

Flying Through a Perfect Moral Storm

*How do Norwegian environmentalists negotiate their
aeromobility practices?*

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Abstract

While growing rates of air-travel contributes to large amounts of global emissions – and a substantial part of the environmental footprints of those who fly – it has not yet been subject to strict environmental regulations. Arguably, working towards sustainable mobilities will require to achieve a greater understanding of the roles, meanings, and implications of consumer air-travel. Recognising that the environmental issue of aeromobility hinges on both social and material factors, this thesis presents a practice-theoretical investigation into the ways in which 13 Norwegian environmentalists negotiate their own aeromobilities as environmentally conscious consumers, based on qualitative interviews. Framing air-travel as a social practice, the thesis has provided some tools for moving past the moral impasse of whether or not flying is justifiable; instead putting the focus on what aeromobility means for consumers, why they continue to fly, and, as an extension of this, how aeromobilities change and become (un)sustainable.

The analyses demonstrated that the environmentalists were highly self-reflexive and spent much time and effort negotiating their (aero)mobilities. Adopting sustainable mobility practices was generally hard work requiring personal sacrifices. When construed as a practice in its own right, air-travel was thought of as environmentally damaging; something of excess, an overused privilege. As part of other practices, however, aeromobility became an important tool; an enabler of opportunities and positive experiences. The analyses emphasise the notion that air-travel is not only a practice in its own right, but part of many other practices with wider socio-environmental implications. The implication of this is that achieving more sustainable mobilities might require attention to not only the modes of transport in question, but to the wider social practices in which different mobilities are part. Based on the analyses, the discussion adds a new layer to the conceptualisation of aeromobility. It proposes that contemporary aeromobility can be thought of as an unsustainable “system” comprised of material and (infra)structural as well as socio-cultural and affective components, woven together through complex logics which inform consumers’ mobility practices in such a way that aeromobility is reproduced.

Key words: Mobility, aeromobility, air-travel, consumption, transport, practice theory, environmentalism, lifestyle, cognitive dissonance

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and finally:

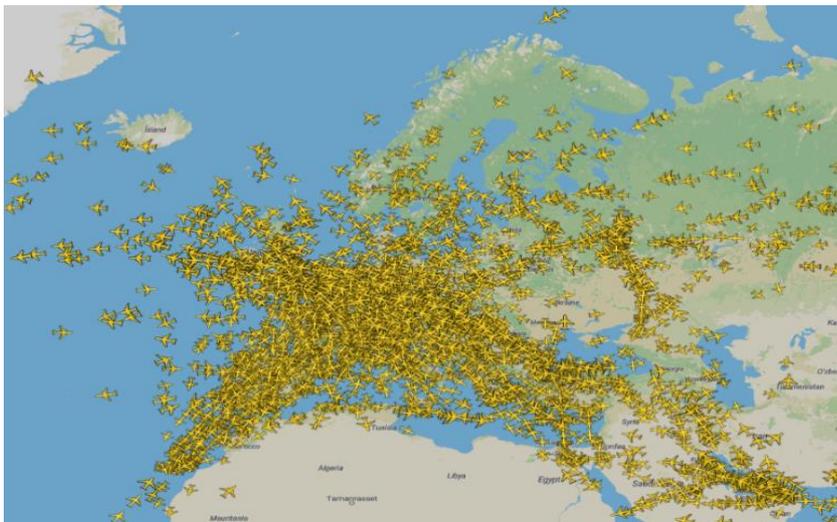
To my family, friends, and girlfriend – for your presence and never-ending support; you've helped me find joy in the smaller things in life, and made me realise that nothing is more important.

That the environmentally conscious, too, have to
heat up their houses
and use a car to get through daily life
is not so surprising ...

But private air-travels?
Those are voluntary! ...

Surely an environmentally conscious soul would find it feasible to
avoid this environmentally unfriendly mode of travel?

(Holden 2005: 262, *my translation*)



Real-time capture of flights over Europe

(12:25 GMT+1, 03.03.2019; from: <https://planefinder.net>)

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1 Introduction

1.1 The flyer's dilemma: A point of departure

In the autumn of 2017, I came to the realisation that I was a hypocrite. I had just bought an astoundingly cheap Oslo-London return flight with a notorious budget airline, adding to my already numerous flights that year. My habit of excessive air-travel – some call it “binge flying” (Higham et al 2014a: 462; Young et al. 2014: 55) – was hardly reconcilable with my self-proclaimed identity as an environmentalist. I soon discovered that I was not alone in my ignorance toward the environmental impacts of air-travel. Research on the environmental impacts of consumption has shown that there is often a gap between consumers' intentions and actions (Harland et al. 1999; Norgaard 2001; Blake 2007; Barr et al. 2010; Holden and Linnerud 2011; Vetlesen 2015; Hall and Holdsworth 2016). This “attitude-behaviour gap” (Higham et al. 2013: 949) is also present when it comes to air-travel as consumers fly despite being aware of, and concerned about, its environmental ramifications (McDonald et al. 2015). A 2018 rapport from the Institute of Transport Economics (TØI) showed that Norwegians enjoyed their leisure and holiday aeromobilities, and that they would not stop flying despite being aware of its environmental costs (Farstad et al. 2018; see also Thune-Larsen and Farstad 2018).

These costs are not insignificant (Pels 2008). Naturally, air-travel emits huge amounts of CO₂, particularly during take-off and landing. It also involves a range of “multiplier” effects – the production of carbon dioxide and water vapour trapping heat within the atmosphere, for instance – which make the carbon emissions even more damaging (Jardine 2005; Clark 2010ab). Moreover, the pollution from production of aircraft, airports, and aeromobility infrastructure have direct impacts on local environments in addition to their general contribution to increased emissions. As such, few consumer practices come with a higher environmental footprint than air-travel: An Oslo-Bangkok return trip, for instance, emits roughly the equivalent of a full year's worth of driving a fossil fuel car (i.e. 2.2 tonnes CO₂ equivalents; Dæhlen 2018; Farstad et al. 2018). As such, aeromobility often contributes to “rebound” effects (Hertwich 2005), as the environmental gains achieved through an otherwise sustainable or “green” lifestyle can easily be cancelled out by emissions from air-travel (Higham et al. 2014).

Like many other normalised, “default” practices in consumer societies, aeromobility represents a rather tricky issue. The key issue is not each separate flight *per se*, but the coalescence of these into unsustainable mobilities. This notion of coalescence implies what Nixon (2011: 2) terms a “slow violence” on the world; “typically not viewed as violence at all”, occurring “gradually and out of sight”. This is problematic: given the current lack of “game-changing” technical solutions to achieve sufficient reduction of emissions, social and behavioural adaptation might be required to achieve “sustainable mobility” (Higham et al. 2013: 951). Aeromobility thus constitutes a double-edged sword: An achievement of profound technological advancement which has redefined global mobilities on the one hand, and a driver for extreme pollution on the other. This gives rise to “the flyer’s dilemma”, described by Higham et al. (2014: 462) as “the tension that exists between the perceived personal benefits of deeply embedded air travel practices and the collective climate change consequences of such practices”. The flyer’s dilemma has also been rephrased as an ethical question: “*Why* do we struggle so much with the practice of flying, despite holding pro-environmental attitudes and knowing that our behaviour is, in contradiction, harming the earth we value?” (Hales and Caton 2017: 109).

The double nature of aeromobility, coupled with my own internalisation of the flyer’s dilemma, was what sparked my interest in this thesis’ topic: the social practice of air-travel, and how it is negotiated by consumers in light of its environmental implications. The research presented in this thesis contributes to the aeromobilities literature in several ways. First, it answers calls for research on the socio-cultural impacts and implications of aeromobility (Pappas 2014: 250; Baer 2018: 312); second, it contributes with new knowledge on the flyer’s dilemma (Higham et al. 2014); and finally, it continues a tradition of tying together work on mobilities and social practices (Verbeek and Mommaas 2008: 641; Hansen 2017ab).

1.2 The state of affairs

“Flying kills”, Monbiot (2006) wrote many years ago. However, it would take some time before the practice of air-travel – undoubtedly “an integral part of contemporary mobility” (Young et al. 2014: 60) – would be cast as environmentally dubious. While this thesis has been written, however, the aeromobility debate has moved from the margins toward the centre of environmental discourse. The environmental

dubiousness of personal air-travel is aptly summarised in the term *flygskam* – “flyer’s shame” – taken in use to moralise frequent flyers (Henley 2019). While the aviation industry has largely escaped the environmental scrutiny faced by other high-emission sectors, it is now receiving more attention. As Higham et al. (2014: 463) noted some years ago, “the insatiable appetite for air travel” must eventually be included in the environmental discourse. According to data from The World Bank, almost *four billion* passengers were carried by airplanes globally in 2017, compared to just over 300 million in 1970¹. This development is set to continue into the future: Forecast reports predict the total number of air-travel passengers to reach *8.2 billion* in 2037, due to (1) rising living standards, (2) population growth and demographic changes, and (3) decreasing air-travel costs (IATA 2017; 2018).

Despite the influence of the Paris Agreement and IPCC advocacy, the aviation industry – which remains poorly addressed in the Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC 2019) – has set few goals to reduce overall emissions (Higham and Cohen 2011). While the EU has issued a goal of reaching “no-emission mobility” by 2050, allowing consumers “to travel by air while leaving a minimal footprint” (EAER 2019: 2), the road towards such goals is highly speculative (Baer 2018: 302). Besides, reduced emissions from European aeromobility might easily be eaten up by substantial growth in polluting aviation elsewhere (see IATA 2017; 2018). Generally speaking, we can thus infer that growth is prioritised over sustainability. If global capitalism is the big environmental elephant in the room, Baer (2018: 299) concludes, “one of the smaller elephants in the room is the growing number of airplane flights worldwide”.

The nature of aeromobility has changed a lot in the last century. A few decades ago, air-travel was incredibly expensive – a luxury afforded by the few, not the many. While most of the world population have yet to step into an aircraft (estimates vary between roughly 80-90%), this is changing: In the coming years, the fastest growing markets for aviation will be located in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region (IATA 2017). As air-travel is slowly becoming “an opportunity for the many” (*ibid*), the increasing availability of cheap long-haul flights through the budget airline industry has further increased demand, rendering the consumption of aeromobility

¹ Interactive statistics available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IS.AIR.PSGR> (accessed 26.10.2019)

increasingly inconspicuous. This has implied a “general tourism trend towards more frequent and more distant trips, and for shorter periods of time” (Verbeek and Mommaas 2008: 630). This trend, coupled with economic growth, has produced a boom in air-travel in South-East Asia (Bowen Jr. 2016: 94): “Now everyone can fly”, reads the slogan of the Malaysian low-cost airline AirAsia.

In terms of functionality, flying is often cheaper (and significantly faster) than travelling by land. Modern-day air-travel allows consumers to (1) travel far greater distances than they would by car or train (Pels 2008; Clark 2010ab); and (2) travel shorter distances more often – commuting to work or attending conferences (Storme et al. 2017), going on weekend holiday trips, or simply getting from point A to B faster, cheaper, and more efficiently than otherwise possible. Urry (2002: 270) argues that a society, which allows its citizens to be mobile, is considered a “good society” (see also Randles and Mander 2009: 253). Flying has also become a lot safer, to the point of being one the safest means of transport there is (see e.g. Savage 2013). While air-travel is still reserved for the “kinetic elite” of the world (Cresswell 2006), aeromobility has come to constitute “an integral component of modern cultural and social life” and the aviation industry “a pivotal part of the capitalist world system” (Baer 2018: 298). Having noted the state of affairs, we can turn to the aims and objectives of this thesis.

1.3 Aims, objectives, and research questions

In this thesis, I analyse aeromobility through a practice-theoretical framework. In doing so, I frame air-travel as a social practice, and personal aeromobility as a set of social practices. My goal is not to argue that flying is wrong (or right), but to paint a nuanced picture of flying as a complex practice, taking into account its contextual elements as well as its practitioners’ motivations. As such, the unit of analysis is “the whole flying event” (Randles and Mander 2009: 246) – the constellations of practices involved in aeromobility. This answers to calls for researchers to focus on “sets of consumption practices” situated within different “domains” of everyday life (Spaargaren 2011: 815).

According to Higham et al. (2014: 464), “responses to the flyers’ dilemma in the traveling public remain poorly theorized and understood”. While most research on the flyer’s dilemma has focused primarily on the denials and dissonances of the

individual agent, the structural aspects involved tend to be neglected (Young et al. 2014). Taking a practice-approach to aeromobility provides new tools to move past the moral impasse of whether or not flying is justifiable, instead putting the focus on what aeromobility means for consumers, why they continue to fly, and, as an extension of this, what can potentially be done to produce and maintain sustainable mobilities in the future. By providing a tool for understanding the socio-cultural as well as material context of mobilities, practice-theoretical frameworks are “particularly important for research on modern resource-intensive mobility practices and possible ways to change them” (Heisserer and Rau 2017: 582). Using practice theory, the thesis ties these two perspectives together; exploring how the agent and the system reproduce each other to create the contemporary, unsustainable practices of aeromobility. A growing body of research indicates that flyers do not constitute wholly rational consumers (see Holden 2005; Barr and Prillwitz 2012; Higham et al. 2013; McDonald et al. 2015), but that their “individual self-understanding and orientations towards action” are largely affected by “structural social transformations” as well as “dominant forms of culture and identity” (Rosa 2008: 15). Taking this into consideration, my inquiry parallels that of Spargaaren (2011: 813), who asks: “How do ordinary people deal with environmental matters and in what ways do they perceive, understand, evaluate and manage the connections between their personal lifestyles and routine (consumption) practices on the one hand and global environmental change on the other?”

In this thesis, then, my aim is to circumvent the flyer’s dilemma by addressing aeromobilities’ socio-material contexts in addition to practitioners’ values, beliefs, and personal lifestyle choices – simply put, to uncover the “socio-material histories” (Wilhite 2013: 62) imbued in their (aero)mobility practices. Through such a reflexive mapping of environmentalists’ aeromobilities, the thesis aims to provide a better understanding of air-travel as a challenge to sustainable mobility. In so doing, it serves as a contribution towards reaching “the deep understanding necessary for breakthroughs towards more sustainable consumption” (Spaargaren 2011: 815).

To go about this, I have studied people *as* practitioners. I have conducted qualitative interviews with 13 Norwegian environmentalists, “using them as informants about the practices they carry” (Shove 2017a: no page). Doing so, I have recognised the multi-scalar nature of processes like climate change, environmental governance,

consumption, and mobility: Not only do they affect general understandings of the world as “standardised”, “large-scale” phenomena, but they constitute “unique”, “small-scale” events in the sense that they take on subjective meanings within individuals’ lifeworlds and practices (Eriksen 2016: 29). More specifically, I have been interested in how practitioners are *recruited* to practices (Shove 2017a) – in this case, the practice of air-travel. As Warde (2005: 140) notes, focusing on practices implies not only asking *why* people do what they do, but also “how...they do those things in the way that they do”. Conceptualising personal aeromobility as a consumer practice makes it possible to unearth some of the mechanisms that make people engage in air-travel practices, and to “make visible previously unrecognised connections between the social and the material dimensions of everyday travel” (Heisserer and Rau 2017: 584). Building on this, I have taken particular interest in the ways in which consumers’ flying habits are negotiated through the interplay between structures and agency. By opting for knowledgeable and self-reflexive participants, I was able to construe, and put the main focus on, their aeromobilities as a matter of social practice.

Two overarching research questions (RQs) have guided this study. RQ1 asks: How do Norwegian environmentalists engage with aeromobility? Here, I have included two more pointed sub-questions: (a) How do they *negotiate* their own aeromobilities, and how are these negotiation processes informed by the socio-material contexts in which they take place? (b) How do they construe, frame, and ultimately live out their environmentalist identities and lifestyles *through* their (aero)mobility practices? Taking the findings produced from these questions as a starting point, RQ2 asks: What are the implications of the findings for analyses of contemporary aeromobilities and how they might change?

In order to answer these questions, the thesis is structured into nine chapters. Chapter 2 provides a Conceptual Framework, which first conceptualises aeromobility, situating it within a broader discussion of mobilities and consumption, and second provides an overview of practice theory. Chapter 3 discusses methodology and the research process. Chapters 4-7 presents and analyses the findings of the study thematically, granting most attention to RQ1. Based on the analysis, Chapter 8 offers a discussion, drawing together RQs 1 and 2. The final chapter offers a concluding summary and some suggestions for future research.

2 Conceptual Framework

2.1 The flyer's dilemma

To fly or not to fly? That is the question at the heart of the “flyer’s dilemma”, first brought up by Rosenthal (2010). This conundrum – encountered by environmentally conscious consumers attempting to adhere to environmentalist principles while also preserving individual interests – rests somewhere in the space between the practical and the ethical. It “reveals a contradiction between our contemporary consciousness of capitalism, its environmental consequences, and our need to continue flying” (Young et al. 2014: 61). Some have framed the frequent flying phenomenon as “binge flying”, pointing to the individual’s propensity for compulsive behaviour. Through this lens, frequent flying can be viewed as a “behavioural addiction” and “a pathological form of consumption” (Young et al. 2014: 52). Such a framing “sheds light on how consumers internalize and process their behaviour while finding it structurally impossible to resolve the overt contradictions between their self-identity (ethics) and their actions (practices)” (*ibid*: 61). Nevertheless, considering consumption as part of practices downplays the role of the individual and demands instead attention to *cultures* of consumption (Campbell 1996; Mansvelt 2005) and of mobilities (Urry 2004; Adey 2006; Gössling and Stavrinidi 2016; Merriman and Pearce 2017). In addition to consider the individual practitioner, then, attention must be put on “the fundamental socio-structural causes of frequent flying” (Young et al. 2014: 52).

Gardiner’s (2006) conception of climate change as a “perfect moral storm” provides a good starting point for discussing the flyer’s dilemma as situated in the *intersection* between structure and agency. According to Gardiner (2006: 298), climate change implies “an unusual convergence of independently harmful factors” which “threaten our ability to behave ethically”. It is constituted by three distinct storms. First, the “global storm” refers to the spatial diffusion of climate change. It points to the ways in which human development and environmental resource use are interconnected “by a vast number of individuals and institutions not unified by a comprehensive structure of agency” (*ibid*: 399). Second, the “intergenerational storm” refers to the temporal diffusion of climate change. As a “lagged” or “deferred” phenomenon, there is an “incentive problem” (*ibid* 404): it becomes “collectively rational to cooperate and restrict overall pollution” while also “individually rational not to

restrict one's own pollution" (*ibid*: 400). As Eriksen (2016: 3) put it, the world is too full of "people and their projects". While the benefits are primarily awarded through personal experience – as "the experiences accessed through air travel may offer psychological benefits to the individual leisure traveller" (Higham et al. 2014: 462) – the costs are primarily felt as a collective burden, through pollution and the intensification of climate change. In broad terms, then, the benefits are *tangible*, while the costs are *abstract*. Additionally, there are complicated questions of historical responsibility to be addressed. Third, the "theoretical storm" refers to the limitations of human intellect and organisation to fully comprehend and act according to situational requirements. Rather than taking action, the default response becomes engaging in moral corruption, self-deception, and selective attention (Gardiner 2006: 408). In sum, then, climate change represents a "catch-22": While business-as-usual will undoubtedly lead to disastrous climate change, "attempts to combat it may [also] have substantial ramifications for human social life" (*ibid*: 401). This "perfect moral storm" can also be applied to aeromobility: its consequences are diffuse and abstracted in time and space, its role within everyday life has changed with the generations, and on a theoretical level, there are many reasons to be found as to avoid contemplating the environmental issues of air-travel. Being aeromobile implies flying through these storms, figuratively and literally, and there might be turbulence ahead.

A growing body of literature has focused on the flyer's dilemma as a barrier for change. Through qualitative interviews with participants from Norway, Germany, and the UK, Higham et al. (2014: 462) found evidence for "widespread neglect of the flyers' dilemma", often accompanied by feelings of guilt and denial. Such feelings, studies show, are commonplace among environmentally conscious consumers (see e.g. Stern 1999; Norgaard 2001, 2006ab; Holden 2005; McDonald et al. 2015). The issue was not a lacking awareness of the environmental consequences of air-travel. Rather, they demonstrated a "profound reluctance to compromise established aeromobilities" (Higham et al. 2014: 469) as their knowledge did not materialise into action. Higham and Cohen (2010: 104) found that Norwegian consumers' "concern for frequent air travel was accompanied by an unwillingness to forego long-haul air travel". McDonald et al. (2015: 1503) found that many "self-selected green consumers" continue to fly despite being aware of the environmental consequences

of this, using different strategies to combine an environmentalist lifestyle with air-travel. Several papers have focused on air-travel in academia, questioning the need for physical co-presence through “corporeal mobility” (Storme et al. 2017; see also Randles and Mander 2009: 253). Baer (2018: 298) grapples “with the dilemmas involved in the academic use of aircraft”. Glover et al. (2017: 1) analyse the ways in which “unsustainable hypermobility”, and primarily air-travel, is institutionally embedded within Australian universities². Some have taken a self-reflexive approach: Høyer (2009) reflects on his own aeromobility through academic “conference tourism” and its consequences; while Hales and Caton (2017) analyse their own narratives as environmentally conscious yet binge-flying academics.

The flyer’s dilemma literature builds on the substantial research on the experience of cognitive dissonance tied to environmental behaviours. Cognitive dissonance describes the self-reflexive experience of one’s actions being out of line with one’s knowledge, attitudes, or beliefs. While theories of dissonance and denial are primarily oriented towards individuals, they add another layer to practice theory by allowing us to think more broadly about the reflexivity of practitioner-consumers; to consider the relationship between practitioners and their “acting out” of practices, as well as meaning-making processes tied to these practices. From a practice perspective, this describes a decoupling of a broader practice from one’s participation in it, making for a “double” reality (Norgaard 2011). The “double reality” of aeromobility is that it is normalised, valued, and cherished, yet also very unsustainable. Barr et al. (2010) have found that “sustainable lifestyles” do not necessarily “spill over” into all domains of life; holiday travel being one the most stubborn domains. McDonald et al. (2015: 1507) refer to the flyer’s dilemma as a “recipe for dissonance”. They found that, when experiencing feelings of cognitive dissonance tied to their practices, “green” consumers employ various strategies to mitigate, eliminate, or repair this feeling of dissonance instead of actually changing their practices. Similarly, studying ethical consumption, Gregory-Smith et al. (2013) found that consumers were “flexible”, using compensation and guilt-management strategies to sustain contradictory behaviour whilst eliminating dissonance. This decoupling of perception and practice is central to dissonance theories.

² A similar discussion has taken place at the University of Oslo, where a petition was signed to cut its emissions from academic air-travel, as of 2018, in half by 2025.

Given that participation in practices is “constrained by a variety of factors outside consumers’ control”, Stern (1999: 461) argues that incentives are more productive than information in generating change. Variables such as knowledge, values, and attitudes tend to be neglected when faced with “barriers to action external to the individual, such as significant financial cost or inconvenience” (*ibid*: 468). Having the right attitude seems mostly helpful in reducing emissions when applied to simple practices which require little effort of consumers to change; when “the external context provides weak pressures for or against behavior” (*ibid*: 464). Reaching a similar conclusion, Sælen et al. (2012) found that, in Norwegian households, “environmental attitudes are most strongly correlated with behaviour related to waste and the domain of food while the correlation is weakest for behaviour relating to domestic energy and transport”. On these grounds, from the vantage point of behavioural economics, Sunstein and Thaler (2008) argue that, given these evident limits of human rationality, creating seemingly “invisible” incentives or motivations for changing practices (*nudges*) is more effective than simply increasing people’s knowledge base about a given practice. The change in focus from information to incentives means, in some ways, turning to a focus on collective practices, as opposed to individual actions and behaviours, as a starting point for facilitating change.

Holden (2005) has studied the environmental attitudes and household consumption patterns of consumers in three Norwegian cities. He found that “green” households – here, households with memberships in one particular environmental organisation – had higher environmental footprints than “ordinary” households. One of his participants worked in an environmental organisation and actively sought to reduce her household’s environmental footprint. Still, she drove as much as the “ordinary” consumers; her electricity consumption was higher; and she engaged in comparatively more air-travel. She is thus a “personification” of environmental cognitive dissonance. While attitudes in some cases were “converted” into specific environmentally productive practices, the households’ total environmental footprints remained high: It was normal to combine a high environmental conscious with high household energy expenditure, expansive everyday mobility routines, and long air-travel trips (*ibid*: 264). The patterns of aeromobility consumption was especially striking. While associated variables such as gender, age, income, education, and

living area are often enablers of high consumption regardless of “greenness”, Holden (2005) found that the green households engaged in comparatively more air-travel *even when all of these variables were isolated and accounted for*. There was, in other words, a statistically significant relationship between relative “greenness” and increased air-travel. This corresponds with several studies cited by McDonald et al. (2015: 1507) which indicate that “the greenest individuals were the most frequent long-haul (air) travellers”.

While this literature focuses primarily on the individual agent, they are also relevant to practice theory. This is because it says something about how individuals become practitioners; about their own understandings of the practices in which they do or do not engage. It is, in other words, about meaning-making. Dissonance and denial are interesting analytical tools because they dip into the social organisation of practice – the thoughts and feelings “binding” the practitioner to a given practice. Arguably, when Norgaard (2006a) suggests that thinking about climate change threatens people’s identities, this is arguably because it changes their perspectives on, and perceptions of, various practices that make sense to them. In turn, as Warde (2017: 197) argues, practice theories might “offer a means to circumvent the value-action gap”. “The difficulty of achieving, cognitively or practically, consistency of behaviour in line with general ethical principles is partly due to the specificity and compartmental character of practices” (*ibid*). While attitudes, values, and knowledge might not necessarily materialise into practice, taking part in practices might create or promote certain attitudes and identities.

The framing of the flyer’s dilemma has received some criticism, however. Young et al. (2015) reformulate the flyer’s dilemma as a question of environmental risk. For them, aeromobility becomes “a contradictory form of consumption that simultaneously produces individual pleasure and global environmental risk” (*ibid*: 1). They warn against turning an issue of “structural conditions of production” into an issue of “individual consumer choices”, as this “serves to perpetuate the very system it intends to critique” (*ibid*: 2). This tension between the individual and the “system” demands a focus on the dynamics between structure and agency. One of Gardiner’s (2006) main points is that climate change (as with air-travel) is difficult to deal with because the processes which produces climate change happen in abstracted time-spaces. This makes it difficult to pin down, and to decide who is responsible or who

is to blame. While not neglecting the structural condition, the flyer's dilemma prepares the ground for examining the interrelations between individual agencies and overarching structures in (re)producing aeromobility. Arguably, a practice-oriented focus circumvents some of the criticisms of the flyer's dilemma.

2.2 From air-travel to aeromobility

2.2.1 The mobilities paradigm

“All the world seems to be on the move”, write Sheller and Urry (2006: 207). In the social sciences, the study of various kinds of movements have been conceptualised as “mobilities” in the last decade (Faulconbridge and Hui 2016). The purposefully broad term “mobilities” refers to the various clusters of spatial mobility that characterise the contemporary globalised world order (not to be confused with social mobility). Constant movements of people and things and ideas continuously change the world, initiating and maintaining processes of chaos and fragmentation: spatial detachment, deterritorialization, inconsistencies of presences and absences, inclusions and exclusions, and so on. Nevertheless, mobility is an unevenly shared social good (Adey 2006: 86). The realisation that the world is not still but moving is not new: as Heraclitus observed roughly 2600 years ago: “The river where you set your foot just now is gone – those waters giving way to this, now this” (quoted in Merriman and Pearce 2017: 496). Nevertheless, the mobilities paradigm denotes the revitalisation of this notion as a tool to better understand the social world. Adey (2006: 90) emphasises “the recent turn towards all things mobile”. Sheller and Urry (2006) refer to the “new mobilities paradigm” as an *époque* in which mobility itself becomes a tangible practice (as opposed to something “in-between” other practices).

It is this sense of the mobilities paradigm that is central to this thesis. Arguably, the field of mobilities is comprised of several “layers” of mobility. Some scholars have been concerned with the theoretical and metaphysical implications of the mobile world. Bauman (2000), for instance, used the concept of “liquid modernity” to refer to the ways in which contemporary societies, and our understandings of them, are constantly changing – thus being *liquid* as opposed to *solid*, evoking Marx' remark that “all that is solid melts into air”. Though not synonymous, this notion of the “liquidity” of the social/political/cultural/economic world also implies a *mobility* of that world. Similarly, Baudrillard's (1994) concepts of “simulations”, “simulacra”, and “hyperreality” further address the ways in which mobilities permeate the virtual,

non-physical world; problematising the blurring of symbols and representations on the one hand, and experienced reality on the other, which occurs in the postmodern society.

Others, however – including myself in this thesis – emphasise the mobilities paradigm’s influence on our sense of space, place, and scale; and how this in turn influences our, identities, practices, and worldly perceptions. As Adey (2006) argues, as the local-global divides are rendered increasingly irrelevant, places themselves expand beyond their “locatedness”, so that places and landscapes become understood through a “politics of connectivity” rather than a purely spatial politics. In simpler terms, the focus is put on the “social and material significance” of different transportation forms (see Hansen 2016: 629). The concept of “hypermobility” – referring to the normalisation and “glamorisation” of global connectedness among the (mobile) elite (Cohen and Gössling 2015: 1661) – is perhaps particularly relevant. If we distinguish between the more theoretically versus the more practically oriented literature on mobilities, then, this thesis pays the most attention to the latter category. Our understanding of the contemporary world order as a mobilities paradigm matters because it changes the parameters used to analyse mobility practices, and not least air-travel.

2.2.2 Time-space and mobility

The very notion of the mobilities paradigm suggests that everything is moving quicker. Building on Bauman, Sheller and Urry (2006: 210) describe “a shift from modernity seen as heavy and solid to one that is light and liquid and in which speed of movement of people, money, images, and information is paramount”. The mobilities paradigm describes a contemporary world predicated on movements, so that immobility feels limiting and degenerative. It suggests that different grand-scale societal processes manoeuvre or re-direct practices. Simply put, then, the mobilities paradigm thesis implies a notion of all-things moving increasingly fast.

“Speeding up” and “spreading out”: Accounts of acceleration

The notion that things are moving ever faster has been theoretically explored in different ways. The concept of “time-space compression” (Harvey 1989) refers to the breakdown and fragmentation of time-space barriers as globalisation and modern technologies alter or distort our sense of time, space, place, and scale; blurring local-

global dichotomies. It refers to “movement and communication across space, to the geographical stretching-out of social relations, and to our experience of all this” (Massey 1991: 24). Time-space compression was conceptualised to describe “an era...when things are speeding up, and spreading out” (*ibid*), so that the world paradoxically becomes both smaller and bigger at the same time. Rosa’s (2008: 1) theory of “social acceleration” considers this speeding up and spreading out as an evolving process. In the “high-speed society”, he suggests, “events...seem to take place faster all the time...What was experienced as being extraordinarily speedy just yesterday...now seems extraordinarily slow” (*ibid*). The creation of new habits, routines, and norms are social implications of technological process. This produces continuously renewed expectations of how time and space are supposed to be experienced. The expectations of perpetual progress (which are arguably institutionalised in the current global order) becomes a key factor for rampant, anthropogenic climate change, “resulting from the temporal gap separating contemporary society’s use of natural resources and nature’s capacity for regeneration” (*ibid*: 12). This, of course, is a key facet of the Anthropocene, the age of humans. Similarly, Eriksen (2016) argues that the world is “overheating” – that these processes of speeding up are self-reinforcing and exponential to the extent that it is unsustainable, threatening Earth’s ecological capacity.

Pauly’s (1995) theory of “shifting baselines” says something about how humans adapt to this acceleration and tempo-spatial diffusion, and particularly in terms of environmental management. He argues that environmental perceptions are inaccurate *by default* because the baselines for understanding nature shift every so often, roughly with every generation. This processual “shift” appears to be invisible and thus tends to be neglected, leading to humans overriding the capacities of ecosystems. The core of the theory is that, since individuals analyse their surroundings from the vantage point of their own existential location in time and space, their ability to perceive broad, long-term changes is impaired. With every “shifting” of generational baselines, the ever-changing environmental state of affairs is continuously re-normalised, leading to both personal and generational “amnesia” (Kahn 2002). The starting point for the theory was Pauly (1995) noticing that fishermen rationalised overfishing due to this amnesia effect. When generalised, the theory suggests that humans struggle to properly consider what has existed in the

past, or will exist in the future, beyond their own generational (or lifespan) limits. Instead, they tend to observe only incremental changes, and consequently downplay the consequences of these – and not least their own contribution to producing them.

These accounts of change say something about the normalisation of practice in a temporal perspective, and its implication for normative ways-of-life on a collective level. Practices are often products of “invented traditions” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), “practiced because they serve the needs of the present generations” (Norgaard 2006: 363). Indeed, Gardiner (2006: 404) points to the problem of generations, arguing that “there is an incentive problem: the bad effects of current emissions are likely to fall, or fall disproportionately, on future generations, whereas the benefits of emissions accrue largely to the present...It is *collectively rational* for most generations to cooperate...[Yet it is] *individually rational* for all generations not to cooperate”. The shifting baselines theory thus suggests that it becomes increasingly difficult to relate to “the excluded non-living generations, who are going to suffer most...subjects who do not live yet and therefore have no voice of their own in decision-making which affects their conditions of life dramatically” (Back 2015: 82).

In terms of practices, this speeding up and spreading out means that, in Shove’s (2009: 28) terms, collectively produced “practice-timescapes” (the sum of individual practitioners’ practice-time profiles) speed up. Giving up or reducing consumption of (aero)mobility might prove difficult given the definitional powers of movement practices at the foundation of the mobilities paradigm (Shelley and Urry 2006). Moreover, the nature of the problems posed in this thesis demands some attention to how the “state of affairs” is perceived; how the system (or structure-agency dialectic) operates, and what the outlooks for near and distant futures are like. The dilemmas and challenges outlined in this section – the speeding up and spreading out of society; the intergenerational blind-spots which inhibit change; and the invisible forces incentivising people, politicians and all climate-change stakeholders *not to act* – are reflected in the views of scholars holding pessimistic outlooks on future environments.

Time-space, practice, and aeromobility

The mobilities paradigm thesis presumes that notions of time, space, and scale – as relational, socially produced concepts – are changing. As Shove et al. (2009: 4)

argue, “temporalities are themselves continually reproduced, enacted and transformed through the sequencing and timing of daily Practice”. Casting consumers not as passive dupes but active practitioners, practice theories suggest that individuals are not necessarily subject to, but rather active producers of, time-space. Schatzki (2009: 35) suggests that “interwoven activity timespaces form a kind of infrastructure through which human activities coordinate and aggregate”. As practices change, then, so do the time-spaces in which they operate. The “time-space” concept has been used to emphasise the relationality, subjectivity, and malleability of time and space; and the inevitable connection between the two. Arguably, the ways in which individual consumers construct their lifeworlds depend on the narratives they employ to understand their place in the world – which, in turn, is influenced by their understandings of the present in relation to the past and the future. In terms of the dimensionality of time, Schatzki (2009: 37) proposes that “the three dimensions of temporality occur simultaneously”, in the sense that (a) both past and future influence practices in the present; and (b) our understandings of the past and the future are always social constructions largely influenced by the on-goings of the present moment.

