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# Sustainable Fashion

New Approaches within the Fashion Industries

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**cultura<sup>21</sup>**

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# 1. Introduction

The present thesis analyses current developments in the fashion industries related to the debate of the Cultural and Creative Industries. This approach includes the particularities of the debate about social, economic, aesthetic and anthropological aspects and, lastly, the current discursive and practical changes towards the idea of sustainable development. The focus lies on two main aspects. First, the implementation of new sustainable practices within the production sector of the fashion field and second, a mindset change in consumer behavior. On a philosophical level, these aspects transport the idea of a more holistic approach towards human life. Although the idea of sustainable development offers an alternative to the dominant neo-liberal system and its linear approach of profit maximization, this thesis is not a capitalism critic in the tradition of marxian theories. The idea of sustainable development clearly offers an alternative to the dominant neo-liberal system and its linear approach of profit maximization. Nevertheless, the idea of sustainable development, means no less than opening up for a new way of conceptualizing and designing mankind and its future: environment and ecology on the one hand, and aspects such as subjectivity, emotions and life itself on the other hand are put on the same level as rationality. "One must make room for myth, feeling, love, regret and consider them rationally. True rationality knows the limits of logic, of determinism and mechanism. It knows that the human mind is not omniscient and recognizes the mystery of reality."<sup>[1]</sup> This cultural philosophic idea functions as a background for the sustainable strategies implemented in the fashion industries in various ways.

## *Background and Hypothesis*

“Critical political economy approaches see the fact that culture is produced and consumed under capitalism as a fundamental issue in explaining inequalities of power, prestige and profit.”<sup>[2]</sup> The cultural studies approaches, although a diverse and fragmented field of study, can be helpful in this context to examine the distribution of power as they study and rethink culture and its relationship to social power. The main achievements of the cultural studies are to create and raise the awareness for the importance of ordinary culture to provide a critical refinement of the term ‘culture’. Predominant traditional ways of understanding culture in the social sciences and humanistic disciplines and, beyond that, in the public sphere have been questioned. The cultural studies are able to provide powerful criticism of the conception of culture as one, finished and defined people or place and instead promote the idea of culture as changing and flexible. Moreover, cultural studies researchers such as Gayatri Spivak have raised important political questions about who speaks and who is being listened to, relating to the mechanics of power and knowledge in modern society, primarily coined by Michel Foucault. This takes those who define and make culture under sharp examination. In this context, the cultural studies have introduced and brought in debates about identity, subjectivity, discourse, textuality, and the relationship of pleasure and culture. All of these themes are subject to the aspects of relativity in structure and definition and postmodern attributes such as deconstruction, mixing and dissolution and the semiotics of the cultural sphere.

Therefore, the cultural studies, which incorporate different disciplines,

have the ability to contribute to new consumption patterns and the affirmation of the individual who stands in sharp conflict with the dominant order. The cultural studies focus on the receivers as active subjects of the consumption of cultural products and cultural mediation. They put attention on the contest of consumption and, moreover, on the characteristics of the products and the consumed 'texts'. Moreover, sociology and the cultural studies can help to offer a better insight into fashion as a cultural practice, fashion as something more than the possession of unique insight, vision, talent or even genius.

The particularity of fashion is that not only it consists of the dominantly spread picture of European haute-couture fashion, luxury articles, the support of the media, its own communication industry and fashion shows, but also - and this is where the cultural scientist comes into play - of the fusionary image of the fashion designer as the sacred genius-artist and, at the same time, his craftsmanship, also known as 'griffe'. This is what defines the fashion industry as a creative industry. The development of the European elite fashion system is closely linked to the rise of mercantile capitalism drawing its roots back to the middle ages. In the sociological tradition of Simmel, Veblen and, more recently, Bourdieu the image of fashion is connected to the cultural, economic and political conditions of the modern and post-modern times.

The research about fashion in this paper shall move beyond a simple review of how the fashion industry became what it is today offering insights into new developments in the fashion sector. Clothes not only are a cultural product, they can also be treated as a human necessity. But it is the cultural value of fashion that shows the fragmentation of human societies, from poor to rich, from alternative to conservative. Therefore, fashion is a political issue, which is shaped by humans and

society. Fashion is able to question and transform existing rules and hierarchies. It is an art of its own.

Although fashion is omnipresent in the city through public spaces with stores, malls, exhibitions and shows, in reality it plays a relatively small role for most citizens. The public space is characterized by an economy of symbols presented to everybody, but in reality it is limited and accessible only to a small number of people. Considering this visible reality, but also the reality within the fashion business: ideas stolen from small-scale producers, the necessity of being creative and the need for creativity, the abnormal cost-performance ratio, the worldwide outsourced production, the workers conditions and top-down structures: many questions arise.

What can be changed in order to make the fashion industry a more democratic and socially fair one and at the same time a creative medium for social and political change? The basis for this discussion is the debate of sustainable development and especially its political, social and environmental approaches towards economic and social change. This change can take shape within branding, different production forms, ecopreneurship and social entrepreneurship, ethical and critical consumption and of course the development of greener fibres and other environmentally friendly production processes. The main approach of this paper lies in researching the question whether, if and how a paradigmatic change in the fashion industries can be achieved. It is about understanding where the limits and the prospects of these undertakings, being in it's infancy, lie.

The paper willingly has a multi-disciplinary focus, whereas sustainable fashion serves as an example for the meta-discourse of cultural

sustainability and its embedding in contemporary society and future aspirations.

### *Current State of Research*

The current state of research for the topic sustainable fashion is quite manageable. There are only few reports and researches mainly by the fashion departments at the London College for Fashion, at Parsons School for Fashion in New York City or the Milano Fashion Institute established by the three universities in Milan: Cattolica, Politecnico and Bocconi. As the research on fashion is a marginal study object in cultural sciences and sociology, sustainable fashion has only a few followers in the fashion field itself. Although the discourse on sustainable development is not a novelty in political science and environmental research, it has taken a while before it expanded into the field of cultural research and the cultural and creative industries. The cultural sphere in sustainable development has always been mentioned by the discourse together with the economic, ecological and sociological spheres, but the discussion was usually guided by the relation between culture and the development policies or anthropology. A scientific research and/or systematic examination from a cultural focus has only taken place to a very small extent.

One of the few works available is “La Moda della Responsabilità?” published by Lunghi and Montagnini in 2007. Moreover, there are two articles about the fashion industries and sustainable aspects from a cultural point of view in “Sustainability: a New Frontier for the Arts and Cultures” edited by Kirchberg and Kagan and published in 2008. Furthermore, there is a first abstract by Emanuela Mora “Moda Critica tra Etica ed Estetica” (Mora 2009) dealing with the relationship between

ethics and aesthetics and an article by Duxbury and Gillette taking a look at the cultural dimension of sustainability: "Culture as a Key Dimension of Sustainability" (2007). One way of approaching the subject comes from a critical economist way of dealing with fair trade, consumption choices as an individual action and as a political participation of civil society: Van der Hoff's "Faremi Melior il Mondo. Idea e Storia del Commercio Equo e Solidale" from 2005 or Tosi's "Consumi e Partecipazione Politica. Tra Azione Individuale e Mobilitazione Collettiva" (2006). These books give interesting insights, but do not directly deal with sustainable fashion as the cultural and environmental dimensions are not covered sufficiently.

The debate around cultural and creative industries gives a good overview of the special features and characteristics of fashion and the fashion industrie. The debate around social and economic change in an informational and postmodern society and the so-called creative class and its new lifestyle help to explain the existence and market growth of sustainable fashion. The collected works of Stuart Cunningham "From Cultural to Creative Industries. Theory, Industry, and Policy Implications" (2001), John Hartley's "Creative Industries" (2005) David Hesmondhalgh's "The Cultural Industries" and articles like "Cultural Industries: A Handicap or a New Opportunity for Cultural Development?" (Augustin Girard 1982), Garnham's "From Cultural to Creative Industries" (2005) all give a differentiated description of the various implications of the creative industries. An Analysis of the Implications of the „Creative Industries“ Approach to Arts and Media Policy Making in the United Kingdom." (2005) and "Cultural Industries: the Origin of an Idea." (Mattelart/ Piemme 1982) serve to understand the development and history of the origins of the debate. In this context

Richard Florida's works "The Rise of the Creative Class" (2002), "The Flight of the Creative Class" (2005), "Cities and the Creative Class" (2005) give important insights as they broaden the discourse of the creative industries on the individual, work and city level. These are important as they help to understand consumer behavior and new lifestyles.

Angela McRobbie's works on fashion and culture "British Fashion Design - Rag Trade or Image Industry?" (1998), "In the Culture Society. Arts, Fashion and Popular Music" (1999) and „Fashion as Culture Industry“ (2000) deal with the fashion industries in particular. Although they mainly deal with the British Fashion Industry the work gives useful and unpretentious critical insights into cultural influences on working models in the fashion business. The Italian view on fashion in the work's of Mora, Bovone, Ruggerone, Micheletti, Lunghi, Montagnini and others working for the Milano Fashion Institute covers the broad range of sociological and cultural fashion topics such as identity, business, sustainability, responsibility, ethics, aesthetics and class.

The classic "Limits to Growth" (1972), "Implementing Sustainable Development. Strategies and Initiatives in High Consumption Societies" (2002) by Meadowcroft and Lafferty as well as some articles help to explain the basics of sustainable development. Edgar Morin and especially Fritjof Capra are well known for their holistic and systemic approaches and complete the debate of sustainable development to link it to and explain the cultural dimension of sustainable development.

### *Structure of the Paper*

The first chapter traces the development and history of the studies of the Cultural and later on Creative Industries. The chapter starts with an

overview of the scientific history of the origins of the term, which in a second step becomes related to the economic and political implications and institutional changes in modern society. A special emphasis is further put on the notion of creativity and its influences, mainly on the macro-, but also the micro levels of the economy. Further, the interrelation between new working patterns, city policies and new lifestyle patterns is brought to the front.

The second chapter puts the focus on the fashion industries as one exponent of the Creative Industries. First of all, fashion history and the meaning of fashion for society and the individual are described from a sociological and cultural perspective. Further on, fashion production modes and consumption patterns are unfolded to demonstrate its special working conditions, and thus the ambiguities and inclinations of fashion in economy and society.

The third chapter introduces the concept of sustainable development as an alternative to neo-liberalism and enhancement of the debate of the Creative Industries. It aims at bringing the triad of economy, sustainable development and culture together. After an introduction with a special emphasis on the cultural dimension of sustainable development, environmental and cultural aspects are put in relation to the fashion industries to explore innovative ideas in fashion towards sustainable development, but also problems and limits inherent in the fashion industries. Diverse practical examples shall demonstrate how a paradigmatic change can be achieved to implement sustainable strategies in the fashion industries.

## 2. Creative Industries

### 2.1 From the Cultural Industries to the Creative Industries - a Historic Outline

In order to understand the current debate of Creative Class and the rising importance of creativity in urban policy making, the sudden emphasis on and importance of creativity in fields outside its usual reference system within the Cultural and Arts Industries and the Cultural sphere in general, it is important to draw a historical outline from its roots, foremost to differentiate and define the occurring notions of culture, creativity and its interrelation with current economies.

Without taking any definite position on the interpretation of culture of the Frankfurt School and taking into account the big gap between the analysis of the representatives of the Frankfurt School and present-day reality it is unavoidable to include their views on the effects of the new communication technologies taking shape in the 1940s and especially their analysed subject: the Cultural Industry.

The main debate about culture industries begins with the critique of mass entertainment in the theory of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer. Adorno underlines that under capitalism the special position of art and culture, which always had the role and possibility to criticize and protest against the prevalent norms and values, has become imbibed and lost its former position. His main argument is that critical art was not possible under capitalism, because the mass population took over it through communication technologies and industrial organisation. Moreover, he states that

„the Culture Industry was a direct extension of the new industries of mass reproduction and distribution which had begun at the turn of the 19th century - film, sound recording, mass circulation dailies, popular prints and later, radio broadcasting.“[3]

Adorno claims that through the integration of the Culture Industries into the capitalist structures it became possible to control the leisure time of the modern worker by seducing and stimulating him through popular culture and ‚high art‘. He even assumed that the American Culture Industry, which in his opinion was the perfect incarnation of the new Cultural Industry equaled European Fascism. The idea of the Culture Industry was used „to signal their disgust at the success of fascism, which they partly attributed to the use of the media of ‚mechanical reproduction‘ for propaganda and mass ideological persuasion, the so-called aestheticization of politics.“[4]

According to the Frankfurt School the difference of former commodities production to the Culture Industry lies in the reproducibility through the technical possibilities of industrialisation. A similar, but different approach is taken by Walter Benjamin who traces the aura of the art object in ritual and cultic practices, where the ‚unique‘ and ‚artistic‘ products had a prestigious, symbolic or sacred value. This former ‚aura‘ of the art object becomes destroyed by contemporary reproduction practices: the commitment in thought, material skills and time becomes replaced by the number of copies to make a grand profit.

Notably is the focus of Adorno and Horkheimer on the relation between arts and technology and the „strong protest by the literate against the intrusion of technology into the world of culture“ [5] and the notion of Walter Benjamin’s essay entitled „The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction“, which anticipates Adorno’s work for more than ten years. „Benjamin shows how the very principle of reproduction

(and he demonstrates clearly how an art like the cinema has no *raison d'être* except by virtue of reproduction, not a single production), renders obsolete an older view of art that he calls 'pious'." [6]

Adorno makes an important distinction in his analysis and especially in his debate with Benjamin over the effects of technology on art: the cultural industries which employ technology to distribute cultural products made by traditional means such as music recordings and book printing and on the other hand the cultural industries which inherent the technology to the production of the form itself such as film making.

But it was not only the reproduction methods that changed the value of art products, the historical process also promoted the structural and social changes of society, where the need of capital to produce, distribute and sell commodities for a profit became the dominant form. Involving crucial transformation of cultural structures, on top the invention of printing itself changes the terms of communication. The printed word replaces the image (mostly religious) and becomes connected with the emergence of new religious, political and social movements and the emergence of the modern democratic state although the State and religious authorities try to regulate it. „The new print media were organised mainly around the market and a new range of private and civic insitutions which grew up with it - Newspapers, political and religious groups (and their presses), scientific and humanistic societies, salons and coffee houses.“[7] The print media serve as a basis for the so-called public sphere, which in turn legitimates the political and socio-economic power over the last 250 years.

In the 18th and 19th century the opposition of the bourgeois and art

sphere became the dominant belief within the humanistic, scientific and public spheres although the separation was more a cliché than the reality of the working artist. With the industrialisation taking over resistant forms of artistry values and strategies came up: up to the present the existing ideal of 'arts for arts sake', the engagement in left wing policies and new ways of approaching the modern times through certain lifestyles represented by the flaneur, the bohemian or aesthetes. Neither has there ever been an autonomous and separated artistic sphere, nor an artistic production totally controlled by market mechanisms. The production of cultural commodities was not around sales, but had to go through the complex game between various actors: the state and political parties and organisations, academies and other educational institutions, private galleries, philanthropists and the whole public sphere creating meaning and artistic value: the press, salons, journals, cafes, theatres and concert halls.

The main point of Adorno's Culture Industry thus lies in the organisation of cultural commodity production on a mass industrial scale. Hitherto the arts were seen autonomous and opposed to society. The autonomy of the artist gained public recognition and the main mediator between the arts and the public sphere was the economic market, promoting the commodification of artistic work. Still, the artist himself was confronted with new ways of surviving as he was not tied to a patron or the church as his employer anymore. This development had two sides: on the one hand, it freed the artist from the dependency on the patron and gave him the ability to exploit and resist the new wealth, on the other hand, art 'lost' its sacred value and became exchangeable.

Adorno's ideas have to be seen under the - by the times parallelly running - post-war discourse, which wanted to rescue arts and culture

from commercial practices. This regulation of the market is inclined to the reduction of the institutional field by the state. This legitimization of the Nation-State is rooted in the civic and historic processes of the 19th century, but having a greater transformational impact after the two world wars. In addition to the main historic process the emergence of the social-democrats forwarded the 'nationalisation of culture', formerly reserved for the rich and aristocracy and restricted by a lack of education and leisure time.

### 2.1.1 Cultural Turn

In the middle of the twentieth century the Cultural Industries had grown enormously, but Adorno's ideas were not adequate to the new circumstances anymore. The term "The Cultural Industry" as it was used by Adorno and Horkheimer was then as a result of its journey along different intellectual pathways rejected by the newly emerging theorists such as Miège, Morin or Huet and converted into the plural form of the Cultural Industries. This linguistic change implies a different understanding of the Cultural Industries as a complex field, embracing different types of cultural production with their own logics and imperatives. This return of the Cultural Industries to the political and policy discourse in the late 1960s was called the "Cultural Turn". It arose from the revival of the marxist discourse concentrating on the forms of ideology and hegemony and the general shift in sociology from the focus on social structure and class towards the analysis of culture. Social cohesion was regarded as a shared system of beliefs, where sub-cultures and identities struggled for recognition and legitimation.<sup>[8]</sup> The singular term of the Cultural Industry understood the field as one, "where all the different forms of cultural production that coexist in

modern life are assumed to obey the same logic“[9]. But the ‘readoption’ of the term cultural industries was not a simple return to the elitist Kulturpessimismus of the Frankfurt School, but also “covered a crucial theoretical disagreement, and thus also policy disagreements“[10].

The (British) Cultural Studies developed three new notions. One notion was the community studies offering and defending an alternative to the official culture by promoting working class life.

At the same time Raymond Williams tried to historicize art and culture and push the official culture on a more modern sociological base. His main argument was that ‘culture is ordinary’ which lead other theorists to reject the supposed ‘threat of mass culture’ seeing in the emerging subcultures new forms of popular culture serving as active forms of symbolic resistance to the dominant social order. “For this group, the use of the term “cultural“ signals a move away from the economic base/superstructure paradigm to focus on culture as a sphere of relatively autonomous social practice and as the key locus of hegemony“[11]. This change implemented the oppositional political movement from trade unions, factories and political parties to the rock concert, the classroom and leisure time.

The third argument was the rereading of texts and the decodification of symbols and symbolic products in the late seventies of the last century. This idea understands culture as a text whose symbolic context can be decoded.

### 2.1.2 Political Economy School

Another competing school of analysis, the ‘political economy school’ was much more engaged with Marx’s work and thus examined

questions such as economy and culture, capital and state, base and superstructure. The central argument of the political economy school was that “under capitalism culture was increasingly produced as a commodity, and thus subject to the logic and the contradictions of this system of production”[12]. This discourse brought up what Adorno’s thesis did not include: how culture was used and valued, how and if it was programmed and if the success of a cultural commodity could be predicted, how independent the artist was and at last favoring multiple Culture Industries over one Culture Industry.

The term cultural here had two main meanings. Firstly, the emphasis on the special features of the economic structure and dynamics of symbolic production, distribution and consumption. Secondly, the reference to the processes of vertical and horizontal concentration and conglomeration, which identified an unified global economic field.

“The political economy version of cultural industries stressed the particular nature of the economic structure and dynamics of the cultural sector, stemming from the symbolic or immaterial nature of its product, which in its turn provided the justification for regulation on the basis of the particular forms of market failure involved”[13].

The cultural sector was characterised by high fixed costs of production, low marginal costs of reproduction and distribution, thus favouring economies of scale and audience maximization. Uncertain demand provoked high risks of investment. What happened is that arguments over state intervention, regulation and privatisation in the cultural sector, short the normal market relation between producer and consumer, do not apply.

Unlike the Frankfurt School’s beliefs of the rationalisation and alienation of cultural labour as wage labour under industrial conditions, the political economy analysis saw the survival of older relations of craft

production and subcontracting for creative labour inputs. From the point of view of the political economy school the cultural industries are seen as complex value chains where profit is gained at key points in the chain through control of production investment and distribution and “the key ‘creative’ labour is exploited [...] through contracts determining the distribution of profits to various rights holders negotiated between parties with highly unequal power“ [14].

The main emphasis of the political economy approach is the one on the technologies of distribution. The economic and regulatory debates are interpreted as struggles over the access to distribution under continually shifting technological conditions. The outcome of this shift was that the profits of the process were returned to the controllers of the technological distribution systems and the original producers of the cultural products or services were left with empty hands.

### 2.1.3 Creative Industries in the Information Society

“The choice of the term ‘creative’ rather than ‘cultural’ is a shorthand reference to the information society and that set of economic analyses and policy arguments to which that term now refers.“[15] In the terminological shift from cultural to creative Garnham sees an attempt to relate the cultural sector and the cultural policy community with the government and also the policy presentation in the media.

The information society perspective involves a number of different analyses concerning the development of the global capitalist economy and its relationship to wider social movements. Subsequently here shall be given a short overview of the main arguments and notions of the information society. A shared notion of the cultural turn school and the thinking of information society is the increasing importance of symbolic

and cultural production, also considered as information or knowledge within capitalist economies. Anyway, the diverse analyses result in different assessments of the importance of the cultural sector (in its narrow sense of the arts and media) and of the nature and role of information (creative) work and workers.

Schumpeter stresses in his long-wave theory(1934) the idea of technological innovation as the central driving force of capitalist growth. Unlike neo-classical economic theory he argued that capitalism was progressed through competition in innovation, not through price competition, which in fact means that there is no competition. This maps quite well to the general concept of creativity and innovation, but is/can be misused by the group of creative workers, because it excludes scientists and the technological sector.

Daniel Bell's theory of post-industrialism (1973) argues that the driving force in capitalist societies is no longer the physical capital, but human capital in the form of scientific knowledge. An increasing amount of value is now produced through ideas. This results in the shift of social power from physical labour to scientists, universities and bankers. For the debate over cultural and creative industries it is important to note, that creativity applies to the use of thought and imagination including all human labour, not only necessarily those working in the creative sector.

[\[16\]](#)

Information economists argued that information is a scarce resource and markets are characterised by differential distributions of information, a general information-based analysis of markets and market behaviour closely linked to new theories of the firm and of management. For the cultural/creative industries approach this means, that high growth levels stem from business information services.

Secondly, it argues that the shift from bureaucratic management style to a more creative entrepreneurial style is a response to the uncertainty of the volatility of the market environment within which corporations work. And thirdly, the key information workers here are lawyers, accountants and management consultants, but not scientists, technologists or producers of information services.

The theory of the service economy described the shift from manufacturing to services, which has also been regarded as a process of de-industrialisation. Two problems arose economically: firstly, services are based on human interactions, which makes them difficult to commodify and thus lead to market failures. Secondly they are not subject to capital-intensive machine/human substitution and thus have low or zero productivity growth. Its major representative is the school of post-Fordism, which argues that immaterial needs are an increasing part of consumption, which can be satisfied through the consumption of immaterial services and the consumption of material goods. Design and marketing are placed at the center of an increasingly fragmented and volatile consumer market, both highly important attributes of the cultural/creative industries.

Following the implications of the shift from cultural to creative industries and the theories of the information society, it can be stated, that the creative industries are the new growth sector of the economy, nationally as well as globally. Moreover they became the key sector source of future employment growth and export earnings, especially regarding the decline of manufacturing.

#### 2.1.4 Cultural Commodity Production

Cultural commodities were considered as a human need, as part of the

creative individual. The pragmatic problem in the theoretical approach lies in the high production costs, which fall the more often a product is reproduced. The need for diversity (to serve the diverse needs and creative individualities) requires new commodities, which is problematic in the sense that the demand and success of a new product is unpredictable. According to Miège there are different kinds of cultural commodities. Firstly, the physical objects which transmit cultural texts to individuals such as books, records, videos, videogames etc. Secondly, the highly state-regulated television and radio broadcasting, which is available for free, and, thirdly, all the cultural forms which run as public performances such as music, theatre and cinema. Their viewing is restricted and depends on an admission fee.

Those three aspects advanced the idea of several Cultural Industries, each sector with their own ways of exchange value, management of demand and creative labour and different investments of capital. The last point of the political economic school contradicts Adorno's view of the total disappearance of the independent artist. Their representatives argued that not only the 'artisan field' did not disappear, but that it also became more of a market intermediary carrying on economic relations and businesses. The artist became more involved in the economy, but this did not end in the cultural catastrophe as predicted by Adorno. Rather did he gain a direct share in the profits through copyright and royalty fees. Nowadays, fulltime workers are directly employed by the cultural workers, especially in the cinema radio and television, as notes Williams for all those fields „where high levels of capitalisation and technology are involved“[\[17\]](#).

But the 'Cultural Industries' are not to be mixed up with the industrialization of culture in the sense as the term is used for other

industries. "One can speak of industrialization when referring to goods produced by assembling massproduced parts on a site or in a factory"[18]. Even if certain techniques are reminiscent to industrialization, the term industrial cannot be applied easily to the cultural industries.

The essentials for a successful cultural product are the talent of the creative artist and his rapport with the public. Both are unique and unreproducible aspects and render the cultural production, even on a mass scale, a distinct cultural essence. Industrialization introduced mechanical production, the division of labour and capital investment. The Cultural Industries transformed the products and services into commodities what encompasses more than solely production and also serves capitalism as it needs a continual extension of commodification.

### 2.1.5 Interim Result 1

Culture in its broadest and most simplified sense is understood as a way of life of a certain social group or distinct people. But the Cultural Industries are not only the industries of a way of life or certain production methods. The respective institutions are directly involved in the production of social meaning. They form a system through which norms, a whole social order is produced, reproduced, communicated, experienced and reformed. The Cultural Industries include all activities and processes, where the first aim is to create or mediate meaning, texts and signifiers, to inform and entertain with them.

Under the core cultural industries mainly include broadcasting, film, the internet, the music industry, print and electronic publishing, video and computer games, advertising and marketing. All of these bear the similar characteristics of a limited pool of disposable consumer income,

a limited pool of advertising revenue, a limited amount of consumption time and skilled creative and technical labour [19].

Another characteristic but also severe problem and challenge of the Cultural Industries is the risky business, which derives from the fact that consumers or audiences use cultural products and/or commodities in irregular and fluttering ways. It is not possible to predict when and how much will be consumed making it difficult to calculate economically.

Furthermore, there is a continuous tension between creativity and commerce. This is an ongoing struggle about the output of the creatives, which inherit and defend a certain amount of autonomy. At the same time they are expected to come up with new, original and special ideas to hit the market when needed and not when they feel like. This struggle derives from the romantic ideal of self-expression and self-fulfilment in the arts, whereas the expectation already points to a different reality. The production costs are mostly high and the aim to create not only distinctive but also rare products is high.

The Cultural Industries thus developed several special features: economic failures are compensated by building a repertoire and filling gaps. A big part of the work is invested into managing the publicity of the product and forming serials, genres and stars hence every Cultural Industries company is dependent on other companies to "make audiences aware of the existence of a new product or of the uses and pleasure that they might get from experiencing the product"[20]. The seriality of a product is covered by artificially produced scarcity.

Another distinctive feature to 'normal businesses' is the loose control of the creatives whereas the distribution and marketing of the product is under a very tight control. Although the Cultural Industries break with traditional ways of organisation, creative autonomy is divided among

functional roles and occupational groups as well as other working inputs. Not very different from conventional companies, they are (quite often) organised hierarchically in terms of pay and status. The unskilled and semi-skilled labour, the craft technical workers and the creative personnel serve the marketers, creative managers and owners and executives as in any other company. Bourdieu sees in the core of the new petite bourgeoisie a new social class with distinctive tastes and cultural practices. This new social class includes all occupations which involve presentation and representation, e.g. fashion and all institutions which provide symbolic goods and services [21].

