

# QUANTIFIED CYCLISTS AND STRATIFIED MOTIVES

## Explorations into Age-Group Road Cycling as Cultural Performance

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Building on ethnographic work with German recreational cyclists, this paper analyzes competitive motives in hobby races and training. Laying open the construction of non-competitive recreational sports as part of the dichotomy between work and leisure, the analysis turns to competitive stimuli in performative experience and examines their effects. These range from short-term efforts in races and group rides to the structuring of training and race schedules. Looking at how motives fluctuate between different layers of competitiveness, three main developments and currents influencing road cycling are observed: the popularity and possibility of big urban events, the increase of quantification, the transparency and availability of data and knowledge, and the permeability of life worlds to competitive norms.

*Keywords:* mass sports, road cycling, rationalization, quantification, competitiveness

When Jan Ullrich secured the victory of the 84th Tour de France in July 1997, after placing second behind Team Telekom teammate Bjarne Riis one year earlier, professional road cycling became massively popular in Germany. “Il Kaiser,” as Ullrich was nicknamed by Italian newspaper *Gazzetta dello Sport*, attracted the attention of German viewers for a sport that had been on the lower levels of the national sports hierarchy for a long time. Viewing figures of public broadcasters skyrocketed to up to 3.38 million viewers per stage, images of Ullrich in the leader’s “maillot jaune” (yellow jersey) occupied the covers of major newspapers, sales figures for road bikes increased considerably and social democratic parlia-

mentary party leader Rudolf Scharping accompanied the Grand Tour stage race clad in Team Telekom kit.

Enter 2013: Ullrich and many of his former teammates admitted to doping, only 12 of the 26 podium finishers since 1997 have not been penalized for taking forbidden substances, the main television broadcasters have dropped professional road cycling from their programs entirely, and newspapers only rarely fail to mention past doping scandals in reports on a discipline with one of the strictest anti-doping policies in professional sports. Scharping – now president of the influential *Bund Deutscher Radfahrer* (BDR, German Cycling Federation), the national governing body of cycle racing in Germany – pleads

for the re-introduction of Tour de France television coverage against a myriad of critics and corruption charges against cycling's world governing body, the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI, International Cycling Union). Notwithstanding, road cycling itself has gained in popularity over the last couple of years.

There is a peculiar disconnection between road cycling as a mass and recreational sport, on the one hand, and competitive cycling, on the other hand. Contrary to the dictum of the "role model function" of competitive sports for their leisure time pendants (Gieseler & Palm 1985: 5; Wann 2001), recent developments suggest the thriving of cycling as a mass and recreational sport despite the fall from grace of the discipline's professional elite, and not because of its popularity in the public eye (see Feddersen, Jacobsen & Maenning 2009 for a study on this "growth paradox" in tennis). Even though the "new generation" of young German professional cyclists – outspoken against doping and demanding severe sanctions against dopers – is highly successful in international races, the sport's stigma remains clearly visible. Similarly, the decline of the amateur portion of road racing – that is the competitive branch of the sport where licensed riders compete in local and regional races, but are, unlike professionals, not paid for it – has been diagnosed by many due to unattractive and unspectacular races with few spectators. More and more riders choose not to "draw a license" in the three available performance categories, and the BDR fears the demise of their system of competitive road racing. However, the sport itself is highly popular: Hobby races in road cycling have especially seen an immense increase over the last couple of years, and while the number of professional races in Germany has decreased, the number of participants and the level of professionalization of age-group races show a steady rise. As many as over 20,000 hobby riders take part in so-called "Jedermann" (everyman) races, and sponsored teams with substantial budgets, training camps and former professional and amateur riders are becoming more frequent. Road cycling on the level of mass and recreational sports in Germany, it seems, is in transition.

This transition is characteristic not only for road racing, but for many other disciplines in mass and recreational sports as well. Urban marathon and triathlon events with sumptuous supporting programs have been – despite costly participation fees – attracting thousands of international participants, and arouse the interest of city marketing, the hospitality industry and sponsors alike. The estimate for the self-proclaimed "sports city" Frankfurt's "City Triathlon" with 1,700 finishers is that the average participant spends 500 euros during the stay in the city (FAZ 2012a), creating significant economic incentives for planners and the sports industry. Similar developments have been observed for road cycling over the last couple of years, and they come as somewhat of a surprise and challenge to the organizational system as well as to available frames of interpretation available for road cycling as a mass and recreational sport. This article will take this element of surprise as a starting point to investigate these developments that have not been thought to be possible and shed light on some aspects that have enabled the current processes. Building on work from the sociology of sports (Cachay & Thiel 2000; Winkler & Weis 1995) and ethnological approaches to sports (Bausinger 2006; Besnier & Brownell 2012; Husmann & Krüger 2002; Palmer 2002), I am interested in the configurations where sports as an integral part of everyday culture are subject to profound shifts in meaning and manifestation, calling into question long-standing understandings of why and how actors engage in sportive activities in mass and recreational sports. These shifts, I will argue, are related to a changing understanding of the body in the social sciences (Gugutzer 2006) and the rhetorical construction of social subsystems – from sports and work (Rigauer 1969) to sports and non-sports – as interdependent, but separate domains with corresponding distinct frames of interpretation. Furthermore, drawing from recent developments in an anthropology of competitiveness (Tauschek 2012, 2013), I will analyze the embeddedness, relativity and stratification of competitive motives in hobby races and training, along with a focus on technological developments enabling the creation of new

frames for interpreting and evaluating performance and performance progressions. My goal in this paper is to lay open the immediacy of competitive stimuli in performative experience and its effect both in its ephemeral and persistent dimensions, stretching from short-term efforts in races and group rides, to the structuring of training and races schedules, and lastly to the appropriation of discursive registers and underlying semiotic processes mediating motives between different layers of competitiveness. I will suggest that there are three main developments and currents influencing the situation in road cycling: the popularity and possibility of big urban events, the increase of transparency and availability of data and knowledge, and the permeability of life worlds to competitive norms and economic principles (cf. Götz 2013). My data are drawn from research conducted at hobby races and group rides in 2012 and 2013, including participation in races and interviews with cyclists and organizers. I will begin by discussing the history and current situation of road racing in Germany against the backdrop of the development of sports in modern society. I will then deal in greater detail with the Jedermann scene in Germany and its particularities, before looking at specific cases as illustrations of broader qualities of modern recreational sports and their entanglement with society and cultural values. These cases are presented as a means of exploring multifaceted analytic perspectives on the field of road cycling as an example of sports in modern society.

