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Technecally, I’m an Artist

An Autoethnographical Study of Content Production in Instagram

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In recent years, there has been a growing interest in digital aesthetics. Among other perspectives, the production practices of users in digital social media environments has recently become a point of interest. Yet, there is hardly any research which addresses the critical issue of content production in light of artistic production.

This present thesis focuses on illuminating content production from the perspectives of an individual, cultural systems and contemporary culture. It asks in what sense content production can be viewed as artistic production, is there a way to properly situate creativity system’s products in art system, and how the boundaries of creativity are to be defined. The goals of this thesis are pursued by utilizing the method of autoethnography.

The most significant findings of the study is that Instagram content production is actually quite similar to artistic production, yet the products cannot be properly situated in the art system. In addition, the boundaries of creativity are defined by the boundaries of different systems. Ultimately, I suggest that Instagram content production is an action of playing an artist.

Keywords: media culture, digital aesthetics, cultural systems, content production
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1. INTRODUCTION

"Rather than being fully digested, these meme-like works are meant to be quickly favorited, reblogged, and forgotten. They embrace the blips and flickers of the screen, celebrating the life span of a meme as a metric for artistic legacy".

When reading this quote from a blog post on The New Yorker’s (2013) website almost two years ago, I had a moment of sudden inspiration. The writer’s idea of juxtaposing Internet memes with works of art felt daring, yet utterly inspiring. Although my first thought was that memes just are not art, the whole sphere brought up some complex questions. Exactly why memes are not art? Is it because they are created by ordinary people? I decided to pursue these questions in my thesis, albeit with a slightly different material - the Instagram pictures.

Hence, the present study explores artistic production in the social media platform Instagram. In short, an Instagram user can take a picture with a smartphone, edit the picture by applying a filter, and then share it in multiple social media
environments. Instagram provides photo and video editing and sharing services for its over 300 million active users (Wikipedia 2014). Hence, the sheer number of users implies the significance Instagram has on the everyday visual environment of millions of people. From the perspective of this study, "[…] the emergent smartphone cultures offer a lens through which to examine contemporary cultural technologies, work practices, and media affects. They also offer a way to conceptualize the disjunctures between industry and users" (Watkins, Hjorth & Koskinen 2012, 666). Digital technologies and environments are discussed from theoretical perspectives in 2.2 Digital Production.

Due to the availability of digital technologies, these memes, Instagram pictures, and other so-called do-it-yourself (DIY) artworks, are quite easily produced by ordinary people, that is, non-professionals and amateurs (Fuchs 2006, 301-302; 2008 185-186; Nightingale 2007, 295-296; see also Watkins et al. 2012, 667). In spite of the quote referring to ready-made digital products, this study sheds light especially on the production practices. This is because digital aesthetics should not be studied only from the perspective of the end product, but also "[…] the dynamic nature of production processes that may be partly or even completely in the control of the ’user/producer’", need to be covered (Richards 2004, 146). In respect of this perspective, theoretical viewpoints are presented in 2.2 Digital Production.

Since these production practices have become available for the ordinary people, there has been some serious mixing between the cultural systems of art and non-art. According to Haapala (2005, 249), a cultural system, or a cultural "[…] world is a set of structures that provide a foundation for practices and conventions guiding people’s actions." The explicit cultural systems I am discussing in this thesis, are the ’art system’ and the ’creativity system’. The art system and the definition of art are discussed from the perspective of the institutional theory of art (Dickie 1984), whereas the ’creativity system’ - a term coined by me – is founded on the theory of the art system. However, the ’creativity system’ can be seen to include, for example, cultural industries, amateurism, DIY practices, and alternative arts.
(Hesmondhalgh 2005, 114; 2006, 73; 2013, 23, 100-101). Today, the interplay between these two cultural systems manifests in the simultaneous process of aestheticization of everyday life and de-aestheticization of serious art (Sevänen 2005, 145). These themes are discussed from a theoretical perspective, in 2.2 Cultural Systems.

Based on these ideas, I put forward three research questions. In order to make myself clear, the perspectives are elaborated before putting forward the actual questions. All of the questions are answered in the chapter 4. Conclusions.

1) The users of digital technologies seem also to be the producers of the content. This content is usually aesthetic. Therefore, I ask how the Instagram content production can be viewed as artistic production? How it cannot?

This question is answered by comparing the theory of the artistic production practices presented in the subchapter with my own content practices in Instagram. The answer draws on the subchapters 2.2 Digital Production, 2.3 Artistic Production and 3.3 Analysis.

2) It seems that the boundaries between the art system and creativity system are indefinite. In spite of the blurring action, there is still a clear gap. Therefore, I am asking how the creative system’s products can be properly situated in the art system? How they cannot?

This question is answered from a more theoretical perspective than the first, although it also draws from the results of the analysis of the data. The background for the answer is mainly based on the theoretical perspectives in the subchapters 2.1 Cultural Systems, 2.4 Art System in Digital Age, and 3.3 Analysis.

3) As the different systems seem to be constantly trying out the boundaries of the art system, I am asking how the boundaries of creativity are to be defined?
The answer draws on the subchapters 2.1 Cultural Systems, 2.2 Digital Production, 2.4 Art System in Digital Age, and 3.3 Analysis.

Now that the research questions have been put forward, a few words need to be said about the study in general.

Based on the research questions, this thesis is built to cover three levels of the relationship of artistic production and digital contexts. The first level is the one of an individual producer, the second level is systemic, and the third level is cultural.

Methodologically, autoethnography is applied in order to generate and analyze the data of my own production practices on Instagram. Autoethnography refers to a methodological practice, in which a researcher, first, observes her own thoughts, feelings and practices, and then, organizes these observations in the form of a self-narrative (Ellis 2004). I decided to utilize this method, because the production process is easiest to study from a producer’s perspective. In addition, my own relationship with artistic production, and the usage of new technologies has influenced my choice. I am a daily user of Instagram, and a good example of a person producing creative content that by all means cannot be defined as art.

Moreover, since this study explores online communication, autoethnography can be seen as a justifiable choice. As Deacon, Pickering, Golding and Murdock (2010, 279) point out, "Observing the communications of others while refraining from taking part can have its dubious aspect, and the term lurking has long been applied to such activity in news groups and the like." Therefore, in this study, the researcher attends to the practices she studies. The method is discussed in the chapter 3. Method, Data and Analysis.

To be consistent with the vocabulary of the thesis, for the most part I use the term 'artistic production' (see for instance Haapala 2005; Turunen 2005 using the term) for art-making activities. Artistic production could also be called 'artistic
creativity’ (Haapala 2005), ‘artistic activity’ (Haapala 2005), ‘artistic process’ or ‘art practice’ (Dickie 1984, 2001; Haapala 2005; Turunen 2005). These terms might have slightly different nuances, but they are used here to refer to the same thing – the art-making activity. In addition, what I find it problematic that ‘artistic production’ and ‘art production’ are used interchangeably in research literature, even though these refer to different things. ‘Artistic production’ refers to production conducted in an artistic manner, whereas ‘art production’ stands for producing artworks themselves.

I use the words ‘production’, ‘producing’, and ‘producer’, to describe the practices of artists or ordinary people when they are making something. However, instead of using ‘product’, in most cases I use the word ‘content’. Similarly, I use the words ‘consumption’, ‘consuming’, and ‘consumer’ to describe the practices of artists or ordinary people when they are using something. These words bring a sense of unity to the thesis, since they can be used in the contexts of arts, non-arts and digital practices. I am aware of the fact that these words point out to the direction of the commercial world. To be clear, it is precisely my point to show the possible blurring of the boundaries of arts and business by using these words. In this thesis, however, I do not attend the discussion of possible – whether positive or negative – effects of this potential blurring action.

There might be also a slight confusion between production ‘processes’ and ‘practices’. Although ‘process’ refers to an entity, and ‘practice’ to a set of actions that construct the entity, these words are not that crucial in the context of this thesis. The main idea is to illuminate production as a continuous happening, and discuss it in general. Hence, no diagrams or such of the proceeding of a content production process is drawn.

Similarly, there might be some confusion over the terms ‘technical’, ‘technological’ and ‘digital’. ‘Technical’ and ‘technological’ tend to refer to production more generally, whereas ‘digital’ refers especially to the present day’s technology. These terms are explicated in 2.2.1 The Digital.
There are also a couple of words to be said about the position of this present study among media studies and cultural studies. According to Meyer (2011, 69), in recent years, cultural studies have become interested in cultural consumers, products and practices, as well as the different meanings attached to them. Based on this, it is quite interesting that, as Hesmondhalgh (2013, 7) states, the research of symbol creators on the cultural industries has been marginalized in academic research for many years. He elaborates this as follows:

"This was perhaps because of an understandable, but excessive, reaction against the fetishisation of their work as extraordinary. [...] In the academic fields of media studies and cultural studies in the 1980s, many researchers began, quite rightly, to examine the pleasures and interpretative activities of audiences much more assiduously than in previous analysts. But this led to a shift in fashion, away not only from analysis of symbol creators, but also from cultural production in general."

Hence, the position of this study can to some degree be described in the following way:

"What I have described above as a new humanism does not possess the baggage of earlier forms of liberal humanism, as it is more enmeshed within the realms of commercial popular culture and mass higher education. While it is not interested in ‘saving culture’ in the tradition of British literary criticism through the training of an elite in a canon of great works, it is also not interested in the cultivation of an anti-capitalist consciousness, as the structuralist Marxists sought to promote in the 1970s and 1980s. Importantly, the new humanism is designed to impact upon the conduct of commercial enterprises, and the corporatizing public sector, and to align social consciousness and cultural awareness with enhanced economic productivity in the context of globalization and multicultural societies." (Flew 2004, 167-168.)

Finally, the present study agrees with all of the following limitations and definitions put forward by Sevänen (2005, 139-140);
"Theoretical models are abstract constructions that are framed with the intention that they would help us to understand the general structure and operation principles of their objects. Hence, in the study of culture and society, such models usually ignore the differences between single countries or societies. In consequence, this article pays attention to the similarities that exist between single countries and societies - and between the national art worlds. It does not entirely ignore the differences between the national art worlds, but its focus is on their common features. [...] At the same time, the model describes, interprets and explains the position of art in contemporary Western culture and society. And also for this reason, the present article refers to the art world in the singular."

This thesis follows the following structure:

**Introduction.** The introductory chapter introduces the topic of the study, puts forward the research questions, and positions the study among media and cultural studies.

**Theoretical Background.** The theoretical background presents the cultural systems, illustrates digital and artistic production, and introduces art system in the digital age.

**Method, Data and Analysis.** The empirical chapter illustrates the autoethnographical method, provides the autoethnographic data, and offers a thematic analysis.

