

Bovenkerk, Henning; Fertig, Christine

**Article — Published Version**

Consumer revolution in north-western Germany: Material culture, global goods, and proto-industry in rural households in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries

The Economic History Review

**Provided in Cooperation with:**

John Wiley & Sons

*Suggested Citation:* Bovenkerk, Henning; Fertig, Christine (2022) : Consumer revolution in north-western Germany: Material culture, global goods, and proto-industry in rural households in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, The Economic History Review, ISSN 1468-0289, Wiley, Hoboken, NJ, Vol. 76, Iss. 2, pp. 551-574, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ehr.13192>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/287907>

**Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen:**

Die Dokumente auf EconStor dürfen zu eigenen wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und zum Privatgebrauch gespeichert und kopiert werden.

Sie dürfen die Dokumente nicht für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, öffentlich zugänglich machen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Sofern die Verfasser die Dokumente unter Open-Content-Lizenzen (insbesondere CC-Lizenzen) zur Verfügung gestellt haben sollten, gelten abweichend von diesen Nutzungsbedingungen die in der dort genannten Lizenz gewährten Nutzungsrechte.

**Terms of use:**

*Documents in EconStor may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.*

*You are not to copy documents for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the documents publicly, to make them publicly available on the internet, or to distribute or otherwise use the documents in public.*

*If the documents have been made available under an Open Content Licence (especially Creative Commons Licences), you may exercise further usage rights as specified in the indicated licence.*



<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>



# Consumer revolution in north-western Germany: Material culture, global goods, and proto-industry in rural households in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries

Henning Bovenkerk | Christine Fertig 

University of Münster

## Correspondence

Christine Fertig

Email: [christine.fertig@uni-muenster.de](mailto:christine.fertig@uni-muenster.de)

## Funding information

German Research Foundation,

Grant/Award Number: DFG FE1916/2-1

## Abstract

Existing scholarship on the early modern consumer revolution postulates a dichotomy between the classic pioneering countries of England and the Netherlands and the remaining parts of Europe, which were more stagnant. We contribute to this literature by analysing probate inventories in a rural area in north-western Germany. We show that a closer look at these spaces, which had an intermediate level of development and integration into global markets, reveals a more gradual development and a discernible market evolution. Sumptuary laws may have somewhat slowed down the change in material culture in German regions, but the presence of towns and the proximity to the Netherlands had noticeably positive effects on consumer behaviour. The proto-industrial orientation of local economies proved to be particularly important, as it led to the granting of access to global markets, in addition to greater availability of cash. We observe a delayed diffusion of the new consumer culture in intermediate European regions and argue for a more gradual view of the European consumer revolution.

## KEYWORDS

consumer revolution, consumption, global trade, material culture, north-western Germany, proto-industry

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/) License, which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the use is non-commercial and no modifications or adaptations are made.

© 2022 The Authors. *The Economic History Review* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of Economic History Society.



This pioneering study investigates the spill-over effects of the early modern consumer revolution from one of the core countries to neighbouring rural regions in mainland Europe. We compare the change in material culture in five rural communities in north-western Germany, given that it is a neighbouring region of the Netherlands. Using probate inventories, the study challenges the dichotomous interpretation according to which the revolutionary development of material culture was limited to the economic vanguards, while the rest of Europe either did not participate in this development or only did so very sluggishly. So far, there is a lack of studies examining the development of new forms of material culture in regions that can neither be considered centres of world trade nor remote peripheries. These intermediate spaces are important areas for the spread of new consumer culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and extended across much of the European continent.

In the eighteenth century, north-western Germany was a region with an intermediate level of development and integration into global markets. Its proximity to the Netherlands facilitated the diffusion of new patterns of consumption. In this region, consumer goods, especially global goods, were integrated into everyday culture at a slower pace than in the North Atlantic trading centres. The long-lasting state regulation of consumption and luxury in Germany had a dampening effect on the development of modern consumer culture, and only slowed down this process but did not prevent it. The entry of global goods such as cotton goods and various products associated with the consumption of colonial hot drinks into rural households marked a turning point in the consumption patterns of hitherto locally oriented societies. Specific geographical and economic factors were of great importance. Proximity to cities had a clear positive impact on access to consumer goods. Of greater importance, however, was the proto-industrial orientation of the local economy, which provided access to cash and connectivity to global markets. With this study, we show that pre-modern households of north-west Germany entered product markets early and supplemented or even replaced self-produced necessities with purchased consumer goods. This study not only shows that the dichotomy between dynamic and static regions in Europe postulated in previous research falls short, but also points to the importance of specific regional factors and the role of market development.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows. Section I provides an overview of the research on the consumer revolution and early modern consumer society. Section II sheds light on the supply side of material culture in north-western Germany and on patterns of import trade and its organisation, which made significant progress in the eighteenth century, at least on an aggregative level. In section III, we present probate inventories as the central sources of this study and situate them in their rural contexts. In sections IV and V, the focus of our analysis is on global goods for which a broad demand emerged in Europe during the eighteenth century. We show how cotton goods and manufactured goods, for the consumption of colonial groceries, arrived in the material culture of this rural region during the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, as part of new material culture, not only global goods but also goods like pictures, mirrors, and clocks became a matter of course in rural households, even among the rural lower classes. The results are summarised and discussed in section VI.

## **I | THE EARLY MODERN CONSUMER REVOLUTION**

The thesis of an early modern consumer revolution describes a change in material culture in which pre-modern households increasingly met their needs by purchasing market goods at the



expense of household-based subsistence production.<sup>1</sup> According to this, households acquired, on the one hand, colonial goods such as coffee, tea, cocoa, sugar, and tobacco, and, on the other hand, larger quantities of differentiated manufactured goods such as pictures, mirrors, porcelain, and cotton goods, some of which were imported via global markets. This development affected not only urban elites, who were committed to a lifestyle oriented towards aristocratic splendour, but also the small-town bourgeoisie and rural households. Populuxe goods – smaller and relatively cheap items – such as colourful ribbons and printed handkerchiefs, which many people could afford, thereby setting significant markers for the further development of material culture, spread through all social classes.<sup>2</sup> In terms of time, the beginnings of this change are located in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; geographically, it has been confined primarily to the North Atlantic littoral regions, especially England and the Netherlands.<sup>3</sup> Ogilvie, however, argued that there is as yet little evidence of an early modern consumer revolution in other European regions, and argued for a more dichotomous view of the development of material culture in largely stagnant regions beyond the core countries.<sup>4</sup>

Several historical developments are considered to have contributed to an increase in the consumption of traded goods. First, the disintegration of sumptuary restrictions over the eighteenth century contributed to the emergence of a legitimate social sphere in which consumption appeared acceptable. In Germany, restrictions on consumption remained in force longer than in other countries, such as England and France, but over time, they increasingly gave way to a positive evaluation of the economic and political effects of consumption.<sup>5</sup> Second, the reduction of trade costs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, through the improvement of trade techniques, allowed the distribution of differentiated trade goods at lower prices.<sup>6</sup> In some cases, the falling prices of such goods had enabled them to substitute more costly products.<sup>7</sup> An important contribution was made by the entry of global goods into the market, especially the steadily growing availability of colonial and manufactured goods, which contributed to the hybridisation of material culture and the appropriation of previously foreign cultural techniques in the Atlantic in the eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, it could have been the overcoming of regional limitations of economic areas, which led to a profound change in material culture, that can be called the consumer revolution.<sup>9</sup>

Third, it has been claimed that the enhanced availability of differentiated goods increased the willingness to work more and longer to participate in a flourishing consumer culture. The

---

<sup>1</sup> de Vries, *Industrious revolution*; McKendrick, 'Consumer revolution'.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'populuxe' is used here in Fairchild's definition of 'cheap copies of aristocratic luxury items'. See Fairchild, 'Populuxe goods', p. 228.

<sup>3</sup> Blondé and Van Damme, 'Consumer revolution'; Blondé and Ryckbosch, 'Material cultures'; McKendrick, 'Consumer revolution'; Shammas, *Pre-industrial consumer*; de Vries, 'Purchasing power'; idem, *Industrious revolution*.

<sup>4</sup> Ogilvie, 'Consumption'; eadem, 'Choices and constraints'.

<sup>5</sup> McKendrick, 'Consumer revolution', pp. 18–20; Hunt *Sumptuary law*; Ogilvie, 'Consumption', pp. 304–12; Wirtz, 'Luxus', p. 168; Rublack, 'Right to dress'.

<sup>6</sup> Davis, *Commercial revolution*; North, 'Transaction costs', pp. 29–35; Verhoeven, 'Fashionably late?', p. 274; see also O'Rourke and Williamson, 'After Columbus'; Pfister, 'Great divergence'.

<sup>7</sup> Beck, 'Luxus oder Decencies?'; Brewer and Porter, *Consumption*; Kriedte, 'Großhändler', pp. 21–2; Shammas, 'Textile prices', p. 501.

<sup>8</sup> Berg, 'Pursuit of luxury', pp. 99–132; Findlen, ed., *Early modern things*; Gerritsen and Riello, *Global lives of things*; Kümin, *Drinking matters*; Menninger, *Genuss*.