### **Sports, Society, Culture, and Cycling**

Ranging from functionalist approaches analyzing the role of sports in different historical contexts (Plessner [1956]1997), to the perspective of systems theory viewing sports as a subsystem interdependent on and relating to other social subsystems (Bette 1999), and to Frankfurt school theorists criticizing sports as an extension of the fetishization of instrumental reason (Morgan 1988; Rigauer 1969), the pervasive force of sportive activity, both as spectator or participant activity (Bausinger 1990), is widely acknowledged. The import of sports in everyday culture has led to declarations that sports are

indeed culture, with specific, yet permeable, norms of practice and understanding (Hitzler 1991), and contribute to the formation of individual and collective behavior, perception and interpretations. Sports and society influence each other mutually, and consequently, sports have become a significant “cultural pattern” among others (Bausinger 2006).

The genesis of sports as a sociocultural phenomenon is closely linked to the emergence and development of civil society. According to Elias’ and Dunning’s figurational sociology, the history of sports can only be adequately understood by viewing it in the context of the process of civilization. Focusing on the interrelation between sports and “society at large,” they argue that playing by the rules in sports is a way to practice social standards:

[S]ports involve a playing with norms on two levels: with those norms which are specific to the sport itself and with those characteristic of the society at large, with those of “non-leisure” life. ... Sport, moreover, provides a good example of the variety of ways in which people can find ways and means for de-routinisation, for the “de-crustation” of self-control and of the emotional restraint imposed upon them in societies such as ours. (Elias & Dunning 1984: 150)

This “emotional refreshment” and relaxation of affect control provided by the physical activity of sports was, according to Elias and Dunning, one of the needs of industrialized societies. In the development of sports in England in the mid-nineteenth century, it was hoped that regulated competitive games such as cricket, partly replacing more brutal sports such as rugby or recreational pursuits like hunting in school curricula, could fulfill an integrative function (Hartmann-Tews 1996: 53f.). Not surprisingly then, there were moves towards an authoritative notion of sports favoring some kinds of sport over others, resulting both in the demotion of folk games (Johler 2003) and popular (*volkstümliche*) soccer games (Elias & Dunning 1984: 85). The idea that certain kinds of sport and competition can have a positive effect on the socialization and integration

of citizens prevailed in England and many other parts of the world (Digel 2012: 71). In that perspective, sport is a means for a controlled and limited expression of excitement and suspense in a regulated society, in the beginning catering mostly to a select group of aristocrats and upper class citizens.

Similarly, cycling started as a bourgeois and male privilege. After the rise of early race events in the late-nineteenth century, the competitive aspect was discouraged and the focus was shifted to a “gentlemen’s pastime” (Cox 2008: 2) by official cycling associations in the UK (Woodland 2005) and Germany (Gronen & Lemke 1987). Cycling became more and more a domain of the working classes with the availability of cheaper bike models. Again, races were initially frowned upon and professional racers were barred from the main organizations; only slowly did the model of professional and paid athletes replace the “gentleman amateur” racing for splendor rather than income. France was the forerunner in this development that led to “the myth of the racing cyclists as working class heroes” (Cox 2008: 4; see also, Dauncey 2003). In Germany, post-WW I depression amplified this process as unemployed men participated in track and road races under harsh conditions in hopes of earning a living. In Nazi Germany, amateur and professional cycling and other competitive sports were largely disestablished in favor of physical exercise for all (Bernett 1966) aimed at maintaining the health of the “racial corpus” and to combat laziness, lameness and indifference (Schäfer 2011a, 2011b).<sup>1</sup> However, the successes of track racers, such as Gustav Kilian and Heinz Vopel, taking part in six-day races in the United States, were still used for propaganda purposes.<sup>2</sup>

After WW II and up until the early-1960s, club sports in Germany were predominantly embedded in the semantics of competitive activities for young men (Cachay & Thiel 2000: 116), mainly constricted to performance-oriented motives; only slowly did the structure of sports organization change to favor a more inclusive paradigm of “sports for all” (Hartmann-Tews 1996). This development had an influence on cycling as a mass sport as well. Noncompetitive biking excursions had always been popular in

Germany, and the early-1970s saw the introduction of road bikes and cycling kit (special jerseys and shorts) in organized cycling tours as a popular and successful format by the BDR.

Despite only a tangential interest in professional races and riders, cycling as a mass and recreational sport was growing. The latter two were thought to be influenced less by competitive norms and more oriented towards fitness, enjoyment and conviviality. Both in scholarly discourse and in the view of the sport’s main organizations, mass sports were commonly defined as all sportive activities under the umbrella of organized sports clubs (Cachay & Thiel 2000: 116), and not carried out in a competitive manner (though team sports evade this definition). Beginning in the early-1980s, numerous mass sports campaigns were initiated, targeting all age groups and classes and stressing the positive benefit of sports for all for society (cf. Kurz & Storck 1994). Recreational sports, on the other hand, were seen as more openly and individually organized and not confined to club structures, but comparably free from competitive motives (Dieckert 2002). As leisure activities, both definitions situate sports outside of work life, and construct – despite acknowledging the interrelations and mutual dependencies of sports and society at large – conceptually different spheres with divergent logics of practice and interpretation. No doubt, the clear cut dichotomy of leisure as passion and work as necessity is still upheld and widespread.

However, these definitions and distinctions became heavily contested from the 1970s onwards, initiated – among others – by Bero Rigauer’s *Sport und Arbeit* (translated as Sports and Work, 1969). Rigauer argued that the distinction between the worlds of sport as a mode of leisure, on the one hand, and work, on the other hand, was invalid, because the principle of merit is the guiding principle in both worlds. Furthermore, he posed that the principles of rationalization applicable for work-life – time planning, bureaucracy, procedures – are adapted in sports, especially in structuring and measuring training efforts and performance. While able to plan these activities with relative freedom in contrast to

the sphere of work, the commoditization of individual performance on the market is also apt for the world of sports. Rigauer makes a case that work and sports are not separate systems of practice, but follow the same logic. One might raise the objection that these critiques of sports are mostly relevant for the realm of professional competitive sports. However, the pervasiveness of work-related criteria in society becomes clearer when approaching them as part of instrumental reason. Following Adorno's essay on *Freizeit* (Leisure or Free Time, 1969), non-work activities are quantified and measured against their usefulness, not necessarily identical with criteria of productivity, but as a means to an end. William J. Morgan says: "Leisure becomes a repository for satisfying social needs unmet within the everyday context of labor. In so doing, it is absorbed within the realm of purposive reason, in which the reproduction of the capacity to labor becomes its central task" (Morgan 1988: 816).

Sports and other leisure activities are, thus, less means in and for themselves, but are mediated by the logic of instrumentality. The arguments that sports are beneficial for health, contribute to fitness, enjoyment and conviviality, have a compensatory function for an otherwise regulated life, or are distinctive of a specific class or group that all fall under this logic: "Sport extends social domination, according to Adorno, by incorporating instrumental praxis within itself. In so doing, sport becomes an after-image of work, a mere prolongation of production" (Morgan 1988: 817). Similarly, Habermas (one of whose students was Rigauer) speaks of the significance of work behavior in the sphere of leisure as "suspensive leisure time behavior" (Habermas 1958, cit. in Rigauer 1969: 7). The underlying paradox is that the increased availability of leisure in modern society – as opposed to earlier eras – increases and does not diminish the importance of norms and values from the sphere of work, be they principles of merit based on competition or other social factors. Thus, it seems that the pervasiveness of sports in society is, at the same time, the pervasiveness of instrumental reason in other forms.

