The effect of Post-growth Economy on the modern fashion business.

Which methods would need to be implied to conciliate both?
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FOREWORD

'Fashion the epitome of consumerism, is also its stealthiest critic, and in its obsession the 'refuse of the phenomenal world' (Freud) of the disregarded, the marginal and everyday- including in this case our garments – surrealism gives us hope, suggesting that there are gaps in the apparent seamlessness of consumer culture through which we can escape into re-echanted worlds.'

Karen Hazel- Fashion- Slow + Fashion
An oxymoron or a promise for the future (2013)
I. Introduction

*Liberation from Excess: The Road to a Post-growth Economy* - Niko Paech

How can we liberate or as Hazel calls it 'escape' from excess, from over-consumption? Why is this necessary and what does it look like? To be able to understand the concept of a Post-growth way of living and to apply it to particular industry branches, we first of all need to know an exact definition of 'Post-growth Economy'. Then it is advisable to find out, whether there is a realistic chance that we will ever get to the point of a Post-growth economy and what this will subsequently mean for our system. If so, the next question to be examined is, how will it affect specific industrial branches and how in particular today's fashion industry - an industry that is very fast-moving and comes up with a new collection every two weeks and at least four seasonal trends per year.

Sina Trinkwalder, the founder of an ecologically and socially valuable apparel manufacture in Germany claims that the new limited collections are in the stores faster than you can react and the consumers are thereby being told through clever marketing-campaigns that only if we buy these items we might be able to stay en vogue or in fashion. In former times there were only two collection changes a year, whereas the big fashion companies have a new collection available every week by now. Only a couple of years ago we had a good pair of trousers for Sundays and a single outfit for work that was enough. Nowadays we need three outfits a day, one for work, then a casual one for home and one for going out chic in the evening (2013). Today's fashion industry is so successful, because fashion provides consumers with an identity, fulfils their need to belong to a group, lets them feel trendy and fashionable and as a consequence makes them buy, even if they do not need a new item. Most consumers purchase at least every season to go with the trend and live the 'new' fashion lifestyle. But how could these trends and needs still be satisfied in a less-growth-oriented economy, a so-called Post-growth Economy? Which compromises will have to be made? Can today's fashion survive in a Post-growth economy and in which direction will fashion prospectively go? In the following I will explore how a Post-growth economy might affect the modern fashion business, whilst basing my research on the book 'Liberation from excess' by Niko Paech, a contemporary economist and professor specialised on Post-growth economy and known as Germany's most radical growth critic. Further I will do intensive research on the project of the above introduced Sina Trinkwalder, who has founded a clothing manufacture called 'manomama' in Augsburg, Germany in 2012 with the aim to act local, to produce local for the locals with the locals. Her book 'Wunder muss man selber machen - Wie ich die Wirtschaft auf den Kopf stelle (2013)' will be the foundation of my research into her project.
Last but not least I will contextualise the theories of Paech and Trinkwalder with opinions of other contemporaries, who occupied themselves with the theory of Post-growth economy, too. I will apply all these to the fashion industry, whilst going into the specific characteristics of fashion with the aim to alert people that our economy cannot always continue growing and that our society might need to prepare for change. One of the main reasons for this is that we are finding ourselves in a time of huge ecological, economic and social changes, such as tremendous climate changes, personal debit and more and more cases of burnout for the last couple of years already, supposedly due to the economic crash in 2008. Leah Temper and Claudia Medina, both researchers in environmental history and ecological economics, claim that the economic crash of 2008 revealed not only the frailty and vulnerability of the economic system, it also exposed the false basis that the growth economy is built on – the financial bubble grows bigger and crashes bigger, but we do not seem to be getting any happier. On the contrary, we suffer from greater job insecurity and environmental chaos threatens (n.d.). So our system seems to be quite paradoxical, we strive for more and more for the sake of our own happiness. 'Life after Growth (Temper & Medina n.d.)' could become our alternative. I will examine this phenomenon with regard to fashion, because changes linked to growth or decline will affect the whole economy either positively or negatively. Certain branches like car or food industry have already been examined by Paech, whereas there is no research to be found about the apparel business in a possible Post-growth economy. But a change towards a Post-growth economy will definitely have a huge impact on the fashion industry, as well. The fashion industry is not only one of the most fast-moving industries, but also one of the big economic players that produces seven percent of all world-exports (Allwood 2006). As such, it also contributes a lot toward the most current problems like pollution, exploitation and corruption. Furthermore, the fashion industry has an impact on all our lives, no matter if young, old, short or tall, as we all need to wear clothes. Clothing is one of our most important basic needs that should be guaranteed to everyone. This means if changes come up to this industry it does not only affect a small consumer group or only the big fashion groups, but it will sooner or later affect everyone. With the help of Trinkwalder's book and her project manomama I will delve into possible methods that could lead fashion towards a Post-growth economy and will then show how these would change the fashion business and system. Therefore I am digging deeper into approaches like slow fashion, up-cycling, regional fashion and making use of pre-consumer waste to examine if these options might be compatible with the concept of a Post-growth economy. I will also delve into the theories of Cradle-to-Cradle and sustainability to investigate, whether these can be put on the same level as a Post-growth economic fashion business.
Therefore I will analyse their similarities and differences and elaborate which theory might be the most effective tool for a change. Finalising I will show, according to the research done, what today's fashion industry could look like in a Post-growth economy. I will also examine if this is a realistic outlook or if 'fashion' and 'sustainability' are a paradox and what we, the individual consumers could contribute to a more slow-fashioned world.
II. Literature Review

In order to understand how a Post-growth economy could affect today's fashion industry, a clear meaning of the term 'Post-growth Economy' has to be defined. In this chapter I will give a detailed overview of the current literature, definitions and both theoretical and academical discussions about Post-growth Economy with the aim to get a step closer to the answer of my main question, what would the modern fashion business look like in a Post-growth economy. Apparently a Post-growth Economy is a Life after Growth, an economic growth, which means in particular that after a long period of continuous rising, in our case since the end of the second world war, the economy will not only be declining, as it has been doing since 2008, we will just not be experiencing economic growth anymore. This does of course not mean that we will hit the pause button. The economy will still keep on going, but in a different way, in a slower and less consumption-oriented way and on a more regional and local basis. Post-growth strives for 'reduction to liberate ourselves from an excess that not only clutters up our lives, but also makes our existence so vulnerable (Paech 2012). Prospectively we would rather put our focus on ourselves, on our well-being and not on well-having and would familiarise with an 'economic system that supplies the humans needs not on the basis of, or dependency on economic growth but which is characterised by degrowth (Paech 2012).

We would still allow ourselves a good quality of life, but in an economy with little or no growth, that is not only dependent on profit. According to Joan Martinez-Alier, a Catalan economist, the Post-growth vision is one of an equitable and democratic transition to a smaller economy with less production and consumption (Martínez-Alier et al. 2010, 1741). Where Paech intervenes that the majority of the western society thinks that a good quality life is not possible without economic growth (2012). They assume, that economy is like riding a bike: if you do not keep on going forward you will fall off. But according to a lot of known economists such as Adam Smith, Herman E. Daly or Ernst Friedrich Schuhmacher this has always been a deception and continuous growth is simply not possible. Bibi van der Zee, a journalist for the Guardian, states that this has already been predicted for a long period of time and cites Adam Smith, the 'father of economics', who assumed that 'some kind of stability would be the eventual result of growth', whereas the famous Victorian liberal philosopher John Stuart Mill believed that 'the increase of wealth is not boundless' ( n.d.).' So they all assume that continuous economic growth is rather impossible. To understand, what less growth actually means we first have to familiarise with its opposite: 'economic growth'. Only then can we learn, why it might soon be impossible to continue as before.
According to Paech economic growth is measured by gross domestic product, it is the sum of all goods and services produced by the division of labour. The form of economic activity measured in this way always means moving a good or service from point A to point B, but no productivity transfer is possible without consuming energy (2012). Therefore he states that the lack of natural resources is one of the major problems. And as we are actually getting close to running out of energy producing resources, we will as a consequence soon not be able anymore to allow an impeccable productivity transfer and without being able to guarantee a productivity transfer, an economic growth can also not be assured (2012). In Paech's eyes the situation is hopeless and we do not have another choice than striving for less growth. Richard Heinberg, another Post-growth economist, is of the opinion that we are facing change. 'The tide of economic growth that has flowed since the second world war may finally be ebbing. For politicians and most economists, this is like saying the sky is falling. Growth has become guidepost and grail, the sine qua non of economic existence. Growth is necessary to job creation and the health of businesses. Without growth the rolls of the homeless and jobless swell, requiring governments to shoulder more responsibility; yet at the same time tax revenues fall, making both new and existing government debt unbearable (2011). With this statement Heinberg wants to depict the conflict between society's vision on economy, that mostly politicians supply us with and the actual effect of nowadays economy on our system. He assumes that it is difficult for society and also politicians to understand that a Post-growth economy is not about going backwards, as most of them possibly fear. It is not about getting off the bike, it is about finding new directions of movement, it is about limiting growth not eradicating it, in order to keep going (2007). Since 2008 we have been experiencing a crisis and are besides facing many problems such as climate change, resource depletion and biodiversity loss. Most people think that the only way out is to strive for even bigger growth. Politicians like Barack Obama for instance ask, as Heinberg writes in an article 'how do we achieve greater global growth' (2011). According to Heinberg, most economists and politicians assume that with an economy that increases its GDP by around 2-3 percent a year, as a result of technological innovation, they can either overcome these problems, or decouple economic growth from environmental limitations (2007). They are doing business as usual, because in their eyes it 'increases wealth and employment, decreases unemployment, reduces conflicts of distribution, allows aid for developing countries, reduces state debt and finances social security systems, and increases environmental protection and this in turn is good for everyone (Lisbon Strategy of European Council 2000 as interpreted by Hinterberger et al. 2009, 1).'
But if we have a look back at the simple formula of Peach, who interprets the issue of less growth in a very radical and drastic way, we can assume that it might prospectively become very difficult to keep on going as before. Economy is causing harm and damage everyday, yet it is difficult to stimulate a declining economy, without destroying our planet more and more. Additionally, society at present does not seem to be prepared for change and rethinking. Referring to Heinberg and Paech we can assume that many are afraid that everything is going to deflate, if they are not continuously striving for larger and larger growth. This might be the reason why politicians like Obama and Merkel are still talking about, how to stimulate the economy again, how to keep the wheel turning. However Paech and other Post-growth economists take a rather revolutionary stance and ask what is all this for? What do we really want? Is there not a better way to design? There is:

Apart from Paech, there are many more contemporary economists and environmentalists who are also specialised on Post-growth economy, but not all of them share the radicalism of Paech's approach. Still, they have one aim in common: to strive for less-growth and overall well-being some of them with different, some of them with similar methods as Paech. Margrit Kenedy, a renowned environmentalist for instance is of the opinion that it is time for a grassroots movement to knock conventional money off its pedestal and replace it with a fresh paradigm that puts people before profits (2012). Which means that Kenedy puts the focus on people and their welfare instead of money. In her eyes, good relationships are of more importance than a particular status in society or property. She appeals for a grassroots movement, in slow steps through sustainable and ecologically friendly activities, which Paech would consider as not sufficient. He refers to Post-growth economy as an economic system that supplies the humans needs not on the basis of, or dependency on economic growth, but which is characterised by degrowth. Post-growth economy specifically distinguishes itself from popular terms or ideologies such as 'sustainable', 'green', 'dematerialised' or 'decarbonised', rejecting the idea that ecological sustainability through technological developments would be a realistic goal when holding on to a system measuring progress merely in added economical value (2012). This is why he argues for the necessity to change such an economic order by addressing the failure of decoupling the environmental damage and the consumption of resources from economical added value. For doing this he addresses issues such as raising general well-being and a higher individual quality of life (2012). An example would be to reduce the average working-time to 20h per week and use this spare time for community activities, which will in depth be discussed in the upcoming chapter. In order to reach this overall well-being Paech suggests a drastic reduction of the amount of produced goods, as a central element of a Post-growth economy.
In his eyes the most important factor for the consumer to get to a higher level of well-being is to relearn the art of consuming. For Paech the critical bottleneck of a growth-oriented economy in modern consumer societies is not so much money, but time. 'With only a very limited contingent of time, we are confronted with more and more consumer options. In such a world reduction does not mean renunciation, but rather protection from sensory overload, stress and ephemerality (2012).'

Therefore he proposes to adjust our demands and capabilities to a more modest scale.

Also Heinberg sees a Post-growth economy rather as a chance and not as a failure, because it gives us the opportunity to redefine our values again and to be satisfied with less. This will maybe make us happier than we were before, because we will not be under continuous pressure anymore to strive for more and more. However many politicians like Obama, Merkel and Hollande and other critics do not share this point of view. Heinberg argues: 'There is light at the end of the tunnel. If we focus on improving quality of life rather than boosting quantity of consumption, we could be happier even as our economy downsizes to fit nature's limits. But a benign future is unlikely to transpire if we all continue living in a dream world, where growth knows no bounds, where debt can be repaid with more debt, and where natural resources are assumed to be endless.' He appeals to us: 'Alarm bells are ringing. Wake up to the Post-growth economy (2011).'

There are many established theories about less-growth economies such as the steady-state economy of Daly, but no one knows exactly, what it will look like. Yet Paech, Daly, Jackson or Heinberg are convinced that the new economy does not hit the pause button on progress, innovation, science, creativity, culture or change, and neither does it go backwards. Quality over quantity might be the new device.

Heinberg describes that we may prospectively not consume as much, but our lives may well improve in all kinds of other ways – more leisure time, greater involvement in the arts and in local democracy, better health, and a cleaner environment (2011). So these pro Post-growth economists see it as a step back, but in a positive way, a step back to reality, a step back to our roots, as well as a small step back to locality. It will let us learn again how to appreciate what we have and always had, but maybe did not make use of for a while. Jeremy William, a journalist and Post-growth activist, claims 'Potatoes can be grown locally, but we are never going to have a village microchip factory. The new market conditions of a sustainable economy would gradually re-order production priorities at the local, national, regional and international level. Advanced technologies, large items and luxury goods will still be traded internationally, while other things will be traded more locally (n.d.).' This vision could become our new future, moving more towards local performances, whilst respecting global ones. All in all we can see, that there is no mature vision of Post-growth economy yet, it is all quite theoretical.
But one important fact that we can take out is ‘that we are living on a planet with limited resources and that it is absurd to expect continual economic growth’, like Heinberg cites Daly, the former World Bank economist (2007).’ In times of climate change and resource depletion we rather have to await that the world economic growth is sooner or later coming to an end. There are many approaches what a life after-growth could look like, that visualise what this could mean for the economy and even more important for society. In the following chapters I will dig even deeper into these theories and will also dig in Post-growth economic projects that have already been realised. Based on these examples I will elaborate what a less consumption-oriented, highly community-, value-, transparency- and as a last highly equity-oriented system would look like, and how these changes would affect the fashion business. I chose the fashion business, because almost no business is more consumption-oriented than the apparel industry. Alistair Fuad -Luke a famous sustainable-fashion-designer claims: Design facilities, mass production and rapid turnover of new styles ensure shorter product (market) life-cycles, which means that the collections are faster in the stores, but also shorter, there are new arrivals every other week. Furthermore are nowadays products less durable, less lasting, this means that we purchase more regularly. Yet this consumption can rather be considered for fashion's sake than for real need (Clark 2013). In other words we are buying way more than we actually need and way more often than we have to and as a consequence are we throwing away way too much, in short we are over-consuming. This consumption pattern can be found in other industry sectors as well, for example in the food industry. Moreover, Slow Fashion finds its origins in the Slow Food movement, that came up in Italy in the early nineties. This movement provides a framework for more sustainable living, based on approaches to food production and consumption (Clark 2013). Therefore I will introduce approaches in the upcoming chapter that are in line with the concept of Post-growth, about changes that might occur to a food company for instance, in order to get closer to an idea, how the fashion industry would change in a Post-growth economy.
III. Post-growth economic approaches as an orientation

Over the following pages I will demonstrate, how industries such as the car and food industry could be shaped by a less-growth and less-consumption oriented thinking. There are already some pilot projects and pioneering attempts going on, even if these are only start up's from special communities such as attac, an international association for social, environmental and democratic alternatives in the globalisation process, or the VÖÖ, an association for ecological economy. Among other, Dorothea Vogel, a cultural scientist and member of attac, works out concepts 'how to enter new paths beyond self-destructive consumption augmentation (2014).’ She points out that due to continuous need to purchase, consumers have destroyed their joy over an individual item and forgotten how to appreciate handcraft and the amount of work that comes with the product. So these forerunners are of the opinion that less-growth brings more pleasure, appreciation and satisfaction with it and are therefore convinced of the idea that society is in need of a change. Sherelle Jacobs, a journalist for the Guardian, claims that growth is a complicated business. Over the centuries, economists have not only been divided over how to make it come about, but over whether 'less-growth 'is really a good thing in the first place. On the one hand, we want to live comfortable existences free of struggle, but then again many of us would prioritise greater social equality or preserving the environment over endless economic enrichment. As we shudder through the collective hangover, growth for growth's sake now finds itself under fresh scrutiny (2012).’ So a step towards less-growth might for some be the better choice. But how could a change be approached? A student who took part in the Project Sustainable Summer School, offered by the University of Wuppertal suggests: 'Sustainability is about living and acting according to human-based values. This involves considering the long term consequences of every action and the ability to look at the big picture (2013).’ That could exactly be the connecting factor: Society should maybe start looking at the 'big picture' again to strive against global damage. For this purpose considering every individual's impact on the environment, economy and on society could be helpful. For example every individual produces an average amount of 12 tonnes CO2 a year (Paech 2012). Another important aspect of how to contribute to a better globe is, according to Reinhard Loske, a contemporary economist, former politician and author, that society should get back closer to human-based values to be able to start acting in a more conscious and attentive way. In his eyes only small is sustainable (2013). Especially in Germany and France, economists like Paech, Heinberg Loske, Daly, Sachs and Jackson have already formed something like a 'only small is sustainable'- movement towards less growth, less consumption and have adopted a kind of Post-growth economic understanding, which could be a possible option for a less harmful economy.
Even if Post-growth economy represents a very radical approach and might not please at first glance, there are already many approaches apparent in the industry that demonstrate what a Post-growth economy could look like and that these options could indeed be positive ones. In this chapter will I in particular hold on to Paech, since he is one of the most famous and most radical Post-growth pioneers and has participated in many projects of attac and VÖÖ for instance that are aiming to get a step closer towards a Post-growth economic understanding and as a result some time soon to a Post-growth economical way of acting. Moreover, he is fully convinced of his theory and therefore clearly expresses the practicalities of Post-growth economy, whereas others might not approach the issue of less growth in such a consequent and critical manner as he does. His conviction helps to understand with which changes the economy would have to cope with, when holding on to all his conditions and striving for less-growth. It gives a clearer idea as well of how the fashion business could be re-shaped according to the idea of Post-growth. Due to the fact that Paech is rather radical in his approaches and suggestions I am examining the extreme, in order to find out, whether it is still possible to keep fashion trendy and appealing in a radical Post-growth economy. If this is the case, we can be sure that the fashion system will definitely not loose its identity in an attenuated version of a Post-growth economy. As mentioned before no clear Post-growth research into the fashion industry has been done, yet. However there are of course many forerunners and designers, such as Orsola de Castro (From Somewhere), Safia Minney (People Tree) or the already introduced Trinkwalder who are trying to get closer to an idea of a possible new and alternative fashion system and are examining this on the topic of Sustainability or Post-growth. Yet Post-growth and Sustainability are still in development. Alison Gwilt, the author of 'Shaping Sustainable Fashion', states: There are many attempts to shape sustainable fashion and change the way we make and use clothes, but it is still in progress (2011). Due to this fact it is advisable to look into current Post-growth economic approaches taking part in other industries such as the car or food industry to be able to imagine a Post-growth fashion branch, because any industry is in need of a change.