<sup>9</sup> Carson, 'Consumer revolution'; Schuurman, 'Things'.



expansion of the labour input of household members allowed the acquisition of consumer goods in addition to meeting needs through subsistence production.<sup>10</sup> However, it is not clear whether there was an initial expansion of labour input to secure sufficient income in the face of deteriorating economic conditions.<sup>11</sup> Proto-industrial households may have played a special role in this, as they largely depended on selling manufactured articles for their income. They relied on markets to procure daily necessities and had already moved away from a traditional subsistence-based way of life. They also often received colonial goods, such as coffee and sugar, as payment for their yarns and fabrics.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, faster penetration of rural households in proto-industrial areas by product markets could have occurred.<sup>13</sup>

Several studies have demonstrated a wide and rapid pervasion of urban and rural societies with new material culture in the core countries of the consumer revolution. Research on various English and Dutch regions has shown that this new material culture spread rapidly from centres, such as London and Amsterdam, to smaller towns and rural regions. These findings suggest that it was not merely an urban or elite phenomenon, but that markets for mass goods had already emerged in the first few decades of the eighteenth century.<sup>14</sup> However, the thesis that a consumer revolution took place throughout Europe in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been repeatedly questioned.<sup>15</sup> In addition to the extensive research on England and the Netherlands, some studies deal with regions of Europe that were far away from the centres of trade, such as Spain and the Scandinavian countries.<sup>16</sup> In her study on the small town of Wildberg in Württemberg (located in south-western Germany), Ogilvie concluded that a revolutionary development, as postulated by de Vries in particular, was not a European phenomenon, but was confined to the vicinity of the European North Atlantic economies. She argued that the consumer aspirations of many people have been effectively curtailed by labour market institutions and parish councils.<sup>17</sup> Earlier research on Württemberg found an increase in the quantity and variety of consumer goods, in particular, fashionable populuxe goods; these results are more consistent with the thesis of the consumption revolution.<sup>18</sup> However, how far these specific local conditions can be transposed to other European regions is still an open question. For Ireland, it could be shown that the country, as a hinterland of the pioneer country England, participated in a developing European consumer culture, albeit with a clear time lag.<sup>19</sup> This suggests that the idea of a pronounced dichotomy between the North Atlantic pioneers and the rest of Europe may fall short.

<sup>10</sup> de Vries, 'Purchasing power', pp. 107–21; idem, 'Industrial revolution', pp. 255–6; idem, *Industrious revolution*; Voth, 'Time and work'; idem, 'Longest years'.

<sup>11</sup> Allen and Weisdorf, "'Industrious revolution'", pp. 720–23, 728; Clark and van der Werf, 'Work in progress?'; Pfister, 'Real wage divergence', pp. 721–6; Verhoeven, 'Fashionably late?', p. 274.

<sup>12</sup> Flügel, *Kaufleute*, p. 56; Pfister, 'Great divergence', p. 61; Weber, *Deutsche Kaufleute*, pp. 42–5, 277–80.

<sup>13</sup> Blondé et al., 'Consumérisme'.

<sup>14</sup> Berg, 'Pursuit of luxury', pp. 88–99; McCants, 'Exotic goods'; Overton et al., *Production and consumption*, pp. 165–9; Shammas, *The pre-industrial consumer*; de Vries, *Industrious revolution*, pp. 149–54; Weatherill, 'Meaning'; idem, *Consumer behaviour*.

<sup>15</sup> Clark and Van Der Werf, 'Work in progress?'; Ogilvie, 'Consumption'; eadem, 'Choices and constraints'.

<sup>16</sup> Bengtsson and Svensson, 'Living standards'; Fernandez, 'Medieval villagers'; Heß, 'Danzinger Wohnkultur'; A. Hutchison, 'Consumption'; R. Hutchison, 'Industrious revolution'; Marfany, 'Industrious revolution'; Moreno Claverías, 'New commodities'.

<sup>17</sup> Ogilvie, 'Consumption', pp. 297–312; eadem, 'Choices and constraints', pp. 289–302.

<sup>18</sup> Medick, *Weben und Überleben*, p. 406.

<sup>19</sup> Flavin, 'Consumption'.



Most studies on material culture outside the core countries of England and the Netherlands examine smaller or larger towns but do not focus on rural areas. Previous research on the transformation of material culture in Germany also refers to urban areas.<sup>20</sup> Given that the core message of the consumer revolution claims a change in the consumption behaviour of the masses, who lived predominantly in the countryside, this perspective must be supplemented by an analysis of rural areas. If the aim is to explore the expansion of the consumption of global goods into large parts of the population and the transition from luxury to mass consumption, we must look at rural areas and the people living there.

Thus, this article addresses two important gaps in historical research on the transformation of material culture. It explores the diffusion of the early modern consumer revolution into regions with an intermediate level of development and integration into global markets that are not significant centres of trade, but also cannot be described as remote areas. At the same time, this study looks at rural areas, such as studies on England and the Netherlands, and asks for signs of incipient mass consumption.

## II | GLOBAL GOODS IN NORTH-WEST GERMANY

In the long eighteenth century, Germany was characterised by its intermediate position in the economic structure of Europe. The level of real wages here lay between the higher real wages in southern England and lower real wages in Italy and other southern European regions.<sup>21</sup> At this time, market integration in Germany had not yet progressed very far. The coastal regions were well integrated, as was generally the case in Europe, but there was hardly any market integration beyond that. There is little evidence of a general integration of the German-speaking region, to which the politically fragmented overall situation and the widespread trade barriers certainly contributed. Germany thus clearly differs here from the north-western European trading centres, which had a well-developed hinterland.<sup>22</sup> Another indication of the slower development of the German economy can be seen in the imports of raw cotton. These can be taken as indicators of the emergence of an import-substituting cotton processing industry, which existed here as in many European regions. However, these imports grew at a rate of 1.0 per cent annually, while growth in the UK and France was at least twice as fast.<sup>23</sup>

There are several indications at the aggregative level that access to new consumer goods in the north-western German hinterland improved significantly during the eighteenth century. An important prerequisite for the expansion of the consumption of colonial and world market goods in rural households was that these goods were available. Three aspects suggest that there was a sufficient supply of colonial and global goods in north-western Germany: the increasing imports of globally traded goods in seaports of the north-western European mainland, a larger degree of openness of the economy, and a growing connection of inland regions to international trade.

North-western Germany was part of the hinterland of some of the most important seaports in pre-modern Europe, such as Amsterdam and Hamburg, as well as to numerous smaller ports, such as Bremen, which supplied this region with globally traded goods. Amsterdam played a dominant

<sup>20</sup> Driesner, *Bürgerliche Wohnkultur*; Heß, 'Danziger Wohnkultur'; Hochmuth, *Globale Güter*; North, *Material delight*; von Heusinger and Wittekind, *Materielle Kultur*; Schmidt-Funke, 'Stadt als Konsumgemeinschaft'.

<sup>21</sup> Pfister, 'Real wage divergence', pp. 721–3.

<sup>22</sup> Chilosi et al., 'Many integrations', pp. 58–62.

<sup>23</sup> Pfister, 'Great divergence', p. 50.



role, becoming the most important port on the north-western mainland in the seventeenth century, thereby replacing Antwerp.<sup>24</sup> For north-western Germany, Amsterdam was relevant because it directly supplied parts of western Germany with globally traded goods via the Rhine and it also distributed these goods to other German ports, such as Hamburg and Bremen. Available data from the eighteenth century show that the exports of most global and colonial commodities to the German hinterland via the Rhine increased between 1753 and 1792, with the quantities of raw cotton growing at an annual rate of 1.7 per cent, sugar at 2.1 per cent, and tea at 0.4 per cent, while the value of exports of tobacco grew at an annual rate of 3.5 per cent.<sup>25</sup> Regarding raw cotton, this is surprising because the Dutch cotton imports in general fluctuated and did not increase significantly over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; nonetheless, they were still substantial for European markets.<sup>26</sup> With the increase in exports distributed over the Rhine, colonial and global goods reached the western areas of Westphalia.<sup>27</sup>

Hamburg formed the north-eastern end of the western European seaports and had grown to some importance since the middle of the seventeenth century. Since it had no direct access to colonial production areas in the eighteenth century, Hamburg imported these goods from the trading ports in the northern Netherlands, England, France, and the Iberian Peninsula. Hamburg was thus not directly involved in intercontinental trade until the American Revolution, but connected the German hinterland with trade in the East Atlantic and the North Sea.<sup>28</sup> Between 1736 and 1798, Hamburg's imports of colonial foodstuffs increased at an annual rate of 1.6 per cent. Coffee and sugar were the most important colonial goods; the annual growth rate of coffee imports was 3.7 per cent. Coffee rose to become a mass consumer good in Germany as early as the eighteenth century, with per capita consumption growing strongly from the middle of the century onwards.<sup>29</sup>

In the nineteenth century, smaller ports then also played an important role in supplying globally traded goods. In the eighteenth century, global and colonial goods were initially only imported in small quantities via the port of Bremen.<sup>30</sup> From the 1840s onwards, Bremen became one of the most important ports for raw cotton and tobacco in Europe, competing with other international centres of trade, such as Liverpool for cotton.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, at least in the nineteenth century, Bremen could be seen as a provider of globally traded goods in north-western Germany as well.

During the eighteenth century, overseas import trade grew significantly faster than the German population. Overseas trade grew at a real rate of 1.0 per cent over the following four decades from 1753 onwards, while the population grew by less than half a per cent. GDP per capita income grew by 0.2 per cent in the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>32</sup> One can thus assume the degree of openness of the German economy increased significantly in the second half of the eighteenth century and consumption of globally traded goods overall increased.

Finally, a strong interconnection between the ports and Westphalia provided a basis for the diffusion of colonial and global commodities. There is not much research on the connections

<sup>24</sup> Lindemann, *Merchant republics*, pp. 19–30.

<sup>25</sup> Pfister, 'Great divergence', p. 14.

<sup>26</sup> Riello, *Cotton*, pp. 93–4.

<sup>27</sup> Reininghaus, *Wirtschaft in Westfalen*, vol. 2, p. 717.

<sup>28</sup> Pfister, 'Great divergence', p. 4; Fertig and Pfister, 'Coffee, mind and body', pp. 223–8.

<sup>29</sup> Pfister, 'Great divergence', p. 44.

<sup>30</sup> Hill, *Die Stadt*; Fuhse, 'Wirtschaftsgeschichte', pp. 103–11.

<sup>31</sup> Fuhse, 'Wirtschaftsgeschichte', pp. 213–8.

