



EXZELLENZCLUSTER

Kulturelle Grundlagen von Integration

UNIVERSITÄT KONSTANZ



KONSTANZER KULTURWISSENSCHAFTLICHES KOLLOQUIUM

Diskussionsbeiträge N.F. 2

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Creative Subject and Modernity: Towards an
Archeology of the Cultural Construction of Creativity

DEZEMBER 2007

Konstanzer Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolloquium Wintersemester 2007/2008

Kulturwissenschaftliches Forschungskolleg / SFB 485

„Norm und Symbol. Die kulturelle Dimension sozialer und politischer Integration“

in Kooperation mit dem

Exzellenzcluster 16

„Kulturelle Grundlagen von Integration“

Mi, 7. November 2007 Prof. Hans Belting

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„Blickwechsel zwischen zwei Kulturen: Perspektive als arabische Sehtheorie und als westliche Bildtheorie“

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„Kreativsubjekt und Moderne. Zu einer Archäologie der kulturellen Konstruktion von Kreativität“

Mi, 30. Januar 2008 Prof. Karl Schlögel

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„Probleme eines Narrativs der Gleichzeitigkeit in der Geschichtsschreibung“

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‘To breed an animal with the capacity of being creative. How much all this presupposes!’ In late modern culture, ‘creativity’ seems to be a game everybody can and everybody has to play. As far as the philosophy of aesthetics is concerned, the semantics of creativity has experienced a total decline during the last centuries - in an article of 1988, Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht can thus describe it as an ‘outmoded concept’. Yet, in the social world outside the narrow realm of aesthetic theory, creativity has, since the second half of the 1980s, been the nodal point of an expansive field of discourse which infiltrates diverse arrangements of social practice. In all of them, to be creative, to unfold in oneself one’s potential for creativeness has turned out to be a basic set of competences required of an advanced modern subject. This is the case for the discourse of organizations and economics as it occurs in pedagogy and education, in the discourse of general psychology, personality and biographical self-help and finally in that of the development of private, intimate relationships. Despite the diversity and alleged functional differentiation of all these fields, the criteria of creativeness ascribed to the ideal, desirable and achievable form of the subject seem to float with ease between them. Although it might not be unproblematic to translate this phenomenon without hesitation from discourses to non-discursive practices, we observe a remarkable and bewildering cultural universality of the desire and the obligation to be creative, with the ideal of the artistic subject - which Boltanski and Chiapello detect in the field of economy - and Richard Florida’s urban ‘creative class’ as its complements. Within the universal horizon of this late-modern order of knowledge, the desire not to be creative seems already at the margin of the culturally intelligible. If in other phases of modernity the primitive or the amoral, the excessive or the socially marginalized used to form the respective anti-subject, now the non-creative, the creativeless, seem to represent such a figure outside the respectable or even the normal.

It requires a step backwards into the cultural history of modernity to become aware of the extreme specificity and contingency of this historical moment in which the social generalization of the creative occurs. A sociological puzzle opens up: When going through our standard narrations of modernity, it is a culture of subjectivity diametrically opposed to that of creativity which forms the dominant and genuinely modern pattern: this is a culture of rationalization and disciplinization of the subject. Leading theorists of modernity such as Marx, Max Weber, Elias, Adorno and Foucault are at odds in many respects, but they all share a picture of modernity as a process of rationalization. The corresponding subject type is one of an internalization of normative rules, one of purposive and regular action and of reflexive self-control. In the long history of modernity, both its bourgeois version from the 18th up to the beginning of the 20th century and that social formation which Peter Wagner labelled ‘organized modernity’ from the 1920s to the 1970s limit the cultural modelling of the subject as a creative and expressive type, as a figure of semiotic experimentation to a narrow space: to that of the arts understood as a functional, differentiated system of ‘autonomous’ art. In a classical theory of modernization which distinguishes between different social realms operating alongside their specific codes - the most sophisticated one can be found in work of Luhmann - the semantics of creativity thus occupies a marginal

place, restricted to an artistic realm, whereas the dominant mode of subjectification beyond that is one of anti-expressive rationalization.

We are thus faced with a puzzle which is easily dismissed in our current constellation of omnipresent discourses of creativity: The puzzle consists in a remarkable shift of dominant models of subjectivity which at first sight might even resemble a complete inversion and the explanation of which brings up some difficulties. In the greater part of the history of modern culture, the creative subject was situated at the periphery of the legitimate. Partly, its incalculability represented an object of discrimination against which a hegemonic culture set itself, favouring either the self-controlled, moral and purposive-rational agent as depicted in Max Weber's Protestant Ethics or the socially adaptive role player as sketched in William Whyte's 'Organization Man'. The expressive-creative subject so to speak used to be the cultural 'other' of both the moderate bourgeois and of the organization man. But since the 1970s and 80s, we can observe an amazing turn in the modern order of knowledge concerning different fields of the social world in which the creative and expressive culture of subjectivity is moving from the periphery to the very centre. The cultural other transforms itself into the nodal point of a new hegemonic structure in which creativity is not a character trait under suspicion, but a generalized ego-ideal and obligation at the same time. How could this cultural inversion happen? What are the implications of the creative subject? In which respect does it form a break with classical rationalized forms of subjectivity?

