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Version 140401

I put this draft on the internet hoping for your comments. **So please send me comments!!:**

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The draft is altogether unpolished and sometimes incomplete. It is bound to change very much — hopefully also thanks to your comments. At present putting much energy in polishing and editing would be a waste of time. But when I get close to a final version (which will be corrected by a native speaker), I will certainly do much editing and polishing.

THE ART PERIOD

The Rise and Decline of a Much Respected and Privileged Position

A study of art, artists and the arts' economy

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Chapter 3 An Obsession with Authenticity, Authorship and Autonomy

[INTRO]

[Still to be written.]

→→→ Although the high symbolic value of authenticity, authorship and autonomy is typical for the art period and requires further explanation this chapter is foremost an *excuse*, which serves the analysis in later chapters. I foremost will attempt to clarify these concepts. They are often used in an imprecise way which can be confusing.

In the first section I explain the difference between expressive and nominal authenticity. In the second I discuss the phenomenon that a strong belief in expressive authenticity contributes to the common notion of the artist being “in the artwork”. In the third and fourth section two forms of nominal authenticity are discussed: authenticity implying that works are, first, genuine and, second, correctly attributed. The latter leads in the fifth section to a brief discussion of the importance of authorship in the arts. Finally in the last section →→autonomy→→

1. Artists and artworks must be authentic

When someone says that an artist is authentic and makes authentic artworks he usually has *expressive authenticity* in mind. Expressive authenticity in art means that the artist has expressed himself in the artwork and therefore has been *true to himself* while creating the work, or, in a slightly wider definition of the concept, he has *expressed a personal view* or a personal *emotional state* in the work. An authentic artwork is than a work made by an artist who was true to himself when he made the work.

But usually when someone says that an artwork is authentic he has *nominal authenticity* in mind, which implies that the work's origin, authorship, and/or provenance —the history of the work— are correctly identified.¹ In case of performances it can also imply that *the work conforms to the author's intentions*. Most often nominal authenticity is associated with *singularity*: a work is authentic because it is *unique* and is made by a *single and correctly identified artist*.

When Charles Taylor speaks of the *ideal of authenticity*, an ideal which is so important in modernity, he has expressive authenticity in mind.² It is also this form of authenticity which concerns us most in this book. —When here and elsewhere in this book I use the term authenticity without adjective or further explication it stands for expressive and not for nominal authenticity.— As already suggested in the previous chapter, the phenomena that artists are thought to express themselves and be authentic while others are not —artists holding a monopoly on authenticity, at least until recently— contribute much to the explanation of the high respect for art in the art period.

During the art period in Western society expressive authenticity almost always has a strong *moral* connotation; artists being true to themselves or expressing themselves in their work is a very good thing. —This is what can be expected when authenticity represents an ideal.— But though the term nominal may suggest neutrality, in practice in this period and up to the present day in the Western world nominal authenticity in the case of art is also experienced as a good thing. Otherwise it is hard to explain why people are obsessed with correct attribution, genuineness and singularity, and why the prices of some paintings are sky-high. People want the work to be unique, rather than one of many copies, like in the case of posters or records, and they want the work to have been made by a single artist rather than a collective of artists. Therefore, in the case of art both expressive and nominal authenticity are sacred objects. Moreover, their sacredness is related. For instance, the artist having been true to himself is most intensely experienced when his truthfulness is expressed and concentrated in a single work, and the artist has taken responsibility for the work and thus is the single author of the work. It are works made by a single artist who expresses himself independent from others and of which only one authorized copy exist, which are most sacred.

The *entangled moralities inherent in expressive and nominal authenticity may explain why also informed people, including some social scientists, do not explicitly distinguish the two.³ Given the entanglement this can make sense, but it can also be unnecessarily confusing, especially since in daily speech the concept of authenticity is being used more and more loosely: even solid wood and lotions can be authentic. In practice the term authenticity can now stand for terms which refer to many more phenomena than just those which can be called authentic in the two senses in which the term authentic has been used before. This often applies when the term is used as an alternative for related terms like honest, true, sincere, uncompromising, integer, self-realizing, self-fulfilling and self-determining as well as for less related terms like spontaneous, non-conformist, natural, pure, traditional and as-it-was-in-the-past. And inauthenticity may be used instead of fake, artificial and phony. As we shall see in a later chapter the increasingly widened use of the term (in)authentic and

¹ Cf. (Dutton, 2003) 258

² Cf. (Taylor, 1991)

³ Among others this applies to (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005)

its associations is not irrelevant for the analysis of the art period and its forthcoming end, but here I ignore this.

In the art period artists not only have the right or privilege to be authentic and make authentic work, they also have the duty to make authentic work. Inauthenticity is condemned. However, although at present expressive authenticity certainly has a positive connotation in popular or common art, the same does no longer apply in the same degree to so-called contemporary art.⁴ Over the last decades in the latter the emphasis on authenticity has gone down, even though at present the attention appears to be growing again. Nevertheless, in the case of some artists it was and is inauthenticity, rather than authenticity they are after. To properly understand this a further investigation of the meanings of expressive authenticity among groups of artists and their audiences, and the developments in them is called for. Although an extensive investigation is not possible in the context of this book, *I will say a bit more about it in later *chapters.—

2. The artist is in the work

When I speak of the *artist being in the work* this is a metaphor. It is in our imagination only that the artist is in the work, and this contributes to art's sacredness or rather radiance or aura. Or *the work talks back* to us as if the artist is in there and talks with us. The artist being in the work is not a somewhat arbitrary but an intense and widely shared metaphor. The difference with transubstantiation is not that large: the work becoming the artist and the artist becoming the work, the same as in the Eucharist the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. In many ways our art experiences are as magical.

Looking at his paintings, we may well imagine a flesh and blood Rembrandt putting paint on a canvas and knowing that Rembrandt made it anyway raises strong emotions. When we find out that a student of Rembrandt put the paint on the canvas, the physicality of the painting does not change and in principal it could raise the same emotions, but it does not. When watching this painting it is no longer possible to imagine that Rembrandt, the authentic genius, had once been there in front of this canvas touching it with his brush.

In the contact with a work the spectator anyway imagines to be in close contact with the artist, also when he is dead—or maybe more so when he is dead, because it is easier to project all sorts of personal feelings on a dead person.⁵ Watching Rembrandt's painting we relate to him and his painting. As discussed at some length in Section * of the *previous chapter there is *internal conversation*. When the artwork "talks back", as any meaningful artwork does, we are involved in an internal conversation in which the work (or parts of it) and its creator are imagined others or selves. It is our conversation. "The work is ours." At such moments we appropriate and recreate the work and its artist. Therefore, seen from outside it would be more adequate to argue that at the moment of consumption the art lover is in the work and not the artist. But this is not the way we experience it. And after all, it is only possible to relate to a work if there has been an artist who first created and appropriated the work; an artists who said: "This work is mine."