### **Sportivity as Distinction, Distinct Cyclists**

The "usefulness" of sports is also exemplified by its contribution to the formation of social and cultural identities, as has been illustrated by studies on the "transferability" of qualities from the sport to the work place (Kay & Laberge 2002). Such studies illustrate the role of sport as a means of distinction alongside its expected other positive effects. Comparable to the work of Elias and Dunning (1984), Bourdieu stresses that the profits of distinction promote some sports over others (1986). The argument is that sports such as tennis or golf carry a greater potential for reputation than other disciplines, and are thus preferred for their ability to create exclusivity and distinction. Moreover, Bourdieu posits that the choice of sport closely connects the perceived benefits of practice with certain lifestyles. Contingent on economic as well as on cultural capital, practicing sport is a relevant decision in the nexus of understandings of class specifics and identity formation.

Applying the concept of distinction to the realm of sports, this extension allows for two things: firstly, it gives a deeper insight into the modalities under which certain types of sport can be successful in historical contexts, and into how sports are carried out depending on ascriptions by different groups. The promotion and later demotion of cycling in the rise of modern society is an example of the centrality of changing sociocultural configurations for the practice of sports. The success of cycling as a recreational sport hinges on value ascriptions, so that, for example, a competitive motive in cycling can be both a stigma and an accolade, depending on historical conditions and on the groups of actors involved. As will be shown below, this holds true for current developments in cycling as well. It includes the forms or arrangements of practice in a social and a physical or bodily way. The social aspect of sports practices involves the composition of participants (members of an exclusive club, workers, amateurs, or professionals), the environment (a closed race track, public roads), norms of conduct (timed races, slow-paced ride), and appearance (clothing, equipment).

The physical aspect of practice makes up the sec-

ond way in which the concept of distinction enriches an analysis of sports. It allows for a closer view of the body and body techniques, involving the “stylization” of life in conceptualizing the “body as an end in itself” (Bourdieu 1986: 589). One dimension of the body is its functionality, fitness and form being the prevalent indicators. Fitness and well-being have become substantial values in the modern and post-Fordist society (Graf 2013), and are pursued for their perceived instrumental benefits for health and productivity and promoted by the “fitness industry.” In search of distinction, fitness or getting fit functions not as activity for the sake of activity, but as leisure activity for superordinate goals, such as identity formation, self-presentation or transfer-effects of enhanced performance within the frameworks of a “body boom” (Meuser 2004). Knowledge about “doing fitness” is a vital aspect of this trend that has been described by Bourdieu as the fragmentation of exercises, each directed at fulfilling a specific function. The myriad of advice books, periodicals and how-to-manuals on the internet are a vivid demonstration of how meticulously the analysis of training routines proceeds to find the optimal, time-efficient and healthiest way of becoming or staying fit, including adjustments catering to trends of, for example, muscularity (“strong is beautiful”) or skinniness (“slim is beautiful”).

Following a rationalization of sports, a huge range of gadgets and platforms are available to gather, analyze and translate data to measure and improve performance in cycling, using diverse quantifying variables: heart rate, lung capacity, glycogen levels, lactate concentration, watt output, calories, speed, duration, distance, cadence, form, perceived intensity, repetitions, body fat, weight, or steps. These variables are measured against constructions of normalcy (body-mass indices, average power output) and scaled into categories (aerobic and anaerobic activity, power and heart rate zones, endurance and explosive strength) guiding and structuring training standards. Training efforts are thus increasingly rationalized against the backdrop of both their transferability and adaptability to other aspects of everyday life, the expected effect of particular workouts,

and the formation of identities along the lines of lifestyle and constructions of normal practice. Fitness and being fit is subject to scrutinizing quantification of guiding indicators, allowing for comparisons not only against oneself in performance improvement, but also against more abstract reference points.<sup>3</sup>

Another dimension of the body that plays an important role in fitness and sportivity trends – aesthetics – has gained new significance. The visual representation of the body is no longer limited to surface appearances, but includes non-apparent and invisible characteristics of the body as well. The transformation of bodies as a resource for creating meaning and the body as a relatively stable “projection surface” for identities (Hitzler 2002) is, as training and race data is made more and more transparent via internet platforms, lists of results or oral exchange, connected to “deep tissue.” Enabled by detailed body knowledge, the shaping of bodies goes deeper than body fat, muscle definition or posture. Somatic reactions, heart rate, the flow of red blood cells, or twitch modalities of muscle fibers have become distinctive qualities even for recreational athletes. Thus, disciplining the body entails and requires the reflexive management of physical features beyond appearance. Specific aesthetic configurations are also important: sport-specific standards of muscle composition have been added to more general images of fit and healthy bodies. The pronounced muscular upper body that conventionally evokes connotations of strength and fitness, for example, is devalued in the sport of cycling as it is not performance- and output-oriented: The weight of muscles less needed for cycling is seen as a disadvantage, which prompted a recreational cyclist to seriocomically bemoan that he has to carry his biceps’ weight up a climb.

Distinction via physical attributes within sports is – unsurprisingly – sport-specific, and it expands to residues which have not for long been thought to be accessible to processes of rationalization, quantification and aestheticization. Along with social arrangements of practice, they are a powerful means for the shaping of identities via sports, and stretch to divergent cultural patterns. They contribute to the accu-

mulation of social capital in training, competition or urban events by reinforcing and representing social values, as Berking and Neckel (1993) have shown for the role of individuality in urban marathon events.

A more general and broadly applicable social value is “sportivity.” While it has long since been identified as a guiding principle in modern society (Kaschuba 1989), its pervasiveness has drastically intensified over the last two decades. Nowadays, the percentage of regularly active sportive citizens has risen to – depending on the study – 70 percent to 80 percent doing sport at least once a week (TdW 2005). 28 percent are members of organized sports clubs, with gradual yearly increases (DOSB 2007, 2011, 2012; Grupe & Krüger 2007: 167), but with the prognosis of decline due to demographic trends (Steinbach & Hartmann 2007). Sportivity varies based on socioeconomic factors: Market research and surveys corroborate the observation that people highly active in sports for the most part originate in households with high net incomes and education levels (AWA 2009); older people or those with lower education levels are most likely not to be involved in sports at all.<sup>4</sup> The “typical” recreational athlete is male, white, in his late-thirties, and has a high income (Hartmann-Tews 1996; Humphreys & Ruseki 2009; TdW 2005) – this holds true for cyclists as well (AWA 2009). A survey of participants at a 2012 Jedermann race in Göttingen puts the average athlete at 42, with a high education level and good income. While the number of female participants is increasing, it is still marginal. Only 13 percent of participants for the Göttingen event were female; the numbers for other races are even smaller (interview with BDR, June 17, 2013).

