

The Rationalities of Cultural Policy: Approach to a Critical Model of Analysing Cultural Policy

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Abstract

The starting point of the paper is a short presentation of Jürgen Habermas's later studies of modern rationalities in *The Theory of Communicative Action*. Vol. I and II (1991) and the work *"Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy"* (Habermas 1996). On basis of these theories the paper will present a model of analysing the rationalities of modern cultural policies. The model will be applied to the comprehensive study of cultural policy in the Nordic countries since World War II *The Nordic Cultural Model* (Duelund 2003). Finally the paper will address some critical considerations of the theories of Habermas and their potential for analysing the praxis and idea of cultural politics.

Keywords

The Theory of Communicative Action and cultural policy, theory of cultural policy research, Nordic cultural policy, rationalities in modern cultural policy, instrumentalization of culture and the arts.

The Concepts of Rationality and Cultural Policy

Rationality is a word, which signifies the position of reason. The concept of rationality is a central theme in the period of cultural modernity. How rationality has been conceived of, what it consists in, and the main problems that the analysis of it entails, has formed the basis for much discussion of the nature of art, culture and cultural policy within the western tradition.

In modern time the concept of rationality and rationalisation is a term most readily associated with Max Weber. Capitalist society is seen to be uniquely rational, not mere in its economic and technical organisation, but also in science, law, religion, art and government. Rationalisation consists of the refinement of *instrumental rationality* (Weber 1922). An institution, e.g. cultural institutions, is rational because they are structured according to rules, which determine the most efficient means for achieving any given goal in a given time. According to Weber's analysis of bureaucracy and

instrumental rationality an essential purpose of cultural policy research is to identify and reflect the forms of rationalities and their changes in a given historic context as - in example - the transformation of Nordic cultural policy described below.

Criticisms of the darker side of rationality have also been forthcoming from the old Frankfurt School theorists such as Adorno and Horkheimer, argued that modern rationality has as a consequence of increasing rationalisation of modern societies, taken a form of a primarily *instrumental* function, and thereby neglects its proper cultural role of critical reflection.

In recent years especially Jürgen Habermas has sought to develop a theory of rationality, which take into account both the *instrumental* and *normative* aspects of social interaction between agents. The *communicative actions* of the life world, which also encompass the expressive rationality of the arts, are in his theory contrasted with the *instrumental rationality of the system* (Habermas 1983).

Thus the conceptualisation of rationality in the communicative action theory of Habermas is processual and contextual and not universal and a-historic. It opens for analyses of the struggle and interplay between the different cultural agents and they're different cooperating or opposing rationalities in a given historic society.

According to Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Action* it can be argued that the field of cultural policy in a modern society is constituted by interplay between different rationalities.

The political system is normally considering art and culture as a mean to promote and improve political objectives – for bad or good. The rationality of public cultural policy in Hitler – Germany was to internalise the ideas and values of Nazism, anti-Semitism and a reconstruction of pre-modern life forms focused on *Kinder, Küche and Kirche*.

Especially after WW II the rationality of the public political systems of art and culture has also been implemented for emancipatorically reasons. Keeping in mind the dictatorial use of art policy in Nazi Germany and Stalin's Soviet-Union the ambition of John Maynard Keynes just after World War II was to organise an administration of the arts according to *the arm's length principle* (Bennett 1995, Duelund 1994, Sinclair 1995). His very hope was to secure artistic freedom and system for supporting the arts independently of the political and economical rationality in society. Ideally spoken the principle was meant a cultural declaration of independence. That was also the very aim of establishing The French Ministry of Culture in 1959 and of the Ministries of culture in the Nordic Countries starting with the Danish Ministry of Culture in 1961 (Duelund 1995, 2003) But one thing is the *rhetoric's* of a democratic administration of the arts. Another thing is the real consequences of the arm's length principle and the so-called *architect – models* of public cultural policy (Chartrand, McCaughey 1989). Are these models also sublime methods of political management of art and culture (Loosely 1995, McGuigan 1996)?

The ideal rationality of *the administrations of arts* as tools of public cultural policy is to realize optimal efficiency in the implementation of the objectives. But according to Max Weber the bureaucracy will also keep in mind the preservations of bureaucracy as a self-referential self-reproducing system (Weber 1922).

