Social process and product's domestication

It is well established in literature of domestication studies that homes evolve differently depending on who lives in them and how people negotiate domestic order. Respectively, it is emphasised that social processes play crucial role in domestication of products. This paper describes social processes interpreted from data collected in Helsinki area, Finland. The data consists of biographies and photographs of items that interviewees presented as 'designed functional products'.

Emphasis on social processes in domestication studies can be seen as an argument against studies that see consumers as mere passive adapters. The character of consumer might be more versatile. In this paper it is proposed that we need to recognise not just active negotiations, but also see passive adoption and indifference as social processes, affecting designed consumer product's domestication into household.

Heidi Grönman
University of Art and Design Helsinki
heidig@uiah.fi

INTRODUCTION

Based on education as a textile designer, I know relatively lot about production of designed items, but when the item is ready and 'in the field', it gets lost. Such ignorance prompted to ask what happens to a product after it is sold and enters home. Does it actually matter that educated designer designed the item? If it does, how?

Roger Silverstone and his colleagues call the process during which a product finds its place at household domestication process. The term domestication implies to how humans tame products and how products tame humans. General approaches to domestication study how technologies or innovations find their place in society, and how the functions and meanings of products evolve when consumers adopt or reject them, sometimes modifying everyday practices so that the product becomes useful. [1], [2]. Domestication-model developed by Silverstone *et al.* views the same process but on a level of individual household. Framework for domestication studies is outlined in article *Information and communication technologies and the moral economy of the household.* [3], but domestication process is only one, though crucial part of bigger media theory by Silverstone [4].

Silverstone sees media, media technologies and their domestication playing fundamental role in the ontology of everyday living [5]. We experience everyday as we do because we have two basic structures for existence: formal (*epistémé*, ritualised*)* and informal (*doxa*, mundane) [6]. Our ability and willingness to switch from one mode to another generate everyday life. For instance, we (ritually) watch news (about rituals, mostly) on television and then (informally) gossip about them. Or we (ritually) negotiate over business meeting, about which we later discuss (informally) with colleagues and members of the family. According to Silverstone, the richness of everyday is created in "our mutual construction of the news of the world" [7], and the mutual, voluntary operation of switching is that which we should be amazed at but which we take for granted. Silverstone seems to suggest that especially research on consumption and domestication of media and media technologies should take into account this constant switching, since it would provide better understanding on what is the audience and how it should be researched [8].

There are several approaches to the consumption and domestication provided by Silverstone. Domestication of products is seen as a mode of consumption in the innovation-cycle of production and consumption [9], and the domestication and consumption of media technologies, especially the television, is seen as a platform for experiences, especially for playing, an activity in itself fundamental to individual existence [7], [10]. Finally, domestication is described as a central concept in a framework that outlines the 'moral economy of the household' [3], [11]. In all these approaches media and media technologies are seen as items *par excellence* due to their "double articulation" as both objects and providers of information about the outside world, including information about objects that household may want to domesticate in the future [12].

"SOCIAL" IN DOMESTICATION LITERATURE

Framework of moral economy models how private households with their 'moral' or 'complementary' economies integrate themselves as social, cultural and economic units with formal, monetary, global economy. According to Silverstone, at stake are household's competence as an autonomy and identity and its capacity to display its competence to itself and to the outside world [13]. Domestication of material and immaterial products is household's solution to the problem of how to generate, maintain and display its competence.

