

Restaurants, Ratings, & Reactivity

The Impact of a Judgment Device
on the German Haute Cuisine

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Abstract

The generally increasing importance attached to the German haute cuisine market in mind, the paper at hand investigates the overall impact of the market's leading measure, the Michelin Guide on German haute cuisine restaurants. Based on a paper by Espeland and Sauder (2007), which describes the effect of measures on organizational actors by *reactivity*, we elaborate on the extent of applicability of this theoretical concept to the German haute cuisine. Our study first reveals examples of reactivity in line with Espeland and Sauder's understanding of the concept. Second, we analyze forms of pseudo-reactivity. These are patterns of behavior that seem to be reactivity on the first glance, however the Michelin Guide does not function as cause but is rather employed as legitimization of the altered behavior by the observed restaurants. Thirdly, we examine patterns of behavior that are in no correlation to the Michelin Guide. In sum, our findings indicate a weaker extent of reactivity in the specific context of German haute cuisine in contrast to what the study by Espeland and Sauder suggests. We present potential explanations for these findings based on our theoretical approach as well as on the specific features of our empirical field of study. To conclude, this paper offers an alternative perspective on reactivity and underlines the importance of further research on measures and their consequences.

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1. Introduction

“Red bible” (A, 2013), “most serious guide” (C, 2013), “boon and bane” (E, 2013), and “something for persons obsessed with their image” (H, 2013) – that is the many-faceted opinion about the Michelin Guide rating in the German haute cuisine. This controversial measure is in accordance with an overall trend of “the proliferation of measurement” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p. 1). An increasing amount of research has been done on the influence of measures on the observed actors (e.g. Espeland & Sauder, 2007; Kornberger & Carter, 2010). Following this vein, we investigate the impact of the Michelin Guide on the German haute cuisine, inspired by a paper on reactivity by Espeland and Sauder. In the following part, we provide an introduction to the German haute cuisine, the Michelin Guide, and the theoretical foundation of our study.

1.1. Haute Cuisine in Germany

Cabbage, potatoes, sausages, pretzels, black bread – that is what many people outside of Germany associate with the German cuisine (Birkett, 2011; Fletcher, 2013; Melican, 2013). From an external perspective, Germans seem to eat pork, heavy gravy and sauerkraut every day, always accompanied with liters of beer. Consequently, the famous Oktoberfest in Munich represents the German food culture quite adequately – in the eyes of many foreigners. Germans already had a reputation as cabbage guzzling primitives during World War I, which led to their famous nickname “the Krauts” among the English and American soldiers (Peters, 2010). Little has changed since then and, in contrast to its French neighbor, Germany has never been famous abroad for its haute cuisine (MacVeigh, 2009, p. 105).

However, while the old clichés abroad still persist, Germany’s haute cuisine has transformed into one of the world’s leading one. “Germany has quietly been going from strength to strength in gastronomic terms over the past decade, with chefs and artisan suppliers creating a high-quality cuisine” (Birkett, 2011). This transformation is also illustrated by the number of Michelin-starred restaurants over the years: In 1964, when the Michelin Guide was published in Germany for the first

time again after World War II, there was no single restaurant that was awarded. In the 2013 edition of the Michelin Guide, Germany achieved a new record of 255 Michelin-starred restaurants, with 209 one-star restaurants, 36 two-star restaurants and 10 three-star restaurants (Michelin, 2013b). Within Europe, this means that only France has more starred-restaurants than Germany (Krick, 2012). “A mix of economic developments and rising appreciation for fine food accounts for a blossoming of the restaurant scene in the last decade” (Dougherty, 2008).

As the denotation “haute cuisine” already bespeaks, this small fraction of gastronomy has its origin in France. Defined as “cooking of a high standard” (Cambridge Dictionaries Online, 2013) or “the preparation and cooking of high-quality food” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013a), it is also very often connected to the French cuisine, as it has its origin “in the stately chateaus and manors of the French aristocracy” (Trubek, 2000, p. 3): “following the style of traditional French cuisine” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013a), “typically French cooking” (Cambridge Dictionaries Online, 2013), “especially French cooking” (Macmillan Dictionary, 2013). Nevertheless, the word is also used in a more general manner these days. Consequently, when talking about haute cuisine in Germany, we do not exclusively consider the chefs that cook in a classical French style but generally all cooks that work with high aspiration and belong to the leading group of their guild. The leading group in this sense does not only consist of Michelin-starred restaurants, but also of all restaurants that cook on a sophisticated level and thus define the haute cuisine.

