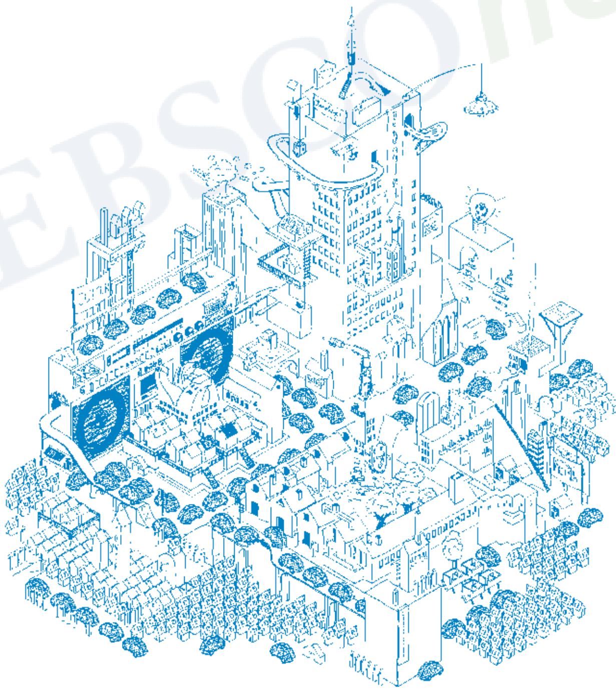
Hubert Knoblauch / Mark Jacobs / René Tuma
(eds.)

Culture, Communication, and Creativity

Reframing the Relations of Media, Knowledge, and Innovation in Society



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Hubert Knoblauch / Mark Jacobs / René Tuma (eds.)

Culture, Communication, and Creativity

It is the premise of this volume that the rising importance of creativity in modern culture is related to dramatic changes in communication. In the last decades we have witnessed a revolutionary change in the ways we interact with one another. This transformation of the structure of communication is one of the most decisive aspects of the creativity of culture. The full aim of this volume therefore is to explore the resulting transformation in the relations of culture, creativity, and communication.

The Editors

Hubert Knoblauch has studied sociology, philosophy and history in Konstanz (Germany) and Brighton (United Kingdom). He was Senior Researcher at King's College London and Professor for Sociology of Religion at Zurich University. He is Chair for General Sociology/Theories of Modern Societies at the Technical University of Berlin and Chair of the European Sociological Association Research Network on Sociology of Culture.

Mark Jacobs is Professor of Sociology at George Mason University, where he was founding director of the first interdisciplinary PhD Program in Cultural Studies in the USA. He is a past chair of the Section on the Sociology of Culture of the American Sociological Association, and chair of the Research Network on Culture of the European Sociological Association.

René Tuma is a full-time researcher at the Chair of General Sociology and Theories of Modern Societies at the TU Berlin. He has studied sociology at the TU Berlin and at King's College London. His research interests include sociology of knowledge, technology, visuality, and interaction as well as qualitative research methods.

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Culture, Communication, and Creativity

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Culture, Communication, and Creativity

Reframing the Relations of Media, Knowledge, and Innovation in Society

Definitions of "culture," a core term shared by the humanities and the social sciences, are contested and changeable. But there is general agreement that culture has to do with meaning and that culture serves to guide to social action. In recent years, culture is increasingly seen to be "productive"—by economists and political scientists, as well as sociologists and anthropologists. "Creativity"—until recently a marginal topic of academic interest—has attracted increasing attention as a cultural product. Creativity becomes a formula guiding action in many societal fields, such as business, city planning, and education. The demand for creativity ranges from the individual level of "creative subjects" to the intermediate level ("creative cities") up to national societies ("creative classes," creative nations) and even international governance organizations. Yet the concept lacks precision. The sociology of culture should be able to help remedy that; indeed, the increased attention to creativity indicates an increasing interest in culture. But with the notable exception of Sales and Fournier (2007), there has been little analysis of the relation of creativity to culture. Contributors to that volume not only demonstrate how communication and information technologies affect innovation—and in particularly creativity—stressing the increased importance of knowledge in contemporary society.

The present volume too emphasizes in its analysis the concept of "communication." It is the premise of this volume (and of the conference that inspired it) that the rising importance of creativity in modern culture is related to dramatic changes in communication. In the last decades we have witnessed a revolutionary change in the ways we communicate with one another. This change has been related to the

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dissemination of a series of new technologies, infrastructures, and media that help shape communication—a process sometimes labeled "mediatization." Given the far reaching transformation of communication and culture by the new information technologies in the last decades, it is rather surprising that the transformation of the structure of communication has not been taken more into consideration as one of the most decisive aspects of the new "productivity" of culture. The full aim of this volume, then, is to explore the relations of culture, creativity, and communication.

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Introduction: Culture, Communication, and Creativity[1]

HUBERT KNOBLAUCH, MARK D. JACOBS, AND RENÉ TUMA

In recent years the concept of culture has been subject to significant changes. From a "superstructure" based on economic fact to a "structure of significations" carried by "signs or a cloth of meaning" guiding actors, culture has moved into the focus not only of the humanities. Recently, due to the impact of the "cultural turn" economists have also become interested in culture as a basic resource for the production of wealth. The most prominent formulation of this new interest in culture has been expressed by the notion of creativity. The interest in creativity, for long time a marginal topic of academic interest, became a formula guiding action in many societal fields, such as politics, economics, city planning, and education. The locus for creativity ranges from the individual level of "creative subjects" to the intermediate level ("creative cities") up to national societies ("creative classes," "creative nations") to the policies of international governance organizations. Although the debate over creativity has already neared the limits of its expansion both across structural levels and as a cultural category, one must observe that the notion of creativity still lacks precision (as does its somewhat more "technological" relative, innovation). Given the fact that creativity is primarily used in a normative sense as an ideal, very few attempts have been undertaken to scrutinize the notion as something which has become part of social reality.

This book addresses the role of creativity from the point of view of the sociology of culture, by focusing on creativity as *meaning*. A major theme of the sociology of culture is that meaning shapes reality by guiding actors and actions.

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1 We would like to thank all our colleagues that have helped us in publishing this volume. Kathleen Luft, Theresa Vollmer and René Wilke were especially essential in editing the papers and Christian Göldner and Bernardo Fernández helped us to put it all together as a book.

It is one of the theses of this book that the rising importance of creativity in modern culture is related to another development: the dramatic changes in communication. In the last decades we have witnessed a revolutionary change in how we communicate with one another. This change has been related to the dissemination of a series of new technologies, infrastructures, and media. Although this change has been variously addressed by social science, e.g. as "the information society" (Webster 1995), as "the network society" (Castells 1996) or as mega-process of "mediatization" (Hepp 2012), its relation to culture has been little understood so far, and even less understood has been the connection between the rise of creativity and communication technologies (for a notable exception see the papers in Sales and Fournier 2007). Given the far-reaching transformation of communication and culture by the new information technologies in the last decades, it is rather surprising that it has not been taken more into consideration as one of the most decisive aspects of the new "productivity" of culture. Note that this does not only refer to the role of media and particularly "mass media culture." Both have been studied to an extensive degree. The focus here lies on the ways in which culture is transformed by (among other things) the new communication technologies.

The neglect of the role of communication for culture is surprising not only for the empirical reasons which force themselves on almost everyone all over the world. Even more surprising is the neglect of the analytical relation between culture and communication. Aside from some earlier attempts to appreciate the role of communication, e.g. by Leach (1976), the recent transformation demands a fundamental rethinking of the relation between culture and communication. One proposition in this respect consists in the notion of communication culture (Knoblauch 2001) which is suggested to provide a reference point for such a rethinking.

Communication culture starts from the assumption that, in order to become socially relevant, any meaning must be objectified in a way which can be understood by actors. As its objectivation and its understanding constitute the basic aspect of communication (which need not necessarily be linguistic), its meaningfulness constitutes a basic aspect of culture. While meaningfulness refers to actors orientations and, thus, subjectivity, their objectivation does not only imply the signification of meaning but also their materiality and the role of objects.

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The notion of communication culture explicated by Knoblauch, and employed by some other contributors, is however only one of the theoretical proposals made by this volume. Given the plurism of cultural sociology, the volume also includes different proposals. Overall, the major goal of this volume is not to impose a particular analytical tool for all papers; rather, the more modest goal is to indicate relations between the three categories mentioned in the title. Therefore we need to ask in the introduction: how do we link or connect culture, communication, and creativity?

Reframing Knowledge and Communication in Culture

When conceptualizing this volume and the conference to which the topic had been devoted, we were impressed by the proposal to relate creativity and communication to knowledge made by Sales and Fournier (2007). They not only show that communication and information technologies affect innovation, and particularly creativity, they also stress the increased importance of knowledge in contemporary society. Approaching the impact of changes in communication and creativity with respect to knowledge has been, in fact, very close to our own position, for at least two editors are strongly devoted to the sociology of knowledge. There are, however, two reasons why we tried to avoid the notion of knowledge as a basic category.

One of the reasons consists in the very fact that knowledge has turned from a basic category in sociology and the sociology of knowledge to one of the most important categories of societal actors not only in science, but also in politics and economy. By the various attempts to construct a "knowledge society" by a multitude of national and international organizations, "knowledge" has turned so much into an "etic" category that it can hardly escape anymore its often naively positivistic, commodified and—being an explicit goals of neoliberal governance (in which the social sciences play no minor role),— ideological character.

The role of knowledge has not only changed empirically; also its theoretical role has been changing. From the perspective of the sociology of knowledge (Berger & Luckmann 1966), knowledge had been a basic category. The tight link between knowledge and society goes

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back to Max Weber's foundation of sociology. As is widely known, Weber (1978/1921) considered social action to be the basic element of society and, thence, of sociology. Social action is defined by the actor's meaningful orientation to other actors. Therefore its most basic feature is meaning. This notion of meaning, which is also the fabric of culture, was later taken up and refined by Alfred Schutz. It was Schutz (1974/1932) who, finally, linked meaning to a general notion of knowledge (as the social form of meaning) and, consequently, provided the foundation for a new sociology of knowledge (Knoblauch 2011).

Within the last decade, the sociology of knowledge, particularly in its very lively German context, made a communicative turn (Keller, Knoblauch, Reichertz 2013): Instead of considering communication as a pane through which knowledge can be seen unstained, it started to focus on the forms, genres and patterns of communication in which knowledge is objectified, transmitted and appropriated. Moreover, the sociology of knowledge started to translate Weber's basic term, social action, into communicative action: social action is empirically (for both, observers as well as participants) always communicative, i.e. expressed in some material, embodied in some form and performed in time and space. It is on the basis of this transformation of social action into communicative action that communication gets into the focus of a discussion of knowledge (for a more elaborated discussion of this argument see Knoblauch 2001, Keller, Reicherz, and Knoblauch 2013).

As mentioned above, the theoretical shift is related to empirical developments; while the social construction of the "knowledge society" turned knowledge from an analytical instrument into a subject matter of sociological study, the move towards communication results also from societal transformation directly linked to our topic. It is the move from social action to communicative action and for the consideration of communication as a basic process in the social construction of culture.

Let us briefly elaborate these arguments. As mentioned above, the notion of "knowledge" as the basic element of contemporary "knowledge society" and its economic correlate, "knowledge production" (Stehr 1994), are themselves subject of a fundamental late modern transformation of society. While modern society was based on industrial production of objects and thus committed to what Habermas (1981) calls the "production paradigm," the association of knowledge to production miss-

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es one essential change: the production and dissemination of product is not necessarily linked to communication and it is itself part of a communication process (Breton 2007). In fact, knowledge society presupposes and requires communication in some form, be it books or computers.

Second, it is no accident that the expansion of knowledge society is paralleled by an unprecedented proliferation of communication. There is no doubt that this proliferation of communication is due to the enormously rapid expansion of new communication technologies. The integration of microelectronic, information systems and telecommunications, in conjunction with the rapid extension of transportation systems and the explosion of the mobility of persons and objects, have substantial effects on the structure of society and the form of culture.

While the effects of technologies have been addressed by the notion of "information society" (Webster 1995), the fact that these technologies are part and parcel of communicative processes has not been sufficiently acknowledge in sociology. For whatever actions are performed in the arts, in science and in everyday life, are being affected and transformed by the use of technologies. One concept for grasping this transformation and acknowledging the role of technical is "mediatization." In fact, Krotz (2001) defines mediatization as "a meta-process relating to both, the overall transformation of society as well as to the human actors and their social relation." As Hepp (this volume) argues, mediatization provides the basis for the emergence of a "mediatized culture" and the globalized forms of transcultural communication. Both are tending towards international standardization and thus the reproduction of institutional forms; simultaneously, they require subjects to appropriate these standardized forms in their (assumedly "individual") ways. This appropriation is certainly one aspect of what is called (symbolic) creativity (Willis 1990); another aspect of creativity can be seen in the necessity to adapt standardized general forms to specific situations and situative uses, such as in the situative performance of "information" encoded in diagrams to audiences in interactive powerpoint presentations (cf. Knoblauch 2013).

The dissemination of new technologies has led some to suggest the advent of a postsocial society in which objects demand their own rights. Although there is no doubt that objects, materialities and technologies play a more important role, the postsocial view (Knorr-

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Cetina 2001) overlooks the fact that objects, have signification for the users which become materialized in their very use. In this sense, they form part of communicative actions (as van Loon discusses in this volume). If we acknowledge the communicative contexts in which objects are used and in which networks of actors (Latour 2005) act, we may realize that contribute to an intensification of sociality and an extension of communicative culture.

The substitution for knowledge of communication, therefore, affects the very role of knowledge. The dissemination of communication technologies, objects and mobility turns knowledge into something which is not predominantly located in the subject. It, rather, forms part of communicative actions. Even if it is technologically inscribed in machines as "information," it still is embedded in contexts of actions as materialities which "make sense" to the actors in a way different from mere information. At the same time, the fact that actions are enmeshed in different contexts does affect the concept of actor.

Hence the extension of technologies and materialities in which human actors are embedded has not led to the much proclaimed "death of the subject." To the contrary, it seems that subjectivation has been enforced to such a degree that while rational decision agents are presupposed by an ever enlarging principle of liberal economy; subjects are also reaffirming themselves by their spirituality which escapes organized religion (Knoblauch 2010). Another form of the reaffirmation of the subject consists in the recent upsurge of creativity.

Reframing Creativity

According to Florida (2004), creativity transforms the social structure of contemporary societies. Indeed, while innovation has been what Fuller (2007) calls the most recent "global policy craze," its transformation into creativity affects not only arts and higher culture but also economy as well as the kind of capitalism characterized by Reckwitz (this volume) as "aesthetic capitalism."

Creativity, thus, presupposes a strong notion of subjectivity which transcends the social as having its own potentialities. The appeal to subjectivity accounts for the special skills required in contemporary

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capitalism and in a society which is considered much less rational than our modernist forefathers had predicted. In this sense, creativity, as it is e.g. used by Florida (2004), is a normative and legitimatory concept which contributes to the construction of the very phenomenon it claims to presuppose (Godin 2008).

As a socially constructed phenomenon, creativity differs in various respects from innovation: much less than relating to science, to technology and, thence, what "knowledge societies" consider a "knowledge," creativity addresses the subjective potential to do something new (Hutter, Knoblauch, Rammert & Windeler 2011). As the idea of creativity seems to escape the rationalistic implications of innovation as "cognitive" act, it also escapes the destructive aspect stressed by Schumpeter (1912) that the creation of newness must destroy the old (as modernity supersedes premodernity). Creativity is, in a sense, an "objectivation" of the subject assumed to escape society. It is a form of communicative action which is most intricately linked to culture. Creativity does not need to be a "product" in any material or even industrial sense. Creativity may relate to ideas, to forms of body movements (in dance, sports, or, e.g., dating) but also to objects which in some way relate to the activities of the subject.

It is a form of communicative action which is most intricately linked to culture. While innovation seems to advance rationality, one of the most essential features of creativity seems to be expressive of the subjects considered responsible for the corresponding action (Taylor 1992). As creativity this way almost per definitionem needs to be expressed, it is a form of communicative action which is most intricately linked to culture. Yet, the culture we are talking about cannot be considered as separated from the rest of society, social power and social structure, as structural functionalism suggested (Anheier & Isar 2012). It is, rather, linked to communication in a way which escapes the functionalism of Luhmann (1999) and the separation of "culture" and "system" suggested by Habermas (1981) but allows to connect it to communication in a way which includes the subjects and what they consider as creativity.

