

Mapping Leisure across Borders

Mapping Leisure across Borders

Edited by

Fabio Massimo Lo Verde, Ishwar Modi
and Gianna Cappello

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

Mapping Leisure across Borders,
Edited by Fabio Massimo Lo Verde, Ishwar Modi and Gianna Cappello

This book first published 2013

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2013 by Fabio Massimo Lo Verde, Ishwar Modi, Gianna Cappello and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-4972-3, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-4972-2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	ix
List of Tables.....	xi
Preface.....	xii
Vincenzo Cesareo	
Introduction	xvi
McDonaldization, Ikeaization, Appleization of Leisure Time: Is it Cool Enough? Fabio Massimo Lo Verde	
Part I: Frames	
Chapter One.....	2
Leisure in the West after the End of the Long Baby Boomer Generation Ken Roberts	
Chapter Two	20
Leisure's Borders: What are We Exporting beyond Them? Robert A. Stebbins	
Chapter Three	30
Mapping Leisure across Borders Through the Art of Painting Ishwar Modi and Mahima Modi Gupta	
Chapter Four.....	41
The Concept of Leisure Antonio La Spina	
Chapter Five	51
Studying Leisure in a Network Perspective: Some Methodological and Epistemological Reflections Marianna Siino	

Part II: Leisure across Media Technologies

Chapter Six	66
Surfin' the Net: Youth and Media Leisure	
Gianna Cappello	
Chapter Seven.....	98
From Physical to Virtual Leisure: A Focus on Tourism	
Gabriella Polizzi	
Chapter Eight.....	117
Emotional Reporting and Leisure:	
Newsmedia, Crime and Entertainment in Italy	
Francesca Rizzuto	
Chapter Nine.....	130
Continuity and Change in the Leisure Dimension	
of Indian Techno-Immigrant Families in Silicon Valley	
Neha Kala	

Part III: Leisure across Gender, Age and Ethnicity

Chapter Ten	146
Second-Generation "Migrants" on the Borders:	
A Bridge Generation Between Two "Leisure Worlds"	
Liana Daher	
Chapter Eleven	164
"All the Girls get to look Pretty":	
Ballroom and Latin American Dancing as Leisure	
Vicki Harman	
Chapter Twelve	177
Leveraging Leisure Time for Domestic Comforts:	
A Study of the Women Selling Homemade Food in Mumbai City	
Brajakishor Swain and Kanak Ata Samal	
Chapter Thirteen.....	189
Leisure Practices and Self-Construction	
among Young Students in Palermo	
Fiorella Vinci	

Part IV: Leisure across Sport, Body and Emotion

Chapter Fourteen	206
Beyond Play, Playfully: The Cultural Location of Fitness Activities	
Roberta Sassatelli	
Chapter Fifteen	229
The Commonwealth Games Delhi 2010: Volunteers in Sport and Leisure	
Sanjay Tewari	
Chapter Sixteen	239
The Nativist Constellation in Europe	
Anna Fici	
Chapter Seventeen	252
Working Entertainment: The Knowledge, Emotional and Physical Labour	
Performed by Entertainment Workers in the Italian Tourist Industry	
Sofia Pagliarin	

Part V: Leisure across Legal and Illegal

Chapter Eighteen	272
The Impact of Beliefs about the Use of Money on Gambling Patterns	
Thomas Amadiou	
Chapter Nineteen	291
Leisure Time and “Alcoholic Interactions”:	
Rites, Norms and Action Strategies among Young Drinkers	
Charlie Barnao	
Chapter Twenty	311
A Computational Approach to the Study of Deviant Leisure	
Valentina Punzo, Barbara Sonzogni and Federico Cecconi	
Chapter Twenty-One	326
The Italian Mafia: An Industry of Leisure	
Attilio Scaglione	
Chapter Twenty-Two	346
Alternative and Deviant Leisure:	
Analysis of the Risks Linked to Web Usage	
Sergio Severino and Roberta Messina	

Part VI: Leisure across Individual and Collective Spheres, Social Stratification and Public Policies

Chapter Twenty-Three.....	364
Evidence-Based Leisure Studies in Higher Education: Using the Results of a Transnational Lifestyle Research Klara Tarkó and Zsuzsanna Benkő	
Chapter Twenty-Four	379
Greek Educational Policy in Recessionary Times: Does Liberal Educational Policy Take its Toll on the Leisure Activities of the Lower Social Strata? Evaggelia Kalerante	
Chapter Twenty-Five.....	390
A Stratificational Approach to the Study of Leisure in Postmodern Society Maya Keliyan	
Chapter Twenty-Six.....	409
Leisure Policy in a Comparative Perspective Marilena Macaluso	
Appendix	433
Contributors.....	455

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1 A typological map of the world of leisure	22
Figure 3-1 The Effects of Good Government (1337-1340).....	434
Figure 3-2 Rejoicing on the Birth of Prince Salim at Fatchpur (1590)...	434
Figure 3-3 The Marriage Feast at Cana (1562-1563)	435
Figure 3-4 Les très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry (1413-1414).....	435
Figure 3-5 The Month of April (about 1790)	436
Figure 3-6 Thrills of the Rainy Season (late 18 th century).....	436
Figure 3-7 The Hunt at Night/The Hunt in the Forest (1460-1468)	437
Figure 3-8 Babur Hunting Rhinoceros near Birgram (Peshawar).....	437
Figure 3-9 Deer Hunt (1760)	438
Figure 3-10 Children's Games (1560)	438
Figure 3-11 Krishna and Gopas Sporting in the Forest (1785-1800)	439
Figure 3-12 Hide and Seek (late 17 th century)	439
Figure 3-13 The Paesant Dance (1568)	440
Figure 3-14 Night Celebration at the Wedding of Price Dara Shikoh (1760)	440
Figure 3-15 Primavera (Spring) (1478)	441
Figure 3-16 Vasanta Ragini (The Music of Spring) (late 18 th century) ..	441
Figure 3-17 Sports of Krishna in Springtime (1730)	441
Figure 3-18 The Swing (1766-1667)	442
Figure 3-19 Hindola-Raga: Lovers on a Swing (about 1570).....	442
Figure 3-20 The Joy of Rains	442
Figure 3-21 The Upper Reach of the Grand Canal (about 1723).....	443
Figure 3-22 The Boat of Love (about 1760).....	443
Figure 3-23 Bathing at Asnières (1883-1884)	444
Figure 3-24 Summer Scene (1869).....	444
Figure 3-25 Maidens surprised at their Bath (1770).....	445
Figure 3-26 Krishna Sporting in Yamuna (1770).....	445
Figure 3-27 Luncheon on the Grass (1865-66).....	446
Figure 3-28 Picnic at Night (1540).....	446
Figure 3-29 Card Players (1892)	447
Figure 3-30 Krishna watching Ladies Playing Chaupar (1700)	447
Figure 3-31 Radha and Krishna Playing Chess (1800).....	447
Figure 3-32 The Circus (1891)	448
Figure 3-33 The Acrobat (1930).....	448

