

Types of Consumption – Varieties of the Aesthetic¹

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1. Introduction

Consumption is a notion complementary to production, and is regarded as the ultimate purpose of production. One produces in order to consume the products, whether directly or indirectly, by exchanging them with other products, by virtue of the so-called division of labour. The means of subsistence must be produced through work, except for the cases of gathering, hunting and the like. The human organism needs to be fed, clad and sheltered, on ever-higher levels of subsistence. Defining what counts as the necessities of life, Marx spoke of a moral component of the means of subsistence, such as the need for recreation etc. (*Capital*, I, chap. 1). Certainly, this moral component also contains an *aesthetic* component. The giving of form, *design*, is imperative from the very beginning of the history of mankind. In other words: The biological needs of the human organism are the substrate, the facticity, of consumption, a facticity which is

¹ This paper is the text of a keynote speech to the Consumption and Aesthetics Conference, Fredrikstad, Norway, 17-19 August 1997.

surpassed by a cultural project, a project which varies throughout the world.

Therefore, it is impossible to deal with consumption in abstraction from aesthetic concerns, except in extreme cases, such as intravenous nourishing in hospitals. These cases are devoid of general significance.

The topic "consumption and aesthetics" is a vast one, and is dealt with in widely different ways by the participants of this conference. No unifying perspective seems to be present. Also, in my own case, I can identify several types of aesthetics in my thoughts and activities. A key note, striking the key, has got to be polytonal. In what follows, I therefore propose to sketch various typical ways in which the aesthetic permeates or pertains to various types of consumption.

2 Varieties of the aesthetic I: The Kantian/idealist and realist aesthetics

Ample support can be given to the following assertion: *Post factum*, Kant's philosophy is the one that best anticipated the institutional structure of modern liberal (bourgeois) societies, in the sense that modern institutions embody this philosophy. In the first place, there is the institution of natural science (mathematical physics, chemistry, biology etc.) and its implementation as technology and industry, and the concomitant role of *the engineer*; this institution corresponds to the *Critique of pure reason*.

Next, there is the institution of law and secular morality, and the concomitant role of the *lawyer*, the *jurist*. This corresponds to the *Critique of practical reason* and to the *Metaphysics of morals*.

Third, there is the institution of art and aesthetic experience in the strict or narrow sense, with the museums, galleries, concert halls etc.,

and the concomitant role of the *artist*. This corresponds to the (first part of) the *Critique of judgement*.

Kant asserts that the aesthetic field or institution is *subordinate* to that of industry and the legal and moral field. To be sure, art is considered a good and important thing, but not imperative. It is a field of edifying illusions, an *imaginary* realm. It may strengthen one's morality and sense of duty, but is not a necessity on a par with the natural sciences, morals and law. Accordingly, Kant described artistic activities as particularly suitable for *the role of women* in our societies, since art will appeal more to their senses and feelings than to their faculty of thinking.

Finally, Kant elaborates a double aesthetic: First, there is the doctrine of our senses or sensibility, which somehow is a condition of our perception of physical objects in time and space. Here, the aesthetic is taken in the original Greek sense of *aisthesis*, of what pertains to the senses, and deals with it as a *substratum* of physical knowledge. Second, there is the doctrine of the aesthetic as concerned with the beautiful and the sublime, aesthetic experiences which presuppose that our sensibility is *directed away* from the world of physical objects and physical laws, making for a specific kind of aesthetic feeling of disinterested sensuous pleasure, beyond ordinary feelings of pleasure and desire.

The position of art within our society accords fairly well with Kant's structuring of the institutional field. The conference paper *Recycling of classical aesthetic terms within modern advertising*² is a small confirmation of this: The appeal to the developing of the personality and so on echoes the belief in the edifying power of art.

² By Inga Gammel, Center for cultural Reserach, University of Århus, cf. Gammel: *Skønhedens filosofi, Fra Homer til Hugo Boss* (trans. The philosophy of beauty), Århus univ press 1994 (Danish text with English summary).