If mobilities are understood to be parts of other practices, then, they are also part in *making time*. This is of course, too, true for aeromobility. In the words of Gössling and Nilsson (2010: 242): “Air travel is becoming an ever more important agent of change in the development of increasingly mobile, globalized worlds, in that it shapes new perceptions of distance, space, and time, creating new ways of dwelling, travelling, and socializing in aeromobilized time-spaces”. To understand contemporary (aero)mobilities, their tempo-spatial context matters. In other words, we need to pay attention to how aeromobile practices have evolved through time, and how they differ across space. Shove et al. (2009) and others theorise the influence of time and space on practices, one overarching argument being that practices ought to be understood as configured by, or perhaps *through*, different time-spaces. As Shove (2009: 26) writes: “In keeping with the view that time is part of practice, it makes sense to focus not on the pace of life or the shrinking of distance as such but on new combinations and configurations of doing – commuting, multi-tasking, day tripping – which take root around infrastructural affordances like those associated with mobile technologies or with faster means and modes of travel”. This continuous production

and reproduction of time leads to various tempo-spatial expectations. Whether a journey from point A to point B is fast or slow, enjoyable or uncomfortable, it can only be one or the other *in comparison to something else*. “Speed and slowness are relational concepts that depend on a context” (Peters 2003: 321) – or, as Mackenzie (2002: 122) put it: “We have no experience of speed except as a difference of speed” (see also Adey 2006: 84). While a regular train might travel by an undeniably fast speed of 200 km/h, this might nevertheless seem “slow” given that we know how much faster we could cover the same distance by air. In terms of mobility, becoming attuned to the speed at which things and events are moving means that (re-)adjusting to the “old” (and now seemingly slow) pace of things becomes challenging. While tempo-spatial experiences have a degree of subjectivity to them, then, these become “organised” into common understandings through social practices. In sum, the concept of time-space says something about the ways in which individual lifeworld narratives affect one’s *locatedness* or *embeddedness* within *relational time-spaces*. These narratives provide insight into “the evolution of routine...how new arrangements become normal” (Shove 2003: 3); they contextualise (if not explain) “cultural and generational shifts of expectation and practice” (*ibid*: 4).

2.2.3 Conceptualising aeromobility

This thesis is concerned with “aeromobility” as a sub-field within mobilities research (Faulconbridge and Hui 2016: 11). The focus in this thesis is a specific form of aeromobility which I refer to as “personal aeromobility”. While this has been applied in different ways – as, for instance, private jet air-travel by Cohen (2009) – it here refers simply to commercial aviation utilised by individual consumers. There are several layers of definition that can be applied to understand aeromobility. In its most essential meaning, it refers to the mobilities we perform in and through the air by means of flying. Incorporated into the notion of “aeromobility” are different notions of “air-travel”, as both (a) an “integrated practice” with its own sets of “understandings, know-how and teleo-affective structures” (Warde 2005: 150), and (b) an incorporated practice, i.e. part of other practices – such as holidaymaking, celebrations, and other “conventions of occasion” – as consumers fly more (Randles and Mander 2009: 246). However, aeromobility can refer to not only to the practice of air-travel, but to the overarching structures which “reproduce” this practice: “The practice [of flying] and its surrounding physical and institutional structures are

intertwined and need to be understood together” (*ibid*: 252). Finally, aeromobility has been applied to refer to a broader mobility “condition”: For Adey et al. (2007: 774), for instance, it implies “the dominance of flying as the normal international mode of traveling (in much the same way that automobility refers to the dominance of the motor car as a means of personal transport)”.

Aeromobility research has been shaped by both the international, global focus of tourism studies and the local, “everyday” focus of the mobilities field (Cohen 2009); two domains which become increasingly blurred in an increasingly globalised and mobile world (Sheller and Urry 2006). Indeed, most – though not all – of the world is “aeromobilised”, holding the knowledge of *the possibility of aeromobility*. As part of the previously described acceleration processes of late modernity, aeromobility has changed worldly perceptions, warping deeply rooted senses of time and space, our perceptions of tempo-spatial distance (Gössling and Nilsson 2010: 242). The concept and theoretical field of mobility, then, is a crucial entry point for developing a nuanced, holistic, and reflexive understanding the aeromobility: its structural and discursive underpinnings, socio-cultural meanings, and environmental implications.

Within the mobilities literature, aeromobility has received relatively little attention. Automobility has been the most researched (Hansen 2017a). For instance, Urry (2004) uses automobility as a framework to understand the different meanings of the car – as an object, consumer good, mobility form, cultural discourse, self-identity, etc. – within contemporary societies. To understand aeromobility, we have to apply a similarly broad analysis. Comparing auto- and aeromobility, there is a difference of ownership of the mobility process, making for differing “vehicle-passenger” experiences (Cidell 2017: 693). The car is a vehicle, both literally and figuratively, of individuality and personality, becoming a “car-driver assemblage” (Randell 2017: 664); the “freedom of the road” offers flexibility (Sheller and Urry 2000: 742; see also Hansen 2017a: 633). Randell (2017) shows how the “performance” of automobility reproduces identity and the Self. Air-travel, on the other hand, is dependent on collective obedience, surveillance, and docility: “We go when the airlines want us to go, and we travel beside strangers and through places in which we have no interest in going” (Cidell 2017: 692). Nevertheless, both mobility forms simultaneously produce notions of freedom and constrain travelling bodies within the material infrastructures through which their mobilities are governed.

Based on this literature, we can chart out two “versions” of the aeromobility concept. On the one hand, aeromobility represents a tangible set of practices involving the “whole flying event” (Randles and Mander 2009: 246): planning trips, getting to and from airports, consumption practices within airports, the air-travel itself, and so on. On the other hand, aeromobility can be thought of as a broader regime, constellation, or – as I will argue in this thesis – a “system” manifested in physical and technological (infra)structures, as well as in culture, identity, and social organisation; and which reproduces consumers’ perceptions and understandings of presence/absence, distance, and time-space relations.

2.2.4 The affects of (aero)mobility

In order to “highlight how being aeromobile connotes different meanings, experiences, and sensations for different people” (Lin 2014: 93), we can turn to the concept of “affective practice” (Wetherell 2012). Despite the lack of theoretical and empirical research on mobility affects (Heisserer and Rau 2017: 584), there has been attention given to the ways in which affect mediates different mobility flows. This body of work revolves around the “feeling” of movement; “what life literally feels like while on the move” (Adey 2008: 440). Affect does not imply a state of being nor any ownership of feeling (“affection”), but rather a process of transformation produced through a reaction to something (Wetherell 2012: 2). Affect, then, is a process of “embodied meaning-making” (*ibid*: 4), in which meanings of things and practices are internalised by people. Affects and their meanings are “distinctive”, highly subjective entities, experienced differently by different bodies (Merriman and Pearce 2017: 497). They say something about “how people are moved, and what attracts them, to an emphasis on repetitions, pains and pleasures, feelings and memories” (Wetherell 2012: 2). Affects permeate social practices – it is produced through a relation or process formed between their elements (Reckwitz 2017). Wetherell’s (2012) conceptualisation of “affective practice” demonstrates that affect and practice can be weaved into the same analytical framework. Practice-thinking, she argues, helps us infuse affect with “pattern and logic” (*ibid*: 11). Heisserer and Rau (2017: 584) further propose that “a consumption-focused practice approach to travel behaviour ensures and recognises the relevance of affective aspects, including people’s emotional attachment to their particular mode of transport and resulting barriers to change”. Though often neglected, Reckwitz (2017: 121) thus proposes

that affect is “among the main ingredients in culturally standardised, routine bundles of practices”.

2.2.5 (Aero)mobility as consumption

In this thesis, (aero)mobility is understood as a form of consumption (Higham et al. 2014). Being aeromobile implies the consumption of aeromobility (*ibid*). Granted, mobility practices tend to involve some form of consumption. For instance, auto- and moto-mobility involve consumption through (a) the purchasing of a vehicle and fuel, or (b) a service where someone else owns the vehicle and buys the fuel. Similarly, personal aeromobility implies the consumption of a service, and thus an experience. Air-travel is marketed at consumers, who purchase flight tickets, as well as a whole range of different goods and services in the airplane, at the airport, and at their ultimate destinations.

Consumption is itself a contested concept which, in its widest sense, implies “a process whereby agents engage in appropriation and appreciation...of goods, services, performances, information or ambience, whether purchased or not, over which the agent has some degree of discretion” (Warde 2005: 137). To simplify, we can think of it as a syncretic concept referring to two distinct processes: (a) the “purchasing” of something, and (b) the “using up” of something (*ibid*). Aeromobility involves both of these: (a) when purchasing a ticket, consumers purchase a service as well as the “material” processes involved in producing this service, and (b) resources are being “used up” through the direct emissions from the flying itself and the indirect emissions produced throughout the life cycles of the aircraft, airport, and their associated technologies.

Warde (2005: 137) argues that “consumption is not itself a practice but...a moment in almost every practice”. As such, mobilities constitute “integrative practices” (Schatzki 1996: 98) which *predispose* consumption. Aeromobility involves many “moments” of (both forms of) consumption: it is facilitated by the process of “using up” resources, given the vast amount of carbon emissions that are produced through (a) flying itself, and (b) the whole life cycle of the aircraft, the airport, and all other technologies associated with aeromobility. The consumption of energy is thus *embodied into* the practice of air-travel. The primary focus here is in other words not on “the consumption of energy, water and other natural resources” in its strict sense,

but on aeromobility as one of “the services and experiences” made possible through consumption (Shove 2003: 4). This is a good starting point for understanding aeromobility through the lens of consumption, as I do in this thesis.

2.3 Practice theory

This section covers practice theory, which constitutes the main theoretical framework for the analysis. First, it provides some context regarding the development of practice theory within the consumption literature. Second, two practice-theoretical accounts which will form the base for much of the subsequent analyses are outlined: First, Sahakian and Wilhite’s (2014) “pillars of practice” will guide my analysis of aeromobility as a practice of consumption; and second, Shove’s (2003) concepts of “escalation”, “standardisation”, and “ratchets” will serve as a point of departure for analysing the ways in which new (aero)mobility practices change and evolve, particularly through habits and routine.

2.3.1 A theory of practices and practitioners

Practice theory has increasingly influenced the consumption field. Recognising that consumption is not happening in a vacuum but is situated within practices (Warde 2005: 137), it challenges the notion of rational consumers being unaffected by “social interactions, culture, economic institutions, or the consumption choices or well-being of others” (Ackerman 1997: 651). Thinking of consumption as *behaviour* implies reducing people’s doings to their “visible action”, which is but “the uppermost layer of a practice” (Wallenborn and Wilhite 2014: 57). For instance, social-psychological consumption research might over-emphasise the individual agent as *an actor* so that “the structuring characteristics of consumption behaviour are left underexposed” (Verbeek and Mommaas 2008: 634). Conversely, thinking of consumption as a system-of-provision might leave “individual consumption motives underexposed” (*ibid*). Practice theories suggest a middle ground approach: Following the “practice turn” (Schatzki et al. 2001), the emphasis has shifted from *consumer behaviours* to *consumption practices*. As a more “balanced approach”, practice theories offer an analysis of consumption which “pays attention to both agency and structure, which makes room for (combining) both bottom-up and top-down dynamics of change, and which recognizes the mutual influencing and co-shaping of human actors on the one hand and objects and technological infrastructures on the

other” (Spaargaren 2011: 815). It recognises the non-visible components imbued in consumption which “bind together” structure and agency; meaning-making processes, material influences, and embodied forms of knowledge. This also makes it particularly challenging – as Wilk (2009: 153) argues, “the spaces between structure and agency” constitute “a zone of comfort” as they represent neither “endlessly repeated series of cycles of routines” nor “a chaotic mess of endless trivial choice”. Early work on practice theory, by e.g. Bourdieu and Giddens, offered a framing of “social life as a series of recursive practices reproduced by knowledgeable and capable agents” negotiating their doings through “sets of virtual rules and resources” derived from “situated social practices” (Spaargaren 2011: 815). With this as a backdrop, the analyses in this thesis draws primarily on the “second generation” of practice theory (*ibid*), which has used this as a foundation for exploring everyday practices through the “the systematic scrutiny of the mundane” (Shove 2003: 2).

But what exactly are social practices? While there are many different theories of practice (see Warde [2005] for an overview), they tend to conceptualise practices as the outcome of complex multi-dimensional processes and interactions between the self and the social and material world as discussed above. Though far from exhausting the “practice” concept, I here provide a backbone for its application in this thesis. Practices are “routinised type[s] of behaviour” (Reckwitz 2002: 249) producing “activities situated in time and space and shared by groups of people as part of their everyday life” (Verbeek and Mommaas 2008: 634). According to Wilhite (2013: 62), the essential claim of practice theory is that actions have imbued in them “sociomaterial histories”. These socio-material histories are what make doings social practices; situated performances which must always be framed in light of their broader context – their “elements” (see Reckwitz 2002: 249) – to be fully understood.

Always affecting and affected by the contextual elements of socio-material world, then, practices are relational. Emphasising this relationality, Heisserer and Rau (2017: 586) suggest four elements which constitute and govern practices. First, there is the convergence between “performances” and the “entities” motivating, affecting, and/or being involved in these. Second is “practical intelligibility”, the notion that people do and think what makes sense to them in their embedded context. Third is the “social site” which relates to “the network of practices and their social orders”.

Fourth is the “field of possibilities”, referring to the different avenues for action made possible by these elements and the practices they produce. This framework addresses two points central in this thesis. First, the performance of practices is something which is constantly being *negotiated* between the practitioner and the world, that is, the *context* in which they are “performing”. Second, the active process of performing practices implies constantly carving out pathways for new practices, so that, by being a practitioner, one is always *going somewhere*, always *moving towards something*.

While practice theories generally focus on specific “doings”, there is another dimension to the practice concept which pertains to a more abstract, general understanding of these. Reckwitz (2002: 249) refer to the former as “praktik” and the latter – “the whole of human condition” – as “praxis”. Shove (2014: 418) uses the terms “practices” to refer to “materialised, situated moments of performance”, and “practices-as-entity” when referring to “something that exists between and beyond specific moments of enactment...carried, sustained and transformed by cohorts of practitioners”. In this sense, we might think of practices as either *particular* to a time, setting, and practitioner, or as abstracted into *general* phenomena (“flying”, “cycling”, “driving”, “eating”). We can, for instance, distinguish between aeromobility practices referring to the sum of individually performed practices related to flying, and the “entity” of aeromobility as an overarching concept which orders or guides aeromobility practices – both of which are central here.

Despite having generally received little attention (Hui et al. 2017: 6), the *practitioner* is central to this thesis. Performed by practitioners, practices are always in negotiation (Heisserer and Rau 2017). While the practitioner, and their roles, have been constructed in many different ways, I here conceptualise practitioners as reflexive actors *within* collective practices. As both *performers* and *carriers* of practices, practitioners are both active and passive agents. This is reflected in Shove’s (2014: 418) definition of practices as “recognisable entities that exist across time and space, that depend on inherently provisional integrations of elements, and that are enacted by cohorts of more and less consistent or faithful carriers”. This passive-active dualism can imply transformation, as emphasised in Hui et al.’s (2017: 6) definition of practitioners as “people as entities that become participants and who subsequently perpetuate and transform practices through their actions”.

Resting between “choice and ingrained habit” (Ehn and Löfgren 2009: 100), air-travel practices might reflect this transforming capacity of the practitioner. Analysing aeromobilities, then, arguably opens for a broader focus on practitioner agency than would discussing, for instance, everyday household routines or eating habits. As Reckwitz (2017: 120) has argued, practice theory ought not lose sight of individual practitioners’ motivations, or “positive desires”, altogether. The point is not to re-cast the practitioner as rational autonomous individuals, but to focus on the ways in which they are constitutive of practices; their motivations seen not as strictly “individualist” but as “embedded into” the practices in question (*ibid*). Moreover, practitioners’ “practical intelligibility” – their skills, abilities, and practical knowledge or “know-how” – are property of the individual and not the practice (Welch and Warde 2017: 187). As environmentalists, the participants in this study employed a great level of reflexivity to practices which they understood to have environmental implications. Therefore, it makes sense to take this reflexivity seriously in the analysis. While, as Heisserer and Rau (2017: 589) put it, “People generally do what makes sense to them”, the notion of sense-making is rather complex: “This ‘sense’ consists of both reflexive and non-reflexive elements which generate the meaningful and patterned character of everyday life, actively produced through recurrent practices” (Wallenborn and Wilhite 2014: 58). That which “makes sense”, then, is a product of not only individual, self-motivated rationality, but of external social, cultural, economic, political, material, and situational or contextual influences. Practice theories, then, recognise the consumer “individuality” as produced by, or *through*, the constant convergence of different agencies.

2.3.2 Applying practice theory: The pillars of practice

Wallenborn and Wilhite (2014: 57) suggest that “agency in practices is distributed among the entities that are enacted in a practice”. Taking these “entities” as a starting point, Sahakian and Wilhite (2014) propose a triangular framework for understanding how practices operate, consisting of three “pillars” – the body, the material, and the social. These are spheres or nodes through which practices are (inter)connected. What forms practices, they argue, is *the knowledge that is produced and distributed between these pillars*. This approach captures the essential foci in my study: the ways in which the agent/practitioner and their subjective, reflexive feelings, emotions and affects (“the body”) interact with overarching structures,

comprised of the different mobility systems on the one hand (the “material world”) and the cultures and norms attached to consumption and mobility on the other (the “social world”).

The first pillar is “the body”, referring to “people and the knowledge they embody, both physically and mentally” (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 39). Ascribed through habitus, “the body includes cognitive processes and physical dispositions, acquired by the body through social experiences, inscribed in space and over time” (*ibid*: 28). Taking bodily performativity seriously implies recognising that knowledge is *embodied*, making bodies “vessels for experiential knowledge...Practices require skilled bodies, and bodies are shaped by practices” (Wallenborn and Wilhite 2014: 57). Necessarily “unique and explicit”, this knowledge affects consumption in different ways (*ibid*: 56). Understanding that mind and body are not a dualism but fused together, “malleable and overlapping” (*ibid*), practice theory suggests that any given practice might have vastly different meanings to different people, despite it being carried out or performed in a similar manner. Practices being “coordinated entities” (Schatzki 1996), Shove (2003: 2) suggests that “the action itself” depends on the contextual elements of “the scenery, the lighting and the setting” (cf. Goffman 1959). Bodies are not only “entities”, Wallenborn and Wilhite (2014) argue, but also ever-evolving “processes”. Acknowledging the evolving nature of the body further provides an interesting avenue for considering how practices change: While some knowledge is “performed automatically and defy explanation by the performer”, such as fine motor skills, much knowledge is “gained through negotiation with social conventions” and is thus open to be changed (Wallenborn and Wilhite 2014: 59). This is reflected in identity, and its role in performance (Hamilton 2010: 571), which is also connected to bodily knowledge; negotiated through the interplay between structures and agencies. In this thesis, the participants are construed as practitioners: Rather than studying practices from “above” (i.e. looking at how the practice is executed from a neutral point of view), I here study practices from “below” (i.e. focusing on the practitioners’ understandings, framings, and performances). This makes the body an important unit of analysis.

The second pillar is “the material world”: “the objects and infrastructures that influence and are influenced by everyday life” (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 39). The implication of materiality on practice is that, simply put: “Once taken into use, things

have agency” (*ibid*: 29). The central notion here is that, as Spargaaren (2011: 817) writes: “Behaviours are preconfigured by socio-material infrastructures and their (sometimes rather implicit) cultural and policy regimes”. Indeed, Schatzki (2002: 46) suggests that things and objects “hang together” in practices, forming “prefigurational relationships”. These relationships imply “the kind of future figurations that are particularly feasible and possible given the existing state of affairs” (Spaargaren and Oosterveer 2010: 1899). Put differently, doings are directed into certain pathways by different material structures. As such, partaking in practices might be “directly affected by the power of infrastructure and technology to act upon our actions” (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 29). Here, technology constitutes a form of materiality, in the sense that “technologies...transform what we perceive” (Verbeek 2006: 365), and, in turn, perception influences action (Wallenborn and Wilhite 2014). Building on this, Peters (2003) argues that mobility problems are ultimately design problems; design concerning both the *thing* in question and the *user* of that thing, and how these entities – practitioners and materialities – converge within practices. This provides a foundation for arguing that, for consumers to “behave sustainably”, the emphasis must be on transforming the material environment by creating “proper technologies, infrastructures and products” (Spaargaren 2011: 814).

The third pillar is “the social world”, implying “socially grounded contexts, a wide category that includes everything from social norms and values to institutions and legal frameworks” (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 39). The socialised aspects of consumption have long been subject to scrutiny by critical consumption scholars. Providing a starting point for analysing the social contexts of practices, Sahakian and Wilhite (2014: 29) turn to Bourdieu’s concept of “doxa”, implying “the tacitly accepted and unspoken” (*ibid*); the thoughts, knowledges, and meaningful understandings which might otherwise be referred to as “normative”. The “practice histories” produced through the accumulation of these might yield greater power in swaying practice than “awareness building alone”, which rests on “the agency of ideology” (*ibid*). It is in this sense that practice theory is useful in understanding the flyer’s dilemma and the value-action gap. Once such thoughts and understandings are articulated and no longer left unspoken, however, they might enter the realm of the heterodoxy, where they are reaffirmed, re-established, or contested; disrupting the stability of normative practices (*ibid*: 30). The social world governing our

practices are the result of the total sum of available practice histories, which tell us *how things are done*, based on the practical experience of how things have been done in the past. To sum up: Practice theories say something about how the material and social worlds are woven together into a socio-material fabric which forms the foundation for bodies, as practitioners, to perform, carry, and understand practices.

2.3.3 The transformation of practices

“Few can pin down just how and when their habits change but again there is a sense that things were not always so” (Shove 2003: 2). The state of a practice is determined by the connection between its social, material, and bodily elements. Practices, Hargreaves (2011: 83) argues, “emerge, stabilize and ultimately die out as the links between elements are made and broken”. To understand this process of change we need to consider the “life” of practices – how they blossom and wither as these connections change, being constantly (re)negotiated. This section covers (1) habits and routines as the foundation for everyday practice; (2) the habituation and routinisation of practices on the individual level; and (3) the escalation and standardisation of practices on the societal level.

Habits and routines: The building-blocks of practices

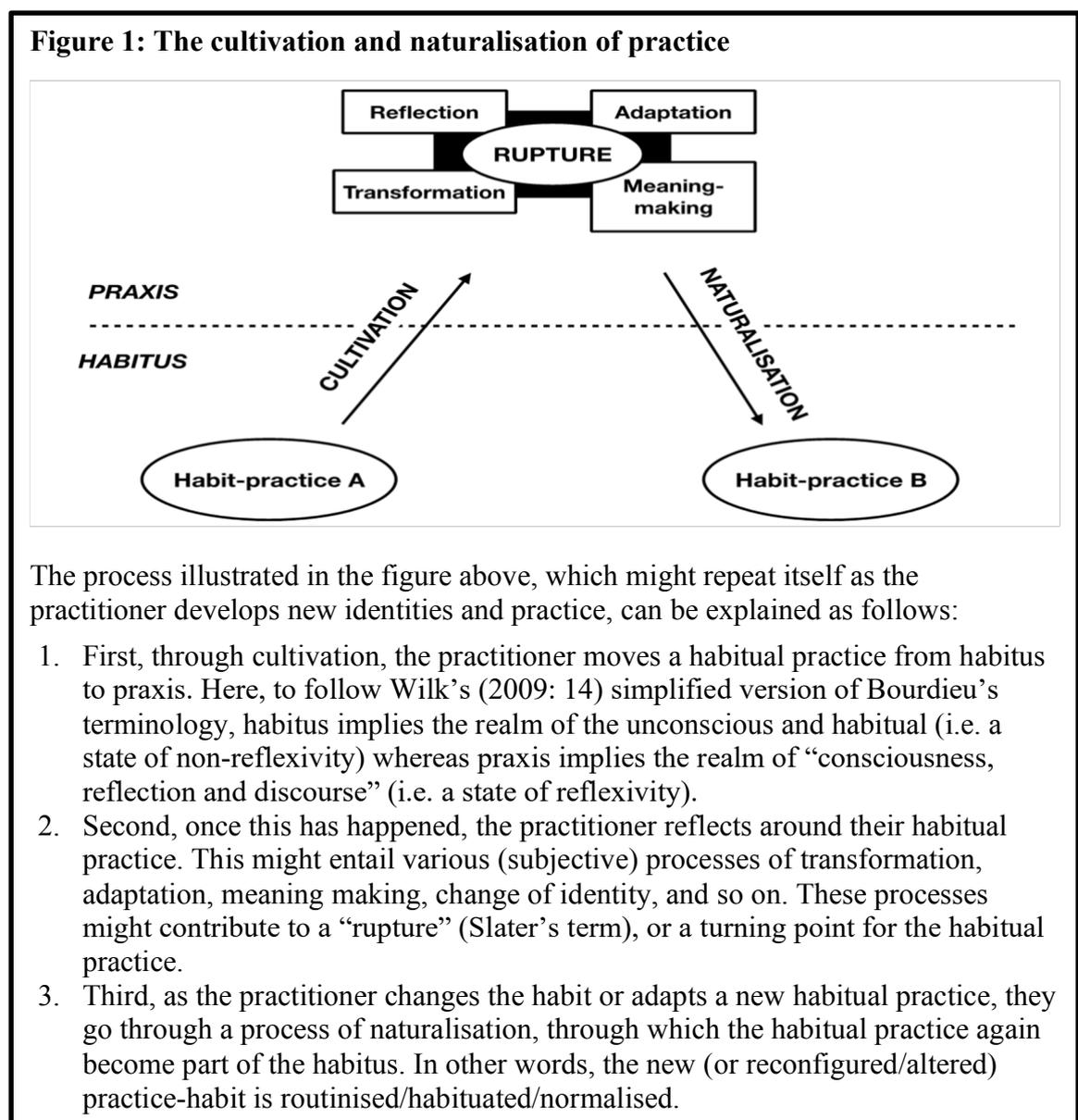
Everyday life is organised through routines and habits, which produce and are reproduced by social practices. Habits are a particular form of practice involving little reflexivity and cognition, formed instead through the embodiment of (subjective) knowledge gained through recurrent practices (Wilhite 2012). Arguably, habits constitute the building blocks of *routines*; “bundles” of particular habits strung together into routinised processes. Practice theory is useful in understanding the socialised nature of consumers’ behaviours, taking into account the thoughtlessly performed and repeated behaviours imbued in practice through routine and habit (Warde 2017). Indeed, at the heart of practice theory lies the imperative to deal with contradiction of humans being at once “active decision makers” and “habitual crowd-followers of fashion, ritual, customs and routine” (Wilk 2009: 147). From a practice perspective, we might therefore ask how “certain practices manage to secure carriers or hosts who are willing and able to devote significant resources of time and energy to reproducing them over and over again” (Shove 2014: 418).

Habits and routines are established, maintained, and can be disrupted. According to Ehn and Löfgren (2009), a “path” precedes every established routine. Through habituation and routinisation, the agency – or “moment of conscious choice” – applied to the given practice is slowly diminished; one is “just going through the same movements...without second thought” (*ibid*: 99-100). Once established, Wallenborn and Wilhite (2014) argue, habit and routine exist largely as part of the *habitus*. The *habitus* works as “a scheme that converts the sediment of past experiences into dispositions for future actions” allowing “individuals to negotiate everyday life without the need for repetitive and constant sense-making” (*ibid*: 58). In this sense, habits are telling of *future* practices, as “submerged repertoires of potential behaviour...Habit is a *propensity* to behave in a particular way in a particular class of situations” (Hodgson 2004: 169). Furthermore, habits and routines produce rhythm and flow in society (Shove et al. 2009) and are paramount in reproducing unsustainable and dissonant practices (e.g. Norgaard 2006). Mobilities, too, are often bound up in habit and routine, organising everyday life – as Hansen (2017b: 381) writes, “all the practices that form the everyday are connected by some form of transport”. Focusing on habits and routine is therefore necessary when considering the potential for transforming unsustainable practices (such as frequent flying), given their definitional power over many practices central to consumers’ everyday lives.

Cultivation and naturalisation: How practices are habituated and routinised

According to Wilk (2009), adopting new habits and developing new routines requires a process of *cultivation* and *naturalisation*. Through naturalisation, practices are kept within the *habitus*; kept “from surfacing into consciousness” (*ibid*: 150). The following “cultivation” (Wilk 2009: 149-150) refers to the process of making previously unconscious practices (i.e. what Bourdieu called *habitus*) part of one’s “consciousness, reflection and discourse” (i.e. what Bourdieu called *praxis*). Cultivation can disrupt a naturalised practice, and naturalisation can “push conscious practices back into the *habitus*” once they are established (*ibid*: 150). Through naturalisation, then, an “old normal” is maintained or a “new normal” is created. In the latter case, engaging with old habits and routines would be experienced as something *breaking* with the normal: an 18-degree household seems cold *because* 22

degrees seems to be the standard; an eight-hour train ride seems particularly long *because* the 50-minute flight seems to be the standard. In these imaginary examples, 22 degrees and 50 minutes become *anchors* (Sunstein and Thaler 2008: 23-24), that is, metaphysical reference points anchoring our understandings of temperature and (travel) time in these respective settings. As new standards become naturalised in this way, these anchors become adjusted (*ibid*) to fit with the new conditions. Finally, we can borrow Slater’s (2009) concept of “rupture” to signify the breaking point between cultivation and naturalisation, as a new routine replaces an old one. This is when the connection between the elements in a practice become sufficiently shaky to destabilise it, for whatever reason, in favour for an alternative or altered practice. In Figure 1, I apply these concepts to understand how habitual practices change.



Escalation and standardisation: How practices establish and persevere

While Wilk's (2009) concepts are useful in understanding how practices change on the level of the individual practitioner, we can turn to Shove's (2003) theory of normalisation to understand how practices change more generally in society. She addresses socio-cultural responses to the material world – how routine practices might become “more resource intensive” not due to new “technologies and infrastructures” *per se* but because of “changing ideas about how things should be and what people should do” (*ibid*: 79). Wallenborn and Wilhite (2014: 59) explain that: “The repetition of a pattern of action establishes progressively a convenience between a body and its environment. Normality is socially constructed through the repetition of similar perceptions and memories”.

Normalisation, Shove (2003: 3) argues, involves a two-fold process of (a) *escalation*, implying the “ratcheting up of demand”, and (b) *standardisation*, implying that “the reach of what counts as normal is more and more encompassing”. In particular, Shove (2003) has demonstrated that practices of household convenience, comfort, and cleanliness are *escalatory*, consumers become habituated to these – and thus demand increasingly more of them. This escalation happens in tandem with the standardisation of the *meanings* of these concepts: With rising household temperatures and intensified washing and laundering, for instance, conventional understandings of comfortable indoor temperatures and what is considered “clean” and “dirty” have changed (*ibid*: 55). As elaborated on above, this also affects naturalisation and cultivation processes among individual practitioners.

This way, both (the structural underpinnings of) practices and *cultures* of practice change, leading to escalation and standardisation – the baselines for “normality” shift (see Pauly 1995). Similarly, evolving mobilities have changed notions of time and distance: ideas of what is “close” and “far away”; what constitutes a “long” and “short” journey. Escalation of demand and standardisation of convention can be resisted, however. I here borrow Shove's (2003) loosely defined concept of “resistance” to refer to the amassing of agency to stand up against these forces. The resistance concept is useful in understanding how environmentally concerned practitioners (such as the environmentalists in my sample) “unmake” (Shove 2012) their polluting practices (such as air-travels). However, context matters: cycling, for instance, “can only symbolise resistance...in situations in which it is not a dominant

mode of getting around” (*ibid*: 368). The same would apply to taking a long train ride instead of a short flight, as exemplified in the previous section.

Pathways of change: The evolution of practice

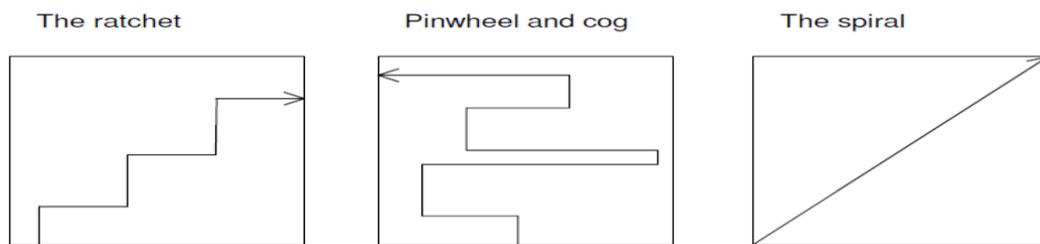
On a large-scale, abstracted level, Shove (2003) has proposed a framework for understanding the potential for practices to change over time. She uses three main metaphors to describe different practices’ potential to change in one way or another (see Figure 2).

First is the *ratchet*, addressing the practices that seem to move in one direction, and for which re-directing this trend is difficult. The ratchet “locks in” movement and flow in one direction while restricting the opposite development. This describes how different lock-in mechanisms and path dependencies alter the direction in which (and the speed *at* which) practices change. Making use of this metaphor to explain the escalation of aeromobility, Randers and Mander (2009: 265) suggest that there is a “ratcheting up” of frequent flying. They describe the “dynamic of change” as a three-fold process: (1) there is a “high level of sociotechnical and institutional lock-in” as the up- or downward ratcheting standardises “a new configuration of practice...and a surrounding sociotechnical infrastructure”; (2) this creates “a high level of historical path dependency”; and (3) this, in turn, makes for (infra)structurally rooted “conventions” – distinctive architectures of institutionalised practices – which are difficult to reverse (*ibid*). The problematic implication of these “ratcheting up” processes, argues Shove (2003: 199), is the “sweeping, cross cultural convergence in what people take to be normal ways of life” and consequent the lock-in of demand for the resources required to maintain such ways of life. This can be applied when considering the normalisation of frequent flying.

The second metaphor is the *pinwheel*, for which practices might seem to move in one direction, but any change to the system might completely re-direct their trajectories. It thus describes practices that are locked in place, but which do not necessarily follow a strong path-dependency. “Unlike the ratchet”, Shove (2003: 194) writes, “the pinwheel can move in different directions but is momentarily held in place by a particular configuration of sociotechnical considerations”. As such, pinwheel-practices are more sensitive to discourse than ratchet-practices – if the discourse surrounding the practice change drastically, so might the practice.

The final metaphor is the *spiral*. This essentially refers to the most large-scale, grand, or “embedded” forms of ratchets – such as consumption, capitalism, and probably mobility. The spiral is similar to the ratchet; however, it propels itself forward, so that rewinding it would require a restructuring of society’s socio-temporal order (*ibid*).

Figure 2: “Pathways of change”



From: Shove 2003: 197

Arguably, we can use (a) the spiral to understand the overarching speeding up and spreading out of society; (b) the ratchet to understand the increase in consumption and (the consumption of) mobility *within* this spiral; and (c) the pinwheel to understand the mechanisms that transform practices and mobilities – both on the individual and collective levels.

3 Methodology

3.1 Conducting constructivist research

As with theories of practice, the methodology applied is in line with a social constructivist philosophy of knowledge production (Halkier and Jensen 2011: 106). The beginning point for constructivism is the ontological realisation that there is a “gap” between the social and the natural world, filled by meaning-making through “reason, will and meaningful speech” (Moses and Knutsen 2012: 173). Following this, the constructivist school rests on two foundational claims about the world. The first is that “social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors” (Bryman 2008: 19), and by extension that the observed world is “a world of our own making” (Moses and Knutsen 2012: 169). Consequently, the second claim is that “people may look at the same thing and perceive it differently” (*ibid*: 10). The only observation we can make of the world, then, is our perceptions of it. Recognising this, “constructivists approach their study with tools...that can identify these socially-constructed patterns in the world, and understand them in the light of the contexts that give them meaning” (*ibid*: 201). This is what I have attempted here, through a qualitative, practice-theoretical analysis of environmentalists’ aeromobilities. Relying on a constructivist research philosophy allows us to question the motives and motivations for flying, or not flying, as well as the *meanings* that individuals attach to flying as a *practice*.