**Food Industry**
The food industry is known for causing problems such as 'methane-, CO2- and nitrous oxide-production, water consumption, drinking water contamination, agricultural control chemicals, the role of the nutrient cycle, land utilisation and competitions, the dependency on farmers as well as the phenomena- urbanisation (Mumme; Interview Paech 2013).'
Moreover, the competition between organic food traders and conventional food traders is everything but fair, as conventional food is indirectly subsidised: the cost of environmental destruction is not being priced into conventional food production, which means that their prices are artificially maintained low, prices that organic products cannot compete with. So it quickly becomes quite obvious that there are many negative issues going on and I only listed a few, yet food is a basic need and cannot be excluded of people's lives. This means appropriate alternatives have to be found. The following concepts include one of the most essential aspects of a Post-growth economy, to strive for less-growth in cooperation with others. For instance the project 'communal gardens', of which already 700-800 exist in New York. They want to make use of urban spaces and change these to urban agriculture sites. Around 50-100 people form a group, most of the members join for ecological reasons and to eat healthy food. Apart from that, they also save money with it, since they do not need to buy these products in the grocery store anymore. Another positive aspect is that these communal gardens create a new form of social interaction (Paech 2011).

A similar project that is very common in Japan is the so called 'Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)'. Here people also form a unity, yet they are not only running global gardens, they buy a farm together, mostly for one year in advance. They take over a farm together with the agriculturists and decide what and how it is being cultivated, whilst carrying the economic risk. In exchange, they get all products, produced on the farm for free (Passadakis 2011).

Next, I would like to introduce the 'food-sharing' approach. According to statistics German private households throw away food worth around 22 billion Euros per year. This is why the initiative 'foodsharing' was being introduced. The internet platform founded in 2012 gives private persons, tradesman and producers the opportunity to offer spare food for free. For example fresh bread, that supermarkets are not allowed to sell anymore, because it is already two days old, or expired food, that is still good, products that supermarkets would have to throw away from law, but could still be eaten. Food-sharing has become very popular in special in-crowds in Germany the last two years. Over foodsharing.de users can arrange meetings for joint- cooking sessions or share spare food with others instead of throwing these away. The main idea is to share food, without spending money, because sharing has also an ethical dimension, in terms of charity. They want to give food a sentimental value again, as well as to show that food is more than just simply a good.

By now they have around 37.363 active users and reached more than 8000 successfully handed over baskets, filled with food that some user did not need anymore, because he was leaving for vacation for example and wanted to empty his refrigerator before (foodsharing.de 2012).
Other initiatives in the food sector are 'Food Coop' and 'Garden Coop, which are associations that jointly order or even grow food. All work occurring during this process is being done by members themselves. So they form an association to assure that everyone, also people with less money than others can have access to premium organic goods (Vogel 2014).

But it is of course not only the food industry that is an perpetrator for global harm and in need of appropriate alternatives.

**Car Industry**

The car industry for instance will face many difficulties as well, also because in Paech's and some other growth critics's eyes, such as Daly or Sachs, Post-growth economy asks for a reduction of 70% of air- and car-traffic in order to fulfill green principles. According to Paech we are 'dependent on a few key resources that are in danger of running out. In 2008 we saw the price of a barrel of crude oil reach historic highs. These price increases undoubtedly had an impact on the course of the global economic crisis, which began as a financial crisis in late 2008. We are also dependent on land. Metals and rare earth elements are also fast becoming depleted and expensive. And the situation is set to escalate, since the proportion of advanced electronics and telecommunications and information technology that contributed to the last phases of economic growth was incisive. And yet precisely these supposed 'smart' product categories, as well as the many so-called green innovations – such as wind turbines, hybrid vehicles etc. – are dependent on scarce resources. The scramble for mining and production sites already resembles the early stages of a cold war (Interview Paech; Leuze 2012).’ Hereby, Paech makes quite clear why we are in need of a change and yet Post-growth economy might not be an option for everyone and surely has its negative aspects as well. The factors just mentioned might be one of the reasons, why a car and plane industry, as we know it today, will maybe not be able to survive prospectively.

The so called 'peak oil' issue, which is an event forecasted by the geoscientist M. King Hubbert, expects the attainment of the maximum rate of petroleum extraction at a certain point of time. The 'peak-oil' topic already came up in 1956 and has by now even been extended to the 'peak everything' issue, which means, that we will sooner or later run out of everything. (Heinberg 2007). This again shows us that we will not have the resources anymore to keep a car- industry fully alive, moreover Paech even doubts if a green car- industry is possible at all (2012).

There are nevertheless still some pioneer- concepts in the car industry that might prospectively bring us further. Projects such as 'car-sharing' with climate friendly and low- consumption models, that lead to a more climate-neutral traffic already could lay the first stone to ameliorate the overall situation.
The economists Werner Reichel and Winfried Kretschmann both members of the green party in Germany for instance did intense research and calculated on the case of Daimler cars, how much CO-2 emission one car would be 'allowed' to produce in order to fulfill the requirements of less than two degrees of global warming. The result of this study was that we ideally would have to reduce the amount of cars by around 25%. At the same time we would have to increase the efficiency of the cars by 50% and there would have to be 4 Mio. car-sharing vehicles, where companies such as Daimler offer vehicles and feature one-way point-to-point rentals, to be able to fulfill the CO2- limit values. With the help of services like car-sharing, the car industry could assure 98% of their gross value added. So Reichel and Kretschmar are of the opinion that less growth does not necessarily mean the end of an economy or the end of decent revenue. (Böcking 2012). Kai Nebel, a scientist specialised in textiles, comes up with another alternative approach, experimenting with the recycling of car-tyres. He tried to mix shredded car-tyre fibres with synthetic fibres to form a new raw material for the production of house mountings in new cars (2014). So regardless of what Paech predicts, there are still many creative ideas circulating that could at least better today's car industry. Another positive movement in the car industry was Volkswagen's decision during the crisis caused by the nuclear accident in Fukushima to solve temporal problems with short time work, instead of sending people home and writing discharge paper. But it seems that for Volkswagen it was more important to hold together in difficult times instead of depart qualified employees (Pach 2012). Not every industry will have to suffer as much as the car industry, but 'green- concepts' might not be sufficient enough either, yet they can be a great starting point. Moreover we can orient on these to recognise the essentials of a Post-growth economy in order to apply these to the fashion industry in the upcoming chapter. And only after having listed these few approaches many similarities can already be recognised. Paech for example asks for short- time work, ideally a 20h week, which would give more spare time to take part in social events such as food-sharing, cooking with others, building up an organic farm or repairing electrical waste and clothes in so-called Repair Cafes for instance, which are especially gaining popularity in the Netherlands. So the overall aim is to become more of an union again, to do things together and very important to share again, be it goods, professions or even money, to create overall well- being.

