ANDERS-SEIN:
THE QUEST FOR OTHERNESS AT ITS EXTREMES

MASTER THESIS

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DEDICATION

This master thesis is dedicated to my parents, Bel and Charlie.

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ABSTRACT

In times of liquid modernity (Bauman 2013), the shift towards uniqueness is omnipresent (Reckwitz 2018). Society collectively aspires and pursues the particular and therefore individuals express the need to be unique within a society in which everyone attempts to do the same. Hence, when constructing identity and attempting to cultivate the self, individuals engage in *Anders-sein* practices (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012) to differentiate themselves in an increasingly singularised society. This thesis expands *Anders-sein* by examining the phenomenon from an extreme and risky experiential consumption context. Therefore, the thesis uncovers new practices of *Anders-sein* and demonstrates how consumers can singularise themselves within a society of singularities.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADHS    Aufmerksamkeits-Defizit-Hyperaktivitäts-Störung
i.e.     id est (that is)
NfU     Need for Uniqueness
1.0 INTRODUCTION

“Postmodernity is the simultaneity of the destruction of earlier values and their reconstruction. It is renovation within ruination.”

Jean Baudrillard

Indeed, we are living in contemporary times marked by turmoil and rapid change. Therefore, various scholars aim to grasp the current shifts pertaining to social, cultural and societal upheavals. In this context, several socio-cultural theories emerged that attempt to capture nowadays’ life environments. Yet, scholars agree upon the fact that individuals today are living in a transitional phase subsequent to modernity (Reese-Schäfer 2002). In this time of liquid modernity, as Baumann (2002, p. 19) denotes it, humans are embedded in a “mobile, volatile, fluid world of globalisation, deregulation and individualisation”. Additionally, in accordance with Baudrillard’s stance, Reckwitz (2018) argues that in this transitional phase general norms and conventions are outdated and reclassified. In fact, society experiences a shift from a social logic of the common to a social logic of the special. Referring to this, the previously outlined renovation within ruination is constituted by the transition from pursuing commonality to curating particularity. This re-declaration from commonality to differentness completely pervades all individual, social and environmental domains. Indeed, there is an obvious shift towards uniqueness. What is increasingly demanded is not the common, but the special and exceptional. Therefore, we are living in a society of singularities, constantly on the pursuit of particularity, embedded amidst a shift towards uniqueness (Reckwitz 2018).

1.1 PROBLEM DEFINITION AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Following Bob Dylan’s lyrics “for the times they are a-changin’”, one could indeed agree upon this stance. In today’s environment of transitions and constant alterations, the different, special and unique is collectively aspired and pursued (Reckwitz 2018). In fact, human beings do express the desire to be unique (Brewer 1991, Snyder and Fromkin 1980; Tian, Bearden and Hunter 2001), yet at the same time they also wish to conform and belong to some group (Asch 1956; Bond and Smith 1996). This ongoing ambiguity to conform, yet to depart and be unique leaves individuals clueless when attempting to construct identity and cultivate their selves. However, especially in contemporary times, virtues like self-actualisation and self-fulfilment are celebrated (Baumeister 1987; Branaman 2007). In this context, being anders provides an enticing and suitable solution to construct identity and cultivate the self alongside the paradox
of conforming and non-conforming. With respect to this, the phenomenon *Anders-sein* is described as a way of life which is neither conform, nor non-conform, distinctive but only under certain conditions and situations and can be regarded as a hybrid form of conformity and non-conformity. The goal of this life project is to ultimately cultivate oneself (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012).

In that regard, *andere* individuals utilise marketplace offers to signal differentness and hence to curate a singularised lifestyle (Arnould and Thompson 2005; Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). Particularly through consuming, individuals are enabled to portray their existentialist selves (Lipovetsky 1994). However, in contemporary times consumption patterns have changed, as well. Pertaining to this, consumption has shifted from a solid to a liquid dimension. Solid consumption refers to perpetual, material goods which are based on ownership, whereas liquid consumption is characterized as transitory, based on access and not limited to material possessions (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017).

Further, in postmodern times individuals are embedded in an “aura of the spectacle” (Firat and Venkatesh 1995, p. 251) and in this aura consumers quest for otherness and singularisation is reflected in their desire to experience consumption (Carù and Cova 2007). In this context, dramatic sports in form of extreme athletic experiences constitute an enticing opportunity for consumers to singularise themselves in an increasingly singularised society. Thus far, “rather than being extreme, *andere* lifestyle experiences constitute small scale boundary transgressions in important life domains” (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012, p. 507). Therefore, the present thesis aims to demonstrate how *andere* individuals construct identity and singularise and cultivate themselves by engaging in liquid, experiential consumption in an extreme and risky context. Particularly, this study is interested in the cultivation practices *andere* consumers engaging in extreme, risky athletic experiences perform. Pertaining to this, the present thesis investigates whether new practices can be generated from scrutinising the phenomenon from an extreme and risky perspective.

Prior research on the phenomenon of *Anders-sein* focused on fashion consumption (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012), bodily appearance (Binder 2014) and *andere* lifestyle experiences (Krall 2015). Following Hemetsberger’s and Weinberger’s assumption (2012) that individuals appropriate *anderes* behaviour to obtain an enhanced comprehension of themselves, extreme athletic experiences seem to provide an adequate research background, especially in light of postmodern developments in which the exceptional and particular are pursued. In
addition to that, experiential consumption represents a promising field of investigation, since visual differentiation allows a great scope of interpretation which might also result in misinterpreting visual signals. Further, extreme experiences are examined in order to determine whether andere lifestyle experiences solely constitute small scale boundary transgressions or if cultivation processes could indeed be pushed to extremes. With respect to these considerations, the thesis investigates into the following research questions:

(1) How do consumers singularise themselves through consumption in an increasingly singularised society?

(2) Which cultivation practices do andere consumers engaging in extreme and risky athletic experiences perform?

With respect to these research questions, a qualitative-explorative research design is employed (Denzin and Lincoln 2005) to examine the life development of Anders-sein as well as the manifestations of Anders-sein in an extreme, risky experiential context.

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The present thesis is divided into six chapters. After defining a problem statement in the introductory section, the thesis commences by providing a literature review. Within this review, three theoretical directions underpinning this thesis are discussed. Initially the concept of Anders-sein (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012) is elucidated and in this context the contributions to identity-construction and self-cultivation approaches are discussed. Thereafter, a review about the contemporary social contexts in which individuals are embedded is provided, especially pertaining to the theories of liquid modernity (Baumann 2013; Reckwitz 2018) and liquid consumption (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017). Eventually, experiential consumption patterns are discussed in the light of extreme experiences (Celsi et al. 1993; Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017) and their contributions to identity-construction and self-cultivation processes are explained, as well. The subsequent chapter pertains to the empirical part of the study. Within this section, insights on the research design and methodology as well as in-depth descriptions on the research methods and the data analysis procedures are provided. Further, findings are presented, discussed and conclusions are drawn. The thesis finalises by offering managerial implications and by lining out limitations and suggestions for further research.
2.0 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The following chapter introduces the concept of *Ander-Sein* (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012) and explains how this phenomenon contributes to the creation of identity and the cultivation of the self. In this context, the logics of conformity and non-conformity are described to delineate *Anders-sein* from former concepts of uniqueness pursuit. Further, the chapter provides an overview about the contemporary social contexts in which individuals are incorporated, which particularly focuses on the tenets of liquid modernity (Baumann 2013; Reckwitz 2018) and liquid consumption (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017). Finally, it is discussed how experiential consumption (Carù and Cova 2007; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982) contributes to identity-building and self-cultivating processes and how being *anders* is embodied through extreme, non-orthodox or risky athletic experiences.

2.1 ON BEING ANDERS

When constructing identity, no creative boundaries are set. The postmodern subject intends to embody the differentiated, authentic self (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012; Reckwitz 2018). Thus, living and expressing individuality now ranges from men wearing female handbags (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012) to displaying extravagantly, even provocatively styled, beards (Binder 2014) or women cultivating non-orthodox lifestyle experiences (Krall 2015). Modern individuals pursue distinctiveness and create their identities and social personas in accordance with the unusual and special (Gümüşay 2018; Reckwitz 2018). These endeavours are not attempts to portray oneself as more unique than others. Neither are they performed to express belongingness to some group. Such individuals are simply living *anders*. Living *anders* means continuously attempting to discover one’s individual way of life, a constant desire of becoming. Such processes of ultimate self-cultivation require permanent self-reflection, which emphasises the notion that these identity-projects are based on existential motives (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012).

Hemetsberger and Weinberger introduced the concept of *Ander-sein* to literature in 2012. This concept can be regarded as a hybrid form of conformity and non-conformity that transcends feelings of uniqueness and assimilation. *Ander-sein* provides a differentiated perspective on the self-reflective individual, as it aligns the theories of individuality and sociality, which have been treated as distinct concepts in former literature. *Ander-sein* is compiled of the German terminologies, *anders* and *sein*. In this context, the term *anders* refers to ‘differentness and
deviating behaviour, or conception’, whereas sein concerns the ‘existentialist notion of self’ (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012, p. 507). Consumption practices of Anders-sein are unobtrusive, impermanent and unideological, yet strongly focused on the inner self. Hence, practices performed to live anders are personally important and widely ranged (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012).

Furthermore, Anders-sein builds on a feedback-mechanism (i.e., individuals juxtapose other’s reactions on themselves with their own perception of their beings and react to the evaluations from their surroundings). Through Anders-sein, individuals develop a profound understanding of themselves, achieved through constant self-reflection and critical reviews of social norms. However, being anders is not associated with general opposition to popular practices; rather, it embraces common habits. Anders-sein practices are performed to contrast common social norms, but only in certain contexts. Such contrasts can be achieved through wilfully ignoring, non non-conforming (expressed through provocative conformity, counteracting ephemerality and consuming the odd) or defamiliarizing (expressed through delocalization, delabeling and contrasting personal practice) individualization practices. The aim of this lifelong venture is ultimate self-cultivation (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012).

Anders-sein can be regarded as an extension to literature, as it is related to common concepts of conformity and non-conformity. Figure 1 illustrates how this phenomenon is related to previous concepts of uniqueness pursuit.

\[\text{Figure 1. Anders-sein contrasted with common concepts of conformity and non-conformity (Hemetsberger & Weinberger 2012)}\]

Based on this model, consumers who are anders do not consume to belong to some sort of group (conformity) or to stand out from the crowd (non-conformity). They rather consume to
express their individuality and uniqueness, within the scope of societal acceptance. The *andere* consumer adds a subtle, provocative touch to his/her way of life, style or other expressions of individuality. Consumers do not perform these actions to evoke high contrasts compared to the rest of society; rather, they critically reflect common habits and adopt them in their own way. Practices of *Non-Anders-sein*, on the contrary, embrace socially approved mainstream consumption habits (Hemetsberger & Weinberger 2012).

Previous literature on the pursuit of uniqueness states that humans act like social chameleons (K-hole 2013). According to Simmel (1905/1995), individuals pursue paradoxical strategies since they simultaneously strive for conformity and differentiation. Indeed, individuals desire to belong to others and often adopt their behaviours, as they feel connected to these others and desire to be part of the group. In fact, belongingness has been crucial for the human race’s survival, and there is a long research tradition on the topic of conformity (Asch 1956; Bond and Smith 1996). Moreover, research suggests that humans conform to others to receive assurance that they are approved and cherished or that they are socially accepted among others (Burnkrant & Cousineau 1975; Chan, Berger and van Boven 2012; Sherif 1936; Schumpe & Erb 2015).

However, humans also want to emphasise their distinctiveness. Hence, singularization practices can be embodied in various ways, for instance, through non-conforming or through unique consumption behaviours (Schumpe and Erb 2015). Individuals express a certain need for uniqueness (NfU). This tenet evolved from Snyder’s and Fromkin’s (1980) uniqueness theory and indicates that individuals tend to constantly compare themselves to others. Hence, they feel more or less similar to other human beings. According to the uniqueness theory (Snyder and Fromkin 1980), people are averse to high similarity or dissimilarity to others. Furthermore, the extent of perceived individual differentness results in positive or negative behavioural and emotional responses. When achieving a medium level of similarity to others, positive emotional responses are expected. On the contrary, high similarity or dissimilarity yields negative responses. Therefore, individuals pursue and aspire to moderate levels of uniqueness. Thus, the NfU exists: individuals’ desire to be perceived as unique and differentiated beings (Snyder & Fromkin 1979; Brewer 1991). In addition, Brewer (1991) argues within his optimal distinctiveness theory that individuals are able to simultaneously adapt whilst differentiating through belonging to particular social groups. In this context, individuals can satisfy their desire for belongingness by conforming to some group, whilst actualising their quest for differentness by comparing their group to other social groupings (Brewer 1991).
Prior research provides various arguments for why individuals aspire to be unique. Berger and Heath (2008) concludes that the desire for differentiation results from low reputation, objecting others or being too similar to reference groups, especially in cases where high affinity culminates in negative emotional responses. In addition, the level of perceived individuality varies; thus, certain individuals desire differentiation more than others. Some people feel deprived of their identities and experience a decrease in self-worth when their resemblance to others is too high (Tian et al. 2001; Snyder and Fromkin 1980). Furthermore, people with high NfU express an increased desire for autonomy, oppose societal conventions and are generally more creative and innovative, such as fashion innovators or opinion leaders (Workman and Caldwell, 2007).

Individuals also express uniqueness as well consumption of counter-conforming items. In this context, consumption goods and services approved by a majority are categorically rejected (Tian et al. 2001). According to Tian et al. (2001), counter-conformity consumption manifests in three dimensions: creative choice, unpopular and avoidance of similarity. Creative choice counter-conformity pertains to the acquisition of innovative, new or original consumption items to highlight one’s individuality. This type of consumption is associated with low risks and thus enjoys positive public evaluations (Snyder and Fromkin 1980). On the contrary, unpopular counter-conformity entails high-risk consumption since these practices depart from social conventions and norms. However, consuming unpopular goods results in individuals benefitting from enhanced self-esteem and public recognition, but risking and acquiescing social sanctions. Last, the avoidance of similarity refers to the omission of popular or mainstream items to generate individuality (Tian et al. 2001).

Likewise, individuals engage in anti-consumption strategies to express distinctiveness and signal identity. Identity-signalling implies that individuals determine which signals they send to others to represent their identities. Therefore, people avoid mainstream consumption to guarantee that others understand their individuality (Berger and Heath 2007, 2008). Moreover, individuals increasingly demand authenticity to generate an authentic identity. This quest for genuineness evolved from postmodern developments (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995; Rose and Wood, 2005), but today’s increasingly homogenous consumption constitutes the severest danger for authentication projects. Thus, consumer develop defence strategies, thereby rejecting commonly demanded, standardised or mass-produced consumption goods and services (Arsel and Thompson 2011, Beverland and Farely 2010, Rose and Wood 2005). Hence, individuals express their differentness and singularize themselves through leading and
striving for unique lifestyles (Arnould and Thompson 2005; Berger and Heath 2007) or by opposing social norms (Rios and Chen 2014).

In general, individuals pursuing individuality through consumption should understand they cannot fully escape market influence or control since they consult the marketplace for singularisation strategies and thus can only utilise goods and services that the marketplace offers. Therefore, consumers aspirations and desires for autonomy and independence are still subjected to market dynamics, as the marketplace and its offerings determine how, and with which means, consumers can engage in authenticity and identity projects. Hence, consumers are never entirely independent (Schouten and McAlexander 1995). Further, other people still impact individual behaviour (Caruana, Crane and Fitchett 2008; Holt 2002; Thompson and Hirschman 1995).

The phenomenon of Anders-sein deviates from these conventional concepts of conformity and non-conformity. Although being anders is associated with the pursuit of uniqueness, the perceived individuality results as a side effect from all endeavours performed to cultivate oneself. Anders-sein means consuming differently than others to fulfil and cultivate oneself and not attract attention (Binder 2014; Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012; Krall 2015; Sartre 1956). Individuals who are anders simultaneously conform to social habits in some respects while striving for optimal distinctiveness. However, their individuality is not created within group contrasts, but by comparing their own perceived demeanours to common social habits (Binder 2014; Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012; Krall 2015).

As highlighted, common literature does not treat individuality and sociality as a holistic, intertwined concept, but reflects on it as two distinct theoretical directions. However, Anders-sein is based on existential motivation, as andere individuals strive for ultimate self-cultivation and self-satisfaction throughout their lives to obtain profound understanding of themselves. Thus, these individuals perform various consumption practices to express and embody individuality and to fulfil themselves (Binder 2014; Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012; Krall 2015).

2.2 BRAVE NEW WORLD

In times of liquid modernity, in which self-actualisation and personal growth are solemnised (Baumeister 1987; Branaman 2007; Cushman 1990), people have several opportunities to express their individuality, thereby engaging in multiple lifestyles. There is no single way of
life. Indeed, postmodern subjects have various possibilities to shape and express their beings (Firat and Venkatesh 1995) due to the interlinked, inconsistent, fast-moving and ephemeral environment in which they move (Baumann 2013). Baumann (2013) identifies this era as a time of liquid modernity, in which nothing is constant or stable and everything flows. Indeed, times of liquid modernity are characterised by instrumental rationality, individualization, risk and uncertainty and fragmentation of life and identity (Bauman 2007a). Instrumental rationality constitutes a classic phenomenon of liquid modernity (Bauman 2007a) and refers to efficiently solving problems (Kolodny and Brunero 2015). Apart from economic efficiency, instrumental rationality is also dependent on interpersonal relationships and exchange. Furthermore, this ‘liquefaction of social structures’ (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017, p. 2) has manifested in a privatisation of modernity since the importance of traditional values, conventions and loyalties has diminished (Bauman 2007a, 2007b, 2013; Lee 2011). In this modern sharing economy, people invite strangers to live in their private homes (Airbnb) or transport unknown people in their private cars (Uber), thereby demonstrating instrumental rationality (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017).

Liquid modernity is also characterised by extreme individualisation. Nowadays it is an obligatory task to perform identity and transform the self, regardless the consequences. However, individuals cannot fully neglect the impact of these consequences, since they must bear them (Baumann 2013a; 2013b). Consequently, ‘identity projects can become more fluid, ephemeral, and in flux’ (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017, p. 3). Due to the liquefaction of conventional organisations and institutions, individuals can no longer rely on such entities as reference points and thus are personally responsible for structuring their lives. In other words, liabilities have shifted away from organisations and institutions and are now one’s own responsibility. Therefore, marketplace offers are utilised to counteract these developments (Baumann 2007b). In accordance with this shift, Giesler and Veresiu (2014) argue that institutions are no longer held accountable for society-wide concerns, but people bear responsibilities and consequences themselves. As a consequence, individuals transformed into independent, economical subjects that pursue self-investment strategies through customised market choices (Giesler and Veresiu 2014). Hence, individuals avoid fixation and long-term obligations, generally preventing to focus in one direction and favouring the choice between several alternatives (Baumann 2001; Green 2014).

This postmodern, fast-moving and unstable environment is associated with risk and uncertainty. Rindfleisch, Burroughs and Wong (2009) claim that the lack of organisational guidance results
in enhanced isolation, as the postmodern subject encounters various challenging life choices that they must handle themselves. Thus, they experience existential insecurities and prospective challenges (Poder 2013).