Estimations put the yearly expenditure for age-group triathletes at approximately 2,750 euros (Wicker, Prinz & Weimar 2013), and one can assume that the expenditure figures for road cyclists are lower, yet comparable. The price of road bikes contributes especially to the high costs of the sport, with entry-level bikes starting at 900 euros and high-end “halo bikes” costing well over 10,000 euros. Cycling shoes, helmets, glasses, and other items of clothing add to the costs. This illustrates the influence of consumption patterns in sports where lightweight car-

bon-fiber road bikes with electronic gears constitute objectified cultural capital and the choice of gear has differentiating signal effects. The “commodification of the cycle as an object” (Cox 2008: 10) is part of larger shifts in road cycling, related to consumption patterns, practices of self-presentation and event structure: “Road cycling is being relegitimized as an activity for certain groups of social elites, with echoes of the ways in which the earliest cycle clubs acted as opportunities for social display of values and disposable wealth” (ibid.).

Such shifts in value attribution or changing patterns of practice and presentation in cycling as a mass and recreational sport are linked to social paradigms of fitness and performance, pointing to cycling’s role for processes of distinction and prompting inquiries into the reasons for phenomena such as huge sporting events, high degrees of organization of cycling competitions, or heavily structured and rationalized ways of doing sports. Part of the efforts to approach these areas have been, for a long time, attempts to create typologies and to segment sports participants into useful categories, guided mainly by motives for recreational athletes. Kaschuba differentiates between five commonplace motivational complexes: body ideals and aesthetics, health, communicative functions of sports, sensual experience, and performance (Kaschuba 1989: 164–165). These have been shown to be “standard” and consistent motives for sports activities in numerous studies by sports science, insurance companies or public administration over the last three decades. More focused analyses in marketing research try to detect “target groups,” arriving at segmentations such as “serious pursuers,” “sport lovers,” and “socializers;” or “healthy joggers,” “social competitors,” “actualized athletes,” and “devotees” (Wicker et al. 2012). For cycling, a BDR-initiated survey of interviewees having ridden any bike in the last six months distinguishes “health-oriented” (30 percent) from “socially oriented recreational cyclists” (27 percent), “purpose-oriented rationalists” (24 percent) and “involved athletes” (19 percent). The governing body was anticipating the first three categories, but expressed their surprise at the high number of “competitive recreational athletes:”

The comparably smallest, yet numerically surprisingly large segment with 19% are the involved athletes. This group – for the most part individualists – rides fast and sport-oriented on purpose to exert themselves. Professional athletes serve as role models. Top-quality equipment is highly valued.<sup>5</sup>

Given the prevailing definitions of mass and recreational sports in contrast to professional sports, it is no wonder the results of the survey, conducted to align the BDR's profile and services with the new needs of cyclists, were met with disbelief: Cycling as leisure is, according to long-standing paradigms, disconnected from the sphere of competitiveness and performance-orientation. While the trend of rationalizing and quantifying sports efforts for instrumental reasons is rhetorically easily accessible, the notion of competitiveness in hobby sports is still comparatively marginal. Looking closer at current processes in road cycling, I will argue in the following that the argumentative declaration of competitiveness is to some degree taboo. Competitive motives are veiled both by value attributions to non-professional road-cycling as non-competitive and by associated discursive registers. Competitive motives find their expression in micro aspects and in reflexive habitual patterns which often evade categorization, and relational and layered motives – in contrast to explicit statements of competitiveness – are not overt and make no direct reference to underlying instrumental or rationalized principles.

### **Cycling as Leisure and Competition**

How do these processes materialize in German recreational road cycling, and in how far does performance-orientation and competition influence the structure of road racing in Germany? Similar to most other countries, road cycling in Germany is divided into three sections. At the top, paid professional cyclists<sup>6</sup> race in professional teams, with UCI ProTeams (such as the former Team Telekom) as the top tier, UCI Professional Continental Teams as the middle tier and UCI Continental Teams – where riders have contracts, but are not necessarily paid

– as the lowest tier *équipes*. This classification determines at which races teams are allowed to start, so that ProTeams have the right to race high-profile international events, such as the Tour de France or the Vuelta a España, Professional Continental Teams have to hope for invitations or wildcards for these World Tour races, and Continental Teams are limited to lower profile races.

The second level is for amateur riders. Cyclists have to be members of clubs approved by the respective national governing body (the BDR in Germany) in order to obtain a license which enables them to take part in amateur races. Amateur riders are typically unpaid, but can receive material support, such as bikes and a cycling kit, or be compensated for travel and accommodation expenses, et cetera. There are three performance categories available for amateur riders:<sup>7</sup> A, B and C. Riders must start with a C license – commonly viewed as the entrance to performance-oriented mass sport – and have to achieve either a win or five top-ten placements in order to get into the next higher category, and keep proving their performance not to be relegated.

Hobby cyclists make up the third level, that of mass and recreational sports. Typically, they do not hold one of the three license categories, nor do they participate in races – at least, this is the long-lasting expectation held by sports organizations and other institutions involved in cycling administration and policy. So-called Radtourenfahrten (RTF, cycling tours), biking excursions or cycle marathons are the classic formats available for hobby riders, with a focus not on performance but, as the BDR puts it, rather on the “contact with the environment (mostly nature), seeing and experiencing” (DSB 1976: 23), the social dimension of doing sports, “fun and joy,” and the benefits for health and well-being: “The appetite is good, the sleep deep, and the self-confidence grows” (ibid.: 33). While cycling tours can involve score cards and tokens of appreciation, such as special jerseys for avid riders, an element of competitiveness is generally denied:

As a matter of principle, the spirit of competition in mass and recreational sports is to be rejected,

it belongs to the realm of competitive sports. ... [The comparison of performance] cannot be eliminated, as it is a natural component of life. ... We do not support these aspects, but they cannot be prevented. (Ibid.: 23)

What Rigauer calls “bourgeois romanticist tendencies” (1969: 81), that is the ideological transfiguration of sports as part of a distinct leisure sphere in contrast to work-life, finds its expression in the normative claim that mass sports should not be competitive or involve performance comparisons. Indeed, this claim goes back to the beginnings of the sport in the early nineteenth century where competitiveness was discouraged and frowned upon. However, this interpretation of mass and recreational cyclists as noncompetitive actors with motives mostly unrelated to agonal principles has been challenged, and the spirit of competitiveness has been, as the quote above shows, an integral element of the sport from the beginning. Notwithstanding the rejection of competitive aspects in recreational cycling by sports associations, they are present at the level of practice. However, the perception of competition-free recreational sports is not just a discursive strategy, but an expression of a larger ideological configuration that posits a conceptual distinction between work and leisure.