Therefore it is not amazing that artists as well often think in terms of being in the artwork. One often hears artists referring to their works as their children. And even a conceptual artist like Damien Hirst says in an interview, talking about his *spot paintings*, that "every single spot painting contains my eye,

⁴ For me "contemporary art" is a genre next to other contemporary genres, which given the number of produced works are as important or more important, but draw less attention. [See also section* and/or refer to Heinich]

⁵ INSERT note?? Graw?? Check A4: Artworks are quasi persons. Ghost of artist. Highly personalized. Someone has left his mark (also in latest phase of grammar breaking a la Laermans). (HA in this sense: expressionist)
INSERT here or ch existential or... White 88: [Before the art period] It was the picture, not the artist, around which the official ideology centered. (in the academy).

my hand, and my heart".⁶ —See picture *.— This is particularly telling because some 1400 of these paintings exist of which he painted only 25 himself; all others were painted by assistants. Given the attention for these paintings on their high price —each of them 50,000 dollar and more⁷— imagining a painter putting paint on a canvas is evidently not necessary for an intense aesthetic experience. Also without having actually painted a spot painting Hirst is in the painting.

It is all in the mind of the art lover and in that of the artist. Because it is so extreme, the example of Hirst and his paintings serves well to demonstrate my point. And also because they are funny I insert two citations:

"The best person who ever painted spots for me was Rachel. She's brilliant. Absolutely fucking brilliant. The best spot painting you can have by me is one painted by Rachel."

"I had an argument with an assistant who used to paint my spots. A fantastic argument. Because it's, like, nothing comes out of my studio unless I say it comes out of the studio. You've got loads of people working. You've got people you care about that you've known for long periods of time. When she was leaving, and she was nervous, she said, "Well I want a spot painting. I've painted loads for you. I've painted these spot paintings for a year, and I want one." A year in the studio, getting paid a fiver, a tenner an hour, whatever it is. So I said, "I'll give you a cheque for seventy thousand quit if you like —why don't I just do that? Because you know you're going to sell it straight away. You know how to do it. Just make one of your own."

And she said "No, I want one of yours." But the only difference between one painted by her and one of mine is the money."⁸

Hirst's fame and the money he refers to in the last sentence represent indeed an important difference. —In the case of Hirst the money aspect is often part of his work and/or his concept; for instance in the case of his work *For the love of God*, a skull covered with diamonds, the high costs are essential[NOT HERE??; see picture *].— But fame and price are not enough. For a high symbolic and financial value another difference is essential as well. The artist and not his assistant allows the painting to leave his studio as Hirst emphasizes. He and not his assistant gives his consent and takes responsibility for a work and says "this is my work". —He symbolically appropriates the work.— In other words, if anyone is in a Hirst spot painting (also as a materialization of his concept) it is he. Hirst's paintings represents him and not Rachel or any other assistant who painted them in his studio. In the imagination of art lovers the difference is huge. For them the artist is in the one painting and not in the other.

—In this signatures are not decisive. Given comparable situations, it can be expected that with only a certificate the 1400 spot paintings would still have had a very high symbolic value and have been worth several ten thousands and the painting made by his assistant outside his studio at best a few hundred. Therefore it is not just the signature and the imagination of a flesh and blood Hirst signing the canvases which in itself causes the enormous difference in financial and symbolic value.—

In the case of any product the labour of one or more people can be said to have materialized "in the product". This applies to a painting as well as to a chair. But in terms of hours there is very little labour of Hirst in each of his spot paintings and far more of the assistants who put the paint on the canvas, as well as of the people who produced the paints, the frames and so forth. So how come that his limited contribution in terms of hours is so important and we imagine him to be in the painting and not his assistant or any of the many other contributors. It is because we believe his contribution —in the case of Hirst in the form of a concept— to be exceptionally creative and irreplaceable and, moreover,

⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/11/us-damienhirst-spot-idUSTRE80A0W120120111>. Hirst's spot paintings consist of randomly colored circles on canvases of different sizes and forms.

⁷ Anything between \$53,000 and \$1.7 million at auctions in 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/06/12/arts/design/Damien-Hirsts-Spot-Prices.html>. For a long time it was unknown how many spot paintings there were. When it was revealed the prices of the works went somewhat down, but recovered soon after.

⁸ Hirst and Burn (2002) 82.

creative in a very personal way. It is a unique, almost divine, inspiration which makes the artist stand out and allows “his soul to enter the work”.

Moreover, to better justify the “divinity” of the artist’s involvement, we like to believe that the artist creates altogether independent from others, starts from scrap and breathes life in dead material. And if he excels he indeed starts to resemble God, the creator par excellence. This, as well as the artist’s monopoly on authenticity, makes the common practice in the art period to call an excellent artist a *genius* understandable.

The notion of the artist being in the work or the work talking back to one is related to the notion of aura in the limited sense Walter Benjamin uses the term aura. —In this book I use the term aura in a wide sense: aura implies that a phenomenon is so special that it seems to radiate.— For him artworks have an aura if they are unique or cannot be multiplied in indefinite numbers. When the artist expresses himself and the artwork gazes back at someone or communicates with someone, this happens most strongly in the case of a single hand-made original and not in the case of a copy which is or could be one of millions of technically (re)produced copies or replicas. —Therefore, although Benjamin does not use the term authenticity often, he can be said to argue that the experience of expressive authenticity depends on or is much enhanced by the nominal authenticity of artworks, that is by their singularity or uniqueness.—

The fact that the number of copies can be unlimited and the actual number can be increased at will — usually at the will of publishers rather than of artists— makes it even harder to imagine that the artist is in each copy or that the copy looks back at the spectator. This is a matter of degree. For aura in the sense of Benjamin absolute uniqueness is not that important. Etchings can also have aura, be it less so than true originals. The opposition is between handmade works in small numbers and mechanical produced work in large numbers.

3. An obsession with original works, genuineness and preservation

Because in the art period people are interested in expressive authenticity and the experience of expressive authenticity is much enhanced by nominal authenticity, it is understandable that they also attach much value to the uniqueness and genuineness of works and to authorship and correct attribution. Artworks must be originals created by a correctly identified artist, who expressed himself in his work. In this section I discuss the type of nominal authenticity which exists when works are genuine and in the next the type which requires that attribution is correct.

