Governing Everyday Consumption
Governing Everyday Consumption

Stefan Wahlen

National Consumer Research Centre

Department of Economics and Management (Consumer Economics), University of Helsinki
Helsinki
Contents

Acknowledgements ......................................................... 7
Abstract ........................................................................... 9
Tiivistelmä ....................................................................... 11
Zusammenfassung ............................................................. 12
List of original publications ............................................... 14

PART 1. Introduction: Studying consumer policy and consumption ...... 15
  1. Distinguishing consumer policy ...................................... 16
  2. Exploring everyday consumption .................................... 19
  3. Aims, data and research approach ................................... 25

PART 2. Governing consumption ........................................... 31
  4. Government as conduct of conduct .................................. 31
  5. Analytics of government ............................................... 34
  6. Governing consumption ................................................ 38

PART 3. Governing practices as practices of government .................. 47
  7. Sustainable development and everyday consumption practices .. 47
  8. Governing sustainable consumption practices .................... 51
  9. Conclusion ................................................................. 55

References ......................................................................... 58

Articles:
Article Ia. .......................................................................... 65
Article Ib. .......................................................................... 87
Article II ............................................................................ 99
Article III ......................................................................... 111
Article IV ......................................................................... 121

Table of figures
Table 1: Summary of individual articles .................................. 29
Acknowledgements

During my doctoral journey I enjoyed support from many different perspectives. Without many diverse people and organizations, this thesis would have not been possible. I would like to address thanks to those who helped and guided me throughout the process. First and foremost I am most thankful to my supervisor Visa Heinonen. His support in all matters arising from this dissertation has been endless, being available without forgetting the meaning of academic freedom. Whenever I needed him he was there, but he also knew when I had to find my way. As co-supervisor Minna Lammi shared her vast knowledge and experience on consumer research being available and helping me out. Also Mika Pantzar served as co-supervisor and was available when I needed him.

The final version of this summary essay would have not been possible in its current form without the comments of the pre-examiners. Päivi Timonen and Johanna Moisander assisted in improving the manuscript and getting it ready for publication. My deepest thanks go to them for their thoughtful comments, suggestions and constructive criticism on the manuscript. I would also like to thank Gerda Casimir for her willingness to serve as an opponent at the public defence.

Various colleagues in the consumer economics unit at the Department of Economics and Management supported my research and helped me in discussions and being available with assistance in various matter. Therefore, I would like to thank: Minna Autio for sharing her viewpoint on consumer studies as senior researcher; Kaisa Hutunen for sharing insights on Finnish perspectives in our joint efforts; Sari Mäki sharing her knowledge on policy and policy analysis; Sylvia Lorek for sharing her thoughts on sustainable consumption; Motaher Hossain for sharing a room and the fact of being a foreigner in Finland; and Toni Ryynänen for sharing his bureaucratic expertise.

I am indebted to Anu Rajias and Michael-Burkhard Piorkowsky who made me write my diploma thesis as exchange student at the Consumer Economics unit and my initial intention to come to Finland. Director Eila Kilpiö and the National Consumer Research Centre (NCRC) deserve my thanks for support printing the dissertation and the weekly floorball distraction. I would also like to express my gratitude to Eva Heiskanen and Kristiina Aalto from NCRC for having the opportunity to assist in the EUPOPP research project. The “Transformation of Consumer Society Graduate School” was a constant place of inspiration and exchange so that special
thanks here are addressed to Matti Peltonen, Riitta Matilainen, Jaakko Autio as well as guest speakers in seminars for advice, especially Frank Trentmann and Anne Murcott.

The International Federation for Home Economics became some sort of professional home for me. Here my deepest thanks are going to: Emma, who was always available when help was needed proof reading a manuscript from a native speaker’s point of view; Hanna, who was willing to share here research expertise and commenting on early drafts of papers and chapters. Also, I would like to thank Anne, Petra, James, Miriam, Karin, Gwendolyn and various others for friendship and enduring support. Also the JUNGES FORUM was a place of constant exchange, thanks for all the discussions. Moreover, I would like to thank Kirsten Schlegel-Matthies and her team at the University of Paderborn for the interim job in a research project on consumer education after I finalized the manuscript. Anke Niehof and the team of the chairgroup for sociology of consumers and households at Wageningen University deserve my thanks for support in the final finalizing of the manuscript and currently giving me an academic home in the Netherlands.

As this thesis is about everyday life, I think it is most important having an everyday (personal) life and friends supporting me in various respect. The unobtrusive just being there or the knowledge of someone being there supported the processes of this dissertation. Distractions from the dissertation every now and then and then deserve my thanks as well. I would like to thank my friends from the time back living in Bonn, especially Richard und Katharina, Markus und Uschi, Almut, Daniela, Gökce und Sascha. From my home in Koblenz I would like to thank Verena, Esther, Kristina and their families as well as Nathalie, Marietta and Anna for letting me know where I am at home home. Friends in Helsinki should not be dismissed, as they have been available in person whenever I needed them. So I am most grateful for Anna and Anni sharing a lot of time, and I would like to thank them especially for trips to Eastern Finland, an expedition to Eastern Helsinki as well as for various journeys to Alabama. Riikka and her gang I am thankful for diverting time and enjoying Finnish culture. Maria und Sarah I would like to thank for joint language courses, evenings out and for sharing a German perspective on academic life in Finland.

From the family perspective, I would like to thank my Finnish family Anna-Liisa, Heino, Henna and all relatives that let me know that I have a home in Finland. My family in Germany always supported me whatever I did and as long as I can imagine. I am proud to have a family that is such supportive so I would like to express my sincere thanks to my parents Otti and Willi along with my brother Holger and his children, who have been there whenever I needed them. Finally and maybe most important, I would like to thank Mikko and Lempo for listening, discussing, reading, commenting and just all the time we spent together. Thank you!

Koblenz (Germany), March 2012
Current societies face several challenges and it has been indicated that sustainability is a major problem. It appears vital to possess knowledge on how to govern problems associated with sustainable development in order to mitigate the challenges they bring about. In this frame of reference, sustainable consumption appears imperative for reaching sustainability. In accord, this dissertation elaborates on how consumption is governed by a variety of instances and hence contributes to consumer studies by progressing consumer policy as well as the everyday life of consumers in offering distinctive perspectives on governing consumption.

Consumer policy attempts to govern consumption, however, predominantly focuses on market activities instead of everyday consumption. Respectively, consumption is here understood as everyday conduct in social practices so as to shed light on its routine and mundane character. The idea of government deployed in this dissertation is that of executing power over oneself or others in conduct of conduct. Hence it is possible to speak of the government of states, households, consumers, or the self. Regimes of practices governing consumption can then be found beyond and along the political and market spheres in the everyday.

The idea of sustainable development pertains to political practices as well as to everyday routines governing consumption. In order to govern consumption towards a more sustainable form of conduct, practitioners in political, market and everyday spheres can be considered by an analytics of government. Thereby a nexus concatenating distinct features can be distinguished including modes of thought, technologies of government, visual representations and identities involved in government. These four features are considered in the analysis of the individual articles providing perspectives on how consumption is governed. On the one hand consumer policy is comparatively analysed considering first the historic development of consumer empowerment and second on the discursive construction of the consumer in policy documents. The other perspectives on governing consumption convey examples drawing on food consumption. First, a practice approach highlights routines governing consumption, and second, a policy intervention related to public catering is analysed.

The results highlight the importance of a possible politico-theoretical alignment of the four features of an analytics of government by the respective practitioners in political, market and everyday spheres. The interplay between modes of thought, technologies of government, visual represen-
tations and identities plays a vital role in governing consumption. In order to achieve sustainability and especially sustainable consumption it has to be acknowledged that these four features mutually interact and influence each other.

Kulutusta ohjaamaan pyrkivä kuluttajapolitiikka on pääasiassa keskitynyt markkinoiden toimintaan, ei arkipäivään kulutukseen. Tämä kirja puolestaan kiinnittää huomiota erityisesti kulutuksen rutiineihin ja arkipäiväisyteen sekä sosiaalisiiin käytäntöihin.

Kulutuksen ohjaamisen idea liittyy ajatukseen siitä, että toimeenpanovalta levittäytyy laajasti eri elämänalueille. Siksi voidaan puhua esimerkiksi valtion, kotitalouksien, kuluttajien ja itsen ohjauksesta. Kulutuksen käytäntöjen ohjaamisen tapoja voidaan havaita poliittisen ja talouselämän ohessa kuluttajien arjessa.


Vuorovaikutus ajattelun, hallinnan teknologioiden, visuaalisten repre-sentaatioiden ja toimijoiden välillä on keskeistä kulutuksen ohjaamisessa. Tutkimuksen tulokset valottavat sanottujen tekijöiden merkittäväyttä arkielämän ohjaamisessa ja hallinnassa. Kestävän kehityksen ja erityisesti ke-stävän kulutuksen saavuttaminen ei onnistu ilman toimijoiden yhteistyötä ja keskinäistä yhteyttä.
Zusammenfassung


Es kann gesagt werden, dass Verbraucherpolitik versucht Konsum zu steuern, jedoch liegt der Fokus all zu oft auf dem Marktgeschehen und nicht auf dem Konsumalltag. Dementsprechend werden Handlungsweisen des Konsums hier als soziale Praktiken aufgefasst um routinisierte und scheinbare banale Charakteristika des Alltages herauszuarbeiten. Das hier angewendete Bedeutungsfeld der Regierung bezieht sich auf die Anwendung von Macht auf das Selbst oder auch auf andere, als „conduct of conduct“. Regierung ist also nicht auf staatliche Institutionen oder das politische System beschränkt, sondern „Regierungskünste“, also Führung von Menschen, findet auch im Kontext von Kollektiven, wie zum Beispiel Haushalten, aber gleichermaßen auch in Formen der Selbstführung statt. Demzufolge können „Regierungskünste“ bezüglich von Konsum in Politik-, Markt- und Alltags-Sphären verortet werden.

die weiteren Artikel befassen sich mit Regierungsweisen im Hinblick auf Lebensmittelkonsum.

List of original publications

The thesis is based on the following publications, referred to in the text by the numerals I-IV


* Articles I.a and I.b were written with equally shared responsibilities. As they follow a similar internal logic, they are referred to as one contribution in this dissertation.

** In Article IV, Stefan Wahlen was responsible for drafting the article including the theoretical framework, whilst gathering the empirical material and the data analysis have been conducted in collaboration with the other authors.
PART 1. Introduction: Studying consumer policy and consumption

The insignificant, ordinary and the stuff that most consumers do not even think about have had a fascination for me since I started my undergraduate studies. I have ever since been struggling with theoretical conceptions that do not address these matters adequately from my point of view. Luckily I found a way during my doctoral journey and became acquainted with a theoretical view of this I believe fits to what is going on in the world. The idea of comparing the image of the consumer in consumer policy initiated the process of this academic dissertation.

The initial idea of comparing the development in Finland and Germany, which finds expression in articles I and II of this dissertation was not just to compare the country that I have been living in for the past five years and the one where I grew up. There are other good reasons to compare them. They serve as excellent examples to set against a European backdrop. Similar in geographical size, but differing by number of inhabitants, consumers in Finland and Germany share some sort of cultural similarities that become apparent in everyday life and in shared understandings on seemingly insignificant matters, even though their welfare-state regimes differ to some extent. Moreover, cultural, political, scientific and other influences came to Finland from Germany during the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Even today there are still strong relations between the two countries.

The unfolding research endeavour has over the past years taken me away from the initial topic and then brought me back to it from another perspective. I returned not to the image of the consumer, but address the question of how consumption is governed by various regimes of practices. Governing consumption can be associated with regimes of practices in political, market and everyday spheres. These three dimensions can be considered as decisive for consumption.

In this dissertation consumer policy and everyday life are ascribed distinctive, yet not exclusive roles in governing consumption. Consumer policy aims at setting the conditions for and influencing consumption towards a desired direction. Problematically, discussions on consumer policy focus mainly on behavioural, institutional and instrumental dimensions (Leonhäuser 2004: 14); and not on cultural practices. Even though these discussions claim to advance consumer policy from the consumer perspective the focus often lies on markets. Too often it is not the real life of consumers that matters in consumer policy, but the market consumers are acting in.
Nevertheless everyday life can be considered as the locus where most consumption takes place. This day-to-day perspective is often unrecognized in consumer policy, where economic concepts describe, for example, the consumer as chooser on markets.