There have been races with time-keeping open for cyclists without licenses for some time now, but the trend of big Jedermann races with a large number of participants is relatively new. In 1996, the first edition of the Hamburg Cyclassics, a professional race of the UCI's World Tour series, introduced two courses of 50 and 160 kilometers for age-group cyclists. A total of 2,400 riders took up the challenge, and, 17 years later, the 2013 edition of the Jedermann race has over 20,000 participants. In 2006, the T-Mobile Cycling Tour as the “first and only overall series of race events” for “ambitioned cyclists”<sup>8</sup> included the Cyclassics as one of around twenty races, building on the popularity of the sport. Two years later, when Telekom stepped down from all sponsorship activities in cycling following the doping scandal around Ullrich and others, the tour was discontinued. How-

ever, demands for a race series for recreational cyclists persisted, leading to the founding of the German Cycling Cup (GCC), a coordinated effort by the BDR and an initiative of cycle race promoters (the Verband Deutscher Radrennveranstalter). In 2008, nine races were part of the series, and in 2013, participants can score points in a total of fourteen races, mostly offering a choice between short and long distances. The Göttingen-based Tour d'Energie, an appendage of a former pro race like the Cyclassics, started with 1,062 participants on a 72 kilometer course and is now host to close to 3,000 cyclists on 46 and 100 kilometer courses.

The popularity of the series is illustrated by the number of participants, the range of sponsors, a dedicated online-publication,<sup>9</sup> and foremost, a number of almost professionally organized teams with high budgets and performance potentials that exceeded the former level of ambitioned cyclists, causing worries for the BDR as the national governing body:

The Jedermann races have reached a stage that needs supervision like competitive sports. By now, there are German championships with doping tests, leader boards for all categories, well-sponsored teams with partially big financial budgets and professional support. The end to this boom is unforeseeable. The statistics for last year shows 50,000 starters for the German Cycling Cup alone. (BDR 2013: 24)

Despite the regulation that riders licensed in the top two categories of the BDR are not allowed to start at such races, the performance level is very high. In some teams, bi-annual training camps are held, and riders have extremely high amounts of training and equipment similar to professionals.

For amateur riders, a 16 percent decline of licensed riders over the last years (BDR 2013: 72) can be observed, prompting the BDR to give warnings against the death of the “decades-long proven A/B and C system of categories and their regulations” (ibid.: 24). Cases of former amateur-category racers discarding their A and B licenses in order to be able to participate in Jedermann races have been

reported (BDR interview, FAZ 2012b). The rise of Jedermann races, in contrast to amateur racing, is largely attributed to the attractiveness of the new format:

The atmosphere is totally different. As a Jedermann, you have a fantastic atmosphere and a huge fenced off racecourse; as an amateur, you drive sixty times around the church tower or through an industrial zone without any spectators. (Interview with a participant in FAZ 2012b)

There is a general worry on the part of the BDR about the impact that Jedermann races and related processes have on the conventional structures of recreational road cycling in Germany:

It is also recognizable that cycle tours are increasingly used by many performance-oriented athletes to train for participation in Jedermann races that spring up like mushrooms. Sadly, reckless behavior, such as jumping red lights ... of some groups has to be noted in some cases. ... It should be argued that they are not bike races... (BDR 2013: 23)

The concurrence of different developments is noteworthy: There is an increasing interest in the format of competitive races with top cyclists able to ride on the level of higher-ranking amateurs; even ex-professional riders are part of the field. The number of sponsored teams competing for the leader board is steadily growing, attracting more well-trained riders and providing incentives to improve in order to secure a spot on one of these teams. In any case, the level of performance in Jedermann races is remarkable. A high number of participants are eager to compete for good placements and to measure their performance against others, contrary to the BDR's insistence on the subordination of competitive motives in recreational cycling. Prior to the rise of Jedermann races, amateur-level racing would have been a venue to cater to this need for competition. Simultaneously, the eventization of non-professional cycle races – following a more general trend to-

wards big events (Betz, Hitzler & Pfadenhauer 2011; Hepp & Vogelgesang 2003; Hitzler 2011; Klein 2004) – attracts a diverse range of participants from all levels of performance and with different motivations to take part. As there are also significant differences in skills, knowledge and experience related to riding such races, organizers and participants alike have remarked the growing conflicts in these races. Here, processes of professionalization meet processes of eventization and inclusion:<sup>10</sup> The aim of organizers is to attract large numbers of participants to make the events economically feasible and profitable. This leads to a situation where occasional cyclists, avid beginners and well-trained sponsored riders meet “at high speed,” causing partly dangerous situations when riders overestimate their skills or overexert themselves and ride “in the red” with potentially dangerous consequences. The dangers of this development are extensively discussed in online fora and on Facebook,<sup>11</sup> prompting some organizers to reflect on possibilities to separate highly ambitious riders looking to score points for the German Cycling Cup from cyclists portrayed as “recreational” or “looking for a good time.” Initial developments like invitation only events for top GCC riders or changes in course planning<sup>12</sup> show an awareness both of the increasing focus on winning as a potential for the format and the conflicts which can spring up from its popularity.

The concurrence of these developments is also a “clash” of different cultural patterns of practice. There has been a shift from recreational events like cycle tours or small timed races with – in comparison to current races – few participants, to highly competitive races with pelotons (the main field of a race) of a couple of hundred riders in a group, team tactics, breakaways, and bunch sprints. This involves the transposition of competitive patterns to performance patterns initially dominated by other cultural patterns like social or recreational rides. The popularization of performance principles (Grupe & Krüger 2007: 309ff.) in mass and recreational sports is critical for such shifts. Competitive motives are, it seems, becoming more and more pervasive in

non-professional sports activities, and find their expression in popular sports events. This development is largely attributed to the significance and centrality of the principle of merit in modern society. Its manifestation in big urban events, new consumption patterns, and marketing and sponsoring activities are regularly ascribed to the expansion of neoliberal paradigms to all aspects of everyday life (Andrews & Silk 2012). Drawing from the deliberations above, I would argue that this account misses an important aspect. Instrumental reason, as shown above, has been the driving force behind sports activities, both professional and recreational, from very early on. This includes elements of competitiveness and performance orientation, not only in team sports. While further inquiry is needed, especially a focused historical ethnography tracing the development of competitive motives and semantics in the sport of cycling from its emergence in the late-nineteenth century in Germany, the literature available suggests that they have always been parts of the sport (cf. especially Rabenstein 1996; Gronen & Lemke 1987). Furthermore, it is crucial to distinguish the guiding principles from their manifestations. The individualization of performance – interrelated to larger social trends of individualization in a risk society (Beck 1986) – and accordingly, a performance orientation in the private sports sphere favored a relatively intraindividual comparison of strength, speed or stamina, not visible on the surface like relative interindividual comparisons such as races. However, this does not mean that instrumental principles were nonexistent in these private spheres. A constriction of economic influence on complex life worlds to concrete and tacit economic principles misses the finer gradients of extra-work activities not apparently linked to work-life – as Habermas has shown, not even suspensive or compensatory leisure time behaviors are external to these principles. Rather, the current developments in road cycling should be viewed as realizations of profound principle in the context of new configurations of practice.<sup>13</sup>

### **Quantification, Rationalization, and Transparency**

What then are – apart from the dictum of economization or neoliberalization – the factors that have led to the genesis and success of Jedermann races in Germany? There are a number of interdependent “enablers” vital to the current situation in road cycling, both in racing and training. While I will focus here on their influence on road cycling, they are certainly also potent in other areas of sports and everyday life.