Singularity or uniqueness are important for people. First, an altogether single and unique artwork —an *original*— is more authentic than a single *copy* or *replica* among several or many copies and replicas. Often the latter are made by others, like assistants or the producers of large scale replicas, like chromolithographs and more recently widely distributed posters of paintings and photographs or recordings of music. The replicas are experienced as less authentic; they have less aura as the artist clearly did not put his soul in each of these copies. Sometimes the artist copied his own work. But if there is a clear original the lower appreciation of copies shows from their lower financial value. Moreover, often also the price of the “original”, if it exists, is also lower than it would have been if there had been no replicas. It is as if the artist by making copies or allowing copies to be made, did not take the work and himself-in-the-work serious enough.

The situation is somewhat different when there is no original. Instead there is a limited series of similar works —as in the case of etchings, woodcuts, photographs and so forth. —Presently the same applies to technically produced recordings of digitally produced art, like much Dance music and some digitally manipulated or produced visual work. Here as well there is no original.— Although one could

argue that in all these cases each copy is an original, the copies are not experienced as originals.⁹ Because etchings and the like are hand-made and the editions are limited, the experience of expressive authenticity (and aura) can still be relatively strong. Nevertheless, in practice they have a lower status than single works and their prices are much lower. [HERE?? or ch repro? Anyway SYNC] In this context it is telling that when photographers started to aspire for the status of artist, rather than just popular artist, they began to reduce their editions. While in the past editions of in between ten and hundred had been common, now somewhat known photographers often make editions of two or three and seldom more than five. This not only befits their new status, it also generates a higher overall income as buyers are willing to pay much for exclusivity.

The case of performances is different again. They represent multiple “executions” of an original consisting of instructions. This can for instance be a score or script or choreography. No perfect execution exist and no two performance are exactly the same. Moreover, most conductors and directors intentionally seek to create artistically interesting differences while sticking to the instructions of the composers, playwrights and choreographers, and audiences may appreciate this. Therefore, conductors and directors are not only performing but also creative artists. In music they attempt to do this in a precise way trying to stick to the possible intentions of the composers, while in theatre directors tend to take liberties. But in either case most of the time audiences experience the performances also as originals.¹⁰ The composer as well as the conductor and in a lesser degree also the performers express themselves in the work and can be imagined to be “in the work”. The same applies to theatre, dance and opera performances. The fact that the performances are hand-made helps the imagination. The audience, moreover, can have a strong here-and-now experience when the performers which are right in front of them make every effort to create the work. This is clearly missing when one listens to altogether identical and therefore interchangeable recordings.

In practice a demand for singularity or uniqueness also exists when it comes to various versions. The existence of versions is common. There can be various sketches. [not a good example; replicas rather than versions??] Of many of Van Gogh’s paintings another version exists. —a phenomenon that is little known. [Other examples of versions of paintings→] Etchings have been reworked. [INSERT examples: -not in Becker work itself, maybe artworlds??/ ask van Os], Verdi revised his scores several times for performances in various houses or for performances by different singers. Also Proust left behind several versions of the same book. When various versions of one work exist, artists sometimes tell in which work they think they expressed themselves best; this can then be regarded as the-work-itself. But especially in the case of dead artists we usually do not know if they judged one version to be more authentic than another, and in the case of artists from before the art period it is anyway unlikely that they cared much about works being more or less authentic and only one being the true work.

When there are several versions of a work there appears to be an unwanted degree of interchangeability, which goes at the cost of aura and exclusivity. Therefore we either attempt to ignore the existence of versions or otherwise want to know which is the true version, the true or authentic work, the-work-itself. Generally experts do not deny that each of a number of versions is an original in its own right, but at the same time there is a strong tendency to treat them as variants from which the one “authentic” work, the work itself, is extracted by the artist or by experts. Often lay audiences do not even know that various versions exist. Art historians, musicologists, theatre and literature scientists already analysed the versions and — sometimes after much research and disagreement— decided which work is the genuine or authentic work, that is the work-itself, and

⁹ In theory regarding each of the copies as an original, as (Goodman, 1954) does, makes sense. (In these cases Goodman speaks of allographic art which opposes autographic art, like painting, where there is only one original.) In a different train of thought (Becker, 1999) argues that also in the case of multiples there always exist minor differences and that therefore each copy is also an original. However, either approach is theoretical; in practice people do not experience the copies as originals.

¹⁰ This is in line with (Goodman, 1954) , for whom performances are not only allographic artworks (instances which are all originals) but at the same time newly created autographic artworks, each performance being a different original.

deserves to be seen or performed. [Repeat?? little known versions of Van Gogh paintings. Choice has already been made.]

→→ However, behind the scenes the research continues and so do the controversies. Moreover, over time the dominant conventions in choosing the true or genuine work anyway change and therefore various “definite” versions succeed one another. This phenomenon relativizes the notion of a true, genuine or authentic work. But the fact that we are willing to spend much money on the research also demonstrate the obsessive need of audiences to relate to one artwork only.

[This paragraph OUT?? MOVE to ch repro? Anyway SYNC] On the side it is interesting to note that in the twentieth century the later works of an artist, who is judged to “repeat himself” and in that sense to make new versions of earlier works, are supposed to be less authentic and therefore less valuable. These are not the true works. These artists are actually blamed for repeating themselves and for inauthenticity. —This, while one could also argue that such artists deserve praise. In a time in which well-known visual artists are evidently not allowed to let posters be made of their works, self-made replicas and imitations would at least enable more people to enjoy their work. This is what happened all the time before the art period. At that time a taboo on repetition certainly did not exist.

The phenomenon of different versions also exists at the level of performances. Even though separate performances can be originals in their own right, among the versions of existing scores, choreographies or scripts or among different performance practices only one can be the true or authentic way to perform a work. Especially in classical music the composer is put on a pedestal, while the authorship of the conductor and performers is belittled. Their freedom is anyway very limited. [only NEXT section?] Unlike in popular art, audiences and experts evidently find it hard to acknowledge that more than one artist can be “in the work”.

[This paragraph OUT or shorter??] In classical music, the serious or high art par excellence, the criticisms and debates regarding the “authenticity” of a certain way of performing are extensive and sometimes heated. They also induce much research. This applies as much to very detailed aspects of performances and minor changes in interpretations as to a general style of performing. —Are the rather bombastic Mengelberg performances of Bach pieces in line with the intentions of Bach?— These concerns testify of the importance of the nominal authenticity of the performance and of the expressive authenticity of the original author which overrides the authenticity of the later performer. The original “real” author, who often was composer and performer at the same time, and his intentions are sacred. —This contrasts very much with the practices in popular music, where performances (also called covers) which deviate much from original performances are much appreciated. [LATER:??/note??] If Joe Cocker would try to sing Randy Newman’s song **You can leave your hat on* the way Randy Newman sings it, he would not at all be praised for respecting the “authenticity” of Randy Newman’s work. Instead he would be blamed for staying too close to the original performance.—

It appears that especially in art-music an obsession with “authenticity” in the sense of genuineness and a consequent high respect for authors has become ever more important during the art period. Even new arrangements and adaptations [other word in cl music??] are often experienced as inferior.