Figure 3-34 Nat-Raga (1700-1720)	449
Figure 3-35 Acrobat Performance (1760).....	449
Figure 3-36 The Football Players (1908).....	450
Figure 3-37 Chandbibi and her Companions Playing Polo (early 18 th century).....	450
Figure 3-38 The School of Athens (1510-1511).....	451
Figure 3-39 The Forest of Fontainebleau	451
Figure 3-40 Noonday Rest (1866).....	452
Figure 3-41 The Siesta/The Nap (1889).....	452
Figure 3-42 Music in the Tuileries Gardens (1862).....	452
Figure 3-43 Ball at the Moulin de la Galette (1876).....	453
Figure 3-44 The Tavern Scene (1735).....	453
Figure 3-45 Bar at the Folies Bergères (1881)	454
Figure 3-46 The Dance at the Moulin Rouge (1890).....	454
Figure 3-47 A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte (1884-1886)	454
Figure 17-1 Schematic map of the considered seaside enclavic tourist space	257
Figure 20-1 Number of deviants through rational imitation with low (0.2) and fair (0.5) average probability of success	319
Figure 20-2 Number of deviants through social imitation with low (0.2) and fair (0.5) average probability of success	320
Figure 20-3 Average payoff reached through rational imitation and social imitation with fair (0.5) average probability of success.....	321
Figure 20-4 Average payoff reached through rational imitation and social imitation with low (0.2) average probability of success	321
Figure 21-1 Mafia games.....	336
Figure 21-2 Mafia penetration in the legal sector of gambling.....	341
Figure 22-1a/b/c/d Box plots of IAT score conditioning subject's variables.....	352
Figure 22-2 Graphical analysis of the interaction effects (gender \times motivation to Web usage on IAT score and related resumptive table of means).....	355
Figure 22-3a/b Box plots of ESS and APEN/A score conditioning on IAT level.....	358
Figure 25-1 Level of satisfaction from proportion between time for work and time for other things in former communist countries (%).....	402
Figure 25-2 Level of satisfaction from proportion between time for work and time for other things in old EU member countries (%).....	403

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 Experiences with and without leisure	49
Table 7.1 Interactions between virtual and physical travels: types and mechanisms of interaction, and nature of the virtual travels involved	104
Table 15.1 Questions asked to volunteers	235
Table 22.1 Distribution of subjects by some principal characteristics and motivation to Web usage	350
Table 22.2 Results of nonparametric test (values and significance) on variables for independent groups	354
Table 22.3 ANOVA decomposition of the IAT score: test over all effects	354
Table 22.4 Analysis of the contrast for between-group factors on the means (gender x motivation to Web usage) of IAT score	356
Table 22.5 Kendall τ rank correlations	356
Table 22.6 Results of U Mann Whitney Test for IAT score	357

PREFACE

VINCENZO CESAREO

It is with great pleasure that I am welcoming you, as the national coordinator of Sociology for the Person, at the introductory session of this important international conference¹. Sociology for the Person, born here, in Palermo, back in 1995, is a group of sociologists who share the same inspirational value, although coming from different experiences: the primacy of the person in the social organization and thus the primacy of its freedom, within the community of belonging.

In this view, Sociology for the Person aims at orienting research and theoretical thinking towards central topics for the social development and for the growth of a civic, free, democratic society, characterized by solidarity, respect for the different cultures, and able to value different associative and community contexts in which a person grows and expresses him/herself, starting with the family. All this while believing that sociology, by growing and getting consolidated as a scientific discipline, can bring its necessary contribution to the overall progress of the individual and the society.

Some of the necessary and growingly urgent conditions for this development and consolidation are, without doubt, international aperture and comparison. Thus I can only express my gratitude to the organizers of this conference, who were able to bring here, to Palermo, such an extensive event, which will significantly contribute to the development of a field of study that touches central aspects of our everyday life.

The conference, in approaching its topic, in the title and successively in the specific speeches, attributes the due centrality to the issue of the “borders” between work time and leisure time, their historical construction and relativity. If we follow a historical perspective, over a long time period instead of a short one, as Norbert Elias (1980) suggests, we can seize the process of stabilization and metamorphosis of these borders, both from a structural and symbolic point of view.

¹ Mid-term Conference of the Research Committee 13 (Sociology of Leisure) of ISA (International Sociological Association). Conference’s title “Mapping Leisure across Borders”, Palermo (Italy), 29-30 September/1 October 2011.

Leisure time, in its modern meaning, is located within the fundamental revolution of times accompanying modernity, with political power being organized in state bureaucracies and the rise of a capitalistic monetary economy and mostly, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the rise of an oligopolistic capitalism, characterized by large productive units of a similarly bureaucratic organization.

I said “restructuring of time”, or even better, “times”. We can point out, although in extreme synthesis, how the transformation of the relations between the individual and its work context bears on at least three different manifestations of temporality: everyday life cycles, personal biography and historical time. In its classical analysis of the bureaucratic organization, easily extendable to the big capitalistic corporation of the twentieth century, Weber underlines, among other things, the separation between the worker and the means for practicing work. This is also linked to a clear separation between the place of work, where a determined amount of daily hours is being spent, and the spaces of domestic life, of leisure time and entertainment. Everyday life in the industrial society is organized around this separation, where “spare time” is in some way, or at least apparently, time that is returned to the “self-determination” of the subject, framed in work processes progressively rationalized and controlled by the top of the organization.

