

Not only does the orthodoxy pretend that increasing quantities of goods are the source of happiness/utility. Implicitly, it also pretends that happiness/utility are sold to the consumer. Everything of economic impact on the consumer's happiness/utility must pass through the market first. For the orthodoxy, the market is the key process in the economy. From this premise, it is only logical to define the value of goods as exchange value and ignore the use value of things. The blinkered scientific view that this entails is evident by now. As is the very different understanding that results when, within the Quality Theory of Consumption (QTC), the curation of social identity becomes the focus instead of the exchange of goods.

Another consequence of the orthodoxy's market focus is its division of economic agents into two (ideal) types: producers and consumers. The one type supplies and sells what the other type demands and buys. Consequently, the orthodoxy also pretends that, *grosso modo*, people do not themselves produce what they consume. Here too, the orthodoxy is flying blind, now concerning the value chain of the consumer sector as a whole. Contrary to this, Part 2 is devoted to a radically different, cultural-economic understanding of this value chain.

If people consume social distance and proximity, they consume what they produce themselves in their capacity as consumers. Because, if you accept the idea of consumption of social distance and proximity, you can hardly reject the idea of self-production of that same social distance and proximity by the consumers themselves. QTC puts the production of social distance and proximity by consumers in the foreground and, consequently, the production (contribution) of industry in the background. If you accept the idea of self-production by consumers, you might also consider two follow-up theory-building paradigms of QTC.

Firstly, the individual effort to produce social distance and proximity is merely individual input into their collective production. What individuals produce, they always produce as an in-group, i.e. collectively, and in symbiosis with their out-groups, in which other individuals input individually into their respective in-groups. Social distance and proximity are produced collectively because they are produced by communicative acts. The first follow-up paradigm is this: self-production by consumers is collective production.

Secondly, the collective production of social distance and proximity is not a process separate from consumption, in the way that home-gardening precedes the eating of the harvest – first one and then the other. Not only does it happen simultaneously with consumption, but is inseparably fused with it. Consumers produce by consuming, and they cannot consume unless they produce. The

second follow-up paradigm of QTC is this: social distance and proximity are produced by consumption in its communicative capacity.

Part 2 deals with this production process of social distance and proximity. In the combination of both paradigms, it is not the market that is the key process in economic activity, but culture instead. Culture turns consumption into a communicative act without which the social cannot be produced.