Bourdieu put a part of this aesthetic doctrine to the test in *Distinction* and elsewhere; the outcome being that Kant was right, but in a severely limited sense. The Kantian, disinterested aesthetic attitude can be found in the dominating social classes, whose members are in an economic position which places them at safe distance from poverty and economic worries about their material subsistence. They are *at ease*. This is a precondition for a *detached* look at artistic objects, or a certain detached and distantiating look which in principle transforms every object into an artistic or aesthetic one. For the truly aesthetic-minded person, everything in the world can be apprehended aesthetically. For this reason, *modern art* and *modernism* can only be apprehended by the dominant classes, even if the bulk of modern art may be rather left-wing in its outlook. Modernism in art presupposes an autonomy of art with which the dominant classes are familiar.

Conversely, the dominated social classes *do not* conform to the Kantian aesthetic. They have no detached way of looking at the world. Therefore, theirs is an aesthetics which *does not* distinguish between ordinary sensuous pleasure and aesthetic pleasure, and which Kant therefore considers "vulgar". On the contrary, they want paintings or photographs of beautiful landscapes hanging on the walls at home, because they make the home more pleasant, or remind of pleasant possibilities outside; or paintings and pictures of attractive young women, evoking the pleasures of sexual life. This aesthetic attitude Bourdieu imputes to their *habitus*, stemming from a situation of need and necessity. Modern, autonomous art is foreign to this kind of aesthetic habitus.

Most important for our present concerns, Bourdieu extends his investigations of the distinguished and the vulgar to encompass not only the field of art, but the *whole field of consumption*. In a highly inventive way, he endeavours to demonstrate that the detached aesthetic attitude is at work also in the sphere of daily consumption, and likewise the aesthetic of material need and worry. Thus, the

majority of the population, the "people" or what Bourdieu terms the *classes populaires*, have adapted to the situation of semi-poverty, and have contracted the habit of buying and liking practical, functional clothing and furniture, consumer objects which make much "effect", so that one gets much for one's money; also, they like food which is nutritional, contains many calories, resulting in a bodily *habitus* different from the *habitus* of the *well off*.

This aesthetics of everyday consumption is deeply realist, and may seem to be Marxist. The conference paper on the official aesthetics of the GDR³ fits well into Bourdieu's description. But it is far away from the young Marx's descriptions of joyful, sensuous consumption of a non-alienated human being. The consumption *habitus* of the dominated classes is deeply marked by *resignation*.

I may add that functionalist urbanism can be understood as a realist, and resigned, reaction. Taking as its point of departure a dire necessity - to amend the "chaotic" situation of Western towns and cities - it will restrict itself to what is effective and functional, letting 'form follow function', rejecting luxurious forms and ornamentation as superfluous, as something the wage labour classes cannot afford.

Bourdieu's research is directed against liberal economists' way of dealing with consumption. They presuppose consumers with varying purchasing power, but with by and large the same perspective on the world. If the consumption patterns differ, this must simply be referred to the fact that those with little money must be content with cheaper commodities than the well-off. This strengthens the image of *mass* society, as opposed to a *class* society. The mass has homogeneous preferences, even if their consumption habits are heterogeneous. Consumption behaviour confirms the structure of the political system, where political parties appear, or sell themselves, as mass parties.

³ By Milene Veenis, Amsterdam School for Social Science Research: *Consumption in East Germany: The Seduction and Betrayal of Things*.

Bourdieu makes an astonishingly strong case for the existence of a class-structured consumption pattern. Class society still persists within life-styles; one's class situation conditions one's perceptions and desires; moreover, different consumption patterns do not just co-exist, they make a field of class oppositions, where - at least in France - the dominant classes distinguish themselves from other classes in an oppressive, intimidating way. To avoid over-simplifying matters, it must be mentioned that Bourdieu also describes a middle class with its own, specific habitus, nervous, eager to cultivate itself, with a liking for educational toys, scientifically recommended food, aerobics, search for identity. This consumption pattern expresses an aesthetic of aspiration and ambition.

These investigations have given an impetus to similar consumption research in other countries, such as Norway. Norway differs from France by having a much stronger popular culture, owing to the progress made the last century by the peasant movement and the labour movement. This makes identical results with those of France improbable. Nevertheless, the same research techniques show that the consumption field in Norway may be class-structured to a certain degree.