Indeed, change has become omnipresent and appears ordinary for the postmodern subject. Thus, switching between or living out multiple lifestyles simultaneously is natural for a liquid society (Baumann 2002). Moreover, the postmodern individual is fragmented within a liquid environment, which means that subjects play different roles in different situations and are constantly ready to switch roles (Powell 1996). Fragmentation implies that individuals seize readily disposable opportunities (Bardhi, Eckhardt & Arnould 2012). This multifaceted way of shaping one’s life is also triggered by individuals’ increasing scope of social contacts. Through enhanced interaction with others, individuals are constantly confronted with different lifestyles and thus encounter various possibilities they might adapt to represent their own beings (Gergen 1992). Further, liquid conditions enforce people’s ability to be resilient and spontaneous and to espouse de-spatialised cultural capital (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017); security and stability have lost in value (Baumann 2007b). Postmodern individuals embrace a prospective attitude, constantly desiring to appropriate ‘the next new thing’ (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017, p. 3). Indeed, postmodern conditions have led to novel concepts like prosumption, the alignment of consumption and production that purports that all economic processes require the incorporation of both (Ritzer and Rey 2016). Further, work arrangements have liquefied and thus manifested in flexible working conditions (Pinsker 2015), transforming working types, such as the shift from office to freelance work or the emergence of co-working concepts (Toussaint, Ozcaglar-Toulouse, and Eckhardt 2014).

These developments emphasize that postmodern conditions enable people to live out multiple identities (Firat and Venkatesh 1995) and that the postmodern individual does not settle for one way of being. In fact, individuals adopt various, sometimes even paradoxical, identities (Firat and Venkatesh 1995; Hall 1994). For instance, one could be a responsible student who works part-time in a bank on the weekdays but competes in the Freeride World Tour on weekends and visits rave clubs to relax in between. This contradictory example highlights the notion that the postmodern subject affirms a chameleon persona (K-hole 2013) and avoids embodying one consistent identity to receive approval (Larry 2014). Therefore, being different and singularizing oneself has become the new norm. In today’s postmodern society, the pursuit of differentness is omnipresent, and being singularized almost appears to be obligatory (Reckwitz
Particularly in today’s liquid society, postmodern subjects experience drastic shifts from security to uncertainty, from stability to rapid change (Bauman 2007, 2013a, 2013b).

In accordance with this stance, Reckwitz (2018) claims that there is an obvious shift toward uniqueness, as he defines today’s liquid society as a society of singularities. He characterizes ‘singularity’ as something special, which is unique, incomparable and unexchangeable. Singularity has an ascribed quality and is always valued. Thus, singularities are not means to ends. Instead, they are ends in themselves. Furthermore, singularities are highly associated with affectivity, as no one is moved by the ubiquitous, but touched by the exceptional (Reckwitz 2018).

The special, rather than the common, is increasingly expected by society. Standardised and regulated norms are outdated, and the singularised and unique attracts. All types of sectors, from education to fashion to general economic processes, exhibit this re-declaration from commonality to differentness and celebrate uniqueness. Thus, the postmodern individual unsparingly strives for uniqueness and differentness, aims to stand out to achieve gratification. The postmodern subject does not simply live life, life is curated and performed in front of others (Reckwitz 2018). However, with these developments in mind, one could question whether it is possible to stand out and singularise oneself in an environment in which everyone attempts to do the same.

2.3 BRAVE NEW CONSUMER

As mentioned, liquid conditions involve consumption to enable a regular way of being since ‘every aspect of life is subject to market logic’ (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017, p. 2). Indeed, the postmodern individual utilises marketplace offers to express and embody individuality (Arnould and Thompson 2005). Thus, the previously described transformations impact how consumers regard the marketplace and how and what they acquire, as well as marketplace offerings’ and institutions’ characteristics and consumers’ identities. Particularly, an everchanging society of singularities involves varying consumption habits, as postmodernity is marked by the shift from solid to liquid consumption. Through consuming the odd and special, individuals attempt to singularize themselves from the mass and use these peculiar things to demonstrate their inner selves. To ensure that everyone captures one’s authenticity, consumers avoid mass consumption and large-scale production, standardization or mainstream consumption activities. In his study about the defence practices of young urban consumers
against mainstream consumption, Michael (2015) concludes that individuality and authenticity are crucial factors for this group. Nonetheless, young urban consumers do not oppose others’ preferences since they also embrace new and different consumption styles. (Arnould & Thompson 2005; Arsel & Thompson 2011; Berger & Heath 2007; Beverland & Farely 2010; Lynn & Harris 1997; Michael 2015; Rose & Wood 2005; Schumpe & Erb 2015; Tian et al. 2001). For instance, the assurance of authenticity and individuality lead to the consumption of tattoos and piercings (Swami 2011; Tiggemann & Hopkins 2011), diverse music styles (Berger & Heath 2007) or scarce products (Lynn & Harris 1997).

In their seminal work, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) introduce a novel, postmodern version of this transitioned kind of consumption, which they termed liquid consumption. Liquid consumption explains that consumption patterns have become ephemeral, based on access, and are not attached to material possessions. Furthermore, these characteristics are coherent and interwoven. In contrast, obsolete concepts of solid consumption refer to perpetual, material goods, which are based on ownership (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017).

Ephemerality is a distinctive feature of liquidity and refers to the transience of consumption. In this context, consumers obtain value through consumption, and the perishability of this derived virtue is accelerating (Baumann 2013; Rosa 2013). As a result, consumption goods are not produced for durability and persistence and individuals regard the conventional consumption system as outdated and deprecated. In other words, the relationship between the consumer and consumption goods, both tangible and intangible, and their ascribed value has become transitory and dependent on the respective context (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017). A characteristic example of ephemerality is the carelessness people exhibit toward their own consumption goods. In this context, individuals intentionally engage in heedless behaviour toward their possessions to justify their desire for product upgrades (Bellezza, Akerman, and Gino 2017). Prior research on this field of investigation implies that ephemerality becomes tangible in a consumption context where consumers do not have access to consumption goods. According to Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017), ephemerality constitutes a major cause for consumers frequent search for marketplace performances, as demonstrated with the Burning Man festival (Kozinets 2002). Through ephemerality, the distinctive features of such marketplace performances are emphasised. Nonetheless, promotion and institutionalisation of such performances have led to changes in these performances’ characters, causing them to lose their ephemerality (Goulding et al. 2002). Although prior research has not completely identified how consumer behaviour is affected by ephemerality, scholars argue that this transience influences people’s intentions to
consume, their manner of consumption and their psychological ownership (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017).

Liquid consumption manifests in access-based contexts as well. Access-based services can be advertised even without transmission of ownership (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012). Further, approachability is more desired than tenure and ownership for all consumption types, tangible or intangible. Hence, access manifests in leasing, sharing, lending, availing public services or utilising and engaging in marketplace offers. In particular, this is relevant for situations in which consumers strive for access to evade or avoid confrontation with the burdens and commitments of ownership (Bardhi et al. 2012; Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012). Thus, the avoidance of proprietorship results in facilitation of consumer lifestyles (Belk 2007; Bernthal, Crockett and Rose 2005). Having access to, rather than owning products and services allows for consumption in contexts in which consumers could otherwise not afford to possess marketplace offerings. This is also applicable when consumers desire diversity, as it simplifies variety seeking (Chen 2008). Prior research in this field suggests various reasons for preferring access over ownership (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012; Edbring, Lehner and Mont 2016; Gruen 2016; Lawson, Gleim and Hwang 2016; Schaefers, Lawson and Kukar-Kinney 2016). Overall, studies demonstrate that having no access simplifies people’s evaluation of how much value can be derived from access, liberating consumers from the encumbrance of proprietorship and the absence of a profound relationship to accessed goods (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017).

Finally, dematerialisation is the last characteristic of liquid consumption. Dematerialisation entails processing fewer or no consumption materials, yet delivering an equal degree of functionality (Thakara 2006). This process manifests in digital goods’ intangibility (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017) regarding consumption (Belk 2013), performance (e.g., the consumption of online music via streaming services; Maggaudda 2011) or consuming experiences (Carù and Cova 2007; van Boven 2005). Particularly, the consumption of experiences highlights the liquid consumer’s disposition toward few belongings. Van Boven and Gilovich (2003) argue that in certain contexts owning material consumption goods does not trigger as much consumer happiness as the consumption of experiences does. In accordance with this finding, Chan and Mogilner (2017) claim that individuals favour being gifted with an experience rather than with a tangible consumption object because experiencing consumer goods evokes a stronger connection to the self than owning them. In other words, ‘we are what we do rather than what we have’ (Carter and Gilovich 2012, p. 1304). Moreover, prior studies identified several inferences for the field of consumer behaviour. Belk (2013), researching digital consumption,
examined whether the extension of the self manifests more in digital or in material consumption (Belk 1988). Since immateriality denominates digital consumption, and digitalisation in general, the postmodern consumer is enabled to live out several identities and can easily switch between them without restrictions. Belk (2013) further interjects that immaterial consumption goods are not acknowledged as authentic and precious like tangible consumption goods. Additionally, digital consumption leads to consumers increasingly engaging in sharing and evokes notions of multiple conjoined ownership models (Belk 2010; Giesler 2008). Moreover, dematerialisation influences how consumers evaluate consumption goods, as immaterial consumption items are more challenging to assess than material objects due to their uncertain and risky nature. Laroche et al. (2001) and Laroche et al. (2004) verified these notions in their research about service offerings and digitalisation in general.

These developments indicate that Anders-Sein evolved from postmodern conditions. Thus, this thesis interprets the concept as a Zeitgeist phenomenon. Liquid modernity and its contradictory and inconsistent environment lead to consumers increasingly engaging in identity projects to cultivate the self. This involvement results in the exploration of self and the discovery of who and what the postmodern individual is and is not, representing basic postmodern processes. The liquid individual experiences void and inadaptability and is surrounded by an environment that hypes and celebrates self-actualisation. Therefore, postmodern subjects attempt to augment their beings with significance and thus develop and engage in manifold, yet volatile identity projects (Krall 2015). The engagement in such identity projects also leads consumers to frequent the marketplace and utilise its offers to nurture the self (Arnould and Thompson 2005). Thus, consumers not only use material possessions to actualise themselves, but also increasingly consuming intangible consumption goods (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017), like experiences (van Boven 2005; Carter and Gilovich 2012; Carù and Cova 2007). Since this thesis investigates the cultivation projects of andere individuals who engage in risky, extreme or non-orthodox sports, the following sections provide an overview of current Anders-Sein practices and present a review illustrating the nature of experiential consumption.

2.4 CONSUMING ANDERS

Thus far, three paradoxical Anders-Sein practices have been identified. In their investigation into unconventional gender aesthetics, Hemetsberger and Weinberger (2012) revealed that individuals wilfully ignore, non non-conform or defamiliarize consumption practices as an attempt to cultivate themselves. First, consumers engage in practices of wilful ignorance. In
this practice, consumers intentionally disregard current trends and ideologies (Gould et al. 1997) to express their *Anders-Sein*. Practices of wilful ignorance have emerged in several consumption cultures (Goulding and Saren 2009, Muniz and O’Guinn 2001; Schouten and McAlexander 1995), such as the indie (Arsal and Thompson 2011) and goth subcultures (Goulding and Saren 2009). In their research about marketplace myths, Arsel and Thompson (2011) revealed that supporters of indie consumption purposefully question current trends, especially regarding fashion or music styles. Goulding and Saren (2009) likewise argue that goths deliberately provoke and challenge conventional gender concepts. Similarly, *andere* individuals extensively neglect and discount mainstream consumption patterns in everyday situations (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). The deliberate avoidance of prevailing social hype liberates the consumer from predetermined ways of being or consumption paradigms. Furthermore, individuals who wilfully ignore mainstream consumption patterns constantly reconsider their own desires and evaluate whether these desires suit their sovereign selves. Thus, wilful ignorance constitutes the foundation for self-transformation since individuals first need to thoroughly reflect on themselves to uncover who they are and who they are not. This process might take several years to complete and only then are consumers able to adapt practices of non non-conformity and defamiliarization. However, practices of wilfully ignoring become visible in the avoidance of traditional social conventions that for instance concern socially accepted lifestyles or gender conceptions. For instance, a man in his mid-thirties volunteering to stay at home and looking after the children and household whilst his partner pursues work wilfully ignores the notion that women are still responsible for raising children and doing chores (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012).

Second, in *non non-conformity*, another *Anders-Sein* practice, individuals neither entirely conform nor diverge from diverse reference groups. Instead, they partially conform and non-conform. Practices of non non-conformity include sub-practices like provocative conformity, wearing the old and outdated and consuming the ugly. Individuals engaged in provocative conformity portray themselves as aligned with society, while highlighting their non-conformist attitude. In other words, consumers aspire to portray themselves as distinctive from the mass, yet they adjust to diverse societal standards to be accepted and welcome. Thus, provocative conformity implies inciting to stand out. Therefore, individuals use provocative objects or items that do not fit into the context. However, since these items do not exceed societal approval, these practices can be regarded as adjustments of common consumption rules. In fashion consumption, especially, individuals practice provocative conformity, such as combining a
leather jacket with a dirndl or wearing cream at an all-white-party. In addition to provocative conformity, wearing the old and outdated is another form of non conformity. Individuals who wear old or outdated clothing do not garner attention for being trendy, but for being out of fashion. Furthermore, objects’ newness is hidden either by making new items look old or through individualisation of mass products. Thus, consumers customise products to conceal their novelty, thereby renouncing the act of purchasing. With this approach, the purchased item gains a personalised and inimitable character without breaking societal consumption rules. In a fashion context, individuals might wash a t-shirt multiple times before wearing it or make new sneakers look dirty. In addition, wearing the old and outdated is not restricted to fashion. This practice also refers to visiting abandoned locations that used to be ‘hip’. Thus, individuals engaging in these practices become visible through the unpopular and outdated. Finally, consuming the ugly complements practices of non conformity. Consuming the ugly refers to the consumption of goods that are strongly disliked and unpopular amongst most people. In this context, individuals consume objects solely because others dislike them. In a similar vein, Tian et al. (2001) describe the practice of unpopular choice counter-conformity, which implies that consumers deliberately choose items disapproved of by the rest of the social environment. However, individuals who are anders indeed acknowledge fashionable and prevalent objects as long as they are considered unpopular among other people. Hence, individuals react to people’s negative evaluations and use them to manifest their Anders-Sein. (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012)

The final consumption pattern is defamiliarization practices (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). According to Hemetsberger and Weinberger (2012, p. 505), “defamiliarization practices aim at altering popular consumption objects, behaviours and conventions in order to disguise their origin or primary purpose”. When performing defamiliarization, individuals modify consumption items or use them outside their original contexts to render them unfamiliar. Defamiliarization includes delocalization, delabeling and contrasting personal practices. First, in delocalization, individuals adopt particular lifestyles in unusual locations, like the appropriation of urban styles and aesthetics in rural surroundings. In particular, delocalization practices resemble conventional urban lifestyles (Thompson and Tambyah 1999), such as a woman from a rural, small and conservative village displaying gothic fashion. In this context, their immediate environment might be antipathic toward these individuals. Another defamiliarization practice is delabeling. Consumers who delabel items alter consumption objects to conceal their true origins. Practices of delabeling encompass removing brand labels,
but also transgressing conventional gender concepts. Individuals who engage in delabeling practices do so since they fear losing their authenticity through the consumption of mass-produced objects (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012; Tian et al. 2001). Hence, consumers engage in oppositional gender consumption to counteract such notions and thus maintain authenticity and individuality (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995; Holt and Thompson 2004; Tuncay and Otnes 2008). For instance, a person representing oneself as gender neutral pursues delabeling strategies. Ultimately, defamiliarization practices are complemented by contrasting personal practices. Unlike delocalization and delabeling practices, which refer to social surroundings, contrasting personal practices entail a strong inner directedness. According to this approach, the consumer who contrasts personal practices does not settle for one fixed identity. More precisely, individuals constantly alter who they are to avoid one definite identity. Thus, consumers continuously transform their styles, habits and ways of being to prevent manifestation. This practice is not dependent on a specific phase of life; individuals perform such practices regularly to prevent imitators. Consequently, consumers obtain a better understanding of themselves through ongoing self-reflection (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012).

Hence, **andere** individuals avoid fixating on any life aspect. The processes of exploring oneself to achieve ultimate self-fulfilment (Sartre 1956) turns into a lifelong desire of becoming. Therefore, **andere** consumers constantly adapt style, behaviour and ways of being to uncover who they really are (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012).

### 2.5 CONSUMING EXPERIENCES

Experiential consumption identifies the true nature of one’s being. Consumers’ experiences are crucial for comprehending hedonistic consumer behaviour (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982) and represent the fundamentals of the postmodern experience economy (Pine and Gilmore 1999). Subsequently, postmodern developments lead to the introduction of experiential marketing, which pertains to consumers’ submergence into the experience (Schmitt 1999, 2016). Companies employ experiential marketing to provide solutions for postmodern consumers’ requests (Carù and Cova 2007). The consumption developments, marked by the shift from utilitarian to hedonistic functionality, result in meaning generated through consumption rather than the sole production of consumption objects, which also entails symbolic exchanges. In this context, consumers strive for the value obtained through consuming, and to postmodern individuals, consumption goods delivering certain functions is self-evident. Liquid subjects
striving for experiential consumption are characterised as sensitive and sentimental beings who seek sensational experiences within the marketplace’s goods and services. Therefore, experiences represent meanings, and experiential consumption is defined as a subjective and intimate in which these experiences are imbued with high emotionality (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982). Thus, scholars employ an experiential perspective to compensate for the disparity between functional and utilitarian points of view. This experiential perspective focuses on “hedonistic values and individual subjectivity” (Carù and Cova 2007, p. 4), meaning consumers are not aspiring to obtain as many advantages as possible, but instead striving for hedonistic self-fulfilment within a certain social context. As mentioned, the consumption of experiences evokes sensations and emotions that exceed mere fulfilment of one’s needs and impact consumers’ quest for an identity. In liquid modernity, individuals mainly consume to cultivate their identities instead of satisfying their needs since consumption contributes to establishing and amplifying identities, which are easily diminished by environmental factors. Thus, individuals do not simply “go shopping”; rather, they live out experiences that intrinsically address all senses (Carù and Cova 2007).

Experiential consumption is rooted in romanticism, and accordingly, individuals aim to shape their lives in interesting ways to actualise themselves. In this context, consumers strive for maximal emotional arousal to escape the lethargy and inertia of everyday life. Hence, the ongoing societal developments and the increasing demand for an identity, especially in western societies, have cumulated in a pursuit of experiences. This enhanced demand for identity results in consumers requesting that seemingly insignificant aspects of life should be transitioned into meaningful experiences. Thus, consumers transform into romantic heroes of everyday life experiences and encounters (Carù and Cova 2007).

Experiential consumption is divided into four main aspects. First, consumption is not limited to the mere acquisition of goods and services, and second, the consumer exceeds the role of a passive end-user. Third, consumers behave according to the context in which they are placed and react according to these circumstances. Fourth, consumers strive for a purpose and aim to imbue their lives with meaning (Arnould, Price and Zinkhan 2002).

Moreover, experiential consumption extends over a certain time period, which is also classified into four phases. The first phase refers to consumers’ preconsumption experience, in which consumers actively seek and gather information about the experience. This phase includes anticipating, dreaming about and envisioning the experience. The second phase is called the
purchasing experience. In this phase, all life aspects revolve around the acquisition and utilisation of the respective experience. In the third phase, which constitutes the core consumption stage, experiential consumption is attained. At this stage, consumers experience various emotions that influence their satisfaction with the acquired activity. This stage is pivotal for determining whether the respective experience’s performance contributes to identity construction (Arnould et al. 2002), because consumers assess experiences by the emotions an activity evokes (Carù and Cova 2007). The fourth phase is reminiscences evoked by the consumed experiences and the nostalgia experience. This phase concerns reliving and inversely reconstructing the experience, using pictures to encourage the consumer to discuss the consumed activity. With this approach, consumers classify their memories, organising and structuring the experience through signalling the experience’s impact on them (Arnould et al. 2002).