**Conclusion.** The conclusion discusses the research question in light of the overall theory and the empirical data.

**Discussion.** The discussion reflects this study, presents its limitations and provides suggestions for future research.
2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The present chapter presents theoretical literature from the following four perspectives: cultural systems, artistic production, digital production, and the art system in the digital age.

These four perspectives are discussed in four subchapters. The first subchapter defines what in this thesis is conceived as art. It also illustrates the two main systems relevant in this study; the art system and the creativity system. The second subchapter, for its part, defines what is digital, and illuminates an individual’s simultaneous consumption and production action in digital environments. The third subchapter discusses artistic production, firstly, from the systemic viewpoint, secondly, from an individual’s perspective – with the help of concepts of *techne* and *poiesis* –, and, finally, from a digital perspective. The final subchapter offers a cultural lens on the art system in the digital age.
2.1 Cultural Systems

The purpose of this subchapter is to clarify the cultural systems of art and other creative practices. According to Haapala (2005, 249), a cultural system, or a cultural “[…] world is a set of structures that provide a foundation for practices and conventions guiding people’s actions.” The explicit cultural systems I am discussing are the ‘art system’ and ‘creativity system’, of which Sevänen (2001, 90-91) writes as follows:

”[…] present-day cultural and social life in Western countries is full of kinds of activities and products that confuse the traditional boundaries between different cultural systems. On the one hand, the established artistic species and genres are constantly testing and exceeding their own boundaries; on the other, the centrality of design and advertising, and the prevalence of the visual and electric media, have created a situation in which the other cultural systems look increasingly like traditional art. Thus, the old species and genres of art - literature, theatre, dance, concert music, painting, sculpture - have, to a considerable extent, become estranged from traditional art-likeness, while other cultural systems, in their turn, have acquired a growing number of properties which connect them with traditional art.”

Put differently, the reason to discuss art and other creativity in the same subchapter, is that their traditional boundaries are blurred from the perspective of aesthetics in contemporary Western societies. These traditional boundaries trace back to the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, vital in the 1940s, when it was suggested that the merger of art and capitalist (culture) industries would prevent art its function of criticism and have mind-numbing effect on audiences (Hesmondhalgh 2005, 113; 2013, 24). In addition, it was presented that this commodification would lead possibly to the end of art (Turunen 2005, 185). Today, the interplay between these two cultural systems manifests in the simultaneous process of aestheticization of everyday life and de-aestheticization of serious art (Sevänen 2005, 145).
In addition, in this study, I understand the cultural systems as follows:

"Artist, work of art, artworld, and the artworld system are what I shall call "inflected concepts." I mean the expression "inflected concept" to designate a concept which is a member of a set of concepts which bend in on themselves, presupposing and supporting one another. No member of such set can be understood apart from all the other concepts in the set. Consequently, in coming to understand a concept which is a member of such set, one must in some degree come to understand all the other member concepts as well. [...] The domain of "cultural concepts" is perhaps rife with inflected sets. In any event, an account of the art enterprise requires the use of a nest of inflected concepts." (Dickie 1984, 84.)

It needs to be pointed out that there is theoretical background for the art system, but not for the 'creativity system', at least as I see it. However, in attempting to construct a model for the 'creativity system', I use the historically constructed structure of art system as an example. After all, there are many other cultural artifact production and presentation systems outside the art system. (Carroll 1999, 237-238; Haapala 2005, 249; Stecker 2005, 96-97).

1.1.1 Art System

By 'art system' (or, 'institution of art', 'system of art', or 'artistic field') I am referring to a wide approach to study art and art life as a whole (Sevänen 2005, 138). As Sevänen (2005, 138) continues, "The "art world" is a holistic concept, since it refers to the entirety of art life. Not only art works form part of the art life, but the production, mediation and reception of art works and the public discussion concerning them also belong to it."

This approach on the systematic models of the contemporary art world in Western society, has two different streams: the philosophical and the sociological. The philosophical branch consists of the works of, for instance, Arthur Danto and George Dickie, whilst the sociological branch draws from the writings by e.g.
Jürgen Habermas, Pierre Bordieu, and Niklas Luhmann. The present thesis follows the philosophical stream of research, because the study aims at shedding light especially on the personal practices of artists and other creative producers within the art system. (Sevänen 2005, 137.) For most part, this study follows the recent works by Dickie (1984, 2001), while the work of Sevänen (2001, 2005) assists in explicating the terms. The reason for following Dickie instead of Danto, is that Dickie is orientated more to the institutions, whereas Danto concentrates on art theory and history (Stecker 2005, 94). Of course, the whole of the institutional theory with its systemic features is very broad and there are a number of different versions of it (Carroll 1999, 224.).

In the study of the art system, art is usually defined in light of the institutional theory of art (Dickie 1984). According to the institutional theory, works of art are defined as art “[…] as a result of the position they occupy within an institutional framework of context” (Dickie 1984, 7). In contrast to earlier theories, such as in imitation theory, in which art is seen as a mirroring of reality (Danto 1964, 571; Knuuttila 2005, 196-197), or expression theory, in which art is an outcome of an artist’s ‘truly creative’ inner process (Haapala 2005, 254-255), the institutional theory does not discuss the value or goodness of art (Dickie 2001, 104). Instead, the institutional theory concentrates on exploring “[…] the ways in which works of art acquire their status or how certain objects and artefacts become accepted as art” (Sevänen 2001, 91). Dickie (1984, 80-82) proposes that:

1) "An artist is a person who participates with understanding in the making of a work of art.

2) A work of art is an artifact of a kind created to be presented to an artworld public.

3) A public is a set of persons the members of which are prepared in some degree to understand an object which is presented to them.

4) The artworld is the totality of all artworld systems.
5) An artworld system is a framework for the presentation of a work of art by an artist to an artworld public.”

Hence, the institutional theory suggests that something is art, if it is properly situated in a system of relations, that is, the art world system (Stecker 2005, 96). In other words, works of art become accepted as art based on different conventions of the 'art world' (Sevänen 2005, 138). The definition of an artwork happens "within a social context wherein the activities of the artist and the audience are co-ordinated by certain underlying social rules. Being an artwork is a function of certain social relations." (Carroll 1999, 226.) Thus, the art world "[...] is a social institution, like religion, insofar as it is underwritten by rules and procedures. [...] In other words, artwork is generated by playing by the required rules and procedures.” (Carroll 1999, 227.) However, this theory has been critiqued for being circular and incomplete; the 'art world' does not differ from other artifact production and presentation systems, expect for naming the system as 'art world' (Carroll 1999, 237-238; Stecker 2005, 97).

Of course, there are many actors in the art system. In light of this thesis, the most crucial actors are the artists. From the institutional perspective, artistry and the profession of an artist are negotiable constructions, defined by numerous sources such as public administration, political life, and the art system itself (Turunen 2005, 173-174, 177). As Turunen (2005, 177) elaborates this; “Public administration [...] usually defines an artist as a person practising a liberal profession or entrepreneurship. In this definition we can see traces of the concepts of artists as craftsmen, as producers making pieces of art to sell.” That is, artists have been educated or trained for their professions just like any other professional in other fields, then defined by actors who are working in the art system, or on the boundaries of art and other social systems.
2.1.2 Creativity System

As noted, I have coined the term ‘creativity system’ for the purposes of this present thesis. Thus, it might be used somewhere else for something totally different. By coming up with a new term, I am following Hesmondhalgh’s (2013) example. He has used the term ‘symbolic creativity’ for the production creative, aesthetic, and non-art human information. As he states, art has been one of the most notable things people have produced for sharing knowledge, and in a way, it does not differ that much from people manipulating symbols for purposes of more mundane information. However, this does not mean that all creative human information production should be labeled as art. (Hesmondhalgh 2013, 6.) However, I find Hesmondhalgh’s term misleading for the purposes of this thesis, especially regarding the symbolic part, and therefore, I am not using it.

With the term ‘creativity system’, I am trying to cover the non-organized spheres of non-art, amateurism, DIY ethos, and creative industries. Following the theoretical approach on ‘art system’, I could have taken for instance Dickie’s (1984) definition and elaborate it for non-arts, but it would have led to a lengthy theoretical discussion about Dickie’s definition itself.

Hence, I have come up with three down-to-earth features that connect all of these spheres: 1) the exclusion from the art system, 2) the employment of creativity discourse, and 3) the production of aesthetic. I am aware that there are problems in these definitions (for instance, what is aesthetic), but I hope it will not hinder continuing with the study. In addition, it needs to be pointed out that, for example, amateurism and DIY culture do not follow the similar, organized market logic as creative industries.

**Exclusion from art system.** The art system functions in a way that it is able to sustain its autonomy. For instance, in the case of amateur (Vodanovic 2011) and alternative (Fuchs 2011; Knuuttila 2005) art, the autonomy of the ‘real’ art depends on the recognition of the Others’ intrusions - anything between radical critique and crafty folk art - into the sphere. As I see it, the intrusions can be also
made by the actors of cultural industries. These intrusions can then be either included to, or excluded from the art sphere, but, usually, they are not included, because ‘real’ art tends to transcend the concrete objects of critique. However, amateur practices and alternative art reproduce the large power structures hierarchical positions embraced by art professionals in the system of art, and thus, cause a movement of shifting that produces the effects of newness and openness. In addition, the possibility of making an intrusion allows the equality of images. (Fuchs 2011, 310; Knuuttila 2005, 191; Vodanovic 2011, 177-178).

Employment of creativity discourse. The second feature refers to the idea of understanding creativity as an ability to see things soundly and clearly, possessed not only by artists, but also potentially by all people, when attending a social process in a systematic way (Turunen 2005, 176-177; see also Florida 2007). Traditionally, creativity has been connected to art, artistry and being able to produce artistic objects (Turunen 2005, 176). Of course, creativity discourse is more vital among the cultural industries than in the amateur arts, although creativity can be also associated with autonomy from corporate control (Hesmondhalgh, Flew 2003, 91-92). As Hickey-Moody (2010, 210) argues, in creativity discourse, creativity is "[…] just accepted as being a good thing, and it’s tied up with capitalist business innovation […]" However, Turunen (2005, 176) states that at least “Compared with the romantic myths of genius, contemporary theories of creativity constitute a non-hierarchical and democratic way of regarding the creativity of the human being, and hence the possibilities of being an artist.”