When one's *habitus* no longer accords with one's purchasing possibilities and real position in the economic field, this calls forth, according to Bourdieu, what he terms a *don Quichote effect*, an effect which, by the way, strongly reminds of Durkheimian *anomie*. The situation is one of bewilderment. What happens? One of the conference papers, that of Lehtonen, deals with this issue⁴. It appears, as I read the paper, that financially ruined people in Finland, participating in a public help program, do not behave like don

⁴ Turo-Kimmo Lehtonen, Dept of Sociology, Univ of Helsinki: *Any room for aesthetics? Heavily indebted consumers' shopping practices.*

Quichote, but project various, new consumer habits, and, consequently, new aesthetic attitudes.

Leaving Bourdieu, the idealist aesthetic may be particularly important for marketing and purchasing behaviour. Advertising creates an imaginary world, just the way idealist art is an imaginary world. The futility or disappointment of consumption itself may be traced back to the gap between the imaginary and the real, so essential to idealist aesthetic.

3. Varieties of the aesthetic II: The aesthetics of semiology and self-referentiality

But there is also a different aesthetic, derived not from our sensibility and taste, but from the *semiotic* dimension of human existence. This aesthetics has not been elaborated by a great systematic thinker like Kant, but has emerged through the contributions of many thinkers - notably Barthes and Baudrillard - and social scientists like Lévi-Strauss or, in Scandinavia, Tom Broch, all of whom have been deeply impressed by *structural linguistics*. (In fact, this semiotic aesthetics is also present in the work of Bourdieu, giving it a certain ambiguity.)

A non-expert rendition of structural linguistics could go like this: Language is a system of internal relations, its constituents or elements are systemic, that is, they refer to, get their meaning from, each other. Language should not be studied in relation to a non-lingual reality, but as a reality *sui generis*. This is the connection between Durkheim and Saussure. This lingual reality is constituted by sounds, words, and articulations, which each and all refer to other sounds, words and articulations, as a system of distinctive oppositions, both in a paradigmatic and in a syntagmatic way. Relations are everything, the phonetic substrate is nothing. Therefore, the word as such is arbitrary in relation to its denoting function or other functions.

Transposed to the domain of aesthetics, the field of experience is interpreted as structured like a language. The meaning of a piece of art is constituted by its relation to other works of art, with which it makes an internal system. The meaning of a piece of cake is constituted by its relation to other pieces of edible substance, and to the non-edible. Bread is opposed to wafers, to Indian “bread”; meat stands in a distinctive opposition to fish, to fowl; wine in a distinctive opposition to plain water, cola drinks, tea and coffee etc. Dongery clothing are opposed to cord, to wool, to leather; t-shirts to shirts with long arms and a collar, the mini-skirt to skirts of greater width (?) and length , the long-haired to those with a short hair cut etc.

Further, in these aesthetic internal systems, relations are everything, while the stuff or substance has no other significance than being a mere material support or substrate. Our aesthetic experiences are wholly relational, each aesthetic object is as such arbitrary, in parallel to the Saussureian *dictum*, that the sign is arbitrary. Thus, the lemon - its yellowness, sourness - the lemon does not mean anything in itself, its meaning or signification derives from its position within a system of *other* fruits, such as the orange, the pine-apple etc. Pasta and red wine have an entirely different meaning within an Italian context or food system than within a Norwegian. Objects of consumption change their meaning according to the consumption code into which they enter. In the extreme case objects of consumption function as mere signs, as the trade mark or *logo*, the small crocodile of *La Coste*, the *Levis* mark, distinguishing between clothing which may otherwise be nearly indistinguishable. They function as *markers* which themselves unceasingly change their material substrate.

This is one of the meanings of fashion. Fashion makes us understand that the objects and ways of consumption are arbitrary: What is chic, smart, beautiful this year may not be so next year. Fashion is in itself and is conducive to *reflexivity*; it trains the capacity to read signs and their changing meanings and contexts. Reflexivity makes for

experience of the world's *contingency* - whatever is, could be otherwise. Our taste is wholly contingent. Nothing is pleasant or beautiful as such, it all depends on codes and contexts.

This semiotic or semiological aesthetic doctrine lends itself to social and sociological interpretations. Consumption can be interpreted as a move in a strategic game or a struggle between social groups, strata or classes - a game where the rules undergo changes all the time. What is at stake, what the struggle is about, is power or prestige, and the power constellation between social groups and strata. The economically dominant strata impose a consumption code as hegemonic, and at the same time seek to restrict the access to the consumption valued by this code. Commodity prices are made forbidding for the overwhelming majority of consumers, who must content themselves with cheaper products and *logos*. Consumption is a sign of wealth and power, and in return may help improve the consumer's economic or political position. Life style is itself a strategy in this struggle field.