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The Structure of this Book

Obviously, the three topics or foci of the book are not seen as merely juxtaposed. Rather, while all three topics have a very general meaning and are unspecific, the combination of the three notions shall serve to provide for a focus of the book. The goal of the book is to link the three topics. Given the theoretical demand, the book also wants to connect theoretical perspective and empirical analysis. For this reason, the order of the book follows the attempt to relate topics to one another.

In the first part the relation between 'CULTURE AND CREATIVITY' will be explicated. It starts with the contribution by *Andreas Reckwitz*, who traces the emergence of a dispositif of creativity in Western Societies, especially taking effect in economy, mass media and in the sciences. To understand this heterogeneous development Reckwitz introduces the concept of three different regimes of "the new" and highlights the role of arts for the most recent and influential form. *Michael Hutter* takes up this argument and presents his critique to the dichotomy of rationality and creativity he identifies in Reckwitz' approach. He then draws to studies from a number of fields such as politics, law and economy and highlights that both cultural dispositives are interrelated in empirical cases. In "creative economies" a change of the nature of work itself is taking place. *Rudi Laermans* analyzes these processes of flexibilization, the introduction of new forms of cooperation that are connected to creative, immaterial labor. The most important quality of creative work is that it leads to uncertainty, that the creative subjects have to deal with constantly. Laermans studies the changing relations within the creative field (co-opetition) and discusses the social reflexive evaluation of creative goods. *Giovanni Boccia Artieri* and *Laura Gemini* present their study of the forms of co-evolution between the art system and the forms of communication. They highlight that the engagement of the spectator has become a central element in the creative process, and show how amateurs find a way to express their artistic gesture in online worlds such as Instagram or Second Life. After giving an overview of the most relevant theories on creativity outlined in the different disciplines (especially, psychoanalysis, psychology and sociology) *Anna Lisa Tota* questions the dualism between mind and body and proposes to clarify the concept of the

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social actor involved in several theories of creativity. She proposes to substitute the notion of body with that of "lived body" (Leib) when referring to a creative social actor.

The second part of this book is focusing on the relation between 'CREATIVITY AND COMMUNICATION'. On the example of urban quarters local engagement *Anika Noack* shows that processes of local social innovation initiated by civil society actors are institutionalized in specific ritualized communicative forms, such as intellectual games, brainstorming, creativity workshops, problem-discussions. The paper argues that here the constant devaluation and differentiation of the old and revaluation of the new in relation to evaluations and moral values fulfill this function of legitimation within the communicative negotiation of the new. In his study of documentary filmmaking *Mathias Blanc* focuses on the French development of the genre from the end of the 1980s onwards. During this period, a professional community has emerged by linking creativity discourse to documentary practices. The definition of a documentary film genre has led to the manufacture of a normative look which wants to be at the same time authentic with respect to the object filmed and subjectively engaged. These elements compose and shape a visual culture which distinguishes itself from journalistic practices. *Thomas Eberle* analyzes photographing starting from a phenomenological perspective as action, then as creative action, and as communicative action. After a detailed analysis he goes into details about how technological change has affected photographing and the communicative uses of photos.

Chapter three is then devoted to the discussion of 'COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE', which starts with a paper on Communication Culture and Powerpoint, in which *Hubert Knoblauch* shows how one can analyze these presentations as communicative actions constituting a special communicative form which, again, is responsible for the construction of contemporary organizations and the way how they are designed, i.e. their communication culture. *Nick Couldry* explores the concept of voice. In his project, a sociology of voice is interested not just in the conditions for individual production of voice, but in the much wider and deeper conditions whereby certain types of voice are possible. He proposes that sociology must develop a descriptive and conceptual language which is close to the gradients of the landscape within

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which individuals speak or are silent, and distant from dominant accounts of what collective culture means.

Closely related to the topic of the previous part, the fourth chapter of the book is dealing with the relation between 'MEDIA AND CULTURE'. *Andreas Hepp* analyzes interrelation between socio-cultural and media-communication change. In this undertaking he relates to the term mediatization, which allows him to address challenges of describing the "multiplicity of media specificity," the challenge of researching mediatization in a "non-mediacentric way," and the challenge of analyzing "change." *Joost van Loon* provides a theoretical engagement with three specific concepts of media. He rethinks "perception" and seeks to establish a form of medium theory that adopts Whitehead's monistic concept of "prehension." Connecting information, communication and knowledge to three forms of mediation—the visual, the optical and the scopic (these could be called modes of creativity)—these modalities of mediatization "prehend" very specific forms of knowledge not because they interpret reality differently, but rather because they create different actualities. *Boris Traue* seeks to establish a media concept compatible with the sociology of knowledge on the basis of which the relations between subjects, media, and communication can be grasped with the term objectivation. Building on this the concept of "communication regimes" takes into consideration the expansion of linguistically and corporeally mediated communication through digital and networked media. How do organizations deal with the challenges of the introduction of internal social media into operational practice? This is the starting question for an empirical Study presented by *Sabine Pfeiffer.* She is able to show that it is precisely the underestimation of the cultural, communicative, and creative dimensions by the organizations that makes it difficult for them to implement Enterprise 2.0 successfully.

The final part of the book presents empirical studies that are 'APPLIED STUDIES OF COMMUNICATION, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY' in empirical cases. *Koen van Eijck* and *Gerbert Kraaykamp* offer a quantitative study of media consumption. They analyze the changing patterns of "highbrow" or "popular" consumption and identify a new pattern of what moves both workers and consumers: cultural voraciousness. A comparative approach of the representation of time and

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space in mass media is presented by *Tatiana Mozhaeva*. She compares mass media news articles in diverse ethno cultural contexts: Russia, Western Europe, and the Middle East. *Nona Schulte-Römer* studies innovation in urban lighting. She proposes a critical perspective on the technical innovation and demonstrates how lighting professionals' and amateurs' different modes of engagement with a lighting technology had a material impact on urban design and technical innovation. In the interdisciplinary research project "Subject Formations and Digital Culture—Learning in the Interaction with Digital Artifacts" (SKUDI) *Julia Walter-Herrmann* and *Corinne Büching* researched and tried to foster creative learning practices with Digital Media. They present a concept for workshops where young adults interact meaningfully and creative with Digital Media. The internet currently plays a crucial role in cultural practices performed by children. *Nuno de Almeida Alves, Ana Delicado, Ana Nunes de Almeida* and *Diana Carvalho* scrutinize children's use of the internet as an instrument of both cultural consumption and cultural production. Computers and the internet are new means for disseminating centuries old artistic practices such as writing, drawing, and playing a musical instrument, but the practices vary depending on the product and the size of the producer's social network. *Jorge Brandão Pereira and Heitor Alvelos* show that in the framework of creative development, digital culture and its dynamic relationship with design and visual communication have generated a new border area, important for the construction and interpretation of communication. Their paper discusses design, communication, digital media participation, local cultures and creativity, focusing on an empirical-based case study of creative communication—how it structures the model of creativity and how it enhances development in local, cultural and social dimensions. *Mark D. Jacobs* presents a comparative case study of three U.S.-based food blogs to explore the relative vitality of the cultural spheres (elite culture, commercialized culture, and popular culture) they respectively represent, within the affordances of modern communications. He focuses on the significance of community-building to the viability of these various blogs and relates it to the discussion about mass culture. As his exploratory study suggests, the implications for cultural creativity are conditionally variable upon the causal mediation of the variable of *community.*

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I

Culture and Creativity

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Creativity as Dispositif

ANDREAS RECKWITZ

To study creativity from a sociological point of view, there are in principle two alternatives: either creativity is understood as a basic quality and requirement of the social and of social action per se; or creativity is analyzed as a very specific social and cultural constellation itself, as a product of the social, above all in modern or postmodern times.

In any case, sociologically, creativity is to be envisaged from a different angle compared with the ubiquitous psychological analyses of this phenomenon. Most psychological studies of creativity, which since Joy Paul Guilford's seminal lecture during the congress of the American Psychological Association in 1950 have been flourishing, take creativity as a universal mental capacity which can be trained by additional psychological techniques (cf. Runco 2007). Whenever creativity is of interest to sociology, though, it must be seen as a social and cultural phenomenon. But this sociality can refer to two different constellations: On the plane of a general social theory, creativity in the broad sense of the ever going evolving of the new—of new socially relevant events or of new human actions respectively—can be detected as a structural feature which is inherent in "the social," be it social interactions or social practices, communication or social processes. Creativity is here so to speak a basic requirement of the social. Heinrich Popitz's (1997) and Hans Joas's (1992) account of creativity take this track. So does—in an entirely different way and while omitting the term creativity itself—Gilles Deleuze's postvitalist social theory of rhizomatic structures (1987). Likewise, certain authors from the tradition of cultural studies with their decisive interest in the experimental and subversive qualities of social action tend to presuppose creativity as such an inherent potential of social action (cf. Willis 1990). It is characteristic that all these authors and schools share a more or less emphatic normative identification with the creative, as something allegedly essentially human or a basic quality of life or as a source for the political.

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Although this sociological perspective on creativity has its merits as counterparts against strictly structuralist theories of the social, I prefer an alternative path. For me creativity does not appear as a universal requirement and presupposition of the social, but as social, cultural and historical product. Then, creativity is not an issue of social theory in the strict sense of universalist concepts any more, but a very specific phenomenon of a very particular social world. From this point of view, it is essential to historicize creativity and to embed it in certain historically specific practices and discourses. Of course, on the level of social theory, we do need a basic vocabulary able to cover both social reproduction and social change, both the repetition of the same and the emergence of the new (without necessarily having a normative bias in favor of the latter). But I would raise a different research question concerning creativity: How and why have we entered in late-modernity a widespread social constellation which appreciates and systematically encourages and produces creativity? How and why have late-modern subjects learnt to define themselves as creative selves and to train their everyday creativity? Finally: how and why have diverse social fields restructured themselves as fields which direct their interest to producing the aesthetically new? So to me, the issue of creativity is intimately linked to a theory of modernity.

My basic assumption is as follows: In the course of the 20th century and in an intensified way since the 1970s, a widespread and heterogeneous dispositif of creativity has been emerging in Western societies. As a dispositif, it crosses the boundaries of different social fields, structuring segments of the economy and of the mass media, of urban planning and of sciences such as psychology and giving them a form which encourages and obliges to creativity. Thus, my perspective on creativity is influenced by Michel Foucault (cf. Foucault 2001). Just as Foucault's archeological and genealogical perspective on the autonomous or on the sexual subject has a certain disillusioning effect, so does a Foucault-inspired perspective on creativity as I would like to support it.

A genealogy and archeology of the modern dispositif of creativity is a complex task. In the following, I would only like to provide the basic conceptual framework for this endeavor. What are the basic structures of this dispositif or apparatus of creativity? I would like to emphasize four issues: First, the creative complex of the present time

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is structured by a particular version of what I will call a 'social regime of the new'. To this purpose, I will differentiate between three modern regimes of the new. Characteristic of the dispositif of creativity is the third regime, that of aesthetic novelties. Thus, second, it is indispensable to clarify what aesthetic practices and processes of aestheticization are. Third, the dispositif of creativity is structured by a certain basic structure of producers and of an observing audience which certifies what counts as a creative act. Fourth, the social field of the arts turns out to be a historically paradigmatic form of the dispositif of creativity.

(1) To begin with, we have to clarify the effects of social regimes of the new, i.e. social forms regulating novelty. In the context of the dispositif of creativity, a familiar key element of the structure and semantics of modern societies is changing its value in a fundamental way—the new. It is a classic finding that the institutions and semantics of modern societies are not oriented towards repetition, but towards self-transformation, and that they have always preferred the new to the old. Thus, the new has been encouraged politically, economically, scientifically, technically, and artistically. It has been supported with regard to political revolutions, the circulation of commodities, technical inventions, and artistic originality. Nevertheless, the new is not automatically identical to believing in progress or thinking in "complete breaks." To be oriented towards the new means, in an abstract sense, rather the development of a temporal concept, which distinguishes past, present, and future, and which favors the future over the past. Not only has the regime of the new a temporal connotation, but it also implies a phenomenal and a social dimension. While the new denotes phenomenologically "the other" in contrast to "the same," it refers socially to "the deviant" in contrast to "the normal." Whether on the temporal, phenomenal, or social plane—the new is not objectively existing, but it always depends on schemes of interpretation, which are more often than not controversial. Social regimes of the new, as they are characteristic of modern societies, do both: they observe the new and they prefer it to the old. Thus, they endeavor to encourage it, and they actively inject dynamics into the social. Three typical structural kinds of this orientation towards the new can be distinguished: The new as stage (The New I), the new as increase and superseding (The New II), and the new as stimulus (The New III).

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Although they follow one another, the earlier forms might not vanish completely with the advent of the more recent ones. These regimes equal three cultural models of modernity: modernity of perfection, modernity of progress, and aesthetic modernity.

The first regime of the new strives for a stage, on which an old constellation will be replaced by a new, more progressive and rational one. At this stage, the new appears to be absolutely and definitely novel and revolutionary, whereas, once it is achieved, the fundamentally new ceases to be required any longer—incremental improvements begin to suffice. This model is the basis of political revolutions. If the desired stage is obtained, the social and the subject are not striving anymore for the completely new, but for perfecting the old as if it was the everlasting new. Consequently, The New no. I is a constellation, which subordinates the new to the aim of political and moral progress—and the latter sooner or later comes to an end.

The New no. II—the regime of increase and superseding—differs. Now the permanent production of the new is desired, whereas the future seems to be infinite. Both scientific-technical developments and economical innovations on the market are typical examples of this pattern. The term "increase" refers to quantitative growth on the one hand, and to qualitative jumps on the other. In any case, the second constellation is characterized by the normative claim of improvement inherent in every single act of the new and, at the same time, by the infinity of the sequence of improvements.

The regime of the new as an aesthetic stimulus (The New III), as it will turn out to be central for the dispositif of creativity, is organized in still another way. The dynamic production of an infinite sequence of new acts remains, whereas the value of the new ceases to be normative. The new does not gain its value by its integration into a sequence of progressing steps anymore, but by its current aesthetic stimulus, which is always getting supplanted by the ensuing sensual-affective quality. Not progress or superseding are now the matter of interest, but the movement itself—the sequence of stimulating acts. The new is mainly defined by its contrast to the preceding, "old" events in the sequence of time, by its contrast as being something different to the identical, and by its contrast as appreciated deviation from the usual. The new is in this case the relatively new as an event, whereas it does

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not mark a structural break. Within the regime of the aesthetically new, the new shares a semantic field with the interesting, the surprising, and the original. These three terms do not refer to progress or superseding—rather are they purely de-normalized and affective terms denoting difference. The production of the new does not continue to follow the model of political revolution or technical invention; it follows the paradigm of creating original objects and atmospheres instead. Here, emotions, senses, and meanings are stimulated—modern art is the paradigm of this regime of novelty.

(2) If the dispositif of creativity is basically structured by a social regime of the aesthetically new, we need to clarify what aesthetic practices are from a sociological point of view. In fact, the dispositif of creativity is carried by and carries out a radical process of aestheticization of the social. But how to define the aesthetic and aestheticization? The original meaning of aisthesis refers to the full range of sensual perceptions. Yet, in search of a precise understanding of the aesthetic, it is not sufficient to refer to these sensual perceptions altogether. With recourse to a basic intuition of classic aesthetics, I understand the aesthetic instead as referring to sensual and perceptive processes possessing a momentum of their own, their own dynamics which have left behind their embededdedness in purposive-rational acts. So, aisthesis as the entirety of all sensual perceptions can be differentiated from "aesthetic perceptions" in particular (cf. Seel 1996). Their specific qualities include that they are an end in itself, self-referential, and oriented to its own realization at this particular moment in time (Selbstbezüglichkeit, Vollzugsorientierung). Sensuality for the sake of sensuality, perception for the sake of perception are their characteristics—and this is exactly meant by the momentum of its own, which the sensual perception possesses in aesthetic practices.

A modern understanding of the aesthetic needs to disconnect the traditional links to good taste, beauty, contemplation, or the autonomous sphere of art. Thus, the crucial point is not if aesthetic perceptions are beautiful or ugly, harmonious or dissonant, introverted or elated, but that they cannot be reduced to mere information processing. They do not subordinate themselves to purposive-rational action, but gather momentum of their own and realize themselves rather independently. However, the aesthetic includes still another

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dimension: Aesthetic perceptions are not simply sensory activities, but contain a good deal of affectivity. According to Gilles Deleuze (1996), aesthetic phenomena always comprise a pair of percepts and affects. Sensual-aesthetic perceiving encompasses the subject's specific affectedness by an object or situation, sensitivities or agitation, an enthusiastic, concerned, or calm way of feeling.

