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Lessons in leftish thinking.

Five prestigious artists have just come to the assistance of the HADOPI Law. It is their right, even though we know that many other artists think that this law is inappropriate in light of the considerable intellectual and industrial changes caused by new methods of communication and, furthermore, that it is perfectly inapplicable.

What is different here is that rather than contributing to the discussion on this issue, they attack the PS (socialist party), which opposes this law, by claiming to be the true repositories of the values of the left.

Thus, “being on the left” would appear to be measured solely in light of the debate on the HADOPI Law. Protesting against the unpleasant cuts to the already limited culture budget, against the almost complete disappearance of all cultural action budgets intended for schools or neighbourhood associations, against the Ministry being bypassed by the implementation of an Artistic Creation Council appointed by the President, against the Director General of French public television being appointed by the President is seemingly unimportant ... While they are certainly dear to the left, these issues are perhaps not sufficiently noble for the prestigious artists. Unless, perhaps, they do not concern them directly.

The issue of free culture and the role of culture on the Internet are complex questions which call into question the current economic, social, intellectual and artistic balances. Over the past 40 years, we have witnessed the privatisation of every facet of social life, the disappearance of dialogue, solidarity and sharing. Yet it is towards culture that the desire for something gratis, free access and the rationale of sharing are developing. According to our artists, introducing repressive measures specific to France is the true response of “the left” to such a trend in society.

Being on the left means seizing this movement towards cultural democratisation while reinventing an economy of creation and creators.

Being on the left means taking the debate between a thirst for culture and funding for creation to the European level.

Being on the left means developing the existing cultural diversity through public financing and sharing on the Internet.

Being on the left means suggesting that the royalties of prestigious authors are used to finance emerging artists.

Being on the left means not confusing personal interests with collective interests.

Considering only one’s market share in this debate is to be not only blind, but also terribly conservative.

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