This *synchronic* system of semiotic consumption, or consumption of signs, is doubled by a *diachronic* system. The enjoyment and purchase of art objects and performances are fully intelligible only with reference to the art of the past; some knowledge of the history of painting is a precondition for the valuation of art today; the same goes for music: Recent music refers implicitly or explicitly to classical music, through imitation, development and quotations, so do dance and ballet. Again, there is an analogy with language. Art can be seen as a self-referential system, a work of art refers not to an extra-artistic reality, but to other works of art, just as a noun refers to other nouns to make an internal phonetic system. Or more carefully: Art may refer to something other than itself, but there is a marked tendency for art to become a closed, self-referential system.

This tendency is discernible also outside the field of artistic objects - in architecture and design of furniture, utensils and clothes. Fashion

often, or perhaps always, presents itself as a *neo*-style. Neo-classicism, neo-dada, neo-1950'ies, neo-victorianism, neo-colonial, neo-regional style etc. The past style reappears with a small, subtle alteration, intelligible only to those who know the history of style. Consumption becomes a cognitive matter, it becomes intellectualized.

The entire field of consumption, then, appears dominated by an aesthetics of *signs* - as opposed to an aesthetics of *aisthesis*, of what is sensed and perceived, of stuff and substance, of taste and smell, of the tactile and the optic. It is an intellectualized aesthetics, in contrast to a materialistic aesthetics, but also to an idealist aesthetics of the Platonic good-and-beautiful, the *kalagathon*.

Baudrillard laboured this point in some early works, as his books *La société de consommation* and *Le système des objets*. Consumption in advanced or late capitalist economies, he asserted, is not really about the use and consummation of artefacts, food and beverages. On the contrary, no need satisfaction and the like take place; what is going on, is an exchange of signs within an economy of exchange values, surplus value and capitalization. The sign must be understood as a peculiar type of commodities, and conversely: Commodities function as sign systems, each commodity-sign circulates within the system, thereby constituting an *ideological apparatus* in the Marxian sense of Althusser.

More recently, Scott Lash has dealt with the present cultural situation from a semiological or semiotic standpoint. He maintains that the notion of *postmodernity* has a definite, and limited validity. It does not apply to society as a whole, as the totality of institutions and social processes; thus, the economy is still modern, not postmodern. But the field of culture has, he asserts, undergone a very important change. Cultural products and symbols less and less refer to a non-cultural reality or, if you like, an non-cultural ontic region. Since modernity is realist, present culture shows strong *postmodern* tendencies. Therefore, *realism* is no longer the dominant cultural form

or scheme of interpretation. Instead, cultural products, activities and signs refer to and get their significance from *other* cultural products and activities, signs. The omnipresence of mass-media, especially television and videos, is conducive to this change towards self-referentiality. The TV-spectator does not observe reality, but an interpretation of reality, a *mise en scène*, a staging of real happenings. This goes for the newspaper reader, too, but for several reasons, the interpretative character of the TV is more readily apprehended. But if *mass-media* literally mediate, that is, alter what they convey, then the global, world-wide culture is experienced as an interpretation. Is, for instance, Michael Jackson a real personality, and is this possibly real person important, compared to his *image* ? As I have shown recently, the same goes for Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir: The *image of Sartre and Simone* in mass mediated culture differs markedly from the allegedly real Parisian couple in post-war France. But what is real? Can the difference between the image and the real be upheld? This *de-stabilisation* of reality, as Scott Lash puts it, is accelerated by the fact that mass-media refer to each other, TV to the press, and vice versa. Add to this how for example the T-shirts have printed copies of van Gogh's yellow meadow, or Munch's *Scream of anguish*, or how the computer plays Bachian preludes to mark the beginning or end of a game, and one can be tempted to assent to Scott Lash's thesis - that culture is turning into a closed, self-referential system of icons and other signs. From this, Scott Lash draws the conclusion that the labour movement faces a challenge: Since working-class culture has been predominantly realist, a postmodern culture calls for new ways of organising labour culture.

