

The Experience of Theatre and the Reasons for Attending

A research into the effect of motivation on experience of theatre
performances

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1. Introduction

In Yasmina Reza's play *Art*, the characters of Marc and Serge stand on the stage in front of a white canvas. Serge proudly proclaims that it's a masterpiece, while Marc scoffs at his friend for paying 200,000 francs for a white canvas. As the plot unfolds, the opposing perceptions of the work divide the friends and an intense debate about the nature of art ensues. To Serge there is a quality to it that gives him aesthetic pleasure, one that Marc is simply too uncultured to see. To Marc there is nothing there but a white canvas, certainly nothing to evoke any form of aesthetic experience. In between them both is their friend Yvan who doesn't know what he thinks and tries to bridge the gap by agreeing with them both behind their backs. The three friends have completely different expectations and experiences in the meeting with the art work, not to mention completely different ideas of what art should be, which in turn divides them. In his work *Distinction*, French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu reflected on how we make the distinction between good and bad taste which in turn has the effect of distinguishing ourselves in the process. Through our experiences of the world we classify what we see around us. Jazz music is good taste and the Kardashians are bad or the other way around. The act of passing that judgement and classifying something as good or bad also conveys something about who we are. Our tastes are linked to a sense of identity and as such the very act of classifying classifies us in return.

As with Serge and Marc, art can create many different and intense experiences, whether it is an experience of being absorbed in the work or the experience of complete displeasure or even disgust. It is said that the key to understanding art is the audience, because "the meanings created from art and the ways it is used depend on its consumers, not its creators" (Alexander, 2011, p. 181). Without anyone to observe the art, there is no point to it. By definition, it is created to be experienced and perceived by someone and to be liked or disliked. Unlike other art forms, however, the experience of the theatre or any other form of performance art, requires the audiences to be present in the production of the work. As a spectator, the work is played out right in front of you. The performers are there to appeal to the audience and evoke some kind of reaction from the. The success of a performance does not only lie in the literary quality of the play, but mostly in the experience and reaction of the

audience. There is, however, a tendency to think of the audience as a single entity, an “it”, forgetting that the audience consists of a wide variety of individuals, who might have very different social backgrounds (Freshwater, 2009, p. 5-6). Their reasons for going might be vastly different as well as their individual experiences of the performances despite it being witnessed in a group. Thus, art “never stands alone, but must be understood in relationship to the people who consume it” and to understand the theatre one must, therefore, first understand its audience (Alexander, 2011, p. 181). There are two questions in response to this. Firstly, why do the audiences choose to come to the theatre in the first place? What are they looking for in the performance? Secondly, what kind of experience do they have? And did their actual experience live up to their expectations? By focusing on the consumption of art, the focus of my thesis will be on how the motivations of the theatre audience affect their aesthetic experience. The first question that needs to be answered then is “who are the audiences”? Furthermore, what is their social background and how does it affect their motivation for attending a theatre performance? In his research, Bourdieu found that the consumers of art belong to a certain social segment group in terms of education, income, and age. He emphasised the importance of cultural socialization, both at home and in the school and how the love of art can affect a person’s socio-economic position and vice versa. Through socialization certain preferences and patterns of activities are developed, what Bourdieu calls *habitus*, which leads to an increased chance of someone attending a cultural event. In other words, who the audiences are might be related to their motivations for attending, and both aspects might affect their experiences as well. The other question that needs to be answered then is “how do the audiences experience the performances”? This assignment will attempt to relate the experiences of a theatre audience to both their social background and their motivations for attending. The issues will be addressed in the form of an online survey that has been distributed to the audiences of Det Norske Teatret (The Norwegian Theatre) in Oslo.

The aim of this paper is to see how this relationship between social background, motivation and experience, takes place with a theatre audience. How does social background affect the motivations of the audience? And what is the relationship between the motivations and aesthetic experience of the audience?

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. The Theatre

When asking the question “what is the theatre”, the first obvious answer is that theatre is performance. More specifically: it is a performance for an audience and its fundamental element thus is the meeting or interaction between the performance and its spectators (Sontag, 1966, p. 29; McConachie, 2013, p. 2). The origins of the term “theatre” translates as “place of seeing”, while the term “audience” stems from the Latin verb *audire*, which means “to hear” (Freshwater, 2009, p. 5). It is in other words something that is made to be seen and heard, to be sensed and experienced. But it is also a social phenomenon as it is “an event which relies on the physical presence of an audience to confirm its cultural status” (Bennett, 1997, p. 86). As such the audience and their relationship to the theatre is a crucial part of the performance. Then one may ask what happens during the event. What does the theatre bring to people and what do the audience in return bring to the performance? Why do they choose to attend in the first place? There are many different and often contradicting elements which are highlighted as the essence of the theatre performance. For some the emotional response defines the theatre, others emphasize the cognitive process, while still others highlight the technical and visual aspects. Regardless of the focus point, the interaction between the actors on the stage and the spectators is at the centre of the theatre experience.

Unlike the drama, whose artistic excellence depends on the abilities of the author, the performance of the drama also depends on its actors and audience. Its success or failure depends on the audience’s perception and judgement of it. There can be no art without the spectators there to witness it as they are the ones with the power to deem the work as either good or bad. As art is an experience good, the value of it can only be determined upon consumption. Despite the audience intention to attend for the sake of a good experience, there is no guarantee that they will get it. As a form of performance rather than a literary work, the theatre has often been undervalued (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 4). The drama is created by the individual, the author, while the theatre is “something achieved by the audience and its servants” (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 5). It has been viewed as unauthentic and fake and is prone to be overly theatrical (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 1-2). In contrast, the drama has a stable artistic quality to it and is not at the mercy of the ability of someone to perform it. The theatre on the other hand, conveys the literary work and can be understood in a number of different ways. A play can be staged and reinterpreted differently each time, depending on which elements the presenters choose to focus on or use to draw parallels to other topics. There are

many different possibilities for a play to (re)connect with its audience and renew itself. It provides the actors with a seemingly limitless amount of artistic choices and possible interpretations. The role of the audiences in all of this is to be there to experience the performance and to evaluate it.

Today the theatre is seen as a quite elitist institution for a quite specific audience, but this was not always so. Throughout history, there have been many different ideas of what the theatre's function is, what it represents, and whom it is for. The theatre mirrors the shifting perception of identity and of the theatre as an art form. One which moves from a religious ritual to an obscene display of immorality to an elitist institution.

The origin of the Western theatre is considered to be Ancient Greece with the annual celebration of the god Dionysos. Every year, the citizens of Athens would gather for the festival to celebrate the polis. The theatre was at this time an integrated part of the cult of the state and was intimately connected with the city politically, socially and religiously (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 8). As such, the theatre was something for all the citizens of the polis. It was related in the sense that it was related to the religious practices, but otherwise part of the everyday life of the people. Similar to the plays of Ancient Greece, the drama of the Christian Middle Ages originated with the cult (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 33). The origins of the Medieval religious plays were however founded in Christianity, with the liturgy of the Easter Mass with the Easter trope as their core (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 33). The theatre was part of two very different cultures at the time, the clerical- and the urban culture. The plays were not individual creations, but rather created in a production process determined by a collective where all the material derived from the Bible. During the plays there was a unique relationship between the actors and the audience as the role of player and spectator was constantly changing. There were no professional actors, an audience member of one performance might become the actor in the next play. This also led to a special kind of spectatorship. The performance was a service to God and the audience was not there to make an aesthetic judgement (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 46). These religious plays came to an end with the Reformation and had almost vanished completely by the end of the sixteenth century. The main objection against them was that the plays contained superstitious elements and that this encouraged immoral behaviour. The view that theatre promoted immorality continued into the Elizabethan era. Yet, in this period, the first public and commercial theatres were established and were highly popular amongst the public despite the objections of the authorities. This was also the time when professional actors emerged. The roles were no longer played out by amateurs, which added an expectation of a certain quality of the

performance. Furthermore, the theatre was a place for all the social classes to enjoy. Regardless of people's perception of the theatre as either a positive or negative spectacle, there was a general belief that the theatre had the potential to influence people in a lasting way (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 52).

Through the Elizabethan period all the way into the French classicism, the setting of the plays was fixed on the nobility. The theatre became an important part of court and it "played a vital function in terms of royal and court self-presentation" (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 99). Although the audiences could be a mix of the nobility and the middle class, the theatre was therefore of court society and a way for the king to position himself and create an image among the people. The emphasis on court life continued throughout the French classicism, but with the *Sturm und Drang* movement in Germany in the 18th century, the theatre became more aimed at the middle class and family life. There was also an increased interest in the great literary pieces of the past and the literary canon. Goethe based "his work in theatre on the concept of performing for an 'élite', that is, a cultivated audience, which also demanded in return further intellectual and spiritual cultivation from the theatre" (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 200). The theatre was starting to become an elitist activity where the emphasis on aesthetic quality was highlighted. It was now becoming a means of mediating world literature and emphasising artistic excellence (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 200). Literature was however still preferred over theatre and this view remained until the beginning of the twentieth century. Theatre was still not regarded as having the same aesthetic quality as the drama. This view changed at the beginning of the 20th century with the avant-garde movement and the de-literarisation of the theatre. It was a period marked by an increasing distrust of the language and its ability to express true emotion (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 284). Unlike the drama, the theatre was now viewed as having an ability to surpass the language and create a new experience and meaning. Instead of the written word, "bodies and objects are transformed into language whilst (word) language renounces its semantic qualities" (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 285). Another important reason why the theatre was gaining a new appreciation, was "the idea or fundamental concept that theatre represents an art *sui generis* and does not serve the mediation of works in other arts, that is, dramatic texts" (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 285). Instead the theatre uses other materials and means to convey its message. Where the dramatic texts rely on texts, the theatre have a different arsenal of tools at its disposal to reach the audience, such as movement, scenic design, and voice in addition to the text itself (Fischer-Lichte, 2002, p. 285).

2.2. Motivation

The theatre has been through big changes through time and the attenders have changed with it. But who are the people who attend theatre performances today? According to Bourdieu, the enjoyment of art and the motivation for attending a cultural event is connected to social background, specifically to a person's upbringing and education (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 1). In his most famous work *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, he deals with the issue of *taste*, the manifested preferences of a person, how it develops and how it unites or separates people. The double meaning of the term *distinction* illustrates the essence of Bourdieu's findings. On the one hand it can refer to an ability to make or see differences and on the other it can refer to an ability to differentiate oneself from others in a certain way – to being “distinguished” (Østerberg, 1995, p. 11-12). Taste has the function that it classifies what is good and bad, whilst also classifying the classifier (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 6). Through the act of making a judgement of taste, one also make the distinction between oneself and those, that is between those who share ones opinion about taste and those who don't.

The work was written as a sociological critique of Immanuel Kant's theory of aesthetic judgement. Kant aimed at showing that good judgements in aesthetics are “grounded in features of artworks themselves, not just in us and or preferences” (Freeland, 2001, p. 10). Bourdieu, on the other hand, viewed taste as socially contingent. It's heavily rooted in our background and social upbringing. One's ability to see and evaluate a work of art is dependent on socialization and the development of taste patterns and practices. Central to Bourdieu's theories are his concepts of capital and how the different forms of capital conceptualise the different forms of power. Bourdieu makes the distinction between three kinds of capital a person may possess; cultural, economic and social capital (Berkers, 2016). Cultural capital is a resource that can manifest itself symbolically, but also in the form of knowledge and experiences. It can take three different forms; embodied, objectified and institutionalized cultural capital. Embodied refers to the resources developed through a process of socialization which has resulted in the dispositions of a person. Objectified cultural capital are resources in the form of physical objects such as books, art, etc. Finally, cultural capital can also be institutionalized through education and recognition in the labour market. Apart from cultural capital, social capital are the resources available to a person through his or her network, while economic capital refers to a person's monetary and material resources. These three forms of capital define a person's class position and this class position gives rise to class specific taste patterns (Willekens & Lievens, 2015, p. 79). Culture and art is an important part of the distinction between the classes. Looking again at the example of Reza's

Art, the different perceptions of the value of a painting works to distinguish the two friends. Serge sees an artistic quality in the work, while Marc sees a waste of money. High culture is valued in society and throughout the school system as it testifies to high amounts of cultural capital. A high level of cultural capital is crucial for the ability to enjoy and understand the code of works of art and it provides a person with power of definition. High levels of cultural capital lead to the ability to consider different forms of expression and to cast judgements of taste. This is what separates the higher from the lower classes. What follows from this is also that cultural capital is reproduced through generations as is it passed on from parents to their children from early childhood onwards.