Words such as 'transformable', 'regional', 'sharing' and 'local', but also 'innovation' and especially 're-cycling’ might become of high importance in the near future. All in all it could be worth trying to create a new balance between self supply and external supply again for example through transition towns, the already named community supported agriculture or barter clubs.
Paech's radical vision additionally asks for regional marketing, regional currencies as well as demolition of the highways and the airports and many car parking facilities. Moreover he wants to develop efficient technologies and products, that can be transformed and re-cycled (2012). Especially when Paech asks for demolition of highways and airports and wants us not to travel any more do critics accuse him of wanting to move back to the stone-age and change human's will to continuously develop further in their wisdom. Our current age is shaped by the perception that expansion make us happier. We focus on what we can still experience, see, learn, own and buy. Where we could still fly to. According to Thomma and Kreiner, both economists and journalists for the daily newspaper taz, most of Paech's critics consider this as a positive aspect of society and would like to maintain this. Whereas Paech retaliates that we consume too much and that we loose time, time while we could actually enjoy, what we just purchased, just experienced (2012). Paech is of the opinion that less property makes us happier. He thinks that travelling to New York does not make us happy it just makes us want more and more with the consequence that one day our expectations are too high to be satisfied. Other critics such as Tim Jackson claim, that it should be up to every individual to decide how he wants to reach happiness and well-being. It should be their own freedom of choice, no one should dictate them what to do (2011). Paech might arguably presume too much in his strict approach, but the more gentle manner of his critics might not be drastic enough to make people aware that we are in need of change one way or the other.
IV. Fashion Industry today

Now that we got to know the phenomenon of a Post-growth economy in theory and examined some cases of Post-growth economic industry approaches, we need to focus, as a next step, on the key factors of the apparel business. Only then can we elaborate how today's fashion industry has to change and which implementations have to be undertaken to bring the industry in line with the ideal of a Post-growth economy. So to be able to imagine such a Post-growth economic fashion industry, we first of all need to occupy ourselves with the fashion industry itself, in particular the fashion industry today. We need to understand this business branch, its remarkable characteristics, its significant differences in comparison to other industries, as well as the power of the industry to shape the consumer. Hence will we come across the most conspicuous problem of nowadays society, consumer behaviour, a problem that has lead us closer and closer towards the break-down of our system. So the key issues to be examined in this chapter will first of all be a clear definition of the fashion industry, a general one as one that explains today's fashion business. Further we have to find out, what distinguishes the fashion industry from others and what they have in common. And finally we need to know, what is so special about fashion and which aspects characterise the business.

Definition

Firstly I would like to show that the word- 'fashion'- as well as the word 'fashion-industry' can have a thousand different meanings and is very multifarious. There is this one facet of the industry that is considered, mostly of fashion- lovers or people, who work in the business, as being very luxurious, flamboyant, exciting, fancy and bright. Whereas beyond it is also very often being seen as a horrible industry, that is associated with child labour in Asia, toxic chemicals, corruption, diseases or factories exploiting workers, issues, such as the Bangladesh factory fires due to lacking building security and fire safety regulation for instance (Burke 2013). So the opinions on the fashion industry are quite divided. To understand the industry thoroughly a definition that brings all aspects together and merges the garment and the fashion industry itself in an overall entity is needed. An entity that brings fashion as a cultural and as a business system together. Generally, the fashion industry is being defined as a 'interaction between makers and sellers of fashionable clothing (web Fashion Encyclopedia).’ Better it is seen as a multi-billion dollar global enterprise, whose main aim is to make and sell clothes from high-fashion, over ordinary clothes and mass market- fashion. When speaking of fashion, people usually tend to generalise the term to merely clothing but in fact, fashion goes far beyond that.
According to Charlotta Kratz, a visual media teacher at the Santa Clara University and co-author of the book 'Fashion in the Face of Postmodernity', fashion can be defined as a cultural phenomenon as it is concerned with meanings and symbols, thus it is an instantaneous mode of direct, visual communication (1998). This means that we often unconsciously dress according to our cultural and tribal background. With our fashion choice we make a statement, send out a message, that comes with hidden meanings and symbols, which can often be brought in line again with our background. 'Fashion is a state of mind, a spirit, an extension of one’s self. It is about being comfortable with yourself, translating self-esteem into a personal style (Shete 2012).’ Vir Shete, a London fashion designer, wants to highlight that fashion is in close inter-relation with our self-expression.

All in all fashion is more than just simply a piece of clothing. Apart from all the process behind and its function of covering the body and keeping warm, fashion most of all expresses identity, religious sense of belonging, creates physical attraction, well-being, embraces creativity and connects communities.

Global Fashion

Further it is important to strengthen that fashion industry at present is a major part of the global business, because garments are being produced, manufactured, imported and exported all around the world. Marketing and promotion campaigns are also run internationally.

'A Global Fashion industry means, when each piece of your Clothing has travelled around the world to be made in different countries. Moreover, it belongs to one of the most important sectors of the economy in terms of investment, revenue, trade and employment generation all over the world. Apparel industry has short product life cycles, tremendous product variety, volatile and unpredictable demand, long and inflexible supply processes (The Fashion Forum, Levi Strauss and Co. 2010).’ 'Fashion was for a long time characterised as a local or regional phenomenon, but today it has become a global phenomenon. Changes in manufacturing, production, and supply chain management, combined with a growth in prestige of some fashion brands based on aristocratic or exclusive social positioning, has resulted in increasingly homogenised global fashion (Johnson 2010). Today fashion is mostly only considered as trendy and fashionable when it is international, whereas in former times the individuality and the uniqueness of the local produced item, was of higher importance. Nowadays fashion is a huge business, more people are involved in the buying, selling and production of clothing than any other business in the world. Everyday, millions of workers design, sew, glue, dye, and transport clothing to stores. The global apparel and footwear industry grew by 5 percent, or 85 billion dollars last year (fashionunited online news 2014).
Moreover the fashion industry has become a huge part of the global market, with a share of seven percent of all world-export as mentioned earlier in the text and generates over a trillion dollar a year (Advisors 2013).

So after getting to know that today's fashion industry is an important part of the global industry, and having learnt about fashion's most significant attributes, we still need to find out what differentiates the fashion industry from others and what therefore makes the industry so special.

**Significant Characteristics that distinguish the fashion industry from others**

Fashion has not always been what it is for us today. In former times it was much more functional, we did not buy garments to indulge ourselves, rather because it was of a basic need, to cover ourselves and keep us warm. But even though it has almost always been a basic need, that additionally brought a lot of meaning with it, and still does today. Clothing does not only cover us, it gives us identity, creates a personality, depicts the wearer's mood, attitude, happiness and often also the status. 'Fashion helps us to evolve and shift our physical and emotional identities, and fuels our human need to mask our true selves. Clothing is a tool for change (Jamie 2012).' Through various styles we can bring out and emphasise on different parts of our identity. These different style-identities make us belong to groups, identify with these groups, have something in common with others and let us show this to the outer world. As Juliet Ash, who is internationally know as a leading figure in the field of fashion and fashion history notes:

Clothes are of human beings as much as the property of human beings. Clothes relate to our feelings more than perhaps any other designed artefact (Hazel 2013). So the meaning behind the clothes that the wearer gives to them consciously or unconsciously and the identity the garment provides in exchange to the wearer is already quite an important aspect, why the apparel industry is that different from others. The fashion industry is also the only industry, which depends that much on trends. According to Karen Webster, Deputy Head of Fashion and Textiles at the RMIT University, no other creative industry works at the such speed, producing new products on a constant basis at very low prices, encouraging a disposable culture. Fashion has shifted from an historical formulaic process of two significant collections a year, to multiple delivery drops on a fast track turn around where similar styles are released across the globe simultaneously. This aspect of the industry has created significant impacts including unsustainable practises and over consumption leading to excess waste. (n.d.). This means the industry cycle has to run way faster than others to realise collections within time frames of four to six weeks. No other sector stands under such huge pressure.
They have to react as fast as possible, because there is one rule in fashion- 'today is today, but tomorrow everything can be complete different again. Fashion is forced to evolve for a number of reasons everyday (Lana Russo n.d.).' One of them is to fulfill the expectations that the industry dictates and that, as a consequence, the consumer expects. But apart from many crucial and strong differences, the fashion industry does have a lot in common with many other industries as well, since they are all operating on the same global market and are producing for the same kind of societies.

**Similarities**

Any industry sector has to prepare for competition on the market, companies continuously have to come up with new, convincing and appealing products, marketing campaigns, ideas and inventions to distinguish themselves from others, to attract consumer's attention and to stay competitive. The modern consumer expects quick availability of the product, a broad product sector and the best quality at the lowest price. Furthermore are innovation, technology-evolution and trend culture big issues that the companies have to take up in order to stay interesting for their consumers. Another significant factor for the industry is the recession, a problem that almost any branch had to face in the last six years. Many might still be struggling, especially smaller more regional companies, but also the big ones, such as Esprit (Chan & Wan 2013), Marks & Spencer who were already facing difficulties before (Finch 2011), or Opel and Vodafone (Wachmann 2011), had to re-invent themselves and had to make many unpleasant decisions such as job cuts or outsourcing in order to keep the company wheel running. In times of a recession, topics such as competition or consumer expectations become even more of an issue, because every company tries to save their own capital, while consumers spend less, but do still ask for much. And then of course the whole industry has to face issues such as climate change, carbon-footprints and limited resources, which are a sub-consequence of a steadily rising economy that formed a throw-away-society, which does not bother about their behaviour and continuously carries on with their unsustainable way of consuming. Maureen Dickson, Carlotta Cataldi and Crystal Grover members of the design association not just a label, which is a designer platform to support today's pioneers in contemporary fashion, interject that 'this over consumption comes with a hidden price tag, and it is the environment and workers in the supply chain that pay (Dickson, Cataldi & Grover n.d.).'