<sup>32</sup> Pfister, 'Quantitative development', p. 181.



between Hamburg and the West German hinterland,<sup>33</sup> but Bremen had trading connections with Westphalia from the middle ages onwards. Merchants from Minden and Osnabrück exported textile products to and via Bremen.<sup>34</sup> While this trade was mainly located in the north-eastern part of Westphalia, the north-western part had stronger connections to the Dutch ports and their markets. In the west, the city of Bocholt, a centre of cotton processing, participated heavily in trade with the Dutch ports to buy the required raw cotton and to sell the produced products as well.<sup>35</sup> A second centre of cotton processing emerged at the end of the eighteenth century in the two adjacent regions of Gronau (Germany) and Enschede (the Netherlands).<sup>36</sup>

There is evidence that merchants who traded Westphalian linen offered colonial goods as part of their payments.<sup>37</sup> While the importance of village shops in rural England has recently been highlighted, there is barely any research on this topic in Germany, where data on rural retailing are hardly available.<sup>38</sup> Regarding the late nineteenth century, there is evidence that village shops sold global and exotic goods.<sup>39</sup> The few extant sources for earlier periods suggest that itinerant traders played an important role in the distribution of goods in the rural regions of north-western Germany.<sup>40</sup>

Although the supply of colonial goods in north-western Germany expanded significantly during the eighteenth century, the consumption of these goods was restricted by sumptuary laws. In the eighteenth century, luxury prohibitions served the protectionism of the domestic economy, but above all supported an endangered social hierarchy, and were therefore directed less at the abundantly consuming elites than at the poorer parts of the population. Even had these laws been less effective than the authorities intended, they very likely pushed the consumption of novel goods into clandestine spaces, making it difficult to track this development.<sup>41</sup> Sources are largely silent about the rise of consumption, as it was considered undesirable for public discourse. In the prince-bishopric of Münster, there were regulations for the clothing of the rural population from 1571 onwards; rural people were not allowed to wear clothing made of imported fabrics or adorned with gold and silver ornaments.<sup>42</sup> Only clothing for holidays and festivities could be made of cotton or silk. For quite some time, these restrictions were not further addressed; it was not until 1764 that there was another regulation according to which the rural population was not allowed to wear clothes made of expensive fabrics. A year later, this was supplemented by disallowing them from wearing precious metals, except for silver rings, necklaces, or shoe buckles. However, these

<sup>33</sup> Kikuchi excludes Westphalia from the analysis and only describes Hamburg's important role for the eastern parts of the hinterland. Kikuchi, *Hamburgs Ostsee- und Mitteleuropahandel*, p. 22, n. 19.

<sup>34</sup> Hill, *Die Stadt*.

<sup>35</sup> Reekers, 'Baumwollgewerbe in Westfalen', pp. 109–14.

<sup>36</sup> Adelman, *Baumwollgewerbe Nordwestdeutschlands*, pp. 17, 37; Reekers, 'Beiträge', part 1, p. 124; idem, 'Baumwollgewerbe in Westfalen', pp. 120–1; Reininghaus, *Wirtschaft in Westfalen*, vol. 2, p. 717.

<sup>37</sup> Schulte Beerbühl, *Deutsche Kaufleute*; Weber, 'German merchants'; idem, *Deutsche Kaufleute*.

<sup>38</sup> Stobart and Bailey, 'Retail revolution'; Bailey, 'Shopkeeper'. For south-western Germany see Ogilvie, Küpker, and Maegraith, 'Krämer'.

<sup>39</sup> Spieker, *Dorf*.

<sup>40</sup> Pfister, 'Kiepenkerl', pp. 41–4.

<sup>41</sup> Beck, 'Luxus oder Decencies?'; Ogilvie, 'Consumption'; Wirtz, 'Luxus'; Rublack, 'Right to dress'.

<sup>42</sup> The following descriptions refer to the prince-bishopric Münster because Münster was the capital and Steinfurt is an enclave of the prince-bishopric, and the electorate of Cologne because Flaesheim was a part of the Vest Recklinghausen, which was part of the electorate. König, *Luxusverbote*, pp. 56–63.





regulations could not be enforced and were, therefore, abolished in 1792.<sup>43</sup> In the electorate of Cologne, there were similar regulations: in 1595, people living in the countryside were prohibited from wearing imported fabrics or any gold and silver additions.<sup>44</sup> In 1730, luxurious black clothing was banned for funerals and the mourning period. In 1764, authorities enacted a new ordinance for peasants' wives and daughters, prohibiting them from wearing lace made from imported fabrics. The ordinances did not prevail, for in 1766 there was a renewal with an explicit demand for compliance. Although further ordinances followed, their enforcement was rarely successful.<sup>45</sup>

The consumption of colonial luxury foods was repressed in the prince-bishopric of Münster in 1724 by sumptuary laws. Urban retailers and members of the trader's guild (*Krämerzunft*) observed growing sales of saffron, ginger, coffee, tea, and other colonial goods in the countryside, and tried to have them banned to protect their own economic interests. Their concerns were heard by the authorities, who, for their part, were not comfortable with the growing consumption of the rural population.<sup>46</sup> From 1766, there was a prohibition on drinking coffee and tea, and even the ownership of objects for drinking and preparation for poorer people and the people living in the countryside.<sup>47</sup> This prohibition was abolished in 1785 because the authorities were not able to enforce the prohibition, and it was ineffective.<sup>48</sup>

In sum, we observe an increasing supply of manufactured and colonial goods that came to the north-western German hinterland via the seaports of Amsterdam, Hamburg, and, to a lesser extent, Bremen. The degree of openness of the economy grew, and the market for consumer goods expanded. This was contrasted with a restrictive economic policy that attempted to curb consumption by the general population. Researchers largely agree that this has succeeded very inadequately. Therefore, sumptuary laws had more of an effect on the visibility of consumption than on consumption itself. Overall, a remarkable upswing in private consumption in the eighteenth century can be inferred from the results concerning the supply and accessibility of traded goods.

### III | ANALYSIS OF PROBATE INVENTORIES IN NORTH-WESTERN GERMANY

This study is based on the analysis of probate inventories from five communities in north-western Germany in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries (figure 1). Methodologically, it follows current studies on consumer research with probate inventories, for example on England and Scandinavia.<sup>49</sup> Since inventories are snapshots of household stocks, we use descriptive statistics to examine changes in the occurrence of certain goods over time. The inventories for three communities were created within the framework of the specific variant of serfdom (*Eigenbehörigkeit*) prevailing in the region, according to which the heirs of serfs owed a kind of fee on

<sup>43</sup> König, *Luxusverbote*, pp. 166–75, 220–2.

<sup>44</sup> Scotti, *Sammlung*, part 1, pp. 180–1.

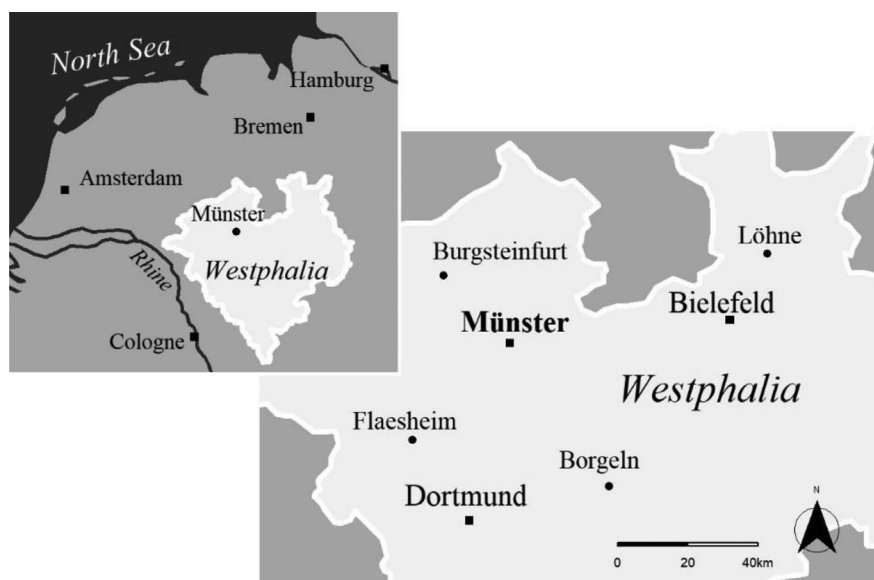
<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, part 2, pp. 878, 987–8. See Schlumbohm, 'Gesetze', and the critical comment in Ogilvie, 'Choices and constraints'. Obviously, the control of the individual by the political sphere was greater in Ogilvie's study area of south-western Germany than in north-western Germany.

<sup>46</sup> Scotti, *Gesetze und Verordnungen*, p. 373.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>48</sup> König, *Luxusverbote*, p. 185.

<sup>49</sup> For example, Overton et al., *Production and consumption*; Ulväng, 'Tea, coffee or printed cotton?'



**FIGURE 1** Location of the study sites in Westphalia, north-western Germany. *Source:* Author creation

the personal estate of the deceased. To assess this fee, probate inventories were taken some time after death. With the abolition of serfdom in the early nineteenth century, these registers were no longer continued. The inventories for the other two communities were drawn up in the nineteenth century, when half-orphans had to be protected under inheritance law in the event of remarriage of widowed parents. Given that this situation did not occur very often, the number of these documents was much smaller in the nineteenth century. All probate inventories in this study relate to households in the countryside and, therefore, enable an insight into consumption and change of consumption of the class of hitherto neglected rural residents in German territories. The five communities belonged to different Westphalian regions, some with proto-industry and others with agriculture alone.

The first group of sources includes probate inventories of serfs in Flaesheim, Steinfurt, and the rural neighbourhood of the city of Münster. They cover the rural peasantry, even very poor peasants, but exclude the landless rural population. The sources are from archives of different church institutions that possessed rights over the villagers living in the three communities. These three communities differed strongly in their socioeconomic conditions: Münster was the capital of the prince-bishopric of Münster and by far the biggest city in the region.<sup>50</sup> Agriculture was the dominant form of employment in the vicinity of Münster, whereas proto-industry did not exist in this region.<sup>51</sup> The probate inventories extend over four rural parishes situated near the town. They originate from two institutions of the Cathedral of Münster: the *Domkellnerei* and the *Domburse*, which were different parts of the cathedral administration, owning quite a few farms in the rural areas of the city.

The Premonstratensian Sisters Monastery in Flaesheim is located in one of the southernmost regions with these kinds of probate inventories, since the river to the north, the Lippe,

<sup>50</sup> Kluetting, *Geschichte Westfalens*, pp. 213–4.