This first introductory part of this dissertation outlines different ways of understanding consumer policy and consumption. Distinguishing various streams of research positions this dissertation within the field of consumer studies. Chapter 1 outlines different concepts of consumer policy in order to investigate and understand diverse perspectives on consumption policies and its specific meanings in particular contexts. The chapter describes the underlying idea of consumer policy deployed in this dissertation and its shortcomings, namely its essential focus on markets. Chapter 2 then illustrates ways of conceptualising consumption especially from practice perspectives. The locus and point of reference of this dissertation appreciates consumption from a perspective of everyday-life. By approaching consumption from a practice perspective, the chapter calls for shifting the perspective from governing the market and towards governing consumption practices. Thereby the foundation is laid and the context set for understanding how far consumption is governed in everyday life practices and by consumer policy. The third chapter of the introduction subsequently outlines the aims of this dissertation to contribute to an understanding of how consumption is governed. The chapter further explicates data, methods and contribution in reference to the individual articles and the research approach in order to describe the interrelatedness and contribution of the individual articles, leading to a better understanding of how consumption is governed.

After this introductory part, the second part describes techniques, discourses, apparatuses, authorities and institutions that are engaged in various regimes of practices involved in governing consumption. Regimes of practices associated with government are especially highlighted here in political and everyday spheres with its various practitioners governing consumption. Thus, the focus on markets governing consumption is shifted and differentiated between these spheres. The third, last and concluding part of this dissertation considers regimes of practices in political government of consumption, as well as (self-) government in everyday life against the idea of sustainable development, bringing together the first two parts reflecting on how sustainable consumption practices might be governed in political, market and everyday spheres by respective practitioners.

1. Distinguishing consumer policy

The roots of consumer policy can be traced back to medieval times (Kuhlmann 1990). Back then, for instance, guilds as associations of craftsmen
regulated consumption to some extent. Precursors of contemporary consumer policy developed around the end of the 19th century with the rise of consumer cooperatives. In Germany, for instance consumer cooperatives in the form of self-organised social movements played an important role around the beginning of the 20th century. As allies of the state, these associations of consumers helped to regulate supply, control prices, guarantee stability and safety as well as the potential for reduced prices. Similarly, residential building cooperatives shaped the construction of cities. Along with increasing urbanisation, women’s participation played a significant role in the development of consumer cooperatives.

Consumer policy as explicit political activity is a relatively recent area of interaction. It was consolidated in the rise of a consumerist movement during the 1950s. This social movement led to the proclamation of consumer rights by US president Kennedy in 1962, including the rights to safety, to be informed, to choose, and to be heard. These rights were adopted by the United Nations in 1985 and amended with the rights to satisfaction of basic needs, to redress, to consumer education, and to a healthy environment.

Nordic countries established an explicit consumer policy already quite early resulting in the introduction of explicit consumer legislation. Germany took up consumer issues somewhat later in a more structured way (see articles I.a and I.b). However, West German research on consumer policy fortified during the 1970s and various consumer policy conceptions were developed. Scherhorn (1975) suggested introducing a counter-weight model in which consumers are supported at the political level by consumer organisations. Kröber-Riehl (1977) emphasised approaches from empirical behavioural research to develop consumer policy further. Biervet al. (1977) proposed a participating consumer policy conception highlighting more intervention in market action. These suggestions on consumer policy led to the establishment of the ‘Zeitschrift für Verbraucherpolitik’ during 1977, now published as the Journal of Consumer Policy.

Against the backdrop of a further evolving society, these discussions from the 1970s were developed further (Kuhlmann 1990, Mitropoulos 1997). The food crises at the turn of the century has led to new discussions on consumer policy (see Reisch 2004). More recently perspectives of new institutional economics (Rischkowsky 2007) or behavioural economics (European Commission 2010) have been advanced focusing on consumer issues and market regulation. These recent discussions have mainly emphasized market regulation and to less extent taken an everyday-life perspective. Moreover, these conceptualisations do not inquire into consumer policy as a field or regime of governmental and everyday consumption practices. The discussions mainly focus on markets and on the consumer as economic actor.

As contemporary consumer policy addresses subject areas such as nutrition, health, product safety, telecommunications, finance, insurance, transport, energy, and the environment, it extends beyond the economic to other
policy areas such as social, health and competition policy. In addition, consumer law, consumer education, consumer research and consumer information are important across the range of consumer policy measures. Repo (2009) highlights the consumer as a marginal object in policy, who serves as a connection between various policy fields. This transverse aspect of consumer policy might find expression in many (other) policy subject areas and at different levels. Consumer policy is related to cross-sectional policy-making processes, for instance, at state levels across various ministries that affect consumer issues. Thus, consumer policy generally aims at regulations striving for consumer security in legal, economic and security matters.

The historical development of consumer policy, as outlined in more detail in articles I.a and I.b of this dissertation, comes along with varying understandings of consumer policy in different backgrounds. Thus, the arena of consumer policy is not definite and ahistoric, and consequently understanding of consumer policy varies over time. The term consumer policy is not only used in the political governance of consumption, but also as political consumption where citizen-consumers choose and vote for products and services. This so-called politicized consumption and the political power of consumers manifests itself in the interplay between stakeholders that support or neglect certain ideological regimes and power structures (Thompson 2011).

Alongside political institutions, third sector organizations such as consumer and women’s organizations and consumer cooperative businesses have played a key role in consumer policy developments. In addition, international or supra-national regulation of consumer affairs is intended to protect the weaker market participant. For example, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has published a consumer policy toolkit (OECD 2010) as guidance for policy makers to address consumer issues. Even though this report promotes efforts to appreciate consumption in routines, the focus lies on routines in relation to market activities. Understanding consumption as demand side, however, appears inappropriate addressing challenges in society such as sustainable development.

It is important to stress here that articles I.a, I.b and II consider consumer policy in different welfare state regimes and with corresponding interpretations of consumer policy. The articles compare regimes of consumer policy practices, depicting the historical development in Finland and Germany. These countries have welfare state systems. Esping-Andersen (1990) distinguishes three welfare-state system regimes: first, a liberal welfare state (Anglo-Saxon); second, a historical corporatist-statist legacy (continental European, including Germany) and, third, a “social democratic” regime type (Scandinavian, including Finland). Hence, the two present cases are of particular interest as their welfare state systems present an interesting comparison with consumer policy in Finland representing the “so-
cial democratic” Nordic welfare state system to that in Germany with its social market economy approach relating to a historical corporatist-statist legacy. A particular attraction of such a comparative analysis is that while Germany has been a member of the European Communities ever since its establishment in the second half of the 20th century, Finland accessed the EU in 1995 after the establishment of the European Union under the Maastricht contract in 1992. The Maastricht contract also included consumer affairs.

Consumer policy has been scrutinised and theorised about by a variety of scholars. The concept of ‘consumer policy’ is typically assigned various meanings. Loosely connected researchers address the topic from various backgrounds. Consumer policy research is merely institutionalised to less extent. For example, in Europe the only publicly funded research centres on consumer policy exist in Norway and Finland. There are, for at least in Europe, no explicit professorships at universities or professional associations addressing consumer policy. Most consumer policy researchers have other disciplinary backgrounds such as marketing, political sciences, some social scientists and researchers from home economics and consumer studies. Hence, the field appears rather diffuse.

Even though the meaning of consumer policy differs and structural weaknesses exist, it can be said that consumer policy sets the conditions for consumption in order to govern it towards a desired direction. At present consumer policy mainly focuses on markets. Setting the conditions for consumption, state regulation, authorities and supra-national organisations such as the European Union aim at diminishing structural weaknesses on the consumer side. Consumer policy discussions do mainly not focus on the consumer perspective, even though they claim to do so. It appears that the consumer often wears the heavy burden of the crown and contemporary images and representations of the consumer as economic actor on markets have several shortcomings as will be explained in the following chapter.

2. Exploring everyday consumption

Various researchers from different schools of thought, research backgrounds and against even more purposes have researched consumption. The most prominent and orthodox, so to say, hegemonic perception believes the consumer choosing and purchasing products or services in markets. However, a broader understanding of consumption considers that there is more to be explored in everyday contexts, for instance, in the domestic arena. Indeed everyday life relates to consumption in many facets. However, routine settings and everydayness are considered to a lesser extent in discussions on consumption and even less in discussions relating to consumer policy. Rather banal and ordinary activities such as the daily
shower, reading a newspaper or a book, the consumption of food, or practices related to the laundry, to mention only a few, take place in everyday life. Thus, in discussions on consumer policy market considerations prevail often from an economist perspective depicting consumption as more or less rational decision-making process.

Research on consumption often hinges on relationships between consumers and producers usually referred to as the market. This market interrelation is the hegemonic idea often not considered from the consumption point of view. In marketing studies, for example, this relationship is habitually considered from the business perspective (e.g. market making), which serves different purposes than contemplation from a consumption point of view (e.g. empowering the consumer). Prevailing ideas in discussions on consumption as well in colloquial talk see the consumer as a customer or buyer, since consumption is often equated with shopping. In everyday narratives, the prevailing framework relates the consumer with market and choice. The point of purchase is important in so far as it is often the locus in social sciences as in economic thought, political disciplines or sociology. The individual and active consumer in markets, the sovereign consumer, knows how to act and is informed about how to behave properly (cf. Trentmann 2006b). In this line of argument, Winch (2006) elaborates on the problematic status of the consumer in orthodox economic thought, claiming that

> the choosing agent seems to have achieved sovereignty at the cost of becoming an isolated rational individual whose tastes are given and whose sensitivity to change is limited to the numerical information contained in prices, incomes and estimates of the risks or uncertainties that impinge on his profit-seeking or pleasure and leisure-maximizing goals.

(Winch 2006: 32)

The consumer in economic theory is sometimes considered as passive and rather the dependent variable. However, the idea of who or what can be considered a consumer is diverse (cf. Gabriel and Lang 2006). For example, Trentmann (2006b: 6–12) delineates the historic development of conceptualisations from the user via the purchaser and the customer towards a consumer in contemporary discussions, thereby outlining a narrative of the active consumer who chooses in markets. The consumer as consuming subject (Reckwitz 2010: 219–233) is constantly changing, as are the boundaries of what can be understood as consumption. Different ideas, images and compositions of consumption emerged exist and are further developed in the practices that are enacted and materialized by consumers (Trentmann 2006a; Gabriel and Lang 2006; Heinonen et al. 2005).

The historicity of understanding consumption becomes apparent in the description by Gasteiger (2010), who outlines the development of conceptualising the consumer in post-war Germany. He highlights influences
from consumer protection institutions involved in politics, from advertising industries and critics of consumption such as the Frankfurt Critical School as shaping an understanding of the consumer. Similarly, Trentmann (2006b) emphasises numerous and ever-changing understandings of the consumer and suggests considering several conceptualisations of the consumer. Thereby, certain historicity can be acknowledged: conceptualisations of consumption are not ahistorical as these can be associated with particular roots, have developed or emerged in the past, and are continuously changing.

As indicated, a broad field of research addresses consumption. In order to understand the contribution of this thesis it appears vital to understand the variation and the stream of research that I would like to contribute to. It is possible to differentiate at least four major research streams concerned with consumption: consumer studies, consumer research, consumer culture and economics (Heinonen et al. 2005: 24–46). The first stream, entitled consumer studies, mainly derives from schools of thought related to home economics or family and consumer sciences. Here, consumer empowerment and the promotion of consumer interest are important and the locus of consumption is the home and everyday life. Sub-disciplines can be found in relation to consumer education, consumer policy or more generally to consumer studies or sciences (Wahlen et al. 2009).

The second discipline or school of thought, consumer research, relates to marketing discussions and behavioural consumer research. Questions here centre around how market actors can be persuaded to demand products and services. Hence, this stream is more related to the understanding of consumer behaviour in order to promote business growth (McGregor 2007). The third important stream in regard to consumption research is that on cultures of consumption. Anthropologists, historians, media and cultural researchers, sociologists and a critical school of thought seek the cultural meaning of consumption (see Slater 1997; Sassatelli 2007; Trentmann 2006b; Featherstone 2007).

The fourth and last body of thought relates to economic thinking. Not only classical economic thinkers like Smith or Marx, but conceptions related to macro-economic thinking such as Keynesian economics also scrutinise consumption to some extent. Examples range from classical authors such as Veblen (1911) examining the leisure class or Galbraith (1958) describing an affluent society, to more model-building advances that are included in the Chicago School promoting the economisation of nearly everything as, for example, promoted by Becker (1976) describing an economic approach to human behaviour. This dissertation aims at contributing to the first stream, consumer studies, assisted by some of the vocabulary outlined in the stream related to cultures of consumption.