## 2.2 Creative Industries in a Broader Context

### 2.2.1 Creative Industries in the New Economy

What made the Creative Industries and its remarkable change since the 1980 so popular was the new economy. The world economy shifted from manufacturing industry to high-technology manufacturing and to consumer services such as neo-artisanal consumer products and services. These new sectors tended to an organization with complex value-added networks. All this led to a new organizational flexibility, transactions-intensive relations, a more important role of design-intensive outputs and the propensity to complex value-added networks. Technology began to play a leading role and the value was generated by information, which was directly brought into people's life.

One segment of this new economy is the group of industries that supplies cultural products and has three common features[22]: first of all they are somehow concerned with the creation of products whose value lies within its symbolic content and the stimulation of consumer

reactions. This segment of industries is further subject to the effects of (Ernst) Engels' Law, which states that as disposable income expands, the consumption of luxury products rises disproportionately. The last characteristic feature is that the firms are subject to competitive and organizational pressures so that they frequently agglomerate in dense clusters and industrial districts, while their products circulate on global markets. „Outputs that are rich in information, sign value and social meaning are particularly sensitive to the influence of geographic context and creative milieu“[23].

Political economists such as Scott and Lash and Urry labeled this shift from mass production to a more flexible and specialized production “Post-Fordism“. The predictable modes of mass consumption rendered smaller niche markets, enabling the proliferation of goods with a higher symbolic content. Social identities alternative to the mainstream were possible to construct. Social space became seen as an important factor in economic understanding.

As stated in the former chapter the Creative Industry Economy underlies an uncertainty of demand for the ‘experience goods‘ or formerly called cultural products/commodities. The buyer lacks information and the satisfaction is largely subjective and variable. In order to be economically successful cultural products need more marketing and accounting than other products. This is contradicted by the fact that their methods and forms of production are less economically driven, but rely on creative activity and work.

The working environment is shaped by a collective nature, which works in small, creative and multi-skilled teams with diverse interests and expectations about the final product. The diversity and variety of formats and between formats is not comparable. The ways of assessing

creative personal relies on vertical skills and creative activities need to be coordinated within a relative short period. The modes of assessing are moreover characterized by long durability of the cultural product and the capability of their producers to continue to gain revenues long after the period of production.

The success of the rapid expansion of cultural economy lies not only in the growth of income, but within the change of sign-value to wider spheres of productive activities at large. This expansion made the Cultural Industries move closer to the center of economic action in many countries and „they cannot longer be seen as secondary to the ‘real’ economy where durable, ‘useful’ goods are manufactured“ [24].

This takes the debate to another level, the local one. Local economic development becomes a necessity, but gives also room for urban visions. The cultural process itself is not a decoration or prestigious expenditure anymore, but moves to the center of policy making. Some companies such as H&M or Warner Brothers carry huge global businesses. Still, small- and medium-sized companies dominate in the business of culture and contribute to the complex relationships of the globally active businesses. The relations of small and medium cultural companies and big ones intermingle.

The rapidly growing cultural-product industries frequently employ high-skill, high-wage creative workers, most of whom are considered to be environmentally aware. The cultural-products industries generate positive externalities in so far as they contribute to the quality of life in the places where they congregate and enhance the image and prestige of the local area.

As mentioned above the companies tend to be highly localized and often place-bound industries, what makes them attractive to policy-

makers seeking for new solutions to problems of urban redevelopment and local economic performance. „The cultural products circulate across national borders, the images, sounds and narratives are borrowed and adapted from other places, producing new hybrids, but also reaffirming the value of cultural authenticity“[\[25\]](#).

This has further implications than a solely economic shift. It is the increasing diversity of cultural products, their fast pace and symbolic intensity which shape the significant segments of commercialized cultural production today. Creativity and experience-based products are among the most specialized, because creativity just as culture is rooted in time and space and linked to a place or even more specific to a community and its history. These attributes, often used as a positive notion for the marketing and advertising of a product, lead to a less efficient market control and regulation of production and consumption. “The more specialized a good becomes, the less capable is the price system of supplying relevant information and the less likely is the competition rule to accurately predict results“[\[26\]](#). This means that the market model does not suit to the regulation of products such as design, art and fashion products, all based on creativity. Complex offers shape complex tastes and values. The cultural tastes and habits of the consumers have become more complex as the cultural production has fastened. It has become more difficult to keep up and suit original, local and at the same time non-local habits and life-style patterns.

The rise of the Creative Industries in the context of the new economy raises issues about the merits of the ‘social market’ or ‘European’ model of capitalism and American-style ‘fast-capitalism’. The cultural sector differs from traditional industries. If the principle of unlimited accumulation underlies capitalism than culture serves as critical, it has

an intrinsic value that is destroyed when simply used for profit. Cultural value is different to the accumulation of profit and sets a limit to it. It is multi-national and deals on the margins of the economy by mixing money and meaning. The challenge of the Creative Industries is or can be the challenge of a new form of economic understanding.

### 2.2.2 Creative Industries and Policy Making

One of the main consequences of the growth and mapping of the Cultural Industries is the creation of the Cultural Industries as an object of policy. In the 1970s they became incorporated into cultural policy at the national level or by the UNESCO to defend endangered national cultures. In the 1980/90s the awareness of culture and therefore the spending on culture and new cultural policy strategies in all nations expanded. The Labour Party acclaimed that

“given the levels of growth already experienced in these fields (anm. the creative and media industries, an important distinction, which formerly was not made, but referred to the the single term, the cultural industries), given the flow of changing technology and digitalisation, given our continuing ability to develop talented people, these creative areas are surely where many of the jobs and much of the wealth of the next century are going to come from“[27].

The ‚new role‘ and bigger impact of the Cultural Industries in the New Economy led to changes and significant shifts within political strategies as well as new policies of countries, communities and cities. Traditionally cultural policy has been about de-commodification, about identifying certain cultural goods as public and therefore being provided by state subsidy.

Cultural policy is understood as the funding of artistic and cultural

policies. In a broader sense it includes the discursive and institutional frameworks through which culture is governed in order to develop cultural citizenship.

„But even the morally neutral use of the term ‚cultural industries‘ has proven limiting in the policy context, because it failed to combine art and culture, culture and creativity. It failed to take advantage of social, technological, and cultural changes that evolved in the cultural ecology and have continued to do so: ‚creative arts‘ remained one thing; ‚cultural industries‘ like media and movies remained another. Creative arts were a form of Veblenesque conspicuous waste; cultural industries a form of commercial exploitation. Never the twain could meet, because one side was ‚honorific‘, the other ‚utilitarian‘ at best“ [28].

The Creative Industries agenda breaks with this by trying to pursue a cultural policy through industrial intervention. The terminological change of the singular Culture Industry to the Cultural Industries involved a conceptual shift important to the policy makers. The different working conditions in the field of cultural production were recognized. Also technologies of production and distribution were recognized and included in further policy making, changing business models, connections between symbolic and informational goods and between culture and communications systems. The connections and difficulties of production, the circulation of culture and the ideological ideas of the status became more transparent. It also was a rejection of Adorno's idea of a ‚totalitarian‘ Cultural Industry and the opening towards a wider understanding.

The arts sector begins to think in managerial and efficient terms, economic benefits become more important in employment, tourism and image distribution. The development of new Cultural Industry becomes increasingly linked to other leisure retail and office developments.

Cultural policy makers do not only create museums, but whole cultural quarters resulting in a whole culture-led urban renaissance. Focusing on the management of the cultural sector as a whole, the new cultural policies start integrating it into the strategies and visions of the future city.

Moreover, the transformations through globalization of cultural markets challenge the established fundamentals of cultural policy. National governments face a declining influence on regulating global media and communication flows and engage in “cultural boundary maintenance” facing economic and cultural globalisation. One of the most important changes is the extension of the traditional and highly elitist term of culture, which actively means “the dismantling of long-standing traditions of public ownership and regulation”[29].

Important political decisions are carried out on an international level. The Cultural/Creative Industries have become highly important even in local urban and social policy. They are used to revitalize economies and provide competitive advantage over other cities and regions, particularly by medium-size cities seeking for power and a stronger economic position. To illustrate this shift in policy making in the following is a short introduction to the perception of culture.

Shalini Venturelli describes three traditions of understanding culture, that strongly influenced the public, political and economic discourses of culture. Firstly the aesthetic tradition, which is associated to excellence in the fine arts. Adorno saw the loss of the autonomous space of art as a catastrophe, while Williams (1981) viewed art as a human need and “symbolic assertion of an ‘authentic’ meaning as part of everyday, ordinary culture”[30]. Rather than in an ideological and political sense this tradition gives form to the artistic and cultural anti-pole to

capitalism. Secondly, the anthropological tradition is rather related to an understanding of culture as a shared symbolic system or a “whole way of life“ of a society. Finally, the industrial or commercial tradition sees cultural products as industrial commodities sold to consumers.

According to Shalini Venturelli, those three traditions are inadequate and not sufficient anymore to describe the actual global information economy. As stated above the distinctive feature of informational and cultural products is that their value and creative expression can be massively influenced through a digital and networked environment. The value of these forms of cultural products is highly linked to their use and implementation.

This requires a shift in political thinking, that goes beyond the question how to preserve cultural forms, practices and institutions of the past (eg. museums) towards the development of an environment that is open to a generation of new cultural forms and creativity. This shall develop and maintain creative infrastructures, where new ideas and forms of creative expression can be established and distributed across global digital networks. There is a strong link between the vitality and condition of artistic and cultural institutions, opportunities for creative expression and the development of new ideas, competition and dynamism within the global information economy. “The Creative Industries produce the “gold“ of information economy and it would not be wise for nations to trade off too lightly for their capacity to develop, distribute and renew their creative infrastructure or the ideas and talents of their creative people“[\[31\]](#).

Current creative industries policy can be considered as a break. Although a shift away from traditional high arts is intended, “in pursuit of these aims the shift from cultural to creative industries marks a return to

an artist-centred, supply-side cultural support policy and away from that policy direction, which the use of the term “cultural industries“ originally signalled, that focused on distribution and consumption. It is for that very reason that the arts lobby favours it“[32].

Despite or because of the shift important questions, rooted in fundamental arts policy problems, arise: On whom shall support focus? On producers or consumers? Is there a restricted range of cultural forms or activities that merit public subsidy? “This question of hierarchy of cultural forms and practices that merit public support, and of judgements of quality, other than those of popularity, is hidden in current policy discourse under the notoriously fluid term ‘excellence““[33].

Nevertheless, current policy is focused on democratising culture by widening access or lowering barriers to the widest possible range of cultural experiences, including audiences and producers. The emphasis on excellence and the creative core in policy support and the stressing of access and education are a contradiction which raises two key problems. Firstly, how do we identify which artists and other creatives to support? How is selection legitimized if audiences reject this form of creativity? Rejecting the notion of excellence for example means that there are no more definitions and instruments to measure it. But the concept of excellence implies, that excellence is a code for exclusivity. Especially for the hierarchy of forms and activities, which are opposed to ordinary cultural products produced by the cultural/creative industries and consumed by the paying publics.

The success of the creative industries might lead to the belief that democratisation of access was the solution. Still, the question of what is really desired is still not solved: does it mean to give up on the

traditional support for the artist within the hierarchy of creativity and excellence or does it mean to give up these measurements? Wide access to cultural products is now available, but if culture is necessarily more democratized in consumption and distribution remains highly questionable.

### 2.2.3 Interim Result 2

In summary, the cultural development today is determined by two main characteristics. First of all by the cultural explosion, which means the use of cultural products in everyday life. The cultural life does not only take place at certain advised places and particular times anymore, but is present 24 hours a day as indicated by the 'cultural equipment' at home and consumption of cultural products such as videos or primarily the internet offering a wide range of music or other various entertainment products. Another novelty is the risen awareness of the public authorities of a broader definition of culture going beyond the traditional support of elitist institutions towards more democratized notions of culture.

These changes create an increase of public spending on culture, a stagnation in the use of cultural institutions by the public and related to this an intensification of public contact with artistic works, especially through industrially produced cultural products. The spendings have risen, the awareness that subcultures, rap and streetwear are part of the culture has arrived at the policy makers. Not only has the awareness of the creative industries risen in the minds of the policy makers, but the creative industries challenge business services as the key economic sector. Moreover, the creative economy is being transformed from within, from an old corporate-centered system defined

by large companies into a more people-driven economy.

The rise of the creative industries is related to the rise of the knowledge economy and to the growing importance of innovation, research and development, investments in ICTs and education and training as the principal drivers of growth in the twentyfirst century economies. Creative Industries produce symbolic goods, the whole range of ideas, experiences and images where value is primarily dependent upon the play of symbolic meaning. Therefore their value is dependent upon the end user, - the viewer, the audience, the reader and consumer-, which is decoding and finding value within these meanings. The value of symbolic goods is therefore dependent upon the user's perception as much as on the creation of original content and that value can or cannot transform into a financial return.

This definition of the creative industries is useful as it acknowledges the often non-pecuniary dimensions of creative production and its relationship with systems of meaning and symbol, as well as the growing importance of symbolic production and design to manufactured consumer goods as diverse as footwear, motor vehicles and mobile telephones. Geoffrey Hodyson describes the current economy as a learning one, where a shift occurs from an economy dominated by manufactured goods and manual labor to one where ideas, intangible assets, services and relational skills predominate: "Creativity will be the driver of social change during the next century"[34].

The Creative Industries are a less coherent term than the rather neat definitions for the arts, media and cultural industries, but it is more dynamic, ambitious and policy-relevant. The idea of the Creative Industries currently embraces two policy clusters: the production of the new economy and the consumption in the new economy, by which is

meant the experience economy with cultural identity and social empowerment. The Cultural Industries in contrast were invented to describe the commercial industry sectors - film, broadcasting, advertising, publishing and music - which distributed popular culture to a national population. This terminological distinction is important as it brings into play the tensions and contradictions between culture, economy and technology. The terminological change from Cultural to Creative Industries 'frees' the Cultural Industries from its solitary arts and cultural relation while at the same time retaining its benefits.

The difference between the creative and the cultural industries are the recent changes in world economy and technology using new communication and interactive media forms. The creative industries combine the creative arts and cultural industries and further include the modern concepts of the political and personal, freedom and comfort, public and private, state-owned and commercial, citizen and consumer. Bringing these two contexts together, the creative industries „were the commercial, or commercializable, applications of creativity within a democratizing ‚republic of taste“ [35].

One of its major characteristics is the intellectual production over other work mechanisms. Lash and Urry (1994) underline the role of symbolic consumption and aesthetic reflexivity as the central feature of identity construction. The symbolic consumption is accompanied by a great awareness and investment. Followingly, the growth of the creative industries turns the tensions within the market and modes of production central to many businesses and the Cultural Industries become the cutting edge for others to follow into a new economy of 'signs and space'.

## 2.3 Creative Production

### 2.3.1 Creative Businesses

The self-understanding of the creative enterprises is strongly linked to the new frameworks of knowledge-based and innovative industries, which are most likely those to advance sustainable and innovative ideas into the future. The term creative industries floods the mainstream with the economic value of the arts and media with the help of creativity as a critical input into the newly developing sections of the economy, the so-called new economy. Formerly diverse sectors now have to cooperate with each other.

The affected sectors within the Creative Industries are the established visual and performing arts, dance, theatre, broadcasting, film, TV, radio, music and new media, including software, games, e-commerce and e-content and range from non-commercial to high-tech and commercial. They range from culturally specific and non-commercial to globalized and commercial, where generally creative, rather than culturally specific content spreads out for economic advances.

The Cultural Industries are able to create local sustainable job opportunities, which are less dependent on market behaviour and the global economy than jobs in offices and factories of large multinational companies. The Cultural Industries are people intensive rather than capital intensive and they are free of the environmental accuses of bigger companies. The cultural entrepreneurs, which work within the networks of cities create 'close' working economies. They have easy access to local and tacit know-how, styles, looks and sounds, which are not accessible globally. Therefore and moreover, the Creative Industries are a good way of cities to promote distinctive and locally based

features on a global level on larger markets.

Cultural entrepreneurs are the key and turning point in promoting social cohesion and the feeling of integration. Art, culture and sport are able to create meeting places for people in an increasingly unequal, diverse and fragmented society, places which formerly have been provided by work, religion or trade unions.

All this, a new attitude towards the markets, a more fluid economy and the integration of social space together with the integration of local clusters and the networks of small- and medium-sized companies, the specific political, social and cultural contexts, have several implications for the Cultural Industries. It becomes clear that freelancers and small- and micro-businesses play an important role in a fast-growing sector. The diverse sub-sectors are highly networked on the local level, operating as clusters and located in the large metropolitan areas suggesting that the City or urbanity itself offers something crucial to the cultural industries sector. The line between commercial and subsidised sectors, between economic and cultural sectors and between the goals of art and goals of profit are clearly distinguished from each other.

### 2.3.2 Creativity in the New Economy

Creativity simply defined means ‚having a new idea‘, which „must be personal, original, meaningful and useful“[\[36\]](#). Creativity has become a value itself and systems have evolved to encourage and harness it, because new technologies, new industries and new wealth flow from it. Creativity is a matter of shifting through material and data to put together new and useful data. It flourishes best in a unique kind of social environment: one that is stable enough to allow continuity of effort, but at the same time diverse and open-minded enough to nourish

creativity in all its diverse forms. It comes from individuals working in small groups, small communities, which emphasize exploration and discovery.

There are two aspects of creativity: the objective and the subjective one. The objective side divides incorporated creativity in an object of creativity in a logical, organizational or productive process, e.g. an haute couture dress into an organized process. The subjective side sees creativity located in the individual and human character[37].

Emotions play an important role and make a real contribution to the rational process of development of creativity. “La teoria delle emozioni spiega perché è necessario ridisegnare l'ambiente organizzativo e mentale, se si può dire così, anche delle imprese, per aumentare il tasso di creatività“[38].

The popularity of creativity as a term in the scientific and economic sphere has occurred parallel to the recognition of the changes in the world from the 1980's onwards. In the new information technologies and the internet based new economy, value is added by ideas that turn into innovations, inventions and copyrights.

Many countries searched for new answers to face the emerging competitive and globalizing movements. The old educational methods do not prepare students for the demands of the new world anymore, where flexibility, adaptability and resilience are needed. Rather than an old controlling and hierarchical working ethos, design and attractivity become more important within a competitive atmosphere.

The call for reinvention was big and creativity thus seemed like the answer to the new challenges. “Critics argued that students should acquire higher order skills such as learning how to learn, to create, to discover, innovate, problem solve and self-assess. This would trigger

and activate wider ranges of intelligences; foster openness, exploration and adaptability[...]"[39]. More than changing educational patterns the top down organizational structures were questioned as they hindered motivation, talent and skills. Creative people often were not willing to work within traditional structures.

„Information is sufficient to execute logical steps in a series. But it cannot enable us to choose between steps that are equally logical. And having ideas - creativity- is seldom logical, except in hindsight. (This is why creativity and innovation are so very different.) We need information. But we also need to be active, clever, and persistent in challenging this information. We need to be original, sceptical, argumentative, often blood-minded and occasionally downright negative - in one word, creative“[40].

Very often a false understanding occurs of what means creativity in the economy. The growing interest in creativity outside the traditional domains of culture is reflective of what has been termed the culturalization of economic life (Lash and Urry). Contemporary capitalism is marked by a growing degree of reflexive accumulation in economic life that includes a new degree of aesthetic reflexivity in the spheres of both production and consumption as capitalist production becomes increasingly design-intensive and oriented towards niche consumer markets. Lash and Urry argued that the production models of the cultural industries were increasingly permeating all sectors of advanced capitalist economies. The production models are based upon extensive research and development and a high level of failure among the trials of developing the one perfect system as a means of managing consumption and an economy which is increasingly driven by producing new ideas rather than the reproduction of established commodities. On top, the management of culture has become the key to improving organizational performance, particularly when it can align organizational

goals to feelings of self-realization among its employees. Economic processes inevitably have got a cultural dimension, particularly with the growth of the services sector, where economic transactions are often more directly related to interpersonal relations and communicative practice.

The Creative Industries rise as employees and sources of new wealth and practices throughout the economy became adopted having their roots in the Creative Industries. According to Jeremy Rifkin the rise of the creative and service industries is located in a wider context of transformation of the nature of property and markets. Before markets existed through discrete exchanges between buyers and sellers. Now there are networks based upon the ongoing relationship between suppliers and users. Wealth before was based upon the ownership of tangible assets such as plant, equipment and inventory, now the production becomes outsourced and wealth creation changed into intangible assets such as goodwill, ideas, brand identities, copyrights, patents, talent and expertise.

New patterns are also the change of ownership of goods to the accessing of services. The change from production and sales to customer relationship and marketing and from production-line manufacturing and long product cycles to the Hollywood organization model of product-based collaborative teams brought together for a limited amount of time. The link between digital communicative technologies and cultural commerce, where ordinary life becomes more and more mediated through the new digital channels of human expression, creates a new form of cultural capitalism.

The Creative Industries are not only creating these new forms of work, but are the pioneers of networking, just-in-time production, large

investment into prototypes and selling 'experience'. "Cultural production is going to be the main playing field for high-end global commerce in the 21st century' and it will constitute the first tier of economic life, above information and services, manufacturing and agriculture"[41]. Work in the Cultural and Creative Industries has been characterized by a high degree of autonomy for artists and other creative professionals, a relatively loose division of labor in the production process and the existence of a wide pool of creative talent, which can be drawn upon a contract or project basis.

As Miège states this also derives from "a permanent crisis in 'creativity', where producers must constantly be on the lookout for new 'forms' or new talent"[42]. The modern cultural production communicates ideas, emotions in a constantly shifting environment, and is quite an interpretable activity. The roles and occupations in the creative industries are typically characterized by "reflective, interactive and intuitive processes with an indeterminate outcome. where the social organization of work tasks is implicit rather than explicit and performance criteria are linked to evaluation by peers, critics and audiences rather than purely quantitative indicators"[43].

Organizational structures as these shift between the formal bureaucracy and the non-conformal autonomy, that characterize creative work processes. This is also, where the danger of creative work lies: pursuing creative tasks is referred to as an intrinsic motivation, but not as regular work. As Angela McRobbie describes, the 'Hollywoodization of labor markets' encourages people to accept long hours of working days and low salary for 'making it' in the glamour world[44].

McRobbie defines five features of this new work environment: The club

culture sociality, which is an union of youth rebellion elements with an entrepreneurial approach to organize events. The club manager becomes a multi-skilled cultural transmitter. Multi-skilled here is also referred to as multi-tasking where people practice several jobs, in formal or also informally organized networks.

McRobbie further refers to the long-hour work endemic to this model, where little or no regulation of formal working hours is the norm, because among others self-promotion and networking take grand part of ongoing work and new contracts. This highly individualized compartment of work also trivializes the critique of potential superiors. “[...], and that issues traditionally raised through trade unions lack a space in which to be heard in what she terms a ‘PR meritocracy’” [45]. Traditional forms of organization are set off and open new spaces.

The fifth point listed by Angela McRobbie is the relationship of the freelance worker to his company. Subcontracts or short-term contracts with major distributors rule the business, but take along loneliness and an impossibility to carry out this kind of job for women with children and those living outside the main urban conglomerates. Those disadvantaged in the capital labor market are also excluded from the “club culture sociality”: racial and ethnic minorities, women with young children, older workers, those outside of the city centers, long-term unemployed and not to mention the disabled.

The Creative Industries are attractive, on the one hand to those swimming outside the traditional structures and hierarchies creating an own system of values based on the idea of creativity promising to be the road to self-fulfillment and realization. On the other hand they create new forms of structural interdependencies.

The re-naming or re-branding of the Cultural Industries as Creative

Industries was also a lack of clarity and a try to give it more specificity. It was hard to distinguish between what was considered 'creative' in the creative sector and also other sectors, such as science. Several models trying to describe the creative industries from other industries usually start by separating work and industries containing a lot of creative input from those with less creative input.

David Throsby introduces a model, where the core creative arts are constituted by literature, music, performance and the visual arts followed by the other Cultural Industries formed by film, museums and libraries. These are theoretically followed by heritage services, publishing, sound recording, TV and radio broadcasting, video and computer game industries[46]. Advertising, architecture, design and fashion are related, but are not totally considered as creative industries as their products not only contain pure creativity, but also other applied skills. The artistic creation here is clearly distinguished from its subsequent reproduction and commercialisation.

David Hesmondalgh rather focuses on the 'classic cultural industries', whereas Alan Scott names the whole sector "cultural commodity production". Scott makes the distinction between values directly experienced by the consumer (entertainment in its broadest sense) and those experienced by others, such as fashion and jewellery.

The industries producing cultural products are made up by two categories. First, the service outputs, which include the entertainment and information industry. Second, the manufactured products, which help to construct individuality, social display and self-affirmation. The distinctions are used to identify the different dynamics of work within the sector, while it is their symbolic function setting them apart and creating a diverse sector. The Work Foundation separates between the Creative

Core, the Cultural Industries and the Creative Industries.

The Creative Core includes all forms of the original product, while the Cultural Industries are constituted by the classic Cultural Industries such as television broadcasting or film production. The Creative Industries here are the original products mixed with a certain functionality such as buildings, advertising, clothes and design. The notion is set on “expressive value“, which replaces creativity. It contains “every dimension which enlarges cultural meaning and understanding“[47]. The expressive value contains the whole list of different values associated with culture: aesthetic, spiritual, social, historic, symbolic and authentic ones. It shows similarities to the understanding of creativity as it relates to an universal quality within the individual, but it is more specific to the cultural sector.

There is a connection between the economic and cultural policy, but it rather promotes cultural values, which are valuable and legitimated by themselves and are part of contemporary public culture. The NESTA sees the cultural sector rather organised around the conditions on which profit is made, than on the qualities of the products.

According to Florida the historic and social changes and thus the actual global shift taking place in the worlds societies moves the traditional economic epicenters and working clusters to new places and new conditions. The competition remains an open game, neither will the actually dominant creative economy of the US always remain an unquestioned epicenter. The determinant in the economy are no longer the turns on trade and in goods and services or flows of investment and capital, but flows of people. The winners are those nations, which have the best abilities to attract, retain and develop creative talent and harness their creative assets and capabilities[48]. Global talent

attraction is a dynamic, sensitive and little documented process, where the traditional economic leaders can lose their position in the nascent creative economy where vibrant and new creative centers emerge.

### 2.3.3 Creative Work in the Cultural Industries

One of the consequences of the new economy is a new career path. People exchange their jobs at big companies for high-tech startups, because it is more exciting, in fashion and offers instant wealth. "People want to exercise their creativity in building something, to experience the whole cycle of having ideas, putting them into action and seeing the rewards"[49]. People don't stay tied to companies their whole life anymore. Instead of moving up through the ranks of one organization, they rather prefer to move laterally from company to company to realize their aspirations.

Furthermore, creative people prefer casual dresses over uniforms. They dress in a simple and practical manner, they dress as they please to. The statement here is not about the appearance, but about the acceptance of dissimilarity and diversity in the workplace. It is an expression of creativity, meeting the demands of flexible work and expressing the identity in the appearance.

In his book 'Creativity, fashion and market behavior' Walter Santagata distinguishes 3 models of creative processes: the idea of the creative genius, creativity as problem solving and creativity vs. innovation. The creative genius underlies the conventional idea of creativity, where creativity is the romantic idea of the creative genius, who is an inspired person, chosen by god or equipped with skills higher than the ones of others. This image of the creative genius is related to a literary and psychoanalytic conception of the creative inventor. It is a mythical

concept, which is unsuited for a constructivist point of view.

Creativity as problem solving, on the other hand, is closer to the idea of human capital and focuses on expertise in a certain field, being prepared at the right moment and taking risks. Both forms, the creative activity of the 'genius' and creativity as problem solving, is that rationality alone is insufficient and that social interaction and emotions are required for well-functioning.