A sociological grasp of the aesthetic requires a praxeological perspective on sensuality and affectivity: A praxeological concept of the aesthetic is fundamental. In this context, two states of aggregation of the aesthetic can be distinguished—aesthetic episodes and aesthetic practices. Concerning aesthetic episodes, an aesthetic perception occurs incalculably, a subject is affected by an object in a certain situation, and, consequently, breaks through the circle of purposive rationality—then the moment has vanished. In contrast, aesthetic practices lead to routines of aesthetic perceptions or of the habitual production of objects for such a perception. These aesthetic practices always hold—frequently implicit—aesthetic knowledge and cultural schemes that predispose the production and reception of aesthetic events. Generally, this understanding of the aesthetic emphasizes an aspect of social practices long marginalized by rationalist approaches of philosophy and sociology. The opposite of these everyday aesthetic practices are acts which are determined by purposes and rules, so that sensual perceptions appear only as secondary cognitive information processing.

Against the background of such an understanding of the aesthetic, the phenomenon of the aesthetization of the social can take shape. It is a precisely determinable structural change. Social processes of aesthetization lead to the expansion of aesthetic practices and to the decline of non-aesthetic, purposive-rational, and normative practices. Form and direction of aesthetization do vary culturally and historically. Now, the dispositif of creativity is characterized by the fact that it enforces a very specific process of aestheticization, which is focused on the production and reception of new aesthetic events. The dispositif of creativity aligns the aesthetic with the new, and it aligns the regime of the new with the aesthetic. It denotes the intersection of aestheticization and the social regimes of the new. The segments of the late-modern dispositif of creativity thus enforce a regime of the aesthetically new which to a considerable degree works by producing and

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distributing specific affects. In a way, every dispositif has its own—often rather concealed—affective structure, but the aestheticized dispositif of creativity works quite openly by disseminating affective intensities, by stirring the senses via new events. Within the realm of affects, the dispositif of creativity has four points of positive motivation and states of agitation: creative activity, aesthetic experience, the creative subject, and creative spaces.

(3) For the structure of the dispositif of creativity a specific structure of the social is essential. This form of the social is not structured by exchange or simple interaction, it is a structure of aesthetic producers and aesthetic observers which direct their interest towards aesthetic objects and are situated in an institutional framework that arranges and filters attention (Aufmerksamkeit). On the one hand, practices aiming at the production of the aesthetically new are necessary, and they must be maintained by qualified individual or collective "creatures." On the other hand, there must be an audience that is chiefly interested in the aesthetic seizure of objects and events. The dispositif of creativity, as a form of aesthetization, is linked to a creative ethos of production. It implies the production of the aesthetically new by a subject or by another entity, such as a collective or the practice itself. Insofar the aesthetization of the creative dispositif is quite remote from Guy Debord's 'society of spectacle' with its passive consumers (1977). Instead, within the creative dispositif, institutions and subjects are prone to the imperative to mobilize their creative potential and to bring about aesthetic new objects and events: artworks and aesthetic goods and environments, media formats and media news, urban transformations and self-presentations in social networks and in real life.

Beside the creative producer, the audience is a second and complementary entity within the dispositif of creativity. The aesthetic stimulus of the new requires an audience, which is apt to realize the novelty of the new and to be impressed by it. "The new" does not exist as an objective fact, it depends on particular kinds of attention and interpretation. Niklas Luhmann rightly referred to the fact that the social fields of modern societies step by step have developed audience roles (Publikumsrollen, cf. Luhmann 1992). With regard to the dispositif of creativity, the audience is oriented to what they observe, receive, and use, in an attitude not of information processing, but of

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symbolic, sensual, and emotional excitability. The modern audience is mainly aesthetically interested. Thus, it functions as pacemaker for the social transformation of modernity. Therefore, the evolving structures of attention and attentiveness/attention (Aufmerksamkeit) through which the audiences direct their interest and fascination to the aesthetic objects are crucial. Generally, human beings turn their attention necessarily only to a limited number of phenomena. In the framework of the dispositif of creativity, it is he criterion of the new which draws the attention primarily to those events perceived by the observers as novel. The management of the audience's attention is, therefore, the main task of social coordination molding the dispositif of creativity. Whether by markets or by media—social structures of selecting and directing attentions form the framework in which creative producers and audiences move. But in the dispositif of creativity, producers and audiences do not fit into a constellation of intersubjectivity in the classical sense. They are connected by a third element: by artifacts which are produced and used as aesthetic artifacts—artworks, goods, urban architecture, fabricated nature etc. These artifacts are material and cultural at the same time—and in this quality they are created and enjoyed.

(4) Aesthetic practices and aestheticization, a social regime of aesthetic novelties and their affective attraction, a constellation of audience, producers and aesthetic objects—it is remarkable that for all these basic structural elements of the dispositif of creativity, one social field which hitherto has rather been pushed to the margins of the sociological inquiry of modernity plays the role of a historical paradigm and example: namely the arts (encompassing here the visual and the performative arts alike, also music and literature). For, the arts were the first field of social practices which developed structural features which later on became typical of the dispositif of creativity as such. Most of these features were formed around 1800 when the arts as a field of its own emerged:

(a) Modern art is a social field that is based on primarily aesthetically oriented practices, that is, practices of production and reception of aesthetic events. It aims at sensuality and affectivity, discharged from instrumental rationality. Romanticism is a prominent historical place for this development of 'autonomous art'. The practices of the modern field of art endeavor to secure the autonomy of art by a varie-

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ty of strategies and methods, which distance the “purely aesthetic” from moral norms and rationalism, but also from the “impurely aesthetic” (for example the popular or kitsch) and from mere craft. Although, of course, this attempt of an autonomization of the arts as a sphere of pure aesthetics is opposed to the later dissemination of aesthetic practices across all fields of society, nevertheless it is here, in modern arts that the emancipation of aesthetic practices from purposive-rational actions, its priorization against ‘mere’ purpose rationality is carried out for the first time. And it is only via this radical idea of ‘absolute’ aesthetics that the affective attraction of aesthetic objects and creative subjects as it is still present in the dispositif of creativity can come into being.

(b) The aesthetic practices of modern art are integrated into the social regime of the aesthetically new, which aims at the continual production of novel aesthetic events, that is, of novel works of art as sensual and affective offers with a surprisal value. As a matter of fact, this orientation towards newness is crucial for modern art since around 1780, and is discursively developed by means of the opposition between the so-called aesthetics of genius and the aesthetics of rules. Whereas the artist’s task had long been the perfect imitation and the application of the rules of ideal art—and, thus, the virtuoso reproduction of what was old and universal—, with modernity, the artist has changed into a creator of original works, which cannot be derived from generalized rules anymore.

(c) The field of arts is characterized by a form of the social which is structured by aesthetic producers and an aesthetic audience which are interested in aesthetic artifacts. The field of art models the character of the artist as a “creative producer,” who is capable of creating the aesthetically new. But the field generates, at the same time, the complementary role: the aesthetically sensitive audience. Consequently, the social aspect of art hinges neither on rational production nor on intersubjective interaction or exchange. The crucial point is rather the social process of generating sensual, semiotic, and emotional stimuli for an audience in artifacts (‘artworks’). Thus, the fields of the arts ‘invents’ the two subject positions without which also the dispositif of creativity cannot exist: the position of a creative subject as a producer of aesthetic objects, thus reinventing himself as an active, original and versatile self

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and the aesthetic audience, observing its environment not in cognitive or normative, but in purely aesthetic terms, focused on senses and affects.

In conclusion: The field of art provides a decisive impulse, which was historically obviously not replaceable by functional equivalents. It provides a constitutive impulse for the genesis of a complex of social practices oriented to aesthetic perceptions, experiences, and individual self-design. Nevertheless, the diffusion of these practices has only become possible, because capitalist economy has—beyond the narrow segment of art—transformed its core areas towards an 'aesthetic economy' during the 20th century. Economy has submitted to an intensively affective regime of the aesthetically new, and aesthetic capitalism generally enforces the rapid spread of permanently new aesthetic objects. The dispositif of creativity also presupposes the emergence of creative subjects, who follow the ideal of creative self-design. Two additional social fields are essential for this social "manufacturing" of the creative self: firstly, the psychology of creativity and, secondly, the mass media with their system of stars. Since the 1970s at the latest, psychology as a scientific and popular complex of subjectification proceeds from the assumption that the creative self is not the exception from the rule, but rather the sound, normal state of the subject. Thus, the normal self appears to aspire for self-fulfillment and self-improvement on the model of the artist. While psychology endeavors to bring about the creative subject "from within"—by means of techniques of the self—, the mass media support its institutionalization "from the outside" by depicting the cultural appeal of successful creative subjects. Thus, the mass-mediated system of stars, which comprises movie-, music-, or art-stars from all creative industries alike, stages creative subjects as figures of identification. Not the disciplined, but the expressive individual becomes, therefore, the cultural model. Another pillar of the dispositif of creativity is added by the culturalization of Western cities, which leads to the aestheticization of urban atmospheres. Thus, the cultural focus on creativity is "materialized," that is, it assumes a tangible, permanent shape. Laid out accordingly, the built spaces satisfy the wish for the aesthetically new by "urban experiences." Within the model of creative cities, supporting and establishing the aesthetically new becomes an issue of political regulation and planning.

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In this way, comparable with a mosaic, the discrete social fields are joined together and, thus, contribute to the institutionalization of the dispositif of creativity. To demonstrate the historical genesis of the dispositif in detail, would be a considerably more complex task (cf. Reckwitz 2012).

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Cultural Conditions of Creation: A Communication-Centered Approach to Reckwitz' "Creativity Dispositif"

MICHAEL HUTTER

Complementary Value Worlds

It is rare that two lectures combined in a program fit together in their research aims, and it is even more rare that the second lecturer has the opportunity to familiarize himself with the argument of the first lecturer because that lecturer just published a book on the topic of his lecture (Reckwitz 2012). I've read the book, and I find its central observations exciting. They confirm a tendency in contemporary society which I detect in my own work, and they sharpen the discussion in a very effective manner.

Reckwitz sets the Creativity dispositif against the established Rationality dispositif. Both of them are culturally developed and acquired. The supporting structure of the Creativity dispositif connects "subjects as creators, an aesthetic audience, aesthetic objects and an institutionalized regulation of attentions" (p. 323). This set of conditions fits the chameleon word "culture," so one can speak of rationally and aesthetically oriented cultures. Rational cultures are achievement-oriented. They provide ways of handling a world based on the distinction between goals and tools. Aesthetic cultures are engagement-oriented. They provide ways of experiencing the world—Reckwitz calls it *Welt-bearbeitung* vs. *Welt-verarbeitung* (p. 25). This world is based on the distinction between body and emotion. Changes in rational worlds are called innovations if they fulfill one or more goals better than existing solutions. Changes in aesthetic worlds are called creations if they provide a new stimulus (*Reiz*) to the bodies and minds of their audiences. I find this shift in the characteristics of newness highly relevant. It is a shift from effectiveness to affectiveness—just one vowel in an English text, and yet a world of difference.

One could continue to list significant contrasts between the Rationality dispositif and the suggested Creativity dispositif, but I would like to focus on the dimension of communication. Rational cultures deal with knowledge in terms of uncertainty—uncertainty is assumed to be ubiquitous and must be reduced in order to make rational actions feasible. In consequence, a very parsimonious notion of communication is sufficient for rational agents. They look for information, and information is either true or false. The ideal situation is one of complete information, when communication is superfluous. Aesthetic cultures deal with knowledge in terms of meaningful signs. In this view, uncertainty is a necessary, positive context in which new signs can unfold their potential of surprise and affective stimulus. For creative agents, therefore, communication is rich and varied. Ambiguities and ambivalences, reinterpretations and newly invented symbols are the material out of which affectively powerful communication is constructed, be it in the shape of stories, visuals, sound arrangements or all three modes at the same time.

At this point, the shadow of doubt falls over Reckwitz' bold dichotomy. Isn't it too much of a simplification to distinguish only two sets of cultural conditions? Would we not lose the complexity and differentiation gained through the various strands in contemporary sociology of communication? I think mainly of two strands—the social construction of knowledge in communicative interaction as it was proposed by Berger and Luckmann (1967) and is continued by authors like Hubert Knoblauch (2013), and the theory of social communication systems, as it was proposed by Niklas Luhmann (2012, 2013) and is continued by authors like myself (Hutter 2001). I emphasize the similarities rather than the differences: in each approach, meaning is generated in communicative interaction. In the first case, meanings take on shape in institutions and organizational fields, with their proprietary logic. In the second case, meanings are generated in the communication events of self-reproducing social systems.

The salient point is that a variety of value logics or codes can be modeled in these theoretical approaches, not only the dichotomy of rational and aesthetic communication. One might object that both of these communication theories come out of a German-speaking tradition and have found only limited applications in other regions of the world. But there are other approaches that also point to a variety of

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incommensurable values which, in their totality can be interpreted as cultures. An example from the French tradition would be the worlds of justified Worth, identified by Boltanski, Thévenot and Chiapello in studying the values imbedded in the consulting literature (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005, Boltanski and Thevenot 2006). An example from the American literature are Harrison White's netdoms, or network relations in domains of topics, all of them structured by "common sets of stories that explain away anomalies" (White 2008, p. 8). All these approaches are, in a fundamental way, communication-centered.

It seems to me that the variety gained in these communication-centered approaches can be preserved and even advanced by Reckwitz' distinction between the rationality and the creativity dispositif. The trick consists of two steps, and it is quite simple: in a first step, the various value worlds of social life are not reduced to a dichotomy, but the dichotomy re-enters each of the value worlds: rational and aesthetic perspective are interpreted as complementary, with highly different proportions and combinations in the various domains of meaning. In a second step, the five "agents of aesthetization" (34f.) are examined. Reckwitz names artistic expansion, media revolutions and new consumer good production, he points to the expansion of objects until they constitute mere bundles of symbols, and to the concentration of socio-cultural practices on the human subject. These agencies shift the relation between rational and aesthetic perspective toward greater emphasis on the aesthetic side.

The main part of my presentation will consist in gathering evidence that this historical shift is taking place in contemporary society. I will observe a series of value-coded communication systems, as they have evolved from primary social conflicts. In retrospect, they have been called functional subsystems, but their functionality is just a rationalist, retrospective legitimation. In history, they have evolved as communication plays around values that mediate conflicts of power, of justice, of access to resources, and so forth. One could choose another communication theory as an ordering device, the result would not differ greatly.

I will, in fact, observe the observers: I will refer to studies from the sociology of each of these worlds, like the sociology of politics, of law or of the economy, to demonstrate that both cultural dispositifs, the rational and the creative, have found some recognition. I will start

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with the more aesthetically charged value plays, and will progress towards the more rationally charged plays.

The Aesthetic Dispositif in Major Worlds of Worth

I start with religion. This value system mediates, above all, the conflict, the fundamental offence, of death. The belief in a parallel world of gods, ghosts and saved souls creates an alternative to biological decay. Research on religion belongs to sociology's founding texts. On one side, there is Weber's interpretation that the belief in providence leads to material success as an effective indicator for salvation. On the other side, there is Durkheim's interpretation that collective effervescence in religious ritual is proof for the priority of social entities. There seems to be a logic inherent in a religion's rules that provide incentives and constraints for handling the world, while, at the same time, the affective quality of religious experiences is so strong that it might even overwhelm consciousness. The contemporary flowering of the so-called Pentecostal movement and the success of mega-churches, particularly in the U.S., are evidence for the rise of the creativity dispositif (Stark 2013). In cultures that consider themselves to be deeply rational, in their business interaction, in education and even in family life, an increasing share of the population takes the step into the trance of collective ritual. At the same time, radical Islamists fight for an elimination of aesthetic pleasure. The shift towards private emotions of pleasure is seen as dangerous and countered by a shift in the belief system that moves these pleasures into the transcendental domain of paradise.

Art is generally considered to be the home ground of the Creativity dispositif. Art is also a communication play, manifested in a set of art worlds, the way Howard Becker conceives them (Becker 2008, Becker and Faulkner 2009). Becker's world of jazz musicians is a good example of the balance between affective and effective components: the priority is clearly with the aesthetic, inventive, creative quality of the pieces—which are communication pieces!—as they are performed before a hopefully enthusiastic audience. But behind the stage, in the practice rooms and studios, effective craftsmanship and knowledge of standard harmonies and melodies is valued highly.