3.2 A practice-theoretical methodology

To produce coherent knowledge, methodology and theory ought to correspond. While the analysis is informed by a constructivist, practice-theoretical framework, there is a specific methodology of practice theory (Shove 2017a). Some might argue that, in order to study social practices, the practices themselves ought to be in focus *while they happen*, thus requiring an ethnographical approach. I take another stance towards this matter, however. A practice-theoretical analysis might downplay individualism without neglecting it: While attending to “the ways in which social processes are played out in complex contexts” requires a focus on “the carrying out of practices”, Halkier and Jensen (2011: 113) write, “it is still possible to describe and analyse individual conduct”. In the *Conceptual Framework* I showed how the practitioner is part of the practice: Practice theorists take interest in how people, as

practitioners, become recruited to practices (Shove 2017). I have therefore addressed the “doings” of practice primarily *through* the “sayings” of individual practitioners. While practices might be common or shared, this does not imply that the *meaning* of the practice is the same for all those participating in it (if so, this thesis would not be very interesting). Following the Frankfurt School, we might think of individuals as “carriers” of knowledge, contributing to the larger “pools” of common knowledge that constitute societies; all three levels of knowledge influencing “the way we perceive and understand the world” (Moses and Knutsen 2012: 185). By focusing on some carriers of knowledge, my goal in this thesis is to arrive at a better understanding of the relations between these carriers (as practitioners) and the larger pools (mobility and consumption practices). On these grounds, it has been natural to put the practitioner in focus of the analysis.

3.3 Positionality and reflexivity

The subjectivity of knowledge (production) implied here is part of the foundation for the analysis, which takes interest in subjective knowledge employed by the participants in negotiating their (understandings of) aeromobility. However, it must also be acknowledged that the analysis is inflected with subjective interpretations and knowledge applied by the researcher. “The truth isn’t just ‘out there’”, Moses and Knutsen (2012: 201) remind us: “Knowledge about the social world is always knowledge-in-context...socially situated...always *somebody’s* knowledge”. Indeed, social researcher take part in the social world they analyse (*ibid*: 190). As such, my goal has not been to position myself as an objective construer of data, but rather to exhibit reflexivity about this (Bryman 2008: 25). It is, however, in place to briefly consider my positionality as a researcher: As mentioned in the *Introduction*, I arrive at this project from the standpoint of (1) an environmentalist (as defined in section 3.5); (2) an individual/consumer/practitioner in a Norwegian society; and (3) a privileged male student. Moreover, as Bryman (2008: 8) suggests, every research project constitutes a “spur” to an “inquiry”. Here, the inquiry concerns the ways in which environmentalists negotiate their aeromobility practices. The “spurs” include (a) the relevant academic and popular literature on the topics of consumption, mobility, and practice; (b) what was first a lack of, and subsequently a flourishing of, attention toward the problematic role of personal aeromobility in ramping up consumers’ environmental footprints; and not least (c) *my own personal experience*

as a self-reflexive, environmentally concerned individual and participant in (aero)mobility practices. Simply put: My own personal knowledge and experiences have served as a “stimulus” for the research (Bryman 2008: 5).

3.4 Research design

3.4.1 Interviewing as a method

As Moses and Knutsen (2012: 200) point out, “constructivists tend to be epistemological pluralists” willing to employ different methods “to understand the unique nature of the social world”. In this thesis, the core inquiry relates to “how *individuals* make sense of the world” (Bryman 2008: 15, my emphasis). Given (a) the thesis’ central focus on “people’s experiences, behaviour and understandings and how and why they experience and understand the social world in this way” (Matthews and Ross 2010: 221), and (b) the phenomenological underpinnings of the practice-theoretical framework, I decided that conducting qualitative interviews would be fruitful. This helped me “to understand the world from the subjects’ points of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations” (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 1). As Bryman (2008: 16) further argues, “it is the job of the social scientist to gain access to people’s ‘common-sense thinking’ and hence to interpret their actions and their social world from their point of view”. Face-to-face interaction implies participating in someone else’s mind; arguably a precursor to the acquisition of social knowledge (*ibid*). Talking to people became a way of seeing the world through *their* eyes, as it were, acknowledging that they were “capable of attributing meaning to their environment” (*ibid*: 385) – and indeed to their *practices*. I have specifically used what Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 27) refer to as “semi-structured life-world interviews”, that is:

[Interviews which seek] to obtain descriptions of the interviewees’ lived world with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena. It comes to close to an everyday conversation, but as a professional interview it has purpose and involves a specific approach and technique; it is semi-structured – it is neither an open everyday conversation nor a closed questionnaire. It is conducted according to an interview guide that focuses on certain themes and that may include suggested questions. The interview is usually transcribed, and the written text is and sound recording together constitute the material for the subsequent analysis of meaning.

The “lifeworld” concept here refers to the *Lebenswelt*, “the world as it is encountered in everyday life and given in direct and immediate experience, independent of and prior to explanations” (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 29). The semi-structured format

helped *guiding* the interviews, without restricting or manipulating it. It helped leading “the subject toward certain themes, but not to specific opinions about these themes” (*ibid*: 31); thus “teasing out the deeper well-springs of meaning with which attributes, attitudes and behaviour are endowed” (Cloke et al. 2004: 127). Although the interviews were semi-structured, they followed no strict form and resembled at times conversations as much as interviews. The collaborative *interaction* was paramount (Rapley 2004). An interview guide was used as a rough “outline” of the topics and questions I sought to cover; a tool for bringing the conversation back on topic when it derailed too far. Longhurst (2010: 103) refers to such interviews as “soft”, naturally unfolding conversations which nevertheless involve *some* order, structure, and self-consciousness. The interview data was thus, as Cloke et al. (2004: 149) put it, “co-constructed” through “conversations with a purpose”.

To fuse interviewing, as a method, with practice theory, I took care to focus on the participants’ practices rather than their personalities *per se* (see Shove 2017b). At times, however, it was naturally difficult to separate the two; especially because the notion of “personality” might bleed into the particularly relevant notion of “meaning-making”: how the participants *made sense* of their (partaking in) practices. Indeed, the interviewing process was largely a quest to “understand the meaning of central themes of the subjects’ lived world” (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 29); central themes here being (aero)mobility, consumption, environmentalism, and so forth. This required the participants to be reflexive of their own practices – to move from the Socratic realms of *doxa* to *episteme*, i.e. from being opinionated to being able to question and justify an opinion, during the course of the interview (*ibid*: 37). This demanded critical, processual reflection on the part of the participants (Bryman 2009: 387).

As a precursor for the interviews, I sent out a questionnaire for the participants to fill in (Appendix 1). The questionnaire asked for simple, descriptive data such as name, age range, and household status, and more evaluative questions such as the extent to which they enjoyed certain aeromobility-related activities. It also worked as a tool to map how many times each participant had flown in the past year. In the end, I decided not to incorporate much of the questionnaire data into the analysis itself. This was because the data it produced were too quantitative in nature to prove useful in the qualitative analysis. The questionnaire nevertheless served a double purpose;

as a “mapping” exercise to gain a better overview of the participants’ aeromobilities, and as an interview prompt. This helped me create interview guides and prepare for the interviews, while also helping the participants by preparing them for, and sparking early reflection around, relevant themes. This became evident as several participants referred back to the questionnaire during the interviews.

Given the practice-theoretical underpinnings of the research, my analysis has sought to be both *explanatory* and *evaluating*. In terms of explanation, I have questioned what kind of mobility – and indeed aeromobility – practices the participants perform or take part in, and why exactly this is so. I have been interested in how the “participants explain their behaviour and understandings in their own words” (Matthews and Ross 2010: 223). Only interviewing would have allowed me to do this. In terms of evaluation, I have not merely sought to “map” environmentally conscious consumers’ (aero)mobilities, but to delve into, and question, their internal dialogue and personal negotiations facing their mobilities. I have been interested in exploring “with the participant different aspects of the social phenomenon [of aeromobility] and to identify and elaborate on, for example, perceived advantages and disadvantages” (*ibid*: 224).

3.4.2 Validity and trustworthiness

In terms of qualitative social research, the validity of the research design is arguably the most important marker for quality; issues of reliability and replicability being less relevant (Bryman 2008). While there are many different dimensions to, and measures of, validity, these are originally derived and adapted from the quantitative research field (*ibid*: 32-34). It has therefore been argued that *trustworthiness* is a better marker for methodological rigour in qualitative research than validity *per se* (Lincoln and Guba 1985). This is because, using “thick” rather than “thin” descriptions of the (cultures of the) world (Geertz 1973), “qualitative findings tend to be oriented to the contextual uniqueness and significance of the aspect of the social world being studied” (Bryman 2008: 378). The dimensions of trustworthiness are sketched out in Table 1 below, drawing on Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) model as represented by Bryman (2008: 34). In addition to this, the notion of “relevance” is important and is “to be assessed from the vantage point of the importance of a topic within its substantive field or the contribution it makes to the literature on that field” (*ibid*).

Table 1: Measures of “trustworthiness” (Bryman 2008: 34)

Measures	Question posed	Traditional equivalent
<i>Credibility</i>	“How believable are the findings?”	Internal validity (causality)
<i>Transferability</i>	“Do the findings apply to other contexts?”	External validity (generalisation)
<i>Dependability</i>	“Are the findings likely to apply at other times?”	Reliability (repeatability)
<i>Confirmability</i>	“Has the investigator allowed his or her values to intrude to a high degree?”	Objectivity (impartiality)

Taking these criteria as a starting point, a case can be made for the trustworthiness of my study. First, the credibility of my analysis is ensured by vigorous use of interview transcripts, as not to neglect the raw data material from which the analysis stems. Moreover, to retain – and give analytical attention to – some of the subtle nuances from the interviews, I have often left whole “chunks” of interview excerpts in the analysis rather than to cut them down into neatly fitting one-liners. Doing so, I believe, has helped me avoid the pitfalls of “forcing” a narrative to fit with the analysis, or manipulating the context of a quote. Second, while the findings cannot be generalised (as is generally true for constructivist research), the findings arguably have a “transferability” to them (Baxter 2016). Indeed, by framing human activities through the lens of practice, we can infer that a social practice in a given (spatial, temporal, situational) setting – and the “rules of the game”, or its “conventions”, which informs this practice (Moses and Knutsen 2012: 171) – have similarities, or indeed differences, to an equivalent practice in another setting. The third and fourth elements of dependability and confirmability are somewhat uncertain, however. In terms of dependability, the fact that I have carried out interviews with multiple participants from different organisations should imply that my findings and subsequent analyses would also be relevant if a different sample within a similar population were chosen. In terms of confirmability, while I have done my best to remain objective, I have already discussed how my positionality becomes embedded within a reflexive research process. Finally, as elaborated on in the *Introduction*, the study has relevance by contributing with both new and supplementary insight into the fields of consumption, (aero)mobilities, and social practice.

3.5 The research process: Gathering data

I started the data gathering process relatively early on, asking some previous colleagues at one environmental organisation if they would be interested in being interviewed for my master’s thesis. Once securing a few participants from this

organisation, I continued by e-mailing other organisations asking for participants; sometimes having to follow up with more e-mails or phone calls.

The sample was a non-probability, purposive sample – as is common for interview-based research (Bryman 2008) – for which participants were “chosen because of their experience or opinions on the research topic” (Matthews and Ross 2010: 225). It was also to some extent a sample based on convenience and snowballing, in the sense that I found new participants and conducted new interviews as I went along. The interviews were conducted in the late autumn and winter of 2018/2019. Two interviews were conducted using Skype, as the participants were based outside of Oslo. The remaining eleven interviews were conducted in-person in Oslo. One of these was recorded at the University of Oslo’s main campus; the rest were recorded at the workplaces of the respective participants. All interviews were audiotaped on a digital recorder, with participant consent, and subsequently transcribed, coded, and analysed thematically.

The participants were ultimately chosen because they were *environmentalists*. I recognised that, in order to find a population of “environmentally conscious consumers”, I would have to use environmentalists. I have used the broad definition of an “environmentalist” offered by the online Cambridge Dictionary (2019), as “a person who is interested in or studies the environment and who tries to protect it from being damaged by human activities”. The best way to secure such a population, I decided, was to aim for individuals who worked in (or had an active engagement with) environmental organisations. While I considered using other parameters, such as self-identification as being environmentally minded, membership in environmental organisations, and so forth, I realised that these would not be appropriate identity markers. After all, most people would likely say they cared about the environment if asked, and many members of environmental organisations might only be “support” members. An overview of the study participants is included in Appendix 2.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The project and research methodology were formally approved by, and meets the ethical criteria set by, the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). Informed consent was practiced (see Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 70-71). The data has been

treated with confidentiality, and the participants have all been anonymised as not to disclose their identity. While some participants indicated that they need not be anonymised, anonymisation was still practiced as to ensure a rigorous ethical standard of research. Moreover, participants might not want to be associated with the final interview transcripts, given that they might, in the analysis, come across in a different manner than they perceived in their interviews – as Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) note, “Oral language transcribed verbatim may appear as incoherent and confused speech” (*ibid*: 187). The participants’ names have been changed to pseudonyms. I have also made the decision not to disclose names of, or information about, the environmental organisations (beyond the limited information present in the interview excerpts), as these were used primarily as an organising variable providing an appropriate sample of environmentalists, rather than being of great value for the analysis itself. The participants were informed that they, as study participants, did not represent their workplaces, but only themselves (insofar as this is possible). All audio recordings were deleted upon completion of the project.

Care was taken to create a safe interviewing environment; “a stage where the subject is free and safe to talk of private events” (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 16). Given the morally charged debates around environment and behaviour, it was important that the participants did not feel moralised or judged in any way. To avoid this pitfall, I took great care to inform the participants that my project was not about moralising individuals for their personal actions: my goal (by focusing on *practice*) was rather to circumvent the moralisation and address the socio-structural contexts in which these occurred, in order to better understand why and how they did what they did. Where appropriate, I shared some personal anecdotes – demonstrating that I, too, found practicing in the interest of the environment to be challenging and difficult, and that this was a motivation for me to talk to them – in order to build rapport and to “level the field” between the participants and myself as a researcher. This also involved practicing a thorough curiosity, or what Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 31) call a “deliberate naiveté”; casting aside, by being critically aware of, my own presuppositions; not having “readymade categories and schemes of interpretation” (*ibid*: 30). As Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 32) remind us, a “well-conducted research interview may be a rare and enriching experience for the subject, who may obtain new insights into his or her life situation” so long as the researcher “shows an

interest in, is sensitive toward, and seeks to understand as well as possible [the participants'] own experiences and views on a topic". Luckily, the participants expressed sincere interest in, and enthusiasm for, our conversation and the topics handled within it – and, once finished, communicated that they, too, had found it insightful. This has certainly applied to me too, as a researcher: “The journey may not only lead to new knowledge; the traveler might change as well” (*ibid*: 49).

Finally, it is important to consider the implications of language and translation when “working as a bilingual researcher” (Smith 2016: 92). While it is said that “translators are traitors” (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 178), I have tried my best *not to be one* by taking translation seriously. All the interviews were conducted and transcribed in Norwegian. The original transcript excerpts were kept until the written thesis was close to finished – in order to maintain the participants’ original contributions and not get “lost in translation”, as it were – after which the excerpts used in the analysis were translated into English (see Appendix 3). Some nuances will be lost in translation; there is no way to correct entirely for this. The whole research processes necessarily involved several stages of “abstraction” (*ibid*) – from (a) the live interview setting, to (b) the audio recording, to (c) the Norwegian transcript, to (d) the English transcript – in which some data and its meaning might be lost. Therefore, translating “meaning between different contexts” (Smith 2016: 96) demands critical and reflexive awareness. Researchers have the power to – but the responsibility *not* to – alter participants’ contributions into something that supports a “preferred” argument. I have done my best to ensure appropriate translations, at times requiring a “foreignised” translation in order to maintain “a sense of people’s meanings in their own context, even if that does not produce a highly polished translated text” (Smith 2016: 95). In some places, where I found translation to be especially tricky, I have included the original Norwegian term used in brackets or added an explanatory footnote. I hope that “being aware of and making clear the challenges of translating certain terms between languages” has in this case helped to “enrich the analysis” (*ibid*: 96).

4 Mapping aeromobilities

Detailing the characteristics of the participants' aeromobilities, this chapter will function as a descriptive or contextual "map" to guide the remainder of the analyses. It focuses on the participants' reasons for flying, and the contexts in which these were situated. The participants expressed the notion that air-travel was a fragmented practice, which played specific roles and carried various meanings depending on the "domain" in which it was carried out. In this chapter, I outline these domains of aeromobility: private, workplace, and extraordinary aeromobilities.

4.1 Private aeromobilities

When discussing the participants' aeromobilities in their private lives, i.e. outside of the workplace, two main categories emerged: (1) flying for leisure, and (2) flying to visit friends and family.

4.1.1 Flying for leisure

The participants had different thoughts, feelings, and relations to leisure travel. Notably, most participants had actively taken steps to reduce or eliminate holiday practices that relied on aeromobility due to their increasing concern for the environmental costs of aviation. Tine, for instance, explained that as she had grown older and had become increasingly associated with environmentally oriented social groups, she had adopted new holiday practices: "when I was young we went on charter holidays every year...it was a natural part [of the upbringing], but now I'm older and I've gotten to know new people, and I've barely flown at all". This underscores the nature of practices as inherently normative and social (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014). With a changing social scene, the practitioner establishes "new understandings of what courses of action are not inappropriate" (Warde 2005: 140). While some participants' aeromobilities, then, were influenced by social factors, others' were predominantly influenced by (infra)structures: While Tine had flown less due to the aforementioned social factors, Jarle had recently begun flying more due to a change in available transport options and their relative convenience as he had moved from London to Oslo (see Chapter 6.2.2).

Most participants argued that typical beach holidays – the cultural reference for this being *sydentur* – were unjustified in face of the environmental consequences of air-travel. Still, some participants saw the value in such trips. Mikkel typically took one holiday a year in order to “get away” and relax in warmer climates, which he felt was necessary for him to boost his motivation and recharge his batteries. That way, he also had something look forward to if he felt overworked, down, or experienced the winter blues. As Randles and Mander (2009: 258) note: “The notion of temporarily suspending everyday routines...seems central to the objective of the practice...[of] ‘getting away’, associated with travelling for a short break to a better (sunnier) climate”. In their study of frequent flyers, they also found that “anticipation and enjoyment” leading up to the holiday was as important as the holiday itself (*ibid*: 256). As Mikkel explained:

The thought processes has been: in periods when you’re fatigued and tired of Norway and snow, you want to relax (*koble av*) and go on holiday, and when you kind of reach the point that, well, your own interests precede the fact that you know it’s bad, it has happened; about once a year, you have to get away, and in winter...you might have to go so far that train travel is not an option

In their study of the “spatial context of sustainable mobility styles”, Barr and Prillwitz (2012: 807) found that, among “environmentally concerned” consumers, “behavioural changes in the holiday and leisure context were much less accepted than those for daily travel”. This was true for Mikkel, who deemed the special occasion of the holiday as more important than everyday mobilities. While everyday mobility might to a greater extent be achievable by means of bus, train, and public transport, faraway holiday travels might require air-travel. Leading an adventurous lifestyle as “a very active family”, Roald too let personal desires override environmental concerns when travelling. He explained that “we’ve had some travels because my partner’s going on skiing races or to some place, and we’ve had some active holidays...I’ve kind of flown at least like an average Norwegian, and I guess maybe a bit more”. While Roald, among others, was very sceptical of beach holiday tourism, he made the argument for flying to gain valuable and insightful experiences. Such trips he felt were more “justified”. In Roald’s own words:

We went on a family holiday to Armenia...and there was nothing in any magazines and I barely found a Google-image from there...we flew to Yerevan via Moskva, burning four trips on the “flight quota”, but we had most likely burned off four flights if we’d chosen a similar place in the Alps, too; but what we saw was a country almost still living in Soviet Union times...I almost didn’t see

an office building in the village, it was only primary sector [economy], cows in the streets, and...tiny shops attached to houses, it was like nothing close to what we have here, and that trip has opened [our] eyes for the fact that there are a lot of different lifestyles around the world, other than the superficial, “status hunting”, excessive lifestyle we have, so travelling can change people’s mindset a little, too, which in the long term might have a positive effect, although where you travel to matters

For Roald, then, travel signified a trade-off between the experiences it involved and its environmental consequences. He thus made a distinction between an “active” and a “passive” type of experience. In the German philosophical tradition, a distinction is made between having experienced something, and having “gained” insight through experience (Hverven 2018: 129-130). While the former – *Erlebnis* – is something which one passively leaves behind, the latter – *Erfahrung* – is something which one actively implements into one’s life, thus entailing an unexpected exposure for something which breaks with one’s expectations, through which one’s worldview has to be re-evaluated (*ibid*). Roald’s divide between the beach holiday and the “cultural experience” holiday implies such a distinction between the active and passive.

Several others felt that going on holiday was an expectation or obligation in social settings involving friends or family. As Maja said: “if you’ve got a family, there’s...expectations that you attend holidays, and everyone else does it, and you can’t afford going...by train”. Some experienced this as a personal indulgence, i.e. moving aside one’s personal morals in favour of participation. Silje, for instance, would somewhat reluctantly join her friends on weekend trips. Others thought of it as a personal sacrifice, i.e. succumbing to peer pressure. For instance, Tine felt pressured to fly with her family instead of taking the train when travelling for Christmas holidays (see section 4.3).

Nevertheless, many of the participants had consciously cut down on typical holiday trips. They prioritised alternative transport methods when travelling, and travelled less often and less far. Siri, for instance, said that “holiday the past years has been travelling by train up to Lofoten to volunteer at a festival, and take the train back down again. It’s a nice vacation, [but] it takes some time”. When travelling by air, they tried to make sure that their aeromobility was “worth it” or justified in some way (see Chapter 6).

While the participants almost exclusively talked about their leisure air-travel in relation to holidaymaking, leisure need not imply holiday per se. Notably, one participant – Jarle – engaged in aeromobility for the sake of flying itself: “Something I could do – and I’ve done this – I’ve taken a return flight from Oslo to some place just to fly a particular plane model...or an airline I haven’t flown before, and I did nothing when I arrived, I was just at the airport and then flew back again”. His interest in airlines and aircraft were enough of a motivating factor for him to book flights.

In sum, leisure air-travel was generally framed as a specific type of aeromobility understood to be unnecessary unless it enabled them to partake in practices which stimulated personal wants and contributed to some specified personal fulfilment – which it often did. For Mikkel, this was “getting away”; for Roald, it was gaining insightful cultural experiences; and for Jarle, it was feeding his interest in aviation.

4.1.2 Flying to visit friends and family

Visiting friends and family was one of the primary drivers for the participants’ aeromobilities, especially outside of work. While some participants had most of their family close by – “Family...that’s not so relevant, that’s two hours by bus” (Mikkel) – most of them had friends and family in other parts of Norway. For those who had friends and family in the southern half of the country, the recurrent dilemma seemed to be whether to fly or travel by alternative means (bus/train/boat). For those with friends and family in the north of Norway, flying was the only viable option in most cases. In other words, there were some important structural-geographical factors (most notably relative distance) working to motivate different kinds of mobilities. Consider, for instance, Jarle: Living in Oslo, he still had family as well as his best friends in Stavanger. With cheap plane tickets and short travel times, he found it convenient to spend weekends in Stavanger. Train travel was not a viable alternative for him, due to travel time and price. He also collected flyer miles, making flying more rewarding in the long-term. He explained:

If it wasn’t for the motivational factor of having friends and family in Stavanger, I wouldn’t have had...the incentive to fly so much...I usually commute to and from Stavanger several weekends a month, which makes up many flights...Well it’s obvious that if it’s a Saturday night – to be alone here or at a party in Stavanger, I’ll choose the party...as long as flights are cheap

While Siri did consider travelling by train to Bergen a viable alternative, and indeed one she tended to choose, she felt some peer pressure from her friends and family to opt for flying to save time and money. This, she felt, made it more cumbersome to travel by train: “I get asked, *well why don't you wanna fly home, it takes an hour, why do you want to sit 7.5 hours on the train when it costs 400kr more*” (Siri). This tension between family values and environmental concern was a recurring theme. Maja did not visit her family in Bergen as often as she would like to due to her own strict no-flying policy. She could usually only go during weekends, and travelling by train would “eat up” too much of her family time to be worth it, she said. Paradoxically, however, this meant that her family would come and visit her in Oslo more often, and they would fly. Maja struggled with this, knowing that the potential environmental footprint of her return trip to Bergen was effectively cancelled out – and even multiplied – as her family members filled up several plane seats to visit her instead. She elaborated on this:

Not having the opportunity to go [home] very often weighs me down, I don't have enough free days and flexitime to justify sitting on the train, to get something out of the weekend, so I plan up to maybe two trips a year...which my mom thinks is quite seldom, and she wishes I would come more often, and I get like, *I don't have the option to go, I don't fly*, so now she and my sister are coming [here]...and it pains me a little that they fly, just to be here one day for my sake, so I kinda feel like it's *my emissions [på mitt klimaregnskap]*

In a sense, this constitutes a sort of behavioural “substitution” rebound effect (Hertwich 2005), for which the positive gains made by one individual not flying a given distance is cancelled out by the negative effects of other individuals flying the same distance as a (more or less) direct consequence of this. Broadening the scope of analysis from individual doings to the collective practice, attention to practice makes such rebounding emissions evident (Spaargaren 2011: 816). Tine further explained how the socio-cultural dynamics around transport and mobility differed between her friends and family. With her family, she had a lower threshold for flying to and from Tromsø. Sometimes, however, she would make the same trip by train, together with a group of environmentally minded colleagues. In addition to the practical constraints of time and money (as previously emphasised by Jarle), she felt that this socialisation aspect (as previously emphasised by Siri) was an important factor for determining her mobility practices. She elaborated:

It's likely my family wouldn't be bothered sitting on the train...so maybe if we're celebrating something...it's more likely I'd just fly, but now it's easier for me because there are more people at the office who have family there [Tromsø], and now before Christmas a group of us went up there and back down by train...you can do it together and make it a social thing, if you're gonna be there for a while it's fine but if you're only going for a weekend it would be a bit silly to use two or those four days you might have in your disposition to travel

Several participants had family or relatives in the northern parts of the country, for which air-travel was understood to be the superior mode of transport. Maja also had family in Tromsø, but despite their expectations for her to visit them, she did not feel that she could afford to do so due to the monetary and temporal constraints of long-distance train travel: "it's expected of me to visit my family in the north...[and] of course I want to" (Maja). Julia explained that she and her family had more or less eliminated trips that were exclusively for family holidays, and focused instead on managing to visit their family. This, she explained, was a compromise in terms of time, money, and reducing their environmental footprint. For Julia and her family, the benefit from staying in touch with extended family outweighed the cost of eliminating specific holidays. This was not uncomplicated, as her husband had family in both Tromsø and India. By cutting standalone holidays, flying to visit family felt a little more justified:

...it's important to our lives, it's important for the kids to see their grandparents...[and for them] to see us...it's pretty...crucial [*et nært behov*]...and now for Christmas, we're travelling to India...for [my husband] is half Indian, so we have family in India too, and we don't have the option to go there very often, but now there's a wedding and stuff which makes us feel the need to go there, and we wish for our children to have a relationship with India because they have a grandfather who's also from India, so well, it's kind of these things I feel that we...well, if not *must* do...really really want to do, while cutting out the beach [*syden*] travels in summer...that's much easier for me...an alternative is maybe to see the family less often, and we're maybe not willing to do that...In recent years...holidays haven't necessarily been abroad...we wish to see the family in Tromsø, so most of our family trips go to Tromsø...and there are no...viable alternatives [to flying] to Tromsø

Other participants, too, had friends and family abroad, whom they wished to visit. Siri recalled two instances where flying seemed like the only viable alternative, although she would have opted for train or bus if she felt like she could. In two separate instances, she reluctantly had to fly, when travelling to Africa. She explained that "it was kind of like, *if you're going to Zimbabwe you have to fly*" and that "you can't really take the train to Tanzania; if it was possible I might have done it, but it would have taken a long time". For Siri, the wish to visit her sister was

stronger than her wish not to fly; and due to structural limitations, she could not choose otherwise. Visiting Brazil on a university trip, Tine's reasoning was similar: "when I went to Brazil I thought, like, *this is kind of the only option*, then my conscience lifted a little". Once they had decided to embark on these trips, there were no viable alternatives to flying. Another time, travelling from Bergen to Denmark to visit her family, Siri had flown to save a considerable amount of time: "instead of...a whole day [*døgn*] it took an hour by plane". In this instance, making use of alternative transport methods would certainly be possible, but due to practical reasons, it was not considered a viable option.

The nature of these practices thus differed: While holidaymaking manifested itself as a "want", visiting friends and family was to a greater extent perceived as a "need". It was, in other words, to a lesser extent negotiable. While holiday travel was usually self-motivated and thus experienced as a voluntary practice, visiting friends and family involved a wider range of complex social relationships, nurturing feelings of expectation and obligation. While both instances made the participants feel compelled to engage in air-travel in different ways, visiting friends and family implied a stronger external motivation. Therefore, avoiding seeing friends and family as a strategy to reduce one's air-travel was seldom an option – perhaps with the exception of Maja, who went great lengths to avoid flying, but who were still indirectly part in the aeromobilities of her family, indicating the difficulty of avoiding aeromobility practices altogether.

4.2 Workplace aeromobilities

Given their engagements in different environmental organisations, most of the participants travelled regularly for work-related purposes, whether to work on campaigns or projects, participate in meetings, engage in keynote speaking, or attend conferences. Sometimes this required flying; other times they used alternative transport methods. The participants stressed the different nature of workplace aeromobility compared to private aeromobility, both in terms of governance and experience. In general, the participants indicated that they spent less time and effort ruminating about their work-related practices and their environmental consequences.

4.2.1 Structural incentives for workplace aeromobility

The participants emphasised that mobility was governed in particular ways in a workplace setting, through systemic or structural mechanisms, which incentivised some mobilities and not others, both directly and indirectly. The first mechanism was *price*. When flying for work, price was not generally seen as an issue. As such, the problem of money was taken out of the equation and it was easier to simply book a flight without excessive pondering. This in turn meant less planning required. Rather than having to plan far in advance, as one might need to do in terms of leisure travel, employees can choose relatively comfortable and practical journeys at short notice. As Frida explained:

When you're going on holiday it's about personal finance, when you're going on work travels it's about someone paying for you...like, when you go to pick a flight, you're not so concerned with price...you're not the one who's paying

The second mechanism was *time*. Flying was also generally more time-effective than other modes of transport, meaning that the participants could spend more time on their work-related tasks or with their family. In Egon's words: "what's most important for me is that I've got little time to begin with; I don't always have time for the train, it takes up too much of the total time". Moreover, as Endre pointed to, mode of travel might be *de facto* pre-determined by the workplace: "I understand that some have to fly in their day-to-day lives, it's not necessarily their fault; they're commuters only getting their flights covered, and not the train, because it's cheaper to fly and it takes less time". Frida considered alternative travel methods if permitted by her schedule but indicated that this required a lot of planning and was often difficult to achieve. By flying, Frida's travel process would be less complicated, and so it felt like the easier and most practical option. Opting for air-travel meant saving time – both due to less planning and shorter travel time: "If it's an alternative to take the train, and it doesn't take too long, I kind of want to choose that, but it has to do with travel time, because you have to make work and family go together".

The third mechanism, closely related to the previous two, was the implications of *family and work-life balance*. Given that the domains of life at work and outside work necessarily overlap, Frida emphasised, so will the implications of one's workplace mobilities. Opting for train travel, for instance, might not only affect Frida's work but also her family. As Gustafson (2006: 516) suggests, "work-related

travel becomes particularly stressful when it comes into conflict with family life and family obligations”. Some research suggests that women are particularly vulnerable when it comes to suffering from the overlap between work-related travel and the informal “work” tied to the household (*ibid*; Casinowsky 2013). Southerton (2009: 49) refers to this as women's “double burden”, having to juggle “domestic and workplace responsibilities” as two separate work “shifts”. In his study of the “work-family conflict”, Gustafson (2006: 517) concluded that “work-related travel” interfered with family life and obligations, particularly if young children were involved. To some extent, this was also true for the mothers in my sample: While it is unclear from my data how family situation impacted the mothers’ frequency of (air-)travel, it seemed that having family responsibilities heightened their threshold for choosing alternative, slower transport methods, as this would extend their time away beyond their normal working hours³. Silje, for instance, admitted that she had in the past opted to fly even when she considered travelling by train to be a viable alternative, in order to free up time with her family: “[The] train takes longer time, and if it was just about me I wouldn’t care about that, but I have a family who then – if there’s an [event] at school – to actually be able to make it to something, which has to do with the family...determines my [transport] choice”. As Casinowsky (2013: 322) puts it, while “working life [is] on the move, domestic life [is] at a standstill”. It thus might be an easier option to simply choose the fastest means of transportation (flying) instead of re-organising family matters in order to travel sustainably (by train or coach). In this sense, it seemed that the participants felt they had to make “individual adaptations” to make work-travel fit in with family obligations (Gustafson 2006: 513).

Finally, the fourth mechanism was *the perceived lack of viable alternatives to aeromobility in the context of workplace travel*. For Nils, for instance, alternative mobilities did not always exist within (what he considered to be) “the limits of reason” (*rimelighetens grenser*). When travelling far for work, he did not see train travel as a viable alternative to flying, due to the implications that would have in terms of both convenience and productivity. As such, he did not really consider the

³ Although my sample included both men and women with families, only women talked about the aspect of making up time to fulfil family duties. While no conclusions can be made from my limited data material on this topic, it does suggest that there might be gendered divisions of (perceived) responsibility in terms of making time for family and household matters.

question of whether or not to fly to be a choice, but a mode of mobility determined by structural or contextual factors: “It’s not always a given that one can say that *no I don’t wanna fly*...Not all places have alternative transport within the limits of reason...If you’re going to Lofoten you can plan to spend three days in a car, but...”. He further emphasised the notion of “needs”, arguing that some types of work require participating in environmentally unfriendly practices such as flying in order to “get the job done”. Having the option not to fly, then, might constitute a form of “privilege” unto itself. It is a “privileged situation”, he suggested, to “sit in *Oslo* or wherever it may be and say that it [flying] is plain wrong” (see Chapter 5.5). Instead, he thought, one ought to show “some humility in terms of the needs of different individuals and occupations”. Having gained more knowledge, Endre had heightened his threshold for work-related air-travel:

knowing the amount of emissions...that’s what’s changed for me; I used to think that lecturing for five people was worth it, now I have more knowledge, and I don’t think it’s worth it anymore – but everything’s difficult about the northern counties [*fylker*], we need to have activity there as well...that makes it particularly challenging...we can’t take the train all the time, it’s like, those flights that have to happen for the organisation to go around, those I feel are OK, but you need to do some calculations

In terms of structural implications, then, flying was considered a sometimes avoidable but oftentimes necessary practice in the work setting – to “make things go around”, as Endre put it – both for the employer and for the employee.

4.2.2 Social incentives for workplace aeromobility

The participants expressed a feeling that workplace travel was normatively organised in a particular way that separated it from private travel. As such, the motivation for potentially engaging in aeromobility was different. I will refer to these motivations as “social incentives”.

The first social incentive for workplace aeromobility was its *association with productivity and purpose*. As an employee or member of an organisation, the participants felt that their workplace travel was somehow *productive*: If they had to fly, they had to do so for a reason. As Frida pointed out, workplace travel serves a different purpose, and is fuelled by different motivations, than leisure travel. Aeromobility thus became a tool, a means to an end. Some participants talked about how travelling for work felt “important” and therefore justified. Attending meetings,

conferences, and events evokes a sense of “busyness” and status. As Frida said: “often if you travel around [a lot]...you’ve got a high-status job”. The associations tied to flying might therefore be characterised more by purpose, engagement, “doing”, and achievement, rather than emissions. For instance, Mina told me that she had recently engaged in long-distance air-travel as part of a project with her workplace. They had travelled to a developing country to work on a meaningful campaign. She associated the trip with something important, and this positive association overpowered her otherwise negative association of air-travel: “It’s like I no longer think of it as air-travel...because I think of it as *work*, like not only having a good time; I guess I think of it as something important”. Interestingly, Mina here seemed to associate the “nice” and “fun” of leisure travel with a contrast to the importance and achievement associated with the work trip. As Lassen (2006: 305) writes: “Tourist trips are...considered to be related to the individual’s sphere of self-determination, whereas work trips are considered to be the result of the employer’s needs and demands from the employee”. In a sense, then, leisure travel might be associated with a certain passivity whereas workplace travel might be associated with a more active engagement.