Statistics show that haute cuisine in Germany is relatively small compared to the number of restaurants: In 2010, there were 78.712 restaurants in Germany, excluding takeaways, cafés, ice cream shops and bars (Statista GmbH, 2013). With 225 starred-restaurants in the same year (Volbracht, 2009), Michelin-starred restaurants only represented 0,3 % of all restaurants. However, while the number of restaurants has been decreasing (Deutscher Hotel- und Gaststättenverband e.V., 2012), the quantity of haute cuisine restaurants has been increasing so that there were 30 starred-restaurants more in 2013 than in 2010. These haute cuisine restaurants compete with all other restaurants for 136 restaurant visits per capita in Germany in 2010. 136 visits might sound quite high, however, considering that

Germany is only on the ninth rank in a worldwide comparison with Japan, Canada and Italy at the top and taking into account that on average a bill of a restaurant visit amounts to 7,26 \$ in Germany in 2010, this statistics shows that gastronomy is a tough business (Deutscher Hotel- und Gaststättenverband e.V., 2013; Statista GmbH, 2012).

Nevertheless, haute cuisine restaurants are facing an additional difficulty: Being part of the top class of Germany's gastronomy also means dealing with very high costs. Thanks to extraordinary ingredients from all over the world for the menus as well as elaborate preparations of the meals, the costs of goods sold in German haute cuisine restaurants amount to up to 70% of total costs (Schweiger, 2010; E, 2013), while the "Allgemeine Hotel- und Gastronomie-Zeitung" (universal hotel and gastronomy newspaper) recommends a maximum of 35% (AHGZ- Allgemeine Hotel- und Gastronomie- Zeitung, 2013). Many a chef teases that 80% of all guests would not even recognize the fantastic quality of the food (Waldherr, 2010). However, it is not only the costs of goods sold, but also high costs for an armada of specially trained servicing staff as well as precious dishes and decorations that often debit an haute cuisine restaurant's account. As a consequence, most restaurants in this first division of gastronomy are subsidized by being integrated into a hotel complex, such as *Vendôme* in Bergisch Gladbach, by having a generous private Maecenas, like *La Vie* in Osnabrück, or by being supported through a company, such as *Aqua* in Wolfsburg. Just a very small number of restaurants are financially independent and gaining profit, such as *Schwarzwaldstube* in Baiersbronn.

In contrast to countries like Great Britain and France, where a lot of the haute cuisine restaurants can be found in the main cities, Germany's gems are all located on the countryside. Three-star restaurants representing the elite of haute cuisine like *Victor's Gourmet-Restaurant Schloss Berg*, *Bareiss*, or *La Belle Epoque* do not wine and dine their guests in cities such as Berlin or Munich, but in Perl, Baiersbronn, and Travemünde. Consequently, gourmet journeys with at least one overnight stay in the restaurants' adjacent hotels are very common in Germany. Nevertheless, the geographical location of Germany's top class gourmet kitchens makes

it very difficult to gain international reputation and to attract more international guests. These guests in turn are very important since the number of German gourmets has been stagnating, while the number of gourmet restaurants in Germany has been rising. To balance supply and demand, additional guests from abroad are needed (L, 2013). However, Germany's big cities host at least one- or two-star restaurants such as *Dallmayr* in Munich (two stars), *Lorenz Adlon* in Berlin (two stars) or *Villa Merton* (two stars) in Frankfurt.

1.2. The Michelin Guide in Germany

The rise in the overall level in Germany's haute cuisine would probably have been unnoticed without the help of one of the most important institutions in the food service industry: the Michelin Guide. Often known as the "Red Guide" due to its distinct red cover, this restaurant guide has a history of more than 100 years. The Michelin Guide was published for the first time in France in 1900, aimed at providing French motorists with useful information as to how to change tires or where to take a rest when travelling. It contained recommendations for restaurants as well as hotels. Published by the French tire manufacturer Michelin, the first edition of the Red Guide was restricted to 35.000 copies only and targeted the spread of the automobile overall (Michelin Reifenwerke AG & Co. KGaA, Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, 2012b). In 1910 the Michelin Guide found its way into the German bookshelves with the first German edition. After a long time without new editions due to both World Wars in Europe, the Guide has been yearly published again in Germany from 1964 on.