Although shopping is the primary area of experience consumption, this type of consumption exceeds the classical, conventional shopping trip since the utilitarian function of consumption diminishes and hedonistic value gains in importance. Hence, the satisfaction and delight derived from the consumption experience is not rooted in the acquisition itself, but in the associations evoked through shopping, particularly in the social exchanges that occur during the consumption phase. Therefore, the distinction between hedonistic and utilitarian value would be misplaced in this context, as these values are strongly interrelated regarding consuming experiences (Carù and Cova 2007).

Furthermore, especially in postmodernity, experiential consumption permeates all areas of consumption. However, how consumers obtain delight and pleasure from these experiences, and to what extent, remains unclear (Carù and Cova 2007). According to Firat and Dholakia (1998), pleasure enables consumers to fully submerge themselves in an original activity. Consumers increasingly demand this immersion to discover a multitude of new meanings that can be integrated into their lives. Consumers essentially consult and seek out the market system to produce identity (i.e., the consumer aspires to be part of and fully immerse in a certain context instead of solely utilising a complete consumption object). This activity is performed to escape the banalities of daily life and even to engage in experiences that other people have previously created. According to Carù and Cova (2007, p. 7), separating the consumption of experiences “from the advent of simulations and virtuality” is difficult since today’s environment is marked with hyper-reality (Baudrillard 1988). The theory of hyper-reality explains that individuals now prefer to imitate and copy rather than to engage in novel, original experiences. In other words,
imitation and reproduction of existing offers has become the new reality (Baudrillard 1988). Therefore, there is an obvious trend of consumers favouring simulated experiences over living and embodying originality. However, these experiences have increasingly evolved into extraordinary and spectacular activities (Ritzer 1999).

2.5.1 CREATING EXPERIENCES

The fast paced, everchanging environment of liquid modernity also leads to modified processes of producing and creating experiences. Consumers transformed from passive receivers to active producers of their own consumption experience (i.e., organisations and consumers co-produce experiences). In total, three major aspects impact the production of experiences. Initially, the product and manufacturing firms are the centre of attention, which is achieved through and precise use of decors at the time of purchase. In other words, the product’s or service’s presentation style is crucial since the immediate surrounding’s design features impact consumers’ buying decisions. Hence, flagship stores of brands like Nespresso shops focus on stimulating and triggering all senses (Schmitt 1999a). Therefore, the design of such flagship stores must be in alignment with the brand design. In other words, a company must pursue coherent design strategy and implementation (Carù and Cova 2007).

As mentioned, another option is to integrate the consumer into the manufacturing processes, (i.e., the consumer actively co-creates the experience in collaboration with the producing company). Therefore, co-creational processes are supported by auxiliaries to ensure a clear role distribution for both consumers and manufacturing firm to emphasis and accentuate the organisation’s offerings (Carù and Cova 2007).

Last, the story behind the company’s product or service impacts the production of experiences. These stories, narratives and schemes, crafted around the offering, play a significant role in creating experiences. In the best case, such narratives contribute to the creation of mementoes, achieved through derivate products. For instance, in 2003, the Irish beer brand Guinness started a campaign called “Every Guinness is a unique experience” to provide consumers with an exceptional offering in their own homes. By performing certain rituals, described within the advertisement, consumers can enjoy an authentic Guinness experience at home. Using this approach, consumers can expand their in-pub memories and create an experience similar to those memories (Carù and Cova 2007).
2.5.2 PROMOTING EXPERIENCES

The production and distribution of experiences has led companies to develop a new marketing approach, called experiential marketing (Pine and Gilmore 1999). According to this approach, adding experiences to a company’s offering complements conventional service and product propositions (Pine and Gilmore 1999). Prior research identifies various forms of experiences, which include spectacular (Baudrillard 1981), peak (Maslow 1961), flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1997), extraordinary (Arnould and Price 1993) and luxury experiences (Wallpach et al. forthcoming). From an experiential perspective, an adequate experience is indelible, even extraordinary. According to Firat and Dholakia (2003), experiential marketing implies that the consumption process should be transformed into an array of extraordinary submersences for the end user. The end user participates in remarkable, memorable processes represented by the experiences or, ideally, transmutes due to such experiences. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) argues that the most valuable experiences are those in which the consumer engages in an extraordinary activity, and the subject’s emotions, aspirations and thoughts are in equilibrium (i.e., consumers experience a flow feeling). Flow experiences constitute peak experiences and are crucial for marketing (Arnould et al. 2002) since they represent the fundamentals of experiential marketing (Carù and Cova 2007). To generate a flow feeling, experiential marketing adapts Baudrillard’s (1988) approach of hyper-reality. Companies create extraordinary experiences through increasingly outstanding and unexpected decors as well as a variety of flamboyances and simulations designed to envelop consumers (Carù and Cova 2007). However, consumers even praise agonizing and exhausting experiences, like tough mudding (Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017) or climbing Mount Everest (Tumbat and Belk 2010), when reflecting on such experiences since they offer vigorous sensations, possibilities to evade daily life banalities and escapes from the fast-pace of liquid modernity, and they enable consumers to tell stories about their achievements (Husemann & Eckhardt 2018; Wallpach et al. forthcoming).

Since human beings express experiential needs, consumers seek brands that offer profound and significant experiences they can integrate into their lives. Therefore, experiences provide the consumer with the opportunity to “physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually” immerse themselves into the consumption process, and consequently, the activity transforms into a significant reality for the consumer (Carù and Cova 2007, p. 10). Hence, experiences need to be outstanding and must involve the individual’s private sphere (Pine and Gilmore 1999; Schmitt 1999; 2005; LaSalle and Britton 2003).
However, experiential marketing also provokes consumer resistance since the engagement in such experiences is restricted and execution is often thoroughly planned and externally predetermined. Hence, consumers are only regarded as actors when they conform to their role as end users, astonished and impressed by the experience’s contents. This emphasises the notion that individuals do not desire to passively receive, but rather wish to actively co-create and design the experiences with which they will engage. As a result, consumers start to oppose to the production of experiences by diverting them away from their original purpose (de Certeau 1984). This diversion is performed so consumers can add a personal touch to their experiences. This approach provides new opportunities to analyse these experiences that could culminate not only in consumers resisting consumption, but even in engagement in anti-consumption behaviour. In other words, this could lead to non-commercial or even anti-commercial initiatives (Bettany and Kerrane 2011; Carù and Cova 2007). For example, the anti-Danone website encourages boycotting Danone products. Overall, consumer resistance and anti-consumption strategies are pursued to highlight the notion that experiences should assist the product or service offering to escape from the simple merchandise role. Consequently, consumers are provided with the opportunity to engage in experiences that are not solely mercantile yet still move and operate within a marketable framework (Carù and Cova 2007).

2.5.3 I CONSUME; THEREFORE I AM

Consumer motivations to engage in experiential consumption vary. However, individuals certainly strive for experiences to renew their selves; hence, they pursue experience. Thus, individuals engaging in experiential consumption aim to escape from daily life inconveniences, strive for authentic and original experiences and desire regeneration of the self. In this context, escaping from the ordinary is associated with the liminal traits of experiential consumption, specifically time and space restraints in extraordinary experiences. Engagement in such experiences emphasises the distance to one’s home and the experiential journey passes quickly. Thus, these aspects explain why engagement in consuming experiences is meaningful and significant for consumers. Moreover, experiential consumption results in a reflexive approach (i.e., a consumer compares the person he/she was before the experience with the renewed individual after the experience).

However, consumers are also on a quest for authenticity since an authentic, original experience produces a range of emotions. This spectrum of feelings is also partially evoked by the natural environment in which participants are situated. In general, authenticity represents naturality,
and therefore, natural surroundings trigger consumers’ fascination with being subjected to nature’s rules or feeling small in a large world. Furthermore, such expeditions involve risks and hazards. Hence, mastering such obstacles reinforces the experience’s meaning. Additionally, an authentic experience is highly associated with escapes from the ordinary, as participation implies individuals abandon their familiar surroundings and flee from urban environments.

Finally, experiences are consumed for self-renewal purposes. In their investigation into experiential consumption, Carù and Cova (2007) concluded that research participants denote experiences in terms of their own selves using a reflexive approach. Hence, individuals contextualise themselves via experiential consumption. According to Foucault (2001), the notion of renewing oneself is a self-transformational processes, which he calls self-concern. Consumers reflect upon themselves as efficient individuals when confronted with distress and can conceptualise themselves in action. Furthermore, by pursuing a reflexive approach, postmodern individuals aim to reconstitute their own cohesion, thereby embracing self-transformation. Therefore, consumers need to practice self-reflection (i.e., contemplating the meaning of one’s life). In this context, escapes from the ordinary provide an enticing opportunity, especially for young adults, to engage in reflexivity projects. However, these escapes from the ordinary do not solely pertain to contrasting mundane everyday life, but especially to the escape of one’s own thoughts, as well (Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017). Moreover, self-renewal implies the reconstitution of an authentic self, particularly when individuals desire to re-establish their selves and retrieve forlorn meaning (Carù and Cova 2007). Therefore, in contrast to Hemetsberger and Weinberger’s (2012) assumption that andere lifestyle experiences represent small scale boundary transgressions in certain phases of life, these considerations demonstrate that cultivation processes also imply engagement in extreme activities and experiences.

2.6 CONSUMING ANDERS: EXTREME EDITION

Since this thesis scrutinises andere consumers who embrace and perform extreme, unorthodox or risky athletic activities, this section focuses on individuals who engage in risk-taking experiences to cultivate themselves. In western spheres, risk is defined as the probability of a threat or hazard occurring during an experience (Short 1984). In fact, embracing and expressing dauntless and venturesome behaviour entails the assurance of an extraordinary consumption experience. Further, risk-taking generates many emotions. Thus, because consumers assess experience through emotions, engaging in such practices is appealing, particularly to young
adults (Carù and Cova 2007). According to Carù and Cova (2007), practices that involve risk-taking are contemporary ordeals to which consumers expose themselves to risk to find the purpose and significance of life. In addition, accepting physical and psychological risks differentiates such practices from other leisure activities. In particular, consumers voluntarily endanger themselves and embrace behaviours that might result in severe injuries, or even death, if not performed correctly (Lyng 1990; Mitchell 1983).

The extent to which individuals perceive risks or encounter hazards determines the structure of the consumption experience. In their investigation into trekking and experiential consumption, Carù and Cova (2007) uncovered that fear can be subdivided into three groups of concern: for oneself, for other people and for the natural surroundings. Natural environments specifically pose dangers due to their unpredictability. Hence, consumers have rigorous preparation strategies to cope with such impediments. Nonetheless, despite exhaustive efforts and prearrangements, participants still develop insecurities. Additionally, worry influences participant’s social environment, particularly toward other tour members. In this context, research participants express concerns about expedition members not being able to keep up or over the relationship with locals. Generally, this trepidation refers to individuals worrying about probing relationships with others. The last concern resides within the individual him-/herself. Here, participants wonder, whether they can successfully complete the experience. Furthermore, participants express distress about their own mental and physical constitutions. This distress pertains to individuals fearing they lack perseverance and stamina or the ability to overcome psychological distress throughout the consumption experience. All outlined concerns and fears are interconnected since participants are notably related to the natural and social contexts in which they are moving. Moreover, these problems all could result in an abortion of the expedition and culminate in failure. Hence, these factors are especially valued by individuals since failure should be avoided at all costs (Carù and Cova 2007).

In this context, dramatic sports are an enticing opportunity for consumers to employ risky behaviours since dramaturgy is the framework for western imagination (Barnard 1968; Propp 2010). According to Celsi, Rose and Leigh (1993, p. 2), this framework “is a fundamental cultural lens through which individuals frame their perceptions, seek their self-identities, and engage in vicarious and actual behaviours”. Furthermore, dangerous and hazardous aspects of dramatic sports render the activities peculiar and interesting for participants, at least from an outside perspective. Therefore, observers could conclude that the exhilaration and delight obtained by taking risks are the main motivational aspects for engaging in perilous experiences.
This level of excitement is directly proportional to the level of risk-exposure: the degree of thrill is directly related to degree of fear and self-conquest (Celsi et al. 1993). Hence, Carù and Cova (2007) concluded that consumers strive for an ultimate and irrevocable sanction that provides a solution to the pressures and strains individuals encounter within their social or cultural surroundings. In addition, consumers expose themselves to irreversible activities imbued with symbolic aspects, thereby injecting value into the consumption experience (Celsi et al. 1993).

Macro- and micro-level factors intersect and equally contribute to the development of and engagement in risk-embracing behaviour. From an external perspective, especially environmental intricacies, media enculturation and technological shifts lead to the adoption of such behaviours. However, internal processes influence the engagement in venturesome behaviour through individual objectives, general predispositions, psychological well-being and interhuman relations. Identity transformations of individuals practicing high-risk activities emerge mainly through internal procedures (Maslow 1961; Zurcher 1977).

In general, the benefits obtained through adopting high-risk behaviours are feelings of authorisation, self-assertion and determination to achieve certain objectives (Glasser 1976). Furthermore, causes for high-risk consumption are risk-embracing processes, alleviation of fears, action and a self-affirmative attitude. Thus, risk-embracing consumers are rewarded by ‘flow, identity generation, mastery, and feelings of catharsis’ (Celsi et al. 1993, p. 20). Furthermore, consumers’ perceived risks develop with increased expertise and eventually appear ordinary to participants as they adopt a high-risk identity. In their investigation into high-risk consumption through skydiving, Celsi et al. (1993) suggest that the development of a high-risk identity results from interacting dynamics in motive development and processes of cultural risk-adoption. These acculturation processes are interconnected, arise in compliance and lead, on the one hand, to consumers perceiving high-risk activities as ordinary and habitual and, on the other hand, to ascending motivations toward high-risk behaviours. Hence, these two findings determine the high-risk identity.

Individuals pursuing a high-risk identity engage in controversial practices. Consumers request hazards and threats whilst simultaneously trusting that the dangers’ impacts of will not be too deleterious or at least still controllable. In fact, an ever-growing number of people embrace high-risk activities and incorporate such behaviours into everyday events. Hence, extraordinary leisure activities like river rafting (Arnould and Price 1993), skydiving (Celsi et al. 1993), trekking (Carù and Cova 2007) or climbing Mount Everest (Tumbat and Belk 2010) increasing
in popularity and fit this type of consumption logic since the experiential value is exceptionally intense. In addition to that, postmodern consumers voluntarily even engage in painful experiential consumption, as well (Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017). According to Turner (1969), engagement in such extraordinary experiences is imbued with romantic and communal aspects, constituting anti-structural consumption spaces. In this context, “antistructure” is out of the ordinary and does not pertain to everyday events. In other words, consumers work toward a commonly shared goal and subordinate their personal motivations to holistic group objectives (Turner 1969). However, in their research about marketplace tensions in extraordinary experiences, Tumbat and Belk (2010, p. 43) object to Turner’s conceptualisation and conclude that practicing extraordinary experiences also involves “selfish motivations, conflicting goals and extreme individualism”, thereby extending Turner’s former universally acknowledged tenet with different perspectives on the phenomenon.

Individuals pursue excessive, partially disproportionate, cultivation strategies by exposing themselves to high-risk experiences. Tumbat and Belk (2010) illustrate these extreme cultivation processes using incidents on Mount Everest in 1996 and 2006. In these tragic events, 12 expedition participants died due to the natural environment or personal failures. However, other group members did not express any intentions to help and abandoned their team mates, even sucking the oxygen of struggling group members to achieve their own objective: to reach the summit (Tumbat and Belk 2010). The top of the world is thus becoming a venue for tragic incidents. In this climbing season alone (May 2019), 13 people have been killed on Mount Everest due to poor weather conditions, especially by the prolonged waiting periods caused by the giant rush to the summit. An activity that had been limited to only a few, highly experienced individuals is now accessible to everyone (Tumbat and Belk 2010), transforming these experiences into a new norm. Figure 2 illustrates a mass of climbers aspiring to reach the summit, resulting in a queue for hours in the death zone due to congestion. This situation also emphasises the increasing popularity of engaging in extreme, risky athletic disciplines (Steinle 2019).
The tragic death of professional climbers David Lama, Hansjörg Auer and Jess Roskelly in April 2019 in the Canadian Rockies is another recent example of the dangers of extreme experiences. During the descent of a barely accessible summit, the three experts were buried underneath an avalanche, tragically losing their lives (Puls 4 2019). This example highlights that individuals put their own lives at stake to actualise themselves and achieve a state of self-content and transformation.

In this thesis, the transformational process of being anders is interpreted as a postmodern, singularised and differentiated way of being. The contradictory, elusive framework of liquidmodernity and the fragmentation of self are reflected in andere cultivation processes and emphasize individuals’ ever-growing demand to be perceived as unique individuals. Hence, it is an existential desire to resolve fundamental quests concerning oneself and to thoroughly comprehend one’s aspirations, motives and intentions. Moreover, the challenges of liquidmodernity concern people’s perceived emptiness and rootlessness, as well as their enhanced striving for self-fulfilment, leading to paradoxical cultivation practices that culminate in engagement in extreme and risky or athletic experiences. In other words, postmodern developments lead to individuals engaging in risky practices to imbue their lives with meaning, endangering themselves to cultivate multiple, partially paradoxical, identity projects. This refutes Hemetsberger and Weinberger’s (2012) assumption that andere practices cannot be associated with extreme activities since prior research reveals that cultivation strategies do imply engagement in extreme and risky experiences.
After examining *Anders-sein* from a postmodern perspective, including theoretical reviews on identity construction and experiential consumption, this thesis now turns to the empirical portion of the investigation.
3.0 EMPIRICAL STUDY

The theoretical part of this thesis provides an overview on the concept of Anders-sein from an interdisciplinary point of view. Therefore, the challenges today’s postmodern individuals face including the difficulty to stand out in a society of singularities and the altered consumption patterns that emerge within such an environment have been discussed. Such differentiated consumption habits also refer to the practice of extreme, non-orthodox or extraordinary sports. Thus, these theoretical considerations serve as a basis for the empirical investigation of this thesis. Based on this literature review, the aim of this empirical research is to uncover how extreme-, extraordinary- or non-orthodox sports practices contribute to one’s ultimate self-cultivation. Hence, this chapter introduces the qualitative research design and methodologies chosen to solve this quest.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

With regard to the main objectives of this thesis a qualitative research design is applied, as qualitative interviews facilitate the understanding of subjective life worlds and help to gain in-depth insights about the experiences individuals have and engage with (Brinkmann and Kvale 2015). Therefore, a mixed approach is pursued, i.e. various methodologies are employed to obtain profound knowledge about the phenomenon under scrutiny.

Firstly, a phenomenological inquiry is performed within the initial interview, since “phenomenologists are concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of people involved” (Welman and Kruger 1999, p. 189). Since the objective of this thesis is to provide insights how extreme and risky sports contribute to cultivating oneself, a phenomenological inquiry facilitates to profoundly grasp how respondents encounter and relive such experiences (Greene and Holloway 1997; Kruger 1988; Kvale 1996; Maypole and Davies 2001; Robinson and Reed, 1998). Moreover, a phenomenological inquiry enables the contextualisation of resemblances across uniquely lived athletic experiences (Patterson 2018).