Some participants further suggested that the net benefits accrued from air-travel might in some cases outweigh the environmental costs it produces. While some work-related trips might be redundant – “you don’t need to go [away]...to do the job, you can do it from here” (Egon) – others might be necessary. The line between necessary and unnecessary, however, is a difficult one to draw. As Mikkel reflected: “Well, you do a proper ‘weighing’: is it necessary to be there in person?...To break through politically, Skype doesn’t work, because you need to meet people in person to get that ‘entry’...Once in touch...shown one’s face...one ought to use technology rather than meeting in person every time”. In Mikkel’s reasoning, the notion of having an impact (*gjennomslag*) is central. Physical movement and physical, corporeal presence, as opposed to immobility and absence or only virtual presence, might be associated with greater vigour or influential power (*handlekraft*). As Lassen (2006: 307) suggests, co-presence, being present with others, “offers the possibility of establishing intimacy and trust”. This amounts to what Storme et al. (2017) term “a politics of presence”, for which being present is understood to be a prerequisite for motivating political change. Within this politics of presence, then, corporeal presence

– the state of being present “in the flesh” – matters. Lassen (2009: 240) has argued that many international work trips are unwarranted in terms of the *work tasks* involved. Nevertheless, Storme et al. (2017: 407) suggest that “it is hard to measure the value of a single trip”, work travel being an “ongoing process” producing “ecologies of mobility”, in which both “sparse” and “dense” networks – i.e. built on weak/diverse and strong/specific ties – are created and maintained. While work travel might imply the expectation or obligation of fulfilling a “sparse” presence, travelling to see friends or family might imply the expectation or obligation of fulfilling a “dense” presence. The “denser” the network, the more importance is tied to being present in a given situation.

The second social incentive for aeromobility was *its associated perception of responsibility and obligation*. Some participants further indicated that the work-related aeromobilities did not feel like their own responsibility, as much as their private aeromobilities. Nils, for instance, admitted that he thought of the aeromobility he engaged in through work as property of his workplace, and not his own: “I don’t have a bad conscious for most of my flying, because it’s for work, so I don’t quite consider it as *my* flying...it’s possible I’d think differently about it if I was going to London to buy a purse”. This distinction between workplace and private life was further demonstrated by more subtle phrases like: “...my life situation – and then I mean my *private* life situation – and *privately* I don’t fly” (Egon). This indicates a compartmentalisation of practice: a mental construction of work and non-work as two very distinct domains of life with different normative guidelines for practice. Participants also acknowledged the feeling of obligation to engage in aeromobility if or when this was required from the workplace. This might be especially relevant in other professional sectors, where the dissonance between individual morals and workplace requirements might be stronger. Tine talked about her father, who had to fly a lot through his work. She struggled accepting this, but acknowledged that her father seemed not to have any choice due to workplace obligations: “in terms of work and stuff, you have to ‘go there’, my parents work a lot; my dad’s in London, only for two days, and I’m like, *did you have to do that*, but yeah they fly a lot...it’s not necessarily that they want to, but they feel obliged to, to keep their jobs”. Together, these two social incentives – associations with productivity and purpose, on the one hand, and a feeling of responsibility and

obligation on behalf of the workplace, on the other – made it challenging for the participants to abstain from workplace aeromobilities when or if this was required from them.

4.3 Extraordinary aeromobilities

The final identified category of aeromobility, which may affect both work and leisure, is that of “extraordinary aeromobilities”, here referring to the practice of flying for a special occasion or unforeseen reason. This is in many ways an unruly category – as Shove (2003: 1) argues, it is “misleading to draw too sharp a distinction between the realm of the spectacular and that of the grindingly ordinary” – yet one which is crucial to understand the participants’ aeromobilities. The essence of this category is captured by Rau and Sattlegger (2018: 46), who write that “the habitual, routinised character of everyday mobility generates relatively stable practices that are only occasionally interrupted by life-course trajectories and life events...people’s mobility behaviour displays considerable continuity over time, only to be interrupted by significant life events or transitions”. Indeed, most participants seemed more likely to fly if this was required to experience something special or out of the ordinary. Examples of such extraordinary events that came up in the interviews were conferences, concerts, celebrations, and ceremonies. While important facets of all domains of aeromobility outlined in this chapter, the notion of being present was perhaps particularly important in terms of extraordinary events where one’s presence was expected, whether from oneself or from others. A key difference here is the sense of relative immediacy, and the process of planning. Indeed, this lack of planning might imply a lesser ability to plan with personal moral values in mind, if travelling in private, or work within the boundaries set by the institution, if travelling for work. Mina, for instance, explained that as she had become more aware of the environmental impacts of her practices, she had started making larger sacrifices to reduce her environmental footprint, such as avoiding flying abroad with her friends. Despite this, she was planning to fly to Dublin in order to attend a birthday celebration. She explained:

...and now I’m actually going to Dublin...to celebrate a 30th birthday, but there were recently discussions of going to Berlin for a concert with some friends, and...because I’ve changed how I think about flying...now I don’t think I’ll do it...I’m going to say no, because I know that, well, I’m in Dublin some weeks before that...Say, five years ago, I’d have joined in immediately, I guess

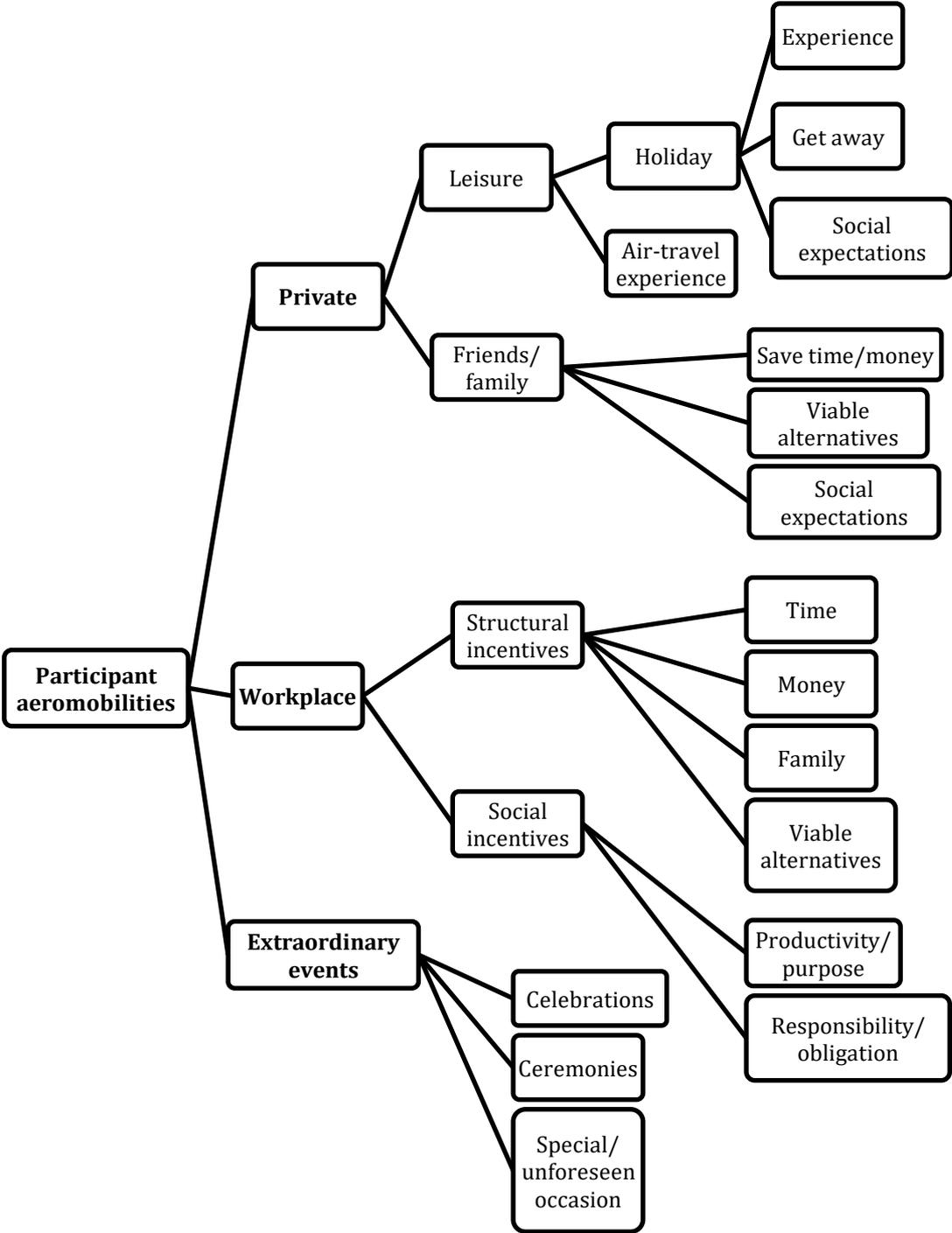
Such trips with friends – what Randles and Mander (2009: 259) refer to as “groups on the move” – might be challenging to forego given its social aspects. Silje admitted that although she, similarly to Mina, wanted to reduce her own environmental footprint from aeromobility, she had joined her friends on weekend trips before, somewhat reluctantly, giving in to her personal desires. Ritual celebrations, such as Christmas, also had this effect. Consider Tine: “[We were going] to Stavanger, and I was like, *no I wanna take the train*, but [it was] Christmas eve, and...my dad was like, *if you take the train you won't be home before 6pm, you can't do it*, and I was like, *OK*, and I thought, *well this is actually really stupid*”. Here, different practical understandings clash: while Tine would sacrifice most of Christmas Eve to take the train, this was not accepted as a rational choice by her family, who valued the family celebrations over personal environmental values. As Shove (2003: 2) notes, on the cultural aspects of practice, “arrangements that are normal for some strike others as being extremely strange”.

The extraordinary events problematised by most participants, however, were funerals or the unfortunate event of a relative or friend falling ill. In such instances – which might be characterised as *disruptive*, in a sense – the importance or immediacy of the event would overshadow all environmental concerns. Indeed, the participants indicated that their only concern would be to get “there” as quickly as possible, regardless of any “cost” (monetary, temporal, social, or environmental) . In a way, then, certain extraordinary events might temporarily alter one’s rationalities, in the sense that the nature one’s priorities suddenly change. Using “weddings and funerals of close friends and family” as examples, Storme et al. (2017) term this “urge” for being present in a given situation a “compulsion to proximity” (see e.g. Chapter 7.3).

4.4 Chapter summary and conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that, for the participants, air-travel was a fragmented practice; a component of various overarching practices; and a practice imbued with different meanings depending on the “domain” in which it was carried out. The most striking differentiation made was the “bundling” of work and non-work related aeromobilities. When flying, it was primarily due to a perceived lack of choice or alternatives. While I have systematised the reasons for flying into distinct categories in this chapter – see Figure 3 – these clearly overlap in the lives of the participants.

Figure 3: Mapping participants' aeromobilities



5 Frequent flying: The normalisation and standardisation of aeromobility

Building on empirical data as well as literature, I argue in this chapter that air-travel constitutes a normalised and standardised practice. This implies that having high personal aeromobility, being a “frequent flyer”, is part of a collective, socially constructed understanding of “normality”; something which is accepted and expected (Wallenborn and Wilhite 2014). I suggest that, in the context of contemporary Norwegian society, “frequent flying” is a normalised form of mobility both in terms of its practices and its socio-cultural and symbolic significance, and that this has implications for how air-travel and related practices are performed and carried out. I apply some of Shove (2003) and Wilk’s (2009) concepts pertaining to the evolution of practices to analyse how this informed the participants’ understandings and negotiations of their aeromobilities.

5.1 Practices of frequent flight

“More people travel more frequently and for longer distances”, writes Massey (1991: 24), referring to a key premise of the mobilities paradigm: the undeniable fact that life on Earth is becoming increasingly mobile. Stretching out (potential) travel distances, aeromobility is an important component of this intensification of mobility. At this point, there seems to be a general agreement in the literature that air-travel is (more or less) a normalised practice in Western societies (e.g. Adey et al. 2007: 776; Randles and Mander 2009; Baer 2018). The previously outlined “flyer’s dilemma” points to the intersection between flying as a *common* yet *unsustainable* practice. As McDonald et al. (2015: 1507) write: “decisions about flying...are located between two powerful social narratives: flying is normal; and flying is damaging the environment...[We live in] an era of hyper-mobility where air travel has changed from being an aspiration, to a social norm, to something to which consumers have begun to feel they have a right”. According to Adey (2007: 776), the increasing ubiquity of aeromobility means that “it is increasingly difficult to identify who flies because they have to and who flies simply because they can”. The “frequent flying” phenomenon describes the manifestation of this normalisation in consumers (Randles and Mander 2009; Young et al. 2014). Randles and Mander (2009) define frequent flyers as consumers who undertake at least two return trips by air (i.e. four flights) per

year. If we accept this definition, somewhere between 50 and 75% of the participants in my sample were frequent flyers. The frequent flying phenomenon indicates that air-travel has undergone a process of becoming less conspicuous and more implemented as part of everyday practices. This, of course, varies as consumers fly for different reasons: While some fly a lot whilst engaging in work-related travel (Storme et al. 2017), and some fly a lot to visit friends and family (Janta et al. 2014), others fly mostly for “special” occasions (see Chapter 4). Nevertheless, air-travel seems to be increasingly “integrated” (Warde 2005: 150) into other practices. As Randles and Mander (2009: 245) argue:

for certain identified groups in society, flying now forms an integral part of celebrating a birthday, anniversary or retirement, taking a city break, relaxing and getting away from it all, visiting friends and family, or pursuing a special interest such as golfing or climbing... the norms and standards of the occasion to fly have themselves changed. This shifts attention...to the wider context of the practices into which flying now inserts

5.2 The habits and routines of (aero)mobility

The participants talked about changing general routines and habits in their day-to-day lives, as part of an overall lifestyle change following their increasing environmental concern and engagement. For most, this involved making compromises on their consumption and incorporating general “across the board” lifestyle changes. Typical practices they had “altered” through lifestyle change were household temperature and lighting (sacrificing comfort and convenience for lower electricity usage), meat consumption (being vegetarian or reducing meat intake) – “I eat less meat...save quite a bit on electricity...if it’s cold I’ll put on clothes, not turn up the heat” (Endre) – and general mobility (avoiding driving, using public transport, cycling to work, etc.) – “I don’t really need to drive a lot...I can use public transport, and obviously, I don’t drive to buy groceries, I walk or bike” (Egon). These kinds of habit-driven practices form the habitual backdrop of routinised, repeated, and at least partially automatised practices that, when woven together, form the fabric of everyday life. While some had made conscious efforts to change these mundane everyday habit-practices, others had internalised sustainable practices through their upbringing, as part of a reflexive, low-carbon lifestyle. Either way, for most of the participants, certain practices – such as the ones mentioned above – were habituated and routinised to the point of feeling “mechanical”.

Ehn and Löfgren (2009: 101) suggest that practices have a “degree of conscious reflection” to them: “There is a continuum from mechanical – reflex-like – routines over to emotionally charged habits, collective traditions and symbolically elaborated rituals”. As flying has become increasingly normalised, it is reasonable to believe that conscious reflection on what aeromobility means on the part of flying consumers has declined. This would imply that flying becomes something one simply *does*; a practice whose meaning is, essentially, reduced to its function. It would, however, be far-fetched to suggest that flying constitutes a simple and mindless “routine”, or that engaging in aeromobility is experienced as a natural part of the rhythm, pace, and flow of everyday life (perhaps with the notable exception of hypermobile individuals who routinely commute by air several times a week, which certainly exist, but which were not represented in my sample). Compared to some everyday habits – like Nils turning off the light switch (see p. 62) – air-travel was not routinised to the point of feeling mechanical.

The routines of aeromobility were instead characterised by a higher degree of self-reflexivity and conscious decision-making, thus resting in a complex “gray area between active and passive” (Wilk 2009: 152). Produced through both mundane and spectacular practices at the same time, aeromobility becomes routinised and habituated to different degrees and in different ways by different consumers; thus constituting an edge-case when talking of habits, routines, and everyday practices, as previously noted. As a practice which is both “normal” and which in some sense *breaks* with the normal (Randles and Mander 2009: 258), then, flying constitutes a particularly interesting target for practice-theoretical scrutiny:

Being normalised but not an everyday “habit” or “routine” for most consumers, it occupies a middle ground “[space] between choice and ingrained habit” (Ehn and Löfgren 2009: 100). This ambiguity is reflected in Mina’s words:

I’ve grown up in a home with low general consumption...it’s kind of in my nature to think less consumption, I spend very little effort on it...I get very conscious about my own habits, but flying, I haven’t really grown up thinking of that as a pollution issue, so I use more mental energy [*tankevirksomhet*] on that than, for instance, recycling, taking the bus, cook leftovers...those things I’ve learned from childhood, but...every time there’s a question of taking a trip here or there I feel that it requires a lot of me, to, like, actually say no, or think, like, *oh shit*...

As noted in the *Conceptual Framework*, normalisation and standardisation of a practice implies that normative expectations of that practice change. This is important to take into account when considering the ways in which the participants negotiated their own mobilities and choosing their means of transport. Indeed, considering tempo-spatial dimensions of practices illuminates the participants' feelings of entrapment within different practice time-spaces. Alluding to the notion of temporal expectations, Shove (2009: 25) uses the concept of "practice-time profiles", that is, "embedded conventions of duration, sequence and timing associated with the competent performance of a practice". In other words, practitioners have an understanding of how long it ought to take to perform a practice correctly under normal circumstances. In my sample, the extent to which the participants were willing to travel with alternative modes of transport depended largely on how much time they thought was fair to use on a given travel distance. Moreover, some participants indicated that their practice-time profiles did not always match those of their peers, and this seemed to cause some friction. For instance, as Tine explained, her parents did not want her to travel by train during the holidays when air-travel would free up more time for her to spend with her family. Similarly, Schatzki (2009) talks about the "coordination" and "harmonisation" of actions and practices, suggesting that common and shared spatialities and understandings of the meanings of time and space help practitioners to organise social practices. As Tine explained, she and some colleagues would sometimes travel north by train or coach together. When alternative travel became a collective "project", it became more fun and seemed like less of a compromise. In this instance, the shared understanding of train-travel as the appropriate mode of mobility (and travelling X hours by train, as opposed to Y hours by air, being the appropriate travel time) implied a harmonisation (*ibid*) of the train-travel practice, which in turn made it a more enjoyable experience. In other words, the context of the travel, or how the travel practice was coordinated, mattered in terms of how it was experienced.

While it is unlikely that the practice of flying is "emotionally charged" for the average consumer, the environmentalist participants were not able to fly without feeling the "weight" of doing so (although both the relative heaviness and contents of this metaphorical "weight" differed between them). They were, in other words, highly reflexive about their own air-travel and related practices. Their aeromobilities,

then, were “cultivated” practices, having been brought from the unconscious realm into “consciousness, reflection and discourse” – from the *habitus* to *praxis* (Wilk 2009: 149; see Figure 1 in Chapter 2.3.3). Here we can draw a parallel to Morton’s framing of self-reflexivity in the modern age of the Anthropocene; the sense that both individual consumers and humanity as a whole are becoming increasingly aware of the wider ramifications and implications – or, rather, *meanings* – of various practices hitherto performed sans apathy and without second thought: “There you are, turning the ignition of your car,” writes Morton (2016: 8-9), “And it creeps up on you” (“it” here being the reflexive realisation that, as a small part in a huge system, one is contributing to environmental degradation and climate change in that very moment). Likewise, the participants had slowly become more aware of their own practices when flying, and this reflection occupied increasingly more space in their heads as they considered their own mobilities.

After this process of cultivation comes a process of naturalisation, according to Wilk (2009). Naturalisation refers to the process of subduing conscious practices – i.e. those practice which one has become self-reflexive about – back into the taken-for-granted realm of the unconscious *habitus* – or simply keeping them “from surfacing into consciousness in the first place” (*ibid*: 150). This latter form of naturalisation was reflected in participants’ feelings of aeromobility as a normalised, standardised practice which they for a long time had not questioned taking part in. Tine, for instance, emphasised the feeling that flying was a naturalised and even expected practice: “[access to aeromobility] has become part of the welfare state, having the prosperity to be able to fly a lot; when I was young we’d go on charter holidays every year; we went to the US and around Europe a lot; it was a *natural* part [of the upbringing]...I’d think flying all the time was completely normal”. Here, Tine points to an interesting aspect of the naturalisation process, which is the socialisation of practice. Others, too, talked about how they had been socialised into sustainable (and unsustainable) practices through their upbringing. As Roald said, “I’m very conscious in other areas, but it [flying] is kind of my ‘bug’...from when I was little...it’s been a normal aspect of life to take a few flights throughout the year”.

Being aware and conscious of the impacts of personal air-travel, most participants sought to reduce their own aeromobility. This implied that they had to un-make, or *deconstruct*, flying as a routine. This process involves Wilk’s (2009) first version of

naturalisation, as they had to first cultivate their aeromobility practices; then incorporate alternative, sustainable practices; and then turn these into “natural” practices to the point of being taken-for-granted. This deconstruction was hard work. Indeed, it had implications beyond the mobility itself, in the sense that habits and routines are “tools for organizing the flow of time, and in this process create temporal rhythms and patterns, by sequencing and synchronization” (Ehn and Löfgren 2009: 100). Here practice theories offer analytical attention toward the complexity of practices as interrelated, multifaceted, and overlapping, as opposed to isolated and self-composed. While some participants took issue with alternative modes of mobility themselves, it was mostly the wider social, and to some extent economic, implications of not flying which they found troublesome.

Several of the participants talked about how they had naturalised and, as part of this, standardised (Shove 2003) various sustainable practices in their everyday lives. While, for most, the choice of whether or not to fly required a high degree of conscious reflection, everyday sustainable practices such as recycling, buying local or vegetarian or second hand, and travelling by public transport seemed to be hardwired into most of the participants. These were practices that were habituated and routinised to the point of feeling more or less mechanical or automatised. Once for instance recycling has become standardised part of a consumer’s garbage disposal practice, not recycling might feel unnatural, out of the ordinary; perhaps *wrong*. The following interview excerpts illustrate how the participants had naturalised and standardised sustainable everyday practices:

The other day I heard about a flat share in Oslo that didn’t recycle, and I got personally shook, because I think of that as such a natural thing to do...I’ve just always done it...most things [like that] I do kind of automatically, but it’s like small things, like remembering to bring a tote bag so I don’t need a plastic bag, it’s a matter of habits...I wouldn’t say I walk around making a lot of active choices...I’ve kind of “incorporated” [*innarbeidet*] them [into my life] (Siri)

This isn’t something I think about, it’s just how I am...I’ve grown up with this, right...it’s not something I consciously relate to anymore, it’s just...when new things come up, I try and evaluate it and take a stance towards it...It [goes on autopilot], right – if you’re used to turn the light when you leave a room, you get used to it, and you just turn of the light when you leave and be done with it, it just becomes another element [*en innarbeidet del*] of [the practice of] leaving the room, without you thinking *oh I have to turn off the light ‘cause I don’t wanna use electricity*...It’s the sum total of the choices one has made to get here, right (Nils)

There are several interesting points brought up in these excerpts. They both emphasise the habituated and routinised nature of their everyday sustainable practices, framing these as practices requiring little effort or energy for them to perform “correctly”. They are incorporated or worked in, to the extent that they do not feel like active choices. Interestingly, while Nils felt that he did not have a very conscious reflection around his practices given their habituated and routinised nature, he also emphasised that these habits were borne out of a set of conscious choices at some point in time. In other words, cultivating new practices (or new ways to perform practices) was at some point a conscious decision, which consequently, through a process of standardisation and naturalisation, rendered a relatively subconscious part of Nils’s everyday life. (As explained in the next paragraph, Maja’s relations to aeromobility had undergone a similar process.) In between these two processes of cultivation and naturalisation, there is arguably a “rupture” (Slater 2009) of the old routine as a new one replaces it (see Figure 1). When Nils talks about taking a stance on a practice and implementing it into one’s everyday life, he indicates such a rupture – a rupture between leaving the lights on and turning them off, for instance. Simply put, then, the forming of new or alternative habits and routines requires (1) an active reckoning with current ones, (2) creating the relevant changes, and (3) developing these so that engaging in them, in turn, feels like – again, as Ehn and Löfgren (2009: 99) put it – “just going through the same movements”.

While most of the participants had gone through some stages of this process, they were walking down different paths and at different pace, as it were. The extent to which they believed that they could – or ought to – make a positive difference in terms of changing their mobility practices varied. While almost all of the participants had “modified” their mobilities as a strategy to fly less, one participant stood out as the one with the seemingly strictest no-flying policy: Maja was the participant in my sample who had taken the most measures to avoid flying. She had, effectively, eliminated flying as an option altogether. For her, travelling by train or bus was the new normal, even if it took longer and was more expensive. She had cultivated and naturalised this practice, to the point that it was routine to check train tickets and not plane tickets when planning a trip. It is important to note here that this was a relatively new lifestyle path for Maja. Indeed, she explained that one of the reasons

that she had been able to “accept” this new lifestyle was that she felt she had already travelled a lot, backpacking in her early 20s. While having been personally concerned with the environment for a long time, it was only in the recent years that she had made the conscious connection between aeromobility and environmental degradation. Maja had for some time used the same strategies in other domains of her lifestyle as a consumer – she would buy clothes, appliances, and kitchen utensils at flea markets, even if it took her a long time to find what she needed. Buying new was *simply not an option*. As such, through a process of deconstructing and reconstructing routine, the “flight checking” routine replaced by a habit of “train checking”, cultivated and naturalised to the point of being/feeling normal:

...because I think you have to contribute as an individual as well...so I try not to think of it as an option...if I'm going to Bergen it's NSB [the train] I check; like, I don't check flight times or prices being, like, *oooh that would've been a lot cheaper*, I just don't grant myself having that as an alternative and therefore I kind of don't deal with [*forholde meg til*] that...so I kind of look at it as not an option or a priority, air-travel being so damaging...The way I deal with it, so that it won't consume too much of my energy...if one's always going from flea market to flea market to buy a rolling pin, instead of just going to [the store] and buying that rolling pin, people might say like, *you use so much time* or that it seems tiresome, I try to just eliminate [the practice of] buying something that is “new”, or to fly, as an alternative, and then you're kind of left with the environmental option; it's not an alternative for me to buy meat, then I have to find something else, to *solve it* – so I don't feel I spend a lot of mental capacity standing by those choices, because I've basically just removed them as possible choices

For Maja, this freed her from the constant dilemma of whether or not flying, or buying a new pair of jeans, was worth it. It lessened the burden of having too many choices. In the words of Ehn and Löfgren (2009: 102), it was a “liberating routine”, in the sense that: “Every new choice or willed action may be the starting point for creating a new habit that sooner or later will turn the task into something taken for granted”. Indeed, while borne out of a practice of restrictive consumption, the (more or less) *complete* restriction of some domains of consumption felt liberating. Indeed, some have argued that having too many choices can lead to choice *overload* and decision *fatigue* (Schwartz 2004). Making the “right” choices thus required less mental effort (*tankevirksomhet*) when the total amount of choices was reduced.

Mina talked about her siblings, who had taken very different positions on their effects of their practice on the environment. On the one hand, her sister neglected personal responsibility and travelled a lot by air; on the other hand, her brother had

turned his life around completely and substantially reduced his environmental footprint. Akin to Maja's case, this suggests that a complete "U-turn" change of practice (and its imbued routines and habits) is indeed possible. While ruptures between old and new practices can be slow and gradual, as with a long-term lifestyle change, this demonstrates that they can also be sudden and abrupt. As Mina elaborated:

I've got a brother who...is a fashion photographer, he's done it for a long time and travelled a lot with work...in an industry which contributes to an extreme [amount of] consumption which is not good, and...now it's become too much for him – after the UN's climate rapport it was like [*claps hands together*] now I'm gonna turn around my whole life...he "switched" completely, he's cut down a lot on his own consumption and...air-travel, so...he's really internalised it...but then I've got a little sister who just lives, like, the "jetsetter" life and flies a lot...I feel like it's a little difficult

Other participants expressed distress tied to restricting flights. In stark contrast to Maja, Jarle continued to fly relatively short distances relatively often to spend time with friends and family. For him, not flying would be too much of a personal sacrifice. Not being able to visit friends and family in another city at regular intervals (he did not consider the eight-hour train journey to be feasible), he thought, would make him depressed, something which would infer both personal and socio-economic costs. Similarly, Mikkel, who did not fly very often but who allowed himself a holiday break once in a while, argued that being too self-policing could in the long-term lead to loss of motivation, depression, and therefore be counterproductive, socially as well as environmentally. Interestingly, both pointed to the notion that too much restriction – going too far away from engaging in "normal" practice – could infer both individual/personal and collective/societal costs:

For society's sake, there's a greater economic cost if I get depressed, for example, and need a psychologist and antidepressants...but if I get social interaction during weekends and that's a factor for me not getting depressed...but it's like a socio-economic gain that I can work and function normally with a normal life, right (Jarle)

It's absolutely an equation...it's something about maintaining the motivation to continue fighting, sometimes one might need a break; maybe in time one would lose, if people kind of lost the support for environmentalism because they didn't bother anymore, because they didn't make it to their grandmother's funeral, because it was wrong to fly; and then you get depressed and you fall out, and the oil lobby wins (Mikkel)

Jarle and Mikkel's (and indeed other participants') continued flying habit is a case-in-point of Warde's (2017: 193) assertion that, due to the stickiness of practices, a

“total reorganisation of [one’s] style of life” is unlikely. Nevertheless, the case of Maja and Mina’s brother suggests that such a “total reorganisation” is certainly *possible*. While Maja “rested” in the comfort of having eliminated flying as an option, and Jarle and, to some extent, Mikkel “rested” in the (somewhat) comfort of not feeling weighed down by personal responsibility, the majority of the sample felt torn and conflicted as they tried to manoeuvre this conundrum (see Chapter 6.1.1; Chapter 7 will further delve deeper into such negotiations of responsibility). While both much restriction and little restriction was liberating in some sense, then, the middle ground was troublesome.

The findings from this section might suggest that flying is not, for most, habitual or routine in the sense that one might fly every other day without giving it a second thought. Rather, it is habitual and routine in the sense that many if not most (Norwegian) citizen-consumers fly fairly regularly as part of a standard routine of visiting friends and family, travelling for work, or going on holiday, thus being standardised in some sense. The frequency of this routine might vary – whether it is a weekly commute between work and family, a monthly friends- or family-visit, or a bi-annual holiday trip, it is still a form of routine – a way in which to organise one’s (expectations of) life, be it everyday life or in terms of special occasions. There is also routine in planning trips: consumers know the routine of looking up and booking flights and so on. Once on a flight, the rules, customs, and safety guidelines are already well known for most. When compared to Julia’s family, who, she said, spent a lot of time, money, and resources travelling to India to visit family in the 1980s, flying is certainly a lot more normal, routine, and habitual practice today.

5.3 Accounts of the normalisation of aeromobility

We can further apply Shove’s (2003) concepts of escalations and standardisation of (un)sustainable practices to understand normalisation of aeromobility. In the *Conceptual Framework*, I suggested three ways that aeromobility, or frequent flying, has become increasingly standardised: (1) both the length and frequency of consumer air-travel have increased, and continues to increase; (2) aeromobility is increasingly being used as part of new conventions (Randles and Mander 2009), so that it becomes integral within increasingly many nexuses of practices; and (3) common notions of leisure time, social events, holidaymaking, and travel are permeated with

symbolism, narratives, and imageries of aeromobility. It is therefore to be expected that standardisation and naturalisation affect consumer expectations. Shove (2003: 2) writes that the “expectations of indoor environments changed dramatically in one generation”. If “indoor environments” were replaced by “(aero)mobility” the message would still ring true. The key term here, “expectations”, was brought up by some of the participants: “there’s an underlying expectation of people to go on holidays when everybody else does it” (Maja); “we’ve got to think differently...create other expectations than flying abroad all the time” (Julia); “I’d say there’s an ‘external’ expectation that one ought to fly” (Roald); “it’s got to do a lot with...expectations; parents don’t want their kids to think they’re poor or anything like that...it’s become so normal for the Norwegian family to go on beach holidays once a year” (Tine). The participants here indicated that the reference points for the level of (aero)mobility considered normal, expected, or accepted had shifted.

However, in addition to naturalisation, my empirical data suggests that standardisation also involves a process of *neutralisation*. While originally pertaining to “the ways in which people rationalise behaviour which breaks social norms”, this concept can be borrowed from the sociological literature to shine light on the normalisation and common acceptance tied to degrading the environment (McDonald et al. 2015: 1504). In this context, neutralisation describes the processes whereby a practice is understood to be “neutral” or beneficial in its consequence or implication on society. As opposed to being a deviant practice, the normalisation of air-travel implies a common understanding that its benefit or value is higher than its societal (or environmental) cost. Indeed, until recent years, aeromobility has received very little blame for its environmental consequences compared to other mobility forms. The point here is that while personal air-travel could be framed as an immoral practice – as the *flygskam* debate demonstrates – this is generally not the case. The neutralisation of aeromobility was reflected in some of my interviews. Several participants talked about the normalcy of having high aeromobility; of flying as an activity, as something to do. Egon termed frequent flying “consumption flying” (*forbruksflyvning*), alluding to the connection between air-travel and the consumer culture. He suggested that flying had become a leisure activity unto itself, as it is so readily available and cheap for Norwegians to travel by air: “It has to do with price, too, of course; it’s become so cheap now, that...flying...becomes not a means, but

more of a goal in itself...a form of leisure activity...yeah, in lack of something better to do, really”. It is perhaps more useful, however, to point to the ways in which aeromobility becomes a normalised means to achieve various *ends* or *goals* which become leisure activities in themselves. Siri alluded to this form of aeromobility, as a simple and effective mechanism to go somewhere for its own sake:

...maybe they're more like, flying is a transport thing, you fly to get to where you're going, or they have a lower threshold for kind of making excuses for going somewhere...one of my friends in high school was in England four or five times a year to go shopping...it was like, *that's how it is*, you fly and you go there and you do whatever you want and you go home again

While aeromobility was, for most, not considered an “activity” in its own right, the participants felt that, in the general society, air-travel constituted a relatively morally neutral means of mobility readily available for consumers to achieve participation in other practices. These data suggest that the escalation of aeromobility represents a continued intensification flying practices, due to both (1) the implementation of aeromobility *into* new practices – or rather the flourishing of new practices which entail or require aeromobility – and (2) the increasing role of aeromobility as a “springboard” for taking part in new practices. As aptly summarised by McDonald et al. (2015: 1517): “People are ‘locked-in’ to flying...and it is still regarded as more ‘normal’ to fly than it is to avoid flying on environmental grounds”.

5.4 Hurried and harried: Dealing with the time-squeeze

Using everyday practices in 1937 and 2000 in the UK as a case study, Southerton (2009) found that the rhythm of everyday life had “sped up” significantly in the last century. “[Contemporary] society”, he writes, “is an experience of acceleration” (*ibid*: 51). My interview data echoes some of Southerton’s (2009) findings. Two overlapping findings were (a) that “the personal coordination of practices was a central challenge to daily life” (*ibid*: 51), and (b) that “daily life [was represented] as an experience of being ‘rushed’, ‘harried’, a matter of ‘juggling’ activities, of ‘fitting it all in’, and of not ‘wasting time’ on meaningless activities” (*ibid*: 60). To an extent, my participants, too, used a “language of rush and busyness” (*ibid*: 61). A recurring theme throughout the interviews was how the combination of work, family, and social life presented a challenge for coordination of mobility. For Roald, this created a feeling of time pressure, and a need for being effective.