With his colleagues, Silverstone describes four processes involved in domestication: appropriation means acquiring an object, objectification how it finds its place in household's life, incorporation how it gets situated to human practices, and conversion how objects, especially media technologies interface between domestic and public contexts [14] (see Figure 1).
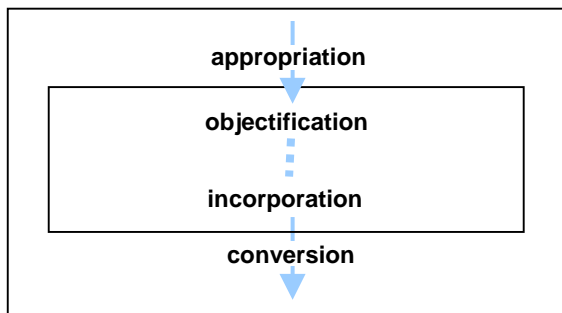

Figure 1: Domestication process

Moral is not an evaluative term [15]. Household achieves its moral by generating and maintaining itself as a social, economical and cultural unit. No household exists without moral in contemporary society, since all households are involved with consumption and domestication of material and immaterial products. This notion leads to the inherent tensions of domestication process that Silverstone sees constantly in action between public and private, informal and formal, and material and symbolic. The term moral attempts to keep these tensions in the framework by noting that while the concepts such as material and symbolic or private and public can be used as analytic terms in research, in actual human practices of everyday living they are rarely distinguishable from each other. Although analytic figures such as Figure 1 represent private space, the household, existing in the middle of public area, and products move between public and private spaces through interfaces of appropriation and conversion, public is involved constantly in practices of private household. As an example of this, Silverstone describes how (private) everyday practices are scheduled according to (public) television programmes [16].

Most of domestication studies use household or certain community as a unit of analysis and describe social processes and social phenomena that domestication processes produce. Research describes how domestication of technology maintains or re-organises gender-roles, user-identities and parenthood, or social character of consumers such as hacker and enthusiast of American cars or identity of Amishes, in addition to describing how fashion and conventions are involved in domestication processes [17]-[20]. Studies focus on technology: media technologies, ICT's, domestic appliances and digital devices. To a great extent, as reflected in these studies, processes of appropriation, objectification, incorporation and conversion are social, taking place in social life. Individuals are constantly involved in mental or physical negotiations over and with material and immaterial items within household or community. For example, re-organisation of interior decoration of living room due to appropriation of bigger television is seen as a physical negotiation that potentially maintains or reconstructs gender-roles at home.

My approach to domestication research is slightly different. First, currently the unit of analysis is "design properties" in a designed consumer products and how they affect domestication process. By "designed products" I mean products that are designed by professional designers with training in arts and crafts. "Design properties" refer to consumers' understanding of the product's (1) aesthetic qualities (such as delight and pleasure); (2) operative qualities (such as ergonomics and ease-of-use); and (3) institutional qualities (in particular, the designer's names and company brands). The focus is limited to industrially designed goods such as consumer electronics, furniture and textiles, not on unique design pieces or works of art. Second, it seems that focus on products means that I'm not looking for certain social process or phenomenon although such could be interpreted from data. Instead, I'm trying to interpret as richly as possible the social processes related to designed products.

To illuminate this difference, I'm taking as an example a study conducted by Alison J. Clarke, as presented in chapter *Taste Wars and Design Dilemmas: Aesthetic Practice in the Home* [21] and compare her findings to what can be said based on our data at this point of research. It should be noted that Clarke's research is not about domestication *per se* and her hold of research is anthropological rather than social. On the other hand, she emphasises social aspects in aesthetic evaluations while even mentioning aesthetics is relatively rare in domestication literature.

Clarke studied aesthetic processes within several "comparatively art-and-design-conscious" households. The chapter is based on larger study that was ethnographic inquiry into social relations and activities of mostly unconnected households situated in and around one street in North London [22]. Clarke's research resembles our current attempt to study domestication of design. She interviewed 76 households and has collected biographies of products and documented homes with photographs. Based on her interview-material, in the chapter she "reveals the actual processes through which taste is formed" [23]. She concludes that the process of aesthetic evaluation is not only based on social relations but that it is typically a social, not an individual process. In Clarke's study, it is proposed that homes and possessions are "active agents [...] in the construction of taste and social relations" while at the same time they are part of Bourdieu-based reflections of for example taste, identity and class [23]. Consequently, in her research she reveals processes through which household ends up having certain kind of interior decoration that reflects dwellers' taste. In Clarke's study, most emphasised are social processes of co-operation, disagreement and negotiation. Most of these happen between humans but she also points out that the relations between products are important to understanding aesthetic evaluation in addition to relations between people [24]. For example, furniture left by former inhabitant may be powerful arguments, affecting construction of taste and aesthetic evaluations by the household [25].

