

Product Service System: A Vector of Consumer Practice Changes Towards More Sustainability

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Introduction (1/2)

- Our modes of operation, our production and consumption practices lead to environmental, economic and social crises
- Changes in our operating methods, our consumption and production practices towards more sustainability are therefore necessary : a transition is needed
- Transition = a long-term process of transformative change towards more sustainable societies ([Grin et al., 2010](#) ; [Markard et al., 2012](#)) by substituting a new economically, socially and environmentally sustainable system for the dominant institutions

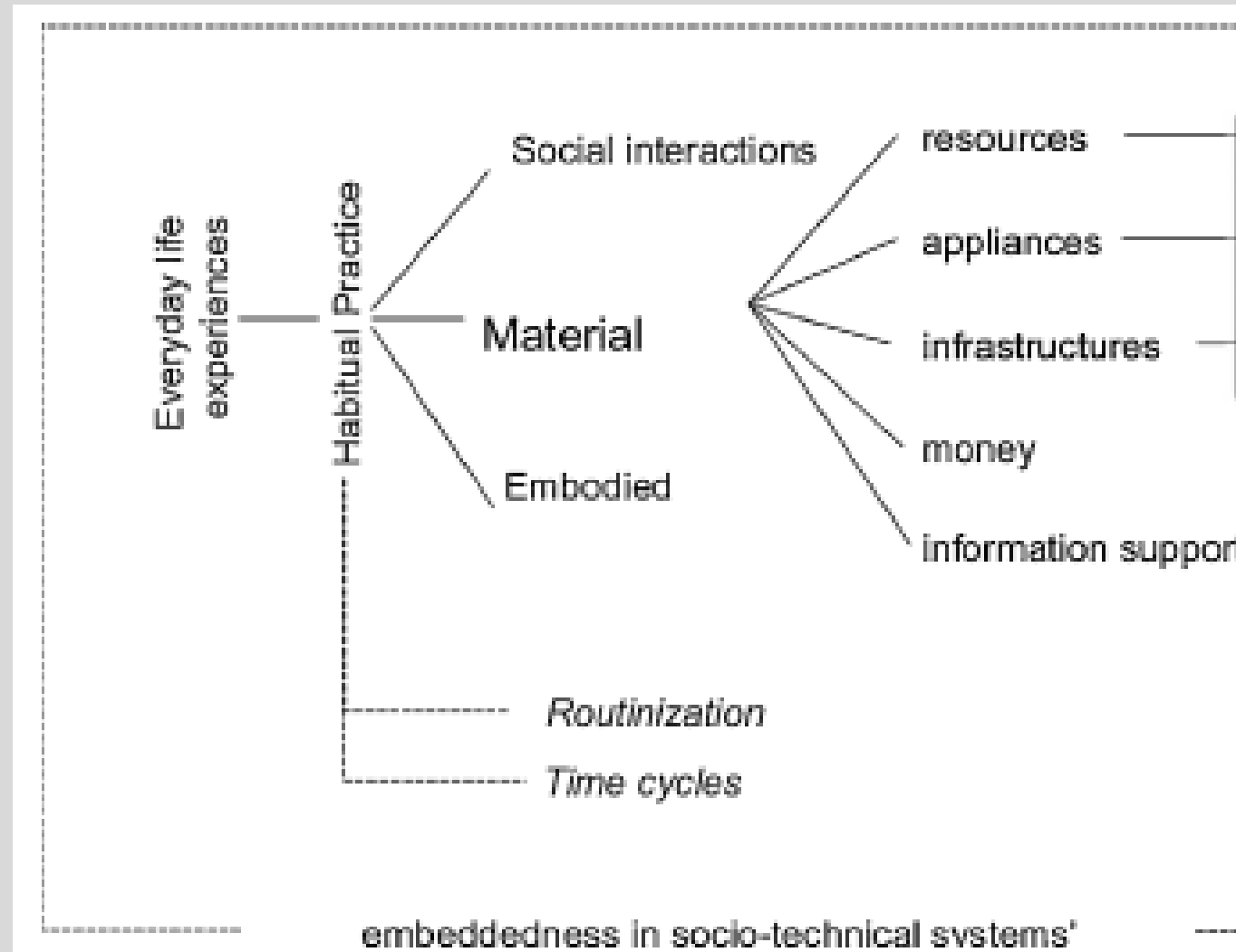
Introduction (2/2)