Well, unfortunately society paves the road for – with ads and “pressures” all the time – people travelling...and I’ve got a family, a little boy, so like when I had to go to Tromsø for work now I didn’t have the time to spend an extra two days both ways taking the train, so it’s obviously some time-pressure [*et tidspress*] from work [*bransjen*], for taking the fastest route and for things to be effective

Similarly, Frida struggled making travel fit with work and family. She talked about the need for fitting the travel to the “program”. As Southerton (2009: 50) notes, “increasingly more spheres of daily life are regulated by the principles of efficient sequencing of tasks within designated slots of time, and it is this that generates experiences of time pressure”. If travel constitutes an “in-between” practice (or part of another practice), flying might be the only viable option to fit mobility within the “designated slots of time” between other practices, such as work-meetings of picking up children from kindergarten. Consider Frida:

...sometimes you can take the night train...but you can rarely do that both ways, you fly to...make it to kindergarten, right, depends on what one is doing that day, but it’s nice to take the train if...it fits ‘temporally’ fits into the schedule...I rarely fly to like, places closer to here...it has very much to do with time

Endre without the constraints of a nuclear family, Mikkel felt the time pressure of modern everyday life. He talked about how the feeling of having less and less time – how he felt that they days became shorter – impacted his everyday lifestyle and choices. He used bread as an example – while, in an ideal world, he would bake his own sourdough bread because he perceived this to be “optimal” in terms of resource-use, the feeling of “time squeeze” (*tidsklemma*) made him opt for store-bought bread and ready-made frozen foods. While working for the environment at his workplace, he did not feel that he had the time nor the energy to make “the really big positive changes” in his *own* life:

I feel like there are fewer and fewer hours in the day...it’s tough, the time squeeze [*tidsklemma*] is central...I probably work more than you’re supposed to...I really like being social, which takes a surprising amount of time: suddenly there’s band practice, and a football match...and some beer with friends...every time you’re making a change it requires a sacrifice, and to actually figure out what you’re then supposed to sacrifice – that’s where the great difficulty lies...At least the way I live now [I feel there’s not enough time to make those really impactful changes]

Rosa (2003) further points to the paradox that social acceleration creates time pressure. He talks about the acceleration of “the pace of life”, a somewhat “fuzzy concept” referring to “the speed and compression of actions and experiences in everyday life” (*ibid*: 8-9). He further argues that there are both subjective and

objective forms of acceleration at play. “On the ‘subjective’ side”, he writes, “an acceleration of the speed of life (as against the speed of life itself) is likely to have effects on individuals’ experience of time: it will cause people to consider time as scarce, to feel hurried and under time pressure and stress” (*ibid*). This “subjective” time pressure is akin to what some of my participants describe – the feeling of being “hurried and harried”, as Shove (2003, 2009) puts it. Additionally, however, there are objective forces of acceleration contributing to this. First, less time seems to be spent on performing a larger amount of practices – Rosa (2003: 9-10) uses the terms “definable episodes” or “units”. Second, there seems to be a “social tendency to ‘compress’ actions and experiences, i.e., to do and experience more within a given period of time by reducing the pauses and intervals and/or by doing more things simultaneously” (*ibid*). Following a similar line of reasoning, Shove (2009: 19) questions whether “experiences of rushing around” might be due to “practice compression” as opposed to simply a “time squeeze” – that is, the experience of trying to partake in more practices by reducing (1) the time spent on each practice, and (2) the interval or space between different practices. The following would be a relevant example: Jumping on a plane to bridge the gap between performing the morning routines of making breakfast and getting the children to school/kindergarten (*Practice A*), participating in work-travel meetings in another city (*Practice B*), and performing the afternoon/evening routines of collecting the children from school/kindergarten and preparing dinner (*Practice C*).

Southerton (2009: 57) also found a reliance on “time-saving and -shifting devices” to be “essential for shifting components of practices within time in ways that generated greater flexibility in personal schedules”. While Southerton refers primarily to various appliances such as freezers and microwaves, one could argue that access to aeromobility also constitutes such a device, in the sense that easy access to aeromobility allows consumers to commute between work and home, friends and family. The most obvious example from the sample here is that of Jarle, who, living in Oslo, still went to parties with friends in his hometown in the weekends. Aeromobility allowed the participants to take part different practices in different domains of their lives, thus being relatively unconstrained by limits of space and time. Arguably, if we are to fully appreciate the integrated nature of mobility

practices, and understand why practitioners participate in different mobilities, we need to consider contemporary understandings of tempo-spatial relations.

5.5 (Un/re)making practice: Resistance and privilege

According to Rosa (2003: 15), social acceleration will always be met with some response or counter-force, that is, “*intentional forms of (social) deceleration*”. Several participants provided such a counter-force to increasing aeromobility – a form of *resistance* (Shove 2003) – as they reflexively sought out alternatives to flying. To repeat, we can infer that they had “cultivated” (Wilk 2009) aeromobility: their awareness of its environmental implications affecting how they thought of, and related to, their own (and indeed others’) air-travel. Following this, they seemed to have “de-neutralised” aeromobility, in the sense that they did not any longer feel that it was a neutral practice (to the extent they had done so previously). Rather, they felt that it was a more ethically nuanced practice which was sometimes ethically justified to partake in, but not always. The participants were somewhat conflicted about this, however – some felt that they ought not to fly at all, and that doing so would be strictly unethical, while others engaged in a lot of aeromobility without feeling much personal responsibility to reduce this. This was also true in terms of naturalisation, as the context of flying had become more important than before. When flying far, and/or for a seemingly important reason, for instance, flying felt more “natural” or justified than if, say, travelling by train (or staying at home) would be an equally natural option. In this sense, they had gone through an “unmaking” phase, in which they had deconstructed their perceptions of aeromobility. Following this, they had gone through – or were in the process of going through – a “remaking” phase, as these perceptions were reconstituted, and new practices standardised. As they sought to decrease their aeromobilities, new or alternative practices had to become routinised, habituated, naturalised, and standardised to replace the old ones. As elaborated on previously, some participants had naturalised alternative means of transport or not travelling at all in certain contexts. The most notable example here was, as previously noted, Maja, who had stopped flying (more or less) altogether, and had *standardised* a range of alternative practices, ranging from mobility to second-hand consumption and avoiding animal products. Most participants, however, had not gone as far as to “standardise” alternatives to air-travel.

An interesting point to note, however, was that having the ability *not to fly* was understood by several participants as a form of *privilege*. Generally, in the literature, those who have the ability and means to engage in aeromobility as frequent flyers are thought of as privileged consumers (as Tine said, “we Norwegians are so privileged – there basically aren’t other countries where people go holidaying multiple times a year”). While this is true, of course, some of the participants framed privilege in a different manner – in a time where *flygskam* is becoming widespread, and the environmental implications of frequent flight are becoming known to most consumers, those who could afford *not* to fly were seen as privileged, albeit in a different manner (“afford” used here in a broad sense, not necessarily monetary). Consider the following interview excerpts:

The tendency is that, those [who avoid flying by principle] are those without children, who’ve been able to walk down their own “CO₂ path” independent of the rest of society. For people with children to get to kindergarten...[who] have to do lots of stuff because of their life situation, they’re often forced to...do more stuff like that than those who only have themselves to tend to...It’s a privilege for those who can make the choice *not to fly* (Nils)

When...you’ve got the option to be flexible...I’ve experienced a lot and travelled a lot, I’ve almost filled my “quota”...And then there are many who haven’t done that before now; they’ve been poor students, or haven’t prioritised it, spending money on it, but now that they work, the possibility is there, and they take trips...I can kind of get annoyed with people going on weekends, while I also get that they haven’t travelled as much as I have, so maybe in terms of emissions accounting I’m doing worse than them; I’m not sure (Maja)

Similarly, Frida talked about how factors such as work and family restricted her ability to carry out an ideal, sustainable lifestyle. While Maja felt that she was, in Frida’s terms, more or less the curator of her own time-use (*herre over egen tid*), Frida felt that her time-use was “governed” by structural factors pushing her to take various choices, including flying, through a sort of “soft” force. She explained:

...but then there’s that inner motivation which is, like, being *effective*, making work and family go together in terms of time, making me opt for flying...you know, *action creates attitude*...Before I had a family...it was a lot easier – you’re the master of your own time; you do exactly what you want and no-one’s nagging you to do something else, and you can have a good day working on the train, it’s all great, right; when you get a family [there’s] time pressure...in a different way...When you’ve flown so many times...it’s just like, well I have to do it, and you realise that *oh but maybe this is fine*

Based on the interview data, we can chart out some key “dimensions” of privilege in terms of *having the ability not to fly*. First, there is *time* – one needs to have extra

time on one's hands, or have a flexible schedule, in order to use alternative (slower) modes of transport. As Shove et al. (2009: 4) argue, there are "multiple temporalities" involved in practices, given that, "at any one point in time, societies are composed of a combination of overlapping rhythms". Second, there is *money* – one needs to potentially have the financial freedom to pay a higher overall travel cost. Third, there is *space* – one might be considered privileged if one is close to where one needs to be, whether it be for work, family, or other forms of travel (as Nils said, being centrally located is a form of privilege). Finally, there is the general *life situation* – if one is "free" in the sense that one lacks a particular job or a family to consider at all times, it is easier to be adaptive and creative in terms of work and leisure time, travelling, and holidaying. Most of the participants in the sample felt that they were, in some way, "weighed down" by their life situation, in the sense that they had to compromise on their choices as consumers, including that which related to mobility. In sum, then, while some participants felt "squeezed" by time constraints, others were able to actively fit time to their needs – and so, having the ability to be non-participatory in normalised, conventional practices such as flying was thus seen to be a certain privilege.

5.6 Chapter summary and conclusions

The findings from this chapter suggest that, in the Norwegian context, "frequent flying" is normalised both as a matter of practice and as a matter of socio-cultural and symbolic significance. This had implications for the ways in which the participants' aeromobilities were performed and carried out. New (mobility) practices were routinised, habituated, and ultimately normalised through processes of escalation, naturalisation, and standardisation. Some had worked to habituate alternative (mobility) practices through resisting the normalisation and standardisation of aeromobility, the motivations for which being grounded in subjective contexts. However, this form of resistance was challenged by a sense of societal time-squeeze, grounded in the pressure to participate in work- and leisure-related activities and their required mobilities.

6 Manoeuvring the flyer's dilemma

This chapter returns to the flyer's dilemma, considering how the participants specifically negotiated their own aeromobilities, and how this inflicted on their environmentalism as part of their identities. I consider the participants' accounts of dissonance as well as the specific strategies they implemented to manoeuvre the flyer's dilemma in their own terms, as it were; bringing this data into a final discussion of the difference between active and passive change of practice.

6.1 Dealing with dissonance

As highly self-reflexive environmentalists, the participants needed not be deceived to admit to dissonant behaviours (see McDonald et al. 2015: 1506), but readily acknowledged, and were willing to reflect upon, their own feelings of dissonance – in terms of their aeromobilities as well as environmentally dubious practices and lifestyle choices. First, I describe their accounts of dissonance, and second, I turn to their responses to this dissonance.

6.1.1 Accounts of dissonance

In a study conducted in Norway, Norgaard (2001, 2006ab) found that individuals who were aware of their carbon footprints, and their effects on the environment, nevertheless employed various strategies to mitigate their own sense of practical responsibility. They were in denial: Thinking about climate change threatened their “individual and collective senses of identity” (Norgaard 2006a: 372). To some extent, this was also true for my participants, whose identities were shaped by leisure travels, work trips, and family visits requiring them to fly. At the same time, however, acting against their environmental values – by, for instance, flying – also threatened their *environmentalist* identities. In this sense, then, the flyer's dilemma is also a dilemma of identity.

Some participants described what can be termed an *implicatory* denial – the failure of transforming knowledge into action (see Norgaard 2006b) – akin to what is often referred to as the “attitude-behaviour gap” (Holden 2005; Gregory-Smith et al. 2013) or “awareness-action” gap (Tiller and Schott 2013). Awareness and attitude seldom translate directly into practice (Holden 2005). The experience of “friction” between

values and actions was described by Frida: “I pollute, I know I contribute to the problem, I do it anyways...I think a lot of Norwegians recognise that feeling”. While interviewing, I encountered some specific instances of implicative denial, as participants broke “rules” they had set for themselves. Having brought a takeaway coffee to our morning interview, Jarle admitted that: “well, now I broke a rule; I’ve been trying to bring one of those thermo cups when I buy coffee to and from work”. Despite trying not to eat meat, another participant ate chicken during our lunch-break interview. Mikkel explained that feelings of dissonance made him feel uncomfortable in everyday life but did not provoke meaningful change in itself: “it’s not a ‘heavy’ feeling day-to-day; it’s more that you get that kind of ‘semi-revelation’ once in a while, like *woah this actually isn’t good*, but then it’s gone really quickly”. This “semi-revelation” evokes Morton’s (2016: 8) notion of the discomfort in suddenly remembering that one is “member of a massively distributed thing”. Through the habituation and routinisation of dissonant practices, the conscious self-reflexivity attached to them waned over time: “changing habits is extremely difficult...it’s a lot like, I’m aware that it’s wrong, but *fuck it*”. By some, flying was framed as a “guilty pleasure” which they sometimes engaged in despite feeling they ought not to. Jarle, who said he had been increasingly occupied by feelings of guilt, compared flying to the consumption of red meat, alcohol, or tobacco, explaining that: “I do ‘feel’ it when I fly, kind of like, *I shouldn’t be doing this*, it’s a kind of ‘sneaky’ feeling...I didn’t use to, but now I reflect on it”. Mikkel associated dissonance with practices which in some way “made sense” to take part in and could therefore be easily neglected. Similarly, Siri had conflicting feelings – while wishing to follow her environmentalist principles, she could not help but feel that in the grand scheme of things her actions were insignificant. She could not decide if she ought to feel worse or better about her aeromobilities:

Well...I do feel strongly that I’m contributing negatively when flying, and I feel very bad...it’s a little strange that I think so much about it, because there isn’t really any direct effect...only more of a long-term effect...It’s a little conflicting, like, I feel that *shit here I could’ve taken responsibility and be environmentally friendly*...When we in the environmental movement tell people to fly less...I want to be a part of that

Those who perceived themselves to be less bound or restricted by the outside world – whether in terms of social or work-related obligations or the existing mobility infrastructures – felt a stronger responsibility to change their participation in non-

sustainable practices. The dissonance, then, seemed to vary along with participants' beliefs that they held the power to make change. As Stern (1999: 46) write: "Different individuals are constrained in different ways, and changing behavior requires addressing the particular constraints that matter to the particular consumer...The weaker the contextual forces, the more personal-domain variables are likely to matter". The correlation between the perceived weakness of "contextual forces" on the one hand, and the emphasis on "personal-domain variables" on the other (Stern 1999: 46), was most reflected in Maja. She had effectively *eliminated* the contextual backdrop of high-emission practices such as flying, meat consumption, buying new things, etc. Over time, the contextual forces affecting her environmental footprint had thus been weakened. Having effectively reduced her reliance on societal expectations and path-dependencies to guide her practices, she felt a great sense of responsibility for her actions and lifestyle. In contrast, Jarle and Frida, who strongly believed that structural changes had to be implemented from above, felt less personally responsible and thus had a higher threshold for drastically changing their practices. Interestingly, then, those with the most restricted lifestyles also felt the strongest dissonance. This is reflected in practice theory, which emphasises that practice might precede perception, and not the other way around (see Coutard and Shove 2018). As Frida put it: "action creates attitude" (*handling skaper holdning*). Considering these notions of dissonance enriches a practice-theoretical analysis of the flyer's dilemma because it says something about the subjective *understandings* of practice.

6.1.2 Responding to dissonance

From a practice-theoretical perspective, it is interesting to consider how the participants dealt with these dissonances, as part of "manoeuvring" the flyer's dilemma in their own terms. This implies a constant negotiation process – as Giddens (1991: 215) points out, individuals work to develop and maintain a more or less constant "inner authenticity" to deal with the continuously evolving "backdrops" for practice and lifestyle evolving through the "rapidly changing circumstances of social life". Arguably, it is when struggling to find one's inner authenticity that feelings of dissonance and hypocrisy arise. While Holden (2005) focused on the mechanisms which enabled dissonant feelings to form in the first place, McDonald et al. (2015) have focused on the ways in which consumers *react to* such feelings. As they write,

“people become uncomfortable when their actions are out of line with their espoused beliefs...the greater the dissonance, the greater the intrinsic pressure to reduce or eliminate that dissonance” (*ibid*: 1505). Through qualitative interviews, they found that self-selected “green” consumers used two overarching strategies to uphold their “green” identities while continuing to fly. These mirror my findings here: the participants responded to their feelings of dissonance by either (a) changing *practice*, or (b) changing their *conceptions* of said practice.

In McDonald et al.’s (2015) sample, the most prominent strategy was developing justifications for not changing behaviour. Justifications could be categorised into *travel product*, relating to the travel process itself; the broader *travel context*; and *personal identity*, relating to “the benefits to their social identity of the cumulative experiences of taking many flights over time” (*ibid*: 1513). These were all to some extent reflected in my sample, as the participants had concerns for time and money, and acknowledged the value in maintaining social relations, being available and flexible, and experiencing new places and cultures. As discussed previously, however, the participants had different “thresholds” for justifying their flights. Jarle had a low threshold, using various forms of (self-)distraction (*ibid*: 1506) through self-talk, trivialising his flights and using jokes to feel better:

...but I manage to rationalise it away some way or another...*well but if I don't fly it doesn't matter that much*...I feel like I can't just say *yeah I flew* a weekend without adding some context or a “but”...When I know I make consumer choices which go against the environment, it's like...at work I try to joke about it

Some worked to change expectations set for oneself rather than specifically justifying one’s behaviours *per se*, as Mina alluded to: “If you think you’re environmentally conscious, but then you discover that, *shit*, you’re actually doing lots of environmentally unfriendly stuff, you experience that dissonance yourself...*either I have to think differently about myself, or I'll have to change my habits*”. In the words of McDonald et al. (2015: 1520), “it is not dissonance between attitudes and behaviour that is being considered...but rather dissonance between cognitions about attitudes and cognitions about behaviour”. This highlights that practices are meaningful in different ways for those who perform and participate in them.

The second and less prominent strategy found by McDonald et al. (2015) was committing to behavioural change, through reducing flights, making compensatory behavioural changes, or stopping flying altogether. These, too, were reflected in my sample. Among those who tried to reduce flights, there was a divide between short- and long-haul journeys. However, while McDonald et al. (2015) found short journeys to be more acceptable than long ones due to relative emissions, the opposite was true for my sample. This was because there were viable alternatives to air-travel for short journeys but not for long ones. The imperative of long journeys – e.g. Visiting family in Tromsø, India, or Zimbabwe – could not be achieved without aeromobility. Granted, as Hares et al. (2010: 471) point out, the “dismissal of alternative transport modes to air travel” depends to some extent on subjective preferences. Indeed, what was considered a “short” or “long” journey was subjective: While most seemed to consider the distances between Oslo, Stavanger, Bergen, and Trondheim to be relatively short (i.e. taking less than a day by train), Jarle and Frida thought of these as too long not to fly; both using the example of Oslo-Kristiansand as a typical “cut-off” distance for travelling by train or bus. The participants thus felt that flying was mostly warranted when viable alternatives were lacking; and this was predominantly true for travelling “long” distances. It was a matter of perception: “dissonance will not occur where an individual can *attribute the inconsistency experienced to external forces*” (McDonald et al. 2015: 1505). Eliminating air-travel altogether was not an option for my participants. However, some had had reduced their flights to (what they considered to be) an absolute minimum, opting for alternative travel destinations or holiday plans to avoid flying in specific situations. As Maja explained:

If I’m going on summer holiday...with some girlfriends, but they wanna go to Thailand and I don’t, then we can’t go together, it sucks, but...then I have to be better at coming up with suggestions, before they do, and then instead of saying no thanks...I say, *do you wanna come over to my cabin that weekend?*

As in McDonald et al.’s (2015) sample, some changed other behaviours, thus making compensatory choices to justify their aeromobilities (see Gregory-Smith et al. 2013). Taking a holistic approach to one’s carbon footprint, one might change “unrelated” behaviours in order to legitimise one’s aeromobilities and repair one’s sense of self (McDonald et al. 2015: 1516), thus achieving a feeling of having compensated in some way. Siri said that, “if I’m at an airport I’ll eat some vegetarian food just to

stress for myself that I'm thinking about the environment". This indicates a notion of "flexibility" directly or indirectly using good or bad choices to "compensate" for dissonant practices (Gregory-Smith et al. 2013). "Flexibility", in this sense, essentially denotes an "uncommitted potential for change" (Bateson 1972: 497). Such compensation, however, becomes mostly *symbolic* – as Julia confessed, "in all these emission calculators...it's the flights that eat up the whole effect of the other things we do...It's so...little [flying that is] needed to tip the scales...it's a real eye-opener". Conversely, then, compensation goes both ways: The participants felt that they "did well" in some areas while "cancelling out" through participation in other environmentally unfriendly practices, such as air-travel – a classic example of the rebound effect, in other words (Hertwich 2005). Such rebounds, then, are the result of individuals isolating variables, through "reactive attitudes", rather than considering the "whole" when negotiating their practices (Fahlquist 2009: 111). Some had more indirect ways of going about compensation. Mikkel pointed to his general lifestyle: "I just fly...but I've done things in life, you know, made larger changes, I work for the environment every day, I've actively begun shopping less – but then I don't know if...I've reduced enough CO₂ by buying one less t-shirt; that I don't think". Frida pointed to her work: "[If I fly], I just fly. *Done deal*...And then I might attend a meeting at the Parliament [*Stortinget*] afterward and ask if they can get a little more biofuel in the planes so they pollute less". The participants thus had different ways of dealing with dissonance.

6.2 Strategies for negotiating personal aeromobility

Feelings of dissonance, then, affected how the participants related to their aeromobilities and consumer practices. With this as a backdrop, I have identified four different strategies they used to negotiate their own personal aeromobilities: (1) carrying out cost-benefit analyses; (2) considering the prevalence of viable alternatives; (3) "tweaking" their mobilities in different ways; and (4) putting strategies aside and engaging in what they thought of as "reckless" mobilities.

6.2.1 Subjective cost-benefit analyses

The most prominent feature of the participants' self-reflexive negotiations of their mobility practices was the subjective cost-benefit analysis. Most participants indicated that they stack benefits up against cost in order to arrive at a conclusion as

to whether or not flying justifiable in a given circumstance. “Costs” and “benefits” here could, on the one hand, relate to personal gains or losses, or on the other hand, and notably in terms of work-related travel, to the perception that flying a given distance would ultimately benefit the environment if the job it enabled was important enough.

While some participants had clear personal understandings of when flying was acceptable and when it was not, others had conflicting feelings. Here, feelings of dissonance would arise when they opted to fly but were unsure about the extent to which it was justifiable. Several participants indicated that they would primarily opt to fly if they felt that the benefits of doing so would outweigh the costs of *not* doing so. In order to arrive at a conclusion, the participants would carry out mental cost-benefit analyses, or they had their own ways of means-end testing. Different terms were used: *avveining* (weighing), *behovsprøving* (means testing), *mentalt mattestykke* (mental mathematical equation). Nils pointed to the importance of applying honest means-testing of one’s aeromobilities: “If we had managed to get everyone to ‘means test’ [*behovsprøve*] their flights...honestly, without making up an excuse every time, I think we’d get close to a point we could live with”. Similarly, Roald emphasised the importance of employing reflexivity to one’s (aero)mobilities, asking oneself why it is one is travelling in the first place: “we have to ask ourselves *why* a lot more; that’s where I think it ‘stops’ a little for people”. The challenge here, of course, is that the sorts of variables producing this equation are difficult if not impossible to compare. For instance, how does one determine or not whether taking a flight to another part of the country to visit one’s ageing grandparents is “worth” adding a substantial load on one’s carbon footprint? This is an impossible equation because one variable is primarily *social* while another is primarily *environmental*. Moreover, how does the knowledge, experience, and cultural capital gained by world travel stack up against its potential environmental impacts? The participants grappled with such questions; the answers necessarily being highly subjective. While all participants engaged in cost-benefit analyses when negotiating their own mobilities (and lifestyle choices in general), the variables governing their practices (i.e. social, cultural, economic, environmental, etc.) were weighted differently, as it were.

I have identified two main strategies for cost-benefit analyses or means testing from the data. The first one is more self-oriented, relating to a personal cost-benefit

analysis in terms of personal gains and own environmentalist identity and environmental footprint, while the second pertains predominantly to concerns about short- versus long-term environmental consequences of a practice. Silje struggled weighing the benefits of social and cultural variables (prioritise her family's needs, spending time with friends, taking part in aeromobile activities and events) up against the consequences of a growing environmental footprint. Mikkel and Jarle both felt that the social consequences of *not* flying for personal reasons – holidaying and visiting friends and family, respectively – would be too detrimental to avoid it, both on a personal and societal level (see Chapter 5). In general, the personal benefits tied to flying to see friends and family in special occasions – events like birthdays, weddings, and funerals, or under particular circumstances like illness or old age – outweighed personal environmental concern in most cases, as for instance Silje alluded to:

In theory I wish to fly as little as possible, but I've also taken flights I didn't need to take, like holiday trips, so...it's a "weighing" between how much pollution I've got the conscience to contribute to, and not falling completely outside my society...my friends and family; being able to *participate* a little

Reflecting on the personal and societal value of travel, Roald argued that, depending on the kind of travel, the socio-cultural gains made from travel could potentially justify the environmental consequences from the aeromobility it potentially involved. He was skeptical of contemporary holiday culture – characterised by beach and sun trips, akin to what Mikkel felt that he needed once in a while – but, through his subjective cost-benefit analysis, he managed to justify some of his own travel. As discussed briefly in Chapter 4, Roald felt that flights could be valuable if used to acquire new and meaningful experiences, but that most flights were, in a sense, “wasted” on the same old beach holidays and so forth. A similar notion was put forth by Maja. Here we can refer to the law of diminished utility, which proclaims that the more one gets of something, the less happiness one will derive from it (Hverven 2018). These notions are reflected in the excerpts below.

...you have to choose differently, if one million Norwegians go to Gran Canaria, at least 900 000 of those could easily have oped for something completely different and maybe experienced something nicer and more unique by travelling in their neighbouring county...and you meet your neighbour, only that he's got red in his cheeks, it's completely meaningless...it's more kind of a desperate *now we're gonna do something cool*, when you fly some place – a lot of expectations are created around the trip, there's a lot of “tingling” and photos of the beach and the hotel...and then you usually fight

at the airport and drink too much on the plane, and make fools of oneself when abroad, so...one could ask, is this self-realisation, or, what to call it, a certain delusion [*livsløgn*]? (Roald)

...in a way, I think it's unnecessary [to fly] if the goal is just to be together...couldn't one instead go to a cabin...and take a train, meet at the middle, but to have to go to Riga, or like another place which is very similar to here...One travels to experience a whole other culture, to get a better understanding of the world we live in... (Maja)

Weighting the environmental costs of flying more than the personal benefits he would derive from it, Endre made some personal sacrifices in order to maintain a low carbon footprint. He explained that he had always dreamt of travelling to New York, but due to the lack of viable alternatives of transportation to flying, coupled with his feeling of personal responsibility to reduce his own environmental footprint, he now felt that he would never be able to fulfill this dream: “I think one flight is too much, really...I've always dreamt of going to NYC, but now I feel like the world shrinks, because I can't go to NYC by plane; it would produce too much emissions”.

Contrasting to these self-oriented cost-benefit analyses were the second category, which involved considering the potential short- versus long-term effects (costs and benefits) that aeromobility had on the environment or on society in general. Indeed, it was acknowledged that, paradoxically, the net effect of flying on the environment could in some instances be positive. Mikkel, for instance, used the term “emissions investing” (*utslippsinvestering*) to address the notion that, in some instances, taking part in a polluting practice such as air-travel might be worth it if the long-term consequences of doing so likely constitute a net environmental gain: “for instance, if youth attend international conferences, I think it's important that they're represented...to prioritise that...so you could consider that...an ‘emissions investment’, so I think that, at times, there are many good arguments for air-travel”. As Nils put it, you sometimes need to crack some eggs to make omelette: “I take no issues with [flying for work]: to do a job you need a tool...air-travel, then, is a tool for doing the job”. He used the *purpose* of a given trip as a proxy for a cost-benefit analysis – he believed flying for an important work trip could be justified (not unlike Mikkel; see Chapter 4), contrasting this with “meaningless” beach holidays, city breaks, and shopping weekends. This was particularly relevant in terms of work-related aeromobility. Nils said:

Well...I separate...between this thing of [1] flying on holiday to Tenerife to lay and daze in the sun, and flying to London to buy a purse, it's a big difference between those and [2] flying somewhere to do a job (...) [In my life], air-travel is a necessary evil...It's not something I *like*...but if you need to be someplace [faraway or remote]...flying is kind of the only alternative...It's like, cracking eggs to make omelette; working for an environmental organisation, flying a lot is a little odd, but that's just how it is...To think that one is part of contemporary society while working to improve this and that, I don't think those are opposing categories...Relatively speaking, I drive quite a lot; that, too, is a little odd, right, but it so happens that *that's just how it is*, and then you have to work to...reduce the emissions...right, but we still can't entirely escape the car in the same way that we can't entirely escape the plane...I try not to get all fanatical, right

However, harkening back to the topic of cognitive dissonance, some participants were unsure or conflicted about the extent to which a flight could be justified in the name of the environment. As Endre explained, he had changed the way he thought about flying to give talks or presentations (see Chapter 4). Siri had in at least two occasions felt that her flights were necessary at the time of travel, but experienced a feeling of dissonance in hindsight; going as far as characterising her participation in long-distance aeromobility as “reprehensible” (*forkastelig*):

I feel very hypocritical when I fly, but like, last year I arranged a seminar on Svalbard, I had ten youths flown up there for four days to talk about climate change and the ice melting, and...that was basically the “peak” of irony for me, but we did that...I'm super hypocritical, and I did that for an environmental organisation to...“spread the message”

For me, it's about the duration...how long I'm *there*, it then feels more worth it [if I stay longer], but at the same time I think it was a little *reprehensible* of me to go on Easter holidays to Zimbabwe, but then again...I wanted to visit my sister...but it's kind of voluntary to travel that far

In sum, the participants found using subjective, mental cost-benefit analyses to be a useful tool to employ their self-reflexivity as a means to negotiate their (aero)mobility practices; thus in a way manoeuvring the flyer's dilemma by justifying their partaking in, and performing of, relevant practices. Nevertheless, the complex ambiguity and hodgepodge of relevant variables to consider made the “calculation” process not only challenging, but oftentimes subject to changing of minds, hindsight revelations, and feelings of regret.

6.2.2 Considering viable alternatives

Almost all participants alluded to the notion of “viable alternatives” (*reelle alternativer*), referring to (a) alternative modes of mobility, or (b) alternative practices, activities, or pastimes to that which might require aeromobility in the first

place, which the individual practitioner-consumer feels would “work out” or be appropriate for them. As Tine said, “the amount of emissions from flying as extreme, so I think that it ought to be a last resort; that you ought to look out for other options to get to somewhere before you opt to fly”. Still, in the words of Nils, these alternatives needed to be “within the limits of reason” (*innen rimelighetens grenser*) – these limits being, of course, highly subjective. The concept of viability, here, is interesting from the vantage point of practice theory because it turns the focus towards the subjective experience of different potential pathways in light of contextual influences. In other words, it relates to the possible pathways created through the enmeshing of individual agency with overarching (infra)structural elements.

The relativity of viability was evident in my data. For instance, while travelling by bus or train from Oslo to Tromsø constitutes an alternative to flying; most participants did not consider this to be a *viable* alternative (“most of our family trips go to Tromsø...and there aren’t any alternatives – *viable* alternatives – to get to Tromsø” [Julia]). Nevertheless, this depended on context, as some participants did consider this to be a viable alternative under the right circumstances (for instance, Tine thought Oslo-Tromsø by train was a viable alternative when travelling with friends or co-workers). Granted, context matters – Siri travels alone while Julia travels with a family with young children. Siri usually took the train from Oslo to Lofoten in the summer, a trip she was used to take, and which therefore worked alright for her. Siri also explained that, while she considered train travel to be a viable alternative for her when going home to Bergen, she experienced some pressure from her family to save time and money flying, as *they* considered train travel to be a lesser viable alternative (see Chapter 4).

For several participants, train-travel between Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, and Trondheim constituted a viable alternative to flying, but some – Jarle and Frida in particular – still favoured flying given the savings in travel time. For Maja, who was the most radical in her personal flight restriction, staying at home (i.e. not travelling at all) was considered a viable alternative to flying on holiday or to visit family in Bergen if time or money did not permit slower and potentially more expensive travel forms.

Time, price, and comfort were three important factors determining which alternatives to air travel that were seen to be “viable”. For an alternative to be considered viable, it needed not be *equally* time-intensive, expensive, or comfortable as flying, but rather it needed not to be *a lot* more time-intensive, more expensive, or a lot less comfortable. As long as this was not the case, the participants were, in general, happy to make some sacrifice in order to avoid flying. Jarle, for instance, tended to fly when holidaying. He explained that this was not because he needed to fly *per se*, but because there were usually no alternative transport methods available which he considered to be viable:

[When I fly for holidaying] I fly because there aren't any good alternatives; when I lived in London I went on weekend trips to Brussels and Paris etc., and took the train because it was more convenient, and...the Eurostar train travels at 200km/h and it takes 2 hours to get to downtown Paris

Nils flew quite a bit for work, which he felt was justified given the lack of viable alternatives – the ends justified the means; like a hammer is needed to pin down a nail, aeromobility became a tool to achieve greater environmental goals. He said: “There isn't always alternative transport within the limits of reason...a little humility in terms of the needs of different individuals and workplaces is in place”. If aeromobility is viewed as a tool, justifying its use thus depends on the context.

Frida and Tine problematised the structural lack of good viable alternatives to flying, arguing that alternatives considered to be viable in terms of price, time, and comfort by the general public ought to be provided to facilitate alternatives to aeromobility:

Politicians ought to...arrange for people to be able to stop flying...measures that allow people to go on holiday without flying – as a politician, how easy or difficult do you make it to choose the environmentally friendly option...I think top-down...In many circumstances you've got two options, just about equally “worthy”, it's about your ethical choice, which one you choose...then you could say, like, *oh how stupid of you to mak the bad choice*...but when it comes to air-travel...it's not like I have two apples and need to choose which one to eat, you know (Frida)

I'm a big “grassroots” fan, but so long as flying is cheaper than taking the train...people will choose that...Politicians must understand that for people to choose train over plane it has to be a viable or comparable service, it has to be possible to people to be, like, *well train is actually better because...it takes the same time and it's cheaper*, so... (Tine)

Having tested several different alternatives – some more radical than others – Roald, too, felt that the alternatives to aeromobility in Norway's transport infrastructure were not, in most instances, viable:

I try to check out the alternatives; I've also tested train from Tromsø, we took the bus to Narvik and train to Stockholm and then Oslo, and it took 36 hours, so...Speaking of which, I've also hiked...the length Norway [South to North], I've tested all the alternatives...what I can say for certain is that flying is the fastest!