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Reckwitz reconstructs the trajectory of the artistic field from a socially deviant, marginal position to the new hegemonic position in post-modern society. The story of human-made creation began with the notion of artistic genius—an individual on the borderline of society. By the late 19th century, the artistic position had become social. Now, the deviance was expressed by a social group, the so-called bohème, in symbolic contrast to the established juste milieu of the bourgeoisie. The actual crossing of the boundaries—Reckwitz calls it *Selbstentgrenzung*, a word without equivalent in English—was achieved in art styles of the 20th century, from Surrealism, to Abstract Expressionism and on the Pop and Conceptual Art.

Now the artist becomes recognizable as a laboring creator, the audience is persuaded to participate in the creation process, legitimate aesthetic objects proliferate and the media necessary to catch the public's attention multiply their transmission power each decade. In today's post-modern art worlds, border-crossings (*Grenzüberschreitungen*) and "aesthetic irritations" (p. 126) become the rule, as we are in the middle of the grand expansionary drive of the Creativity dispositif. An indicator of the historical moment at which the artistic "logic" has become hegemonic is the publication of *The new spirit of capitalism* in 1999. The authors see artistic critique transposed to the economic field, to processes of production. They demonstrate that in a commercial world in which projects are the most frequent form of labor coordination, and in which goods that consist of symbols gain in market share, artistic practices and artistic judgment are adequate role models: the entrepreneur as creator, the consumers as receptive audience, the production of novelties in a network of subtle attention channels. Today's artistic field—or world, or societal subsystem, or play—provides an "exemplary format for practices, discourses, subject-forms and subject-artifact-constellations" (p. 128).

The other major worlds of worth— politics, law, science and economy—rely in their self-descriptions strongly on the Rationality dispositif. And yet, social scientists have uncovered an aesthetic dimension in each of them. The aesthetic dimension is quite obvious in regimes of political power. Power is most effective when it is merely symbolic (Strong 1984, Hutter 2002). Representations of power take aesthetic forms, from buildings to protocols, and from parades to opera festivals.

Political communication uses all these forms, although their logic is recognizably distinct from the political calculus, the goal-achievement behind the appearances. The usage takes place in at least three ways.

First, the political field is populated with organizations, like ministries, armies and political parties. Each of these organizations is a communication play in itself, and in each of them, there exists a balance between rational goal-achievement and the aesthetic stimulus that engages the members of the organization. Traditional armies, with their rich variety of uniforms and with a tradition of musical performance, are an example. As an aside: Organizations operate in all subsystems, not only in politics, but also in law, in science, in religion, in art and in the economy. There is a remarkable desire to represent each organization with a visual logo or an entire corporate visual identity. But this topic does not fit into the time available for this lecture, so I return to my observations on the level of more general value plays.

A second moment of change comes from political movements. The followers of such movements do not only congregate because they want to achieve an explicit goal. Participation in them is also an experience, affective engagement is crucial and visual styling is customary. Even small groups gain mass media attention, and thus the attention of larger audiences. If the voting rules are favorable, they might even gain a share of institutional political power in parliaments.

A third moment of change in politics comes from the vast communication play of the mass media. Traditionally, the media of print and broadcast are closely coupled to the political system (Hutter 2006, p. 181f). Particularly in democratic systems, the power-holders need them to justify their actions and to gain the audiences' voting support. But the newspapers are only read and the TV-programs only viewed if they have sufficient affective appeal. The rise of affective content has been registered in all media, offline and online. It shifts the balance between rational information and aesthetic content within the mass media field, and it also shifts that balance in the political field. Politicians—and their organizations—have become issue creators who engage audiences, in order to get their votes at the next election.

I will pass over the legal system quickly, although it offers rich grounds for creativity research. Most legal conflicts are between private parties and are unique in nature. Creative solutions have to be

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found that fit the particular constellation of the case, and they are performed as trials in courtrooms. Even today, high judges wear antiquated cloaks when they utter their legal judgments, and attorneys slip into their robes as actors slip into their costumes.

Finally, we come to two plays of value communication that seem to be far away from the creativity dispositif, namely science and the economy. However, sociologists of science as well as economic sociologists have demonstrated the existence and the growing relevance of aesthetic sociality in their fields.

In regard to science, specific evidence has been collected by workplace studies and laboratory studies (Latour and Woolgar 1986, Knorr-Cetina 1999). They all show the relevance of contextual, performative factors. The four components of the Creativity dispositif—subjective invention, audience engagement, constitution of the object's "material" and attention steerage—are all present. In more applied fields of science, like medicine, the logic of research contrasts with the affective experience of suffering. Even a surgical operation reaches a more satisfying outcome when the patient and her or his close relations are treated like collaborators that should be engaged rather than as obstacles to be constrained and ignored. The communication culture of the medical field as a whole overlaps with the organizational culture of particular hospital institutions. Currently, the organizational cultures change more quickly towards their affective dimension, while the larger professional traditions adhere to established rational patterns of thinking and behavior.

The medical field yields a good example of an issue that is just beginning to gain momentum, namely the issue of methods. If aesthetic social processes function according to a logic that is not connected to established rational indicators, what are then the adequate methods to observe these processes? What if the statistics of correlation are without results because instances of creation are singular, not repeatable, fleeting? There are a number of strategies to answer this question. One is an adoption of ethnological methods. Participatory observation is gaining in popularity, but it begs the question of establishing generalized results. A second approach is exemplified by Lucien Karpik (2010), who argues that singularities are coordinated through informed judgments rather than rational decisions, and that useful devices

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and entire coordination regimes have evolved around such judgments. A third approach applies the investigative tools of the humanities. If the information returns from putting students into computer labs are approaching zero, it might be more revealing to use the archival methods of historians, or the hermeneutic methods of art scholars, or the open engagement style of literary critics. The new relevance given to so-called "art research" is a further dimension of the aesthetic expansion.

Finally, we come to the economy and the economists. Economists are social scientists who focus on the economy, equipped with a specific theory that is so dominant in their profession they describe themselves through their theory rather than their field. The theory is a theory of rational choices and decisions. It seems to fit the interaction around production in organizations and in market exchanges so well that the economy's logic is assumed to be identical with the Rationality dispositif: free individual decision, complete information, well-defined goods and effective legal rules would be the components, if we pattern them after Reckwitz' four creativity components. But just as artistic practices are exemplary, yet not identical with creativity practices, so are economic practices exemplary, but not identical with rational practices. Economic practices have spread into non-economic communication for many decades, while artistic practices are just beginning to spread into non-artistic communication cultures.

This counter-movement is now invading even the study of the economy. It is so varied that I can only point to a few contributions that indicate that variety. There are, to start with, the behavioral economists. They have found, in laboratories and in field experiments, that the subjects operate with a solid core of rational calculation, but that this logic is overridden in many cases by considerations of fairness, reciprocity, responsibility and style (Kahneman, Knetsch et al. 1991). Rationality, it seems, is an evolutionary accomplishment, but it is by no means the end of social development.

In consumption research, there is a growing recognition that consumers are interested in affective events, rather than in effective tools. A remarkable precursor of this position was Tibor Scitovsky, a prominent welfare economist in the 1950s, who made major contributions to the emerging concept of external effects. Late in his career, he published a book titled *The joyless Economy* (1976). He argues that economics has

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focused narrowly on demand for goods that satisfy comfort, and that it has excluded the analysis of demand for goods that provide stimulus—”joy” in his terms, “*Reiz*” in Reckwitz’ terms, but exactly the same kind of intuition. Despite his reputation, Scitovsky found little resonance in his time—maybe now the development of joyful goods has progressed far enough to be recognized by a larger number of economists.

Not only economists do research on the economy. Management science is more restricted to the communication that takes place inside firms and other economic agents—which are also largely social entities -, and it is not as restricted to the rational-choice model in its theoretical approach. Ortmann (2009), for instance, points toward the recognition of creativity practices. Innovation, he argues, is paradoxical because that which is new cannot be intended and thus cannot serve as goal. The search towards new solutions, therefore, becomes a collaborative process that involves creators and users.

Last but not least, there are the contributions of economic sociology. The “Worth of Goods,” to quote the title of a volume published in 2011 (Aspers and Beckert), is not reducible to market prices. A variety of factors, from taste to reputation, and from surprise to dissonance, play a decisive role. The very process of valuation is taken seriously as a specific kind of action (Stark 2009, Lamont 2012).

It is also one of the findings from our own research here at WZB that valuation encompasses much more than a simple correlation between real phenomena and their constructed indicators. Particularly in that sector of the economy where experiences are consumed, not tools applied, valuation communication turns into valorization communication: the product has to be charged with references known to the user, and to those with whom the user is engaged (Canzler, Galich et al. 2013). With the help of such valorized goods, users can experience feelings of status, of suspense or of desire. Here, we have come to the kind of material that is of interest in my own empirical studies (Hutter 2013). I therefore present to you a tiny sliver of an example of what I mean by production according to the Creativity dispositif.

In Figure 3.1, you see a photograph of two handbags from a Louis Vuitton edition in 2004, with a surface called Eye Love Monogram, designed by Takashi Murakami. Murakami introduces his own color scheme, and he inserts a type of colored contiguous circles, called

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„jellyfish eyes,“ that are a signature of his style. Thus, he uses the value attribution to his trademark symbols to valorize the appearance of the products of a manufacturer with a somewhat dusty reputation. The photo was taken at the *Museum für moderne Kunst* in Frankfurt, where these bags were part of a Murakami exhibition—re-entering, as it were, the museum space to gain even more value. That's what I mean by production according to the Creativity dispositif: a highly visible artist-creator is involved, and an audience that uses the product in its visual status games. The scope of artistic objects is expanded to handbags, and the media of fashion combines with the media of visual art to steer public attention.

Figure 3.1: Vuitton handbags, Murakami's Eye Love Monogram Edition, 2008. Photo: M. Hutter

I have come to the end of my tour. Reckwitz' claim of a shift from the Rationality dispositif toward the Creativity dispositif was supported by evidence in each of the communication plays with their different value codes. In each play, the shift from effectiveness to affectiveness assumes different forms. The sociological investigation of these communicative practices will help to understand and explain the cultural conditions of creation.

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Creative Labor and the Production of Culture: Toward a Sociology of Commonality

RUDI LAERMANS

Situating Creative Work

As many of us know from direct experience, the world of work has undergone a quite profound change in the Western world. Starting in the 1980s, the de-localization of industrial labor to low-wage countries went hand in hand with a growing flexibilization of the work force (Beck, 2000). This not only creates a growing "precariat' of temporarily employed, lacking job and income security (Standing, 2011). Within several sectors, particularly those related to the creative economy and the culture industries, the flexibilization trend also markedly transformed the nature of work itself. For researchers within and outside the university, software programmers, advertising professionals, or those employed within the spheres of furniture design or clothing fashion, the primary unit of work is as a rule today no longer a well-defined specialized task but the temporary project. Whereas the first was repeated over time in organizationally stabilized conditions typified by a high degree of labor differentiation, project work is mostly carried out within the context of shifting collaborative networks and mobilizes variable personal competences or individual qualities. French sociologists Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello (2005) therefore speak of the recent breakthrough of "the projective city"' as an autonomous regime of legitimation and justification. They link its institutionalization with "the new spirit of capitalism" that has succeeded the traditional industrial order and its stress on efficiency or, in Max Weber's famous characterization, the dominance of goal rationality. Overall, two dimensions stand out within the new labor dispositive, which are both again highly observable within the domain of creative work or immaterial labor (on the latter notion, see Dowling, Nunes and Trott, 2007; Gil, 2008).

First, the majority of flexible project workers turn out to be highly skilled, work devoted professionals who are often self-employed and do not lament over their self-exploitation (see, e.g., the case study of Reidl, Schiffbänker and Eichmann, 2007). In their experience, both the long working hours at a relatively meager fee and the lack of job security are sufficiently balanced by the pleasure of doing personally gratifying work in a relatively autonomous way. As is also pointed out by Boltanski and Chiapello (2005), "the projective city" is actually based on the social generalization of the ethos of self-development that was traditionally associated with artistic work. When Daniel Bell took around the mid-1970s the temperature of American society in his sociological classic *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, it seemed still plausible to speak of a "disjunctions of realms" and "the double bind of modernity" (Bell, 1976, p. 3-174). More particularly, Bell contrasted the longing for self-fulfillment inherited from the artistic avant-garde with capitalism's need of self-disciplined workers. The counterculture of the 1960s helped to democratize the ethos of self-expression, thus only intensifying in Bell's view the cultural contradiction characterizing contemporary (American) capitalism. However, the new post-Fordist regime of accumulation that came into being during the 1970s has meanwhile incorporated the once subversive demand for authentic self-realization that vastly motivated the socio-cultural upheaval between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s. Whereas Fordism rested on a strongly disciplinary mode of governing labor, post-Fordism combines various forms of "soft control" with worker's self-management and the invitation to actualize one's individual capacities within the context of paid activities (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 219-304; Heelas, 2002). Many well-trained people, especially those in their twenties and thirties, are therefore willing to undergo—to paraphrase Zygmunt Bauman (2000)—the specific form of "liquid modernity" that post-Fordist capitalism has installed within the sphere of work. Notwithstanding the stress it may bring along, they accept the steady erosion of the boundary between work and non-work and do not massively contest the blurring of the distinction, especially when a project deadline or an important milestone is near, between wage-earning and unpaid voluntary work.

Second, the average immaterial laborer also subscribes to a new kind of social morality that in essence equals the maxim "the more

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professional contacts you have, the better you are.” The ideal-typical project worker is indeed a social networker who maintains a broad portfolio of the most diverse and remote kinds of connection with an eye to possible projects. The network functions as a potential of virtual resources that can be selectively made active when a project starts to take shape on the one hand, and on the other, appears as an often complex and sometimes fleeting configuration in which one may be momentarily mobilized by others’ activities. Repeated collaborations recurrently result in stabilized nodes or—according to Mark Granovetter’s well-known distinction—strong ties within networks that likewise comprise many weak ties (Granovetter, 1973). “Projects apparently operate in a milieu of recurrent collaboration that, after several project cycles, fills a pool of resources and ‘gels’ into latent networks,” Gernot Grabher (2002, p. 208) observes. In view of actual or future projects, or more generally one’s overall professional reputation, “know who” matters often as much as “know how’. Both forms of knowing are often so interwoven that they are difficult to disentangle within the social networks sustaining project work. According to Boltanski and Chiapello (2005, p. 110), networking as such is even the principal practice structuring “the projective city”: “[The] project does not exist outside of the encounter (…). Hence the activity par excellence is integrating oneself into networks and exploring them, so as to put an end to isolation, and have opportunities for meeting people or associating with them.”

Although the inspiring observations of Boltanski and Chiapello on “the projective city” have undoubtedly furthered our theoretical understanding of “the new brave world of work” (Beck, 2000), they conspicuously under-conceptualize the collaborative nature of most instances of immaterial labor. Flexible project work within the creative economy indeed not only involves the reproduction and possible extension on a daily basis of both strong and weak professional ties. Within the context of a singular project, it first and foremost involves an always particular social cooperation marked by varying degrees of mutual specialization and diverse modes of coordination or supervision. In short, innovation-driven capitalism of the post-Fordist kind is based on the combination of project-, net- and teamwork. The collaborative nature of most research and design activities or the conception of new buildings and original digital products thus thoroughly social-

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izes—in all possible meanings of the verb "to socialize"—the action of being creative. It is therefore questionable whether sociology still needs to debunk à la Pierre Bourdieu (1993, p. 29-144) the romantic cliché of the lonely genius who creates in sheer isolation. In his sociology of cultural production Bourdieu indeed still presupposes a widely shared belief in this stereotype, which allows him to present his view as a critical uncovering of the real social nature of creative work. However, the situation already known from intrinsically collaborative practices such as film or theatre making has nowadays rather become the norm in various domains. We can today observe in many sectors that creativity not only depends on personal talents but chiefly flourishes—as is also underlined by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1996)—within appropriate social contexts. It is precisely this productive nexus between the individual and social level that is reflexively taken into account by the prototypical project worker who weighs the pros and cons of a possible future cooperation. Economic or material pressures notwithstanding, she or he acts at least partially in a sociologically enlightened way because one knows that the actual chances for self-realization or being creative vastly depend on stimulating social contexts. Yet what does this mundane observation actually imply for the sociology of creative labor?