It can be said that Clarke has studied what kind of a process aesthetic evaluation is and concludes that it's a social process involving humans, products and the house as an architectural entity. Her data clearly shows that homes evolve differently depending on who lives in them and how people negotiate domestic order. On the other hand, our subject of study is "design properties" in designed consumer products and their role in domestication process. Respectively, for instance aesthetic evaluation is seen as one of the possible processes or concepts related to products and their designed properties. The following will serve as a short excursion into the social

processes as reflected in our interview-based data from "Design and domestication of consumer products"- project. It is hoped that our material and my interpretation will show how mundane concepts such as friendship, caring, passivity and indifference are common elements in relation to designed items.

DATA AND METHOD IN DESIGN AND DOMESTICATION-PROJECT

Interviewees

This excursion is based on interviews and documentation of 14 households in or near Helsinki, Finland. Interviewees were recruited based on their living area, occupation and/or education. Sole condition was that interviewee should be professional in a field that is relatively speaking knowledge intensive and which in its education and daily practices has either emphasis in aesthetics or clearly lacks emphasis in aesthetics. Expertise was thought to limit recruited interviewees so that they in principle have equal possibilities either by knowledge or/and wealth to access even international markets of design. In addition, documentation of homes in relatively low socio-economical levels by Riitta Nieminen-Sundell indicated that since we wanted to make fairly sure that interviewees possess designed items, we should concentrate on homes at higher levels of socio-economic hierarchy. However, since there will be second and probably third round up of interviews, we plan to recruit more households to this study, hopefully widening the scope of research.

The group of interviewees is purposefully two-folded. People working in areas where there is emphasis in aesthetics are all young designers, typically with low income, while people working in areas without emphasis in aesthetics are close to middle age and the average income is upper middle or high.

Figure 2: interior of one designer household.

The 7 designers I interviewed are all living at the centre of Helsinki or close to it, and they all are under 35 years of age. Their nicknames are Anniina, Elisa, Emma, Kalle, Laura, Mervi and Sakari. Thus, there's 5 women and 2 men. 3 of these designers are still studying at the University of Art and Design Helsinki (UIAH), and 4 have graduated from UIAH within 5 years. All of them are working in design-field (furniture design, ceramics and glass design, interior design, industrial design and graphic design) and at least 4 of them are internationally known or already famous. I estimated that 2 of them have middle income and the rest have low income. One is single and the rest are living in different kinds of partnerships. All of designers are living in block of flats.

The group of interviewees working in areas that lack emphasis in aesthetics consists of 9 persons. Their nicknames are

Figure 3: kitchen of one interviewee

Hannele, Ilmari, Janne, Liisa, Olavi, Rea, Sanna, Theo and Tiina. In this group there are 5 women and 4 men. Their areas of profession are (in alphabetical order) Chief Executive, Detective Chief Superintendent, Investor (CEO), Journalist (lifestyle section), Marketing Manager (Branding Agency), Protestant Priest, Researcher of Media, Researcher of Politics and Researcher of Technologies. 2 of interviewees are under 35 years of age, 3 are living as singles and 3 have had or are having international career, while 6 have been and are working in Finland. 5 live at the centre of Helsinki while 2 live in remote suburban areas and 2 are living in the same remote area 40 minutes drive outside Helsinki. Poorest of the group has income which is currently the average in Finland (2500e / month) and can be said to belong to lower-middle class. My estimation about the rest is that there are 3 of middle income, 2 of upper-middle and 2 with high income. 3 of this group are living in detached houses, the rest in block of flats.