In the following, I do not intend to answer all these questions, but rather to open up a space for possible and - as it seems to me - indispensable analyses of the development which the cultural pattern of the creative has taken within the course of the Western history of subjectivity. From my point of view, there are two aspects of this process of creative subjectification which are of special interest here: on the one hand the historical sequence of modern aesthetic movements, ranging from Romanticism across the avantgarde movements to postmodernist counter culture, a sequence to be interpreted as fields of certain techniques and definitions of generalized and naturalized aesthetic subjectivity beyond the arts. On the other hand there is the process of overlapping and overdetermination which takes places between the three areas of aesthetic discourse, economic discourse and psychological discourse in the 20th century. The universalization of an aesthetic-expressive subject and its quasi-technical formation in certain technologies of the self as carried out in the aesthetic counter-movements from 1790 to 1970 on the one hand, the aesthetic-economic-psychological complex of the creative on the other hand, seem to form two basic and complex historical preconditions for the hegemony of the creative subject we experience today. My paper consists of three parts: I will first briefly sketch some central categories for such a type of analysis; in the main part, I will give a rough analysis of the process of universalization of creative subjectification in the aesthetic counter-movement of modernity; finally, I will present an outlook on the process of the overlapping of discourses in the 20th century.

First, I would like to consider some basic conceptual tools necessary for such a type of analysis. I derive these tools above all from Foucault's project of an archeology and genealogy of forms of the subject, without simply imitating Foucault, who in some respect rather underestimated the significance of the modelling of modern subjects as creative. What is characteristic of such a - in a broad sense - Foucauldian, poststructuralist analysis of creative subject forms?

In modern culture, creativity - understood as a bundle of certain attributes of production of the new, of expressivity and heightened perception - is normally ascribed to subjects. Only on a second plane can creativity be imagined as a quality of supra-subjective units such as for instance institutions. Now on the level of subjects, creativity is frequently presupposed to be something internal and something pre-given: as qualities of the inner life of individuals which seem to exist in a pre-cultural, pre-social realm and which often are said to be repressed by social forces. It is exactly at this point that an analytical perspective influenced by Foucault and other poststructuralists is able to shift the perspective on subjectivity: The gist of this perspective is that the alleged autonomy of the modern subject depends on a constellation of being subjected to certain cultural complexes which define and produce legitimate forms of subjectivity, thus on a process of ‚subjectification’. The seemingly inner world of a subject then can be analyzed as the result of a - as Deleuze put it - cultural ‚in-folding’. For Foucault, this holds above all for attributes of a ‚rational’ subject such as reflexivity or moral conscience. Now, however, we can transfer this idea to the complex of creativity. Against its self-representation as something inner and natural, as a natural core of the subject which - in a prolongation of a Foucauldian ‚repression hypothesis’ - is often repressed by social forces, so-called creativity can be analyzed as a product of very specific historical discursive formations which define and naturalize alleged creative attributes of subjects and in this way produce them. However, creativity cannot only be reconstructed as a discursive production, but simultaneously as a production of very specific cultural practices, certain technologies of the self, connected to these discourses, which mould a body - and also a mind and soul - which routinely demonstrate creative capacities. To borrow Judith Butler’s phrase, the seemingly inner core of creativity then turns out to be a sequence of performative acts. So, creativity gains a technical character. The question to be pursued is then: What are the techniques through which in a certain cultural context actions and perceptions become ‚creative’? With regard to creativity, this perspective is in some way paradoxical: Creativity is often not only ascribed to subjects, but to the attributes of individuals, of particular, singular beings. Besides, it is connected to the capacity for producing ‚new’ elements which in some way are unpredictable. However, the perspective I would favour directs our attention to the routine character and the social, collective - which is not identical however with the intersubjective, - character of creativity as certain routine technologies of a certain subject-type.