[NOTE?: There are some exceptions like *[ASK theo]. —Forgetting about these] —The contrast with popular music where adaptations can easily have more symbolic value than the originals is again large.— In the view of many classical music lovers they rather testify of disrespect for the originals and their composers than of respect. They threaten to bring not only the original composers but also art-in-general down.

The same applies less openly but even more dramatically to what I call *imitation art* in the visual arts. The majority of paintings which hang on the walls in private houses are relatively cheap works in the style of well-known artists. Most of the time there not only is little respect for these works in the established visual art world, but it is also disqualified: it is not really art.

During the art period authenticity and the-work-itself have been constructed and with retroactive effect a tradition has been invented which did not exist before.¹¹ As a consequence much value is now attached to careful preservation. The artwork must be preserved in its “original state”. This again may involve much research and expert interventions by, among others, restorers. Old paintings which are damaged or of whom the colors have faded are meticulously restored to reproduce their assumed original state.

In the case of paintings the changes are usually visible and they may be much appreciated. But sometimes the changes are not or only hardly noticeable. For instance, at present the preservation of videos and video installations sometimes leads to the costly rebuilding of old equipment which is no longer produced. At the same time new and much cheaper equipment can (almost) perfectly emulate the originals. (If the new equipment had existed at the time the works were made, the artist would certainly have used it.) We clearly are obsessed with nominal authenticity and prepared to spend much money on it.

Extensive preservation of art by storing it testifies of the high value we attach to art by authentic artists. After having been enjoyed for a while at home, in offices and in museums the works are not thrown away but maintained and stored under often perfect storing conditions. They are only occasionally shown to friends and as part of a museum collection they may every now and then be part of an exhibition, but many are only stored and de facto disappear altogether. During the art period people and their governments are willing to spend large and ever increasing amounts of money on the preservation of an ever increasing number of artworks. —Before the art period many artworks would serve for a while and next disappear in the dust bin. For instance, it is estimated that of all Dutch seventeenth century paintings for which there was considerable demand in that century, less than two percent survived.¹²—

Finally, it is telling that during the art period a wish to preserve important art can even override the intentions or wishes of artists to have their work destroyed after their death. This was for instance the case with works of Kafka which after his death were published by his friend *, while he wanted them to be *burned. Other examples →→, [music visual art] which * [ASK Olav/ van Os]. The artists may officially own the work, but we (or experts) own the artist. He must have all freedom to create the work, but once it is produced his say or authority is limited. This brings us to the issue of authorship and the symbolic and legal ownership of works.

4. An obsession with authorship and correct attribution

During the art period and up to the present day authorship in the arts is of utmost importance. One sometimes has the impression that everything revolves around authorship. The signature of the author has much symbolic value and in the case of successful artists its financial value can be very, very high. —If it is true that the art period is gradually coming to an end, this certainly does not show from a reduced interest in authorship.— Therefore it is understandable that also much value is attached to correct attribution. Is the work really made by the person who claims to have made the work, or is it a fraud or fake? Or is the person who we think made a work of old the true creator or was it somebody else and is the attribution wrong? What is at stake is nominal authenticity and in the background also expressive authenticity. The latter shows from the interest in plagiarism. Did the artist

¹¹ ^ (Becker, 1999) discusses the notion of the work-itself both in the case of different versions of one work as in that of different performance practices. He speaks of the Principle of the Fundamental Indeterminacy of the Art Work and argues that although art experts and art lovers speak of the work itself, for the sociologist there is no work itself. “That is, it is impossible, in principle, for sociologists or anyone else to speak of the “work itself” because there is no such thing. There are only the many occasions on which a work appears or is performed or is viewed, each of which can be different from all the others.” However, exactly because people believe that a work itself exists, it makes sense to use the term in this text.

¹² Ref.

himself think of the typical content and form of a work or did he copy essential ideas from another artist, implying that the latter rather than he is in-the-work.

The obsession with authorship and with correct attribution is not of all times. That it was not in the Middle Ages is what can be expected because at that time artists were craftsmen and expressive authenticity was not highly valued. There was also little interest in the personal life of artists. Replicas of works made by the artist himself or by other artists were not judged to be inferior, and imitation art was normal and often expected. That authorship was unimportant also shows from the fact that visual artists did not sign their work. However, presently we find it increasingly hard to live with artworks without known authors. Lucky for us, intentional or not, the artists of old left personal marks. By comparing works and oeuvres such marks sometimes enable art historians to attribute works to specific studios or to single artists, which are named by them, like * of *. [ASK]van Os/velthuis]

A problem arises when art historians discover that in the case of works made by famous artists there may have been co-authors or assistants who did part of the work. For instance, it became clear that ** [ASK]van Os/velthuis] only painted the heads of the figures in some of his well-known paintings while in or outside his workshop others painted backgrounds or * or *, and probably had considerable freedom in doing so—more than the assistants of Hirst have. Nevertheless, putting much emphasis on the fact that the famous artist most likely had the final say preserves part of the magic of authorship. But the knowledge that other authors may be in the work as well remains unpleasant and museums generally do not shout it from the rooftops.

That in the art period plagiarism and fraud draw much attention is also telling for the importance of authorship.* The fraud and the plagiarized work is unique but it is wrongly attributed and therefore (nominally) inauthentic. In an economy which is based on private property fraud and plagiarism are forbidden by law and those who break the law are punished. This applies also outside the arts. But what stands out in the case of art is the excitement and indignation. We related to the wrong person and feel cheated in an existential way. Someone interfered with our relationship with an artist and with art. Well known is the case of Van Meegeren who created paintings in the style of Vermeer—a possible case of plagiarism—and by forging his signature pretended that they were made by Vermeer—a case of fraud. (See picture *.) After he, at his own initiative, admitted the fraud, the paintings lost most of their symbolic and financial value, and there was much indignation. Suggesting that a highly regarded painter, Vermeer, not just created the painting, but put his soul in it, while in fact it was only Van Meegeren who did so, is a major sin.