The Uncertainties of Creative Work

Although the fusion of culture and commerce or creativity and capitalism is everything but new, its recent generalization within the innovation-driven post-Fordist economy obliges sociologists to think out of the boxes defined by the existing sub-disciplines. Beyond the sometimes solid divisions between for instance the sociology of the arts and STS (Science and Technology Studies) or between the sociology of labor and cultural sociology, "the new spirit of capitalism" asks for a more general approach of the diverse forms of immaterial labor that are symbol- and communication-oriented. Such an encompassing sociology of cultural work must commit itself to a broad definition of creativity and not stick to the restricted and highly charged, at once person-centered and quasi-theological notion of bringing something into being out of

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nothing that is suggested by the Romantic tradition. Thus the strategic invention of new financial products and the collective writing of software are genuine creative acts in their own right. Both activities involve individual ingenuity as well as intensive forms of cooperation within networks. We have today already at our disposal a vast array of research data that document for diverse fields the interdependencies between the individual and the social level within creative practices, in the broad sense (see, e.g., Becker, 1982 on art worlds; McRobbie, 1998 on the British fashion industry; Banks, 2007 and Huws, 2007 on the cultural industries). They allow us to delineate the principal sociological stakes of creative work or immaterial labor. Without making any claim to being exhaustive, I will briefly discuss some of these main issues hereafter. My tentative considerations are partially inspired by personal ethnographic research within the field of contemporary dance (Laermans, 2012b and 2013). However, for the sake of argument I will develop a more abstract line of reasoning, thus deliberately running the risk of ending up in that grey zone where the difference between informed hypothesis and pure speculation may become relatively blurred.

A first feature of immaterial labor—and probably even its hallmark—has everything to do with the fact that creative work, whatever its particular nature, unavoidably brings with it several uncertainties. Beyond the eventual economic risks one takes when embarking on a new project, being creative is inherently a risky business from a personal point of view. Thus every participant in a project trusts her or his individual capacities but is never perfectly sure that she or he is really able to accomplish all future tasks or demands. The latter are simply unknown in the present and can therefore just not be anticipated. Yet a more profound risk is at stake here. As Pierre-Michel Menger (1999) has rightly pointed out, every form of creativity per definition rests on the mobilization of a singular potential or—in the language of management—an individual human capital that is never fully transparent for the person in question. The creative worker neither knows the exact limits of his or her inventive capacities nor can she or he predict the productive gains they may actually offer when confronted with specific tasks. Every new project is therefore a risky self-investment, a personal bet on one's personal potentiality. Or as the subtitle of *Le travail créateur*, the summa of Menger's many-sided

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investigations into artistic practices, has it: being creative equals "to realize oneself in the uncertain" (Menger, 2009). This gives creative work its challenging character and explains why it is often experienced as self-developing. Nevertheless, the possibility of failing or not-being able to live up the expectation of creativity is always lurking and directly increases with the chances to challenge oneself in a genuine way.

The creative worker who is successful according to her or his own standards has to face a second uncertainty (Menger, 1999 and 2009). Indeed one never knows in advance if one's personal contributions to a project will be socially validated as truly innovative or really original by the other participants, the customer or other direct stakeholders. To a great extent, the creative qualities of a product or service are in the eye of the beholder(s), which may result in diverging valuations and difficult to settle differences in esteem (Stark, 2009). Bourdieu (1993 and 1996) therefore links creative work to the struggle for recognition or symbolic capital within the various fields of cultural production. However, this power-centered approach tends to overstep the simple but far-reaching point that the others' judgments and the resulting social confirmation or rejection of individual work as genuinely creative is usually situated in the future and therefore highly uncertain. Creative workers thus regularly risk spending personal time and energy on activities or artifacts that are only afterwards criticized or repudiated. This is particularly the case when a minimum consensus on technical procedures, quality standards or valid accounts is lacking. The more open the nature of the activity or artifact, the greater the possibility to be creative—but the higher also the chances of heterogeneous value judgments and, consequently, of work not (immediately) recognized as innovative or original.

Although it is perhaps the sociologically most pertinent one, the third and last major uncertainty informing creative work is the least researched one. As said, most instances of immaterial labor are nowadays practiced within the context of small or large scale collaborations, which entails a rather distinctive kind of social risk. When a creative worker initiates or renews relations with particular others in view of the realization of a project, she or he bets on an expected common productivity yet to realize. The same of course goes for the mobilized temporary co-workers: they also invest in an unpredictable

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social future. The participants pool personal competences and "join forces" but they can neither foretell the precise outcomes nor anticipate the productivity of their mutual working relationships. Their engagement actually bets on the potentiality of cooperation itself or—in the terminology advanced by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2009)—on a hoped for "common wealth," a common surplus that may be generated in and through their future interactions. "Our collaboration will be fruitful, stimulating and rewarding," thus the participants presume, yet they are highly uncertain about their joint action's future course. Particularly when a cooperation involves several new members with whom one has not previously worked together, the activity of co-creation not only implies a risky self-investment but in addition equals a perilous social investment.

From Trust to Commonality

In order to balance the aforementioned risks, creative workers have to trust both themselves and the others they are cooperating with. They need self-confidence: their eventual conjunctural self-doubts must be outweighed by their faith in the possibility to activate and steer their personal capacities in an appropriate way. And they simultaneously have to put a minimum of trust in the others who take part in and are co-responsible for a project's collaborative realization. The given trust is many-sided and usually comes down to an always contextually specific combination of professional and personal confidence. Swift trust is possible on the basis of professional expertise that is validated by educational credentials and, more importantly, by previous collaborations or an individual's general reputation within a network (Meyerson, Weick and Kramer, 1996). Social reputations may also back the more personal trust without which cooperative relations rapidly go astray. A creative worker thus has to take at face value the demonstrated sincerity of those with whom she or he collaborates when they judge one's work. Moreover, they also have to be personally trusted in a more general sense since otherwise a collaborative endeavor does not make much sense. The sociology of immaterial labor is therefore to a rather great extent a sociology of trust relationships. Successful

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creative social collaborations indeed rely on a "trust capital"—or as Robert Putnam (2000) suggests: a social capital—that is at once premised and reproduced. In line with Niklas Luhmann's path breaking work on the subject, Piotr Sztompka (1999, p. 25) rightly argues that social trust is in essence "a bet about the future contingent actions of others." To put confidence in others is thus a particular way to deal with their freedom as autonomous subjects (Luhmann, 1979). A creative worker does not know how the other project members will proceed in the near future, yet he trusts that they will behave responsibly and respect agreed deadlines or shall act as gently and creatively as they did in previous situations. Nevertheless, even a fairly reliable knowledge of the personal and professional qualities of one's fellow-workers never offers complete certainty about their future engagements or lines of action within the context of a particular project. As Georg Simmel (1950, p. 179) already noticed, trust starts from a "weak form of inductive knowledge" and therefore always requires a leap of faith. Given the manifold uncertainties it intrinsically implies, collaborative project work of the creative kind cannot do without this faith in others. The risk that a project may collapse due to a lacking cooperativity or a restrained social productivity is thus exchanged for the risk of trust. After all, the given confidence may be betrayed, with more or less drastic consequences.

Trust relations form the proverbial beating heart of the project-driven, often temporal and thus everything but substantial commonality generated within "the projective city," which Boltanski and Chiapello (2005, p. 107-128) relate to value principles such as active engagement, adaptability and the sharing of information or competences. The commonality informing immaterial labor is framed by a common cause—read: the project—and indirectly relies on a common culture of symbols and conventions that is partly made up of profession-specific codes. The three main elements that according to Etienne Wenger (1998) underlie so-called communities of practice can thus also be found, albeit in varying degrees, in creative collaborative practices. They testify of a mutual engagement, solidified by professional and personal trust; they are defined and experienced as a joint enterprise as outlined by the initial terms and general aims of the project, which often combines vague questions with more precisely formulated

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problems; and they selectively mobilize a shared repertoire of both tacit and explicit forms of knowledge, in the broad sense. Probably the most pertinent sociological trait of the thus produced commonality are the immanent links or feedback-loops between its constituent dimensions: a product or service is developed in common through a common activity that is founded on the common productivity resulting from the networking of various capacities (Laermans, 2012b). A successful creative collaboration indeed not just couples individual talents or competences but elicits a stimulating and self-referentially sustained interaction. At least two strongly interwoven characteristics stand out (Laermans, 2013). On the one hand, the participants continually learn from each other through their continual exchange of information, which alternates moments of explicit discussion with more implicit learning processes. On the other hand, the mutual feedback or trading of viewpoints is individually experienced as regularly opening new doors. One may for instance suddenly have a seemingly splendid idea because a co-worker is defending a rather poor insight. The new idea is voiced, receives both appreciative and critical comments, and becomes thus more refined. Such a sequence, which is not uncommon within the context of creative collaborations, clearly indicates that both individual creativity and the final outcome of its socialization are to a great extent derivative of the joint action that unfolds among those participating in project work.

The commonality characterizing creative cooperation actually induces a collective creativity that cannot be attributed to individuals as such, that has a strikingly improvisational nature, and contingently emerges during interactions in an event-like way (Laermans, 2013). "The projective city" thus extends a quite specific invitation to sociology. The discipline is still marked by the vast rift that divides Durkheim- from Weber-inspired modes of practicing sociology, the social fact- from the social definition-paradigm. In short, sociology—and the same goes for the other social sciences—vastly remains in the grip of the modern, meanwhile worn-out semantic that opposes the individual to the social (Nassehi, 2006; Laermans, 2012a). On the contrary, collaborative creative practices direct attention to a non-substantial form of commonality whose productive and creative features point to social processes that are neither structurally patterned or determined nor fit

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simple models of inter-subjectivity and individual agency. Collective creativity literally happens in-between individuals and simultaneously transforms or singularizes them in often unpredictable, surprising ways. It thus greatly deconstructs the established notion of authorship that underlies the prevailing idea of artistry or creativity and implicitly informs the reigning sociological conceptualizations of subjective agency. Moreover, as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2009) rightly emphasize, productive interactions within the sphere of immaterial labor produce a "common wealth" whose positive nature and sometimes excessive richnesses sharply contrast with the dominant tendency within sociology to regard the social primarily as a generator of all sorts of individual blockages and collective problems.

We should, however, be wary of the idealized picture of post-Fordist forms of creative collaboration that emerges from the writings of Hardt and Negri (2000 and 2009) or Paolo Virno (2004) (compare Laermans, 2011). Creating together time and again engenders relationships marked by rivalry, not to mention the sometimes destructive effects of individual narcissism. In addition, to a greater or lesser extent each immaterial laborer behaves as an individual entrepreneur who calculates both symbolic and material returns when investing in a specific project or working on a particular task. Project goals or a collaboration's social demands do not always go together that smoothly with personal interests, which may cause frictions within the corresponding mode of cooperation. Collaboration's actual commonality is therefore often double-sided, even an oxymoron: it hovers between instances of harmonious cooperation and moments of a sometimes fierce inter-individual competition. "Co-opetition," a notion that Boltanski and Chiappello (2005, p. 132) only use in passing, is therefore the concept that probably best fits the ambiguous nature of social life within "the projective city." We must, moreover, take into consideration the existence of outspoken differences between the various sectors of the creative economy or the culture industry with regard to the overriding forms of personal motivation and, partly connected to this, the prevailing kind of relationships in field-specific professional networks. Thus Gernot Grabher and Oliver Ibert (2006) observed a striking contrast between the social ecologies of software developers and advertising people. Whereas the first maintain often strong ties with co-profes-

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sionals based on much mutual trust and a common history, those working within advertising act less communally and more entrepreneurially, which results in fleeting strategic friendships that are both intense and ephemeral. However, the software developers also engage via online platforms in weak, task-oriented ties with strangers out of a shared interest in technical problems. Grabher and Ibert therefore differentiate between communality, sociality and connectivity networks. Their research results illustrate the existence of distinctive cultures of collaboration, which is a rather under-researched topic within the sociology of creative work that deserves more scholarly attention.

Interpreting Creativity Collectively

The social common brought forth in collaborative practices acts as a matrix for a genuine social reflexivity consisting of group discussions and collective critique, discursive negotiations and explicit argumentation. The main issue this reflexivity addresses pertains to the actual value or possible worth of both the creative cooperation and its temporal outcomes. "Is it valuable?": with many variations and distinct framings according to heterogeneous vocabularies, this simple question continually surfaces during creative collaborations. For two main reasons, the articulated answers will usually diverge and elicit a difficult to settle debate. First, the participants often invoke different value registers, contrasting orders of worth or—in the terminology advocated by Boltanski and Thevenot (2006)—diverse regimes of justification. The very nature of creative work indeed often implies competing principles and criteria of performance quality. The deployed standards for the determination of both the value added and the ultimate worth of the goods or services created are often difficult to commensurate; witness for instance the vast difference between common criteria such as originality, efficiency and technical feasibility. Collective processes of assessing innovative work thus often engender value ambiguity and dissonance. They routinely exemplify a situation of so-called plurarchy or heterarchy in which various value hierarchies lead to distinctive, even opposite judgments (Stark, 2009). An additional uncertainty is thus created within creative practices. Not only is the project mem-

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ber unable to know in advance how her or his contributions will be appreciated or validated, but she or he cannot even anticipate which value grammar(s) will apply.

Second, the value-loaded notions that are commonly invoked in the regular assessments accompanying creative work have anything but stable meanings. As I already pointed out in passing, creativity is not an ontological fact but in the eye of the beholder. With the noteworthy exception of purely technical performance standards (e.g., a new device either functions or malfunctions), the same goes for nearly all the other qualifying notions that are mobilized when the temporary or final results of creative work are addressed. Thus originality, user-friendliness or even profitability are ambiguous categories that generate flexible and intrinsically contestable interpretations when a specific artifact or service is collectively appreciated. “This lack of fixed values at the outset stresses the practical activities of actors, their interpretations, and their construction of meaning. Values and preferences can only be understood in relation to the very social processes in which they are already applied,” as Patrick Aspers and Jens Beckert (2011, p. 26) rightly underscore in their joint introduction to the recently published collection *The Worth of Goods*. Evaluative processes that rely on seemingly consensual standards may therefore nevertheless produce situations of “disagreement in agreement” or of “dissensus in consensus’. Sensemaking in both the dissonant and the consonant mode thus again and again pushes the commonality characterizing immaterial labor in the direction of a reflexively valuating interpretive community (for the latter notion, see Fish, 1990).

Overall, the value of creative work must be relationally established through processes of collective reflexivity and dispute that are part and parcel of that very same creative work. Precise standards or norms are often lacking, which obliges a continuous exchange of value-loaded views and opinions. The risks are manifold: one or more participants may mix all too overtly appreciation and moralization, discussions can turn into fierce and inconclusive debates, or an exchange can on the contrary be too rapidly closed off because of the fear of an emerging difference in opinion or definition, resulting in a communicative non-said that may undermine rather implicitly the working relationship. The interpretative and situation-bounded trade-off between

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divergent justification logics and heterogeneous readings of shared principles may produce a working consensus, in the sense Erving Goffman (1990) gives to this notion, that acts as a discursive mediator for individual viewpoints. Evidently, the social construction of a collectively negotiated value judgment or more encompassing vocabulary is anything but a neutral affair. Power differentials are at play: some opinions matter more than others. Thus the judgments of senior researchers, principal customers or those with an already established professional reputation usually outweigh the judgments of other valuators. Nevertheless, within the context of creative labor socially reflexive processes of valuation are first and foremost quasi-political games with uncertain situational outcomes that do not necessarily reproduce or solidify—as for instance the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1993 and 1996) suggests—existing social or cultural hierarchies.

Within private and public organizations, the ongoing evaluation of both the results of immaterial labor and the activities of creative workers or project teams has meanwhile elicited a plethora of assessment schemes that try to standardize individual and collective creativity. Overall, the so-called neoliberal mode of governmentality analyzed by a.o. Nikolas Rose (1999, p. 137-166) and Mitchell Dean (2010, p. 175-204) sets contestable and multi-interpretable criteria of innovation, originality or—more generally—productivity that actually confirm the open nature of innovative work and project collaborations. The latter indeed testify to a potential individual and collective creativity that is difficult to manage or regulate. Nevertheless, customers or employers like to set milestones, implement standardized protocols, or specify quality norms and performance indicators. We thus come across perhaps the most crucial tension informing today's creative labor, particularly when it is embedded in relatively strongly organized work contexts. Innovative practices are synonymous with "thinking and acting outside the box" that thrives on a self-organizing togetherness, yet this kind of commonality contradicts in more than one respect the logic of supervision and command (Hardt and Negri, 2009). With different accents and always situationally produced outcomes, the post-Fordist creative economy indeed revives the well-known dialectic between collective autonomy and social heteronomy, potenza (potentiality) and potestas (power). Only the future may re-

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veal if the many forms of today's creative work will also give raise to new modes of creative management within an economy that observes itself as creative...