For an analysis of subjectification, I would emphasize two additional aspects: one is that of the passionate attachment, linked to subject models, the other is the materiality of the subject production. All subjectivity, including creative subjectivity, has a double structure: it is a set of cultural criteria of the adequate and the legitimate, but at the same time it is the object of considerable psychic, affective investment. Judith Butler labels this aspect the ‚passionate attachment’ to a certain form of subjectivity. In fact, in order to grasp the impact of the figure of the creative it is indispensable to consider both aspects: on the one hand it is to be analyzed as a catalogue of cultural criteria - this is the Foucauldian aspect in its narrower sense -, on the other hand it is to be reconstructed as an ego ideal which carries affective attraction. Without this passionate attachment, the cultural attractiveness of creative features, their motivational force would remain inexplicable.

Against a mentalist or textualist prejudice, it must, however, be said that subjects and, all the more, creative subjects are not ephemeral phenomena of minds and texts. They are culturally formed materiality, besides the materiality of bodies above all the materiality of

artefacts, of complex subject-object-constellations. A specific subjectivity depends on a corresponding ensemble of artefacts, of space and architecture, of tools and technical media. Concerning the form of reflexive, moral subjects we have for instance become more and more aware that diaries and private rooms of one's own are necessary material components of a subject living in the inner realm of its conscience and consciousness. As to the form of creative subjects, we should direct our attention in a similar manner to these material circumstances and artefactual components: the specific technical media from literacy to computers, the structuration of space in studios or creative team offices, up to whole city quarters suitable for creative industries.

I have now collected a couple of heuristic categories which in my view could be instructive for analyzing subject cultures in a kind of cultural archeology in general and the subject culture of creativity in particular. But where do we have to search in order to find out about the uneven path of the definition and the generalization of the creative subject form in the metamorphosis of modern culture? I thus arrive at the second part of my paper. There can be hardly any doubt that to explain the establishment of creative subjectivities, certain aesthetic movements within modern culture are of crucial interest. I would argue that three contexts of aesthetic movements are of specific influence for defining and practicing what creative subjects are: around 1800 the context of Romanticism, around 1900/1920 the diverse movements of the so-called avantgarde movements; finally in the 1960 and 70s the complicated complex of revolutionary counter cultures and the aesthetic movement of postmodernism. Yet, from the perspective of a cultural archeology and genealogy, a particular, shifted perspective towards these movements seems necessary. Firstly: It cannot be a question of seeking historical 'roots' or continual 'traditions' of creativity in modern thought, a strategy Charles Taylor pursues in his seminal volume 'Sources of the Self'. Rather, romanticism, avantgarde movements and postmodernist counter cultures can be interpreted as cultural niches in which in a very specific historical moment certain alternative and at first oppositional discourses and material practices concerning subjectivity are produced, niches of cultural innovation. These are not continuous historical traditions, but rather cultural elements which, later on, other cultural contexts draw upon and interpret in a very selective way. Late-modern creativity consequently is not a copy of romantic creativity, but rather it draws upon and reinterprets certain elements of this romantic identity and embeds and combines them in a different context. Thus, instead of a logic of cultural continuations there is a logic of temporal intertextualities at work here.

Secondly, the aesthetic movements cannot be reduced to mere revolutions in art, nor to anti-modern protest movements. Frequently, we come across the reading that romanticism and avantgarde modernism in particular contributed to an autonomization of art in relation to other spheres of modern society. Besides, we find the classical sociological interpretation that these movements should be grasped as anti-modern, rather regressive forces which - in the end in vain - fought their anti-rational fight. From the perspective of an archeology of subject forms, quite a different story emerges: Romanticism, modernist avantgarde and postmodernist counter culture are on the contrary radically modern movements in redefining modernity and above all the form of the modern subject in a radically different way: as aesthetic subjectivity. It is not anti-modernity, but another modernity which is at work here. Above all, however, this aesthetic subjectification in all three movements is not at all limited to art as a reduced sphere, but aims at a universalization of aesthetic subjectivity: the aesthetic subject here is discursively and partly also practically produced as

a generalizable subject form. In this way, they all can understand themselves as attempts at a cultural revolution, and are in fact anti-hegemonic movements of a general subject transformation in the direction of the aesthetic.