When it is not a case of fraud, but it is discovered that the attribution to one artist and not another is incorrect, there is also much agitation. A classic example is that of the painting *Man with Golden Helmet*—see picture *—, which at first was attributed to Rembrandt and was regarded as one of his best paintings. But when it turned out not to have been painted by Rembrandt but by one of his pupils, the painting was moved to another far less prestigious room in the *Gemäldegalerie* in Berlin and its estimated financial value dropped to one tenth of what it had been before. The opposite also occurs: a painting or sketch bought in a thrift store for a few dollars turns out to have been painted by an important artist and its value becomes many times higher. An example is that of Teri Horton who for eight dollars bought a painting, which he did not like very much but thought to be funny, and which next turned out to be painted by Jackson Pollock, having a value of some \$50 million. (Later on the attribution was disputed again, which only raised the excitement.¹³)

The excitement also follows from prices, which are astronomically high. But that prices can be so high is not accidental and needs explanation. Exclusivity certainly matters. —To a degree paintings are comparable with rare stamps.— The value of exclusivity increases if it is connected with a famous person. But it still has to be explained why the value of a painting or just a sketch of a famous artist is much higher than that of the t-shirt of a famous football player. The added symbolic and financial

¹³ http://artinvestment.ru/en/news/artnews/20081103_pollock_for_50_million.html

value follows from a meaningfulness in combination with nominal and expressive authenticity. The football player wore the shirt, but the artist has expressed himself in a the work. In that respect he is far more profoundly in-the-work than the football player is in the t-shirt —washed or not.

The obsession with authorship and authenticity can only be so important in the art period due to the fact that in modernity the individual has become the central figure. His identity appears to be self-made and we tend to forget that people are socialized beings. Generations follow in each other's footsteps. There is nothing altogether authentic in people and this also applies to art. Plagiarism can be said to be standard. Therefore, looking from outside one could argue that it is not so much the artist who expresses himself in a work but a civilization, involving long chains of numerous interactions between people and of works. From this perspective a desire of scientists and audiences to establish provenance —the knowledge of the history of a work over time— and to derive cultural meaning from works can also be understood from an interest in the relationships between artworks in the context of a civilization process.¹⁴ Nevertheless, a general obsession with nominal authenticity and authorship, and huge differences in the symbolic and financial value of works can only be properly understood if also magical or less sophisticated beliefs and motives are taken into account. Most of the time people who watch a Rembrandt painting and are very impressed by what they see, rather imagine Rembrandt putting paint on the canvas than that they think of predecessors or a civilization process. In combination with an interest in exclusiveness and financial value, what matters most is the belief that the artist is in the work and that therefore the work is authentic in its expression.

1. An obsession with authorship and correct attribution

During the art period and up to the present day authorship in the arts is of utmost importance. One sometimes has the impression that everything revolves around authorship. The signature of the author has much symbolic value and in the case of successful artists its financial value can be very, very high. —If it is true that the art period is gradually coming to an end, this certainly does not show from a reduced interest in authorship.— Therefore it is understandable that also much value is attached to correct attribution. Is the work really made by the person who claims to have made the work, or is it a fraud or fake? Or is the person who we think made a work of old the true creator or was it somebody else and is the attribution wrong? What is at stake is nominal authenticity and in the background also expressive authenticity. The latter shows from the interest in plagiarism. Did the artist himself think of the typical content and form of a work or did he copy essential ideas from another artist, implying that the latter rather than he is in-the-work.

The obsession with authorship and with correct attribution is not of all times. That it was not in the Middle Ages is what can be expected because at that time artists were craftsmen and expressive authenticity was not highly valued. There was also little interest in the personal life of artists. Replicas of works made by the artist himself or by other artists were not judged to be inferior, and imitation art was normal and often expected. That authorship was unimportant also shows from the fact that visual artists did not sign their work. However, presently we find it increasingly hard to live with artworks without known authors. Lucky for us, intentional or not, the artists of old left personal marks. By comparing works and oeuvres such marks sometimes enable art historians to attribute works to specific studios or to single artists, which are named by them, like * of *. [ASK]van Os/velthuis]

A problem arises when art historians discover that in the case of works made by famous artists there may have been co-authors or assistants who did part of the work. For instance, it became clear that ** [ASK]van Os/velthuis] only painted the heads of the figures in some of his well-known paintings while in or outside his workshop others painted backgrounds or * or *, and probably had considerable freedom in doing so —more than the assistants of Hirst have. Nevertheless, putting much emphasis on the fact that the famous artist most likely had the final say preserves part of the magic of authorship. But the

¹⁴ Cf. (Dutton, 2003)

knowledge that other authors may be in the work as well remains unpleasant and museums generally do not shout it from the rooftops.

That in the art period plagiarism and fraud draw much attention is also telling for the importance of authorship.* The fraud and the plagiarized work is unique but it is wrongly attributed and therefore (nominally) inauthentic. In an economy which is based on private property fraud and plagiarism are forbidden by law and those who break the law are punished. This applies also outside the arts. But what stands out in the case of art is the excitement and indignation. We related to the wrong person and feel cheated in an existential way. Someone interfered with our relationship with an artist and with art. Well known is the case of Van Meegeren who created paintings in the style of Vermeer—a possible case of plagiarism—and by forging his signature pretended that they were made by Vermeer—a case of fraud. (See picture *.) After he, at his own initiative, admitted the fraud, the paintings lost most of their symbolic and financial value, and there was much indignation. Suggesting that a highly regarded painter, Vermeer, not just created the painting, but put his soul in it, while in fact it was only Van Meegeren who did so, is a major sin.

When it is not a case of fraud, but it is discovered that the attribution to one artist and not another is incorrect, there is also much agitation. A classic example is that of the painting *Man with Golden Helmet*—see picture *—, which at first was attributed to Rembrandt and was regarded as one of his best paintings. But when it turned out not to have been painted by Rembrandt but by one of his pupils, the painting was moved to another far less prestigious room in the *Gemäldegalerie* in Berlin and its estimated financial value dropped to one tenth of what it had been before. The opposite also occurs: a painting or sketch bought in a thrift store for a few dollars turns out to have been painted by an important artist and its value becomes many times higher. An example is that of Teri Horton who for eight dollars bought a painting, which he did not like very much but thought to be funny, and which next turned out to be painted by Jackson Pollock, having a value of some \$50 million. (Later on the attribution was disputed again, which only raised the excitement.¹⁵)

The excitement also follows from prices, which are astronomically high. But that prices can be so high is not accidental and needs explanation. Exclusivity certainly matters. —To a degree paintings are comparable with rare stamps.— The value of exclusivity increases if it is connected with a famous person. But it still has to be explained why the value of a painting or just a sketch of a famous artist is much higher than that of the t-shirt of a famous football player. The added symbolic and financial value follows from a meaningfulness in combination with nominal and expressive authenticity. The football player wore the shirt, but the artist has expressed himself in a the work. In that respect he is far more profoundly in-the-work than the football player is in the t-shirt —washed or not.