Production of aesthetic. This production takes place both in the spheres of amateur (non-commercial) and professional creative production (commercial). Amateurs (etymologically, amator means ‘lover’ in Latin) are members of the public who embrace a performative DIY attitude and an alternative culture of experimentation, remix and interactivity, and actively produce culture by themselves at a professional standard, without institutionalized recognition. Their practices are closely tied to the changing symmetry, social aesthetics, and participation. Due to the new technologies, people have been provided a
possibility to create, innovate and produce culture based on their personal preferences and tastes. (Richardson & Gorbman 2013, 9-10; Vodanovic 2011, 172-175, 176.)

The professional creative production is mostly defined and governed by the business world, because cultural industries (‘culture industries’ or ‘creative industries’, sometimes overlapping with ‘media industries’) produce aesthetic and informational products in order to gain profit. These products, however, have an effect on how people understand their lives and see their everyday surroundings. The core cultural industries are advertising and marketing, broadcasting, film, Internet industries, music, print and electronic publishing, and video and computer games. Therefore, the intangible products are linked to art, creativity and aesthetic enjoyment. (Flew 2003, 91-92; Hesmondhalgh 2005, 114; 2006, 73; 2013, 23, 100-101.)

Whilst the actors making art in the art system are called artists, the actors in the creativity system are called either producers or users, depending on the context.

### 2.2 Digital Production

This subchapter discusses digital production. First, it clarifies the concept of ‘the digital’ and some of the concrete technologies related to it. Second, the subchapter concentrates on the simultaneous consumption and production action. In this subchapter, aesthetics is not seen as a matter of taste of the final product anymore. It is more of ”an examination of the beauty of all stages of the production/consumption process, precisely because the moment of consumption can be a moment of production as well” (Richards 2004, 146). In a similar vein, it has been suggested that cultural analysis should comprehend ”the study of processes of production, consumption and circulation, as well as the products
and practices involved” (Meyer 2011, 69). That said, I will begin by defining the ’digital’ and then, continue with digital consumption/production itself.

2.2.1 The Digital

A good starting point for defining the digital, is to say a few words about technology that, actually, enables the digital. The etymology of the word ‘technology’ illustrates a viewpoint from which technology may be understood. The word comes from Greek ‘technikon’, which refers to something that belongs to ’techne’. Techne, for its part, stands for a skill or technique. Since humans manufacture and utilize tools to achieve different objectives, people, hence, tend to consider technology as an instrument, a means. (Heidegger 2013/1949, 4-5,12-13; see also Hanssen 2005, 77.) Technology works as an instrument by converting objects and experiences in the form of data, and further, by distributing this data (Ziarek 2005, 223).

Nevertheless, just as the creativity discourse requires extra careful handling, also the digital discourse and the rhetoric attached to it need to be made visible. Put differently, "Terms such as ‘the Digital Age’ gloss over such phenomena in their own right or as examples of alternative modernities, resources of hope, new dynamics in social movements, or as part of the trajectory of indigenous life in the twenty-first century. Perhaps it is time to invent new terms to remind us of the issues of power at work from a position that interrogates the hegemonic order implied in the language of the Digital Age.” (Ginsburg 2008, 141.) Ginsburg (2008, 129) continues as follows:

"I would like to suggest that part of the problem has to do with the rise of the term ‘the Digital Age’ over the last decade and the assumptions that support it. While it initially had the shock of the new, it now has become as naturalised for many of us - Western cultural workers and intellectuals - as a temporal marking of the dominance of a certain kind of technological regime (‘the Digital’) as is 'the
Palaeolithic’s’ association with certain kinds of stone tools for palaeontologists. [...] the unexamined ethnocentrism that undergirds assumptions about the Digital Age is discouraging; indeed, the seeming ubiquity of the internet appears a facade of First World illusions.”

Nevertheless, digital technology still is in the core of modern being. People carry different kinds of pocket-size devices to organize their everyday tasks and connect to other people (Hansen 2010, 172). In this study, I refer especially to the smartphone, which "is differentiated from a mobile phone by its ability to connect to online applications and services […] Using this definition, the ‘smart’ element of the device refers to its ability to be reconfigured and repurposed by individual users through their choice of downloadable apps and content” (Watkins et al. 2012, 666). The smartphone enables people to access social media environments or platforms (e.g. Instagram), and consequently, to share their pictures online.

Social media is usually defined as a technologically mediated social space, a virtual community, concentrated on online communication. In fact, contemporary digital culture is based on participation. People are continuously involved in communicating, cooperating and interacting shared meanings, which fosters the togetherness, values, and beliefs of the members of the community. Nevertheless, the construction of differences to other users might be because of impressing others, and also, some meanings that do not correspond to real life might be constructed. (Fuchs 2006, 46, 302, 311-313; 2008, 127.)

From the perspective of this study, "[…] the emergent smartphone cultures offer a lens through which to examine contemporary cultural technologies, work practices, and media affects. They also offer a way to conceptualize the disjunctures between industry and users” (Watkins et al. 2012, 666). Indeed, the smartphone offers a lens. The production of images has evolved enormously in the history of technology, from the printing press to photography, film, video, and digital imaging (Mitchell 2010, 37; see also Kramer 2013, 44). For the people using smartphones, "[…] the cameraphone experience is more about the images and
what they can, or wish they could, do with them. From their perspective, the cameraphone experience cannot be separated from its role in life offline. [...] These cameraphone activities have become part of the pattern of exchange and reciprocity that make up the fabric of everyday life [...]” (Nightingale 2007, 295-296; see also Watkins et al. 2012, 667). That is, “The cameraphone’s attractiveness to consumers lies in its capacity to activate new and pre-existing social relations in interesting ways” (Nightingale 2007, 295.)

2.2.1 Consumption/Production

Typically, consumption is seen as opposed to production. In this study these two practices are seen to be intertwined;

"Cultural consumption entails production in the sense that consumers have to make sense of products, hence they are producers of meanings. The complexity of cultural consumption is also rooted in its diffuse and often messy nature [...] it occurs across various sites and is intended or focused to different entexts.” (Meyer 2011, 68.)

Therefore, one of the main ideas this study follows is that cultural consumers both consume and produce meanings. Contrary to the traditional idea of one-way model of communication, in which media texts actively produce messages and consumers just passively receive them, consumers are now seen to contribute on the production, as well. (Meyer 2011, 72.) In effect, “[...] the production of culture is inseparable from the culture of production” (Davis 2011, 59).

Today, cultural consumption has increased because of the development of new digital technologies (Meyer 2011, 68). The cultural products produced with these new technologies, are in the form of electronic media and information (Kramer 2013, 41). The consumption perspective is justifiable, since after all, digital technologies are consumer commodities that are developed in order to gain profit (Penny 1995, 48-49). Cultural consumers consume these products, and engage in
cultural consumption practices; practices, which necessarily are not only the act of purchasing or using something up, but also engaging in immaterial practices, such as thinking and feeling (Meyer 2011, 68).

Technology has offered people the potential for more active alignments, and the worries of new technologies making people lazy and passive might be an overestimation (Richardson et al. 2013, 24). At least, the asymmetry between the ‘old media’ senders and audiences has begun to turn around due to the new technologies. Here again, individuals are challenging the old hierarchies and concentrations of power. It has been suggested that the new, emancipatory digital communication possibilities and the self-generated content can be seen to equate with freedom. (Hesmondhalgh 2006, 1, 2-3; 2013, 7, 320-321, see also Vodanovic 2011, 177.) However, it needs to be pointed out that although the agency of individuals seems to be empowered, there are also people who are not able to participate because of the high price of the equipment or the incapability to understand, and thus, the gap between ‘information haves and have-nots’ can be seen widening (Nightingale 2007, 291).

The complexity of cultural consumption/production manifests in the smartphone context, too. Social media platforms, such as Instagram, in this thesis, are regarded as part of Web 2.0, although the term is overlapping with Web 3.0, and in commercial sense, Web 2.0 applications tend to be free for their users - gifts, that is to say. The revenue logic works in a way that the number of users affects the value of the application in terms of selling advertisement space to third parties. Therefore, thoughts about informational labor (or, immaterial labor), such as user-generated content, people are performing in social media platforms, have been raised. (Fuchs 2006, 301-302; 2008 185-186.)

User-generated content is produced by the consumers of the digital technologies, and it "[...] attracts the digital general public, delivers consumers to advertisers, and provides rich information about consumers to both the communications industry and to advertisers" (Nightingale 2007, 289-290, 292).
Consequently, these *gifts* (or, free-of-charge services) are seen to have a double character of simultaneously supporting and undermining informational labor. In the digital context, there is also a division between anticommercial open source values, in which free information and free access to computers, are appreciated, and, the corporate cyberculture, in which technological determinism and radical individualism are embraced in the manner of neoliberal thinking. (Fuchs 2006, 301-302; 2008 185-186.)

### 2.3 Artistic Production

The purpose of this subchapter is to provide an overlook on the art-making activity of an artist. In general, this subchapter aims to offer an account of what an artist is "[…] doing when she or he produces (or creates) pieces intended for artistic consideration" (Haapala 2005, 245). The activity will be viewed especially from the perspective of the institutional theory of art, but "It is worth noting that every theory of art is a description of a practice for producing art" (Dickie 2001, 98). Dickie (2001, 103) elaborates the statement that every theory of art has its own theory for producing art, and, a typical underlying practice of concrete action;

"Every theory of art is an attempt to give some further depiction of what is going on in the production of art over and above the actual practices that everyone would agree about. At this point, I shall distinguish between a practice that is envisaged by a theory of art that purports to describe what is universally the case when a work of art is produced. […] Each theory of art would have its own theory-of-art-practice. An example of the second kind of practice would that of crafting (painting) a design […], which everyone would agree is typically, although not always, involved in making a visual work of art. Each domain of art would have such a typical underlying practice."

From a *theory-of-art-practice* perspective, the institutional theory of art comprehends artistic process as a process that follows the institutional practices
and conventions for producing an artwork. Artists aim at creating objects that are presented to the members of the art world, but often, these members attend in the production process before the ready work is presented. This speaks for the collective nature of artistic production in the art system. (Dickie 2001, 98; Turunen 2005, 183). Of course, these formal practices in art system produce and modify meanings with the help of the members within the group organized by the practice. An object can be used as an artistic medium and be displayed within the context of the artworld. Nevertheless, the production of art is an informal one consisting of a number of diverse informal practices; the artwork has to be made. Naturally, there are different actions which produce artifacts, but are not making in the sense of making. Hence, there are simple and complex objects: simple objects have not been altered in any way, but the complex objects have changed from simple objects to complex by an agent. (Dickie 1984, 44, 45-46; Dickie 2001, 102.)

Although institutional definition of artistic production takes the practices of different actors into account, it still does not really go into an artist’s personal practices and skills. Basically, it only describes these practices as the underlying practices "][…] that everyone agrees is typically involved in the production of a work of art, for example, the crafting […]” (Dickie 2001, 105.) As I see it, the underlying practices could be techne and poiesis.