The latent and proclaimed goals of the economic medias of the system world, such as the commercial private industries in literature, music, film, tv, the new digital interactive medias etc., is profit, accumulation of private capital and monopolization of the cultural market under pres of economic globalisation and world wide competition in the cultural

field. In the last decade a lot of world wide cultural conglomerates has brought hundreds of cultural enterprises that have never been active in the cultural sector before (Smiers 2003. 2004: 13)¹.

The rationality of *the art system* as a distinctive rationality of the life world is to produce and reproduce aesthetic traditions, norms and forms of symbolic communications. The arts institution in e.g. the Western societies is still to a high degree either based on the contemplative art conventions of the eighteenth century bourgeois society or on the revolts against them as i.e. the rationality of the historical avant-garde (Bell-Villada 1996).

It is the overall thesis of the paper, that the balance of power between the different systems of rationalities in a given society in a given historical is decisive for which forms of rationality will be dominating. In example the rationality of the economic market forces, the political media and bureaucracies, the intrinsic values of the aesthetic rationality and of the anthropological conceptualisation of culture are all different rationalities in play in the cultural field (Taylor 1992).

If this thesis is valid, *cultural policy* is a matter of urgent public debate, according to the rationalities propounded here, and not only to a technical problem of administration, as propounded in the narrow definition of cultural policy as *administration of the arts*. Of course this question is of interest to research on cultural policy. But in a broader sense cultural policy, however, is also about the clash of ideas, institutional struggles and power relations in the production, dissemination and reception of arts and symbolic meaning in society (McGuigan 1996).

In democratic societies governed by law, cultural policy according to this argumentation is the outcome of the debate about which values (forms of recognition) are considered important for the individuals and collectives a given society (Duelund 2003:13). Is it the instrumental rationality of the economic and political medias or the communicative rationality of art and culture, which shall be dominating in society?

Research on cultural policy in this conceptualisation can be defined as to identify the interplay between the economic, cultural and political rationalities and the potentials of cultural policy to influence on this interplay (Duelund 1982).

The Theory of Communicative Action

According to Habermas, this endeavour is expanded in the thesis that modern societal formation has split itself into two practice spheres, *system* and *life world*, that operate with different rationalities and that are in conflict with each other (Habermas 1987 (1981)).

The *system* and its rationality are defined by the expansive dynamics of the capital accumulation and state bureaucracy. The political and economic medias of the system are operating according to *strategic behaviour*, read: Instrumental behaviour such as political power legitimation and economical efficiency.

On the other hand, the actor perspective of the *cognitive/scientifically, expressive/artistically and ethical/political* spheres of *life world* are operating in according to *communicative behaviour*, read: dialog based and non-instrumental behaviour.

The point in The Theory of Communicative Action is that the dynamic and complex interferences between the rationalities of the system and of the life world. In late- modern societies as a tendency is characterised by the systems the strategic colonisation of the life

world and - contrary – of the emancipatorically counter fights of to this colonisation by the spheres and communicative rationalities of the life world. It can be the fight of the artist organisations for author's rights in intellectual property right opposed to the copyright (read producers right) protection promoted by the cultural industries and the American copyright tradition. Or it can be the inventions of the cultural political in democratic societies as e.g. the public cultural policies in the Nordic and other European countries after WW II to regulate the cultural field with the overall aim to promote artistic freedom and cultural diversity.

Habermas's dynamics conceptualisation of rationality seems to be useful as an analytical starting point for cultural political research at a theoretical as well as at an empirical level. According to the theory an important point for cultural policy and cultural political research is this: The economic and bureaucratic media of the system may improve an expansive colonizing logic. But this strategic rationality does neither depend upon itself nor is it an absolute or static phenomenon. After all, it is possible for human actors – artists, researchers and politicians - through their actions as players in the power game of the cultural field to influence on the power positions in society between the strategic behaviour of the system and the communicative behaviour and rationalities of the life- world.

Between Facts and Norms

In his recent major work *"Between Facts and Norms"* (Habermas 1996 (1992)- abbreviated to BFN), he argues in a more optimistic tone that the public sphere in democratic states governed by law, even under the economic and bureaucratic tendencies to colonisation, can function as a sphere for a debate free from supremacy.

The public sphere in the form of the democratic state governed by law carries not only instrumental rationality of strategic action, but also communicative actions. That is why the possibility still exists for the state governed by law through legislation, subsidy and regulation schemes to work against the *colonization* of the communicative actions of the life world and to ensure that it not only are economic and power political goals to which consideration is taken.

