Participation and sustainable consumption in contemporary barter practice

Participating means being involved in co-decisional practices which have the power to change power and institution's structure and it represents a very different concept compared to interaction and access, says media and communication scholar Nico Carpentier. Thus, for who's got access to a particular field, we can’t say he's also interacting, and not even participating. What happen when we look at consumption within this particular theoretical frame?

Literature on sustainable consumption already highlighted how much these consumption choices entail a reflection of the subject on the collective consequences his actions have and how they find meaning in public sphere rather than in private sphere. From this perspective it should be possible to assume that sustainable consumption is the expression of a participating practice which requires a considerable amount of social and cultural capital.

Through the analysis of on-line and off-line barter practices this paper aims to evaluate the level of participation being at play in such practices and to understand to what extend relational capital really matters, trying to show once more how political and social the sphere of consumption is. Barter has been chosen because it represents a goods exchange practice where social and cultural capitals are the measure of value, instead of the economic one. After an ethnography and a netnography of some Italian cases, a number of subjects will be interviewed by in depth interviews focusing on their everyday practices in order to be able to describe a phenomenology of contemporary barter.
On the relevance of identity, justice, norms, status and trust in ethical consumption.

This paper studies the influence of different sociological and social psychological determinants of ethical consumption behavior and proposes a more standardized measurement of Fair Trade consumer identity.

Scholars in the field of sociology of consumption rely heavily on the theoretical framework of identity when explaining Fair Trade consumption; complementary concepts of norms, social status or justice beliefs have only marginally been accounted for. Methodologically, sociological research on FT consumption relies almost exclusively on qualitative approaches and ignores the growing quantitative research in environmental sociology and social psychology on sustainable consumption and green consumer identity.

Our contribution to the sociological research on ethical consumption is twofold. The primary concern of our paper is to clarify under what conditions certain determinants and theories are more useful than others to explain individual Fair Trade consumption. We competitively compare the explanatory power of seven determinants – budget restrictions, consumer identity, social and personal norms, social status, justice beliefs, and trust.

Our second aim is methodological. We suggest a more standardized measurement of Fair Trade consumer identity complementing the current qualitative focus of sociological research.

In 2011, we asked 556 German and 547 U.S. undergraduate students to complete a questionnaire on self-reported coffee consumption, stated preferences for Fair Trade coffee, social and personal norms of ethical coffee consumption, their identity as Fair Trade consumers, justice beliefs, subjective social status, and socio-demographics.
Prosumption practices and critical consumption: the garden resistance to consumer society

Prosumption is a central topic in contemporary consumption theory and research (Ritzer, Cova, Bartoletti). Although we have at disposal many conceptual tools in order to observe consumer creativity and resistance practices in the frame of cultural studies (for example Hall and Jefferson, Willis, Campbell, de Certeau) the prosumption perspective can help us to discover important changes regarding consumption practices and their meaning in advanced consumer societies.

First, the point is not that consumers are becoming producers: production and consumption, from an institutional perspective are still different and separated social activities, are oriented to different purposes and their relationship is still characterised by an unequal distribution of power. When Toffler (1980) introduced the prosumer concept he noticed a rising participation of consumers in the production that reveal an interesting change in consumption culture. In capitalistic societies, the clear separation between production and consumption implies that the market (the “production for exchange”) is the best way to satisfy consumer needs. The point for me is that the rise of the prosumer reveals a distributed re-appropriation of production as a space of individual expression and of sociability, and a delegitimization of the market as the best way to design human collective and individual styles of life. Some prosumption practices emerge as political and critical consumption.

I intend discuss this theme through the empirical observation of the rise of prosumption practices of gardening in western society with a focus on the vegetable community gardens and guerriglia gardening practices in the town of Bologna (Italy).
Motivation and coordination of customer involvement in value creation. Insights from three case studies

The phenomenon of increasing integration of customers and users into the organizational creation of value has been investigated from both perspectives: the users and the companies. The primary concern of the analysis is the discussion of the dissolving boundaries between production and consumption. Depending on the respective theoretical perspective, this discussion concerns concepts like “prosuming”, the “working customer”, “produsing” and the “interactive value creation”. Within the framework of a research project at the Goethe-University Frankfurt/Main this debate was investigated theoretically as well as empirically in carrying out three case studies. The research question goes as follows: What are the reasons customers participate in processes of “new types of prosuming” or in the “interactive value creation” and how are these processes coordinated by the firms? The results show a considerable range of motives and forms of coordination: The customers primary motives to voluntarily assume tasks and activities were both of intrinsic and extrinsic nature. The identified organizational models reach from strategies of rationalization to prosuming as basic business model and finally to the collaborative and interactive value creation between the company and the web-community. In this paper the theoretical facets as well as the main results of the three case studies will be presented.
Can we identify distinction in the food consumption area?

Bourdieu’s pioneering focus on cultural distinction in France in the 1960s-70s has been a tremendous inspiration and point-of-departure of many analyses of cultural differentiation in and across nation-states. However, apart from a few studies, distinctions in food cultural orientation have not been investigated thoroughly. Therefore, in this paper, we seek a) to identify different lifestyles pertaining to food culture and b) subsequently outline whether population segments that exhibit “food distinction” also are positioned in higher strata, as we would expect from a Bourdieuan framework.

Methodology: a sample of Danish citizens (N=1003) completed a questionnaire where question items were constructed so as to obtain indicators of some of Bourdieu’s original lifestyle concepts (taste of necessity, aesthetic orientation) and recent hypotheses of contemporary distinction practices (omnivorousness) in a specific food-related practice/context.

We inserted indicators of attitudes/approaches to food and food-related economic capacity/willingness to pay into a latent class analysis in order to identify different types of food-lifestyles. We assessed the credibility of these types with additional indicators of what they stress when eating out. Finally, we assess whether people that exhibit “food distinction” hold higher socio-economic profiles by means of a multinomial regression analysis.

The results from this paper add to the sociological stock of knowledge of cultural distinction within a specific field, while at the same time discussing/analyzing this with a contemporary view on distinction (omnivorousness).
Leveraging Buying Power for Development - Ethical consumption in Chile and Brazil

Ethical consumption, i.e. a form of consumption in which consumers use their buying power to effect social and pro-environmental change is now widespread in income-rich countries, with the UK’s 36 billion-pound “ethical market” being particularly well-developed. Of course, practices of ethical consumption will be embedded differently in different cultural contexts, and Euro-US concepts of ethical consumption are not simply transferable to other countries. This paper brings some light into these differing conceptualizations by analyzing ethical consumption in two middle income countries in the Global South. Chile and Brazil are former developing countries, which despite still suffering from some of the highest levels of inequality in the world now have growing economies and rising ethical consumption movements. This paper presents the first findings of an ongoing multinational research project involving universities in Brazil, Chile and the UK, funded by the UK Economic and Social Science Research Council and the Department for International Development. Broadly speaking the project seeks to analyze the trends in ethical consumption - exploring what people locally in Brazil and Chile see as “ethical” choices in their own buying decisions – and what criteria they want the state to use when making purchasing decisions in their name. This paper reports on the first phase of the project based on extensive literature review, which focus on understandings of “ethical”, “sustainable” and “conscious” consumption in Chile and Brazil.
Healthism among Danish consumers

In 1980 the American economist Robert Crawford introduced the term healthism. Healthist ideology can best be understood as form of medicalization of daily life, as situates the problem of health and disease at the level of individual behavior (Crawford 1980: 365). Consequently, individually orchestrated healthy behavior becomes paradigmatic for the good living. In the ensuing literature, some of the alleged effects of healthism have been its potential to distort public health priorities, to increase health anxiety through media hype and risk inflation, and increased economic health care costs due to escalating demands for tests and referrals (Greenhalgh & Wessely 2004). In this way, healthism becomes a new form of governmentality of the epistolary form (Sulkunen 2009), internalizing the message of healthism without state intervention, making use of the marketplace, its products and services, in ‘responsible’ pursuit of healthiness.

Healthism has inspired the description and analysis of the contemporary ideoscape of health in different cultural settings (Cheek 2008; Lupton 1995; Rose 1999, Rysst 2010). Here, based on an ethnography of thirty-four consumers, we evaluate the notion of healthism and its actuality in Denmark. We find that healthism is constructed as an individual “inner value”, unfolded by listening to one’s “inner” voice, and nurturing a search for “pure” and “natural” products in the marketplace. Furthermore we discuss how the concept of “health” in the Danish case has become a way of defining boundaries between Self and Other as well as to an articulation of particular moral and social categories (Crawford 2006).
Lifestyles Unity or Diversity? Consumption of Leisure in Slovakia

The difference on the rural-urban axis is an important factor in determining the nature of leisure time activities and lifestyle of the Slovak people. In our paper based on data from ISSP Leisure Time and Sport module 2008 we concentrate mainly on the locality where leisure time activities are carried out in Slovakia. In comparison with previous periods, today in Slovakia we are witnessing a wider range of preferences for leisure and holiday activities, which are gradually becoming an important factor in defining the socio-economic position of people and an important factor affecting their lifestyle. This trend is rising as the Slovak society is becoming a part of the broader international society and its inhabitants are thus starting to adopt more features of the global lifestyle. However, globalisation, with regards to lifestyle, is not an inevitable phenomenon, and we can even see that the national specifics and local contexts which modify the adoption of changes in lifestyle play a role in this process. In the case of the Slovakia population, manual work and physical activities still remain a relevant component of their free time activities. This also applies to a significant part of the urban society, which is caused by a certain dependence on socio-cultural models of spending free time from the past. The urban nature of the place of residence (in the Slovak context) might also not necessarily mean a higher adherence to individualist and more complex forms of leisure activities, which focus on the cultural and physical development of a person.
The future of consumption: Decreasing or Post-Growth?

The current global financial and economic crisis is causing profound transformations in consumption patterns and lifestyles of many Europeans. Even sociologists who study the concept of risk they are trying to understand those changes and to provide plausible interpretations.

In this perspective, play a significant role the theories, as the ‘serene decreasing’ of Serge Latouche, that propose as a possible solution to systemic problems an alternative model of development and consumption in relation to the environment, energy, transport, food, pointing to a qualitative and not quantitative dimension of social life.

Other theories prefer use the concept of post-growth and observe the worldwide spread of movements and associations that seek to change the approach to the consumption of natural resources according to a vision of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

The paper, with a comparative theoretical research, shows that it’s possible to prevent the risk of environmental disaster, exhaustion of energy sources, global food crisis, with the dematerialization of economy and a lower use of energy and resources, based on a changed view of the relationship with nature and society.

Public policy could take the opportunity of the crisis to determine and implement new strategies, involving citizens more directly, promoting a qualitative lifestyle, with attention to territorial development, exploitation of local natural resources, in food, transport, energy sources.

It’s important to dedicate more time to sociability and community life. It’s a delicate and complex challenge, which could lead to a positive and renewed equilibrium of ecosystem.
Turn Up the Volume: Social Mobility and Cultural Omnivorousness

Social mobility has often been linked to cultural omnivorousness. However, most of these claims consider social mobility on the aggregate level. For example, Peterson and Kern (1996) argue that the amount of social mobility in a society mixes people with different cultural tastes, making elite taste more accessible to different social strata and thus creating opportunities for omnivorousness. However, in this paper we focus on the individual experience of intergenerational social mobility and relate this to the breadth of cultural taste patterns. We study whether social mobility can explain why some individuals exhibit an omnivorous taste pattern, while others do not.

Socially mobile individuals have been socialized in two different social strata—i.e. the social position of origin and the social position of destination. Therefore, socially mobile individuals have been confronted with a wide variety of cultural preferences and products which we expect to result in omnivorous taste patterns.

Building on a large-scale survey representative for the Flemish population (n = 2,849), we consider musical listening behaviour and distinguish six different taste patterns by means of latent class analysis. Subsequently, we study the effects of social mobility by using diagonal reference models and find that socially mobile individuals have a higher probability of exhibiting omnivorous taste patterns compared to non-mobile individuals. Our results indicate that socially mobile individuals gravitate towards the broadest taste pattern they have been socialized with.
Young adults collective eating consumptions: lifecycle, generation and cultural heritages

In the last thirty years, several studies in social sciences underlined how food and eating are at the hearth of the identity's construction and manifestation (e.g. Barthes, 1961; Douglas, 1972; Fischler, 1990; Warde et Martens, 2000). Food is hardly conceived as a ‘simple’ form of consumption.

The purpose of this communication is to discuss how young adults socialize themselves to specific lifestyles through collective eating consumptions, which reveal their multiple identities.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with young adults (18-28 years old) and participant observation of eating events in Lyon, Paris, Berlin, Barcelona and Madrid.

Young adults’ collective eating consumptions revealed the complexity of this crucial step in their life course. In this period, young people dispose of a large independence, but also of social and material constraints creating the conditions for particular food consumptions and eating practices, like the consumption of fast foods, convenience food, etc. Moreover, we noticed that in the different countries of our research young people may consume similar food products from the same brand. Nonetheless, usages and practices regulating food consumption are strictly connected to national patterns of consumptions. For example, whatever the country young adults may go eating in fast foods, but temporal and social arrangements may differ, the signification they give to this event as well.