<sup>51</sup> Reekers *Beiträge*, part 1, pp. 123–35.



roughly formed the border of the geographical dissemination of the Westphalian variant of serfdom.<sup>52</sup> Flaesheim was a rather small village with approximately 310 inhabitants in 1755 and 350 inhabitants in 1858, but was legally considered a town.<sup>53</sup> In our dataset for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is the community that was farthest from the Netherlands and was located in the northern part of the Vest Recklinghausen, which was part of the electorate of Cologne.<sup>54</sup> Agriculture was the predominant form of employment, there was no proto-industry, and it was rather sparsely populated.<sup>55</sup>

Steinfurt is the northernmost of the three communities, and closest to the Netherlands. Entries in church records indicate that seasonal labour migration to the Netherlands was common in this area. Overall, however, the source material for the north-western Münsterland is poor, so there has been little research on the extent of seasonal migration. For neighbouring regions in the north (Emsland), on the other hand, it has been shown that this labour migration was of considerable extent. Among the communities for which we have sources in the eighteenth century, Steinfurt is the only one with significant proto-industrial linen production.<sup>56</sup>

For the three communities mentioned so far, we are examining probate inventories from the eighteenth century that originate from serfdom. Therefore, the dataset involves all peasant classes here, but no non-peasant households, such as day labourers or craftsmen. The sources for the two following communities, Löhne and Borgeln, were recorded by the district courts in the nineteenth century when widowed parents wanted to remarry. Two-thirds of the inventories here concern non-peasant families, such as smallholders, craftsmen, day labourers, and yarn spinners. The continuing population growth and the indivisibility of farms led to an increase in the non-peasant classes in the eighteenth century, so that farmers were in the minority in the villages of the nineteenth century.<sup>57</sup>

Löhne, in eastern Westphalia, was a parish where agrarian and economic conditions were rather poor, and in the 1820s, more than half of the households made their living for the main part through proto-industrial yarn spinning. During the eighteenth century, this area was integrated into global markets for proto-industrial linen, which was traded internationally by merchants via the north-western German seaports. It may be due to this external orientation that we observed a higher turnover of credit and cash within the community in previous work.<sup>58</sup>

Borgeln was located in an agriculturally favoured region and participated in supra-regional markets for agricultural cash crops. There was a large labour market for servants and day labourers in the nineteenth century; approximately a third of adult inhabitants worked as unmarried servants at peasant farms. The parish was part of an area commonly referred to as the 'granary of the Ruhr area'. Fertile soils and good transport connections allowed for early specialisation in food exports as the Ruhr area became an important centre for coal mining and iron production from the 1840s onwards. Peasants produced and sold cash crops, but there were no proto-industrial

---

<sup>52</sup> Klüeting, *Geschichte Westfalens*, p. 223.

<sup>53</sup> Grochtmann, 'Flaesheim', p. 10.

<sup>54</sup> Reekers, *Beiträge*, part 8, p. 62.

<sup>55</sup> Grochtmann, 'Flaesheim', p. 10; Krüger, 'Recklinghausen'; Reekers, *Beiträge*, part 1, p. 99.

<sup>56</sup> Lucassen, *Migrant labour*; Reekers, *Beiträge*, part 1, p. 124; Reininghaus, *Wirtschaft in Westfalen*, vol. 2, p. 717; for neighbouring regions see also Küpker, *Hollandgänger*.

<sup>57</sup> Pfister et al., 'Life course strategies', pp. 94–6.

<sup>58</sup> Fertig, 'Rural credit market', pp. 179–82.

**TABLE 1** Numbers of probate inventories in five rural settings

	Flaesheim	Vicinity of Münster	Steinfurt	Borgeln	Löhne
1630–49	23	–	–	–	–
1650–74	57	–	–	–	–
1675–99	24	51	–	–	–
1700–24	49	61	–	–	–
1725–49	59	69	25	–	–
1750–74	–	13	24	–	–
1775–99	–	51	68	–	–
1800–10	–	20	–	–	–
1810–39	–	–	–	28	4
1840–81	–	–	–	6	26
Total	212	265	117	34	30

*Notes:* Inventories from Flaesheim, Münster, and Steinheim are being recorded and expanded in an ongoing project; inventories from Löhne and Borgeln originate from an older, completed project, but have not yet been evaluated.

*Source:* Fürstlich Bentheimisch-Steinfurtisches Archiv, Johanniterkommende Steinfurt, Akten (Bur.H.Ak), 211; 219; 226; 227; Landesarchiv NRW Abteilung Westfalen, B 103, Domkapitel Münster, Domdechanei, Akten, 130; 131; Landesarchiv NRW Abteilung Westfalen, B 104, Domkapitel Münster, Domkellnerei, Akten, 712; 713; 715; 716; 717; 718; 719; 720; 721; 722; 724; 726; 758; 759; 760; 761; 762; 764; 766; 768; 770; 771; 772; 773; 774; 839; 841; 842; 1004; 1005; 1006; 1007; 1008; 1009; 1010; 1023; 1024; 1025; 1027; 1028; 1030; 1031; 1033; 1088; 1089; 1090; 1091; 1093; 1094; 1095; 1096; 1097; 1099; 1100; 1101; 1174; 1175; 1176; 1177; 1178; 1179; 1181; 1182; 1183; 1184; 1185; 1187; 1188; 1278; 1279; 1280; 1281; 1282; 1283; 1284; 1285; 1286; 1287; 1288; 1289; 1290; 2261; 2263; 2264; 2266; Landesarchiv NRW Abteilung Westfalen, B 105, Domkapitel Münster, Domburse, Akten, 265; Landesarchiv NRW Abteilung Westfalen, B 151 ÜW, Studienfonds Münster, Stift Überwasser, Münster, Akten, 454; 653; 700; Stadt- und Vestische Archiv Recklinghausen, Herzoglich-Arenbergisches Archiv, VIII. B 43; 51; Landesarchiv NRW Abteilung Ostwestfalen-Lippe, D 23 B, 50401; 50418; 50386; 50390; 50408; 50409; 50411; 50412; 50427; 50449; 50119; 50120; 50120; 50122; 50122; 50124; 50125; 50112; 50132; 50159; 50160; 50163; 50164; 50170; 50175; 50180; 50186; 50186; 50210; 50213; 50227; 50228; Landesarchiv NRW Abteilung Westfalen, Amtsgericht Soest, Grundakten Soest, 1843/3; 1909; 1965; 1996/1; 2741/1; 3142; 3460; 3460; 3560; 3624; 5696-3; 5696; 6585; 6607; 6640; 6641; 7359; 8514; 8518; 8685b; 8773; 8773b; 8865; 8883; 8895; 8898; 8900; 8951; 9977/1; 9018; 8999; 8974; 8956; 2077.

activities. Thus, the community was involved in regional markets for food but not in global markets for manufactured articles.

In this study, we examine inventories from two periods in which the conditions for the creation of probate inventories changed (table 1). Geographically, our communities are characterised by varying proximity to urban centres and the Dutch border. More importantly, two of the five communities were located in areas with proto-industry, while the others were purely agricultural. The communities thus offered different access to markets, and some had already left traditional ways of life behind to some extent.

## IV | THE CONSUMPTION OF COTTON FABRICS

Cotton goods may be considered the most important drivers of new consumer culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as they not only met the initial growing demand for Indian manufactured products but also triggered extensive import substitution production of manufactured articles in different European regions.<sup>59</sup> Both imported cotton cloth and the products

<sup>59</sup> Berg, 'Pursuit of luxury', pp. 99–104; Lemire, *Fashion's favourite*; eadem, 'Revising the historical narrative'; Lemire and Riello, 'East & west'; Riello, *Cotton*, pp. 160–83; Styles, *Dress*; idem, 'Fibres'.



of the European production centres were oriented towards standardised qualities, so that the place of production soon no longer played an important role for consumers. German restrictions on expenditure were directed against expensive and imported clothing, as the mercantilist state wanted to promote domestic industry, but at the same time feared excessive consumption by poorer sections of the population. At the same time, these restrictions served to maintain the symbolic order of feudal society, and were directed against new functions of clothing worn as fashion and to demonstrate status. Bedding, on the other hand, was not subject to restrictions. Therefore, the following analysis of textiles distinguishes between clothing and bedding. This distinction is also connected to the different meanings of clothing and bedding in the new consumer culture. While clothing tended to emphasise personal identity and social status, bedding served the purpose of wellbeing. The entry of comfort into the domestic sphere has been emphasised repeatedly in recent times, with bedding playing a leading role.<sup>60</sup> Recent research in England and the Netherlands emphasises that new consumer goods often served personal wellbeing rather than the imitation of consumption patterns considered superior or being indicative of prestige.<sup>61</sup>

Evidence for clothing and other home textiles in inventories is rather sparse for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There is no evidence of cotton clothes in Flaesheim and Steinfurt. In many inventories, clothes were not listed as separate items, but listed as 'all the clothes' or 'the clothes in total', and they were not described in detail. The materials for clothing in these two communities were mainly linen, leather, and wool. In the vicinity of Münster, there were only a few clothes made of silk: an inventory from 1729 lists two pairs of silk trousers and an inventory from 1740 lists a silk skirt. However, the references to silk in the Münster area seem to be exceptional cases, as in both cases these were very wealthy farms. For them, it may not have been necessary to hide forbidden clothing, as they could afford to pay the financial penalty and probably placed a higher emphasis on the prestigious function of special clothing.

However, clothing was very sparsely mentioned in general, especially in the dataset from the vicinity of Münster, although every deceased person should have owned at least a few clothes, rags, or the like. More than half of the inventories from Flaesheim and Steinfurt included clothing, but none were made from imported fabrics, like cotton or silk. Considering that bans were increasingly issued during the eighteenth century, it is reasonable to suspect that these sources recorded by the authorities do not adequately capture true patterns of consumption and that the clothing and home textiles made of cotton and silk were perhaps hidden to avoid punishment.

In contrast to clothes, inventories frequently mentioned bedding (table 2). There was considerable consumption of cotton in Steinfurt and the vicinity of Münster, but Flaesheim did not show similar developments. There was no cotton bedding in the period 1630–1774 in Flaesheim.