Thus, Habermas takes his starting point in the fact that the life world still is housing communicative rationality and a set of joint values and norms that can be the beginning for people, through a joint dialogue and through reason to find out which is right and wrong, what is desirable and non-desirable.

Reflected to the system of art, culture and cultural policy, the empirical consequences of Habermas' theoretical approach is, that under the right conditions art, culture and cultural policy have potentials to possibility to react against the colonizing process of the strategic rationality in late modernity and in a cultural colonised world. Arts, cultural institutions and cultural policy can place them self in the conflicting interplay between the strategic rationality of the system and promote a counter process based in expressive rationality of aesthetic creations.

The Task of Research on Cultural Policy

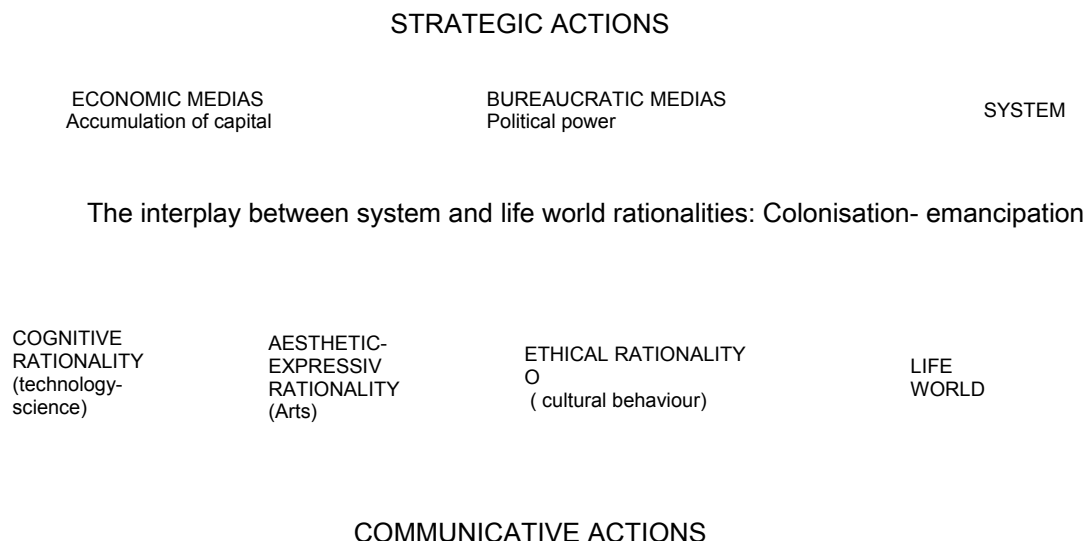
Reflected in this way it can be argued that the overall task of research on cultural policy is to produce knowledge and insight about under which political, economical and institutional conditions art and culture can remain, survive and improve as communicative actions reflecting and expressing the authentic experiences of the citizens?

In this normative and hermeneutic model of analysing the field of cultural policy three of the most important empirical tasks of cultural political research in modern societies can be posed as:

- To identify the interplay and power relations between the economical and the political medias of the system *and* the communicative power and position of the artistically and cultural medias of the life world in a given society in a given period.
- To identify the transformation of the interplay and power relations between the strategic medias of the system and arts and culture as life-world phenomenon's.
- To reflect the institutional conditions under which the communicative rationalities of arts and culture can/could have be (en) improved in a given society in a given historic period
- To develop theories and methods which can give plausible answers to these questions.

Figure 1 below worked out a tentative model of analysing the rationalities of cultural policy on basis of The Theory of Communicative Action and Between Facts and Norms. The model is called *The constitutional paradigm of culture* is worked out in figure1:

FIGURE 1: The constitutional paradigm of culture



The Rationalities of Nordic Cultural Policy

Cultural policy in Norden was faced with a range of new cultural policy challenges in the mid-1990s (Duelund 2003: 7). In this context, Norden refers to: the five nation states of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden; Nordic cultural cooperation under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers; the autonomous territories, i.e. the Faeroe Islands, Greenland and Åland; and the Saami regions.

Within Norden, the ability of welfare-based cultural policy to fulfil the artistic expectations of the 'founding period' after World War II was questioned more and more at the time.

According to figure 1 the political rationality was increasingly contradicted to the aesthetic rationality of the arts.