To explain the origins of these taste patterns, Bourdieu introduced the term *habitus*. It is a concept that describes the embodied relationship a person has to the environment. It is the sum of the learned and habitual patterns of behaviour and interpretation, which is formed through previous practices (Østerberg, 1995, 23). These patterns are particularly shaped during childhood and as such functions as both structuring, as a lens or a way of experiencing the world, and what Bourdieu calls a structuring structure, meaning that it affects the actions and practices of a person (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 171; Østerberg, 1995, p. 23). Bourdieu elaborates on this by describing the habitus as being both practice unifying and practice generating (Willekens & Lievens, 2015, p. 79-80; Bourdieu, 1984, p. 101). It is practice unifying in the sense that it is a way of looking at the world. One sees the world from a certain perspective and thus art and culture is also perceived in a certain way. Habitus is also practice generating in the sense that people seek out similar things to what they already have shown a liking to and preference for. As a certain pattern of taste and a liking for certain things has been built up, an individual will seek out experiences that are in line with these tastes. This process is not a conscious learning process, but rather something physically incorporated or embodied in a person (Willekens & Lievens, 2015, p. 80; Bourdieu, 1984, p. 10). Bourdieu's theory of taste is essentially a story of how we come to belong to the social groups that we do and how it affects our tastes, our likes and dislikes, and the practices and patterns that follow.

Another useful concept of Bourdieu to mention in the context of the theatre is that of *field*. Field is defined as an area in society where different agents are struggling to maximize their position whilst performing certain activities according to certain rules (Bourdieu, 1983; Maton, 2005, p. 689; Gripsrud, 2011, p. 79). Each position in the field is defined by where it can be situated in relation to other positions and in sum they all structure the field. (Bourdieu, 1983, p. 312).

Figure 1. The artistic field of Bourdieu

TABLE II: ad p. 29

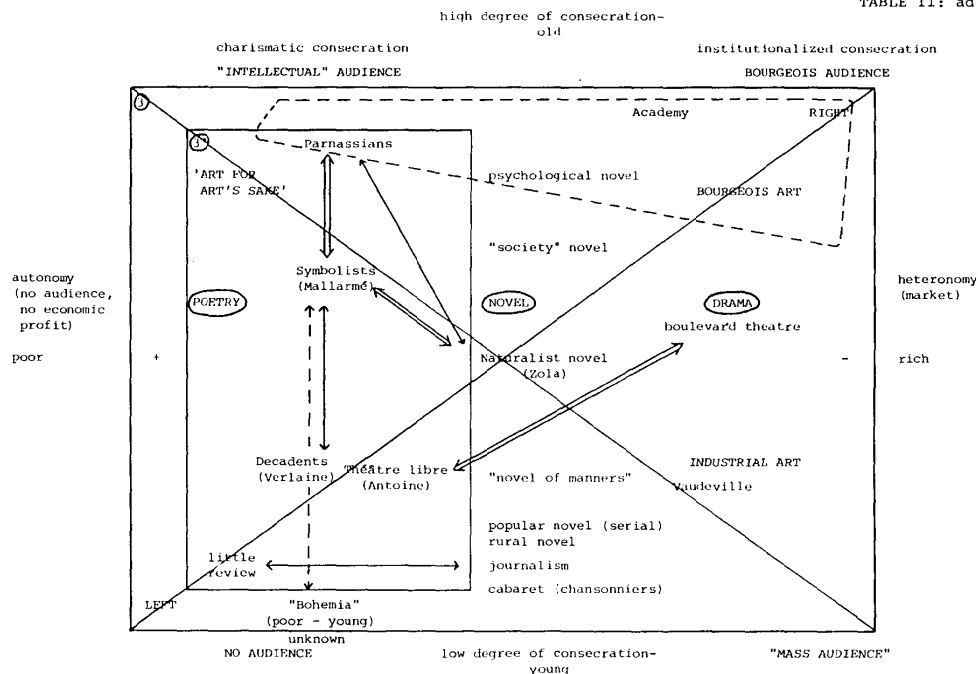


Fig. 2. Diagram of the artistic field (3), contained within the field of power (2) which is itself situated within the field of class relations (1). '+' = positive pole, implying a dominant position; '-' = negative pole (dominated position).

(Bourdieu, 1983, p. 329)

As such the introduction of a new position would mean the complete transformation of the field as a whole. In the case of the artistic field or more specifically the literary field, every time a new literary work is added or movement is taking place this will change the overall construction of the field as there is now a new work and position which the rest of the field must relate to. One doesn't have to look any further than to Shakespeare himself to see an example of this transition. William Shakespeare's plays started out as entertainment for the masses and a rather undervalued art form in his own times. A little over a hundred years later the *Sturm und Drang* movement in Germany urges a new appreciation for the masters and highlights Shakespeare as an example of true artistic excellence. Today, Shakespeare is considered the greatest playwright that ever lived, one that all the other works and movements in the field will be positioned in relation to. Even so, with the introduction of a new work or movement, the view of Shakespeare might change. With each change to the field, the meaning of a work changes (Bourdieu, 1983, p. 313). This change in the "space of literary or

artistic possibilities is the result of change in the power relation which constitute the space of positions” (Bourdieu, 1983, p. 314). The literary field is one where the writer of the play is glorified as a unique creator, “irreducible to any condition or conditioning” (Bourdieu, 1983, p. 312). Especially when we are dealing with a work from the literary canon there are a great deal of expectations and perceptions bound up with it. Although the theatre is separated from the drama in the sense that the theatre is an oral performance by actors, it is deeply associated with the playwright and the literary tradition he or she is a part of. Just mentioning the name of Shakespeare, Ibsen, Racine or Beckett will make certain associations, opinions, perceptions and expectations pop up in people’s heads. The perception of the work or the playwright is therefore dependent on the position of it in the field of art and how it is thought on in relation to the other works.

As can be seen in figure 1, the drama or theatre can occupy two opposite poles at once, as part of the artistic field. It can either be a part of the heteronomous pole, a position where the principles of the market are the guiding force, or the autonomous pole, where the artistic quality is valued over material gain and audience appreciation, depending on the type of performance. The autonomous pole occupies a *dominant position* in the artistic field as a position reserved for the “intellectual” audience with an appreciation for art for art’s sake. In contrast, the heteronomous pole is in a *dominated position* as a type of drama made for the market. As can be seen in Bourdieu’s model of the artistic field, experimental theatre such as théâtre libre is a type of theatre where the artistic quality is favoured over the size of the audience, while boulevard theatre, which is more focused on entertainment value, is placed to the right in between the bourgeois audience and the “mass audience” as a more market focused form of theatre. In other words, the dominant position is the one that requires the most amount of effort from the audiences and thus also higher amounts of cultural capital. Art for art’s sake is thus over entertainment.

All taste is part of a field with all the class divisions and conflicts that that entails. As such there is no innocent taste, according to Bourdieu (Østerberg, 1995, p. 24). In his introduction to Bourdieu’s *Distinction*, Østerberg (1995) uses coffee and tea as examples of how this dynamic can play out with increasingly finer nuances. Tea is generally considered a more bourgeois drink, while coffee is associated as a working class drink. So although most people probably drink it because they prefer it over coffee, the act of drinking tea is also a way to confirm or establish class position, whether there is a conscious intention behind it or not (Østerberg, 1995, p. 24). The example expresses a cultural and social field of opposites, where one of the two (tea) will express a greater cultural capital than the other (coffee). This

can also be stretched further as there are similar distinctions between different kinds of coffee and tea as well as any other drink one may choose over another.

In sum, a person's motivations for experiencing art is very much tied to social background and the taste patterns that have been developed through education and socialization. The next question then is what happens after this? Through motivation one makes the decision to attend a particular activity, such as the theatre, but how will the performance live up to the motivations, and can the experience be affected by the reasons for attending?

2.3. Aesthetic Experience

The aesthetic experience has been celebrated by humans long before the sensation was ever named. As seen with paintings, drawings, sculptures and ornaments dating all the way back to Paleolithic period, human beings have always enjoyed the pleasure of creation and of observing beautiful objects. In Ancient Greece, myths tell us of the musician and poet Orpheus, who became the very personification of art's ability to transfix people. Whenever Orpheus played his lyre, "the birds and beasts, and even inanimate rocks and trees, would follow him in enchantment as he sang his lyre, and rivers would halt in their courses at the sound of his melodies" (Hard, 2004, 551). Even the goddess of death herself, Persephone, could not resist Orpheus' wishes once he played and agreed to bring back his dead wife for him. Art certainly has been known to mesmerize long before the sensation was named and although there have been many theories regarding the nature of art and the experience we have in the face of it, the term "aesthetic" happened more recently. It was first used by A. G. Baumgarten in his work *Reflections on Poetry* and it was with him that aesthetics first became an independent branch of study (Park, 1993, p. 24). Baumgarten defined aesthetics as a "science of sense knowledge" (Van den Braembussche, 2009, p. 2). A certain science of how we sense and experience things is however difficult to obtain as we all experience what we see, hear and feel as individuals. The aesthetic experience might be very different depending on who we are. What can then be said about the aesthetic experience and what it consists of? There are many and often conflicting ideas regarding the nature of the aesthetic experience and what quality makes an experience aesthetic or not. While Baumgarten held that aesthetics should concern itself with a "further cultivation and perfection of taste and sensibility", Aristotle praised the tragedy as the foremost of all art forms with catharsis as its finest quality,

John Dewey emphasised that artistic objects are deeply rooted in the society they were created in and the daily lives of that time, Nelson Goodman claimed that art makes use of a “language” that can be understood symbolically only, Clive Bell talked about the subjective nature of the aesthetic experience despite the existence of a general agreement of what constitutes art, and R.G. Collingwood held that art has the ability to communicate things that language is unable to do (Van den Braembussche, 2009, p. 68). Although they have vastly different opinions on what causes the aesthetic experience, they all speak of the same thing – the effects a work of art can have on a person.

The different approaches to art can be categorized in three different groups; expression-, cognitive- and formalist theories. Both expression- and cognitive theories are based on the principle that art communicates (Freeland, 2002, p. 149). It can communicate either feelings and emotions or thoughts and ideas, and the interpretation of art can explain how it achieves this (Freeland, 2002, p. 149). One may also choose to focus on the formalist traits of a work of art, that is the compositional beauty of a work and the effect of the visual elements (Freeland, 2002, p. 151). Consider Molière’s *Tartuffe* and how the different aspects of the play may affect an audience differently, depending on which aspect they focus on. Some may choose to focus on the emotional impact of the story and be moved by the comical and often tragic aspects of a family’s encounter with a pious fraud. They might laugh at Orgon’s inability to see Tartuffe for what he is and at the lengths to which his wife is willing to take to expose Tartuffe as a fraud. They might also sympathise for the struggles of Valère and Mariane to finally be together and weep as Valère confesses his love for her. Other audience members might find the ideas and thoughts the story conveys more captivating. They might find the many shots aimed at the clergy and hypocrisy of religious virtue to be interesting and enlightening ideas. They certainly were thought of as dangerous ideas with potentially harmful effects at the time of the play’s release. Finally, the execution of the scenography and the visual aspects of the performance might be the most pleasing and interesting aspect to others. How the directors have chosen to present the story visually and the building of the set is often an important part of how the story is conveyed and might contribute to the overall experience of the play. For example, in a staging of Racine’s *Phèdre* at Det Norske Teatret, the props would be in constant movement depending on Phèdre’s state of mind. The more she become undone following the revelation of her love for Hippolyte, the more the state would become undone. It went from order to chaos until Phèdre was sitting at the centre of the stage, all the props pointing at her as if a claustrophobic labyrinth and her hair and costume undone. As soon as her husband, believed to be dead, returned, everything

moved back in place. The order had been restored and her hair and costume was firmly tucked back in place. Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi agreed with the three vantage points interpretation could take, but also added a fourth; transcendence of actuality, which he described as an experience of human potentialities to break the bonds that tie people to the existing social systems and elevate the audience (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990, p. 16). Based on a Marxist view it can happen once a play is able to portray the social system and the potentialities it represses (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990, p. 16). It can also refer to the effect religion and the portrayal of a divine, universal order or the brotherhood of man (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990, p. 16-17). Either way the experience of art as transcendence brings the audience out of the usual notions of the world. It might challenge the world view, either through a critical view of the social structures or by preaching humans' affinity with each other – with all of humanity – or the divine.