For the sake of simplicity I'll call this group of people 'non-designers' since the first group consists homogeneously of designers. Also, in order to secure identities of my interviewees, I'll use the pronoun 'she' everywhere since majority of them is women (10/16).

Method

First round up of interviews was done in spring 2004. This round up was designed to document each household and collect basic data about possessions of household with a rough history of the interviewee from the point of accommodation and professional career. Interviews were semi-structured theme-interviews accompanied with documentation and small picture-based task about design. One or two round ups of interviews will follow this first one, the next starting in spring 2005.

During first interview, I visited each household with camera and minidisk. Basically I asked people to show me products that they thought to be designed with emphasis on functionality accompanied with telling product's crude biography (how long it has been there, how it was obtained, what is going to happen to it). In addition I asked which of the presented products is one's favourite and whether one possess products that interviewee despises. I offered camera to interviewee and asked to photograph each product and take some general photographs from each room in question. Few wanted to take the photos by themselves but most interviewees wanted me to do the photographing. I also drew a rough layout of each household. Finally, at the end of interview, I asked each of interviewees to connect 29 pictures about designed products to 6 pictures about varying interiors. This picture-based task was not designed to form taste-groups out of answers. Instead, it was an easy way to generate comments about design.

Despite not formally interviewing people, I spent from 1,5 to 4 hours in each household. On the average, from one household I got 13 pages of transcription and 46 photographs. While I usually didn't get a rigorous set of well-explicated biographies, I did get talk about the products interviewees saw as designed in their households and about the whole interior decoration, in terms of design and aesthetics. In the framework of domestication studies, most of the talk concerns appropriation, to some extent also conversion but there's relatively little information about objectification and incorporation. It is interesting that discussion about design, products and products' properties in this case provided relatively little material about instance, meanings, personal value or memories related to the product.

In her study Clarke mostly locates the process of "social formation of taste" in disagreements and consequently in generation of compromises and to a lesser extent in co-operation and negotiations. Within the framework of domestication studies it seems reasonable to divide 'findings' into those that remain within household and to those that are generated due to involvement of the outside world. This refers mostly to social processes in relation to products that household has received as gifts, inheritance or from former inhabitants.

SOCIAL PROCESSES IN DOMESTICATION

Social processes within household

In Clarke's study, disagreements between dwellers are far more typical than mutual taste or consensus about decoration. In addition, notions about fights over ICT's are common in the domestication of technologies literature [26], [27]. Indeed, in our interview-material, there're 8 persons who are having disagreements over products with someone else. 2 are disagreeing with their relatives, who are bringing them products they wouldn't want to possess. One dislikes certain product that her partner wants to display and one regrets having bought one product. One had disagreements with an interior designer when the apartment was under construction, and partner of one interviewee dislikes products that she brings home. In addition, one is disagreeing with her partner about the future construction of the apartment and another is expecting disagreements with her partner when they will move together since there will not be space enough for both of their furniture.

Figure 4: one source of disagreements.

Thus, half of the interviewees are having some kind of quarrels over products, taste and aesthetics, although relatively little with one's partner as in Clarke's material. Clarke is building her argument about sociality of aesthetic evaluation partly on the compromises people are doing in order to solve disagreements [28], but our material doesn't easily bend in revealing compromises. Despite protests, woman I interviewed has continued to bring home souvenirs from her shopping-tours, the other is displaying her favourite products that her partner dislikes. It is doubtful whether the relatively peaceful current situation proves that partners have made a compromise, since the interviewees explicitly told how they are displaying the product, although partner is opposing it. On the other hand, very likely the couple disagreeing over future construction of the apartment will find an agreement since compromise is impossible in the situation where they have to choose the preference of one (opening a door into wall) or the other (keeping the wall closed). Having it both ways in that case is no likely. The interior designer whose ideas the dweller didn't like finally came up with more personal ideas since the problem in the first place was too neutral proposal, a compromise. It seems that the only place for real fights but probably not compromises will be the new home of one woman, since she "knows what she wants" and was explicitly irritated since her partner doesn't have similar taste. The women with helpful relatives are and probably will continue in making compromises, in a sense that they are saving the products they unwillingly receive and display them at least when the gift-giver visits.