After the Second World War, the objectives underlying state cultural policy in Denmark, Norway, Finland, Iceland and Sweden were formulated as part of the general welfare programme, and the combination of individual liberty and collective public regulations, which has characterised the Nordic welfare model. According to the philosophy of this kind of welfare system, society has a duty to ensure both individual liberty and equal social and cultural possibilities for all citizens in society.

According to arts and culture as phenomenon's of the life-world the major objective in the cultural policies of the countries was to counteract the effect of the commercial culture industry on art and culture, which Nordic governments fear will standardise and damage art and everyday expressions of culture. This was to be done by offering state support for the individual artist and to artistic production and distribution so that artistic circles would not be dependent on the commercial market.

E.g. *The Copyright Act*, passed in 1961, and the law constituting the *State Art Foundation* in 1964 are both aimed at safeguarding the interests of individual artists against the economic based rationalities and strategic behaviour of the commercial industries (Duelund 2003:58).

Copyright legislation was thus an important cultural policy tool with which the Ministry of Cultures in the Nordic Countries tries to regulate the cultural market. It specifies and defines the mutual rights and obligations of the author, producer and user. The Copyright Act protects the author's moral rights, i.e. the author's right to assert his/her name in connection with his/her work and to object to any distortion of it. The Nordic artists' rights protection represents the *droit d'auteur* tradition, which asserts the authors' and performers' economic and moral interests.

According to the Nordic model of cultural policy, copyright laws must primarily protect the rights of the creator and, ideally, serve as the undisputed guarantee of aesthetic freedom and financial revenue to the artists (Duelund 2003:62). These traditions are prominent on the European continent and in the Nordic Countries, in contrast to the British and American copyright system, which is oriented more towards the rights of the producers. The Nordic copyright legislation provides for organisations made up of copyright holders entering into collective agreements with users and producers regarding compensation for individual works and performances, the size of royalties, etc.

In the first few years after the Ministry of Cultural Affairs was set up in 1961, Parliament also passed a number of laws dealing with culture in an effort to stimulate the dissemination of culture to the whole population in all parts of the country, e.g. the *Act of State Aid to Museums of the Fine Arts* (1964) and the *Act of Developing Public Libraries in Councils and Municipalities* (1964) (Duelund 2003:58). Touring was an important element in bringing culture to all in the 1960s. Subscription schemes, low-price tickets and improved marketing were also introduced. The purpose was to realize the egalitarian aim of culture for all.

The touring was mainly by institutions based in Copenhagen; the Royal Theatre (especially in the summertime), the Danish Theatre – staged plays representing the special national tradition, identity and history, and the National School Theatre, performed plays with special references to Danish norms and good manners. Later on – in the seventies – the capital's monopoly on touring was broken. New institutions for theatre, music and museums were established in towns and cities all over the country – a process of decentralisation promoted by the State through the so-called fifty/fifty

model. In other words, if a county or municipality invested in a local theatre or museum, the Ministry of Culture was obliged to double up the local investment per annum (Duelund 2003:59).

According to the conceptualisation and interplay of rationalities stated in figure 1, the overall ambition in the public cultural policies in the Nordic countries in the constituting phase 1960-1975 was to regulate the economic medias of the system, support the individual artist directly and promote cultural institutions all over the countries in favour of ensuring artistic freedom, cultural diversity and open access to art and culture.

The philosophical principle of welfare cultural policy found in the Nordic countries 1960-1975 was grounded in the thinking of the European Enlightenment and aesthetic education. With the welfare state as a regulatory and mediator, citizens were to be educated as valuable, fully mature members of society with the ability to take responsibility for their lives on an individual as well as on a collective basis. The basic building blocks of the new cultural democracy would consist of these enlightened individuals, who would be able to participate in the further development of political democracy. The role of artistic policy in all this was to ensure that aesthetic considerations also contributed to the development of social and material welfare as a secular alternative to religious dogmas.

The Transformation of Rationalities

In fact it was the ambition in the post-war Nordic Welfare states to realize the modern liberal ideal of the arts emancipatorical role in society as described by Habermas in his classical work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Habermas 1989 (1962)). But in spite of this ambiguous aim of the welfare states, the public cultural sphere in the Nordic countries was also transformed to a totalizing economical and political rationality (Duelund 2003: 479-531).

