

The State of the “Green and Digital” Art: On Cultural Economy’s Twin Transitions

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Abstract

Today’s cultural/creative industries are facing a triple “stress test”, pressured by ideological (e.g., traditionalism/conservatism vs. modernism/progressivism at the level of value systems), ecological (e.g., with the tension in an art deliberately friendly to macro-level sustainability, but not always to micro-subsistence) and technological factors (e.g., with the transition of artistic performance from handwork’s soft touch to “hardware and software”, as well as under the threat of the ubiquitous robotisation and the establishment, horribly dictu, of a “useless artistic class”. The present essay is, before claiming ultimate originality, a step forward to a useful insight into the way in which cultural-artistic production (which, par excellence, regards a minority of us) and the consumption of cultural-artistic goods (which, to various extents, literally involves us all) will manifest in the more or less distant future. Resorting to economics in an excursion that crosses disciplinary realms, is not fortuitous, since we deal with values and prices, business and governance models, de- and re-professionalization, all in an ideo-/eco-/techno-logical force field. Economics is (a)credited as the science of human action, socially ordering subjective goals and scarce means, also warning about the manmade degradation of the resource potential given by the natural environment, or reconciling scales of intimate preferences and technological recipes. And the economics-of-culture subset is (also) about subjective values/ideas and their inter-subjective valorisation, about adapting artistic acts and artefacts to the material constraints and the adequacy of its spiritual representations, about optimizing arts (feeling) and (technical) crafts.

Keywords: environmentalism, digitalization, cultural tradition, artistic modernity, creative destruction