Identity – lifestyle or destiny?

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## How can changing realities be covered in social research?

Postulate

- **Different tendencies in societies in the late modernity make it difficult to define and find the fitting approaches and research methods that can provide a comprehensive picture of a given situation and a good approximation to reality and its various subjective perceptions.**

- **Change of meaning of basic concepts.**

- **Changes in framework of society (values, ideologies, policy, technical and economic opportunities …)**

:\\ Who wants to be adult?

- **The cult of staying young does not mean young people have it easier today.**

- **Growing up means:**
  - **Finishing education and entering the labour market**
  - **Leaving parental home for an own residence**
  - **Partnership and sexual identity**
  - **Autonomy**

- **And youth starts earlier**
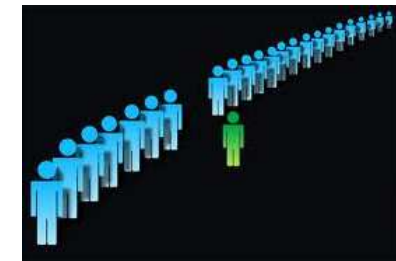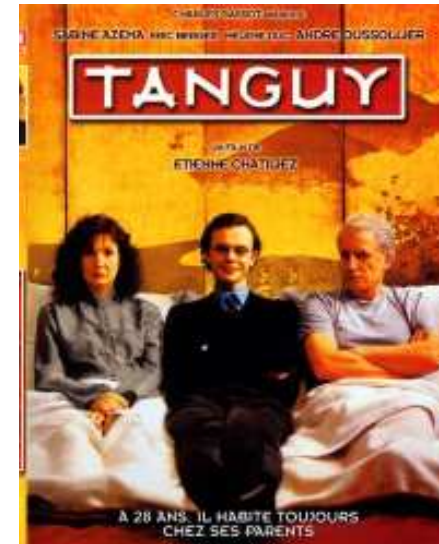
Changes in society

- **Loss of fundamental truth:** communism, capitalism, religions have lost their influence and power of interpretation

- **Scepticism concerning development:** not everything that is possible, should be done – conflicting directions

- **Risk-society:** dangers that can not be influence endanger all people – climatic change

- **New balance of work life and leisure time:** new forms of defining identities
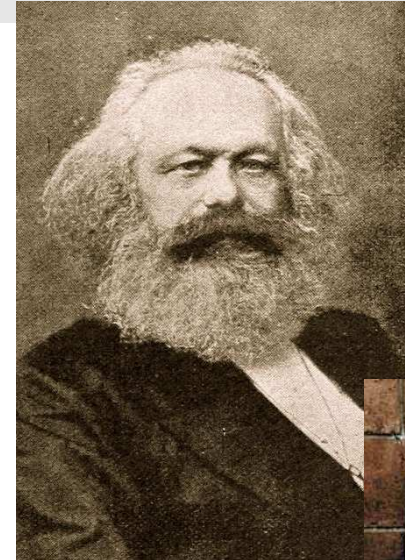
Globalisation – diversity – networks

- From "mono-culture" to multi-culture and trans-cultural living

- Perception of trans-cultural differences in everyday life

- Trans-national culture and media industry (TV, Internet)

- Everyday life and acting in networks

- Changing in determinants of migration

- Growing migration, growing inter-cultural contact and (in)tolerance
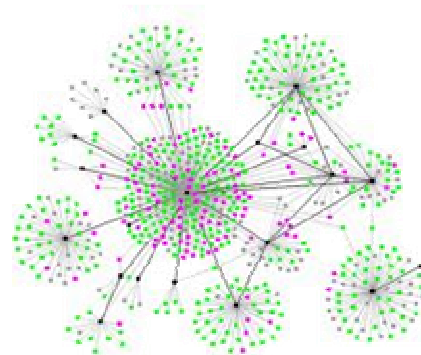
Individualisation

- Traditional communities lose influence and power

- The individual is essential.

- Freedom and necessity to choose!

- Being someone special is ordinary

- Lifestyle as motor of group building: constructing the life

- Need of self-expression for the markets

Foto: faz.net

Foto: carolineclarkdesign.com

Foto: greune.com

Aesthetics in society

More important than the thing itself is how it is presented. **Function follows form!**

Beside functionality each product and each form of consumption has an ideal content and a surplus.

Objects are carriers of magic powers and authorize the consumers to lift them above their surrounding.
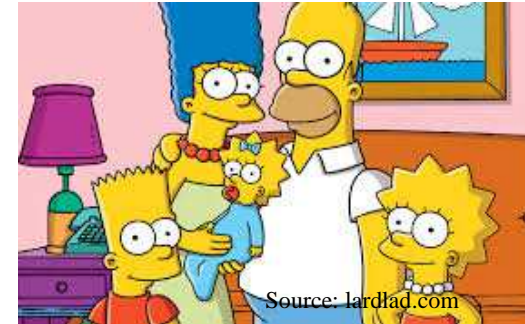
:\\ Important influences on children

- **Family**

- **Friends and peers – youth cultures and scenes**

- **Media (MY MEDIA)**

- **Schooling / leisure activities / clubs**

- **Work**

- **Surrounding – traditions**

- **Policy**

Consequences for upbringing?

   Maybe.

Consequences for growing up?

   Definitely!

Source: lardlad.com

www.serbien-urlaub.info

Belgrade at night
www.belgradeatnight.com

Creating identity and self image in scenes

Implications for social research

- Broader theoretical background needed.

- Triangulation of methods AND of theories (e.g. migration research, youth research, media research, psychology, health research)?

- Research teams will have to be inter-disciplinary built.

- Researchers in the field (interviewers, moderators) will have to understand different realities (inter- and trans-cultural realities of the people, surrounding / neighbourhood, school – education – labour market, media usage, socio-economic background, gender roles …).

- Construction of guidelines and questionnaires might have to follow new rules – comparability over time still possible?

Thank you for your attention

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