The rest are rarely fighting over products, taste or aesthetics. This is accomplished roughly in three ways: first, by being indifferent what interior decoration consists of, sometimes by letting someone else do the decoration; second, by not accepting products that one doesn't like or getting secretly rid of them; and third, by living with people who share one's aesthetic values. Typically in the households of interviewees who didn't mention disagreements, in case of couples one is following the first path while the other is using the second or third or they both are following two latter ones. Also in the case of singles all three paths are used, since relatives seem to consist a group whose taste and decisions affect the lives of singles' fairly heavily, even in case of middle-aged persons.

In terms of co-operation, the data from Design and domestication of consumer products-project backs also relatively poorly Clarke's argument. First of all, 4 of interviewees were living as singles by the time of interview, which of course limits possibilities for co-operation. From the rest 12 persons, 4 explicitly said that both in the couple were doing decoration and are equally interested in design. In addition, one said that her partner is clearly agreeing with her plans and decisions. The 8 persons left were talking about how "I am doing…", "I chose not to…" and 2 of them explicitly mentioned how their partners are "not interested in decoration or design". Thus, there're at least 5 interviewees who are doing same kind of co-operation as described in Clarke's study, where for example a woman is first decorating with her husband and later, as a widow, with her adult daughter. While Clarke says that such an agreement is relatively rare and that mostly products produce anxiety, our material implies that friendliness and indifference are, in fact, more common than outright anxiety when it comes to decoration and design.

On the other hand, it might not be self-evident that people are fighting over products, in a sense that the products are the real cause for the fight. While this is difficult to show by means of research, it is easy to find in fiction literature descriptions of accusations of bad taste and bad decisions which are based on the sole reason that the character is despising the accused other for reasons that usually are far from aesthetic. On the other hand, when a character likes the other, she or he can wear and display nearly anything without fear of being despised. Indeed, such controversial characters are considered as 'cool'. This is not to say that products by themselves are not evoking emotions, liking and disliking. In addition to her own research, Helga Dittmar refers for example to studies by Russell W.

Belk, which show that people draw conclusions about personality based on material possessions [29]. For instance, respondents were shown two kinds of bags, the first consisting flying ticket and expensive travelling gear while in the other there was a bus-ticket and respectively similar stuff than in the first one but in much cheaper style and materials. Majority of respondents estimated owner of the first bag being of course richer but also "more likeable, successful, interesting, generous, responsible, attractive and aggressive!"[30]. Especially within one culture we are drawing fairly similar conclusions about personalities of others according to their appearance and possessions.

Social processes in the interface of inhabitants and others

Social processes that relate household with outside world are to a great extent related the second point by Clarke, that the relations between products are important to understanding aesthetic evaluation. By this she means that the apartment with its existing products and structures often acts as a third party in dwellers' relationship, when they are making decisions concerning household's decoration [31].

For example, Turo-Kimmo Lehtonen in his study about consumers at one shopping-mall in Helsinki makes a notion that we still do not know the reasons that actually explain the decisions-making when somebody is buying or dismissing a product [32]. Drawing from the Clarke's study it seems that in very practical sense, the existing decoration is often participating in negotiations in those decision-making situations as well as when negotiations take place at home. In our interview-material this clearly is the case. Although most of non-designers are wealthy to extent that they could change the whole decoration quite frequently and designers could do it with recycled and self-designed materials, nearly all of them are having inherited or otherwise received furniture and products which they don't want to depart with. In general our material is consentient with findings by interior-designer Riitta Pesonen [33]. She studied 17 households in two blocks of flats in Helsinki, and found that most of furniture in households is old: inherited or recycled items that interviewees appreciate. Also, interior decorations rarely follow consistently one style or era. Instead, decoration is a personal mixture of varying products, materials and styles. Consequently, since items are durable and interviewees seldom change or throw away them (because the items are appreciated), most of interviewees complained that they should have more room for storage. Pesonen says that typically interior designers and architects believe inhabitants to own fewer products than they actually do. Our material seems to provide examples of interior decoration where the architecture of the building is taken into consideration more clearly than in the study by Pesonen. 5 interviewees provided examples of decoration decisions that were based on the architectural style of the apartment. They also presented products that have been accommodated because they are related to the apartment by being designed the same year as the household, or by some other, less-architectural reasons.