As a conclusion, we observed that ordinary and festive collective eating consumptions are crucial times building and performing the multitude cultural belongings of this age group.
Development of post-socialism suburb in relation to consumer patterns affected by neo-liberalism: the case of Latvia

Transition from socialism to capitalism in Eastern and Central Europe is characterized as the most courageous experiment with neo-liberal ideas in the contemporary world. Neo-liberalism as the process should be domesticated not only by political elite, but also by individuals, families and communities (Creed, 1998).

Having a closer look at post-socialistic home life the term “normal” stands for a life standard, which is extraordinary in the local context and is likened to an average level of West and is being realized in building sphere and body care (Fehérváry, 2002). A private suburban house, surrounded by a lawn, was the forbidden dream of the socialism era and has become the symbol of the new era. Research deals with challenge posed by post-socialism, i.e., prestige of having a dwelling in the suburbs, obtained by mortgages (credit), which has resulted in heavy financial obligations making a person heavily indebted.

An active property development in Pieriga (the suburban zone surrounding the capital city of Riga) began at the turn of the new millennium when the real estate market was booming. Majority of the local government authorities envisaged an unprecedented rise in number of real property and hurried to plan the development of their territories accordingly. The outcome was dozens of widely scattered real property clusters, built with no overarching communal development plan and with none or underdeveloped infrastructure.

New research issues require application of Emergent Methods. Therefore this research integrates the quantitative and qualitative method in one study. It is a survey of the population (SKDS, 2009), which reveals a suburb as a desirable living place, however, without awareness of place affiliation, but partly structural interviews with families in the new private houses reveal both the advantageous and disadvantageous consequences that interviewees’ attribute to their decision made several years ago, to acquire a real property in a suburb.
Re-location and food consumption: a comparative analysis of couples in France and Britain

The understanding of the way in which eating habits are formed and changed is still very partial and is often captured by a public health agenda which frames the issues from within one of the dominant normative and policy discourses. Our paper aims at contributing to a sociological and comparative account of the mechanisms and conditions of change in eating habits by drawing on the first results of a comparative study of the negotiation of eating habits in bi-cultural couples who have recently relocated to France or the UK. We are currently collecting data through in-depth couple and individual interviews in both countries, focusing on the adjustments, negotiations and tensions between former and new patterns of conduct, in their material, sensory and affective, cognitive and value-related dimensions [1]. The paper will analyse the interview material in the context of a comparative analysis of factors underpinning change in populations that are similar, insofar as they are exposed to the same wide drivers of change (such as marketisation, the spread of norms concerning nutrition and health etc.), and yet markedly different in overall representations of, and relations to, food.

[1]‘Changing eating practices: an international comparison’, a project of the Sustainable Practices Research Group (University of Manchester). The project team is led by Alan Warde and includes Isabelle Darmon and Dale Southerton.
The contradictory role of the prosumer in the process of creation of value

Social networks are becoming the new paradigm of social organization. They are the material basis of expansion when talking about social structure because they carry out ruling functions and processes (Castells M.). They cast cycles that represent a central flow of logic which in turn become interconnected with open structures in continuous transformations. It has made society ripe with potential for consumption and communication as it has increasingly made economic, cultural and political distances seem nonexistent.

It becomes interesting to investigate this argument from a sociological standpoint: whether this acceptance of society, produced by the network, presents its own characteristics or simply reproduces the same dynamics of modernity. According to Ritzer and Jurgenson, the prosumer, even if has always been present in history, becomes a central figure in the production consumption process of the digital environment.

Our hypothesis is that prosumption plays a contradictory role in the process of empowerment/exploitation of the consumer by a side enhancing the consumer, as a subject within the discourses of the brand, and by the other side reducing him, more than in the traditional relations of consumption, to the role of an object or a manipulatable tool.

In order to demonstrate our hypothesis our analysis will be focused on the online practices of unboxing, hacking and customization of products, as examples of how a prosumer may act in the process of creation of value.
Consumption, time and food. A comparative analysis of Use of Time eating and cooking in the US, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Spain.

Food consumption indicators show an important homogeneity between countries. European countries spend a similar percentage in food consumption in household budgets. However, this homogeneity is not so obvious when we compare the use of time spend eating and cooking. A feature of European dietary change is to reduce the time devoted to eat and to cook, however we believe that we can to detect other features about an specific food culture in each country. In this paper we copare four countries though the Time Use Survey: US, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Spain. To clarify difference eating and cooking we employs multivariate analysis for determining whether the relationships between time’s variables and certain sociodemographic factors are the same in the four countries.
Get away from things to get away with things: voluntary simplicity and unclutter strategies in alternative lifestyles as tools for breaking up with the affluent society

Fifty years of consumption society criticism provide us with a large variety of initiatives in reforming lifestyles in western societies. Most of these reforms aim at breaking up with mass consumption habits at the individual and sometimes collectively organised level. During the last decade, voluntary simplicity strategies have been a cultural vehicle for changing visions on material comfort. Reforms in consumption habits were interpreted as new forms of political activism e.g. in « political consumer » theories (Micheletti, 2003; Dubuisson-Quellier 2009). Our research uses the intermediate concept of « ordinary resistance » (Dobré 2002; 2007; 2009) as a platform for analysing individual action with and against the affluent consumption. The refuse to consume « like anyone else » translates into different self limitation or self deprivation actions e.g. learning to « live without » (cars, heating comfort, supermarket shopping, etc.), or buying less new things (reuse, repair, donation, etc.). Self limitation and deprivation actions are often accompanied by discourses on « authentic needs » as opposed to artificially stimulated needs, generated by the market. Do self limitation strategies imply changing thoughtstyles (Douglas 1996)? My hypothesis links political activism attitudes to lifestyles reforms. In field work I find contradictory facts which tend to confirm that cultural drive is stronger than political attitude. The paper I propose uses the theoretical frame and empirical qualitative data of an ongoing research project TERESA (Social treatment of things profusion in alternative lifestyles). Field work focuses on the relationship to things though individual and family interviews, ethnological observation and « second life » itineraries of things.
Cosmopolitanization, consumer culture and figurational changes in Ireland

This paper examines processes of globalization and expanding cultures of consumption from the perspective of national politicians in Ireland, and uses examples from parliamentary debates from the 1930s to 1970s. As such, it concerns what Beck has described as ‘cosmopolitanization’ – the internal globalisation of nation-states. While useful, Beck’s emphasis on a sharp temporal break serves to obscure long-term continuities. Following Elias, and drawing on Wouters’ (2007) discussion of nostalgia, I argue that in the context of Ireland’s incomplete and uneven state formation and nation-building processes, they-feelings towards other national groups were initially characterised by contempt, fear, and the ambivalent and contradictory need for international recognition and difference. This gradually gave to feelings of nostalgia on the one hand, and a mixture of resignation and hope on the other as interdependencies between Irish people and other nationalities advanced, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. The cultural lag exemplified by nostalgic feelings is related to uncertain national self-worth not only due to late nation-state development (Elias, 1996: 285) but also the shame of emigration and continued partition. Global integration offered the promise of ameliorating these conditions, though ultimately may have loosened bonds at the intra-state level as we-identities expanded, especially for those active in such figurational links. These changes are explored through shifting discourses on the nature of incoming consumer goods and tourists.
Substance based and non-substance based: The cultural embeddedness of the concept of addiction out of the perspective of Finnish and French social workers

Nowadays, excessive behaviours tend to be understood as addictions and often handled accordingly in treatment and policy. This paper questions, what similarities beyond the common understanding as an addiction exist between these problematic behaviours. We recognise addictions as cultural bound syndromes.

In this article alcoholism, pathological gambling and eating disorders are studied and it is compared, how Finnish and French social workers understand them. Finland and France with their different drinking, gambling and eating culture are chosen as examples. Social workers have daily contact with addicts and therefore hold a position as gate keepers.

A stimulated focus group method (Reception Analytical Group Interview) RAGI was applied to eight groups of Finnish and five groups of French social workers not specialised in addiction. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed by open coding. During this process the categories of positive feelings towards the addict, negative judgements and excuses for the problematic behaviour were created and further analysed.

The study confirms the notion of addiction as a cultural bound syndrome as the participants’ understanding of the problematic behaviours depend strongly on the culture and differ between the three excessive behaviours and the two cultural contexts.

The results imply that the use of addiction as an umbrella concept for all kinds of excessive behaviours has to be handled cautiously; the cultural embeddedness of the behaviour in question has to be taken into account and conclusions on treatment and policy have to be made taking this into account.
Converging on sustainability? An approach of consumption behaviors through amateur gardening practices

In France, recent research has pointed that sustainability policies are responsible for new kinds of regulations on consumption behaviors (Rumpala, 2011). In the same time, analyses have shown that knowledge and practices associated with the idea of “sustainability” are not equally distributed among social groups (Hoibian, 2010), and that individuals do not strictly apply recommendations in their everyday life, also guided by family or group imperatives (Garabuau-Moussaoui, 2011; Lamine, 2008; Shove, 2003). In this scientific context, change mechanisms have not been deeply studied: how individuals develop new consumption behaviors?

In an ongoing research, benefiting from a postdoctoral fellowship from the region Ile de France, I concentrate on a measure that might act as a trigger for change: within the framework of environmental policies, amateur gardeners are asked to adopt new cultural techniques (regarding the use of pesticides, the reduction of waste, fertilization, the use of water etc.). Therefore, using ethnographical methods, I question how far new regulations are implemented and how far changes within gardening practices might lead to changes at the domestic level.

More precisely, I focus on allotment gardens, which are above all dedicated to kitchen gardening and still mostly occupied by a low-wage and low-education population who has never taken particular care on environmental issues. In these allotments, collective organization and sociability among gardeners might foster the adoption of new practices. My contribution will analyze to what extent gardeners with different social attributes (age, sex, occupation, income, education) embrace behaviors compatible with the political agenda on “sustainability”.

From hyper-consumerism to guilt: economic crisis and discourses about consumption in Spain

The economic crisis that Spain has been facing since 2008 has produced significant effects in the way citizens are dealing with consumption. Beyond austerity practices and concerns about an uncertain future, there is a rising anxiety about the sustainability of the current consumption patterns. Moreover, it is interesting to analyse how consumption evolves in a situation in which the budget is highly constrained. How do people from different social classes perceive consumption under these circumstances? Our contribution deals with those issues using data from an empirical research project - whose main goal was to map necessities and consumption practices in Spain, trying to assess the impact of the crisis. It was a qualitative sociological research that took place in the years 2010-2011 and whose methodology was based on focus groups and discourse analysis. In this work, we will discuss the results focusing on how different groups of interviewees elaborate a discourse about it which ranges from guilt to a strong moral discourse related to the adequate level of consumption. We consider that our paper might provide interesting results and a deeper knowledge of the relationship between consumption and social class.
Reading Habits and Cultural Reproduction in Spain

This paper focuses on the impact of environmental factors like family, school and friends on the formation of literary reading preferences of Spaniards. While substantial research on reading habits has focused on the role of cultural capital, gender and generational differences or preferences for literary genres, the evidence on the cultural reproduction process associated to the formation of such tastes is rather limited. The theoretical framework combines the work of Bourdieu and Passeron, who analyzed the role of education in the reproduction of cultural and socioeconomic structures, and the contribution of Holbrook and associates on the importance of the early age experiences on the formation of cultural tastes. The data come from the Cultural Barometer 2009 survey, a representative database harmonized according to the EU standards which collected information from Spanish residents at the moment of the interview, of both genders and age 18 years and older. The methodological approach consists of regression models for quantitative data analysis. Preliminary findings indicate that: the professors at school obliging or encouraging children to read; the parents who often read books to children; and, commenting books with friends, are the most significant reading experiences from individuals’ infancy or adolescence. At adult ages, personal criterion, together with the opinion of relatives or friends, and the information received from the communication media, are the most important when choosing what book to read. Socioeconomic demographics contribute to explain the differences observed in the reproduction of reading habits across the social hierarchy.
Social Determinants of Innovative Consumption Practices: Computer and Internet Utilization in Russian Households

Consumption has been an object of study both in economics and sociology. In sociology dominant theories of consumption had a tendency to focus either on symbolic meaning of goods, or on the moral judgments of consumerism. Consumption in economics is mostly viewed through the lenses of price, disposable income and (ir)rationality. A more balanced look on emerging consumption practices as a part of everyday social life from the perspective of economic sociology is proposed in this study.

The contribution of this research is intended to add to two distinct fields. First, to the diffusion of innovations literature, which is currently focused on the following elements of diffusion: the innovation, communication channels, time, and a social system, by emphasizing the importance of life history perspective to the process. Second, to the body of economic sociology studies by focusing on consumption, which has been neglected for a long time in favor of production and distribution. Theories of practice offers the appropriate framework for such purpose, avoiding both extremes of overatomized and oversocialized individual, providing a tool for analysis of emerging consumption practices, and shifting attention from symbolic communication to actions.