Secondly, narrative inquiry supports the phenomenological investigation, as individuals tend to reflect about experiences through telling narratives (Bruner 1991; Krall 2015; Woodside, Sood, and Miller 2008). Consequently, this thesis applies a form of narrative inquiry, namely narrative paradigm, to obtain narrative and episodic knowledge of how being anders manifests itself
through performing extreme, risky sports and reciprocates in the lives of research participants (Chase 2007; Krall 2015; Koll, von Wallpach, and Kreuzer 2010). Narrative inquiry ranges from recounting whole life biographies to the investigation of single lived experiences (Atkinson 2007; Chase 2005). However, within this thesis respondents narrate their whole biographic life stories as well as distinctive autobiographical experiences (Atkinson 2007; McAdams 2001). Thus, narrative inquiry and especially narrative paradigm helps to immerse in individuals’ subjective life worlds and facilitates to capture how and why such experiences are made (Shankar et al. 2001). Narrative paradigm suggests that there is no one absolute existence, but several realities that co-exist and which are created through narratives (Corbetta 2003). This implies that experiences only then become genuine and real for individuals, if individuals interpret experiences through narratives. This is due to the fact that through interpreting experiences they become more or less valuable for individuals. Consequently, the derived empirical knowledge is neither objective, nor does it depict facts (Shankar et al. 2001), it rather reflects how research participants subjectively perceive the world (Flick 2009). Thus, narrative research paradigm is also deployed as a research methodology in the present study.

Based on these empirical insights, a new theory emerges (Bryman and Bell 2007) which eventually provides a diversified understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

### 3.2 RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURE

In the following, the general research procedure will be explained in detail to ensure and enhance the accuracy of the present study (Flick 2009). Within this thesis, research was carried out in two steps. Firstly, an introductory interview session was employed with the aim to get to know the participant better and to establish credibility and trust. Firstly, this endeavour demanded an introductory interview session. This first interview round focuses on the phenomenological aspect of being *anders* and is applied to obtain an understanding of participants and the experiences acquire through phenomenological inquiry. Yet, the most important aspect of this interviewing phase is to assess whether candidates fit and fulfil the predetermined sample criteria and to gain first insights into their extreme and risky consumption experiences.

Secondly, a final interview session was held to obtain detailed information about individuals’ lives and the experiences they have. This calls for multiple approaches to holistically grasp and capture individuals’ life worlds and their athletic practices. For this matter, in-depth qualitative interviews (Patton 1990) including biographical life-story elements and narrative techniques
are applied (Berger 2010; Flick 2010; Kruse 2011; McAdams 2007). As a consequence, in-depth qualitative interviews (Patton 1990) including biographical life-story elements and narrative techniques are necessary. In addition to that, autodriving techniques are employed to augment qualitative insights (Heisley and Levy 1991).

3.3 QUALITATIVE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS AND AUTODRIVING

To gain such profound knowledge about individuals’ life worlds and the experiences they have, phenomenological inquiry is combined with narrative interviewing techniques to encourage storytelling (Berger 2010; Fraser 2004; Kruse 2011; Küsters 2009). Originating from narrative theory (Schütze 1977), narrative interviewing techniques assist examining biographies (Kruse 2011). Hence, encouraging candidates to tell stories is essential, as narratives permit individuals to structure important episodes (Berger 1997) and consequently this enables them to express their identities through narrating stories (Brunt 2001; Ezzy 1998; Fraser 2004; Jackson 1996; Plummer 1995; Riessman 1990, 1993, 2003). However, this strong directedness on the interviewee (Kruse 2011) leads to a monological process, in which interview participants are reassured to recount their experiences without being interrupted by the interviewer. The latter rather reflects quietly and listens attentively (Kruse 2011; Küsters 2009). Flick (2009) suggests, that the interviewer should abstain from interrupting the participant and merely listen carefully to the candidate’s monologue in order to enhance procedural validity. Subsequently, the interviewer might ask further questions to cover potential important topics that respondents have only briefly mentioned beforehand or they have answered only vaguely (Berger 2010; Fraser 2004; Küsters 2009). However, there exist various ways to conduct narrative interviews, either through classic- or partial narrative interviews. Carrying out classic narrative interviews requires no precise interview guidelines, whereas partial narrative interviews demand the elaboration of a structured guideline (Kruse 2011). In this master thesis, partial narrative interviews were conducted to enable comparisons between interviews and to cover all relevant aspects and topics effectively.

Furthermore, adding biographical life story elements to the interview guideline was necessary (McAdams 2007). Narrating one’s life exceeds mere descriptive representations of one’s being. Through recounting life stories, individuals ascribe meaning to certain events or experiences they have had (McAdams 2001). Furthermore, the context and the significance of the story could vary depending on the respective social environment individuals are moving in, i.e. interviewees might want to leave a certain impression depending on who is listening to the
narrative (Hoyle et al. 1999; Storch 1999). Moreover, narrating biographical life stories does not see its limits in past events, indeed constructing narratives includes present occurrences which marks it as a creative and productive activity (Shankar et al. 2009). This is especially accurate when it comes to narrating biographies or life stories, as individuals ascribe value to different life situations and use them as a tool to form and build realities (Chase 2005; McAdams 2001; Shankar et al. 2001). Bruner (1987) emphasises this, as he states that self-narrating of life stories enables to organise the experiences individuals have had, to structure memories and thus to parse and ascribe meaning to the respective life incidents. Eventually, individuals turn into their autobiographical narratives (Bruner 1987). Hence, individuals create a so called “narrative identity”, which represents the ultimate incorporation of an experience into one’s identity (Carù and Cova 2007; Ricoeur 1990). As a result, individuals perform realities (Chase 2005; Shankar et al. 2001).

In addition to that, the interview includes the deployment of autodriving techniques. When applying autodriving methods, utilising pictures as additional stimuli is decisive to trigger individuals even more (Hall et al. 2007). In this context, the term “auto” refers to the interviewer using visual information from the interviewees’ lives which leads to more profound descriptions of respondents on their experiences and consumption patterns. Precisely, the deployment of pictures enhances the respondent’s willingness to tell stories about their lived experiences and the emotions associated to them. Consequently, pictures are helpful tools to identify the personal importance that each depicted moment evokes. Moreover, analysing personal photographs distracts respondents somehow, which lowers the pressure for the interviewee. Thus, employing autodriving techniques enhances the mutual understanding between the interviewer and the interviewee (Tinkler 2013). Therefore, the present thesis applies this method, as it augments qualitative data as well (Heisley and Levy 1991).

3.4 INTERVIEW STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURE

In order to obtain impromptu responses, research participants remained uniformed about the fact that the interviews also involved questions concerning their biographical life stories (Küsters 2009). This was of good use to prevent biased responses, as individuals could have prepared answers in advance, if they had known that they had to respond to questions regarding their personal lives (Küsters 2009). However, to still inform interview partners that the interview contained questions referring to their extreme and risky athletic experiences was proper. Moreover, notifying participants in advance to bring along important photographs to
the interview sessions that adequately depict their athletic experiences and their lifestyles was essential.

Subsequently the final interview session took place. In this interviewing phase, the researcher takes the position of an active listener that solely poses simple, straight-forward and open-ended questions. For this matter the interviewer refrains from posing “why” questions, as these might put the interviewee into a situation in which they might feel they had to justify their actions. Rather, the interviewer should formulate more indirect phrases that encourage the respondent to provide profound descriptions of the lived experiences (Patton 1990).

In both interviews, initially briefing respondents about the general procedure and the overall course of the interview was relevant. In particular, it was explicit to interviewees that there are no right or wrong answers to foster an unconstrained, in-depth description and narration of their experiences and way of life. Additionally, the interviewer acquired permission to tape-record the interviews and assured the interviewees to treat the entire conversation strictly anonymously. However, the initial interview should provide information about respondents’ current practices, experiences and consumption behaviours. Thus, in the final interview session, the first question was designed to animate participants to recapitulate a typical day in which they perform their extreme and risky athletic experiences. Thus, in the final interview session, the intention of the first question was to animate participants. Thereafter, the interviewer invited respondents to inform about feelings and notions associated with the lived experiences. For this matter, the questioner employs autodriving techniques. In this context, respondents were asked to bring along two important photos depicting them whilst engaging in extreme sports, but also showing them in a non-athletic context. This was employed to uncover whether *anderes* behaviour has manifested in other life domains, as well. Further, the interview guideline continues with questions that encourage the respondent in sharing the most positive and negative occurrences they had encountered while performing their extreme experiences to determine the personal importance of the respective *Anders-Sein* practice for the person interviewed. (Patton 1990)

Moreover, in order to understand the personal development of and the strive for being *anders*, it is worthwhile to pose biographical questions to uncover early manifestations of *Anders-sein*. Therefore, the interrogator encouraged interview participants to reflect under which circumstances their being *anders* has evolved and how their athletic practices reveal this. Eventually, the interview terminates with questions concerning socio-demographic data
(Küsters 2009). Thereafter, tape-recording of the interviews stopped and both, interviewer and interviewee, reflected on the session held (Küsters 2009). The appendix comprises both interview guidelines.

Overall, the evaluator conducted ten interviews, of which all interview partners qualified for the final interview session. Initial interviews lasted from twelve to 27 minutes, whereas in the final interview rounds respondents talked for about an average of 55 minutes. In total, the audio material obtained from the ten interviews comprises about 13.5 hours. Thereafter, interviews were transcribed. To ensure that interviewees felt comfortable during the sessions, interviews took place in a pleasant and comfortable environment for the research participant. Hence, most interviewees wanted to give their interviews in their favourite cafés or bars. Further, spatial distance made it necessary conduct two initial and final interviews via Skype. All interviewees are German speakers, thus the interviews were translated to English (Flick 2009).

### 3.5 Sampling Procedure

When conducting qualitative research, individuals that provide sufficient expertise and in-depth insights regarding the study purpose need to be sampled. Thus, this often limits the number of participants in qualitative investigations in size (Patton 1990). Particularly narrative inquiries often restrict the amount of participants to very small sizes, at times they are even broken down to single cases (Chase 2005). Besides from such single instances, the quantity of cases under scrutiny is not predefined when conducting qualitative research. Commonly, theoretical saturation determines the end of the sampling phase. Theoretical saturation has set in, when “no new data appears and all concepts in the theory are well-developed” (Krall 2015, p. 38).

However, as mentioned beforehand, expertised, informative research participants, who provide in-depth insights need to be sampled to fulfil the study purpose (Patton 1990). Hence, the questioner applies the method of purposeful sampling, as interviewees and informants serve a certain purpose. In this study, interviewees are selected according to the principles of criterion sampling and snowball sampling. Criterion sampling is a certain strategy of purposeful sampling and when applying a criterion sampling method, participants need to fulfil certain criteria in order to be included to/ become part of the sample (Palys 2008). One criterion respondents participating in this research has to comply with is that individuals engage in extraordinary, unconventional, risky or extreme sports like Freeriding, Freestyling, Obstacle Race Running, Snowkiting, Hike and Riding, Ice Climbing etc. and perform them in their own
way, unlike anybody else. Furthermore, individuals perform these kinds of sports for an existential reason and thus cultivate themselves by engaging in it. This implies that the athletic experience is of deep personal significance and incorporated in the participants way of being. However, individuals also partly conform to conventional behaviours, i.e. they adopt common social habits, have a conform or non non-conform appearance or lifestyle in order to gain social acceptance.

For this matter, the evaluator distributed contact sheets with explicit descriptions of the desired sample characteristics in the university, but also posted on various social media channels like Facebook or Instagram to enlarge the range. Furthermore, the student mail distribution list provides the possibility to send out emails to obtain as many potential research participants as possible and also enables to approach informants personally among the own circle of friends. Additionally, applying snowball sampling techniques ensures that the study includes the adequate candidates. The definition of snowball sampling reads as follows “the act of expanding the sample by asking one informant or participant to recommend others for interviewing” (Groenewald 2004, p. 46). Thus, it was worthwhile to ask active research attendees whether they knew someone else who would fit into or who would be interested to take part in the study. The appendix contains the contact sheet and the formulation of the email, as well.

Subsequent to the contacting phase, all respondents were further screened in order to find out whether they suited the predetermined sample criteria or not. Surprisingly, all persons contacted and those who applied to be a part of the study fulfilled the conditions in the initial interview round to participate in the final interview session. Thus, final interviews were conducted with the ten research participants that are listed in table 1. Confidential data like the names of research participants were anonymised.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>CODE NAME</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>PROFESSION</th>
<th>ANDERE ATHLETIC EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tim</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Factory student in the banking sector</td>
<td>Telemark Freeskier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bastian</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Aeronautical student/ project manager</td>
<td>Obstacle Race Athlete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mimi</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Student/ Employee</td>
<td>Powerlifter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Trail-Motorbiker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moritz
Student/ cook
Hike and Rider

Lea
Kindergarten teacher
Freerider/ Extreme Skitourer

Marcel
Physio Therapist
Steep Face Freeskier/ Ice Climber

Eric
Student/ employee
Extreme Skitourer/ Ice Climber

Tobias
Working student
Snowkiter/ Freeskier

Lena
Professional athlete
Freestyler

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics like gender, age, phase of life and andere athletic experiences reflect the heterogeneity of the sample. Furthermore, the andere athletic experiences compose of different extreme or risky athletic disciplines, of which most of the respondents engage in extreme winter sports disciplines. However, the sample reflects homogeneity regarding professional status, as the majority of respondents are students working in different sectors while studying. Nonetheless, all research participant fulfilled the predetermined sample criteria, as all participants perform various extreme sports disciplines and all data is useful for further analysis.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

After completing the interviewing phases, initial and final interviews were transcribed (Kruse 2011) and general themes have been derived. These themes refer to the “individual life story development of Anders-sein” and to “performing andere, extreme experiences”. To further investigate into the phenomenon and hence provide enriched insights, findings of the present study were contrasted with current results on Anders-sein (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). Moreover, interviews were coded using Maxqda. In this context, meanings and sub-themes derived were obtained from the data itself.

However, since this thesis is interested in investigating into the meaning of extreme, risky experiences for andere consumers, a hermeneutic analysis was employed. By definition, hermeneutics constitute the interpretation of meaning (Shankar et al. 2001). In particular, this thesis employed a hermeneutic circle. In general, symbolic meanings and relations of individual life stories were examined across cases. More precisely, an intratextual cycle was applied, which means that transcripts were first read and then scrutinised individually (Thompson 1997). Thereby, respondents’ life stories were reconstituted and important or transformative events
were chronologically ordered in order to gain an overall view of each respondent’s individual life story (Haupert 1991). This was performed to prepare for the actual data analysis (Flick 2009). Subsequently, cross-case analysis was employed to determine the interrelations across respondents’ life and consumption narratives. Thereafter, in an iterative approach, all of respondents’ transcripts were profoundly examined and re-read in order to obtain a holistic comprehension of the stories told. Thereafter, data was interpreted. With regard to that, the researcher remained objective and open during the interpretation phase. This means, that data was not interpreted in accordance with predetermined objectives or meanings. Rather, the researcher openly and objectively examined new meanings that emerged from data material (Thompson 1997).

Additionally, grounded theory was employed within the iterative and intratextual cycles (Thompson 1997), which refer to the two meaningful themes derived. Thereafter, data material was coded pursuing a three-step approach, in which the phases are termed open, axial and selective coding (Glaser 1978; Kruse 2011). Initially, data material was processed via open coding (Kruse 2011; Kuckartz 1999). Within this stage, in-vivo-codes and/or open-label codes are employed to the transcripts (Douglas 2003; Kuckartz 1999). In this context, in-vivo-codes refer to the terms respondents’ utilised and hence they provide insights about research participants’ perspectives and perceptions (Kuckartz 1999). Further, the contexts that are conceptually conveyed by the respondent are summarised with open-label codes (Douglas 2003). Referring to this, codes concern single words or sentences, various sections or one and more paragraphs (Kuckartz 1999). After completing the coding phase, the respective codes are conflated into categories (Flick 2009; Kuckartz 1999). Thereafter, data analysis continues with axial coding. In this phase, previously identified categories are re-elaborated and refined (Flick 2009) and relationships are established between open codes to create core codes (Douglas 2003). With respect to this, core codes refer to “aggregates of the most closely interrelated (or overlapping) open codes” (Douglas 2003, p. 50). Further, only relevant codes that inform the study with rich insights are further processed, thereby eliminating insignificant codes (Flick 2009). In a final step, selective coding was applied to data material. Thereby, selective coding pertains to the generation of even more concise and precisely summarised codes and categories (Flick 2009; Kruse 2011). More specifically, central core categories from axial codes are generated through coding selectively (Douglas 2003; Kruse 2011). In addition to that, core categories are put into relation with other categories that were obtained from the data material (Flick 2009; Kuckartz 1999).
Following the principles of grounded theory, transcripts were processed applying in-vivo and open-label codes. Thereafter, codes were summarised into categories and iteratively related to each other, which has led to increasing data abstraction. Ultimately, data was summarised into two levels of data abstractions referring to the previously generated meaningful themes. Hence, the findings obtained from this hermeneutic analysis and coding process are presented in the subsequent chapter.
4.0 FINDINGS

Subsequent to generating meaningful themes and thoroughly analysing qualitative data, results regarding *ander*ere, extreme consumers are presented within this chapter. Since this thesis investigates into *ander*ere individuals, who cultivate themselves through consuming extreme or risky athletic experiences, the outcomes partially support and complement current findings of *Ander-sein*, yet they also challenge and extend the existing model by providing new insights. Hence, in this section it is going to be discussed how being *anders* in an extreme and risky context contributes to respondents’ *sein*, i.e. how extreme and risky cultivation practices impact participants’ lives and identity construction. First, in-depth examinations of participant’s biographies reveal individual life trajectories and how they contribute to the development of risky consumption practices. Further, results demonstrate how extreme, risky athletic experiences are performed and in what way they contribute to consumer’s quest for singularisation and self-cultivation. The thesis finalises by outlining the importance of extreme sports for constructing and manifesting identity in postmodern times.

4.1 REFLECTING ON SELF: INDIVIDUAL LIFE STORY DEVELOPMENT

Since the engagement in extreme experiences entails several hazards, it appears obvious that individuals regularly reflect on themselves and their actions in order to determine whether the risks involved are worth being taken. In this section, participant’s personal and individual developments are further examined. Individual’s biographical narratives differ greatly, yet some aspects comply among all respondents. Significant turning points in participant’s lives that lead to self-transformational processes are discussed, as well as manifestations of *Anders-sein* within individual’s biographies.

4.1.1 WILFUL IGNORANCE: THEM VERSUS ME

By definition, *Anders-sein* entails neglecting societal norms and conventions to some extent, as well (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). This *wilful ignorance* manifests in various aspects of respondents’ lives and constitutes the fundament for developing *anderes* behaviour. Hence, the results of the present thesis confirm Hemetsberger’s and Weinberger’s stance, since all research participants mentioned to critically reflect on majority thoughts and habits in their narratives. Further, this manifested *wilful ignorance* ascertains that research participants of the present study are *anders*. However, the reflection on societal customs and habits results in
participants *wilfully ignoring* social expectations and conventions. When asked about their perception and evaluation of general societal norms, respondents conclude:

“The preexisting principles, societal laws – they are not irreversibly defined. It’s not carved into stone how things should be” (Tim, 23, telemark freeskier)

“I actually believe that I’m quite the opposite of everything that is associated with general societal norms, because that never really appeared interesting to me, to, to conform to society and so on and they tell you to do this and to do that. That has never really been my thing” (Eric, 21, extreme skitourer and ice climber)

“Conventions... in general I believe that they are permanently overthrown anyways - constantly readapted, because everyone sets their standards the way they need them to be” (Lea, 28, freerider and skitourer)

In their narrations, Lea, Eric and Tim confirm that societal tenets and paradigms are intangible constructs which everyone is enabled to unburden themselves from. Eric however claims that neglecting socially accepted manners and not caring about what others think and do has always resided within his personality. He illustrates this by expressing fear of living a standard life. Therefore, Lea concludes that social norms are ambiguous, since everyone adapts these paradigms according to their own current necessities. In a similar vein, Thomas exemplifies his disregard towards conventions through not publicly advocating political views or not belonging to local clubs, which represents a rather untypical behaviour given that he originates from and lives in a rural Tyrolean small town. Mimi, on the other hand reports to always having preferred things that are perceived as unpopular among the majority. Therefore, Mimi continues in her argumentation that she has developed a certain indifference concerning societal principles and perspectives. In her narration, the powerlifter recalls neglecting socially accepted and celebrated beauty ideals, thereby being *anders*. In a similar vein, Lena mentions not caring about current fashion trends and styles and expresses detachment from socially hyped trends.