As specified above, the consumer is commonly considered a market actor. Likewise, discussions on consumer policy mainly focus on the con-
sumer as market participant (cf. Reisch 2004; Thøgersen 2005; Heinonen et al. 2005: 15). Nevertheless, the locus of consumption is not exclusively the market, as consumer studies, home economics and research on cultures of consumption emphasise. These streams of research are located within different disciplines; however, it must nonetheless be acknowledged that overlap exists and some scholars conduct and even call for interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research (McGregor 2007). Following McGregor (2007), this dissertation aims at blurring the disciplinary boundaries and accordingly promotes transdisciplinary consumer studies (Wahlen 2008). With the assistance of the theoretical vocabulary of cultural studies related to consumption, this dissertation contributes to consumer studies and home economics as an influence on the development of policy (see Wahlen et al. 2009). Thereby, moving beyond disciplinary boundaries, academia might interact with civil society and develop solutions to challenges in society such as striving towards more sustainable consumption.

Contemporary understandings of the consumer predominantly derive from economic and business thinking focussing on market exchange and purchase of commodities. This view can be questioned (Trentmann 2006a: 2) when the the approach to the consumer relates to everyday life, for example, in domestic settings (Niehoff 2011). Market choice is often associated with positive overtones, i.e., connotations that are understood mostly in a positive way. The notion of choice with different peculiarities in cultural, economic and psychological traditions generally relates to the rational consumer choosing ethically and environmentally correctly in decision-making or problem-solving processes. There is a certain doubt about the active and responsible consumer. Choice relates to unevenly shared freedom: it might assist in liberation of consumers, but also be involved in their oppression (Gabriel and Lang 2006: 26ff). The focus on the market should be overcome in order to consider the consumer acting in mundane and ordinary routines of everyday life. Linkages between power, beliefs, identities and practices can be revealed by shifting the focus from the market towards the everydayness of consumption.

In order to highlight an everyday life perspective, it appears vital to ask what exactly is everyday life? A question that seems very simple, yet the most elementary questions are often the hardest to answer. Indeed, when people are asked about everyday life, they consider doing nothing because everydayness is so obvious that it is obviously forgotten (Ehn and Löfgren 2009). Therefore, everyday life can be defined by what it is not, like events not happening from day to day but rather by the extraordinary events framing the everyday. Nevertheless, it might be said that everyday life is what seems to be the most familiar to us. Everyday life is the fulfilment of everyday tasks, routines, rhythms and regularities: getting up every morning, having breakfast, going to work or school, having lunch, going home, having dinner, reading a book, surfing on the internet or watching televi-
sion, probably doing similar things again and again, “everyday life is characterized by ambiguities, instabilities and equivocation” (Highmore 2002: 17).

Bennett and Watson (2004) emphasize that Lefebvre’s (2008 [1961]) account of everyday life recognizes rationalizing and modernising forces that affect its organisation in households and families. For instance, discussing technology as restructuring the everyday in the second half of the last century. Routine, repetition, and regularities in everyday life relate, according to Felski (1999), to the repetitive tasks of social reproduction such as cleaning, cooking, and caring outside the dynamics of history and change. The everyday and home are associated with habit and repetition (Bennett and Watson 2004), so that home and household are conceptualised differently in distinct cultures and social contexts (Casimir and Tobi 2011) and are of the highest relevance for consumption. The ambivalence of everyday-life becomes apparent when thinking of boredom (not in a pejorative understanding), which is opposed to the excitement beyond the everyday. In any case, oppressive routines in day-to-day repetitions may not be noticed, in their inconspicuousness and complete unobtrusiveness, yet are useful for the consumer in so far as they produce a certain security.

An everyday-life perspective can be acknowledged by practice thinking, which forms a different approach to consumption, as has been widely canvassed. In a practice approach, consumption is not reduced to shopping and market exchange, but is understood in a broader sense. Since current discussions on governing consumption rather emphasize market exchange, it is suggested that these discussions could benefit from practice-theoretical thinking. The following explains an understanding of consumption as taking place in social practices in order to provide some notion of how to theorize consumption that is underlying this dissertation. This is important, since it differs from most approaches found in consumer studies (especially related to consumer policy).

First, and perhaps most important, practices are conducted regularly. As repetitive conduct, practice thinking emphasizes reiteration without being mere behaviour or action. The situational context and the surroundings as well as other ‘stuff’ involved in the practice are acknowledged (Stern 2007: 186). Reckwitz (2002: 249–250) provides a definition of what can be understood as practice:

A practice (Praktik) is a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. A practice – a way of cooking, of consuming, of working, of investigating, of taking care of oneself or of others, etc. – forms so to speak a ‘block’ whose existence necessarily depends on the existence and specific interconnectedness of these elements, and which cannot be reduced to any one of these single elements.
Different aspects become apparent considering ‘ideal’ practice, that is, considering different dimensions of practices. These dimensions are inex- tricably linked to each other in corresponding practices, they merely exist separately but the totality of a nexus constitutes a practice. The phenom-
enon of ‘practice’ then includes bodily movements and performances, men-
tal activities with understanding and knowledge, as well as things and ar-
tefacts. Collective characteristics of practices can be located in shared un-
derstanding, which manifests social structure in a field of practices. The in-
dividual can be located at the cross-section of the three dimensions but not the centre of analysis. The practice-as-entity is understood as a “temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings” (Schatzki 1996: 89); however, the individual and the practitioner is the carrier of men-
tally and bodily activities, carrying out the routine and interpreting the di-
mensions that come together in a practice.

The idea of everyday consumption as taking place in social practices has become better known in the last decade (see Shove 2003; Shove and Pantzar 2005, 2006, 2007; Warde 2005; Trentmann 2006b; Watson and Shove 2008; Gram-Hanssen 2008, 2009; Jaeger-Erben 2010; Thompson 2011, Hargreaves 2011, Halkier et al. 2011). In an understanding of consumption cultures like those promoted by Slater (1997: 63ff), Featherstone (2007), Sassatelli (2007) or Trentmann (2006b), consumption is stressed as a meaning-making phe-
nomenon, which embraces both individual and collective characteristics. Consumers as “carriers” of practices (as practitioner or conductor) individually carry out the practice even though it is collectively somehow similar, but internally differentiated. Even though practices are in some way very individual, these practices follow some principles of shared culture (Warde 2005). Changes in practices become apparent over a longer period of con-
sideration or over spatially differentiated consideration. Variations in prac-
tices appear over geographical and temporal spans. Summarizing the afore-
said, consumption can be understood, according to Warde (2005: 137):

as a process whereby agents engage in appropriation and appreciation, whether for utilitarian, expressive or contemplative purposes, of goods, services, performances, information or ambience, whether purchased or not, over which the agent has some degree of discretion. In this view, con-
sumption is not itself a practice but is, rather, a moment in almost every practice.

It is important to highlight that consumption is not always of a mone-
tary nature, i.e., is not reduced to market exchange as understood in its col-
loquial and economist sense. Consumption also extends into the home and other sites, seeking the mundane, repetitive and banal character of eve-
ryday life. Ordinary consumption (cf. Gronow and Warde 2001) is empha-
sised by a practice approach. Within this broader understanding it might
be possible to understand and consider consumption as a part of many everyday life activities so that a large variety of consumption clusters exist (Scott 2009). In these consumption clusters, consumers as practitioners regard processes in the situational context via shared understanding as normal, i.e., via some sort of normalising processes norms are constructed in regimes of practices, and thus pervade society.

This involves an idealized norm of conduct; however, beside how something should ‘normally’ be done in context, practitioners conceive some sort of hyperindividual sense of normality. This includes the normal way of doing the laundry, cleaning the windows or preparing food (see also Shove and Southerton 2000). Understanding is thus involved in the processes of normalization, i.e., perceiving consumption as normal and normalization as a process of translating or adapting something new as a part of everyday consumption, which is taken for granted and must not occur in the awareness of the practitioner due to the tacit forms of knowledge applied. Practices are then formulated as conduct, emphasizing bodily movements in performances that take place in a particular context in time and space, through which shared or collective knowledge and understanding as bodily activity assists in mediating materialities in order to create an ever-changing and dynamic sense of normality in consumption.

3. Aims, data and research approach

Transformations in society present new challenges for both consumers and consumer policy. For instance, during recent decades the Internet and social media allowed an information society to emerge. Since 2008, financial crises brought about uncertainties for consumers as well for policy makers regulating markets. During the recent decade, several food scandals raised awareness for consumer issues on the political agenda. Another example draws on challenges with more sustainable forms of consumption that have been discussed already for a while. Sustainable consumption has been recognized as a field where consumer policy should become more active. However, even though a vast amount of research, activities and initiatives exist, little has been achieved in order to change consumption patterns towards a more sustainable way (cf. Lorek 2009).

In order to tackle societal challenges this dissertation seeks to contribute to a better understanding of how consumption is directed toward desired directions. The aim of this dissertation hence lies in addressing the question of how consumption is governed. This dissertation contributes to consumer studies as to progress consumer policy as well as the everyday life of consumers. Particular interest accompanies more sustainable consumption, especially against the backdrop of interplay between consumer policy and everyday life consumption.
This research report brings together several projects related to the question of what regimes of practices govern consumption, manifested in the individual articles constituting this dissertation. Therefore, I would like to present a summarizing overview of my research objectives and related research questions. In doing so, we should understand how the individual papers fit together and contribute to research on consumer policy as well as to everyday consumption. Therefore, the objective of this dissertation is twofold. On one hand, consumption in everyday life is in this dissertation not considered as solely market activity (see above, chapter 2), but is conceptualized as social practice highlighting routines and day-to-day activities governing consumption (see article III). On the other hand, consumer policy and its market focus (see above, chapter 1) is approached in regimes of practices associated with governing consumption in policy, market and everyday spheres (see part 2, articles I and II). Sustainable consumption then serves as an example (see part 3, article IV), as the political concept affects everyday lives of consumers.

Sustainable everyday consumption practices have been researched to some extent, even though theoretical consolidation in what concerns consumer policy is still lacking, for instance what concerns a “knowledge-to-action” gap (see Markkula and Moisander 2012). The original articles I, II, III and IV contribute to the objectives from different perspective as explained in the following.

**Articles I.a and I.b** problematise the attempts of consumer policy to govern consumption as human conduct during the last century in Finland and Germany. The articles trace the historical development of technologies of government that are manifested in transformations attempting to empower the consumer. By this genealogical and critical approach some entrenched ideas might be reconsidered in order to progress consumer interest. The historical and comparative consideration reveals differing political regimes of practices to consumer policy and the respective way of governing consumption. The more structured Finnish approach is opposed to a more sporadic German consumer policy regime. The investigations suggest that, for instance, consumer empowerment never played a central role in consumer policy and that attempts to develop European consumer policy could benefit from a historical consideration of consumer power. Around the beginning of the 20th century governing consumption was enacted in regimes of practices, such as consumer cooperatives. During the last century, the political government took over these responsibilities to return them more recently to (self-) governing consumers.

**Article II** asks how and to what ends socially legitimised authorities attempt to impede consumption. How are expertise, knowledge and forms of thought articulated in systematized policy programmes or reports? Moreover, how do political bodies or entities of government rhetorically shape consumers? A comparative analysis of Finnish and German policy
documents discusses outcomes of historically and locally specific discursive practices locating the consumer in between two conceptions. The responsible and thoughtful consumer acts in sovereignty, whilst a consumer as victim is in need of help. This article elaborates on consumer policy documents and their way of governing the consumer by describing what can be understood as consumer. The study suggests that contemporary consumer policy discussions oscillate on a sovereignty-vulnerability continuum relating to concepts or mission statements that come along with certain shortcomings.

**Article III** scrutinises opportunities to conceptualise consumption in a way that appreciates everyday life. The article examines how consumption can be described as social practice. More specifically, the stable, routine character of consumption practices is described by analysing diary data from a German context. The data driven analysis is supported by the theoretical account of social practices as heuristic in order to highlight how routines govern consumption. The article offers insight into how the constancy of routines and their seasonality govern consumption in social practices, considering the consumer as practitioner. In contemporary consumer policy, for example, the routine character of everyday life is disregarded to a large extent. The empirical example draws on diary data from Germany encompassing a period of twenty years (1970–1990) showing the slow but steady change in routines in consumption practices. The article highlights the theoretical notion of social practices and its relevance, considering consumption conduct as domestic practice. More precisely, the article emphasises the routine character of consumption practices and their longevity.