These are all aspects that shape the economy and get an industry such as the fashion industry into a fix, because competition becomes tougher and tougher, consumers expectations rise as well, but less money is available, yet there is still the general aim for growth.
It is these factors that lead to decisions such as outsourcing, producing in South East Asia, cutting costs or using material of lesser quality. Gary Harvey, a known eco-designer states:

The problems we face today are the results of mass consumerist culture demanding new cheap clothing that wastes limited natural resources and keeps millions of textile worker enslaved in inhuman working conditions. Developed countries have lost their respect for clothing and the connection with the production process, and things need to change (n.d.). Being aware of the fact that there is already going a lot wrong in today's global industry and economy, we still need to find out, what fashion's strengths and weaknesses are in order to find out how a Post-growth economic change would especially affect the fashion industry and how its positive characteristics and the pleasure that it still mostly brings to the consumers can be kept. 'Fashion is a multi-billion-dollar global industry that, at its heart, is based on creative egoists (Banks 2013)', which might be true, yet there are many positive aspects, about the fashion industry as well.

**Strengths**

Those 'creative egoists' as Libby Banks, editor at the New York Times calls them, are shaped by today's economy and therefore mostly very profit- and revenue-oriented, yet creative. But it is with their help that we could get back to the root of fashion: creativity and the outcome of creativity – the garment. And this is exactly, what becomes more and more forgotten the uniqueness of a piece of clothing, the vision and the many ideas and drawing attempts behind, the craftsmanship, the passion and the profession of a designer, as well as the identity that a particular garment can give to its wearer. When wanting to strive for a less-growth economy it is probably also the attitude of consumers themselves that need to change. They might need to re-learn how to appreciate the garment itself again. Today's consumer society is very likely to rush after trends and waste too much and is also quite often referred to as a 'throw-away society', slow fashion wants to teach consumers how to contain these habits. Companies and societies would need to rethink as well, when wanting to adapt to a slower fashion world. This means that trends would have to limit as well. So we learnt that fashion does not necessarily show particular weaknesses it is rather the overall economy that is facing many problems, additional is society used to growth-driven and money-driven decisions. However, there are many attempts towards more consciousness and a slower fashion, these will be introduced in the upcoming chapter.
V. Post-growth Economy and the Fashion Industry

After having examined the term 'Post-growth Economy' in theory, having understood the vision of pioneers and forerunners, having recognised the potential of change and the variety of options, that it could bring, we had a look at a handful of approaches, that some idealists suggest and partly already live. We have analysed some post-growth economic-like projects in the food industry and the car industry, and had an overall look at the fashion industry itself, in order to understand this very unique and pervicacious business. To imagine how a Post-growth economic fashion could look like and if nowadays consumer would appreciate slow fashion and consider it as trendy and fashionable, we first of all have to know if today's society is even likely to participate in the build up of a Post-growth economy. Could we motivate people already now to rethink?

Paech for instance clearly states no. After having interviewed a hundred people, mostly students, but also professionals, between 19 and 55 years from all over the world, majority from Germany and Netherlands, through an online survey that I have developed during the research phase for this paper (see appendix: p. 41-46), I am not sure either. I could gather the information that 54% of these respondents are not even familiar with the term 'Post-growth Economy' and have no idea what awaits them. However, 78% are of the opinion that our system is lacking and that we sooner or later have to change something, but none is very pleased about the idea of building up a whole new system, a whole new life style. Still, only 17% are afraid of a change, this of course without knowing, what they will have to expect and if a change will really ameliorate things or not.

Introducing a Post-growth Economy already now would surely be very difficult, of course it will become less difficult if people did not have a choice anymore. But for now most of the people of the First World still live in prosperity and cannot imagine a different life, so why would they already start rethinking. The hundred interviewed persons from my survey seem to 76% convinced that the system will collapse one day, but they are not aware of the fact that according to Paech there would be way more requested than building low energy consumption houses and buying organic vegetables in the supermarket. Most of the living generations in Europe have been growing up in a more or less healthy economy that society succeed to continuously generate and stimulate, since the end of the second world war. So it is difficult for them to realise that according to Post-growth economists and due to economic developments we seem to be in need of change.

Believing Paech, Heinberg or Jackson it is not up to us to decide, if a change is a good or bad thing anymore, because it is simply too late.
Steffen Moll, a journalist for the Socioeconology Cradle-to Cradle association, quotes the Greenpeace activist and founder of ecological research institutes Michael Braungart: 'Every day, natural resources are extracted of the earth that will not regrow (2014)', but that we would need to continue with our familiar way of living. Taking this statement into account whilst referring to Post-growth activists it seems that the only way out is to build up something new instead of investing tons of money, effort and time to save the old system. Paech for instance 'no longer believes in reconciliation between the environment and the economy, and in the notion that a level of prosperity achieved through credit can simply be continued through green growth (Interview Paech; Klawitter 2013).’ Every movement in history started on a small – pioneer scale and then became through the right methods and implementations popular and successful. Yet Post-growth economy is still a pretty surreal and theoretical issue, because it is only a theory of a group of contemporary economists and can therefore only be examined on a what-, if-, when-level. As everyone approaches the issue in a slightly different way, we cannot know yet what really will happen, nor can we be sure if Paech's vision is really the only 'way out'. But it is for sure worth trying to predict what will eventually, according to the vision of these economists happen and what it could look like. Thanks to some fore-runner projects, our imagination can be stimulated and we have real cases to orientate on. Yet it will not be easy to convince society that a Post-growth economy might be the better choice. According to Kate Fletcher, a researcher, writer and design activist, it is especially the politicians who are critical and skeptic, yet it is them who could achieve the most through political-participation to a better world (2013). Every industry and all the big enterprises will have to suffer a lot, so taking one step back instead of two forward will not please them. Society seems not to be ready yet, therefore it is not clear, when and if people will start to rethink and participate in alternative, less- growth projects. Even Paech is not sure, when and how the break-down will be, but he is convinced that it will happen. He claims that 30 years ago we were only worried about the ecological collapse, but now we even have to add other aspects such as the resource- debt-, and financial-crisis. This is why it is utopic to think that nothing will happen (2014). So he is clearly convinced that we are in need of alternatives.

In this chapter, I will examine the likeliness of the fashion- world to survive in a Post-growth economy on existing and successful projects, that were undertaken with the aim to act without growth- orientation and in line with sustainable principles. So in the following we will investigate: The effect of Post-growth economy on the modern fashion business. What would possible implementations be - and is it even possible to bring both ideals in line? With which changes would fashion industry have to deal with in comparison to other industry branches?
And then it would also be worth to examine, if Post-growth economic approaches could be ranged on the same level as sustainable efforts to understand the extent of Post-growth with regard to fashion and to subsequently compare it with slow fashion and sustainable fashion.

The fashion industry is a strong, vibrant and ever-changing business and puts consumption on a whole new level, as garments can just so easily be replaced. In the survey that I have created I asked people, about their buying intentions and 11% answered that they just buy for buying, regardless, if they liked the purchased pieces or needed them. 59% of the interviewees answered that they buy, because they liked the items they saw and only 26% answered that they purchased something, because the really needed it. Paech compares this type of consumption behaviour with society's addiction to accumulate more and more money. He says that 'the need to increase per capital consumption in the rich countries, is like a gilded cage (2012)' - an addiction, that some people cannot control anymore. And if we were honest to ourselves and thought about, what we actually need, we might come across a few things a year, but taking the results of the survey into account it seems that people nowadays are used to get a new item every other day. One third of the respondents cannot really imagine to wear a special piece several times to a public event, they would prefer to buy something new instead of wearing it again or combine it differently.

These outcomes make us assume that preferring new over old and used is a very common consumer attribute in our first world, probably because it makes them feel better, more comfortable and more confident. One approach in a Post-growth economic fashion world would be 'up-cycling', which means adding value to rubbish through transforming it into useful objects. But for the just named consumer group, it would presumably not be easy to adapt to wearing old, re-cycled items instead of buying new ones. It is in a way of course a 'new' item as well, yet it is still old and at some point also waste. Moreover society is used to the availability of new items in the stores at least six days a week. Referring to Ash and Hazel we learnt that fashion gives us an identity, a status, a possibility for self-expression that many of us might fear to loose.

Stefano Pilati an Italian fashion designer once said that fashion should provide an enormous fun-factor to the wearer and makes them feel good (Carpenter 2010), but how should they feel good in an old worn-out piece of fabric, that someone changed from a skirt to a turtleneck. Does this really provide the same feeling? Are sustainable-recycled clothes really fashionable? I have to admit, that I was surprised that referring to my survey more than 42 % said 'yes'.

Fashion at its origin is shaped by 'creativity' to its full extent - 'anything goes' is the device, even if it might still be a big challenge to make something brilliant out of an old worn out garment.
There are many designers, such as Gareth Pugh, Rei Kawakubo, Yohji Yamamoto, Iris van Herpen or Issey Miyake who approached this idea already. But will fashion really be able to keep its most important attributes such as (examples survey) 'flamboyant', 'multi-faceted', 'creative', 'revolutionary', 'innovative', 'evolving', 'changing', 'out of control' and 'sustained' in a Post-growth economy? It is commonly known, that most of the hype of the fashion world is created through clever marketing approaches, as Catarina Midby head of design at H&M also admits in her article 'The New Future of Fashion (2013)'. Despite this, fashion provides the consumer with something that no other industry sector or product manages to give to their customer – an 'incredible sense of belonging', as Fletcher calls it (2009). Can they find this in a Post-growth economy as well?