While both convenience and comfort – two of the categories Shove (2003) argue influence contemporary social practices (the third of which, cleanliness, being less relevant to the field of mobilities) – clearly mattered for the participants in terms of negotiating their mobilities, *convenience* seemed to matter even more than *comfort*. In fact, most if not all participants emphasised how they actively disliked aspects of the *process* over aeromobility. While they had different feelings about the experience of flying, most of them took a dislike to what preceded and followed the flying itself: getting to and from, and being at, the airport. It was emphasised that aeromobility is a multiple-step process, actually flying being only one of many practices. Some participants felt that airplanes and especially airports were stressful environments in which relaxing was difficult:

Airports produces the absolute worst in people, it's a very strange atmosphere...I kinda feel a little out of place, because it's like, I have to think a lot more about where I'm going and what I'm supposed to do as my next "step" [in the travel process] (Siri)

I basically think air travels, especially for short distances, are...a very unnatural way to transport oneself...it's very ineffective, you spend a lot of time waiting, queuing, being controlled; then you transport yourself in a very cramped metal box with a lot of people, and bad air; it's uncomfortable (Egon)

It's the whole package: I get a bad conscience when flying...but it's also an uncomfortable way of travelling, first you have to take the train to the airport, check in luggage, take your belt off, scan stuff, hang out in a sweaty waiting area, cramped, bad seats – and the same thing again when you land...those who get up as soon as the plane has landed, they annoy me boundlessly, people are so impatient...people lose their manners as soon as they get on a plane...I've got bad associations with planes (Mikkel)

I think it's a little tiresome...cumbersome...it's 20 mins to drive, and then I have to figure out where the heck I'm going to put my car, or I have to take a cab, bus isn't an alternative where I live...and you have to check in and do all those things, and...get along [once you've landed] and often it's a place you're not familiar with, and you gotta orient yourself and stuff, the first thought that hits me is, like, *urgh* (Nils)

Others thought the process of flying was just alright. Routine was paramount, as Roald pointed to. Having worked at an airport when he was younger, he recognised "what flying implies". "There", he said, "I learnt that I ought to be happy if one out

of 20 [passengers] smile to me”, thus having acquired “some form for routine making it feel OK”. However, several participants compared air-travel with train-travel, as it seemed to be the most natural alternative. Most participants seemed to prefer the overall experience of travelling by train:

It’s faster to fly [from Oslo] to Bergen than taking the train, but...you can sit down on the train and *then you’re there*, there’s no...you just have to be there, whilst with flying there’s more...you have to get to the central station and take the airport express, and you have to be there at the right time, and then there’s check-in, and waiting, and boarding...it’s so much that makes that way of travel a little more of a drag, I guess (Mina)

I don’t think flying is terrible...it’s alright...nice sitting, looking out the window...but, well, it’s a hassle...it’s, like, a longer process (Frida)

I think it’s...fun to fly, because I associate it with going on holiday, but...it’s also a little stressful...it’s not just fun, in that sense taking the train is more comfortable, it’s a lot more hassle to fly on short distances (Silje)

However, despite airports being stressful, Jarle made use of benefits accrued through loyal membership in different airlines, which made the process not only less stressful but very enjoyable: “that part is stressful, but here the airlines have done something genius...when you fly a lot you get advantages...fast-track, lounge, all these extras; the process becomes a lot more relaxing”.

In sum, taking part in different mobility practices were largely negotiated on the basis of other available mobility practices. As such, the relationality of mobility practices is emphasised. When viable alternatives to flying seemed absent, the participants felt that their aeromobilities were to a larger extent more justified. However, what constituted a viable alternative was highly subjective. In the end, convenience – saving time and money – was more important than comfort.

6.2.3 Mobility “tweaking”

The participants further described some more concrete strategies applied when they did decide to travel by air, working as steps toward justifying their aeromobilities or lessening their environmental impacts. These were primarily strategies for *organising* their trips. Three primary strategies are emphasised here: (1) bundling of practices, (2) making travel compromises, and (3) adjusting the duration of stay.

Drawing on, but diverging slightly from, Schatzki’s (2009: 46) use of the term “bundling of practices”, I use the notion of *bundling* here to refer to different ways of combining tasks, activities, trajectories, or trips in order to ensure less overall

aeromobility. For instance, Siri explained that she had felt bad about flying when going on a short holiday, but less bad when she flew to Zimbabwe to visit her sister for a longer period of time. She also explained that her father had stayed a couple of additional days when travelling far for work, in order not to feel so bad for flying far. Roald tried to combine work trips with visiting friends and family to avoid “lots of those extra trips”. Consider the following interview excerpts:

...you try to do several things at once, so when you're going on a work trip you try to visit some relatives and friends as well...so that you don't need lots of those extra trips, and cut weekend city breaks and stuff (Roald)

I was also on a little vacation in Scotland, and...*that one* I felt bad about...because it was kind of just a stupid little holiday...it was a little...well, like I went against my own principles, but then I went anyways, yeah (Siri)

Right now my father's in Ghana on a conference...lasting two days, and he's staying a couple of days extra because he had such a bad conscience flying...but then it's like, he still flies to Ghana (Siri)

The second strategy was making compromises. For instance, for a return trip, a compromise might be to fly one way and take the return trip by train. This was a way for the participants to reduce their environmental footprints while also “making peace” with their inability to be “perfect” environmentalists. Consider the following interview excerpts:

It varies a little, my partner isn't very happy about me spending time travelling, so then I have to find some middle way...If I were going to Bergen or something, I might have taken the train one way and flown the other, because the train takes longer...had it only been me I wouldn't care, but I've got a family...to actually be able to make it to something having to do with the family...it determines my choice (Silje)

If there's a situation...a confirmation [*konfirmasjon*] or something, and I can't use any flexitime...I might fly one way, because the card's just don't add up; I'd wish...we got an extra day off if we opted for train travel, because it takes a whole day...Lots have family scattered around; if you could then get half of that Monday off, to take the train...[flying is a backup solution] (Maja)

The third strategy was to consider the duration of stay. This implied staying longer when flying somewhere to “make the most” out of the flights. This strategy was thus interconnected with bundling, in the sense that bundling tended to require longer stays. While none of the participants indicated that they used this as a deliberate strategy, they suggested that flying for very short stays was less acceptable. This was reflected, for instance, in the typical mention of faraway long-weekend trips as a very unjustifiable (and unsustainable) form of aeromobility.

6.3 When strategies fail: “Reckless” mobilities

While the strategies discussed above worked as tools for the participants to manoeuvre the flyer’s dilemma in many circumstances, they also had their limitations. Several participants talked about how they, from time to time, would abandon their values, environmentalist identities, and the rules they set for themselves. These were characterised as – aptly worded by some participants – “fuck it” moments. When these applied to mobilities, they can be referred to as “reckless mobilities”. Based on the interview data, I have charted out two overarching scenarios in which the participants “gave in” to the wish or expectation to travel by air (or engage in other unsustainable practices). These were (1) powerlessness, and (2) reflexive exhaustion. These scenarios can be better understood as describing situations in which the distributed agency of the body, the material, and the social world override the reflexively induced self-motivation for behaviour found in most of the environmentalist participants. These reckless mobilities produced feelings of (and, consequently, responses to) dissonance, as discussed in a previous chapter.

The first driver of reckless mobility was a feeling of powerlessness (*avmaktfølelse*). In his study of environmentally oriented consumers’ behaviours, Holden (2005: 279) argues that powerlessness is a driver for behavioural dissonance through the attitude-behaviour gap. In other words, he suggests that it works as a barrier between thought and action, so that attitudes do not become materialised in, or translated into, behaviour. My take on it, however, is different: from the vantage point of practice theory, the participants who felt powerless indicated a reflexive tendency to feeling that their personal agency was somehow subdued the social practices in which they were involved. In other words, the structural elements governing their practices were thus granted a high degree of agency, a strong capacity to influence their acts (or the collective acts of consumers). This was true for Jarle, whose high aeromobility still felt like only a very small contributor to the rampant climate change and deteriorating environment:

yesterday I read...an article about the “myths” of climate change...and the myth was, like, *you can affect the climate through your choices*, and that myth is crushed...and it’s a bit like (...) if I’d cut all my flights...the number’s so small, right, even though it’s far above the population average...it’s that feeling of powerlessness [*avmakt*], you “rationalise it away” – *oh, it doesn’t matter that much*

This did not necessarily pertain specifically to their own practices. Rather, the belief that their own practices were, in the grand scheme of things, mere “drops in the ocean” – and that even if they themselves put in time, effort, and resources to change their own practices this would not necessarily produce meaningful change on a macro scale – felt like a disincentive for altering their practices. Uncertainty about the meaning of their own practices was thus a barrier for making productive changes. While this involves some form of “rationalisation” process, this was, at least to some extent, based on their knowledge about, and understanding of, the systems and structures in which their practices unfolded.

Similar to the participants in Norgaard’s (2006b: 367) study, some of my participants experienced a sort of environmental “compassion fatigue”. Indeed, several participants indicated that, from time to time, they would grow tired of holding an environmentalist mindset. This was most relevant to those who were the strictest about governing their individual environmental footprints through adopting alternative, low-carbon mobilities and everyday consumption practices. The self-reflexivity involved in their environmentalism (or at least their environmentalist identities) – involving near constant self-surveillance, subconscious performance of cost-benefit analyses, questioning or pondering the behaviours and practices of themselves and others – was tiresome. As such, the notion compassion fatigue is here best re-defined as an onset of “reflexive exhaustion”; the feeling or experience of not having the energy required (*overskudd*) to govern the sustainability or environmental profile of one’s practices. This notion of fatigue was reflected in the following excerpts from my interviews with Siri and Maja, respectively:

...it would actually be fucking wonderful not to care...but unfortunately I, like, care *too much*...would be nice to to think about it...if flying wasn’t bad for the environment...in an ideal would you wouldn’t need to care...Yeah, I feel a strong sense of responsibility...even though I know I won’t save the world by taking the train home (Siri)

When you’re setting up that equation...you have some principles, but then you actually argue for being lax [about it]...justify the choice to do something *not* environmentally friendly...are you, like, supposed to follow those arguments to get away cheaply, give yourself a better conscience, or should you be rigid about it? Discussing with yourself, it’s tiresome (Maja)

Julia felt hypocritical, explaining that, after a long and intensive work period coupled with a period of intensive environmentally oriented self-reflexivity, the exhaustion had led her to award herself with a holiday trip involving flying:

What happened was...we got the IPCC rapport, then came the National Budget, and I worked day and night a while...because it was obvious that [these didn't match]...and I went into an emotional, well, tied to the stuff about the future and the children and what's going to happen...all these thoughts, and I've just been really down; and then I end a super turbulent work period by taking a kind of "well deserved" trip to Copenhagen [*laughs*] and that I feel is – well, it's hypocrisy, that's what it is

Some participants acknowledged that they would at times spend a lot of time and effort reflecting on the costs and benefits of a practice, without this crystallising into any meaningful change in that given practice. As Julia further explained, this reflection might not materialise into practice if there would be an "opening" – and thus an incentive – for following personal desires, such as going on a holiday trip if a babysitter was available for a weekend. To some extent the reflection itself felt rewarding, the lack of practical follow-up produced dissonant feelings. Still, Julia emphasised that sustainable living ought to constitute a lifestyle which is "doable" (*oppnåelig*) for people; i.e. one which stimulates self-reflexivity but which does not lead to reflexive exhaustion. Thinking this way provided her with some balance in her approach toward self-governing her practices. Again, consider Julia:

...I think about it but intention isn't always reflected in action; I can...do stuff that's like, *OK this is actually a little hopeless but I do it anyways*, but then I've at least reflected on it (...) we try to be conscious and do our part but we try in no way to be all rigid about it, I think it's important to try and be a role model which is attainable for others around us, that we're not so "far removed" that others will give up attempting some of the same things because *we can never be like that*...But I'll have to say it, if we suddenly had a nanny for a...weekend, we might too have suddenly gone on some weekend by plane someplace, we might have discussed...if it was right to do or not, but I think we could've easily ended up doing it

For some participants, this fatigue crystallised in what some characterised as "fuck it" (*gi faen*) moments. These were moments in which they, oftentimes spontaneously or impulsively, decided to engage in environmentally reckless, unjustifiable, or hypocritical practices, despite being aware of this. In other words, they put away their critical self-reflexivity and moral values, following instead their momentary desires or intuitions. For Silje and Mikkel, these moments had arose as a consequence of personal desires, as indicated in these respective interview excerpts:

To say "fuck it" [*å gi faen*], that's something I do from time to time, because, well, let's say I have some friends going on a weekend trip...it's happened, it's like *OK I actually really want to join*, and then it's like – well...fuck it, I guess I'm joining (Silje)

Holiday is important to relax, and therefore I sometimes think of it as worth it, to, well, maintain motivation the rest of the year...a reward or something...vitamin D is healthy and sun is nice and makes you happy...If [I need to defend my choice for] anyone...it's myself...you know it's wrong, but *fuck it this time* (Mikkel)

Finally, the intangibility and abstract nature of the environmental ramifications of aeromobility provided some obstacles for motivating the participants to actively reduce their air-travel. Simply put, the extent to which the consequences of one's participation in a practice seemed concrete and specific determined how bad the participants felt about so doing. Not only was it then more tangible, but the cause-effect relationships was also more evident and straightforward. Compared to the more tangible everyday consumer practices, aeromobility had an abstractedness to it. Jarle, who was among the most frequent fliers in the sample, struggled with this. While not feeling too bad for flying that much, he felt very bad when driving in the city because he hated local pollution. As such, his wish not to contribute to this was driven partially by ideology and partially by a perceived moral obligation. For him, then, it was easier to conceptualise the localised, tangible pollution which could be "experienced" by himself and his peers, than the abstract pollution from air-travel which only materialised as seemingly small contribution to the globalised, abstracted phenomenon of climate change. He did, however, acknowledge the hypocrisy in this; taking an active dislike to the pollution he felt most adversely affected himself and his peers, while not minding so much the pollution affecting *someone, somewhere*:

If I walk around the city centre, I think the exhaust fumes from cars are gross...a car-free city centre...I think is a great idea, right...Planes emit much more CO₂ and probably other toxins too...That air pollution [I notice] in everyday life, that's what bothers and engages me the most...I dislike it so much myself that I don't see any reason that I should pollute and contribute to bad air quality for others

Other participants had similar feelings. Siri, for instance, reflected on how doing small things within one's everyday life to benefit the environment could feel a lot more productive than not flying due to its concrete, tangible nature. Picking up plastic, she suggested, is such a tangible practice that makes the individuals engaging in it feel good about themselves – even though its positive environmental impact is relatively small. In contrast, however, some participants demonstrated an ability (and indeed a tendency) to "materialise" abstract consequences from practices. Some of the participants who were parents were using their children as "plot devices" to

imagine possible futures, and indeed as motivations to create a better one for them: “the future feels close because I think about...my children when they’re my age...it’ll be close to 2050...that feels close” (Julia). From this perspective, then, the notions of powerlessness and compassion fatigue discussed in this section are informed by abstraction and its influence on understandings of practice.

To conclude this section, these notions of reckless mobilities (and reckless consumer practices in general), characterised by a feeling of powerlessness and a reflexive exhaustion, indicate that adhering to environmentalist principles and keeping one’s environmental footprint down implies, in a sense, going “against the grain” of contemporary society. Indeed, it directs us back to the notion that the participants live (and practice) within a consumer society predicated on individual consumption and economic growth as opposed to sustainability and environmental protection (and, as I will argue in Chapter 8, within a system of aeromobility) – and that this makes environmentally oriented, everyday consumer choices stressful, if not necessary troublesome, to achieve. This, in turn, involves employing active reflection to negotiate participation in, and performance of, many practices which would otherwise demand more of – to simplify – a passive compliance. It implies actively questioning, rather than passively following, societal incentives for practices. Put differently, as previously discussed, it requires a greater degree of *performing* as opposed to *being a carrier of* social practice. Being a self-reflexive, environmentalist consumer-practitioner thereby estrains the participants’ bodies, leading to feelings of powerlessness and exhaustion.

6.4 Passive and active change

An implication of this analysis is that accepting behavioural change differs depending on the structural underpinnings for the practices in question. There is a difference between (a) changing one’s practices and (b) accepting to have one’s practices *de facto* changed. In their study of UK tourists’ relations to aeromobility, Hares et al. (2010) found that tourists were reluctant to make individual personal changes and therefore would prefer national governments to use legislation to force behavioural change. Similarly, Tiller and Schott (2013: 31) found that while New Zealand’s travelling consumers did not wish to voluntarily change their behaviours to reduce carbon footprints, they were nevertheless willing to make the changes

required so long as legislation would govern their practices. Holden (2005: 282-283) argues that while positive environmental attitudes might have a weak *direct* effect on consumption, they have an important *indirect* effect by granting legitimacy to structural changes. Roald and Mina talked about this specifically:

It's...easier to accept things that the system changes if you're kind of a little "in" on it, if you understand that *oh shit they actually do this because we have to make such drastic cuts, ok, then I can bear having for instance five flights a year...that's my quota*, but if you don't get the issue, or that you disagree with the premise of climate crisis, then you'll probably be more resistant (Mina)

I've kind of flown a lot the past years...[so] I think it's fair that I get a restriction in the form of a quota, so I'm willing to do something about it, and I'm not sure that's true for everyone else, necessarily...but I have to be careful saying too much about what people think and do, because I think there are many people who think less than I do about the problematic aspects of air-travel, but who fly less than me, and then [*laughs*] – it's they who are more environmentally friendly (Roald)

Working within the transport domain, Roald felt hypocritical for his aeromobilities. For him, this was a double-edged sword: On the one hand, he felt he ought to fly less; on the other – due to contextual factors and personal interests – he did not feel personally responsible for making use of a service provided by society through its functioning transport infrastructures. While he felt it could not be expected of him to deal with his own dissonances by changing his practices, he felt that structural restrictions ought to be imposed on him; in which case he would, he thought, be more than happy to accept them. On these grounds, there is reason to argue that environmentalism might imply a greater acceptance of “passive” changes – i.e. change being structurally imposed “from above” – than it implies a great motivation for initiating “active” change through resisting the allure of these structures and changing one's own practices through self-determination. Doing so would require a high degree of (1) environmental concern and (2) self-reflexivity, as well as strong feelings of (3) personal responsibility and (4) environmentalist identity. While most of these requirements could be applied to my participants, their feelings of personal *responsibility* took different shapes. This topic will be dealt with thoroughly in the next chapter.

6.5 Chapter summary and conclusions

As self-aware environmentalists, the participants negotiated their own personal agency through self-reflexivity. Within a system which effectively incentivises unsustainable mobility practices, re-framing one's practices required less effort and

determination than actually changing them. They had different ways of “calculating” whether or not they should fly; the variables involved in which were highly subjective. Their strategies for manoeuvring the flyer’s dilemma were further influenced by their feelings of dissonance tied to their (aeromobility) practices. The limitations of this is reflected in some participants’ recurring feelings of powerlessness and reflexive exhaustion, which led to reckless participation in unsustainable practices. The key point to stress here is that, due to the complex nature of practices and their meanings, the participants had a certain normative “flexibility” (Gregory-Smith et al. 2013: 1216) to their aeromobilities. While attitudes, values, and knowledge can contribute to change, this indicates that this is most likely when applied to relatively “low threshold” changes by individuals with a strong personal environmental concern.

7 Responsibilisation: The Moral-Structural Underpinnings of Aeromobility

This chapter addresses the moral ambiguities tied to aeromobility and its structural underpinnings. Two key findings are discussed. First, the participants' subjective perceptions of responsibility – and in turn, their “self-positioning” as agents within the structure-agency continuum – affected their aeromobilities (and their *relations to* them). Second, in most cases, the participants' perceptions of social responsibility overruled those of environmental responsibility, in the sense that environmental concern was quickly put aside in situations of great personal or social importance. I draw these findings into a broader discussion of responsibilisation and life politics.

7.1 Responsibility within the structure-agency continuum

The previously outlined moral “storms” of climate change (Gardiner 2006: 400-408) provide a good starting point for thinking about the flyer's dilemma as dilemma of responsibility. Each of these storms – the “global storm” pertaining to *space*, the “intergenerational storm” to *time*, and the “theoretical storm” to *complexity* (*ibid*) – present moral challenges and open-ended questions of responsibility which the participants grappled with through governing their own aeromobilities and lifestyles as environmentalists. The participants all showed a certain awareness of these storms, and their own manoeuvring of it. Most had become increasingly self-reflexive in previous years, and air-travel was one of the practices which had begun to concern them relatively recently. As previously established, the participants felt that air-travel posed a dilemma not only in theoretical terms, but also in practice – given the tension between various individual motivations and the overarching environmentalist imperative to fly less – as they negotiated how much they ought to sacrifice to avoid flying.

Discussions of the meanings and consequences of individual flights were brought up in the interviews. The participants' understandings of this were generally unified, though not without nuance. Many arguments can be made to emphasise “the insignificance of a single person's act or omission” (Glover 1986: 125) based on the premise that one's individual participation in a practice makes either (a) an *insignificant difference* or (b) *no difference at all* in swaying it or re-directing its course. Examples include: “It makes no difference whether or not I do it”, or “If I

don't do it, someone else will" (*ibid*). In general, the participants acknowledged but refuted this line of reasoning. Rather, they were unified in believing that each individual flyer contributes to increased pollution from aeromobility, primarily through stimulating increased demand, in the sense that "if enough people don't go...there will be one less plane" (Endre). Still, the participants did not always *feel* the "weight" or significance of their participation in aeromobility. In Siri's words: "I feel very bad, but...like if I hadn't sat on that plane it kind of wouldn't make any difference" (the typical use of "kind of" here indicating the tension between objective knowledge and subjective experience). Nils communicated a similar notion: "if I sit on exactly that plane or not it likely doesn't matter much, if you disregard [the issue of demand]". As the most frequent flyer in the sample, Jarle, too, had conflicting feelings – while admitting that "I feel that I'm very much a contributor to keeping up the demand of domestic air-travel in Norway", he also reasoned that "there's more than a million flights every year *between Oslo and Stavanger alone*, and...[my flights] make up, like, *increeedibly* little".

However, the aspect of consumer agency, particularly in terms of swaying demand, was brought up by several participants. Mina explained that: "I know...a flight attendant...she told me there was a period...they ended flying planes with like two passengers and stuff, so they actually had to cut flights...it's so market driven; if people don't wanna fly the planes won't leave". Frida agreed, reminding that individual agency must not be omitted from a structural perspective: "if everyone buys lots of flights...there'll be a reason to establish new routes, there are many more routes now than five years ago". Silje and Tine, respectively, framed this in light of consumer responsibility: "the planes obviously won't fly if there aren't enough people, then they'll downscale...if [this was not] so you could kind of deny *all* responsibility"; "I think [denying responsibility] is stupid, it's like saying...*yeah but all the meat is already slaughtered*, like, *if I don't buy it, it's there anyways*, this is about consumption...it's demand". In terms of demand, the notion of socio-cultural – as opposed to strictly structural – reproduction of aeromobility was brought up. Frida pointed to the socio-cultural implications of her aeromobilities, acknowledging that her participation contributed to "the trend that people increasingly fly everywhere", and that, by flying, "[I] do...teach my children how 'great' flying is". Similarly, Julia admitted that: "we have a four-year-old who keeps

saying that planes emit lots of CO₂...so he's 'arresting' us more and more". Moreover, Endre pointed to the ways in which commercials and culture impacted people's motivations to fly: "there are so many ads about flying to 'Granca' everywhere, it's so easy to book that flight, it's like...*the plane will fly anyways*, and if that ad hadn't been there, it wouldn't have been like that".

A key dilemma surfacing in the interview was whether air-travel was (a) objectively immoral due to its environmental ramifications, or (b) morally justified in some circumstances but not others. Here, the participants struggled arriving at a definitive conclusion. I found an interesting tension between these in several participants: They believed that flying could be justified depending on context, while also believing that – given the existing knowledge about the effect of mass-aeromobility on the environment – flying was inherently "wrong". They wrestled with the subjective feelings of being – or *not* being – responsible, alongside the knowledge of being objectively co-responsible (see Vetlesen 2018). While they felt that flying was objectively wrong, it could potentially be defended based on subjective context. Moreover, while some aeromobilities could be justified in light of the workings of contemporary society, they were still not necessarily seen as permissible from an environmental point of view, making for a self-reflexive hypocrisy. Frida further suggested that a narrow focus on aeromobility might imply a reductionist perspective on environmental governance: After all, there are many other unsustainable conventions and practices elemental to everyday life in contemporary societies which might not be questioned in the same way, constituting another form of hypocrisy. She posed a rhetorical question: "Internationally, the emissions produced by the cement industry are much higher...Given that I know how bad producing that concrete is...is it more unethical to fly than to live in a house?...that's my question". Given the complexity of consumers' total environmental footprints, Frida firmly believed that overarching structural measures targeted at many practices at the same time were needed. In a sense, the tension described here constitutes the very *root* of the flyer's dilemma, aptly summarised by Maja's reflections:

There's many elements...making it greyer than black-and-white, wrong-right; like the fact that it's terribly expensive...it you've got a family, and there are expectations of going on holidays and everyone else does it, and you can't afford...train – uh, but then again...I think it's wrong, objectively speaking...yeah, that which is immoral...should be removed as an alternative, and then you should work with what you have...yeah

The bottom line – or, the view most participants arrived at after some pondering – was that frequent flying presents a joint dilemma between societal structures and consumer agencies; that the “problem” is the sum total and not its individual parts. Similarly, while not being “very hostile towards individuals”, Endre thought that “Norwegians’ travel habits...it’s a little idiotic, to go to Thailand...just to be there for a week and go back again, for no other reason than being on holiday”. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that “my generation, we’ve grown up with flying always being a possibility, flying being cheaper than taking the train, and I think that’s a bad thing”. The notion of all-things being relative is thus paramount: While each individual flight is relatively insignificant when appreciating the structural nature of aeromobility, then, it is also per definition relatively significant.

7.2 Life-politics: The individualisation of responsibility

It has been argued that individualism can be attributed to neoliberalism; the proliferation of the contemporary consumer society being part of this. Putting “an increased emphasis on personal choice and freedom”, critiques argue, “neoliberal discourses of responsabilisation” cast collective problems – such as climate change – as challenges for individuals to solve (Trnka and Trundle 2014: 136-137). In the neoliberal society, Fahlquist (2009: 110) argues, the individual, through her perceived consumption choices, “is directly responsible for the world”. Indeed, Middlemiss (2014) argues that the late-modern identity has made people identify more as individuals than as group members. Elias (1991) further suggests a shift in identity balance, from *we-* to *I-*identity, so that striving for individualised change might increasingly pertain to achieving a *feeling* of making a difference rather than actually *making* a difference. This might fuel the aforementioned fallacy of individual insignificance (Glover 1986). Neoliberalism, according to Lukacs (2017), represents “an ideological war...against the possibility of collective action...[To] alter the trajectory of the climate crisis...requires of us first a resolute mental break from the spell cast by neoliberalism: to stop thinking like individuals” (no page).

Giddens (1991) argues that this notion of individualised responsibility informs consumers’ identities and notions of *Self*, making for a “life politics” – a politics of “choice...of lifestyle...of self-actualisation in a reflexively ordered environment, where that reflexivity links self and body to systems of global scope...[so that] globalising influences intrude deeply into the reflexive project of the self, and

conversely...processes of self-realisation influence global strategies” (*ibid*: 214). This framing of the Self grants each individual with the task to define one’s “life project” – to ask first “Who am I?”; then, “Who would I like to be?” (Vetlesen 1997: 2). As the personal becomes political, Giddens (1991: 215) argues, we are left with “a politics of life decisions”. When the self becomes a “reflexive project”, then, self-identity becomes a self-centred, “reflexive achievement” (*ibid*). As Manderson (2005: 297) writes: “By ‘calling us in question’ – by singling us out as responsible for others – we are made better aware of ourselves.”

In light of the environmental crisis, the consumption of aeromobility is, arguably, a life-political issue of the sort that Giddens discusses. Trnka and Trundle (2014: 139) argue that “neoliberal notions of the responsible individual” are represented in “practices of audit and accountability...self-surveillance and self-assessment” through which “individuals and collectives...conduct moral evaluations of their actions in relation to their potential effects, calculating and designing their life course in ways that attempt to mitigate harm and risk, and maximise benefit to themselves and others”. This is exemplified by the participants, who spent a lot of time figuring out how to deal with their own consumption of aeromobility as individual consumers and as environmentalists. Frida challenged this neoliberal, individualised form of environmentalism, suggesting that stronger impacts could be made if individuals turned their focus outward on the world instead of inward on themselves:

...everyone must do their bit for the climate, and then people initially think about...what *they* do in their day-to-day lives; and what do you emit in Norway, maybe 10 tonnes [CO₂]?...That’s a lot for one person, but...if you go to the University board and ask them facilitate better bicycle parking, get students cheaper public transport passes – then you’ll create a lot more change than by cutting those 10 tonnes...I think we expect way too much *personal* engagement for the climate...If I go and ask, in person, *what’s the heating in this kindergarten*, if they used an oil heater...and they threw that one out, that wouldn’t have been a much larger contribution on my part than if I’d biked more, right...Of course, what you vote is very important, but it’s even more crucial how you influence the systems of which you’re part...so I think we ought to expect that people question how these systems [function]...more so than expecting great things from their everyday lives, because when you start discussing if I ought to eat meat one day less a week...then we get caught up in the tiny [things], and then we don’t achieve the great changes we’re in need of...But...well, it’s a very simple way for politicians to deny their responsibility; *think about your own lifestyles, don’t think about what I do*

As I have argued, the flyer’s dilemma is a dilemma of responsibility, and a key question here is who should be *made* responsible: the individual consumer-

practitioners performing or partaking in the practice, or the system which incentivise them to do so? There are no simple answers, given that both structures and the agents within them contribute to the reproduction of practices. On these grounds, the flyer's dilemma can be critiqued for portraying air-travel as "a form of excessive pleasure consumption" (Young et al. 2015: 2), thereby continuing a tradition of individualising environmental responsibility. Opposing this view, Young et al. (2014: 60) argue that the flyer's dilemma is instead "the product of structural conditions (i.e. societal, economic, technological) rather than individual excessive appetites (i.e. psychological)". Critics of neoliberalism argue that the neoliberal world order is founded on the notion that individual actions are what ultimately matters – while at the same time actively suppressing the potential impact of these individual actions. The debate, then, struggles with the "paradox of responsibility" – while personalising blame deflects "attention from underlying structural conflicts", simply blaming "the world system" neglects the responsibilities of its constitutive components (Eriksen 2016: 145).

7.3 Ways of flying: Context, motives, and intentions

Some have argued that "the moral point of view requires an abstraction from context"; a distinction between "what is good for me or us to do" and that which "is the right thing to do" (Vetlesen 1997: 1). In practice, however, given their complex and multifaceted nature, moral dilemmas arguably do require attention to their imbued contexts (*ibid*; Hverven 2018: 29). Reflecting this practical-moral understanding, most participants re-negotiated the moral standings of their aeromobilities every time they considered flying, taking the broader context into account. The consensus among the participants was that there were different "ways of flying"; that flying was justified in some but not all circumstances. As previously touched upon, the main contexts justifying aeromobility were (a) social, particularly relating to special occasions, unforeseen events, or visiting sick or old relatives; (b) those related to work; and (c) unconventional or "active" holiday trips involving some sort of learning or cultural experience otherwise unobtainable.

Intention was considered an important facet of moral practice. Jarle, for instance, said that: "I think people can do a lot of wrong without being bad people...their intentions – what they think about what they do – better 'explain' them". Nevertheless, as Julia

put it, the extent to which a flight is justified “depends on how good the intention is”. Endre brought up the relationship between intent and knowledge: “everything you do emits, so it’s like, you just don’t know what’s wrong and what’s not...it’s about how much you already know...intention is what counts for me”. Siri felt that legitimising “good” intentions could be problematic: “you could say that good intentions produce good morals, but that doesn’t improve the consequences of a given action”. Similarly, Egon pointed to limitations of good intentions: “the act you execute...is a result of your reflections and ability to put action behind your words...if everyone walks around preaching the importance of the environment, but then they have two cars in their household...*you don’t need more than one car; yeah I need two, because we need one each to get to work*, rights, because it’s so convenient”. Frida reflected on the relationships between actions and intentions:

An act can be bad or...good, depending on the intention behind it...but I think that many acts are thoughtless...[Similar acts can have] very different [intentions]...Suppose you have a sick grandmother in Tromsø; are you not supposed to go to her deathbed because you’ve reached your “quota”?

In contrast to this, as a thought experiment, Julia thought about the effects of contemporary unsustainable practices on her children’s future, and how these would ultimately be the same regardless of the intentions put behind engaging in these practices. In her own words:

For the climate, intention doesn’t matter...the last IPCC rapport, combined with me choosing to have two kids, makes me carry a strong sense of responsibility for the Earth they’ll grow up in, and hand over to their kids...Yeah, we can live and do what we want here and now, but...how will things be for them; I’m truly worried for their future, and not least...it’s partially my, uh, error, choosing to bring children to this Earth...and if I really feel that responsibility, that ought to be reflected through my actions...I can ruminate over it as much as I want, but if it’s not reflected in my actions, it doesn’t matter; then I really don’t do anything for my children...If the question is, like, if I have a greater right to fly because I’m visiting family, you could always say about others that they have a greater right to this and that because this and this...but is visiting family a valid reason [to fly]? Perhaps a little more than...a city break to shop...but I’m a little against the notion of...finding all kinds of excuses all the time, because I think it tricks us into wanting to argue that what we do is “right” even though we actually know that it isn’t, yeah

In particular, the participants pointed to social events as examples of potentially acceptable reasons for flying. As Mikkel said, “I’ll never say to someone attending a funeral, like, *nope, take the train*...and if flying is the solution to maintaining a friendship, I won’t judge that...more *encourage*, perhaps; I think I might have been

actively supportive, like, *yeah I think you should take that trip*". Mina further suggested that, for instance, flying was warranted when visiting family for special occasions as long as this was prioritised over other air-travels: "I believe you should be able to fly home for Christmas to with family instead of spending two days [on a train], but then you have to cut elsewhere...You should be able to fly to visit an old grandmother, but...maybe not...to go on a 'champagne' trip to Copenhagen with your girlfriends". As similar notion was put forth by Roald: "You'll likely find more sound reasons to visit an old grandmother who might be dead next year as opposed to visiting a tanning bed in Gran Canaria...*why we travel*, that's what people ought to ask themselves more often". Flying to visit an old or sick grandparent, or to attend a funeral, were the most typical examples used by the participants when referring to situations in which it was unquestionable that one ought to fly if needed. There was little moral ambiguity in those situations – regardless if flying was understood as wrong or not, it was "permitted" without question in such circumstances. They were, in other words, common "justifications accepted for action" (Dawson 2012: 314), in this case flying. Endre's continued reflections around when flying was acceptable aptly summarised this notion. Referring to the prospect of attending a faraway funeral, he said:

But...I think...[sometimes you're in a] situation where you feel you have to go there, that you can't think like that, it's like in the films where the man has a stroke and the wife takes a cab, even though [she] never takes a cab, right; you're a little, like, *in the moment*...and then you think, *I could've taken the train*, but I just didn't want to spend the extra time on the train, I wanted to sit one hour on the plane, and you don't save a lot of time, but you save a little, and right at that point, it was worth it for me

In contrast, flying for beach holidays, long-weekend city breaks, and shopping trips were the most widely used counter examples of this. These were understood to constitute lesser justifiable air-travel practices, perhaps being less "compatible" with the environmentalist identity. Here we can turn to Mills' (1940) "common vocabulary of motives". As the participants had become more aware of, and concerned with, the environmental ramifications of aeromobility, their motives changed: "When individuals are called to account for their behaviour, the justifications they give, when spoken, become 'motives'. Acceptable motives form part of 'common vocabulary' of that particular society" (Dawson 2012: 314). While some motives, then, were not any longer seen as particularly acceptable, those entailing nurturing close social bonds or

performing very important work remained the most acceptable ones. Using this as a “guide”, the participants organised not only their aeromobilities, but their personal ethics. The moral evaluations of aeromobilities presented here are relevant to the analysis because they affect the meaning-making processes which govern the self-reflexive practitioners’ understandings of their own practices.