The obsession with authorship and authenticity can only be so important in the art period due to the fact that in modernity the individual has become the central figure. His identity appears to be self-made and we tend to forget that people are socialized beings. Generations follow in each other's footsteps. There is nothing altogether authentic in people and this also applies to art. Plagiarism can be said to be standard. Therefore, looking from outside one could argue that it is not so much the artist who expresses himself in a work but a civilization, involving long chains of numerous interactions between people and of works. From this perspective a desire of scientists and audiences to establish provenance—the knowledge of the history of a work over time—and to derive cultural meaning from works can also be understood from an interest in the relationships between artworks in the context of a civilization process.¹⁶ Nevertheless, a general obsession with nominal authenticity and authorship, and huge differences in the symbolic and financial value of works can only be properly understood if also magical or less sophisticated beliefs and motives are taken into account. Most of the time people who watch a Rembrandt painting and are very impressed by what they see, rather imagine

¹⁵ http://artinvestment.ru/en/news/artnews/20081103_pollock_for_50_million.html

¹⁶ Cf. (Dutton, 2003)

Rembrandt putting paint on the canvas than that they think of predecessors or a civilization process. In combination with an interest in exclusiveness and financial value, what matters most is the belief that the artist is in the work and that therefore the work is authentic in its expression.

5. The artist must be in charge and be the single author

Not only a civilization but also the input of a number of specific people and not just the artist can be said to be in-a-work. Typical for the art period is however that the contribution of the author is glorified, while the input of others in a work of art is largely ignored or taken for granted. They get little or no credits, while it is the artist who gets all the praise —and sometimes also all the blame. In this context it is not amazing that in the popular imagery of many people including an amazingly large number of artists the successful author is a lonely, altogether independent genius who on his own creates something wonderful from nothing.

In itself authorship in the most common symbolic sense of the word is not that special. It only implies that there is a person who has or has had the final say in the-work-itself and whose input we believe to have been most creative. Such persons exist in the case of many more products than artworks, from coffee-machines to organized holidays. There are always people who were probably most creative and had a final say in their basic form or content of a product. Therefore the extreme goodness of authorship in the case of the arts cannot just follow from the knowledge that the artist had the final say in the-work-itself, or that the artist was the most creative person involved. It can also not follow from the knowledge that an artist produced a work altogether on his own or did so altogether manually. After all, the latter applies as well to the activities of many craftsmen; and it certainly does not apply to the production of most of the spot paintings of Damien Hirst. His general involvement is largely the same as that of a manager who runs a factory.

In this context it is good to note that for symbolic authorship in the arts having had the final say in the final product is not decisive. The symbolic authorship in the arts is tied to the-work-itself and not necessarily always to the final work as it is offered to a buyer or to an audience. Sometimes the final work differs from the-work-itself and others had the last say in it. An example can be found in film. The existence of a director's cut next to the film as it is shown in cinemas demonstrates that in this case the director, i.e. the artist, did not have the last say in the product.

How come that Hirst can claim symbolic ownership also when his assistants did most of the work? Or how come that we grant symbolic ownership to a film director whose work is modified and who anyway does not legally own the (intellectual) property rights of his work? As noted, what matters is that we assume that there is a work-itself in which they had the last say and that their input has been exceptionally creative. We, moreover, believe that the creative input of the artist is of another order than that of the inventor of the coffee machine. Usually we imagine that during the time an artist works on a work there has been a phase in which there is much inspiration and the artists “breathes life” in a work. Thinking of a specific work this phase is often associated with a brief period of highly inspired activity. —This may well have occurred when Rodin painted a *watercolor or Hirst for the first time thought of a spot painting or Bach, who needed amazingly little time to compose, created a musical piece.— At other times the association is rather with a lengthy, diligent and laborious struggle in search of a new creative form or expression. —This could apply to painters like Cezanne and Auerbach and a musician like *[musician ASK theo or Schuurman].— In practice a combination of both is probably most common: time consuming struggles with occasional brief moments of “enlightenment”.

For authorship the amount of creative time spend is in principal not important. What matters is that the artist's labor is very creative and as such *irreplaceable*. Apparently in the arts the relation between the input of creative labor in terms of hours and quality or artistic merit —as well as price— is weak or non-existing. Nevertheless, in practice people are double minded about the amount of creative time and other time spend by the artist on a single work. An artist may be admired for thinking in a flash of an apparently new solution to an artistic problem, but he can also be blamed for not having made a

considerable effort. Especially when artists' prices and incomes are very high this lack of personal labor input can be experienced as extremely annoying by people. *I notice the same two attitudes when people come to my studio and I tell them that on average I spend one hour on each drawing. I get praise from some people. But others are disappointed and would clearly have preferred that I would have said that I had spent days of hard work on a drawing. I am sure that in that case they would also sooner have bought a drawing.*

Looking from outside at *authorship in a broad sense* it is questionable if the high value people attach to the input of the artist and to authorship (in the common narrow sense) is always altogether justified. Also forgetting about the impact of a civilization or the spirit of the times, it is possible that what an artist adds to the creative input of assistants, peers and predecessors can be relatively little or even insignificant. The artistic merit of a work may rightly be judged to be high, but this is due to the creative labor of others rather than the artist. The others could be the real authors.

Keeping in mind that the distinction between creative labor and non-creative labor is not clear and labor can anyway be more or less creative, in the present context the creative labor of four groups may matter: first that of assistants, second of peers and critics, third predecessors and fourth consumers. —I will discuss the creative input of the last group in a later chapter.— First, support personnel, as Howard Becker calls them, contribute to the realization of a work of art. The support personnel can form a large group, from paint-makers to those who distribute artworks. Most of their contributions directly or indirectly rest on at least some irreplaceable creative labor. Especially the input of assistants can be irreplaceable. But in the arts assistants are seldom credited for their creative inputs. This is telling of the extreme emphasis on sole authorship in the arts.