The third model defines creative action in the cultural and creative industries in distinction to innovation. Creation is different to innovation as it gives birth to something totally new, which has not existed before. In the first instance it has no purpose and serves as an anti-utilitarian and a non-cumulative good[50]. The intrinsic feature of creation is its factor of self-realization, focusing on enjoyment and self-fulfillment, and in the best case creates positive values.

Innovation on the other hand, usually referred to within classic economic theory, introduces something new into already existing patterns. Innovation wants to change and is an „utilitarian, incremental and cumulative act“[51]. Innovation has limits whereas creativity is a non-exhaustible and also non-saturable good.

Bob Geldorf states: “I find business - it's a cliché - as creative as anything. Business creates ideas. Around something as dry as a boardroom meeting there can be a confluence of ideas that creates and promotes more ideas“[52]. Of course, the characteristics of creativity, self-realization and self-fulfillment can be realized in many circumstances and may it be at the most boring seeming board meeting of a big business company or a small association. There are no limits. The main point here is that business is just as creative as painting, songwriting or writing poetry, but that creativity is not necessarily rooted

in an intrinsic need of creation. It is not as personal, either. Even if the idea for a new business is totally new and creative, the business plan and conversion of it is not necessarily new and creative.

The importance of a creative business lies rather in understanding the differences between the differing, but intertwined value systems, the economics of creativity. Creativity relies on intellectual property, which is difficult to grasp. Other value systems are physical products, ideas, platforms and transmitters and are similar to other physical material.

Within the creative sectors diverse creative jobs have developed, differing in their tasks, their share and commitment to creative work. There are the creative people, the thinkers, the creative entrepreneurs, the post-employment jobs, the just-in-time persons, the temporary companies, the network officers, as well as others concerned with business clusters, finance, deals and hits and with teamwork[53]. All of them being important, in the context of this thesis the creative people, the job of the thinker and the creative entrepreneur are of special relevance, because they relate most to the notion of creativity.

Creative people start working from within themselves which requires that they must be true to themselves. They shall be passionately involved in their work, no matter if it is paid or not. It is not the work which has the priority, but life, which becomes transmitted by the imagination and the belief into their minds. The starting point is always the individual, which not only has to manage its creativity, but also to take control over it, whether working alone or in a group.

Different than the creative person there is the job of the thinker, both can also correlate and must not exclude themselves. The thinker is the person who uses coincidences for new ideas and in the job. It is not the incident itself which matters, but how it is being used. It requires that

the process of thinking is organized and somehow used, even if it is rejected in the end.

The last type of creative person introduced at this point is the creative entrepreneur. As Jean-Baptiste Say has defined, the term entrepreneur describes someone who unlocks tied-up capital and redirects it to ,change the future'. The idea of change and marketing is perceived as something positive and the entrepreneur is characterized as someone with an urgent vision to be realized with financial skills and a focus on the vision through his/hers big pride. Lash and Urry saw the vertical disintegrations accelerated within the Cultural Industries[54].

The special strength of creative work is that it can be small-scale and non-profit, but not necessarily has to be small-scale and non-profit. It is organised around these clusters and freelancers, but additionally notions of aesthetic reflexivity come into play. The idea of creativity as a source for contemporary economic development and personal growth becomes crucial. More than innovation, long established in economy, creativity draws on artistic quality, more intuitive than calculative.

But the individualization within the Creative Industries sectors is not about individuals per se, as about new social bondings, promoting choice and optionality. The responsibility on capital is distributed in a different manner, not necessarily relying on traditional and organized labor anymore. New conditions of work are largely being experienced by the 'new labour economy': it has become the source for self-realization, freedom and independence.

Especially for women, work may appear as an alternative or even escape from traditional marriage and domesticity. For ethnic minorities the Creative Industries can be a chance for 'upward mobility'[55] and the possibility to escape from exclusion of social margins. For young

people the work represents an important feature of cultural identity. According to Angela Mc Robbie “there is a utopian threat embedded in this wholehearted attempt to makeover the world of work into something closer to a life of enthusiasm and enjoyment“[56].

Young women entering the labor market expect that work is satisfying and being rewarded significantly alongside the necessity to be one’s own breadwinner. The young fashion designers, which do the complete sewing themselves and work 18 hours, although self-exploiting themselves are committed to their work and only have to blame themselves if things go wrong. Zygmunt Bauman describes this as the “stealthy ways in which the new capitalism seems to absorb itself from responsibility by creating invisible structures and by liquefying the social order“[57].

People blame themselves, where social structures are unclear, opaque and in this way serve the interest of the new capitalism by ensuring the absence of social critique. These at the first glimpse positive working practices in reality reproduce old patterns of marginalization, especially women and ethnic minorities and at the same time don’t offer a space to discuss such issues. “The club culture question of ‘are you on the guest list?’ is extended to recruitment and personnel“[58]. Getting a job or even an interview relies on informal knowledge, contacts and friendships. There is no fairness or equal representation and getting a job depends on whether the recruiter sympathizes with one or not. The speedy and risky businesses requiring short-term contracts negate ethics, community and politics.

The new forms of (self)exploitation by the ‘creative workers’ raise the question about whether the idea of autonomy serves as a trick creating the myth of free labour. While other scientists emphasize the pleasures

and satisfactions of work, the commitment to the product and the process of creation. Mark Banks stresses the creative satisfactions which come together with ethical considerations. The 'moral economy' of creative work is one which sets some real limits to economic logics of accumulation[59].

The question about the possibility to adhere to act in accordance with principles of social justice, gender and racial equality while working in the seemingly glamorous world of the cultural industries remains unanswered. The accelerated speed of cultural working in the second wave marks an intensification of individualization. This means a more determined looking out for the self, but also less time for reflection.

Usually creative people are hired and then given a general outline of tasks to be carried out by themselves. A consequence of creative jobs usually is the increase of stress rooted in the multiple shifting between jobs and tasks and increased speed of changes of the whole working sphere.

The employment contracts between companies and people are undergoing dramatic changes. Formerly contracts were group oriented and emphasized job security, whereby the new contracts are tailored to the needs and desires of the individual. The shift to self-motivation and autonomy at the workplace is tied to the fact that identity is no longer created from the company worked for, but by the kind of work. It was the profession, the lifestyle interests and the community lived in. It is not the no-collar workplace which is new, but the stage in the motion towards more efficient ways of harnessing ideas and creativity. The Creative Class is one of those working the longest hours and the one with the most time pressure and stress. The reason here lies in the fact that many creatives believe to like their work (although a great number

may really like it) and defend to be intrinsically motivated. “Young recent graduates are the workhorses of many sectors of the Creative Economy“[\[60\]](#).

## 2.4 Creative Consumption

### 2.4.1 Creative Cities

The concept of creative cities in this chapter shall be treated under the acknowledgement of the theories of cultural/creative industries, the information society, the new economy and the changes implemented through globalization focusing especially on the relevant factors for my argumentation.

Creative milieus and their development are an important factor of a cultural competition between the European metropolises, where the focus lies on strengthening the economic power through the attraction of qualified workers and innovative production and services. Many cities go through a complicated transformation process from the former culture industries to the new creative industries. The classical sectors of culture-oriented production, especially those of clothing and furniture production, highly lose in their economic importance and as centers of job-creation. On the other hand this reduction is compensated through the growth of information technology sectors and consulting. Although the detailed processes are diverse in many cities, the classical cultural offer of opera and concert houses, theatres and museums, architecturally and historically important buildings still exist.

Creative cities are a place you want to be, places you want to be seen at. In creative places workshops, restaurants and bars are the most superficial indicators of a creative environment and the flagships of

dynamic and vibrant lifestyles. As Jane Jacobs describes successful places are multidimensional and diverse, they don't just cater to a single industry or a single demographic group, they are full of stimulation and creative interplay.

In the late 1970's the UNESCO and the Council of Europe started to investigate the Cultural Industries. Nick Garnham, professor of communications at the University of Westminster and later member of the Greater London Council, set the cultural industries on the agenda. These newly emerging discourses in the 1980s and continued in the 1990s around cities and the network society marked cities as the new economic drivers producing knowledge and creating symbols, all in a notorious positive light as potentially liberating forces. "When introduced in the early 1990's it was seen as aspirational; a clarion call to encourage open-mindedness and imagination"[61].

The idea of the Creative City wanted to emphasize (and succeeded) the huge potential of creative people and creative places for the solution of urban problems, enhancement of economic development and wealth creation. The idea created the hope of the improvement of life and living conditions. "Creativity in this context is applied imagination using qualities like intelligence, inventiveness and learning along the way"[62].

Although creativity is legitimized through the arts context and embedded in the organization of artistic creativity, the term in the context of the new economy and the debate of creative cities is not exclusively used for artists, but for different groups of people including business persons, scientists or public servants. It promotes the idea that through the encouragement of creativity and its legitimate use in public, private and community institutions and spheres urban innovation

is created.

This means, there is a need for infrastructures beyond the traditional urban and economic insignias of wealth and power such as buildings, roads and infrastructural systems like public transport. A creative milieu or city is a combination of hard and soft factors. The building and transformation of an urban landscape is never solely economic and visually manifested in the buildings, it is always also social, ethical, cultural and political. The soft infrastructure includes the people, their social networks and business skills, which precisely means a

„flexible labour force, dynamic thinkers, creators and implementers as creativity is not only about having ideas;[...]; being able to give maverick personalities space; strong communication linkages internally and with the external world and an overall culture of entrepreneurship whether this is applied to social or economic ends“[63].

In her book *Loft Living* (1982) Sharon Zukin stresses the new urban dynamic in which culture generates economic values recouped in retail and leisure industries and by the real estate. Referring to Bourdieu's notion of cultural and economic capital she illustrates how artists transformed the image and the atmosphere of SoHo and how it became a cool and popular bohemian urban space.

This change of an urban space, known as gentrification is now common to almost every large city. The visual transformation takes as a basis the new attitude towards working. The do-it-for-oneself mentality is part of regaining control over the cultural production. This is approached to as a liberatarian act in the context of the working sphere. Through taking control over the own work, one takes control over their own life and mediates it through transformations in the city. “Everyone is now in the creativity game. Creativity has become a mantra of our age

endowed almost exclusively with positive virtues“[64].

A Creative City needs to create an identity of creativity, nurturing and mobilizing creative ideas, talents and organizations to create a long-run and sustainable effect. This also includes risk-taking, leadership, a strong self-belief without being deterministic and rigid. For the ‘creative leaders’ it means having the strength to go beyond political cycles. Moreover, this notion includes the understanding and estimation of networking capacities, the historic and cultural diversity and richness, the governance and the usage of symbols and growingly important eco-awareness.

#### 2.4.2 Creative City Policies

The term Creative City was first introduced by Robert McNulty through the encouragement of the US National Endowment for the Arts in 1977 and further encouraged by Harvey Perloff in 1979. “Avoiding the word ‘culture’ the ‘Economies of Amenity’ programme illustrated how cultural amenities and the quality of life in a community are linked to economic development and job creation“[65].

The running theme in the following studies of economies of arts was the contribution of the arts to the vitality of the cities. Policy makers became aware of the positive effects of the cultural agglomerations, a sort of neo-bohemian attitudes, where artists, migrants and young creatives generate their own specific culture, often tied to local cultures and clusters. Core concepts included design, architecture, parks, the natural environment, animation, arts activities and tourism, as well as short cultural planning in urban places.

Franco Bianchini introduces the notion that cultural planning involves all the arts (1990): urban design, the art of winning community support,

transportation planning and mastering the dynamics of community development, the art of forming partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors and ensuring the fair distribution of economic, social and cultural resources[66].

More than things there are the symbols, activities and the whole range of local products, from crafts over manufacturing to services. Furthermore, urban resources include historical, industrial and cultural heritage, represented through urban landmarks and architecture, but also through indigenous traditions of public life, festivals and rituals and, moreover, through food, language, clothing, leisure activities and sub-cultures. The return of the Labour government in 1997 marked a change for the cultural industries. Setting up a Creative Industries Task Force they renamed the cultural industries to creative industries. With a lapse of time, overcome by now many European cities faced similar developments.

Characteristically the line between cultural and economic activities is fluid, not only between subsidised and non-subsidised sectors, but also between businesses and cultural entrepreneurs. Grabher (2001) sees the cultural industries organised in two distinct networks, those within localities and those within global corporations. The local context includes skills, biographies, cultural notions tied to the 'local systems'. "The cultural industry networks are embedded within a local 'moral economy' that limits the abuses of network sociality by reputation and other social sanctions"[67]. The global basis works on a network of institutions of debates and communications with the aim to question established forms and practices.

The Cultural and Creative Industries are embedded just between cultural and business activities trying to mediate between culture and

economics, between personal and professional life. According to Alan Scott, cultural commodity production is strongly linked to the city, which provides the most important facilities and institutions creating knowledge and performing activities in creative urban milieus. The city accumulates and streams human activity that continually creates public goods. Cultural production and consumption transform the city through shopping malls, boutiques, cafés, clubs, restaurants, theatres, museums and galleries.

The city governments today are highly engaged in sustaining this symbolic content, also using it for the revitalisation of dead quarters to increase its prestige, property values and, of course, to attract new investors and thus create new jobs.

While Richard Florida starts his observations from the consumptional patterns, Alan Scott focuses more on the cultural production. According to Florida people are the motor force behind regional growth. “Proponents of human capital theories argue that the key factors for regional growth do not lie in reducing the costs of business, but in endowments of highly educated and productive people“[68]. Place facilitates the matching of creative people to economic opportunities and thus provides a pool for companies in need of people and in turn a labour market for people in need of jobs. The gathering of people, companies and resources at particular places generates particular specialities, capabilities and efficiencies that promote economic growth. Two symbols of a succesful city according to Florida, are the tolerance for strangers and the intolerance for mediocrity. The qualities appeal to members of the Creative Class, they like innovation, risk-taking and the formation of new businesses.

The Creative City has now become a fluctuating term in danger of

losing its essence of unleashing and empowering potential from all kinds of possible sources. Instead, many cities tend “to restrict its meanings to the art and activities within the creative economy professions calling any cultural plan a ‘creative city’ plan, when this is only an aspect of a community’s creativity“[69]. The central meaning of the Creative City is about not becoming a fixed state of affairs. It is about lateral and horizontal thinking, the capacity of acknowledging the local details, skills, ideas and imaginations. It is about distributing them to all individuals and to overcome reductionistic and hierarchic thinking in favor of a more holistic picture.

### 2.4.3 The 3 T’s: Technology, Talent and Tolerance

Richard Florida's key to understand the new economic geography of creativity and its effects on economic outcomes lies in what he calls the 3T's of economic development: technology, talent and tolerance. Each is necessary, but insufficient alone when wanting to attract people, generate innovation and stimulate economic growth. His basic argument is that regional economic growth is empowered by creative people, who prefer places that are diverse, tolerant and open to new ideas. Diversity increases the odds that a place will attract different types of creative people with different skill sets and ideas.

For a creative economy to fluctuate it is important that industries have “low entry barriers”, so that firms can easily enter and keep the industry vital. A place where newcomers are accepted quickly into all sorts of social and economic arrangements are more likely to attract greater numbers of talented and creative people. The 3 T's of economic development are: technology, talent and tolerance. While economic growth is closely associated with concentrations of highly educated

people, innovation and high-tech industries are strongly associated with locations of the Creative Class and of talent in general.

Florida refers to Pascal Zachary, who argues that openness to immigration is the cornerstone of innovation and economic growth. America's successful economic performance is directly linked to its openness to innovative and energetic people from around the world even more striking in comparison to the formerly economically prospering countries such as Japan and Germany, that are now declining because of their homogenous population.

People value lifestyle amenities highly for the choice of locations, they prefer a more active, informal and street-level variation of amenities. Dynamic knowledge-economies do not beget social cohesion, but certain kinds of social cohesion beget dynamic knowledge economies [70]. As an successful example Florida draws on the wealth of the European Nordic Countries, which combine an intense, open and innovative enterprise culture with some of the most egalitarian social and civic cultures in the world. The norms of trust and cooperation are highly influential in the determination of opportunities and wellbeing. According to Florida, it is necessary to find the most effective tools to deal with multiple deprivation proactively, as the nurturing and spreading of home-grown creative potential is equally important[71].

Innovations are strongly associated with specialized creative capital and diversity. Creativity and diversity work together to attract talent, generate high-tech industries and spur regional growth. The creative capital is even more important to regional growth than human capital or high-tech industry, because it shapes both of them by it. The "key dimension of economic competitiveness doesn't lie in large endowments of raw materials or natural resources or labor cost

advantages, but the ability to attract, cultivate and mobilize creative assets“[72]. This means, that there is much to gain from being an open, inclusive and diverse community. To succeed and prosper economically, regions need to offer the 3 T's of economic development. According to Florida, companies follow firstly the talent: the new 'creative class' is drawn to a particular quality of place: open, diverse communities, where cultural creativity is easily accessed[73]. Through quantitative studies Florida and his colleagues identify correlations between ethnical, social and sexual diversity, the concentration of talent and the clustering of high-tech industries. Diversity is lead by tolerance, which refers to the acceptance of individual differences. "Tolerance also underpins the ability to attract talents as the creative class tends to gravitate towards urban areas characterized by bohemian values and openness“[74].

One of the pressing issues of a globalized world is the question of how to maintain growing cultural and ethnic diversities. Secondly, Florida sees the turning away from a limited conception of tolerance as mutual non-interference towards the more active creation of social trust in fluid, pluralized societies. The more tolerant and open a nation or region is, the more talent it is able to attract and mobilize. Richard Florida's formula of the 3 T's of economic development is completed by innovative future technologies in the information technologies, the media and biochemistry. Decisive for Richard Florida's assumption is, that only a region or city, where the three factors of talent, technology and tolerance come together in a beneficial way, a prosperous economic growth is created.

## 2.5 Lifestyle and Leisure Time

„Experiences are replacing goods and services because they stimulate our creative faculties and enhance our creative capacities. This active, experiential lifestyle is spreading and becoming more prevalent in society as the structures and institutions of the Creative Economy spread“[75].

The Creative Industries have set up a new relationship between aesthetics and the industry.

The economic sphere as well as the whole society have become more creative. Lash and Urry name this phenomenon “the culturalization of everyday life“ and Venturelli sees “culture moving to the center of international public policy“[76]. Experiences are replacing goods and services because they are supposed to stimulate creative faculties and enhance creative capacities.

„They acknowledge the importance of the culturalization of everyday life by identifying the experience economy which creates income by explicitly engaging customers in a personal and memorable way - through experiential ‘shoppertainment‘ or ‘entertailing““[77].

The Creative Class is less a leisure class than more an “active class“. The openness of the individual to all kinds of experiences leads to a kind of creative behavior, which in the turn is constructive. There is a lack of rigidity and permeability of boundaries in concepts, beliefs and perceptions. Ambiguity is tolerated where it exists and enhances the ability to receive diverse and maybe conflicting information without forcing closure upon the situation.

“People start living a synthesis of a bohemian lifestyle with an organization man value set. The ‘creative people’ with creative values, working in increasingly creative workplaces, living essentially creative lifestyles represent a new mainstream setting the norms and pace for much of the society“[\[78\]](#).

### 2.5.1 The Creative Class

The shift of trade in global terms to South East Asia and the appearance of Richard Florida’s “The Rise of the Creative Class” 2002 brought together the ideas of the economic impact of the arts, the creative industries and creative cities. Although the facts had been described by Allen Scott, Michael Storper or John Hawkins before, Richard Florida’s book connected the three aspects: “a creative class- a novel idea, the creative economy and what conditions in cities attract the creative class. At the time writing his book he had not been aware of the creative city debate“[\[79\]](#).

The core of this book is the definition of the new economic class: the Creative Class. The Creative Class is not simply to live and follow certain lifestyles and rules as the leisure class, but according to Florida will rule and shape the economic and cultural life in the upcoming century. Just as the service class before and the working class a hundred years ago. Although it is smaller in number the Creative Class is supposed to be the generator for economic growth at the same time representing the zeitgeist.

Compared to formerly defined classes such as the working class, the members of the creative class do not see themselves as members of a class. As it is defined by creative occupation within a variety of innovative industries this class does not fit into the traditional class concept.

“Compared to research stressing the importance of the individual genius, Florida links idea-generation and thus innovativeness to the availability of heterogeneity of voices and perspectives. The more heterogeneous the creative class is, the more possibilities it opens for combining and mixing different ideas and viewpoints which in turn leads to a large supply of possible innovations“[80].

Florida's theory is mainly supported by the definition of occupations as part of the creative class, their size and composition. He sees a strong connection between places that are diverse and tolerant, measured by his Gay and Bohemian indices and economic growth. According to Florida, companies are attracted to places where creative people gather around. He thus sees economic development driven by lifestyle factors, including diversity and tolerance, entertainment and urban infrastructure. „And with life itself having become the scarce and precious commodity, many increasingly define the quality of their lives by the quality of experiences they consume“[81].

Richard Florida differentiates between the core Creative Class, including people in science, engineering, architecture, design, education, arts, music and entertainment and the larger group of creative professionals in business and finance, law, health care and related fields. Florida developed a series of indices to compare regions and cities: the Creative Class index, the High Tech Index, the Innovation Index, the Talent Index, the Gay Index, the Bohemian Index, the Melting Pot Index, the Composite Diversity Index (combining the Gay, Bohemian and Melting Pot Index) and the Creativity Index (composite measure based on the Innovation, High-Tech, Gay Index, and the Creative Class).

Richard Florida sees human creativity as the ultimate economic resource, which is the ability to come up with new ideas and better ways of doing things. Ultimately the human creativity raises productivity

and thus living standards. The transition from the agricultural to the industrial age was based upon natural resources and physical labour power. The current transformations are based on human intelligence, knowledge and creativity[82].

One of the major components is the exchange from traditional hierarchical working systems to more autonomous, intrinsically motivated and self-controlled systems: „In addition to being fairly compensated for the work we do and the skills we bring, we want the ability to learn and grow, shape the content of our work, control our own schedules and express our identities through work“[83].

It is not sufficient anymore to use the information and technology made by others as it was in the information technology, but people in the creative industries use the technology now to express their own ideas. It is a difference to say I have an idea and expressing a personal view than to reproduce some information.

There is a remarkable growth in the number of creative workers such as engineers, scientists, artists, musicians, designers and knowledge-based professionals. R.Inglehart stresses the shifts of values in national economies. Traditional values, such as the respect for civil and religious authorities are replaced by more secular values. Financial and social stability, the struggle for survival are replaced by the individual right for self-expression. Max Weber describes how the protestant ethic provided the ideas of hard work, thrift and efficiency, which accompanied the rise of early capitalism.

Today the creative spirit is the shared commitment. Creativity has become the most valuable commodity in the economy, but it is not a commodity as any other. It comes from people: “Living for diversity has become a matter of economic survival, because it comes in all colors,

genders and personal preferences“[84]. This does not only mean to eat green food during lunch, listen to bossa nova, drive a Porsche and mountaineer while having one or several creative or semi-creative jobs. New forms of economic infrastructure emerge and are being shaped: systematic spending on research and development, high-tech start-up companies and a system of venture finance, all supporting creativity, creative people, their ideas and products.

Richard Florida's insights go against the idea of innovative performance linked to social capital, as described by Putnam (1993). Putnam argues that social capital, realized in networks and connections, trust, and common rules are of crucial importance for creating learning environments and transforming knowledge into innovative products or processes[85]. In contrast, Florida states that companies agglomerate in cosmopolitan cities to rapidly mobilize talent, the talent is already there and does not necessarily need to be mobilized.

One of the main arguments stressed by Florida is that capitalism has expanded and is now able to capture the talents before excluded groups of eccentrics and nonconformists: the creative individual has become the new mainstream. 25-30% of workers in advanced industrial nations work in the creative sector of the economy, engaged in science and engineering, research and development, technology-based industries and design industries or in the knowledge-based professions of health care, finance and law[86].

One of the effects of the creative economy is the organization of the population into social groups, or classes. Creativity has become increasingly valued for the results that it can produce in firms and organizations and for the individuals, because it is a route to self-expression and satisfaction at the job.

The more creativity is valued the more it grows. The growth of the Creative Class is reflected by powerful and significant shifts in values, norms and attitudes, such as individuality, meritocracy and diversity. The Creative Class prefers self-stating, hard work, challenge and stimulation in an open and multifaceted environment.

A class is a cluster of people who have common interests and tend to think, feel and behave similarly, but whose similarities are fundamentally determined by economic functions, by the kind of work they do for a living. The Creative Class is paid to create and to have considerably more autonomy and flexibility than the working or service classes. The latter classes are rather paid to perform according to a plan. Historically the decades between 1800-1900 were shaped by the rise and later decline of the working class. The following century was characterised by the rise of a postindustrial society in which many people shifted from the production of goods to deliver services. According to Florida now it is the Creative Class, who has become the crucial emerging class of our time.

### 2.5.2 Creative Practice(s)

The cultural sphere provides a wide range of tastes, forms and patterns of creative consumption and production, where a broad and often extreme row of creative practices destabilizes categories of arts and culture, “collapsing the borders between the traditional and the innovative, the polite and the rude, the everyday and the celebrity, the professional and the amateur“[87].

Creative practices within the cultural industries and the creative arts are characterized through the following features: interactivity, which means the concern for a sustainable and immersive environment in the area of

education and entertainment. Creative activities are a combination of different genres, materials and historical influences formed to a closed hybrid, in content as well as in their form.

Within the avant-garde the process of unification and collaboration has been important throughout the twentieth century as currently represented through the creation of multimedia works involving digital art, sound, installations and performances. This creative practice is now used within the creative industries as the need for collaboration of different sectors and has become essential to its self-understanding. Creative practices are hybrids that include and want to include forms and ideas of cultural production.

Especially the changes introduced by the new technologies enable the creative producers to transform and expand their forms and mediation as they please. The new technologies involve a critical potential by transmitting and receiving content.

Furthermore, creative practices are looking towards multi- and cross-ways of distributing the creative and cultural products. Artists focus their energy on the artistic production itself, i.e. on the creation of the work. But the framework of the creative industries challenges them to pay just as much attention to the distributional side of their work. This forces many creative producers and artists to create opportunities for “multi-platform delivery and cross-promotion of their work”[\[88\]](#). It is not believed that creative practices are commercially irrelevant, but cultural production never operates excluding commercial realities.

Patronage, subsidy and sponsorship are all means of funding work, but cultural entrepreneurs in the vanguard of the new economy look for new ways to grow their businesses.

### 2.5.3 Interim Result 3

New attitudes towards the market and to entrepreneurship are the ones that can be able to link a contemporary sense of social justice, 'authentic' culture and economic viability. The new labour is built upon opposing currents of popular culture, which is articulated in the form of the emergent discourse around cultural industrialization, creativity and also socially responsible entrepreneurialism.

This vision of a new economic order is centred on more fluid patterns of work and career. A life span is now demanding more responsibility in exchange for autonomy. It becomes an economy which is more based on projects and networks rather than on competition. The collaborations reward the people with individual creativity and innovation in alternative to fixed hierarchies of class and corporation. These are the arguments which underlie the New Labour Economy. In the meanwhile the Cultural and Creative Industries serve as partners.

Creativity in this context has become one of the driving forces of economic growth, the ability to compete and prosper in the global economy goes beyond trade in goods and services, flows of capital and investment. Creative cities policies thus are a result of the social, political and economic objectives of national continua. Locations obtain their significance in economic and creative development and consumption and innovation are implicated in strategies for social, economic and political revitalization. Thus,

“the origins of urban development and growth in modern society reside, above all, in the dynamics of economic production and work.[...] To be sure, actual cities are always something more than just bare accumulations of capital and labor, for they are also arenas in which many other kinds of phenomena -social, cultural and political- flourish“[89].