The paper on Kafka and Prague presented at this conference⁵ seems to corroborate this semiotic aesthetics: The image of Kafka is sold and propagated by the tourist industry of capitalist Chechia, on all levels, as souvenirs, T-shirts, as tourist walks, so as to form a circuit of signs.

⁵ Maruska Svasek, Amsterdam School for Social Science Research: *Kafka-kitch and Billboard Art. Commodifying the Aesthetic/Aestheticising Commodities in Post-Communist Prague.*

Another case is the semiotization of Hemingway in Havana: His living-place, his bar, his favourite drink are part of the growing tourist industry in Cuba.

4.Varieties of the aesthetic III: The vitalist problematic

Kantian idealist aesthetics - and its perversion or distortion through the field of social distinctions - may still hold the sway as the hegemonic attitude towards art and the artistic. But there is a different attitude which has grown in importance the last hundred years - an aesthetics of *vitality* and *intensity*, counting among its early proponents the philosopher-sociologist Georg Simmel.

Vitalist philosophy arose in the 19th century as a response to the mechanisation of social life; *Le mort saisit le vif*. Ever wider fields of human activity became mediated by mechanical devices. This implied a tremendous increase in effectivity and productivity, but also a certain reification of the human body itself and of the flow of social intercourse. To compensate for this one could make much of the spiritual dimension of human existence, and emphasise the spirit over against the body. But one could also insist on the difference between *the living organism* and *inert matter*. While inert matter is dealt with by the science of mechanics, *biology* 's topic is life as self-preserving, self-developing, desiring systems. Living organisms respond to *differences*, and are dependent on differences of stimuli. The monotonous is harmful to the organism, to life in general. The organism is a system of tensions and intensities, varying in degree. A degree of intensity is always a difference of degree. When differences are annulled, the living organism is threatened. The human being experiences extinction of differences as boredom. *Vitality* connotes great tensions and great internal differences, connotes *intensity*. Another early vitalist, G.B.Shaw, said he did not want to be happy, but active and alive, that is vital. He thought of happiness as a state of equilibrium, as differences levelled out, as an idyllic pastoral.

Simmel's interpretation of urbanity is vitalist. There is a dialectic between intensity and the monotonous, between differentials and the undifferentiated. Man, wrote Simmel, is a being of difference, he/she responds to differential stimuli. The great attraction of the metropolis is that it offers endless possibilities of the new and unexpected; compared to the quiet or sleepy life of the small town or the village, metropolitan life is extremely intense and vital. But the opposite is also true: In order for large scale urban life to function, it must be mechanized and routinized to a considerable extent. Mechanical clock time governs metropolitan life, compelling every citizen to reckon with seconds and minutes, thereby suppressing the inner consciousness of time (Husserl) or the *durée* (Bergson), constituted by a flux of intense, interpenetrated experiences which defy measuring and quantification. The urban dweller must somehow cope with this dialectic between the intensive and the merely extensive, between vitality and reification, between on the one hand the stimulating and exciting, and on the other hand, the predictable and boring. Too much stimulation is also harmful to one's vitality. To protect against overstimulation the urban dwellers must take on an outer appearance as *blasé*. To compensate for this, they create spheres of intimacy where intense social relationships can be cultivated. Here, one can respond to tiny differentials, a glance, a shrugging, the *timbre* of the voice.

The monetarisation of metropolitan life is in itself levelling. Money quantifies qualitative differences, reduces them to the monotony of more or less. An amount of money is not itself an *intensive* magnitude. The dialectic between the intensive and the extensive is itself of great intensity in great cities, compared to small cities and the country-side. The urban dwellers run the risk of succumbing to all the mechanisms of the big agglomeration, making them feel mechanical and as it were dead; but at the same time they may achieve a maximum of intensity, life on a high level, differentiated and multiple.