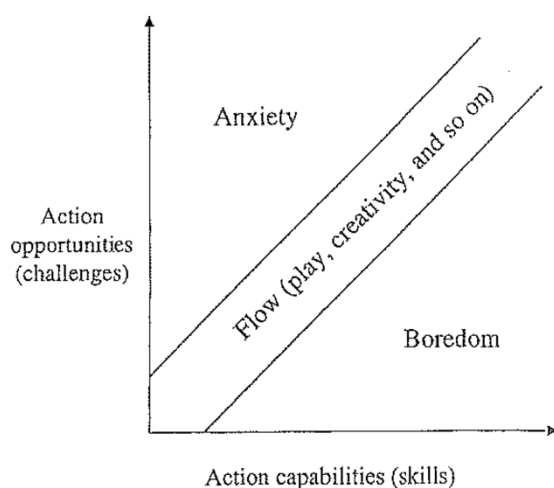
In an attempt to unify the different theories of aesthetics Sung-Bong Park views “aesthetic” as a term that describes the “specific mode of relationship between an individual and an object” (Park, 1993, p. 25). The individual's response to the object might play out three different ways; the individual may respond positively and willingly to the experience of the object, the individual might wish to absorb the potential quality of the of the experience as fully as possible and finally the individual might explicitly wonder where that experience comes from, how it is caused by the object and critically considers it (Van Eijck, 2015). The aesthetic consciousness is a dynamic balance between affective and cognitive engagement, meaning that it is not about a quality or an essence that lies in the object, but a manner of participating with and being involved in the object. The same object can therefore be “enjoyed” in different ways (Van Eijck, 2015). This relates to the motivations of the audience. The manner of which one appreciates a work of art, relates to the motivations to experience it in the first place, as they say something about what an individual is looking for in the encounter with the object. Is the audience there to experience the cognitive aspects of the work or to have an emotional experience? Do they want to analyse the object critically or do they prefer to experience it for the sake of enjoyment? For some the aesthetic experience is something that requires effort, through critical thinking and analysis, while for others it is the feeling of letting the work speak to you, of letting go.

To Csikszentmihalyi, this interaction might lead to what he calls *flow*, a term he himself coined, which has its origins in studies about activities that are intrinsically motivated or autotelic (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 89). The theory contributes to the understanding of why people can have a pleasurable experience during a performance. The

state of flow is described as an experience one is in a state of intense and focused concentration, where action and awareness merges together. There is a loss of reflective self-consciousness and a sense that one can control one's actions. The temporal experience is distorted and the experience of the activity is viewed as intrinsically rewarding to the person (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 90). In short, it is what happens when one is completely absorbed in an activity (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 89). This can happen when doing sports, gaming, reading or other forms of creative work. The experience is in other words not limited exclusively to art.

This state of an optimal experience, can be entered once there is a balance between “an organized set of challenges and a corresponding set of skills” (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 92). If an activity is too challenging the person becomes anxious of the situation, but if the skills of the person surpasses the challenges it will be perceived as too boring and produce apathy instead, as can be seen in figure 2. Flow is the sensation of losing oneself in an activity whilst being stimulated and challenged at the right level. It is an “unfolding experience” where any solution or action will encourage people to search for new challenges. Thus, the limits are constantly being pushed, where one is seeking challenges at the right level according to one's skills, similar to what happens in gaming. With the achievement of each level, the player moves on to the next, which challenges the skills of the player a little more than the last and encourages learning and improvement.

Figure 2. Model of the flow state



(Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 94)

The theatre is one of the many activities listed by Csikszentmihalyi as being able to produce an experience of flow. It is a situation where the audience can become “absorbed” in the art. It is an experience we go in and out of as an audience and it is a “general effect of playing; blending and empathizing at the playhouse allow spectators to experience joy when they ‘go with the flow’ of a performance” (McConachie, 2013, p. 56). In the case of art, the optimal level at which a person is challenged will depend on their amount of

cultural capital. In order to reach a state of flow or the aesthetic experience, the perfect spot

between the challenge that is the work and the set of skills possessed by the viewer. These skills are the sum of the viewer's cultural capital.

When looking at Monroe Beardsley's list of criteria for the aesthetic experience, Csikszentmihalyi notes several similarities with the list of criteria for the flow experience, as can be seen in table 1. All the points do not correspond completely, but the two experiences contain many of the same elements, which is why Csikszentmihalyi argues that the aesthetic experience and the experience of being in flow are essentially the same state of mind (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990, p. 8). These are experiences that are relatively more clear and focused than everyday life – a heightened state of consciousness (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990, p. 9).

Table 1. Csikszentmihalyi's Comparison of Criteria Defining the Aesthetic Experience and the Flow Experience.

CRITERIA FOR THE AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE ^a	CRITERIA FOR THE FLOW EXPERIENCE ^b
OBJECT FOCUS: Attention fixed on intentional field	MERGING OF ACTION AND AWARENESS: Attention centered on activity
FELT FREEDOM: Release from concerns about past and future	LIMITATION OF STIMULUS FIELD: No awareness of past and future
DETACHED AFFECT: Objects of interest set at a distance emotionally	LOSS OF EGO: Loss of self-consciousness and transcendence of ego boundaries
ACTIVE DISCOVERY: Active exercise of powers to meet environmental challenges	CONTROL OF ACTIONS: Skills adequate to overcome challenges
WHOLENESS: A sense of personal integration and self-expansion	CLEAR GOALS, CLEAR FEEDBACK
	AUTOTELIC NATURE: Does not need external rewards, intrinsically satisfying

^aBeardsley 1982, 188–189.

^bCsikszentmihalyi 1975, 38–48.

Table 1. Comparison of Criteria Defining the Aesthetic Experience and the Flow Experience

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 8)

The feeling of being immersed in the world of the play is an enjoyable and rewarding experience, but it is not one that occurs throughout the performance (McConachie, 2013, p.

56). It is a state that the audience members can go in and out of during the play. It is after all difficult to be able to stay in a state of complete absorption for the duration of entire theatre performance. A cough from the person two rows down might make one snap out of it, the spectator might take a moment to consider the visual effects of the performance or drift off to think about something from their own lives. As an audience member one is very much part of a bigger group and despite the aesthetic experience being individual it is also highly affected by the rest of the audience and the environment in general. As such, the sensation of being a spectator is complex as it is both an individual and a collective experience. The “role of the theatre audience involves the spectator’s interaction with performance in both social (audience member) and private (individual) capacities” (Bennett, 1997, p. 125). Our response to the performance is complex as the people “at the theatre respond as individuals, as an entire audience, and also as a part of a larger network” (McConachie, 2013, p. 69). The audience respond to the play within their individual frames of mind, but the experience is happening as part of a collective group. It is a shared experience where the spectators become a single mass and whether an audience is “good” or “bad” depends on the performance’s ability to win them over. There is a wish to have a shared experience as a group and to relate to the performance in the same way. The first thing one does after a performance is to discuss the individual experiences of it. “Did you like it?” we ask, but what we really want to know is if their experience was the same as ours. The hope is that we will all react to it in the same way and if we don’t we wish to get on the same page and maybe even persuade each other. Spectators essentially want to be “moved by the same group emotions” (McConachie, 2013, p. 69). The ability to share the experience with each other and to have a similar experience of it is a big part of the experience. And so, the performance becomes at once both a deeply personal experience as well as a way to connect with the group and share the experience.

The level of flow will depend on the individual and the rest of the audience but also on the environment in general and the challenges it poses for us, as it is also part of the shaping of the flow experience. The motivation is not exclusively located in the person, but is also emergent through interaction with the environment. The interaction is however filtered through the perception of the person as it is “the subjective challenges and subjective skills, not objective ones, that influence the quality of a person’s experience” (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 91). Without an already existing interest in the theatre, the individual might pass by several promotional posters or other forms of advertisement for an upcoming performance without even noticing it’s there. All humans view the world through filters, where the only the elements that we already have an interest for gets noticed. The rest

simply sifted out of our consciousness and ignored. To Park, it is precisely the awakening of the aesthetic consciousness that is the most fundamental aspect of the aesthetic situation (Park, 1993, p. 28). In many cases, this awakening might happen through stimulation from the outside environment. A sound on the street or the sight of a beautiful landscape might be enough to activate the aesthetic consciousness. However, the aesthetic experience does not have to be activated by the environment. Intrinsic motivation can also set the aesthetic consciousness in motion. Once someone plans to attend an activity, such as the theatre, the plan to go can elicit a certain mind-set and the intention to have an aesthetic experience. Thus, the very decision to go has the ability to mentally prepare the audience for the aesthetic experience. The spectator stands on the threshold of the aesthetic experience once he or she enters the theatre itself. From then on “the aesthetic potential of every individual object is supposed to be activated” (Park, 1993, p. 28). The audience takes their seats and waits for the experience to begin. Once it does there is however no guarantee that the complete aesthetic experience will occur. It is not a given that the mobilization of the aesthetic consciousness will lead to a complete aesthetic experience. The fulfilment itself is a rare occurrence (Park, 1993, p. 28).

2.4. Motivation and Evaluation

According to Csikszentmihalyi, previous aesthetic experiences will lead to an incentive to seek out similar experiences as the “motivation to persist in or return to the activity arises from the experience itself” (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 92). The sensation of flow, which is intimately connected to the aesthetic experience, is intrinsically rewarding and something people seek to replicate. Once someone has found an activity that they enjoy and that makes them enter flow, the experience will create a liking for it and the person will try to replicate the experience (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 92). Thus the ability to replicate a rewarding experience involves a process of motivation and evaluation. The process of searching out experiences and determining how rewarding they were, works in a continuous cumulative cycle. Similar to what Bourdieu describes in his theory of the habitus, our activities and practices build up a taste for a particular kind of events and lead to a continued consumption of similar activities, which refers to its practice unifying and practice generating qualities (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 101). The world view of a person, which is based on social background, will lead to a certain pattern of preferences and practices. Similar to this,

motivation and evaluation of experience work in a loop where motivations lead to experiences that are evaluated as either good or bad and the knowledge thus gained adds to the motivation to participate in future activities. A person who decides to attend a theatre performance will do so based on a certain perception of the world. In the motivation to attend a performance, there is an expectation or wish concerning what that experience is going to be like, whether it offers is mental stimulation, emotional- or entertaining experiences. The reason for someone to seek out an experience depends on the habitus, which is why the habitus, like motivation, is practice generating. The performance itself will lead to an experience that may or may not be rewarding and meet the expectations the audience member had. The evaluation of this as a good or bad experience will then add to the person's embodied cultural capital, or habitus, and motivate him or her to have new experiences.

Moreover, as the motivation for attending is influenced by social background and cultural capital, so is the experience. As was seen with Bourdieu, you need the ability to read a work of art, to speak the language so to speak. Artistic products and activities require effort from the viewer (Roose, 2008, p. 247). The ability to meet the challenge that a work of art poses, depends on the amount of cultural capital that a person possesses. Should the audience be unable to make the required effort or be up for the challenge, the experience would be one of apathy or boredom rather than an aesthetic experience (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 94). In other words, the mismatch between the challenge and skills leads to an inability to have an aesthetic experience. It is something that does not come easily, and even if people have obtained it before, there is no guarantee it will happen again when they seek it out. Sometimes there is no experience at all but disappointment (Park, 1993, p. 28).