The hypotheses would be tested on the data of the Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey (RLMS-HSE), a national representative household survey. The RLMS-HSE round administered in 2009 included a block of questions on computer and Internet utilization in the household. Variability in adopting Internet activities allows for applying regression analysis in order to study its social determinants.
Assessing the sustainability of consumption: conceptual and empirical approaches to a complex phenomenon

All efforts to promote sustainable consumption are challenged to distinguish between sustainable and non-sustainable consumption. Consequently, discourses on sustainable consumption inevitably need to elaborate on what exactly it is that makes individuals’ acts of consumption sustainable. Very often, research projects do not define their notion of sustainable consumption, they just work with an implicit definition. Within the German social-ecological research program “Sustainable consumption - From knowledge to action”, funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research, how to define sustainability in consumption was one the issues that have been discussed during the process of synthesis. Ten project groups investigated different aspects of sustainable consumption, focussing e.g. on conditions of consumption in different fields of needs or on windows of opportunities adequate to foster sustainability. The discussion on how to operationalize sustainability in consumption was neither framed by the idea of charging individuals alone with the task of ‘making the world more sustainable’, nor was it attempting to generate a set of criteria directly applicable to individual acts of consumption. Instead, the synthesis elaborated possible ways on how to determine sustainability in individual consumption behaviours in the first place. This was underpinned by an understanding of sustainable consumption that builds on the distinction between objective needs and subjective wants and that resolves some shortcomings of the widely-spread Oslo definition. As a result, two promising approaches were identified complementing each other. The paper presents these approaches and illustrates them using examples from two projects in the research programme.
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**Prosuming, recognition and social capital development in a political festival of central Italy**

Festa de l’Unità is a political festival - the only case in Italy – running in most italian cities without interruption since the second world war. The festival was originally organized by the Italian Communist Party and the ideological motivation has historically been one of the prevailing dimensions of participation. Now, after almost 70 years and the disappearance of the Italian Communist Party, the festival is organized by the Democratic Party and the ideological dimension is gradually diminished.

The festival is the symbolic center of a ritual calendar year consisting of several community activities. While ideological dimension that motivated participation has gradually failed, the analysis of this particular set of rituals allows us evaluating by which terms ritual’s reproduction is still possible, despite changes in their political, economic and social basis.

The work is based on ethnographic research conducted in a neighborhood of Bologna, started on march 2011 with a group of volunteers promoters of the local festival.

The ethnographic research has revealed the central role played by objects and practices carried out by volunteers, related to the production and consumption of local food [Douglas 1970; Toffler 1980]. These activities have a role as a medium for social recognition [Crespi 2004; Honnet 1992], and from another point of view they seem to allow the development of social capital [Bourdieu 1986; Putnam 2000], two factors that are essential for participation.
The Variety of Food Consumption Moralities and its relation to Social Structure in Germany

In recent years, the thesis has become widespread that everyday consumption is more and more structured by moral or ethical decisions. However, sociology has mostly studied splinter groups of self-appointed “ethical consumers” until now (e.g. FairTrade-activists), neglecting the broad majority of consumers. The paper deals with everyday morality as socially constructed conceptions of ‘good’ consumption and examines the case of food. The paper presents a typology of abstract ideals of ‘good’ food consumption (‘consumer responsibility’, ‘craft consumption’, ‘health’, ‘indulgence’ and ‘use value’) and asks how these types are grounded in social structure.

The paper starts from sociological debates ABOUT whether consumption norms and tastes continue to vary along traditional segmentation lines (P.Bourdieu) or are increasingly individualized (e.g. U.Beck). It is contended that consumption morality depends on experiences actors make as members of diverse social categories like class, age groups, gender and household forms. More precisely, while social structure does not determine actors’ moral stances on food consumption directly, it has an indirect influence on the moral problems with which they are confronted. How these problems are solved morally, is – within certain limits – open to individual variation. This is demonstrated by a comparison of cases with different class backgrounds.

Evidence is based on a series of semi-standardized in-depth interviews with consumers from a medium-sized town in Germany.
Food, cultural taste and politics

In the Disctinction, Pierre Bourdieu paid attention to the close correlation between tastes and political attitudes which has however been largely neglected in later studies. This paper explores the relationship between culinary taste and “highbrow” musical taste as well as their relation to political conservative and liberal attitudes. Both nationally representative survey data and qualitative follow-up interviews are utilized in the analysis. Based on survey questions of favourite foods, three culinary taste patterns are identified: “traditional heavy/meat”, “light/ethnic” and “fast food”. The most salient distinction is organized between the taste for “modern” light/ethnic and “traditional” heavy/meat. This finding is supported both by survey data and qualitative interviews. Culinary taste patterns are closely related to musical taste as well as to political attitudes. Most significantly, the “light/ethnic” culinary pattern is strongly associated with “highbrow” musical taste as well as liberal political attitudes. This relatively strong correlation remains intact even after controlling for the effects of standard socio-demographic factors. The results give support to Bourdieus's idea of structural homology between cultural fields and to the existence of homologous lifestyles.
Healthy and Globally: Organic Food Consumption in Israel as a Field of Cultural Cosmopolitanism

During the 2011 Israeli social justice protest there was a call: "We've replaced the word consumer with the word citizen". But citizenship and consumerism are not necessarily dichotomous. Organic food, for example, is associated with the concept "citizen-consumer", which ties together self-interest ideologies with social and ecological responsibility. Therefore, organic food consumption arouses an expectation for some degree of opposition to the consequences of globalization. However, in-depth interviews conducted with dozens of organic consumers reveal that this practice is, in fact, in accordance with the cultural logic of global neo-liberalism. Employing Bourdieu's concept of field, I will present four different categories of consumers operating in the Israeli field of organic food: 1) "new age culture" consumers 2) retail chain consumers 3) communal consumers 4) urban consumers. These categories compete with one another on the local translation of the global concept "organic". Despite the differences between them, I'll point to their common characteristic: the way they fail to create a critical distance between the fields of organic and conventional food. The Israeli consumer discourse emphasizes organic food as a symbol of global-cultural trends, health and self care; while other meanings, such as social and environmental concerns, are absent or appear as secondary. Therefore, I will argue that organic food consumption in Israel is used to establish cosmopolitan identity. The citizen-consumer hybrid is revealed as characterized in the essential level on assimilation of consumer values and cosmopolitan aesthetics, and adopting critique aspects only on a symbolic level.
“We started to dress more better”: clothing consumption of the St. Petersburg and Novosibirsk middle class

The line in broken Russian in the title appeared during the recent protests against the election frauds in Moscow and belonged to a pro-Kremlin young girl Svetlana from the city of Ivanovo who articulated it as an evidence of the current authorities’ economic success during the past ten years. This line has immediately become a meme in the Internet and appeared on the protests again, but this time among the opposite side, the protesters, in slightly modified form, namely, “I am ready to dress less better”, which was presented by a male opponent. These both lines, as well as virtual dialogue, highlight not only shift in the urban clothing culture occurred in the first decade of the new millennium, but also the current process of negotiation and re-negotiation of class and political identity, capital versus regions distinctions as well as gender differences. Drawing on the post-Bourdieu class and identity concepts of Skeggs (2004), Savage et al. (2005) and others, in this paper I consider how the differences in clothing are produced, how they are articulated through clothing concepts and practices and brought into existence in everyday life of urban cultures of two cities in Russia – the “second capital” St. Petersburg and the “capital of Siberia” Novosibirsk. The paper is based on the in-depth interviews and ethnographic observation conducted in these two cities in 2009-2012.
Practice theoretically based consumption research, social interaction and mediated communication: Towards a conceptualization


Practice theoretically based consumption research, social interaction and mediated communication: Towards a conceptualization

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A practice theoretical approach (Warde, 2005) to consumption research challenges one of the basic assumptions in a lot of consumer research: That motivations drive individual consumer choice. In stead, consumption activities are seen as moments in or consequences of a multiplicity of routinised, socially organised and intersecting practices. However, in the research field on contested consumption and mediated behaviour change discourses, the assumption that motives are a prelude to consumer choices is still dominant, due to the traditional models of target group analysis (Eden, 2009). Thus, a practice theoretical approach to empirical research on contested consumption provides for less simplified conceptualisations of consumption processes.

But practice theoretical concepts also need development. In this paper, we are going to discuss the relations and reciprocities between social interaction “within” a practice and mediated communication that to varying degrees can be “external” to a specific practice (Couldry, 2004). All kinds of normative media discourses and behaviour change interventions are at the disposal for consumers as symbolic resources (Halkier, 2010). Such symbolic resources can at times become „active“ elements of a practice or they can remain in the background. The main analytical and conceptual question focused on in this paper is how the mediatized communication enters into dialogue with the discursive and embodied interactions that can be observed within consumption activitites of an integrated practice. The authors draw upon their empirical studies of parents and children co-shopping in Estonia and convenience food consumption in Denmark – and other types of contested consumption in relation to the importance of mediatization (Hjarvard, 2008).
The other side of ethical consumption

In my presentation I want to address the relation between morality and consumption in a way quite different to recent approaches to ethical or political consumption. In public and scientific discourses a moralisation of consumption is stated. However, this diagnosis is ignoring two things. On the one hand it is ignoring that consumption has been ever since the objective of politics and has experienced specific forms of moralisation. This is first and foremost a question of theoretical and empirical appropriateness. On the other hand, and I will focus on this aspect, it is ignoring the other side of the coin. If there are consumers whose choices and practices are labelled as good, responsible and reasonable, there must be consumers whose choices and practices are labelled as bad, irresponsible and foolish. Hence, a moralisation of consumption is always producing an antagonism. Currently we are experiencing the discursive construction of an ethical consumer on one side and of a new underclass consumer (Unterschicht in Germany and the chav in GB) on the other side. And this is not only a matter of scientific or public discourse. It is a practical knowledge of social policy, a justification for politics of exclusion and social inequality.

The theoretical background of my paper is based on the conceptual tools, methods and analytical distinctions of governmentality studies. The empirical evidence of my paper is based on a discourse analysis already carried out in the course of my PhD thesis.
The Role of Nostalgic Consumption in Transition to Vulnerability

We explore challenges for vulnerable consumers who have faced major life transitions and are consequently denied inclusivity within consumer culture. We address the literature in three sections; consumers in transition, consumer vulnerability and nostalgia. Our findings are based on qualitative research with vulnerable populations, including low-income families and homebound consumers. Drawing on in-depth interviews and life narratives, we discuss the ways in which the transition to vulnerability presents a challenge to identity construction. The transitory poor may perceive the exchange restrictions and negative consequences associated with poverty as worse than long-term poor because the former group has become accustomed to a higher level of consumption. Similarly, the site of the marketplace as a lost space of interaction is one of the major life-changing experiences associated with being homebound. We illustrate the way in which nostalgic consumption can be employed as a coping mechanism for those experiencing transition. Nostalgic possessions provide a critical constituent to managing life-threatening situations. The continuation of particular consumption practices has enabled vulnerable consumers to cope despite the uncertainty associated with transitions. Research among consumers in crisis or in situations of ‘extremis’ has the potential to extend our understanding of the role of nostalgic consumption in society, and how in particular these consumption experiences can facilitate the situation of those in distress.
Sustainable consumption, frugality and the discourse of waste

This paper discusses the salience of the discourse of waste in domestic electricity consuming practices. Based on qualitative interviews and focus groups with participants who had been given feedback on their own usage levels, average levels and lowest electricity usage levels, it argues that waste avoidance should be seen as an important popular discourse in this domain of consumption. Analysis of the interviews suggests that concern about waste can sometimes act as an effective catalyst for change in habitual and established practices that resist arguments based in alternative discourses such as those of ‘saving money’ or ‘saving the environment’. Furthermore, it indicates that the waste discourse is associated with frugality rather than thrift (Evans and Abrahamse, 2009). People want to save electricity in order to avoid moral misdemeanours and not so that they can spend the savings elsewhere, so while a rebound effect might result, it is not an inherent aspect of the behaviour change. Although concern about waste can also result in increased resource consumption (for example, when old freezers are retained and kept in use rather than thrown away), the paper suggests that interventions that increase the salience of waste can help to reduce consumption.
Theory-methodology-imbalance – one problem, two solutions

Practice theory is on the rise in consumption studies. The term is used in many ways but most emphasise the centrality of concrete, context-specific action. Thus, detailed, rich data on concrete setting are needed. However, not all draw methodological inferences from these theoretical points. We contend that many practice-inspired analyses suffer from a mismatch between theory and methodology; 'thick' theoretical ambitions are matched with 'thin' methodological efforts, thus destroying the analytical potential that such projects have.

Lack of methodological competence and difficulties in doing fieldwork in private spheres of Western societies are important reasons. While lacking competence can be solved by thorough training in fieldwork methods the other problem is not so easily overcome – the extreme privacy of the private sphere in the West makes access to good data difficult. We suggest two ways out: First, more research should be done outside mainstream Euramerica. Such research can generate knowledge that is valuable also to Euramerican reality. Secondly, more of the research done ‘at home’ should be conducted in public or semi-public settings. Given that the private sphere is the main problem focus on public or semi-public spheres will lessen the problem. The paper will use two examples to illustrate these points: one from the first author’s fieldwork in Botswana – to show how access to ‘private’ data often is easier in non-western socialities – and one case from Norway to illustrate how focus on a semi-public sphere gives valuable access to everyday life.
Conservative Consumption - Theory of a Paradox

Consumption has been accompanied by its critique from the very beginning. In his recent reconstruction of German intellectual anti-consumerism after the Second World War, Hecken (2010) pointed out two important aspects. First, the remarkable convergence of otherwise clearly distinct conservative and leftist positions when it comes to the rejection of consumerism. Second, the internal contradictions both positions suffer from. Roughly speaking, the conservative view combines a structurally affirmative (pro-market) position with a culturally critical ("wertkonservativ") attitude. Vice versa, the leftist standpoint juxtaposes a structurally negative (anti-capitalist) angle with a culturally open (permissive, hedonistic) attitude.