Modern cities are places of different, concentrated human interactions, which are the source for endless, but historically and geographically specific forms of creativity and socioeconomic change. It is fairly understood that people need face to face interactions, socialization and networking in every way to create synergies. Geography matters, because people gather in places which are centers of creativity and where they like to live. Every individual city is thus an agglomeration of complementary and competitive relationships marked by the local specificities of capital and the division of labor.

Michael Porter describes these places as 'clusters': "Geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, associated institutions in a particular field that compete but also cooperate"[90]. All together they increase the productivity of the firms and companies within the cluster through the shared access to specialist inputs, labor, knowledge and technology. They promote innovation by rapidly making all firms fastly more aware of new opportunities and by enhancing the capacity for rapid and flexible responses to these opportunities. They promote new business foundations in the related sectors through access to the necessary labor, skills, knowledge, capital and technology.

Cities operate as nodes in a global network with the potential to direct the flow of international and local traffic in commodities, ideas and services. Cities are complementary to each other as within mutually exchange of specialized products. At the same time competing with one another, cities try to secure their own collective interests in a world of finite resources. As communities they want to secure inward investments, expand their external markets for these products and attract visitors from outside[91].

What distinguishes places from one another is their characteristics of 'consumptional identities'. "It is consumption, symbolic, innovative and self-directed that dictates the success and allure of creative places"[92]. Clusters represent a new way of thinking about national, state and local economies and they enhance competitiveness by giving new roles to diverse institutions, to levels of government and to companies. Usually companies thought about competition and strategy in terms of what was inside the company, but a good deal of competitive advantage is outside companies and even outside their industries, usually where their business units are based. More than single industries, clusters encompass an array of linked industries and other entities important to competition.

Before companies were the force behind the economic competition of cities which measured their status by the number of corporate headquarters they were host to. Today companies go and emerge where there are talented and creative people. The success lies in the creation of a place where creative experience can flourish.

"The leading edges of growth and innovation in the contemporary economy are made up of sectors such as high-technology industry, neo-artisanal manufacturing, business and financial services, cultural-products industries (including the media), and so on, and that these sectors in aggregate constitute a "new economy""[93].

In these sectors, the work of production usually occurs in extended networks of large corporate identities and small firms of "flexible specialization".[94] Further the labor markets of these sectors tend to be in motion and competitive, including many part-time, temporary, freelance and project-oriented forms of work. Consequently the outputs do compete more on the basis of quality than on the basis of their

qualitative attributes.

The clusters of the new economy are characterized by two contrasting attributes. On the one hand, the clusters operate with 'large underbellies' of sweatshop factories with low-skill and low-wage workers. On the other hand, they employ highly qualified workers such as professionals, scientists, technicians, managers, craftworkers, artists and designers. In different sectors of different cities are found varying mixes of these ways of employment are found.

In this creative economy, there is a great impact of mass production, a system which changes the structures of society and the modes of ordinary life. For a large number of people it becomes possible to work in another location than the one where they have come from. Social life becomes organized around the emergence of new economic and social classes. The main elements of a modern and highly organized society and economy are large-scale institutions, functionality, specialization and bureaucracy. Its main principles are the breaking down of tasks into their most elemental components and the transformation of human productive activity into stable and quite predictable routines.

## 3. Fashion Industries

### 3.1 Fashion Industries - an Introduction

“Fashion is a language, but a very ambiguous one.”[\[95\]](#)

The fundamental function of fashion is to express the personal and social identity of the subject and satisfy the desire to renew the own image. Fashion can be understood in two distinctive ways: fashion as a fashion system or fashion as a social process. The fashion system is represented through clothing and the repeated mechanisms of stylistic innovation. Fashion is a whole social process, in which the fashion system is ‘only’ one particular, hyper-specialized phenomenon.

There are several distinctive areas, which intermingle and overlap. This includes the complex social process of fashion, which represents a particular social form of socializing and the coming together of signified symbols incorporated through the objects of consumption. Moreover, it contains the social structurization of consumption and the aimed use of such significations and of course the idea of fashion as a productive and commercial structure. These are the basic mechanisms of fashion. The utmost example, where these basic mechanisms are represented in a clear and highly visible form is women’s clothing.

As well as being a matter of creation, consumption and identity, it is also a matter of production, distribution and retailing. It is therefore not just a cultural subject, but also a subject which is connected to apparently mundane matters of profit margins, response times, supply and demand. Fashioned up clothes[\[96\]](#) should be considered in terms of both, their cultural aspects and their economic aspects. There is a preoccupation with the competing tendencies of conformism, the

collective identity and individuality. The personal identity was and remains at the center of fashion.

Fashion is a process which is born in the highest and most central places of society, where it influences and takes over fast rhythms and important functions of the growth of the bourgeois society. Fashion is like an autonomous artistic genre. It is without doubt one of the most lively and socio-culturally important ones, such as architecture and cinema. Together with architecture it fits in the wide categories of design and styling, and with cinema it enters into the field of spectacles. Fashion today has become a global phenomenon. Because of the concentration of resources, supplies, skilled labor and creativity, Paris grew to be the fashion capital of the world. It built its reputation through the couture, but profits today come from prêt-à-porter. Paris shares the European spotlight with Milan, whose designers and fashion brands have achieved similar international success, and with London with its distinctive and personal style and young fashion scene.

The distinctive feature of the fashion industry and its products from other industries is the embodiment and spread of symbolic values. The influence of culture within the fashion industries is the culture of creativity with a strong emphasis on the originality of an object, the aesthetic and technological quality and the image. This feature is not only a mere characteristic, but the core of the production of the value chain. Fashion by definition implies continuous innovation, what literally means that the creator (the designer) always needs to keep up with the tendencies and changes of consumer preferences.

Fashion is not easily to be classified as a cultural or creative industry. It is rather a mixture of a cultural industry as well as a consumer goods industry. "The high degree of balance between functionality and

signification makes this a complex special case, made all the more interesting by distinctive forms of organization“[97]. Compared to other creative industries designer fashion is a rather small business represented through a few big names. At the same time it is a highly competitive, fast and transient industry.

The fashion business includes design, craft and art on the one hand and manufacturing and retailing on the other. Both sides are highly interwoven with each other. The special and distinctive feature of the design fashion is its unproportionally high visibility and symbolic influence, especially in comparison with the real size of the global textile and clothing industry. A fashion product is only protected by copyright if it is qualified as an artistic product. It needs to be made with “individual skill and effort“[98]. This means that a handmade dress is protected by copyright whereas a mass-produced dress is not.

The vocabulary of fashion changes and can at the same time express different meanings according to the person wearing and presenting it as well as from the one's observing it. “Clothing is a dynamic language open to endless resetting“[99]. There are differing views on fashion: it can be considered as a ‚trickle down process‘, which means that new ideas are transmitted from the elite producers of the social pyramid to the bottom. Or it is considered as a matter of points of view, where each style creates an anti-style that defines it and stimulates further change.

For as long as it has existed fashion has always been used for communication. The specific features are the two levels of communication, an open and a hidden one. From a cultural sciences view the reading of fashion clothes is the creative value left to each individual, which allows the transmission of ambiguous and equivocal

messages. Fashion is a value and cultural transmitter among others. In some ways it is a sophisticated one and in another way complementary and supporting language for the spoken work. The permanent reinvention and shifting of meanings, codes and values is fundamental to fashion as it is understood in our culture. All the ambiguities, ambivalences and instabilities are set within antithetic meanings. The fashion industry itself identifies garments and accessories as indicators of social status.

In recent times the identification with clothes has become a very precise and fastened activity. This is a proof that the motivation for creative dealing with fashion is cultural. The potential of cultural models to drive creativity cannot be overemphasized. Successful fashion designers collect their knowledge and ideas from as many places and times as possible. Especially in history, but they also go beyond it, trying to “focus on a conceived model of an ideal future“[\[100\]](#). The most famous agent of an artistic and utopian-oriented way of designing fashion clothes is Hussein Chalayan [\[101\]](#).

A company which produces fashion, is the utmost example of forced innovation and creativity. It is not only a desire and an ideal to create, but the companies are forced to relaunch, recreate, rethink, and to discuss issues several times. This process is not limited to the design team, but applies to the whole organization. To be successful, each element in the organization during the process of development, marketing and relaunch of the product, must be innovative and everybody should have a creative attitude. But, a designed garment is only fashion when worn by someone. The idea and the successive creation are only the first steps in the production chain. An important

critique by McRobbie states:

“The society offloads its responsibility to people by turning work and employment into a matter of self-love, individual will, talent and commitment. This new ethos creates an intensification of labour, not through coercion but through its opposite, through the love of one’s own work, which is also a kind of self-love and a means of gaining self-value“[\[102\]](#).

Fashion is a fluid mix of the categories of art and craft, high culture and low culture, practice and production. Cultural production is a series of processes and of goods, whose economic and social value depends directly on the transmitted symbolic contents rather than the implied technologies. During the communicative process cultural products may change their content, which makes it even more complex to grasp them. The number of employees and implied actors rise, the cultural objective changes meanings and the economic interest becomes multiplied.

Fashion is the most evident example for such a confluence of subjects and motivations. It is the place for excellence, where the orientation towards the market and the creative idea come together. “Moda è un’industria culturale, dove la merce prodotta ha il valore che ha per i suoi significati, per i suoi elementi simbolici“ [\[103\]](#).

It is necessary to understand the contemporary discourse on culture, to be able to distinguish the conceptual categories necessary to interpret fashion. The economic value of fashion is characterized by a long chain of communication and is thus culturally formed by stylists, inventors, industrials, managers, photographers, distributors, negotiators, sellers, buyers and consumers. This makes it difficult to distinguish in a strict mode between social rapports cultural active or cultural passive. It is not possible to simplify easily between transmitter and receiver,

between roles purely creative, productive and passive.

The fashion process has to be considered as a cycle of production of signifiers. Until recent times, the movement was always from the bottom towards the upper status. It went from the imitation of the prestigious symbols of the wealthy class and founded on a stable and known economic hierarchy. Today, different styles of diverse status groups intermingle. Stylistic distinctions of punks such as rivets and safety pins have become adopted by haute couture houses.

Therefore, the world of fashion today is exposed to a continuous renewal and creative process, from the conception of the product to the various connections of managerial organization of the enterprise. The fashion sphere consists of symbols, objects, systems of distribution, agents, institutions and economic organizations. All is organized and institutionalized. There are ateliers, houses of high fashion, factories and the textile industries. There are the rights on intellectual property, conventions and the formal and informal rules. All these factors of acknowledgement and legitimation are not independent of the logics of the market.

The dynamic of the field is continuous, implicates revisions, agreements and perpetual redefinitions. “Le istituzioni pubbliche e l’industria della moda, coscienti di queste realtà, cercano tuttavia di rendere il rinnovo generazionale della creatività il più normale possibile“[\[104\]](#). A new fashion style is not only the invention of this style, of new forms or an original aesthetic. From the economic point of view, a new fashion cloth introduces fundamental innovations for the process as well as for the products.

New styles are tied to the introduction of the industry of mass production. The international success is a result which becomes

reunified every season and thus needs new ideas and organized creativity. This is the production of culture in the fashion system.

In substance the universe of fashion, the complex system of relations between industrial enterprises, service society and mass media stays highly fragmented, without organizational and strategic ideas for the system. The fashion system rests “prigioniero di rivalità che appaiono all'osservatore esterno non più economicamente e culturalmente sostenibili”<sup>[105]</sup>.

All industries function in the way that they aim to introduce an object of innovation on the market and compete on the level of acknowledgement and adoption of the object by the consumers. For the cultural industries the overall goal is innovation towards which the whole production is directed and adjusted at. The essential value of the product is that the consumer desire for novelty and change is satisfied.

The cultural industries function as a mechanism for the regulation of innovation and selection. On the one hand, the fashion industries constitute a particular segment of the manufacturing industry of textiles and clothing. Nowadays, the manufacturing industry has adopted a production and organizational model, which makes it similar to the cultural industry.

In the cultural industries a structural uncertainty prevails: the desire for novelty and change is naturally volatile and indefinable. For the manufacturing industry on the other hand innovation is the social condition which leads to the success. It is necessary to sell an adequate number of items or products for the purpose of selling. Thus, the fashion industries operate within these two antipodes of rigid calculation and the ability to come up with new ideas whenever necessary.

### 3.1.1 History of Fashion

The academic analysis of fashion, dress, costume and clothing is a varied field of study. Different disciplinary fields and approaches have dealt with the field of 'bodily adornment'. Among the first has been art history, focusing on costume (history) in painting and anthropology, which was much more concerned with body supplements and body modifications in all cultures. Through the twentieth century, these have been rounded up by history, literature, semiotics, sociology, economics and business studies and finally by the studies of visual culture, design studies and the cultural studies. As fashion studies today are a hybrid of these diverse disciplines in this work, the focus is put on the most relevant approaches towards fashion: its socio-economical as well as socio-historical and cultural aspects to give a holistic outline as much as possible for the understanding of the phenomenon fashion and the fashion industries. "L'attraverso l'analisi della moda e della sua evoluzione storica è possibile comprendere molto della società nel suo complesso"[\[106\]](#).

In this context, more than the designer's eccentricity, fashion is a reflection of the social, political, economic and artistic forces of a historic period of time. The changing styles that evolve from these forces tell of historical events as poignantly as journals and periodicals. Fashion gives the opportunity to understand society in its whole. As fashion and fashion studies, in contrast to clothing, inherent to most societies in the world, are a geographically narrowed system of organization and production, the focus is put on the relevant factors of this fashion system.

Western fashion emerged during the 14th century in the European courts, especially the French court of Louis XIV. For centuries the royal

courts used fashion as means of publicizing their superiority, strength and influence. It was a way to announce their elitism, produced together with status and social dress. Bourdieu described this as the “discrete nature of ‘the games of culture’ between the upper-class intellectuals and the bourgeois, where their self-interested representation of culture provoke mutual lucidity and reflexive blindness“[\[107\]](#). Through the patronage of the royal court and the development of the silk industry, France became the center of fashion. Although in the 19th century Europe cannot be considered a fashionable society, the rise of mercantile capitalism fostered the rise of fashion consumption and a privileged and elitist understanding of fashion. “When in the 20th century consumption of fashionable clothing became a mass phenomenon in the most developed countries, fashion became an institution for launching novelty, an ally of the avant-garde“[\[108\]](#).

Haute couture became an institution for itself and together with the French term ‘la mode’ further contributed to the emergence of the haute couture fashion industry in France. Having its origins in the 19th century, the haute couture system has until now undergone an organizational evolution. It changed its relationship to its clientele over the years influenced by the mass market and the social order sustaining it. It has great impact on taste and among the arts in general and played a big role in the spread of Western dress. The haute couture, formerly an absolute elitist establishment, over time became the bridge between that class-structured fashion of the past and the democratized fashion of today.

“In the public sphere fashion was adopted as a political tool used to promote the dissension of youth groups in protest against mainstream ideals and beliefs. In the public sphere it became a vehicle to express meaning and memory. Allied with individualism and the search for a greater intellectual depth in keeping up with other conceptual visual arts trends”[\[109\]](#).

The democratization of fashion was further advanced by major technological advances in the late 19th century and early 20th century in clothing manufacture. It became possible to produce credible copies of the former clothes en masse. These technological advances, especially the invention of the sewing machine changed clothing production from custom-made to ready-to-wear fashion. “The industrial revolution nourished the growth of a large middle class which demanded and could afford fashion at every price level”[\[110\]](#). The effect of the great depression on fashion was immense: the industrial production fell to half of what it had been and many companies went bankrupt.

The 1930s were the greatest and most glamorous years in film history, a paradoxical contrast with the deprivations of real life. During the Second World War, many Parisian designers had to close because of the lack of fabrics to work with. There were no trimmings, no press coverage and most essentially no heat and little food.

The circumstances of the Second World War and its effects on the French fashion industry, where of great advantage for the Americans. They found their own style in sportswear, which reflects until today the more casual American life-style. Among the most famous ones are Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein.

By the mid twentieth century ready-to-wear (prêt à porter) has become the terrain on which the viability of new fashions would be tested. In the

50s and 60s the main subject of change and innovation of fashion products was the industry, through mass production as well as through the innovations of the fabrics and things industry and techniques of manufacturing.

The 70s were dominated by the publicities of the mass media. The baby-boom generation and the newly emerging market for teenagers composed of records, cosmetics, magazines and junior fashion was created. This was also the time of the emergence of the young British fashion designers. The emerging street fashion carried out a certain kind of influence on the fashion of luxury and vice versa. Both together influenced the industrial fashion. The giants of the ready-made industries played the main role in the diffusion of bottom-up fashion coopting innovations of the working class and other subcultures. At the same time the industries began to study the tastes of the consumers until the commercialization of styles started reflecting the preferences of the consumers.

The 80s in contrast focused much more on the phenomenon of style, on the research of symbols, on distinction and lifestyle. The griffe itself was considered per sé a synonymum of novelty and distinction. The stylists, the models, the specialized magazines, the designers and the advertising experts did not only shape and dictate the fashion, but by now have become fashion themselves.

Today the fashion industry underlies the developments of modern communications, which speed up the fashion process. The fashion industry is largely lead by the influences on marketing and consumer demand. Fashion marketing includes the process of research, planning, promoting and distributing the raw materials, apparel and accessories that consumers want to buy. A major trend in fashion marketing is the

globalization. World trade in apparel and accessories is growing despite high tariffs and drastic currency fluctuations. Many countries may be involved in the production of a single garment.

Consumer demand has caused the conversion of the fashion industry from a manufacturing to a marketing focus. Manufacturers and retailers study the shopping habits of all groups, which are influenced by age, income and lifestyle: demographic and psychographic trends and databases help to learn about consumer preferences and define target markets. Because fashion today has become a product of change, the sense of timing is a crucial factor.

### 3.1.2 Symbolism and (De-)codification of Fashion

Fashion is a collective behavior which refers to the consumption of clothing products. In sociology the concept of fashion contains collective behavior of diverse ways and typologies. These are characterized by the fact of anticipating and reflecting more or less important forms of social and cultural movements. The meanings in a dress are likely to be more ambiguous and more differentiated than they are in a many other realms. The aesthetic expression aims to communicate notions, subtleties and complexities.

“L'éthique et l'esthétique, ce n'était pas un idéal individuel, mais bien une matrice collective, où tout un chacun puisait ce qui lui était nécessaire pour parfaire son équilibre, trouver l'expression correcte et appropriée, exprimer une manière d'être libre et aisé, en bref vivre en accord avec la nature et la société”<sup>[111]</sup>.

The sociological interest in clothing and fashion lies in two factors. Through clothing and fashion the personalities of the people are communicated. The individual becomes a rational function and plays out emotional roles through fashion. On a collective level fashion

enables to locate the people symbolically in the more or less structured space of status claims and life-style attachments. There are lines of thinking to be followed: the instinct, the dream, the myth and the archetype are nothing else then rational and follow the collective emotion: they are a pushing force to the integration of the individual, to social form.

“In Paris selbst zeigt die Mode die weiteste Spannung und Versöhnung ihrer dualistischen Elemente. Der Individualismus,[...]; aber dabei wird ein gewisser ganz weiter Rahmen des allgemeinen Stils, der aktuellen Mode, streng festgehalten, so daß die einzelne Erscheinung nie aus dem Allgemeinen herausfällt, aber immer aus ihm heraushebt“[\[112\]](#).

Hence, fashion lives between the two antipodes of each other completing identities of collective and personal identity. It is defined by the need for togetherness and separateness from the others, the mass. The way in which the body is closed can be regarded as an active process or technical means for constructing and presenting a bodily self. Western fashion (elite or high fashion) is a particular variant of this in which the designer plays the role of definer.

Clothing styles and the fashions that influence the body over time constitute a code. The life of the body is turned on through the technical arrangement of clothes, adornment and gesture. The signifiers of the clothing constitute a style, an appearance or a certain fashion trend, which in a material sense can be thought of as the same for everyone. The signified is strikingly different for different publics, audiences and social groupings: for the conservative being against the experience, the fashion-wise as against the fashion-indifferent and for the creators of fashion and their coteries being against its consumers, even the sophisticated ones. This sphere of meanings being attached to clothes, cosmetics, hairstyles and jewelry is a highly differentiated field in terms

of taste, social identity and people's access to the symbolic goods of society.

“So entspricht die Nachahmung in all den Erscheinungen, für die sie ein bildender Faktor ist, einer der Grundrichtungen unseres Wesens, derjenigen, die sich an der Einschmelzung des Einzelnen in die Allgemeinheit befriedigt, die das Bleibende im Wechsel betont. Wo aber umgekehrt der Wechsel im Bleibenden gesucht wird, die individuelle Differenzierung, das Sich-abheben von der Allgemeinheit, da ist die Nachahmung das negierende und hemmende Prinzip“ [113].

Simmel puts his emphasis on class differentiation as the basis for fashion motivation in his analysis of the fashion system. But his analysis serves to understand that clothing styles and fashion do not inherit the same meaning for all members of society at the same time. Because of these different understandings, what is worn lends itself easily to a symbolic upholding of class and status boundaries in society. This implies that clothing's meanings are cultural.

In the world of design and merchandising is a good deal of uncertainty. It depends on whose interests are served by a new fashion and whose by resisting the new proclamation. But not all clothing is fashion. All clothing systems have a distant relationship with fashion systems and stylistic conventions. Although western fashion, its fashion codes and patterns are spread all over the world through the effects of capitalism and globalization and the presence of “western fashion iconographs“, fashion codification is not unique to the culture of capitalism.

But the emergence of the current distinguished and specialized fashion systems can be linked to the discourses of individualism, class, civilisation and consumerism appeared in Western societies. As Goffmann analyses, fashion is the possibility of taking the distance between the own official role and the other emerging roles. “Moda come

possibilità di prendere le distanze dal proprio ruolo ufficiale, per permettere agli altri ruoli di emergere“[114]. The codes of dress are technical devices which articulate the relationship between a particular body and its lived milieu. Therefore, clothes are part of the construction of a personal habitus, if not even ‘the construction’ of a personal habitus.

This habitus refers to specialized techniques and types of knowledge which enable people to negotiate the different departments of existence. Habitus includes the unconscious dispositions, the classification patterns, and the serious-taken preferences which lie in each individual's sense of the appropriateness and validity of his taste for cultural goods and practices[115].

They are as well inscribed to the body through body techniques and modes of self-presentation. The techniques of fashioning the body are a visible and primary denotative form of acculturation, which is used to wear the bodies for self-presentation within the social environment, mapping our codes of conduct through our fashion behavior[116].

Our habitus of clothing creates a face which positively constructs an identity rather than disguising a natural body or real identity. Fashion is understood as a cultural form of civilization with codes of conduct for the self-presentation. The body is trained to perform in socially acceptable ways by utilizing movement, gesture and demeanor until they become second nature. A fashion system embodies the denotation of acceptable codes and conventions, sets limits to clothing behavior, prescribes acceptable (and excludes unacceptable) modes of clothing the body, and constantly revises the rules of the fashion game.

From that perspective, fashioning the body (in contrast to simple clothing for the purpose of keeping warm) is a feature of all cultures

although the specific technologies of fashion vary between cultures and within a single cultural sphere. The multiple possibilities create a self-identification. The fashion choice is a way to reflect the self, because anytime clothes are changed, the old or new ones are questioned. Fashion thus can be considered as a way to harmonize the own ambivalences and to give them value.

Therefore, fashion can be understood as an index of codes of display, restraint, self-control and affect-transformation. Only the fashion behavior varies within the context: accordingly, fashion has no absolute or essential meaning, rather the clothes-body complex operates in ways appropriate to a particular habitus or milieu [117]. To illuminate this understanding in the following chapter the relationship between class and fashion and what fashion means for the generation of individual and collective identity shall be explained.

### 3.1.3 Class and Fashion

For many years fashion and fashionable clothes were only reserved to the aristocratic and wealthy circles in Europe. Fashion is always related to the cultural impulses of the era within economic and political conditions. Fashion always reflects the dominant ideology, no matter whether supporting or negating it. Fashion is a mirror of the social model. Historically this phenomenon has always existed and has always had the characteristic of representing the various periods of history and their aesthetics of the body.

This influenced the beginnings of the academic research of fashion and therefore the analyses dealt with the places of the fashions existence: first the aristocratic classes and then the upper classes. "In spite of the pervasiveness of this idea, the trickle-down theory is often ascribed to

North American economist Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929) and to German sociologist Georg Simmel (1858-1903)“[\[118\]](#). Although they dealt with the role of fashion for the upper class, they gave important insights into the relationship between classes.

“Il termine moda del latino *modus* indica una scelta, un meccanismo regolativo di scelte transitorie che abbracciano un vasto campo, da quello artistico letterario a quello del costume, del gioco all’abbigliamento, e vengono fatte in base a criteri di gusto e di estro“[\[119\]](#). Fashion is a manifestation of profound phenomenon’s implying signals of social tensions and potential collective aspirations. On the other side it is an important element of intercommunication, very often ‘symbolical support’ of other phenomena. It can influence directly on the clothing, modifying and using it as a support to experiment possibilities of social change.

There are two distinctions to be made. On the one side fashion is used to go conform with accepted standards in society. On the other side it serves the necessity for individuality, for conscious distinctiveness. In this interplay between conformity and individuality, clothing has signed and evidenced the fractures and the diversity between classes at power and the others. It serves to differentiate the diverse social figures inside the various classes: the dominant or the powerless.

“They can be united in a variety of different ways, and Simmel analyses a selection of types, from the dude who is always the first to adopt new styles, to women who compensate for their overall repression by superficial display in dress, to the true individualist who uses fashion as a mask of conformity under which his or her individualism can be all the stronger“[\[120\]](#).

To confront this idea of fashion solely based on class differentiation, lifestyle aspirations and modes of distinction the eye shall be shortly put

on everyday clothing. Everyday fashion or clothing is more accurately compared with other fashion systems, including those in non-european and non-capitalist cultures. Everyday fashion plays an important role in the lives of most people. The systems of fashion and cycles of popularity percolate through contemporary life. There are style conventions and dress codes, which can be identified in all groups, including sub-cultures, ethnic groups, alternative lifestyles, workplace and leisure cultures and in all the mundane places and institutions of everyday life. Some parts of everyday fashion systems are directly attuned to elite fashion codes, whereas most aspects have an indirect, oppositional or remote relationship with elite fashion.

With the appearance of mass society fashion has also become a mass medium, but still serves as an element of satisfaction of social needs and the necessity of differentiation and distinction. Therefore, fashion has become somehow the child of the complex and fragmented society losing its uniformity. "...figlio della società complessa, che perde i caratteri di uniformità ed omologazione tipici della società borghese in cui lo status sociale aveva anche un suo preciso aspetto cementario" [121]. At this point, it is necessary to distinguish between the institutional reality which is constructed through social elements independent from the individual and the functioning of fashion as a systematic and normative reserve on which the individual can pull the own dress and the individual reality. This is the own and true act of clothing, with which the individual actualizes the general institution through the own person and creates his (fashion) identity.

### 3.1.4 Fashion and (Modern) Identity

“It is at once evident that clothes generally, and fashion in particular, communicate much more about the person than the social statuses he or she occupies or aspires to”[\[122\]](#).

More than the symbols of social class or status to which some sociologists are inclined to, the social identity and its role in evoking and assimilating modifications in fashion plays a major role. Identity through fashion is created by any aspect of the self, which makes individuals communicate via symbolic means with others. In the case of fashion, identity is created through predominantly non-discursive and sublime visual and tactile symbols. Social identity points to the configuration of attributes and attitudes persons seek to and actually do communicate about themselves.

“Yet, it was Simmel who first called our attention to the fact of ‘individual differentiation’. By this expression we mean the fact that modern social differentiation, insofar it has introduced more fragmentation in society, has indirectly resulted in the creation of spaces of freedom for the individual”[\[123\]](#).