**Article IV** highlights an attempt to promote sustainable consumption by shaping the conditions for consumption. How do different actors try to frame consumption? How can consumption practices be governed towards more sustainable conduct? The empirical example draws on a Finnish case in which the central government agreed to be a good example promoting sustainable food consumption practices via school food and educate pupils to eat more healthily and sustainably. The article scrutinises public catering as a means to promote sustainable consumption practices. The analysis of different sets of data (expert interviews, round-table discussions, online consumer discussion and additional documentary data) elaborates on the perspectives of policy-makers, catering professionals and consumers. It becomes apparent that these various actors support and oppose the initiative promoting more sustainable food consumption by specific identifications and visual representations. Active practitioners are involved in the conflicts, struggles and practical problems translating the political concept of sustainable consumption into practices. The change of existing regimes of practices in governing consumption needs policy makers and analysts to become aware of the interpretations of these various practitioners.
To sum up the individual contributions of the articles it can be said that emphasising consumption conduct in social practices and routines governing consumption (article III), has certain implications for regimes of practices governing consumption as well for political government (article IV). Thus, the analytics of government can highlight how regimes of practices in governing consumption are enacted in different spheres in order to conduct consumption conduct. Self-government in everyday routines (article III) seems as important as government from political government (articles I and II) as does the market. Moreover, distinguishing the government of consumption by practitioners on political, market and everyday levels shifts the focus from the market as prevailing in contemporary consumer policy discussions. This leads to the practical contribution for policy makers and analysts that should take unfolding interpretations of practitioners into account as these can take the policy process in various directions that might have not been considered when designing policy (article IV).

The four articles as individual contributions provide insights on how consumption is governed from different perspectives. Table 1 illustrates the specific research questions, approach and contribution of the individual articles. As becomes evident from the articles, my research strategy can be considered as diverse since different approaches to research come along with different strategies of investigating phenomena and consumption is governed by a vast amount of influences in specific contexts.

Due to the diverse research strategy, it seems important to apply a coherent epistemological stance. In what concerns epistemology, a qualitative and interpretive approach has been chosen for this dissertation. Epistemological foundations of interpretive consumer studies are, along with ontology, important philosophical foundation of research. What is knowledge, how can it be produced, what are its sources, what are the limits of knowledge and what do people know? These matters underlie every research question. Interpretive approaches have emerged and developed in the past. Questions of what is considered as knowledge and, further, how knowledge can be generated in the research process are differentiated by Schwandt (2000), according to whom qualitative research rejects “the blend of scientism, foundationalist epistemology, instrumental reasoning, and the philosophical anthropology of disengagement that has marked ‘mainstream’ social science” (Schwandt 2000: 190). He argues that in qualitative inquiry, “theoretical” matters challenge the researcher constantly in a perpetual process of critical reflection and transformation. Moreover, in qualitative research, as in interpretive consumer studies, a constructivist epistemology lays the foundation of inquiry, as researchers assume that knowledge is constructed and not discovered, as realist approaches take for granted.

Accordingly, various epistemic approaches can be distinguished in qualitative research. Schwandt (2000) differentiates interpretivist philosophies, philosophical hermeneutics and social constructionism. Interpretivism as-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article no.</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Research approach</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.a and I.b</td>
<td>How did political instances attempt to conduct consumption conduct in order to empower consumers? How did consumption-related public policy develop during the last century in Finland and Germany?</td>
<td>The articles trace the historical development of consumer policy in Finland and Germany. This historical and comparative consideration reveals differing political approaches to consumer policy and its ways of promoting consumer empowerment.</td>
<td>The results oppose a more structured Finnish approach to more sporadic German regimes of practices in consumer policy. The investigations suggest that consumer empowerment never played a central role in consumer policy and came across as a mere rhetoric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>How and to what ends do socially legitimated authorities attempt to rhetorically shape consumption? How are expertise, knowledge and forms of thought articulated in systematized policy programmes or reports?</td>
<td>A comparative analysis of rhetoric or discursive practices. Investigating Finnish and German policy documents in order to show how the consumer is located in between two conceptions of the consumer as sovereign and the consumer in need of help and assistance.</td>
<td>This article elaborates on consumer policy documents and their way of considering the consumer. Political government contributes discursive practices that somehow shape consumer conduct. The responsible and thoughtful consumer is opposed to a dupe consumer in need of help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>How can consumption be described as social practice? How are routines governing consumption?</td>
<td>The empirical material consisting of diary data encompassing a period of twenty years highlights the slow but steady change in routines in consumption practices.</td>
<td>Conceptualising consumption conduct as social practice considers the consumer as practitioner. The article highlights the theoretical notion of social practices and its relevance, considering domestic practice emphasising the routine character and its longevity governing consumption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>How can political governmental practices attempt to influence private consumption practices by setting conditions for consumption? How can a reframing of consumption conditions by presenting a good example for sustainable food consumption motivate more sustainable consumption conduct?</td>
<td>The article highlights perspectives of policy-makers, catering professionals and consumers. The empirical material consists in different sets of data: expert interviews, round-table discussions, an online consumer discussion board and additional documentary data.</td>
<td>The article suggests that changes towards more sustainable food consumption practices can be initiated via public catering. It becomes apparent that various actors support and oppose the initiative promoting more sustainable food consumption by specific identities and visual representations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sumes that social human action underlies a meaning: “To say that human action is meaningful is to claim either that it has a certain intentional content that indicates the kind of action it is and/or that what an action means can be grasped only in terms of the system of meanings to which it belongs” (Schwandt 2000: 191). Epistemological foundations are not intended for a rigorous, linear mode of employment, but rather form a basis for critical thinking and continuous self-reflection in a creative and productive research process. It is to strike a balance between open-minded and sceptical inquiry as applied in the individual articles of this dissertation. In evaluation processes of research, three criteria are conventionally consulted: reliability, validity and generalizability (Moisander and Valtonen 2006: 23). These are partly rejected, for instance, the results of this dissertation should not come up with generalizations, however, validity and reliability should not be dismissed, so that the results of the articles draw upon the transparency of the research process, so that I described in all four articles the respectively applied strategy and corresponding data analysis method and also explained the theoretical stance to make the whole research process traceable.

To address the overall research question of how consumption is governed, this summary essay is divided into three parts. This first part introduces the thesis and the theoretical positioning of this dissertation within consumer studies. The first chapter explicates central concepts of consumption and consumer policy to lay the foundations of the thesis. It becomes apparent that the consumer is dominantly discussed from economic or business perspectives. Hand in hand, consumer policy often only considers the consumer as market participant. The second chapter sheds light on everyday consumption as prevailing in domestic contexts and shifting the focus away from the market. The following second part then describes various regimes of practices involved in governing consumption. Regimes of practices associated with government are especially highlighted here in political and everyday spheres with its various practitioners governing consumption. Thus, the focus on markets governing consumption is shifted and differentiated between these spheres. The third, last and concluding part of this dissertation considers regimes of practices in political government of consumption. It is reflected how sustainable consumption practices might be governed in political, market and everyday spheres by the respective practitioners.
PART 2. Governing consumption

A variety of strategies might be applied in order to govern consumption. The idea of government expounded here involves an understanding of government, not simply relating to the executive branch or the administration of a state. Since government is recognized in a broader sense, the aim of this part is to delineate the analytics of government as a theoretical opportunity to address the question of how consumption is governed, especially by political government as well as by everyday life. Government here differentiates between “rationalities” or modes of thought and “technologies” or strategies of government, understood as conduct of conduct. Government in its broader sense recognizes organized regimes of practices governing states, as well as households, families or, here especially, consumption.

In a manner of speaking, government involves knowledge and power over others and ourselves. It is then possible to distinguish a complex set of apparatuses concerned with government, hence chapter 4 explains the notion “conduct of conduct”. An analytics of government (chapter 5) then accompanies the idea that government involves “rationalities”, i.e., mentalities or modes of thought including knowledge and expertise, e.g., in discursive practices. Moreover, government also consists of “technologies”, which include the techniques, apparatuses, agencies, authorities, and institutions. In the conduct of conduct, further crucial and fundamental links consist in characterizing a phenomenon and the opportunities to modify it, which take the form of identities and visual representations. Chapter 6 then provides specific examples of how consumption is governed in political, market and everyday spheres drawing from the respective articles of this dissertation.

4. Government as conduct of conduct

Government is understood nowadays in a colloquial sense, predominantly as the institutionalised control of a state, often connected to the executive branch of political leadership. Depending on the viewpoint, government also includes institutions leading the state, such as ministries and other administrative and regulative entities. Hence, this understanding occasionally embraces bureaucracy and administration as part of government (Lemke 2001, 2007). In an understanding that is loosely related to Foucauldian thinking (without taking a Foucauldian stance), the notion of government
can also be understood somehow differently. Government might include the direction of subjects, but these subjects must not be citizens (Nonhoff 2008). It is important to stress that a wider understanding of the word government can signify problems of self-control, guidance for the family and for children, administration of the household, or directing the individual. In this sense, it is possible to distinguish the political government of a state, the government of a family or a household, the government of the self as a consumer or the government of everyday life. In view of this, subtle forms of government in everyday life occur in households and families (cf. Donzelot 1979). It can then be argued with Dean (2010: 18) that:

Government is any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through the desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs of various actors, for definite but shifting ends with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes.

In this sense, government can be considered as conduct of conduct (Dean 2010: 17, Foucault 2007: 192–193, 1991, Gordon 1991: 2). When government is understood as conduct of conduct, the word conduct is considered as noun and as verb. Having a closer look reveals that conduct has, as a verb, the sense of to lead, to direct or to guide, to say that it comes along with the idea of how something should or has to be done. On the other hand, conduct as a noun means something like behaviour, activity or practice. Thus, conduct of conduct can be understood as leading, directing, or guiding some kind of behaviour, activity or practice. As Binkley (2006) illustrates, conduct of the consumer by leading, directing or guiding consumer behaviour, activity or practice suggests that conduct of conduct is about how consumption should or ought to be done. In other words, conduct of conduct suggests in what concerns consumption that personal conduct in behaviour, action or practice is governed, directed or controlled somehow.

Considering government as conduct of conduct and not relating to it as attributed to the state only, many scholars even go further and break with the characteristics ascribed to the government of a state as a territory that has to be governed. In this approach, some scholars neglect considering ideas of political government related to the state, only considering the government as to take place in enacted regimes of practices (Miller and Rose 2008, Dean 2010). This is not the case here, as it is perceived that regimes of practices in political government also shape conduct to some extent (cf. Lemke 2007). The linkages between state and the subjects to be governed are of interest. More specifically, the interest is in the attempt to govern subjects and how the personal conduct of consumers is conducted. Hence, it is possible to differentiate between so-called self-government and the po-
litical government of states, economies, or populations, even though similar modes of thought or technologies are applied.

Culture and power are central to the ideas related to the practices of government outlined above. Questions of power in government relate to leading or guiding others and the self in interventions. Power then manifests itself in relations and can be considered as productive rather than repressive, whereas freedom can operate as a mode of power. Hence, power does not possess a certain centre, is not measurable, and involves multiple authorities. Moreover, power as “actions on others’ actions” (Gordon 1991: 5) produces meaning, interventions, entities, and processes and involves some sort of rationality. In this sense, rationality has to be understood as a form of clear, systematic or explicit thinking (Dean 2010). Thinking also involves morality, i.e., in how far something has or should be done, which is enacted by the self in practices. Power of knowledge and expertise as forms of government have to be stressed in the sense outlined above.

Power is not limited to the actions of the state but embraces more in so far as the government of the self should be distinguished. This self-government is independent of the political government of the state; however, it might be argued that these two types of government permeate each other (Dean 2010: 21ff, Miller and Rose 2008: 9, 27). Power and knowledge can be considered as hinged or linked to each other; however, subjects in freedom and advanced liberalism who are governed are understood as autonomous and responsible individuals, for instance, as acting freely in markets, and expressing their choice (in markets as well as at the ballot-box). Neoliberal government then is a way of directing all government towards the self-government and individual subjects who know how to govern themselves.

To avoid misunderstandings, the understanding of government outlined here is not related to governance approaches to the leadership of a state. Governance approaches take a similar view in so far as they take a broader field of actors in political control or leadership into consideration (Nonhoff 2008: 287). However, even though discussions of governance also acknowledge the role of a variety of actors in a wider sphere of influence of state government and political leadership and include co-operation and various actors affecting policy. It is important to highlight that differences exist in the approaches to government outlined above and contemporary approaches to governance. Accordingly, it has to be stressed that governance approaches tend to discard the characteristics of culture and meaning (e.g., Bevir 2007, Rose 1999: 15–20). This thesis discusses the analytics of government as a different approach to governing consumption from governance approaches. Besides culture and meaning, the notion of government acknowledged in this thesis contains a critical stance (Lemke 2001) advancing the link between power and knowledge in the conduct of conduct.
5. Analytics of government

The broader understanding of government outlined above is recognized by an analytics of government (Dean 2010) which relates to the idea occasionally described as governmentality. This notion aims at analysing regimes, mentalities or practices of government. First mentioned by the French philosopher, sociologist and historian Michel Foucault, it is essential to acknowledge that the idea of governmentality originates from Foucault (Foucault 2007; Gordon 1991). However, it is emphasized that a number of scholars have developed the concept “analytics of government” whose ideas are accessed here. Hence, Foucault’s ideas serve as a starting-point for the consideration of an analytics of government without taking a Foucauldian stance, as Rose and Miller (2008: 8) conceive their conception of the analytics of government as a ‘history of the present’ rather than being governmentality scholars. Therefore, the focus in this dissertation is on notions that emerged in discussion during the recent decade(s) and were developed by Rose (1999, 2001), Bröckling et al. (2000), Miller and Rose (2008) and Dean (2010) amongst others. Power and knowledge can be considered at the intersection of the analytics of government, which might be traced back to the semantics of the word governmentality (cf. Lemke 2001), deriving from “government” and “mentality”, whereby government or the governor describes power relationships and mentality the modes of thought and knowledge involved.