The first cluster of such enablers consists of new techniques in the realms of quantification and rationalization. An increasing number of tools and gadgets are on the market allowing performance measurement, tracking and analysis. They are able to record performance indicators such as strength, endurance or recuperativeness. These techniques stretch from very basic things, such as measuring weight or speed via scales and simple bike-attached speedometers, to sophisticated devices, such as quantifying leg-specific power output via power meters. Power meters, coming from professional sports, are highly expensive diagnostic tools attached to the cranks of a bike to monitor the wattage produced by a cyclist. In combination with performance tests, such as spirometry (measuring lung capacity) or lactate measurements, power zones and anaerobic thresholds are analyzed to determine training and race recommendations.<sup>14</sup> Training plans are then structured aided by these power zones, trying to prevent “junk miles” (that is training miles outside recommended power or heart rate zones). Recently, more affordable power meters have been introduced onto the market, making them a more viable alternative to popular heart rate monitors. The supply of performance diagnostics, position and mobility analyses as a service, providing individualized training plans even for recreational cyclists, builds on these data. Training diaries on a range of online platforms help one to follow the specific schedules aligned to the goals for the season. Less refined versions of training analyses include ready-made training plans that can be used individually with the help of diagnostic tools such as heart rate monitors. Fur-

thermore, tests in cycling publications and online fora inform readers about new “tech” – equipment and clothing – and its potential to increase performance by reducing drag or friction. The quantification of performance is, moreover, enabled by GPS location services, recording the courses ridden by cyclists and creating “segments,” for example a hill or a time trial course. Comparing one’s performance to earlier rides becomes effortless, as times are measured automatically for the course or segment given. Former instances of measuring course performance have been – besides races – so-called *Stoppomats*: Installed at the foot and peak of climbs, a cyclist would fill out a card at the foot of the climb with his name and punch it into the *Stoppomat* which would print a time stamp on it. At the top of the climb, one would punch it in again and deposit the card into a box. The cards would then be collected at regular intervals and leader boards be published in local cycling magazines. Nowadays, results from *Stoppomats* are posted online. Power meters, diagnostics and training plans closely follow the logics of rationalization, including references to and disputes about scientific studies or citing the training methods of professionals as guiding patterns for the training of recreational cyclists. They are linked to fitness and sportivity paradigms that have emerged over the course of the last decades, stressing the importance of fit and healthy bodies. Furthermore, these tools facilitate the more direct and substantiated mapping of instrumental principles to performance-oriented goals. Thus, these new quantifying instruments have the enabling potential for optimizing and perfect training schedules, even in the realm of non-professional cycling. In this regard, the trickle-down effects from professional sports as well as the mediation of training paradigms through bike-specific publications and media are central factors for this development.

Closely connected to the techniques of quantification and rationalization are new techniques of transparency. Data acquired from heart rate monitors, cadence and speed sensors, and power meters, as well as training logs, are increasingly uploaded to a range of online platforms and made publicly available.

So-called Winter Trophies (“Winterpokal”) rank riders or teams of riders according to the duration of training over the winter months; on Strava,<sup>15</sup> the data of single rides – including speed, heart rate, (estimated) power, VAM (*velocità ascensionale media*, average ascent speed), and time – can be measured against past efforts as well as other cyclists having ridden the same course. The results are virtual leader boards segmented by age group, gender and weight class. Analogous to professional races, the fastest riders of a climb or segment are designated King or Queen of the Mountain (KOM/QOM) – when they lose a KOM, an e-mail is automatically sent to encourage them to win it back. Outside of training, race results are posted online and in leader boards of race series, such as the German Cycling Cup or the Jedermann portal,<sup>16</sup> creating rankings for all riders and teams participating in Jedermann races, based on points gained in each competition. Transparency also involves knowledge about training methodology and practice, for example the newest trends in professional training, flexibility or strength exercises, technique, and equipment. While many riders will not use the full extensive functionality of online platforms or extremely expensive training devices, the “base layer” of transparency techniques – comparing one’s own performance with the performances of others – causes an expansion of the digital dimension of cycling, having a direct impact on competitiveness and how rides are experienced.

This is linked to the third cluster concerning the connection of technical aspects with social factors. Enabled by techniques of quantification and transparency, the individualization of performance – both in training and in races – can draw from virtual proximities of riders and their efforts. As a result, athletes in mass and recreational sports have an increasing number of reference points for their performance. One is no longer limited to monitoring one’s own performances, but one can also see how one stacks up against other riders in terms of results or speed. This leads to new relationalities and, consequently, to a networked or relational re-individualization as a cultural pattern of performance: the individualization of competitiveness, that is that

personal efforts are measured and improvement is aspired to on a personal level, is coupled with new techniques, massively expanding the possibilities to relate oneself to others without necessarily being in direct contact. While this re-individualization does not mimic professional competitive interpretations, it involves a stratification of competitiveness with divergent points of reference: the self, and different performance or age groups as the other. Online leader boards and virtual KOM classifications on Strava are examples of the potential of putting various people into competition without them having to know each other. KOM notifications and leader boards are able to create directed competitive stimuli by putting efforts into relation with each other. Thus, the digital tools available to mass and recreational cyclists create new competitive patterns based on already existing developments, such as the popularization and individualization of performance principles, and the rationalization and quantification of sports, as well as everyday life. What can be observed is both a stabilization and continuation of these relations and patterns. Jedermann race series continue and expand and online dimensions of the sport are extended, both on online platforms gaining new “social features” and on social networking sites.