Not only did the restaurants become more professional over the years, but also the Michelin Guide. In 1926, the famous star-rating system was introduced. Even though the Red Guide also contains recommendations for hotels and has additional rating scales such as the fork and spoon designation, it is mostly known for its restaurant rating and the Michelin stars. Contrary to popular belief, it is the restaurant that is awarded with Michelin stars and not the chef. However, the stars are still linked to the chefs as the starred restaurants lose their Michelin stars in case their chef leaves. Referring to its origin as guide for motorists, three stars denote a restaurant that is worth a special journey, two stars a restaurant that is worth a detour and one star a restaurant that is a good place to stop on your journey (MNA

Inc., 2013). While the restaurants were evaluated by questionnaires sent to the hotels and restaurants during the first decades of the 19th century, Michelin employed its first professional inspectors in the 1930s. Since then, skilled inspectors with a long experience in the cuisine have been travelling through over a dozen countries that are represented in national editions of the Red Guide. In Germany there were about 18 inspectors in 2012, all anonymously testing up to 250 restaurants per year (Michelin Reifenwerke AG & Co. KGaG, 2012a; Vogt, 2012). Each restaurant is visited a couple of times every year, every time by a different inspector, to ensure an evaluation is as objective as possible. Moreover, the awarding of the stars is discussed in special conferences, where the inspectors together with the national chief editor as well as the international director meet and discuss the yearly evaluations.

Generally, the restaurant guide industry in Germany is well established with several different opponents. The Red Guide's most important competitor is the "Gault Millau", a guide that is also international. Even though the Gault Millau is ill reputed among the restaurants, it is still almost as popular as the Michelin Guide among gourmets. This is probably caused by the Gault Millau's rather entertaining writing style. Furthermore, it seems to be common knowledge that the Gault Millau inspectors are rather subjective when evaluating (Lücke, 2009). While the Michelin Guide is famous for its factual short critical reviews, the Gault Millau is known for its more detailed reviews that "aim for jibe and irony" (Leciejewski, 2013) and are intimidating or even life threatening for the tested restaurants (Lücke, 2009). Many cooks blame the Gault Millau inspectors for being malevolent, unfair and not skilled enough (A, 2013; F, 2013; J, 2013). Other restaurant guides such as *Feinschmecker*, *Varta-Führer* or *Aral Schlemmer Atlas* play a less important role within the German haute cuisine. The Michelin Guide claims to differentiate itself from the other guides through a couple of principles: Anonymous visits of the inspectors, independence, objective evaluations, yearly updates and homogenous standards of the evaluations (Michelin Reifenwerke AG & Co. KGaA, Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, 2012a).

Although there are rumors every year, after the latest edition of the Red Guide is published, about some of the reviews which do not meet everybody's expectations, the guide has not lost its status as an institution in the haute cuisine market. This is even more surprising if one considers that Michelin does not publish its exact evaluation criteria. The company only discloses cornerstones of the evaluation process:

The star symbols judge only what's on the plate, meaning the quality of products, the mastering of flavors, mastering of cooking, personality of the cuisine, value for the money and the consistency of what the restaurant offers to its customers both throughout the menu and the year (MNA Inc., 2013).

The Michelin Guide does not explain in more detail what it exactly means with "personality of the cuisine" or the "mastering of flavors". It just stresses the fact that everything beyond the food on the plate, such as ambience or table linen, is officially not affecting the evaluation. To push this argument to the extremes, it would be possible to gain three stars by offering extraordinary meals even though the restaurant were based in a simple barn, according to Michelin's declaration. However, some chefs doubt this and refer to the fact that every human being is open to influence by its environment (E, 2013; I, 2013). Nevertheless, the mystery about the detailed criteria of the Michelin inspectors has never negatively affected the Michelin Guide's legitimization in the haute cuisine. Even though chefs and restaurant managers feel the need for transparency about the Michelin Guide's evaluation process, they would never question its status as an important institution within the haute cuisine sector (A, 2013; E, 2013; I, 2013).

Notwithstanding all chefs' and caterers' awareness of the fact that the Michelin Guide is a profit-oriented company in the end, which is highly dependent on good sales figures of the guide, its authority, trustworthiness, and independence are not questioned. Moreover, international affairs such as the termination of the Austrian Michelin Guide in 2009 due to economic reasons (Wolschner, 2009) or a scandal in Belgium in 2005, where "a glowing review was given to a restaurant that was a building site at the time of its supposed inspection" (Rennie, 2005) have not affected the Michelin Guide's reputation in Germany. "From a small, 400-page red

guide distributed free of charge to motorists to make their travels easier and more enjoyable, the MICHELIN guide has developed over the years to become the benchmark in gourmet dining” (Michelin, 2013a).