2.3.1 Techne and Poiesis

To add a little more substance from the perspective of an individual artist, artistic production is now explicated with two terms - ‘techne’ and ‘poiesis’. The idea to use these terms comes from Arto Haapala’s article Techn, Poiesis and Artistic Creativity (2005), in which the writer states that these terms serve as general concepts applicable to all of the arts, not just to an individual artist or a particular form of art (Haapala 2005, 245-246). Therefore, these terms can be applied to the
in institutional theory of art, too. After all, the art world system "[…] is the context in which the different skills have a role to play" (Haapala 2005, 248). In addition, following Haapala (2005, 245, 246), albeit the words techne and poiesis both derive from the ancient Greek philosophers Aristotle and Plato – and the Latin term ars may be positioned in-between techne and poiesis – my personal purpose is not to discuss these terms in a philosophical sense, but rather, illustrate a simple 'model' of how to understand and conceptualize artistic production in general.

The concept techne refers to a 'know-how' – a practical human skill. In the context of artistic production, techne is understood as the craftier side of the process. It is such knowledge that makes it possible to produce things, act in the surroundings, and attend all kinds of activities. Furthermore, techne is based on rules that make an activity rational and even controllable. In the context of art world, techne manifests itself in the art world's practices, operations and conventions. The operations of the art world are historically constructed, and thus, sometimes self-evident for the actors in the system. However, this is right where techne manifests – in the know-how of the basic conventions, operations practices of the art world system. In the art system, techne is cultivated in the training of the artists and other actors in the system. Art schools and other institutions provide artists the required skills and information in order to produce art according to the particular field they are in. For their part, audiences and other art appreciators are generally given training to appreciate and understand the art provided. (Haapala 2005, 246-250.)

Poiesis, for its part, builds upon techne and can be described as an individual act of a certain artist (Haapala 2005, 251-252). To bring the concept of poiesis up to date and to refer to the individuality of an artist, Haapala (2005, 253) suggests the term 'style'. As he elaborates; "Combining the ideas of style and poiesis, we could put the matter as follows: poiesis is the ability of an artist to create an individual style for her- or himself. In this sense poiesis is a step further from techne - or from praxis for that matter. Poiesis is distinctively artistic in this sense: not just any skill,
but a skill of higher order that presupposes the basic skills. *Poiesis* is the ability to
develop the existing characteristics of an art world in a new direction; in a way, it is
the sublimated *techne*.” (Haapala 2005, 253.) Put differently, the style of an artist
differentiates an artist from other artists. It is the distinguishing character that adds
something new to the existing art world system. Nevertheless, style – or, *poiesis* –
is ultimately a skill, and not everyone is capable of using it. (Haapala 2005, 253.)

To sum up, artistic production can be characterized with two capabilities: *techne*
and *poiesis*. Their relationship is interdependent in the sense that in order to utilize
*poiesis*, that is, to have a style and be ‘truly’ creative, an artist needs to possess
the knowledge and skills of the practices of *techne*. Put differently, although
poietic skills can be seen as the real artistic skills, the technical skills need to be
mastered too. (Haapala 2005, 254-255; see also Heidegger 2013/1949, 11.)

**2.3.2 Art and Technology**

Next, theoretical literature on artistic production in digital contexts with
 technological tools presented. In general, the digital art forms can be seen to have
both immaterial and material features; they have a virtual mode of existence, and
an advanced technical (or digital) form. With regard to both of these features from
the perspective of artistic production, technology has become to play a crucial role
today. (Desideri 2005, 113-114; Drucker 2010, 16-18; Ziarek 2005, 209-210,
215.)

Naturally, the development of technology has offered artists new tools for making
art. At his time, Benjamin (2008/1936, 28) found that new technologies, such as
photography and film, distinguished themselves from traditional forms of art, such
as painting or theatre, "[…] not only in the way in which man presents himself to
the camera but in how, using the camera, he presents his surroundings to
himself". Hence, new technologies offered a new way to make art. Today, Ziarek
(2005, 214) confirms this idea by clarifying that technology is "a means for artistic exploration, a source of new materials and techniques, which serve artists in expanding and revising the horizons of artistic production". This very thought of exploration and finding something new is visible in Benjamin's writings, as well. Benjamin (2008/1936, 24) writes that artistic production with new technologies is able to reveal some hidden aspects beyond the everyday consciousness of the material world to the audience, since it "[...] affords the kind of spectacle that was never before conceivable, not at any time nor in any place" (see also Brown 2010, 54).

Interestingly, these statements do not discuss technology as a mere tool or an instrument. To clarify, they underline the idea that technology might aim to a revealing action of some sort (Heidegger 2013/1949, 4,13). As discussed earlier, the concept of techne has to do with technology, as well. Since the concept of techne entails a dimension of knowledge and stands for knowing in the widest sense, or, being "entirely at home in something, to understand and be expert in it, the essence of technology, actually, is nothing technological (Heidegger 2013/1949, 13). Consequently, technology is both an instrument and a mode of revealing, which reveals the hidden, and gives an access to 'truth'. (Desideri 2005, 109; Heidegger 2013/1949, 4,13.)

It seems that art and technology might have something in common. That is, artistic production in digital context has turned art as techne - technical in its essence. Of course, it does not mean that art and technology would be the same, as they are different in their ways of production. These different ways of production can be separated as technical techne and poietic techne. (Ziarek 2005, 216.) Technical techne refers to the way of how technology produces; it renders available, manipulates and dominates. By contrast, poietic techne refers to the way of production in art; it is such manipulation that undoes the power. To be a bit more confusing, technical techne actually belongs to the greater sphere of art and poiesis. After all, it is still revealing and productive dimension of making. (Desideri
2.4 Art System in the Digital Age

The purpose of this subchapter is to illustrate the art system in digital age from a cultural perspective. Some of the art system’s features that combine both art and the digital are presented.

One of the most crucial features in the art system in digital age is the **disappearance of the aura of an artwork**. The term ‘aura’ refers to the artwork’s cultural and material entirety. To be more specific, aura is defined as the artwork’s unique and authentic character, historical specificity, and spatial relation to the audience. (Benjamin 2008/1936, 9; Brown 2010, 54; Hanssen 2005, 76; Sevänen 2005, 146.) Nevertheless, due to the introduction of new technologies, the aura seems to be disappearing. Especially, the aura can be seen to decay because of the new essence of works of art – technical reproducibility. Reproducibility is not only a distributional facility, but also a possibility of reproduction in different contexts, locations, and times. (Benjamin 2008/1936 25-26; Ziarek 2005, 212-215, 216.) The idea of reproduction, and the changing nature of especially artistic production, can be illustrated with an example of a magician and surgeon:

“Magician and surgeon behave like painter and cameraman. The painter, while working, observes a natural distance from the subject; the cameraman, on the other hand, penetrates deep into the subject’s tissue. The images they both come up with are enormously different. The painter is an entity, the cameraman’s chopped up into a large number of pieces, which they find their way back together by following a new law. That is why the filmic portrayal of reality is of such incomparably greater significance to people today, because it continues to provide the camera-free aspect
of reality that they are entitled to demand of a work of art precisely by using the camera to penetrate that reality so thoroughly.” (Benjamin 2008/1936, 25-26.)

In other words, the traditionally understood, unique and unrepeatable, character of artworks can be seen as an incidental construct (Desideri 2005, 113). Along with the aura, the traditional aesthetic forms and categories, such as originality, authenticity, and cult value, have been culturally guarded by denying the possibility of reproducibility. are also disappearing. Historically, these characteristics, along with However, technological development, especially the introduction of photography and film, has shown that artworks are, actually, reproducible. For instance, the digital works of art especially seem to be increasingly in between the dimensions of the form of an object and an event. (Benjamin 2008/1936, 26; Desideri 2005, 113; Hanssen 2005, 76; Ziarek 2005, 221,230-231.) Of course, it can be also argued that reproducibility has helped to emancipate artworks from their traditional, cultural, and material limitations, and as a consequence, make them more accessible, displayable and public. (Benjamin 2008/1936, 12,15; Brown 2010, 54; Desideri 2005, 113-114).

If the concept of reproducibility is brought to the digital age, it operates through the features of interactivity and mutability. Mutability manifests in the possibility for open modification of the technological, artistic, and informational aspects of the work (Ziarek 2005, 210-211, 217, 220, 223-224). Because the content is mutable, the audience is able to participate in the work’s production process. This participation can be also viewed as interaction, in which the boundaries between reception and production, and the individual and the collective, are blurred. To clarify, since the participants are interacting from multiple and different locations at different times, these kind of art events do neither rely on the linear sense of temporality, nor traditional conceptions of subjectivity, identity, and collectivity. (Fuchs 2006, 302; Ziarek 2005, 210, 216, 220, 222-223.)
Another key feature is the **blurring of the boundaries between the art system and other cultural systems** within the society (Sevänen 2005, 155). In addition to the blurring of the boundaries between art system and creativity system, art system is constantly negotiating with, for instance, commercial, political and digital systems (Sevänen 2005, 149). For instance, Penny (1995, 48-50) argues that artists using digital technologies are inevitably engaged with consumer commodities. In order to manage with the blurring of the boundaries, Turunen (2005, 186) states that it is not enough for artists to justify the existence of their work by social, political, aesthetic, educational, cultural or other meaningful criteria, but they are also required a professional identity.

In spite of the critique, these negotiations can be viewed as important, as well. The negotiations tend to guarantee the diversity of art, defend its autonomy and prevent other social systems penetrating the art system in order to spread their possibly normative logic (Turunen 2005, 188). This idea is elaborated as follows:

> "Principal in discussions of the definition of an artist there are questions of autonomous and instrumental concepts of art, the conflict between them, and the rhetoric of their legitimation. Both of them are defining strategies that include certain aims. The strategy based on the concept of autonomous art aims at its own right to self-determination. The instrumental concept of art, for different reasons, aims at a kind of utilitarianism, which means that the significance of art is determined from outside, for example by the social, economic, political and/or moral spheres within a society. Strategic definitions have usually been attempted in order to achieve practical benefits, such as better social-economic situations and advantages. Ideological definitions include larger scope for politicising the profession of an artist and for a general discussion of hegemony and counter-hegemony." (Turunen 2005, 188.)