Miller and Rose (2008: 10–14) present one possible approach to the analytics of government in which they convey their conception basically from four broader sets of thought. The approach to an analytics of government as proposed by Miller and Rose (2008) first derives from science studies and the importance of focusing on instruments and interventions (e.g., Latour 1992, 2005). A focus on instruments and interventions – such as tools, scales and measurement techniques – is linked to modes of power therein and incorporates intellectual techniques and ways of thinking in a broad view. The second set of ideas relates to writings on the history of the ‘economy’ and how the present system was brought into existence (e.g., Polanyi 1944). A genealogical perspective on the economy assists in understanding discontinuities in discourses and practices (see articles I and II) and, moreover, how economic thinking and acting made economic life manageable. The third body of writings is that on professions and expertise, which investigates how expertise, problems and know-how came into existence, especially those challenges related to human beings (Miller and Rose 2008). Finally, the fourth and last set of notions related to the analytics of government, as outlined by Miller and Rose (2008:12) is that on ideas more closely related to Foucault such as technologies of subjectification and the history of discourses. Hence, it becomes obvious that a historical separation of personal, social and economic life is impossible.
An analytics of government then distinguishes a complex set of apparatuses concerned with the government and “savoirs” or knowledge of how to govern and what to govern. A long-term historical perspective emphasizes this continuous development. Concepts such as those of government and knowledge constantly modify, transform and are (re-)produced. This idea accompanies a particular critical stance, both towards existing concepts as well as towards the present situation and how we attain the present situation (Dean 2010). Looking back at the idea of government outlined above, which hinges on concepts of knowledge and power, two distinct features of the art of government can be distinguished. Miller and Rose (2008) elaborate on these two aspects. On the one hand, they distinguish ‘rationalities’ or ‘programmes’ of government and on the other they describe ‘technologies’. While this distinction does not imply different areas to be found in reality, it does suggest “intrinsic links between a way of representing and knowing a phenomenon, on the one hand, and a way of acting upon it so as to transform it, on the other” (Miller and Rose 2008: 15). In the same line of argument, Rose (1999: 5) conceives that:

[…] in the analytics of government, we need to pay particular attention to the ways in which, in practice, distinctions and associations are established between practices and apparatuses deemed political and aimed at the management of large-scale characteristics of territories or populations, and micro-technologies for the management of human conduct in specific individuals in particular locales and practices.

The analytics of government, accordingly, comes with a critical or historical perspective and focuses on deliberation and direction of human conduct within a multiplicity of rationalities. An analytics of government concentrates on different techniques and practices. Analytics of government, governmental rationality, and the art of government are terms that can be used here interchangeably to analyse government and those mechanisms that try to outline, mould, assemble and work through choices, desires, aspirations, needs, wants and lifestyles of individuals and groups (Dean 2010) towards continual modifications of society. Government can then be described as an indisputably heterogeneous field of thought and action, and to govern includes a shaping of conduct in actions, processes taking a desired direction (Rose 1999: 4). It also becomes apparent that analytics of government incorporates an utopian element in as far as it aims at modification and betterment in society, the lifeworld or whatever is concerned with government (see Dean 2010: 44). The question of what is better for society is of course disputable and different modes of thought are involved, including opposition and support (see article IV).

Dean (2010: 27) outlines the elements of an analytics of government emphasizing power as techné, truth in epistemes and identity as its ethos. Accordingly, he considers four distinct and inextricably linked dimensions
that can be contemplated when discussing an analytics of government. In the regimes of government it is possible to differentiate between knowledge (expertise), technologies of government, visual representations and identities (Dean 2010: 33, Moisander et al. 2009: 74, also article IV). These four reciprocally conditioning dimensions are outlined in the following in more detail to grasp the idea of analytics of government. It is important to mention that such an analytics attempts to avoid radical or global positions in considering the relation between states of domination and practices of freedom and how scrutinising these linkages is continually transformed.

**Knowledge** plays a vital role in the analytics of government and might be manifested in rationalities, modes of thought and discourses producing truth. Regimes of practices on how to conceive a phenomenon are inextricably linked to governing this phenomenon (cf. Rose 1999: 8). This so-called episteme of government may contain forms of thought, knowledge, expertise, strategies and other means of calculation. Knowledge and expertise provide truth for certain contexts in the same way as thinking about a phenomenon often involves notions of how to govern it. For example, discursive practices and mechanisms are related to psychology as a field that knows about human conduct (behaviour, practice). Hence, psy-knowledge shapes human conduct via its expertise and knowledge (Miller and Rose 2008). Similarly, economic thinking infiltrates and governs everyday life in the striving for goals and self-interest of subjects who are considered to act as rational, uninfluenced by social or cultural surroundings.

Rationalities of government manifest themselves in power and discourse. These can be considered as key concepts for the analytics of government. For example, article II scrutinises how executive governmental authorities contribute to a discourse, making-up, outlining and formatting the consumer as a subject who has to be governed (article II). Discourse theory and rhetorical analysis helps to open up the construction of social, political and cultural identities in politics as a language game (cf. Howarth and Torfing 2005). Knowledge, in turn, creates discourses and thus problems that can be solved by government. Discursive mechanisms can be assumed in the analytics of government (Miller and Rose 2008: 29–32), drawing attention to language as the expression of knowledge in descriptions, conceptualizations or calculations.

**Techniques of government** can be understood as mechanisms, procedures, instruments, tactics, or technologies that deploy rationalities of government (Dean 2010: 42). These techniques neglect a philosophy, which only considers values, ideologies and world-views, but considers the linkage between the aspirations of authorities and the activities of subjects in regimes of practices. It can be said that these technical means of achieving an end are rendered in complex compilations of diverse forces in the practices of government (Miller and Rose 2008: 63–65). These governmental techniques deploy programmes; for example, article I.b describes technol-
ologies that attempted to empower the consumer. Power is indeed a central concept here and, coming back to the ideas of Latour (2005), it must be emphasized that a translation of power is only stable if enacted in practices, to say materialized and taken up by the various actors involved.

**Visual representations** relate to analytics of government in fields where governing practices or regimes of government become visible. Manifestations in pictures communicate how someone or something is governed. These pictures or images might consist of diagrams, descriptions, organisation charts or various kinds visible representations. The government in visual representations is materialized in visual and spatial respects, i.e., how to govern a subject in space. Different regimes or practices of government inherit different visibilities; for example, flow charts, or materialization or enactment in performances. Images are involved in processes of government as things have to be arranged and objects and material artefacts produce social reality in some instances. It can furthermore be argued that visual representations in the media such as TV, newspapers, magazines and the internet shape government, as do visible publications in governmental documentations, so that power relations are rendered visible as well (Dean 2010: 41).

**Identity** and identification thus far relates to the results of various processes shaping subjects, as governing operates in the enacted practices of the subjects, i.e., in the practices of actors or practitioners. Although this identity is often of collective character, it is also manifested in individual identities. What kind of a person, self and identity is the governed and the governor? In collectives, certain understandings are accompanied by identification with groups. Regimes of government do not determine forms of subjectivity; moreover, capacities, qualities and statuses are shaped. The question then is what identifies a citizen as a citizen and a consumer as a consumer. Who am I as a subject? Moreover, Miller and Rose (2008:174) emphasise the creation and transformation of identities in the practices of human conduct.

To sum up, different ways of grasping the dimensions of an analytics of government can be distinguished. Articles I.a and I.b, for example, set out a genealogical perspective on governing consumption in Finland and Germany by political government. In order to analyse regimes or practices of government, a genealogical approach might be deployed. Since genealogy can be considered as the history of the present (cf. Bevir 2008 or Dean 2010: 52–74), it “approaches the historicity of conduct via its own particular set of ethical and political concerns ‘grounded’ in the present” (Dean 2010: 53). Thus, genealogy as historico-political analysis studies, whilst contesting existing narratives in the forms and consequences of universals, particular historical situations and practices grounded in problems raised in the course of particular social and political struggles.
Political and social problems can be addressed according to continuities and discontinuities. Accordingly, Bevir (2008) highlights genealogy as an expression of a radical historicism. Within this frame, detailed historical study questions and reformulates “presumed continuities and discontinuities, so that it is possible to offer diagnoses of the limits and possibilities of the present” (Dean 2010: 57–58). Genealogy in the context of the analytics of government can thus be considered as a kind of critique of political reason, investigating hitherto implicit conditions. Since the historicity of the conduct of conduct advances the present as a set of limits and possibilities, genealogy is critical and problematizes consumption conduct. Genealogy is critical in the way that it provides an inducement to study the form and consequences of the present as a polymorphous and permanent instrument of criticism (distinct, however, from the critical approach of the Frankfurt School, e.g., in respect to consumption).

6. Governing consumption

The organization of consumption is principally rooted in everyday contexts and influenced by political government and markets (see part I). This chapter suggests that the conduct of consumption conduct is located in political, market and everyday spheres. Exemplified by the dimensions of an analytics of government outlined in the previous chapter, this chapter stresses the analytics of government in relation to consumption, making it possible to highlight consumption practices as conduct that is conducted in a variety of regimes of government and related practices of government. The government of consumption acknowledges an ever-changing conduct of conduct. The literature on the analytics of government and the conduct of consumption conduct has grown in recent years (see, for example, Miller and Rose 2008: 114–141, Binkley 2006, 2007, Moisander et al. 2010, Shove and Walker 2010). As outlined in part 1 of this dissertation, consumer policy often refers to the regulation of market exchange. Since the state attempts to empower the consumer in this relationship, the following subsections first consider how the state tries to shape consumption to then consider how the market governs consumption, and finally how consumption is governed in everyday life and routines in the four dimensions of analytics of government.

A political government of consumption is of interest in what concerns the intersection between administration and regulation (for instance, by consumer policy) and the governing of selves in consumption conduct (see Rose 1999: 5). Examples of how governmental entities attempt to govern consumption relate to official statistics (Ahlqvist 2010), discursive practices as discussed in article II (see also Autio and Heinonen 2007; Autio et al. 2008) and challenges within the empowerment of the consumer (see articles I.a and I.b). Knowledge and political rationalities are often reflected in
discursive mechanisms. Reality is represented in reports, programmes, etc, to form political deliberation, argument and scheming.

The documents issued by a state body shape consumption to some extent. They provide rationalities for how consumption should be conducted. As argued in article II, the consumer is understood from the consumer policy perspective in a dualistic way. On the one hand, the responsible consumer acts on the market and on the other is a vulnerable creature who has to be safeguarded by policy. It is tempting to overcome this dichotomic thinking in proposing a sovereignty-vulnerability-continuum. Documents can be considered as visual representations of what is understood by bureaucrats as a consumer and then form some sort of knowledge that is advanced by such a statement. An analysis of the discursive construction of the consumer provides a reflected rationale to discuss the consumer in, for instance, arguments for more sustainable consumption.

Official statistics also govern consumption, similar to market research, providing categories of thinking about the consumer, defining the household and policy measures. Statistics make consumption calculable so that forms of calculation and investigation are available for technologies of government. Hence, statistical conceptualisations of consumption serve as a mode of expertise rendering phenomena such as consumption practices comparable, whether changing, modifying or remaining stable. Statistics thus create a new reality (Miller and Rose 2008: 65). Ahlqvist (2010) describes the development of statistics in Finland and their conception of consumption for the last hundred years: starting at the beginning of the 20th century to the development of a Nordic welfare state after the Second World War to a modern consumer society with its choices and calculation models. Recent statistics also contribute to views on sustainable consumption, whereby cultural and economic conditions of neo-liberalism as dominant forces ascribe distinct features of citizenship to consumers. In this conception, consumption is the individualistic conduct of an individual citizen-consumer who acts responsibly and freely. This citizen-consumer considers the outcomes and consequences of all consumption activities (cf. Soper and Trentmann 2009).