In regard to everyday life, as Touraine (1993) among others illustrates, modernity is qualified as the problematic coexistence of rationalization and subjectification, whose reflex is the clear border between work and leisure time: on the one hand there is production time, subject to instrumental rationalizing and organizational hierarchies, on the other, “spare time”, dedicated to entertainment, intimacy and consumption.

Work hours reduction, along with payment claims, traditionally represented one of the main stakes in labour union movements: “eight hours of work, eight hours of sleep and eight hours of leisure” was the slogan of a newly born labour union movement, when in 1886 a strike for the eight hours ends up in a tragic massacre. The goal of the eight hours was endorsed, in 1919, by the International Labour Organization. The requests of the capitalistic growth, on the other hand, begin to pivot on the development of mass consumption and, thus, on a mass of consumers possessing time and liquid assets for consumption. One of the most important manifestations of social change, characteristic for the twentieth century, is the progressive democratization of consumption, of places and times of consumption: this is the case of paid holidays (*congés payés*), introduced for the first time in France in 1936 and spread, roughly in the same period, in Roosevelt’s United States, as a consequence of labour

union agreements. It is sufficient to recall the theorization of the “cultural industry” by the Frankfurt school, the “critique of everyday life” by Henri Lefebvre and the fierce analysis of “the society of the spectacle” proposed by Guy Debord.

As an economist of those times, John Kenneth Galbraith (1967) observes with extreme acumen, within a growingly planned economy, it is not possible to think of long-term production planning without providing, at the same time, long-term consumption planning and, thus, planning the needs and wishes of a presumed “sovereign consumer”. Advertising, design, packaging, and other similar expressions of a growing cultural industry seem to provide the link between the dynamics of organized capitalism and the sphere of human desires and needs.

We now turn to the second aspect of the experience of time, *biographical time* which, as everyday life time, comes to be more and more defined in relationship with the labour organization. In a famous work of Antonio Gramsci he observes how in the United States, in a more clear and obvious manner than in the old Europe, individuals’ positions in the society comes to depend on their position in the productive organization’s hierarchies, due to the more advanced level of development of American capitalism. Biographical time gradually comes to signify the time of the work career, marked by fundamental passage moments, such as entering and exiting the world of work, periodic career progressions or promises of an intergenerational upward mobility. Thus we come to *historical time*, to the succession of generations. The thirties are characterized by a profound crisis, with high unemployment rates, that seems to nullify, in the eyes of many, every day and biographical order linked to the relations with the productive organization (Connerton, 2009). On the contrary, during the twenty or thirty years following the Second World War, we witness high rates of growth, linked to the promise of a better future, accompanying the scientific and technological innovation along with the rational organization of production, where a frontline role was played by the planning action of public authority. A historical and social context of this kind allows for an organization of every day time and biographical time as described above, corresponding to a model of the social actor that I tried to synthesize in the figure of the *homo sociologicus* (Cesareo, Vaccarini 2006).

In one of my previous contributions, back in the eighties, I underlined the numerous signals indicating the overcoming of the rigid separation between life times (every day and biographical), characteristic of organized capitalism, framed in growing flexibility (Cesareo 1982). Since then, a series of social transformations required our attention: we could

mention biographical fragmentation as an example that grows to the level of disaggregating identities, linked, in the analysis of Richard Sennett (1999), to the insecurity of contemporary work paths. Moreover, we can refer to the impact of new communication technologies on the organization of everyday times and spaces, given that in our conference a parallel session is suitably dedicated to the issues of time and space: many complain of the “invasion” of spare time, while the borders between the domestic sphere and the work place prove to be more and more permeable.

After having proposed these ideas that I consider useful for the continuation of our work, reaffirming the centrality of the borders when analysing the metamorphosis in life times (and spare time), I renew my thanks and compliments to the organizers of this conference and hand over the floor to the following speakers.

Reference List

- Cesareo, V. 1982, *La Società Flessibile*, Milano: FrancoAngeli.
 Cesareo, V. and I. Vaccarini 2006, *La libertà responsabile*, Milano: Vita e Pensiero.
 Connerton, P. 2010, *Come la modernità dimentica*, Torino: Einaudi.
 Elias, N. 1980, *Coinvolgimento e distacco*, Bologna: Il Mulino.
 Galbraith, J.K. 1967, *Il nuovo stato industriale*, Torino: Einaudi.
 Sennett, R. 2000, *L'uomo flessibile*, Milano: Feltrinelli.
 Touraine, A. 1993, *Critica della Modernità*, Milano: Il Saggiatore.

INTRODUCTION

MCDONALDIZATION, IKEAIZATION, APPLEIZATION OF LEISURE TIME: IS IT COOL ENOUGH?

FABIO MASSIMO LO VERDE

Too much time, too little time

Recent studies on *leisure time* and the relationship between work and free time highlight two paradoxes that modern advanced societies have to face (Glorieux, Laurijssen, Minnen and van Tienoven 2010). On the one hand, we notice a significant reduction in the number of hours dedicated to working activities and an increase of the hours devoted to leisure activities and activities done in a non-working *context* and time. This constant lack of time contributes to spreading the perception of *pressure* on daily life (Gershuny 2000; Goodin, Rice, Bittman and Saunders 2005; Robinson and Godbey 1997) especially in women¹ (Freysinger and Flannery 1992). On the other hand, while productivity and wealth have increased—even though there has been an arrest in the last year and a half—together with a diffusion of goods that should allow the buyer to save and use time more efficiently, the consumption of goods has become more volatile and excessive, even useless in some cases. This tendency to volatility in goods consumption together with the overabundance on offer would also involve the consumptions made during and for *leisure time*, a *life style* which we have already registered with voracious forms of consumption especially in a specific social class starting from the end of the sixties (Linder 1970). Ultimately, a growth in the perception of life being continuously beset by the lack of time is in contrast with a widespread need of a slower pace (Glorieux, Laurijssen, Minnen and van Tienoven 2010, 164; see also Leccardi 2009) especially in social classes that enjoy particular conditions

¹ For Italy see Istat 2006; for Europe see Dioguardi and Lo Verde 2009.

of wellbeing and economic resources as well as social and cultural ones (Glorieux, Laurijssen, Minnen and van Tienoven 2010, 178).