The striking point lies in the ambivalence of the collective identity, which is an important cultural source of the code changes in fashion. The diffusion of fashion inherits various and ambiguous meanings. This is the place where fashion feeds itself from, from the instability of our social identities and their ambivalences. With symbolic tools fashion enters in perfect resonance with the conflicts of the changing states of emotions and the soul and the self-references which characterize society on the collective level. “Certainly, social cohesion under modern conditions cannot simply take the form it had in traditional societies. In Durkheim’s view, at the basis of the ethical norms of modern society is precisely the division of labor, insofar it requires cooperation”[\[124\]](#).

Émile Durkheim acknowledges the importance of economics and the related socio-ethical norms of modern society, which constitute the individual identity (but) within a collective conscience. Further, he states that “the lack of harmony between norms, functions and individual motives, is for him at the basis of the ethical fractures of modern society - that is, of anomy“[\[125\]](#).

In contrast to Simmel, Blumer depicts fashion as an outcome or process of class differentiation, treats fashion as an act of collective mood, taste and choice. “Style comes into fashion only if it corresponds to what he terms ‘the incipient taste of the fashion-consuming public’“[\[126\]](#). The individual in his attempt for individual differentiation is ‘freely’ interacting within the social boundaries of singularity.

This idea of collective selection constitutes the first aspect of modernity. The origin, formation and development of collective taste are a grand problem for the production of fashion and of culture. Fashion is set through a process of free selection from among a large number of competing models. The creators of the models are seeking to catch and give expression to what we may call the direction of modernity. The buyers, who through their choices set the fashion, try to anticipate the fashion-consuming public. The diffusion of fashion is taken for granted because of its central creation and organization and following transmission to the periphery. The designs made by Parisian haute couture moved at varying pace not merely geographically outwards, but also socially downwards, probably loosing a great deal in subtlety, quality and workmanship as they did so.

“This experience of self-alienation has been intensified with the transition from a producer to a consumer capitalism: overwhelmed by the allure of a consumer society, post-modern individuals are tempted to abandon any life-long project to think of their life in more immediate ways. This is why we have come to link identity and fashion“[\[127\]](#).

In recent times there is a greater polycentrism and pluralism in fashion. There are multiple fashion systems: fashion moves up and down and along a variety of starting positions and in several directions, rather than a single system in which fashion only moves in one direction, top-down from the elite to the majority. There are changing views about fashion in clothes, which seem to present a number of distinct epochs, each of which is characterized by different systems of production and contrasting types of consumption.

Hence, at one moment fashion is determined by an elite and hand craft production. The next moment fashion is dominated by mass production and mass consumption. The emphasis lies on flexible production and consumption becomes more diverse and segmented in line with the increasing polycentric origins of fashion. Further, the information technologies create opportunities for (ex)change even in traditional and mature sectors such as the clothing and textile industry. The development of Benetton for example is precisely the utilization of information technology in production and distribution.

Three kinds of fashion leaders can be distinguished, although they intermingle most of the time: the avant-garde, which is stylistically adventuresome, the luxurious and expensively dressed and those of the real-life, representing the largest segment of everyday middle- and upper-middle-class fashion-conscious women. The essence of fashion lies in the process of change and transition. As Blumer notes, “for fashion to operate in a particular area it must be marked by a premise

being placed on staying 'up to date' and a penalty being placed on becoming outmoded"[128].

But fashion involves not just fluctuating culture. More than that it involves industry and more than consumption, it entails production. Fashion requires a certain kind of socio-cultural environment to exist. It emphasizes the importance of prestige in the system of fashion, which is embedded within rules and social conventions. Modes and models of fashion must be observable and their meanings must be comprehensible, thus not constrained by the absence of meanings. There is no behavior apart from society, it exists only within social reference systems, which share common meanings and common languages.

This is also evident within the fact, that designers usually resist the mass market until economic circumstances and potential profits persuade them to initiate ready-to-wear lines and licensing arrangements, whereas the latter in particular has been extraordinarily profitable. Many designers support their loss-making couture fashion by licensing arrangements. "In contrast to the individual nature of creativity, the latter is always a social matter. In our case, one is tempted to say that the market ultimately sets the rules of fashion"[129].

### 3.2 Fashion Production

Within the Creative Industries in general some activities have always been distinguished as commercial operations. Creativity of course is central and it is protected, but so is the system of production and distribution, too. Especially within the fashion industries the tradition goes back to the 1850s, "when Charles Worth 'invented the system which is the basis of modern fashion'"[130].

In recent years enterprises based on the network model of production, clothing, design and selling emerged. This meant an immense reduction of the whole production cycle. Design, production and selling take place within two weeks, whereas Charles Worth gave a new fashion style five years to live more than 150 years ago. In order to establish and maintain commercial security in the speed of contemporary forms of cultural production, creative producers need to adopt innovative production tools and processes.

Luigi Maramotti, CEO of the Max Mara Fashion Group talks about “forced innovation and the need for all members of the organisation to have a creative attitude“[\[131\]](#). Although the speed of fashion production seems to adapt to the modern ideal of Fordist production and modernising industry, there are limits of how far fashion manufacture can be transformed into a Fordist system.

Until now the technology in the fashion field has not further developed since the introduction of sewing machines and electric cutters in the 19th century. Not only does the unpredictable demand of the fashion products resist an efficient and easy process of Fordism[\[132\]](#).

In addition, the glamorous world of the mass media has given students of fashion design unrealistic aspirations about being designers and running their own studio and collections. This promoted the desire to work in a creative field such as fashion. Because art schools draw on the romantic notions of art, they give themselves a primary commitment to creativity and imagination and encourage an image of the artist as a different kind of person from the normal, average citizen[\[133\]](#). This form of cultural capitalism keeps going, taught through the art schools and continued from the design-entrepreneurs who express little interest in the dynamics of wealth creation and business.

Although the production process takes a big part of the manufacturing, it is nearly totally edged out from the focus on the creative process, within art schools as well as within the fashion media and moreover the art field. "Visiting a factory or production unit as part of their course is not common, no discussion of the history of fashion production, of sweat shops, homeworking or struggles for trade union representation"[134].

In fact, there is a rigid division of labor: the designer usually doesn't know who is producing the designed clothes, on which basis and for which salary and in the worst case not even in which part of the country. What takes place is the reproduction of a strict social hierarchy, where 'middlemen' work between two complete diverse fields. On the one hand, the working field of the designer, on the other hand the field of production and manufacturing, where the salaries are pushed down to maximise profits up to a large size of exploited labor. Designers thus can evade from the responsibility of exploited labor, production methods and protect their own reproduced habits of social distinction. "They retain this distance and distinction, not only as a mark of professional status and identity, but also as a style of creative individualism"[135].

The task of bargaining for the cost of orders are delegated to a production manager, who keeps the contact with the wholesalers and subcontractors. Working with or without the services of a business manager, many young designers are naive and ignorant in pretty much all the questions concerning production cycles, labor rights and other socio-political questions. What stays important are only design-related questions. Focusing on the problem from another perspective, it

becomes clear that fashion journalists and other professionals in the fashion field describe the field only in terms of sales and consumer spending rather than on employment conditions and livelihoods. These parts are completely left out. Thus the fashion industry goes into recession where sales are down and recover when there is a consumer boom.

In most cases the formerly unique genre of fashion has been exchanged by three principle categories of style: the style of luxury, the industrial fashion and presently more and more streetstyle. The industrialized fashion is created by producers, who sell similar styles to similar social groups similar in many different countries, just as smaller companies which limit themselves to a single country or continent.[136] Publicity in the media, in elaborated catalogues and through the clothes themselves, sells an image of a product to be able to compete in the mass diffusion of images, which at the same time constitutes a mediated culture and undermines the qualities or covers imperfections. This form of mediated culture determines the values and the attractiveness of the product for the consumers. The criteria for the enterprises at various stages of the production and communication chain is to choose the creative inputs which should lead to the innovation of products.

The basic criteria is the preservation of an equilibrium between what is known and what is new. The equilibrium is hold by not putting in question too radically established knowledge, routines, competences which serve as a transformation for the idea of a product socially accepted and of established success. The management usually chooses within between style, product and marketing, each necessary and decisive for the planning of every new collection.

The decision on the price of the product is symbolically loaded with significance, because the sides of industrially produced fashion confront each other, the free and creative side and the commercial side. Main problems often lie in the weakness of the chains, which draw the connection of the designer with both their suppliers and their consumers. Therefore, the product manager needs to be able to negotiate a product through all production phases. “Lo product manager (l'uomo prodotto) deve essere in grado di gestire un singolo progetto sotto tutti gli aspetti, compresi quelli commerciali e di redditività complessiva“[\[137\]](#).

He/she needs to be a creative person who needs to produce new projects on the basis of the informations from the market, shaping the definition of the product, the research, the development and technical proofs without forgetting to control timing and the quality of the production cycle. The insecurity of the demand is definitely the fundamental problem of the clothing organizations, weather small or big.

### 3.2.1 Development of a Fashion Product

The process of the development of fashion is different from its production cycle. The development involves a complex of influences, interactions, exchanges, adjustments and accommodations among persons, organizations and institutions that animate the cycle from the beginning to its end. The most influential feature is time. The cycle is characterized by its elapsed time from the introduction of a fashion product to its supplementation by a successive one.

As mentioned above, the span of today's fashion production cycle is progressively shortened.

The several factors, which account for the progressively shortened span of the fashion cycle therefore, have a different influence on the development of a fashion product. There is the intensive capitalization and rationalization of the apparel industry. This is accompanied by a consumer affluence and therefore new consumption modes and techniques. Furthermore, the loosening of class, boundaries and the quickened flow of information via the electronic media implicate an ongoing democratization in the fashion industries. The industry is less influenced by major fashion revolutions such as the lifting of hemlines following the First World War, suggesting a process that draws on inspiration. By contrast, the average fashion cycle is more dependent on imitation or institutionalization. It is much more institutionally constrained by numerous aesthetic conventions, publicity practices and merchandising requirements.

The most intriguing question at this point is how the invention, the finding of ideas in the fashion process takes place. Where do the designers get their ideas from and what happens during this process?

“Anywhere and everywhere. The answer I would hazard, shorthand for suggesting that talented designers, like artists everywhere think constantly of what they next want to do, and ‘just about anything’ can prove a source of inspiration or touchstone for a fruitful idea“[\[138\]](#).

The first step in producing a cultural product such as fashion is to take the decision on what to produce. Producing fashion thus means selecting the fabrics, the colors and silhouettes for the given season’s collection. The process generally begins with a concept that is inspired by a range of influences, local or non-local, such as architecture, art exhibitions, opera and theatre or street wear. There are local factors such as the complementary cultural institutions of a city. New York for

example, is not only an internationally renowned fashion capital, but also famous for performing and visual arts. The cultural institutions within a city do not only help to encourage innovative dynamism by exposing designers to distinct ways of seeing and doing fashion, but they reversely „play a critical role in translating the designer’s vision into a tradable commodity“[\[139\]](#). Further, fashion-related institutions serve as important intermediaries linking designers and their produced fashion directly with the consumer.

Apart from specific local factors which immensely shape the whole character of the fashion production, from the first idea to the presentation of the new collection on a fashion show to the presentation in the store and modes of consumption, there is a series of non-local sources of design inspiration. One of them travels abroad, where foreign influences become easily included within the creation process. This includes other international colleagues or competitors, usually the internationally most renowned and therefore high-profile designers. Other influences can be old movies and the study of costumes of historical epochs. All these quite differing influences shape the design of a fashion product and take shape when the process of giving a material form finishes in a concept.

It has to be underlined that in the case of the high-end designer, the foundation providing this process, is the fashion design-school. The city itself „as a source of both “art“ and “commerce“ reveals how a number of intermediaries assist the designer in the process of producing fashion“[\[140\]](#), but the cities institutions are the ones that serve with cultural artifacts and play a directive role in guiding the design innovation process. „The city establishes the social and economic parameters of creativity, giving meaning and value to a designer’s

product, thereby ensuring that aesthetic innovations are translated into commercially viable products.”[141]. Fashion becomes part of the advertisement of the city or even the country as a whole like Italy or Paris, it creates an image of the city and its people.

### 3.2.3 Fashion Business

The culture within the company “is like an enormous database from which can be read the company’s life, experience, skills, individuals’ contributions over the years, but also limitations and handicaps”[142].

The apparel manufacturer works on a level where he is defined by its customer and identified by its particular style. This involves finding a market niche around a particular lifestyle or need. On the other hand, a company establishes an image and a product to appeal to a target market. The merchandiser prepares plans to achieve sales goals and to meet consumer needs. The design apartment creates a seasonal line of items or groups, whereas the designer is especially concerned with color, fabrics and other design elements to develop attractive garments. After a sketch and first patterns are complete, the sample garment or prototype is made as a test of the design and fabric. Finally the line is selected and prepared to be shown at wholesale markets.

In apparel production there are three integral phases of fashion manufacturing: design, production and sales. To keep its retail customers, each manufacturer tries to maintain a consistent price structure, quality of styling and construction and timely deliveries. Even before a collection is shown at the market, production may begin based on sales forecasts. After a collection or line is shown at a market, it may be possible to adjust cutting orders. Traditionally, the retailer and the manufacturer represent two separate businesses, but communicate

through the wholesale markets.

Fashion shows and fairs take place all year long around the world and are of crucial importance to a fashion company as it gives first hints what will be en vogue this season and which products sell. Further, brands and designers expand their businesses by adding product lines, exporting and opening retail stores. Manufacturers have various distribution policies to ensure that their goods are merchandised properly. Many offer incentives to retailers to buy their merchandise, but they also use publicity, advertising and other promotional aids to foster sales. The final test for fashion merchandise is whether the consumer buys it at the retail level. Each season brings a new chance for success or failure. No wonder the apparel industry is a competitive and often nerve-racking business.

#### 3.2.2.1 *“Made in Italy”*

To confront the Italian fashion case with the other European fashion systems, it is necessary to underline that the Italian case represents a relevant peculiarity: in Italy the whole line of manufacturing, which gives fashion production its life, is to be found. There is a wide fabric production field spread all over the nation. It is not only the segment of confession, but all the phases from the production of yarns to those of fabrics, as well as the studies and production of artificial fibers. Moreover, the Italian system also covers the planning and development of machinery and industry complexes. This is a big difference to other countries, which primarily produce outside of their country. The Italian case is presented here, because the production side of fashion plays an important role in sustainable development strategies as will be

shown in chapter 3 on sustainable fashion.

In the 1940s there were only 30 fashion manufacturers operating in Italy, their production was basically limited to men's wear. Since then, the Italians have built an international fashion reputation on creativity, beautiful fabrics, knitwear, leather goods, tailoring and quality production. Devoted to ready-to-wear and accessories, fashion is now Italy's second biggest industry next to tourism.

To expand its markets, Italy's fashion industry is export driven. Clothing and textiles have become Italy's biggest export after shoes. The modern Italian fashion, which is tied to the cycles of stationary fashion production, to the fashion shows and the image of the 'griffes' and especially here competes with the French fashion system. This system was born after World War II with an installation from the beginnings completely industrial.

The role of the fashion designer in Italy is defined and recognized by the public through three etiquettes: the designer as an artist, as an artisan and as an entrepreneur. "La duplice anima della moda italiana, insieme industriale e artistica, influisce sullo sviluppo del sistema moda, che incarna la dialettica tra arte e prodotto di consumo, tra élite e massa"[143].

This triad of the fashion designer in the Italian fashion system does not only cover the industrial and artistic field, it modifies the nature of the fashion product and the production itself. As a result, the innovation in Italy, in the post-war years was born within the companies. This innovative attitude represents the distinctive element of Italian fashion, which is, within a short period of time, able to distribute ready-to-wear fashion and to undertake a leading position within the international fashion system. This happens, starting from a position originally

marginal.

To build and conserve their position in the international market, the Italian creatives had to affront two types of commitments: the economic-industrial question and the social-artistic question. Firstly, they needed to find the balance between positioning themselves at their own market and at the same time they needed to learn to compete on the international level of high fashion and the emerging market of ready-to-wear. Additionally, they needed to find a plan of legitimizing themselves socially to be able to confront the couturiers of the French haute couture, which at that time still reigned supreme.

“The cultural qualities of the producers and the character of the location in which production takes place are imagined as embodied in the commodity itself. The evocation of the artisanal and craft traditions of Italy with its venerable history of art and design which can be traced to the Renaissance endows Italian products with this heritage and a commensurate value“[\[144\]](#).

This meant, that the designer was at the same time busy producing a product of quality inheriting both sartorial and artistic elements and working on designing the own social image of exclusivity by embracing the codes of the griffe. The created brand had to transform its name into a desired object for the public. The intent was to be remembered by the consumers and take over the position which was until then occupied by the houses of the French haute couture. This was implemented successfully by brands like Armani, Gucci and Dolce & Gabbana, but also major fashion business houses like Benetton or the Max Mara Fashion Group.

The Italian fashion system has grown together with the growth of the division of the textile-clothing industry, representing a large number of the national income. The Italian enterprises are diffused all over the

country in diverse sectors of manufacturing, with a preponderance of the traditional labor intensive enterprises.

Milan has become the center for “moda pronta” (ready-to-wear), because it is close to the fabric sources of Como, Biella and Torino. There is also a smaller fashion center in Florence and many fashion and accessory companies are scattered around the country. It lives from the idea of creating something new and together with the industrial conditions builds the matrix for a sort of creative capitalism. “... una sorta di capitalismo creativo: pare sintetizzare efficacemente la fusione tra i due elementi costitutivi del mito del centro: il basso e l’alto, la Terra e il Cielo“[\[145\]](#).

Milan as the geographical center and gate to Europe and the outside world was able to create two internationally acknowledged myths: the myth of the capital of Italian fashion and that of Italian design. This happened although Milan is quite conformist. There is a strong aesthetic judgment on the ‘non-beauty’ of the city, on its provincialism and its exclusion of certain social circles. All this created the myth of the fashion center in Italy and lives from this particular image. Today, because of the structural change in the global economy, Milan as well faces a shift from its classical creative industries of textiles, clothing, shoes and furniture to new creative industries sectors, e.g. fashion media and advertising.

In summary, the special features of Italian fashion are that designers, manufacturers and fabric companies work cooperatively, often as integrated parts of a large vertical company. Some of these fashion companies are part of large textile firms. These companies are able to invest heavily in the newest technology and spacious, modern factories that help Italy maintain its reputation for high-quality production. The

result is that 39% of European apparel production is done in Italy.

### 3.2.4 The Aesthetic Tradition of Excellence in the Fashion Field

The aesthetic development in fashion design and its grasping in the wider sphere of society underlies several important factors. Fashion designers are trained in the tradition of the fine arts. This forms their identities and understanding as fashion designers. This is also the reason, why they regard their tailored pieces as art (to be hung in museums such as art pieces) rather than clothing[146].

But the difference from a fashion designer to an artist, which surely both create and work creatively, is that the fashion designers item must proceed in the chain of production. This difference is definitely not a chosen one. The reliance on an enterprise and the norms and values of the market underlie “more a survival strategy than a political statement”[147]. The designer is more committed to artistic and cultural values than to production methods, economy and business strategies. On one side this is due to their training, but it is also a common and socially accepted view of the fine arts.

The legitimized artistic freedom is only superficially free. The power of the teachings of the curriculum and the actions of the fashion departments remain in the hands of the academics, where the student needs to adapt to a distinctive habitus to survive. Passion, self-representation and moreover self-exposition are the distinguishing traits of the fashion field, which are expected to be fulfilled as a proof for artistic evidence. This construction of the ‘creative self’ is a requirement in fashion culture and makes up a grand part of the success. The student itself becomes a “fashion subject”, an aestheticized subject.

The role of art in the fashion field can be interpreted in two

contradictory ways: first of all does it provide the necessary distance from the vulgarity of cash and commerce. It protects the designers against failure when times are hard and gives the strength to work even harder in an economically insecure environment. Secondly, the role of art enables to serve as a kind of strategy of taste and distinction within the economic field. The creation of the fashion designer becomes a performative strategy: the “technologies of the self” which can now be recognised as producing the fashion design ‘subject’[\[148\]](#).

Moreover, the aestheticization of everyday life has brought several consequences for fashion in general and for upcoming fashion designers. The expansion of the fashion sector and the fashion departments in art schools by the end of the 1980s gave young fashion designers more confidence in promoting their own products. These changes have resulted in regarding the fashion designer as an author, as an artist in his or her own right. This way fashion has gained the status as a kind of fine art practice.

At the same time, due to an ongoing democratization and the diffusion of cultural products (see chapter 2.1 and 2.2), the meaning of art itself has changed. The elitist idea of art made room for a new broadened understanding of art, where the boundaries between high and low culture mix. More than that, the aestheticization of everyday life has entailed a breaking down of the old distinctions between high culture and popular culture. Fashion has definitely played and still plays a key role in this process as it is more than an art product in the museum. It is visible and present on the street.

Further, the creative labor markets have grown and so has the challenge to judge about cultural values. When creativity is committed to aesthetic values, the form, original functions, the ‘created’ goods are

loaded with symbolic values. The consumers recognize the products not only for their measurable qualities and quantities, but also for the signals of the aesthetics, the design or new forms which touch their soul and emotions and in the best case encourage them to try new things.

Fashion design is a highly disorganized and disintegrated economy. Working in this industry is one part of the aestheticization of society, where the priority lies in producing works of art. “Stylists describe their work as ‘image making’”[\[149\]](#). Therefore, fashion fits into the developments of the expansion of arts media and cultural programmes: the history of fashion, fashion photography and the history of fashion photography serve as important subjects of exhibitions, galleries and bigger retrospectives, mostly patronized by cultural state and city departments in the role of promotion.

Further can “the development of the British art school be seen a part of the history of modernity and the place made available for ‘culture’ in that undertaking”[\[150\]](#). The schools promoted and supported the individualization in modern society, presented especially through the figure of the artist or in the fashion sphere the designer and partly in other ‘less’ creative workers. This legitimizes the pursuit of self-realization, of accumulating experiences and living emotions, “which were otherwise seen as impediments to the great march of rationality, reason and bureaucracy”[\[151\]](#). The schools legitimize the so-called artistic freedom. Although the fashion designers embellish themselves with connotations of the understanding of excellence in the fine arts, most understand their practice as a combination of fine art and craft making.

The work of artistic creation becomes mystified as a creative and

intrinsic act of production and the magic of the label, a strategy of power. Famous examples of this strategy are fashion designers such as Vivienne Westwood, John Galliano or Alexander McQueen, all conforming to the accepted image of the practicing artist. The dimension of art is qualified by the pitch for the market and for publicity. Outside of the fashion cosmos, the artistic touch and the individual image of the designer are part of the process of marketing and branding. They come together in the concept of the label and move around the status and the meaning of art. A good and successful label represents integrity and renounces the marketplace.

On the other side these notions give fashion the aura, status and distinctiveness needed to set it apart from high street clothing and the rag trade. "The imperative of the market is balanced by the sheer effort of the designers to see their own work hung on gallery walls, featured in art magazines and acknowledged as an object, piece or collection like an 'installation' or 'performance'" [152]. This image of the romantic artist now underlies the practice of a wide range of cultural professionals, from the art directors of the advertising sphere to that of the traditional image of the poor and starving artist.

The idea of the artist as a creative genius has its roots in the Renaissance, but the term found access into the discourse of the human sciences at the end of the 18th century. For the first time the term was not only applied to God, but to the human artist, who became characterized as being guided by feelings and imaginations rather than by reason and rules. In Kant's "Critique of Judgement" the genius is characterized by originality as opposed to imitation, which is necessary for artistic production. It is fairly accepted that some people are more creative than others. This romantic notion of the Kantian aesthetic

stresses separateness in art and culture and keeps old stereotypes alive.

This view is opposed by Pierre Bourdieu's sociological critique, stating that cultural sensibility is not an universal property, but restricted taste of a particular social class, mainly the bourgeois class. Bourdieu offers a rather democratic view of popular cultural taste and of the capacity for artistic production. This view does not totally neglect traditionalist conventions and rules, but emphasizes those as well as original and novel writings.

These notions feed the fashion sphere and at the same time help it to compete in the field of symbolic cultural/fashion production. Designers become trained under this concept of artistic excellence and later keep on nourishing the image of the creative genius.

### *3.2.3.1 Young Fashion Designers - the Case of Great Britain*

“Despite the hardship faced by the fashion designers I interviewed, including the long hours and the difficulties of maintaining a cash flow, the luxury they have, as my more respondents see it, was of being able to concentrate on their own work“[\[153\]](#).

The sector of independent fashion design has been nearly erased as the big chains intermingle and include styles of the catwalks within weeks or even days until they hang on the clothes racks. (note: Talking about Europe: This is the case for England, France and Italy, but not an emerging young fashion scene in Thailand or Shanghai for example.) Since the end of the 1990s it was not possible for young fashion designers to be ‘independent’ anymore. The only way of surviving is to sign a contract with bigger companies and to give up total creative independency.

Another impact on the creative outputs of young designers is the overtaking of the big chains of graduated and highly talented students for a short period of time and to subsequently replace them with others. State support, varying in the countries, is rarely available and young fashion designers are not to be found in city centers, but sometimes in urban districts undergoing a process of gentrification. The street “Marktstraße“ in the quarter „Karlinenviertel“ in Hamburg for example hosts many designer and particularly workshops (<http://www.karlinenviertel.de>). For young fashion designers this means that they have to become multi-skilled. They have to know about marketing and self-promotion, not only the ‘creative’, but much more of the business side of fashion. Therefore, the fashion designer must be able to be a self-disciplined and creative individual to be successful. The creative part of the job has to be rationalized within the overall work. The creativity itself has to become a conscious part of the self-understanding of the enterprise.

The young fashion designer can hardly set up a sustainable small-scale business after graduation. For a young fashion designer it is a long and hard struggle ‘to become famous’. Moreover, it is even harder to become long-lastingly successful and to be able to live from the fashion production. This process includes long periods without work and orders. But, the working ethos as well as the aesthetic norms make the young designers understand their precarious situation as a period of time, which can be filled with other inspiring experiences later to be included in the new ‘upcoming’ job. This is a distinctive and particular way of managing the uncertainty and risks of working in the creative field. To surpass these periods without work, many designers do other jobs such as part-time teaching or all kinds of other jobs to accumulate capital for

the needed equipment: a sewing machine, other little pieces of equipment and of course enough fabrics.

The training and the aspiration to be creative, forces many designers to concentrate more on self-advertisement and promotion of their creativity than to the manufacturing side of things. Although publicity and the mass media set the selling of products in motion, too much of the designers time is taken by trying to get into contact with fashion editors and stylists. The designers often have to rely on freelance services rather than getting a full-time employment.

The British fashion design is in fact heavily dependent upon and uniquely supported by the State, especially in terms of training and education. This stands as a counterpart to the small business culture where the young designers try to set up their businesses after leaving school. Thus, the common culture rejects the classic elitist idea, namely that cultural experiences and experimentalism can only be experienced by a minority and only at certain places.

One of the outcomes of British fashion design is a greater degree of access to culture and its democratization in an image-dominated and culturally saturated economy. Although the businesses and enterprises are quite small, they generate an enormous cultural visibility, which is an indication of their importance. They reflect the fluidity and unpredictability in an innovative way within a postmodern 'Kulturgesellschaft'.

This shift to a cultural economy brings into being a new awareness of aesthetics and creates a kind of aesthetic reflexivity. The individualization for its part can serve and encourage the need for new forms and associations in the long term. In a postmodern world of cultural goods and lifestyles these 'new cultural intermediaries' have the

knowledge to disseminate and produce cultural and symbolic goods to a wider audience within the boundaries of an emergent middle class. These “‘organic intellectuals’ have become the spokespeople for the new middle class within an emerging postmodern society“[\[154\]](#). These people, who are educated from an early age on to interpret, to invent and change signs and as states Bovone undertake skills of the former socially established intellectuals.