- The transition towards more sustainability requires a long-term change
 - In terms of corporations strategies and institutional policies
 - In consumer behavior as well as their values and perceptions, which are either the driving forces or the obstructions of this transition (Kemp and van Lente, 2011).
- To be successful the new business and economic models need consumers
- It is necessary to induce consumer practice changes
- BUT there is a lack of analyses on the reasons of the overconsumption (Avelino et Wittmayer, 2016)

Research Field

- Transition theory
 - MLP : Multi Level Perspective
 - A transition is only possible if the innovative business/economic models break up with established practices
 - So, the understanding of established practices is fundamental
 - So that there will be a chance for transition
 - To foster change in consumer practices

Research Field: Practice theory



Source: [Maréchal and Holzemer, 2018](#)

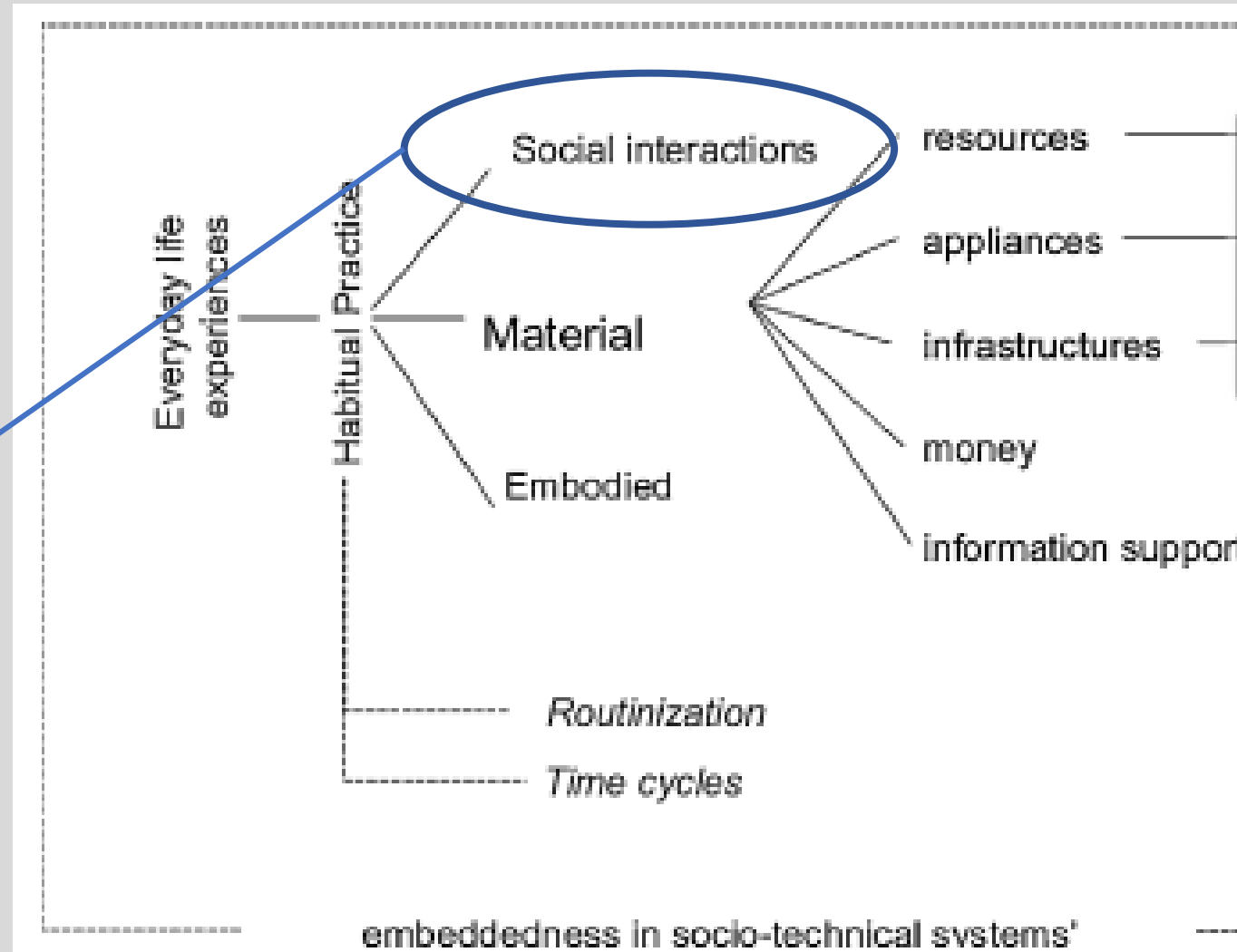
Research Field

- Practice theory
 - Practices = network of facts and sayings evolving over time and spatially dispersed ([Schatzki 1996](#), [Mylan 2015](#)).
 - Consumption = a set of practices rooted in a socio-cultural landscape associated with the modern economic system
 - The understanding of established practices is fundamental
- New innovative business model : the Product Service Systems (PSS)