Two researchers who have carried out studies into the topic of motivation and evaluation, are Henk Roose (2008) and Michèle Ollivier (2008). Roose investigated how people perceive a musical performance and what they are looking for while Ollivier looked at cultural omnivores and how their motivations affected their evaluations of different cultural activities. Both Roose and Ollivier are looking at different segments of those attending arts events and how their motivations, experiences and evaluations of art take place. In Roose's case, the respondents are discussing specific performances, while Ollivier is dealing with the respondents' view of different cultural activities in general. By measuring the frequency of attendance of his respondents, Roose is also able to get some indication of his respondents' experiences in the past (Roose, 2008, p. 240). A high or low frequency would provide some indication of the audience's previous experiences with classical music. Ollivier measures her

respondents' relationship to activities through their general knowledge of different events as well as their discourse when discussing various kinds of activities.

Through these different approaches, Roose and Ollivier revealed how the respondents sought out specific experiences and the intertwined relationship to the perception of different art forms as well as what kind of experience they were after. Both studies showed that the different segments had very different motivations behind their decision for attending a cultural activity as well as different ways of experiencing cultural events. One of the things Roose is looking for in his study is which aesthetic aspects the audiences are after when attending a classical concert. He found that there are five aesthetic aspects that were important to the respondents, which are described as; emotional, escapist, familiar, normative and innovative (Roose, 2008, p. 242). These deal with the need to have an emotional experience, having a moment to forget about daily life, the need to experience something that is familiar either through previous encounters or through one's own life experiences, a wish to see a critique of society and injustice, and finally the need to experience something new and inventive. Furthermore, he found that there are four types of reasons for attending, namely intrinsic motivation related to the specific concert, intrinsic motivations of a more general nature, extrinsic motivations relating to the social aspect of attending and, finally, extrinsic motivations relating to media coverage (Roose, 2008, p. 242-243). Ollivier's respondents report that their interest in and motivation to attend different cultural activities stem from their interest in self-improvement, discovery and aesthetic quality, entertainment and fun, and finally for more practical reasons (Ollivier, 2008, p. 132-141). In other words, the respondents were searching for different levels of challenge in the activities. The motivations and discourses reveal how the respondents seek out very specific elements in a cultural activity, and the effects of the practice unifying and practice generating effects of the habitus. Through their cultural capital, the audiences view the art and the experiences they have in a certain way, with a filter that has been built up over the years through social background and education, and this leads them to seek out experiences that fit into this world view. The connection to habitus is especially evident in Ollivier's results, through the discourse of the respondents and their patterns of consuming cultural activities. Their knowledge about arts and culture and the activities they listed as having participated in, revealed their patterns of consumption in the past and gave an indication of their previous experiences. The respondents' discourse also reveals how they would evaluate the different experiences as well as their motivation for attending different activities. As such their general view of the world and taste as well as their patterns and practices were exposed.

Moreover, the expectations of the respondents differed in terms of the complexity of the activity as the different social segments' motivations for attending different activities, were accompanied by certain perceptions and levels of openness. There thus seemed to be a relationship between how the respondents evaluated different cultural activities and their motivations for new experiences. Dividing the respondents into highbrow, middlebrow and lowbrow based on their discourses and levels of cultural capital, Ollivier found how the different segments of her respondents perceived good and bad taste. Respondents with a high brow cultural profile, measured in terms of educational credentials, showed an interest in activities that stimulated them cognitively and possessed a great deal of knowledge regarding arts and culture (Ollivier, 2008, p. 132). Contrary to this, the respondents with a lowbrow cultural profile preferred activities that emphasise fun and entertainment with lower amounts of knowledge about arts and culture, while the middlebrows were located somewhere in between these positions with an interest in both entertainment and self-improvement (Ollivier, 2008, p. 135-140). The results would indicate then, that there is a likely connection between cultural capital and motivation for attending a cultural activity. Furthermore, it is also connected to the kind of experience that the respondents reported for different activities. Thus, their studies show how the replication of rewarding experiences happens and how intimately connected motivation and evaluation are. Perceptions and previous practices lead to an incentive to seek out new experiences and add to the perception of different cultural activities. With this common link of cultural capital, a connection between motivation and experience is likely to find. For the sake of the research into the relationship between the motivations and experiences of the audience at Det Norske Teatret, this indicates that the motivation does indeed have an affect on the experience of a performance which will likely been seen in the results of the survey. The relevance of Roose and Ollivier for the research lies in the close connections they found between social background, motivation and experience and how the process works in a cycle. It also indicates at how social background with cultural capital affects the motivation. Cultural capital implies that there is an expectation in terms of the complexity or familiarity of the work of art that should be met. In a sense then, motivations qualify the impact of the cultural capital.

2.5. Expectations

Looking at the results of previous research conducted by Bourdieu (1984), Csikszentmihalyi (1990; 2002). Ollivier (2008) and Roose (2008), it is likely that there is a connection between

the motivations of an audience and their experiences. This relationship might, however, also be affected by elements in the audience's social background. To find the answer to how social background, motivation and experience are connected, I will conduct a survey among the audiences of Det Norske Teatret. The aim for this survey is to see how exactly social background affects motivations and if this in turn affects the experience, or if there is simply a direct line between social background and experience. I expect to see an overall relationship between the motivations of the audience of Det Norske Teatret and their experience in certain areas. However, I expect that once this relation is controlled for social background characteristics, it will turn out to be largely spurious as people's backgrounds is likely to affect both motivations and evaluations in similar ways.

The analysis of the data will be taken in four steps to look at what kind of dimensions the responses revealed; 1) the social background of the respondents, 2) the relevance of social background for motivation and experience, 3) what kind of relationship there were between the socioeconomic status of the respondents and their motivation and experience, meaning did the social background have a positive or negative effect, and 4) the relationship between motivation and experience. In line with Bourdieu's theories of habitus, it is expected that social background has influenced the respondents' view of the world and interests, which will affect both their evaluations of their experiences and their motivations for future involvement in activities. It then follows that people with different social backgrounds will be looking for different things in a performance. Some might be attending for the sake of self-improvement or to see something that challenges their world views, while others prefer to attend for the sake of entertainment and fun (Ollivier, 2008, p. 132-141).

In their research into motivations and evaluations of participation in cultural activities, Roose and Ollivier mentions several aspects that proved important for the different audience segments. Looking at Ollivier's results, it is clear that the highbrows, middlebrows and lowbrows were looking for quite specific activities and drew on a particular discourse when they justified them (Ollivier, 2008, p. 130). In general, the highbrows exhibited a high level of knowledge and were looking for activities that would lead to self-improvement and stimulation. They preferred the discovery of new and challenging activities, rather than activities that would be considered mass culture, which they found too passive (Ollivier, 2008, p. 133). The middlebrows practiced a lot of highbrow activities, but still emphasized entertainment and fun rather than self-improvement as a motivation (Ollivier, 2008, p. 135). Furthermore, they were less likely to express critique against mass culture and generally exhibited a broader taste than highbrows. Finally, the lowbrows preferred exclusively non-

highbrow activities and expressed less of an interest in stimulation of their minds and discovery of new things (Ollivier, 2008, p.138-140). In other words, the three segments used by Ollivier showed quite specific taste patterns and evaluations of different activities, depending on social belonging.

Based on these theories, it is likely that the responds from the survey will reveal that high levels of cultural capital will lead to cognitive or highbrow motivations; motivations that are linked to self-improvement and discovery. Lower amounts of cultural capital on the other hand, is likely to lead to motivations linked to sociability and familiarity. Elements of the social background, such as levels of education and frequency of attendance will give an indication of the respondents' level of cultural capital. To measure the different motivations of the audiences, the statements for motivations in the questionnaire are divided into four dimensions; personal, social, societal, and transcendental. Regarding the relationship between motivations and social background, four hypothesis predict the outcome.

Hypothesis 1: Level of education, and age have a positive impact on motivations related to personal development

The personal dimension relates the audience member's wish to attend for the sake of self-improvement and stimulation as well as personal enjoyment. It deals with the wish to learn and have fun at the performance at a personal level. The desire to discover new things and grow on a personal level, indicates high levels of cultural capital. It is therefore likely to be connected to level of education.

Hypothesis 2: Level of education, age and being male have a negative impact on social motivations

The social dimension on the other hand describes the motivation to participate in an activity with other people and to share an experience. Rather than attending to cover a personal need, the wish to attend is tied to the sharing of the experience with someone else or attending for the sake of the other person. It is related to the wish to share an experience with someone else, but it can also be more about going for the sake of someone else rather than a personal need.

Hypothesis 3: Level of education have a positive impact on societal motivation

Unlike the social motivation, the societal dimension for motivation, expresses the need to have an educational experience. This search for an educational experience is related to knowledge about society and life, rather than a need for personal development and growth. It's about learning about society and critiques of it relates to elements of the aesthetic experience as explained by Csikszentmihalyi.

Hypothesis 4: Number of theatre visits and level of education has a positive impact on transcendental motivation

Finally, the transcendence of actuality is the fourth element of the aesthetic experience. It deals with the experience of taking a step back from society in order to be able to view it critically or to have an experience removed from the troubled of daily life (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 16). The topic of transcendence of actuality also discuss the aesthetic experience's ability to "give people a foretaste of [an] other-worldly reality" (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990, p. 16). In short, an individual may experience a wish to have a big cultural experience in the sense of a big emotional or aesthetic experience that goes beyond those of the daily life of the spectator.

Similar to the dimensions for motivations, I expect the results of the survey to show that the respondent's experiences of the performance will be grouped together in certain factors. However, as there are fewer statements for the audience members to answer, I expect a fewer number of dimensions than for motivation and believe there to be a total of two or three dimensions. The dimensions for experience draws on different theories of the aesthetic experience and which elements creates it. For the making of the survey four dimensions were used; expression-, cognitive-, escapism- and visual experience. For the first two dimensions of expression and cognition, the view that art communicates and expresses either emotions, or ideas and thoughts to the audience has been used (Freeland, 2002, p. 149). It followed then that it was natural to create one dimension for the cognitive aspects a performance can express, and one for the emotional aspects. The first dimension then relates to the experience of the performance as an expression of emotions and describes the sensation of the performance as having an emotional impact. The second dimension covers the view that the experiences can be created by the thoughts and ideas that are being conveyed. This relates to the wish to be cognitively stimulated. Apart from this, art can also be experienced as a form of absorption or escape into the actions and story on the stage. The third dimension thus relates to the aesthetic experience as the feeling of "going with the flow" so to speak, or

getting lost in the work. Drawing on Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory, the dimension of escapism relates to the feeling of escaping the daily lives, of losing track of time and being immersed in the work. Finally, the aesthetic experience can also be created by the sensory or visual aspects of a performance. The execution of the stage, the costumes and makeup, may prove to be the most important part for some audience members.

Following the execution of the survey, the response will reveal what kinds of motivations and experiences the audiences had. The question then is what type of motivation is likely to lead to what kind of experience? Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of habitus, it is likely that there is a connection between the two as our world views and experiences of the world will lead to a motivation to have new experiences. Based on the theory of Roose, Ollivier and Csikszentmihalyi about the aesthetic experience and the evaluation of experience, certain predictions can be made about the connection between the different dimensions for motivation and expectation.

Hypothesis 5: Personal motivation has a positive impact on cognitive and emotional experience.

It seems likely that the personal motivation will be related to the cognitive and emotional experience. The motivation to go for once own personal sake is related to both the learning of new things as well as having an entertaining experience and as such is expected to be connected to the cognitive and emotional experience.

Hypothesis 6: Social motivation has a positive impact on expressive experience, but a negative impact on cognitive experience.

The social reason would be most related to the expressive experience as it is related to the experience of having an entertaining and pleasant experience, but specifically with other people. The social motivation is in opposition to the wish for an experience for the sake of self-improvement. It is therefore likely that it should have a negative impact on cognitive experience.

Hypothesis 7: Societal motivation has a positive impact on cognitive experience

It can be expected that the societal motivation would be most connected with the cognitive experience of a performance, as it implies an interest in learning and criticism of society.