In western societies, many people have to deal with the high cost caused by the acceleration and the proliferation of stress due to a lack of time which is in contrast to the need for wealth (Gleick 1999; Leccardi 2009). The perception of time pressure has caused major changes both in working and leisure time, where we find most of the habits regarding consumption.

This perception does not exclude the time devoted to leisure practices. It refers to a time, in which, in the worst cases, the pressure is generated by the lack of available resources—mainly economic ones—and in the best cases by the excessive range of choices that one has to choose from. We are facing a pressure determined by the lack of resources available to cultivate free time practices that allow the consumer to get enjoyment from the practice itself; this is the flow that Csikszentmihalyi refers to (1990). Therefore, the practice requires a time during which one can develop all the needed skills to become an amateur or to cultivate other kinds of activities that are part of serious leisure (Stebbins 2007) as well as money/economic resources. In brief, if the resources available increase and grow, our commitment to leisure practices will grow as well, but the time available will remain constant, so our consumption will be inevitably voracious (Glorieux, Laurijssen, Minnen and van Tienoven 2010, 166) superficial, fragmented, and in most cases, not at all satisfying.

The same factors that cause this voracity can also result in an inclination towards the consumption of *passive leisure*: it is preferred to consume free time in activities that do not involve even a minimal physical or mental obligation (i.e. a challenge, the acquiring of a new technical or intellectual skill, etc.). The lack of cultural and economic resources and the lack of time would induce the using up of free time in or around the home, doing activities requiring, in most cases, a “low intensity commitment” also characterized by varying levels of commitment. In essence, activities that allow the auto-regulation of the investment of time and resources without the loss of position with respect to what has already been acquired, happen instead of serious leisure. So, people would be more pushed towards casual leisure (Stebbins 1997) instead of serious leisure. In the last few years, also in Italy, there has been the tendency to devote more time to these kinds of activities (see ISTAT 2008).

In fact, the differences in the distribution of free time and working activities (Wilensky 1960; Parker 1983), influenced also by other factors such as gender, age, job title, qualifications, the family life cycle, the kind of household etc., surely contribute to determine differences in the choices

of leisure and to condition the demand for leisure provisions. The most interesting aspects, however, are those in regard to, as we have been able to evidence in other work (Lo Verde 2009), the way in which this demand is connected and the way in which the offer of leisure is not necessarily organized in response to the demand. Even in the leisure market the demand is now stimulated by a growing and varied offer. As is known, there are different ways in which sociability and sociality are traditionally treated by the different institutional contexts of various countries, or rather organized by following the global trends where changes can often be determined within cultural practices, which leisure practices made in leisure time are certainly part of.

These can be simplified more or less by a higher level of “sociability” or “sociality”² (Beachler 1996), that is, they can give a start to a higher or lower level of intensity in social networks, or the need for them to be created, or, on the contrary they do not need them at all. They can also be developed in a private or public environment, depending on the type of activity or on the intentions of those who are planning to conduct them (see Lo Verde 2009, 103 ff.). Up-to-date statistics and the most recent studies (Roberts 2006; Blackshaw 2010) show that the majority of activities considered to be free time practices are today consumed in-home and “alone” (Lo Verde 2009). In summary, the quantity of time that we devote to discretionary activities that we label free time has, in most cases, a connotation of *loneliness*. Obviously, as shown by most studies, there are important differences in the ways in which the consumption is done between different social classes, and in this case these differences are related to a different lifestyle. However, the tendency to consume free time in a private setting or alone has increased in all Western countries (Roberts 2006).

Excesses and lack of sense

Apart from the aspects regarding free time activities and forms, we would like to highlight the first major change in the trend regarding the way we consider and utilize our free time. This involves the different meaning that

² Sociability is “the human ability of forming networks through which units of individual or collective action can make information that expresses their interests, tastes, passions and opinions circulate in the neighborhood, in public spaces, assemblies, circles” (Beachler 1996, 64). Sociality instead is “the human ability of keeping groups and networks together, of ensuring the coherence and cohesion that makes them become a society: these forms of social solidarity, like tribes, towns, countries, etc. can be called morphologies” (ibid.).

it has acquired today, in comparison to what it signified in the past, even fairly recently³. The “de-differentiation” that would be the connotative focus of the postmodern era relationship between work and free time (Rojek 2010) determines a relevant change of perspective in the social and individual significance given to free time. The “residual” view that has, for the individual and the community, the same meaning of an “entertaining” but “rational” function still characterized, as it was in the past, by the *functional* aim of social regulation, is today joined by the vision of leisure time as a “time for the self” or “own time”, during which one can construct or deconstruct answers to a popular but not very defined need for authenticity, uniqueness, recognition, independence, identity, things that can be obtained as well and mainly, in some authors’ opinions, through general practices of consumption. This is found in both the interpretations of free time given by the new working class, as well as those coming from a large part of the middle class that feels the effect of time pressure that was mentioned earlier (Glorieux et al. 2010).

Using the suggestive and very postmodern words of Blackshaw (2010, 102), we can say that, even during free time the postmodern individual

is not blocked by social class anymore and is not against being carried away, with caution, by the wind. He or she, on the other hand, desires instant gratification, prefers to postpone the planning of future problems to a later date, reluctant to renounce their pleasure. The transformation of the self is not just a possibility, but it becomes a *must* for each individual, because in postmodernity, a *life lived to the full* is the only one that is worth living. Modern structures continue to fragment and their characteristics that were central once, defined by class identity, gender, ethics and age, have disappeared from the story. There is no clear life direction that cannot be repeated in another offer (either) an obvious line in time, or circularity, or a better moment, just “the end”. “Maybe this time, I could be someone else”: this is a central point to life, a world of contingency in which everyone would be able to change their identity. At the root of our free time (nurtured) interests there is this subconscious that is a *schedule* and it is obviously “*individualized*” and “*private*” rather than “*social*” and “*communitarian*” (ibid., our italics).