On average assistants get far more credits in the popular arts —think of the credits on film posters and even more so in the credit titles, while usually the acknowledgments on the CD covers of popular music are also far more complete than in the case of classical music. Especially in the visual arts public crediting is absent. *I have a friend who after several years stopped working as camera man for a well-known Dutch visual artist, who makes foremost film and video art. He felt extremely frustrated, because he never received credits or public thanks, while his contribution was beyond any doubt very creative and irreplaceable.*

In a wide definition of symbolic authorship some assistants could well be called co-authors. Also the creative input of befriended artists and critics who advise an artist on the work at hand, and even more the creative input of predecessors can be considerable. But because the input of peers, critics and predecessors is usually unintentional, calling them authors would imply too much stretching of the concept of authorship, also when this is interpreted in a broad sense. But seen from outside their creative input can be very large. If that is the case the main merit of the artist is that he made a more or less creative and original choice of inputs. How creative that choice really is can be a matter of debate. But given all such interrelations, seen from outside, the before mentioned popular notion in the art period of the artist as a lonely genius breathing life in what is dead, or creating something from nothing makes no sense.¹⁷

The debate on influencers is not absent in the arts. But it is foremost an internal affair of musicologists, art historians, literature scientists and so forth. They study, for instance, the impact of real live contacts of artists or the successive stages in styles, and publish their findings in academic articles. Generally, they pay much attention to well-known artists, especially artists which are believed to have innovated styles, while the input of little known artists may well be underestimated. Nevertheless, at least in their own circles these experts somewhat demystify the role of the lonely author and genius. But it is only recently that also many art lovers, foremost in the visual art, become

¹⁷ This raises the question of the fairness of the existing remuneration in the arts. It can be argued that given their creative input in their works in comparison to that of assistants, little known peers and predecessors the remuneration of some famous artist is too high and that of the others too low. One could even argue that the latter are exploited. I shall look into this issue in Section *.

interested in the influences of other artists on a specific artist and evidently appreciate information on this as is now increasingly offered in the notes on the walls of museums. This may well be a sign of the art period being passed its zenith. At the same time the modernist notion of a single genius is far from dead. We continuously tend to reinvent a grammar that enforces the peerlessness of artists.¹⁸ This certainly applies to classical music, where the notion of the artistic genius is still very strong as also shows from the continued use of the term in program notes as well as a lack of information in the notes on influences of other artists. The presence of a single author and not a team of co-authors taking responsibility for a work of art is anyway important for our appreciation of authorship and authenticity. It is hard to imagine several people being in-the-work. Moreover, because people in teams have to negotiate with one another and go for compromises, the input of each member is thought to be less authentic or even not authentic at all. In the case of team production the authenticity of artwork and artist disappears or otherwise is judged far less significant and valuable. In the art period with its emphasis on authenticity and authorship there is little symbolic and financial reward for teams of artists who make collaborative work and for the work/s they make.[insert note?]^{*19} Therefore it is understandable that in the arts there is little truly *collaborative work* and thus *co-authorship*. Unlike in the popular arts, in the creative industry in general and in science, works made by teams are rare. Works by a couple of artists, who do not occasionally, but permanently work together, form an exception. In the imagination they fuse into almost a single person, and some couples, like ^Gilbert and George, do everything possible to enable this. Given the emphasis in the arts on singularity, it is anyway predictable that couples emphasize their unity rather than the differences between them. Yet, as we shall see in the later discussion of popular art, it are precisely the differences between the participants in a team which through dialogue, negotiation, compromise and further dialogue enhance quality.

[LATER/EXTRO?]Presently there is an increasing interest of groups of foremost critical young artists in collaborative projects and this could signal change, but it remains to be seen if in the longer run they can withstand or change the existing ethos in art worlds, including art markets, which glorifies and rewards authorship in the arts.^{*20} [Also Note on Atelier Lieshout?] [EXTEND?? on collaboration or LATER? SEE notes in subsection below or moved to later chapter.]

6. Artists should be autonomous and must not compromise

Since individual freedom represents a core value in modernity and art pre-eminently stands for personal freedom, not only *authenticity* and *authorship* but also *artistic autonomy* is an intense sacred object in the art period. Next to an ideal of authenticity there is an ideal of self-determination and individual autonomy or freedom, which as well lasts to the present day.²¹ [Sentences on Rousseau presently in new times TO BE MOVED to HERE?? SYNC]This ideal can be traced back to Rousseau and the enlightenment. He promotes the idea that a person is free when he determines for himself what is good for him and sets his own course accordingly, rather than that he is shaped by external influences.

The goodness of authenticity and autonomy are interrelated, as is that of authorship. Autonomy and hence a minimum of curtailment allows artists to express a personal view and be authentic. Artists must be autonomous and able to choose their artistic goals independent from others. They must be in

¹⁸ ??Reference. In last paper Heinich??

¹⁹ *INSERT?? note about collaborative work of orchestras ≠ ensembles etc. *INSERT?? note about growing importance of singer-songwriters, also involving a cost aspect.

²⁰ *Reference to John Roberts and Stephen Wright??

²¹ Taylor (1991) (Taylor, 1991) 27

charge and be author —and be preferably the sole author, because also co-authors could constrain him.

The relationship with artistic autonomy explains the exceptional high degree of autonomy which art worlds and artists have during the period. It is higher than that in other worlds or fields, including science. This is enabled by an art-ethos which not only artists but also donors, consumers, commissioners and art lovers adhere to. Art lovers want the artist to be autonomous and this explains the passivity of audiences. Most of all the ethos encourages private donors and governments to generously provide funds with no or few strings attached. This situation is exceptional and signifies the high symbolic value of art. Particularly telling is that whereas autonomy appears to be a privilege, in many countries autonomy and hence support has turned into a right. Politicians and art-lovers argue that art and artists must be autonomous and therefore have a right to be subsidized, while artists and art institutions also believe that they have a right to be autonomous, do everything possible to materialize this right and are extremely indignant when they are not or insufficiently supported. And often art lovers and art loving politicians agree: artistic autonomy is a right.

But autonomy does not only represent a privilege or right, it is also an obligation. The artist must strive for a *maximum of artistic autonomy*. He must try to let him constrain as little as possible not only by others but also by himself. *The artist must not compromise*. He would compromise, not only if he (also) strives for selfish goals —like making money or becoming famous— but also if he strives for non-artistic selfless goals —like serving an audience or a political course. —It follows that artistic autonomy is more limited than autonomy in general. Unlike autonomous people artists are not altogether free to determine their own course; they are required to pursue their artistic goals independent from others, but not other than artistic goals. What matters is an *art for art's sake*.—

To prevent misunderstanding it is good to note that at the level of artworks the meaning of the term autonomous can be more limited than discussed so far. An autonomous artworks may imply that the work is made by an artist who has much autonomy, but more often it merely implies that the work is no applied work, i.e. useful for practical purposes, as in the case of a beautiful vase. The distinction between autonomous and applied art apartments in art schools is based on this interpretation of the term. And in a somewhat wider interpretation of the term it implies that a finished and publicly shown work stands on its own and should be discussed as an artistically autonomous reality, that is valued and discussed as such.²² Therefore it does not or not in the first place serve non-artistic goals like, for instance, political goals. (This wider interpretation overlaps with the earlier mentioned general meaning of artistic autonomy in the case of artists and art worlds.)