The sources in the vicinity of Münster and Steinfurt include bedding made of cotton–linen blended fabrics (*Baumseide*).<sup>62</sup> In the vicinity of Münster, the proportion of inventories with bedding made of cotton and silk increased from 3.9 per cent in 1675–99 to 52.8 per cent in 1750–74. This is surprising in two ways: first, these numbers had increased even after wearing clothes made of imported fibres was banned. As bedding was not explicitly mentioned in the legal texts, the rural population might have focused on the legal consumption of cotton bedding. Second, the import of cotton goods in Hamburg began to decline in the middle of the century and stood in

<sup>60</sup> Lemire, 'Comfort', pp. 24–6; Stobart, 'Comfort'.

<sup>61</sup> McCants, 'Global consumers', p. 194; eadem, 'Porcelain for the poor', p. 334; Overton et al., *Production and consumption*.

<sup>62</sup> Reininghaus, *Wirtschaft in Westfalen*, vol. 2, p. 713.

**TABLE 2** Numbers of probate inventories with bedding in Flaesheim, vicinity of Münster, and Steinfurt

	Flaesheim ( <i>N</i> = 212)		Vicinity of Münster ( <i>N</i> = 265)		Steinfurt ( <i>N</i> = 117)	
	With bedding, %	With cotton/silk, %	With bedding, %	With cotton/silk, %	With bedding, %	With cotton/silk, %
1630–49	52.1	0.0				
1650–74	87.7	0.0				
1675–99	87.5	0.0	100.0	3.9		
1700–24	96.0	0.0	43.3	11.7		
1725–49	91.5	0.0	88.5	37.3	88.0	4.0
1750–74			100.0	52.8	95.8	16.7
1775–99			97.4	7.8	98.5	1.5
1800–10			85.0	5.0		

Source: Data from authors' database.

opposition to this development. Likely, the primary sources of supply for rural households in Westphalia were not German seaports, but the neighbouring centre of cotton processing in Bocholt, which was closely linked to the Dutch ports.

It is also noteworthy that bedding made of cotton was recorded with less frequency in probate inventories in the vicinity of Münster at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The most probable explanation is a change of perception; cotton bedding simply became the new 'standard' and was therefore no longer mentioned explicitly. The process of inventorying was not standardised in Westphalia and was carried out by different officials who handled this process individually. Therefore, a change in the perception of things that were no longer explicitly mentioned was not unlikely at this point. When they first appeared, cotton bedding was explicitly distinguished from linen and wool bedding. In later periods, an increasing number of inventories contained cotton, linen, or wool bedding, as well as only cotton bedding. However, after 1775, information on bedding materials was recorded less frequently. The most plausible explanation is that cotton goods and mixed fabrics became a commonplace part of domestic furnishings, leading to attention on these materials diminishing, before disappearing altogether.

In Steinfurt, as in the vicinity of Münster, half-linen beds were also inventoried, but in much smaller numbers. The numbers reached their peak in 1750–74 and then declined until the end of the century. Bedding made of cotton–linen blends was present here as early as the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In contrast to Flaesheim and the vicinity of Münster, both types of imported fibres, silk and cotton, were present in the households in Steinfurt. The results for Steinfurt indicate that cotton became the new standard fabric for bedding and that only silk was mentioned in the inventories of the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Thus, we can observe how the perception of the quality of fabrics changed and how cotton goods became a natural part of the furnishings.

These results for cotton and silk fabrics clearly show that globally traded materials were consumed in the rural areas in north-western Germany from the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards, at least in regions close to towns and in the proto-industrial, linen and cotton processing areas of the Westmünsterland region. The ownership of cotton was not limited to wealthy peasants and was widespread among peasants in general. By the late eighteenth century, more expensive fabrics, such as silk, also entered some wealthier



peasant households. Proximity to urban markets and integration into proto-industrial markets had positive effects on the entry of cotton fabrics into rural communities.

## V | GLOBAL STIMULANTS IN NORTH-WEST GERMANY

The rising imports of colonial groceries and stimulants in Hamburg, from 1733 onwards, suggest that the north-western German countryside had sufficient provisions of global goods, especially coffee and sugar. However, it is an open question as to how far these goods diffused into the broad mass of the population, and whether the countryside participated in this upswing of global consumption. Given that probate inventories did not record consumables, there is no direct evidence that these goods were consumed in rural households. An approximation of the consumption of luxury goods is offered by manufactured goods that were acquired specifically for the consumption of coffee or tea. Some of these served the purpose of preparation, such as coffee grinders or coffee roasters, while others enhanced enjoyment and contributed to prestige, such as coffee crockery or even porcelain. When seeking evidence for such objects during that period, one must be aware that their absence does not prove that tea or coffee was still unknown or unaffordable. On the contrary, it may be assumed that the acquisition of such objects had lagged behind the enjoyment of these stimulants for some time. While the appearance of these objects marks the point in time from which the culturally enhanced consumption of these drinks can be proved, the beginning of actual consumption can hardly be traced. It is safe to assume that manufactured goods were only acquired after actual consumption had already become established.

Even though studies on the consumer revolution in the European North Atlantic economies have demonstrated a close connection between the possession of porcelain and the consumption of coffee and tea, we tend not to see this correlation for our region. After all, tea or coffee can be brewed with almost any pot or kettle, and even drunk from wooden bowls, without the need for any special objects to prepare and enjoy them. Studies on England and the Netherlands suggest a strong linkage between the consumption of colonial goods and the possession of special objects for this consumption because of cultural standards, such as respectability, a better taste, and quality of consumption, or because these goods were widely available close to the seaports.<sup>63</sup> However, the fact that the consumption of colonial goods was subject to legal prohibitions speaks to a certain reluctance to purchase prestigious objects that would turn coffee consumption into a semi-public ceremony. It is not yet known when imported porcelain arrived in Germany, beyond the princely and aristocratic courts, in small towns, and rural areas. However, there does not seem to have been any production of imitations for broad sections of the population, such as Delftware in the Netherlands or Wedgewood in England.<sup>64</sup> Under these conditions, it is plausible that the consumption, especially of coffee, took place hidden from the public eye. In inventories from the nineteenth century analysed under this study, we observed that the consumption of hot drinks was less closely linked to the ownership of porcelain than in England or the Netherlands.

The probate inventories from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Flaesheim show little evidence of the presence of objects related to the consumption of colonial goods. Except for one inventory mentioning a peppermill in 1664, there are no hints at the consumption of colonial goods. The only objects mentioned are food bowls, but no special dishes for the consumption of tea or coffee.

<sup>63</sup> For example, McCants, 'Porcelain for the poor'; Smith, 'Complications'.

<sup>64</sup> Marchand, *Porcelain*.



Inventories from Steinfurt (1725–99) and regions in the vicinity of Münster (1675–1810) show the same pattern regarding cutlery and dishes. Objects such as butter and soup bowls and tablespoons are listed with no special reference to objects used for the consumption of colonial products. This may indicate a change in dining culture that appears to have no direct linkage to coffee or tea. Cutlery and crockery are not particularly common in the inventories of the Münster area; they were only recorded when they were made of a more valuable material than wood or clay, such as tin or silver. While this may indicate a higher standard of dining culture, there appears to be no direct evidence of the consumption of colonial goods.

In contrast to the communities remote from towns, there is some evidence of increased consumption of colonial comestibles in the vicinity of Münster: with the lifting of the sumptuary restrictions at the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century, a small number of inventories included objects for the preparation of coffee, such as coffee grinders and kettles. From this period onwards, it appears that the rural population acquired goods for the preparation of coffee. There is also evidence of the consumption of tea, with the explicit mention of teapots. Four inventories from the late eighteenth century specifically mentioned coffee and tea objects. These were by no means always rich farmers; small owners also owned utensils for drinking coffee and tea. So, there is no reason to assume that this was the exclusive consumption of a narrow elite.

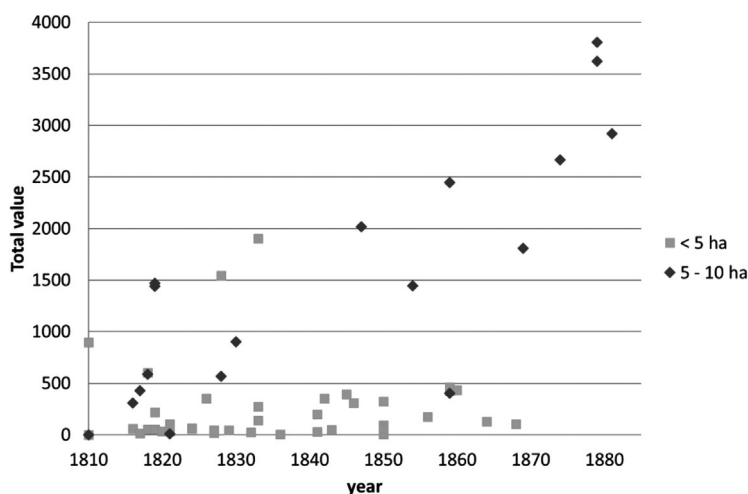
Therefore, it can be stated that it is quite difficult to find sufficient evidence for the consumption of stimulants in the eighteenth century. Probate inventories in north-western Germany never recorded food items or colonial groceries. However, because consumption of these beverages was forbidden for a long time, it is hardly surprising that tea sets or coffee roasters were not part of the everyday material culture until the late eighteenth century. This is when the influence of towns with earlier developed consumer culture comes into play. In the late eighteenth century, corresponding objects were first found in the vicinity of Münster but not yet in more rural areas. However, the efforts of the authorities to ban these colonial goods from rural households indicate that there was a corresponding consumption early on. Objects acquired specifically for the enjoyment of coffee and tea only appeared in inventories with the abolition of sumptuary laws.

The probate inventories for Löhne (eastern Westphalia) and Borgeln (east of the Ruhr area), which date from the early nineteenth century and have been available since then, contain global goods from the beginning. Since we have data here for peasant and non-peasant households, we can pursue the question of how far the new consumer culture diffused into the poorer social classes. On the basis of the development of total wealth, we can see that peasant households became significantly wealthier in the nineteenth century, while the wealth of non-peasant households remained constantly low (figure 2). Nevertheless, these poorer households also participated in a new consumer culture that included the acquisition and ownership of global goods.