Another example of governing consumption by knowledge and expertise is provided by Autio and Heinonen (2007) as well as by Autio et al. (2008), who analysed Finnish consumer policy programmes 1983–2007 and concluded that there had been a shift from a vulnerable consumer in need of protection in the 1980s towards more an active political agent considering social and ecological issues in consumption. The programmes thus changed over a period of time, changing the perception of the consumer as well. The consumer as subject being governed changed from a passive to a more active agent. Reflecting the more empirical aspects of a genealogical analysis in articles I.a and I.b, the question of formation and transformation in elements of thought in practices of government shapes consumer em-
powerment in the second half of the last century. As demonstrated in article 1.b, for example, the empowerment of consumers in Finland before the Second World War was more a task of actors in civil society. Cooperatives and companies took the role of acting in favour of the consumer. This gradually changed from the 1950s onwards, when the state took over responsibility in order to safeguard and empower the consumer. During the 1980s and 1990s, this responsibility was returned to the individual consumer as actor in markets. This comes in accordance with Rose (1999: 18) who argues that “continual attempts to define and redefine which aspects of government are within the competence of the state and which are not, what is and what is not political, what is public and what is private and so forth.”

Consumer power and empowerment can be considered as central categories in consumer-related public policy. Consumer empowerment can be understood as an enhancement of the agency of the governed consumer. It relates to consumer subjectivity in qualitatively transforming power relations in favour of the consumer (cf. Cruikshank 1994; Shankar et al. 2006; Dean 2010). Therefore, political government supports consumer empowerment to overcome power imbalances in consumer conduct. For example, Repo et al. (2009) explain that consumer empowerment in the digital age has to face several challenges and needs new forms of regulation. Thøgersen (2005) highlights a consumer need for empowerment for more sustainable consumption: as victims, consumers should be safeguarded to some extent and consumer policy should set the conditions that support more sustainable consumption. Moreover, consumers should be activated to ease a transformation towards a responsible market actor who does not face severe challenges. Contemporary political power is put into effect by a vast number of agencies and techniques. These technologies of government are manifested relatively loosely with executive and bureaucratic or formal organs of political government.

Markets and marketing govern consumption to a certain extent via market research (Miller and Rose 2008), general marketing (Moisander et al. 2010) and in-store marketing (Dulsrud and Jacobsen 2009, DuGay 2004, Zwick et al. 2008). These examples allow an understanding of how markets govern consumption in the four dimensions of analytics of government explicated in the previous chapter. For instance, Miller and Rose (2008: 114–141), in an analysis of documents deriving from a market research institute, assemble the subject of consumption as being located in between psychology, advertising and capitalism. In their example of how the consumer as subject is directed, guided and governed by marketing practices, they describe everyday life as being shaped by dominant economic, social and cultural forces.

The portrayal of the consuming subject underlines how companies, in conjunction with psychological sciences, engage in practices contributing to the constitution of the consumer as subject (cf. Gasteiger 2010). More-
over, Miller and Rose (2008) trace changing problems of the consumer in relation to changing technologies of investigation and changing conceptions of the modes of interrelation between products, advertisements and individual choices of goods and services (Miller and Rose 2008: 117). They accordingly suggest the freedom of consumer choice as proposed by (neo-) liberal ideologies to be allied with the idea of economic growth at the individual level. These aspects can be accessed in order to exemplify a translation of marketing rationalities, programmes or technologies with self-regulatory techniques and the particular, persuasive role of expertise at the individual level.

Power emanating from marketing and advertising cultures manifests itself in consumer subjectivities and shapes the commercial domain. Moisander et al. (2010) describe marketing as a possible form of government. Using examples of environmental friendly fashion and clothing consumption, they depict marketing as practice and a technique to frame consumption conduct. Knowledge and expertise of the marketing sphere as ways of thinking, knowing, reasoning and questioning the consumer somehow shapes the consumer as subject. Zwick et al. (2008) identify the phenomenon of co-creation as new market govern-mentality, like du Gay (2004), who describes the introduction self-service during the 1940s and 1950s as similar to co-creation. The individual consumer takes over responsibilities and is put to work in matters that employed paid workers before. Dulsrud and Jacobsen (2009) portray self-service as retail technology. They describe in-store marketing as a mode of discipline, and technologies such as in-store marketing do not emphasize consumer autonomy but illustrate that consumers are influenced by regulated freedom. A more concrete and visible example is the architectural order in the shop and the arrangement of shelves and products that guide and discipline the consumer. These technologies coordinate and regulate shopping in a modern supermarket (Dulsrud and Jacobsen 2009).

Knowledge and modes of thought related to self-service as a modern device, or other selected marketing technologies such as signs and symbols in the store, manifest themselves in specific expertise. The question ‘what makes a consumer a consumer’ might seem very simple; however, marketing experts structuring the field of action know how to construct consumer identities via, for instance, brands and products (du Gay 2004; Moisander et al. 2010). The example of self-service portrayed by Du Gay (2004) shows that the understanding of the conduct of shopping was different immediately after the Second World War from what it might be today. Self-service was not accepted by the consumer immediately, whereas it seems natural to shop in self-services today. The context in time and space is hence important, as self-service was not as well known as it is now. Not only marketing, but psy-sciences assist in conducting consumer conduct. Economic psychologists had a vital interest in consumers as the targets to assist mar-
Marketing professionals deploy their programmes and practices (Miller and Rose 2008).

Identity and the ethos (Huttunen and Autio 2010) of self-service are associated with the individual consumer choosing from a range of products and services, hence shifting the responsibility from the seller to the buyer (DuGay 2004: 154). Identification in markets is then associated with particular techniques and practices that are accepted by the self as well as by others in collectives and accompany ways of being, feeling, and conducting. Government operates though identities that are shaped by marketing. Moisander et al. (2010) exemplify this by identifying products that assist in creating identities. Moreover, Dean (2010: 44) asks what makes a person a consumer in a supermarket. Identification with some sort of government is important, as Du Gay’s example (2004) on the upper class women who did not want to accept buying in a self-service store and carry the products home themselves.

Visibilities, signs and visual representations are ubiquitous in stores: brands as visible representation of products that are pre-packed in self-service stores that come along with certain colours, images and logos and hence visualise fields of products and services. Embodied purchases also render government visible and influence the spatial arrangement of artefacts involved in consumption as, for example, in supermarkets (Dulsrud and Jacobsen 2009). Coins and bank notes can also be considered as visual representation of money as exchange-value that are now increasingly displaced by card payments. Advertising takes a big part of marketing and grew continually during the last century as well as contributing towards visibilities of marketing (cf. Heinonen and Kortti 2007).

**Everyday routines govern consumption** to not less degree than any other kind of government. The government of consumption is ultimately enacted in everyday practices or, in other words, practices of self-government. Consumption practices (see chapter 2) relate in many respects to routines. Regimes of practice in routines and day-to-day conduct can be described as at the heart of government. The idea of self-governmental technologies is important in the enactment or materialization of government, and becomes apparent in discussing the consumer as an individual self who has to govern the everyday. As outlined above, the consumer’s government of the self can be distinguished from the government of states, economies, or populations even though similar rationalities can be identified in this ‘self-government’.

Self-government, or technologies of the self, characterizes how governmental technologies are interpreted and translated by those who are subject to them. For instance, Binkley (2006) describes the aspect of freedom in the relationship between production and consumption by highlighting varieties of freedom. Binkley claims (2006: 359) that “the responsibility for maintaining this differentiation has fallen upon newly ‘responsibilized’ in-
dividuals in the cultures of neo-liberalism”. Binkley further (2007) highlights opportunities of conveying personal autonomy and self-responsibilities, assuming consumption conduct as an ongoing life-project.

Economic self-government emphasizes consumption as economising everyday life. Hence, economic technologies and measures such as flexibility, self-management and autonomy are adapted to governing the everyday, thereby promoting some sort of economist consumption ethos (Huttunen and Autio 2010). Consequently, the responsibilities attributed to the consumer are of growing importance. Deriving from liberalist economic and political thought, the individual consumer has to take over responsibility in distinctive roles as patient, tax-payer, care-taker, manager of the household, and in many other areas. Binkley (2006: 348) comes to the conclusion that:

To govern oneself, then, is both to act and to step back from action, to conduct oneself, but also to conduct that conduct. It is to affect a transformation in oneself across the divide opened up between one’s thought and one’s actions, by rationalities of governmental rule: to make oneself more efficient, more productive, cleaner, more communicative, loving, civil or giving.

Identities and visibilities are translations and interpretations of self-government, or technologies of the self. The various dimensions of consumption in social practices, embodiment and performances, knowledge and understanding, as well as things and artefacts, contribute to the government of everyday conduct in routines. The idea that consumption can be regarded as routine has not always been considered in consumer studies. Indeed, little attention has been paid to ordinary routines, even though consumption routines play a fundamental role in everyday life.

From a sociological perspective, Ilmonen (2001) elaborates on consumption and routines by emphasising a theoretical duality between action and behaviour. He proposes a distinction on a continuum between consumption actions resembling a proper decision-making process to be found for instance within the rational consumer, and consumption behaviour which is unconsidered, repetitive and norm-oriented conduct (Ilmonen 2001: 9-11). Routine consumption practices, even though the consumer is knowledgeable, are accordingly not always performed with full awareness: the level of discretion might differ according to the practice. Giddens (1984) highlights social practices and routines in his theory of structuration by outlining the repetitive character of routines as providing safety and security. He argues that processes of routinisation in day-to-day life are essential. Considering the differentiation between discursive and practical consciousness and categories of time and space (Giddens 1984), practices have a recurrent, repetitive or routine character (e.g., Jaeger-Erben 2010). Accordingly, whilst practices and routines are quite similar, it is possible to highlight a longer-
lasting temporal and repetitive axis in routines. This relates to everyday life in the idea of a practical (un-)consciousness (Giddens 1984) in governing consumption.

The routine character of domestic practices as a specific kind of consumption practice is outlined in article III. Theoretical accounts of practices are quite complex and thus not amenable for easy translation into empirical research. Article III scrutinizes longitudinal diary data spanning a period of twenty years to consider the longevity of routines in everyday domestic practices. Through a data-driven analysis, it is possible to understand what was meaningful to the author of the diaries at the point of writing, thereby allowing for an interpretation from practice perspectives. Dimensions and interrelating functions become apparent in patterns and practices depicted by the author. In contemplating the routine character of these practices, it is possible to emphasise the practical consciousness (Giddens 1984) of the author as consumer in her daily conduct. Moreover, it is possible to consider changes that have occurred over a period of two decades as re-contextualisations and processes of routinisation. Mundanity and repetition in everyday-life relate in many respects to routines and governing social activities. In this examination, routinised practices are individual conduct, yet shaped by some sort of collective understanding. It becomes apparent that consumption is private and personal conduct, impacted by external factors such as power and politics (see Ehn and Löfgren 2009).

Hence, consumers derive a sense of safety from the habitual shape of the social worlds consumer themselves (re-)create. In this view, although the consumer is knowledgeable and competent, consumption conditions might not always be recognized and consequences might be unforeseen. In effect, Giddens’ (1984:376) discussions on routinisation and the habitual character of day-to-day activities accentuate most activity in the everyday as representing a well-known form of conduct. The diary data investigated in article III elucidates routines emerging over longer periods and changing constantly. Routines can be considered as developing, reproducing and reconfiguring constantly without the practitioner being particularly aware of the change (Shove and Walker 2010; Warde 2005). The consumer as practitioner then regards quotidian processes as normal, i.e., norms are constructed via some sort of normalising processes, and thus are pervasive in society. This involves an idealized norm of conduct; however, beside how something should normally be done in given systems of provision, consumers conceive a hyperindividual sense of normality (Shove and Southern 2000). Routines might therefore be considered as governing everyday life consumption.

Consumption, for example, in domestic practices, can be considered taking place mostly in routines (Gram-Hanssen 2008). By large, practices are inconspicuous, rather banal and considered normal conduct: Consumption practices are considered so routine that they are routinely forgotten (Hilton
Routines govern the structure of the everyday: security and a liveable everyday routine make it impossible to reflect on every single act of consumption. The banality of consumption, not in a derogatory sense, and the proposal that most routines are taken for granted is considered in an approach to consumption as a conduct of practice (e.g., Shove and Pantzar 2005; Hand and Shove 2007; Warde 2005).