Nonetheless, since self-reflection constitutes a retrospective approach, it needs to be considered that participants’ attitude towards majority thoughts can change, thus the evaluation of such majorly shared believes might alter over time. In this context, respondents are well aware that at times they need to adapt to societal norms, as Marcel concludes:
“Up until today I still pursue certain rules that my father has thought me, like tidiness, cleanliness or punctuality, since they simply help me to structure my daily life and routines” (Marcel, 26, steep face freeskier and ice climber)

Marcel’s statement demonstrates that majority views and habits cannot be continuously ignored, since respondents still move within society and are partially also dependent on them. Therefore, people need to act according to the current situations they are in to avoid conflicts and impediments in their daily lives. Nonetheless, individuals generally evaluate whether the appropriate societal reaction in the respective context suits their own perspectives and believes, aiming to obtain maximum positive outcomes for themselves (Bellezza et al. 2013). Therefore, respondents are in a pursuit of “their own thing”.

4.1.2 HOW TO BE ANDERS: PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Importance of familiar environment.* Findings reveal that respondent’s upbringing and personal developments vary considerably. When reflecting on their early years, interviewees generally report about a pleasant childhood. In this context, especially respondent’s family situation and environment significantly impact individuals’ personal development and growth. Participants list that they were provided with various opportunities to unfold and discover every aspect about themselves. Further, they stated that especially parents and grandparents fostered their personal development. In this context, curating individual development is also associated with high expenditures, since engaging in and exercising various types of sports also constitutes a cost factor. Therefore, when reflecting on his childhood and on his parents Tobias reports that:

“They told me I can do and try out everything in sports, it is my sports and they support me in everything I do, that means every kite course, every kite, my ski tickets, these things are and were always covered by them” (Tobias, 25, snowkiter and freerider)

In a similar vein, Tim also concludes that his parents provided him with the freedom to do whatever he pleases to do and that they fostered his individual development. Hence, from an early point on, research participants were enabled to explore who they are, who they are not and with what they identify with. However, it needs to be considered that identity cannot yet be constructed in childhood (McAdams 2001), albeit early manifestations of *Anders-sein* can be detected, as first self-cultivation approaches are pursued through trying out and testing different kinds of sports, for instance. Almost all research participants stated that they were
provided with the opportunity to try out various and manifold athletic experiences. Regarding this, Marcel mentions that:

“I’m actually rooted in tennis. Until I was fourteen, I quite intensively played tennis, I even played in the Bavarian league, where I come from. Then I broke my wrist and I wasn’t able to hold the racket anymore and then snowboarding got increasingly important for me. Actually, I spent a lot of time in the freestyle park. And then I started a little bit of climbing. During adolescence then, when I was sixteen, seventeen, I somehow realised: Okay, ski touring – touring in general – I like that a lot. Then my friends started telemark skiing. First, I switched from snowboarding to telemark skiing. That’s when I really got into ski touring. And with a little luck, I got to descend more steeper stuff” (Marcel, 26, steep face freeskier and ice climber)

However, not all respondents experienced an unexceptionally happy childhood. Some participants had to endure traumatising events during their youth, which shaped them for their future lives. Lena, for instance, when reflecting on her childhood reveals that:

“When I was eleven, when I actually started taking up this sport, my mother died, [1], ehm, after suffering for a long time from a disease and somehow it was[...], from this point on everything turned into a challenge, because [obviously] there was no mother anymore, everything was difficult. We were many children, of course we fought a lot, there were several problems it somehow was (.) difficult to master” (Lena, 22, freestyler)

Growing up as the youngest of five siblings, Lena describes in her narrative that the loss of her mother was the main cause for taking up the sports. Together with her older brothers, she started training in order to cope with her mother’s death. This tragic event constitutes the first big challenge in her life that she had to overcome and this might have poignantly manifested in her personality for requesting challenges and pushing boundaries even further nowadays.

Less tragic, yet still incisive, Eric describes that the divorce of his parents elicited the trigger to explore himself:

“And then, then our father abandoned us, abandonment always sounds so tragic, but this was the start of a new life. And then it turned out, that from this moment on (.) my mother, so she set us free, me and my sister. And actually, I would say, since I was
Respondents’ narratives and individual developments represent early manifestations of adopting anderes behaviour. These narrations evince that respondents’ domestic environment as well as the overall family situation are decisive for participants’ past, current and future developments regarding Anders-sein. In this context, positive family environments as represented in Marcels, Tobias’ and Tim’s narrations as well as negative incidents that occurred to Lena and Eric equally contribute to the development and manifestation of anderes behaviour. Referring to this, Lena had to master the biggest challenge of her life already at an early stage of her personal development. Thus, she started to evolve into a person constantly on a quest for a challenge and tries to push boundaries even further, as it turns out later on. Eric’s, Marcel’s and Tobias’ family environment however demonstrates that their families have fostered them to engage in self-reflection and self-exploration, which constitute fundamental notions of Anders-sein (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012).

Importance of role models. In addition to familiar support, participant’s role models are also responsible for their engagement in extreme and risky athletic experiences. Refuting the assumption that andere individuals do not imitate the practices of others (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012), the thesis demonstrates that respondents indeed follow their idols in order to acquire the necessary expertise and skills. Thus, role models also contribute to respondents developing notions of Anders-sein. Role models vary from family members, to friends, to diverse athletes, however they all triggered interviewees’ quest for extreme and risky experiences. Therefore, Lea states:

“My brother used to be a freerider, as well, and I have always kind of adored him. He is actually way older than me. And to me it was always like: woah, the big brother. And photos of him are on display in our local ski school. And he also took me with him, but not to force me into doing it, but because I told him “Hey, I want to join you”. Yes, I joined all the big boys. This was obviously a very precious moment for me, since the big brother asked me whether I wanted to accompany him and all of his boys. And the little one wags down in front of them” (Lea, 28, freerider and skitourer)

In her narration, Lea explains that it has always been easier for her to get along with boys rather than with girls. When visiting a girls-only school, Lea reports that she missed having male
students on campus, since she felt that it is less difficult for her to become friends with males compared to females. Thus, Lea’s reflection represents subtle quests for singularisation, i.e. she differentiates herself from others in this context. However, on the contrary, Tim does not express such positive evaluations towards his role model in his narrative. When reflecting on the motivational incentives his role model has set, Tim reports:

“He used to teach me in a military style (.), he actually yelled at me all over the mountain and continuously told me how shitty I would ski and that I am useless and that I am, (.) that my parents invested a lot of money in me and my freeride equipment and that I would never be able to use it with my lousy skiing technique (.). So, you see, he used a really rough tone, but coming from him, that really motivated me. And it was the biggest motivation not to think “I want to be like him”, but to say “I want to be better than him”” (Tim, 23, telemark freeskier)

Tim’s mentor challenged, even provoked him during the beginnings of his telemark-skiing career. In his narration, Tim reflects that his friend and role model requested nothing but perfection from him concerning his technique and style. If he would not be able to master the skiing and telemarking technique precisely, Tim would not be allowed to ski with his role model. During his learning phase, Tim was continuously exposed to his friend’s teases and provocations. However, his mentor’s taunts would not deter him from performing the sports, it rather motivated him, thereby evoking and even enhancing his quest for a challenge.

Referring to role models, other participants mentioned that professional athletes in the respective sporting scene motivated them to take up the sport. When reflecting on his childhood idol, Thomas remembers that formula one grand François Cevert elicited the desire in him to become a formula one driver as well, regardless the fact that during times of his active career, fatal incidents were on the agenda. Hence, Thomas expressed early manifestations of Anders-sein, as he was wilfully ignoring the consequences that the sport entails, thereby also embracing risky behaviour. Similarly, Tobias also reports that videos from various sporting grands from the snowboard and freestyle scene, as well as extreme athlete Felix Baumgartner elicited the wish in him to pursue extreme athletic experiences, albeit wilfully ignoring the risks involved, as well.

 outsiderism. However, during their childhood and youth, nearly all respondents report to have experienced certain forms of outsiderism. These social sanctions refer to exclusions within
school, one’s own circle of friends and social environment or they concern respondent’s physical appearance. Thomas reports about a history of bullying from his teacher due to his left-handedness, which has pervaded his entire life from that point on. Being left-handed even impeded him from fulfilling his dream to become a photographer, since the responsible employment office declined his application due to the fact that he is left-handed. In a similar vein, Moritz remembers having experienced difficulties due to his corpulent appearance. Lena endured mockery and hostility in school, as well. She felt that classmates disliked her, because they thought that Lena would maintain a special status among her teachers as a consequence of being a successful athlete. Likewise, Tim and Tobias also experienced forms of harassment in school. Most of Tim’s teachers disliked him, due to his suffering from ADHS, whereas Tobias remembers being excluded from his classmates, because of his father, who is employed as a teacher in Tobias’ school:

“In my last year of secondary school, I was one of the most unpopular students in my class. This happened, because everyone constantly claimed that I only got good grades because of my father, who is a teacher in this school. I then had to change school, because I couldn’t endure it anymore” (Tobias, 25, snowkiter and freerider)

Similarly, Bastian and Eric also had to face social sanctions due to not conforming to social conventions. Bastian remembers being excluded as a consequence of refusing to drink alcohol, whereas Eric describes having had difficulties with his social environment from moving places and speaking another dialect as the habitants in his new living environment. In Lea’s case, the harassments she was exposed to culminated in her developing severe depressions:

“When I was sixteen, I wanted to spend a semester abroad. But then I had to endure my worst experience, a very drastic one. My girl friends, they have abandoned me. Then I drifted into depression and everything” (Lea, 28, freerider and skitourer)

The confrontation of outsiderism during childhood and youth foster the development and adoption of Anders-sein, as well. Individuals who were exposed to bullying and harassments from an early point in their lives tend to differentiate themselves from others, since their former encounters with exclusion lead to the appropriation of insensible and indifferent behaviour towards social conventions and opinions shared by the majority of society (Wan, Xu and Ding 2013). In other words, respondents are not concerned about what others think about them, they rather pursue their own objectives, regardless the social reactions.
Intrinsic motivation. Apart from familiar support, motivational incentives from role models and suffering from outsiderism, respondents report that intrinsic factors contributed to the development and early manifestation of Anders-sein, as well. Some of the research participants conclude that they generally perceived themselves as more active or differentiated from others already from an early point on in their lives. Whilst reflecting on his childhood, Marcel recalls his parents telling him that as a little boy that he used to run around and yell:

“Scooting and shredding. And I – somehow I adopted this attitude until today” (Marcel, 26, steep face freeskier and ice climber)

In a similar vein, Tobias remembers that his affinity for risks also evolved during his childhood, when he was about nine or ten years old, thereby expressing early endeavours to explore himself and especially he sets first approaches to cultivate himself through risky experiences. Eric, however, concludes that being different has always been part of his biography, as he remembers always deciding to pursue the things and activities that others refused to do. Likewise, Thomas states that a critical and differentiated attitude has already been put in his cradle, whilst he reflects on going to school wearing yellow trousers, being the first boy in his class to do so. In addition to that, Mimi also remembers pursuing activities, before they were “in”:

“So, for example I am, uh, an incredible fantasy fan, just, that already started when I was little. I already watched Star Wars, read through the Harry Potter books and back then, nobody in my environment perceived such things as fashionable or trendy or “in”, like society does nowadays. Especially compared to today, where every other person is a Star Wars, Marvel, DC, whatsoever fan” (Mimi, 27, powerlifter)

Mimi clarifies in her reflection that she has always pursued her own thing, regardless whether these activities or goods were and are perceived popular among society or not, thereby signalling subtle hints on being anders through wilfully ignoring social reactions. Concludingly, all these narrations and reflections represent early manifestations of Anders-sein throughout respondents’ individual life developments and these manifestations are embedded in respondent’s beings to this day.

4.1.3 TRANSFORMING THE SELF: WILFULLY PRACTICING ANDERS-SEIN

Within this section, the thesis demonstrates that respondents wilfully practice Anders-sein, which means that participants still pursue extreme, risky athletic experiences, regardless of
sport- or event-related difficulties. Sport-related difficulties pertain to issues that occur within the engagement in the respective athletic discipline, whereas event-related problems concern more or less severe incidents that participants encountered. However, incidents that elicit transformational processes constitute tragic events, once-in-a-lifetime events and general turning point events. Particularly when pursuing otherness in extreme forms to cultivate the self, self-reflection is required to determine and evaluate, whether one is satisfied with his/her current life situation and the cultivation activities and practices that are pursued. Especially the engagement in extreme and risky experiences that entails numerous hazards, needs to be constantly reflected. Reflection is particularly crucial in this case, since exposing oneself to such excessive activities might even result in risking one’s own life. However, during the course of a lifetime, several events and incidents take place that completely alter respondent’s current life situation. Thus, critically reflecting on changes and transformative events, regardless the extents, has an impact on one’s quality of life. In the following, certain events that affected and changed research participant’s life and attitude towards their respective extreme sports as well as cultivation practices that are fraught with risk are discussed.

**Tragic events.** As previously mentioned, the death of Lena’s mother has elicited the urge in her to take up ski freestyling, thereby laying the foundations for being anders and for cultivating herself through setting extreme and risky challenges. However, in her narration she mentions several events that induced her to reflect on herself and the sports she practices, in general.

**Once-in-a-lifetime events.** One such event refers to her participation in the Olympic games in Pyeongchang. Since the attendance in these events is limited to only a chosen few, participating in the respective contests was particularly meaningful to her. She reveals that competing in the Olympic Games was not self-explanatory, as she was in midst of her comeback season after suffering from several injuries and only barely managed to pass the qualifying rounds. Hence, the feeling of having achieved something that not everyone is capable of doing, an experience that is even denied to renowned athletes at times, made this event so important and special to her. In a similar vein, she remembers that winning the Youth Olympic Games was a moment that changed her life significantly:

“Somehow it was a miracle that I was still able to compete and, ah it was simply, I was in a complete state of emotional chaos, I was completely overwhelmed. Uhm, therefore I would say, if I had not won this medal, I am not sure, if I would still be practicing this sport today” (Lena, 22, ski freestyler)
Whilst examining her life story, Lena concludes that the engagement in this type of sports resembles being on a rollercoaster, because practicing ski freestyling entails permanent ups, which are represented through the achievements and objectives attained, and downs, that constitute the injuries and risks that the athletes are permanently exposed to. Hence, after suffering and coming back from several injuries, Lena constantly reflects, whether performing the sports is worth the risks involved. In her narrations she confesses to regularly contemplating about giving up, resigning and starting something new. Nonetheless, winning this medal reminds her that the circumstances and the obstacles involved are no hindrance to success and that this achievement is responsible for what keeps her continuing to expose herself to such dangers, thereby confirming that being extreme has manifested in her sein and risk is required at least to some extent to cultivate herself.

*Sport related difficulties.* In this context, other participants mentioned that more or less severe incidents impacted the course of their lives and the engagement in the respective extreme athletic discipline. Thomas remembers having experienced severe back and vortex injuries from a motorbike accident shortly before his 30th birthday. He was not responsible for this accident, however it triggered him to reflect whether practising this sport is worth putting his life at stake, since he could not be held accountable for this accident. The realisation, that incidents could still happen despite taking calculated risks, i.e. that not only one’s personal failure could lead to misfortunate events, but also external aspects constitute a risk factor, led to him contemplating whether the value obtained from practising the sport is still bigger than the hazards he exposes himself to.

Likewise, Tim and Marcel report about having had similar thoughts. Both are rooted in extreme snow sports, hence the dangers that the natural environment poses are beyond one’s own control. In this context, Tim and Marcel were fortunate enough to survive being caught in an avalanche. In Tim’s case, he was even lucky enough to escape from an avalanche twice, despite being stuck for over twenty minutes and having to free himself. These incidents triggered them to reflect on themselves and the respective sports, in general. Therefore, Marcel concludes:

“I think every, uhm, motivated skier gets caught under an avalanche at least once in their lives. And then you think about it differently. I mean at least you start to question certain aspects about the sports. Well, it is not like I would take less risks after that, but you contemplate about certain things more than once” (Marcel, 26, steep face skier and ice climber)
Despite experiencing mortal agony during these incidents, both Marcel and Tim stated that they would not give up practicing this sport. These events solely caused them to actively reflect on themselves and their actions, yet both of them argued that these incidents did not impact their dauntlessness. Thus, they express anderes behaviour, since they demonstrate that taking risks is required to cultivate their selves, thereby neglecting the consequence in spite of thoroughly evaluating them.

**Turning point events.** Further, in Lea’s case, a fatal kitesurfing accident, that occurred during her first kitesurf lessons, changed her life drastically, albeit evoking self-transformational processes in her. In this accident, she suffered from severe injuries, as she recalls:


“I had an accident in Southern France, I had to be transported back home where I’ve had a surgery and then I had to relearn everything from scratch. So, I broke one vortex and had to undergo a major back surgery and then I needed to lie down and rest for a very long time. Initially I thought that I would not be able to ever ski again. I endured a lot. After a month, I could only walk for five minutes straight. That was the maximum. And that’s how I groped my way up. I learned a lot for myself” (Lea, 28, freerider and skitourer)

Lea’s reflection demonstrates the grave consequences of cultivating oneself through extreme and risky sports. However, notwithstanding the severances of her injuries, Lea did not give up and fought her way back to the slopes. Nonetheless, this incident changed her as a person, since the recovery and relearning phase were very time consuming and exhaustive. Thus, this incident transformed her into a more consolidated and stable individual, knowing what she wants, needs and with what she identifies herself with. On that account, she could not take up kitesurfing again, because now she is aware that she does not identify herself with kiting. However, even though kitesurfing and freeriding are two completely different kinds of sports, the risks involved remain the same. Hence, when deciding to freeride nowadays, Lea ponders thoroughly, if the hazards involved are still majorly within the scope of her own control. Nonetheless, like Marcel and Tim this accident did not turn her into a risk-averse person, it rather caused her to reconsider which kind of extremes and risks she strives for in order to cultivate herself. Hence, Lea is anders.

Overall, resembling consumers who deliberately and voluntarily engage in painful experiential consumption (Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017), participants of the present study wilfully practice
their athletic experience regardless of unpleasant encounters and events. Despite exposing oneself to severe dangers, the value obtained from practicing the sport still exceeds the risks involved. Therefore, positive and negative incidents equally contribute to respondents’ self-transformational processes.