### 3.3 Fashion Consumption

#### 3.3.1 Fashion and Urbanity

The city represents a collection of different lifestyles, where all the fashion of the past is equally present and simultaneously consumable. The city forms a collection of cultures, where every culture is confronted with other values. The distinctive feature is that the cultures and modes of cultural products are not able to be absolute, they can offer identity creation. Therefore, fashion as a form of cultural practice becomes a social practice, a cultural field of experimentation in the urban context.

“La professionista della moda si rappresenta come un sintetizzatore dei ‘segnali’ che scandiscono la vita metropolitana“[\[155\]](#). The fashion professionals are very well aware of manipulating culture, which includes to construct significations. The image doesn’t offer itself as an alternative to reality, it is more one of the facets which can represent reality. The way of dressing up, fashioning oneself for some is a privileged way of expressing the secret and hidden parts of oneself.

The contemporary postmodern culture and its communication practices and followed by fashion are global and fragmented. Fixed places become relative, reflexive, experimental, tolerant and provisional. One

similarity between fashion and the postmodern city is the (important) refilling of the non-places[156] with substance, which are not able to produce cultural roots to the identity. Fashion can help to experiment diverse identities and creative social bonds, which otherwise are not found in the contemporary city.

As postmodern theories have shown, everyday life has changed: it is fragmented and contradictory. The subject is dislocated in a plurality of roles and discourses. There is an absence of unifying meta-narrations and at the same time the proliferation of local micronarrations and there are strong routines tied to diverse contexts. This causes a pragmatic curve, the consuming activities and the active roles of mediating receptors become valued. Everyday life becomes a construction playground for socially relevant practices and a place where subjects can identify and exchange images of themselves and the world. This is very visible in the gathering and life of youth cultures.

There are several modes of how can be contributed to the construction of fashion. The contemporary city and its manifold situations of consumerism seem to offer a variety of opportunities, where sellers and buyers interchange their roles. From second-hand fashion to the salesperson and the models who purchase the clothes to cheaper prices and resell them to friends. What takes place in many districts of European and North American cities is the shift from production centers to places of consumption, generally known as gentrification. It is a shift about the imposition of a cultural power: the historical past becomes aestheticized and the artistic community claims for itself the central role in the revitalization of the district.

Therefore, fashion is primarily an instrument of communication,

because it is able to change significations several times. It is a particular open language, 'contaminated' because it underlies the environmental variations and beneficiaries. The metropolis is the scenery where different images of fashion are consumed and constructed, where various possibilities of fashion are discovered. But it is also the metropolis itself which is the main reason of fashion.

### 3.3.2 Fashion Cities and Cultural Globalization

Fashion centers developed as a result of concentrations of resources, supplies, skilled and creative labor. Today, in a globalized world "the idea of such a globalised, borderless fashion has become something of a millennial fixation"[\[157\]](#). The so-called high fashion, formerly constituted through one-time elite designer companies, has produced global players which are capable of surviving in a world of diverse fashion settings over national and medial borders.

The established contact networks and institutions of particular fashion cities have been reformed within new global contexts. A new established significance of collections as social institutions for the controlling elites of global fashion culture have taken over the formerly 'Paris-controlled' fashion norms. Hence, new interdependent ambiguities of the modern fashion and the modern city have emerged: both can be vital, alluring and liberating, yet, both still have the potential to be oppressive, manipulative and exclusive.

Fashion, as a technique of acculturation can perfectly flourish in the wide range of local environments with different codes of behavior, rules, habitus and social positions. The construction of fashion cities is related to their symbolic and economic (super-)power, but the symbolic and economic geographies are of different shape than those of finance and

business services. There is a “distinct spatial and cultural separation between the spaces of finance and those of fashion“[\[158\]](#).

There is a long-term development of the geography of fashion's world cities, which is strongly tied to the following factors: the urban consumer revolution of the 18th century, the economic and symbolic systems of European imperialism, the development between general rivalries between European cities and those of European fashion cities. Later on the influence of American popular culture on European fashion and the development of a symbolic ordering of cities within the fashion media further shaped the current geographic distribution of fashion.

Like architecture or great exhibitions, with high fashion the European national cultures found another way to compete with each other. First it was Paris, then New York City, which established as an actual site of elite fashion consumption and imagined space of fashion fantasy. As the landscape of fashion in the 20th century was mediated by film, photography and the fashion press, fashion was permanently present to go with and shape the Zeitgeist. “The identification of Zeitgeist cities is just an extreme manifestation of a wider change: fashion has taken its place alongside music, gastronomy, clubbing, museums, galleries and urban tourism as key ‘cultural industry‘“[\[159\]](#).

These urban cultural districts are agglomerations of buildings dedicated to the figurative arts, museums and organizations which produce culture and goods founded on culture, services and correlative structures. From an economic point of view, the development of cultural districts is positive in several aspects: work is created, income is generated, the institutional capacities are improved and the places open up internationally.

From a cultural point of view, cultural globalization is a rather

controversial issue. Cultural globalization “generally refers to cultural products or artifacts that are circulated among advanced or advancing countries, particularly those that constitute desirable markets or that possess sufficient levels of income for investment in the arts and in industries that produce cultural artifacts“[160].

As the diffusion of cultural products usually goes along economic and organizational structures, the exchange of products remains one-sided on the one hand. Already known brands are able to invest into advertisement at particular places and therefore only certain products dominate the market. On the other hand, smaller and more locally based products seldomly gain access to a certain type of global culture. But, on the other side exactly these regional products “provide support for a network model of cultural globalization. Regions exhibit sub-networks of denser connections within the global network but are also linked less strongly to other areas“[161]. Therefore, cultural globalization operates on two working sites: a „homogenization of cultures and hybridization of cultures“[162].

### 3.3.3 Fashion as a Lifestyle

Fashion is a cultural process and a form of social behavior. But why has fashion become such an important form of social expression? It is quite easy to acquire clothes, change and experiment with, to express emotions and give political statements. The individual and social identity is not (solely) defined anymore from birth, class, family and from income.

Today, fashion objects are separated from their intrinsic value and are acquired and used in many other fields: in culture, values and compartments of subjects using them. The existence of lifestyles

explains above all the contemporary presence of multiple fashions in society, all equally accepted, validated and imitated. The terminus becomes exchanged by its plural: the fashions. The fashion is not able anymore to impose an uniform conformism in the whole society.

Therefore the analysis of the phenomenon fashion has to be shifted towards the atmosphere, the tastes and individual choices, at the inside of the fashion system and the overall consumption. This is the predominant subject which conditions the behavior of the actors: the single individual, the consumer, which seems able to decide and to choose with always less conditions and social influences.

This subjectivity of the mass creates a new behavior of consumption, through which fashion represents the most apparent aspects and expresses its values most central. "L'affermazione della propria micità sembra essere l'unica necessità che muove l'atto di consumo"[\[163\]](#).

The values of reference, which before were represented through groups in which the individual identified itself through the adoption of symbols and status of style, become of personal exploration and game.

The urban district can serve as a factor in aesthetic production and organization of the activities of young artists and creative workers. The neighborhood provides both material and symbolic resources that facilitate creative activity, especially in the early years of an artists or creative workers career. The term bohemia first appeared in the 1840s, when the Parisian writer Henri Murger published the stories of poor artists living in Montmartre, "applying the term bohemia to mark the material and symbolic spaces occupied by these strivers"[\[164\]](#). In the United States the term appeared in urban districts such as Greenwich Village, where artists, political radicals, eccentrics and immigrant laborers shared the same urban spaces.

Current debates on the contemporary Western cities underlie the shifts within the economic context: de-industrialization and globalization increase the importance of immaterial labor in areas like finance, technology and media design. Therefore, new patterns of production characterize the city, especially the production of culture and technology. “Bohemia, rooted in the modernist metropolis persists in the transition to what Michael Dear (200) calls ‘the postmodern urban condition’”[\[165\]](#). More than their modernist predecessors, the postmodern bohemians are more important in understanding urban developments.

Of special interest are the advantages these bohemian districts offer for young creatives and to understand their role within the theories of political economy of cultural production and urban development. The modern bohemia has typically been viewed as a marginal space in the city with regards to urban economy and to the norms of capitalist accumulation. The utilitarian work ethic is consciously rejected by the representatives of the bohemia. Baudelaire, French writer and self-confessed bohemian states “to be a useful man has always appeared to me to be something quite hideous”[\[166\]](#).

But the bohemia today is often utilized in the neighborhood as a site of accumulation: the new bohemian spaces are implemented in strategies of gentrification. There are strong relationships between the new bohemia and the agglomeration of new media enterprises. It is less considered as a site for the production of culture. Indeed, the neighborhoods serve as a place for research and development for the Culture Industries.

The rehabilitating role of older industrial neighborhoods remains an important and anachronistic feature for living lofts, performance venues

and galleries. These places have become much more illuminating beyond the traditional arts venues. Besides the increased number of artists in large cities, it is the new creative class consisting of educated cosmopolitans employed in the postindustrial growth sectors of finance, insurance, real estate and media technology, which shape city quarters. “This development leads artists and other cultural producers to emerge as avatars of urban consumption patterns, a trend not unknown to past bohemia, but one whose scope and impact has increased with the corresponding increase in cosmopolitan consumers”[\[167\]](#). According to Richard Florida and Nicholas Clark, urban populations no longer follow job offers, but employers rather have to create jobs where the educated, individuals with a high cultural capital live and consume cultural products from their artistic environment.

The formerly romanticized poor genius artist correlates with the new bohemia and with the instrumental interests of the Culture Industries. Instead, the ideal feature of the bohemia is their benefit to the cultural industries creating employment opportunities, which combine work, display and residential spaces. At the same time they create an artistic platform for the local community and the corporate interests such as recruiting talent. “Traditionally, the cultural production of the bohemian avant-garde is considered to be an entirely different matter from the presumably crass and generic popular culture commodities disseminated by formal organizations”[\[168\]](#). In fact, this implicates that artistic innovations now immediately move into the economy.

As the bohemians are usually young and have ‘low profiles’ at the early stages of their career, beyond low rents, they need easy access, low entry barriers and display venues to enhance their visibility for their career. They must be able to easily find work, preferably flexible to fit

time requirements and at the same time realize aesthetic affections. Being an artist involves several distinctive features. Slipping in different roles is as much part as a recognizable lifestyle displayed through modes of dress and self-presentation. "Neo-bohemia, like its modernist forerunners, is a setting in which "living like an artist" is facilitated, and a habitus amenable to creative pursuits is fostered"[169]. In fact, many people adapt the distinctive habitus without making any art at all. Moreover, there is a high rate of failure in bohemian districts, resembling those found in a milieu of technological innovation, where a high amount of creative work is a condition for the relatively low output of innovative products being thrown into the market.

"The irony of the new bohemia is that the resources sustaining local creative activity in fact may ultimately be more beneficial to interests other than those of the artists themselves, particularly in a financial sense. Property entrepreneurs benefit as neighborhood celebrity increases the potential for extracting rent, and local entertainment providers benefit as it draws more -an more affluent- patrons into their orbit"[170].

Furthermore, the capital interests associated with the production and distribution of cultural commodities benefit from the changing barriers: the symbolic and material resources of the local field enable artists to engage in creative work for delayed and highly uncertain compensation. New bohemias serve as sources of input, of cultural products and talent, for local and for global cultural production and consumption. But the ideological predispositions and material strategies are highly vulnerable as they can be exploited easily by the media giants of film, television and music, just as being the institutionalized fine arts market.

### 3.3.4 Interim Result 4

The analysis of the fashion industry shows its complexity. There is the designer, his outstanding role in the working process and at the same time the bondings he faces from the self-reception as an artist: the economic constraints guided by the unforeseeable consumer choices of the creative industries. His success is linged around the idea of competitive individualism. There is a rigid hierarchy and whole set of rituals of deference and authority related to the fashion leaders. At the same time, there is a notorious carelessness in regard to ensuring good working practices and basically the existence of a non-democratic culture, which allows snobbishness and elitism to prevail. Fashion has no lobbyists and does not credit itself on the political front.

A major problem is that the available language for discussing fashion design and the criteria are still under-developed and assertive. In journalism it is solely important to declare the designer as a genius and 'auteur'. There is in fact, little engaged criticism or outright disagreement. Thus, fashion appears to be a conflict-free zone, also due to the collective lack of confidence: its statues in the arts schools is still low and associated with a range of less elevated practices such as dressmaking, decorative arts, embroidery and in general the degraded field of the women.

Secondly, image and style have become an imperative necessity in the dissemination of knowledge and of introducing new areas in employment and career opportunities. The fabrication of fashion is not only a fact of industrial mass production anymore, but one that needs more creative ideas and innovation. But these distinctive features of the fashion industries and the problems are not new. It has always been an unstable and chaotic industry. Wages were always low and the

companies regularly went into liquidation. Facing these difficulties the small-scale production of fashion is still a form of job creation and not simply to be reduced to the idea of talent, choice or unconstrained agency on the part of the designers.

Moreover, the importance of creativity and producing trendy fashion to be successful at the market does not only lie at the production side of fashion business. The consumption side is equally important and highly influences the fashion business. The flow of information in the city, especially in defined and outstanding urban districts, tied to complementary lifestyles defines habitus and hierarchies. The consumers complement the fashion business as they strengthen the creative aspects in the business itself. Individuality and excellence, travels, the exchange of symbols in newly created networks are worshipped and operate at two levels: promoting the own lifestyle and at the same time the designer and his brand. The negative aspects of the business like unstable and long working hours and low wages are thus swallowed by aspects of friendship, networks and leisure time.

# 4. Sustainable Fashion

## 4.1 Sustainable Development

„The environmental movement, in other words, has a history of reflexivity, of calling for a debate on the direction of the modernization of society. It not only argued for a resolution of the problem of physical degradation, but has always combined this demand with a critique of the institutional arrangements that were implicated in bringing these effects about and a warning of the perverse effect of a swift technocratic response. That is to say, in its best and most interesting moments the environmental movement has been concerned about the conditions under which the requirements of environmental regulation (discursive closure, social accomodation, and problem closure) were to be achieved.“[\[171\]](#).

In the following chapter the term sustainable development, its rise in political and general scientific theory and its implications shall be introduced. After an introduction to the general socio-historical development of the term, the economic aspects in relation to the social and ecological aspects of sustainability will be treated. As the greening of the economy, often misinterpreted as a sustainable practice and misused for profit-oriented advertising strategies, is not enough for a societal change towards sustainability, social and ecological aspects in relation to the cultural dimension come into play.

### 4.1.1 Historic Outline of the Discourse of Sustainable Development

In the 19th century the qualities of the environment were not a widespread concern. Nature was perceived as ‘mother earth’. It was believed that nature is constantly regenerative and therefore would just absorb everything and continue to grow. It was not thought about

negative and disastrous effects of the use of nature for human's modern lifestyle. At the same time, the Western view saw nature as a dangerous and brutish force, which needs to be civilized and subdued. Today the understanding of nature has dramatically changed. The awareness of the vulnerability of the oceans, the air, the mountains, the plants and animals has risen.

The Industrial Revolution brought higher standards of living and growth of life expectancy, an increase and spread of medical care and education, electricity, telecommunications and other advances which raised comfort and convenience. Furthermore, benefits in productivity of agricultural land, increased harvest and food storage through technological advances, but the Industrial Revolution also carried adverse environmental outcomes. Leading companies implemented new strategies for integrating the environment into their overall business strategy in recent years. But the negative impacts of the Industrial Revolution are still persistent and the limits of nature ignored. The introduction of the term "development" entered the international agenda after the Second World War: on the one hand side to rebuild the economies destroyed by the war and on the other side for economic development of the lesser developed countries. At this period of time the term development is closely linked to the economy as the Zeitgeist believed that through economic development the rest would follow. But aware of the fact, that a solely economic development approach would not be enough, one after another the other dimensions of development would enter: social, cultural, political and with the publication of Limits of Growth by the Club of Rome (note: The Club of Rome was an international group of people from the academia, civil society, industry and diplomacy who met in Rome, Italy in 1968. Now it is global think

tank which deals with various political issues and international topics.) in 1972 the sustainable (environmental) dimension.

The publication of *Our Common Future* by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 marks a decisive phase for conceptualizing environmental and development discourse in the international debate. The conception of sustainable development presented by the Brundlandt Commission draws together diverse strings.

“The environmental v. growth controversy that polarized the debate in the 1970s was partially sidestepped by emphasizing the reorientation of growth to meet the urgent needs of the world’s poor and to reduce the impacts of economic activity on the environment“[\[172\]](#).

Further,

„the notion of development was extended to cover the industrialized regions: thus sustainable development could be understood as a common challenge faced by all nations, but a challenge implying very different policies, priorities according to the developmental stage already attained“[\[173\]](#).

Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, 1992 “sustainable development“ has become an internationally important term in the political discourse around the quality of life, the obligation for future generations and the conservation of natural resources. Being a rather wide and undefined field of discourse, it has to combine two aims at the same time: the political and economic differences between developed and developing nations as well as the coupling of environmental issues with social justice and political affairs. It is the combination of the social and political movement of environmental protection in the industrialized northern countries and the concerns about development of the southern

hemisphere.

“The emergence of the discourse on sustainable development is closely linked to the erosion of development and a narrow conception of economic modernization as prevailing models for the management of social transformation. On the one hand, ‘development’ and ‘modernization’ have attracted growing criticism, mainly from Third World activists, as a means to domination of non-Western societies and cultures. [...] Not only has the triad of economic growth, technological progress and social development not met the specific conditions and requirements of most Third World countries; the debate on the ‘limits of growth’ in the early 1970s also demonstrated that the resource-intensive path of development pursued by the Western industrial societies could neither carry on into the future at the same pace, nor could it necessarily be applied on a global scale“[174].

Therefore, the discourse on the sustainable development was directly engaged with problems of great international importance. Diverse concerns and interests are accomplished: sustainable development is about a balance between the needs of the poor and the sustention of natural systems for future generations, short: economy and environment, conservation and progress, efficiency and equity in the light of North and South.

By the end of the 1990s the idea of sustainable development has been embedded in the international discourse on environmental and development issues, but has achieved an outstanding status.

“As the concept of ‘social sustainability’,[...], it was not clear whether it meant the social preconditions for sustainable development or the need to sustain specific social structures and customs. Major transformations of these structures and questioning of the present distribution of power are likely to appear as preconditions to sustainable development. This becomes clear when one addresses the central question as to why so many people’s needs are not being met today - moving to the analysis of economic, social and political causes of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion“[\[175\]](#).

As diverse interests were brought in, several approaches to conceptualize sustainable development made its way. James Meadowcroft identifies six components of the main factors related to the debate around sustainable development. First of all the basic governmental understanding how sustainable development has been conceptualized in the context of nature and what it is believed to determine. The ideas and visions of how to achieve sustainable development were and still are highly determined by the country’s economic, ecological, social, political and cultural circumstances. Of second great importance are the patterns of institutional engagement. This includes the legal base of sustainable development and the amounts of commitment displayed by existing ministries and agencies. Another factor are the measurements and the monitoring displayed to implement and fix sustainable development. Fourth, the involvement of civil society and the governments engagement for collaboration. Related to the third and fourth factor the international political initiatives play a great guiding and communicative role. And lastly, sustainable production and consumption which means the implementation of new and the modification of existing patterns towards sustainable production and consumption[\[176\]](#).

William Lafferty on the other hand identifies four normative principles embodied in the UNCED usage of sustainable development. First, the satisfaction of the basic human needs and reasonable standards of welfare for all living beings. Second, the goal to achieve more equitable standards of living both within and among global populations. Third, to be sustainable such change should be pursued cautiously to protect biodiversity and the regenerative capacity of nature, locally as well as globally. Fourth, to be achieved without undermining the possibility for further generations to attain similar standards of living and standards of equity.

Another approach is presented by Klaus Jacob who tags six key principles: the integration of environment and economy, the welfare of future generations and environmental protection, meaning resource and amenity conservation and the acceptance of the limits of the biosphere. Further, equity through class and across generations, the quality of life issues and participation.

None of these approaches are formal definitions, rather specifications of the normative dimensions included in the concept.

“Das „Zeitalter der Entwicklung“ (Sachs 1998:6) begann mit der Amtsantrittsrede von US-Präsidenten Harry S. Truman am 20. Januar 1949. Darin deklarierte er den Kommunismus zum neuen Feind der USA und kündigte ein vier Punkte-Programm für „Frieden und Freiheit“ an: (1) Unterstützung der Vereinten Nationen und ihrer Agenturen; (2) Programm für die Erholung der Weltwirtschaft durch den Abbau von Handelsschranken und Verstärkung des Marshall-Plans für den Wiederaufbau Europas; (3) Gründung des westlichen Militärbündnisses NATO“[\[177\]](#).

From a sustainable point of view social development cannot be undergone without including the reproduction of the natural prerequisites. In his book “Risk Society“ Ulrich Beck claims that in order

for societies really to evolve, modernization must become reflexive. According to him this is already becoming operative in the critique of science developing not just in the green movement, but in the broad masses of the lay public[178].

Thus, sustainability breaks with the boundary of economic growth and development. It neglects the idea of a continuous and especially linear development of societies in one direction all societies must follow. "In contrast, sustainability emphasizes the diversity of paths for societal transformation, depending on the particular cultural or political as well as ecological starting points"[179]. The concept or idea of sustainability is not a fixed definition, it is rather a qualification of states and processes within a continuum of possible states and processes. Therefore, it is not possible to isolate social or environmental sustainability, but it has to be put into relation with the interactions between societies and nature. It thus refers to an interdependence for a longer period of time and can followingly involve changes and transformations in societies and nature.

Although there is a great difference between sustainable and non-sustainable societies and their structures, that this does not necessarily mean the opposition from conservative to progressive, but that the relationship between the social system and its environment. More than ecological, it includes the emotional, social and cultural environment[180]. Sustainable development is a multi-dimensional and processual construction, which needs to be connected to diverse dimensions of development to achieve sustainable development.

There are five main spheres of sustainable development: the social, cultural, ecological, economic and political sphere. The social sustainability aims to achieve an equitable income distribution, even

access to resources and social services and social equality, whereas cultural sustainability means the balance of tradition and innovation. Economic sustainability is understood as an efficient system ensuring socially equitable, quantitative and qualitative progress, while ecological sustainability relates as well to the resilience of the natural ecosystems as to the spatial distribution of human activities. Lastly, political sustainability tries to provide a framework for national and international governance.

#### 4.1.2 Implications of Sustainability in Policy Making

“Furthermore, sustainable development is not only confined to grand declarations of intent, but is increasingly associated with concrete policy initiatives and programmes. As a concept which weaves together normative ideas of equity, participation, prudence, welfare, and environmental concern in novel ways, sustainable development potentially signals a shift in the manner in which problems are defined. It has, for example, encouraged reframing the relationship between environment-and-development policy-making sparked cross-sectoral linkages among previously distinct policy domains; favoured policy inputs from new groups and coalitions; and encouraged adjustments in relationships between governments and other social actors“[\[181\]](#).

These discursive and historical developments led to a permanent place of the ecologic crisis on the public agenda in the Western countries. Since the late 1970s new ways of conceiving environmental problems have emerged. In 1987 the Brundlandt Report reintroduced the concept and at least 40 working definitions have appeared. Further, the UN Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 was of great importance. With the introduction of the Agenda 21[\[182\]](#) the formerly apparent differences and struggles over the meaning of the term sustainable development have become more obvious.

The policy discourse of ecological modernization recognizes the ecological crisis as evidence of a fundamental omission in the workings of the institutions of modern society. Following the general endorsement of the Brundlandt Report many Western countries published comprehensive documents working out national environmental plans from the 1990s onwards.

Sustainable development should also be analysed as a story-line that has made it possible to create the first global discourse-coalition in environmental politics. A coalition that shares a way of talking about environmental matters, but unites members with widely differing social and cognitive commitments and diverse interests. Therefore, the environmental conflict has to be seen as a complex and continuous struggle over the definition and the meaning of the environmental problem itself. The environmental discourse is related to time and space and moreover governed by a certain understanding and modelling of nature, which reflects upon past experiences and present occupations. Maarten Hajer specifies five fundamental points that underscore the importance of this social constructive orientation on the discursive practices in which environmental politics are made<sup>[183]</sup>.

First, he stresses that environmental change cannot be seen as a temporary phenomenon but is structural in character. Mankind has always used nature to further its own goals and this manipulation of the natural environment has been accompanied by a range of serious environmental problems. Secondly, the debates on pollution always raise questions about the social order in which the pollution occurred. Followingly, the debates on nature or pollution reflect the contradictions of the social developments against which they take place and of which they're part. A fourth problem is that the environmental difficulty is

hardly ever discussed in its full complexity. It tends to be dominated by specific issues and topics that dominate the perceptions of the ecological dilemma in a certain period of time. In the end, the discursive strategies matter as today's environmental symbols are treated politically. This also reflects the way in which the term 'policy-making' shall be understood: "The art of regulation is to find a way to secure credibility in face of these contradictions, to render regulatory strategies acceptable and to generate trust for the institutions that are put in charge of regulation."[184].

Therefore, the efforts of the state in the early 70s to treat environmental concerns like any other problem were bound to fail. Many environmentalists were embedded in a larger discourse of developments in general in capitalist consumer society. These aspirations of radical environmentalism rested on a mixture of feelings, which feared of industrial catastrophes and a growing unease about the loss of moral community. Furthermore, there was a basic insecurity over the economic future of national societies, the emergence of other issues less politically illuminating such as acid rain compared to nuclear power and the availability of alternative discourses.

The 1970s were the starting-point for the wave of environmental politics, but the 1980s brought the emergence of a specific policy-oriented discourse in environmental politics. A discourse on sustainable and ecological modernization that recognized the structural character of the environmental problem. The environmental problems began to be framed by combining economic aspects with ideas from the natural sciences, so that the issues of environmental degradation became more calculable. Moreover, with the Tschernobyl nuclear disaster the discourse of ecological modernization shifted from the belief in endless

economic growth, to a reconciliation of economic growth and the resolution of ecological problems. In Germany, the nuclear disaster led to the foundation of the ministry of environment 5 weeks after the catastrophe in 1986.

This means that ecological modernization started to occur in the techniques of environmental policy-making. A new role for the sciences in environmental policy-making was created. On the micro-economic level the belief that environmental protection only increased cost was exchanged by the concept of pollution prevention. On the macro-economic level nature was conceptualized as a public good and resource contrary to the idea of being 'freely' used. These changes in belief systems led to a change in the legislative character of environmental politics and implied a reconsideration of existing participatory practices.

A changing key moment was the meeting of Environmental ministers of the OECD member states in May 1979. As the OECD put special emphasis on the relationship of economy and environment, they brought eco-modernist notions to the attention of governments, emphasizing their potential in terms of economic growth while underlining the need to come to an integrated approach embracing policies towards land use, energy, transportation and tourism without which anticipatory policies were likely to be a failure.

Further formative moments were the redefinition of the environmental conflict through the debates within the UN commissions on issues of development, safety and environment: the Brundlandt Report (1987), the Brandt Report North-South: A Programm for Survival (1980), Common Security (1982) and Common Crisis (1983) of the Palme Commission.<sup>[185]</sup> This sequence of UN reports signifies a continued

concern with the need for increased multilateral cooperation which was strongly inspired by Western European social democratic ideas.

In summary, the emergence of the policy discourse of ecological modernization is not to be attributed to the success or power of one particular group. Rather, many of the ideas that were constitutive have been under discussion in different places since the mid-60ies. The formation of a coherent policy discourse, the bringing together of these elements was rooted in the activities of secondary policy-making organizations like the OECD or the UNEP.