Some aspects surrounding consumers in the everyday are only noticed in their absence or if considered as discontinuities over a longer period of time. Scott (2009) elucidates social and cultural aspects of food in everyday life, describing the symbolic significance of food and food-related practices. Routines and rituals are even important as norms and unspoken rules, the shared knowledge of how particular food is served in different regions of the world. Food practices are challenged all the time: societal developments, in recent years discussions on the sustainable character of vegetarian food practices have arisen, and are continuously shifting the shared understanding of normal food (see article IV). The empirical material in article III, diary data encompassing a period of twenty years, highlighted the positioning of food in everyday life. The data disentangles interesting aspects, especially on the rhythms and seasonality of different food practices. Considering the aforesaid principles of practice thinking, and its application to consumer studies, food as a special consumption cluster can be considered to take form in practices. Food practices are composed of different projects, which involve the dimensions explained above. Foodstuffs have to be procured and consumers normally buy their food at markets. However, as shown in article III, it is also possible to grow vegetables in the garden as an alternative way procuring food.

Each project within practices might consist of various possible components requiring (tacit) knowledge on how to enact governmental practices. Besides knowledge and understanding the things and artefacts involved in practices (such as food, but also tools and technologies) play a central role. All practices are conducted with some common discretion and rules, so that the practices are perceived as normal. Various practitioners probably conduct the same ‘normalised’ practice and even when these practitioners do not know each other, the practices may not vary a lot although differentiation is probably involved over time and space. For instance, it can be challenging for Europeans to understand Asian food practices, or to understand practices now that prevailed one hundred years ago.

In summary, considering consumption in practices acknowledges the collective and symbolic structures of knowledge in bodily performances, shared understandings, skills and material artefacts, reflecting on the individual as well as the collective character of everyday conduct. The routine character in consumption, including consumption often being indiscernible, makes it possible to describe the consumer as a practitioner. In this sense, the consumer is knowledgeably monitoring the everyday even
though routines, repetitions and rhythms govern consumption practices. The regularities and repetitions of everyday life govern consumption and provide a sense of security, whereby the consumer does not need to reflect every single activity. Considering consumers as practitioners acknowledges possible knowledgeable intervention, but the unconscious ways of activity, including different levels of discretion, vary mostly according to the present practice.

An analytics of government can contribute in various ways to the question how consumption is governed. Shifting the focus from consumer policy regulating market towards regimes of practices in political, market as well as everyday spheres, considers consumers as subjects in various circumstances and specific contexts. Recognizing the conduct of consumption conduct in political, market and everyday spheres, the consumer, classically understood as a rational and responsible market participant, is governed by modes of thought and technologies of government that might manifest in identifications and visual representations.

To conclude this chapter, government is omnipresent and diverse. Different kinds of expertise, techniques, identities and visual representations govern consumption. State-like entities as well as self-government attempt to shape and guide consumption to some extent. The responsible consumer can be understood as conception deriving from economic and political thought. However, taking an everyday perspective, consumption might be appreciated differently in discussions related to consumer policy. Talking about unseen visibilities, such as the creation of consumer identities, the consumer is guided, regulated, and shaped by market institutions, government-like entities and perhaps most importantly by everyday life in related and enacted practices of routine-based self-government.
PART 3. Governing practices as practices of government

This third and last part of the dissertation is going to reflect the previous parts on consumer policy, consumption practices and the government of consumption in order to address the question of how consumption is governed. Sustainable development or, more specifically, sustainable consumption, serves as an example, because the political concept relates to political government as well as to (self-) government of the everyday. Chapter 7 outlines the idea of sustainable development in the light of understanding sustainable consumption as conducted in social practices, drawing upon ideas developed in chapter two. Empirical examples are originated from the example of sustainable food consumption practices (see articles III, IV).

Chapter 8 then deliberates on governing sustainable everyday consumption practices relating to conduct of conduct and an analytics of government outlined in part two. In order to understand the government of such practices, current modes of thought and rationalities behind the promotion of more sustainable consumption are explained in order to determine in how far sustainable consumption can and should be supported by various practitioners, such as policy makers, professionals and consumers (see article IV). The link between rationalities and governmental technologies illustrates how private consumption is shaped and directed by materializations in visibilities and identities. The concluding chapter 9 reflects the contribution and some of the shortcomings of this dissertation as well as directions for future research.

7. Sustainable development and everyday consumption practices

Sustainable consumption can be considered a focal challenge that should be addressed by consumer policy. Hence, consumer policy discussions foster a change in consumption patterns in order to promote a sustainable future (cf. Fuchs and Lorek 2005, Thøgersen 2005, Berg 2011). The idea of sustainable development assists in reflecting how consumption is governed by various instances. The concept of sustainable development, which pertains to political government and likewise to the government of everyday life, appropriately attempts to foster changes linked to challenges such as governing everyday life consumption in a sustainable way, but also to opportunities by political government to set the conditions that allow and sup-
port sustainable consumption. Thus, regimes of government towards sustainable practices are associated with individual as well as the societal or more collective levels.

The idea of sustainable development appeared on the political agenda in 1987 after the 1970s faced a worldwide oil crisis and growing degradation of nature along with increasing disparities between the global north and south. The report on “Our common future” prominently defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). The Earth Summit 1992 in Rio de Janeiro advanced the adoption of sustainable consumption patterns, introducing the idea to research and environmental policy. Hence, in order to advance a sustainable future, the effects of contemporary consumption and production should be considered with respect to future generations, associated with environmental, social and economic pillars. Discussions thus centred on an increase in efficiency and reducing levels of consumption (Fuchs and Lorek 2005) along with the promotion of sufficiency through changed patterns of consumption and production (Berg 2011).

Sustainable development is a broad and complex concept, embracing sustainable consumption and production. Various actors engage in various sorts of practices (re-) shaping, guiding and transforming consumption. Three different spheres governing consumption (see chapter 6), markets, policy and the everyday, should be considered in environmental, social and economic sustainable development. Supra- and international, national and regional entities govern conditions, which in turn govern markets and commerce and finally consumption in everyday life contexts. All three dimensions, however, are open and fluid to the extent that they impact on each and another: modifications entail modifications.

Linkages and varying viewpoints between consumers and producers like those between consumers and state-like governing bodies have to be acknowledged. Hence, governing consumption refers to three dimensions that decisively influence consumption: the everyday life of consumers, a dimension of provision (mainly relating to markets and marketing), and the perspective associated with politics (see Reisch 2004). Therefore, Thøgersen (2005) proposes the empowerment of consumers for sustainable consumption, considering governing entities as well as networks of provision. Consumption conditions have to be considered, as they derive and develop from everyday life as well as from market and political contexts.

Sustainable consumption is a contested concept allowing for a wide range of sustainable consumption practices (see Autio et al. 2009) which might occur in several areas or clusters worth being considered as promoting more sustainable consumption. For instance, Lorek (2009: 44) distinguishes selected consumption clusters which are of environmental rele-
vance, highlighting importance of food, housing and transport in supporting strong sustainable consumption. Chapter 2 of this dissertation considers consumption as momentum in social practices, stressing consumers as practitioners who might take over co-responsibilities, but might not always be aware of conditions or the associated outcomes of consumption practices in routines (see also article III). Moreover, some conditions can be found beyond the scope of individual consumers.

In fostering sustainable consumption, various perspectives have to be taken into account, and the challenges, responsibilities and opportunities in implementing sustainable development should be highlighted. Another important aspect has been considered in article III. The consumer is constantly going through micro-changes in routine consumption practices that, from the perspective of government, might take environmental, social and economic aspects into consideration (cf. Røpke 2009). Practice approaches consider consumption as ordinary and everyday conduct in routines and rhythms emphasising collective and symbolic structures of knowledge. Bodily performances, shared understanding, implicit knowledge, know-how, things and other artefacts in a nexus of doings and sayings, to speak of practice-as-entity, reflect both the individual and collective nature of everyday consumption practices.

When consumption is understood as conduct that occurs in social practices, questions about what elements of practices are relevant to governing this practice to more sustainable ends arise. Examples in articles III and IV demonstrate sustainable food consumption practices. Governing these practices faces several challenges: From embodiment and bodily performance over a shared understanding and knowing about sustainable alternatives, towards things and artefacts (foodstuff and equipment) in the respective practice, influence the outcome of consumption. Sustainable food practices can thus range from provision to preparation, eating, and waste disposal. Rituals and intake routines involve preparation performances and some sort of mental, bodily and emotional activity. Sustainable food practices are rendered visible in seasonal, vegetarian, local or organic food, for example. These visible representations relate to sustainable consumption of alternative foodstuffs that can be considered more suitable to attaining sustainability goals (article IV).

Other important matters include the things and artefacts involved in sustainable food practices. It seems self-explanatory, but food is involved in food practices. However, focussing on the practice makes it obvious that there are more things and machines involved, such as those used in preservation, processing and packaging with freezers, fridges, microwaves, ovens, knives, forks, etc. as Hand and Shove (2007) describe, ways of living with a freezer has influenced food preparation in everyday life. These materialities involved in the practices and a shared understanding of their use are a form of fossilisation (Shove and Pantzar 2006). Historicizing consumption
as conduct might reveal ways of living more sustainably, as argued in article III.

Furthermore, results in article III stress that practices are constantly developing without the practitioner being particularly aware of it, so that are consumers not always aware of the outcome in terms of a sustainable future. The empirical examples in article IV highlight how sustainable development is an unclear concept for practitioners, even though a vast variety of research on the topic exists. It seems that the broad definition outlined above comes along with some scope of interpretation on what sustainable food is. While ‘the’ definite or unequivocal sustainable alternative often does not exist, the context is of relevance and, in an ever-changing environment, practices that are sustainable today might not be considered so in the future. Hence, the utopian idea of sustainable consumption always raises questions of comparable alternatives that might be more or less sustainable.

However, understanding and knowledge of sustainable food practices are indispensable, which is a challenge because of the implicit form of conduct. Even if desires or the motivation to change to a more sustainable or environmental friendly way (cf. Moisander 2007) of handling food exist, it might not be enacted or implemented into practices. Consumers might not be aware of living an unsustainable way of life: the tacit form of knowledge in practices supports this suggestion. As described in article IV, consumers have not been aware of traditional food being vegetarian, and hence can be considered as more sustainable, which is part of their everyday diet. This might be linked to identity issues, since it became obvious in article IV that some consumers opposed vegetarian food as shaped by green ideologies, i.e., they could not identify with it, even though they did not oppose traditional culture-specific vegetarian food as a more sustainable alternative.

It would prove interesting to test old cookbooks and their implicit assumptions that might not be considered knowledgeable now, but is more sustainable. In this, the historically-cultural specificity of consumption practices becomes apparent, raising awareness and suggesting action for more sustainable food practices. It proves interesting to consider norms of conduct as well as the identity related to the various dimensions of sustainable food consumption practices. The normality of consumption conduct appears in its pervasive character and shared understanding that some sort of conduct is normal. When sustainable food is considered as normal, future challenges might be reduced. However, another Utopian perspective might evolve in the future, a more sustainable one that might not be conceivable today.
8. Governing sustainable consumption practices

The first three parts of this dissertation scrutinise consumer policy, everyday consumption practices and the analytics of government. It can be argued with Bevir and Rhodes (2010: 1) who understand “the state as a series of contingent and unstable cultural practices, which in turn consist of the political activity of specific human agents [...]” in order to “[...] explain these cultural practices by reference to the meanings embedded in them, where the meanings arise against the background of contingent historical traditions and dilemmas.” Similarly, Shove and Walker (2010) describe how consumption practices can be governed towards more sustainable development.

The following is going to draw together the various strands of this dissertation to highlight how sustainable consumption might be governed in technologies of government, modes of thought, identities and visibilities. As outlined in the second part, different instances engage in regimes of practices governing consumption in political, market and everyday life spheres. The example from article IV demonstrates how sustainable food practices might be guided by regimes of practices in public catering. The state government serves as an example stimulating catering professionals and consumers to conduct consumption a more sustainable way. Article IV explains rationalities related to regimes of practices in public catering that have developed in a Finnish context during recent decades (Raulio et al. 2010; Aalto and Heiskanen 2011). The example of public catering shows that consumers’ food choice and responsibility are beyond the scope of the individual and acknowledges different forms of government.

The analytics of government shows that a peculiarly utopian element is inherent in government (Dean 2010: 44) which, according to the concept of sustainable development, aims at forming sustainable consumption conduct. Government then aims at continual modification of society, and sustainable development aspires to transform society in such a way that environmental, social and economic characteristics are reflected in regimes of practices so that there is no harm to future generations. This utopian element of sustainable development might be acknowledged in an analytics of government and the four different dimensions it is associated with. This permits a consumer perspective, one that acknowledges cultures of consumption and everyday life.