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The Networked Amateur: Performing Arts and Participatory Culture in the Continuum Professionals–Amateurs[1]

GIOVANNI BOCCIA ARTIERI AND LAURA GEMINI

Introduction

The main goal of this contribution is to observe the relationship between culture, communication and creativity as a complex phenomenon that requires us to follow the forms of co-evolution between a specific system of society—the art system—and the forms of communication.

From the point of view of social system theory, and in particular that of Niklas Luhmann (2000), the art system is the place in which creativity is institutionalized and produces cultural forms such as communicable movements and artistic currents. Moreover the art system operates thanks to its specific institutions—art galleries, museums, magazines, theatres, etc.—that is, through those social contexts that produce and circulate artistic communication.

Nevertheless and inside the general theory of functional social differentiation it's important to consider the relationship between the art system and its environment and the mutual irritability[2] among the different functional systems of the society. The main systemic relationship to observe, and the one that concerns us here, is between art and media. From its beginnings art has interacted with technology and has undertaken a continuous exchange with the media which has as-

1 The text is the result of joint work of both the authors. In particular, the introduction and the conclusion was written by both; Laura Gemini was responsible for the drafting of parr.2., 3., 4.1. Giovanni Boccia Artieri drew up the par. 1., 4.

2 "Functional systems are incapable of directly influencing one another. At the same time, their coexistence increases their mutual irritability" (Luhmann 2000, p. 3). In fact the autopoietic system does not receive any inputs from the environment but only irritations, that is perturbations. In other words, external events may trigger internal processes but they cannot determine those processes.

similated languages, aesthetics and logics. On this basis, the reflection on creativity and culture must take account of changes in communication. More precisely, we face a change of scenario and read it in a systemic and mediological key. From the systemic perspective we must observe the change of scenario from the point of view of social complexity; from the mediologic perspective, we must highlight the complexity of communication. In other words, the social complexity—which in our terms is the complexity of communication—is closely linked to the evolution of the media. That's why the world-society (Luhmann 1997), which is the society formed by all possible communications, emerges in a relation of homology with the context of global communication of the world-media (Boccia Artieri 2004). In this sense, the media should be considered as contexts of individual and collective experience and not "simple" tools for the transmission of information.

This character of the media concerns the communication of the whole society and the way in which individuals participate in the communication and it is highlighted by the art system and the creative processes in the broadest sense. In fact, we will try to see how creativity is a process that has spread culturally in relation to the evolution of the media and even more evidently with the digital culture. There are many contexts of the society in which it is possible to observe this trend. As mentioned above, however, art and creativity are the privileged places to observe this process and its steps. In the first section we will show how the evolution of the relationship between media—in its digital perspective—and society has changed individuals' perception of their positioning in communication, even at the collective level as audience, public, consumers and citizens. This process created a suitable context for the emergence of a figure we call networked amateurs. This figure becomes central to the analysis of the system of art and creativity. The art system, as explained in the second section, evolved under the influence of the artistic avant-garde who conceived public participation as the goal of art. This principle is now being encouraged by the language of the digital offering a spreadability of the artistic gesture in connection with the spread of the reality of the networked amateurs. A series of examples of projects and artistic works—both in visual art and in the field of theatre performance—in the third section show how the engagement of the spectator has be-

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come a central element in the creative process. But this type of creative process remains internal to the art system, showing the self-reference and closing operation of the system. At the same time the artistic gesture, such as aesthetic widespread gesture, finds a way to express itself and be seen in the digital environment, in particular, as we explain in the fourth section, in the social network sites—especially those based on images, such as Instagram—and online worlds—such as Second Life.

Towards the Networked Amateur

In order to describe the world-society and its correspondence to the world-media, we must recognize that nowadays we are witnessing a mutation. This is linked to the introduction of new possibilities for communication and "mass personal" connection (blogs, social networks sites, etc.) through the Net and mass self communication (Castells 2009). It is both a qualitative and a quantitative change. Individuals feel they are not only the object (as audience, users, voters, etc.) of a conversation anymore, but that they can be the subject of it.

A few things change: the audience perception of its positioning in communication—the perception we have as individuals of our communicative role in society and the ways they listen, watch and/or elaborate what is happening. What we thought as private is no longer considered private and can therefore become a subject for public communication.

The entire experience of communication changes thanks to the awareness that individuals have of themselves as potential subjects of a conversation, rather than only as the objects of it.

The way one thinks of being in continuous connection with others, even in a scalable way, also changes because of the new possibilities that individuals have to communicate with a wide and connected audience: this is the crucial shift from the idea of publics as audiences to that of networked publics. The term "networked publics" refers to a diverse interrelation and co-evolution of cultural practices, social relations and the development of media technologies in the direction of a digital connection (Ito 2008).

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We are facing an accumulation of occasions in which individuals "play" with self-representation and performative and creative forms, thanks to

a) the diffusion of reproduction and production technologies in daily life, from digital photo cameras to editing software, which allow people to give life to media forms similar to the ones we find in mainstream media;
b) the growth of systems of disintermediation and content-sharing, from web platforms to social networking systems;
c) the diffused awareness of a logic of the construction of contents and languages which are very similar to those of the mass media, used however, in an environment in which individuals are connected to each other

People are more or less aware about exposing their individuality—for example by generating creative contents—to the general audience and turning their living experience into a chance to communicate with other people through their contents. Networked publics produce, put in circulation and consume symbolic forms, culturally recognizing themselves inside these processes. Networked publics are not simply a form of a participatory community, but rather participatory cultures that generate symbolic forms in which the participation is structured around the logic of sharing, free, open, non-utilitarian contents, and so forth.

However, nowadays participation seems to characterize a logic including a semantic continuum between commitment and amateurish contents. This logic also considers different levels of participation and different meanings to this sense of participation. Different technological platforms feature different "interaction" methods—people can just read, or also be more active, expressing a "like" for what they have just read. They can also share contents, comment and answer posts by other users or coordinate offline actions.

What has really changed today is the media environment: this highly networked place exposes people's creativity and makes each different form of creative participation and production clearer and more visible. This context is the ideal environment for what we call "networked amateur." Here we have different forms of cultural and creative participation expressed by the networked amateur as: new forms of collaborative mediation between professionals and amateurs that

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create a ProAm reality (Flichy 2010): a close relationship between the market and the passionate amateur that generates a mixture of cooperation, conflict and co-dependency; the growth of "produsage" activities (Bruns 2008), which are co-operative, non-proprietary and user-led, and involve and are promoted by productive publics, creating specific symbolic forms and free open source around the design and production of digital content, as well as, new forms of manufacturing, information and entertainment (such as Linux, Wikipedia, Open Manufacturing, Open Biotech); the larger reality of the so called prosumers, "those who are simultaneously involved in both production and consumption" (Ritzer, 2009), which can be defined through the practices of production of contents inspired by existing products and formats.

States of Widespread Creativity. From the Spirit of the Avant-Garde to the Digital Artistic Culture: Some Steps

The context of widespread creativity can be considered one of the most interesting (and controversial) results of the evolution of the social system of art in relation to the evolution of communication (Gemini 2003). A contest prefigured by the Avant-Garde and, in particular, the one developed during the experimentations around such concepts and practices based, for example, on: the passage from the object to the process; collective authorship; the spectator as co-creator (or the audience as performer as well…). As we know the movements of the historical avant-garde have played an important role in this direction. They overthrew the artistic canons, and introduced the ideas that characterize today's system of art and its social function. With a motto such as "kill the moonlight" the Italian Futurists, for example, have expressed the desire to leave the domain of romanticism and artistic communication based on the idea of beauty.

The ideas and practices of the exponents of Surrealism and Dada, with Marcel Duchamp in first place, led the operations of the art system to areas which were previously unthinkable. The ready-made can be considered a revolution based on the value of the artistic gesture, the idea and the symbolic value of the artistic work. The symbolic transformation of everyday objects into works of art has removed the

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relationship between beauty and ugliness, resulting in a change in the code of the system of art: from beautiful/ugly to fit or lack of fit (Luhmann 2000).

Moreover if we think about John Cage's ideas both in music and in the performance (happening) and those of the artists of the Black Montain Collage—Allan Kaprow, Merce Cunningham, Robert Rauschenberg and Fluxus, to name but a few—we also have the tools to understand the extent of the cultural (and political) changes of those years and the advent of what would become the multimedia and transmedia art: a form of art which is conscious of its technological and experimental characteristic.

Of course today all these processes must be analyzed in a different way because they are enhanced by the Internet and digital culture. A context in which the phenomenon of convergence culture (Jenkins 2006b) and participatory languages (Jenkins 2006b) allow us to observe different kinds of networked performance: among the artists, between artists and audiences, and among the networked publics. In this context the transformation of the creative and artistic experience can be seen as an example of the changing paradigm of communication in regard to the relationship between cultural production and consumption. More precisely inside the artistic context this shift can be seen in the relationship between acting and experiencing. According to the scheme theorized by Georg Simmel (1913) and, later, by Niklas Luhmann (1995) art connects the action of alter with the experience of ego: thus, the artist acts, and the spectator experiences the art piece. Nevertheless, digital culture and the performing paradigm show how experiencing is also actually (a form of) acting.

So, this transformation reshapes the boundaries between the professional and the amateur nature of art, in a direction in which the "artistic gesture" becomes clearly widespread. Digital culture, supported by the diffusion of practices of the networked amateur developed by blogs, social network sites and online worlds, makes this process clearer, and allows us to talk about widespread creativity (Gemini 2009).

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Blurred Boundaries for a Closed System. Art and its Public seen by the Artists

As stated previously, boundaries between professional artists and amateurs blur in two main directions. The first one concerns the way in which the professional artists use the creative contribution of the users in their own work while the second refers to the architecture of the web and the logic of social network sites's contribution to the diffusion of amateur culture. On the first point we can name a number of examples of artistic projects focusing on the engagement of the audience and crowdsourcing. These works allow the creation of a new kind of relationship with the spectator. He is more and more engaged in the artistic project according to an interactive idea of communication rather than a classical idea of communication transmission.

A very interesting project is *P2P Art—The aesthetics of ephemerality* by the Swedish artist and film maker Anders Weberg.[3] Since 2006 he has been making films for distribution solely through peer to peer file sharing networks. The original artwork is first shared by the artist until one other user has downloaded it. After that, the artwork is available for as long as other users share it. The original files and all the material used to create the artwork are, then, deleted by the artist in the name of the idea that "There's no original." Moreover the continued existence of the artworks, their exhibition, distribution and archiving depend completely on the support of fans and users. As we can easily understand, the question of the loss of aura identified by Walter Benjamin (1955) can be considered completely overcome. The same theoretical frame could be found in a project by the artistic duo 01.ORG called *Life Sharing*[4], a real time sharing system based on Linux. From January 2000, 01.ORG's main computer was turned into a transparent web server. Any user had free and unlimited access to all contents: reading texts, seeing images, downloading software, checking 01's private mail, getting lost in this huge data maze. According to the authors the concept and the value of this kind of experiment deals with the nature of the architecture of the net that can turns a website into personal media for

3 <http://www.p2p-art.com/>

4 <http://0100101110101101.org/home/lifesharing/index.html>

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complete digital transparency. So, at the end of 2003, *Life Sharing* was shut down, after offering more than 3 years of free and unlimited access.

A more complex and more widely performative nature project is *Learning to Love You More.*[5] It is both a web site and series of non-web presentations including works made by the public in response to assignments given by the artists Miranda July and Harrell Fletcher. Participants accept an assignment, complete it by following the simple but specific instructions they are given, send in the required report (photograph, text, video, etc.), and eventually their work is posted on-line. Like a recipe, meditation practice, or familiar song, the prescriptive nature of these assignments intends to guide people towards their own personal experience. Since *Learning To Love You More* has also been an ever-changing series of exhibitions, screenings and radio broadcasts presented all over the world, the documentation of participants could also be submitted to be included in one of these presentations. These presentations have taken place at many venues (that include for example The Whitney Museum in NYC). From 2002 to its closure in 2009, over 8000 people participated in the project. This example seems particularly illustrative of the dynamics that we are trying to observe. A project of such artistic crowdsourcing, and apparently liked by people, can be done both inside the web and through the structures that the art system provides. But in this case crowdsourcing is not concerned with finding money to fund a project since here it is the user's performance which is the currency of exchange. It may develop as a cross-media and transmedia work and prove to be suitable for contemporary aesthetics. However, this is a project designed by artists and based on the circulation of contents from the institutions of art even if they are largely grassroots contents.

Also in the theatrical scene we may find some very interesting works supported by the web as those made by companies such as the Berlin based Rimini Protocol, which sometimes works with nonprofessional actors and with the involvement of the spectators. In the performance *Call Cutta in a Box. An intercontinental phone play*[6], for example, celebrating the inherent performativity of everyday life, the

5 <http://www.learningtoloveyoumore.com/>
6 <http://www.rimini-protokoll.de/website/en/project_2766.html>

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"show" is co-performed over the phone by an audience of one and a Kolkata-based call center operator-performer.

In a similar way, the New York based company The Builders Association creates large-scale theatre projects exploring the interface between live performance and media. The idea is that a work like this can re-animate theatre for a contemporary audience, "using current tools to interpret old forms." Such productions combine historical and new texts with performance, sound, video and architectural sets, to create a world on stage which reflects contemporary culture. For example the *piéce Continuous City*[7], as we can read in the web presentation, "is a meditation on how contemporary experiences of location and dislocation stretch us to the maximum as our "networked selves" occupy multiple locations. From Shanghai to Los Angeles, Toronto to Mexico City, *Continuous City*, tells the story of a traveling father and his daughter at home tethered and transformed by speed, hypermodernity, and failing cell phones. The characters they interact with pursue their own transnational business, from an Internet mogul exploiting networking across the developing world to a nanny who blogs humorous stories about the people and places within her universe. The show also reaches directly into each city that the production visits, through a participatory website and on-site filming to create a global and local production."

Although these cases show an open concept of authorship and the change of the relationship between acting and experiencing, as has been said before, it is true that these examples even show the autonomy of the art system. As an operatively closed system, the art system observes—through the artist's eyes—the human environment formed by the individuals and brings it inside through its operations. More precisely, interactivity, crowdsourcing, engagement are processes based on the desire of the user to be involved and to be a co-creator of an artistic project, but this art project was designed by the artist who remains its main creator. As we can see below, the creative dimension really spreads where the boundaries of the art system blur towards an aesthetics experience, which starts from a "simple" user and is guaranteed by technological affordances.

7 <http://www.thebuildersassociation.org/prod_continuous.html>

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Spreadable Creativity on Social Network Sites and Online Worlds

A second way to observe how the boundaries between professional artists and amateurs blur concerns how the architecture of the web and the logic of social network sites contribute to the diffusion of amateur culture, whose artistic creativity spreads over the works of professional artists. Inside the operative closure of the social system of art, as complex as it has become, it's possible to observe how networked and productive publics create value through their acts of spreading content and commentary through social networks, but also how they generate the possibility of circulation of new aesthetic contents (Boccia Artieri 2012b). In these contexts it's possible to note how digital culture creates the new profile of what we defined the "networked amateur," who is an evolution of the traditional amateur. The networked amateur, unlike the traditional artistic amateur, has both the appropriate contents and the techno-cultural abilities within easy reach. The networked amateur is also a figure who works in an environment where artistic tension and playful attitude interweave.
A first example we can mention in this respect is Instagram. Instagram is a free photo sharing app for android and iOS devices that lets the users take or upload a photo, and then filters and shares it through a variety of social networking services, including Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and Instagram itself. Instagram is a social network site that connects with others sharing photos, comments and likes.

Some people seem to believe that the easy way with which amateur photographers can post their photos to the service, and the way they use its limited set of filters, will ruin the art of photography in the end. This isn't that surprising, indeed, since it's the same kind of criticism that was made about blogging, citizen journalism and Twitter, among other things—and in each case the critics could have been right sometimes, but on the whole they were mostly wrong.

In a recent debate about the Instagram phenomenon photographer Kate Bevan writes about how the use of a limited set of rather mundane filters degrades photography, while photography requires a specific level of artistic competence which results in the production of artistic quality. In this sense, applications such as Instagram and other

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photo editing software encourage people to choose and add pseudo-artistic effects without actually thinking about what they are doing, only to produce a mass effect of pseudo-creativity that empties the photographic production of meaning: “For me, the Instagram/Hipstamatic/Snapseed etc. filters are the antithesis of creativity. They make all pictures look the same. They require no thought or creative input: one click and you’re done.”[8]

And Rebecca Greenfield wrote on the Atlantic: “Some might call the process democratizing—everyone is a professional!—but really, it’s a big hoax. Everyone is just pressing buttons to add computer-generated veneers to our mostly mundane lives.”[9] From this point of view she emphasized that the Instagram filters are a simulation of instantaneous classical photographic effects that require both time and authorial expertise by professional photographers: the photos of our trips, food and the environment in which we live that we see on Instagram are only a trivialization obtained at low cost with a mass imitation of the act of photography.