Radical Post-growth economist argue that it is not fashion, nor the garment, that provides happiness, it is simply the consumption itself. Yet this is a huge part of nowadays fashion identity. What would a Post-growth economic fashion identity then look like? At first glance it seems that fashion is going to loose its whole identity in a Post-growth economy - its glam, flamboyance and edginess. But actually people are already dissatisfied by today's fashion world, so maybe people would appreciate a change. After having interviewed hundred people through the already introduced online survey I got to know that the fashion world is often considered as 'fast-moving', 'shallow', 'fast but not renewing', 'competitive' and 'out of control' and that they do not even appreciate and admire it as much as I thought, they did. Sales figures, however, are booming despite this impression, according to annual reports of H&M or Esprit for example. Fashion is a paradoxical industry, but the fashion industry is one that every single person makes use of, it is an industry that unites society and especially cultures and tribal groups. In order to examine if the meaning behind today's fashion industry and the principles of a Post-growth economy can go hand in hand, we will have a look at some projects in the fashion industry, that represent visions of a post-growth economic fashion industry.

According to Paech, Post-growth economic approaches want fashion first of all to produce the kind of clothing, 'that can be handed down from one generation to the next instead of throwing things away after having worn them just a few times (Klawitter 2013)'. Post-growth appeals for more ethical consumption.
Regional economy

As a first example for more ethical consumption I will introduce the so-called 'regional economy', taking as example Sina Trinkwalder's project 'manomama'. manomama describes the story of a woman, who used a very unconventional method to build up a textile manufacture in Augsburg (Germany), a city known for its textile heritage. A factory, that offers products 100% made and fabricated in Germany. Trinkwalder, a former management assistant in advertising, realised that she could not keep on going like before anymore and that she had to go for change. Therefore she founded manomama according to her principle: 'We can not change the world, but we can make every day a bit better, if we just make sure, that we make our dreams come true on our own.'

Apart from wanting to produce 100% ecologically and regionally, in South-West Bavaria, her objective was to create a social valuable company, that gave a second chance to socially disadvantaged or excluded people. She wanted to manufacture regional materials to be able to fabricate regional products with people from the region. Trinkwalder did not hire the most qualified applicants, or the ones with the best reputation, she took those, who needed the work the most and gave them the chance to prove themselves. She chose people with slim job chances, because they were too old, single parent or did not have enough or no working experience. Trinkwalder is of the opinion that the rest of the job market is meritocratic, she on the contrary wanted to offer fairly payed work and wanted to give these people a chance and let them become part of our society again, because these people desperately wanted to work. Fair payed work in her eyes meant offering unlimited employment contracts, an hourly wage of at least 10€ and flexible working times, so that employees could coordinate their times with their families (see Fig.1+ 2). manomama started with sweaters, that the buyer could customise through individual colour decisions online, before production, with the aim to produce jeans at a later stage. But Trinkwalder succeeded to become more and more popular in a minimum of time already, mainly through daily social media posts. And not least thanks to the uniqueness of her project she got invited to sustainability or organic congresses, where she could network successfully and secure the first big job-collaboration with Germany's biggest drugstore (dm- Drogeriemarkt): the production of 70.000 organic, sustainable and recyclable bags for the drugstore chain. After that they had similar collaborations with 'Ökoland', 'Edeka Südwest' and 'real' so they grew bigger and bigger and after a while became so popular and successful that they could finally start producing apparel wear, t-shirts, sweaters and even jeans. By now the label manomama has a wide range of classic and timeless basics made out of ecologically produced cotton, available on their online store.
Sustainable and regional fashion from manomama in comparison to fast-fashion from C&A
And every other week manomama’s team comes up with a new concept, how they can evolve further, hire more people, become even more transparent, be more sustainable and how they can recycle/down-cycle their materials. manomama demonstrates that it is possible to produce trendy fashion in Germany, whilst acting at the highest social stage. Sustainable and regional fashion that can even match up with fast fashion from C&A for instance. Trinkwalder proved that ‘act local’ and ‘respect global’ is an alternative option to our consumption-oriented world. We can find many more regional economy approaches, which also try to provide green local jeans, such as Nudie Jeans Sweden, Kuyichi Netherlands or Gebrüder Stitch Austria, Pearls of Laja Germany, and Trousers London from the UK. There are also some that do not only aim to provide green local jeans, but also share the social ideals of Trinwalder such as ‘Gea Waldviertler’, a shoe brand from Austria, that performs similar to manomama, but on a way smaller scale (Staudinger 2012). #

But at least in Germany, no one operates on such a popular and high level as manomama, therefore I consider this approach as a forerunner with more than an exemplary function.
Up-cycling

Another method towards less growth, could be the so-called 'up-cycling'. To collect paper, glass or plastic with the aim to recycle it, is pretty common and natural in Germany, but we would not collect old clothes. Nevertheless, 100,000 tons of textile-and garment-waste have been thrown away by German households in 2010, according to the official figures from the German Federal Statistic Office. Added to this are vast quantities of fabric remnants and waste left over from production. And these piles of garbage are getting more and more interesting for designers, to work with. They want to burst this throw-away mentality to save resources and the environment.

According to Kirsten Brodde, textile-expert and Greenpeace activist, the twist of the 'up-cycling' concept is that old pieces are not only being recycled they also gain on value through clever design ideas. It is more than just pure recycling they manage to make avantgard looks out of old discarded jackets, shirts and blouses (2014). Especially 'jeans and t-shirts are some of the most mass produced garments in the world and also the most thrown away. Transforming old clothes is an effective approach to turn this cycle around (Jessen 2014).'

One example for this trend is -aluc in Berlin. Luise Barsch, founded an up-cycling store around 18 months ago and became quite know and popular already. She is of the opinion that 'Yesterday’s trash is today’s treasure. (2014).'

Aluc produce shirts and blouses with 'pre-consumer-waste', so fabric remnants, left over waste, ends of the reels or pattern pieces, that amass during production. So the base material looks practical new and makes it therefore easier to produce pretty items. Further they cooperate with the waving mill of an organic eco-friendly producer, who provides them with their leftover material.

So aluc's end-product is not only up-cycled, but also ecologically valuable. Aluc is also very focused on solely producing in factories, where workers are fairly paid. To ensure this they work with other companies, so that the factory is always fully occupied. (Barsch 2014)

Another example is the 'Eccochic Design Award', which takes place in Hong Kong every year since 2009. Eight finalist, mostly from European and South-East Asian countries, get the chance to present their up-cycled collection at the Hong Kong Fashion week. This year's winner was Karen Jessen, who also has an own up-cycling label 'Benu Berlin'. Her price was to develop the 'Recycled Collection' by Esprit 2014. This shows us that not only the small and not only the Western brands, are rethinking, sometimes the Eastern countries are even further ahead and forward thinking than we are. A similar initiative to the 'Eccochic Design Award' is 'Esthetica' an association with the British Fashion Council to showcase the growing movement of cutting edge designers committed to working eco sustainable. All Estethica designers adhere to three principles: fair-trade, ethical practise and use of organic and recycled materials. (British Fashion Council n.d.).
Esthetica is curated by Orsola de Castro and her partner Filippo Ricci. Orsola de Castro also runs her own brand 'From Somewhere', which is specialised on making clothes out of recycled off-cuts of luxury materials. From Somewhere was already set up in 1997. 'I am designing two collections for Tesco with another eco designer by taking leftovers from the factory in Sri Lanka where Tesco produces its clothes. As well as recycling fabric I am concerned with helping individuals. All our clothes are made in the Cooperativa Rinascere in Vicenza, which helps rehabilitate disabled people and people with mental health problems. My seamstresses used to work for top fashion houses before they got ill and it is been hard for them to re-enter their profession (Salter 2010).'
Thus another great approach, that could almost be put on a same level as manomama, because it shows that also big companies, such as Tesco are willing to collaborate with sustainable designers to contribute to a more conscious world. Secondly de Castro also hires socially underprivileged people, who have slim chances to get back to a job as manomama does. And thirdly it is remarkable that she already founded a company to these principles in 1997, when others were still making sure to find the right place in a profit- generating economy.
There is a lot going on in the up-cycling apparel sector, even if most of the companies do not gain enough popularity and do not receive enough attention.

Brodde claims that transforming waste into consumer goods allows us to get a step closer to a world that outlives us and we are desperately in need of a world, where we can feel save and secure again. Methods such as up-cycling put the issue of scarcity on a whole new level. Suddenly, resources and materials are not scarce anymore, because there are enough things that we can repair, up-cycle and re-interpret. The world will always be full of thing that we can (re-) use (2013).
A complete different example, that perfectly depicts that the fashion industry does not necessarily have to suffer from a movement towards a Post-growth economy is the so-called 'Hautecouterre' magazine: 'Verte', which is a sustainable fashion- and lifestyle-magazine for the conscious consumer, launched by the Princeton University 'Sustainable Fashion Initiative' for the first time in 2013. 'Verte' shows interesting topics, the latest sustainable trends, stimulates the reader to conscious and sustainable acting, as well as to live, create, and shop purposefully. It is a stylish, fresh, modern, cheeky and fashionable magazine, that does not look boring, incredible organic or 'recycled-paper-like', at all. It has everything that a conventional Elle- or Harper's Bazaar Magazine has as well, with the little difference that it is 100% produced sustainable and occupies itself only with sustainable issues in fashion. And therefore another proof that it is possible to conciliate fashion and sustainable- less growth ideals. (Princeton University n.d.)
And as a last example there are all the alternative material innovation projects taking place. These approaches can be categorised in technology- innovations or natural material innovations, mostly implemented on partly-sustainable, sustainable or cradle- to cradle fundamentals.