In its different forms, the *game of the self* is one of the most widespread practices of leisure time because in its “mass” interpretation *free* time has to be *another* time when you can do, acknowledge and *be*

³ This vision is in line with the elite view shared by those who attribute a function of spacing/distancing and distinction to free time. It refers to the leisure class vision that Veblen talked about.

something other than who you are or what you have done in *everyday life*, aware of the fact that it is a temporary condition and thus, harmless.

The offer of emotional mediation in the leisure market is, from this point of view, symbolic as well as abundant. It manifests itself in *prêt à porter* packets of competences, as easy to acquire as they are false, ready to be replaced at the next occasion, in a continuous collection of variety and innovation with the aim, for buyers, of building for themselves “nice experiences” that will give them a “nice souvenir” as it made them try “other things” or feel like “others” (whether it is about “cooking skills” deceptively acquired during a weekend, or “athletic skills” apparently acquired in a week of sport activities, oriental philosophy and the art of seduction can be also be added). Similarly there is a new significance as to what new items’ and services’ roles should be, which is spreading between those making offers that are becoming more and more standardized. However this is a novelty, which in fact even the same sellers never believed, in a triumph of becoming postmodern, of which the cost is always stress, from *too many things to do* or *nothing new to do*.

The paradox of contemporary free time would therefore cause a radicalization of the *excess* of *sense* that is given to it, in addition to its unequal social distribution which is present despite the converging trend (Gershuny 2000, 4ff.) that would reduce the differences of consumption between social classes. From this point of view, every time slot and every practice takes a significance and a sense that goes further beyond their usual meaning: it often “means” much more for someone, at least if taking into account their individual stories, especially because it is a personal sense that could also signify “other” from what is socially understood. On the other hand the paradox is that it is taking its opposite to extremes; that is, the general *lack* of sense regarding individual free time makes the greed for time and innovative practices grow. The experiential polysemy is well-researched by those who want to use time “in the best way”, where “the best” is basically the result of a higher *intensity* of the emotional experience. This polysemy is frequently opposed, even if it remains in the same semantic field, by the uniqueness of its final significance which is reduced to a well-known and obsessive pleasure created by the known repetitive compulsion. The abundance of meanings researched will be reduced to only one: “unfortunately, even this moment went away... but let’s start thinking about the next one...” Following a merely productive logic that has surely given, as in Horkheimer’s theory, an instrumental rationality to the aim, impossible to achieve for itself, of finding the sense of the done activity, and also trying to find a certain coherence between the practices. This coherence is very often built *ex post*.

In fact, that coherence is a *modern* category, widespread in a social system whose predictability was considered useful for the overall result, to orient all the social systems with the aim of “progress for all”. This aim has been fairly criticized considering the high economic and social costs that are required, but it was still a shared *vision*.

Although in a social system where even predictability has already become saturated, its meaning of efficacy, even coherence, loses its sense. Now it is more the unpredictability and the capability to ride the effects that generate competitive advantages both in the economic and in the social system. So the rational logic of *consecutio* (and the subject of *aut, aut*) is joined by the logic of associations (and the subject of *et, et*), that opens the path for *many experiences*, with no limits, *consequently*, and so, ideologically putting *ex post* coherences in contrast. The limits to leisure experiences are defined to a different extent and by unclear conditions that outline differences and put groups together by following completely new paths like gender, age, nationality, wage and qualifications.

In this free time “paradox”, generated by the excess and the lack of meaning often given to it and stuck between the *must be* that increasingly constitutes it in the imaginary, and the *possible* that instead connotes it in reality, between what we would like—or maybe, as Rojek (1999) believes, what we think we would like—and what we are allowed to achieve as it is “offered” in more or less standardized forms, the risk that “the end” will just be a definitive and clashing loss of sense is always there. The most critical theorists think that it is one of the consequences of extreme individualization that characterizes today’s society and is caused by the bad consequences of the unrestrained inflexion of late capitalism as a social regulator, which is now in crisis. It is so unrestrained that it is even going against some of its principles that are widespread in the modern version, and is now becoming a form of *neat capitalism* (Rojek 2010), a tidy, clean and more recently, environmentally friendly capitalism. As Freud taught, Western society became organized around order and cleanliness, even if today they present themselves in new ways and forms. This rationality contributes to maintaining sufficient efficiency in the final organizational outcome.

Towards the Appleization of free time

Blackshaw (2009) has recently re-proposed an already known criticism to the metaphor used by Ritzer (1993) to explain how the process of standardization of western society was driven to its extremes. It is again proposed here to develop the subject of the contemporary ways of

consuming leisure time, for instance, the process of “McDonaldization” that would now even involve social relationships. Blackshaw tries to apply the same category to free time consumption patterns, but also suggests a new metaphor that in his opinion could better explain the on-going process by defining it as a “process of Ikeaization” of leisure time.

As we know, in Ritzer’s opinion, efficiency, computability, predictability, control and “irrational rationality” are at the core of the McDonaldization process (see Blackshaw 2009, 126ff). The system that regulates the offers and requests of McDonald’s products is based on a “pact” between consumers and the corporation. The ways in which this pact is put in place can be found in behavioural practices, namely what makes the service efficient. These rules make consumers and workers *socialize* with the ways of using and providing the service itself. The *efficacy* is achieved thanks to the fact that the users *know* how to act in every phase of the process in the enjoyment of the service, acquiring the skills of a consumer through practice; the workers are socialized with the equivalent skill, which means being prepared in the standardization of delivery procedures that agrees with what the *trained* consumer expects.