#### 4.1.3 Philosophical Background for a Sustainable Future

Fritjof Capra argues that the social reality evolved out of the biological world between two and four million years ago and was followed by social life. His conceptual framework for an idea of sustainable living turns around life's biological, cognitive and social dimensions. The extension of the system approach to the social domain explicitly includes the material world, just as Edgar Morin, who does not fully exclude the material aspect of life. He argues that in the future will be no strict division possible, because the key challenge of the new century is to be build around ecologically sustainable communities, designed in a way that their technologies and social institutions, their material and social structures do not interfere with nature's inherent ability to sustain life. The design principles of the future social institutions must be consistent with the principles of organization that nature has evolved to sustain the web of life.

“The sustained life is a property of an ecological system rather than a single organism or species“[\[186\]](#). This includes that no individual organism can exist in isolation: “life is a property of planets rather than

of individual organisms“[187]. A key characteristic of life are the dynamics of self-regeneration, coined by Humberto Maturama ‘autopoiesis’ or ‘self-making’. The concept of autopoiesis combines two defining characteristics, the physical boundaries and the metabolic networks[188]. This definition of a living system as an autopoietic network means that the phenomenon of life has to be understood as a prosperity of the system as a whole. It provides a clear and powerful criterion for distinguishing between living and nonliving systems.

The theory of autopoiesis identifies a pattern of self-generating networks as a defining characteristics of life, but it does not provide a detailed description of the physics and chemistry that are involved in these networks. As the cell is an open system, living systems are organizationally closed, but materially and energetically open. Thus, life constantly tries to renew itself. Morowitz explains: “Although we do not know how many independent origins of cellular life may have occurred, all present life is descended from a single clone“[189].

Thus, the questions arises: what is life? Focusing on bacteria as the most simple living systems, a living cell is a membrane-bounded, self-generating, organizationally closed metabolic network. In this light, Capra identifies three major ways of evolutionary creativity: mutations, gene trading and symbiosis[190]. What are the implications of these facts? In order to built a sustainable society for future generations, the redesigning of many technologies and social institutions is necessary. To overcome the gap between human design and ecologically sustainable systems of nature, a fundamental new business environment is required as well as the general aim to become ecologically sustainable.

In traditional economic theory the key sources of wealth are natural

resources (like land), capital and labour. In today's economy management and technology are highly linked to knowledge creation (see chapter 1.1.3 and 1.2.1). Increases in productivity come from the capacity to equip labor with new capabilities based on new knowledge. As we have seen above, living social systems are self-generating networks of communications. A human organization will be a living system only if it is organized as a network or contains smaller networks within its boundaries. Indeed, recent networks have become a major focus of attention not only in business, but also in society at large and throughout newly emerging global culture. Within these new information and communication technologies, social networks have become all-pervasive within and beyond organizations. For an organization to be alive, the existence of social networks is not sufficient. Each communication creates thoughts and meaning, which further enhance communications. The entire network generates itself producing a common context of meanings, shared knowledge, rules of conduct, boundaries and a collective identity for its members.

“The most effective way to enhance an organization's potential for creativity and learning, to keep it vibrant and alive, is to support and strengthen its communities of practice”[191], to provide social space for informal communications to flourish. Capra argues that intelligent and alert people rarely carry out exact instructions and that living systems always choose what to notice and how to respond[192]. A strict compliance means also robbing people their vitality. This is important in today's knowledge-based organizations in which loyalty, intelligence and creativity are (supposed to be) the highest assets (see chapter 1.3 Creative Production).

According to Capra the capacity to overcome this dilemma is self-

educated labor, which has “the capacity to access higher levels of education, to process information and to create knowledge. In an economy where information processing, innovation and knowledge creation are the main sources of productivity, these self-educated workers are highly valued”[193]. The new economy has enriched a global elite of financial speculators, entrepreneurs, high-tech professionals and knowledge creators, which lead to an accumulation of wealth. But the benefits rested within some national economies, whose social and economic impacts have been disastrous.

The new economy has produced and is still producing interconnected consequences: rising social inequality, social exclusion, breakdown of democracy, rapid and extensive deterioration of the natural environment and increasing poverty and alienation. Moreover, this new global capitalism has created a global criminal economy that profoundly affects national and international economies and politics. Local communities have been threatened and destroyed around the world and “with the pursuit of an illconceived biotechnology it has invaded the sanctity of life by attempting to turn diversity into monoculture, ecology into engineering and life itself into a commodity.”[194]

Although new environmental regulations, increasing ecofriendly products and further developments encouraged by the environmental movement exist, there is a massive loss of forests and a massive extinction of species. According to Capra democracy, human rights, environmental protection and other values need to be valued higher than the ultimate goal of money making[195]. This also includes that sustainability in ecosystems as well as in human society involves the whole community, which interacts with other living systems, human and nonhuman ones. For the human sphere sustainability contains the

cultural integrity, cultural diversity and the right to self-determination and -organization.

To build sustainable communities it is necessary to become ecologically literate. The survival of humanity will depend on the ecological literacy, the ability to understand the basic principles of ecology and to live according to them. In this light, it is necessary to design a conceptual framework that integrates the biological, cognitive and social dimensions of life.

#### 4.1.4 Sustainable Development and Culture

For several millenniums archaic societies not knowing or ignoring each other constituted humanity. Today, different societies know about each other and constitute a kind of common consciousness about the human existence. This does not simply mean the global exchange of information, but the persistence of a global nuclear threat, the recognition of the third world and the globalization of cultures, the related development of a global civilization and the emergence of a planetary ecological consciousness[196]. Thus, cultural development is an ambivalent process consisting of two antagonistic aspects. On the one hand the homogenization, degradation and loss of diversity, but on the other hand new impacts, syntheses and diversity.

According to Edgar Morin, "Homo the super-living has created new spheres of life: The sphere of the spirit, the sphere of myths, the sphere of ideas and the sphere of consciousness". In the process of producing these new forms of life[197], the Homo has become estranged from the living animal world[198].

To recover an unity of humans means to substantiate the common identity. This means a mindset change and a moral reform to recognize

a human identity. Similar to Fritjof Capra, Edgar Morin thinks that all self-organizing systems are in fact auto-eco-organizing systems (Morin et al. 1999:47). They are autonomous and depend in regard to their eco-system[199]. For the realisation of sustainable development, ecological thinking needs to be founded on the concept of auto-eco-organization considering the link of every living, human or social system to its environment.

Similar to the rise of the standard of living and its linkage to the degradation of the quality of life, the multiplication of the means of communication can be linked to the impoverishment of personal communication. At the same time individuals can be simultaneously autonomous and atomized sovereigns and objects, masters of their machines and be manipulated by what they master.

“The myth of progress is collapsing, development is sick; all existing threats to the whole humanity have at least some of their causes in the development of science and technology (threat from mass destruction, ecological threats to the biosphere, population explosion)”[200]. Instead, the notions of socialism and capitalism should not have providentialist, imperialist and reductionist overtones. Rather should their power and creativity, their self-regulating and self-organizing qualities be intergrated into planetary civilization.

Global reality cannot be understood in its totality. It includes enormous uncertainties due to its complexity, its fluctuations, its mixed and antagonistic dynamics, its possibilities and impossibilities. A politics of humanity must take on all problems in their totality without becoming totalitarian. “It must embody management, technology and the economy, without being dissolved and depolitized by management, technology and the economy”[201].

Edgar Morin criticizes that intelligence which is fragmented, compartmentalized, mechanistic, disjunctive and reductionist breaks with the complexity of the world into disjointed pieces and splits up problems. It separates what is linked together and renders unidimensional the multidimensional[202]. A philosophy that ignores living beings, subjectivity, emotions and life is irrational. Rather, it must make room for myth, feeling, love and regret and consider them rationally. "True rationality knows the limits of logic, of determinism and mechanism; it knows that the human mind is not omniscient and recognized the mystery of reality"[203].

#### 4.1.5 Interim Result 5

The Brundlandt Report postulates economic growth and environmental protection, but economic growth and environmental protection are only two aspects of sustainable development. Sustainable development also implies, that not all forms of growth are acceptable and that not the whole environment shall be conserved. Sustainable development is therefore the metadiscourse, where growth and the environment become subordinated.

"In the first place, sustainable development is explicitly international in focus: it was formulated to adress global problems, and predicated upon an international effort to resolve dilemmas of environment and development"[204]. Here, sustainable development is highly related to international organizations and their role in environmental decision making and their support of ecological decision makers. Furthermore, at the environmental level sustainable development is highly related to global issues such as climate change and biodiversity.

But it also relates to the improvement in national environmental policy

acts and international competition, where the dimension of international equity and preoccupations of globalization are missing. Aspects of inter-generationality, welfare for all human beings and equal opportunities are irrelevant. The discourse of sustainable development cannot be reduced to the idea that pollution prevention will solve the current problems. Pollution prevention is only one aspect, but it is not enough to clean businesses. Rather, ethical concerns are central to sustainable development. The global community, the wealthy and the poor and the future generations need to see the efforts.

A general problem lies in the difference between sustainable development and ecological modernization. "Nevertheless, it could be argued that 'sustainable development' - with its grand normative agenda - has served simply as a rethorical cover for a policy stance that in practice looks much more like 'ecological modernization'"[205]. This means, that economic rationality and technocracy inputs still dominate policy discourses and a structural change - adhering the abolition of private property, dismantling global economy and a resolution of the existing state system - towards contemporary societies has not been undertaken.

On the other side, our new civil society is characterized by a shift of focus from formal institutions to social and political relationships among its actors. The civil society relies on local grassroots organizations and skillfully uses the new global communication technologies. Although there is great diversity of interests, from labor organizations to human rights, women's rights, religions, environmental and indigenous peoples organizations, there exists an agreement on the core values of human dignity and ecological sustainability. „Modern environmentalism emerged as an element of the counter-culture of the 1960s and this

counter-culture was above all a critique of many of the technocratic institutional arrangements that are now associated with ecological modernization“[206].

The present-day environmentalism has its roots in the late 1960s. It is described as the social concern over environmental change, which emerged as an element of a much broader value change that occurred at that time. One of the most important researches on the changing value-orientations is Reinhard Inglehart's work on the silent revolution from 1971. The political scientist noted a great intergenerational shift in the values of the industrial countries, value preferences to material goods related to economic and physical security shifted towards goals that related to the so-called 'post-material' value concerning human growth and the satisfaction of intellectual and aesthetic needs. He draws on Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs, which implies that people foremost fulfill their material needs and only then strive after post-material goods.

Civil society is able to use symbols and cultural codes through global communication technologies effectively for framing the(ir) political discourses. Their political power derives from the ability "to frame critical issues in a language that makes sense to people and connects with them emotionally to promote a more 'people-centered' politics and democratic and participatory political processes.“[207]. The further challenge is to reshape the governing rules and institutions of globalization as well as redesigning the physical structures, cities, technologies and industries to make them ecologically sustainable.

## 4.2 Sustainable Fashion Production

### 4.2.1 Sustainable Fashion

“Lastly - the environment. What can one say about this? The points are too obvious. Although some firms have taken environmental issues on board and some firms have grown up that are producing clothes that do not harm the planet, fast fashion seems triumphant; and it is incredibly wasteful. Cotton uses up enormous amount of water and the clothes are manufactured for the most part in an incredibly polluting way. A return to the idea that clothes are valuable, not just economically, but culturally would seem desirable, but this may be to take a stance against the tide of history, since we seem to be in a period in which change and novelty are preferred over lasting value“[208].

The problems faced by the fashion industries towards a change to sustainable fashion are obvious: sustainable fashion presents a contradiction in itself. It relies on fast change, a constant demand for the new. This is a reliance which is environmentally polluting: starting from huge monocultural cotton plantations to the dying of fabrics.

Furthermore, the fashion business is marked by a high relocation, deregulation and flexibilisation of labour. Although a fashion item might be branded as ‘made in Italy’ it is self-evident that it is produced in China, Indonesia or Cambodia.

“Der größte Teil der arbeitsintensiven Produktion von Bekleidung für den Weltmarkt findet heute in Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern (bes. Asien) statt. Seit den 1970er Jahren sind Millionen Arbeitsplätze in den Industrieländern abgebaut und dorthin verlagert worden - meist in Freie Exportzonen und Nähstuben in der Schattenwirtschaft in denen Arbeitsgesetze und Konventionen der Internationalen Arbeitsorganisation der Vereinten Nationen (ILO) häufig außer Kraft gesetzt werden“[209].

Multinational cooperations and haute couture houses (!) produce their

products in Asia, Eastern Europe or Africa and thus ignore or respectively overcome eventual production constraints. The problems for small-scale designers and smaller regional brands lie at the constraints at home: high production costs, few consumers willing to pay high prices for labour-intensive hand-made and/or traditional fashion products.

A big problem of new sustainable fashion approaches is that etiquettes such as natural or ecological, respecting the environment are used and often misused for promotional messages. This is called greenwashing. PR strategies and techniques of manipulation are systematically used to label a business green, responsible or fair, while in reality the 'responsible activities' constitute only a small amount of the business activities or none. The greenwashing of major oil companies like Shell and BP through grand marketing strategies promoting renewable energies, which in fact takes an insignificant amount of investments related to the overall business numbers of the company, often is theme in public discourse. But there also exist more subtle or unknown contributions for upgrading ones image. A quite famous example is the movie Home (<http://www.home-2009.com/us/index.html>) produced by Yann-Arthus Bertrand showing natural air images from around the world while touching ecological and social issues. The movie is financed by the french luxury goods concern PPR, et al. owning the subsidiaries Gucci, Sergio Rossi, Bottega Veneta and Yves Saint Laurent.

Followingly, three main trends in sustainable fashion, which reflect diverse aspects of sustainable development, shall be introduced: biological (or green) fashion, fair fashion (fair trade) and second-hand fashion.

#### *4.2.1.1 Biological (or Green) Fashion*

According to the Zeitgeist and values dominating the society nature is always perceived differently.

Nevertheless, nature has always constituted an ordinary element to fight with for simple survival and therefore was a defensible and valuable good. With the repetition of natural catastrophes the attention towards the quality of life and the environment nowadays has diffused and become a cultural heritage. Therefore, concrete requests, from the part of the consumers, go into the direction of a major control of primary materials, of production methods, of recycling and packaging and elimination of waste.

As the awareness about the complexity of nature cannot be resolved in a linear way of knowledge, but has to confront itself with the systemic relations, which are complex in character of circulation and reaction. This implies the existence of ecological limits, where a well-balanced report between society and nature is needed.

The biological fashion, also called green fashion is a direct emanation of this responsibility towards the environment. It is characterized by certain methods of production, by eco-compatible consumption and products and of environmentally friendly packaging which is easily disposable or recyclable[210]. The sector uses exclusively organic fabrics and some products are characterized by natural dyeing colours and dyeing methods. These characteristics manifest a strong sensibility towards the personal health as a form of responsibility towards oneself, which goes beyond caring for the environment. Furthermore, the attention towards the cycle and the recuperation of the material comes close to second-hand fashion.

We have seen that the vitality of ecosystems depends on relationships,

the interactions between species, their uses and exchanges of materials and energy. "A tapestry is the metaphor often invoked to describe diversity, a richly textured web of individual species woven together with interlocking tasks"[211]. Diversity in this sense means strength, monoculture weakness. The idea of monoculture is not limited to materials, but begins with them.

The line of green fashion therefore is characterized by two models of production: the multinational businesses and the micro-businesses. There is a long list of small businesses producing green fashion in diverse nations. Followingly, two examples. Firstly, the English shoe brand Terra Plana ([www.terraplana.com](http://www.terraplana.com)), which produces environmentally friendly shoes. Terra Plana uses recycled and eco-friendly materials and glue. They use traditional and artisanal stitching techniques to minimize glues. They have set up an eco matrix consisting of the five senses as the basis for the development of the shoe and follow and an ethical policy. Their shoes are not fully sustainable, but the brand invests in modern technologies and high design standards for new inventions. In 2007 Terra Plana won the Observer Ethical Fashion Award and a year later they became the award for Ethical Footwear Retailer of the Year from Drapers.

Another brand is one of the oldest and most famous green fashion labels in Germany: Hess Natur ([de.hessnatur.com](http://de.hessnatur.com)). It was launched in 1976 by the environmental activist Heinz Hess and has since become a pioneer of eco-friendly and socially responsible fashion. Their philosophy starts with the human being in the center of attention. Embedded within the environment of nature and society, the focus of Hess Natur, does not rest on the quality of the material. Moreover, Hess Natur engages for society, environmental protection, supports

international social and ecological and informs and supports knowledge about the production chain processes.

#### *4.2.1.2 Fair Trade Fashion*

Fair fashion reflects the altruistic dimension of responsibility, which often intermingles with a strong environmental inducement. The products are either produced in developing countries putting emphasis on labour rights and environmental concerns or cooperations in the industrialized countries offering work to socially disadvantaged people.

Fair trade implies the extension of the traditional repertoire of tangible and intangible significations of products. It means investing in the world of social responsibility and investing in the people who produce. Therefore, fair trade follows a mode of production and consumption, which is environmentally aware and respects human labour rights. A new commercial reality is created between the producers of the South and the consumers of the Nord. It reflects another mode of commercial practice, which follows neither profits nor the volume of exchange, but respecting all who participate. Fair Trade Organizations such as the Fair Wear Foundation or the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), try to construct alternative production cycles to reach the creation of a social and sustainable economy. It is a market-based social movement trying to obtain better trade conditions and sustainable development for the developing countries.

A fair trade product includes a fair salary in the local market. It offers the workers the possibility of amelioration and promotes the same labour opportunities for all persons. It realizes sustainable procedures and adopts criterias of transparency. It constructs commercial relations for a long period between producers and importers.

A young and very ambitious German sustainable fashion label is Armed Angels ([www.armedangels.de](http://www.armedangels.de)). They promote sustainable cotton production in India and send their products with DHL GoGreen aiming at the reduction of Co2 emissions. Moreover, Armed Angels is partners with fairtrade ([www.transfair.org](http://www.transfair.org)) paying local farmers a fair price and undermining child labour. They also support diverse relief projects, among them the first open network and self-labeled All-Profit-Organisation Viva con agua (<http://www.vivaconagua.org/>).

Fair trade seems to represent the most original way of critical consumption. It gives coherence and continuity to those having already made ethical, sustainable or ecological (consumption) choices and now want to use responsibility in their own consumption. Moreover, thanks to handcrafting or industrial productions fair trade satisfies the demand for original and creative fibers, whose demand has risen in dominant mass markets.

#### *4.2.1.3 Second-Hand Fashion*

The third model is second-hand fashion which means the re-usage of used clothes. More than having a long countercultural tradition it also bears non-responsible or not primarily sustainable significant. But, in the recuperation, in the reutilization and recycling of linen one can identify forms of continence and environmental attention.

Diverse counter and youth cultures have signaled with their lifestyles and modes of fashion a retaking of the personal initiative in the world of appearance. They represent kind of a complete autonomy in their way of presenting themselves to contrast the official fashion dictate. Therefore, this kind of approaching clothes relies more on the consumption and cultural aspects of sustainable fashion as it is marked

by high symbolic knowledge and individual choice.

In the future also this sector might become of great relevance, as a cultural mindset change in consumption practices (see 3.3.5) might put more focus on the re-usage of clothes as a change from the throwaway mentality. The fashion designer Magdalena Schaffrin decided to use natural materials or only recycled synthetic fibers, colours without chlorine bleaching and leather only if its not tanned with chrome in her collection[212]. But for Schaffrin the concept of sustainability means more than following ecological guidelines: she follows the fashion dictate of presenting two collections every year, but enlarges the existing collection with combinable pieces.

In terms of production, second-hand fashion might also reach to the development of recycling methods for used clothes, also called eco-efficiency.[213] Doing more with less means to transform human industry from a system that takes, makes and wastes into one that integrates economic, environmental and ethical concerns[214].

#### 4.2.2 The Role of Sustainable Fashion for the Community

“The wide presence of small family business ensures that even the entrepreneurial function is not concentrated in the hands of a few prominent local families but is spread over the places and is part of the common business culture. As the craftsman turns into the entrepreneur, s/he works with the same, familiar logic in the development of the new venture: relying on his/her deep knowledge of the product, the tastes of potential customers, and of his/her intuition in adjusting its characteristics to fit the changes of the competitive environment. And, at the same time, s/he talks all the time to the fellows entrepreneurs, exchanging information, comparing solutions, keeping each other updated about the latest developments in technology, and so on“[215].

Generally, family businesses spread knowledge from generation to

generation and thus contribute to the development of social, cultural and economical capital of a city or region. Through a long-term and sustainable investment in these spheres, they are able to create a sense of belonging, trust and knowledge between the consumer, the inhabitant and his district.

“What is clear, however, is that they find their basis in the local[...] and that they grow in symbiosis with the district itself, finding an eloquent translation in the individual work ethics, in the shared, absorbed and repeated knowledge and behavioural practices, by which the homo distrecutalis is characterized.”[\[216\]](#)

Industries that realize improvements on their industrial and environmental behaviour are likely to extend their practices beyond their borders into the local communities. They are more open to share information and maintain relationships with the community and reciprocally involve information from environmental and community groups in their decision-making processes and agenda setting. These companies are not necessarily driven “by altruistic concerns, but by the bottom-line drive to increase profits, productivity, and performance by reducing waste and emissions.”[\[217\]](#)

Moreover, artistic production formerly was an individual activity. Today, the production asks for the presence of a complex organisation, let them be private, cooperative, non-profit or public institutions. The material goods of culture shape cultural districts: places, which integrate cultural products of micro, small or medium-sized enterprises. This is of great importance for economic and local sustainable development. Where and how the product is sold and marketed is of great importance for the final success. To survive in these markets it is necessary to stay in the forefront with the capacity to get information: creativity becomes an essential resource, the basic factor for new

culture(s), knowledge and innovation. To produce knowledge and culture creativity is needed. It is of fundamental importance for a company in a postmodern society and needs growing intellectual capital to survive in society.

Emanula Mora traces five principles of activity which lead to the choice of producing sustainable and ethical fashion[218]. The development and choice of measures for environmental protection which includes the utilization of natural fibers to organic cultivation, the usage of natural dye, the purification or reuse of used water in dyeing process and finishing. Secondly, the formulation of a code of conduct for labour rights, in outsourced production units as well as in domestic production factories. Thirdly, the establishment of industrial projects which foresee economic sustainability for the suppliers of primary materials, often from developing countries. Moreover, communication campaigns and distribution strategies, which promote a culture of sustainable consumption. Lastly, the development of educational activities and the employment of socially disadvantaged employees, former prisoners, disabled persons and immigrants.

The development of culture is enhanced from creative entrepreneurs, private investors and facilitated through governmental policies. Therefore, it has to involve all social, ecological, cultural and economical factors within an area or a city for a sustainable future.

Moreover, events like the Ethical Fashion Show of Paris (<http://www.ethicalfashionshow.com/efs1/>) have familiarized the aesthetic sphere with ethics. Initiatives like these have shown that the sustainable sector can represent a strategic sector for the 'relaunch' of the fashion sector and beware from delocalization in geographic areas.

## 4.3 Sustainable Fashion Consumption

### 4.3.1 Consumption and Consumer choices

“Consumers have developed a post-modern attitude in their choices, by which they attribute greater value to creative and symbolic factors than to aesthetic and functional characteristics“[\[219\]](#). The demand for novelty shapes the economic behaviour affecting social interaction.

Consumer demand has caused the conversion of the fashion industry from a manufacturing to a marketing focus. Manufacturers and retailers study the shopping habits of all groups, which are influenced by age, income and lifestyle: demographic and psychographic trends and databases help to learn about consumer preferences and define target markets. There are three properties in fashion: style, acceptance and time. Because fashion today has become a product of change, a sense of timing is an important attribute at all levels of the industry. The majority of consumers follow lifestyle trends of the *Zeitgeist*, which facilitates the mass marketing of fashion. The acceptance or rejection of fashion trends by the consumer has a major influence on styling and merchandising decisions. The fashion industry responds to consumer needs with a variety of size, price and style ranges in women's, men's and children's wear.

People usually purchase goods because of three objectives: for the material or psychic well-being or for ostentation. The first two objectives refer to the personal needs of the individual, the need for nutrition, for clothing, for having a protection and the need for the freedom of soul and relaxation. The last one is a generic term including all the demands of society.

The rules of the market rely on a rational paradigm which postulates the

existence of an individual always acting towards a more optimization of costs and goods: the homo oeconomicus. But, it is not clear why the human being wants goods. As mentioned before the consumer moves towards goods after having fulfilled his/her basic needs. And, in reality, people buy and use fashion objects secondary non-rational criteria, as it is in the case of satisfaction of primary needs tied to material survival or other needs. The choices and the use of goods do not only serve physical and psychological necessities, but concern also other dimensions such as symbolic communication, especially in the case of fashion consumption.

Consumption is situated between the economic function of the commercial system. The consumption of cultural and fashion products is of great importance to the individual as the person is insistently and extensively judged through clothes. Followingly, the consumer has great influence to oblige the industry to implement better production strategies as they have great power over their existence. The emergence of groups like the LOHAS (Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability) and the LOVOS (Lifestyle of Voluntary Simplicity)[220] reflects the need for more clarification in the jungle of production and marketing processes. Moreover, the emergence of websites like [www.utopia.de](http://www.utopia.de), a guide for sustainable consumption or [www.karmakonsum.de](http://www.karmakonsum.de), one of the leading blogs about ethical consumption, neogreen lifestyles, eco-marketing and new economic management show the emergence of an emancipated and reflective consumer.

### 4.3.2 Responsible Consumption

Is it possible that fashion, a volatile phenomenon par excellence represents a behavioural form of acting economically and environmentally responsible? Is it able to represent more than taste and personal inclinations other values such as ethics?

The emergence of responsible consumption offers an ultimate reaffirmation of such discourses. It confirms that many criteria which guide consumers in their choices are not solely based on material needs, but also on affective and valuable gratifications. The emergence of the environmental discourse sharply lights up the consequences of an unsustainable lifestyle of the industrial society.

Carla Lunghi identifies three directions of responsible consumption: the one towards oneself, which includes the goods for the psycho-physical welfare and the personal happiness. The consumption directed towards the others includes fair trade, the respect of labour rights and the exclusion of child labour. Lastly, the consumption concerning the environment which pays attention to biologic and sustainable products, waste management and products with low environmental impact[221].

This means, that the logics of profit making and the liberal commercialization are not being rejected but embraced towards the creation of a sustainable lifestyle with social and environmental aspects. The diffusion of responsible products can therefore serve as a modification of change of the global economy.

“La diffusione dei prodotti responsabili può essere interpretata come una modalità di contestazione delle dinamiche economiche mondiali, una forma di globalizzazione dal basso che si fa portavoce di valori diversi rispetto al cieco perseguimento dell'utile individuale e dell'arricchimento senza limiti”[222].

The choice of fair trade organizations to use the potentials of

consumption to affront the social and environmental deficits of the globalized economy corresponds to the acknowledgement that the market can offer something positive. At the same time a market change is put forward as an alternative. This implies a culturally based fact: the consumer does not only want to produce relevant economic facts, but questions and moreover penetrates the values of the occidental society. For a real change towards a more sustainable and just market, the responsible choice of the consumer must become a need.

In the fashion industries this discourse seems to lose most of its poignancy as the fashion world is less concerned with responsible and sustainable values. The difficulty lies especially at the complex dynamics of fashion consumption and choice, the particularities of the several businesses of the fashion and apparel industry described in chapter 2. As fashion presents a way of cultural mediation and communication, its constant publicity becomes an ambiguous factor in the light of responsibility. To act economically responsible means to reflect over the consequences of the own market behaviour related to consumption. The time to reflect over the own consumption patterns and choices usually cannot coopt with the fast-pace and trendy atmosphere of fashion.