In our contemporary situation the frontlines seem to have blurred, since we find ourselves in a time where a globally open market meets unprecedented individualism – just as if the structural half of the conservative point of view amalgamated with the hedonistic half of the leftist. However, I would like to argue that a new type of consumption 'theory' has emerged that combines conservative cultural critique with the formerly leftist distance to dynamic markets. It is the ecologically motivated idea of "limits to growth" that paved the way for this unlikely combination. There is much phaenomenological evidence for a new type of quality-oriented consumption that perfectly matches the idea of a sustainable economy. On a theoretical level, however, a central question remains yet to be answered: when consumption is ultimately about producing, using, eventually wasting and again producing – is a mere qualitative, 'conservative consumption' possible in the first place?
The modernization of eating: Studying changes and stabilities in Nordic eating patterns

It is often claimed that individualization, de-traditionalisation and freedom of choice are at the core of modernity. For daily eating patterns this is often claimed to result in globalization and dissolution of traditional cultural patterns regarding eating rhythms, the structure of meals and the social context of eating. In public debate and in research a concern with the alleged ‘americanisation’ of eating patterns and more specifically with an assumed decline of the family meal is a recurrent theme.

We will present a project about Nordic eating which allows us to study social change and stability in the area of modern eating. Fifteen years ago a quantitative and comparative study was conducted with the aim to address the alleged individualization of eating. As a follow up, a similar study is to be conducted in 2012. The studies include interviews with almost 5000 individuals from four Nordic countries and address meal patterns and meal structures in detail and more generalized patterns of practices and attitudes related to food consumption and meals.

Theoretically the project is based in theories of practices and theories of modernization. Food consumption is viewed as a set of coordinated practices, which are subject to institutionalization, normativity and routinization.

We will present results from the first showing that even though a lot of individual eating took place, eating was most often a social activity characterized by nationally different, but distinct socially coordinated rhythms. Our plans for, and if feasible, some preliminary results from the second study will be discussed as well.
Nobody was Dirty: challenging collective conventions of cleanliness

Social expectations play a leading role in determining the way we act, and the resources consumed within those actions. Humans are social beings, observing, interpreting and applying what we perceive as conventional to our everyday practices (Warde, 2010; Cialdini et al 2003). The potential in saving resources by adjusting collective conventions is both exciting and daunting: shifting expectations can enable pro-environmental default actions without time-consuming education and motivation of individuals, yet collective conventions are both hard to define and complicated to shift.

To illuminate some of the implications of shifting collective conventions, a cultural intervention was performed in Melbourne, with the aim of decreasing cleanliness expectations to save laundry resources. An olfactory exhibition was installed in the National Gallery of Victoria, and the media (newspapers, radio, blogs, television) were engaged with ideas of washing less. The message was that laundering frequently is not only unnecessary but also detrimental to the environment. This public engagement strategy is imprecise and outcomes are hard to determinable, yet some inferences in engagement and subversion of un-environmental practices can be drawn from this study. The main finding is that there is a continuum between mindful engagement of the individual and shifting collective conventions, and that both should be addressed in enabling environmentally desirable social practices.

This study is useful in considering practical ways to move beyond rational, incentive based behaviour change, and start to integrate a holistic view of human practices to construct a sustainable future.
Is there an emerging practice of weight management?

The term ‘weight management’ is constantly brought up in current discourses on weight and health and promoted in various health policy programmes, guidebooks, magazines and Internet guides. Judged from this angle, it can be argued that weight management is currently in the process of institutionalisation. In this paper, we ask if and in what ways weight management is becoming rooted also in everyday life as a practice, i.e., a nexus of doings and sayings coordinated by understandings, procedures and engagements (Warde 2005, Halkier 2010). We investigate the ways in which people understand weight management, what they do in order to manage their weight and what kind of positions they take to weight management. The paper is based on an analysis of eight focus group discussions in which 68 people (47 women, 21 men, average age 55) participated in Helsinki in autumn 2009.

Our findings suggest that weight management has not established itself in everyday life as a complex, ‘integrative practice’. On the other hand, it is too complicated for a ‘dispersed practice’. The understandings, procedures and engagements of weight management constantly refer to healthy eating, slimming and exercise that are multidimensional and overlapping practices themselves. In the paper, we discuss the possibility that weight management is an emerging practice in the process of becoming, or a complex of novel combinations of other practices. This seems to call for a new concept that refers to a third type of practices, consisting of elements of various integrative practices.
Fashioning cultural capital: A study of sartorial tastes and bodily practices in Turkey

This paper will contribute both to the theoretical discussions on the contemporary relevance of class in cultural consumption and to the empirical attempts of analyzing diverse class cultures in Turkey. The specific focus of the research is the consumption domains where the body is shaped, cultivated and adorned; hence it draws on survey questions as well as in-depth interviews which reveal sartorial and bodily dispositions of respondents comprehensively. Using multiple correspondence analyses, the first part of the paper brings insights into the ways in which those dispositions and practices are differentiated. Consequently, it unpacks the substance of the primary opposition within the constructed map. At this first stage, the analysis of the supplementary socioeconomic variables demonstrates the continuing impact of class and cultural capital. By integrating cluster analysis, the second part of the paper identifies patterns, which unravels different forms of engagement and restraint. The in-depth interviews further qualify these patterns in relation to understandings of bodily need and definitions of good taste in clothing. The extracts also illustrate how women’s notions regarding the appropriate ways of delineating modernity, religiosity and femininity -through their dressed body- differ among clusters. Last but not least, the positioning of these clusters on the MCA map suggests that these patterns pertain not only to different amounts of cultural capital but also to cultural resources that are different in character and related to the national context.
Cultural Economics of Museums in Israel: Structure of Funding, Repertoire, and Audience

Demographics

This paper is part of a larger project that studies the cultural economics of museums in Israel with an emphasis on cultural policy and the construction of a cultural canon.

In the proposed conference presentation I explore the way various economic, organizational and cultural characteristics of museums in Israel are associated with the number of people who visit those museums and with basic demographic characteristics of this audience. Most directly this kind of analysis provides an indication as to how cultural policy shapes consumption patterns.

I use data on all the museums that received funding from the ministry of culture during the period 1998-2009, a total of 53 museums. The ministry of culture publishes annual reports that provide extensive information about dozens of parameters such as sources of income, genres presented, number of exhibitions, demographics of artists, types of catalogues produced, characteristics of repertoire, investment in infrastructure, and demographics of visitors.

I present and discuss analysis of the way the number and characteristics of visitors are associated with various sources of funding (governmental funding, private funding, and earned income), types and repertoires of exhibitions, and several organizational characteristics of the museums (e.g., size, location). I also show how these associations change over time and between museums.
Financing everyday practices. The significance of household debt in a financialised economy

Traditionally, everyday practices of consumption have been analysed distinct from income, the latter typically serving as a ‘background variable’ in regression analyses. But the deregulation of the Western economies from the mid-1970s onwards has fundamentally changed the financial environments in which the households operate. One obvious consequence is that loans, credit and a range of other financial products have become easily available to almost everybody. A perhaps less noticed feature is that the deregulation of the economy has implied a financialisation of every-day life, i.e. an increasing dependence on finance and speculative financial products, along with more responsibility attributed to the household and individual citizens. The new role of credit in financing consumption has led to new kinds of dynamics between income and consumption, producing new opportunities as well as vulnerabilities and, potentially, new practices. With the financialised economy and the emerging crises as a backdrop, it is of great importance to understand the ways in which households are linked to the financialised economy. In this paper we will explore how theories of practice and institutions may be used to develop an understanding of how households adapt to the risks of the unstable, financialised economy, related to social status, practical implications, as well as power and responsibility. We will use examples from a comparative project on the financialisation of the household economy, with data from Norway, Denmark and the UK.

Co-authored with Christian Poppe, The National Institute for Consumer Research

Public and private spending on children presumably plays a major role in determining children's later health, well-being, and productivity (Becker 1975; Folbre 2008). Understanding households’ private consumption of services which create human capital is particularly important. Unlike government provision, which is either equally provided or (often) designed to ameliorate inequality, private household consumption, which depends on parents’ incomes, may manifest substantial inequalities. Yet little attention has been paid to variation in the extent of private spending – both how intense spending is and under what conditions there is greater inequality. In this paper, I investigate variation in parental expenditures on children and the extent of inequality in expenditure across different types of welfare states in Europe. In doing so, I situate consumption within a national context, asking how national policies and economic conditions change incentives for private consumers, particularly for this form of consumption that may impact future inequalities. I use data from four countries: England, a liberal welfare state, Norway, a social democratic state, Germany, a corporatist/continental welfare state, and Spain, a Mediterranean or “southern European” welfare state. Using data from expenditure surveys from each country, I track spending on children. I examine spending on child care, education, toys, games, and hobby goods, and children's clothing. I then examine how determinants of spending differ across countries, investigating the role of income, education, and women’s labor force participation across the three countries. I track spending over a period starting in the 1970s to roughly the present day.
Consumer positions in economic scarcity: passive victims or active agents?

The paper focuses on how Finnish basic income receivers’ discursively construct themselves as consumers. The research material consists of 15 unstructured interviews gathered mainly from the Helsinki Association for unemployed. Interviewed people are recipients of a basic unemployment allowance, a labor market subsidy, a national pension, a parental allowance or a higher education study grant. Most of the interviewees’ income is supplemented by general housing allowance and/or social assistance.

The analysis is relying on positioning theory (van Langenhove & Harré 1999) and its core is to find out how self is discursively positioned as a consumer in interviews. Analysis focuses on features which interviewees’ assign to themselves as consumers and how the positions shifts according to different story-lines. For example, they position themselves as restricted and controlled benefits receivers, yet the same time as conscious consumers and eager job-seekers. The former characterized by victimhood and the latter by active agency. These two shifts in story-lines are somewhat problematic. While choosing one you lose the other.

The conclusion is drawn in the context of discourse on individualism which makes the consumption inequalities visible. Economic driven culture forces the poor or marginalized people to prove their autonomy by presenting themselves as capable actors with responsibility. This position can be seen problematic, because individualistic discourse suggests that the responsibility lays the blame for being poor for the poor. Thus, my paper will give insight to the lives of marginalized people who in these neoliberal times are trying to battle against being excluded from the society.
Thinking Outside the ABC Canon Methodologically?: Practices, Dish Washing and Knowledge

The theme of practices (routine, everyday, mundane) has been one of the central tenets of debate in the ESA consumption network over the past 15 years (Ilmonen 2001; Warde 2005; Halkier et al. 2011). The ‘Practice Theory’ on which the network draws may be seen as connected with the cultural theoretical provinces of Actor Network Theory (ANT) and Non Representational Theory (NRT). In all of these fields, questioning has commenced on the methodological implications pertaining to the theoretical directions taken (e.g. Crang 2003; Latham 2003; Law 2004), though arguably NRT scholars have been most active in the exploration of ways of thinking outside the box that represents the methodological canon of the social sciences. This paper joins their efforts in an active way, and argues that we should at the very least question this methodological canon in the light of the type of questions we wish to ask, and inferring from this on how and in what ways methodological innovation would be useful. To illustrate this, I further the argument that the ABC thinking, identified by Shove (2010) as linking social science ‘theory’ on attitudes, behaviour and choice with policy ‘practice’ inside what is to all means and purposes a firm hegemonic cocoon, also lies at the foundation of one of the most pertinent methodological questions addressed in social science (Atkinson 2003: 108); that of the dualism between ‘what people say’ and ‘what people do’. This dualism has historically occupied a salient performative presence in social science research, meaning that in important ways, it has ‘made the world’ of social science research (Law & Urry 2004). Whilst practice theory (of that summed up by Reckwitz 2002) importantly calls for attention to the embodied performance of knowledgeable humans in a material world, I examine how ingrained language is, not only in our daily practices, but also in research practice. I engage with debate in NRT to explore how and in what ways creative interventions (Crang 2003) help us to move beyond such cultural solidities, in effect making ‘the familiar’ of routine practices ‘strange’. The argument is illustrated with reference to the analysis of dish washing.
Second Hand in Italy: a “new way of consumption”?

The aim of this paper is to investigate the theoretical assumptions of material culture in Western societies and to analyse the material culture of second-hand consumption in Italy. The global recession (US and Europe) is connected to the growth of reselling services, vintage consumption, and more generally of re-use cultures. As a consequence it can be said that second-hand consumption is a practice driven either by economical causes and cultural beliefs. Second-hand culture is characterized by a peculiar social meaning related to the aesthetic of goods and, its system of relations and it represents the history of products and people. Second-hand is the opposite of the “new”, which represents the rational choice of consumers who decide to purchase and consume products regardless of their physical wear and tear. While new goods guarantees a sort of “purity of consumption”, second-hand goods seems to be “dangerous”. Second-hand consumption brings commodities to an “impure” and relational way of consumption, not mediated by conventional market and industrial “clean” production. With the help of two theoretical axes: purity and danger, related to the proximity of the body, and the gift or the exchange, related to the value of goods, we try to investigate, through an ethnographic observation, second-hand cultures in a region of Italy: the Veneto.
Being audience today: practices of consumption and production

In literature dedicated to mass media the idea di “consumption” is linked to the active fruition of texts; it has also been defined as “productive” or “second level production” (de Certeau, 1990).