**Technological and Sustainable- Innovations**

Catalytic Clothing for instance is an approach that would be defined as a technology innovation on a partly sustainable level. It describes an innovation that has been introduced for the first time in 2012 by Helen Storey, a designer and fashion professor at the London University of Arts with one of her colleagues Anthony Ryan. Catalytic Clothing makes it possible to purify the air we breathe through garments treated with nanosised particles of titanium dioxide. ‘This simple nanoparticle formulated ‘green’ laundry product with potential, enables us to turn the public into an air-purifying altruistic community (Storey 2012).'

Whereas an example for a natural material innovation, that operates on a sustainable level would be the brand Umasan. Umasan is the first vegan fashion label, which satisfies the needs of the new health style generation, by making use of fabrics that contain a certain amount of zinc with an anti-inflammatory effect. The vegan label attaches a great importance to ecological and human production processes as well as the natural, sustainable and animal-friendly use of resources. They offer garments from innovative vegan fabrics like seaweed, beech wood, eucalyptus wood, soy silk or bamboo. Further aims Umasan to 'create calmness within the madness of the fashion world and its ever evolving market insecurities. They are looking for balance and timelessness opposing industry standards. (umasan official website n.d.).'

All these approaches are great examples to demonstrate that fashion, as we know it today, could possibly survive in a Post-growth-sustainable economy and that both ideals could be brought in line. However, some of the brands are still under development and mostly not primarily profit-oriented. They nevertheless teach us that it is basically possible, it just requires some instinct feeling and creative methods, but since fashion is creativity in itself, this should be feasible. Concepts such as 'Regional economy', 'up-cycling' and some 'innovative resource alternatives' just showed us that it is possible to combine both and this not only in theory, but also in practise. The question is only what society will make out of it. Every single approach, that has been introduced, be it in the car food or fashion industry comes up with future-oriented solutions and innovations that are economically successful, supportive to climate protection, the conservation of natural resources, and embody the societal responsibility of economic actors.
Sustainability in fashion has been in the spotlight for several years. More and more brands come out with green product lines, and announce on their websites how and where they are produced. There are many designers, textile scientists, economists, growth-critics and authors, such as Fletcher, who addressed the issue of slow, sustainable fashion in her various books and articles or the group of authors of *Worldchanging: A User's Guide for the 21st Century*, that presents innovative solutions, ideas and inventions for building a sustainable future. They all researched how an alternative (fashion) system due to sustainable and less-growth requirements could look like and mostly came to the conclusion that there are many options such as the previously named in the car, food and fashion industry. Yet the overall issue is so complex that the question what it could become, is still in progress and requires further and further research. Also the question what sustainability is on a whole cannot be answered at present, nor can a Post-growth economy in practise really be described. So the movement just has to keep on going and evolving. More projects, that put their focus on sustainability and on less growth in order to cater for overall well-being and happiness are needed. When realising that both sustainability and Post-growth cannot be fully defined, the question arises if sustainability and Post-growth economy can be considered as the same and could be put on the same level?

**Sustainability and Post-growth**

Post-growth can be seen as a world ideology, whereas sustainability, prioritises 'conserving an ecological balance by avoiding depletion of natural resources (Oxford online dictionary).'

A Post-growth economy is in that sense not only about the nature and it requires way more, than just making use of eco-friendly materials, it is about us. Therefore sustainability could almost be seen as the catalyst of a Post-growth economy, a necessary tool that contributes to the fulfilment of a Post-growth economy, and leads us into a slower and less-growth oriented direction.

All the approaches that we had a look at were rather smaller projects, since it is very complicated to offer 100% sustainable products. The textile industry requires a lot of chemicals, water and causes much pollution and damage. It is often quite difficult to find alternatives for dyestuff and bleaching, for example. Also, the production of organic cotton in quantities that e.g. H&M need, can be problematic (Midby 2013). And not only the textile industry has to face these problems, which might be one of the reasons, why it is rather smaller brands in any sector that are offering (partly) green- products. Big companies might also refuse to invest that much money, for such a costly and alternative requiring production process (Laughland & Bansal 2011).
But there are of course many big companies that picked up the issue of 'we need to save our planet', as well that decided to become more transparent in production terms and offer more environmentally friendly products. Yet they often do things by halves, because they are still very profit-oriented and are not willing to invest money, which is an issue that a radical Post-growth economy wants to disregard and eliminate. Also, most of the big brands are just reacting on trends such as organic cotton- jeans like C&A did, or a conscious collection like H&M, or as mentioned before the Esprit Recycled Collection, designed by the winner of the Eccochic Award.

All these approaches are not necessarily bad, but they are very much profit-oriented and still stimulate consumption and today's throw-away society. Additionally many brands might just do it, because others are doing it and since the market is penetrated by competition, every big player has to jump on the bandwagon as well. Midby states that already in 1995 'Fashion and Sustainability' became a trend and therefore H&M felt the pressure to do it as well (2013). On the case of H&M in 1995 we can see that performing sustainable does often not happen from conviction, in the first place but rather out of pressure to stay competitive. Marks and Spencer's Plan A for example is originally a great idea: to motivate the consumer to reach 180 commitments based on five main pillars in the sectors of waste, climate change, sustainable raw materials, health and fair partners by 2015. Yet they rather do it to spruce of their image, instead of real world-and society-caring intentions. This is not to say that it is of little importance to mention and spread these issues.

But it should happen out of conviction, as only then can we really achieve slow fashion in terms of less-growth and less-consumption. Patagonia for instance is the first brand world-wide that offers out-door jackets made from recycled polyester fibres, obtained from re-cycled PET-bottles. However, the process takes so much energy that it could not even be regarded as ecologically friendly or sustainable anymore (Nebel 2014). So even a brand like Patagonia that is very less- growth oriented and appeals to their consumer to buy less, with a ' Do not buy this Jacket campaign' cannot keep its promises to offer fully sustainable and re-cycled products.

Patagonia and the above mentioned cases could be accused of the so-called greenwashing. Greenwashing is, 'when a company or organisation spends more time and money claiming to be 'green' through advertising and marketing than actually implementing business practises that minimise environmental impact. It is whitewashing, but with a green brush (Greenwashing Index Partnership University of Oregon).’ And this as a consequence makes consumers mistakenly think that they are already doing something good, even if that is maybe not the case. So if a Post-growth economy did eventuate the major problem for the big fashion concerns, and the overall economy would probably be that they have to redefine their ideals and conviction.
Their main purpose would need to shift from money and property, to the people and the overall-well-being of the whole globe. Even the approach of Trinkwalder could be considered as a lukewarm project, because she does not operate 100% sustainable. As an individual she is also not acting on a radical Post-growth level, which excludes using of cars and planes for instance. But not only radical is successful, this is what many growth critics fault on Paech's approaches and visions (Unfried 2012). Trinkwalder built up her idea on a handful of crucial principles that perfectly fulfil the majority of the requirements of a Post-growth economy and therefore manomama is for sure a very great step into a more conscious direction and an example that perfectly compromised with the identity of fashion.

The theory of Post-growth economy asks for a hundred percent conviction and dedication. Ideally, the five main principles of a radical Post-growth economy: 'institutional innovations, material zero sum games, regional economics, subsistence economy and sufficiency (Paech 2012)' would have to be fulfilled (see appendix p.47). But this is, as we could learn almost impossible and utopic. That again is exactly what others such as Fletcher or Tamsin Blanchard, the author of 'Green is the new black' (2007) or Janet Hethorn, the author of 'Sustainable Fashion- why now' (2008) came across, too. The ideology of fully post-growth or fully-sustainable will apparently never eventuate. But even Paech is optimistic and heads his last chapter: 'We (still) have a choice', and Trinkwalder adds: 'if you want to reach your dreams you have to start working on them now. It is in your hands.' What our society will actually make out of it is still questionable, but something will happen. Fashion did not only manage to become fashionable through Christian Dior's New Look in 1947 for example, which was a revolutionary turning-point. Fashion did also not only become what it is today through the introduction of Ready-to-Wear. It always had a fashionable touch and ever since got redefined for many hundred times already, with the help of genius garment-makers, designers and style-pioneers. No matter if we think about Rose Bertin, Coco Chanel, Kurt Cobain, Giorgio Armani, John Galliano, Lady Gaga or Marc Jacobs there will always be one forerunner, who comes up with a 'crazy' idea and will introduce a new era of fashion and people will admire it and wear it.
VI. Conclusion

Concluding we can say that it is rather up to us if the main-principles of a Post-growth economy, that are mostly limited to less-growth and less-consumption and the universe of today's fashion industry are compatible or not. We are definitely not lacking on creative methods, as we could learn in the previous chapter. These methods have shown us that there are many creative approaches, to what fashion could look like in a Post-growth economical way. This theoretically means that we have proved that both phenomena can be brought in line. Yet if we adapt to it, can identify with it and whether this fashion provides us with the same extent of happiness and belonging, is another question and depends solely on our attitude and likeliness to change.