However, these competitive patterns are still relatively unstable or fragile. An expression of this fragility is the fact that there is mostly no “immediacy” or directness to competitive motives, but rather a layered approach. As interviews with recreational cyclists participating in Jedermann races have shown, there are both stratification and temporality attached to competitiveness as well as its explication. The stratification finds its expression in a sequential layering of motives: Recreational motives, such as staying healthy and fit, losing weight and enjoying the sport, are often foregrounded, while overtly instrumental motives, such as compensation for stressful work or private life, are subordinated. However, they are – closely linked to the findings of Elias and Dunning – widespread among cyclists, who argue that the relaxation from cycling helps them in their busy work or personal lives. Competitive dimensions, that is improving one’s performance for

the sake of performance, riding faster than other riders or achieving a good placement in races, are often less directly communicated or only formulated *ex post*. Both the fragility of the competitive pattern in recreational sports and the discursive subordination of competitive motives as part of the dichotomy between work and leisure favor the underemphasis of competition. This is, of course, not a stratification of motives that can be generalized for all cyclists. There are a number of identifiable types of riders along the lines of recreational cyclists who initially deny competitive motives; cyclists highlighting their individual improvement as the primary goal; riders clearly competitive but stressing that their expectations are low in view of their own performance and other, better riders; and highly ambitious riders aiming at achieving top results in races. Segmentations have their limit, and this is especially the case for segmented motivations in recreational sports. Creating a typology of three or four different athlete types for marketing purposes might make sense, as Wicker et al. (2012) argue for the triathlon. However, such typologies are not sufficient for an ethnological analysis, most notably because of the stratification of motives. When further inquiries are made, specific competitive motives are regularly communicated in addition to recreational instrumental motives, even if a competitive dimension is denied initially: “Yes, of course, one tries to ride faster than other riders one knows on a climb,” a cyclist stressing her non-competitive aspirations in the sport stated (interview with C., June 14, 2013). The account of another cyclist who recognized one of his team members in a race who started the race faster than him:

When I saw him, I have to say, it is not really nice to say, I know, but I was happy that I caught him. ... I take other riders of my club as a comparison, and my aim is, of course, to be as fast as them or better. ... Well, I know it is not possible, but I want to take a podium place in one of these races one day. (Interview with J., September 12, 2013)

More ambitious riders explicate their competitive motivations more clearly and include specific goals

in their formulation: “My aim is to move from the top 20 of my age group to the top 10 in the next season” (interview with D., September 10, 2013).

One important aspect of the formulation of competitive motives hinges on what one might call immersion: Relations to other riders in combination with performance and potential can be created to measure one’s performance not only in terms of speed, time or abstract ranking, but also with specific reference to single riders. This results in joy about being faster than another rider in the sprint finish or excitement that one is able to “follow the wheel” of a competitor up a climb. The notion of relative expectation horizons is vital here, as it enables new relationalities between different athletes: “Well, I don’t know, I have no experience, no horizon of expectation of how to rate my performance” (interview with J., September 12, 2013).

Relatively narrow expectation horizons closely relate to how competitive motives are formulated, and techniques of transparency and quantification are important enablers creating denser networks of performance knowledge, resulting in cyclists’ abilities to relate to each other’s performance. There is, of course, an amplifying effect of existing cultural practices and competitive patterns, leading to persistent influences of competitive stimuli and cyclists, for example in how training efforts are structured, how race seasons are approached or which expectations riders have. As Jedermann races grow more popular and more and more riders participate in these events, competitive motives and patterns gain importance (the diametrical opposite being that an increasing number of riders shy away from highly competitive groups and choose to ride at the back, as a race organizer observed). The appropriation of discursive registers – the “vocabulary” of ambicionado cyclists – including argumentative strategies and communicative ways to make sense of race efforts, forms another distinct element of competitiveness in recreational sports. Besides registers from professional sports, including expressions like “bridging a gap” or “leeching” (riding in the slipstream of other cyclists without contributing to pace making), the elicitation of stratification is a remarkable feature of discourse.

Related to the fragility of competitiveness in recreational cycling as a cultural pattern, expressions of competitive motives are, for the most part, coupled with mitigating phrases. Outright statements of ambition (“I want to win”, “I want to be better than him”) are much less frequent than remarks pointing out the relativity of one’s performance (“I want to improve my own performance/to keep my current form”, “It would be nice to be able to ride with the top group”) – though further inquiry into the discursive manifestations of competitiveness is required, direct and strong utterances of competitive ambitions still seem to be, in contrast to professional sports, less encouraged in spite of recent developments towards performance orientation. Instead, what can be observed is the relationality of competitiveness as participants construct isolated standards of comparison regarding their performance (“Can I improve my time?”, “Can I beat my training partner?”). In this respect, the long-standing normative dictum that recreational cycling should not be competitive seems to prevail here in a modified form, favoring relative instead of absolute performance comparisons. An intriguing observation in this context is that, in order to be successful, top riders in Jedermann races need to adapt their work schedules heavily to their extensive training efforts, creating the need to justify such an emphasis on the sport. At a certain point, the intensive pursuit of cycling with highly rationalized and structured training regimen evades the frames for interpreting recreational cycling. The justifications for such efforts heavily draw from the principle of merit in professional sports, illustrating its pervasiveness in its non-professional counterpart.

The temporality of competitive motives is another important aspect, albeit in a more ephemeral fashion: The atmosphere of big race events, seeing a teammate or a known competitor in a race can function as a “trigger” or competitive stimulus. This points to the necessity of observing road cycling as performance; strong cases have been made for extensive ethnographies of bodily practices and sports as performance (Honer 2011), and the same holds true for road cycling and competitiveness. Ephem-

eral competitive stimuli are accessible by interviews as well, but direct access depends both on direct ethnographic encounters as well as on coincidence: One revealing episode during a Jedermann race in Hannover placed the ethnographer in a small group trying to bridge a gap to the field at the front at the race, with one of the riders swerving out of the Belgian tourniquet (a formation where several riders take turn at the front and then fall back into slipstream) and bringing down the next closest rider. As it turned out, the two were husband and wife, producing an argument right after they had checked for bodily or technical harm: "Why did you do that?", the husband asked, alluding to her apparently riding "in the red" and overexerting herself, thus – according to him – not being able to properly control her bike and causing the accident. "This was the first time we have been so close to the top group, and I wanted to stay in contact with them!", she exclaimed; the stimulus of seeing the front of the race at such a close distance caused them to accept risks, as they explained to me while we were standing – unharmed – at the side of the road. Indeed, this is a common critique of Jedermann races based on experiences of accidents and crashes over the last couple of years. Riders are caught up in the moment and try to ride harder than they can, looking for gaps where no gaps exist or riding faster than they are used to. Competitive patterns are, in that regard, very influential.

### **Conclusion**

Both stratification and temporality of competitiveness illustrate intermingled motivational spheres as well as the limits of segmentation. The pervasiveness of competitiveness as a cultural pattern does not only apply to those cyclists voicing direct ambitions, but also to other athletes seemingly less interested in producing a good performance. The popularity and possibility of big urban events, the increase of transparency and availability of data and knowledge, the increasing quantification and rationalization of recreational sports: these are vital enablers for the emergence of new competitive patterns in mass and recreational sports. Techniques, knowledge, transparency, and new forms of social rela-

tions are important aspects of this configuration; in their convergence with trends towards urban events, they bring about new constellations of competitive performances, such as Jedermann races including a professionalization of ambitious hobby cyclists. Thus, I would argue that the phenomena of these races and new forms of competitive patterns in mass and recreational sports should not be constricted to the increasing influence of economic (or neoliberal) principles on life worlds, but that they have been facilitated by the concurrence of the developments outlined above, amplifying – but not replacing or creating – existing cultural patterns of rationalization, quantification, and competitiveness.