In both communities, many peasants and households from rural lower classes owned a whole range of consumer goods that they did not produce themselves but instead bought at markets, which made life more pleasant. These included beautiful things that embellished the living space and refined table culture. Mirrors, pictures, and clocks hung on the walls, and tablecloths, glasses, porcelain, and tea sets were found on the tables and the sideboards (table 3). In both communities, households acquired furniture for storage and also for displaying things, so that by the middle of the nineteenth century, over 80 per cent of households had a sideboard or cupboard. This shows that an upscale living culture developed in this region during the nineteenth century.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the inventories in both communities mentioned numerous objects for the preparation and consumption of coffee. The inventories listed objects manufactured for the consumption of coffee, such as roasters, grinders, kettles, and pots.





**FIGURE 2** Total values of inventories, by the size of landed property. *Note:* ‘Ha’ refers to hectares.  
*Source:* Authors’ data

**TABLE 3** Frequency of possession and number of selected consumer goods in Borgeln and Löhne, by period (%)

	Borgeln		Löhne	
	1810–39 (N = 28)	1840–81 (N = 6)	1810–39 (N = 4)	1840–81 (N = 24)
Coffee equipment	53.6	50.0	50.0	79.2
Porcelain	10.7	33.3	50.0	4.2
Tea service	21.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Glassware	14.3	33.3	50.0	33.3
Scarfs	17.9	0.0	0.0	4.2
Towels	53.6	66.7	50.0	45.8
Tablecloths	32.1	33.3	50.0	25.0
Mirrors	10.7	16.7	50.0	41.7
Paintings	0	0	0.0	20.8
Books	3.6	16.7	25.0	54.2
Clocks	28.6	66.7	75.0	91.7
Sideboards	0	0	75.0	79.2
Cupboards	46.4	83.3	50.0	25.0

*Source:* Authors’ data.

Porcelain was evidenced in the form of porcelain plates and cups, as well as teacups, at least in the richer village of Borgeln. The latter is remarkable, as tea consumption in Germany generally tends to be common in coastal regions but not necessarily in inland regions.<sup>65</sup> The picture emerging from this research is of a culture of coffee and tea consumption, which had already advanced in the early nineteenth century and was also visible to visitors and officials drawing up

<sup>65</sup> North, *Material delight*.

**TABLE 4** Frequency of possession and number of selected consumer goods in Borgeln and Löhne, by social class (%)

	<b>Borgeln</b>		<b>Löhne</b>	
	<b>&lt;5 ha (N = 24)</b>	<b>5–50 ha (N = 11)</b>	<b>&lt;5 ha (N = 18)</b>	<b>5–50 ha (N = 11)</b>
Coffee equipment	50.0	54.5	66.7	90.9
Porcelain	8.3	27.3	16.7	0.0
Tea service	16.7	18.2	0.0	0.0
Glassware	20.8	9.1	22.2	54.5
Scarfs	16.7	9.1	5.6	0.0
Towels	50.0	63.6	44.4	54.5
Tablecloths	29.2	36.4	38.9	18.2
Mirrors	8.3	18.2	44.4	45.5
Paintings	0.0	0.0	5.6	36.4
Books	4.2	9.1	50.0	54.5
Clocks	20.8	63.6	88.9	90.9
Sideboards	0.0	0.0	77.8	81.8
Cupboards	41.7	81.8	38.9	18.2

Note: 'Ha' refers to hectares. Categories distinguish between smallholders or landless households and peasants.

Source: Authors' data.

inventories. Unlike the studies conducted in England and the Netherlands, coffee drinking was not closely associated with the ownership of porcelain.<sup>66</sup> On the contrary, many households had coffee pots but no porcelain. These coffee pots were made of pewter, earthen materials, or often, plain tin. Porcelain was nowhere near as present in this region as it was in the Netherlands, with its mass import of Chinese porcelain and a flourishing Delft industry. This may have been due to the greater geographical distance of the hinterland from the seaports.

It is also noteworthy that peasants and lower-class households had equal access to coffee, despite obvious differences in wealth and income (table 4). In Löhne, a village characterised by its proto-industry, it is also noticeable that consumer goods were not only more widespread, but that the difference between poorer families and farmers was less pronounced than in Borgeln. In addition to coffee equipment, clocks were almost standard equipment in poorer households as well as among peasants. This indicates an advanced awareness of time, which coincides with the trend towards increasing industriousness, but it also confirms that proto-industrial regions had already moved some distance away from a traditional way of life based on subsistence production. In Löhne, local grain production was not sufficient to feed the population. The numerous landless and land-poor households had to provide for themselves largely on the market, and the many hours of spinning and weaving were better survived with coffee as a supplement to an already meagre diet.<sup>67</sup>

It seems that coffee drinking was already widespread at the latest in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, and with the removal of restrictions, the corresponding objects now also found their way into households and the public view. The presence of consumer goods is also underlined by the widespread use of sideboards even in poorer households; it was necessary,

<sup>66</sup> McCants, 'Porcelain for the poor'; Smith, 'Complications'.

<sup>67</sup> Braun, *Industrialisation*; Voth, 'Time and work'.



practically everywhere, to store objects, and perhaps also to present them attractively. The fact that we found more evidence of consumer goods overall in Löhne than in Borgeln is somewhat surprising given the economic situation of this region. Wages were lower, farms were smaller, and people inherited less from their parents. Above all, however, proto-industrial linen manufacture came under considerable strain in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when cotton goods from England flooded the textile markets. Nevertheless, it was normal here for the poorer part of the population to own consumer goods as well. Some of the land-poor households in Löhne owned larger values of coffee sets, mirrors, clocks, paintings, and sideboards than rich farmers in Borgeln. Here, we can see a clear connection between the proto-industrial character of the local economy and the presence of coffee consumption and advanced consumer culture.

The inventories in these two communities contained textiles in the form of clothing, home textiles, and bedding. However, inventory writers rarely recorded the materials from which these textiles were made. The bedding was of considerable value in the probate inventories of the nineteenth century, and the inventories often contained descriptions of their condition. They often mentioned the size (i.e. whether one or two people could sleep in them) and their age. Beds could be complete, old, or battered, but the descriptions rarely addressed the materials. Some beds were made of linen or wool, some also of fustian or 'drill', a firm, durable fabric. From what we know about the development of bed textiles in Münsterland during the eighteenth century, cotton had already become accepted as a material for beds. We interpret the fact that cotton was barely explicitly mentioned as a sign that cotton beds were no longer a speciality. The material was also rarely recorded for clothing and home textiles. There were a few silk scarves, cotton-linen blends, and individual garments made of cotton. Towels and tablecloths were widely used early on, but in those cases too, there was usually no indication of the materials from which they were made. However, because no reference to the type of fabric was noted for most objects, it is not possible to determine the quantitative penetration of imported fabrics in rural areas during this period.

Our analysis of inventories from the first half of the nineteenth century shows that global goods were already widespread in rural households. The comparison of the two communities suggests that proto-industry played a central role in the establishment of a consumer society. The stimulating effect of proto-industry can be seen in two factors. First, early participation in supra-regional markets led to the regular use of cash payments, which is also reflected in significantly higher cash holdings in probate inventories. In proto-industrial Löhne, cash and receivables accounted for more than a quarter of total assets; in Borgeln, however, only less than a sixth. Cash was available here to buy traded consumer goods. Second, merchants who traded linen on supra-regional and international markets are important for the intermediation of global goods. These merchants, who were mostly based in surrounding towns, traded linen through the North Sea ports and very likely brought colonial goods to rural society in return. Although the consumption of coffee was already part of everyday life everywhere at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was much more widespread in the poorer but proto-industrial Löhne than in the agrarian Borgeln. In the latter community, cash crops were produced and sold, but market access was limited to the households of rich farmers and oriented towards neighbouring areas, such as the mountainous Sauerland and the fast-growing Ruhr area. Access to supra-regional proto-industrial markets accelerated the change in consumption habits among the general population and enabled the early emergence of a modern consumer society. What we observe here is that proto-industrial areas moved away from traditional lifestyles on the basis of agricultural production regimes and increasingly met their needs through the market. Long hours at the loom or the spinning wheel could be better survived with bittersweet drinks than with calorie-rich, but rather bland, cereal porridge.



## VI | CONCLUSION

Previous research on the early modern consumer revolution has queried whether the development observed in England and the Netherlands can also be found in other European regions, and has tended to answer this question in the negative. According to this view, a revolutionary change in material culture took place in the pioneering North Atlantic countries, while the rest of Europe hardly participated in this development. However, previous studies focused on cities and regions relatively distant from overseas ports and early modern trading centres. This study, by contrast, focused on rural areas, and thus, on the consumption behaviour of a broad section of the population in an intermediate region on the Dutch border. It shows, for the first time, that new forms of material culture from the pioneering countries spread at a slower pace to regions with an intermediate level of development and limited integration into global markets. Three findings stand out in this regard.

First, the study shows that the diffusion of new consumer culture in regions beyond the European North Atlantic economies took place with some delay. Even in an area that was economically, socially, and culturally closely linked to the pioneer Netherlands, the effects of a pre-modern consumer revolution can only be observed with some delay and to a limited extent. Sumptuary laws did not prevent the consumption of new goods but pushed it into the private, non-public sphere until the late eighteenth century. Cotton clothing did not appear in the inventories, while cotton bedding, which was not subject to any restrictions, soon became popular in the wake of a new need for comfort and became a new standard in the eighteenth century. After restrictions on hot beverages, such as coffee and tea, were lifted in late eighteenth century, manufactured articles, such as coffee accessories or tea sets, immediately appeared in probate inventories. They spread rapidly throughout all sectors of rural society, suggesting that the consumption of colonial goods had already become established in the eighteenth century, and now also entered the semi-public sphere for all to see.

Secondly, access to markets can be seen as a driving factor for the seepage of global goods into rural society. European expansion and the accompanying expansion of trade formed the basis for an emerging early modern consumer society. However, participation in these new markets varied across European regions. The connection of certain regions to the supra-regional, increasingly global network of proto-industrial production led to greater circulation of cash and provided channels for the penetration of popular and global goods. The same merchants who sold linen fabrics in the major seaports also brought the colonial goods available there to the rural hinterland. The great importance of direct access to trade networks and commercial centres for the development of early modern consumer society can thus hardly be overestimated.