Today media consumers are becoming much more than consumers – they are producers and distributors of content as well. New technologies are providing audiences with more choice and control in terms of when, where, and how they consume their media. This kind of work is close to the co-creative labour, that is “the phenomenon of consumers increasingly participating in the process of making and circulating media content and experiences” (Banks & Deuze, 2009).

Starting from these outlines, we propose the study of a body of TV series linked to the universe of fashion (for example Sex and the city, Gossip Girl), as they are analyzed through the socio-semiotic methodology (text analysis) by considering the principles of medial convergence. The TV series are used by fans-audiences along consumer and production practices; they represent:
- Texts to watch (on television at specific hours, in streaming from the Internet, or to be kept after downloading)
- Objects capable of producing socialization (online discussions)
- Models to imitate or to follow in one’s personal dress outfits (in the online world practices of this kind are increasingly made evident either in non-official discussion spaces or in commercial web sites).

Thus, audiences become co-creators of contents and styles, new authors of “decentralized creativity”.

In what way then should the new audiences be analyzed? To which extent can the theoretical approaches we have presented be applied in order to study pragmatically “evolved” audiences? How can we define them: medial-audiences, prosumers, consum(auth)ors?
The Unease of the Hipster: Negotiating Trends and Authenticity among Cultural Consumers

Furthered by the general commercialization of culture, being ‘hip’ is considered a crucial source of social prestige in the fields of fashion, music and other arts which are all in a state of constant flux and revaluation (e.g. Frank, 1997; Taylor, 2009). Social prestige can therefore be gained by being ‘in the know’ of new developments in the cultural field which has been discussed as an alternative to a status hierarchy based on social class as Bourdieu described it (Thornton, 1995).

In depth interviews with young people deeply involved in urban culture scenes reveals a different perspective: They oppose following trends which are seen as shallow, boring and too easy. Instead their central concerns are authenticity and uniqueness, up to idiosyncrasy. While the participants are emphasizing their openness and acceptance towards other people’s tastes, not submitting oneself to any style regimes is considered admirable.

Bourdieu’s concept of naturalness turns out to be a useful theoretical approach that captures the kind of authenticity that the interviewees are performing. The study therefore contributes to a refined understanding of symbolic boundary work and conspicuous consumption.
Theorising the 'complicit' consumer: (spaces for) consumption in the neoliberal city

This paper is concerned with the role that consumption plays in the neoliberal reinvention of the post-industrial city. Neoliberalism, as imposed for example, through the orthodoxy of the creative city, continues to have profound implications for the everyday nature of city life. Above all perhaps, this orthodoxy has created a contemporary city that is increasingly defined by elites through and by consumption. In this context cities appear to have become increasingly defined by disparities of wealth and are thus the product of a situation in which the opportunities they engender are more open to some social groups than they are to others. Acknowledging this to be the case, this paper considers the suggestion that a tendency to condemn the neoliberal city without sufficient recourse to how that city is experienced by consumers may result in an underestimation of the subtleties of the neoliberal project. Drawing upon a discussion of how the contemporary city is increasingly defined by 'spaces for consumption', the paper seeks to develop the notion of the 'complicit consumer' as a means by which the ways in which consumers engage with everyday life in the city can be more effectively understood. The paper therefore calls for a re-evaluation of how the neoliberal city is currently theorised, arguing that the consuming city is better conceptualised as an emotional experiential entity in which the consumer is more than just the straightforward victim of ideological consumerism. In doing so the paper begins to consider how the sociology of consumption can better contribute to broader sociological debates.
Are youth subcultures still up to date? An explorative research

Research effected in recent years in the field of consumption (Shankar, 2006) has shown that the role of subcultures as defined by Cultural Studies (Hebdige 1979) has deeply changed. Indeed, the focus on consumption tribes, sharing a common interest in and a peculiar commitment to a particular product class, brand, or consumption activity (Schouten and McAlexander 1995), has shifted the attention from the role of negotiators and rejectors of dominant ideologies, typical of subcultures, to consumption practices and rituals typical of the new tribes (Maffesoli, 1996).

The aim of the paper is to verify if, in a consumption driven society, it is still possible to identify juvenile ‘traditional’ subcultures. Analyzing the creative use of goods, i.e. the re-appropriation techniques and the peculiar consumption rites that typically define a subculture, we should be able to understand if specific groups of young individuals share identity and dispositions, reveal strong and lasting social ties, and construct themselves as oppositional to other groups.

The research is an explorative one and the applied methodology will be an ethnographic (Kozinets, 2002) analysis of forum and blogs.
Food consumption and urban poverty

Focusing on the emergence of old and new forms of social fragility, the paper aims to investigate the dynamic and multi-dimensional relationship among food consumption, urban spaces and population living below the poverty line.

Our starting point is that food is primarily a social fact. In cooking, eating and feeding one another, humans have throughout history celebrated the social nature of food consumption, the fact that food sends messages to body and mind, and that the journey from field and farm to kitchen and mouth is a social journey, made attractive by the bonds of kinship, friendship and companionship.

Through case studies, participant observation and non-standard interviews on life history, the paper explores whether living under economic and socially marginal conditions doesn’t constitute by itself the presupposition of exclusively following the logic of need and its satisfaction, recognizing the activation of processes of negotiation for the necessities, also of those more fundamental or basic, than those alimentary.

Focusing on poverty and exclusion as social deprivations, and not simply material injustices, the paper examines the limits of welfare state, which may create a material safety net for its poorer citizens but fail to grant them the gift of “recognition”, as Charles Taylor might put it. This dilemma reminds us again that as the poor struggle with developing what Appadurai called “the capacity to aspire”, where and how they have access to the symbolic comforts of food consumption may be as important as their access to food itself.
What makes students read literature? A panel study into the influence of parents and education on the reading level.

Reading literary books is one of the most prestigious cultural activities in our society. An indication of this status is that literature has been part of the Dutch secondary school curriculum for decades. Yet, the question whether secondary education actually affects the type of books students read remains somewhat contested. The parental family is found to be a main determinant of reading behavior as well and it is not always clear what school adds to this primary socialization. The cultural reproduction thesis claims that the school curriculum will reproduce existing inequalities in reading, whereas the cultural mobility thesis claims that school can reduce the differences due to family socialization.

In this paper, we examine (a) the extent to which school and parents stimulate reading literary books, and (b) how school interacts with cultural socialization by the parents.

In this paper we use panel data on 1727 Dutch secondary school students who were surveyed at their secondary school between the ages of 14 to 17, and who participated in at least one of the follow-up surveys 2, 4 and 6 years later. Our dependent variable is the reading level of the last book that students had read at the time of the survey. All generated book titles (1500+) were rated by over 200 book experts – more specifically: librarians – on their complexity and literary quality. Besides information on the secondary school context, independent information on parental social background and reading behavior is available as one parent was surveyed as well.
Use and importance of ethnic food distinctions among mothers of small children in second generation immigrant families. Concerns and strategies related to dietary change.

The aim of the present study was to create knowledge to improve initiatives to promote dietary change among families with small children of 2. generation ethnic minority background in Denmark. The project aimed at understanding which elements in existing practices and perceptions work to promote or impede such changes from taking place. The paper suggests that in order to avoid the risk of mistakenly culturalising eating and feeding practices which have been formed by for instance structural, ideological, social, psychological or practical conditions it is necessary to study in what contexts and exactly how cultural and ethnic identity is considered important by the individuals in question. Analysis was based on data from four focus group interviews with mothers of either Pakistani or Turkish background. Results of the focus groups showed, that mothers’ strategies to alter the diet of the family and children were motivated by two major concerns: 1) the securing of family health and 2) the development of multi-cultural eating competencies in their children. Results also revealed that mothers conceptualized inhibitors to change partly in terms of ethnicity and drew upon dichotomies between ‘our [Pakistani/Turkish] food’ and ‘Danish food’. Analysis, however also pointed to several indications, that such dichotomies were challenged and in a process of dissolving. The discussion treats the process of dissolution of ethnic distinction in food categories among ethnic minority groups and its possible implication for health promotion.
Shared Social Responsibility: consumption and local development

This paper investigates the behavior of responsible consumers and how their actions influence local development.

This analysis is not to be made in the context of Karl Marx's theory of consumer behaviour on commodity fetishism: the action is the demonstration of consumer alienation. Neither is this analysis made according to the idea that everyday commodity consumption is a realm for the actualisation of capacities for autonomous action, reflexive monitoring of conduct and the self-fashioning of relationships between selves and others.

The relationships between consumers, producers and local authorities, and their effects on local development processes are instead analysed from the point of view of “shared social responsibility”: a new paradigm for social cohesion.

This paradigm of shared social responsibility has three dimensions: the common good; a new idea of happiness and related new methods for measuring well-being (Stiglitz, Sen e Fitoussi); and new cooperative processes.

Through the lens of shared social responsibility the action of consumption is seen as a form of civic engagement.

Our research implies that local development arises from virtuous circles of responsibility, in which consumers, producers and local governments work together to develop lifestyles and consumption patterns, capabilities and culturabilit^.

The research was carried out on specific examples of cooperative projects, our focus being on the Sustainability Factory organised through the University of Bologna: these workshops brings together local authorities, corporate organisations, and citizens’ groups interested in new lifestyles and forms of consumption.
Transformation of Youth’s Sexual Culture in the Context of Consumer Society (an example of Russia)

While active debates regarding the process of formation of so called consumer type of society are going on in Russian academic discourses consumerist values and patterns of behavior continue spreading in the society through advertisement in the Media and on the Internet. According to different social research the everyday practices, including sexual ones, of young Russian people transform and become more diverse under the influence of social changes. To understand the role and effect of consumerism as a set of specific norms and values on sexual culture of young Russians there were conducted 20 in-depths interviews with students aged 18-26 years old. The main focus of the research was on meanings, attitudes towards commercial sex and real practices of the informants. It showed interesting and significant transformations in perception and evaluation of the sphere of sex work in students’ consciousness.
Distinction in the Field of Wine Consumption

Contemporary sociological theories (Beck 1986, Giddens 1991, Bauman 1988) dealing with social change postulate a disembedding of persons out of traditional social relations (individualization thesis). It is argued that traditional production-related sources of identity, like social class, are eroding. As a consequence, persons have to construct their identities more self-reflexively whereby consumer behavior is seen as an important source of identity. This thesis may be challenged, as consumption decisions are still structured by specific social contexts (e.g. family, sociocultural environment) (Warde 1994). In Germany wine was traditionally a distinctive beverage of the upper-class. In comparison to other products it can be aestheticized to an outstanding degree. Its quality can not only be evaluated on a subjective basis, but also on the bases of socially shared quality indicators.

In light of the individualization thesis and due to the specifics of wine it is to query whether wine consumption patterns in Germany nowadays are still class-based: To what extent is wine consumption related to the social position and lifestyle of persons? Which patterns of consumption can be identified? Which practices are suitable to demonstrate status and prestige in the field of wine consumption? These questions are answered by means of a multiple correspondence analysis based on an empirical data. Besides focusing on wine consumption patterns it is analyzed whether the structure of social space as Bourdieu puts it can also be found with regard to wine consumption. Basically, the results show that the field of wine consumption is still strongly structured according to a dimension of lifestyle luxury and to the level of economic and cultural capital.
Museum Attendance in Russian city: Leisure Activity as a Predictor

Today a social role of museum is much wider than just conservation, restoration and demonstration. Museums are regarded as an attraction for tourists, a part of school education and, of course, important piece of city environment benefiting a community in terms of leisure, knowledge and esthetic. Sociology can support museum function by providing relevant information about current and potential visitors. The body of papers by Pierre Bourdieu, Richard A. Peterson, Paul DiMaggio and others explain macro level factors of participation in arts and museum visiting, but they do not elucidate meso-level ones where museum is embedded into consumer’s everyday life alongside with other leisure activities. In order to reduce this gap we have tested typology of museum visitors based on their leisure activity. Except the fact that lifestyle approach allows to account great changes which have happened due to the transition in peoples’ lifestyle and diminishes the problem of incompletely formed class culture this approach might be beneficial for museum management, because it gives valuable marketing information about current and potential museum visitors. Empirical base of the report is data of two sociological surveys (204 of visitors of Perm Contemporary Art Museum and 500 of Permien citizens) which took place in 2010. Methods of data analysis are factor analysis and regression analysis.
**Fresh is Best? Social Position, Time, and the Consumption of Fresh vs Processed Vegetables in France**

While vegetable consumption is encouraged for public health reasons, French households tend to buy less and less fresh products and more processed food. However, this trend hides strong variations in vegetable consumption across households. Are these variations compensated or strengthened when we take into consideration processed vegetables? What role does the time devoted to cooking play in fresh vs processed vegetable purchases, according to the social position of the household? The paper refers both to the literature on stratification of tastes and to the theory of the “time crunch” in the upper classes.

Taking advantage of very detailed data about food purchase of 2650 French households (Kantar Worldpanel 2007), we are able to take into account a wide range of processed vegetables (excluding potatoes) and separate them from fresh vegetable purchases. The data cover purchases for at-home consumption only but includes every shopping place visited by the household throughout a year. Respondents are also asked if they spend the least possible time cooking.