Hypothesis 8: Transcendental motivation has a positive impact on expression- and escapism experience

Finally, the transcendental motivation is likely to be connected to the experience of a performance as expression and as a means to escape the daily life and be absorbed in the play.

In conclusion, there are three findings I expect to find in the results of the survey; first, that social backgrounds of the audiences will have an affect on what they are expecting from a performance, second, that the social background will also have an affect on the experience the audiences had of the performances, and finally, three, that the motivations of the audiences will affect their experiences. In terms of how these three affect each other positively or negatively, I expect that both the social background and the motivation will affect the final experience. Again, both habitus and motivation is practice generating and so they are each likely to add to the experience separately, the sum of which will be the final experience. It is likely that motivations will not primarily be met in terms of complexity and familiarity. In a sense, motivations qualify the impact of cultural capital, which is typically about general intelligence or experience, but not as specific as motivation.

3. Methods

To answer the research question of how motivation affects the aesthetic experience of theatre audiences, a survey was conducted among the audiences at Det Norske Teatret in Oslo. Det Norske Teatret is one of the biggest institutions in Norway and it is known for its long history of commitment to nynorsk or New Norwegian, one of the two standardized versions of Norwegian. It was founded in 1910 as a group of amateur actors gathered to create a theatre dedicated to New Norwegian. The group originated as part of the struggles between the New Norwegian on the one side, based on the many dialects all over the country and especially in the West, and bokmål or Bookmaal, based on the Danish language and for many a symbol of the union between Norway and Denmark. In 1912 they founded Det Norske Teatret (The Norwegian Theatre) where all plays are performed exclusively in New Norwegian. The

theatre is placed in the centre of Norway's capital Oslo, which is an area that is highly influenced by the Danish language and Bokmål. Even today, the status of New Norwegian is frequently up for debate. It is the source of a constant battle involving the status of the dialects and Norwegian heritage and whether or not it is necessary for people who practice Bokmål to know New Norwegian as well. In the midst of all this, Det Norske Teatret is still one of the biggest cultural venues in Oslo today and has proven to be highly popular. It offers a diverse repertoire and stages plays by established playwrights, contemporary theatre or new writing, children's theatre and musicals and is known as an established institution with high quality performances.

3.1. Theatre attendance in Norway

Based on Audience Atlas' study of cultural participation in Oslo and Akershus in 2014, the Oslo region is a very culturally engaged area. 99% have participated in the cultural market with a majority having done so during the last 12 months at the time of the study. 87% had attended performing arts events at some point in their lives. Within the cultural market, the market for plays and drama is by far the largest. A mere 7% are not interested in attending and the majority of those who stated an interest have attended at some point (Audience Atlas Norway, 2014, p. 52).

At the time of the study, Det Norske Teatret was one of the top three cultural institutions in Oslo in terms of attendance in the last 5 years, with 70% of the overall user market having attended at some point. 87% of the cultural market were aware of Det Norske Teatret. In terms of motivations for attending, a majority stated that they attended for emotional reasons, closely followed by social, spiritual and intellectual reasons.

3.2. Measures

In order to answer the research question, the concepts of social background, motivations, experiences of the performances attended, needed to be included in the research. The purpose of the research was to see how the concepts varied among the sample in order to assess how they are connected to one another. To achieve this, a quantitative method in the form of a survey was most suitable.

The questionnaire was made using the software Qualtrics and distributed online through the e-mail addresses of the audience members. The questionnaire was divided into three sections that measured the respondents' motivations for attending theatre performances

in general, their experience of the specific play they recently saw at Det Norske Teatret, and their social background. The first section consisted of 12 statements divided into four dimensions. The first dimension measures the personal reasons for attending a theatre performance, the second measures the social reasons, the third measures the societal reasons while the final dimension measures the transcendental motives of the audience. The respondents indicate their answers using Likert scales with five options which indicated to what degree they agreed with each statement. The second section consisted of nine statements regarding the experience of the performance the respondents had attended at Det Norske Teatret recently at the time of the survey. The nine statements were divided into four dimensions to measure how their experiences were tied to expression, cognition, the visual or the experience of the performance as an escape from daily life. The same five scales that were used to indicate the answers of the section of motivation were used to measure the experience of the performance. The third and final section consisted of several multiple choice questions regarding the audience's social background. It consisted of seven questions about age, gender, place of residence both in Norway and in Oslo (if applicable), highest level of education, job, and number of visits to the theatre in the last 12 months. The division of the statements into the different dimensions is indicated below.

Questionnaire statements

Motivation

Personal

- I go to the theatre because I like the particular play or the actors in it
- I go to the theatre because it can give me new ideas and raise interesting questions
- I go to the theatre to see things I recognize from my own life played out on the stage
- I go to the theatre to be entertained
- I go to the theatre to have a break from my daily life

Social

- I go to the theatre because other people take the initiative to go
- I go to the theatre because it's a good way to spend time with others

Societal

- I go to the theatre to learn something new
- I like to go to the theatre when it is critical to society

Transcendental

- I go to the theatre to have an aesthetic experience
- I go to the theatre to have an emotional experience
- I go to the theatre to enter a fantasy world

Experience

Expression

- I enjoyed the performance
- The performance aroused emotions in me

Cognition

- The performance made me discover new things
- The play and the roles in it were easy to recognize
- The performance contained wisdom about life

Escape

- The performance captured my attention from beginning to end
- The performance brought me to another world and made me forget about my daily life

Visual

- The scenography of the performance was well executed and exciting
- The performance told the story in a good way

3.3. Participants

The target population for the questionnaire were the audiences of Det Norske Teatret selected in a stratified sampling method, which took place in two steps. First the audience was targeted through the performances that were staged in four different time periods. Then the survey was sent to all audience members who had an email registered with Det Norske Teatret. In practice this meant that only the audience members who had booked tickets online were contacted. Also, for any groups attending together, only the one responsible for the payment was targeted, while the rest and those who paid for the tickets by other means were not targeted.

In collaboration with the theatre, the survey was initially distributed among the audiences in three separate extracts, each spanning over two to three days. The desired sample size was a minimum of 200 as this would give a robust foundation for the results. In order to obtain this amount, it was estimated that the survey should be sent to roughly 1500 audience members. However, as there were still a few responses lacking of the goal of 200 at the end of

these three extracts, the survey was distributed among a fourth group. The final result was a sample of 226 people. The social background of the respondents is summarised in table 2.

Table 2. Social background of audience members

Gender	Answer	Response	%
	Man	50	22%
	Woman	173	78%
	Total	223	
Age	15 to 25	43	19%
	26 to 35	30	13%
	36 to 45	36	16%
	46 to 55	46	21%
	56 to 65	38	17%
	Over 65	31	14%
	Total	224	
Place of residence	Oslo	128	57%
	Akershus	56	25%
	The rest of eastern Norway	32	14%
	In south or western Norway	4	2%
	In the middle or north of Norway	4	2%
	Do not live in Norway	0	0%
	Total	224	
Place of residence in Oslo	Alna	5	4%
	Bjerke	2	2%
	Frogner	9	7%
	Gamle Oslo	8	6%

	Grorud	3	2%
	Grünerløkka	20	16%
	Nordre Aker	12	10%
	Sagene	10	8%
	St. Hanshaugen	11	9%
	Stovner	1	1%
	Søndre Nordstrand	7	6%
	Ullern	5	4%
	Vestre Aker	15	12%
	Østensjø	10	8%
	Nordstrand	6	5%
	Total	124	
Highest level of education	Primary and middle school	4	2%
	High school/ Vocational studies/ Apprenticeship with certificate	38	17%
	College/ University up to four years	66	30%
	College/ University over 4 years	113	51%
	Do not wish to state	1	0%
	Total	222	
Job	Self-employed	13	6%
	Public employee	71	32%
	Private employee	61	27%
	Retired	27	12%
	Student	39	18%
	Other	8	4%
	Do not wish to state	3	1%
	Total	222	

Number of theatre visits in the last 12 months	1 time	7	3%
	2- 3 times	77	35%
	4-6 times	70	32%
	7 times or more	68	31%
	Total	222	

4. Results

Once the data had been gathered, a factor analysis was performed in SPSS on the survey data to find the dimensions for the motivations and expectations of the audiences. Principle components with varimax rotation and eigenvalues greater than 0.97¹ were used. Following the identification of the dimensions, the variables were compared using bivariate analysis. Finally, the data was analysed using regression analysis to uncover any causal effects between social background, motivation and experience.

4.1. Motivation

First, the motivations and the experiences of the audiences were analysed and grouped together. A factor analysis of the data revealed that there were four dimensions for the motivations of the audiences as used in the making of the survey; aesthetic, social, intellectual and motivation to see something recognizable. However, the composition of the dimensions was different from what was expected. The dimensions are presented in table 4.

Table 4. Rotated Component Matrix for Motivation

	Component			
	Aesthetic	Social	Intellectual	Recognition
I go to the theatre to have an emotional experience/ Eg går på teater for å ha ei emosjonell oppleving	0,790	0,025	0,230	0,150
I go to the theatre to have an aesthetic experience/ Eg går på teater for å ha ei estetisk oppleving	0,767	-0,083	0,184	0,044

¹ It was necessary to divert from the default value of 1 for motivation in order to include the fourth dimension of recognition.

I go to the theatre to enter a fantasy world/ Eg går på teater for å gå inn i ein fantasiverd	0,727	0,294	0,031	-0,095
I go to the theatre because it's a good way to be with others/ Eg går på teater fordi det er ein fin måte å vere saman med andre på	0,079	0,759	0,202	0,016
I go to the theatre because other people take the initiative to do so/ Eg går på teater fordi andre menneske tek initiativ til å dra	-0,216	0,679	0,130	-0,105
I go to the theatre to get a break from my daily life/ Eg går på teater for å få eit avbrekk i kvardagen	0,390	0,659	-0,221	0,228
I go to the theatre to be entertained/ Eg går på teater for å bli underhalden	0,234	0,655	-0,391	0,275
I like to go to the theatre when it's critical to society/ Eg likar å gå på teater når det er kritisk til samfunnet	0,041	0,192	0,769	0,072
I go to the theatre to learn something new/ Eg går på teater for å lære noko nytt	0,278	-0,063	0,738	0,237
I go to the theatre because it can give me new ideas and raise interesting questions/ Eg går på teater fordi det kan gje meg nye idear og det kan ta opp interessante spørsmål	0,386	-0,096	0,593	0,295
I go to the theatre because I like the particular play or the actors in it/ Eg går på teater fordi eg likar stykket spesielt eller skodespelarane i det	-0,122	0,105	0,129	0,762
I go to the theatre to things I recognise from my own life played out on the stage/ Eg går på teater for å sjå ting eg kjenner igjen frå mitt eige liv spelt ut på scena	0,218	0,006	0,209	0,727

The four dimensions of the motivations of the audience are labelled aesthetic, social, intellectual and recognition. The aesthetic motivations consist of a preference for emotional and aesthetic experiences as well as experiences where they entered a fantasy world or experiences that somehow went beyond everyday life. The social motivations for attending

related to getting away from daily life and sharing an experience with others. The intellectual motivations for attending concerned the interest in learning something new from a performance and experiencing a different view of the world. Finally, the motivations relating to the wish to see something recognizable or specific were related to the content of the performance and how relatable it was to the audiences' life.

Compared to the original dimensions that were composed for the making of the survey, there were several similarities. The transcendental dimension remained as it was with the same statements following the responds of the audience. The dimension was renamed as the aesthetic dimension with the results of the survey. The social dimension remained the same as the social dimension from previously, with the addition of two statements from the personal dimension, relating to the wish to be entertained and having a break from daily life. The third dimension also remained the same as it was before the analysis of the results, with the only addition of one statement from the personal dimension, namely the one relating to wish to get new ideas from a performance. Finally, the fourth dimension of recognition, was a combination of the two remaining statements from the previous personal dimension that were about the wish to see something familiar from the audiences own life and a play, or actors who they were already familiar with.