From the middle of the 1980s, a financial and political instrumentalization was set in motion with regard to the original Enlightenment-inspired political goals and strategies. The level of cultural and artistic activity was increased in order to counteract trends towards higher unemployment and greater social exclusion, which were gradually changing the social sphere in the Nordic countries. Cities, local authorities and regions began to invest in cultural activities, art centres, and festivals for practical financial, and developmental, reasons. Culture can make money, was the argument. Culture creates employment! Culture keeps local communities together! Culture can help to develop and preserve a decentralised community structure!

To fulfil these objectives, the responsibility for cultural policy was increasingly moved from the national level to the local and regional levels (Duelund 516-518). This applies particularly to cultural policy, and to a lesser degree, to arts policy. Even though state expenditure as a percentage of the combined public expenditure – with few exceptions – seems to have remained unchanged between 1975-2000, this should not be understood to indicate that local and regional bodies had not been handed over greater responsibilities regarding cultural policy during this period.

This has taken place primarily by gradually reducing the fixed reimbursements by the state to libraries, theatres, museums and other cultural activities. The aim of these fixed reimbursements had been to promote the “carrot” principle of ensuring specific cultural objectives at the local and regional levels. Instead, funding is now often allotted on a block grant basis, which local authorities can spend “on cultural projects they themselves prioritised. And according to the new administration reform in Denmark all funding from

the central governments to culture on the local level will from 2011 be allocated on a block grant basic.

On the other hand in recent years, there has been a trend towards a *de-concentration* of cultural policy, in the sense that the responsibility for cultural policy has been decentralised while, at the same time, the state has reinforced and increased its grip on cultural policy (Duelund 2003: 516). Automatic reimbursement programmes have been replaced by contract model, which involves more freedom for local authorities and more power to the state. The central government to an increasing degree, determines what state funding should be spent on and under what conditions it should be used.

As an extension of this political and administrative instrumentalization of cultural policy in the Nordic countries, the goals of cultural policy has been bind to industrial/ economic strategies.

In a Danish report entitled *Denmark's Creative Potential*, published jointly between the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Industry in 2000 and the recent report from 2003 *Denmark in the economy of culture and the creative industries* the argument was made that cultural policy ought to promote increased coordination between cultural industries and the arts, with reference to the necessity of constructing a national cultural industry as a bulwark against the international cultural industry's increasing dominance over the population (Duelund 2003: 397-401). According to this argument, the international cultural industry represents a significant threat to Danish identity and values.

In the Norwegian report entitled *Coordination between the arts and industry* (2001), an argument is made for linkages between culture and industry, partly motivated by an interest in the cultural development of local communities, and partly in order to create more jobs in the regions and in local communities. This is why the report especially points out the positive benefits that can accrue from increased coordination between the arts and industry in the development of the Norwegian regions and local communities.

In Sweden, a closer symbiosis between cultural and industrial development came about primarily via regional trials. These were carried out from 1 July 1998, with the intention of promoting in equal measure, political, economic and administrative decentralisation of state cultural policy. This process led to the implementation of trials in political autonomy in regional cultural policy in Region Skåne, Regional union of Kalmar County, Gotland local authority and Västra Götaland.

Under the Finnish initiatives, the great importance of "content production" to technological hardware expansion has been highlighted as an effective and necessary economic growth promoter in the global network community.

Despite differences in formulation, all these initiatives tend to point in the same direction. Initially it was the ministers of finance during the Nordic model's first instrumentalization phase, from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, who exercised a significant degree of influence on the framework and contents of reforms in cultural policy, with a view to ensuring an efficient use of the cultural funds available and limit the growth of state expenditure. However, it is to an increasing degree the ministers of industry who have been allowed to influence the second phase of instrumentalization, which has taken place since the mid-1990s to the present. The reforms in cultural policy in the Nordic countries at the start of the 21st century, to an increasing degree, have linked together culture and industry to create a common business-orientated growth potential.

The French cultural theorist, Jean Francois Lyotard has in his book *The post-modern Condition: A report on knowledge* (Lyotard 1984) used the concept *performative* to identify the totalising process of instrumental rationality in post-modern societies. In the vacuum that remained after the great narratives and belief in enlightenment and progress had faded away in the established public and cultural sphere, performative knowledge and systemic theories were developed to take their place.