Romanticism is the first complex of discourses and practices which around 1800 develops a certain version of an aesthetic and in its way creative subjectivity, with the creative – ‚das Schöpferische‘ - built as one specific element into the aesthetic as a broader structure. The semantic and technical expenditure of this reformulation is considerable. For an archaeology of creative subjectivity, several elements are of specific importance here: The romantic construction of subjectivity is based upon a set of distinct differences, opposed to the dominant bourgeois identity of a rational being, namely on three planes. It is directed against morality, against the utility of purposive rationality and against the routine character of repetitive action. The romantic discourse carries out a cultural inversion, presenting the hitherto desirable as the deficient: moral subjectification turns out to be a restriction of a horizon of possibilities; purposive rationality a procedure of postponement of satisfactions; repetition becomes uneventfulness and boredom. Generally, Romantic discourse is directed against the form of a rule-following subject, placed in an ordered, realistic universe which finds its primary place of life in bourgeois work and bourgeois family life. What Lothar Pikulik calls the Romantic ‚uneasiness towards normality‘ is positively translated into a code of the aesthetic: For this, it is crucial to model the subject not primarily as an agent of exterior action, but as an interior realm of perceptions and interpretations. The subject is understood as the constructing authority of a meaningful universe, centred around itself. Bourgeois everyday realism is thus contrasted with a romantic constructivism in which the objects of the world are not objectively present, but turn into carriers of contingent meanings. In this context, romantic discourse elaborates a rich semantics of inner life, consisting of perceptions, imaginations and emotions, which amounts to what McGann calls the ‚depth model‘ of the Romantic subject. To have such a deep inner life - in contrast to alleged bourgeois superficiality - presents itself as a theme of Romantic passionate attachment towards oneself. Its subject is aesthetic in the sense of the Greek ‚aisthesis‘: as a centre of perceptions in their variability and intensity. It is to be stressed, though, that the Romantic discourse of subjectivity is closely intertwined with certain Romantic practices, with technologies of the self which provide a training programme of Romantic subjectification. Romantic love, but also the Romantic observation of nature or the practice of listening to music provide such techniques, which literally produce the sensitized interiority of Romantic subjects.

It is against this background that Romanticism models its subject as somebody ‚creative‘. The semantics of individuality, of expression and of the new are central here. That Romantic discourse and above all certain Romantic practices - as for instance the elaborated self-observation of perceptions and emotions - bring about a radicalized code of individuality has often been pointed out. Paradoxically, the general form of the subject here consists in being particular, individual in the sense of something singular, irreplaceable. In the Romantic perspective, this particularity of every person is naturally present, but at the same time it is exactly through certain procedures, for instance self-observation of imaginations, a training in seeing the unique in the loved other etc., that this allegedly natural core of an individual is systematically produced. Romanticism produces an inner realm as a result which it afterwards presents as its very precondition. This code of

individuality can then motivate a more specific, well-known Romantic semantics of ‚originality‘ and ‚ingenuity‘.

Individuality is closely connected to expression: The Romantic notion of expression is situated at the core of its production of creativity. The Romantic subject primarily lives in its inner world, but simultaneously it strives to express these inner processes in outer deeds and works. The outward world then is of interest in a double sense: on the one hand as a projection screen of interpretations and intensities, on the other as a self-made expression of inner ideas. Thus, the Romantic structuration of action differs from its bourgeois counterpart: Action is not primarily formed as means to ends or as doings which follow norms and values, but as the shaping of objects - including one's own self and intersubjective relations - according to inner strivings in order to reflect oneself in one's outer works and doings. This model of expressive creativity presupposes a positive concept of the ‚new‘. Indeed, Romanticism presupposes a discursive transition from what has been called an aesthetics of imitation to an aesthetics of invention. This aesthetics of invention operates with a concept of ‚imagination‘ which Coleridge opposes to classical ‚fancy‘: Imagination means ascribing new meanings to familiar phenomena. The new here is tied to a shift of meanings. However, the pleading of the radically novel against the mere repetition of the same is again not only a discursive fact, but an aim of systematic training. In Romanticism - for instance in the doings of Romantic writers and composers - we find quite a few of these techniques: The play of free association and combination, the recourse to alienating meanings, finally the confidence in chance which does not count on planned construction are elements of such Romantic techniques of creativity.

Romantic subjectification finds its social basis in a tiny, bourgeois-based group, but simultaneously its redefinition of the subject raises the claim of a universal upheaval of perspective. The proper, the authentic subject is said to be an aesthetic, thus also an expressive-creative one - often the rhetorical structure of this universalization includes a recourse to ‚nature‘, sometimes also to religious forces -, and Romanticization is a strategy which is directed to the whole of everyday life. However, there are several limits built into the Romantic context inhibiting this universalization: One limit is the ambiguous use of a semantics of ingenuity which partly suggests that there are distinct qualitative differences between human beings, as far as their aesthetic dispositions and expressive competences are concerned. So, the figure of the artist does not seem as easily generalizable, but rather forms an unreachable elite model. Secondly, the aesthetic revolution of Romanticism is not a revolution of the ordinary, but of the extraordinary, of - with Max Weber - ‚außeralltägliche‘ realms. We find a fierce disgust towards the everyday within Romanticism which encourages it to retreat into special niches such as nature or music and largely to refrain from core fields of bourgeois life such as work or politics. Finally, the social and the intersubjective seems to represent a blind spot in the Romantic universe which rather has a monologous structure. Thus, the role of the social other for example in creativity is not systematically considered.