Food consumption proves as an interesting example, as the case of governing food consumption via public catering exemplified in article IV considers three perspectives: those of policy-makers, catering professionals and consumers. Expert interviews with stakeholders and policy makers were conducted as well as a round-table discussion and expert interviews with public catering professionals, beside consumers participating in a focus group discussion and an online discussion board. The modes of thought of the three perspectives show how various actors support or oppose veg-
etarian food as a more sustainable food option. The rationalities in the discussions have been rather diverse, both supporting and opposing the introduction of more sustainable food in schools in Helsinki. At a very practical level, for instance, practitioners in the canteen kitchens did not know how to translate the political idea of more sustainable development into the provision of sustainable food.

Government as the conduct of consumption conduct in the case of sustainable practices relates to modes of thought (rationalities, discourses, knowledge, ways of thinking and calculating) that convey sustainable development. Technologies of government (in regulating conditions as well as consumption practice, means and instruments) then aim at consumer empowerment, i.e., advancing the subject position of the consumer. Finally, the link that translates sustainable consumption practices in identities (types of agents assumed) and visibilities (concrete manifestations) via materialization is an important aspect. Here, relevant elements of a food practice, that of things involved in the practice, are to be shifted and enacted to become normal day-to-day routine. The four dimensions of analytics of government help to understand how to govern sustainable everyday food consumption.

**Technologies of government** might support sustainable food consumption practices. As demonstrated in part two, the government of consumption takes place in enactment of political, market, and everyday practices (see articles I and II). Nestle (2007) scrutinizes how the food industry influences nutrition and health. Several examples not only illuminate marketing practices, but also dietary advice shaping food consumption. Nutrition professionals and dietary advice changed the food pyramid, for instance, and Nestle (2007) shows how the food industry contributes to this. It is then possible, as described by Dulsrud and Jacobsen (2009), to shape sustainable consumption conduct via the regimes of practices in government applied by the food industry. They provide examples from the United Kingdom, where the placement of sustainable products in the supermarket shelf motivates consumers to live more sustainably. This agrees with the portrayal by Fine (2002) and the systems or networks of provision that shape food consumption to a certain extent. Shaping the conditions for consumption might assist promoting more sustainable consumption (Thøgersen 2005).

In article IV we scrutinize public catering as a regime of practices governing food consumption. We show how sustainable consumption policy motivates a translation into food consumption practices, consumer conduct being shifted towards a more sustainable future. In considering the link between rationalities of governing consumption and sustainable public procurement, we illustrate how governmental technologies attempt to shape and direct private consumption. Public catering as a technology of government has been used for a couple of decades in the Finnish context.
(cf. Raulio et al. 2010), so that food consumption conditions are shaped by governments and then implemented by consumers in their everyday lives, so that practices of sustainable consumption become normal.

**Knowledge, understanding and modes of thought** might consider what opposes and supports the advancement of sustainability from the perspectives of practitioners; i.e., in article IV, that of policy-makers, companies (here, catering professionals) and consumers. Since different perspectives are often juxtaposed, and processes of negotiation might bring about more sustainable consumption practices, Cohen (2006) calls for sustainable consumption which promotes democratic expertise. Knowledge of the consumer is produced by various circumstances, including governmental reports and the planning of consumer related public policy. As outlined in article II, discursive practices related to the political government of the Finnish and German governments contribute to an understanding shaping consumption conduct, which depict the consumer both as a sovereign and mature actor in the market, and as a victim who has to be safeguarded by political intervention.

The opportunity to create knowledge of consumers and their everyday life arises from rendering the view on consumption towards non-individualistic conceptions, thus considering that consumption occurs as momentum in social practices (Warde 2005; Shove and Walker 2010). The consumer is then no longer considered as in colloquial speech as a shopper and the focus shifted away from the market towards the everyday. The shared understanding of the consumer as buyer or shopper can be challenged by perspectives of cultures of consumption and as shown in conceptualising consumption as taking place in social practices.

An analytics of government wants to describe how the production of truth occurs. Historicizing government from a genealogical perspective highlights contingencies and disruptions, and thereby identifies what is considered normal (see articles I.a and I.b). Regimes of power and authority are established in government practices in order to empower the consumer for more sustainable consumption, but the importance of decisive practitioners involved in consumption, i.e., policy-makers, business professionals and consumers in their everyday lives have to be acknowledged.

Discursive practices show how the normalization process inevitably involves controversies over both the rationalities and technologies of government. Moreover, the rationalities and technologies are intertwined in the ambiguity of the definitions of sustainable development and consumption (e.g., vegetarian, organic or seasonal food), where ambiguity in the rationality translates into ambiguity in the technology. This in turn places responsibility on networks of provision to select the ‘right’ way of offering sustainable consumption opportunities. Article IV thus shows how the conduct of conduct in sustainable consumption entails multiple levels of self-controlling subjects and associated modes of thought.
**Visibilities and visual representation** of government might be found in bodily movement and performances. Considering bodily performances and shared understanding includes skills, know-how and material artefacts that create norms and identities. These should be governed and transformed into a more sustainable way. Sustainable school food in the form of a weekly vegetarian dish is one of many opportunities. In being visible, the dish has to come in accordance with consumer identities and it has to be enacted in practice. Mere rhetoric changes nothing. The initiative to provide more sustainable food has to be taken up by the consumers, who should enact and transform their lives for a more sustainable future.

The examples drawn from the routine character of consumption and a possible translation into practice might prove interesting. An excellent example deriving from a social practice approach with implications for government might be the discussion on carbon dioxide emission. The number of kilograms of carbon dioxide is rather abstract and not visible to consumers. The example from public catering and sustainable meals promotes visibility for consumers and can be considered as giving form to the abstract concept of sustainable development serving as a way to translate it into everyday life. Consumption practices are undergoing constant change and come with their own dynamic so that consumers in innumerable situations and moments are confronted with a huge variety of contexts, which again influences the practices to adapt new parts, or even in some cases improvise or experiment.

**Identities and identification** seems helpful when consumers identify with the idea of sustainable development. As the example of the vegetarian dish in schools in Helsinki shows (article IV), some consumers did not oppose the more sustainable dish, but could not identify with the green political ideology behind it. Traditionally, a great variety of consumption can be considered more sustainable than other alternatives, and in promoting these alternatives it seems appropriate to invoke what Shove and Pantzar (2006) call fossilisation: historicize the conduct and look back at traditional consumption practices that occurred in less abundant phases. Since these phases can be considered more sustainable without being ascribed to a green political ideology, consumers can identify with them.

Of course, as outlined above, many consumption practices appear as unconscious routines, so that subtle forms of convincing consumers without manipulating them can promote more sustainable consumption patterns. This also challenges and reshapes existing identities. Sustainable conduct has to be manifested in actual practices in order to transform these. Rising awareness among consumers is only a very first step; it must also be practicable, and more sustainable consumption must fit into the identity. Vegetarian dishes are common in the present food culture, but even though the vegetarian dishes visibly exist in real life, they are not recognized as a vegetarian dish.
To conclude, an alignment from politico-theoretical discussions on sustainable consumption towards everyday talk and discussion promotes materialization and enactment in practices. However, mere rhetoric does not extend very far, as sustainable consumption is normalised and translated into consumption practices and practices of government by practitioners in their daily conduct. This dissertation has shown how an alignment of identities and visibilities in materializations can occur in the process of translating sustainable consumption into normal consumption conduct, as well as suggesting that this alignment is translated back into politico-theoretical discussions over continually transforming knowledge and expertise. Therefore, the perspective provided for analysing efforts to promote sustainable consumption practices in terms of rationalities, technologies, visualisations and identities, as well as the translations occurring between dimensions gradually putting sustainability into practice. Governing sustainable everyday consumption practices is associated with governing practices as practice of government in the everyday as well as the more political levels of government.

9. Conclusion

The overall endeavour of this dissertation was to elaborate on how consumption is governed to better conceptualize and understand the phenomenon. The idea of governing consumption was approached from a culturalist standpoint by considering everyday consumption as conduct in social practices (see part 1) and by explicating the concept of the analytics of government (see part 2) emphasizing consumer policy and everyday routines. Hence, the thesis suggests a conceptual perspective highlighting that political, market and everyday routines govern consumption.

The four articles that constitute this dissertation are published in refereed journals and contribute in different ways to this overall aim. The results of this dissertation contribute (Corley and Gioia 2011) to consumer studies in their relevance for policy makers and analysts, researchers and accordingly impact consumers’ everyday life. Acknowledging that consumption is governed not only by policy that considers the market, but also in routine practices that govern everyday conduct. Routines govern everyday life smoothly as long as some intervention is needed. It is possible to highlight the consumer as practitioner to acknowledge ever-changing processes in the conduct of consumption. A shift can be made away from prevailing market considerations in consumer policy towards the everyday as routines in everyday life governing consumption.

Consumption conduct in social practice emphasises three dimensions of practice, embodiment and performance, understanding and knowledge as well as things and artefacts (article III). Conceptualising consumption prac-
tices as a nexus of doings and saying has certain implications for regimes of practices governing consumption (article IV). Thus, the analytics of government can highlight how regimes of practices in governing consumption are enacted in three different spheres governing consumption that of political, market and everyday government in order to conduct consumption conduct. Self-government in everyday routines (article III) seems as important as government from political government for example in instruments and interventions (articles I.a and I.b) as well as in discursive practices contributing to the constitution of the consumer (article II). Moreover, distinguishing the government of consumption by practitioners on political, market and everyday levels shifts the focus from the market as prevailing in contemporary consumer policy discussions. This leads to the practical contribution for policy makers and analysts that should take unfolding interpretations of practitioners into account as these can take the policy process in various directions that might have not been considered when designing policy (article IV).

The penetration of economic thought throughout society promotes the idea of governing the family, household and everyday life according to economic principles. The consumer is not confronted directly with the technologies and related modes of thought behind these sets, but by subtle technologies of marketing, in self-service or in-store marketing as a mode of discipline. These economic principles govern as well the everyday to a certain extent, and are mostly invisible. Talking about invisible visibilities, for example, in the creation of consumer identities, the consumer is regulated and shaped by institutions of the market, government-like entities and perhaps most importantly by everyday life in enacted practices of government. It thus should be kept in mind that consumption is governed by a variety of instances in the spheres of policy, markets and everyday life. The articles of this thesis have highlighted exemplary how some of these instances contribute to governing consumption. In the introduction the notion of normality has been outlined briefly. Maybe policy can take part in normalizing conduct towards a desired direction by setting the conditions for consumption (see article IV). Hence, policy makers and analysts should take the normality of consumers in their everyday conduct as starting point and rely on attempted changes therein.

This report, I have to admit, has certain shortcomings in my performance as researcher (Heiskanen 2005). For example, article II was published three years ago, since when my theoretical standpoint has developed quite a bit. Not to say that the article does not fit into the theoretical framework, but it could contribute differently and would improve if written from the perspective outlined in this dissertation, emphasising the works on analytics of government more. Moreover, the empirical material has not been comprehensive; however, from my point of view it shows important tendencies. A second shortcoming, or challenge, has become apparent, having
written this manuscript, why Miller and Rose (2008) do prefer not to scrutinize political government as it might be confusing for the reader. Even though there are good reasons to do so (Lemke 2007).

There are a couple of issues that need some further work. As I have outlined in article I.b, consumer empowerment appears as mere rhetoric and it would need to consider consumer education as a tool of consumer empowerment and to discuss the way these technologies of government might improve the subject position of the consumer. This idea is closely related to the question of how consumption is governed and links practices and competence, i.e., how competences develop and might be improved in order to empower consumers. A last issue that might be worth considering derives from articles I and II: the question of how European consumer policy attempts to create the consumer as a subject that brings European matters closer to the citizen. For example, official documents could be scrutinized in order to find out how the EU bureaucracy is trying to shape a European citizen by creating consumer awareness in the Single European Market.

Having described the conduct (of the self and of others) of consumption conduct in practices, I have to admit that only specific perspectives on consumer policy and everyday routines are traced and that to a limited extent in this brief report. My thesis brings together streams of research (practice approaches and analytics of government) that have been discussed over recent decades, but have rarely been discussed in a conjoint way (cf. Shove and Walker 2010), even though they follow similar ontological and epistemological routes. The resulting implications should serve as a stimulus and are not to be considered as static. Future developments might demonstrate how far it makes sense to consider regimes of practices as conduct of conduct in the analytics of government as a valuable approach, but I consider the joint reflection as an opportunity considering consumption and its government, neither as individualist nor holistic. Moreover, I strongly believe that cultural aspects will prove productive for future research on governing consumption, especially in addressing different challenges for society. The analytics of government and theories of social practices are constantly developing. The intersection is very interesting and would need further exploration. A politico-theoretical alignment considering the consumer as practitioner in the regimes of government involved in consumption attempts to resolve the heavy burden of carrying the crown in ascribing the responsibility to the consumer as a neo-liberal project of choice acting rationally in everyday conduct towards more sustainable consumption.
References


References