Responsibility has become one of the most debated problems on the general agenda of various social actors such as enterprises, the state, political parties, NGOs, consumer associations or single citizens. The problem in capitalist societies consists in the fact that the question is not about doing the right or the wrong thing, but about the calculation. Therefore, the people are 'freed' from taking responsibility for their actions. Beck refers to this as organized irresponsibility, which describes the missing of an effective coordination between growingly

independent and self-referential resting ambits. This results in a general situation of insecurity. The social and individual risks are not under control of the institutions supposed to supervise anymore. Therefore the same institutions become producers of uncontrollable threats.

“If there is anything that produces unity across the entrenched political divides, then it is the conviction that we are imprisoned by our dependence on rationality; that productive forces give rise to the liberation that enslaves us; that we are captives of a reason that threatens to turn into its contrary; or that we differentiate by function, to the point where everything always becomes more functional and more differentiated. These are all theoretical variations on the basic experience of the age, that of industrial fatalism“[\[223\]](#).

The consumption of fashion is closely related to its production. Simmel's treatment is appropriate to former dress codes, but fails to measure up with contemporary fashion and modernity. There is a tremendous growth in complexity on the consumption side of fashion. There are immense consequences that this complexity has (had) for the manufacturing of clothes, particularly in terms of the arrangements of production and the organization of work.

In concrete choices of acquisition, the utilization of goods and responsible services the individual consumer finds concrete instruments to value his ideological options: the impact of the economic choice is perceived in a precise direction of sense[\[224\]](#). Therefore, consumption is valued under these consumption practices and responsible production, even if some problems rest. There are local logics and insitutional logics which guide consumption practices in everyday life which cannot be simply replaced. Followingly, this means that a research for coherence in consumption behaviour is not simply done.

As stated above, the environmental discourse lights up the unsustainable lifestyle of industrial societies. Only in a diverse way of consuming and only in an alternative way of perceiving possessions it is possible to create a different future. It is necessary that the power of consumption and the single consumer is recognized and valued differently to give an idea of a different lifestyle or even future.

“Nella civiltà occidentale contemporanea è stato privilegiato l'aspetto materiale della vita, ma questo ha portato le persone, ad avere una visione solo parziale di sé, è in atto un passaggio, non sarà tanto 'di moda' avere gli oggetti firmati quanto il fatto di essere capaci di riconoscere ed affermare la propria natura peculiare e di essere impegnati su qualche fronte sociale, ambientale, etico, equosolidale“[\[225\]](#).

#### 4.3.3 Fashioning up as a Creative Political Practice

In democratic and political ideas of creativity 'high culture' is seen as elitist culture only reserved for a few. In this idea of culture institutions, certain practices and only certain genres fit in the understanding of given categories. Although they encourage and support special artistic productions they usually stay closed to other forms of artistic production. Especially younger people can be discouraged by not being able to work with broader and more symbolic understandings of arts and creativity. The creativity of everyday life, of everyday practices is not being recognised or even denied. Although many young people are not involved with the arts, in their daily lives they live with and through symbols and expressions. Through creative signs they create their own identity, give their activities a meaning and in this way establish themselves in society.

Although this newly emerged culture in youth communities neglects the traditionalist seperative view on culture and might offer broader art

forms to a wider public, it does not necessarily create a more democratic living. The interactions with culture, - the consumption of cultural products, the attendance of cultural events, the engagement with sports, games and youngster discourses -, raise new problems. The identity work carried out is based on exclusion just as much as inclusion. Different attitudes, modes of dressing and listening to diverse genres of music transport new prejudices, hierarchies and inequalities. In this context, culture and creativity are an interplay within more clearly defined institutional contexts and rather flexible social dynamics. Youth culture is not as autonomous and free of political or educational intervention as some cultural populists might wish, but it has the ability to question and criticise established notions and definitions of culture. And fashioning up oneself, dressing in a certain mode clearly emphasizes the individualistic notion of personal creativity and imagination.

It is not creativity as it is understood in the arts for the purpose of creating great art works, but rather a play within everyday life.

“This creativity she says is based on ‘possibility thinking’, which for her, means ‘refusing to be stumped by circumstances but being imaginative in order to find a way around a problem’. Craft maintains that her notion, while being practical in that it ties all domains of life - the ethical, social and conceptual - to each other in everyday contexts, is also akin to the romantic notion (in the tradition of Rousseau and Blake) as it has its roots in a sense of personal growth and fulfilment as well as personal divergence and agency”[226].

Although there is a higher amount and consumption of cultural and creative products in everyday life today, it would be too simple to argue that creativity can meet all demands in everyday life. Stuart Hall (2006) rather argues that creativity emerges from challenges and divergence,

not the mastery of everyday life. They reject both, a strong elitist view of culture as well as a strong creative notion.

The fashion sector is dominated by the logic of economic production: in the time of globalisation the leading imperative has become the reduction of costs and an escape towards North Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia. Critical consumption relies on the adequate knowledge about production processes behind the products.

“Nel settore della mode si fa più difficile, è un ambito in cui il ciclo si perde in una filiera complicata e in gran parte sommersa, dove vi è una netta divaricazione fra chi produce materiale e chi detiene il marchio e gestisce la comunicazione. In molti casi si tratta di vere e proprie multinazionali con migliaia di ddetti con salari da fame e uno sfruttamento scandaloso dell'ecosistema“[\[227\]](#).

The risk and/or difficulty of critical and political consumption lies in the downfall of the good intentions as the importance lies on the appearance and can undermine the original principles. Additionally, economic recession can put the coherence of ethical behaviour to test. To live according responsible and ethical values means to create the awareness and the responsibility that every action of consumption has social effects in terms of sustainability. The relationship with clothes is symbolic as clothes express our individuality.

#### 4.3.4 The Relation of Aesthetics and Ethics

The defining questions are: Aren't the aesthetics the outer representation of beauty and the ethics the interior ones? Can aesthetics without ethics exist? Further, can ethics express itself differently if not through aesthetics?

There seems to be a constant tension between aesthetics and ethics, as they often represent incompatible dimensions, especially in fashion

production and business, but also in everyday life. For the consumer the aesthetic dimension is fundamental. The consumer generally does not purchase unappealing clothes, neither if they underlie fair trade nor sustainable aspects. Therefore, one can conclude that clothes signify an aesthetical and emotional experience.

There are three types of consumers, the aesthetes, the emotional ones and the politically and socially engaged ones. The homo consumens is kind of an omnivore, he is doubtful and therefore makes various choices between aesthetics and ethical options. The aesthetic search is the conductive line of fashion history and therefore has generated and still generates the fashion industry. "Il rapporto fra consumatore e produttore, nell'ambito dei consumi etici, è bidirezionale e paritetico, il prodotto che nasce da questa interazione è frutto di una reale contrattazione dialogica"[\[228\]](#). This means that the producer does not produce what the consumer does not retain as appropriate to consume (in this case ethical or sustainable).

The interest from the consumer's and the producer's side for environmental protection, labour rights, traditional and handcrafted products has considerably risen in the last years. The cultural aspects of a product are valued and realized through social responsibility and critical consumption. This creates a symbolic and virtual space promoting responsible practices with oneself and in relation to others.

But, the aesthetical dimension of fashion is non endlessly extendible. Many artistic ideas, many formal and aesthetic designs are already implemented in fashion production. There are tons of variations, from short to long skirts, from synthetic and rather new fibers such as modal to natural fabrics like silk, linen and wool, from business suits over casual leisure time clothing to highly specialised sports outfits. Just as in

the arts, it is quite difficult to introduce a new innovation as most of the time it has already been seen. Followingly, innovational and creative practices devolve only to a few artistically oriented designers. “In ogni caso, l'introduzione di nuove dimensioni estetiche nel campo della moda riguarda solo alcuni artisti-designer, le cui creazioni però sono decisamente poco commercializzabili nel mercato dell'abbigliamento e possono circolare piuttosto nel mercato dell'arte“[\[229\]](#).

Another problem derives from the branding of products today which is highly diffused in the market segment of mass production and not only reserved for the luxury brands anymore. The griffé, which formerly was an industrial sign and the creative warranty of the designer in competition with the other 'masters of the haute-couture' has lost its artistic connotation. Contrary, the brand defines the object with arbitrary significations and attributes, which from a materialistic point of view are not distinguishable from the competition.

The insatisfaction with the complexity of the global economic system and the circulation of masses of information creates a need for transparency. In the fashion system this particularly concerns the production chain. Followingly, interest of individual self-expression and for social distinction, especially of those more open towards fashion innovations, is accompanied by the interest for sustainable and ethical conditions.

“Se da un lato la valorizzazione dell'individualità sembra un orizzonte senza ritorno per i piani di azione delle persone nel mondo attuale, il valore social del Nuovo sembra ormai da parecchi anni in una fase di tramonto, dovuta soprattutto alla crisi di sviluppo dei Paesi tardo-industriali. Tutta la parabola culturale del postmoderno, in fondo, non ha fatto sancire tale declino“[\[230\]](#).

On the one side, this means that postmodernity and its paradigms of

cultural deconstruction, sampling, chaos and coincidence are overcome at the social level whereby they are kept at the individual level. On the other side, art and aesthetics take over the new function of promoting values.[231]

#### 4.3.5 A New Culture of Sustainable Consumption

“The precariousness of an open research and discussion on complexity is better than an ‘objectivity’ that isolates objects from their context and makes a partial truth into an apparent certainty-without-alternatives: on this we construct and legitimate today’s global social order”[232].

Davide Brocchi postulates that the boundaries of sustainable societies are more open and more flexible and that sustainable societies are therefore more oriented towards the environment than to their own reproduction and expansion[233]. An evolutionary culture would therefore follow open exchange within the flexible boundaries of the environment.

Followingly, to ‘return’ to a culture of sustainability, reduce the mentality of consumption and develop a responsible attitude I want to draw on two examples of a different behavioural attitude towards a more sustainable consumption practice: continence and the perfect product. Continence does not simply require a change of lifestyle, but implies a diverse approach towards material (goods) in human existence. Through an adequate consciousness and reflexion it is possible to understand which consumption corresponds the commercial logics of the economic system and which is necessary for the achievement of real well-being. Continence in this context is not synonymous to renunciation but expression of liberty, it is recovery of the autonomy of public conditioning. It is the reappropriation of freedom of choice and of

thought. It is the capacity to include in the necessities of the body spiritual, affective, intellectual and social aspects. Therefore, continence is more than a philosophy of life: it becomes a political project offering an alternative to the existing system. The perfect product, on the other hand, allows at the same time to respect the others and the environment and to obtain full material, psychologic and spiritual satisfaction.

Sustainable development tries to reconcile the contradictory exigences of economic growth and environmental concern and at the same time proposes eco-efficiency. The objective is to promote a diverse awareness of well-being and how to reach it. This does not mean to deny consumption completely or to limit it, but to move it towards determined characteristics.

#### 4.3.6 Cultural Sustainability in the City

As shown in chapter 2.1.2 and 2.3 fashion products have transformed into objects of communication. The symbols inherent in clothes mark the social position, the identity, lifestyle attitudes and political statements: they define the individual. The individual in turn carries, plays and identifies himself with the symbols.

“Thanks to re-enchantment, post-modern, often metropolitan, tribes live fashion phenomena within different frameworks: the city becomes then the ideal place for poetics, but also for fashion circulation and consumption, atelier as well as store of the language, forms, expressions that can be used to convey the imaginary no longer coercible into the rigid schemata of custom”[\[234\]](#).

Furthermore, “the city becomes the sum of the places in which nomadic identities- mobile and uncertain, suspended in a climate of increasing indifference towards everything static - are defined”[\[235\]](#). This means

that the city offers the best place to combine and experiment with new ideas influenced through art, fashion and general cultural life. The city offers a network, where the individual becomes his own designer, a créateur of new values and reinvests the created knowledge into the flow of signs. Fashion items become the transmitter of the communicated ideas, meanings, opinions and political ideologies.

In summary, cultural sustainability in the city is a way to improve a community's well-being next to economic, environmental and social sustainability. Cultural sustainability creates and maintains the cultural values, the collective memory of a community.

#### 4.3.7 Interim Result 8

The remaining question is: does one action of solidarity make fashion responsible? Sustainable? Greener? Or is taking responsibility only a fashion which considers environmental protection, labour rights and the welfare of the consumer one inseparable necessity?

Ethical fashion is not similar to sustainable fashion. Taking responsibility only serves partially to the implementation of sustainable consumption. Ethics instead serve the discursive and social complexity as they transcend the single individual and its relation to the other. Fashion becomes ethical and therefore sustainable at the moment where the producer is related to the consumer. It is not the summary of single demands, but the result of a dialogue creating connection and awareness.

Moreover, there are several external factors which influence the growth of ethical consumption patterns and outline the complexity of the ethical action: first of all the globalisation of the markets and the degradation of national governments. The appearance of multinational businesses and

the development of repressive campaigns. The social and environmental effects of technological progress and the changing role of consumers at the economic market. Followingly, the efficiency of campaigns against the market and the growth of a vast movement of business responsibility.

Sustainable fashion creates new cultural modes and patterns of consumption and non-consumption and thus influences also the production methods. If consumption is the social connection and the defining element of a person, different styles of consumption define new forms of social and economic models.

Through critical consumption and ethical fashion the individual is able to redefine its own social position in relation to nature. The modern relation of the human being with nature characterized by domination and exploitation becomes reversed: by means of more commonness with nature the human being will be in search for more dignity and grown value for himself. Therefore, sustainable fashion consumption implies a diverse approach towards the environment. The focus lies on social and dialogical aspects with nature rather than competition over scarce resources.

Modern fashion is characterized through the valuation of the new trend and social distinction. Sustainable fashion is therefore able to forward a new model of identification and distinction for a sustainable modernity.

“This relates to the need for a cultural shift in the way that individuals and society address economic, social, and environmental issues. In this context, the culture of sustainability refers to people changing their behaviour and consumption patterns, and adapting to a more sustainability-conscious lifestyle“[\[236\]](#).

## 5. Conclusion: Fashion Forward: Transforming Cultures and Perspectives for Sustainable Fashion

“Behind the artistic action (in a no less macroscopic way than everyday action) social imagery has long ceased to be controlled by political ideologies and has progressively yielded to the triumph of the private and its values. But myths and cosmogonies have also stopped supporting our illusions and warming our hearts“[237].

The ability to be critical towards consumption and in production develops parallel to the awareness that capitalism with its approach to endless growth has failed. The neoliberalism has devalued its most important resources: human labor and nature. Both false commodities, which compared to other commodities are recyclable and exchangeable. The logic of maximizing profit dominates the inevitable consequences of the devaluation of all forms of life and the total loss of sense and the direction of humanity. Moreover, the endless consumption of goods has not proven to better people's life's.

“Subjective measures of well-being, such as the share of people who consider themselves ‘very happy’, have also not increased since 1975. Empirical evidence suggests that a return to 1970s per capita consumption levels would not make people worse off but would instead lower resource depletion, energy use, and ecological impacts by half“[238].

Therefore, critical awareness in consuming fashion and questioning production methods does not mean to be oppositional or antagonistic. It rather contains the question to confront oneself with the brand and to reflect it under unhabitual aspects. It means to engage with social responsibility and neglect the request of the brand to act as it wishes to

maximize its profit.

The fashion industries carry the distinctive feature of the creative industries: they are producers and mediators of meaning. On the one hand, the fashion industries have the possibility to influence and change the existing social order. On the other hand, fashion industries heavily underlie irregular consumer choices and therefore challenge traditional economic business concepts. Through the permanent need of the creation of new cultural codes demanded by a cultural consumer society, creative ideas and intellectual production play a major role in fashion business. As fashion products fulfill individual and social needs of identity creation, fashion businesses compete more on the level of quality than on quantity. All these factors enable the fashion industries to carry forward a change in thinking to establish an alternative cultural paradigm.

“Considering the social and ecological costs that come with consumerism, it makes sense to intentionally shift to a cultural paradigm where the norms, symbols, values and traditions encourage just enough consumption to satisfy human well-being while directing more human energy toward practices that help to restore planetary well-being“[239].

Furthermore, the cultural factor implies the dependence of the fashion business on place. Production methods, modes of consumption and taste are dependent on the way people live and perceive their environment. On a local level, the history of a place influences, for example in areas with a long-term production of textiles and fabrics, the business philosophy and simply what kind of product is being produced. On an international level local factors help to distinguish the own fashion market in a global network of competing fashion cities. The growth and importance of fashion business is closely linked to the

development of industrialization and a continuously growing urban environment.

“[...], thinking about fashion takes us to the heart of key questions about the nature of urban modernity, in particular its double-sided character, characterized simultaneously by new forms of constraint and commodification in everyday life, but also by new possibilities for active experimentation and identity formation“[\[240\]](#).

Although the focus on the urban side of fashion is strongly characterized by economic terms, the urban space offers creative and vital inputs in renewing fashion cultures. New ideas and practices are able to flourish and be exchanged in an environment marked by diversity, artistic and intellectual exchange. These are the best factors to create a creative sustainable urban development, which means more than defining culture and fashion as art, which enable the economy of a place to flourish. Sustainable urban development includes an openness towards cultures of youth, ethnic minorities and other communities of interest, local rituals, images and perceptions of the environment, the natural and built environment including public and open spaces and the heritage. Moreover, the diversity and quality of leisure facilities, cultural, eating and entertainment facilities and activities, the repertoire of local product and skills in crafts, manufacturing and services all are able to contribute to an environment of sustainability.

“Studies have suggested that advanced environmental practices reflect a corporate commitment to advanced management in general. Other studies indicate that advanced plants tend to adopt an interrelated bundle of advanced practices such as team-based work, employee input in decision-making, quality management and so on“[\[241\]](#).

Apart from sustainable change within the companies there are creative

methods of awareness raising of private persons and in the wider public sphere. One quite unique example is the idea of a blogger of Indian descent living in New York City. One year long she wears the same dress with donated accessories from her readers and in this way tries to raise money for school children in India. She uses the internet to draw attention, collect donors and to present herself. On her website [www.uniformproject.com](http://www.uniformproject.com) she is able to combine individual creative expression with socially driven factors. She lives in New York City, but uses her Indian origin to build a bridge to another country.

Besides private engagement and action taking, whether in a very personal way or through a private company, political engagement and awareness raising from political representatives are just as important. The creative sector needs financial and symbolic support from the politics to be recognized, to flourish and to establish itself in a long-term and sustainable way. A main problem here is that creativity is often translated into its economic equivalent of innovation and moreover misused for other urban political reasons.

“Advocates of the cultural planning approach argue that policy-makers in all fields should not simply be making an instrumental use of cultural resources as tools for achieving non-cultural goals, but should let their own mindsets and assumptions be transformed by contact with the richness and complexity of the often hidden and invisible assets of local cultural life”[242].

Furthermore, it is of great importance that local politicians, actors from civil society and private businesses work and mutually exchange with each other. For the building of a sustainable future it is important that the diverse fields learn from each other instead of working in competition and narrow-mindedly for themselves.

“Equally it is important for local authorities to learn from certain private sector industries, like the fashion and design sectors, to value people who can spot talent and identify creative and innovative milieux. These talent and trendspotters, sometimes described as ‘coolhunters’, can give vital information to the local policy-making system. They can help design support services (ranging from access to venture capital, technology and cheap premises to advice on management, marketing and intellectual property) tailored for talented young people wishing to work in the creative industries. By doing this, they can help prevent the migration of talent from regional cities to London, Paris, Milan and the other global centers of the cultural economy“[\[243\]](#).

The constraints of this easily formulated idea lie in the differing exigencies of the region, the personal and professional needs of the creative actors and the economic goals. The interests sharply contrast as local politicians try to unify diverse interests, businesses mainly seek for economic profit and the creative actors look out for individual development and holding a critical position in society. Although there is progress and will to cooperate between scientific and social institutions, businesses and the creatives in recent times, the creatives still suffer under major problems. Whereas economic growth and regional development is accepted as a worthy investment for the future well-being of society and mankind, cultural values and expression are recognized as important, but not valued as equally important. Culture and cultural outcomes like intellectual work and ideas, the beautification of life and the aesthetization of everyday life is considered as a luxury in society. Its importance for social bonds, for the future development of humankind and amelioration of living conditions is mostly underestimated and therefore undervalued. Furthermore, the creatives miss a political lobby to defend their needs for an equal acceptance of their work and most importantly a fair salary valuing their work.

As Angela McRobbie states, the

“aim is to combine the sociological work of demystification with one of reconstitution so that fashion is better able to attend to its own business, particularly in the area of manufacture and production. The aim is unequivocally reformist in that there is an attempt to connect sociological and cultural analysis with a concern for policy“[\[244\]](#).

In addition to the need for a political lobby, a mindset change at several levels is necessary. The scientific institutions critically need to reflect their education programs towards a mindset change. More than design and art education it is necessary to enable upcoming designers and other creative workers in the fashion business for long-term working methods. Therefore, it is necessary to educate with a holistic approach. This includes education about production and consumption patterns, about globalization and international working conditions and about changing climate conditions, which involve environmental approaches and innovative ideas in clothing for extreme heat, cold or other contaminated living conditions. Young fashion design students need to be prepared for an uncertain future where pragmatic, social and environmental values count just as much as the design of a fashion product.

Therefore, the artistic value of a fashion product, represented through innovative design, the griffé and the choice of certain fabrics or other working materials, needs to be approached in a democratic way. First of all this means that it is equally important to social, economic and environmental factors and not superior to the others. This is a totally different approach towards fashion as the designer might lose his aura of the sacred-given artist. Given that this is one of the most important features for a fashion product to be successful. This would change the

whole way of approaching fashion and fashion design. Design would not be mystified and secondly this new way of making a fashion product could lead to a democratization of fashion in two ways. On the one hand side, the designers and fashion retailers would focus much more on a good quality product than being as famous as possible or selling as much as possible. On the other side, the consumer would choose a product not solely for being chic or à la mode, but for other qualities like long duration or little contamination of the environment.

Nonetheless, a change of the cultural paradigm towards sustainable fashion consumption within a holistic sustainable approach towards life is only a little and insufficient step towards a sustainable future. The development and planning of an ethically and sustainable civilization needs a whole lifestyle change, in the Northern hemisphere as well as in the Southern hemisphere. The implementation of cradle to cradle, fair trade, corporate social responsibility, environmentally friendly dying methods, biological planting methods, ecological fabrics and recycled fibers are only the first steps towards a sustainable fashion industry. It remains to be seen whether a globalized society based on participation, solidarity, responsibility and sharing rests an utopia or becomes reality, even if it is forced by an indispensable necessity for survival.

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- [89] Scott 2006:2

- [90] Hartley 2005:224
- [91] Scott 2006:3
- [92] Hartley 2005:226
- [93] Scott 2006:3
- [94] Here producers focus narrowly on one type of output, but the output's design specifications are constantly changing.
- [95] Hartley 2005:205
- [96] These are to be considered as differently from retail clothes as they fulfill different needs.
- [97] Hesmondalgh 2007:14
- [98] Howkins 2001:96
- [99] Hartley 2005:205
- [100] Hartley 2005:206
- [101] Hussein Chalayan is a British fashion designer, entrepreneur and conceptual artist. In 1999 and 2000 he has received the British Fashion Award Designer of the Year and is known for his unconventional and experimental approach towards arts and fashion.
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- [127] Gonzales 2005:8
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- [129] Gonzales 2005:1
- [130] Hartley 2005:169
- [131] Hartley 2005:170
- [132] Fordism has various meanings in different social theories. It is mainly relates to socio-economic issues and modes of production. The main points are the standardization of the product, the usage of specialized equipment through the assembly line and the elimination of skilled labour in direct production while paying the worker higher wages to construct a full-time run economy.
- [133] McRobbie 1998:53
- [134] McRobbie 1998:60
- [135] McRobbie 1998:60
- [136] This is also the case for most luxury articles found at certain places in distinct quarters or shopping malls in only a few chosen cities such as London, Paris, Milan, New York and Tokio. Recently, new cities such as Rio di Janeiro or Shanghai hit the market. Karl Lagerfeld for example presented the Chanel collection at the beginning of december 2009 in Shanghai.
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- [138] Davis 1992:123

- [139] Rautis 2003:99
- [140] Rautis 2003:105
- [141] Rautis 2003: 105
- [142] Hartley 2005:208
- [143] Crane 2004:35
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- [146] McRobbie 1999:9
- [147] McRobbie 1998:4
- [148] McRobbie 1998:109
- [149] McRobbie 1999:45
- [150] McRobbie 1998:15
- [151] McRobbie 1998:17
- [152] McRobbie 1998:112
- [153] Hartley 2005:383
- [154] Bovone 1997:177
- [155] Bovone 1997:203
- [156] The term was coined in 1995 by Marc Augé and describes places which do not hold enough significance to be considered as places.
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- [158] Bruzzi et al. 2000:14
- [159] Bruzzi et al. 2000:20
- [160] Crane 2004:2
- [161] Crane 2004:4
- [162] Crane 2004:4
- [163] Bovone 1997:287
- [164] Lloyd 2004:343
- [165] Lloyd 2004:344
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- [175] Becker and Jahn 1999:25
- [176] Meadowcroft and Lafferty 2002:5
- [177] Brocchi 2010:2
- [178] Beck 1992:2
- [179] Becker and Jahn 1999:5
- [180] Kirchberg and Kagan 2008
- [181] Lafferty and Meadowcroft 2002:16
- [182] Agenda 21 was the planet's first summit to discuss global warming related issues and programme for the implementation of sustainable development. It is an action plan to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the UN, governments and other groups concerning environmental issues.
- [183] Hajer 2000:17
- [184] Hajer 2000:23
- [185] The Palme Commission was an independent international commission for the the disarmament and common security.
- [186] Capra 2004:5
- [187] Capra 2004:5
- [188] Capra 2004:10
- [189] Capra 2004:28
- [190] Capra 2004:32
- [191] Capra 2004:111
- [192] Capra 2004:112
- [193] Capra 2004:146

- [194] Capra 2004:207
- [195] Capra 2004:212
- [196] Morin and Kern 1999:19
- [197] Forms that depend on language, concepts and ideas, which further feed the mind and consciousness.
- [198] Morin et al. 1999:40
- [199] In all the sociological, cultural and political spheres.
- [200] Morin et al. 1999:71
- [201] Morin et al. 1999:112
- [202] Morin et al. 1999:128
- [203] Morin et al. 1999:129
- [204] Meadowcroft and Lafferty 2002:447
- [205] Meadowcroft et al. 2002:451
- [206] Hajer 2000:102
- [207] Capra 2004:221
- [208] Wilson 2007:6
- [209] Brocchi 2010:7
- [210] Lunghi and Montagnini 2007:39
- [211] Capra 2004:121
- [212] Ströbele 2009
- [213] Eco-efficiency is based on the idea of creating goods and services and at the same time using fewer resources and creating less waste pollution.
- [214] Braungart and McDonough 2002:51
- [215] Kirchberg and Kagan 2008:413
- [216] Kirchberg and Kagan 2008:414
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- [229] Mora 2009:1
- [230] Mora 2009:3
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- [232] Kirchberg and Kagan 2008:38
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- [236] Duxbury and Gillette 2007:12
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- [241] Florida, Davison and Cline 1999:12
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- [244] McRobbie 1998:12

# Sustainable Fashion

New Approaches within the Fashion Industries

Rana Öztürk

The present thesis analyses current developments in the fashion industries related to the debate of the Cultural and Creative Industries. This approach includes the particularities of the debate about social, economic, aesthetic and anthropological aspects and, lastly, the current discursive and practical changes towards the idea of sustainable development. The focus lies on two main aspects. First, the implementation of new sustainable practices within the production sector of the fashion field and second, a mindset change in consumer behavior.

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