Apart from these self-limitations on a successful universalization, we can detect a highly instructive contradiction and ambiguity in Romantic subjectification: that between the subject as an inner core and an inner plural. Romantic creativity is anchored in two conflicting sources: on the one hand we find the concept of an inner core of an individual centre which - against all possible resistance from the environment - is to be expressed in the outwards doings and works; on the other hand, we come across an idea of contingencies

within the self, of plural voices and incalculable forces which in their ambiguity permanently produce new and also unintelligible elements. Authenticity and contingency are thus two conflicting codes in which Romantic creative creativity constructs itself.

The avantgarde cultures at the beginning of the 20th century and later on the postmodernist counter cultures of the 1960/70s in many respects appropriate und reinterpret Romantic discourses and practices of creativity. The diverse avantgarde movements of around 1900 and shortly after - comprising aestheticism, expressionism and life-reform, futurism, surrealism, dadaism and others - can be understood as a second attempt of a broad anti-bourgeois movement of universalizing aesthetic, creative subjectivity. Again, and in a different version, the aesthetic and the creative are generalized as attributes of a proper modern subject. I would only like to stress some elements in which the avantgarde discourses and practices of creativity differ from the Romantic ones and which are of decisive importance in the late modern appropriation.

Although the notions of the aesthetic are not identical in the different movements of the so-called avantgarde they all share a concept of the subject as inherently transgressive. Transgression is seen as an apriori quality of subjects which, however, is systematically inhibited under bourgeois conditions. The identification of the subject with something inherently transgressive means that it has a tendency to break its own boundaries, to burst open structures and systems and thus not to remain the same. We could regard this as an apriori ‚creativity‘ of the subject, however, less in the sense that it produces works and is expressive, but in that it has a tendency to change its own form and thus to become something new itself. Crucial for the avantgarde concepts and techniques of such transgression is a conceptualization of the object world as a helpful screen of irritations. When the avantgarde cultures presuppose a positive idea of the new then it is understood as the disruptively new which results from the subject in its perceptive structure being again and again irritated by external stimuli and thrills of a dynamic object world. This object world is the emphatically modern world of the metropolis and of its technological apparatuses, of new media and mass events, of consumption, public sexuality and traffic chaos. It seems that in contrast to the Romantic anchoring of creativity in the natural interiority of the subject - which then made the object world appear in great part as the noise of estrangement -, the avantgarde cultures anchor this self-transformation in the subject's openness to a fascinating, irritating outward modern world. Consequently, at least partly, avantgarde culture reverses the Romantic priority set on the natural into a priority of the artificial. The transgression of the avantgarde subject consists in an imaginative and disruptive appropriation of the impressions and things of an urban, technical world. Characteristic technologies of the self of such an avantgarde subject consequently are film watching as it is analyzed by Walter Benjamin or the strolling around of the metropolitan ‚flaneur‘.

Apart from this sensitivity towards the irritations of modern everyday world, it is the idea of subversion which gives the avantgarde subject a specific profile. This subject not only undergoes a training in experiencing shocks and irritating impressions, it is also motivated by causing these irritations itself. Creative acts in the broadest sense thus are subversive acts, acts which irritate widely held common sense assumptions and confront them with surprising, maybe shocking alternative ways of seeing and doing things. Thus, in the avantgarde context, what we could call creativity achieves a social, intersubjective meaning: For the Romanticist, creativity is primarily an act of individual production from

the individual interior; for the avantgarde, this production of the new can only be measured against a social background of common sense which the creative act resists and seeks to subvert. New is what irritates and disrupts these socially shared meanings. Creative acts as subversive acts thus require an audience whose reactions provide proof as to whether something counts as irritating.

In this context, avantgarde artistic creativity in the narrower sense comprises some characteristic elements: The production of the new in many respects loses its meaning of individual originality, but is rather grasped and practiced as an experimental arrangement of things. It is not the invention of something unique, but the combination of given elements which in the avantgarde sense makes up the new. Here it is typical that the field of the objects able to be treated creatively is expanded into the infinite of the total realm of everyday objects - the realm of the 'objets trouvés' of arbitrary origin. Finally, the act of demonstrating the creative object to a surprised or shocked audience is decisive in order to render the work novel. In sum, the avantgarde subject culture in several respects thus radicalizes the universalizing claims of an aesthetic, creative subjectivity: the model of the transgressive; sensitiveness towards irritations resulting from the modern object world; finally, the practice of subversion in a social context seem to be decisive components of this radicalization.