While the household size and structure affects both fresh and processed vegetable purchases, processed vegetable consumption does not depend on education, income and age of the respondent while the three variable strongly affect fresh vegetable purchases. Therefore, as far as social stratification and distinction are involved in food consumption, distinction lies rather in fresh vegetables. People who spend the least possible time cooking buy less fresh vegetables and a little more processed foods, but this is independent from the effect of the household’s social position.
Comparing "Cosmopolitanism": Taste, Nation and Global Culture in Finland and the UK

This paper adds a comparative perspective to the study of the relationships between cultural taste, cosmopolitanism and social organisation. Drawing on rich empirical material provided by two similarly designed projects in the UK and Finland, it explores the ways in which different national taste cultures are shaped through global culture. Starting from the historical role of taste in the formation of national cultures, this paper examines the different elements of everyday interaction with "global forms" of culture (film, TV, cuisine) in two countries with distinct collective histories. Whilst there have been some recent attempts to study cultural taste in a comparative perspective, the weight of sociological inquiry into taste has been focussed on specific national spaces, including the France of Pierre Bourdieu's seminal contribution. This tendency persists even as the production and circulation of culture is increasingly accepted as global. Global culture is assumed to be the driver of cosmopolitan ways of being, but is also interpreted as a threat to distinct national cultures. Strong theoretical arguments have been made for the emergence of post-national cosmopolitan subjectivities in contemporary Western societies but the empirical basis for these claims is not always well established. The paper broadly concurs with those critics who see cosmopolitanism in the context of the maintenance of privileged political or symbolic positions of classes/status groups. It also reports the evidence for different appreciations of the nation and national cultural forms in these two countries as a means of testing the limits of a global theory of taste.
Diätische Bildung and Identity Consumption

This paper deals with the rediscovery of the "Nordic Food" and the education of "good taste" - and the identity construction that is involved. The empirical data comes from Danish facebook groups having food as a theme and Danish foodblogs.

The negotiation and dialogue on "New Nordic Food" (NNF) as it is articulated in social media (FB and madblogs) demonstrating consumption relational dimension - I am responded to (in my consumption), therefore I am. (Featherstone) (Markham). NNF is prepared as the rediscovery of the "true" & "good" taste to suit the regional area: North. Eating this food is to "rediscover" the self. New Nordic Food is created through the invention of tradition (E. Gellner). By consuming "NNF" we can meet the current discourse about eating sustainably and thereby show in identity as ethically and socially responsible individuals (Douglas & Isherhood) (Dittmar); You become an educated person. (Hegel). Only through consumption, you will experience Diätische Bildung. At the same time the field shows the paradox of consumption – the wish that through consumption the lost identity can soothe the truth - while there is an inherent awareness that consumption is merely a sign and a narrative in which we live through. (Baudrillard) (McAdams).
Lost in Translation: The Problem of 'Translation' in Comparative Research: The Case of Two Research Projects on Cultural Capital in the UK and Finland

In comparative research and its data collection one should aim in the survey questionnaire to find as good a translation equivalent of questions as possible for the sake of comparison. However, studying even such societies with share about the same European cultural traditions, there are great social and cultural differences, which imply certain difficulties in the research survey design. In this paper, this problem is addressed by discussing the problems of pursuing equivalents to the survey items and translating British cultural matters and issues of consumption into the Finnish context. This is illustrated by the case of the Finnish research project on cultural capital (Rahkonen et al. 2006), the survey of which was modelled on the example of the British survey (Bennett et al. 2003), yet incorporating a number of national or cultural modifications, while trying to preserve the comparability as far as possible. Finally, it is also discussed about the implications of translation to comparative research, and, on a more general level, to the transferability of Bourdieu's schema.
Paths to wine connoisseurship. Interrelations of public norms and domestic appropriations within wine consumption.

Contribution:

Wine consumption is becoming ever more culturalised and reflexive. I propose a micro-sociological approach to contemporary œnophile discursive practices, in Luxembourg, by concentrating on their inherent normativity (moral and aesthetic) and ordinary appropriation (ethical and hedonistic). The empirical context for this articulation are wine tasting lessons ‘for beginners’, which convey a specific type of normativity.

The publics of this institution – mainly male and affluent – have both ‘operational’ and ‘hedonistic’ motivations. Appropriations of the œnophile normativity are reactive – either positively or negatively: interviewees adopt tactical usages of specific dispositions and of tactical courses of action, related to vertical differenciations (social trajectory and position), but mainly to horizontal ones (milieus, interactions and experiments carried out through various projects of subjectivation).

These dispositions and tactics are linked to the domestic œnophile logics of action – which are active and strategic. Contrasting with the œnophile normativity (focusing on wine), ordinary discursive practices relate to preoccupations with one’s personal and social life, rather than to wine. Nonetheless, it is the aesthetic-based œnophile canonisation that contains essential prerequisites of subjectivation, even if it is appropriated in a hedonistic, socio- or egocentric way. This shows the consubstantial and flexible interweaving of norms and pleasure, leading to a personal and social empowerment (with a potential that is mainly ethical, but also distinctive), via one particular food item.

Theoretical framework:

Foucault (discursive practices, governmentality, ethics/morals), Carré (motivations), Bourdieu (dispositions, distinction), De Certeau (strategy/tactics) and Dubet (logics of action). Methodology:

Grounded theory (Strauss/Glaser), in-depth interviews and participant observation.
Sustainable consumption and normality

Drawing on analyses of individual, household and group interviews conducted in the UK on domestic practices such as laundry and personal cleanliness, this paper concludes that the adoption of more sustainable practices is constrained by perceptions of what is normal. The research suggests that some sustainable practices are not adopted because they are seen as too different from normal, everyday behaviour, while other less sustainable practices are retained because they are seen as ‘normal’. The research shows that conceptions of what is normal change over time and that many consumers are aware of this and use a discourse of ‘progress’ to explain why older versions of normality are no longer acceptable.

The paper compares the individualised perspective adopted by ‘social norms’ theory with the more sociological approach taken by practice theory. The latter suggests that shared, routinised patterns of behaviour (practice as performance) constitute the practice as a social entity. Although participants believed their practices to be widely shared and ‘normal’, they actually differed radically between households. Ideas of what is ‘normal’ varied widely, and were more likely to have been formed in childhood or influenced by salient social identities, than based on knowledge of what other people do. Thus, it appears that practice performances are shaped more by people’s perceptions of what is normal than by actual practices. The divergence between individual performances of domestic practices highlights the differences between versions of practices, and the potential role of social marketing in communicating and shaping perceptions of what is normal.
DO CHILDREN NEED EDUCATION FOR CONSUMPTION? ETHICAL REFLECTIONS INSPIRED BY A PROGRAM IN PORTUGAL.

Programmes of consumer education directed to children are beginning to draw some attention in Europe. The aim of this article is to raise a few topics to debate these initiatives and their ethical implications. Children have been increasingly regarded as active and influential consumption actors and their relation to money, products and the media has been variedly explored in the last decades. The crescent amounts of money received by children and their growing centrality in familiar, economic and social life force us to rethink the considerations of their insignificance as consumers and look out for different paradigms. Scholars, governments and organizations examine children with growing interest and preoccupation, trying to forecast the profile of consumer citizens of the future and to prevent problems that are challenging contemporary societies, such as debt, alienation or pollution. Educational programmes have multiplied, willing to prepare children for a more conscious, sustainable and empowered consumption behaviour. In Portugal, these programmes have most of the times been embedded in private initiatives from banks and insurance companies. However, ethical questions arising from this type of programs and their alleged pedagogical contents should be discussed. The example of a Program of Financial Education applied to 245 children of two primary schools in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2010, is used to illustrate some issues that should matter to sociologists of consumption.
Arts consumption and museum audiences: Using MCA to explore aesthetic dispositions of museum visitors.

Bourdieu's Distinction (1984) has mostly been read as an account of the social structuring of cultural practices and less as a theory of the aesthetic. In this paper we explore empirically how the modernist framing of Bourdieu's aesthetics needs to be rethought in the context of contemporary cultural change. Drawing on a survey of museum visitors in Ghent, Belgium (N = 1,195), we use Multiple Correspondence Analysis to analyse what aesthetic dimensions are important when people contemplate works of art. We find that the opposition between popular (based on beauty and harmony) and highbrow aesthetics à la Bourdieu in the structure of the aesthetic space is still important. Yet, the content of highbrow aesthetic has changed, now privileging 'postmodernist' dimensions over modernist ones. Linked to this tension, another dimension is crucial, one that favours a socially reflexive art compared to a detachment of art from social preoccupations.
Field-Specific Discourse About Taste. The Transformation of Wine Journalism in Germany, 1947 - 2008

A central topic of the new economic sociology is the cultural, institutional and social embeddedness of markets. A paradigmatic case are markets for consumer goods, which are mainly evaluated according to aesthetic criteria of taste, because aesthetic evaluations are inherently laden with uncertainty (Karpik). Typically such markets show the structure of a social field (Bourdieu), which contains not only the structural positions of diverse types of producers and consumers, but furthermore positions/actors which are crucial for the aesthetic evaluation and consecration of consumer goods. Thus, in a kind of field-specific public sphere core meanings and evaluations of aesthetic consumer goods are negotiated.

Our study focusses on the development of the field-specific public sphere for the German wine market in a longitudinal perspective. We analyze if the development of public discourse in this field resembles other fields (music, food, cinema), where we find an erosion of traditional, high-brow criteria of aesthetic evaluation and in parallel the emergence of criteria of aesthetic authenticity, implicating a rehierarchization of taste and consumer practices (Peterson; Johnston/Baumann, Janssen). Our study complements and adds to previous research because of its longitudinal character covering the whole period between 1947 and 2008. The data base for this research is a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of reporting about wine in the two German weeklies “Der Spiegel” and “Die Zeit”.
Bunny-Juss is teaching: consumer education at kindergartens.

The current consumer literacy debate emphasizes the need to teach consumer competencies at an early age involving preschoolers and kindergartens. Research has shown that parents regard themselves as the main teachers for their children, at least in such everyday matters as consumption. However, various studies also reveal that parents not always have enough knowledge, time and willingness to actually engage in conscious teaching. The common way to teach consumer competencies is co-shopping. However, not all children have possibilities to participate in co-shopping procedures for various reasons. In the Estonian context the Consumer Protection Board considers consumer education one of its key areas of responsibility whereas pre-schoolers in one of their priority target groups. As a result, educational cartoons have been produced aiming to teach children shopping procedures, consumer rights and consumption related threats in a playful and child-friendly format.

The present study uses participant observations and interviews with pre-schoolers (aged 3-6) and their teachers in two different kindergartens of Pärnu (a smaller city) and Tallinn (the capital) conducted in winter-spring 2012. The objective of the study is to track how pre-schoolers learn consumer competencies in kindergarten, what sort of teaching and learning practices can be identified as well as how they are related to the children's everyday life and consumption practices. Both teacher-children and children-children interactions are focused on. The central elements in these teaching situations are the educational cartoons mentioned above.

Critical consumption: a space of recognition in post modern society

The aim of this paper is to interpret the emergence and development of critical consumption in Italy through the concept of recognition, as an inter-subjective space of expression of self-identity. Those spaces which are excluded from the field of citizenship can be covered by critical consumption transforming the act of consumption itself into a “political” act. This fact implies regarding consumption as a means of “struggle” to claim some rights not only through the status of citizen, but through the consumer’s role. The growing necessity to claim a space on the socio-economic scene, through the consumers’ choices, shows the emerging of highly heterogeneous new forms of social action and political participation, that could be exemplified as placed on a continuum line stretching from the choice to consume in a “responsible way”, from the social and/or environmental point of view, to forms of collective consumption (for example groups of fair purchasing). The figure of a “consumer”, unlike the figure of a “citizen”, is free from any moral restriction to distinguish right from wrong. Consumption is in itself a communicative act maximizing the social usefulness of the consumer, the political relevance of consumption emerging from the fusion between the elements of citizenship and the acts of consumption, merging into the figure of the “citizen-consumer”, softening the boundaries between public and private and between individual and collective behaviour.
Sustainable Consumption Associations: objectives, strategies and publics

The civil society concept is the result of a long and complex process of historical transformation (Hegel), and it is associated with the proliferation of public criticism of the despotic power of the state and “a radical defense of civil society as an indispensable moment of political and social democratic ‘(Keane, 2001). Today, this concept is often used as an ideal-type to describe, explain, clarify and understand the contours of a given slice of the complex reality. By using media, new social movements exert pressure on the control and sense structures, advocating the construction of a new social system, reorienting its historicity (Fernandes, 1993; Watertight, 1999; Gohn, 2004).