4.2 CULTIVATING THE SELF: PERFORMING EXTREME EXPERIENCES

This section outlines the meaning and importance of extreme, risky athletic experiences for participants and describes how dangerous sports enable and facilitate self-actualisation. Thus far, “rather than being extreme, andere lifestyle experiences constitute small scale boundary transgressions in important life domains” (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012, p. 507). However, this thesis demonstrates, that respondents pursue extremes and risks in order to cultivate themselves. In their narratives, research participants report that they tried out various types of sports throughout their lives, however they all agree that only certain athletic experiences contribute to respondent’s self-cultivation processes and self-growth. Therefore, the following table outlines the extreme and risky athletic experiences participants engage with. Further, respondents’ descriptions on how to perform the respective types of sports are provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONDENT DATA</th>
<th>EXTREME ATHLETIC DISCIPLINE</th>
<th>PERFORMING EXPERIENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tim, 23</td>
<td>Telemark-Freeskier</td>
<td>Descending slopes off-piste with a telemarking technique, which means that the outer ski is in front. This is achieved through lunging forward (Kleppen 1986).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bastian, 28</td>
<td>Obstacle Race Athlete</td>
<td>Combining cross-running elements with several obstacles, like for instance crawling through barbwires or running up ski jumping hills. Contests last between 24 to 48 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimi, 27</td>
<td>Powerlifter</td>
<td>Rooted in heavy athletics, powerlifting combines squatting, bench pressing and performing dead lifts with heavy weights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas, 58</td>
<td>Trial-Motorbiker</td>
<td>Mastering obstacles with a motorbike in rugged terrain or overcoming artificial obstacles through balancing out the bike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moritz, 25</td>
<td>Hike and Rider</td>
<td>Mountaineering and climbing during winter, then descending the peaks with skis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lea, 28</td>
<td>Freerider and Skitourer</td>
<td>Combining skiing off-piste with skitouring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcel, 26</td>
<td>Steep Face Freerider and Ice climber</td>
<td>Climbing up mountains in winter, thereby combining elements of skitouring with freeriding and jumping over steep faces with skis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric, 21</td>
<td>Extreme Skitourer and Ice Climber</td>
<td>Combining elements of skitouring with climbing mountains in winter, thereby rappelling steep faces during winter and descending off-piste terrain with skis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobias, 25</td>
<td>Snowkiter and Freerider</td>
<td>Utilising a kite as a towing equipment, thereby combining elements of kitesurfing with skiing; Riding skis in off-piste terrain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena, 22</td>
<td>Ski Freestyler</td>
<td>Performing flips and spins with ski in a halfpipe (Levinson and Christensen 1999)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Despite engaging in more or less similar types of sports, respondent’s narrations demonstrate that cultivations practices coincide throughout all life stories. In the following, insights are provided about the practices respondents pursue to cultivate themselves, which are eventually summarised and presented. These practices concern pushing one’s boundaries and requesting challenges, the communal aspects of being *anders*, embracing risky behaviour through strategically approaching them and integrating the pursuit of extremes and risks with mundane everyday life. All of these cultivation approaches constitute significant and meaningful life domains for participants and are crucial for further developing themselves towards ultimate self-cultivation and self-actualisation. However, since the present thesis investigates into consumer’s singularisation practices through consuming extreme and risky experiences, the following section elucidates the respective cultivation strategies that respondents pursue and which meaning participants ascribe to and obtain from them.

### 4.2.1 EXTREMES AND EVERYDAY LIFE

Practicing extreme sports that is fraught with risks also entails passively integrating the athletic activity into all life domains. In order to prevent dangerous situations and to enhance technical development. The analysis of verbatims has yielded that respondents organise their lives around their respective extreme sports. This manifest itself for instance through excessive training sessions. Whilst reflecting on her training efforts, Mimi emphasises the intensity of the training sessions, as the powerlifter describes the typical procedure of a powerlifting contest. Therefore, she recalls performing squats with 140 kilos of additional weight, which can clearly be interpreted as intense. Thus, intensive and excessive whole-body sessions are required, which she integrates into her daily life. In this context, Eric also claims to train about five to six times per week to optimally prepare his body for his extreme ski tours. Similarly, Bastian mentions to exercise two to three times per day, which results in making sacrifices in other life domains:

> “Uhm, I always try to actively exercise and therefore I sleep less, because I simply don’t have time for sleeping, which might not be ideal for this kind of sports, but it works fine for me. I try to get about five to six hours sleep per night to squeeze in a morning session. And when others wake up and have breakfast together, I already exercised for two hours” (Bastian, 28, obstacle race athlete)
Complementing his training in the gym, Bastian also mentions to train outside a lot to prepare his body the most efficient way possible for the contests. He mentions hiking and climbing as effective supporting athletic disciplines that facilitate competing in these tournaments. Indeed, extreme sports involve extreme training sessions, yet Bastian’s statement also implies that respondents make sacrifices for performing and engaging in the respective sports. Regarding this, Eric mentions that practicing extreme ski touring and ice climbing is majorly responsible for splitting up with his girlfriend. Despite being aware of his egoistic intentions, Eric decided to leave his girlfriend for the mountains, since they simply are of significant importance to him. He demonstrates this excessive extent of personal significance by claiming that the majority of his thoughts revolve around the sport. This continuous thinking process manifests in thoroughly planning projects for a certain amount of time and using the sport for coping with everyday life challenges. In particular, respondents engaging in extreme winter sports report about the necessity and importance of thorough planning projects, which in turn leads to them integrating the activity into their everyday-life processes, since planning might also be very time-consuming. Further, Thomas, for instance, uses the sport in order to cope with everyday life challenges:

“If some things didn’t turn out to be as fruitful as I wanted them to be or when I had troubles in school, then I took my bike and tried to master obstacles that I couldn’t handle in school or at work (Thomas, 58, trial-motorbiker)

In addition to that, the engagement in extreme sports entails various liminalities that also impact respondent’s everyday lives. Liminalities refer to cost aspects of engaging in extreme sports, the appropriation of the required expertise, time and place of the respective extreme consumption experience and even to the sport itself, which will be discussed later on. For most research participants, the engagement in extreme sports requires partially expensive equipment. In this context, ski or hiking equipment or the acquisition of a motorbike or kite constitute considerable cost aspects. These cost factors in return also impact everyday life, since respondents need to know how to finance their leisure activity. On the other hand, the appropriation of the necessary expertise might also involve expenditures, like for example the trainings and courses required to become an alpinist or a snowkiter or in general the expertise necessary to enter off-piste terrain. Furthermore, the engagement in extreme sports is also limited to time and place of the respective practice, i.e. most of respondent’s athletic cultivation practices cannot be performed all year long, especially in the case of extreme winter sports athletes. In the case of Bastian and Mimi, participating in the respective contest is not possible
at all times simply due to the extreme and exhaustive extents that the participation in these contests entail.

Thus, after reflecting on all these insights, it can be concluded that performing extreme sports is associated with restrictions concerning time and money. However, all research participants voluntarily and happily accept these constraints, as long as this time can be invested into their leisure cultivation-activity. Therefore, life is indeed organised around the engagement in extreme sports, thereby signalling that respondents are anders. Further, the outlined practices and liminalities demonstrate a singularised way of life, following the imperatives of postmodernity.

4.2.2 PUSHING BOUNDARIES: THE QUEST FOR A CHALLENGE

The engagement in extreme sports entails being extremely ambitious. Hence, respondents express their ambitions through setting challenges and pushing their own boundaries even further, regardless the risks involved. In their narrations, all respondents confess to having always sought and pursued challenges. Regarding this, extreme athletes adopt a resilient and preserving attitude, since pushing boundaries constitutes a transformative process that consumes time to evolve and entails several setbacks, from which participants need to remain unfased. In this context, when Tim reflects on his first telemark-skiing days, he ponders:

“In my first season, the season I picked up telemark-skiing – I’m keeping records about my skiing days, in total I had 35 skiing days, 21 of which I telemark-skied and 14 alpine skiing days. Referring to the 21 days, I have to admit that only the last seven of them were fun” (Tim, 23, telemark freeskier)

In his reflection, Tim associates picking up telemark-skiing and appropriating the required skills and techniques with several drawbacks and pushing his boundaries to the extremes. Whilst contemplating, he remembers that especially in his initial learning phase he got to the point where he could not endure the tribulations anymore and was completely exhausted. For him, it took a certain amount of time to build up the required musculature and acquire the necessary expertise that enables the engagement in this sport, thereby concluding that appropriating the demanded prerequisites entails integrating the extreme activity into all life domains. In this context, the value participants obtain from practicing extreme sports is initially not clearly evident. However, to respondents it appears obvious how pushing the boundaries contributes to cultivating themselves. Lena claims that she needs to be challenged, because
otherwise she would be bored. Hence, she strives for challenges that force her to leave her comfort zone. When asked to reflect why she pushes her limits so drastically, she concludes that:

“I actually often wonder and ask myself why I constantly need to be challenged, why I can’t simply go skiing, which would actually entail less reconsiderations and contemplations. But as I’ve mentioned before, the challenge, the adrenaline rush, the euphoria that it evokes, that’s what makes the sport so special to me, that’s why I can’t quit it” (Lena, 22 ski freestyler)

In her statement, Lena confirms that the value generated through constantly setting new challenges exceeds the obstacles involved, thereby concluding that pushing the boundaries and being challenged imbue her life with thrill and excitement. In a similar vein, when reflecting on the reasons for freeriding in off-piste terrain, Lea’s reflection coincides with Lena’s argumentation. She explains that regular slopes indeed offer versatilities, however skiing in the open ski area offers far more delight and fascination. Lea justifies her argumentation by comparing descending groomed slopes with freeriding in offside terrain. Therefore, she concludes that several external factors, like different kinds of snow layers and snow banks represent obstacles that do not occur in protected grounds. Hence, what appears most appealing to Lea is that offside terrains provide more opportunities for romping and for exploring herself and her body. Likewise, Moritz also perceives regular slopes as boring, therefore pursuing off-piste terrain. On the other hand, Mimi and Thomas claim that challenging themselves contributes to their self-actualisation, because through pushing boundaries they proof themselves that nothing is impossible, even though it might have appeared to be like that at first. Therefore, they have come to the conclusion that every challenge or obstacle can be mastered. Eric however associates pushing boundaries with the pursuit of adrenaline rush, whilst Bastian argues that many people feel subchallenged and thus engage in obstacle racing to contrast mundane everyday life. Complementing this, Marcel describes that he pushes his boundaries and sets challenges through exploring the unknown. He exemplifies this through reflecting on exploring and descending a route that no one has ever rode before, as he recalls:

“That was an amazing day. Nonetheless, it was challenging, because you know that neither did anyone today take that route, nor did anyone in the past and that’s something special, a very unique feeling” (Marcel, 26, steep face freeskier and ice climber)
Now that respondents have outlined the reasons for seeking challenges, the following section discusses how they push their boundaries. In Lea’s case, the participation in contests like the Freeride World Tour represents her pushing the boundaries. Likewise, Mimi exemplifies her strive for challenges through learning how to perform pull-ups. To her, accomplishing this challenge means generating achievements of which she thought that they were impossible to obtain. Lena however exceeds her limits through facing her fears. Despite reporting about fearing heights, she picked up climbing in order to obtain adrenaline rush. Like Marcel, Eric experiences euphoria through exploring the unknown. Thereby, he pursues routes that are not mapped or rarely used. On the other hand, Tobias exceeds his limits through setting rules. According to his principles, every ski day needs to entail an obstacle that encourage himself to face his fears. He exemplifies this by performing at least one backflip with skis within the course of a ski day. On the contrary, Bastian feels challenged when people tell him that he could not achieve objectives that they perceive as impossible to obtain:

“When people say, “That’s impossible”, I get in the mood to prove them wrong. No matter how absurd it seems” (Bastian, 28, obstacle race athlete)

The obstacle racer reinforces his statement by describing his project for the summer, which is to run through a mountain chain in the Tyrolean alps that includes 50 summits in half the time required. This means cutting down time from 96 to 48 hours by running without taking breaks, well aware of the fact that he exposes himself to several hazards. Hence, he pushes his boundaries through achieving the supposedly impossible.

Conclusively, respondents’ narratives refute the notion that cultivation practices and processes solely constitute small scale boundary transgressions (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). In fact, participants’ stories demonstrate that pushing the boundaries and setting challenges are essential for obtaining ultimate self-cultivation. Thus, cultivation practices can take extreme forms, as well. This is also subtly reflected in academic discourse. Extending Holbrook’s and Hirschman’s stance (1982) that consumers strive for physically and emotionally hurtful experiences, Scott, Cayla and Cova (2017) describe in their study on painful experiential consumption that participants are rewarded with an enhanced self-understanding and an escape from their own thoughts from engaging in painful experiences. Further, individuals are enabled to narrate the story of a fulfilled life by displaying the injuries that result from practicing painful experiences (Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017). Likewise, respondents of the present study are
rewarded with similar outcomes for themselves due to the extreme and unusual encounters they make whilst performing the sports.

4.2.3 RISK CONSUMPTION FOR CULTIVATING THE SELF

As previously outlined, striving for challenges and thus pushing one’s boundaries are highly associated with risk-taking and hence with the consumption of extreme activities that are fraught with risk. In their narrations, respondents list numerous dangers that the engagement in the respective sport involves. These hazards range from suffering from severe injuries to actually putting one’s life at stake, hence experiencing mortal agony. When reflecting on the negative aspects of the respective types of sports research participants engage in, almost all respondents outlined that the risks involved got out of their own control and thus they experienced more or less severe consequences. Tim and Marcel had to first-hand experience what it means to be caught by an avalanche. Both escaped, yet Tim had to endure this encounter even twice. Once he was lucky enough to be carried away by it on the surface. However, the other time the avalanche buried him, as he recalls:

“It wasn’t an extremely steep section. And then I realised that I couldn’t move. And that everything was blue. This means you got... you can’t, can’t breathe, where you have to tell yourself “okay, don’t panic, don’t panic”. I tried to release myself. Tried to move, but realised that it barely succumbed to it. And then I panicked. I started to eat snow and to wag my head up and down, I somehow tried to mould air pockets. So, you see, I only had myself in this situation and it was sinister. All you see is dark – all shades of blue. Then I spat down to see where it went and that’s where I realised that I was stuck in an avalanche. Upside down” (Tim, 23, telemark freeskier)

In this situation, he was well aware of the fact that if he could not release himself within several minutes, he would be dead, since alerting ski patrol would take too much time. Tim then remembers approaching his misery strategically by moving his body back and forth to estimate how deep and in which angle he was stuck. Tim reflects:

“Okay, what do we do now? What do we do, what do we do, what do we do – okay. Uhm, I tried to move my body back and forth, uhm upside down and I realised that my left foot was released. And then I thought, if I would manage to sway my legs over my head to make a turn. And then I kind of did the dolphin-move, I tried to move my body back and forth. I somehow stopped time and realised that I was buried for 25 minutes.
I was buried under an avalanche for 25 minutes, until I released myself” (Tim, 23 telemark freeskier)

Tim’s near-death experience constitutes a natural hazard that could occur anytime and still respondents willingly expose themselves to such dangers. Despite being stuck in an avalanche head-first and for 25 minutes, Tim was still capable of strategically approaching the situation. Nonetheless, the dangers that these extreme athletic experiences include did not prevent Tim and all other respondents from practicing them. Risk factors are represented through personal failures or dangers that the natural environment poses, like for instance Tim’s and Marcel’s encounter with avalanches. In a similar vein, Bastian exposes himself to health endangering risks by competing in obstacle race contest, thereby constantly running for 24 to 48 hours. Competing in these events requires thorough preparation and training which have led to him developing a cardiac muscle above average. Bastian recalls that if he would not gradually step out of the sports, he would not live to be 50 years old, since his cardiac muscle would have gotten too strong, thus inducing cardiac arrest. Other respondents like Lena, Mimi, Lea, Tobias and Thomas also claim that painful injuries constitute the biggest hazards in their respective sports, which almost all had to suffer from already.

Additionally, respondents demonstrate unaffectedness towards what is perceived as risky and dangerous by society. This state of indifference is achieved through defending the engagement in extreme sports with expertise and strategically approaching the situation. When asked about the degree of dangers involved in his sports, Moritz states that:

“Uhm, I don’t think that it is too dangerous or fraught with risk, if you behave according to the situation” (Moritz, 25, freerider and ice climber)

Indeed, respondents express a certain intrepidity towards risks, thereby knowingly endangering their health and well-being. Additionally, all respondents defend endangering themselves with claiming to calculate risks and strategically approaching the situation. In behalf of all respondents, Marcel justifies a risk-embracing attitude as:

“The risk is calculated. Ultimately, you know why you are doing something like that, you are 90 percent sure – well I need to be 90 percent sure before descending a steep face that it will work out and as soon as I enter the wall, I am about 99% sure that everything is going to work out. Because, I would not enter a flank or groove of which I am not a 100 percent certain that it will work out. As soon as I feel uncomfortable
whilst entering, the project died to me” (Marcel, 26, steep-face freeskier and ice climber)

Despite obviously demonstrating a risk-embracing attitude, respondents perceive their assumed risks as calculated. Other approaches to calculate risks is to cover one’s back by practicing sports with others. Lea and Tim report that bringing along partners while in offside terrain constitutes a life insurance for them, thereby strategically enhancing their security. Likewise, other research participants claim to remain control over the situation by thoroughly preparing. This preparation refers to thoroughly planning tours, to diverse physical training sessions, to testing whether the equipment is reliable or not. In addition, other approaches to minimalize risks is to increase expertise and durably further enhance technical development. With respect to that, Lea for example buries her ABS-backpack containing her avalanche beacon, to test whether her equipment is working appropriately and that she can rely on it in an emergency situation. Yet, this risk-calculating approaches also tend to foster risk-affinity, as Moritz reflects:

“My appetite for risks increased the more I did it. I might have become more calmer and more calculating, yet I also take risks more easily or I expanded them successively. Consciously or not, my inhibitions lowered and I started to take more risks” (Moritz, 25, hike and rider)

However, in this case as well, it is not clearly evident which value participants obtain from exposing themselves to such dangers. Interviewees are well aware of the consequences they might face due to the participation in certain types of sports. Nonetheless, they all embrace risks, even start to belittle taking safety measures:

“As long as I don’t need a rope, it’s like scrambling to me” (Eric, 21, extreme skitourer and ice climber)

Therefore, respondents were asked to determine which value they obtain from risk-taking. To Lea, the experience intensifies due to exposing oneself to dangers, since the risks involved entail in-depth knowledge and conscious awareness of one’s surrounding. Despite the incomprehension of her family and friends towards her freeriding activities, the complete state of freedom and euphoria she generates through setting challenges, pushing boundaries and thereby taking risks exceeds her reconsiderations and worries. Mimi however associates the extremity of her sport with obtaining an enhanced self-understanding eventually, whereas Eric
engages in risk-embracing behaviour to prove his worth to himself and others. Thomas however highlights the therapeutic aspects of extreme sports by describing how trial-biking helped him maintaining a healthy mental hygiene. For Tobias, taking risks is necessary to experience adrenaline rushes and euphoria, whereas Marcel, Tim and Moritz describe achieving a complete state of freedom, flow and emptiness of thought, resembling meditative practices. In this context, utilising extreme sports as a means to achieve a meditative state is solely performed for spiritual reasons, thereby emphasising the existentialist motivations of engaging in extreme experiences (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). Further, performing extreme experiences could not only be interpreted as an attempt to contrast mundane everyday life, but also as an escape from their own thoughts (Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017). Hence, all these practices contribute to respondent’s attempts to cultivate themselves.