The third context of an anti-hegemonic cultural movement which seeks to universalize the model of the aesthetic, creative subject can be observed in the 1960s and 70s. The so-called counter culture of this time, connected with a certain version of postmodernist artistic practices represents a third anti-hegemonic niche of 'cultural revolution' whose claims point in the direction of a redefinition of subjectivity. This third complex of discourses and practices contains a highly complicated structure and to understand it adequately several aspects should be considered: From my point of view, the concept 'counter culture' should be preferred over narrower concepts such as 'generation of 1968', 'students revolt' or others. The concept 'counter culture' illustrates that the sociological relevance of this movement consists less in its outwardly political character, but rather in its cultural revolutionary impetus for the reform of everyday life. And the underlying structure of this impetus is an anti-rational aesthetic and in a way creative subject in a new version, a position such as it is explicitly stated in the texts of the French 'situationists'. Again this aesthetic counter-subject is not a mere invention of discourses, but an ensemble of practices of subjectification in diverse fields such as sexuality, music, meditation, collective work etc. The youth cultures of the 1970s represent an important section of these counter-cultural practices. Many segments of so-called postmodernist art - above all in plastic and graphic arts, but also in performative happenings and other anti-modernist art forms - in the 1960s and 70s can be situated in the broader context of the counter cultures. Whereas Romanticism and avantgarde are movements of aesthetic subjectification centred around artistic movements, it seems typical of the counter culture that here artistic practices represent merely one element besides other practices which all share their aesthetic-creative orientation. Again, complex processes of cultural reappropriation between the counter cultures, avantgarde culture and Romanticism take place, but there are also some shifts:

Firstly, as to the rhetorical foundations for universalizing the aesthetic, in the broad discursive context of the counter culture we find elements of a remarkable psychologization. Elements of a natural expressiveness or a basic transgressiveness of the self are resumed, but by combining these semantics with a psychologization an allegedly

fundamental motivation for being creative is projected into the subject. In a paradigmatic version, this motivation for being aesthetic is a sort of pleasure principle and the classical form of this psychologization can be found in Marcuse's identification of an 'aesthetic eros' which operates with the difference between pleasure and reality principle, with the aesthetic as that perceptive and affectual structure of the subject existing beyond the mere reality principle. In some way or other, the counter cultural discourse presupposes a basic, unlimited human desire for unfolding and experimenting which is not fixed upon a definite aim, but in the proclaimed 'creative age' plays with shifting aims. What this psychologization of the aesthetic succeeds in is a profound reversal of perspective on the subject: whereas before the idea of an aesthetic and creative subject was always threatened with the objection of being supplementary or even parasitical towards a more profound, pre-aesthetic reality of purposive human existence, now the tide turns: Now, the aesthetic-creative nature is presented as the most natural quality of human pleasurable strivings.

A second element of counter-culture and postmodernism is the discourse and practice of semiotization which partly is translated into a stylization of the self. The basic identification of the social world with a constellation of competing and overlapping semiotic systems which affect the subject and which, vice versa, a creative subject is able to uncover in a masterly fashion, to ironize and to recombine, is not only an invention of the theoretical and artistic discourse of postmodernism, but represents fundamental background of those practices of stylization of the subject as they have taken place in a diversity of youth cultures since the 1960s. Aesthetization here is above all the practice of a semiotic perspective on and creative handling of seemingly banal details of everyday life, above all of consumer culture. The boundary between life-world and the aesthetic here indeed is breaking down. This stylization of the person as well as the psychologization is closely connected to a third element typical of counter-cultural aesthetization: the turn to the body. In many respects, the Romantic subject was focused on the mind and the inner world, thus implicitly imitating bourgeois scepticism towards the body; avantgarde culture only partly revised this constellation. For the counter culture and related postmodernist art forms, the focus on the body considerably contributes to the new universalization of the aesthetic and the creative, and this in a double sense: On the one hand the body seems to be a natural basis for creative processes in the broadest sense, the body seems to long for lived experiences and has a tendency to permanent self-modification; simultaneously, the body - its surface, its movements, its affects and intensities - seems to form a prominent place for aesthetic creation and recreation.

A final and central shift in the discourse and practice of the creative which the counter culture carried out is its new emphasis on the group, on the collectivity as a condition and arena for creative processes. Here the contrast to Romantic self-centredness and its opposition against the social is distinct and the shift transforms creativity into an allegedly social practice in the strict sense. Counter-cultural discourse and practice perceives collectivities as an aesthetic precondition in a threefold sense: collectivities are communities of style - such as in the lifestyle groups of youth culture -, they are collectivities of communal lived experiences, lived experiences which depend on the presence of a group of others; finally and prominently, the group appears as a medium for creative processes. The group here is seen as an ensemble of intersubjective irritations and impulses and of creative cooperation which cannot be replaced by individual originality. The summer schools of the

fluxus movements, Wahrhol's 'factory' or the art school movement of the 1970s all represent examples of such a creative practice in groups.