This article, viewing sports as an integral part of everyday culture, inquired into road cycling as a cultural performance. It mapped the crucial dimensions and underlying processes which an ethnological research program on new and emerging patterns of sport activity in modern society will have to take into account. Many of the elements outlined here are efficacious for other realms of everyday life as well, but manifest conspicuously in the realm of cycling. The quantification of the self and of performance, the rationalization of practice – both in its meaning of training and action – and the stratification of competitive motives point beyond cycling to much more pervasive sociocultural processes demanding further research.

There are a number of aspects upon which I have not touched in this article, but that seem crucial for further inquiry into cycling as a mass and recreational sport in light of current developments. One of these aspects is doping in recreational cycling. Doping in the history of professional cycling has been extensively thematized (cf. Houlihan 2002). While most of the literature on doping in sports focuses on professional sports (Bette & Schimank 2000) or its potential negative influence on young athletes, newer studies have also started to problematize doping and substance abuse in mass sports (cf. Müller-Platz et al. 2006). The use of steroids in gyms (Kläber 2010) has been a popular example for the reach of doping into non-professional spheres. From caffeine, analgesics, asthma medication to over-the-

counter NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, e.g. Ibuprofen) and finally to EPO (erythropoietin) or human growth hormones (HGH) – the range of substances used in mass sports (and everyday life; Robert Koch-Institut 2006, 2011) is huge, prompting officials to administer drug tests at the German Jedermann championship in 2012 and urban triathlon events in Germany. While there have been no known cases of doping in recreational road cycling in Germany yet, tests at the New York Gran Fondo in 2012 resulted in two hobby riders testing positive for EPO.<sup>17</sup> A survey of Swiss endurance events estimated that 5–10 percent of athletes in mass sports use NSAIDs to treat pain during races (Mahler 2001). Another recent study found high percentages of physical (13 percent) and cognitive (15.1 percent) doping among recreational triathletes in Germany (Dietz et al. 2013), suggesting a “general propensity to enhance” (ibid.: 8) rather than abusing substances for specific race goals. These findings fit the hypothesis of the pervasiveness of principles of self-quantification, rationalization and self-optimization, although further inquiry into this sensitive topic is needed.

Furthermore, and closely linked to pro-cycling where masculinity and heroism are highly valued while women’s cycling is largely neglected by media, race organizers, sponsors and spectators, aspects of gender demand closer scrutiny. Jedermann races are predominantly occupied by men, but serve as a dense field of inquiry into gender issues as men and women currently start in the same races, causing disputes about safety and fairness. What are the reasons for the long-lasting under-representation of women in Jedermann races and recreational road cycling? On which levels do perceptions of rationalization, quantification and competitiveness differ based on gender differences, and how does this materialize in performance?

Lastly, the role of technology has been touched upon tangentially in this article, yet further ethnographic inquiry into the role of technology and bikes as objectified cultural capital, innovation, extension of the body, and – clearly – fetish is called for. The adaptation of new technology as well as the circu-

lation of technological and scientific knowledge in the realm of cycling is closely linked to the ways in which road racing as competition is performed. Perspectives from science and technology studies present an opportunity to further conceptualize this interface between sports and technology and promise insights into the interaction between different forms of knowledge and action.

## Notes

- 1 There had also been processes in the Weimar period linking physical exercises to rationalization and debates about a “human economy” (Dinçkal 2013).
- 2 The developments of the transformation of cycling in Germany from a historical perspective deserve far more attention than this article can provide.
- 3 This is linked to the “quantified self”-movement, where extensive data on the body is harnessed, processed and analyzed. See <http://quantifiedself.com>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 4 See <http://www.presseportal.de/print/2505640-aktuelle-umfrage-zum-umgang-mit-stress-im-job-ausgleich-theoretisch-beim.html>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 5 <http://www.bdr-medienservice.de/index.php?id=518&thema=1752>, accessed September 10, 2013. All translations from German to English by the author.
- 6 Formally, the distinction between professionals and amateurs was replaced by age categories in 1990, see <http://www.uci.ch/Modules/BUILTIN/getObject.asp?MenuId=MTkzNg&ObjTypeCode=FILE&type=FILE&id=34033&LangId=1>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 7 <http://www.rad-net.de/modules.php?name=html&f=disziplinen/kategorien.htm&menuid=107>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 8 <http://breitensport.rad-net.de/aktuelles/2007/die-t-mobile-cycling-tour-geht-2007-in-die-zweite-runde.html>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 9 <http://www.challenge-magazin.com>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 10 I am referring to the notion of “inclusion” from sports studies as the process of including individuals in social subsystems like sports (cf. Hartmann-Tews 1996: 37).
- 11 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/140043912701934/>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 12 The Bremen “Race of Champions” invited the top 100 men and top 40 women of the Jedermann scene for a race, see <http://www.bremen-challenge.de/index.php?pid=276&state=page&action=default>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 13 Neckel (2008) shows a similar pervasive transposition of a “culture of success” to all aspects of society.
- 14 Such rationalization of riding and its manifestation in

professional races – riding at a determined wattage using a powermeter – has been critiqued for its lack of spontaneity or dullness in contrast to “instinctive” racing styles: see <http://www.cyclingnews.com/news/nibali-its-a-huge-personal-satisfaction-to-win-tirreno-adriatico>, accessed September 22, 2013.

- 15 <http://www.strava.com>, accessed September 22, 2013. There was a lawsuit against Strava following the death of a cyclist trying to beat a KOM on a descent. It was argued that Strava encouraged risky riding by creating leader boards and incentivizing riders to reclaim KOMs. The lawsuit has been dismissed. See [http://velonews.competitor.com/2013/06/news/strava-wins-dismissal-of-civil-suit-over-berkeley-death\\_289714](http://velonews.competitor.com/2013/06/news/strava-wins-dismissal-of-civil-suit-over-berkeley-death_289714), accessed September 22, 2013.
- 16 For the GCC: <https://service.acceptus.de/rennen/forms/sort.php?id=m&y=2013>, accessed September 22, 2013. For the Jedermann-Portal: <http://jedermann.rad-net.de/jedermannrangliste/>, accessed September 22, 2013.
- 17 <http://www.bikeradar.com/news/article/two-amateurs-test-positive-for-epo-at-gran-fondo-new-york-34711/>, accessed September 22, 2013.

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