1.3. The Theoretical Foundation

Even though the Michelin Guide has existed for more than 100 years now, it is more topical than ever and seems to perfectly meet current needs. In times of endless supply, both information and product related from all over the world, consumers increasingly have difficulties to make decisions for or against a product (Blank, 2007, p. 198). Clever businessmen have realized that and offer remedies in the form of all kinds of product reviews and rankings. Consumers can find evaluations about tourist attractions¹, universities², cosmetics³, wines⁴, employers⁵ and many others. The rankings and ratings are increasingly being found online, but traditional printed editions such as the Michelin Guide still exist. The measures differ a lot in methodology: some pool customer reviews (TripAdvisor), others are based on standardized product tests (Stiftung Warentest) while there are also subjective evaluations (Robert Parker). Nevertheless, they all have in common that they try to reduce complexity and are aimed at enabling the reader or consumer to make a decision based on their evaluations.

Based on this trend, scientists have investigated the effects of these tools, which are given diverse names: “Measures” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007), “rankings” (Kornberger & Carter, 2010), “ranking device” (Pollock & D’Adderio, 2012), “certification contest” (Rao, 1994) or “judgment devices” (Karpik, 2010) – there seems to be no consensus about any specific term. However, not only the terms differ, but also different fields of study have caught the researchers’ interest. While Kornberger and Carter (2010) concentrate on city league tables, Saisana et al. (2011) deal with world university rankings, amongst others. Nevertheless, the work done

¹ TripAdvisor: www.tripadvisor.com. Retrieved May 24, 2013

² Times Higher Education: <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/>; QS World University Rankings: <http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-university-rankings>. Retrieved May 24, 2013

³ Stiftung Warentest: <http://www.test.de/Kosmetik-Pflege-von-Kopf-bis-Fuss-1162064-0/>. Retrieved May 24, 2013

⁴ Robert Parker: <https://www.erobertparker.com/entrance.aspx>. Retrieved May 24, 2013

⁵ Universum: <http://www.universumglobal.com/IDEAL-Employer-Rankings>. Retrieved May 24, 2013

so far is mainly focused on rankings, even though the object to be ranked differs. Because of this spotlight on rankings, we see a further need to investigate ratings.

To underline why it seems to be important to also direct the scientists' attention to ratings, we firstly have to clearly distinguish between rankings and ratings in this paper. To our knowledge, both denominations are often used as synonyms, which is not correct and misleading. In contrast to a rating, a ranking is comparative and often restricted to a specific number of ranks (Coote, 2011, p. 1296). A rating, in turn, classifies an object according to specific criteria. The different classifications might have a hierarchical order, however, the objects themselves are not ranked. While an object is evaluated with reference to its competitors in a ranking, the competition or market does not play any role for a rating, in contrast. The focus is more on the criteria applied for the judgment than on any benchmarks.

A paper considering rankings that especially caught our interest was Espeland and Sauder's (2007) "Rankings and Reactivity: How Public Measures Recreate Social Worlds". This work is an example of research on rankings and their effects. Based on the example of media rankings of law schools, the authors show that people within the environment of law schools are affected in their actions by the rankings. Espeland and Sauder use the methodological concept of reactivity – "the idea that people change their behavior in reaction to being evaluated, observed, or measured" (p. 1) – to outline this phenomenon. We were wondering how far their observation that "rankings [...] gradually transform law schools into entities that conform more closely to the criteria used to construct rankings" (p. 33) also applies to a different environment such as the German haute cuisine and to a rating such as the Michelin Guide's stars.

Based on the assumption that there is a lack of studies on ratings and their consequences, the Michelin Guide is highly interesting to focus on as we think it is a good example of a rating. It is "non-comparative and can therefore be quite abstract" (Coote, 2011, p. 1296). Moreover, its rating symbols, the stars, are not restricted to a specific amount. This also means that the stars are not exclusively given to a small portion of chefs but could, theoretically, be given to all chefs as

long as their cuisine fulfills the criteria for a star. However, this is far from reality, of course.

The Michelin Guide is special also in another aspect: The product, which is rated, food or cuisine, is very hard to evaluate since taste is generally very subjective. Karpik (2010) perceives the haute cuisine as an example for a market of singularities. By singularities he means “goods and services that are structured, uncertain and incommensurable” (p.10). Moreover, Karpik claims that judgment devices such as ratings and rankings are vital to the existence of a market: “Without judgment devices, the market of singularities could not function” (p. 46). He furthermore mentions the Michelin Guide as a good example for a judgment device, because, “the Red Guide’s technology dispels opacity, reduces quality uncertainty, and establishes economic regulation for incommensurable products while at the same time making them all momentarily equivalent” (p. 81). We follow Karpik by assuming that we are dealing with a singularity when investigating the haute cuisine, as food seems hard to compare by matter of fact.