Fashion is a complicated, obstinate sector, but Post-growth economy could symbolise a chance and not a loss, a chance for the overall economy, but also for slow fashion to develop further and to gather on appreciation. Trends have always been changing and every era brought a particular spirit, a special Zeitgeist with it, we just do not know yet, which spirit a Post-growth economy could provide us with. Moreover are trends partly dependent on consumer acceptance and on lifestyle. If society one day agrees on living a Post-growth economic lifestyle, they will also be likely to accept the individual and original trendiness of regional or up-cycled products. Fashion identity has also always been changing and been subject to historical events. But it never lost its face and even if it does one day it will be a base for something new, often even for something better.

Fashion will get on a whole new level, which can of course not be compared at all with its old vision, but this does not necessarily mean that it is less good or less meaningful. In a Post-growth economy garments would probably give way more identity to the 'consumer', than ever before. Clothes would presumably be available and affordable to everyone, there would be less class society- more entity. Hazel describes sustainable clothes, as unique pieces that were not only transformed into empty images for rapid consumption (2013). And Charlotte Constantjee, a Dutch fashion author, adds that these unique items of long-lasting craftsmanship and the highest quality can be treasured for a long time, might even become heirlooms of the future and might contribute to a lower rate of consumption (2013). Hazel completes with her proposition that these pieces can almost be considered as a new form of couture as they will mostly be custom-made for individual clients and additionally bring ethical consciousness with them (2013). All in all we can say that it would theoretically be possible to keep a trendy fashion world, but to a whole different extent than the last 55 years.
The problem with implementing this is not necessarily the compatibility of today's fashion industry with the principles of a Post-growth economy, nor that a Post-growth economy cannot offer individual and trendy fashion, as we could see on the case of manomama that offers clothes that can be compared to any other fast fashion brand, but which are yet sustainable and fabricated regionally. The problem is presumably rather our consumption-oriented, partly even consumption-addicted society and the profit-oriented concerns that often fool us with green-washing concepts. Admittedly, it is very difficult to operate fully sustainable and less growth oriented. But if we believe, what radical growth- critics as Paech predict, if we really face the big breakdown one day, we might have to accept that life will not be as it was before and might need to find appropriate alternatives. We still do not know, if a Post-growth economy will really develop, but we do know that society needs to start re-thinking. Only when having realised this every consumer can contribute something to create a better world, which does not necessarily have to follow the principles of a Post-growth economy. Post-growth economy is an ideal and might not be fulfilled to the extent desired by economist as Paech, Heinberg, Daly or Jackson. Also sustainability and Cradle-to-Cradle can at present not totally be fulfilled yet, but there is a convergence to all three conditions. They are depending on each other and if each of these principles could at least be satisfied to a certain extent we could probably already accomplish a lot to save our planet. For now a starting-point would already be to learn respecting the idea of world consciousness and to start internalising it and very important to just buy, what we really need and make use of, because it is a known fact that we are running out of resources everyday and will not be able to continue living as we did before. And it will also be important as Midby claims to spread the message, to get as many people as possible on board on a journey to a more sustainable future (in fashion) (2013). Paech is also of the opinion that we can only reach something together. But we are also in need of more transparency, honesty and more political participation in order to strive for less growth. Together we might find an appropriate alternative, that is acceptable for everyone and does not restrict us too much. And this alternative can definitely be created in a fashionable way, because as Hazel notes, slow approaches offer more sustainable and ethical ways of being fashionable. This has implications for design, production and consumption, because to quote Coco Chanel 'Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the street, fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening (n.d.).
Taking these statements into account we can assume that we do not have to fear an overall fashion-break down, but it might require our creativity, participation and willingness to change as our confession that we are living in a world full of over-consumption. We have learnt that less can sometimes be more and that 'we do not need to compromise fashion for sustainability. The two belong together (Midby 2013).’ And all these alternative approaches taking place in various industries have shown us that we might be running out of resources, but we are not running out of ideas- if we are afraid of a possible break-down we can just take them up.

Re-ducing, Re-cycling, Re-creating and above all Re-thinking can become our new device.
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**Survey created for the thesis:**

1. Are you familiar with the term 'Post-growth' Economy?

   Yes [17] 17%
   Neutral [31] 30%
   No, not at all - no idea what this means [54] 53%

2. An explanation for the ones that ticked 'neutral' or 'no': The theory of a 'Post-growth'-Economy describes an economy after (= post) 'growth', which means that economy will apparently sooner or later stop to continuously rise, this because a continuous rising economy (continuous rising GDP) is according to famous economists simply impossible. Knowing this I would like to know, what you personally think about nowadays economy? Are you of the opinion that:

   - everything should stay as it is, because our system (from a global perspective) is great and doesn't cause any harm and damage [8] 8%
   - Neutral - no opinion [16] 16%
   - our system (from a global perspective) is not great at all and we definitely should rethink and go for a change [78] 76%

3. As well as I would like to know if you are afraid of a change?

   Yes [17] 17%
   Neutral [22] 22%
   No, not at all [63] 62%
4. And last but not least do you think, that it is realistic that our system is going to collapse one day?

Yes  76  75%
Neutral  18  18%
No, not at all  8  8%

5. What is your gender?

Female  78  76%
Male  24  24%

6. What is your age?

0 - 18 years  0  0%
19-25 years  78  76%
26-30  11  11%
31-40  5  5%
41-55  7  7%
55 +  1  1%
7. What is your occupation?

- Pupil: 0 (0%)
- Student: 66 (65%)
- Professional: 21 (21%)
- Self-Employed: 13 (13%)
- Other: 2 (2%)

8. Where are you from?

- Germany: 53 (52%)
- The Netherlands: 17 (17%)
- France: 1 (1%)
- Other: 31 (30%)

9. How often do you shop new clothes, shoes, accessories?

- Every week: 8 (8%)
- Every month: 46 (45%)
- Every 2-3 months: 33 (32%)
- Every 6 months: 11 (11%)
- Max. once a year: 3 (3%)
- Other: 1 (1%)
10. Would you consider yourself as a/an

- frequent shopper [32] 31%
- occasional shopper [53] 52%
- very infrequent shopper [17] 17%

11. Do you mostly shop, because

- you REALLY need something? [26] 25%
- you saw it – you liked it and that is why you bought it, but you actually don’t really need it? [59] 58%
- Other [6] 6%

Consumer behavior and DO-IT-YOURSELF (DIY) UP-CYCLING

12. How does your closet look like?

- most of the items look alike [20] 20%
- quite balanced - some different colors- some different shapes [57] 56%
- a various mix of very different things- (very different colors and very different shapes and materials) [25] 25%
13. Imagine the following scenario: You get a spontaneous invite to a party. You open your closet and can’t find anything to wear, because you simply don’t like anything of the ‘old’ things anymore. What would you do?

- Go to the stores and buy something new: 31 (30%)
- Take one of the old items and make something new out of it- DO-IT YOURSELF: 18 (18%)
- Put on one of your ‘old’ things from your closet: 42 (41%)
- Other: 11 (11%)

14. Did you ever make something ‘new’ (garment or accessory) out of an old, used item? (like on all the DO-IT-YOURSELF and UP-CYCLING BLOGS for instance)?

- Yes: 54 (53%)
- No: 48 (47%)

**FASHION BUSINESS**

15. If you had to describe nowadays Fashion Industry in ONE word- which attribute would you give to the business?

Massconsumption diverse everything nice unsustainable exploitative Confusing Fast-fashion Fast Fluctuating insane outdated Competitive Cyclical Marketing Multifaceted don’t know self-sustained Revolutionary neglecting the importance of honesty within its production process creative Fast fashion Overload ever-changing glam cheap Polluting different expensive Exagerate billigschön mad Boring casual Pretentious fake lucrative Fugacious impersonal consumerism h cheap for production, expensive for selling it short-lived Classic revolution Innovative insipid Noopinion htu Manipulation repetitive Evolving low quality changing fast revamp out-of-control saturated Overhyped Moneyfocused don't get the question Crary Paris Shallow fast fast-moving Competitive complicated Recycled Complex Expensive Amazing alike skinny Expensive hipster Back to Sustainability uniform Ausbeutend globalized a lie Subculture destroyers Adminidtrativ supercalifragilisticexpialidocious superficial Anzug changing Artificial Exploitationmoney-grubbing Fast (but not renewing, if that is a word)sustainable- eco- friendly
16. Would you consider ‘sustainable’ clothes as ‘fashionable’ ones?

- Yes: 42 (41%)
- Neutral: 24 (24%)
- Just a few, but mostly not: 34 (33%)
- No, not at all: 2 (2%)

17. Did you ever purchase an eco-friendly (produced) /sustainable garment?

- Yes: 67 (66%)
- No: 35 (34%)
Diagram: Post-growth economy 5 essential pillars (Niko Paech)

- **Monetary domain**
  - 40 hours of working time

- **Decommercialised domain**
  - 20 hours
  - 20 hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global division of labour</th>
<th>Regional economy</th>
<th>Subsistence</th>
<th>Sufficiency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material zero-sum games: redesigning, not new production of labour</td>
<td>De-globalised value added chains</td>
<td>Own production (e.g. food, craftsmanship, education)</td>
<td>Streamlining: jettisoning affluence ballast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient and consistent technologies</td>
<td>Regional complementary currencies</td>
<td>Extending useful life: maintenance/repair</td>
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<td>Physically and culturally durable product design</td>
<td>Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)</td>
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<td>Reparability and modularity</td>
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<td>Resource gains through unsealing and renaturation</td>
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**Political support through institutional innovations**