Now, the counter culture, including what Hutcheon called the artistic 'postmodernism of resistance' was per definition an anti-establishment movement of a self-proclaimed 'small radical minority'. Yet, all the elements I have enumerated - the psychologization, the semiotization, the turn to the body, finally the practice of the creative group - provided essential elements for the presentation of an aesthetic, creative subject as the universal horizon of modernity proper. I would surely be careful to interpret the sequence from Romanticism across the avantgarde cultures to the counter culture as a linear process of enhancement, but it would be adequate to understand them as a number of rounds in which different strategies of universalizing aesthetic, creative subjectivity are developed.

Yet, the final success of these strategies in the battle of modern subjectification cannot be explained when the analytical focus remains limited to the realm of aesthetic movements. In the last section of my paper, I can only briefly point out a second decisive process which during the 20th century has obviously contributed to the emergence of the creative as a culturally accepted and desired model of the subject which would deserve some closer scrutiny: the overlapping of the aesthetic discourses and practices with economic and psychological discourses which, stemming from different sources, in the end promote and naturalize in a similar manner the rise of the culture of the creative subject. What seems indeed remarkable in the development of models of the subject during the 20th century is that the model of 'creativity' does not remain restricted to the sphere of artistic discourses. Already the complexes of aesthetic discourses and practices I have dealt with in the context of the avantgarde and the counter culture break up the narrow boundaries of a field of arts as a functionally differentiated system. This is all the more the case in economic discourses and in those of the human sciences, above all in psychology and their therapeutic environments.

Already since the beginning of modernity, economic discourses, i.e. discourses which define 'an order of what it is possible to think and to say' concerning work, consumption, the market, rationality, planning, organizations etc., make considerable efforts in defining new subject positions, and they are closely connected to corresponding complexes of practices and of subjective self-interpretations. The subject of work, the professional subject here always played a prominent role. In his 'Protestant Ethic' Max Weber reconstructed in a pathbreaking way the subjectification of a self-controlled bourgeois professional subject in the field of work in early modernity in the 18th century. Meanwhile it has become obvious that the constellation in this early modern economic field was already more complicated: For instance, Joseph Vogl has pointed out in which way the 18th century self-made man not only turns out to be a rational being, but also includes considerable affective attachment to his work on a risky market; and Colin Campbell reconstructed the degree to which, in the context of the Romantic discourses, a capacity to derive imaginative satisfaction from objects has been developed which provides the background for modern dispositions of a consumer culture. However, we can observe a genuine, considerable discursive shift concerning the definition of an economic subject only since around 1910. From now on, in three steps and in three different discursive contexts, a historically in some respect amazing redefinition of competent economic subjects sets in, which ascribes certain innovative dispositions to them that turn them into creative subjects in the broadest sense. The first of these discursive contexts is the discourse of the entrepreneur in the 1910s and 1920s. One

should keep in mind that at first it sees itself to a considerable degree on the political defensive: The contemporary societal tendency is that of organized capitalism (or even socialism) and the erosion of bourgeois economic individualism. Yet, in its elaboration of the economic subject as the entrepreneur this discourse contains a historically effective cultural innovation in regard to subjectification. The discourse of entrepreneurship confronts the model of an economic subject of systematic planning and mere rational calculating; it sees the genuine attributes of economic competence in the masterly handling of incalculability, the skilful perception of new market chances and the corresponding invention of novel products, the playful speculation with risks and chances. Although the term ‚creativity’ is not explicitly used in this context, it does contain a specific model of creativity: it is less the creativity of individual work, but the creativity which arises from a careful observation of possibilities and lacks in a market constellation which this discourse describes. The new is the relatively new in comparison to already existing offers, so that creativity here presupposes a sense of comparison. The model of the entrepreneur marks a decisive cultural innovation, but the model still lacks a claim of universalization: In some respects, comparable to the Romantic artist, the entrepreneur here rather appears as an elite model which is not accessible to everybody.