Julia and Tine, however, problematised the notion of aeromobility being automatically justified so long as the reason for flying was deemed socially acceptable by peers. Whilst acknowledging the usefulness of organising the moral standings of practices based on individual intentions and contextual influences, they also felt the need to stress – for themselves and others – the limitations of such a line of reasoning in terms of climate change mitigation. As Tine reflected:

I think action’s important, because...well, it may be you’re flying to visit a sick grandmother, and you can’t really argue against that, but at the same time...you could always come up with some excuse...a “good enough” reason...because only you can “feel” it...but if you’re always like, *yeah but it’s OK that I do it, I’m only doing this and that*, if you’re constantly...making up reasons...you’ll never stop [flying]...There’s probably a line to be drawn somewhere; I’d say, like, if you’re seeing a sick family member, like, then it’s kind of OK, but if you’re seeing a friend you haven’t seen in five years, can’t you meet some other way, really? But yeah, this stuff is a little difficult

The implication of this is that when context – that is, the meanings of the individual practitioner’s participation in a practice – is taken seriously, the challenge of simply “shifting” behaviours becomes evident. The relative “weighting” of the categories *action* and *intention* can be arranged and evaluated in different ways to construe or negotiate the moral standing of participating in a given practice. As Mikkel said, it is always possible to provide some “argumentation as to why a given action was ‘worth it’ in a broader context”. Endre further suggested that the morality of an action or practice must to some extent depend on the structures within which it is performed or carried out. This, he suggested, is because people (as practitioners) are parts of a system, working within established structures – as “nodes in a network of relations” as Arne Næss put it (Hverven 2018: 116, *my translation*). While the structures are more or less constant, people – and their subjective lifeworlds – are always in flux and flow. In Endre’s own words:

I’d say [flying] is wrong no matter the objective...[but] even though it’s wrong I’d do it...it’s not like people don’t do anything wrong in this world...it’s not always your fault, it’s something you have to do, that’s what difficult about it...where do I put the “have to” limit...that’s changed the past year...last year,

I'd think that if you fly [somewhere] to hold a seminar for five people, it'd be worth it...even if it's only for two hours, but now...it'd have to be at least maybe 40 people...

Some have pointed to proximity or distance – both in its physical and metaphysical sense; proximity being “a relative closeness” (Manderson 2005: 298) in “relational, spatial or temporal” terms (Nortvedt and Nordhaug 2008: 157) – as a useful barometer for individuals’ moral evaluations of their practices. Considering the ethics of aeromobility, Hales and Caton (2017: 98) remind that while caring for others in “proximal relationships” – through e.g. social events and gatherings – might “manifest largely as private actions and moral experiences...they have public consequences”. They argue that “a sense of care” produced through “proximal relations” come to override “abstract moral principles such as universal justice, which are not rooted in our lived relational exchanges with visceral others” (*ibid.*: 109), making people’s values and moral compass all the more complex (Gino and Galinsky 2012: 24). For Manderson (2005: 298), then, proximity constitutes “the origin of responsibility”, as “the experience that leads us to catch sight of it”. While proximity is telling of the ways in which responsibility is subjectively construed, it leaves the question of objective responsibility open. Bridging subjective and objective responsibility, Fahlquist (2009: 111) concludes that: “Individuals who have reasonable alternatives, capacity, and resources to do something about the environment should be seen as responsible...because a) they have power and resources to do more to solve environmental problems, and b) they have the capacity to make it easier and less costly for individuals to act in environmentally friendly ways”. However, as the analyses here demonstrate, these categories are unfixed and relative. While not rejecting the question of objective responsibility altogether, when faced with practice-oriented scrutiny, the closest conclusion we can arrive at is that individual lifestyle choices – and potential for *changes* in these – depend a great deal on vaguely defined (socio-material) contextual factors.

7.4 Chapter summary and conclusions

This chapter has focused on the participants’ subjective understandings of responsibility and morally justified consumer practices, how this informed the ways in which they negotiated their personal aeromobilities. The analysis has been tied up in a broader discussion of the structural individualisation of identity and responsibility occurring in contemporary, late-modern societies. The main findings

were the following. First, the participants' subjective perceptions of responsibility – and in turn, their “self-positioning” as agents within the structure-agency continuum – affected their aeromobilities (and indeed their relations to their aeromobilities). Second, in most cases, social responsibility “overruled” environmental responsibility, as environmental concern was quickly put aside in situations of great personal or social importance; the common theme being that flying to visit one's old grandmother was an acceptable motive, while flying for a shopping weekend in London was not. This weighing of motives was a key facet of their self-responsibilisation. Third, many of the participants were very self-aware and self-reflexive in their thinking, which can be understood as a matter of “life politics” (Giddens 1991). In sum, while environmentalism certainly guided the participants' aeromobilities, it did so within a broader context. Together, the attention to both environmental concerns and the broader context provided a “map” guiding the possible, and subjective, territories for their aeromobilities.

8 The system of aeromobility

In this discussion chapter, I build and expand on the findings from the previous analyses to sketch out a “system of aeromobility”. This system is comprised of material and (infra)structural as well as socio-cultural and affective components, which together in complex “logics” which co-shape consumers’ mobility practices. By shifting attention from the flyer’s dilemma to the system of aeromobility, I suggest that while changing cultures of mobility will likely be required to reduce emissions from aeromobility, structural measures will have to precede and incentivise this in order to properly account for the “clashing of scales” (Eriksen 2016: 29) between individuals and the system.

8.1 Contours of a system

Urry’s (2004: 27) conceptualisation of automobility as a self-organising, non-linear, and expansive system has been an important contribution to the mobilities literature. The key premise of his argument is that, when combined, the sum total of “things” in society having to do with cars and driving is larger than the sum of its parts, constituting a complex system that is at once material, social, political, and cultural. This “systems thinking” also implies that the car, as a vehicle, is nothing without the system within which it exists (and which allows it to exist). This contribution has been particularly central for mobilities scholars’ theorising around the social-material connections imbued in, and performed through, various mobilities. While the system approach has been applied to other mobilities (e.g. Hansen 2017a), little effort has been put into theorising a system of aeromobility. As per writing this, the phrase “system of aeromobility” was only to be found in Lassen’s (2009: 233) discussion of technical infrastructures in “aeromobility management”, and Jensen’s (2011) discussion of global aviation infrastructures. Cidell (2017: 695), moreover, suggests that both auto- and aeromobility can be “seen as totalizing systems for travel at their respective scales”. Drawing on mobilities and practice literatures, as well as the empirical data presented here, I therefore apply a broader and more targeted conception of the “system of aeromobility” as the socio-material infrastructures co-shaping aeromobility practices. This takes into account the interconnectedness between material structures, socio-cultural norms, and practitioners’ bodies in mediating (aero)mobility. Given that a “practice and its surrounding...structures are

intertwined”, they “need to be understood together” (Randles and Mander 2009: 252). Indeed, the analysis here has demonstrated that aeromobility concerns not only the practice of flying itself, but “the whole flying event” (*ibid*: 246). Thinking of aeromobility as a system which *facilitates the reproduction of these events*, allows us to widen our scope of focus beyond the air-travel itself. This might constitute a small step towards tackling the environmental challenges tied to contemporary aeromobilities. Table 2 presents the six components that “generate” and “reproduce” the system of automobility (Urry 2004: 25-26) applied to, and contrasted with, the system of aeromobility. With the notable exception of “ownership” – commercial aeromobility representing a service to be consumed while automobility hinges on individualised freedom through the private ownership of vehicles (*ibid*: 28) – there are many carryovers here.

Table 2: Comparing/contrasting systems of auto- and aeromobility

C. <i>Automobility (Urry 2004: 25-26)</i>	<i>Aeromobility</i>
1 The physical, material, or manufactured object of the car itself.	The physical, material, or manufactured object of the aeroplane itself.
2 A major item of <i>individual consumption</i> and private ownership imbued with individual meanings and symbolism.	A service that facilitates the individual consumption of experience or distance (see Handel 2017); the process of which is imbued with individual meanings and symbolism.
3 A complex “constituted through technical and social interlinkages with other industries” (<i>ibid</i>).	A complex, but perhaps one which is predicated more on global participation than individual ownership.
4 A “predominant global form of ‘quasi-private’ <i>mobility</i> that subordinates other mobilities” (<i>ibid</i>).	A predominant global form of non-private mobility which subordinates some forms of mobility – e.g. long-distance train travel – but which more <i>importantly creates new domains or opportunities for (hyper-)mobility</i> .
5 A “dominant <i>culture</i> ” sustaining “major discourses of what constitutes the good life”, defining appropriate citizen mobility, and influences art and symbolism (<i>ibid</i>).	A driver of a globalised culture of experience and “travelness”, sustaining discourses of the good life e.g. through enabling global participation and through various institutionalised markers of social status (first/business class travel, bonus programmes, etc.)
6 An essential cause of pollution, excessive resource-use, and environmental degradation.	An essential cause of pollution, excessive resource-use, and environmental degradation.

Acknowledging a system of aeromobility means attributing a strong structural component to the flyer’s dilemma. Young et al. (2014) suggest three reasons for the flyer’s dilemma being structurally (re)produced. First, flying is integral as a means of mobility in the contemporary world. There is little doubt about this; see C. 4 above.

Second, “the environmental cost of air travel appears unavoidable” as technological efficiency gains “do not conceal the increase in total...emissions as the industry continues its unrestrained growth” (*ibid*: 60; see C. 6). Third, “flying appears more resistant to consumer-led change” compared to other, smaller-scale practices carried out in the everyday lives for consumers (*ibid*; see C. 2-5). This structural reproduction, the driving force of the aeromobility system, is not only comprised of the technical or material infrastructures that make aviation possible, but also immaterial infrastructures construed by a myriad of social, cultural, economic, and political forces. Some exist in the intersection between these, such as frequent flyer programmes which facilitate “aeromobile lifestyles” by heightening the aeromobile experience and institutionalising aeromobility into consumption through credit card reward schemes, making for both “frequent flyers” and “frequent buyers” (Gössling and Nilsson 2010: 250).

Drawing on practice theory, it can be argued that humans, as consumer-practitioners, fly not only because of an economic or social “rationality”, but because of a complex hodgepodge of different incentives and motivations driving social practices. These might be characterised by “lock-ins” and “path-dependencies”, which refer to the ways in which material (and potentially socio-cultural) structures inhibit potential measures to re-orient practices; describing how certain practices are more or less consciously “scripted” (or engineered) into being by those who “design” technologies and material structures within society (e.g. Peters 2003; Verbeek 2006; Adey 2008). Acknowledging this, we can frame aeromobility through the lens of social practice to gain a better understanding of its systemic dimensions. The application of practice theory in this thesis implies that agency is “distributed” between three “pillars”: the body, the material, and the social (Sahakian and Wilhite’s 2014: 25). The point of theorising a system of aeromobility, then, is to argue that this system *permeates* each of these pillars, which become proprietors of this distributed agency.

8.2 The logics of the system

The analyses suggest that practices are guided by different *logics*. I here draw on the concept of “logics” theorised by Verbeek and Mommaas (2008: 635) as “principles that guide reasoning in a situation”. Arguably, from a practice perspective, this notion of *reasoning* is produced through the convergence of – or, rather, the coming

together of – the relative agential *capacities* of “people, things and social contexts” (Sahakian and Wilhite’s 2014: 25); influencing, and steering practitioners towards, practices. The concept of logics, as applied here, informs our understanding of the ways in which practitioners negotiate their mobilities whilst situated within a “nexus” of practices (Hui et al. 2017). By focusing on the participants’ own reflections and meaning-making processes tied to their practices, I have sought to arrive at a better understanding of these logics.

As a starting point, it is important to consider the participants as not only practitioners, but as individualised bodies who “become” practitioners within systems of practice. Defending such an individualised focus within practice research, Hui et al. (2017: 6) argue that while processes of “thinking and reflection” are generally thought of as “mental and individualist”, they are “features of activity-in-practices” which contribute to “the transformation of practices over time”. Whilst being performed or carried out similarly, different practices hold different meanings for different practitioners: these “activities-in-practices” are always different. In a sense, then, practices are the sum of their individually negotiated parts – or, as O’dell (2009: 96): put it, “a series of...micro-calculations, each of which may seem meaningless at first glance, but which come to be highly meaningful when woven together in the pulse of daily life”. This is also a key point imbued in Lassen’s (2009) term “individual rationalities”; as well as Gustafson’s (2006: 513) concept of “individual adaptation”, referring specifically to the ways in which women make practice “adaptations” to make work-life “fit” with family life. The level of active cognition or reflexivity involved in these micro-calculations, individual rationalities, or – as I shall suggest – *logics*, might vary as, at times, “people behave automatically in response to situations, inventing motives afterwards when challenged to provide justifications” (Warde 2017: 204). On these grounds, if air-travel is the practice in question, each flyer-practitioner’s *activity-within-the-practice* is contingent on their different, complex motivations for (a) flying in this given instance, and (b) understandings of the meanings of both (i) *flying* and of (ii) *this particular flight* in its broader (socio-cultural, material, political, environmental) context.

Scholars of both practice theory and mobilities have used many different concepts to account for this complexity, referring to the ways in which consumer-practitioners, as individual entities, make different choices given their differing lifeworlds and

perceptions and understandings *of* the world. Pointing to the importance of considering behavioural contexts in practices, Wilhite (2016: 22) suggests that “consumers have differentiated knowledge, are embedded in social relations and perform their everyday practices in historically deposited material settings”. The notion of “differentiated knowledge” is also indirectly articulated through the “pillars” framework; one of the pillars being “people and the knowledge they embody, both physically and mentally” (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 39). The individualised way of being-in-the-world, as it were, has been referred to as the result of different forms of “embodied”, non-explicit knowledge: *tacit, practical, personal, subjective, situated, or inarticulate* (see e.g. Collins 2010; Sahakian and Wilhite 2014; Wilhite 2016). Arguably, such vaguely defined forms of knowledge constitute the foundation for the *habitus*. The key point to stress here is that practices are mediated through the knowledge produced as the subjectivity of the individuals’ lifeworlds meets the contextual backdrop of a situation anchored in a specific time-space.

Also elemental to the logics guiding practice is the mediation of affects. Arguably, the system of aeromobility is a system which generates affect, in the sense that affect is one crucial “capacity” moving – indeed *affecting* – its logics. This has become evident in the analyses through the ways in which the participants’ understandings of aeromobility were “fused together” with their relations to various practices that were meaningful to them, and which required – or could in some way be relationally connected to – aeromobility. The process of these elements being construed together is arguably interwoven with a process (or experience) of affect: “The individual”, writes Wetherell (2012: 21), “is a site in which multiple sources of activation and information about body states, situations, past experiences, linguistic forms, flowering thoughts, etc. become woven together”. In addition to the affects produced through the practice of air-travel itself, the contemporary phenomenon of aeromobility – materialised through the system of aeromobility – is characterised by symbolism, imageries, and discourses which arguably (re)produce different forms of affects. Moreover, affects of movement are spatially grounded through – and sometimes *engineered into* (Adey 2008) – “affective atmospheres”, i.e. spaces capturing “the tension between presence and absence, materiality and immaterial...the subjective and objective” (Anderson 2014: 21), such as aeroplanes,

airports, and even airspace itself. Through materialised (infra)structural designs and architectures, affective atmospheres might produce certain affects which motivate practitioners to participate or engage in various practices. Aeromobility might therefore constitute an “affect generator” (Reckwitz 2017: 124). If we regard affect to be something which both governs and permeates practices and mobilities, it makes sense to consider the possibility that the logics of practices have an affective component to them.

We can turn to Verbeek and Mommaas’s (2008) “consumption junction” to illustrate the process of logics coming together as consumers and providers meet in time and space: “At consumption junctions, different logics...prevail. Technology and market-oriented producer-logics meet the lifeworld-logics of end users of products and services” (*ibid*: 635). The “barriers as well as windows of opportunities” arising as the individual (lifestyle, identity, routines, and behaviours of) practitioners “meet” the various “provider-logics” implemented in the system or structure, they term “slots” (*ibid*). We can apply this to mobility practices: As these logics meet – perhaps *clash* (see Eriksen 2016: 29) – at the consumption junction, environmental concerns might be dismissed. There might be more “slots” incentivising than disfavoursing aeromobility, or vice-versa. As Warde (2017: 194) writes, “obstacles well up” as different practices produce different, perhaps conflicting, priorities. This way, a potential goal to fly less might be re-directed by the available slots, creating new and altered logics for practice. The sum of possible mobilities the practitioner can engage in to “achieve” (the goal of) an overarching practice can in this sense be thought of as “black-box” of mobility. Within this black-box, several participants emphasised the experience of a “clash” between (a) the environmentalist logic rooted in identity and ideology, surfacing as a concern for the environment and feelings of personal responsibility; and (b) the more common-sense logic rooted in situational contexts of everyday life, surfacing as desires to see friends and family, feeling the need for a holiday, complying with perceived expectations and obligations of presence, as well as dealing with logistical and infrastructural challenges of managing the balance between work, family, and leisure time. This latter logic often took precedence over the former.

Adding to this, Peters (2003) argues that mobility problems are essentially problems of design. He suggests that new innovations and designs can help construct new

“passages”: tempo-spatial orders which forge potential *pathways* through the fabric of socio-material infrastructures, thus creating the space for new or alternative (ways to carry out) practices. In a broad context, this involves warping perceived time-space related to a practice and its function (see Hägerstrand 1970; Sahakian and Wilhite 2014). Such pathways guide practitioners to envision a set of practices as a sequential process, so that taking part in them become “a matter of actively ‘seeing a way through’ to what comes next” (Wetherell 2012: 16). In other words, things or objects hang together in a way that mediates “prefigurational relationships” (Schatzki 2002), referring to “the kind of future figurations that are particularly feasible and possible given the existing state of affairs” (Spaargaren 2011: 817). This implies that incentives for taking part in practices are materialised into the fabric of society through design. Indeed, as Peters (2003: 319) writes, passages “have to be designed, created, repaired and legitimized”. This might suggest that the system of aeromobility is a system accumulatively “designed” to provide “slots” which incentivise consumers to engage in air-travel.

I have illustrated the logics-of-practice concept in two figures. First, Figure 4 presents a simple illustration of the logics of practice as they might be experienced by the individual consumer-practitioner; a visualisation of how logics create perceptions of potential mobility passages within the “black-box” of mobility, depending on the availability of incentivising slots. Second, in Figure 5, I have illustrated a version of Verbeek and Mommaas’ (2008) “consumption junction” which incorporates Peter’s (2003) concepts of “design” and “passage”.

Figure 4: Passages through the mobility “black-box”

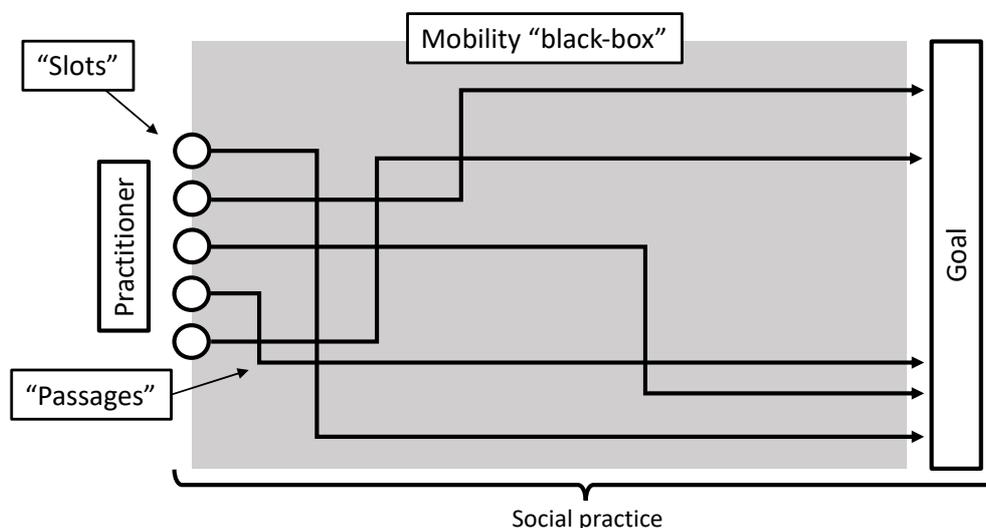
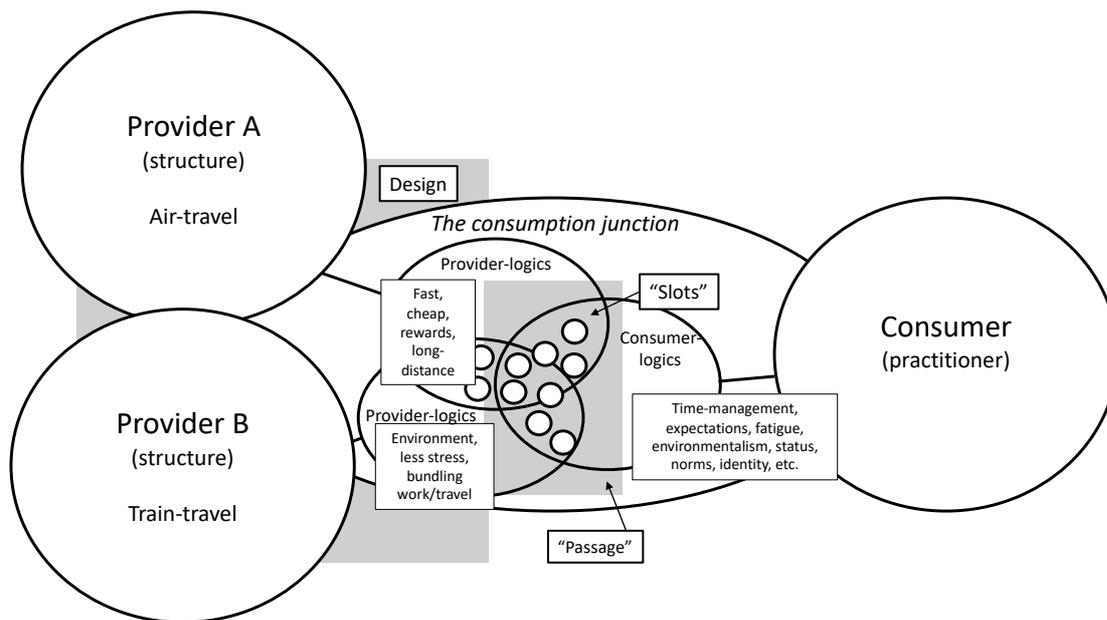


Figure 5: Mobility practices negotiated in the “consumption junction”



8.3 Changing the (logics of the) system?

Based on the analyses, two arguments have been laid out thus far in this discussion. First, practices are influenced by different logics construed in the intersection between its elements, with a particular focus on its structural and material components. Second, I have proposed that thinking about contemporary aeromobility as a *system* – producing and being (re)produced by such logics – creates new avenues for considering how aeromobility integrates into other practices and thus permeates consumers’ lifeworlds far beyond the practice of flying itself. When considering what ought to be done about the “problem” of aeromobility, then, we need to consider not only air-travel, but practices carried out within the system of aeromobility as an overarching societal structure. As Verbeek and Mommaas (2008: 640) suggest, using practice theory, we can “search for slots...potentially opening ‘windows of opportunity’ for transitions towards more sustainable...mobility practices”. To find such “windows of opportunity”, different logics of practice have to coincide in specific ways.

To promote change, then, the capacities (agential forces) in practices will have to be “steered” so that they “come together” in a desired way. This implies a reconfiguration of the elements, distributed between the pillars, in practices. As Reckwitz (2002: 210) suggests, normative social practices are “held together” and organised by common understandings of the meanings and practical knowledges

imbued in them. Change in practice, he suggests, requires a change in: (1) “regular bodily activity” (expressed through habits, routines, performances, actions, behaviours); (2) the “socially standardized way of understanding and knowing” as it pertains to a particular practice (i.e. the subjective meanings and affects imbued in that practice); and (3) the material structures which facilitate a given practice, through the previous two components (*ibid*). The first component is exemplified by the participants having changed their mobility practices. The second component was reflected *within* the sample, as the participants had reconceptualised the meanings of aeromobility through their environmentalism (however, as the *flygskam* debates have indicated, it might begin to affect the general population; see section 8.3.2). Among the participants, the third component – pertaining to structural realm of aeromobility – represented the greatest barrier, both in terms of (a) the air-travel industry, which provides increasingly accessible and affordable flights; and (b) its embeddedness in culture and social life, rooted in societal expectations of time-space relations and hypermobility in a globalised world-order. As practice theorists have repeatedly stressed, consumers’ capacity for individual agency is therefore limited. All three categories outlined by above by Reckwitz (2002) are interconnected, but change might thus require structural change as both an initiating “precursor” and a follow-up “response” to potential change in culturally grounded mobility practices. With this in mind, I will turn to the potential to change air-travel practices through (1) structural intervention, referring to Reckwitz’ (2002) third component of change; and (2) socio-cultural adaptation, referring to the first and second components.

8.3.1 Changing practice through (infra)structural intervention

The system of aeromobility is a system which reproduces infrastructural incentives to engage in air-travel. We can think of this infrastructure as “socio-material”, acknowledging the social (and cultural) dimension of material structures, as practitioners both socialise (give meaning *to*) and are socialised by (derive meaning *from*) materialities. After all, the “material world” not only *influences* but is *influenced by* practitioners’ carrying-out of everyday life (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 39). If we broadly define infrastructure as the “networked features of the built environment” (Shove and Trentmann 2018: 3), we acknowledge (a) that there is a social (and thus immaterial) dimension to “networked features” and (b) that much, if not most, of the built environment in some way contributes to this “network”.

Infrastructure thus becomes that which “enable, sustain or change what people do” (*ibid*). Granted, then, there are “extensive and profound interdependencies between infrastructures and contemporary ways of life” (*ibid*).

While the “prevailing idea is that infrastructures develop to meet pre-existing needs” (Coutard and Shove 2018: 14), practice theories favour an opposing view, suggesting instead that “contemporary interpretations of need and (standard) service are themselves outcomes of previous infrastructural configurations” (*ibid*: 18). The data presented in this thesis suggest that although social and cultural factors play an important part in swaying practice, these are presupposed by material factors; existing mobility (infra)structures allowing the participants to achieve various ends that were important to them. If we distil the concept of *agency* to mean “the capacity to influence acts” (Wilhite 2013: 63), then, we can delegate some form of agency to structures and material objects. Indeed, materialities *incentivise* practice by constituting “proposals for being” (Alkemeyer and Buschmann 2017: 10); co-shaping human action, they give “material answers to the ethical question of how to act” (Verbeek 2006: 361). In this sense, things can become “bearers of predispositions for consumption” (Wilhite 2013: 66).

In order to create change in social practices, then, we need to first consider the “steering role of infrastructure” (Warde 2017: 198). This is because, in simple terms, while social and cultural change requires some (self-)reflexivity among practitioners, material infrastructure affects the “pre-reflexive” (Welch and Warde 2017) realm of practitioners’ sense-making process. Therefore, as Warde (2017: 197) argues, actions are seldom informed by deliberate consideration of attitudes and values, but rather constitute “rapid responses to cues provided in the external environment, conjured up from habits and intuitions about the nature of the situation in which we find ourselves”. As such, he suggests, changing practices “requires altering the environment of action rather than changing people’s minds” (*ibid*). Parallel to this, Stern (1999: 468) argues that providing *incentives* is more effective than providing *information*: while “carefully designed and delivered” information can affect practice, this is unlikely so long as “there are important barriers to action external to the individual, such as significant financial cost or inconvenience”. The essential point here is that focusing on socio-cultural change and adaptation will be of limited value if not coupled with a strong focus on the infrastructures in which this has to be

implemented. One material-infrastructure strategy for motivating changing practices would be “nudging” – creating seemingly “invisible” (and generally materially rooted) incentives or motivations for changing practices; gently pushing consumers in one direction without limiting their practical choices (Sunstein and Thaler 2008). Nudging sustainable mobility might imply internalising externalities by adjusting prices to match environmental costs or providing tangible benefits to those reducing their aeromobilities or opt to travel locally.

Nudges and material incentives generally involve some form of scripting and design. Interested in this notion of *things* having the agency to incentivise practice by just being there, as it were. Latour (1992) uses the concept of socio-material “scripts” to suggest that responsibilities and intended meanings are “delegated” to things or objects – as “artefacts” – by its designer. This challenges the common notion that the roles of technology in society are guided by their “functionality” in terms of solving problems or filling needs (Verbeek 2006: 362). In terms of mobility systems, scripting within the system of aeromobility is different from, for instance, the system of automobility. The world of automobility is heavily scripted in the sense that the very layout and infrastructure of society in many cases demands driving practices for individuals to function as citizens: if there are no public transport and poor pedestrian or cycling paths, but instead multilane highways, automobility is scripted into the transport infrastructure. While scripting within the system of aeromobility can also be structural in this sense – e.g. when poor alternative transport methods are in place and consumers save both time and money by flying – it might be more interesting to consider its socio-cultural scripting.

8.3.2 Changing practice through learning and adaptation

To rehash a key point: material infrastructures have a social “layer” to them, in the sense that social actors, as practitioners, have to make sense of them and negotiate their meaning. While I have argued for material incentives being most powerful in mediating sustainable practice (Warde 2017), the analyses also point to the potential for socio-cultural change. While, for instance, mobilities are embedded in material infrastructures, the ways in which these are used is a matter of social (and cultural) adaptation of practice. As Reckwitz (2002: 212) argues, things need to be ascribed with meaning by social actors in order to become material components of practice, in

the sense that practices are influenced by an “embodied understanding” of the meaning of things. It is therefore important to recognise that infrastructures do not *only* impose behavioural guidelines on practitioners. As Shove and Trentmann (2018: 3) point out, people as practitioners also “create demand for infrastructures” through their participation in practices. Indeed, as Coutard and Shove (2018: 11) write: “infrastructures shape relations between practices, material artefacts and related concepts of service (e.g., of comfort, convenience) in time and space; reciprocally, established practices shape and sustain specific infrastructural configurations”. Acknowledging the social dimension of infrastructures, then, also implies acknowledging their malleability, for “although certain infrastructures are massive, expensive and extensive, they are never stable...they are subject to multiple forms of boundary making, contestation and ongoing negotiation” (*ibid*: 7).

Recognising the malleability of infrastructure as a convergence of socio-material entities, we can discuss the potential for changing practices through socio-cultural adaptation and learning. Alkemeyer and Buschmann (2017: 9) point to the situatedness of learning, as a way in which the cultural aspects of social practices have the potential to transform and change through “neglected bodily, pre-reflexive and non-linguistic processes” of socialisation, habituation, and embodiment. “Learning”, they suggest, “is conceived of as a process of participating in practices in which, alongside practical and propositional knowledge, identity and social membership are formed” (*ibid*: 12). This is not unlike the process of embodying knowledge through cultural adaptation referred to by Mauss (1935) as “enculturation”. This might in turn contribute to the transformation of the common “motives” for, and “vocabulary” around, practices (Dawson 2012: 314). Sahakian and Wilhite (2014) point to a more conscious, goal-oriented form of learning. Learning, they suggest, require a “learning proposition”; a “broad understanding of what is to be learned” (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 31). “The social learning approach requires an acknowledgement of the culture of consumption and how it is manifested in social practices” (*ibid*). On these grounds, we can infer that (1) “learning” to become consumers with high environmental footprints takes the character of the former – situated and implicit – kind of learning; while (2) “learning” to reduce one’s environmental footprint by engaging in different or

alternative consumption practices takes the character of the latter – self-aware and self-reflexive – kind of learning.

The participants had undeniably gone through a process of social learning as they had evolved into their different roles and identities as environmentalists. To use a “game” analogy: Through their environmentalism, the participants demonstrated a “willingness to be motivated by the rules of the game” (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 40) – the “game” here being the environmentalist pursuit of reducing one’s environmental footprints – and thus to be competent “players” of (the practices incorporated into) this game (see Alkemeyer and Buschmann 2017). Arguably, however, a transition towards sustainable mobility cannot rest on the hope of widespread “learning” (to take part in the “game”) alone, as it would be naïve to believe that the general consumer population would engage in reflexive learning and turn into actionable environmentalists. There are simply too many variations in behaviour and practice; too many things outside of the domain of environmental concern that are “meaningful to people in their everyday lives” (Sahakian and Wilhite 2014: 31); too many individual (and collective) motivations, incentives, *logics* at play at all times to warrant such an argument.

Rather, we can turn to learning as a mechanism to *sway* particular (bundles of) practices. As Sahakian and Wilhite (2014: 31) suggest, goals of “saving the planet” are powerful *ideas* but ineffective as goals to motivate change; they “ignore what is meaningful in social life and fail to engage with relevant social practices”. In order for learning to have effect, they suggest, it needs to be *meaningful* by being closely applied to specific practices. This form of learning ought to imply “the acquisition of practical knowledge”, creating new “rules” and adopting new “tools” to manoeuvre the “game” that is the given context (*ibid*: 30). As demonstrated in Chapter 5, the participants had done exactly this – cultivating and naturalising mobility habits through social learning – albeit to different extents and in different ways. Such a process also transforms the affects of practices: Every practice is “affectively *tuned* in a particular way” (Reckwitz 2017: 118), and socio-cultural adaptation through learning might change this “tuning”. Indeed, Wetherell (2012: 141) points to the notion of affective patterns shifting with the ebbs and flows of society; on both individual and collective levels. The circulation of affect, she argues, might help us “understand the rapid shifts that can take place in the demos as old orders cease to

‘feel right’ and alternative fantasies of ‘the good life’ begin to engage populations” (*ibid*). As such, “there is always the chance that new and different acts of affecting will emerge from within social practices and explode their normality” (Reckwitz 2017: 121). A possible example of this already happening, albeit on a small scale, is the impact of *flygskam* on consumers’ aeromobilities – having been a potential contributor to Sweden’s decrease in air-travel and increase in train travel in 2019 (Hanssen et al. 2019). This way, affect might, in a sense, be *revamped*; start “from scratch”, stopping consumers from “endlessly plagiarising...past practice” (Wetherell 2012: 23). For instance, the cultural practice of *sydentur* might constitute such an “endlessly plagiarised” practice which might change – as Endre reflected: “I think it’s something which is left [in you from childhood]...you *want* to go to Syden; when you’re *in* Syden, it’s scorching hot, it’s not so nice, you get tired”.

Through Shove’s (2003: 194) model for the evolution of practice, detailed in the Conceptual Framework, we can assume that while globalisation and technological progress (as grand constellations of “spiral” practices), and general levels of consumption and mobility (as stubborn sets of “ratchet” practices) will keep increasing, there is a potential for (down)*shifting* the orientation of the somewhat more pliable “pinwheel” practices of aeromobility. In light of this, we might think about aeromobility as constituted by “runaway processes”, that is, “mutually reinforcing growth processes” leading to an eventual collapse unless disrupted by some variable which changes the relationship between these (Eriksen 2016: 21). If air-travel is construed as a pinwheel practice, a socio-cultural shift through changes in popular conception or perception might potentially constitute such a disruptive variable with the power to re-direct its course (again *flygskam* is a relevant point of reference).

8.3.3 Clashing scales? Practical and general understandings

In line with practice theories, I have from different vantage points argued that the socio-cultural and the material are bound together to such an extent that merely considering one aspect of a practice would be pointless. When considering how to create potential for change, it is necessary to consider how both realms of practice can be brought into consideration. Welch and Warde’s (2017) differentiation

between practical and general “understandings” provide a good starting point for this inquiry which informs, and is informed by, this analysis.