4.2. Experience

For the experience, the factor analysis revealed that there were in fact two dimensions for experience of the audiences at Det Norske Teatret. Similar to the dimensions for motivation, the dimensions for experience were different than the one constructed when making the survey. Instead of the four dimensions of expression, cognition, escape and visual experience, there were in fact two dimensions based on the responses of the audience, which are presented in table 5.

Table 5. Rotated Component Matrix for Experience

	Component	
	Expression	Entertainment
The performance made me think and discover new things/ Framsyninga fekk meg til å tenke og oppdage nye ting	0,832	0,156

The performance aroused emotions in me/ Framsyninga vekte kjensler i meg	0,815	0,188
The performance contained wisdom about life/ Framsyninga inneheld visdom om livet	0,725	0,171
The performance told the story in a good way/ Framsyninga fortalde historia på ein god måte	0,694	0,408
I enjoyed the performance/ Eg likte framsyninga godt	0,676	0,477
The performance brought me into another world and made me forget about my daily life/ Framsyninga førte meg inn i ei anna verd og fekk meg til å gløyme kvardagen	0,144	0,798
The scenography in the performance was well executed and exciting/ Scenografien i framsyninga var godt utført og spennande	0,156	0,777
The performance captured my attention from the beginning to the end/ Framsyninga fanga merksemda mi frå start til slutt	0,543	0,603
Stykket og rollane i det var lett å kjenne igjen	0,259	0,526

The motivations were labelled as expression and entertainment. The first related to the emotions and thoughts the performance provoked as well as the experience of the performance as good. The second related to the experience of the performance as entertaining in the sense that it was well executed and exciting as well as being able to capture the attention of the respondents.

With the reduction from four to two dimensions after the survey was conducted and analysed, the composition also changed. The first dimension of experience of art as expression consisted of all the statements previously included in the dimension for expression, as well as two of the three statements from cognition and finally one from the

dimension for the visual experience. The dimension for the experience of the performance as entertaining consisted of one of the dimensions from cognition, all of the dimensions from the dimension for the experience of the performance as an escape and one from the visual experience.

4.3. Social background

In the previous analysis of the data regarding motivation and expectation, four factors of motivation and two factors of expectation were identified. The different factors contained two to five of the survey items. The factor scores of the respondents were then related to their social background characteristics to assess whether gender, age, place of residence, highest level of education, job and number of theatre visits in the last 12 months are connected to their motivations and experiences. As this is a study with a little over 200 participants, which entails a relatively small sample, the critical p-value for what is considered statistically significant is placed at 10% ($p \leq 0.1$).

The analysis started with bivariate relations through compare means before the causal analysis. This was to be able to assess the relationships between social background and motivation and experience individually. This allowed for a more detailed report on the relationships.

These analyses showed a significant difference between gender for motivation for recognition ($p=.001$), the experience of the play as expression ($p<0,014$) and as the experience of it as entertainment ($p<0,001$). Women score higher than men on all the motivations for attending as well as the experience of the performance. Surprisingly, women are both more likely to seek out familiarity as well as having more intense experiences. It would have been likely that familiarity lessened the intensity of the effect, but it would appear that is not so in the case of the audiences at Det Norske Teatret.

Table 6. Motivation and experience by gender; * $p \leq 0,1$, ** $p \leq 0,05$, *** $p \leq 0,01$

Gender	Motivation Aesthetic	Motivation Social	Motivation Intellectual	Motivation Recognition***	Experience Expression**	Experience Entertainment***
Male	-0,156	-0,205	-0,172	-0,431	-0,307	-0,426
Female	0,044	0,067	0,048	0,128	0,098	0,115

Total	0,001	0,008	0,000	0,008	0,006	-0,007
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There was also statistical significance for age across aesthetic motivation ($p < 0,000$), social motivation ($p < 0,000$), motivations of recognition ($p < 0,036$), the experience of the performance as expression ($p < 0,027$) and the experience of it as entertaining ($p < 0,000$).

Aesthetic motivation for attending seems to decrease with age. Social motivations for attending seems to follow a similar pattern, with a decrease in social motivation as age increases. Recognition of the play and actors in it seems to be more important for the younger age groups and less important for the older age groups with the exception of the respondents between the ages of 56 to 65 years. As for the experiences of the play, the experience of it as entertainment decreases with age, while the experience of the performance as a form of expression follows a similar pattern with the exception of the age group of 26 to 35.

Table 7. Motivation and experience by age; * $p \leq 0,1$, ** $p \leq 0,05$, *** $p \leq 0,01$

Age	Motivation Aesthetic***	Motivation Social***	Motivation Intellectual	Motivation Recognition**	Experience Expression**	Experience Entertainment ***
15 to 25	0,168	0,459	-0,003	0,354	0,284	0,431
26 to 35	0,537	0,128	0,006	0,061	-0,070	0,242
36 to 45	0,504	0,217	-0,046	-0,291	0,104	0,160
46 to 55	-0,161	0,024	-0,185	-0,008	0,149	0,012
56 to 65	-0,329	-0,136	-0,061	0,145	-0,113	-0,465
Over 65	-0,780	-0,859	0,408	-0,291	-0,504	-0,435
Total	-0,004	0,004	-0,002	0,008	-	-

When looking at place of residence in Norway, the social- ($p < 0,047$) and intellectual motivation ($p < 0,008$) show statistically significant differences, as well as the experience of the performance as entertainment ($p < 0,007$).

Table 8. Motivation and experience by place of residence; * $p \leq 0,1$, ** $p \leq 0,05$, *** $p \leq 0,01$

Place of residence	Motivation Aesthetic	Motivation Social**	Motivation Intellectual**	Motivation Recognition	Experience Expression	Experience Entertainment **
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Oslo	0,052	0,121	0,120	0,010	0,012	0,067
Akershus	0,057	0,023	-0,413	-0,034	0,026	0,172
The rest of the east	-0,285	-0,450	0,227	0,096	-0,055	-0,358
The south and the western parts of Norway	-0,422	-0,617	0,416	0,335	0,066	-0,341
Middle and north of Norway	-0,052	0,185	-0,173	-0,663	-0,464	-1,546
Total	-0,004	0,004	-0,001	0,007	0,000	0,000

For those living in different areas of Oslo, the motivation to see something recognizable differed significantly ($p < 0,012$). Particularly Alna, Stovner and Nordre Aker scored high. Oslo has a long history of social inequality between east and west. The east was, historically, where the working classes and poor families lived, with a predominance of social issues compared to the west where the upper classes resided. Although the differences are not as pronounced today and the borders have shifted, the differences between Oslo east and west are still present, in terms of crime, ethnicity, poverty, education, and severe or serious mental illness (Øia, 2007). Based on research on the differences between east and west (Øia, 2007), Alna and Stovner, which belong to outer east, and Nordre Aker, which belongs to the west, score very differently on a majority of the aspects of social background, such as ethnic background, poverty, and education (Øia, 2007). It is surprising then that they all score high on the same motivation. However, there were very few respondents from both Alna and Stovner, with 4% of the total amount of respondents from Alna and only 1% from Stovner. In other words, it is difficult to draw any conclusion from the results with so few so respondents.

Table 9. Motivation and experience by place of residence in Oslo, * $p \leq 0,1$, ** $p \leq 0,05$, *** $p \leq 0,01$

Place of residence in Oslo	Motivation Aesthetic	Motivation Social	Motivation Intellectual	Motivation Recognition**	Experience Expression	Experience Entertainment
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Alna	-0,189	0,098	-0,404	1,014	-0,127	0,232
Bjerke	1,365	-0,692	0,900	-1,817	-0,605	1,413
Frogner	0,259	-0,095	0,005	-0,212	-0,248	-0,146
Gamle Oslo	0,078	0,051	0,424	-0,288	0,202	-0,485
Grorud	-1,069	0,419	-0,051	0,010	1,162	-0,958
Grünerløkka	0,042	0,127	-0,081	-0,046	-0,342	0,052
Nordre Aker	0,169	-0,154	0,220	0,700	-0,102	0,084
Sagene	-0,081	0,464	0,334	0,284	0,346	0,442
St. Hanshaugen	-0,198	0,110	0,604	0,375	0,405	0,196
Stovner	1,369	0,072	-1,128	1,031	0,518	1,058
Søndre Nordstrand	0,353	0,023	0,394	0,187	-0,100	-0,003
Ullern	-0,415	0,329	-0,137	-0,921	-0,594	-0,023
Vestre Aker	-0,006	0,066	-0,361	-0,403	-0,264	-0,201
Østensjø	-0,126	0,681	0,385	0,031	0,572	0,320
Nordstrand	-0,046	0,177	0,757	-0,226	0,055	-0,113
Total	0,013	0,141	0,144	0,007	0,006	0,039

Social motivations ($p < 0,018$) and intellectual motivations ($p < 0,061$) for attending as well as the experience of the theatre as entertainment were all significantly different across education level (see table 10). The results indicate that as level of education decreased, the social motivation for attending the theatre increased. Intellectual reasons for attending scored higher among people with a primary- and middle school education and those who had studied at college or university for over four years. The respondents' experience of the performance as entertainment declined with their level of education.

Table 10. Motivation and expectation of highest level of education; * $p \leq 0,1$, ** $p \leq 0,05$, *** $p \leq 0,01$

Highest level of education	Motivation Aesthetic	Motivation Social**	Motivation Intellectual*	Motivation Recognition	Experience Expression	Experience Entertainment*
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Primary - and middle school	0,386	0,860	0,390	0,119	0,419	0,501
High school / Vocational studies/ Certificate of apprenticeship	-0,051	0,356	-0,309	0,313	0,228	0,208
College/ University up to four years	0,048	-0,015	-0,107	-0,031	0,007	0,140
College/ University over four years	-0,022	-0,151	0,151	-0,091	-0,100	-0,186
Total	0,001	-0,004	-0,000	0,000	-0,001	-0,005

When looking at the number of theatre visits the respondent had attended in the last 12 months, the social motivations ($p < 0,063$), the intellectual motivations ($p < 0,005$), the willingness to see something recognizable ($p < 0,029$) and the experience of the performance as expression ($p < 0,82$) showed statistical significance. The respondents who had only attended one time or seven or more times during the last 12 months scored low on the social motivations, while the rest of the respondents scored higher. The only respondents who scored high on intellectual reasons for attending were those who had attended 7 or more performances over the course of the last 12 months. The same applied to those who attended with the purpose of seeing something recognizable and those who had an experience of the performance as an expression of emotions or thoughts.

The most frequent attenders score highest on the experiences and the intellectual and recognition motivation and second highest on aesthetic motivation. This is in line with what was expected.

Table 11. Motivation and experience of number of theatre visits in the last 12 months;

* $p \leq 0,1$, ** $p \leq 0,05$, *** $p \leq 0,01$

Number of theatre visits	Motivation Aesthetic	Motivation Social*	Motivation Intellectual***	Motivation Recognition**	Experience Expression*	Experience Entertainment
1 time	0,272	-0,071	-0,726	-0,475	-0,331	0,096
2-3 times	-0,224	0,206	-0,039	-0,042	-0,048	0,035
4-6 times	0,063	0,009	-0,167	-0,179	-0,166	-0,162
7 times or more	0,156	-0,221	0,294	0,283	0,257	0,116
Total	0,001	0,002	0,003	0,002	-	-

There was statistic significance for job across aesthetic motivation ($p < 0,000$), the social motivation ($p < 0,000$), the intellectual motivation ($p < 0,085$) and the motivations relating to recognition ($p < 0,015$) were all significant. Furthermore, both the expression- ($p < 0,044$) and the entertainment experience ($p < 0,029$) showed statistic significance.

Those most likely to attend for aesthetic reasons were either self-employed or working in the public field as well as students. The ones who attended for social reasons were students and worked in the private sector, while the respondents who were likely to attend for intellectual reasons, were working in the public field, retired or students. Those who went to the theatre to see something recognizable worked in the public field or students. Finally, those who had an experience of the performance as an expression also worked in the public field or students, while those who had an entertaining experience were students.

