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Kunst und Kult im Zeitalter der Kulturindustrie. Ein Vergleich der kunstphilosophischen Thesen Walter Benjamins mit der kritischen Ästhetik Theodor W. Adornos

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Abstract (English)

In this master thesis dissertation I will compare Walter Benjamin's theses about art in times of late capitalism, especially his ideas from his essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1935/36) with Theodor W. Adorno's analysis of *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception*, the fourth chapter of his with Max Horkheimer written book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944). This thesis aims to show the emancipatory potential of art from the perspective of the critical theory from Theodor W. Adorno and Walter Benjamin. Walter Benjamin is concerned with the relation between religion and art as well as the change shift from the cult value of an artwork to its exhibition value. This change was caused by new forms of art, like photography and film and shifted foundation of art from cult to politics. In Adorno's analysis of art in late capitalism, every artwork - without exceptions - is a commodity. However, after detailed consideration of Adorno's texts. I will show that Benjamin's approach and Adorno's critique are not contradicting but complementing each other. This hypothesis will be proven after a close look into the correspondence between Adorno and Benjamin. The old, potentially autonomous, auratic art as well as the modern, technological grounded, non-auratic art need to be analyzed in a dialectical-materialistic sense. My analysis shows the mutual/common project of Adorno and Benjamin, which comprises a materialistic aesthetic that tries to demystify art and highlights one possibility for liberation in art.