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Copyright Law and the Discourse of the Knowledge Based Economy

Over the last decade many scholars have called attention to the commercial potentials of culture. This economization of culture has had a big impact on official policies and EUs Lisbon Agenda of 2000 stated that Europe should become “the most dynamic and competitive knowledge based economy in the world” by 2010. Copyright became a part of this strategy when EU passed a new Copyright Directive (2001/29/EC) in order to improve the conditions for exchange of immaterial goods.

I argue that this is a change of paradigm in copyright thinking that moves copyright from a cultural to a globalized economic discourse. But Copyright is an old cultural institution that partly remains embedded in national traditions. My presentation will discuss what consequences this economization of copyright can have on cultural ideas about authorship, creativity and the public domain that have been a part of the copyright tradition since the 18th century.