Nexuses of social practices are informed and permeated by “a complex of general understandings” (Welch and Warde 2017: 185). These general understandings are what helps practitioners conceptualise practices, their meanings and functions; “to understand the relation between culture and action” (*ibid.*: 191), thus having an “organising” or “integrating” function (*ibid.*: 195). This category, then, shares some traits with other concepts pertaining to the overarching organisation of culture: “grand narratives” (Lyotard 1984), i.e. common stories told to make sense of, and legitimise, practices and worldly phenomena (such as consumption; Mansvelt 2005); “key symbols” (Ortner 1973), i.e. symbolic elements that uphold and reproduce socio-cultural systems or structures; and “thick description” (Geertz 1973), i.e. the application of such analytical concepts to analyse, interpret, and derive meaning from practices and cultures. Considering general understandings, Welch and Warde (2017: 195) argue, allows us to get a better grasp of common practices by (1) permitting “the analysis of large scale phenomena”; (2) allowing for analyses of culture (and its influence on pre-reflexive knowledge and values) on practice; and (3) mediating “discursive formations and practices”. Being a self-reflexive, environmentally aware consumer, as applies to the participants, implies holding a certain general understanding of what it means to engage in different consumption and mobility practices.

The extent to (and ways in) which such overarching general understandings are transferred into practice, however, depends on *practical* understandings (Welch and Warde 2017). Rather than permeating practices, practical understandings apply to specific practices. They concern the question of how to relate to particular practices; how to proceed, respond to, and go on with an activity. It is thus predicated on the notion of “practical intelligibility” (see Schatzki 1996, 2002; Heisserer and Rau 2017; Welch and Warde 2017) – essentially the individual practitioner’s toolkit for negotiating their practices, which is in turn a cornerstone in the logics involved in a given practitioner-practice relationship. The practical understanding is negotiated between the practice pillars – as Wallenborn and Wilhite (2014: 57) suggest, bodies have a “plasticity” to them: depending on the practice and the practitioner in question, as well as on the broader context in which these are bound together,

different elements within a practice can be weighted differently. In one instance, the (agential capacity of the) material infrastructure might “override” social norms or personal values in mediating practice; in another instance, the opposite might be true. Therefore, while practitioners’ practical understandings might be informed by, and organised through their complex of, general understandings, they might also diverge. This is because, as I have showed in my analysis, the motives and motivations for two individual practitioners to engage in the same practice will always differ – they will be characterised by different logics and affects.

While general understandings might be relatively constant, fixed, and rooted within the identity of the practitioner-consumer, practical understandings are fragmented, in flux, and rooted within the particular socio-economic, socio-cultural, and tempo-spatial context of a given practice. In terms of aeromobility it might be a consumer’s *general* understanding that it is an environmental harm that ought to be avoided, while, when the opportunity for a weekend get-together in Paris arises, it is his *practical* understanding that flying is necessary to fulfil the social obligations of this practice. Here, the general understanding might pertain primarily to the overarching practice of air-travel, while the practical understanding might pertain primarily to the broader practice in question, within which aeromobility might be implemented. This might, then, produce what Eriksen (2016) terms a “clash of scales”, occurring “when the intersection of...[different] levels of scale leads to a contradiction, a conflict or friction”. We can think of these ways of understanding as producing a *duality* of affect – as Wetherell (2012: 7) writes: “Affect can be uncanny and extreme but it can also be ordinary...Through this ordinary affect, people engage with the momentous and the global political”. When describing how they self-reflexively negotiate their own feelings of responsibility in relation to their aeromobilities, the participants have touched on this notion; of (aero)mobilities being at once experienced as “momentous” and something which has broader, albeit abstracted, “global political” ramifications (*ibid*). To understand the system of aeromobility we thus need to understand the interaction between aeromobility as an overarching practice, and the participation in aeromobility as unique activities *within* this practice.

In order for change to happen, then, practitioners’ practical understandings of their practices need to – at least to some extent – comply with their general understandings of the nexus of practices in which the practice in question is situated. The belief that

global aeromobility needs to shrink ought to be met with a reduction in the *practices* which (re)produce aeromobility. To achieve this, as I have begun to argue here, material and socio-cultural realms must guide practitioners' practical understandings, incentivising sustainable practice. Aside from nudges, structural incentives might involve increasing tax on low-cost flights whilst building out alternative infrastructures and subsidising train travel to create a more immediate option for efficient long-distance travel. Contemporary debates around flyer's shame and the value of hypermobility, coupled with the shifting of social status from mass-consumption to sustainable living in some developed societies, might help to "re-tune" affects and create socio-cultural "incentives" for reducing, personal air-travel. Moreover, the "conventional expectations that long journeys will be quick" (Warde 2017: 199) imbued in contemporary cultures, and in the system of aeromobility, might need some reconsideration. The bottom line here is thus that, for sustainable change to happen, structures ought to *guide* practices in the right direction, rather than practitioners pushing for structural change *through* their practices.

8.4 Chapter summary and conclusions

Tying together the RQs, this chapter has drawn on insight produced in the analysis to spark some theoretical reflections around aeromobility, its imbued practices, and how these might change. The culminating discussion has been centred around the following arguments. First, I have framed contemporary aeromobility in light of an overarching *system*, emphasising how aeromobility permeates everyday life beyond the practice of flying itself given its integration into various practices. When considering unsustainability of aeromobility, we thus ought to consider not only air-travel itself, but the myriad of related practices carried out within the system of aeromobility. Second, I have argued that this system is founded on, and (re)produced by, complex and manifold *logics* of practice. These describe the process occurring as the elements of practices, with their relative agential capacities, clash and converge; opening up different *passages* for action. Arguably, mobilities are negotiated through the "coming together" of such logics. This, in turn, might produce a divergence in practitioner-consumers' practical and general understandings, inhibiting change. Finally, considering how these insights might affect the potential for change, I have argued for a shift in focus from *rationales for behaviour* to *the logics of practices*, so that productive passages involving sustainable mobilities can be formed.

9 Conclusions

9.1 Summary of findings and arguments

The study has recognised the complexity and fragmented nature of air-travel as a practice. Air-travel provides an interesting avenue for practice-theoretical scrutiny, given that it – as I have argued – rests between constituting a routinised habit and something special and out of the ordinary. Practices hold different meanings and experiences for different practitioners, and it becomes evident that this is also true for aeromobility. While air-travel can be thought of as a practice in its own right, the analyses of this thesis have emphasised that it is, perhaps more importantly, a part of many other practices (Randles and Mander 2009). In this study, when construed as a practice in its own right, flying was thought of as environmentally damaging; something of excess, an overused privilege. As part of other practices, however, air-travel became an important tool, an enabler of opportunities and positive experiences. The meanings of aeromobility thus represent a clashing of different “scales” (Erikson 2016: 29), expressed through practice as different “logics”. Table 3 provides an overview of the general findings presented in the thesis, sorted into categories of the overarching topics covered throughout, as well as some general implications of these.

Table 3: Summary of findings and implications (by category)

TOPICS	MAIN FINDINGS	IMPLICATIONS
Mapping aeromobilities	As a “fragmented” practice, air-travel held different meanings depending on context. Some aeromobilities (work, extraordinary events) were more “justified” than others (holiday, private leisure).	Achieving sustainable mobilities might require a focus on mobilities as <i>elements within</i> overarching practices. This implies recognising mobilities’ socio-material contexts.
Normalisation and frequent flight	Air-travel is normalised in the context of contemporary Norwegian society as a “standardised” form of mobility; both in terms of the practices it involves and in terms of its socio-cultural and symbolic significance. Avoiding flying required a reflexive process of resistance, cultivation, and naturalisation of practices.	Once a practice – such as air-travel – is standardised in society, it becomes problematic to expect consumers not to engage in this practice. Sustainable mobilities ought to be standardised, not requiring consumers to go “against the grain” with their mobility practices, as it were.
Aeromobility time-spaces	The standardisation of aeromobility has tempo-spatial implications, contributing to time-space diffusion and acceleration, which affected practices and expectations. The participants experienced societal expectations to be mobile, an experience of time-squeeze, and a pressure to take part in activities. Flying allowed them to participate in different practices, thus being relatively unconstrained by time-space limits.	Mobility practices must be understood in relation to the tempo-spatial relations, rhythms, and expectations imbued in society, both materially and culturally. Through different processes of “acceleration”, expectations of mobility change. This must be understood in order to consider consumers’ (demands for) mobility practices on a general level.

<i>Self-reflexivity and dissonance</i>	The participants were highly self-reflexive about their consumer practices, including mobilities. When acting out of line with subjective environmental knowledge and values, they experienced feelings of dissonance. While some changed their practices as a result of this, most responded by changing their conceptions of the practice in question. In terms of aeromobility, this involved warranting air-travel by focusing on its contextual elements.	Individuals' personal attitudes, awareness, values, and knowledge seem to have limited effect on changing producing change in practices. However, they are important factors in determining individual responses to potential structural changes or regulations affecting consumer practices. This acknowledges the importance of considering individual consumer agency even in terms of structural change.
<i>Strategies and heuristics</i>	Through self-reflexivity, the participants used different strategies to guide and negotiate their (aero)mobility practices. However, they also engaged in "reckless" mobility practices when fatigued from being self-reflexive. This reflects the potential for, and limitations of, individual consumer agency in maintaining sustainable practices.	This suggests that environmentalists, as self-reflexive environmentally conscious consumers, have some amount of agency to guide their practices towards sustainability. However, this conscious negotiation of practice requires effort and is tiresome within a system which in many ways disincentivises this. Therefore, this cannot be expected from the general consumer.
<i>Responsibilisation</i>	The participants' subjective understandings of responsibility affected their aeromobilities and consumer practices. Nevertheless, their perceptions of social responsibility tended to override that of environmental responsibility.	Considering the socio-material context of practices, environmental responsibilities might lose ground to other forms of responsibilities guiding consumers' mobility practices. This is somewhat neglected in the individualised logics of responsibility represented in life-politics and neoliberal environmental discourse.
<i>The system of aeromobility</i>	Contemporary aeromobility can be thought of as an unsustainable "system" which is comprised of material and (infra)structural as well as socio-cultural and affective components, which together in complex "logics" which inform consumers' mobility practices in such a way that aeromobility expands through continuous reproduction.	To combat the unsustainability of contemporary aeromobilities, a system of sustainable mobility must be created. This must involve both material (infrastructural reconfiguration) and socio-cultural (changing normative expectations) factors, in order to change both general and practical "understandings" of (aero)mobilities, and the practices in which they are integral.

The main takeaway from this analysis of environmentalist aeromobilities pertains to the relative agency of individual consumers to govern their own aeromobilities and resulting environmental footprints. The study demonstrates that while consumers, as practitioners, certainly *can* (and do) apply individual agency to maintain sustainable mobility practices, this approach has clear limitations. There are two main reasons for this, and these constitute the study's key findings. First, the environmentalists found it challenging to avoid flying. Despite being self-reflexive, environmentally conscious consumers, they struggled to act in accordance with own beliefs, values, and knowledge when deciding if, when, and how to travel. This was largely due to, and depended on, the context and complexity of the practices involved, and of the motivations behind these. While they generally sought to reduce their aeromobilities,

they found many reasons for not always managing to do so. The most important ones – which they were most reluctant to give up – had to do with the maintenance of social relations in some way. Second, as a flipside of this, when they did actively avoid flying – which many often did – this was, in most cases, not without cost. Rather, it was experienced as a sacrifice requiring perseverance, passion, and determination. The participants experienced the notion that, as Warde (2017: 194) puts it, “obstacles well up”:

More important priorities, arising from other practices – keeping children healthy, responding to the needs of friends, flexible working hours, unanticipated opportunities for social entertainment – take precedence...there are indeed a set of infrastructural arrangements for the conduct of practices which constrain and steer performances but which are rarely brought to mind by either householder or social scientist when contemplating the throughput of the domestic larder

Moreover, the analysis has shown that, in the context of contemporary Norwegian society, aeromobility is normalised and standardised in the sense that it forms an essential part of both its socio-material fabric and its infrastructure; in turn organising societal expectations of mobility and perceptions of tempo-spatial relations. This implies that, as Gössling and Nilsson (2010: 242) put it, practices and activities increasingly occur within “aeromobilized time-spaces”. The participants in the study made efforts to keep their own environmental footprints low, but few had stopped flying altogether, finding it difficult to resist aeromobility; both because of its strong influence on contemporary mobility and because it enabled them to take part in specific practices which were important to them. As Eriksen (2016: vii) notes, if we address a situation by “hovering above” it, only considering the “general picture”, we quickly “fail to see the nooks and crannies where people live”. Doing so, we might become blinded by the environmental ramifications of aeromobility that we lose sight of its meanings and functions imbued in consumers’ lifeworlds. Understanding aeromobilities therefore requires the acknowledgement of “some sort of compromise where we can engage with both consciousness and familiarity with ourselves, our companions and intimate others, our material surroundings and their various pressures and demands” (Wilk 2009: 153).

9.2 Theoretical implications

I have applied these findings to existing theory, suggesting two overlapping conceptual tools to better understand the relationship between practitioners and their (aero)mobility practices. First, I have built on Verbeek and Mommaas’ (2008)

concept of the “logics” of practice to argue that the outcome of practices can be thought of as the “coming together” of various logics, mediated through the different capacities of agency distributed between the elements – the social, the material, the corporeal – within the practice. When a practitioner-consumer travels by air from point *A* to point *B* for in the context of *X* and for *Y* reasons, we cannot understand the *meaning* of this by consulting only her values, attitudes, beliefs, or knowledge, on the one hand, or her structural or material context, on the other. Rather, we can think of that air-travel practice as a pathway or “passage” through the “black box” of practical negotiation, borne out of different bundles of logics “clashing” together and converging. The ways in which these logics converge affects consumers’ understandings of the options – the potential pathways or passages – that exist within this black box. To again quote Wetherell (2012: 16), it produces affects which influence their ways of “actively ‘seeing a way through’ to what comes next”.

Applying this understanding of logics reaffirms a key proposal of practice theory, namely that practices are not straight-forward but complex. This is, of course, a highly theoretical conception of something which could be thought of in simpler terms as essentially *individuals making choices based on not one but many factors at once*. The practice-theoretical analysis adds to this, however, by showing (a) that these “choices” are not rooted solely in the individual’s rationality but in the socio-material context of the situation; (b) that there is always a gap between the *conception* of an action and what that action constitutes in practice; and (c) that these factors can be both tangible and abstract, both within and outside the practitioner’s immediate grasp of the situation. This practice-theoretical scrutiny has provided some tools to break the practice of aeromobility down into many interrelated components, and to re-assemble these to form an overarching structure. This structure, I have labelled the *system of aeromobility*. This is a system in which it “makes sense” for consumers to engage in aeromobility, and which is constituted in such a way that aeromobility is continuously expanded and reproduced. In other words, it implies that contemporary mobilities, lifestyles, and identities are founded on different “logics” of aeromobility to different extents.

As a concluding note here, acknowledging the system of aeromobility opens up new avenues for future possibilities in terms of mobility. While taking seriously the issue of frequent flying and intensified aeromobilities in face of environmental turmoil,

sketching out such a system allows for a more pragmatic way of thinking about the issue of unsustainable (aero)mobility. As Shove et al. (2018: 212) write, “the future is not entirely open: it is not possible to re-imagine either infrastructures or conventions of daily life from scratch. Instead, efforts to configure and steer the future are in large part efforts to manage the rolling frontiers of adaptation and concern the repair and modification of existing infrastructures and practices”. Rather than aiming to “stop flying”, *per se*, then, we might grant our attention to task of imagining, and developing incentives for, more sustainable mobilities. This might imply re-thinking current mobility systems as well as cultivating new understandings of “mobility” as not only a matter of transport movement, but as something which permeate all of contemporary societies through the various practices and cultural conventions within which mobilities are embedded. Shifting the future prospects of the system becomes the main imperative, given that: “In making some trajectories more likely or seemingly more viable than others, this accumulation of infrastructure-practice configurations throws shadows deep into the future” (Coutard and Shove 2018: 21). This will require attention to all three pillars of practice: things, people, and the social world.

9.3 From theory to practice

This thesis has contributed with new insight into the fields of social practice, (aero)mobilities, and the flyer’s dilemma. In agreement with previous practice-theoretical works, it has reaffirmed the simple yet profound statement that that: “People generally do what makes sense to them” (Heisserer and Rau 2017: 589); the (logics which construe the) notion of “sense” here being admittedly more complex than is often admitted. From the analysis, we can infer that, in order to produce sustainable mobilities, society needs to *make* sustainable mobility *make sense* to its citizens. In other words, as previously noted, consumers’ practical understandings (what *their* practices mean in the specific contexts they are carried out) and general understandings (what different practices mean in a broader, more *abstracted* context pertaining to the state of affairs) need to overlap. This means that the logics of mobility must coincide in such a way that passages for sustainable mobility practices are formed. The analysis suggests that the influencing capacities of structures – through e.g. lock-ins, path dependencies, scripts, incentives – tend to override individual consumers’ capacity for self-reflexive governance of own behaviours.

This view is informed by the discussions of standardised practices (Shove 2003) and life-politics (Giddens 1991). The issue is that, while individual identities and perceptions of self are always in negotiation – being reflexively sustained in relation to constantly changing social realities – solving large-scale world problems such as the climate crisis demands stability and purposefulness in action. If we accept this logic, reducing mobility emissions will require attention to structural change, transcending the reliance on individual consumer agency.

Whilst having contributed with theoretical insight, there is no magic bullet practical solutions to be offered here. Nevertheless, it is in place to emphasise that a transition towards a system of sustainable mobilities ought to create good *alternative* travel infrastructures. This echoes Spaargaren's (2011: 814) argument that sustainable consumer behaviour will be achieved "at the moment when the proper technologies, infrastructures and products are put in place as the result of strict regulations". As Hverven (2018: 146) notes, it is difficult for individuals *not* to harm nature so long as society is organised in such a way that inadvertently doing so (through engaging in normalised and standardised practices) is the norm. Granted, this does not imply that consumers ought not to bother reducing their individual environmental footprints through reducing their aeromobilities. Rather, it implies that, while those "reasonable alternatives, capacity, and resources" ought to do their part (Fahlquist 2009: 111), sustainability cannot *rely* on the responsabilisation of consumers. Indeed, individualisation of environmental responsibility is counterproductive if it undermines "the vital role of institutions" (*ibid*).

The bottom line is that the right structures ought to be put in place to (a) incentivise consumers in general to engage in sustainable mobility practices, and to (b) make it easier for those who already wish to engage in sustainable mobility practices to actually do so. In terms of environmentalism, my analysis suggests that holding an environmentalist identity might help sway or transform one's practices *if contextual parameters allow doing so* without great personal cost (see Stern 1999: 464). If this is not the case, however identity might primarily affect how practitioners understand and conceptualise their own practices. Nevertheless, environmentally minded consumers might have a greater proclivity towards conforming or "following along" once structural changes are put in place. Again, to lean on Fahlquist (2009: 119): given their "power to create opportunities for individuals to do what is right",

governing bodies must take responsibility. They ought to “create systems to make it easier for individuals to respond to the emerging norm that we ought to act in environmentally friendly ways” (*ibid*: 120). As an ending note here, this conclusion is aptly summarised by Silje’s words:

It’s challenging enough making people change their behaviour if all of society incentivises [*legger til rette for*] people to fly...it’s a little utopian to believe that society will say no...*come fly, it’s so simple*, and then each individual’s supposed to think *no, I won’t do it because it’s harming the environment* – I don’t think that’ll happen...I still believe you’ve got a responsibility for it, but...*society as a whole* has that responsibility

9.4 Limitations and avenues for future research

While this thesis has built further on a vast body of work on practice-theoretical accounts of consumption and mobilities, it has only scratched the surface of research on aeromobility and the practices it subsumes and is subsumed within. Moreover, the research is limited by several factors such as its limited sample. Recognising this, there is future research to be done on the system of aeromobility and how it is reproduced. To further evolve the body of work, future research could, for instance, implement a larger sample with more diverse participants; apply different definitions of environmentalism to the sample; draw comparisons between different consumer groups; and/or implement alternative research methods for mapping aeromobilities, e.g. through coupling interviews with participatory or auto-ethnographical methods. Furthermore, to complement the very conceptual approach taken here, research focusing more on the socio-technical structures of this system would be of interest. To avoid the pitfalls of compartmentalising practices, future research might further delve into the environmental ramifications of aeromobility *in relation to* other consumer practices. This would be useful in terms of thinking holistically, considering which battles ought to be fought, and with which ferocity, to ensure future sustainable consumption and mobilities. Finally, it is in place to recognise that, while largely failing to do so here, policy-oriented research on the implementation of existing practice-theoretical insight into society ought to be welcomed.

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Post-script

When I started working on this thesis (in early 2018), there was little public debate around the environmental ramifications of personal aeromobility. As I submit this thesis (in late 2019), such debates have dominated environmental politics, news-stories, and public engagement for several months. In many ways, the debate has moved from the margins toward the centre of environmental discourse. In 2018-2019, the children's climate protests, championed by Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, sparked public debates around flying, popularising the *flygskam* phenomenon. There might be change in the air, quite literally – a heightened *reflexivity* around aeromobilities among consumers and leaders alike starting to rock the boat (or, in this case, the plane!).

As a researcher in the middle of this, I have not been left unaffected. As I mentioned briefly in the Introduction, what sparked my interest in aeromobility to begin with was my burgeoning awareness of my own hypocrisy as a frequent flyer – a “binge flyer”, as some termed it – at a time when few of my peers seemed to discuss this kind of hypocrisy. As a young and adventurous student, I had been ignorant of this for a long time after I first started caring about the environment (and my own role as a consumer within it). This has changed, as I have begun negotiating my own aeromobilities in light of environmental factors. I have certainly felt *flygskam* and attempted to reduce my air-travel as a result of it – although I'm hesitant to declare that I've been successful in this endeavour.

Whilst writing this thesis, listening to the participants' insights, I have quietly caught myself changing my mind several times; failing to decide how much I, as an individual, ought to feel personally responsible for my own environmental footprint. Though frustrating, there is also an enjoyment to be found in changing one's mind back and forth – it's a learning process, after all. Perhaps the road is the destination. Thinking in these terms I'm developing my own compromises, my own strategies and heuristics for dictating when, for me, flying is warranted, and when I ought to take the train or the bus instead (or just stay at home). While certainly facing a growing anxiety for the environmental impacts of excessive air-travel, I have also gained a newfound appreciation for the opportunities it grants us with. Going forward, I aim to avoid unnecessary flights, but to cherish my flights when I do fly. Part of the problem is, after all, that we so easily take our aeromobility for granted. The most valuable aspect that I have gained from this project has, in this sense, been the intensified self-reflexivity it has provoked in me.

Admittedly, however, I have not dared calculate the environmental footprint of my own aeromobilities whilst working on this project. Although I have been aware of my relatively frequent flying, and made some efforts to fly less, the abstracted nature of its contribution toward climate change and environmental degradation provided comfortable grounds for ignorance. As I completed the thesis, however, I decided that it was high time to finally do some long overdue calculations. I began by checking my calendar, searching for flights in my e-mail inbox, and browsing my flight bookings on the websites of the airlines I have typically travelled with. I had to

shake my head a little, realising the absurdity of not even remembering how many flights I have taken in the past two years. Having dug up my flight history, I used an emissions calculator offered by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)⁴. So, here goes...

The result was, if not a shock, at least unsettling. In 2018, I took 17 *individual* flights, my carbon footprint stemming from these (i.e. from the one economy class seat I occupied) being 1922kg – almost *two tonnes* – CO₂. In 2019, I took 16 individual flights, leading to a carbon footprint of 1404 kg CO₂ – despite having travelled more by train on shorter distances. Whilst writing this thesis, then, I have had an average yearly carbon footprint from aeromobility of 1663kg. Given that the typical total carbon footprint of a Norwegian citizen is around 8.5 tonnes per year (which is, by the way, almost twice the global average), my flights alone would account for roughly 20% of that. (Knowing this, considering the vast amounts of emissions produced by global air-travel becomes rather mind-blowing, as aptly visualised in the screenshot of European airspace on page IX in the beginning of the thesis.) If I placed myself among my sample in the study (as a 14th participant), I would have been among the 15-20% who took the most flights (although this says little about the total carbon footprint of these flights). Adding to this, I must admit that my flights were predominantly for leisure or seeing friends and family; I have no expectations of workplace aeromobility to hide behind.

Calculating one's own carbon footprint is certainly a humbling experience, and perhaps one that we ought to repeat now and then as a subtle reality check. I'm not convinced that shaming is a great strategy for productive change, but feeling a little *flygskam* once in a while probably won't not hurt anyone. Granted, it is one's total carbon footprint – or perhaps even more importantly, one's entire *environmental* footprint – that ultimately matters. Seeing the actual numbers produces in me one of those revelatory moments in which I am reminded that I am “member of a massively distributed thing”, as Timothy Morton put it – a “thing” of taking part in mass-consumption, hyper-mobility, material excess, and unsustainable living, and the blissful ignorance oftentimes attached to these.

It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that some practices contribute higher emissions than others – and air-travel is certainly one of those. The upside of this, of course, is that calculating air-travel emissions is relatively straight-forward, and that cutting down on flying even a little might produce substantial reductions in one's carbon footprint. While recognising the structural or systemic problems at play here, as I have emphasised in the thesis, this does not undermine the willingness of consumers to ponder, evaluate, and perhaps re-consider how their own practices and mobilities might be part of the overarching issue. Around this time next year, I will return to the calculator and, hopefully, find that the number has continued to shrink. Until then, I hope that the public, political, and academic debates around aeromobility will continue to flourish and engage politics, academia, and the public alike.

⁴ Link: <https://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/CarbonOffset/Pages/default.aspx>.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Spørreundersøkelse i forbindelse med masteroppgave om flyreiser

Denne spørreundersøkelsen deles med intervjudeltakere til min masteroppgave. Undersøkelsen har to formål:

- (1) Den vil gi nyttig kontekst
- (2) Den vil stimulere til refleksjon i forkant av intervjuet

Vær ærlig når du besvarer denne undersøkelsen. Vi kommer til å diskutere svarene dine under intervjuet, dersom du har kommentarer eller spørsmål til undersøkelsen, gjerne noter deg disse slik at vi kan prate om dem.

Dersom du skal reise med fly før intervjuet skal avholdes, gjerne bruk anledningen til å reflektere rundt opplevelsen - hvilke tanker har du, hva føler du? Vi kan prate om dette i intervjuet.

* Required

1. Navn? *

2. Alder? *

Mark only one oval.

- 18-25
 25-30
 31-40
 41-50
 51-60
 61-70

3. Hva er din livssituasjon? Skriv gjerne noen stikkord om jobb/sivilstatus/familie/husstand.

4. Hvor mye vil du selv si at du flyr? *

Mark only one oval.

- Aldri / så godt som aldri
 Lite / sjelden
 En god del / ofte
 Mye / veldig ofte

5. Hvor mange flyreiser har du tatt det siste året? (De siste 365 dager; én tur er én vei; gjerne noter deg eksakt antall også.) *

Mark only one oval.

- 0
 1-2
 3-4
 4-6
 6-8
 8-10
 10-12
 12-14
 14-16
 16-18
 18-20
 20+

6. Har du flyet mer eller mindre enn hva som er normalt for deg det siste året, vil du si? *

Mark only one oval.

- Mer
 Mindre
 Som normalt

7. Kryss av grunnene til at du reiser med fly *

Check all that apply.

- Feriereise
 Besøke venner og/eller familie
 Jobbrelatert reise
 Jeg får eller vil få brukt bonuspoeng
 Other: _____

8. På en skala fra 1-5, i hvilken grad liker du å reise med fly?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Jeg misliker sterkt å fly; jeg skulle gjerne vært foruten.	<input type="radio"/>	Jeg liker veldig godt å fly; jeg får glede av turen i seg selv.				

9. Unngår du å fly hvis du har muligheten? Svar ærlig. *

Mark only one oval.

- Ja, alltid
 Noen ganger, det kommer an på situasjonen
 Sjelden
 Nei, aldri

10. Hvor mye vil du si at du flyr i forhold til andre i din livssituasjon? *

Mark only one oval.

- Mer
 Gjennomsnittlig / like mye
 Mindre

Appendix 2: Consent form

Informasjonsskjema

Hva er formålet med forskningsprosjektet?

Dette prosjektet vil utgjøre forskerens masteroppgave. Formålet med prosjektet er å intervju miljøengasjerte norske forbrukere om deres forhold til flyreiser for å finne ut mer om hvordan forbrukere bør forholde seg til flyreiseproblematikken i framtiden, og hvilken rolle flyreiser bør spille som del av et grønt skifte.

Hvem vil gjennomføre prosjektet?

Johannes Volden – student ved masterprogrammet «Development, Environment and Cultural Change» ved Senter for utvikling og miljø (SUM), UiO.

Hva vil jeg bli bedt om å gjøre?

Du vil bli bedt om å stille til et intervju. Intervjuet vil vare ca. én time. Intervjuet vil være uformelt og uten noen tydelig struktur. Deltakeren vil bli bedt om å dele personlige tanker og følelser rundt egen atferd og generelle miljø-etiske problemstillinger, men utover dette vil dette ikke innebære diskusjon av sensitive temaer. Du vil også bli bedt om å fylle ut et kort spørreskjema i forkant av dette intervjuet.

Hva vil skje med de samlede dataene?

Jeg behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke. Konfidensialitet og anonymitet ivaretas gjennom sikker datalagring og bruk av pseudonymer. Datamaterialet anonymiseres innen dato for prosjektslutt (senest 30.11.2019).

Hva vil skje dersom jeg ikke ønsker å delta eller ombestemmer meg?

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Hvor lenge vil intervjuet vare?

I utgangspunktet setter vi av 60 min til intervjuet. Du kan bli spurt om å delta i et oppfølgingsintervju ved en senere anledning dersom noe er uklart eller trenger utdypning.

Hvor vil intervjuet bli gjennomført?

Intervjuet vil bli gjennomført på et sted avtalt på forhånd av både forsker og deltaker.

Vil resultatene av prosjektet bli offentliggjort?

Denne oppgaven vil i utgangspunktet ikke publiseres. Det kan hende den vil være tilgjengelig for studenter og ansatte ved UiO. Det finnes en mulighet for at tekster basert delvis eller i sin helhet på oppgaven vil publiseres på noe vis.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til: innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg; å få rettet personopplysninger om deg;

Appendix 3: Study participants

Participant	Gender	Age*	Position in EO**	Life situation
Jarle	Male	25-30	Adviser	Single, no children
Siri	Female	18-25	Part-time Secretary	Single, no children
Egon	Male	51-60	Regional Manager	Divorced, children
Mina	Female	25-30	Communications Adviser	Cohabitant, no children
Endre	Male	18-25	Board member	Single, no children
Julia	Female	31-40	Head of Communications	Married, children
Silje	Female	31-40	Senior Adviser/Project Manager	Cohabitant, children
Frida	Female	31-40	Adviser	Married, children
Maja	Female	25-30	Adviser	Single, no children
Nils	Male	31-40	Managing Director	Cohabitant, children
Roald	Male	31-40	Project Manager	Cohabitant, children
Tine	Female	18-25	Board member	No children
Mikkel	Male	25-30	General Secretary	Single, no children

** Based on age intervals in the questionnaire survey; **EO = Environmental organisation*

Appendix 4: Example of translations

<p>Ch. 6</p>	<p>«Nei altså da flyr jeg bare, på en måte, jeg gjør ikke noe- men jeg har jo da gjort ting i livet på en måte- større endringer, jeg jobber for miljøet hver dag, og har aktivt begynt å shoppe mindre, også vet jeg ikke om det forsvarer- at jeg har tjent inn nok CO₂ gjennom å kjøpe en t-skjorte mindre, det tror jeg ikke...» (Mikkel)</p>	<p>...well, then I just fly, kind of...but I've done things in life, you know, made larger changes, I work for the environment every day, I've actively begun shopping less – but then I don't know if...I've reduced enough CO₂ by buying one less t-shirt, that I don't think</p>
<p>Ch. 7</p>	<p>«...det handler om med flyreiser også, at man må velge annerledes, hvis 1 million nordmenn årlig drar til Gran Canaria så har du hvert fall 900 000 av de som enkelt kunne valgt noe helt annet og kanskje opplevd noe finere og mer unikt ved å reise i nabofylket, ganske mye mer unikt enn det som står i katalogen, og du møter naboen bare at en har blitt rød i kinna liksom, det er jo helt meningsløst faktisk, så det er jo litt hva man skal ut på, tenke over hva som er alternativa (...) for å være litt stygg da, det er mer en sånn desperat nå skal vi gjøre noe kult, når man flyr et eller annet sted- det eskapes veldig mye forventninger rundt reisen da, det er veldig mye kribling og bilder av stranden og hotellet, veldig mye i forkant, også går man stort sett og krangler på flyplassen og drikker for mye på flyet, og driter seg ut når man er i utlandet, så for å snu på det kan man spørre om det er selvsrealisering eller hva skal man kalle det da, en slags livsløgn» (Roald)</p>	<p>...you have to choose differently, if one million Norwegians go to Gran Canaria, at least 900 000 of those could easily have opted for something completely different and maybe experienced something nicer and more unique by travelling in their neighbouring county...and you meet your neighbour, only that he's got red in his cheeks, it's completely meaningless...it's more kind of a desperate <i>now we're gonna do something cool</i>, when you fly some place – a lot of expectations are created around the trip, there's a lot of "tingling" and photos of the beach and the hotel...and then you usually fight at the airport and drink too much on the plane, and make fools of oneself when abroad, so...one could ask, is this self-realisation, or, what to call it, a certain delusion [<i>livsløgn</i>]?</p>
<p>Ch. 8</p>	<p>«veldig mange snakker om at alle må gjøre sin innsats for klima, og da tenker folk med en gang på...hvilke ting de gjør i sin hverdag, og hva slipper du ut i Norge, kanskje 10 tonn...det er mye for en person, men...hvis du går til styret i UiO og ber dem tilrettelegge bedre sykkelparkering, skaffe billigere månedskort for studenter, da vil jo du skape mye mer endring enn å kutte de 10 tonnene, da kan jo du kutte mye mer, så jeg tror at man setter disse forventningene til folks klimaengasjement alt for personlig, for jeg vet også at hvis jeg går og spør personlig, <i>hva er fyringen i barnehagen her</i>, hvis de hadde hatt oljefyr da...og hadde hevet ut den, så hadde det vært et mye større bidrag fra min side enn om jeg hadde syklet mer, ikke sant, så jeg tror at folk må påvirke systemene rundt seg så utrolig mye mer...det er selvfølgelig kjempeviktig hva du stemmer på, men jeg tror det er enda mer avgjørende hva du påvirker systemene du er en del av...så jeg tror at vi skal forvente at folk stiller spørsmål med hvordan systemene [fungerer]...mye mer enn å forvente store ting fra deres hverdag da, for når du begynner å diskutere skal jeg spise kjøtt en gang mindre i uka...da henger vi oss opp i de bittesmå [tingene], også får vi ikke til de store endringene vi trenger (...) men...det er jo en veldig lett måte for politikere å drive med ansvarsfraskrivelse, <i>tenk på din egen livsstil, ikke tenk på hva JEG gjør</i>» (Frida)</p>	<p>...everyone must do their bit for the climate, and then people initially think about...what <i>they</i> do in their day-to-day lives; and what do you emit in Norway, maybe 10 tonnes [CO₂]?...That's a lot for one person, but...if you go to the University board and ask them facilitate better bicycle parking, get students cheaper public transport passes – then you'll create a lot more change than by cutting those 10 tonnes...I think we expect way too much <i>personal</i> engagement for the climate...If I go and ask, in person, <i>what's the heating in this kindergarten</i>, if they used an oil heater...and they threw that one out, that wouldn't have been a much larger contribution on my part than if I'd biked more, right...Of course, what you vote is very important, but it's even more crucial how you influence the systems of which you're part...so I think we ought to expect that people question how these systems [function]...more so than expecting great things from their everyday lives, because when you start discussing if I ought to eat meat one day less a week...then we get caught up in the tiny [things], and then we don't achieve the great changes we're in need of...But...well, it's a very simple way for politicians to deny their responsibility; <i>think about your own lifestyles, don't think about what I do</i></p>