The main goal of this communication is to present a typology of associations focusing on sustainable consumption and development. From the information available on the websites of these associations, collected between October and November 2011, we developed a typology based on five descriptive variables: temporal, geographical, objectives, activities and target audiences. The purposes are: i) to identify the emergence of this phenomenon in Portugal and compare it with other EU countries; ii) to deepen the knowledge of the objectives of these associations, iii) to analyze the relationship between these objectives and the privileged activities to achieve them and iv) to identify the target groups of the intervention. In short, we intend to deepen the knowledge of the role that these associations play as members of civil society in promoting sustainable consumption practices.
Cultural intermediaries and the construction of naturalness as a form of value: The case of natural wines

Located at the intersection of culture and economy, cultural intermediaries are significant in constructing value by framing how others (end consumers, as well as other market actors) engage with goods, affecting and effecting others’ orientations towards those goods as legitimate and desirable. This paper focuses on cultural intermediaries in the wine industry, and specifically those involved in the promotion of natural, or ‘biodynamic’ wine. The production of natural wine is defined by attention to environmental sustainability (minimal chemical or technological interventions are made in how the grapes are grown or made into wine) and adherents suggest this creates a strong connection between place and taste. However, rather than take the ‘naturalness’ of natural wine for granted, the paper offers a distinctive, theoretically-informed analysis of the construction of naturalness as a form of value. Bringing together theoretical insights from new economic sociology and cultural economy, the research is concerned with how wine intermediaries perceive and frame natural wine as ‘good’, and how that hinges at least in part on their selective singularization of, and affective engagement with, some of the wine’s material and symbolic properties. The discussion draws from interviews with wine intermediaries—e.g. wine writers, distributors, publicists—involved in the promotion of natural wine in the US, France and Australia (n=25). This empirically-grounded examination of wine promoters and the construction of naturalness contributes to recent debates regarding the cultural resonance of ‘ethical goods’ and how best to conceptualize how ethics and aesthetics, principle and pleasure intertwine in consumption.
In the face of declining natural resources and anthropogenic climate change, the urgency of switching to renewable energy sources is rapidly increasing. Hence, the German government has put a lot of effort in establishing photovoltaic systems among German households thereby mainly relying on financial incentives, i.e. feed-in tariffs. However, it can be assumed that there are other factors than financial incentives that motivate or inhibit people to purchase photovoltaic systems. So far, studies on the adoption of photovoltaic systems were almost exclusively drawing on survey methods focusing on the common variables used in socio-psychological studies (environmental consciousness, willingness-to-pay, peer-group influence) combined with socio-demographic variables (age, income, education). Other purchase motives, which are more cultural in nature and quantitatively hard to grasp, like conspicuous consumption, have been left aside. Therefore, a comprehensive and open exploration of factors and personal motivations of the decision to purchase a photovoltaic system is still missing.

In this paper, a mental model of the decision to purchase a photovoltaic system based on 25 problem-centered interviews is presented. In order to elicit personal motives relevant for the purchase decision the laddering technique has been applied during the interviews. The interviews were conducted with owners of photovoltaic systems as well as people who had intended to buy a photovoltaic system but decided against it, in order to reveal inhibiting factors. The theoretical framework of the study is provided by the Means-End Chain Theory as well as the Needs-Opportunity-Ability Model.
Climate Scepticism and Consumer Practises

There is an overwhelming majority in the scientific community that we are facing a global warming and that the climate change is a result of human activity. At the same time we have witnessed that a large minority of citizens and consumers are sceptical to the scientific conclusion and are expressing denials to the climate changes (Oreskes and Conway, 2010; Washington and Cook, 2011). This observation is the point of departure in this paper.

Based upon a representative Norwegian consumer survey from November 2011 we will study various dimensions in the climate deniers’ attitudes towards 1) science, 2) political authorities, 3) information channels and 4) their own consumption practises. Our main research questions are:

- To which degree is the climate scepticism related to a general mistrust in political institutions and information channels?
- How is climate scepticism related to general and more specific values in the man-nature discourse?
- To which degree is there a relationship between climate scepticism and everyday consumer practises?

Thus, the paper will participate in two theoretical discussions. The first is the relationship between science and society. According to Beck (Risk Society, 1992) modern citizens have lost faith in science, but have no other authorities to believe in. The second discussion is the tension between the rational choice theories and the planned behaviour (Azen and Fishbein, 1980) on the one hand and the theory of practise on the other (Reckwitz, A. 2002; Warde 2005).
Commodity as Identity in Consumer Society – Are We What We Buy?

Diversification of supply on the global market, acceleration of the exchange of goods, alongside the weakening of the sense of social class belonging, led to a significant transformation in consumer behavior. Modern consumers, free of all class constraints, are able to constantly expand their desires and needs, seek new experiences and pleasures. Faced with an endless variety of products that are alike on the level of functionality, consumers begin to adjoin a different type of value to material goods, using their consumer choices as means of forming their identities.

In many cases, consumption can no longer be explained through the concept of social differentiation (Veblen, 1899; Baudrillard, 1998) in our hyper-consumer society (Lipovetsky, 2006) – in accordance with the movement of individualization of taste and behavior it is far more important what we buy because of ourselves or to extend ourselves (Belk, 1988). This is a change that the advertising industry recognized quickly and skillfully, exceeding from campaigns built around the functional benefits of products to campaigns built on values and emotions.

Due to growing up in a commercialized world, teenagers and young adults are strongly influenced by the advertising industry and accept brands as legitimate communicators, using them to show who they are and linking their sense of self with some of the many logos on the global market.

By reviewing the work of relevant authors this paper will attempt to explain in what ways and for what reasons material goods have identity functions in developed Western consumer societies, with special emphasis on the role of commodities in construction of identity of youth.
The relation between complexity and appreciation of paintings: Arts as a communicative experience

According to the RAND-cooperation (2004), an artwork is a bundle of cultural information created by an artist and put into a specific context by an arts organisation. Participants decode this cultural information by means of their knowledge and proficiency about the arts domain, e.g. cultural competence. To Ganzeboom, the maximum appreciation of an artwork results if the complexity of it matches the cultural competence of the participant. This thesis only focuses on ‘cognitive’ feelings that result from information processing. Visual arts, however, have a strong ‘affective’ appeal triggered by colour use and emotional associations of a participant.

In this paper we explore the effect of cultural competence on the cognitive and affective feelings evoked by paintings that differ in complexity. The paintings used in this online survey study are selected with great care to keep the use of colours as much as similar within themes while the complexity (figurative – abstract) of the visualisation differed within a theme. Preliminary results (n=122) suggest that use of colour and theme have a larger effect than the complexity of a painting on the cognitive and affective feelings experienced. Furthermore, socialization by parents and the highest education level have less influence on the feelings experienced than the extent to which secondary education focused on visual arts. In the paper, we will explore the suggestion that, at least for visual arts, the mobility thesis is more applicable than the reproduction thesis.
Practice theory and discourse theory in consumer studies - conceptual challenges and analytical advantages

This paper addresses the uses of practice theory and discourse theory in consumer studies, especially with respect to the concrete analytical handling of the terms discourse and practice. Such a discussion is of importance to research in general, but especially so in consumption studies as discourse and practice theoretical perspectives increasingly are being applied. The treatment of discourse and practice as analytical concepts is potentially tricky. These concepts tend for example sometimes to be used as a conceptual pair, e.g. pointing at respectively what is said versus what is done or attitudes versus actions etc. Yet, in most theoretical conceptualizations discourse is practice and likewise practice includes the discursive and the foregrounding on one of them is linked to a particular analytical focus. A clarification of how to manage this analytically, how to go about studying consumption according to perspectives that underline saying and doing as intertwined in complex practices and social processes, is thus important.

The paper outlines some common and much used definitions of discourse and practice and discusses how these can be differentiated. How we might practically and concretely can go about in trying to shed light on consumption through the use of these concepts, the analytical advantage with each of these concepts and distinguishing between them when analyzing a particular data material with respect to a chosen consumer theme will be suggested by drawing on a couple of examples from previous and ongoing Norwegian consumer studies (e.g. analyzing the meaning of ways of consuming clothing and ICT with respect to identity and gender).
The impact of age on consumption

Ageing societies affect the development of industrialised countries by provoking societal challenges regarding economic, social, political and demographic structure. The demographic impact on final demand is of special interest in this study.

Using the life-cycle approach of age structure effects on the average propensity to consume the intention of this study is to detect the influence of different age groups on the composition of consumption for Germany. The results are used to show the quantitative consequences of demographic change.

The analysis is based on long time series of the System of National Accounts (SNA). The demand is estimated as aggregate and separately for eight consumption purposes. If the coefficients of the single age groups are significantly different from zero, the distribution of the age groups among the population has impact on the aggregate amount consumed. Furthermore, the coefficients indicate the influence of each age group on the average propensity to consume. Combining the resulting coefficients with forecasted time series of income and population composition can give a hint on the development of consumption expenditures. Finally, the monetary value of the demographically induced change in demand is quantified.

One of the results is that the expenses for consumption in relation to income become higher due to the fact that the share of persons aged 65 and older increases. In absolute terms aggregate consumption declines as income of the aforementioned older age groups is considerably lower than that of the middle aged. The weight of the single consumption purposes is redistributed.
Beyond Symbolic Value? - Product durability and theories of consumption

An emphasis on longevity or durability of consumer products as an aspect of environmental quality has appeared, disappeared and re-appeared a number of times since the mid-seventies. Our point of departure is that product life extension is an underrated approach to reduced environmental impact (resource use, energy use, pollution). Much general consumption theory tend to focus on the purchase of products, much environmentally concerned consumer research focus on problems in the production and in the waste phase. Further, we know that most sociologists are concerned with the symbolic properties of goods and activities.

All the above are relevant to the study of product durability. The key here, however, still seems to be the use phase. Product life extension is about prolonging the use phase. The paper aims at assessing the relevance of recent theories of consumption/life styles for understanding what happens in the use phase for a number of environmentally consumer goods, like cold appliances, dishwashers, washing machines, furniture and clothes. If the use phase is a theoretical blind spot, we should find out why. If it is not, we want to assess how recent theory actually contributes to our understanding.

Empirically, the paper is based on secondary analyses of a wealth of material on product durability, gathered through a number of projects. Our main focus is on three or four projects and one conference done between 1996 and 2012. Theoretically, we will look into the different types of rationality guiding the consumer.
Power to the people or just bigger cages, longer chains? The story of Threadless and collective value co-creation.

Threadless is an online t-shirt retailer that sells t-shirts and other apparel designed by its customers. The ideas for the t-shirts are submitted by users, voted on by online community (1.500 votes average) and finally selected by the company. From 2000 since today, over 300,000 designs have been submitted to Threadless from ca.100,000 different users. 3,000 of them were printed. Threadless current revenue excess of 30$ million, and income reaches 10$ million annually. For more than 700.000 registered users Threadless serves as a specific community center, where they blog, chat about design, socialize with fellow enthusiasts and buy t-shirts. The company doesn’t advertise, employ no professional designers, works without using modeling agency (employees play models) or fashion photographers. Threadless has neither sophisticated market research nor forecasting capabilities, and does not deploy a complex, flexible manufacturing system. Not surprisingly there are several new approaches pointing toward an increasing involvement of consumers in the value creation processes and overall melding consumption and production process. Co-creation of value, collective customer commitment, customer competence cooptation, value co-production, collaborative innovation, crowdsourcing, service-dominant logic, amateur professionalism, active consumption, consumer tribes, prosumption, produsage, social production and convergence culture etc., are different labels used to address roughly the same issue: the more the consumer/user participate in designing/co-creating goods and services, the higher his/her commitment to the collaboration process, identification with the collaboration outcome, and willingness to buy. However the concept of value co-creation faces significant critique over double exploitation, alienation and proliferation of ideological claims of consumer empowerment and liberation so essential for a reproduction of capitalist hegemony. The paper will examine the role of Threadless consumers and consumer community within the value co-creation process, the nature of individual engagement in value creation and potential asymmetry in relation between the company and the brand community.
Will consumption replace work? The case of Poland.

This article aims to show what the value of work is for the Polish society, and that of consumption. Work has for a considerable period occupied the most important place in the values of societies. Currently, it is increasingly being replaced by consumption. To achieve this, the author will use research of her own and that of other sociologists conducted in Poland, in particular, Silesia.

The theoretical part discusses the notion of value. Then, what place consumption has in the system of values. Consumption is one of the utilitarian values and above all applies to usable functions. The most valuable for the utilitarian is, in a sense, what is desirable and achievable. It will also define the notion of consumption and consumerism.

as well as the impact of socio-demographic variables on the system of value and on consumer behavior. Two approaches to consumption will be discussed, primary and secondary. The primary approach will be characterized by the dominating value which is the possession of tangible property, as well as putting human endeavors before everything else, enjoying life, having a life full of sensations, and in general leading a prosperous life. The secondary approach - modern consumerism – will be manifested in the emergence of new trends in consumption, its rationalization, the growth of critical attitudes, the awareness and the functioning of post-modern values.

These two types of approaches to consumption as a value will be shown through the research. In conclusion, the model of the transition from the primary to the secondary consumption will be presented.
The changing rationalities of the consumer

The field of behavioral economics has been gaining ground since the 1980s, and is currently much in vogue both as an academic subject and as a new set of tools for the politics of regulation. At the EU directorate level, a number of conferences have been held aimed at consolidating the link between behavioral economics and consumer policy. In the US, the top behavioral economists Kahneman, Ariely, Thaler, and Sunstein were identified by Time Magazine as a “behavioral dream time” on Obama’s presidential campaign in 2008, and in 2009 Sunstein was appointed as Obama’s new “regulatory czar”.