In the *remainder of this section I briefly discuss the relationship between autonomy and various types of constraints as a preparation for later chapters in which I discuss constraints artists face and the way they may or may not “compromise”. Artistic autonomy is always relative. There are always *constraints*. First, whether they are aware of it or not, artists almost always have non-artistic goals as well and therefore they artistically constrain themselves. Second, and more importantly, artists are always constrained by their environment.²³

Given what an artist would ideally like to do in order to realize his artistic goals there almost always is a lack of funds and this restrains him. Or, in case of commissions, certain demands, for instance with respect to the topic or size of a work, may well constrain him artistically. In all such cases he strives or is supposed to strive for a maximum of artistic autonomy. In other words, on a scale from 100% autonomy to 100% heteronomy he goes for a position as close as possible to 100% autonomy, but he will always end up somewhere in between. Often he will attempt to get closer to the autonomy

²² Cf. (Laermans, 2009) 127

²³ In these paragraphs I ignore self-chosen constraints, like making drawings always on the same type and size of paper, or “natural” constraints, like gravity for a sculptor or the limitations of existing software for a music producer. In the most common thinking on autonomy these are not supposed to limit artistic autonomy.

extreme by attempting to reduce one constraint while accepting that another constraint becomes more severe. An active artist *negotiates* and attempts to *exchange* constraints to increase his autonomy. For instance, in exchange for a more restraining requirement with respect to the topic of a commissioned work an artist may demand and receive a higher price, which gives him the means to spend more time on the work.

Problems arise when the autonomy of the artist is de facto constrained by other artists or by his art world. First, his artistic goals can conflict with those of others in a team of artists in which he participates —this is the collaborative situation mentioned above. Most likely he will experience that he regularly has to compromise or rather that others constrain him in his strife for a maximum of autonomy. When others and the artist himself demand that he is the sole artist and does not compromise, this situation is unattractive. (Note that in this case he does not really compromise, because also in the constraining situation he strives for a maximum of autonomy.)

Second the artist's artistic goals can differ from the artistic goals of his art world. In this case the art world demands may constrain the artist and he may experience that he has to compromise. In order to get his work across or to be able to raise funds he needs art world recognition and therefore his choices are limited. He may actually experience a double bind resulting in two conflicting duties. In order to be a true artist the artist *must* set his own artistic goals and at the same time he *must* follow the demands of his art world. In case of a conflict between the two, whatever the artist chooses he is in the wrong and can be blamed for his choice. Especially when artists are expected to be innovative, which is nowadays often the case, this can cause distress.

It follows that the choices of artists who strive for a maximum of autonomy may vary. One artist will believe he maximizes his long term autonomy by (temporarily) giving in to his art world's demands. In that case others may blame him for compromising and being a "rookie". And another artist will believe to be as autonomous as possible by ignoring art world demands and being a "rebel", while others laugh at him because this way he will never be able to get his art across. What will happen is hard to predict: often rookies win in the long run but sometimes rebels or mavericks do and may even take over an art world and fundamentally change its artistic goals.²⁴

The same as the autonomy of an artist also the autonomy of an art world or field is relative.²⁵ Art worlds may be relatively powerless. First, artists may ignore the demands of a weak art world and go their own way and, second, society may strongly restrain an art world. To a degree art worlds can set their own goals, but there are always limitations. The overall means of an art world are anyway limited. Consumers do not buy anything offered and private and state support is limited. An art world establishment may well wish a larger or additional concert hall or more funds for the residence of artists who do research which it judges to be important, but there are limits. For instance, consumers are willing to pay but foremost for works or genres which an art world is not or no longer interested in. Or donors set constraining demands. —Presently this may well be a stronger orientation on demand.— Therefore also in such cases more general processes of negotiation and exchange are likely to occur.

Finally, it is good to realize, that from an outsiders point of view some circumstances which artists experience as constraining may well enhance creativity. Being forced to make a smaller work instead of a huge painting which can only be shown in a museum or the entrance hall of a bank may, after all, be very inspiring. And the same may apply to the very process of negotiating with consumers, which can well be interpreted as a dialogue which enhances creativity, even though most artist experience it as a time-consuming necessary evil. In a later chapter we will see that in the popular arts artist are more aware of such processes and appreciate them more.

²⁴ Cf. (Peterson & White, 1989) and (H. S. Becker, 1982) *

²⁵ (Pierre Bourdieu, 1984)

7. In the twenty first century however the autonomy of art and artists is under fire

Section still to be written.

[These paragraphs may be used be it rewritten.]During the art period art worlds, far more than other worlds or fields including those in science, have much relative autonomy and donors and governments provide funds with few strings attached. This position is exceptional and signifies the high symbolic value of art. Presently the belief that autonomy of art and artists is very important and that we must maintain it at all costs is clearly less widely shared than during the major part of the art period. The fact that in many countries the requirements for support have become more restraining and public support has started to go down, may well be a sign of less respect and a foreboding of the end of the art period. Our interest in expressive authenticity has not diminished, but we find authenticity also in many other areas. The arts have lost their monopoly on creativity and authenticity, and this may well contribute to a diminishing respect for art and a decreased inclination to spend money in order to protect art's autonomy.

However, if it is true that the art period is now gradually coming to end, this certainly does not show from a decreasing interest in authorship and singularity in the arts. Otherwise the fame of many old and contemporary artists and their works would not be so high, and the prices of some of their works sky-high. But, it is possible that this no longer follows foremost from a belief in artistic merit and genius but instead from a modern celebrity culture in combination with exclusiveness which extends to many other domains as well, from entertainment, fashion and sports to the provision of unique watches and cars.

The analysis in this chapter shows that in the art period the intensity of the appreciation of many works of art also depends on the knowledge that a specific author with more or less reputation created a work. In one situation a certain painting, like the one Teri Horton found in a thrift store, is hardly noticed or is thought to be worthless and it may well end up in the garbage bin, while in another situation the same drawing is shown in a museum, gets much attention and its financial value is many thousands of dollars. In theory in either situation the drawing could have interesting meanings and be attractive for those who see it, but in practice it takes an *art-setting* to make it very meaningful. We must know that it is (real) art and this required a specific art-setting. This art-setting did not always exist. It is constructed in the course of the nineteenth century. This is the topic of the next chapter.

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