As I see it, the third cultural feature is the **technicization of being**. Based on the statements above, art could be seen as an instrument for manipulation. In fact, today’s reality is intertwined with information constructed in terms of power and
manipulation. The manipulation of information, such as digital imagery, could be characterized as a symptom of the technicization of being. (Ziarek 2005, 218.) This idea draws from reproducibility disclosing "[…] art as techne, as technical in its essence, and, consequently, as one instantiation among many of the prevalent technicization of being characteristic of (post)modernity" (Ziarek 2005, 214). To illustrate, entertainment lives from technology; it uses technological hype and technology's latest achievements to be more appealing to the consumers, and thus, gain profit. Therefore, consumers are kept "playing the game of technology, drawing us more and more into it to divert attention from the question of technicization" (Ziarek 2005, 218). Desideri (2005, 113-114) suggests that this could also lead to "[…] the artificial production of immediate sensation which characterizes so-called 'virtual reality'." On the contrary, art is embedded in new technologies, too. But instead of playing the game of technology, it keeps on asking the question of technology and the technicization of being. Put differently, art "makes technicization into the very question of its existence." (Ziarek 2005, 218).
3. METHOD, DATA, AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of the following chapter is to provide empirical material of Instagram content production. I have chosen to utilize the method of autoethnography in order to provide answers to the research questions, especially the first one. The subchapter 2.3 Artistic Production presents how artists in the art system produce art. Yet, there is no theory – or at least I have not found – of Instagram users producing content. Hence, the data generated in this chapter. I work as a good example of an Instagram user, who is not an artist. From a systemic perspective, I belong to the art system only as a member of audience. Therefore, it is unlikely for me to be included in the art system as an artist, my products perceived as art, or my production practices understood as artistic.

First, the method of autoethnography, which may be conceived both a method and a way of academic writing, is presented. Then, the self-narrative data, or three small stories, are put forward. The data is created by utilizing the method. Finally, a thematic analysis on the data, is offered. The results of the analysis will be used in the final chapter, 4. Conclusions.
3.1 Autoethnography as a Method

Autoethnography emerges from the traditional ethnographic setting of a researcher observing the subject of research outside oneself (Spry 2001, 711). In traditional ethnography, the researcher involves in a social setting, and observes the practices, processes, and other ways people make sense of their everyday lives. Based on these observations, the researcher keeps on evaluating, adapting and refocusing the research, and its data, theory, and themes. Hence, ethnography has a grounded, dialectic nature. (Davis 2011, 58, 60, 65; Deacon et al. 2010, 5-6, 258.)

Autoethnography follows these traditional ethnographic traits above, but it also concentrates on the way in which the study is presented – that is, writing. Typically, autoethnographical texts exist as stories, as fiction, prose, poetry, or combination of all above, written by the researcher. These stories, or narratives, follow general storytelling conventions; they have a plot, contain dialogue, depict people as characters, create a crisis to be resolved, and provide an explanation that gives meaning to the crisis. As the researcher writes in first-person voice or includes oneself as a character (in the sense of autobiography), these stories usually tell about the private life, emotional experiences, self-consciousness, deep personal relationship to culture, and the historical and social contexts the researcher lives in. (Ellis 2004, 30, 32, 37-38, 40, 195). According to Ellis (2004, 38), the autoethnographical research process proceeds as follows:

"First they look through an ethnographic wide angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations. As they zoom backward and forward, inward and outward, distinctions between the personal and cultural become blurred, sometimes beyond distinct recognition".
There are two reasons I have chosen to use the method of autoethnography in this study. First, production practices are personal, and therefore, they need to be studies from an individual’s perspective. During the process, the researcher constantly recognizes and interprets the traces of culture inscribed upon herself, and as a result, autoethnographic method provides first-hand data of cultural production in action (Davis 2011, 60-61; Spry 2001, 710). In a similar vein, Ellis (2004, 34) argues that "[…] it’s self-absorbed to pretend that you are somehow outside of what you study and not impacted by the same forces as others. It’s self-absorbed to mistakenly think that your actions and relationships need no reflexive thought. To write about the self is to write about social experience […] If culture circulates through all of us, then how can autoethnography not connect to a world beyond the self?" Consequently, autoethnography does not assume the nature of other people’s production practices, and thus, it might be quite exploratory (Davis 2011, 60-61).

Another reason for utilizing autoethnography is the possibility for the readers to involve and participate by reflecting their own production processes at the same time (Ellis 2004, 37, 46). As said, production is a personal experience. Hence, there are 300 million personal experiences of producing Instagram content. It would not be possible to do qualitative research on all them, so now the readers are encouraged to take an active role and reflect themselves as interacting individuals. (Spry 2001, 711).

Nevertheless, autoethnography can be viewed as problematic. Of course, it can be highly subjective, unrepresentative, and hence, inapplicable to the wider, macro level (Davis 2011, 60-61). On the contrary, Ellis (2004, 30) states that "In interpretive, impressionistic, narrative work, authors are concerned about issues of validity, reliability, and generalization, but these terms take on different meanings in narrative research." The limitation of autoethnographic method might be also the fact that it can be "[…] overly self-indulgent; it can be self-adoring or self-hating without being sufficiently self-aware or self-critical, and without taking into account
cultural constraints and possibilities” (Ellis 2004, 34). In addition, as I see it, the expression through different literary genres can be seen unjustifiable from the perspective of literature. Put differently, how do these alternative and experimental forms actually contribute to research.

3.2 Data: Three Stories

The data of the study consists of three small stories, Unicorn Beer, Auschwitz Confusion and Hipster Home, I have written about a situation I have been producing Instagram content. The stories are in prosaic form and follow my personal style of writing. However, the data aims at describing a situation instead of being a narrative per se. The published content is added next to the stories for the reader to see.

The data was chosen based on the following principles: first, the situation needs to be ‘authentic’ in a way that I would not be aware of doing research at that moment. Second, the situation need to have happened recently, so that I remember it as well as possible. Finally, the published content needs to be in a sequential order. Unicorn Beer was published in September 2014 and the two others in October 2014.

3.2.1 Unicorn Beer

It’s eight in the morning and I sit on the back seat of the car. I keep my eyes closed, but listen to my parents speaking with a quiet tone. I’m glad I’ve packed huge the Swedish wool scarf with me, it works as a blanket. Those Swedes really know how to do their marketing stuff, I could even find the exact New Zealand sheep they’ve taken the wool of.
I take a sip of my take away coffee mug, and start waking up properly. Soon, well be at our destination, a beer brewery. It’s not typical of us to have our family holidays at beer breweries, but this time, we had a good reason to follow our Austrian hosts wherever they wanted to take us.

At the brewery, we’re guided into the intimate tasting room with a tiny souvenir shop next to it. I step into the room. A stuffed head of a white horse right in front of me.

"Christ", I gasp. The huge head is cut from the body and attached to a stick. Like an arrow penetrating the skull, the stick seems to come out of the forehead. The whole thing reminds me of a hobby horse, but with the horn on its head, it’s an unicorn. A real head of a real horse. I’m speechless.

You know what? I’ve been a vegetarian since I was eleven. My parents tried to feed me meat, like all by accident. It was also the age when I went to ride horses once a week. I hated every single moment of it. Horses scared the shit out of me. I was lucky to fall out of the saddle to end the misery. Anyhow, I can’t remember a time when I haven’t loved animals, from dogs to birds.

I look at the horse for a long minute. God. I don’t know what to think. On one hand you could still see the horse breathing with its hairy muzzle and enjoying carrots. On the other, its dead and looking at me with its glass eyes.

I pull myself together and start wondering the angles I could take a picture of it. Hey, at least it has the best place of the room, on a podium. The unicorn – or its head – is a guest of honour here. I need to be fast, or those other visitors follow my example and ruin my pictures. Fourteen pictures, and I stick my iPhone back into my bag. The brewery tour is about to start.

Back in the car, I reach for my phone. I really want to share this sight. I scroll down for pictures and look for an image with a wow effect. Well, it seems that taking a picture of this thing wasn’t a piece of cake. Blame the huge horn. I really do want to have the whole horn in the picture. And that clutter on the background needs to go.

I turn around the picture and try to crop it as well as possible. The square crop makes it pretty difficult to get the horse head centered. Although it takes time
finding the right angle, I’m pretty satisfied. The stick almost forms a diagonal line across the picture. Now that’s what I call symmetry. Artsy.

Next a little bit of color. The head is white. Ummm, maybe something blueish? Amaro? No, too light. Umm, Hudson? Nope, boring. The black door behind needs a shade. What about Nashville? Yes. And a little bit of contrast and blurring here and there. OK, I’m overusing these filters.

I think twice about sharing. After all, I have a lot of vegan friends. I have friends that ride horses. What if is someone is offended? To avoid any controversy, I write "einhornz bier beer of the unicornz" and add the hashtag #oktoberfeststimmung. No one’s offended if I’m trying to be funny. I tag myself to the location of Brauerei Fohrenburg.

For your record, the beer was good and the unicorn made it even better.
lauraleponiemi, hannamt, kissapepsi, maisa_irene, ellahelsinki, jonnakonna, sinimariak, kate_berry
iidahietsu einhornz beer beer of the unicornz
#oktoberfeststimmung
"I live here in Krakow, you know", my brother sarcastically informs me while eating breakfast. We’re staying at four-star boutique hotel in Kazimierz, the Jewish quarters. "Well, TripAdvisor knows these things", I answer and have a sip of my coffee. I know he’s happy to stay there.

The Polish driver picks us up and takes us through some leafy forests reminding me of Central Europe in general. "Nazis must have spent their evenings in these villages", I think feeling surreal. I’m on my way to the place I’ve always wanted to see. I read Anne Frank’s diary when I was twelve. Too young, I guess.

In Auschwitz, our guide welcomes us. She’s quite chic in her blue leather skirt, but doesn’t smile at all. Calmly, she tells us that her relatives were held on the camp. She mentions the name of that notorious doctor, Mengele, three times. Maybe some of her relatives were subjected to horrible medical experiments. "Follow me", she says and makes a move with her hand.

The red brick buildings are a few hundred meters away. I put my Wayfarers on, look away from the buildings and up at the sky. No clouds whatsoever. Makes difficult to get good pictures, the sunlight’s heavy. I look at the buildings and I can’t feel my legs. I even get the spins. I want to stay away from the group.

The group stops in front of the sign, the gate, Arbeit Macht Frei, you know it. I remember a picture my friend Sini posted in Instagram in summer. Her boyfriend standing in front of the gate. OK, I need to take a picture and tell people I’m here. Other people are already taking those freaking pictures. I feel embarrassed. I don’t want to seem like a hungry tourist waiting for shocking sights.

Soon, the Polish lady asks us to continue the tour. The group starts walking through the gate. "This is it", I think, "I need to take the picture". We’re walking and I tap on the smartphone screen to focus on the sign. I hold my breath. Taking twenty pictures while moving, holding the camera on top of my head. Snap snap snap. A quick look on the pictures. Yes. Many good ones.
Back at the hotel, I wear a bathrobe and lay in bed. My brother is watching a documentary of Polish bisons. Or at least they look like bisons. I dig out my iPhone and scroll the pictures.