Interviewees are receiving quite a lot of products by inheritance or as gifts. While these add to the general "historical" look of interiors, they are at the same time creating tensions since these products are usually not of dwellers own choice. In addition, unlike interviewees in the study by Pesonen, our interviewees are not generally explicitly appreciating inherited items, especially when the item is big and heavy, such as table or sofa. Interestingly enough, research on Finnish lottery winners [34] describes a tension that might partly illustrate our interviewees' situation. Interviewed winners of lottery prize were surprisingly reluctant to appropriate even those items that their had dreamed about before winning. Authors conclude that "the appeal of new goods is not in owing them but in the process of appropriation as a disciplinary and rational activity" [35]. To the lottery winners this means that the joy they felt when their economic resources were based on salary is more difficult to experience when nearly everything is within their reach. To what extent this applies to inherited items and gifts in our material is difficult to say, at least at this point of research.

From the 14 households only in 4 the new, self-bought or, in case of one designer, self-made products dominate decoration. In the rest of households, majority of products is inherited, collected, received or recycled. These long-lasting products are taken into account several ways when interviewees are making decoration decisions. In this respect the two groups of designers and non-designers differ from each other. For instance, all the designers possess old furniture that are in everyday use while one third of non-designers have only new furniture. Similarly, while one third of non-designers possess works of fine art and high-end design, none of designers display either. These are, of course, largely financial questions. This is evident also when we take a look on what interviewees are collecting. 4 designers from 7 and 3 non-designers from 9 are explicitly collecting certain products. Designers are collecting old maps, old flashlights, toy-cars and found photographs while non-designers are collecting contemporary and modern national and international works of art and design, both unique works and furniture such as lamps. With the exception of photographs (that are in boxes and albums) collections are part of decoration in households, and in 4 households they dominate the general overview of decoration. Old furniture, on the other hand, consists usually of inherited antique pieces, rustic items and modern design from 1940's to 1960's. These products evoke mixed emotions. Some interviewees are valuing them because products are high quality design "that is not produced these days", or because the product is a reminiscence from childhood. On the other hand, at some households pieces of old furniture are treated with indifference, and products are seen as things that one is storing, possibly until somebody else can take them. The same can be said about sets of dishes that are either inherited or interviewee has bought them long time ago. Indeed, the most common brand across households seems to be Iittala/Arabia, since in 12 of 14 households Iittala/Arabia-products were either presented as designed or they're visible in photographs. At some households the glasses, ceramics and cutlery were in everyday use while some interviewees are storing them for their children.

Figure 5: Gifts from relatives. A cup by Birger Kaipiainen and a glass by Tapio Wirkkala.

It is interesting to note that the groups differ in relation to certain brands and their products. Ikea and Artek were by far the most often mentioned brands. While 6 of 9 non-designers presented as a designed product something from Ikea, none of designers did, and as far as I can recognise, there's nothing from Ikea in photographs. Similarly, while designers mentioned scornfully both Ikea and certain craft-based brands, such as Kerman Savi and Pentik, non-designers did not express dislike against brands but instead, unlike designers, were reluctant to present technological devices as designed, with the exception of Bang & Olufsen. Artek, on the other hand, is equally displayed and liked in both groups, and roughly half of interviewees possess Artek furniture. For the record, all the 14 households had Finnish Design products by Artek, Iittala/Arabia or Marimekko and mostly they've been either inherited or received as presents. Thus, our strong culture of gift giving and conserving in Finland is in this sense affecting as a unifying agent across households. The gift-giving culture seems to be a source of anxiety, and when asked, nearly all of interviewees wished to receive food as a gift instead of dishes or other designed products.