This implies that all knowledge and all products – also artistic ones – must be evaluated by their utility in economic terms. This can be described as an all-encompassing rationality that sets the economic relationship between inputs and outputs above all other rationalities. Instead of asking whether an aesthetic artefact is important, true or interesting from an aesthetic, cultural or democratic point of view, the performative management mentality asks whether it can be sold, or has economic benefits or serves the purpose of political legitimisation. Thus performative management derives its strength directly from power relations, from the strategic behaviour of the economic and bureaucratic medias. Management and legitimisation via performative knowledge become in the end a pure and cynical language of power that displaces all other forms of rationality. Every one of society's activities is forced to obey the rule: "Be operative, that is to say measurable, or disappear!" as the Swedish man of letters, Sven Nilsson, has formulated it (Duelund 2003:529)

Conclusion

The post-war role of the welfare state in Nordic cultural policy was basically to regulate the economic institutions in order to ensure artistic freedom and cultural diversity. But today, the state, regional and local authorities have entered into a symbiosis with the private sector in order to give a higher priority to the economic basis of the arts and culture. Experience and turnover have gradually replaced the original goals of cultural policy, i.e. participation, education and enlightenment. This development can be described using a term from of figure1 as *colonisation*: the financial and political media have colonised the intrinsic values of the arts and culture.

In overall terms, the project has shown that the rationale behind cultural policy in the Nordic countries – in spite of minor variations – can be divided into four separate phases from the 1960s to the present. Each of these phases can according to figure 1 be characterised by different rationalities:

Phase 1: 1960-1975. The expansion of state cultural institutions via a central strategy aimed at *democratisation of culture*. Legitimation of state cultural policy through the need to counteract the standardisation and reification of the arts and culture by the commercial cultural industry. Retention of mechanisms to protect artistic rights with the focus on copyright legislation. Cultural policy is chiefly regarded as a mean of promoting the aesthetic/expressive rationality of art.

Phase 2: 1975-1985. Stimulation of local cultural initiatives through state reimbursement programmes and the strategy of creating a *cultural democracy*. Continued legitimisation of state cultural policy as a bulwark against the effects of the cultural industry. The extension of exclusive rights for authors to new areas is begun. Cultural policy is increasingly being conceptualised from an anthropological viewpoint. The concept of art broadened to culture in a wider sense as amateur activities and everyday culture. Cultural policy is chiefly regarded as a mean of promoting both the aesthetic/expressive rationality of art *and* the rationality of culture.

Phase 3: 1985-1995. A social and financial instrumentalization of policies for culture and the arts combined with a scaling down of the educational aims and the necessity of state regulatory programmes in relation to the cultural industry. This change is brought about by initiatives such as allowing local authorities to take over a larger proportion of the funding and implementation of cultural activities previously organised by the state. The protection of artistic rights is extended to new areas, with technological development and producers as chief beneficiaries. Cultural policy is to a high degree regarded as a mean of promoting rationality of the economic medias of the system, instead of ensuring the interdependence of art and culture as a communicative rationality of life world. The dominant direction of interplay between system and life world are an expanding economic colonisation of art and culture for the purpose of accumulation of capital and economic and development.

Phase 4: 1995 - ?. An economic and political instrumentalization of the arts and culture via *multifaceted* initiatives with the intention to promote a symbiosis between the arts and business, combined with tax reforms and legislation on funding, aimed at encouraging private patrons and companies to sponsor and purchase art. Performance-related contracts and other *New Public Management* mechanisms are introduced into the public administration of culture, which increasingly involves qualitative regulation of public cultural institutions and art funding programmes. Authorship rights are transformed by extending them to comply with international copyright laws, which benefit in particular the rights of producers. State regulation of the commercial culture industry is abandoned in favour of a strategy that promotes a symbiosis of political/bureaucratic institutions with the economic medias. The aim of this new rationality is to exploit the arts and culture in order to stimulate economic growth and political legitimation. Cultural policy is primary regarded as a mean of promoting the rationality of the economic and the controlling rationalities of the political/bureaucratic medias.

Figures that indicate the different rationalities of regulation and stimulation of art and culture compared to figure 1 will be distributed to the presentation of the paper on the conference.

Critical Considerations

In his analysis of the rise and fall of the bourgeois public sphere Habermas finishes in a pessimistic evaluation of the possibilities of art and culture in the liberal bourgeois public sphere. The transformation of the public sphere of the development of commercial cultural industries delimits and marginalizes, according to Habermas, a free production of art and the role of art in society as a medium for expressing the authentic experiences of the citizens and producing enlightenment and understanding of the unknown forces in human life. The reasoning and critical public degenerates into passive consumers of culture. "Public relations" and manipulation techniques replace the principle of publicity (Habermas 1989 (1961)).