One of them is really good as it is. The word Arbeit is enough. Anyone knows the rest of the text. Arbeit didn't make these people frei. The pic could be almost published without a filter. I'll just try different filters, just in case. I reach Brannan. Ironically, I find the name of the filter reminding me of Swedish language and the word 'burned'. I feel really sad. I choose Brannan, add some contrast and a rough vignette to darken the edges to draw the focus toward the centre of the image. Here we go.

The sharing part is not that difficult. I really want people to visit the place. I tag myself to Auschwitz Birkenau. But how on earth do I tell about the place and my confused feelings? Well, maybe I just write "mua #hämmentää tää homma", which translates into "I'm #puzzled of this".

I'm glad the bison documentary is on.
lottahanki, sinko_calle, sinimariak, heidipauliina_, ojaakkol
iidahietsu mua #hämmentää tää homma
heikr Ei ihme! Jaiks!
lauraleponiemi Mua hämmentää et saaks täästä tykätä. Calle kyl jo tykkäs, et näköjään iha ok hahah.
IIDahietsu Haha @lauraleponiemi! Mut kyl mä suosittelen käyntiä täällä aika monelle. Herättää paljon ajatuksia.
"Feels almost guilty", I say, "how can I ever decide what to order?" My brother nods his head up and down.

Moa Burger is the ultimate place for burgers in Krakow. The menu is filled with options with local ingredients to satisfy the needs of demanding urbans. The old, cathedralesque building with ceilings and walls painted white feels like a church. Like the bars in Edinburgh. It differs from a church, though. Instead of crystal chandeliers, they have these industrial laps hanging from the ceiling. Red cables, that’s cool. "They must have used an interior designer here", I think to myself.

He has already decided the burger he’s ordering. Bacon, of course. "I’ll have the avocado burger and a milkshake with flower syrup, please", I say to the waitress and head to the bar table next to the wall.

I scan the place with my tired eyes. "The lamps look the same I have at home”, I say and dig out my iPhone, "and they have a peacock on the wall.” My brother smiles back at me. I understand his silence, the day at Auschwitz-Birkenau was long.

I hold my iPhone and take six shots of the place. It seems that I can’t get everything in one picture. The place is intimate, but the high ceiling makes photography difficult. I hold down my finger on the screen to focus on the peacock. I think about my angles and move my camera round to find the best possible shot. It’s a bit dim, so these pictures are going to be grainy. Some of the clients look at me taking pictures. Well, sorry. I’m a tourist.

"Thirty-four!". That’s my avocado burger. My brother must be relieved me stopping to take pictures. He’s like let’s just concentrate on eating, OK?

Back at the hotel, I look at the pictures. None of them really capture the cool atmosphere of Moa Burger. None of them tell how tired and hungry I felt. I was still puzzled and sad from what I had seen today at the concentration camp.

I decide to take one of the pictures capturing the industrial lamps, the cathedralesque ceiling and the peacock wall art. That’s enough.
The limitations of Instagram hit me again. It’s difficult to crop the picture into the form of a square. It seems that I miss some of the important parts of the picture. I’m doing my best to get the peacock there too. Okay, now it’s fine. This picture needs some color, too. I start adding the filters to my image and play around to give it a look. Well, the place was intimate, so I’m suspecting Lo-fi could be great. Umm, not. I’m trying every filter there is.

Actually, I have to say, this time Amaro surprises me. How on earth does it turn this picture red? Usually it makes everything light and cold. I add some heavy contrast. Perfect. The shadows of the lamps look amazing.

Since I’m feeling quite sensitive, I decide to craft the image text a bit boring. I write “avokadoburgeria ja kukkasmilkshakea, maailma on taas parempi paikka”, which means "avocado burgers and flower milkshake, the world is a better place now". No hashtags, just tagging myself at Moaburger.

Share? Yes.
noorakero, lauraleponiemi, tapssaa, hennamariah, kristiina_emilia, kristaleinonen, ellehelsinki, sinimariak, maisa_irene
iiidahietsu avokadoburgeria ja kukkaismilkshakea, maailma on taas parempi paikka

Tykkää  Kommentoi
3.3 Analysis

The present subchapter offers an analysis that illuminates the data provided in the previous subchapter. First, it presents guidelines for analyzing narrative data, and then, conducts the actual analysis on the three small stories of Instagram content production.

3.3.1 Thematic Analysis

In general, the analysis of autoethnographic narratives can be conducted in three ways: with narrative analysis, thematic analysis of narrative, or, structural analysis of narrative. The first option, narrative analysis, regards the story as theoretical itself, and thus, the story does not need to be analyzed at all. However, in order to get a bit more out of the stories, the stories need to treated as data. The second option, thematic analysis, concentrates on the content and presents the findings in the form of categories. (Ellis 2004, 195-196). Category, for its part, refers to a term that covers different kinds of concepts, constructs, themes and discourses (Meyer 2011, 82). The final option, structural analysis, is focused on the analysis on the form.

In light of the nature of the data and the aims of the thesis, thematic analysis is utilized. Firstly, since the data aims at describing a situation instead of being a narrative in a narrative sense, thematic analysis can be seen more applicable than structural analysis. A structural analysis would concentrate too much on the narrative form itself. Secondly, the abstract themes in the theoretical background are easier to take into account with a technique emphasizing concepts and categories. Finally, along with the text, the data consists of images as well. Therefore, a structural analysis on the narrative would be useless. Nevertheless, the images do not play an important role in the actual analysis. The main idea of
using the images is to let the reader see the production and the product side by side.

In consequence, the data will not be analyzed as a narrative *per se*. The concentration is on the content of the narrative, not the narrative with a plot, characters and setting itself. I am using the theoretical model of thematic analysis as an abstract construction that helps to understand the general operation principles of the analysis (see Sevänen 2005 for theoretical models as abstract constructions). Therefore, some of the central guidelines of analyzing narrative data are usable also to analyze data with a mixed nature. The reason for not combining narrative and pictorial analysis in this thesis, is that the main object of research is the process. As said, the process from the producer’s perspective is not visible in the ready product (Instagram content).

The analysis will take place in two steps. First, I have already made notes on the elements that are important to the research questions, and organized the data in a way that the stories have become more manageable. For this part, I have used the first research question that underlines the difference between artistic and non-artistic, personal production practices. This hands-on work has provided me the understanding that the most suitable literature for the analysis, is the one of the artistic production, in subchapter 2.1 *Artistic Production*. The second step is what happens next. Thematic analysis is used to analyze the content of the stories through themes and their relations to academic literature. (Ellis 2004, 198-200; Meyer 2011, 82, 83.)

### 3.3.2 Analyzing the Three Small Stories

The purpose of this analysis is to make the three small stories more visible from the viewpoint of an individual’s content production practices. It also provides material for answering the research questions. Since the thesis aims at answering
how an individual’s content production can be viewed as artistic production, the concepts of *techne* and *poiesis*, familiar from the subchapter 2.1 *Artistic Production*, are used in this analysis. These concepts are applied on my personal Instagram content production practices, and then organized into categories. In other words, in this analysis, my production process is scrutinized in light of artistic production.

Roughly, I would say that *poiesis*, my personal style, is visible in my experience in the beginning of these stories. On the contrary, *techne* manifests itself in the final, technical part. These two terms and their manifestation in different parts of the production process is, however, intertwined. Let us start with the poietic aspects of production.

**Poiesis.** As discussed in 2.1 *Artistic Production*, *poiesis* refers to the individual style of an artist. As I see it, the style is constructed based on the individual’s overall experience. Naturally, the style could have evolved over the years, but in these stories, my inner world is closely tied to content production, as well. For instance, if I would have thought that Auschwitz is a fun place to visit, I would neither had made a dark picture nor written how confused I am. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that no one else can experience things exactly as I do. Hence, I think that an individual’s overall experience could be something that might manifest as *poiesis*, style. Let me explain this with three categories – thoughts, feelings and actions – that construct the overall experience. (However, I need to point out that the personal experience is surely not enough in constituting ‘truly artistic’ *poiesis*.)

**Feelings.** There are different kind of feelings in the production process. For instance, in *Unicorn Beer*, I was feeling cold and a bit sleepy, although I felt safe in my huge wool scarf. When seeing the head of a horse, the tiredness was replaced with huge interest and curiosity. In *Auschwitz Confusion*, I was well-prepared for the experience with a good night sleep, eating proper
breakfast, and preserving my energy by staying quite silent in the car. In other words, I was a bit predicting that I might be shocked, and therefore, took care of my well-being. Of course, I was nervous to see what I was about to see. When I saw the notorious Arbeit Macht Frei sign on top of the Auschwitz gate, my mind was quite blank, to be honest. Perhaps this was a psychological defence of some sort. In Hipster Home, I felt sensitive and vulnerable before going to the restaurant. However, the atmosphere there came to me as safe haven, soothed me down and brought back my trust in brighter future.

However, these feelings are not restricted just to the surroundings. Making a picture that looks good feels satisfying. In Hipster Home, I felt that the picture was really good: “Perfect. The shadows of the lamps look amazing.” In Unicorn Beer, I found the diagonal line good: “Now that’s what I call symmetry. Artsy.”

Thoughts. Poiesis could be seen also in the thoughts and associations of an individual. In Unicorn Beer, I had these thoughts about cultural differences, different ways of making fun of things, memories of my own history and associations of internet meme culture. In Auschwitz Confusion, I remembered reading Anne Frank’s diary as a pre-teen (although she was not transported in Auschwitz) and an Auschwitz picture my friend posted on Instagram. In Hipster Home, I thought about the architecture, the interior and the food that took my vegetarian diet into account. I remembered how they made churches into bars and clubs in Edinburgh. All of these thoughts contribute to the individual style, the poiesis, as well.

These stylistic aspects are also visible in the language I use for the ready post. The sense of humour is emphasized especially in Unicorn Beer, but visible also in Hipster Home. Humour has always been a way for me to process difficult things, and it might be a way of trying to be accepted in the Internet world, too. I enjoy the genres of sarcasm, irony and dark humour. None of these genres, however, felt appropriate when creating Auschwitz Confusion. In
Unicorn Beer, the humour comes from the idea of "what the hell is wrong with these Austrians". In addition, the image text has some intertextualities to unicorn memes in Internet, to the unicorn trend and cat video trend. In Hipster Aesthetics, I was self-ironic in describing myself eating generic hipster food.