The aesthetics of intensity can account for much of modern art, as institutionalised in art galleries, museums and artist organisations, public grants and university courses. Strawinski's *Rite of Spring* from 1910 was an early example. It contained passages of hitherto unheard harshness and ugliness, as the composer Lalo noted at the time. But this objection could not really detract from its artistic value. Expressionism is also a strongly vitalist movement, even if it may be concerned with death and despair. Munch's paintings express his gloomy mood in a most intense way, so does the early works of Schönberg, such as his *Gurrelieder* or the *Pierrot Lunaire*. Jazz in the "roaring twenties" came as a movement of intensification, as contrasted with the overly disciplined and controlled ways of musical listening and performance of the Establishment. In our days, the paintings of Francis Bacon could stand as a highly intense art or an art of intensity. But above all, the aesthetics of vitality can account for the culture of rock and pop and much of the ordinary, everyday consumer cultural pattern. Rock - as a Norwegian philosopher and rock musician (Sigurd Ohrem) has said - is the opposite of leaning one-self back(wards) in self-complacency. Rock is not about beauty in the idealist sense, it is not about beauty in any sense. It is noisy, violent, harsh and the like - it is an anti-image of the smooth functioning of offices and bureaucracies. Boredom haunts the well-planned world of bureaucracy, differences are levelled, the unpleasant is banned - no smells, no smoke, no shrills, no screaming and shouting, no sobbing or excessive laughter. Rock is the counter-image of this polite and polished way of life; it is intentionally ugly, rough and bad-mannered, and this goes - *a fortiori* - for the punk style, for rapping, the Caribbean *reggae* and so on.

Childhood and adolescence are as a rule more intense than later stages of life. Therefore, there is affinity between youth and rock culture, a fact which does not exclude grown-ups and the ageing from participating.

The aesthetics of intensity influences and materialises itself in life-style and clothing fashions - the bizarre, the shocking, the wild and barbarian, the 'anything goes'. One can be anything one fancies, if only one is intense. One must explore and exploit the differentials of tastes and colours and shapes, as a perpetual fight against the entropy of social life, the levelling of differences towards the routine-like.

Therefore, our daily life and sphere of consumption has not become more beautiful over the decades. If I compare photographs from the 50ies and 60ies of urban life with what I see today, there is no progress towards beauty. One may try to impute this to the recent tendencies of misery called forth by a less tempered capitalist economy - the poor, the homeless, the junkies, the beggars are part of the city-scape, and seemingly have come to stay. But this is not the whole story. The truth is that even the well-adapted and well integrated parts of the population do not pursue the ideal of beauty as much as before; they pursue intensity. Therefore, even the well-off can dress outrageously. To give one example: Wearing dongery jeans and an expensive fur coat would have been unthinkable 30 years ago, to say nothing of bearing a rucksack upon the fur coat. The rucksack and the fur coat belong to different codes of dressing, the one belonging to out-door sporting life, the other to high-life. But today they are mixed, creating a dissonance. So what? Modern art is strongly concerned with all kinds of dissonance, so why should not modern consumption be?

Likewise, in matters of food, the situation is one of cacophony, with a marked tendency towards the intense. The Mexican way is fashionable, and also the kitchen of the Orient, with their strongly spiced dishes. A Swedish sociologist, Sten Andersson⁶, has noted that meat balls in Scandinavia connotes the safe existence of one's

⁶ *Matens roller*, (trans. The roles of food) orig. Almqvist & Wicksell 1980, Norw. trans 1983, University press.

childhood, while a burger connotes freedom – that is, exciting possibilities for an intense life.

The aesthetic connected to *bodily health* can be seen as a variation of the vitality theme. Good health, one must believe, makes one more vital. On the other hand, overly concern with health - have I got enough sleep, can I eat this or that - may lower one's vitality, turning into an unexciting worry about one's expectancy for reaching the age of 80. So, perhaps the recent aesthetic of health is a new, postmodern aesthetic, also, because it blurs the distinction between the ethical and the aesthetic. Consumption has become at the same time a matter of the senses and of morals.

5. Concluding remarks

Consumption is a vast topic, its relation to aesthetics is only one aspect. To concentrate on this aspect does not mean that other aspects are unimportant. I am thinking of the great questions of distribution, of compensatory consumption and of the Unreason of a society geared onto the consumption patterns we experience today. But the study of aesthetics and consumption may shed new light on these topics.

The various forms of aesthetic attitude I have sketched are conflicting perspectives, with an affinity to other kinds of social and political conflicts.

The dominating type of aesthetic is, I believe, after all, still the Idealist one, institutionalised in countless ways. The functionalist, instrumental aesthetic is another important trend, especially within architecture. The semiotic and vitalist aesthetics may be increasingly important. The various forms of aesthetic attitude I have sketched are conflicting perspectives, giving rise to conflicting policies of consumption, with affinity to other social and political conflicts. Reflecting on this diversity may help clarify research within this domain.