4.2.4 BEING ANDERS WITH OTHERS

As mentioned beforehand, respondents also engage in extreme sports with others as some form of hedging against risks and dangers. However, other companions do not simply just appropriate the functions of a life insurance, respondents also emphasis the communal aspects of being anders. Contrasting Hemetsberger’s and Weinberger’s (2012) assumption that Anders-sein is an individuality project that does not necessarily include the companionship of other participants since andere individuals aim to differentiate themselves within social groups, the present thesis demonstrates that extreme athletes also cultivate themselves through being anders with others. When asked about the meaning of freeriding to her, Lea ascertains:

“Freedom. Being free, enjoying the day outside with friends” (Lea, 28 freerider and skitourer)

Lea’s statement emphasizes the importance of communal aspects during the engagement in extreme sports. In her narration, she highlights the synergistic effects of sharing experiences with the right people, which she defines as friends whom she trusts and knows that they appropriate the adequate expertise to freeride. Sharing her leisure time with these people increases the value of freeriding to her, since this enables her to arrange her off-time together with friends and thus to create memories together. In a similar vein, Lena clarifies that ski freestyling is not simply a sport discipline to her, rather it exceeds the mere functionality of a sporting activity. To her, what makes the sport so valuable is also constituted in communal aspects, i.e. to share experiences.
Further, thus far Anders-sein is interpreted as an act of individualisation, in which participants “do not imitate the practice within their circle of friends” (Krall 2015, p. 23). Contrasting this interpretation, Marcel states that he and his circle of friends indeed pursue the same practices and share the same spirit when it comes to steep-face skiing. However, despite sharing the same attitude and practices towards extreme sports, every participant still hast to descend the slopes by themselves, thus being somehow individuated in a group of people. Complementing the previous statements, Mimi realises the importance of others in her sports, as well:

“To devote yourself to someone and to trust the person, that introduces you to the sport and teaches you how it works, the one who secures you whilst using weights for the first time, because you simply want to get stronger, better, uhm, you need someone who secures you, you need someone to show you how it works, someone, who is there for you and helps you to gain mental strength or who is there to simply help you, uhm. And to trust someone this much, that someone else might help you with this, uhm, these constitute experiences that are extremely valuable for your personal further development” (Mimi, 27, powerlifter)

To her, having others around during powerlifting is important, because especially in the initial phase of picking up the sports, she needed someone besides herself to believe in her and her skills. Further, she also states to need and enjoy the communication with others in between her training session, thereby emphasising communal aspects, as well. Likewise, Tobias also confirms that snowkiting in company of others is simply more fun than kiting by himself. When asked why he perceives it as more fun when with others, Tobias highlights the motivational aspects of snowkiting with friends, since they push each other more. Similarly, Eric reflects:

“The most beautiful tours where the ones where my colleague and I just sat there afterwards and said nothing. And that’s way more beautiful than experiencing it alone. And that’s why it would be a shame to do the beautiful projects on your own. Because these are the moments you want to share” (Eric, 21, extreme skitourer and ice climber)

In summary, respondents do express the desire to be anders with others, hence refuting Hemetsberger’s and Weinberger’s assumption and demonstrating that practices of Anders-sein do not neglect communal aspects. However, the present thesis solely demonstrates that respondents do express the wish to cultivate themselves in the company of others, yet further research is required to holistically capture and further grasp this practice.
FROM ANDERS TO SEIN

Respondent’s narrations ascertain, that the extreme activities they pursue have manifested in their identities and constitute a fixed part of their beings. Further, following the imperatives on liquid modernity, findings demonstrate that the engagement in extreme sports provide an enticing and suitable solution to singularise oneself within an increasingly singularised society. When reflecting on the meaning of extreme sports to them, research participants report:

“Telemark-skiing in this sense is the one single athletic discipline with which I can identify myself best with. It just gives me the feeling that I am indeed a better person than I am compared to my normal me” (Tim, 23, telemark-freeskier)

“It is the main focus in my life, besides being active and spending a lot of time outdoors. Sports is definitely one of the biggest factors in my life, which has actually pervaded my whole life ever since” (Bastian, 28, obstacle race athlete)

In a similar manner, Lea also reflects upon freeriding as an activity that has manifested in her being. In her narration, she even mentions that she would rather resign her dream job than giving up the sports, since no job could give her that sense of freedom and euphoria that she generates from freeriding. Likewise, other respondents also mention that if they were not able to practice their extreme sports anymore, they would somehow feel bereft. In the following, the establishment of respondent’s sein through being extremely anders as well as respondent’s manifestations of Anders-sein beyond experiential consumption are discussed.

APPROPRIATING A LIQUID IDENTITY

Indeed, research participants do identify themselves with the extreme, risky sport they pursue. Nonetheless, the analysis of interviews has yielded that one way of being is not sufficient enough. Research participants adopt multiple identities to cultivate all aspects of their selves. In this context, respondents do not merely identify themselves with the extreme activities they practice, but also with the everyday life personas they embody. Hence, their sein is not restricted to one single way, rather research participants emphasis and curate a multifaceted way of being. Tim, for instance, is rooted in the banking sector and currently also studies finance related matters at the university. However, besides reserving most of his leisure time for extreme sports, namely telemark-freeskiing, he also celebrates hardstyle music and visits such festivals. Therefore, Tim is anders, as he transcends the typical banker-stigma and rather imbues his life
with the values that are important to him, thus living out different versions of himself. Likewise, Eric reports about having multiple circle of friends, which are distinct from each other. In this context, Eric has his mountain friends, but also mentions to have a separate group of friends with whom he for instance goes out or plans other leisure activities with. Therefore, he is also referring to living out multiple identities. In addition to that, Lea’s multifaceted way of being has manifested in the lifestyle she has chosen. For one thing, she works as a kindergarten teacher, where she teaches values like security and safety, whereas in her other job she is responsible for organising sports marketing events. Additionally, she cultivates herself in her leisure time through exposing herself to dangers and risks. In the following, she recounts how she reconciles these blatant differences:

“Uhm, I have to say that working in the kindergarten is just a wonderful job, because they give you so much back. Children are extremely honest people, therefore there exists nothing more beautiful to me than seeing a child’s smile in the morning. Sports marketing on the other hand is something completely different. It’s more organised and it’s somehow a compensation for the work in kindergarten. And then freeriding, that’s freedom to me, it’s where I can fully focus on myself” (Lea, 28, freerider and skitourer)

Lea’s reflection implies, that she is curatoring risks and extremes in one life domain, whilst striving for security in other aspects. Further, she separates her work persona from the life persona and even her life persona is subdivided into several individualities, thereby living out multiple identities.

Indeed, the construction of an identity is not solely limited to the extreme activities respondents curate. As mentioned beforehand, engaging in extreme, risky experiences is associated with liminalities. These liminalities also refer to the engagement in the sport itself, since almost all research participants are aware of the fact that they will not be able to perform this kind of sports on this level for the rest of their lives. Hence, participants are further aware of the fact, that they have to substitute the respective extreme activity at some point. When asked about what they would do, if they were not able to practice their respective sports in the future, almost all respondents claimed that they would look for something different, from which they could obtain a similar value. In this context, Bastian concludes:

„I’m going to do other things, but I will never fully renounce sports, simply because I can’t. I love the sports. Maybe I don’t want to practice it on such an extreme level, I will
**definitely do more relaxed kind of things, but I won’t stop running or setting myself challenges. Maybe I am up for something more relax like running through Tibet in seven days or something like that**” (Bastian, 28, obstacle race athlete)

Respondents do identify themselves with their extreme, risky athletic discipline, yet Bastian’s statement clarifies that it is not only the extreme extents of the respective sporting activity with what participants identify themselves, but the value obtained that contributes to their quest for ultimate self-cultivation. Following Bardhi’s and Eckhardt’s (2017) interpretation on liquid consumption (2017), the quintessence of the term liquid also suits respondent’s identity construction approaches. Identity projects are marked by the ephemeral, dematerialised and rapid traits of postmodernity. Further, respondents claim to love what they do and identify themselves with their extreme practices. However, on the other hand they are also aware that the performance of this sport is limited, due to physical erosion caused by the sports as well as the dangers that it involves. Moreover, the course of life that respondents have chosen and are going to choose later on also influence the engagement in extreme, risky experiences. Hence, due to the multifacetedness of respondent’s lives, they appropriate a liquid identity to cultivate all aspects of themselves and are thus enabled to switch inbetween identities. Therefore, they are striving towards ultimate self-cultivation by pursuing the value that they obtain from engaging in extreme, risky experiences.

### 4.3.2 MANIFESTATIONS BEYOND EXPERIENTIAL CONSUMPTION

In addition to andere extreme, experiential consumption, respondent’s Anders-sein manifests in other life aspects, as well. Especially when it comes to fashion consumption, participants demonstrate their Anders-sein. In this context, individuals do not want to rebel against current fashion styles, yet they do not want to follow every trend, as well. They rather demonstrate a certain indifference when it comes to fashion, however they do not aim to stand out through non-conforming. However, respondents claim to not hype current fashion trends. Therefore, they pursue “their own thing” within the scope of societal acceptance. Referring to this, Mimi concludes:

> “I think especially when it comes to fashion trends, you need to bear in mind what you like and in what you feel comfortable with” (Mimi, 27, powerlifter)

She exemplifies her statement through her opposing skinny jeans for a very long time, which she now regrets. After reflecting on herself, she has come to the conclusion that other types of
jeans, like boyfriend jeans, which are highly en vogue right now, simply do not fit her body style. Therefore, she decided to wear whatever she feels most comfortable with and what suits her body best, yet somehow adapted to the current fashion trends. In a similar vein, other participants also mention to adapt the current styles in accordance with their beings. This is demonstrated in Bastian’s statement:

“In university, I was known as the guy who always wears the sweatpants. When I once wore a jean for an oral exam, everyone looked puzzled at me and asked what’s wrong. And this happened in Berlin, a city in which you’re super anonymous” (Bastian, 28, obstacle race athlete)

Besides fashion consumption, one respondent’s _Anders-sein_ manifests in the travel destination he chooses. Instead of travelling to places like Indonesia, Asia or Australia, which are popular among his cohort, the 21-year-old decided to visit and explore Eastern Europe, a rather unconventional travel destination given his age. When asked why he chose this destination instead of others that his friends visited, he mentions that it has manifested in his biography to decide for the things that others did not do. Hence, he concludes:

“I think I always wanted to be a little different” (Eric, 21, extreme skitourer and ice climber)

### 4.4 PRACTICING ANDERS-SEIN: ETREME EDITION

The present thesis aims to uncover cultivation practices of _andere_ consumers in an extreme and risky context. Within this section, findings are summarised especially focusing on the cultivation practices _andere_, extreme individuals engaging in experiential consumption pursue. Data analysis has yielded that respondents engage in existing practices like _wilful ignorance_, which constitutes the fundamental practice in order to further develop _anderes_ behaviour. In addition to that, one research respondent engages in _delocalisation_ practices through snowkiting. In particular, he expresses this through _defamiliarizing_ the original function of a kite, i.e. instead of kitesurfing on water, he uses the kite as a power unit for skiing in winter. In other words, through kitesurfing on snow he _defamiliarizes_ the original function of a kite.

However, complementing current findings on _Anders-sein_, the present thesis uncovered additional cultivation practices that contribute to respondent’s quest for otherness. Respondents claim that _pushing boundaries through setting challenges_ evokes feelings of euphoria and self-content that could not be obtained otherwise. Furthermore, the communal aspects of being
anders are emphasised, as well. Hence, being anders with others also constitutes a cultivation practice, since the experience intensifies for respondents through sharing it with companions. Surprisingly, extreme activities that entail various hazards are also pursued to achieve a state of meditation. Resembling meditational techniques, respondents claim to achieve a complete state of freedom and emptiness of thought through risk-taking and engaging in extreme experiences. Thus, risk-taking as a form of meditation constitutes another cultivation practice which consumers curate. Finally, participants narratives yielded that they adopt multiple identities to live out their multifaceted being. Hence, appropriating a liquid identity to cultivate all aspects of one’s being constitutes the last practice that this research identified.
5.0 DISCUSSION

Within a postmodern society, virtues like self-actualisation, personal growth and extreme individualisation are celebrated and curated (Baumann 2013; Baumeister 1987; Branaman 2007). In liquid modernity, society has experienced a shift towards uniqueness and therefore it is the singularised and special that raises attention and thus attraction. Indeed, singularisation has become the tool to signal differentness in a society that celebrates and performs the exceptional (Reckwitz 2018). Further, individuals are provided with endless opportunities to shape and form their selves, since postmodernity has led to the demise of normative identity constructs and has left individuals perplexed on how to fill their empty and fragmented selves with meaning (Crushman 1990; Firat and Venkatesh 1995). Therefore, individuals have to thoroughly reflect on themselves to determine what they desire and aspire, who they are, who they want to be and how they want to singularise themselves to eventually completely actualise themselves.

In this context, andere experiences provide an enticing opportunity to differentiate oneself within a society in which everyone attempts to do the same (Baumann 2013; Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). Through being anders, individuals aim to curate and eventually completely actualise their sein, i.e. through pursuing andere experiences individuals further develop themselves towards ultimate self-cultivation and self-actualisation. Hence, ander practices are performed as one way to imbue postmodern individual’s fragmented (Firat and Venkatesh 1995) and empty selves (Crushman 1990) with significance and purpose.

The experiences informing this study contribute to such self-exploratory projects. However, contrasting Hemetsberger’s and Weinberger’s assumption (2012) that andere experiences only constitute small scale boundary transgressions that are not pushed to extremes, the present thesis demonstrates that self-cultivation approaches and identity projects can indeed be extreme and fraught with risk. Hence, individuals practice extreme and risky experiences in order to further explore who they are and who they are not, to cultivate themselves and to deliver a contribution for constructing and expanding their identity. Hence, these self-exploratory processes are rooted within their beings.

However, the development and manifestation of being anders in an extreme and risky context is a long-term process. By definition, Anders-sein entails critically reflecting on societal norms and conventions. Andere individuals question existing social tenets and paradigms and aim to
discover who they are apart from the person society implies they should embody. Thus, people who are *anders* unburden themselves from intangible constructs that society imposes and critically review prevalent concepts concerning marriage, family planning, aesthetic ideals, provincial values or gender and sexuality discourses. In this context, participants of the present study embrace a “live and let live” attitude. Hence, they disassociate themselves from social expectations and discourse and engage in *anderes* experiences in the pursuit of “their own thing”.

Nonetheless, respondents are faced with criticism from their social surrounding concerning their extreme athletic experiences, since the engagement in risky activities often results in incomprehension and disapproval from their environment. Thus, it is a tedious process to ignore the norms and conventions society enforces upon individuals and requires in-depth reflection on self. This is in accordance with Hemetsberger’s and Weinberger’s findings (2012), who state that self-reflection constitutes a long-term process. Especially in the context of extreme and risky sports, constant and thorough self-reflection is required, since practicing such activities might in the worst case even result in fatalities.

However, findings demonstrate, that these processes of self-reflection, self-exploration and ignorance already evolved at an early stage in respondent’s lives. In this context, respondent’s family environment as well as certain role models do have an impact on developing *anderes* behaviour, therefore refuting the existing standpoint that *andere* individuals do not imitate or reproduce behaviour of their immediate surrounding (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012). Results reveal that especially in an athletic context, one’s family fosters self-exploratory processes through enabling individuals to try out various types of sports. Hence, *anderes* behaviour might be manifested in one’s self, but can be encouraged by one’s domestic environment or pushed further through role models. Further, especially in a sport related context imitation is required to some extent, since practicing extreme sports is associated with high, even life-endangering risks. Therefore, imitation refers to the appropriation of the required techniques, skills and expertise to engage in the sport, which cannot be taught by oneself. Hence, role models or guiding persons are required to develop this kind of *anderes* behaviour.

Moreover, in alignment with previous studies concerning *Anders-sein* (Binder 2014; Hemetsberger an Weinberger 2012; Krall 2015), radical changes and events also contribute to the development of *anderes* behaviour. Findings demonstrate, that particularly in a sport related context tragic events or drastic changes foster the engagement in extreme sports due to the therapeutical effects obtained through setting challenges or pushing boundaries.
Indeed, through performing and engaging in extreme athletic experiences that entail various hazards concerning one’s health and even one’s life, participants of the present study do cultivate themselves. In accordance with Holbrook’s and Hirschman’s stance (1982), the engagement in extreme experiences is associated with high emotionality for the consumer. By engaging in the respective extreme sports, respondents push their boundaries and set themselves challenges to generate feelings of euphoria and self-content, enhanced physical and mental self-understanding (Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017) as well as emptiness of thought and absolute freedom. In line with Scott, Cayla and Cova’s stance (2017, p. 22), this emptiness of mind could also be interpreted as an escape from one’s own thoughts and thus as “temporary moments of escape from their self”. Further, these emotions resemble the feelings generated and obtained from engaging in peak (Maslow 1961) or flow experiences (Csikszentmihalyi 1997). Particularly in the context of extreme sports, respondents aspire and set flow experiences. By definition, flow experiences constitute a state of complete immersion into the experience, thereby not perceiving one’s immediate environment anymore and attaining an ecstatic state (Csikszentmihalyi 1997). However, in the present study, feelings of flow are interpreted as meditative and therapeutic that contrast mundane everyday life.

Furthermore, research participants highlight the communal aspects of being anders. For them, the engagement in the respective sports intensifies through sharing the experience with others. Hence, contrasting Hemetsberger’s and Weinberger’s claim (2012), Anders-sein cannot be solely interpreted as an individuality project that excludes the presence of others. Through pushing boundaries or setting challenges together, individuals cultivate themselves, since through sharing the activity with others individuals obtain a greater value as when compared to performing the experience by themselves.

Additionally, in line with Krall’s findings (2015), the present study further demonstrates that being anders through material consumption varies from expressing Anders-sein through engaging in experiential consumption. Embodying Anders-sein via material consumption appears more obvious than through experiential consumption. Thus, andere individuals that perform extreme athletic experience fraught with risk do not practice such activities with the aim to clearly differentiate themselves from others, but they do so to cultivate themselves. In other words, andere individuals engage in extreme experiential consumption to obtain incremental values for themselves. Therefore, engaging in extreme, risky experiences is performed due to existentialist reasons (Binder 2014; Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012; Krall 2015). Andere, extreme experiences can be interpreted as transformative, since they are
performed solely due to existentialist motivations. Hence, respondents pursue such activities in a pursuit of complete self-fulfilment (Sartre 1956).

Further, the present thesis demonstrates that identity is performed and not fixed (Butler 1990). Indeed, the engagement in extreme sports and embracing risky behaviour has manifested in participants’ identities. However, they do not restrict themselves to one single way of being. Findings demonstrate, that they adopt multiple identities and engage in the appropriation of a liquid identity. As mentioned beforehand, liquid conditions enable to lead multiple lifestyles and therefore individuals can live out their beings in a multifaceted manner (Firat and Venkatesh 1995). Therefore, findings illustrate that respondents do not settle for one identity as an extreme athlete, for instance. Rather, respondents pursue various lifestyles and identities that are even contradictory at times. Hence, in line with Bardhi’s and Eckhardt’s claim (2017, p. 3) that “identity project can become more fluid, ephemeral, and in flux”, the identity projects respondents of the present study engage in can also be interpreted as liquid. Whilst curating risk and danger in one life aspect, respondents of the present study seek security or diversity in other life domains. Hence, coinciding Firat’s and Venkatesh’s claim (1995), participants avoid embodying one consistent identity and rather appropriate multiple identities, in between which they can shift seamlessly.

Additionally, this manifestation of a liquid identity is also constituted in the liminalities the sport entails. Apart from liminal traits concerning costs, time and place of performing the experience and the appropriation of the required expertise, such liminalities also refer to the sports itself. Findings demonstrate that the respective extreme sports respondents engage in do constitute a significant part of their identity, yet it is crucial to highlight that it is the value derived from such experiences that contributes to respondents’ quest for ultimate self-cultivation. Therefore, respondents do not merely strive for the activity itself, but for the value obtained, thereby appropriating a liquid identity to cultivate all aspects of their beings.