Table 12. Motivation and experience of job; * $p \leq 0,1$, ** $p \leq 0,05$, *** $p \leq 0,01$

Job	Motivation Aesthetic***	Motivation Social***	Motivation Intellectual*	Motivation Recognition**	Experience Expression**	Experience Entertainment**
Self-employed	0,701	-0,416	-0,193	-0,411	-0,148	-0,359
Public employee	0,108	-0,050	0,089	0,160	0,181	-0,087

Private employee	-0,083	0,192	-0,269	-0,181	-0,034	-0,023
Retired	-0,714	-0,842	0,297	-0,397	-0,503	-0,223
Student	0,290	0,309	0,141	0,231	0,112	0,419
Total	0,022	-0,030	0,004	-0,026	0,001	-0,007

4.4. Effect of social background on motivation and experience

The relationship between certain aspects of the social background and motivation and experience has now been established. But in order to establish if these relations indicate causal effects, we need to add another type of analysis. To answer this, each motivation and experience were regressed on combinations of independent variables. Together, the set of independent variables included in each model account for part of the variance in each motivation of experience. In the process, it is assessed to what extent relations between independent and dependent variables are in fact causal.

As can be seen in table 13, for the aesthetic motivation, 19,8% (adjusted R^2) of the variance was accounted for by the variables entered. Only age, number of theatre visits and being self-employed compared to being a student, significantly contributed to the prediction of the aesthetic motivation. All three variables had a positive effect on aesthetic motivation. This means that older audience members and those who are more frequent visitors have a higher score on the aesthetic motivation. This deviates surprisingly from the results from the compared means, where aesthetic motivation decreased as age increased. For self-employed respondents the aesthetic motivation was more important than to the students.

As for the social motivation, only age, number of theatre visits and living in Oslo east compared to living outside Oslo, significantly contributed to the prediction of social motivation. Altogether, 16% (adjusted R^2) of the variance for the social motivation was accounted for by the variables entered. All the three variables showed significance, had a positive impact on social motivation. Similar to aesthetic motivation, older audience members and members who reported a large number of theatre visits in the last 12 months, are more likely to have a social motivation for attending. For people from Oslo east, the social motivation is more important than for audience members from outside Oslo.

For the variance for intellectual motivation, 9,1% (adjusted R^2) was accounted for by the variables entered. Highest level of education, number of theatre visits, living in Oslo west

and east compared to living outside of Oslo and being self-employed and working in the private sector significantly contributed to the prediction. All the variables had a positive relationship with intellectual motivation, indicating that the respondents with high levels of education and frequency of attendance visited the theatre more for intellectual reasons. Also, intellectual motivations were more important for the respondents living in Oslo.

For the motivation to see something recognizable, 7,5% (adjusted R^2) of the variance was explained by the variables. Only gender, highest level of education and number of theatre visits significantly contributed to the prediction and all three variables had a positive relationship with the motivation for recognition. For gender this means that women had a higher motivation to see something recognizable than men. For educational level and number of theatre visits, the high levels correlate with higher levels of motivation to see something recognizable.

A slightly lower percentage of the expression experience was accounted for with 6,3% (adjusted R^2). Of the variables entered, gender, highest level of education, number of theatre visits and working in the public field compared to being a student, significantly contributed to the prediction of expression experience. All of the four variables had a positive relationship with the experience of the performance as an expression of thoughts or emotions. Women thus had a more emotional experience of the performances than men, while for level of education and number of theatre visits, the high levels correlate with higher levels of expression experience. Furthermore, it means that the respondents working in the public field had a high experience of the performance as expression.

Finally, with the variables entered, 9,9% (adjusted R^2) of the variance in the experience of the performance as entertainment was explained. Only gender and age significantly contributed to the prediction. The effect of gender was positive, while the impact of age was negative, which means that the experience of the performance as entertainment decreased as age increased, while women had a more entertaining experience than men.

4.5. Effect of motivation on experience

Having seen how social background correlates with each motivation and experience, the question is how the motivation affects the experience and if it has an independent impact at all once social background is controlled for. Simultaneously, the final regression models will show whether social background directly affects the experience or whether social background

plays a more indirect role, its impact being mediated by motivation which in turn affects the experience?

Before the inclusion of the motivations, 6,3% (adjusted R^2) of the variance for expression experience was accounted for. This changed to 12% with the inclusion of motivation, meaning that the motivation variables accounted for the same amount of variance that all the other variables accounted for together. Of the four motivations, intellectual motivation ($p < 0,040$) and the motivation to experience something recognizable ($p < 0,001$) were significant. Before the motivations were added, working in the public field, gender, level of education and number of theatre visits over the last 12 months were all significant. With the addition of the motivations, the effects of working in the public field and gender both disappeared, indicating that both characteristics must be linked with motivation, which means that the effect of both gender and working in the public field on their experience of the performance as expression goes through motivation. Adding the motivation has thus mediated the direct effect of social background on experience. Put differently, the differences between people working in different fields as well as differences between men and women in expression experience could be explained by the fact that they have different motivations, which may be responsible for their diverging experiences. The effects of level of education

Table 13. Motivation and experience of social background; *p≤0,1, **p≤0,05, ***p≤0,01

Social background	Motivation Aesthetic	Motivation Social	Motivation Intellectual	Motivation Recognition	Experience Expression	Experience Entertainment
	Unstandardized Coefficients					
	B					
(Constant)	0,109	1,019	-1,436	-0,633	-0,403	0,199
Oslo west ²	-0,248	0,156	0,468**	0,191	0,093	-0,056
Oslo east	-0,161	0,286*	0,404**	0,055	0,139	0,126
Self-employed ³	0,937**	-0,37	-0,659*	-0,38	0,18	-0,374
Public field	0,402	0,038	-0,453	0,147	0,512*	-0,142
Private sector	0,266	0,189	-0,65**	-0,148	0,319	-0,07
Retired	0,207	-0,357	-0,276	-0,43	-0,028	0,183
Gender	-0,027	0,178	0,17	0,444**	0,297*	0,406**
Age	-0,302***	-0,125**	0,072	0,019	-0,05	-0,181**
Highest level of education	0,129	-0,13	0,213*	-0,186*	-0,229**	-0,006
Number of theatre visits in the last 12 months (including this visit)	0,13*	-0,213**	0,136*	0,133*	0,168**	-0,086

² The variables for Oslo west and east are both dummy variables in which they are both compared to the reference category of living outside Oslo.

³ The variables for jobs are all dummy variables and are being compared to the reference category of being a student.

and number of theatre visits both remained significant, indicating that they both directly affect the experience.

Both the variables for gender and working in the public field had a positive relationship with the experience of the performance as expression, meaning that women had more of an experience of the performance as expression than men and that people working in the public field had more of an expression experience than people working in the private sector. With the inclusion of the motivations, neither gender nor working in the public field showed any significance. As men and women have different motivations, which are not constant, as can be seen from the compared means in table 6, the inclusion of motivation makes the relation non-significant.

With the addition of motivation to the experience of the performance as entertainment 28% (adjusted R^2) was accounted for. Compared to the 9,9% before this inclusion, the motivation variables accounted for twice the amount of variance that all the other variables accounted for together. Aesthetic ($p < 0,000$), social ($p < 0,000$) and intellectual motivation ($p < 0,006$) all had statistically significant effects. Before the motivations were added, the effects of gender and age were both significant. Age disappeared when the motivations were added, while gender remained, indicating that gender directly affects experience of a performance as entertaining. Age on the other hand affects the motivation, which in turn has an effect on the experience. Furthermore, with the addition of motivations to the independent variables, being retired became statistically significant, indicating that pensioners have characteristics that counteract one another. Pensioners also score very low on the aesthetic and social motivation, both of which in turn strongly encourage the entertainment experience. Thus, being a pensioner in itself encourages the entertainment experience, but with the motivations that are typical for pensioners, namely being low on aesthetic and social motivations, the entertainment experience is diminished. In other words, pensioners initially did not seem to differ in their entertainment experience, but this was merely due to counteracting forces.

Both gender and being retired had a positive relationship with experiencing a performance as entertaining, while the intellectual motivation had a negative relationship with the experience of the performance as entertaining. This means that the audience members who attended the theatre to see something intellectually stimulating would have had a negative experience.

Table 14. Experience of motivation and social background; * $p \leq 0,1$, ** $p \leq 0,05$, *** $p \leq 0,01$

	Experience Expression	Experience Entertainment
	Unstandardized Coefficients	
	B	
(Constant)	0,314	-0,723
Oslo west ⁴	-0,045	0,047
Oslo east	0,07	0,155
Self-employed ⁵	0,009	-0,385
Public field	0,122	-0,069
Retired	-0,296	0,539**
Student	-0,42	0,308
Aesthetic motivation	-0,005	0,347***
Social motivation	0,058	0,319***
Intellectual motivation	0,148**	-0,179**
Recognition motivation	0,246***	0,089
Gender	0,143	0,381
Age	-0,056	-0,033**
Highest level of education	-0,215*	0,046
Number of theatre visits in the last 12 months (including this one)	0,142*	-0,049

⁴ The same applies as in table 13, where the variables for Oslo west and east are both dummy variables. The reference category is living outside of Oslo.

⁵ The variables for jobs are all dummy variables and are being compared to the reference category of working in the private sector.

5. Discussion

My objective with this paper was to find if there was a connection between a theatre audience's motivation for attending a performance and their experience of it. In other words, do motivations affect the aesthetic experience? Based on the analysis of the responses, I argue that there is indeed a connection between motivation and experience. In order to assess this relation, social background must be taken into account as well. The works of Bourdieu (1984), Ollivier (2008) and Roose (2008) support the fact that social background has an impact on both motivation and experience. But how does the chain between socioeconomic status, motivation and experience really connect all together? Both the habitus and the motivation are generating so it would follow that they both add to the experience of the performance.

In the responses from the audience at Det Norske Teatret, four factors of motivation were identified; social-, intellectual- recognition- and aesthetic motivation. The first factor covers the social motivations related to the wish to experience a performance for the sake of spending time with others and be entertained. It is a break from daily life and focuses on the theatre experience as fun, rather than any form of personal development. As entertainment is generally considered less challenging, it also associated with lower amounts of cultural capital and non-highbrow activities as opposed to attending for intellectual reasons (Ollivier, 2008). Attending the theatre for intellectual reasons, deals with the wish to learn new things and have critical view on society. It is related to a wish for personal development and self-improvement as well as the discovery of new thoughts and ideas (Ollivier, 2008, p. 133; Freeland, 2002, p. 149). The recognition motivation, on the other hand, relates to the wish to see a play or an actor that is familiar or something that resonates with the spectator's own life. The familiarity might heighten the experience either through recognition of the particular play, an actor or even familiar elements from the spectator's own life. Finally, factor four, aesthetic motivation, indicates the wish to see a performance that has a high aesthetic and emotional impact as well as the potential to transport its spectators into a fantasy world (Roose, 2008, p. 242; Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990, p. 8-9).

For the experience of the performances, two dimensions were identified, namely expression and entertainment. The expression experience covers the idea that art communicates with the viewer (Freeland, 2002, p. 149). It relates to the idea that the experience of a performance is largely determined by a piece's expression of thoughts, ideas and emotions through a good story. The experience of a performance as entertainment on the

other hand, consists of statements relating to a feeling of seeing a recognizable and exciting story and being transported into another world.