Thirdly, this increasing orientation of everyday life towards pre-modern markets was followed by shifts in everyday culture. Proto-industrial households were part of rural society, and in many regions peasants also participated in both agricultural and proto-industrial production. At the same time, however, new forms of need satisfaction and consumption emerged here that were little oriented towards traditional rhythms and modes of production. The new proto-industrial forms of work brought households into stronger contact with markets and thereby led to new opportunities of shaping everyday life, work, and consumption. In this way, the proto-industrial penetration of a region was accompanied by a new, more modern lifestyle that developed new consumer needs.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was made possible by a German Research Foundation project grant: DFG FE1916/2-1: 'Konsumrevolution und Wandel des Konsums von Haushalten im Spiegel von Nachlassverzeichnissen vom 16. bis zum frühen 19. Jahrhundert in Nordwestdeutschland'. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the European Social Science History Conference 2020–21 and at the workshop 'Encountering the Global in Early Modern Germany', University of Tübingen, and we are grateful for the comments and suggestions of those who were present. We would like to thank Ulrich Pfister, Esther Sahle, and the anonymous reviewers for discussing the findings and presentation of this project at various stages, and we are grateful for the careful comments, which led to a much-improved final version of the article.

Open Access funding enabled and organized by Projekt DEAL.

## ORCID

Christine Fertig  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2122-0734>

## REFERENCES

- Adelmann, G., *Die Baumwollgewerbe Nordwestdeutschlands und der westlichen Nachbarländer beim Übergang von der vorindustriellen zur frühindustriellen Zeit, 1750–1815: Verflechtung und regionale Differenzierung* (Bonn, 2001).
- Allen, R. C. and Weisdorf, J. L., 'Was there an 'industrious revolution' before the industrial revolution? An empirical exercise for England, c. 1300–1830', *Economic History Review*, 64 (2011), pp. 715–29.
- Bailey, L. A., 'Squire, shopkeeper and staple food: the reciprocal relationship between the country house and the village shop in the late Georgian period', *History of Retailing and Consumption*, 1 (2015), pp. 8–27.
- Beck, R., 'Luxus oder Decencies? Zur Konsumgeschichte der Frühneuzeit als Beginn der Moderne', in R. Reith and T. Meyer, eds., *'Luxus und Konsum': eine historische Annäherung* (Münster, 2003), pp. 29–46.
- Bengtsson, E., and Svensson, P., 'The living standards of the labouring classes in Sweden, 1750–1900: evidence from rural probate inventories', *Lund papers in economic history* no. 213 (2020).
- Berg, M., 'In pursuit of luxury: global history and British consumer goods in the eighteenth century', *Past & Present*, 182 (2004), pp. 85–142.
- Blondé, B., Lambrecht, T., Ryckbosch W., and Vermoesen R., 'Consumérisme, revolution agricole et proto-industrialisation dans la Flandre et le Brabant du XVIIIe siècle: malédiction ou bénédiction? Une synthèse préliminaire', in F. Guilhem and J. Petrowiste, eds., *Le nécessaire et le superflu: le paysan consommateur dans l'Europe médiévale et moderne* (Toulouse, 2019), pp. 189–214.
- Blondé, B. and Ryckbosch, W., 'Material cultures', in C. S. Dixon and B. Kümin, eds., *Interpreting early modern Europe* (London and New York, 2020), pp. 183–214.
- Blondé, B. and Van Damme, I., 'From consumer revolution to mass market', in J. Stobart and V. Howard, eds., *The Routledge companion to the history of retailing* (London and New York, 2019), pp. 31–49.
- Braun, R., *Industrialisation and everyday life* (Cambridge, 1990).
- Brewer, J. and Porter R., *Consumption and the world of goods* (London and New York, 1993).
- Carson, C., 'The consumer revolution in colonial British America: why demand?', in C. Carson, ed., *Of consuming interests: the style of life in the eighteenth century* (Charlottesville, 1994), pp. 483–697.
- Chilosi, D., Murphy, T. E., Studer, R., and Tunçer, A. C., 'Europe's many integrations: geography and grain markets, 1620–1913', *Explorations in Economic History*, 50 (2013), pp. 46–68.
- Clark, G., and Van Der Werf Y., 'Work in progress? The industrious revolution', *The Journal of Economic History*, 58 (1998), pp. 830–43.
- Davis, R., *A commercial revolution: English overseas trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (1967).
- Driesner, J., *Bürgerliche Wohnkultur im Ostseeraum: Stralsund, Kopenhagen und Riga in der frühen Neuzeit* (Cologne, 2012).
- Fairchild, C., 'The production and marketing of populuxe goods in eighteenth-century Paris', in J. Brewer and R. Porter, eds., *Consumption and the world of goods* (London and New York, 1993), pp. 228–48.
- Fernández, L. A., 'Why did medieval villagers buy earthenware? Pottery and consumer behaviour in the Valencian countryside (1280–1450)', *Continuity and Change*, 33 (2018), pp. 1–27.



- Fertig, C., 'Urban capital and agrarian reforms: rural credit market in nineteenth-century Westphalia', in P. R. Schofield and T. Lambrecht, eds., *Credit and the rural economy in north-western Europe, c.1200–c.1850* (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 169–96.
- Fertig, C., and Pfister, U., 'Coffee, mind and body: global material culture and the eighteenth-century Hamburg import trade', in A. Gerritsen and R. Giorgio, eds., *The global lives of things: the material culture of connections in the early modern world* (London and New York, 2016), pp. 221–40.
- Findlen, P., ed., *Early modern things: objects and their histories, 1500–1800* (London and New York, 2013).
- Flavin, S., 'Consumption and material culture in sixteenth-century Ireland', *Economic History Review*, 64 (2011), pp. 1144–74.
- Flügel A., *Kaufleute und Manufakturen in Bielefeld: sozialer Wandel und wirtschaftliche Entwicklung im proto-industriellen Leinengewerbe von 1680 bis 1850* (Bielefeld, 1993).
- Fuhse, G., 'Die Wirtschaftsgeschichte von Bremen. Verändr', *Nachdr. der Orig.-Ausg von 1972* (Bremen, 2010).
- Gerritsen, A. and Riello, G., eds., *The global lives of things: the material culture of connections in the early modern world* (London and New York, 2016).
- Grochtmann, H., 'Flaesheim', in H. Grochtmann, ed., *Flaesheim. Zur 800 Jahrfeier, 1166–1966* (Münster, 1966), pp. 7–11.
- Heß, C., 'Danziger Wohnkultur in der Frühen Neuzeit', *Untersuchungen zu Nachlassinventaren des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* (Münster, Hamburg, Berlin, and London, 2007).
- von Heusinger, S. and S. Wittekind, eds., *Die materielle Kultur der Stadt in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar, 2019).
- Hill, T. *Die Stadt und ihr Markt: Bremens Umlands- und Außenbeziehungen im Mittelalter, 12.-15. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 2004).
- Hochmuth, C., *Globale Güter – lokale Aneignung: Kaffee, Tee, Schokolade und Tabak im frühneuzeitlichen Dresden* (Konstanz, 2008).
- Hunt, A., *Governance of the consuming passions: a history of sumptuary law* (Basingstoke, 1996).
- Hutchison, A., 'Consumption and endeavour: motives for the acquisition of new consumer goods in a region in the north of Norway in the 18th century', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 39 (2014), pp. 27–48.
- Hutchison, R., 'An industrious revolution in Norway? A Norwegian road to the modern market economy?', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 39 (2014), pp. 4–26.
- Kikuchi, Y., *Hamburgs Ostsee- und Mitteleuropahandel 1600–1800: Warenaustausch und Hinterlandnetzwerke* (Cologne, 2018).
- Kluebing, H., *Geschichte Westfalens: das Land zwischen Rhein und Weser vom 8. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 1998).
- Kriedte, P., 'Vom Großhändler zum Detaillisten: der Handel mit "Kolonialwaren" im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (1994), pp. 11–36.
- König, B., *Luxusverbote im Fürstbistum Münster* (Frankfurt a.M, 1999).
- Krüger, H.-J., *Die Bevölkerung im Vest Recklinghausen vom Ende des 16. in Jahrhunderts bis zum Beginn der Industrialisierung*, vol. 1 (Koblenz, 1977).
- Kümin, B., *Drinking matters: public houses and social exchange in early modern Central Europe* (Basingstoke, 2007).
- Küpker, M., *Weber, Hausierer, Hollandgänger: Demografischer und wirtschaftlicher Wandel im ländlichen Raum: das Tecklenburger Land, 1750–1870* (Frankfurt, 2008).
- Lemire, B., *Fashion's favourite: the cotton trade and the consumer in Britain, 1660–1800* (Oxford, 1991).
- Lemire, B., 'Revising the historical narrative: India, Europe, and the cotton trade, c.1300–1800', in G. Riello and P. Parthasarathi, eds., *The spinning world: a global history of cotton textiles, 1200–1850* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 205–26.
- Lemire, B., 'An education in comfort: Indian textiles and the remaking of English homes over the long eighteenth century', in J. Stobart and B. Blondé, eds., *Selling textiles in the long eighteenth century: comparative perspectives from western Europe* (Basingstoke, 2014), pp. 13–29.
- Lemire, B. and Riello, G., 'East & west: textiles and fashion in early modern Europe', *Journal of Social History*, 41 (2008), pp. 887–916.
- Lindemann, M., *The merchant republics: Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg, 1648–1790* (New York, 2015).
- Lucassen, J., *Migrant labour in Europe 1600–1900: the drifts to the North Sea* (London, 1987).