**Actions.** The actions have to do with the actual, embodied practices I have conducted in the surroundings. I was abroad in all the stories. In Unicorn Beer, I am in Austria, and in both Auschwitz Confusion and Hipster Home, I am in Poland.

**Techne.** As already discussed in 2.1 Artistic Production, techne refers to a practical human know-how that makes it possible to produce things and act in the surroundings. Additionally, it is knowledge of the rules of the activity, and the craftier side of the process. Techne, in the context of Instagram, can be located in two categories; skill and rules.

**Skill.** The skill refers to the know-how of using the smartphone camera and the Instagram app. To be honest, I had hard time remembering what I really did when producing the content on the Instagram app. In order to write the stories, I had to check the pictures and try out different filters to know what I had done. Therefore, I would claim that most of the technical parts of the production, such as taking, choosing and editing the picture, are motorized.

For instance, in Unicorn Beer, I just take the smartphone and start shooting. In the car, I crab the phone and begin editing without even thinking. In Auschwitz Confusion, I know that it’s difficult to get proper pictures because of the heavy sunlight. In addition, to choose the right picture for further editing is relatively easy – it just looks best. And just as in Unicorn Beer, in Hipster Home I’m also trying to find a proper the angle to take the picture with the smartphone.
These examples show that techne really is a skill or know-how. I know what I’m doing without even having to think about it. I don’t have to spend a lot of time thinking which picture I will choose or what to do technically with the picture. Hence, the skill is the user’s knowledge of using the smartphone camera and the different tools Instagram provides.

**Rules.** Instagram sets rules and boundaries of what can, and cannot, be done. That is, Instagram defines the settings for the content, and therefore offers a ready format to follow. For instance, the selection of filters is limited (Wikipedia 2015):

- Normal: No filter applied
- 1977: The increased exposure with a red tint gives the photograph a rosy, brighter, faded look.
- Amaro: Adds light to an image, with the focus on the centre.
- Brannan: Increases contrast and exposure and adds a metallic tint.
- Earlybird: Gives photographs an older look with a sepia tint and warm temperature.
- Hefe: High contrast and saturation, with a similar effect to Lo-Fi but not quite as dramatic.
- Hudson: Creates an "icy" illusion with heightened shadows, cool tint and dodged center.
- Inkwel: Direct shift to black and white - no extra editing.
- Kelvin: Increases saturation and temperature to give it a radiant "glow".
- Lo-fi: Enriches color and adds strong shadows through the use of saturation and "warming" the temperature.
- Mayfair: Applies a warm pink tone, subtle vignetting to brighten the photograph center and a thin black border.
- Nashville: Warms the temperature, lowers contrast and increases exposure to give a light "pink" tint - making it feel "nostalgic".
- Rise: Adds a "glow" to the image, with softer lighting of the subject.
- Sierra: Gives a faded, softer look.
- Sutro: Burns photo edges, increases highlights and shadows dramatically with a focus on purple and brown colors.
- Toaster: Ages the image by "burning" the centre and adds a dramatic vignette.
- Valencia: Fades the image by increasing exposure and warming the colors, to give it an antique feel.
- Walden: Increases exposure and adds a yellow tint.
- Willow: A monochromatic filter with subtle purple tones and a translucent white border.[93]
- X-Pro II: Increases color vibrance with a golden tint, high contrast and slight vignette added to the edges.
- Slumber: Desaturates the image as well as adds haze for a retro, dreamy look - with an emphasis on blacks and blues.
- Cream: Adds a creamy look that both warms and cools the image.
- Ludwig: A slight hint of desaturation that also enhances light.
- Aden: This filter gives a blue/green natural look.
Lately, Instagram also added three more filters to the selection (The Independent 2015):

"It also adds three new filters, along with a promise that the site will "bring you additional ones more regularly going forward". The three new filters are called Lark, Reyes and Juno. Instagram said that the three are “inspired by weekend adventures outdoors”. They are “a family of modern, subtle filters that brighten and enhance your photos in refined, beautiful ways”.

“Lark desaturates reds while punching up blues and greens to bring your landscapes to life,” the team wrote. “Reyes brings a dusty, vintage look to your moments. And finally, Juno tints cool tones green while making warm tones pop and whites glow for vibrant photos of people.”

Based on the data, I ultimately choose the filter based on how the picture looks with different filters. For instance, in Hipster Home, I suspect that Lo-fi would suit the picture best, but when trying out the filters, actually, Amaro happens to work even better. In case the filters do not add enough of an effect, there is also a panel with more advanced settings. In all of the stories, I tend to use these settings. For example, in Auschwitz Confusion I add a vignette, whereas in Unicorn Beer I choose to add some contrast.

In addition, Instagram also provides rules for the form – the square crop. In the examples of my production, I tend to follow the rule. For instance in Unicorn Beer and Hipster Home, I followed the square crop form, although it was difficult. Perhaps a rectangular frame would have suited better for these pictures. Some people tend to use other applications, which allow to add white borders around the picture, so that the form of the picture looks rectangular. This rectangular frame is widely used in photography, and thus, the demand for the square crop form is quite radical. This theme could actually
call for some research on the composition and positioning in Instagram, but not in this study this time.

Instagram has also defined rules for the text. Below the actual picture, is an area for short texts and hashtags. Hashtags are Instagram’s categorization system, which helps other people to find pictures with a similar theme. In *Unicorn Beer*, I thought about being funny when writing "einhornz bier beer of the unicornz". This referred to the quite absurd interlink with unicorns and beer. It also referred to the unicorn trend in Internet. To be clear with my humorous attitude and to avoid any controversy, I added the hashtag #oktoberfeststimmung, which pointed out that I am in a German speaking country during the beer festival time. In all of these stories I’ve written a few words to describe the picture in an ironic sense.

Finally, Instagram defines rules for tagging, too. To clarify, it lets its users to add locations and other Instagram users to the posts. I have ‘tagged’ all of the whereabouts in the upper corner, right under my nickname. These ‘tags’ consist of the exact names of the places: *Breuerei Fohrenburg*, *Auschwitz Birkenau* and *Moaburger*. Although I am with my family members in all of these stories, I haven’t tagged them to my posts. There is a reason for it; none of them is in Instagram.

Now that I have found themes that relate to *techne* and *poiesis*, I will be saying a few words of the relationships of these themes. As said, based on my stories, *poiesis* seems to be constituted of the individual’s overall experience that includes thoughts, feelings and actions of an individual. *Techne*, for its part, seems to be constituted of skill and rules. Consequently, the production of content in Instagram combines both *techne* and *poiesis*; the individuals overall experience that is communicated through skill and following the rules. In other words, it seems that I might be connecting the overall experience together with the technical picture. For instance, in *Auschwitz Confusion*, I added deep blue filter on the picture to show
I’m thoughtful and serious. In *Hipster Home*, I added the light pink filter was chosen to show the vulnerability, but also the cosy feeling I felt after. Of course, this idea needs some more research.
4. CONCLUSION

This is the final chapter of the actual study. The purpose of this chapter is to provide answers to the research questions by discussing themes in the chapter 2. *Theoretical Background* and the findings of the subchapter 3.3 *Analysis*. The chapter is constituted of three subchapters, all of which provide an answer to the question *in question*. To give a small reminder, the research questions are:

1) How the Instagram content production can be seen as artistic production? How it cannot?

2) How the creative system’s products can be properly situated in the art system? How they cannot?

3) How the boundaries of creativity are to be defined?

When discussing themes already mentioned in the chapter 2. *Theoretical Background*, no reference to the original source is made. All of the themes, ideas and statements can be found earlier in this thesis with proper markings to the sources. In case something new is mentioned, there will, of course, be a reference.
4.1 Limited Creativity

This subchapter concentrates on the first research question (*How the Instagram content production can be viewed as artistic production? How it cannot?*). The focus is on an individual’s viewpoint, and hence, the discussion is for the most part based on themes in 2.2 Digital Production, 2.3 Artistic Production and 3.3 Analysis.

As discussed, artistic production consists of *techne* and *poiesis*. Based on the analysis on my content production practices on Instagram, these two aspects, *techne* and *poiesis*, seem to take place. Therefore, my Instagram content production can be seen to be artistic. In sum, **given that *techne* and *poiesis* are crucial aspects of artistic production, the Instagram content production can be viewed as artistic production.** Let me clarify this.

Instagram can be seen as a system or an institution that functions through different conventions and operations. It defines the practices and rules of the system. These conventions and operations are ‘historically’ constructed, and hence, self-evident for the users. As pointed out in the analysis of the data, Instagram provides and defines quite a lot of the *techne*-related practices and skills. As for the skills, users do not need to possess artistic *techne* themselves, because the easily usable digital technique is already there. Instagram provides the *techne* in a way that it makes the users feel as if they were included to the art system based on ‘their’ technical skills. However, the users need to learn how to use the Instagram app – the *techne* of Instagram – in order to be able to operate in the system. Based on my experience, I did not even have to think about the technical production part, because it was highly automatic, a know-how. Accordingly, Instagram is a system for anyone to become an ‘artist’.

Instagram also provides the knowledge how to operate in the system. It defines the code of conduct, or a set of rules for the users to follow. The rule-setting
mentality manifests quite concretely in the rules for the content; no nudity, violence or drugs are allowed. Pictures containing any controversial material are always deleted by the moderators. Nightingale (2007, 291) elaborates the reason for rule-setting from a commercial perspective: "[…] user-driven surveillance is not working to the satisfaction of the advertising industry, so surveillance is metamorphosing into a new online industry. The sites need advertising to make a profit, and advertisers are attracted to the entertainment and interest that the presence of controversial material generates, but cannot risk their products being linked to content that might damage brand images." In other words, the user-generated content is supervised in order to attract advertisers. Nevertheless, it needs to be pointed out that Instagram does not show any visible advertisements to its users, but it might collect the user data for selling purposes.

Instagram offers possibilities for poiesis, too. It allows different kinds of variables to express the style of an individual. On the condition that the relationship between techne and poiesis is interdependent, the poiesis of Instagram would not manifest itself without the skills and rules of techne. Therefore, a user can be a mediocre creative producer, but still express oneself credibly. As discussed in the analysis, the poietic possibilities manifest in the expression of individual actions (adding location and tagging people), thoughts (verbalizing in the text box) and feelings (applying filters). Especially the filters can be seen to manifest poiesis, since they are stylistic means. However, the amount of filters and different tools, is limited. I need to point out again that the personal experiences are surely not enough in constituting a 'truly artistic' poiesis.