Secondly, the *computability* of the product qualities for each piece, as well as the maximum length of time allowed to put in place all the practices of delivery and enjoyment, makes the regulation of consumer *streams* possible. Whoever enters a McDonald’s restaurant knows that they will not be able to spend a lot of time there after the consumption. McDonald’s is certainly not a place for “long breaks”, as opposed to a Parisian café or *brasserie*. *Not wasting time* is another of the conditions required by the “pact” between *corporation* and consumers.

In third place, *predictability* is what allows the consumer to know that in whichever country he goes, eating at McDonald’s means eating a specific kind of food—even with some slight differences in each menu including *local* food, like salmon in Norway or Mozzarella in Italy. But the *Big Mac* is the same all over the world... This predictability is not only in the “pact” but it also, as Ritzer says, gives McDonald’s the possibility to be seen as a place that is in some ways *reassuring*.

In fourth place, *control* and the capacity technology has to substitute humans in matters of accuracy and reliability come into play. Also as an instrument of *timing* that says when to do what has to be done. It further implies that the workers have to be ready to answer, in an active way, the alarm ringing which indicates that the chips are ready, that their crispiness is controlled as well, even if it is never controlled by the consumer. The consumer believes that he has achieved the skills to recognize a “good chip”, even if he cannot control frying time.

There is a final aspect to take into account that in our opinion is a betrayal of the “pact” made between consumers of McDonald’s products and the corporation. We refer to all the *irrational effects of rationality*, such as the unpredictable aspects like the increase of social costs, more than economic ones. These aspects affect both the community and the individuals making the experience not very rewarding or pleasant both for the consumer and the worker. It is about “de-humanizing” unexpected effects, generated by a type of work and consumerism that appears radically different from mankind. It is one thing to occasionally work and eat at McDonald’s, which could constitute a practice of *casual leisure* for the consumer or a temporary occasion of work for young people; but it becomes very different if McDonald’s becomes the *only* choice in terms of food and work.

Blackshaw believes that, even if some characteristics of the organization and of consumption in the McDonald’s way could be applied to forms of consumerism of leisure time as well, giving birth to what Rojek (2005) calls *McLeisure*, there are some aspects that are not completely described by this metaphor. Certainly the process of standardization is seen in a range of *contexts* in which free time is consumed or produced. An example can be the places and the ways in which goods are offered (Codeluppi 2000), places in which you do not just buy items, but you can find “distraction” and entertainment, following specific relational *patterns* and procedures. Another example can be given by the way of consuming meals cooked in the microwave, suitable just because they are easy to prepare and quick to cook; or even the way in which free time is consumed and organized in theme parks. In the latter for instance, *queuing* can be assimilated to the idea of the conveyer belt (Blackshaw 2009, 128). The “queue” and the wait should discourage useless extensions of the time spent in the park and wandering around the park, following the same efficacy-centred idea of the conveyer belt. Finally, this also happens in television schedules, that is, more and more attention is given to aspects related to quantity and accountability of the success of a program and less focus on the quality of the program. We find this attitude in professional sport management, which has become a matter of *corporations* that tend to standardize even the production of the grounds for sporting events, replacing natural grass with a synthetic one and putting in place an organizational machine able to make *standard* controls of efficiency that have to be *measurable* as well (ibid.).

Everything said up to now does not justify the use of this metaphor to interpret the ways of consuming leisure time nowadays. Blackshaw underlines that even in Ritzer’s work there is not enough about the

changes that “postmodern individuals” encountered, or about the need to escape from incertitude that is a consequence of the standards designed by the modern rationality that also involves McDonald’s. “McDonaldization” outlines that the processes of normalization and standardization now include our “leisure” experiences as well. On one side we would see the emergence of the impossibility of escaping homogenization of leisure practices, and McDonald’s as one its symbols that we would accept for its *economic power*. On the other, there is the emergence of the idea that we do not want goods and services with a human semblance, just because the “McDonaldization” process is the extreme result of rationality, accountability and predictability that feed the modern society and that western people are relying on. In Blackshaw’s opinion, Ritzer is forgetting the possibility that individuals may look for alternatives to the irrational, antisocial and de-humanizing effects of “McDonaldization” (ibid., 129). That possibility is instead very real and it is often translated in various forms and practices of *social* and shared consumerism of leisure activities (for instance, Manchester United football team *supporters* that are at the same time owners of the team, being pushed merely by sporting reasons and not gaining any economic or financial advantages).

As has been said before, Blackshaw brings together the metaphor of “McDonaldization” with the idea of “Ikeaization” of *leisure*. So the *vision* of the well-known brand producer of furniture and furnishings would become the most suitable frame to apply to the new ways of leisure time consumption in modern society. That is the vision of *neat capitalism* that we were referring to earlier, and its intention is to keep the *brand* united without causing the “alienation” of the consumer.

The process of “Ikeaization” has contributed to changing the way in which we use our free time. For instance, at the core of the IKEA *vision* there is the concept of *home*: IKEA gives its contribution to social life by “helping people to create their home”... feeling at home (in the world, we could say, citing Tomlinson, 2001) is one of the forms that the quest for identity can take in the postmodern era. “Nothing can defeat the power and the warmth of home” (ibid., 132). It is with Ikeaization that the world becomes “welcoming” as its aim is to provide an “experience” of a house that has never been lived in before (ibid.), and the experience of intimacy “for all”.

According to Blackshaw, the middle class would find in shops that warmth which the working class used to find in football clubs. Due to the fact that IKEA recalls the idea of family and neighbourhood that renders it an achieved Utopia hidden behind the shared idea of “having found a house”, “feeling at home”, in truth, what the middle class really finds is

just “anxiety”. To use Bauman’s words, our desire is to “follow a rabbit, go hunting for it, but not catch it”. The process of “Ikeaization” of leisure would support it, making us “feel at home” in the places where we consume our free time, a house that we sometimes would like to get away from or, more simply, we would like to temporarily forget about.

Having said this, we are all like IKEA consumers in the sense that we do not know what we want. We are not able to compare the importance of making a home to the pleasure of immediate gratification, often making impulsive decisions. Just as every *neat capitalist* knows, Inkvar Kamprad⁴ knows very well that even what looks real and lasts like a “house”, proves that there is no stability in the modern “liquid” world. This is because dreams which are “Ikeaized” (just as many basic furniture models of IKEA) are already old when they are born and are never developed with an eye towards longevity (*ibid.*, 133).