Following the identification of the factors for motivation and experience, the impact of each aspect of respondents' social background on motivation and experience was assessed. The aim was to see which background characteristics had a significant impact on motivation and experience and if the effects found were in line with the expected results. The first hypothesis predicted that the level of education and age would have a positive impact on the motivations related to personal development. Based on the results of the causal analysis, the level of education did indeed have a positive impact on the intellectual motivation, which is related to personal development. Although age was relevant for the aesthetic and social motivations, it did not affect the intellectual motivation. The two motivations it did affect negatively, relate more to the experience of an entertaining time with others and getting lost in the work, rather than self-improvement. Furthermore, with the new dimensions, the societal dimension related to self-improvement is most in line with the motivation to attend for the sake of self-development, that is the intellectual motivation. Thus the answer to hypothesis 1 also answers hypothesis 3, which predicted that level of education would have a positive impact on societal motivation. This would all be in line with previous research on how taste is socially contingent and the development of cultural capital (Maguire, 2014, p. 16; Bourdieu, 1984, p. 13). Higher levels of education would then indicate high levels of cultural capital and an appreciation for challenging works. As studied by Csikszentmihalyi (2002) in his research regarding flow, it is the balance of challenges and skills that creates the aesthetic experience. High levels of cultural capital must therefore be matched by similarly high levels of challenge posed by the work for the experience to be rewarding for the audience. Similar to this, Ollivier's (2008, p. 133) research showed that people with highbrow tastes, that is people with high levels of cultural capital based on educational credentials and knowledge, were generally looking for cognitive stimulation and learning new things when seeking out cultural activities. This would also be in line with the results of the second hypothesis, which predicted that level of education, age and being male would have a negative impact on social motivation. While neither level of education nor gender significantly affected social motivation, age did indeed have a negative impact on social motivation. Based on the results from the bivariate analysis, it can be seen that social motivation decreased as age increased. Thus, it is indicated that the audience members in the higher age group were less interested in attending a performance for the sake of being social. As for the fourth hypothesis, which predicted that the number of theatre visits and the level of education would have a positive impact on the transcendental

motivation, the results indicated that an increase in number of theatre visits did indeed have an impact on the aesthetic motivation. Frequency of attendance can be seen as an indicator of the audience's liking for the particular experience that a theatre performance creates. Keeping in mind the practice generating effects of the habitus, this is to be expected. With memories of good experiences in the past, people will seek to replicate the experience (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 92). A rewarding experience of a performance can be a reason for an audience member to seek to replicate the experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 92). Based on these theories, the prediction that cultural capital, represented by education and frequency of attendance, has a positive impact on intellectual motivation, was confirmed.

Having seen how the different aspects of the social background affect motivations, the question remained how motivations affect the experience of a performance. The fifth hypothesis predicted that personal motivation would have a positive impact on cognitive and emotional experiences. Intellectual motivation positively affects the expression experience and I consider this finding to corroborate the hypothesis that personal motivation positively affects the expressive experience. Nevertheless, the expression experience can also be aroused by familiar things. The results show that there was indeed a positive relationship between the motivation for recognition and on the expression experience and showed statistic significance. Again, this is in keeping with previous research. Audiences attending for intellectual reasons are looking for new impulses and ideas and are expected to find performances that challenge their world view stimulating (Ollivier, 2008, p. 133). In addition to the intellectual motivation, the motivation to see something recognizable also had a positive impact on the expression experience of the performances. This might be due to the fact that seeing something that is familiar can arouse an emotional reaction. Being witness to a play or the work of actors that one has a particular liking for, can heighten the experience itself. Knowing a play really well and already having an emotional relationship to the play and seeing it played out on the stage, might add to the experience of seeing the work on a stage. Just seeing the interest that was created for Hamlet once it was announced that Benedict Cumberbatch was to play the role of Hamlet, gives an indication of how the audience's relationship to the particular actor might in fact create more of an experience than the actual story. Of course, such high expectations might also lead to an even greater disappointment and it is not certain that the strong emotional experience will be a positive one. However, in the case of Det Norske Teatret, the results indicated that the motivation for recognition had a strong positive impact on the expression experience of the performance. The original hypothesis 6 predicted that social motivation has a positive impact on emotional experience, but a negative impact on cognitive

experience. As emotional and cognitive experience turned out to be part of a single dimension, namely the experience of a performance as an expression of thoughts or emotions, I would instead have expected the social motivation to have a positive impact on the entertainment experience. Attending for the sake of having a social experience at the theatre, would indicate an interest in an entertaining experience to share with others. This was also the case based on the findings. Social motivation did not affect the experience of the performance as expression. The same issue of the combination of the cognitive and emotional experience appeared for hypothesis 7 as well. The impact of the societal motivation on cognitive experience, would thus rather be a question of whether or not the intellectual motivation would have a positive impact on the expression experience. It did indeed, which was to be expected as people attending for the sake of self-improvement want to see something that expresses thoughts and ideas and makes them see things in a new way. Audiences who are looking to be stimulated cognitively and to have a challenging experience, are likely to have a positive experience from performances that express new ideas (Ollivier, 2008, p. 133). Finally, the aesthetic motivation did not affect either type of experience. Aesthetic motivation did, on the other hand, have a positive relationship with the experience of the performance as entertaining. It was expected that the strong emotional and aesthetic experiences would be reported by people with a motivation for seeing something that would transport the audience into another world and absorb them. The dimension of entertainment does, however, consist of statements regarding the feeling of being absorbed as well as an experience of the play as being of good quality. As for the part of the social background, the results indicated that some of the aspects affect the motivation which in turn affect the experience, thus resulting in both background and motivation adding to the experience.

Thus, several experiences were explained by both social background through the habitus and the motivation. The results indicated, however, that some of the aspects of the social background had a direct link to experience, without being mediated by motivation. For the experience of the performances as expression, both level of education and number of theatre visits remained relevant even after the motivations were added as independent variables. Similarly, gender remained relevant for the entertainment experience. This indicates that some background characteristics can affect the experience directly regardless of any motivation for what to see. Level of education and number of theatre visits can both be seen as indicators of cultural capital. This means that, as could be expected from the theory, cultural capital also directly affects experience.

Within this empirical research the theories used proved successful. As discussed by Bourdieu (1984), Ollivier (2008), Roose (2008) and Csikszentmihalyi (1990), cultural capital affects the interest in and experience of cultural activities. This was supported by the findings of the research. The audience who attended for intellectual reasons showed a preference for experiences that stimulated them cognitively and a dislike for performances that did not. Unlike this, respondents attending for the sake of entertainment and being social showed a preference for performances that they experienced as enjoyable. The theory would suggest that this is due to their differences in social background and cultural capital, but motivations turned out to have independent effects as well. Different audience segments preferred different challenges to be posed by the work in accordance with their abilities to read and appreciate the work.

The research process was mostly successful, but certain elements could be improved upon for better results. First of all, the dimensions of motivation and experience taken from theory and applied in constructing the survey, could have been constructed differently. As they were, the differences between the ‘theoretical’ dimensions on which the hypotheses were based and ‘empirical’ dimensions that resulted from the factor analysis proved the process of testing the hypotheses difficult at times. Personal motivation, which was used to show the personal relationship someone could have with a performance both in terms of learning and entertainment, disappeared with the new dimensions of the motivations and was split into the intellectual and social dimension. Furthermore, the cognitive experience was empirically included into the expression experience. As it turned out, only intellectual motivation indicated statistic significance and did indeed have a positive impact on expression experience. The social dimension and transcendental dimension remained as they were before the analysis, while the societal dimension remained similar to what it was, with the addition of two more statements from the personal dimension. This meant an overlapping of dimensions when comparing the hypotheses to the findings and complicated the interpretation of the results. Furthermore, there would ideally also have been more statements for each dimension in order to have a more robust result. Using more statements to map each concept would have made the results more conclusive. However, for the sake of getting enough respondents, a substantial amount of statements needed to be cut. This could be improved upon by future research through a more extensive survey, covering a broader audience. It could also be useful to cover a wider variety of art forms. The theatre is an experience where the audience is very much present in the making of the work. The art plays out right in front of them and demands their attention for the duration of the performance. As such there is a

possibility that the motivations and experiences of the theatre and the relationship between them might differ somewhat from other art forms.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to find how motivations affect the aesthetic experience of a theatre audience. In order to answer this two questions needed to be answered; how does the social background affect the motivations of the audience, and, what is the relationship between the motivation and aesthetic experience of the audiences?

An audience research was conducted among the audience at Det Norske Teatret in Oslo. The first step of the analysis was map the different kinds of motivations and experiences of the audience. In the analysis of the data, four factors of motivation were identified, namely aesthetic, social, intellectual and motivation to see something recognizable, as well as two factors for experience; the experience of the performance as expression and entertainment.

The results show that in terms of the level of complexity of the performance, the social background had an affect on the motivations for attending. While the intellectual motivation was tied to a positive relationship to level of education, the results also indicated that the age of the respondents negatively impacted the social motivation for attending. This indicates that the level of cultural capital based on age and educational credentials lead to an increased wish for a challenging experience that is cognitively stimulating. In other words, there is a link between the social background of an audience and their reasons for attending a theatre performance.

The wish for a challenging experience is connected to the theory of the flow experience, which is intimately connected to the aesthetic experience. In order to achieve a state of flow, a perfect balance between the skills of the audience, which in this case relates to their level of cultural capital, and the challenge posed by the work is needed. These skills are what initially lead to the wish to have an experience, are thus also what will enable the audience to face the challenge of the work of art. The motivation is after all the wish to have a specific kind of experience, so it follows that this should have an effect on the actual experience. The regression analysis of the data revealed that certain elements of the social background directly affected the experience, while the impact of other elements was mediated by motivation and thus affected the experience through it.

Thus, looking at the results from the survey of the audiences at Det Norske Teatret, it can indeed be said that there is a connection between the motivation for attending a performance and the actual experience of it.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Questionnaire for Det Norske Teatret (The Norwegian Theatre)

Motivation

People attend the theatre for many different reasons. Some reasons are listed below. We ask you to indicate to what degree you feel you identify with these statements. Note that these statements are about your **motivations to attend the theatre in general** and not for the particular play you just saw.

Dimensions	Statements	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
Personal	I go to the theatre because I like a particular play or the actors in it.					
	I go to the theatre because it can give me new ideas and it can raise interesting questions.					
	I go to the theatre to see things I recognize from my own life played out on the stage.					
	I go to the theatre to be entertained					

	I go to the theatre to get a break from my daily life.					
Social	I go to the theatre because other people take the initiative to go.					
	I go to the theatre because it is a nice way to spend time with others.					
Societal	I go to the theatre to learn something new					
	I like to go to the theatre when it is critical to society					
Transcendental	I go to the theatre to have an aesthetic experience					
	I go to the theatre to have an emotional experience					
	I go to the theatre to enter a fantasy world					

Other reasons to attend the theatre	
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What performance did you watch at Det Norske Teatret?	
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Experience

People often have different **experiences** of the same play. We list different possible experiences people can have of a play below. To what degree do you feel that you identify with the following statements in terms of the performance **you** saw recently.

Dimensions	Statements	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
Personal	I enjoyed the performance					
	The performance aroused emotions in me					
Cognition	The performance made me think and discover new things					
	The play and the roles in it were recognizable					
	The performance contained wisdom about life					
Escape	The performance captured my attention from beginning to end					
	The performance brought me into another world and made me					

	forget about my daily life					
Visual	The scenography of the performance was well executed and exciting					
	The performance told the story in a good way					

Other experiences of the performance	
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Social background

Gender	Man	Woman
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Age	15 to 25 years	26 to 35 years	36 to 45 years	46 to 55 years	56 to 65 years	Over 65 years
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Place of residence	Oslo	Akershus	The rest of the east	The south and west	In the middle and the north of Norway	Do not live in Norway
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If you stated Oslo as place of residence	Alna	Bjerke	Frogner	Gamle Oslo	Grorud	Grünerløkka	Nordre Aker
	Sagene	St. Hanshaugen	Stovner	Søndre Nordstrand	Ullern	Vestre Aker	Østensjø

Highest level of education	Primary and middle school	High school/ Vocational studies/ Certificate of apprenticeship	College/ University up to four years	Colege/ University over four years	Do not wish to state
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Yrke	Sjølvtendig næringsdrivande	Offentleg arbeidstakar	Privat arbeidstakar	Pensjonist	Student	Anna	Ønsker ikkje å oppgi
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Number of theatre visits in the last 12 months (including this visit)	1 time	2-3 times	4-6 times	7 times or more
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What would make you go more often to the theatre?	Price	Someone to go with	More time in my daily life	More knowledge about what is being staged	Other reasons
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What other reasons could contribute to you attending the	
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theatre more often?	
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Where do you get information about Det Norske Teatret and the performances?	The home page of Det Norske Teatrets	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Newspapers, radio, tv	Det Norske Teatrets Repertoar Magazine (Bakteppet)	Other reasons
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What other places do you get information about the performances at Det Norske Teatret?	
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