In a study *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Calhoun 1992) originated in a September 1989 conference on the occasion of the translated Habermas- publication, 27 years after the publication of the German original, scholars from a wide range of disciplines responded to the work. In the summary of the book *Further Reflections on the Public Sphere* Habermas himself concludes, that during his work he had underestimated the resistance potential of the life world, especially the critical and reasoning potential inherent in the educational system, which since the 1960s has been expanded greatly. What we need is a theory of public spheres and of rationality, which include a wide range of public spheres and rationalities analytic reflected in a horizontal and not vertical model. Perhaps

the strategic behaviour of the system sphere cannot be reflected as distinctively differentiated from the communicative actions of life-world?

Another publication from recent years *Masses, classes and the public sphere* also advocate the idea of a plurality of “counter-public spheres” and is addressing the philosophical concept of the public sphere itself (Hill, Montag 2000).

Also the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann has in his comprehensive studies of social systems argued, that modern society is constituted by interplay between different systems, which are producing and reproducing their own rationalities – their own *autopoiesis* (Luhmann 1984,1998).

It is also the case for the system of art and culture. *Creative and performing artists* are operating in a system reproducing aesthetic traditions, norms and forms of symbolic communications. But in contrast to Habermas, which position reflect a evolutionary approach to historic development, Luhmann totally deny any interplay between the different system, the different rationalities. Art is art, economy is economy, policy is policy with their own autopoiesis not related to others social systems in society.

The theories of Habermas can thus and have been criticized from several points of view:

- In post-modern linguistic and cultural theory the notion of the validity and universality of the rational acts of communication severely questioned. Rational argumentation and reasoning may be necessary elements in the dialogue and communicative acts between individuals, but they are hardly in themselves a form of communication complex enough to the shaping of, cultural competence, meaning and opinion in society or a guarantee of the maintenance of a cultural and political democracy in a state governed by law. The concept of rationality is too distinctive compared to the complex variety of symbolic form of communication and artefacts in post-modern societies
- A lot of masses and classes and cultural varieties have been excluded from the public sphere in its classical form.
- Theories of communication exclude the real power structure in the world and its implications for culture and the arts as reflected in the studies of Michel Foucault. Art and authors as proactive subjects in history is an illusion (Foucault 1977,1981,1986,1991)
- The concept of communicative action in the theories of Habermas underestimates and marginalizes the aesthetic paradigm and the unique rationality of the fine arts and their role for human cognition.

Habermas's major answer in defence of his position is as pointed out in his essay “Further Reflections on the Theory of Public Sphere” (Habermas 1996), the a free and open public sphere in a democratic society governed by law, is the *only* model, which allow us to discuss reflect these critical elements and makes it possible in a reasonable dialogue to clarify the conceptual and theoretical misunderstandings.

But does it make sense to apply the theories of Habermas as a critical framework for research on cultural policy?

Although there are a lot of theoretical and empirical issues to be clarified in the years to come according to the critic of his theories mentioned above, the experiences of the Nordic research project verify *the constitutional paradigm of culture* as one by others fruitful

approaches to research on cultural policy. That is also the case in relation to new challenges raised to cultural policy by expanding globalisation and the revitalisation of nationalism.

In a discourse with Charles Taylor (Taylor 1992) and in his recent works *The post national constellation* (Habermas 2001), he is reflecting the challenges of *multiculturalism*, including the essential global issue of whether cultural right protection ought to be defined as an individual or collective cultural right. This new huge issues national and global cultural policy is reflected in a way, which can complement and up-date the model of national rationalities in cultural policy, discussed in this paper.

Notes

- ¹ In USA the idea of cultural policy is based on the ideological paradigm, that a free-market economy is the most efficient system of stimulating aesthetic production, securing artistic freedom and improving cultural diversity (Chartrand & McCaughey 1989, Mulcahy 1995). The rationality of the American *helper-model* of cultural policy has mostly been to support art and culture threw tax-exemptions accordance to the liberal philosophy, that money is lying best in the pockets of private people. In this perspective it can be argued that the helper model of American cultural policy is representation of rationality, which are legitimising neo-liberalism and a free market-economy as an efficient universal and global tool of securing optimal artistic autonomy and quality.

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