The second characteristic in the process of “Ikeaization” of leisure has to do with the *democracy* that IKEA represents. Both middle class and working class furnish their houses purchasing items from IKEA, as *anyone* does, leaving out of consideration skin colour, gender, age, nationality. We believe that this is a new inflexion of the word *democracy* that is typically postmodern, where consistency is given by the “possibility of choosing everything”, on the basis of a “democracy of taste”. In fact this is characterized by a certain populism that hides the non-democratic possibility of building up personal criteria of selection of what we call *taste*; an idea of democracy that gets its conclusion in the principle that everyone *has to build their own environment* and “show off” that which has been consumed (*ibid.*). The same thing happens with leisure time practices, “as in a rock concert, that was once for the young, *today they are open to everyone*” (*ibid.*, 135, our italics).

What allows individuals to maintain their social status is not really their hierarchic position, but their ability to be *cool* when choosing leisure.

The third characteristic of the “Ikeaization” process that makes IKEA’s work just a “dream” for McDonald’s, is the *incalculable* and *unpredictable* feature of its offer, as it is determined by hundreds of

⁴ The inventor and owner of IKEA. IKEA was founded in 1940 in a Swedish village. In 2005 it already had 202 shops in more than 32 countries in the world, it printed 145 million catalogues in 48 different editions and 25 different languages, it could count on the loyalty of almost 410 million consumers all over the world, one million consumers visit the shops everyday. In 2005 it had 84,000 workers. Between 1994 and 2005 its income increased from 4.3 to 19.4 billion dollars, with a growth of 400 percent. Between 2000 and 2005 the price of goods decreased by 15-20% without diminishing the quality (Blackshaw 2009, 131).

different combinations of possible furnishings that every single consumer can choose from and furthermore, is unable as a consumer, to imagine. Variety and innovation in the style, without affecting quality levels, make IKEA products “high in value, but not in price” (ibid.).

Even today leisure is characterized by an offer of “modular” provisions, less standardized than in the past, where the quality of its services and goods—at least for those that are part of *cool leisure*—are surely recognized by those who enjoy them.

The fourth characteristic of the “Ikeaization” process recalls the process of globalization, but at the same time denies it. Even though it should be considered as a *global brand*, there is still something *naturally local* in IKEA, which diversifies it from McDonald’s. What makes this brand so *familiar* is its ability to anthropomorphize its products, giving them a Swedish name that enchants consumers, giving them a purchase experience which is simple and... European, in other words “not American”. Again, using Blackshaw words (2009, 136), “Differing from McDonaldization, Ikeaization is warm and full of intimacy and charm”.

Added to this, leisure time is translated into a need to feel *different* but at the same time *similar* as far as consumption is concerned anywhere, whether it is at home or in the world.

The fifth characteristic of the “Ikeaization” process is given by the fact that IKEA outlines a way of consuming free time that does not follow “the American way” but follows the “working ethics”, sharing with the American dream; an aim of having a “self-sufficient field”. “Ingvar Kamprad knows that the satisfaction that comes from giving to one’s house an IKEA restoration cannot be bought. You have to gain it, learn it and work on it” (ibid., 137).

The existing “pact” between the consumers and IKEA is different from the one that links McDonald’s to its consumers. In this pact the awareness that both have of reducing costs emerges, together with all the benefits that it carries for the consumers: “The result is that IKEA consumers become well-acquainted in the skill needed to select their own furniture, transport and build it on their own” (ibid.).

Briefly, it is as if the consumer is giving their contribution to production through assembly. This is something that consumers like doing, because they feel they are taking part in the process, aware of their role in the reduction of costs. This is an idea that has already been going around in the market of “do-it-yourself”, but for a restrained number of *bricoleurs*. This leads the activity to be very exciting, stimulating in us the idea of getting “the maximum puritanism possible with the lowest sacrifice”. This would in fact underline, in Blackshaw’s opinion, the dark

side of the pact. As it would be another even more devious and evil Weberian “steel cage” (ibid.).

Looking at leisure time, its “Ikeaization” would mix the difference between *casual* and *serious leisure* upon which Stebbins’ works are centred, as the satisfaction of “DIY” assembly fulfils the self-achievement need researched in *serious leisure* even if it is just *casual leisure*⁵.

This flexibility that de-differentiates the limit between work and free time is exactly what forms the basis of the idea that Blackshaw gives to the “Ikeaization” of postmodern leisure. It can be added that it is through the idea of flexibility in choice rather than the quantity and quality of products that you can really get the sense of what leisure time “Ikeaization” is. All the possible ways of combining the various goods together, being able to buy replacement goods that allow us to often re-style the home, thanks to low prices. New styles and hybrid styles cause us to transfer our set of skills practiced in our leisure time pursuits. The fulfilment of leisure consumption is not given exclusively by the quantity and/or quality of the ways that relate to the different practices, but it is given by the possibility of combining these activities together, building up a sense and making our choice coherent.

Even the Ikeaization metaphor is not enough to interpret some forms of contemporary leisure time consumption as it almost ignores the decision making processes linked with the “individual” dimension of leisure choices. As is the case for other metaphors used to interpret the dynamics of contemporary consumption, the emerging image of society is one of a society with a macrostructure, where, most of the time, because of an ill-concealed determinism, the personal space for decisions regarding our own life projects is non-existent or banished to “false consciousness”. The limits of the “Ikeaization” metaphor are established by a partial inefficiency in given explanations. As in any other metaphor the “interpretative power” is linked to its capacity of offering *intuitive* links to a social world which does not give answers to questions inherent in the reasoning about the ways the social world develops.

The metaphor, which can be useful for a description of the *context* in which the *trend* of forms and practices are formulated in leisure time consumption, does not take into account certain conditions needed to explain the *reasons* that support the “institutionalization” of choices in free time. All things considered, the range of individual choices is considered to be “determined”, whereas the individual choice could be decisive in changes in the institutionalization of some practices of leisure time.