- Marchand, S. L., *Porcelain: a history from the heart of Europe* (Princeton and Oxford, 2020).
- Marfany, J., 'Was there an industrious revolution in Catalonia?', *Zeitschrift für Agrargeschichte und Agrarsoziologie*, 59 (2011), pp. 76–90.
- McCants, A. E. C., 'Exotic goods, popular consumption, and the standard of living: thinking about globalization in the early modern world', *Journal of World History*, 18 (2007), pp. 433–62.
- McCants, A. E. C., 'Poor consumers as global consumers: the diffusion of tea and coffee drinking in the eighteenth century', *Economic History Review*, 61 (2008), pp. 172–200.
- McCants, A. E. C., 'Porcelain for the poor: the material culture of tea and coffee consumption in eighteenth-century Amsterdam', in P. Findlen, ed., *Early modern things: objects and their histories, 1500–1800* (London and New York, 2012), pp. 316–41.
- McKendrick, N., 'The consumer revolution of eighteenth-century England', in N. McKendrick, J. Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, eds., *The birth of a consumer society: the commercialization of eighteenth century England* (Bloomington, 1982), pp. 9–33.
- Medick, H., *Weben und Überleben in Laichingen, 1650–1900: Lokalgeschichte als allgemeine Geschichte* (Göttingen, 1996).
- Menninger, A., *Genuss im kulturellen Wandel: Tabak, Kaffee, Tee und Schokolade in Europa, 16. –19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 2004).
- Moreno Claverías, B., 'Luxury, fashion and peasantry: the introduction of new commodities in rural Catalonia, 1670–1790', in B. Lemire, ed., *The force of fashion in politics and society: global perspectives from early modern to contemporary times* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 67–93.
- North, D. C., 'Institutions, transaction costs, and the rise of merchant empires', in J. D. Tracy, ed., *The political economy of merchant empires* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 22–40.
- North, M., *Material delight and the joy of living: cultural consumption in the age of enlightenment in Germany* (Aldershot, 2008).
- Ogilvie, S., 'Consumption, social capital, and the 'industrious revolution' in early modern Germany', *The Journal of Economic History*, 70 (2010), pp. 287–325.
- Ogilvie, S., 'Choices and constraints in the pre-industrial countryside', in C. Briggs, P. M. Kitson, and S. J. Thompson, eds., *Population, welfare and economic change in Britain, 1290–1834 (People, markets, goods: economies and societies in history)* (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 269–305.
- Ogilvie, S., Küpker, M., and Maegraith, J., 'Krämer und ihre Waren im ländlichen Württemberg zwischen 1600 und 1740', *Zeitschrift für Agrargeschichte und Agrarsoziologie*, 59 (2011), pp. 54–75.
- O'Rourke, K. H. and Williamson, J. G., 'After Columbus: explaining Europe's overseas trade boom, 1500–1800', *The Journal of Economic History*, 62 (2002), pp. 417–56.
- Overton, M., Whittle, J., Dean, D. and Hann, A., *Production and consumption in English households, 1600–1750* (London and New York, 2004).
- Pfister, U., 'Vom Kiepenkerl zu Karstadt: Einzelhandel und Warenkultur im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert', *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 87 (2000), pp. 38–66.
- Pfister, U., 'The quantitative development of Germany's international trade during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries', *Revue de l'OFCE*, 140 (2015), pp. 175–221.
- Pfister, U., 'Great divergence, consumer revolution and the reorganization of textile markets: Evidence from Hamburg's import trade, eighteenth century', London School of Economics and Political Science economic history working papers no. 266 (2017).
- Pfister, U., 'The timing and pattern of real wage divergence in pre-industrial Europe: evidence from Germany, c.1500–1850', *Economic History Review*, 70 (2017), pp. 701–29.
- Pfister, U., Bracht, J., Fertig, C., and Fertig, G., 'Life course strategies, social networks, and market participation in nineteenth-century rural Westphalia: an interpretative essay', in G. Fertig, ed., *Social networks, political institutions, and rural societies* (Turnhout, 2015), pp. 89–124.
- Reekers, S., 'Beiträge zur statistischen Darstellung der gewerblichen Wirtschaft Westfalens um 1800. Teil 8: Vest Recklinghausen', *Westfälische Forschungen*, 26 (1974), pp. 60–83.
- Reekers, S., 'Das Baumwollgewerbe in Westfalen von den Anfängen im 16. Jahrhundert bis zum Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts', *Westfälische Forschungen*, 37 (1987), pp. 105–34.
- Reininghaus, W., *Die vorindustrielle Wirtschaft in Westfalen: ihre Geschichte vom Beginn des Mittelalters bis zum Ende des Alten Reiches*, 3 vol. (Münster, 2018).



- Riello, G., *Cotton: the fabric that made the modern world* (Cambridge, 2013).
- Rublack, U., 'The right to dress: sartorial politics in Germany, c.1300–1750', in G. Riello and U. Rublack, eds., *The right to dress: sumptuary laws in a global perspective, c. 1200–1800* (Cambridge, 2019), pp. 37–73.
- Schlumbohm, J., 'Gesetze, die nicht durchgesetzt werden – ein Strukturmerkmal des frühneuzeitlichen Staates?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 23 (1997), pp. 647–63.
- Schmidt-Funke, J. A., 'Die Stadt als Konsumgemeinschaft. Urbaner Konsum im frühneuzeitlichen Frankfurt am Main', in J. A. Schmidt-Funke and M. Schnettger, eds., *Neue Stadtgeschichte(n): die Reichsstadt Frankfurt im Vergleich* (Bielefeld, 2018), pp. 331–65.
- Schulte Beerbühl, M., *Deutsche Kaufleute in London: Welthandel und Einbürgerung, 1660–1818* (München, 2007).
- Schuurman, A., 'Things by which one measures one's life: wealth and poverty in European rural society', in J. Broad and A. Schuurman, eds., *Wealth and poverty in European rural societies from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century* (Turnhout, 2014), pp. 13–37.
- Scotti, J. J., *Sammlung der Gesetze und Verordnungen, welche in dem vormaligen Churfürstenthum Cöln (im rheinischen Erzstifte Cöln, im Herzogthum Westphalen und im Veste Recklinghausen) über Gegenstände der Landeshoheit, Verfassung, Verwaltung und Rechtspflege ergangen sind: vom Jahre 1463 bis zum Eintritt der Königl. Preußischen Regierungen im Jahre 1816. Abth. I, Gesetzgebung für den gesammten Chur-Staat Cöln bis zu seiner gänzlichen Auflösung am Ende d. J. 1802 1: (1830) vom Jahre 1463 bis zum Jahre 1730, und von Nr. 1 bis Nr. 400* (Düsseldorf, 1830).
- Scotti, J. J., *Sammlung der Gesetze und Verordnungen, welche in dem Königlich Preußischen Erbfürstenthume Münster und in den standesherrlichen Gebieten Horstmar, Rheina-Wolbeck, Dülmen und Ahaus-Bocholt-Werth über Gegenstände der Landeshoheit, Verfassung, Verwaltung und Rechtspflege vom Jahre 1359 bis zur französischen Militair-Occupation und zur Vereinigung mit Frankreich und dem Großherzogthume Berg in den Jahren 1806 und resp. 1811 ergangen sind. Zweiter 2: Hochstift Münster: von 1763 bis 1802* (Münster, 1842).
- Shammas, C., *The pre-industrial consumer in England and America* (Oxford, 1990).
- Shammas, C., 'The decline of textile prices in England and British America prior to industrialization', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., XLVII (1994), pp. 483–507.
- Smith, W. D., 'Complications of the commonplace: tea, sugar, and imperialism', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 23 (1992), pp. 259–78.
- Spieker, I., *Ein Dorf und sein Laden: Warenangebot, Konsumgewohnheiten und soziale Beziehungen um die Jahrhundertwende* (Münster, 2000).
- Stobart, J., 'Introduction: comfort, the home and home comforts', in J. Stobart, ed., *The comforts of home in western Europe, 1700–1900* (London, 2020), pp. 1–16.
- Stobart, J. and Bailey, L., 'Retail revolution and the village shop, c.1660–1860', *Economic History Review*, 71 (2018), pp. 393–417.
- Styles, J., *The dress of the people: everyday fashion in eighteenth-century England* (New Haven, Conn., 2007).
- Styles, J., 'Fibres, fashion and marketing: textile innovation in early-modern Europe', in K. Siebenhuener, J. Jordan and G. Schopf, eds., *Cotton in context: manufacturing, marketing, and consuming textiles in the German speaking world, 1500–1900* (Cologne, 2019), pp. 35–60.
- Ulväng, M., 'Tea, coffee or printed cotton? Farm households' consumption of goods in Northern Sweden, 1760–1820', *History of Retailing and Consumption*, 7 (2021), pp. 137–61.
- Verhoeven, G., 'Fashionably late? Time, work and the industrious revolution in early modern Antwerp (1585–1795)', *Continuity and Change*, 35 (2020), pp. 255–79.
- Voth, H.-J., 'Time and work in eighteenth-century London', *The Journal of Economic History*, 58 (1998), pp. 29–58.
- Voth, H.-J., 'The longest years: new estimates of labor input in England, 1760–1830', *The Journal of Economic History*, 61 (2001), pp. 1065–82.
- de Vries, J., 'Between purchasing power and the world of goods: understanding the household economy in early modern Europe', in J. Brewer and R. Porter, eds., *Consumption and the world of goods* (London and New York, 1993), pp. 85–132.
- de Vries, J., 'The industrial revolution and the industrious revolution', *The Journal of Economic History*, 54 (1994), pp. 249–70.
- de Vries, J., *The industrious revolution: consumer behavior and the household economy, 1650 to the present* (Cambridge, 2008).





- Weber, K., 'German merchants in the Atlantic trade of colonial goods and European manufactured goods, linking Hamburg, Cádiz, and Bordeaux (1700–1830)', *Jahrbuch für europäische Überseegeschichte*, 1 (2000), pp. 169–74.
- Weber, K., *Deutsche Kaufleute im Atlantikhandel 1680–1830. Unternehmen und Familien in Hamburg, Cádiz und Bordeaux* (München, 2004).
- Weatherill, L., 'The meaning of consumer behaviour in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century England', in J. Brewer and R. Porter, eds., *Consumption and the world of goods* (London and New York, 1993), pp. 206–28.
- Weatherill L., *Consumer behaviour and material culture in Britain, 1660–1760* (1996).
- Wirtz, R., 'Kontroversen über den Luxus im ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert', *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 37 (1996), pp. 165–76.

**How to cite this article:** Bovenkerk, H. and Fertig, C., 'Consumer revolution in north-western Germany: Material culture, global goods, and proto-industry in rural households in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries', *The Economic History Review*, 76 (2023), pp. 551–574. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ehr.13192>