This anti-amateur argument describes a situation in which the real photographer is opposed to the amateur photographer or, if we think of another area, in which the real journalist is opposed to citizen journalist. And, obviously, on Instagram we can find images which are both trivial from the point of view of content and aesthetics, in the same way we can find a description of what a user ate or his passion for Justin Bieber on Twitter: the social network sites are an extraordinary repository for LOLCats[10]! But the point is that the availability of technological tools lowers the barriers to participation and allows for artistic experimentation by amateurs—photographers or journalists—through a mechanism of creation that has changed in terms of production, circulation and consumption. We are witnessing an environment in which professionals and amateurs see their boundaries and barriers

8 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2012/jul/19/instagram-debasing-real-photography?cat=technology&type=article>

9 <http://www.theatlanticwire.com/technology/2012/07/rich-kids-instagram-epitomize-everything-wrong-instagram/54744/>

10 A LOLcat is an image combining a photograph of a cat with text intended to contribute humour.

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EBSCOhost

blurred, and create a cultural *milieu* pro-am based on a complex relationship between them: the Instagrammers interact with their feeds—uploading their own photos, and liking and commenting on others'—several times a day. Pro and Am are sometimes in the same timeline and in the same community of "igers," using the same #hashtag to circulate the pictures and make them accessible and be commented in the network. Amateurs also improve their abilities observing the others' photos and being in conversations with the pros. In this environment the photographic creation reflects the multi-level connection between the practice of different skills and different aesthetics.

Second Life experiences

Another, final example we would like to mention is the "strange case" of Second Life (SL). Despite its decreasing hype after the period between 2006 and 2009, this still active online world is an interesting context for artistic experimentation. Indeed, SL presented itself as the communicative context in which the elements that characterize the change of paradigm of communication converge and become evident. Being an avatar, resident in SL, involves a creative investment on the part of the user (the choice of the avatar's shape, the clothes and so on). For the testers and the more willing users the further level of creative expression is given by the building of objects, environments, clothes, by taking pictures or videos and so on. But in SL there are also those who translate their creative streak by creating artistic works—paintings, sculptures, installations—and performances without being professionals in real life. They are those who, starting from an amateur vocation, manage to use the medium for an artistic goal like the "real" professionals, even becoming SL celebrities.

Similarly, several professional real life artists are stimulated by the aesthetic and performing potentialities of the online world, where they have moved part of their research, by exploiting the formal and relational characteristics of this artificial environment.

There are many cases that could be mentioned. To name but a few: Moya Janus aka Patrick Moya, painter and performer in real life and in SL. Another one is the group 01.org that is Eva and Franco Mattes,

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the artist couple named above who became famous for the artistic testing of the net—as we saw talking about *Life Sharing*—and for re-enacting some of the most important performances of the 70s (by Gilbert & George, Vito Acconci, Marina Abramovich, Joseph Beyeus) in a kind of work that they call Synthetic Performance.

We must then consider, as we stated earlier, that the residents don't need to be professional artists in real life to be recognized as artists in SL or, more simply, to express themselves in an artistic way. The performance is the paradigm of the functioning of SL. Art in SL is an art of behaviour, made by the users for the users and for this reason it fulfills the forms of the emerging participatory culture best. So we report an example in order to observe how the art in SL is the expression of the collapsed communicative contexts which, at the same time, expand the practice of creativity in performing terms. In other words participation is the core business of an artistic work in SL and of a more and more performing imaginary. One example is the opening party-performance by Gazira Babeli held in March 2008 both in real life (at Fabio Paris Art Gallery in Brescia, Italy) and in the Locusolus Island in SL. It was therefore a mixed reality event. Gazira Babeli is a "mythical" and "famous" figure in SL. He/She is a well known artist in SL and less known in real life. People don't know his/her true identity; they are not sure about his/her gender even if people try to know something more about him or her. Here the participation was considered as the main and declared element of the party. For this reason the information about the event was largely spread in the net. In other words, the event had to be easily available. In this case the active participation of the avatars in the "bright ideas" of Gazira guaranteed the success of the event. Inside SL the room that reproduced the real gallery with the exhibited pictures by Gazira was filled with sound, music, images and strange objects. Furthermore: the avatars could float in the environment and became like busts on stone bases and therefore elements of the exhibition for the time of the opening-performance, for the hic et nunc, but also art works and not only in a metaphorical meaning. The active participation of the avatars was a guarantee of the success of the performance, for the success of Gazira as an artist. So first of all the spectators were the performers, aware of the two-sided role that they could and had to play. The spectators continued to play

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their simultaneous roles as performers even after the SL event, through their blog posts and retrospective entries on social network sites.

In this case we can observe all the state of spread creativity that characterizes a certain direction of contemporary art. This kind of art is supported by the grammar of communication and by the grassroot logics of the digital. This allows us to change the question "Who thinks that the SL audience is a B-Side audience?"—used as a claim for Gazira's opening—into a new question: who still thinks that the audience is a B-side of communication"?

Conclusions

In this paper we tried to describe the evolution of the art system through the figure of networked amateur. This figure represents a key element in continuity with the spirit of the artistic avant-garde and their idea of participation, which is enhanced today (Gemini 2009).

Our theoretical background has put together the theory of social systems, in particular the work by Niklas Luhmann, with the mediological theories that analyzing the evolution of communication in relation to its technologies with the centrality particularly assumed by the SNS.

As we know Luhmann observed and described the system of art as a communication field (2000) focused on the relationship among artists, connoisseurs and the public, and focused on traditional institutions such as galleries, museums, magazines. Nowadays, however, we must be aware of a more complex artistic and creative scenario, which is homologous to other areas of society, characterized by the convergent and participatory culture created by the web 2.0 (Jenkins 2006b; Boccia Artieri 2012b).

Technologies and digital environments should be considered as enabling tools. They enable people to produce and distribute creative content, making the difference between professional artist and amateur artist increasingly blurred. From the point of view of the production, we tried to show how in the continuum professional-amateur the coupling between art and media concerns with the operational closure of the art system on several levels.

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According to Luhmann, therefore, the starting point of our reflection is the autonomy and self-reference of the art system. To Luhmann—and the art scene he managed to observe—the artwork has to do with the dimension of utterance of a communication as a self-referential character, that is, with the aesthetic forms and not with the reality of information which remains an external element to the artistic communication: "Art approaches a boundary where artistic information ceases to be information and becomes solely utterance [*Mitteilung*] or, more accurately, where information is reduced to conveying to the audience that art wants to be nothing more than utterance." (Luhmann 2000, p. 298).In other words "one tends to privilege self-reference over hetero-reference. This preference appears to be the decisive factor in the further development of art, especially in the twentieth century" (ibidem, p. 288).

However, the system of art has developed in relation to other systems of society, including the media system which is crucial in the development of artistic languages and the production of new forms of utterance. The media and web communication are in structural coupling with the art system and are therefore an important source of irritation and perturbation. In other words, the media and the web are for art an environment that contributes to the increase of its internal complexity.

The professionals highlighted these dynamics through the direct involvement of users, requiring their participation; or taking materials from the Net Posts, images, etc. For example, in the text we report the case of Miranda July and we can add the last experiment of mail art ("We think alone") by forwarding personal e-mails of celebrities who have agreed to participate to people included in the project. Technologies allow non-professionals to experiment and express the creative streak beyond the knowledge and skills that were once attributed to the artist and his "aura." Contextually, we can observe how the production and circulation of photos through the SNS (we can think, for example, of how successful Instagram is), videos, music, etc., spread a creative acting. Thus, aesthetic forms are produced, which, virtually, can be selected as "fitting" forms for the artistic code. The overcoming of the concepts of artistic genre, style, author, etc.—already undertaken by the avant-garde and by the boost they gave to the change of the art system code from beautiful/ugly to fitting/not fitting—expresses, as far as we

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are concerned, the contemporary scenario. The subject who spreads this creative acting—the spread creativity—is the networked amateur. Contextually, according to the luhmannian frame, the amateur too can create fitting "imaginative forms" (van Maneem 2009) and have them networked with the others. In other words we try to show how the participative dimension supported by the SNS—both the artistic forms by professionals and the creative gestures by the users—directs the art system towards the hetero-reference. Nowadays, art refers more explicitly to the external social reality. "Reality" is an element that irritates (perturturbs) the aesthetic side and the languages of the art system, but it also forces art and artists to question about their social function. The spread creativity and its networked amateurs force us to consider art no more solely on the side of the utterance producing aesthetic forms (the act of the artist), but as a system producing information about reality. The relationship among art, creativity and SNS highlights a stronger meaning of the ideas of participation developed by the Avant-garde. The networked amateur either produces and circulates the creative contents or is part of his observation—as in Second Life—and this means that artistic communication depends more and more by self-observation of the subjects involved. Moreover we know, always after Luhmann, that art puts in relation communication and perception, that is the body or better the bio-cognitive subject. Our idea is that inside the context of the participative culture the system of art plays a pivotal task regarding a performative imagery. The reported examples highlight how "the employment of a post-representational idiom that performatively redefines both our cognitive and bodily experience, relates to the practice of performance as a communicative medium based on the embodied relationships among its participants" (Gemini, Timeto 2013). Contextually, art is primarily a context of the elaboration of collective imagery. This imagery incorporates the technologies of communication and its logic that today is increasingly open, peer, participatory and free. Moreover, in this perspective, art is the preferred framework to observe the transition from representationalist imagery to a performative one, which includes the agency of subjects and an idea of the experience of images that passes through bodies. The representationalist imaginary is based on the idea of the "realistic" representation and the dominant channel of vision. It corresponds to the idea of mimetic art and figurative image as

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a vehicle which is necessary for the knowledge of the world. The post-representational or performative imaginary depends on the scientific turn of the twentieth century focused on the theory of the observer.[11] In this sense, experience and the internal reference of the observer, i.e. the way in which each part from his experience and from his perspective of observation, become points of departure for a new epistemology. For this reason the art system is also an important place to observe a mutation in progress when we adopt a sociological approach to communication regarding the arts. This mutation involves, on the one hand, the system of art and its internal complexity, and, on the other hand, the individuals and the perception they have of their positioning in communication. Individuals become more and more active in a creative way, acquiring a new awareness of being part of performing audiences and of networked publics according to a participatory culture and thanks to the digital and its grassroots logics. We don't know if this creative spread could "improve" contemporary art, but this is not the point here. We only think that this can be a useful chance to understand, through art as a social system and as a place of observation of society itself, the evolution of communication and the audiences' change of the perception they have of their positioning in communication, as well as changes in the relationship between the individual and society.

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11 See for example Thrift 2008. In the analysis of evolution of art in relation to the performative imaginary see Grau 2003, Shanken 2009, Gemini 2007.

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Creative Bodies and Creative "Leib" in Everyday Life

ANNA LISA TOTA

Introduction

The notion of creativity has been marginal for many years in the sociological field. Probably the most interesting attempt to consider the impact of creativity in sociology is that of Wright Mills (1959) with the notion of "sociological imagination," a kind of creativity at work in the sociological thought. In relation to creativity, sociologists have been able to better explain the impact of the social contexts than the creative processes in themselves. For a long time, this notion in the sociological field has tended to remain "an empty label," akin to what happened to the notion of genius (De Nora 1995). When it was impossible to explain the reasons why someone was better than someone else (in terms of education, career, etc.), we would use the notion of "genius" or that of "creativity," especially in the artistic field. It begged a substantive explanation for the added value of an object, an event or a social actor (De Nora 1995).

Creativity has been studied mainly in the fields of the arts and the sciences, but in the last decades a relatively new field of research has emerged: creativity in everyday life (Ray and Anderson 2000). Moreover, of late we have witnessed a revival of this notion in relation to creative cities (Landry 2000), creative groups and creative classes (Florida 2002), especially in the economic field. Some of those notions have been criticized (Peck 2005), even if they provide us with the opportunity to rethink this concept in a different perspective.

By considering a theory of creative action in everyday life, this essay will question the dualism between mind and body we usually assume. It will propose to clarify the concept of social actor involved in many theories of creativity: when we talk about creativity, what kind of social actor do we have in mind? Is it an individual split

between mind and body? Does the dualism between mind and body remain in these theories or does the concept of body intelligence becomes central? The reflections by Husserl (1931) and Merleau-Ponty (1979) on the concept of “Leib” will prove to be relevant. The essay will propose to substitute the notion of body with that of “lived body” (Leib) when referring to a creative social actor as a necessary precondition of conceiving the creative process itself.

The Literature on Creativity: an Interdisciplinary Notion

Within the social sciences creativity has become a specific research domain in the last decades only, primarily due to the contribution of psychology and psychoanalysis which, even in a variety of perspectives, tend to focus on the relationship between the main characteristics of the subjective personality and the attitude towards the creative act. In sociology the research interest for this topic has emerged later in time and has been articulated mainly in relation to: a) the theories of social actions (Joas 1992); b) the relation between science and innovation; c) the study of creativity in the arts (Melucci 1994). Creativity is a thoroughly interdisciplinary notion, as it has become a research terrain for psychoanalysts, psychologists, sociologists of culture, sociologists of arts, sociologists of science, anthropologists, philosophers and economists.

Psychoanalytical theories and psychology

In the twentieth century the first reflections on creativity were outlined by the Freudian psychoanalytic approach that analyzes the motivations underlying the creation of the artwork. The psychoanalytic interpretation establishes a relationship between artistic impulse and creation and the instinct of libido: the artist, because of his/her instinctual needs, is unable to deal with reality and turns to the world of fantasy. Through the capacity of sublimation, which is essentially a defense mechanism, s/he turns his/her unrealistic claims into goals to be achieved. According to Freud, then, creation is an activity derived from displacement of the libido from the original objects. The artist

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uses the process of sublimation to transform the libidinal energy into socially desirable goals. The study of unconscious dynamics continues to characterize subsequent studies that are placed in the Freudian tradition (Klein 1929; Chasseguet-Smirgel 1971). In particular, Chassaguet-Smirgel introduces in her model the distinction between two types of creative acts: a) those designed to repair the item and only indirectly the subject and b) those that directly repair the subject.

Theories of ego-psychology (Kris 1952; Kubie 1958) represent a sharp deviation from the psychoanalytic setting, as they introduce the concept of ego-regression and stress the role of ego control on the primary process of creation. Beyond the psychoanalytic approach, the theme of creativity has been extensively studied by psychology. The most investigated topics are: a) on one hand, the creative personality syndrome defined as positive, with respect to which series of symptoms able to detect the creative state are listed (Barron and Welsh 1951); b) on the other hand, the process of ideational creation, with respect to which the key steps (corresponding to particular cognitive or emotional states traversed by the subject) are listed. In this second theoretical perspective we can find, for example, the contribution of the Gestalt-theorie (Duncker 1935; Wertheimer 1945) and the factorial theories (e.g. the theory of divergent thinking outlined by Guilford 1967).

Humanistic psychology, instead, can be classified within the first type of theories, those that explore the creative personality. According to humanistic psychologists, creativity is a constitutive feature of human beings in general, rather than a quality reserved for the few. Fromm (1959) defines the process of life as a process of continuous birth, creation indeed. Humanistic psychologists propose definitions of creativity that would reflect the style of the psychic creator. They recall the aspect of quality of the ordinary: it is "the balance achieved between growth and defense "(Maslow 1962), "openness to experience" (Rogers 1979), a "force that breaks the ordinary structures of experience" (Barron 1968).

While the psychoanalytic approach has studied the affective components of the creative process, cognitivists consider the determinants of cognitive components. As in the case of humanistic psychologists, cognitive scientists also study the creative process in general and not only artistic creation. Within this approach we can distinguish different theories for the explanation of the cognitive

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components: a) the Gestalt psychologists (Duncker 1935) identify a sudden restructuring of the field and introduce the concept of "productive thinking" (Wertheimer 1945); b) the factorial analysts—who refer to the model proposed by Guilford (1967)—identify the specific mental functions involved in the creative process called "divergent thinking."