⁵ It is *project-based leisure*, after the classification of Stebbins, and not *casual leisure* as believed by Blackshaw.

Remaining on a descriptive level of *megatrend* that characterizes contemporary free time forms and practices, we can evidence that “making a home” really has an important significance as a manifestation of a need for existence in a world that has levels of complexity much higher than in the past and that show a clear drive towards the *privatization* of social life, also including the consumption of free time (Lo Verde 2009). However, we need to add that privatization is contemporary to the increasing “domestication” of the world, even through the existing *hyper-connection* of often very distant places, especially in the western world. The new information technologies offered a big contribution to this *hyper-connection*, as Castells (2008a, 2008b) shows.

As such, to explain leisure time practices and forms, we could add a new metaphor that allows us to understand *the frame* in which new leisure choices are organized and that recalls the use of new communication technologies: this process can be called, using another metaphor as striking as the others, the “*Appleization*” of leisure time, whose features underline another kind of pact existing between consumers and corporations. This metaphor is easier to describe through some *imperatives* that highlight its “founding” power.

1. Build your own small initiatory community: or be part of the big one

On one side of the offer there is the objective of willingness to build the image of a community of consumption that, most of the time, wants to retain the state of a “niche”: *Apple* is a global *brand*, with a high *coolness factor*, but it is not “for everyone”, nor does it want to be, at least not in this phase of business life. Each *Apple* product is targeted at a more cultured consumer, more informed, more curious, more innovative than the average person, having an *active* and not *passive* attitude towards the ways of using technology, an awareness of their technologic skills, of the available symbolic, cultural and social capital, rather than just an economic one. In short, *Apple* is targeted at a consumer who believes that by buying its products they will be part of an *initiator* community that they want to make more important, but that has nothing to do with postmodern “tribes”, that Maffesoli refers to, where one can have access to or be part of these tribes for other reasons, as they are less open to “internal” changes, with respect to the *Apple* community.

On the contrary to what happens in the *IKEA vision*, the offer feeds the idea of a community that wants to be distinguished not for its purchasing power, which is surely present, but for the ways in which it uses

technology, information and *ideoscapes* (Appadurai 1990) that circulate in the world of information. So, it *knows how to choose among* technologies, which *frames* to use to interpret reality, and it also knows what contents to put into these *frames*. The *Apple world* answers to a demand for a *vision* that certainly propagates among *active* leisure consumers more than among *passive* leisure ones, even if the activity can be the *download* and use of a new application. An *Apple* consumer knows and shares with other *Apple* consumers the same linguistic code, a set of “digital” skills (including the use of *touch screen*) that gives them the daily confirmation of being “superior” in the quantity of technological resources, but also in their technical competences, that we know is a certainty in that “liquid” world that Bauman refers to.

The process of “*Appleization*” in the production and consumption of leisure has this same feature. “Initiates” of a certain type of use of free time are not only consumers of certain practices made by a *leisure class*, but also choose forms and practices of free time consumption that could become less exclusive due to entry barriers of symbolic, social, cultural as well as *cognitive* nature. As we will see, free time is *cool* only if it can be recognized through the signs and sounds by those who make them, only those who use an *i-phone* know how to use the modes of information management and recognize those that they need. The “*Appleization*” is then a *vision*, and not only the result of the use of an object: it is a way through which one can *observe, record, classify* and *question* the world. Thus, the use causes empowerment, enriching the databank that is contained and becoming like “vectors” of adopted instruments in order to be registered by others, even these *selected* people, only in certain cases as *potential* participants of an initiatory community.

2. Select your sources, your information, your frame

“*Appleization*” is developed in the willingness to build a niche that grows slowly, especially through *viral marketing* that is not very fast in getting new “market shares” but is constantly growing, and that justifies the final result which is the retention of the loyalty of people being part of the same community, the sharing of a *vision*. The consumer of *Apple* technologies is “integrated”, in the double meaning of “integrated in a community” and “technologically integrated” as he uses in an integrated manner a large number of *Apple* technological instruments. At this point, they become a “follower” who *shares a way of choosing sources of information*, as well as the *frame* of these sources and its contents. If we consider the number of sources, *frames* and information contents that

circulate in the digital universe, we will discover that our major problem will be having a *vision* that gives us the chance to make a “selection”. This is the criteria that are followed, used to make selections and to account for the choice and the validity of information. This is because of the excess in the offer of information. The *Apple* consumer is well aware of this; they continuously empower their database, storing up information, data, images, sounds, etc. following *coherence* criteria very difficult to find in the *offline* world and that give justification and reliability to the *vision*. The information collected and made coherent is useful to confirm not only the usefulness, but also the reliability of the source and the validity of the *frame* in which the source moves. In brief, the frame makes the content of the available data credible, useful, interesting and *real*.

The same happens in the universe of choice that is at the base of leisure time consumption. The selection of information sources in the decision of leisure consumption is a fairly important problem, both when choosing *casual leisure* consumption places, practices and contexts but also in *serious* or *project based leisure*. The offer of *cool* leisure presents the same peculiarities: it circulates on sources and through information reachable by those who share a *vision* that is in line with its “recognisability”. The realization of *cool* leisure practices, as well as the ability of finding new ones, is less important than the ability of knowing how to consult information sources that guess or guide the *coolness* of a leisure form or practice.

This is also an effect of the “*Appleization*” process: whether it is to do with holidays, going out in the evening, public events, leisure time in *everyday life*, or days-off or the weekend, consumed in-home or in public spaces, on his own or with other people, the gratification is given by the confirmation that we have made the right decision that is in line with a *vision* that allowed us to select information sources, the frames and the information itself. On-line and off-line discussions in forums, about where to go on holiday, about events or about the evening spent with friends are a good example (many studies have been done on this topic and are rich with results that agree with this last statement, see Polizzi 2010). Being able to choose the setting according to shared needs set by a conscious *vision* of preferred ways of spending free time is *cool*, and it also follows the need for an accessible leisure offer... but only if you know how to *select* it.