Here, the second discursive context, the discourse on human capital and human personal resources in the 1950s and 60s, sets in. This discourse aims at reforming the type of the bureaucratic organizations and imagines a new subject model which could bring about this change: Against the pattern of a socially adaptive subject striving for security, this discourse, which already overlaps with certain psychological debates, elaborates the model of a genuinely self-responsible and imaginative subject, striving for personal challenges and self-development. Crucial is the position that this subject model now seems generalizable for all employers or even all workers and that it is applicable for the work inside organizations. The third discursive context, the postmodern management discourse of the 1980s and 1990s, centering around Tom Peters, Rosebeth Kanter, Charles Handy and others, shares some similarities with the discourse of human capital: a universalization of the work subject as a locus of psychic self-development, of self-experimentation and enthusiasm towards the new and challenging is taking place. It is instructive to see how the semantic fields of the aesthetic, of creative science and of play are inserted into this economic discourse. We can observe here two additional elements: on the one hand the discourse of the entrepreneur is resumed and universalized into the model of what Nikolas Rose calls the ‚enterprising self’. Work inside organizations and between organizations - and partly even social life beyond economic organizations - are regarded as playing fields of a subject which in itself contains the potential of being enterprising, i.e. innovation-seeking. The second element - and we can detect here a parallel to the corresponding aesthetic discourses - consists in a close tie between economic creativity and team work: Unlike the classic entrepreneur, creative work is now said to depend fundamentally on creative small collectivities. At any rate, in postmodern management discourse the modelling of the economic subject of work as a naturally innovative, creative subject reaches its peak.

It has become obvious that at least since the mid-20th century, both the economic discourses and the aesthetic-counter cultural discourses of the creative subject draw upon a third discursive field: that of psychology. Against the background of Foucault’s analyses of the connection between the history of the modern subject and the history of the human sciences, this influence should not come as a surprise: Since the 19th century the psy-

disciplines have contributed considerably to the definition of normality and anormality, desirable and pathological states of mind and universalized subject models. In our context, the shift which in the 1950s starts in psychological discourse is of decisive importance, a shift which the new American psychology of personality centered around texts of Maslow, Allport, Rogers and others brings about. This shift would deserve some closer scrutiny. Broadly speaking, one can detect here a discursive transformation from a psychology which defines the normal and desirable subjectivity as the competence of social adaptation to a psychology which is focused on a concept of 'self-growth', a self-growth which is closely linked to dispositions of creativity. The discursive field of a psychology of social adaptation, against which the psychology of personality, so-called 'growth psychology' is directed encompasses a heterogeneous complex which contains texts of authors as diverse as Alfred Adler and Eysenck: Paradigmatic here is Eysenck's dualism between the introverted, self-centred person and the extroverted, socially adaptable being, with the latter understood as the normal case and the former as the pathological. In contrast, growth psychology develops an opposing semantics of the normal: The subject is now said to dispose of a natural desire for self-fulfilment, a wish to express its inner potentialities in its action and its experiences, also against the resistance of routines and expectations. These self-actualizing personalities develop what is allegedly present in their inner core right from the beginning: the capacity for intensive lived experiences, for spontaneity and experimentation and - as it is explicitly stated for instance in the texts of Maslow - of creativity, which means inventiveness, a perceptiveness open for unknown possibilities. The univerzalisation of the subject of self-growth here amounts to an obligation to follow these universal demands of the inner self: 'what humans can be, they must be. They must be true to their own nature.' (Maslow: *Motivation and Personality*, 1954, 22)

It would be instructive to follow in more detail the paths of these processes of overlapping which have obviously occurred between the aesthetic, the economic and the psychological discourses since the late 1950s, altogether naturalizing the creative subject. To describe this cultural process, I would find helpful the concept of cultural overdetermination of subject positions as Ernesto Laclau uses it. What we are observing since the 1960s with regard to the creativity of the subject is exactly such a process of overdetermination. Overdetermination - originally a Freudian concept which is now transferred to cultural theory - has a double connotation: On the one hand it means that different cultural codes from different social fields and discourses which are at first isolated from one another bring about the same cultural pattern in a sort of mutual reinforcement. Thus, the model of the creative subject seems to be overdetermined by aesthetic, economic and psychological discourses. On the other hand, overdetermination implies at the same time the element of immanent ambivalences and contradictions: The different discourses seemingly reinforce the same cultural pattern, but as they are different discourses - which additionally are heterogeneous themselves - they transport their immanent and mutual differences into the new cultural pattern which turns out to be less homogenous and stable than it seems at first sight. Concerning the creative subject of the present, there are diverse instabilities which come to the fore as a result of overdetermination: the ambivalences between a semantics of authenticity and the inner core and between a semantics of contingency and experimentation; the ambivalence between an anti-social impulse and an affirmation of the group; the ambivalence between a model of creativity which finds its confirmation in itself and a creativity conceptualized in a model of the market. In the end,

an archeology of the creative subject would reconstruct in detail these fractures within the discourses and practices, fractures which possibly undermine the self-universalization of creative subjectivity. To gain ground in order to regard it from outside and not to accept it as the end of the history of the subject, will be a difficult, but necessary task.

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Perspective: Arab Mathematics and Renaissance Western Art, November 2007