Lastly, it is important to highlight that individuals are subjected to market logic (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017). Therefore, when pursuing otherness via marketplace offers, andere subjects can only individualise themselves within the scope of marketplace offerings. In other words, one can only express his/her Anders-sein within the range the marketplace provides. Hence, identity projects are limited to such constraints.
6.0 CONCLUSION

The present thesis investigated into singularisation and cultivation practices of andere consumers in an increasingly singularised society (Reckwitz 2018). Hence, this study examines the phenomenon of Anders-sein (Hemetsberger and Weinberger 2012) from an extreme and risky perspective. Therefore, the thesis contributes to an enriched understanding of Anders-sein, since values obtained from engaging in extreme experiences fraught with risk are presented. Additionally, it is explained how Anders-sein in an extreme and risky experiential context contributes to identity construction and self-cultivation processes. Overall, this study demonstrates that consumers singularise themselves through engaging in extreme experiences, taking risks for cultivating the self and appropriating a liquid identity. Further, the thesis expands current findings by contradicting existing results on the phenomenon and thereby introducing new practices of Anders-sein: appropriating a liquid identity, risk taking as a form of meditation, being anders with others and setting challenges through pushing boundaries.

6.1 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Performing extreme athletic experiences fraught with risk are of significant importance for andere consumers. The urge to expose oneself to risks and dangers might even be rooted in early stages of individuals’ lives. Moreover, these practices essentially contribute to individuals’ singularisation approaches, self-cultivation- and identity construction processes and imbue consumers’ lives with purpose and meaning. However, disregarding the subjective importance of these practices, targeting this customer group constitutes a challenging task, since andere individuals engaging in extreme, risky athletic experiences are in a constant pursuit of “their own thing”.

However, since andere individuals appropriate a liquid identity, the values obtained through engaging in extreme, risky athletic experiences can be triggered in other domains, as well. In this context, marketers are enabled to reproduce such generated virtues in other aspects that are not fraught with risk. Moreover, individuals performing such experiences do so to contrast mundane everyday life and partly also to escape their own thoughts (Scott, Cayla and Cova 2017). Therefore, marketers can address andere consumers by providing marketplace offerings that trigger such values, yet in a non-extreme context. Furthermore, values like emptiness of thought could be obtained through addressing individuals via emphasising the generation of meditative and liberating states in other domains. Further, andere individuals emphasise the self-
renewing prospects of engaging in extreme sports. Such aspects can also be aroused in other domains that do not include extremes or risks. Additionally, *andere* individuals are on a quest for a challenge and aim to push their boundaries even further. Hence, marketers are enabled to challenge them in other life aspects, as well.

Overall, targeting and approaching this group of consumers constitutes a difficult task, since they do not follow mainstream consumption patterns. *Andere* individuals critically review societal norms and conventions and hence only appropriate themselves whatever they want to have. Thus, they express indifference concerning fashion trends or aesthetic ideals. Further, cultivation practices are substitutable and change over time, which complicates reaching this group, as well. Yet, *andere* subjects do aspire autonomy, self-cultivation, and demonstrate affinity for challenges and pushing boundaries. Hence, branding approaches could be targeted on such themes.

### 6.2 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The present thesis informs the phenomenon of *Anders-sein* with rich and new insights by investigating into it in an extreme and risky context. However, the phenomenon is not yet fully explored and demands further investigation. Therefore, possible directions for further research as well as limitations of the present study are presented in the following.

For one thing, limitations of the present study refer to the sample size. Despite the fact that the ten respondents provided this study with rich insights, even more in-depth and promising data could have been generated through enlarging the sample size. Further, the data was analysed by one researcher only. In this context, the quality of the study could have been enhanced through integrating more examiners into the research (Flick 2009). Additionally, the phenomenon of *Anders-sein* has only been investigated in western society-constructs. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore into the phenomenon in non-western cultures. Moreover, the topic of self-cultivation processes occupies a broad field of investigation and thus the phenomenon could be scrutinised from various other perspectives. Therefore, themes like food or music consumption seem promising and could be considered for further investigation. Moreover, also the communal aspects of being *anders* constitute an auspicious field of investigation. The present thesis uncovers that individuals do express the desire to cultivate themselves with others. However, further research on this practice is required to holistically and thoroughly grasp it. Additionally, the interview guideline could be further adapted with respect to focusing more on
self-cultivation practices and the psychological aspects of being *anders*. In this context, further research could question even more why individuals engage in *andere* practices.
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APPENDIX A: APPROACHING THE SAMPLE

A.1 EMAIL AND CONTACT SHEET

Subject: To those who make a difference

.... I WANT YOU!

Du machst Erfahrungen, die anders sind? Du betreibst besondere oder unkonventionelle Sportarten wie Freeriden, Freestyling, Hike and Riding, Eisklettern, Paraskiing, Snowkiting, Downhill Biking etc.? Mit anderen Worten: du probierst dich aus, forderst dich immer wieder selbst heraus und versuchst mit diesen besonderen Erfahrungen den Alltag zu durchbrechen? Außerdem beschreiben dich deine Freunde und dein näheres Umfeld als jemanden, der gesellschaftliche Konventionen nicht als gegeben hinnimmt, sondern kritisch hinterfragt?


Da es nicht leicht ist, jemanden wie dich zu finden, würde ich mich sehr über deine Unterstützung freuen! Alle Daten werden selbstverständlich anonym behandelt.

Falls du dich angesprochen fühlst und Interesse hast an der Studie teilzunehmen, dann kontaktiere mich bitte unter belinda.fadum@student.uibk.ac.at
APPENDIX B

B.1 INITIAL INTERVIEW GUIDELINE


Fragen 1-7: Andere Erfahrungen

Bei unserer Kontaktaufnahme erwähntest du, dass du andere/unkonventionelle/besondere Sportarten betreibst.

1: Könntest du mir bitte dieses sportliche Erlebnis/ diese sportlichen Erlebnisse beschreiben?

Praktik: unkonventionell, individuell, besonders, teils sogar extreme/gefährliche Erfahrungen.

2: Wie kam es dazu, dass du diese Sportart betreibst?

Praktik: Individuelle Ausführung der Freizeitaktivität.

3: Machen Personen aus deinem Freundeskreis dieselben oder ähnliche Erfahrungen?

Individualität durch Konformität versus Anders-sein.

4: Was sagt diese Sportart über dich aus?

Identitätskonstruktion durch Konformität versus Anders-sein.

5: Hat dich diese sportliche Erfahrung geändert?
Selbst-Transformation, Selbstfindung, Sinnfindung.

6: Gibt es noch andere oder ähnliche sportliche Erfahrungen, die du ausprobiert hast?

Permanente Selbstfindung.

Falls ja: Welche?

7: Bitte vergleiche diese sportlichen Freizeitaktivitäten mit denen deiner Freunde. Welche Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten erkennst du?

Assimilation, Zugehörigkeit.

8: Bitte vergleiche deinen Lebensstil mit dem deiner Freunde. Welche Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede erkennst du?

Teilweise Konformität.

FRAge 9: Konventionen: 10: Es gibt gewisse gesellschaftliche Erwartungen im Bezug auf Familie, Geschlecht, Einstellungen, Kleidung und dem allgemeinen Lebensstil. Wie stehst du dazu?

Hinterfragung und Loslösung von gesellschaftlichen Konventionen.

FRAge 10: Transformation, Selbst-Findung 11: Würdest du sagen, dass du in deinem Leben angekommen bist und dich selbst gefunden hast oder würdest du dich eher als Typ beschreiben, der sich selbst stetig weiterentwickelt?

Selbstfindung, Sinnfindung.

Vielen Dank, dass du dir die Zeit genommen hast meine Fragen zu beantworten. Gibt es noch etwas, das du gerne ergänzen würdest?
B.2 FINAL INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

EINLEITUNG.

*Small Talk.*


**THEMATISCHER RAHMEN 1: ANDERE ERLEBNISBEREICHE**


   *Beschreibung der Erfahrung*

2. Erzählgenerierendes Nachfragen zu Unklarheiten, Erzählücken, angerissenen, aber nicht fertig erzählten Themen (Berger 2010):

   Könntest du mir bitte über die Situation X noch ein wenig mehr erzählen?
   Du hast erwähnt, dass du (...). Könntest du mir das bitte genauer beschreiben?
   Du hast erzählt, dass du (...). Kannst du dich an ähnliche Situationen in deinem Leben erinnern?
   Du hast beschrieben, dass du (...). Kannst du mir bitte ein Beispiel dafür geben?

3. Exmanentes Nachfragen (Berger 2010):

   **FRAGE 1:** Ich hatte dich gebeten, für dich bedeutsame Bilder von deinen sportlichen Erfahrungen herauszusuchen. Könntest du mir diese bitte zeigen.

   Mit welchem Bild möchtest du beginnen?
   Was ist auf diesem Bild genau zu sehen? Erzähl mir davon.
Was bedeutet dieses Bild für dich?
Kannst du mir bitte beschreiben was du fühlst, wenn du dieses Bild siehst?
Hintergründe erfragen:
  Inwiefern?
  Wie oft machst du eigentlich (Benennung der Sportart)?
  Wo machst du diese sportliche Erfahrung am liebsten?
  Könntest du mir diesen Ort/ deinen Lieblingsort genauer beschreiben?

FRAGE 2: Abgesehen von deinen jetzigen sportlichen Erfahrungen: war es immer so in deinem Leben, dass du dich nach solchen Erlebnissen gesehnt hast?
Allgemeiner Beginn, anderen Erfahrungen nachgehen zu wollen.
  Wie alt bist du zu dieser Zeit gewesen?
  Bitte erzähle mir davon.
    Bitte schildere mir genauer, was damals passiert ist.
      Berufliches Leben; Privates Leben; Beziehung/ Prägende Menschen; Wunsch nach Veränderung.
      Gibt es einen Menschen in deinem Leben, der deinen Wunsch nach solchen Erlebnissen geprägt hat?
    Du hast auch Bilder von (Benennung der Sportart) mitgebracht.
      Bitte erzähle mir davon.
      Was bedeutet dieses Bild für dich?
      Kannst du mir bitte beschreiben was du fühlst, wenn du dieses Bild siehst?
      Hintergründe genauer erfahren...
    Bei Aufgreifen der Thematik seitens der Befragten: Du erwähntest, dass du bestimmten gesellschaftlichen Erwartungen kritisch gegenüberstehst. Wie kam es eigentlich dazu?
      Beginn/ Auslöser der Hinterfragung gesellschaftlicher Konventionen.

FRAGE 3: Gibt es ein bestimmtes Erlebnis, das deinen Wunsch nach (Benennung der sportlichen Erfahrung) ausgelöst hat?
Schlüsselerlebnis in Bezug auf den spezifischen Erlebnisbereich (z.B. Reiseerfahrungen).
  Falls nein: Wie hat der Wunsch diese Erfahrung zu machen begonnen?
    Anstoß die Sportart zu betreiben; Wunsch nach Veränderung; Lebensphase.
    Wie alt warst du damals?
Was geschah in dieser Lebensphase?

*Berufliches Leben; Privates Leben; Beziehung/ Prägende Menschen; Wunsch nach Veränderung.*

Hintergründe erfragen:
Könntest du mir das bitte genauer beschreiben?

*Berufliches Leben; Privates Leben; Beziehung/ Prägende Menschen; Wunsch nach Veränderung.*

Gibt es einen Menschen in deinem Leben, der deinen Wunsch nach (Benennung der sportlichen Erfahrung) beeinflusst hat?

Gibt es noch etwas das ich wissen sollte, das mir dabei hilft, deinen Wunsch nach (Benennung der sportlichen Erfahrung) zu verstehen?

Ganz generell – wie reagierten andere Menschen darauf, als du ihnen erzählt hast damit (Benennung des Erfahrungsbereiches) zu beginnen?

*Was hast du in dieser Situation gedacht?*

*Wie hast du darauf reagiert?*

Falls nicht geklärt:

Wie haben deine Freunde darauf reagiert, als du begonnen hast diese Erfahrung zu machen?

*Reaktion auf die teilweise Differenzierung innerhalb des Freundeskreises; mögliche Beeinflussung; Wie hat deine Familie am Anfang darauf reagiert? Reaktion auf die teilweise Differenzierung; mögliche Beeinflussung.*

**FRAGE 4: Wie hat sich das mit dem (Benennung des sportlichen Erfahrungsbereiches) in deinem Leben dann weiterentwickelt?**

*Entwicklung der Erfahrungen mit der Zeit*

Hat sich die Art wie du die Erfahrung machst im Laufe deines Lebens geändert?

*Veränderung der Aktivität, um das eigene Selbst zu entdecken und um zu erfahren wie sich geänderte Verhaltensweisen auf die Identität auswirken.*

Hast du schon mal eine Person kennengelernt die genau dieselben (Benennung der sportlichen Erfahrungen) macht wie du?

*Einzigartigkeit; Möglicher Wechsel in andere Bereiche des Anders-seins.*

Wie hast du in dieser Situation reagiert?

Was hast du gedacht?
Falls nein: Stell dir bitte vor du lernst jemanden kennen, der genau dieselben (Benennung der sportlichen Erfahrungen) macht wie du.  
Was würdest du in so einer Situation fühlen?


Schlüsselerlebnis in Verbindung mit Anders-sein.
Was ist in diesem Moment genau passiert?
Wie hast du dich dabei gefühlt?
In welcher Lebensphase warst du damals?
Soziales Umfeld, Lebensumstände, etc.
Wie hat sich dieses Erlebnis auf dich und dein Leben ausgewirkt?

FRAGE 6: Welches bedeutende Erlebnis war das negativste, das du in Zusammenhang mit dem (Benennung des sportlichen Erfahrungsbereichs) erlebt hast (McAdams 2007)?

Schlüsselerlebnis in Verbindung mit Anders-sein.
Schildere mir bitte, was geschah.
Kannst du mir erzählen, wie du dich dabei gefühlt hast?
Hat sich dein Leben aufgrund dieser negativen Erfahrung verändert?

FRAGE 7: Haben deine (Benennung des sportlichen Erfahrungsbereiches) zu einem Wendepunkt in deinem Leben geführt? Also gab oder gibt es ein bedeutendes Erlebnis, das dich oder dein Leben verändert hat (McAdams 2007).
Falls ja: Erzähle mir bitte wie es dazu kam und wie es war.

Schlüsselerlebnis in Verbindung mit Anders-sein.
Inwiefern denkst du, dass dieses Erlebnis wichtig für dein Leben ist oder war?

FRAGE 8: Würdest du sagen, dass du dich durch deine (Benennung der sportlichen Erfahrung) verändert hast?

Selbstfindung, Selbst-Transformation.
Wie drückt sich das konkret bei dir aus?
Was bedeutet das für dich?
FRAGE 9: Denkst du, dass du auch in Zukunft diese (Benennung anderer sportlicher Erfahrung/Erfahrungen) noch machen wirst?

Stell dir vor, du könntest diese besonderen Erfahrungen in Zukunft nicht mehr machen. Was würde das für dich bedeuten?

Bedeutung der Anders-sein Praktiken.

THEMATISCHER RAHMEN 2: KONFORMITÄT/ NICHT-KONFORMITÄT


Möglicherweise: Phasen der Nicht-Konformität

2. Erzählgenerierendes Nachfragen zu Unklarheiten, Erzählücken, angerissenen, aber nicht fertig erzählten Themen etc. (Berger 2010)

Wie alt warst du damals?

Erzähl mir bitte von dieser Lebensphase.

Könntest du mir bitte über die Situation X noch ein wenig mehr erzählen?

Du hast erwähnt, dass du (...). Könntest du mir das bitte genauer beschreiben?

Du hast erwähnt, dass du (...). Beschreib mir bitte wie es dazu kam.

Du hast erzählt, dass du (...). Kannst du dich an ähnliche Situationen in deinem Leben erinnern?

3. Exmanentes Nachfragen (Berger 2010):

FRAGE 1: Würdest du sagen, dass du Modetrends folgst?

War das schon immer so?

Wie hat sich das mit der Mode in deinem Leben dann weiterentwickelt?

THEMATISCHER RAHMEN 3: ANDERS-SEIN UND INDIVIDUELLE LEBENSGESCHICHTE

ruhig Zeit lassen für Einzelheiten, denn für mich ist alles interessant, was dir wichtig ist. Flick (2010, 229)

2. Erzählgenerierendes Nachfragen zu Unklarheiten, Erzählücken, angerissenen, aber nicht fertig erzählten Themen etc. (Berger 2010)

Vielen Dank für deine Erzählung.

Nachfragen (Fischer-Rosenthal & Rosenthal 1997):
Könntest du mir bitte über diese Phase noch ein wenig mehr erzählen?
Du hast erwähnt, dass du (...). Könntest du mir das bitte genauer beschreiben?
Du hast erzählt, dass du (...). Kannst du dich an ähnliche Situationen in deinem Leben erinnern?

3. Exmanentes Nachfragen (Berger 2010):
FRAGE 1: Stell dir wieder vor, dein Leben wäre ein Roman mit Kapiteln, Szenen und Geschichten, die auch in deiner Zukunft passieren – in welche Kapitel wäre der Roman untergliedert?
Lebensthema (McAdams 2007)

Und welchen Titel hätte der Roman?

Jetzt sind wir am Ende des Interviews angelangt. Würdest du noch gerne etwas ergänzen wollen, das dir wichtig erscheint?

SOZIODEMOGRAPHISCHE DATEN

Vielen Dank. Wenn du mir dann noch ein paar Dinge verraten könntest:
dein Alter ............................................................
deinen Beruf ............................................................
deinen Wohnort ............................................................
deine Herkunft ............................................................
dein ungefähres monatlich verfügbares Nettoeinkommen ............................................................
NACHGESPRÄCH/ REFLEXION


DEKLARATION

Hiermit bestätige ich, (Name des Interviewpartners), dass ich, Belinda Fadum, die Erlaubnis erteilt habe, das hier geführte Interview und das vorangegangene Erstgespräch aufzunehmen, damit es anschließend für ihre Masterarbeit transkribiert werden kann. Des Weiteren bin ich damit einverstanden, dass meine Daten veröffentlicht werden dürfen, meine Anonymität aber, ohne vorherige Absprache, stets gewährleistet ist.

.................................................................

Ort, Datum, Unterschrift
APPENDIX C

C.1 DATA STRUCTURE

GENERAL THEME 1: ANDERE, EXTREME EXPERIENCES

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Development of Anders-sein
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<td>strive for perfection</td>
<td>support</td>
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### Handling social reactions
- Differentiation from others/ or similar sports
- Willful ignorance
- Conformity
- Non-conformity

### Social reactions
- Negative
- Positive

### Same experience - threat for individuality or not?

### Andere pracitce
- Performing andere, extreme experience
  - Extreme
  - Difficult
  - Calculated risk
  - Positive evaluations
  - Liminality
  - Motivational aspect
  - Negative evaluations

- Anxiety
- Strategic approach
- Defamiliarisation
- Cautiousness
- Sacrifice
- Constant alertness
- Rite
- Easy

### Manifestation of Anders-sein

### Preparation

### Manifestation beyond experiential consumption
GENERAL THEME 2: INDIVIDUAL LIFE STORY DEVELOPMENT

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AFFIDAVIT

I hereby declare that this master thesis has been written only by the undersigned and without any assistance from third parties. I confirm that no sources have been used in the preparation of this thesis other than those indicated in the thesis itself.

This master thesis has heretofore not been submitted or published elsewhere, neither in its present form, nor in a similar version.

_________________________       ________________________
Date                        Signature