All in all, Instagram offers possibilities for both techne and poiesis, but these possibilities tend to be quite regulated and limited. This raises a question whether this kind of techne and poiesis can be included in the art system. From the cultural systems perspective, I suspect that Instagram content production cannot be viewed as artistic production. This theme is discussed in the next subchapter.
4.2 Pushing the Boundaries

This subchapter concentrates on the second research question (*How the creative system’s products can be included in the art system? How they cannot?*), but continues answering to the first question, too. The focus is on the systemic perspective, and hence, the question is answered based on themes in the subchapters 2.1 Cultural Systems, 2.4 Art System in Digital Age, and 3.3 Analysis.

Before going to the actual discussion, I would like to say a few words about Instagram and creativity system. Earlier, I have discussed Instagram as it would indisputably belong to the creativity system. At this point, I have become uncertain whether it belongs to the system entirely (not that anything could belong to a system without belonging to some other system, as well). Provided that Instagram is a company providing digital services, it actually has been established in the commercial and digital systems. Gradually, it has become accepted as a part of creative system. Be that as it may, this indefinite location of Instagram at least shows the ambiguous nature of the systems’ boundaries.

The theoretical literature seems to indicate that other system’s products can be included into the art system – and accepted as art – if the products can be properly situated in the art system. However, the creative system’s products are not properly situated the art system. Their producers do not follow the conventions and operation of the art system. Hence, they are not art. Provided that Instagram content belongs to the creative system, Instagram content is not art either. In spite of the quite circular argumentation, it can be concluded based on the research that the creative system’s products can be included in the art system, if the products could be properly situated in the art system.

This idea can be applied to the content production, discussed in the previous subchapter. Instagram content production can be viewed as artistic production, if
it is properly situated as artistic production in the art system. However, my content production would not be accepted by the art system as artistic production, as I belong to the art system only as a member of audience. In addition, my products lack of the truly creative style, poiesis. The stylistic aspects I used are defined by Instagram. However, no one will be ever making a picture just like mine, but still it is not enough for making it truly poietic. Therefore, it is unlikely for me to be situated in the art system as an artist, who produces works of art.

One could then ask, if Instagram content, produced by a trained artist in the art system, is art. It could be, since Instagram can also be seen only as a medium for the production practices or the products. Although the medium would not be properly situated in the art system, it does not mean that the production or products are automatically excluded. Separating the medium from the products also allows artists to make art there. The artwork could be in Instagram or a gallery, as long as it is properly situated in the art world and can be justified based on art theory. This scenario, however, is quite problematic due to the context. After all, Instagram is regulated and governed by a company, and hence, belongs strongly to the commercial and digital systems.

I really need to make a side note now. Interestingly, a week ago I continued the paragraph above as follows: "Based on the idea of the blurring of the boundaries between different systems, I would not be surprised, if Instagram would be accepted as an artistic platform or medium in the coming years". This week, right before finally returning this thesis, I read the news. The New York -based artist Richard Prince had just sold screenshots of other people’s Instagram content. As CNN (2015) writes;

"Is it selfie-ish to make a profit off of strangers’ Instagram photos?

Richard Prince did just that, and it's drawing a lot of negative reaction.
The painter and photographer blew up screenshots of other people's Instagrams, hung them at the Frieze Art Fair in New York and reportedly sold almost all of them for $90,000 each.

Prince called his exhibit "New Portraits," and the fact that he sold photos without the permission or even the knowledge of many of the original photographers is not sitting well with some people."

The example shows that every new form of art faces some resistance. The discussion about copyrights and the amount of money he sold the works shows how controversial the act was. However, as to Benjamin (2008/1936, 30-31), new, pioneering forms of art always 'go too far' with their demands for expression at a new technological level. However, he points out that "The flamboyance, even crudeness, that art manifests in this way, especially in what are called 'periods of decadence', spring in fact from art's richest core of historical forces" (Benjamin (2008/1936, 31).

Although the changing character of art was not in the focus of the research, the implications of the study for this cannot be ignored since it provides an important perspective on art today. As discussed, the character of art is changing and the aura of an artwork declining due to the possibility for reproduction. From this perspective, it does not matter if, for example, the 'original' work is in Instagram, because the conception of 'original' has changed. Actually, contemporary digital art and Instagram products have a lot in common; they are reproducible, interactive, mutable and have an event character. Yet, there's a slight difference. As I see it, artworks usually tend to make the usage of technology visible, whilst the Instagram products aim at hiding the usage of technology (see Heidegger (2013/1949). Further research is needed on this idea.
4.3 Playing an Artist

The present subchapter concentrates on the third research question (How the boundaries of creativity are to be defined?). The subchapter focuses especially on the cultural viewpoint, but also draws on the individual and systemic perspectives too. The discussion mainly based on themes in 2.1 Cultural Systems, 2.2 Digital Production, 2.4 Art System in the Digital Age and 3.3 Analysis.

From the systemic approach, the **boundaries of different systems define the boundaries of creativity**. Each system formulates its own definition of creativity. Since the systems have their own definitions of creativity, they too have their own discourses. To my mind, these discursive differences create the boundaries. Put differently, it is impossible to speak about creativity in general, because both the definitions and discourses of creativity vary between different systems. From this perspective, the boundaries of different systems could, actually, be the boundaries of different creativities.

If taking Instagram as an example, on one hand it could be argued that the boundaries of creativity are defined by digital technology, the platform and the social media environment. In this sense, actually the digital system defines the boundaries of creativity. On the other hand, it could be that the commercial system defines the boundaries of creativity. As discussed, the conception of creativity has changed from an artist-only to an idea of everyone being potentially creative in the right social context. Moreover, the products of Instagram are instrumental, that is, not living for their own sake, as they are sold to advertisers (Turunen 2005, 186). Hence, Instagram uses the immaterial, creative labor of people to make content for them to be sold.

Based on the previous subchapters discussing the research questions, it seems that content production in Instagram cannot be considered artistic. However, it could be considered as **play**. In the analysis of my personal content production in
Instagram, I noticed that the intertwined techne and poiesis-related practices were playful. For instance, in my production practices, I felt satisfied after 'playing' with the different settings. I was entertaining and enjoying myself. I found the production fun and not that serious. Therefore, I am suggesting that part of the attraction of Instagram is based on the playful nature.

Play enables the simultaneous production, and pushing the boundaries. By providing a game to played, Instagram gets its users hooked. I feel that Instagram keeps the users playing the game of technology, or even playing artists. The artist play is paved with readymade techne (filters), so it's hard to fail and feel not being talented. Hence, Instagram feeds the user's ego about one's talents, and, of course, the 'likes' by the followers keep the illusion on. Therefore, ordinary people can play with new technologies to pretend as they were artists. Everyone has a chance of being included to the 'art system' of Instagram.

The playful action also provides individuals the possibility to push the systemic boundaries. The individuals contribute to the blurring of the boundaries, if they have the right tools, such as digital technology, to blur them. In Instagram, a user is acting in a digital environment that is built upon commercialized system, but still creating aesthetic content of creativity system – gesturing towards the art system's discourse of creativity. Consequently, the person is able to play as if one were in the art system. People are offered a position of a creative and genius artist. This idea speaks for virtual reality, and calls for further research. In sum, I find it a paradox that users are provided a possibility to make art, that is not actually art.

In the previous subchapter, I already questioned whether Instagram belongs to the creativity system at all. At least Instagram tries to gesture towards creativity system with the hip editing tools and retro polaroid filters, used by the creative class living in urban environments. These features also appeal to the DIY mentality of today. They also point at photography, which has not been included in the art system that long. I have become even more certain that Instagram provides the
play of being creative as the creative system understands creativity. After all, the pictures are not artistic, and they do not seem to actually gesture towards art system either. However, the question remains whether it can even seen as creative, or is it still just ordinary content production.

Just as Richard France shows us; it's okay to play an artist, but only a true artist can break the rules (and make the money).
5. DISCUSSION

This short chapter reflects the present study. The aim of this thesis was to investigate Instagram content production in light of artistic production. First, some of the limitations of the study are addressed. Then, suggestions for further research are considered.

Limitations. There are four main problems in the study. The first thing to be considered is separating production from consumption. As noted, cultural analysis should comprehend "the study of processes of production, consumption and circulation, as well as the products and practices involved" (Meyer 2011, 69). It is difficult to get all of these aspects covered in one study, and some limitations need to be made to get the study as focused as possible. However, what I still find lacking in the research is the consumption part. Especially the production playing such a pivotal role, it would need the counterpart to balance the whole study. I feel that the production and consumption are practically inseparable, and the separation of these practices is artificial.

Another thing to consider is the systemic perspective, and especially the definition of 'creativity system'. As discussed, the term is coined by me, based on what I understand as a system that has not been defined yet. There is no such definition
for the whole sphere of non-art 'creativity' that would interlink both commercial and non-commercial actors. Nevertheless, I could have paid more attention in defining the different actors, practices and products in that system. In addition, I could have justified why the creative system is combing both commercial and non-commercial spheres. In the end, I could just have used the digital system instead of creating any new concepts.

Third problem in this thesis is the chapter 3. Method, Data and Analysis. The problems in autoethnography have to do with the nonexistent objectivity of the method. Of course, the generalizability of the stories is tested by the readers who decide whether the story resonates with their experiences and lives. Although the data of the study consisted of three in-depth stories about my personal production practices, it is still a small number in comparison to the number of Instagram content published every day around the world. The idea was to make the study personal and explorative, but it is still quite evident that a larger number of cases could have expanded the diversity, and some features of different genres (such as selfies) might have emerged that were not identified in the present study. Since the data for the study was relatively small, the implications made should be considered as suggestive only. A huge problem in writing the thesis was that how to conduct the analysis. However, I ended up in adopting the concepts of analysis from the theoretical literature, to make the analysis fit well with the theory. Nevertheless, care should be taken in generalizing the results.

The final limitation of this study arises from the perspective of aesthetics. The study uses 'art' and 'artistic production' as concepts to operate in finding new perspectives on the creation of social media content, instead of tapping into any hard core philosophical or aesthetic discussions.

**Suggestions for further research.** The present study suggests at least three directions for further research. First, the relationship between production and consumption could be looked into in more detail. As Turunen (2005, 183) points
out, the art system and its network nature consists also the "process of receiving which emphasises the role of receivers (readers, spectators, listeners, etc.), and their experiences and interpretations." Hence, future research could take into account the consumption practices of the 'receivers', too. Of course, digital environments as an area of investigation is enormous, and there are plenty of possibilities for future research.

I stress the fundamental need for further research concerning digital aesthetics. Imitation theory could provide an exceptionally interesting perspective on mimetic works and virtual reality. This is the direction I would like to follow in the future.

More research attention should be given to the everyday visual culture Instagram belongs to. Possible further research could concentrate on image production, or the documentary nature of smartphone photography.
REFERENCES

Academic


Non-academic