Figure 6: collection of one interviewee.

In relation to 'others' participating in interior decoration, from the 16 interviewees 4 were status-conscious in a sense that they were explicitly concerned what the 'others' might be thinking about their interior decoration. One was a designer how mentioned how the home probably is not a very good portfolio and the other, a non-designer, was proud of her home because it shows "even to others" that this is a house where people are actually living and not just displaying perfect living and taste. The third, a non-designer, was not afraid in any sense what others might think but instead she was aware of her responsibility as a hostess of her business and other guests, which had affected to a great extent the decoration of her apartment. Interestingly enough, each of them, unlike the rest of interviewees, mentioned explicitly their dislike against "museum-like" and "impersonal" homes where everything is strictly arranged, cleaned everyday and probably furniture is secured with robes so that one cannot sit in relic-chair. [36] The fourth was a non-designer who talked about how people usually clean up everything before receiving visitors but that she managed not to clean before I came. Still, I got the impression that in the beginning she was quite conscious about the 'fact' that I'll get a 'wrong' impression about her and her lifestyle.

However, the rest, two thirds or 12 persons, were neither explicitly nor implicitly concerned about what others might think about their decorations, lifestyle or their display of taste. Some were clearly aware that right now there is MA in Design asking them to point out designed products, which admittedly sounds like a trick question, but after a while these tensions were forgotten and people seemed to show their possessions openly. Contrary to my expectations, interviewees didn't talk in terms of taste and status. They simply talked about the products, like there wouldn't even exist other people outside household. Thus, although it is possible to claim that people are buying expensive and culturally valued products because these are good for their status, the argument seems not to be well-grounded in empirical material. Similar point is made by David Halle, who studied art-related possessions in socio-economically varying households in New York [37].

CONCLUSION

Based on our material it seems to be correct what Clarke in principle is arguing, namely, that very seldom one place is decorated solely according to one person's individual taste. Decoration of the household usually is a mutual project of several persons and of products and architecture too. However, it is suggested that decoration involves other faculties in addition to taste and aesthetic evaluation. These are mundane concepts such as friendship, caring, politeness, hospitality and also indifference and passivity. With these latter activities (most likely excluding indifference and passivity which hardly are activities in this sense) the motivation of action and focus of one's concentration is on other people rather than in products and their aesthetic properties. This might be used to further question in what sense the process of aesthetic evaluation is social. Indeed, Immanuel Kant holds that aesthetic experience is explicitly a subjective, direct and disinterested experience of pleasure [38]. While Kant's assumption that such experience is also a universal faculty common to all humans is problematic, it might be useful not to entirely deny all subjectivity from aesthetic evaluation.

Our material that mostly consists of products' biographies still provides relatively complex collection of social processes involved in domestication process. Generation and maintenance of relations with friends and relatives are present in households, as well as negotiations between inhabitants. Equally present is the tendency to converse items even if they clash with household's current aesthetic dimensions in its 'moral economy'. Designers in this respect are more ready to throw away products that are too clumsy, but mostly tensions are handled in advance by reminding relatives and friends what kind of style one appreciates. Thus, really awful items seldom enter household which implies that those close to household either share similar values or are able at least to follow values of the household. In this sense, the moral economy of household is conversed and operating in the outside world.

On the other hand, even if products are seen as expressions of status, taste and aesthetic evaluation, from our question about the role of design in domestication process follows that the interest doesn't focus on what people are doing with products. Instead, we are asking, what is it in a product that evokes affection, indifference and disliking and the question of taste, for example, is relevant only to extent it affects interpretation of data. While the research is in progress, this paper is an attempt to show also that such product-focused study has thus far received too little attention.

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