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Culture, market and society. Between marketization of culture and culturalization of market

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In the last decades of the 20th century the academic research has become aware of and interested in the changes brought by the industrialization and democratization of culture. Whatever the concepts used to define these changes - “information society”, “new economy”, “creative economy”, “knowledge-based economy”, or “network society”, they reflect the interest in the relation between culture, society and economy. Mass society corresponds to a high scale of production, distribution and consumption of cultural artifacts and services. In this context, the art for the sake of art becomes questionable and this has transformed the cultural field and the artists as well. A new definition of culture, more extensive and inclusive, was needed to express different values and practices.

Authors like Pierre Bourdieu or Richard Florida opened the debate, by bringing into the attention of academic world social and cultural practices ignored before and they launched a new approach in their research field. Concepts such as habitus, taste, cultural consumption, creativity, creative class and cities, became useful instruments in the research of cultural and creative sectors.

We must point out right from the start that in this special number of the International Review of Social Research we shall use a definition of cultural and creative sectors, used particularly in the official documents of the

European Union¹; it comprises those fields also known as creative industries (e.g. visual arts, performing arts, heritage, film and video, television and radio, software – including video games – books and mass media, design, architecture, advertising, as well as the support- or connected industries).

Recent modernity (postmodernism) and de-industrialisation have led to the transformation of the production-based capitalist economy, in an economy of signs (Lash and Urry, 1994), based on consumption and pleasure. In this context, the cultural and creative sectors have responded to the post-materialist needs on several levels: education or intellectual and professional development, personality expression, entertainment, social distinction, value sharing, socialisation etc.

On this background, both the manner of artistic creations' reception and the manner of cultural goods creation and production are becoming increasingly diversified, and we are assisting more and more to the entry of bricolage into the cultural production and cultural consumption as well.

New academic disciplines named differently depending on the cultural and academic environment (cultural studies, sociology of culture, sociology of arts, cultural sociology and cultural economy) deal with the research of the relation between culture, society and economy.

The tension between culture and economy is a highly debated theme among social sciences experts, and this special issue goes into the details on how this tension materialises within certain creative sectors, such as music, opera, design or visual arts.

The preoccupations related to the cultural products marketization have drawn the attention on the effects

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¹ European Commission, ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’ (26 September 2012)

on the product quality; on the other hand, a series of studies highlight the importance of the capital in the development of not only serial, but also unique products, thus contributing to the support and stimulation of creativity. The economy-culture relation seems to be rather ambivalent, the commercial exchanges and the business environment smooth out the cultural interaction, but also vice versa: the cultural exchanges may fuel the economic development and the capital flows.

Florida (2008) showed that the places with “symbolic leisure”, such as natural and cultural spaces, provide their residents visual and creative stimulation, which may stimulate the feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction. This creative stimulation may overflow onto other daily activities, including the residents’ work and the business environment. Thus, a cultured economy, mainly based on knowledge, creativity and symbols, will benefit by the effects of stimulating the imagination.

This special issue of the IRSR aims to be a collection of studies on various topical themes in the field of cultural and creative sectors. The selected articles debate and detail the culture-economy relation, by presenting several case studies that contribute to the understanding of this relation’s materialisation within different cultural contexts, with different traditions in the development of the “creative-industry” and “creativity” concepts.

The first article of this special number, *The Creative Industries: a discourse-theoretical approach*, presents the manner the creative industry concept manifests itself within the East-European space, with a special accent on Estonia’s case. The paper highlights the multiple definitions, interpretations and approaches related to this concept, as well as the absence of theoretical and methodological discussions on how the creative industries may be analysed. The author records the influence of the socialist experience on the concept, by rejecting the association between the idea of industry (more likely to be specific to the socialist production) with the ideas of culture and creation. Furthermore, the article highlights the effect of this influence on the cultural policies in Estonia. The author also emphasises the fact that, although it appears to be quite recent, the interest in the creative industries manifested itself within the socialist context as well, but in the absence of the theoretical frame within which it manifests nowadays. The article brings a significant contribution to the understanding of the manner in which the creative industry concept applies in the post-socialist space.