We would propose a paper on behavioral economics as a new and highly influential approach to the sociology and the politics of consumption, asking the question of what dialogue this direction offers between theory and empirical research. Critics have raised the issue of whether behavioral economics could, indeed, be classified as a theory, or whether it is better described as a set of tools or ideas, to which behavioral economists Camerer and Loewenstein have replied that they do not seek “to be a separate approach in the long run”, but merely to replace economic models “based on stricter rationality”. We would ask what implications the eventual replacement of standard economic theory by behavioral economic approaches would have for the sociology and the politics of consumption, focusing on the foundations and implications of the altered visions of consumer rationality.
Computers and Reading: a Complicated Relationship

One of the most striking trends in leisure time use or consumption is that the time devoted to reading is decreasing and, on the contrary, the time devoted to computer use is increasing. This is also evident on the basis of the longitudinal analysis of the Finnish Time Use Surveys from years 1979, 1987, 1999, and 2009. At first glance, this seems to be due to the strong age stratification. The younger is the age class, the less is time devoted to reading, and younger is the age class, the more is time devoted to computer use. From the cohort perspective, the reading is not decreasing in the all age classes, but when cohorts reach the middle age they increase again their time devoted to reading. And what is still more surprising: the time devoted to computer use and the time devoted to reading, do not seem to correlate. Thus, in this paper a complicated relationship between reading and computer use is analyzed from the longitudinal perspective.
School meals in Portugal: governing children’s food practices

Nowadays mainstream socio-political discourse is mobilized to fight a ‘war on obesity’ in schools (Leahy, 2010). The way this war is fought makes use of devices, or biopedagogies (Wright and Harwood, 2009), such as initiatives to improve children’s eating practices. In this paper, drawing on a post-Foucaultian approach (Miller and Rose, 2008), our attention focuses on the rationalities that inform the organization of the Portuguese school meals and the biopedagogies that help implementing these rationalities so that children’s food consumption is transformed and normalised. The empirical material is based on a content analysis of over fifty school meals and public health policy documents since the 60s until nowadays (covering the end of Salazar’s fascist regime and the emergence of the democratic state in Portugal). The paper’s aim is threefold: 1) to describe the continuities and discontinuities of official discourses on school meals; 2) to look at the symbolic position of children, health and food consumption in those documents; 3) to seek if there is a single rationality of school meals or, instead, plural rationalities. The findings describe how school meals rationalities are plural and enmeshed, organizing in multiple ways the contexts that discipline children’s eating practices in schools. Despite the plurality and overlapping found it is possible to observe shifts in rationalities according to the emphasis given to particular aspects across time. These shifts enabled the identification of five different types of school meals governmentalities: the (Estado Novo) Regime; the Democratic, the Modern, the Consumer and the Obesity and Risk.
'I am no pig': emotions of receivers of food assistance from food banks in the Netherlands

Since 2002 a growing number of low-income and/or over-indebted households in the Netherlands alleviate their situation with food donations from local food banks. Such food banks collect from companies edible food that would otherwise have gone to waste. It consists of for example foods beyond the expiration date, mislabelled products and unsold seasonal products. Receivers of food assistance collect it once a week at a distribution point. The growing demand for food assistance indicates it is a welcome contribution to the groceries in many households. However, receiving food assistance as well as eating the products forces the receivers to set aside embodied dispositions towards food and norms about how to obtain food. Furthermore, it places them in interactions of charitable giving that various authors have identified as harmful to the self-esteem of receivers. The food as well as the interactions at the food bank induce fierce emotions in receivers, such as anger, gratitude and shame. In analysing the dynamics leading to these emotions this paper will contribute to a flourishing and fast evolving subfield in sociology: the sociology of emotions. Furthermore, it allows a better understanding of the profound effects of embodied dispositions towards food and social norms about the obtaining of food. The paper is based on a qualitative study at a food bank, consisting among others of in-depth interviews with 17 receivers of food assistance, observations and several interviews with volunteers.
Couchsurfing: Exploring post-consumerist collective prosumption

Insecurities evoked by financial crises during recent years popularise non-monetary exchange of commodities and services. This renunciation from traditional market exchange is exemplified by couchsurfing as contemporary hospitality service network. Couchsurfing is a quasi-movement manifesting in an online community providing worldwide hospitality services via a virtual network website. This community has been researched in what concerns consumer trust, as well as an emerging form of tourism. However, in our paper, we consider couchsurfing as consumer-created non-monetary parallel market for accommodation that comes across as a post-consumerist form of collective prosumption.

We examine the phenomenon of couchsurfing via a virtual ethnographic approach. By this, we are able to exemplify an actor-to-actor, service-for-service network of provision that is not relying on traditional monetary market exchange. First results of this study highlight interesting implications for theorising non-monetary, post-consumerist exchange in collective prosumption networks. In comparison to commercial networks of provision, the informal and collective character of couchsurfing manifests in memberships of a virtual, and in return in a real, community. A reactivation of non-monetary exchange as a post-consumerist trend is routed in the mutuality of the hospitality service, reflecting the fact that couchsurfing works on a give-and-take, quid pro quo basis. The virtual community establishes contacts so that the members are consumers as well as producers. This prosumption perspective is dyadic and discrete, however, there is evidence that these collective structures support long-term practices and network creation.
Comparing consumer movement in Taiwan and Japan: The making of consumers in state capitalism

Does consumer politics in Taiwan resemble that in Japan? To explore this question, this article begins by a brief discussion on the political economic transformation in which consumer movements embedded. State capitalism focusing on export manufacturing marked both Taiwan and Japan economies. But politically, the former went through dramatic democratization and the latter developed stable conservative dominance. Therefore, comparing Taiwan consumer movement with Japanese case analyzed by Patricia Maclachlan (2002) can illustrate the influence of political competition on consumer institutionalization.

Drawing on consumer organization publications, the comparison first notes how different types of activists in Taiwan and Japan responded to similar concerns. Japanese housewives encouraged by US occupation force are contrasted with intellectuals, housewives, and greens that appeared following democratization in Taiwan. This contrast led the comparison to apply a genealogy approach to consumer discourses. Especially, the comparison analyzes how discursive incorporation of farmer and retailer interests successfully won Japanese consumer movement a voice in economic policy making, whereas Taiwanese consumer movements failed to leverage party competition and focused on educational efforts. Political compromise in Japan thus resulted in a strong and comprehensive consumer regime. But fierce political competition marginalized consumer movements in Taiwan that institutionalized a weak and narrow consumer regime.

In conclusion, this comparison suggested a common theme in the making of East Asian consumer. As state capitalism suppressed consumer market for industrial growth, specific political structures that support such development have significant implications to consumer empowerment. Market responsibilities instead of rights are easily imposed on consumer citizens.
Individual or family lifestyle? The mutual influence of family members on attitudes towards food, clothing and home furniture.

In this study, we examine how attitudes toward a number of lifestyle domains of different family members are related to each other. These lifestyle domains include food (exotic and local preferences), clothing (fashionable and practical preferences) and home furniture (design and practical preferences). We use data from the ‘Cultural Participation Survey 2003-2004’, a large-scale representative population survey with additional information on family members (2,849 face-to-face interviews supplemented with 4,056 paper questionnaires of family members) in Flanders (Belgium). In a first step, we analyze a sub dataset of couples living together. Here, the focus is on how spouses influence each other’s lifestyle preferences. In a second step, we analyze a sub dataset of households with adolescents present. A multilevel model is constructed in order to see how the attitudes of the parents are related to the attitudes of adolescents in the household. The attitudes and social background characteristics of both parents are included as family level variables and personal characteristics of the adolescent (sex, age and gender) are included as individual level variables.
Sustainability, ethics and wellness in new luxury consumption

This paper focuses on the changing conception of luxury consumption and luxury products in Finnish consumer society. Particularly during the past 20 years, consumers have become more aware of environmental, ethical and health related issues in their consumption. What is traditionally understood as sustainable consumption has been regarded as purchasing fewer goods and preferring second-hand consumption. Conversely, luxury consumption has been associated with the pursuit of social status and hedonism. However, researchers have detected a change in the perception of luxury goods recently. Nowadays also handcrafts and ethically and ecologically produced products and services are being perceived as luxury. Ethics and environmental concern are also often connected with the awareness of health, wellness and active leisure time.

This study identifies new trends in consumers’ attitudes, behavior and expectations, especially in the context of luxury goods and services. We explored empirically if parallel perceptions on luxury consumption can be detected using a structured survey (N=1600). In statistical analyses, three different consumption styles were identified: sustainable consumption style, status-oriented consumption style and wellness-oriented consumption style. All consumption styles included different perceptions of luxury consumption. The socio-demographic variables that explained these consumption style dimensions the best were age, gender, educational background, self-perceived social class and income level. Sustainable and wellness-oriented consumption styles were most typical for women, highly educated, middle-aged or elderly, with high income. Conversely, status-oriented consumption style was the most typical for the young, men, and the less educated. This supports theories and previous research results on the changes in luxury consumption.
Uses of practice theory in consumption research

Arguably, the last few years have seen the onset of a “practice turn” (Schatzki 1996, 2002; Schatzki/Knorr Cetina/von Savigny 2001; Stern 2003) in the study of consumption; a theoretical development mirroring the increasing adaption of practice theory in fields such as science studies, human geography, or even management science. This theoretical perspective has been applied to a wide range of empirical fields, from everyday household practices and sustainability (Ingram/Shove/Watson 2007; Shove 2010; Shove/Trentmann/Wilk 2009) to market practices and forms (Araujo/Finch/Kjellberg 2011; Araujo/Kjellberg/Spencer 2008) to communities and co-creation (Schau/Muniz/Arnould 2009), to leisure consumption and innovation (Shove/Pantzar 2005, 2007) to shopping (Cochoy 2008, 2009), and more. But as both early (Warde 2005) and more recent (Halkier/Katz-Gerro/Martens 2011) calls for applying practice theories to consumption have noted, said theories themselves are neither uniform nor necessarily coherent; and the wide range of applications has surely not reduced the variety among the positions collected under the ‘practice’ label. Therefore, my contribution asks how the empirical works have adapted and re-focused the original general theories by authors such as Schatzki, Bourdieu, or Reckwitz to both our field and their specific topics. It seeks to sort out some major strands of practice thought in consumption research and compare their respective epistemological positions as well as their uses of the term ‘practice’; highlighting both commonalities and discrepancies.
Consumption in anti-capitalist social movement spaces

This paper presents findings from three case studies of social movement spaces in Barcelona. Radical political beliefs, including Marxist and environmentalist critiques of capitalism, influence participants’ daily practices of food provisioning, the use and construction of space, and the provisioning of cultural or educational activities. Reorganising ordinary life according to these anti-capitalist and egalitarian ideas involves displacing or eliminating monetary transactions, redefining waste food, and sharing space and possessions. These activities, like critical consumption, are mobilised by a variety of political arguments. In contrast, movements in these spaces challenge the very logic of acquisition, use and disposal through the deferring, outsourcing or fragmentation of the ‘moments’ in which consumption takes place.
Cultural consumption: antique jade market and networks

This project wants to explore how is jade market developed and governed in contemporary Taiwan? There are at least four perspectives on the formation and development of market and market governance, the political perspective (Fligstein 1996), the network perspective (White and Boorman 1974), the framing perspective (Callon and Muniesa 2005), and the soft law/expert power perspective (Slaughter 2004). These perspectives highlight political power, network, intuitional force and authority of expert that govern the market. However, I would especially highlight the role of culture to understand jade market, because the value of jade is associated mainly with Chinese society. Jade is a special kind of stone that is price-less in cultures that do not appreciate its characteristics. Nonetheless, jade artifact has been priceless goods in Chinese culture since ancient time. Therefore, illegal tomb digging was the most common channel that ancient jades came from in the contemporary jade market.

By using qualitative methods, this project is trying to analyze the cross-bordering complex social and commercial networks among China, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan in trading antiques, especially antique jade. The focus will be on the formation of jade collecting and consumption in Taiwan 1980 onward, and its relationship with the currently booming antique market in contemporary China. There are multilevel of social relationship intertwining with different scale of networks. What are the key elements in the formation of the networks and how it affects the construction of the market need to be studied.
Voluntary Simplifiers as Political Consumers- New Insights on Political Consumption

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the discussion on political consumption by focusing on a group of Israeli voluntary simplifiers.

The voluntary simplicity movement has been criticized by some researchers as being escapist or apolitical, and by others as being too individualistic and therefore unable to achieve any meaningful goals. In this paper, I claim that by focusing on individuals practicing a voluntary simplicity lifestyle rather than on voluntary simplicity as a movement, they are revealed to be very political. I show that to understand their political characteristics, they should not be analyzed using the criteria of social movement or traditional politics, but should be understood in the framework of political consumption.

Researchers in the field of political consumption report on difficulties in defining and conceptualizing political consumption and consumers. I suggest that by analyzing the practices and discourse of voluntary simplifiers, not only can they be included under the definition of political consumer, but this definition can also lead to framing new dimensions of the phenomenon.

This paper is based on an interpretive analysis of interviews with thirty five consumers who have chosen different degrees of reduced consumption. These consumers were found to use significant political discourse based on multiple political ideas, and to be willing to adopt a highly dedicated and uncompromising lifestyle to implement these ideas. I interpret the finding using the framework of political consumption, with reference to globalization, individualization and changing political structures.