The notion of productive thought arises in the context of Gestalt psychology and it is due to Wertheimer (1945): "productive thinking" is that way of thinking that does not qualify as a mere repetition of a learned habit. There is a sudden intelligent reorganization of the data collected in the reality described as "Einsicht." Gestalt-psychologists have drawn numerous experiments—such as the window on the altar and the parallelogram by Wertheimer—designed to analyze what happens when the mind works productively. The concept of divergent thinking, instead, is that of Guilford (1967): he has developed a model of the intellect, represented graphically by a solid consisting of 120 elements (4 content x 5 operations x 6 products). The author uses the factorial approach for the decomposition of creative thinking: by calculating the correlation coefficients between the various items, relevant factors are identified. In two subsequent studies in 1954 and in 1961 he identifies the distinction between divergent and convergent thinking that is synthesized by the five factors of divergence: 1) fluidity and fluency, 2) spontaneous flexibility, 3) adaptive flexibility, 4) originality and 5) elaboration. Another significant contribution to psychological perspective on creativity is due in the early eighties to Gardner (1983), who redefines the concept of creative production by introducing the concept of "multiple intelligences." In Frames of Mind he documents that there are different kinds of intelligences totally independent from each other.

Sociology and social psychology

Between the sixties and seventies a series of sociological and psychosocial studies were carried out to evaluate the impact of the environment on creativity. These approaches investigated the influence on the processes of the formation of creative actors by different social factors (such as gender, generation, birth order, social class, education) and so-called socialization agencies (the school, the family). The purpose

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of this kind of research was to identify the most favorable contexts for the emergence and the spread of the creative talents. The study of Torrance (1962) finds a significant relationship between the gender of the subjects and their creativity (as measured by scores on specific tests). This significance is confirmed by studies carried out in the seventies by Lott (1978) documenting that the affective and cognitive components related to creativity are more inhibited in educational models for girls. Gender stereotypes seem to have a significant impact. Some studies (Altus 1965) reinforce the hypothesis that the first-born are more creative than their brothers. This would depend on the type of emotional relationship that is established with parents. Even birth order seems to be influential.

The impact of school on students' creativity has been the subject of extensive cultural debate between the sixties and seventies. The study by Wilson, Stuckey and Langevin (1972), for example, documented the impact of a school system opened to the development of divergent thinking. As a result of these debates a series of programs were proposed: by improving the school climate, it was thought to be possible to develop creativity. The influence of a good learning climate was also supported by Rogers (1979): the non-directivity of the teaching seemed to have a real impact on the development of creative potential. Finally, many studies have documented that the lack of authoritarianism and the establishment of an educational climate favored creative manifestations of the child. In particular, the research by Getzels and Jackson (1962) examined two different types of family: one represented the convergent type, the other one the divergent one. The authors were able to identify educational styles that seem to be more effective than others in promoting children's creativity.

Between the eighties and nineties research on creativity moved further along two main lines: on one hand, the study of the social contexts of creativity (De Masi 1989) and the analysis of the ways in which social actors articulate it in the social practices of their daily and professional life (Melucci 1994); on the other hand, we can see the attempt to decline this notion in a theory of action (Joas 1992), analyzing the relationship between existence and symbolic world and between imagination and mythology. The study by De Masi (1989) on creative teams in Europe from 1850 to 1950 analyzes thirteen experi-

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ences of collective creativity, offering a historical reconstruction of the social and cultural conditions that characterized them. The research by Melucci (1994, p. 8) considers creativity by taking into consideration three different dimensions: “Creativity is analyzed, besides in the theories and models circulating [...], through the subjects to whom is attributed [...], in the discourses that characterize it [...] and in the contexts that make it possible.” One of the central issues addressed in that research regards creativity as a cultural product and as cultural discourse. Questions were asked to interviewees about the social mechanisms that govern the social construction of creativity itself. The analysis focused on different areas of research: arts, science, advertising, theater, large organizations, social movements and adolescence, defined as a stage of life where one creates and recreates the sense of the world. Ways of creativity are very different: for example, among artists the term creativity is used with some ambivalence, while among advertisers it is used as metaphor to describe their professional status.

A very interesting contribution to the analysis of this notion is that of Hans Joas (1992), who uses the concept of creativity to establish a theory of social action. He starts with the dual reworking of Weber’s notion of charisma and Marx’s notion of revolutionary action. In the case of charisma, Joas emphasizes how creativity is defined as a permanent attribute of a certain personality, rather than of specific actions. The charisma is, in fact, conceived as the exclusive prerogative of the subject. In this sense, the charismatic leader seems to be the equivalent in politics of what in science and the arts is the genius. In revisiting Marx’s concept of action, Joas stresses that Marx applies the idea of self-expressive action to the concept of work. Alienation is the process by which what we produce materially, once estranged, is opposed to us as external power, hostile and no more controllable. The social actors perceive the product of their work as having a capacity of coercion on themselves. In Marx then creativity would not be an attribute of the human action in general, but only of the revolutionary action, in which the creative synthesis produces a new society (Joas 1992). The contribution of Joas is of particular interest, as it makes possible the reinterpretation of the classical theories through a relatively new concept such as creativity. Moreover, it links this notion to the context of social actions in general, focusing on the research terrain of creativity

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in everyday life. Ray and Anderson (2000) adopt this perspective in their study of "cultural creatives," who are changing the world.

Social constructivism in the study of creativity

Compared to the previous perspectives (such as the psychoanalytical and the psychological ones) sociological theories involve some deep changes: creativity ceases to be analyzed as a more or less favorable syndrome, and it is then articulated within the social contexts that make it possible. The focus of the analysis takes into account new analytical levels, such discursive practices through which the label of creative is attributed to some social actors or social groups in a given social context. In Melucci's study (1994) the role of the social context emerged as central in all the different investigated fields: the acknowledgement of the creative nature of a product, event, idea has been literally "co-produced" by the social context. This study, in other terms, refers to the "social constructivism" perspective. Nonetheless, it should be mentioned that, mainly in the arts there has been a long-standing tradition of very different theoretical perspectives documenting the role of social contexts in shaping the meanings of the artwork: structuralism (Mukarowsky 1936), semiotics (Eco 1979), but also phenomenology of literary texts (Ingarden 1931), Kostanzschule (Iser 1970), Reception Theories (Holub 1984). My aim is not to suggest that all these approaches share the same perspective on the role of context in the recognition of creative products; instead I aim at suggesting that they have contributed in different ways, to different extents and according to very different perspectives to this conclusion. This just to remind us that social constructivism coexists with a long tradition of other theoretical perspectives that converge in documenting the contextual nature of the artwork. The advantages of the constructivist approach have been numerous: a) it has been a key to understanding the dynamics of creativity in a larger sense, and it has made it possible to overcome the romantic conception of the genius isolated in his/her "tower," working totally on his/her own. b) It made it possible to adopt a more sociological approach in understanding the processes leading to the creation of an artwork. c) It opened up the

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field to several studies on creativity not only on the side of production, but also of consumption and /or reception. However there are also limits that can be considered, as we will see in the next paragraphs.

"Creative Bodies": Creativity in Everyday Life

"Call it what you want, it is the feeling that we have to be creators of our intentions, our decisions, our actions, and thus of our habits, our character, than ourselves. Artisans of our life, artists (…)." (Bergson 1911, p. 118-119). Henry Bergson is one the philosophers most interested in a notion of creativity who does not discriminate between the genius and the common person. The concept of *élan vital* seems very close to the theoretical positions outlined by humanistic psychologists as well.

In the sociological field it is thanks to the study by Ray and Anderson (2000) that a renewed interest in the study of creativity in everyday life has emerged. Creativity, according to this perspective, refers to a process shared by and accessible to all social actors, that can shape their actions and thoughts in their everyday life. Therefore, the creativity of the genius no longer represents the main focus. This concept can be better viewed as a continuum going from common people to the genius. The implied idea is to deny the discrete gap among the different distributions of talents and creative skills in the population and to recognize different degrees on which these talents can take shape in different situations and circumstances. It is a continuum, not a discrete variable. According to this point of view everyone is a potential genius, with a different combination of skills in different fields. The difference has to do with the freedom to shape and hence recognize these skills. As mentioned above, there is a consolidated tradition of studies following this line of thought in psychology as well (Maslow 1962; Barron 1968; Rogers 1979).

"Creative bodies" and the mind-body dualism

Several theories seem to imply a conception of the creative actor that does not consider the mind-body relationship. Does creativity have to

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do mainly with the mind of the creative actor or with his/her body or with both of them? Can we distinguish between creative ideas and creative actions? In some theoretical approaches the body seems not to be properly considered. However, several scholars have pointed out the relevance of the body knowledge (Keller and Meuser 2011). It is proposed here to consider the process of creativity in everyday life as a process referring to bodies and not only to minds. It follows Gardner's idea of multiple intelligences. Intelligence and knowledge are considered as characteristics pertaining also to the bodies and not only to the minds of the creative actors considered. However, the following question that arises is about the kind of body we have. The conception of body we have is highly relevant to the analysis of creative action. In other words, who is acting? And if the answer is the body, what kind of body is acting? Mainly, we tend to focus our attention on the physical body. Our idea of body is taken for granted. We mainly have in mind a psychical body and also a specific relation between body and mind, where the mind has control over the body. There is a common tendency to consider the mind as an entity separate from the body. This distinction is strongly associated with René Descartes and the so-called "mind-body problem." It is a consequence of his "cogito ergo sum" theory. The mind-body dualism refers to a particular way of thinking about the relationship between mind and body. The most relevant contribution for outlining this issue is the volume "Meditations on First Philosophy" by Descartes published in 1641. Leder (1990) suggested that Descartes' philosophy about the mind-body problem was strongly shaped by his early experience of being painfully sick that led him to desire an escape from his own body. According to Descartes, mind and body are separated and the mind can exist without the body. "I think therefore I am": this idea is often linked to the ascendance of the disembodied rationalist view, which is still alive today.

There are interesting interpretations of this dualistic conception. For example, it has been argued that this deep separation between mind and body within modern capitalistic societies has led to a sharp division between physical and mental labor (Petersen 2007). This idea of the mind having control over the body is declined in a different way when we consider gender and ethnicity. One of the important contributions of feminist scholarship has been to draw attention to the fact

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that women's bodies and minds are seen as different and differently related and inferior to men's bodies and minds. (Lloyd 1984). For women, the mind and body are seen as more closely related than for men. Women are more in touch with their body and prone to its unruliness (for example, as they experience menstruations or childbirth). This is to remind us that there are several interesting implications at work if one considers the gendered construction of the mind-body relationship.

However, the unruliness of the body is a sudden and disruptive experience available for men too. When one falls down, when one is sick or when one suddenly does something inadequate against social rules, e.g. showing their body in public, then one seems to lose control over their body for a few moments. In other terms, it suddenly emerges that the control that one usually has over their body corresponds to a shared belief as if it were, in the end, a collective illusion. It does not work in the real world, as the body can be independent from the mind and from the ideas that we share about it. When one has had a serious and long-term illness, it suddenly becomes clear that he/she is subjected to his body. Another conception of body is necessary along with another definition of the relation between body and mind, as this can be a key to better understand creativity.

"Koerper" and "Leib": Husserl and Merleau-Ponty

The conception of body which could help understand the creative process is due to the phenomenological approach. "Koerper" is the name that Husserl (1931) uses to precisely describe the "body-subject" or "body-representation": the body occupying a certain space and then responding to certain measures, the body as *res extensa*, reduced to mere measurement of certain quantities (weight, width, length, etc.). This description applies to any body, of both humans and other living beings. However, so long as that definition applies to any body, it does not correspond to the particularity of the body that one incarnates. 'The lived body" corresponds to this experience that Husserl calls "Leib"; when one feels their own body from the inside. This experience is linked to what Husserl, in the Cartesian Meditations, defines as "Eigenheit": this term refers in German to the meaning of

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"property" in the sense of "ownership" but also of "peculiarities/characteristics." This is the body as lived unity of perception and motion. There is a continuous movement between the lived body and the body-object. The lived body (Leib) is always on the point of being inverted in objectification (Koerper). This process was described by Merleau-Ponty (1979) as "reversibility" and it refers precisely to the dynamic of the imminent reversal of roles and positions between the two types of body identified by Husserl (1931). In the final phase of his thoughts, Merleau-Ponty will adopt the term "flesh of the world" to translate the term "Leib": by doing it, he emphasizes the fact that the lived body can never be said to belong to someone. It is the experience of the meat as inhabited by the possibility of otherness that makes the experience of "having a body" possible.

It could be argued that the lived body can be referred to the experience of being a body and to a relationship between mind and body that overcomes the dualism implied in Descartes' theory. When the body is viewed as lived body, concepts such as control over the body and property of one's own body are inadequate and obsolete. When the body is viewed merely as body-object, then, the same concepts become central again and one can be deceived by the illusion of "having a body" that is under the mind's control. This conception of lived body becomes central for a better understanding of the processes at work in creativity.

The body according to Rudolf Steiner and to esho-funi theory

When one takes for granted the physical conception of the body as the unique body that one has, it should be remembered that there are millions of people around the world who do not share this limited conception of the body. According to Chinese medicine, for example, the body is viewed in a very different way, although it is not necessary to go all the way to China. An analogous conception can be found in Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy. According to the philosopher Rudolf Steiner there is a fourfold articulation of the body: a) the physical body, as physical material structure, held in common with the mineral world; b) the life or etheric body, the source of life and growth, held in

common with the plant world; c) the consciousness, or astral body, held in common with the animal world; d) the ego, that is the faculty of self-awareness, unique to humanity. Steiner's anthroposophy proposes a very complex conception of body. For the present purpose it is enough to mention the fact that the reduction of the body to its physical part is not "natural," but can be viewed as a cultural construct as well. Going back to the aforementioned question of this paragraph: Who is acting in the creative process? The physical body or the other ones? Is the experience of lived body or that of body-object more relevant for creativity? Let us imagine considering not only the physical body, but also the etheric one—which according to Steiner would refer to the energy level of the body. Would it perhaps be a way to apply the quantum theory first outlined by Max Planck also to the understanding of social action? At the very end the creative action is a specific type of social action. What would happen if one started to think in terms of the theory of creative action which considers the activity of all different bodies outlined by the philosopher Rudolf Steiner, and not only by the physical one? What would the consequences be if one really applied the notion of lived body or that of "flesh of the world" outlined by Merleau-Ponty to understand the process of creativity?

It is interesting to note that those notions seem to converge towards a very well-known theory in Japan. It is the notion of Esho-Funi, the oneness of life and its environment, and it is due to Nichiren Daishonin, a 13th-century Japanese Buddhist monk. The principle argues that life and its environment, albeit two seemingly distinct phenomena, are two integral phases of a single reality. It is interesting to note the extent to which Merleau-Ponty, Rudolf Steiner and Nichiren Daishonin, even from very different perspectives, come to similar conclusion. They all seem to propose a theory of action according to which the division between the social actor and the environment is somehow less solid, somehow reduced, although not totally. Could we argue that this is possible because they start to consider the subjectivity and the bodies of the social actors not only at the level of the matter, but also at that of their energies? If the body is viewed as an energy system (and not only as matter), it makes sense to assume that there isn't any discrete distinction any longer between the inside and the outside. The boundaries of the body depend on the conception of the body as mat-

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ter. Let us imagine overcoming the conception of separation between the individual (his/her body and his/her mind) and the environment. Instead of considering the individual and his/her body as fully distinguished from the environment, one might consider this relation as better represented through a continuum where the inside (the body) and the outside (the environment) are reciprocally influenced and shaped. When the body becomes "lived body," it becomes also "flesh of the world," because the separation is overcome.

Conclusion

If we go back to the social constructivist approach to creativity, applied for example to the case of a creative product, it is argued that there is a vector of meanings inscribed in the product by the producer and a receiver (the visitor in the exhibition, the listener to the concert, etc.) who decides what kind of meanings s/he will actualize—usually (but not always) it will be one of the meanings inside that vector. The receiver is part of the environment of the creative product, as well with all the other relevant parts of the context. The product is not completed in its meanings and in its being a creative object, if we do not also consider the context, the environment where it is placed. This movement, this dynamic tension between inside and outside, can be also reconsidered in terms of esho-funi. In other terms, at the level of energies one could argue that the creative product creates a context for its own recognition. In this sense, the creativity would not depend on a context that recognizes it, as suggested by the constructivist approach. Creativity would refer to an internal/external level or intensity of energy that would lead to many creative acts in the arts, but also in everyday life. Following this perspective, it could be argued that social constructivism illustrates the creative process as a relation between a social actor and his/her environment that gives him/her the recognition of being creative. The reason, therefore, is that social constructivism considers the social actors in their physical bodies, but not in their etheric ones (Rudolf Steiner), not as "lived bodies," nor as "flesh of the world" (Merleau-Ponty). By adopting another theory of the body, the division between social actor and environment can be viewed in a

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