Consumption under the practice theory

- Consumers are largely locked into infrastructure, social norms and habits that significantly limit their consumption choices (Tukker et al., 2008).
- Three hypotheses explain how this construct of consumer practices lead to overconsumption
 - The desire for ownership being present in our societies because it makes it possible to show one's position in front of one's rivals - all the other people – which has only been strengthening (hypothesis following Veblen (1899))
 - Following a general loss of meaning in work, consumption becomes a means to fulfill this void (hypothesis following Crawford (2009) and Stiegler (2007, 2008 and 2015))
 - Overconsumption comes from desires that have been created by post-war marketing (hypothesis following Pharo (2018) and Bernays (BBC, 2002))

Consumption under the practice theory



3 Hypothesis :

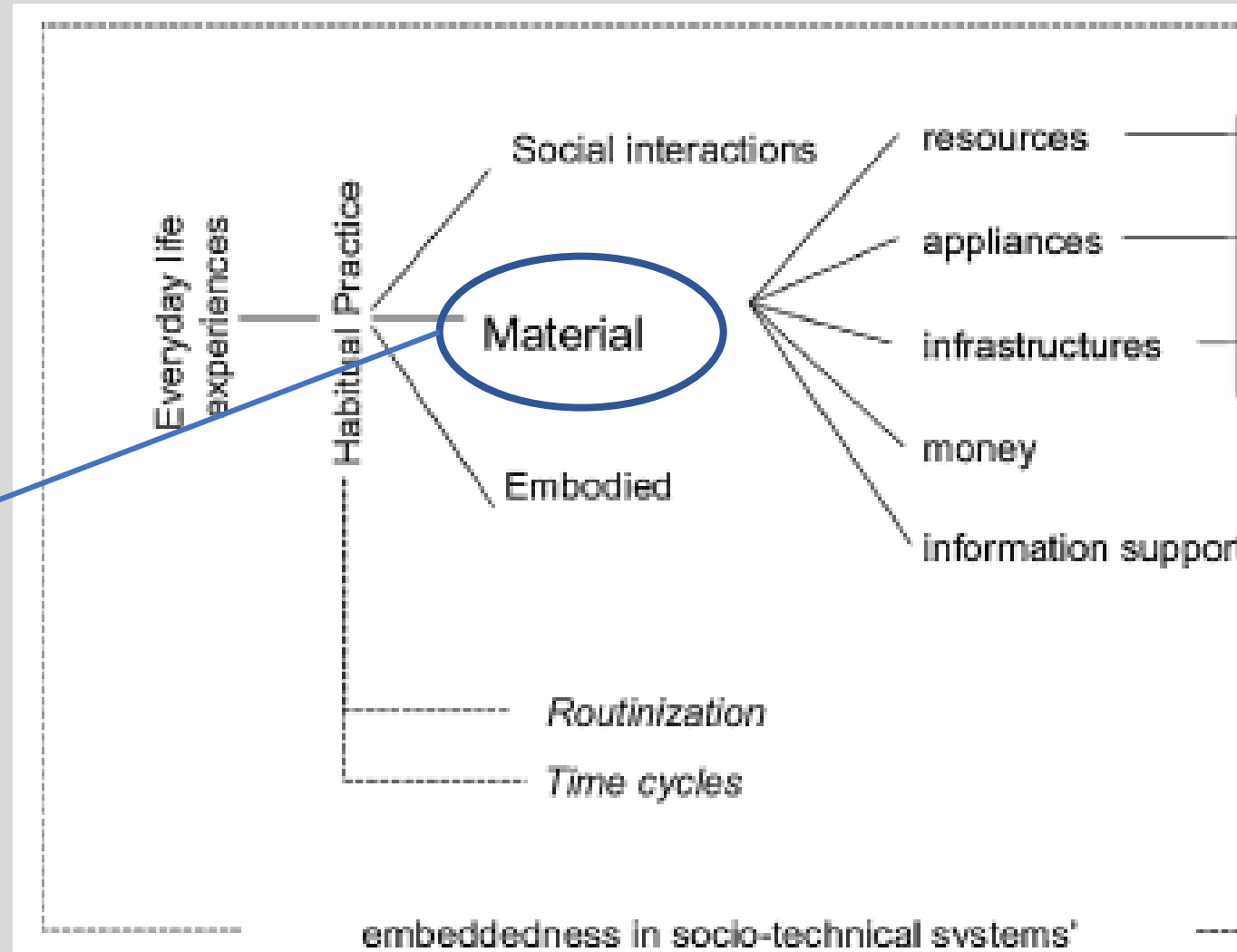
Our ways of consumption are long-term social-cultural constructs