The second article *Public banking for the cultural sector: financial instruments and the new financial intermediaries* reveals the manner in which various

financial instruments support the development of the cultural and creative sectors. It presents case studies of public intervention in France, Spain and UK, as well as at the level of the European Union, with highlight on the differences in the support of the creative industries, explained through historical transformations and mutual influences. The article presents the financing models and their success within various fields of the creative and cultural sectors. The author emphasises the importance of the financial instruments in the public policies of creative-industry stimulation. The article brings a significant contribution to the research in the field of cultural policies, by highlighting the relation between the development of the financial instruments and the cultural contexts where the creative industries are active.

The paper *Legitimising Strategies in the Field of Independent Cultural Production: the Case of Reissue Record Labels in the USA* analyses the labour market in the United States, based on a case study conducted in Austin, Texas. The author presents the history and the approaches regarding the Independent record labels in the context of the mainstream industry and presents the manner in which the dichotomy ‘inauthentic’ versus ‘authentic’ manifests itself. Moreover, the article presents the legitimisation process of the independent creative trade and brings an important contribution to the understanding of the artistic creations’ commoditisation phenomenon.

Design, It’s Not what it Looks Like! introduces us in the world of fashion and analyses the way fabrics are used to build an image. The author approaches the illusion- or even the delusion effect that materials may have, through a foray in their use in various creation techniques. The article approaches the matter of delusion through fabrics, presenting practices and strategies used in design. The work contributes to the understanding of the consumerist society and reveals the way signs, symbols and materials are used to convey a message.

The paper *Less than Friends, More than Acquaintances: Artists and Gallery Openings in New York* opens a door for us to take a look into the exclusivist environment of the visual artists in New York. The article presents a case study on the career development strategies used by the artists trying to achieve notoriety in the art market of New York. The author approaches the theme of both creator’s and art work’s value building and recognition, within the context of an economy of signs and financial capital. The avant-garde creation and the bohemian world intersect with the business interest and socialisation through art, and the author introduces the reader in the socialisation process within the exhibitions in the dedicated spaces

in Chelsea. The work is important for the understanding of the manner in which networking is becoming an important capital in order to gain notoriety, as well as to survive in the art market.

The article *Institutional Logics as orchestras' strategic dilemma* draws the curtain off and reveals how the classical-music orchestras are surviving and developing as the state, the private businesses or the public are becoming less interested in supporting them. The article presents a case study as well as the history of symphonic orchestras in Germany, highlighting the institutional logic relevant to professionals within the orchestra, as well as the structure of the public and the attractiveness degree for the orchestras' activity. The authors offer a complex image of the classical music production and consumption environment in Germany and help us understand the relations and connections within the artistic environment, as well as the elements that express the tension between the aesthetical logic and the market logic.

The last paper *The Opera Experience: Performing a Vibrato with the Audience* approaches the topic of Opera-performances' audience development, within the context of low percentages of spectators identified by recent studies. The article approaches the Opera as a specific highbrow culture product and synthesises the motivations of Opera-performance attendance. The authors' approach falls into the theoretical current of the symbolic interactionism and treats Opera consumption as a cultural experience within which pleasure depends on the context, biography or social interaction. The work brings an important contribution to the understanding of cultural goods and products consumption motivation, particularly for those products and goods that require a high knowledge of the symbols and mechanisms of their decoding.

Bionotes

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As Doctor in sociology since 2011 and researcher since 2005, she coordinated several studies related to culture and creativity. In 2014, Anda was the Romanian delegate expert at the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) Member States Expert Group meetings, European Commission, Priority B – Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS), Topic CCS Access to finance. She published seven books about the cultural sector as co-editor and co-author and two articles about cultural sector and rural economic practices. She is also interested in food anthropology, rural communities and creative industries.

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