Source: [Maréchal and Holzemer, 2018](#)

Consumption : a way to fulfill desires

- Our ways of consumption are long-term social-cultural constructs
- Their deconstruction will need a long time process

Consumption under the practice theory



It is possible to influence certain leverage points of consumption in the short-term

Source: [Maréchal and Holzemer, 2018](#)

Consumption : a way to fulfill desires

- But it is possible to influence certain leverage points of consumption in the short-term (material context)
- To change our ways of consumption while preserving the meaning of this consumption (social interaction)
- And realize a transition towards a more sustainable consumption

One case.... The clothing sector

- Fast-fashion phenomenon (illustrates the social-cultural construct)
- Second most polluting sector after the oil sector
- Conditions of work are deplorable (e.g. collapsing of the Rana Piazza)

Overconsumption of clothes:

- On average 70% of the contents of French wardrobes are not worn
- 12 kg of clothes are thrown away every year by the average French person

Clothes consumption

- “Dress to impress”
- Ways to dress for a party, a wedding or work
- Fashions-addict
 - Long-term construct of the social-cultural context
- Price, new or second-hand clothes, labels, accessibility of the stores,...
 - Material Context : leverage points of consumption influenceable in the short-term

The questions are

- How to consume without wasting resources as much as we currently do?
- How do we change our consumption of clothes without changing why (the long-term socio-cultural construct) we consume it ?
- How can we fulfill our desires in a sustainable way?

Hypothesis : a part of the consumption of clothes practice is a long-term construct and another part consists of leverage points of the material context that we can influence in order to realize a transition towards more sustainability

Methodology

- Semi-structured and Integrative interviews in front of consumers' wardrobe
- The clothes are an integral part of the methodology
- It is not only a question of making a physical description of the object but of identifying the leverage points, the rooting of the practice.
- The consumer classifies his or her clothes according to the type of purchase, the purchase price, the type of use for which they are intended and the frequency of use
- Each ranking is discussed to bring out the leverage points of the material context.

Product Service System

“An offer model providing an **integrated mix of products and services** that are together able to fulfil a particular customer demand (to deliver a ‘unit of satisfaction’), based on **innovative interactions between the stakeholders of the value production system (satisfaction system)**, where the economic and competitive interest of the providers **continuously seeks environmentally and socio-ethically beneficial new solutions.**”

Vezzoli et al. (2014)

Product Service System as a way to fulfill needs

- PSS aims to offer a combination of integrated products and services, capable of achieving end user satisfaction, sometimes referred to as a *satisfaction unit* (Bacchetti et al., 2016).
- PSS = (re)positions the satisfaction of needs as the core of value creation
- It generates a transition in the perception of one's own well-being by the customer
 - From the feeling of well-being derived from the property of a product
 - To the well-being based on access to the service or to the lived experience derived from using this product (Dyllick and Rost, 2017).

Product Service System as a way to fulfill needs

- Economic function of the company
 - ≠ to produce goods
 - = to meet functional needs (Vaileanu-Pau and Boutillier 2012),
 - Companies must identify very precisely the needs and preferences of their consumers (Cook, 2014).

Conclusion

- To be effective, the transition will not only need
 - The development of innovative and sustainable business and economic models
 - Changes of practice from the producer and manager side
- But will also need
 - To understand the ingredients of the overconsumption practices : the role of the social interaction and the role of the material context
- By identifying these ingredients and leverage points, it is possible to offer them a more sustainable practice of consumption
- PSS is one example of this realization

Thank you for your attention