To sum up, with this paper we would like to answer the question, ***what impact the Michelin Guide as a rating has on the German haute cuisine market***. We base our project on Espeland and Sauder’s (2007) work on rankings, while we put our focus on ratings, in particular the Michelin Guide. The paper at hand shows in how far reactivity is a phenomenon which is also observable in the context of ratings. Furthermore, by studying whether the Michelin Guide’s stars as a well-established rating influences the chefs’, service staff’s or caterers’ behavior or not, we conclude whether this rating is just giving a snapshot of reality or actively creating reality. As field of study, we chose the German haute cuisine sector, which is one of the biggest haute cuisine markets in Europe or even worldwide. Haute cuisine in general is very interesting to us since it deals with a market of a singularity, food, according to Karpik (2010). After having read this paper, the reader should have an idea about the extent to which the Michelin Guide influences the German haute cuisine and about potential differences to the study of Espeland and Sauder as well as implications.

1.4. Findings of the Study

To answer our research question, we conducted 12 interviews in the beginning of 2013 all over Germany with people that work or worked in the haute cuisine in different backgrounds. Following the idea of an iterative process, in our analysis we look for patterns in the answers that seem to characterize the German haute cuisine or their work in this field.

We find out that reactivity can be observed to a much smaller extent in the haute cuisine than in the field of study of Espeland and Sauder (2007). At first, there are aspects in the work and environment of our interviewees that are influenced by the Michelin Guide and its criteria for evaluation, thus confirming reactivity. We furthermore find patterns of behavior that appear to be reactive, but when taking a closer look one realizes that they do not meet the exact definition of reactivity. In these cases, a specific behavior is justified by the criteria of the Michelin Guide by our interviewees. However, they rather purport reactive behavior than the Red Guide really influences them. Therefore, we call this phenomenon pseudo-reactivity. We can see that the rating is used for the purpose of legitimization of certain patterns of behaviors, but that there is a missing correlation between these behaviors and a good rating and our interviewees are aware of that. Finally, we find indicators that confirm the opinion that the Michelin Guide is not the main clock generator. People working in the German haute cuisine make many decisions without considering the Michelin Guide's potential evaluation criteria. We call these cases non-reactivity. All in all, it can be said that the Michelin Guide is legitimate in the haute cuisine and that the rating is perceived as very prestigious. Some chefs even see it as an aim in life. However, it affects the daily business of the German haute cuisine restaurants only to a certain extent.

Our analysis is divided into two main sections: In the first step, we figure out that reactivity can be observed in the context of a specific rating as well, but only to a limited extent. In the second step, we look for possible explanations for this finding. Reasons for this different outcome of our work compared to Espeland and Sauder (2007) might be related to the three theoretical pillars that we use as foundation of our paper. While the third pillar, Espeland and Sauder's work on reactivity in the

context of rankings, serves as an inspiring example for our approach, the other two pillars set the stage for our paper. Therefore, we could imagine that they have an impact on our final outcome. Consequently, one explanation for our result might be the circumstance that our study dealt with a rating and not a ranking. Moreover, we have to critically question whether the Michelin Guide really is a typical example of a rating and whether its specifics could have influenced our result. In addition to that, we reflect upon in how far our assumption that the German haute cuisine is a market of singularities according to Karpik (2010) could have implications for our study. Besides that, the different results of our work compared to Espeland and Sauder might depend on the specific field of our study. The German haute cuisine is certainly different from the American law school sector and this might explain our deviant findings. All in all, possible explanations for the results of our study might finally show fields for further research to clarify.

1.5. Course of Investigation

The paper at hand is divided into diverse sections. After this introduction to the topic, a part concentrating on the methodology of our work follows. In that part, we give details about our approach, interview techniques and the way we analyzed the interviews to come to our conclusions. Following the methodology, we elaborate on all theories our paper is grounded on in a part called “theoretical background”. As mentioned before, we base our study on three theoretical pillars: the overall distinction between rankings and ratings, Karpik’s (2010) reflections on markets of singularities and the impact of judgment devices, and Espeland and Sauder’s (2007) observations concerning reactivity related to rankings. After a short explanation of these theoretical concepts, we bring our field of research into context with the theories mentioned. Next, we start the analysis by presenting the reader with some general information about the German haute cuisine, which is a world in itself. This background information is necessary to understand this specific world, the evaluation of our arguments in the analysis as well as the potential explanations for our study’s result at a later point in the paper. Following this general information, we show the results of our study. By referring to the different interviews we conducted, we answer our research question while taking the theoretical frame of our work into

consideration. We draw up a final conclusion that differs to the result of Espeland and Sauder and try to find reasons for that. After the analysis, there comes a discussion section in which we show implications of our work to existing research. We go back on the three theoretical pillars and show in how far our conclusion affects them. Furthermore, we consider the basic assumptions of institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977) as well as the overall discussion about the expressiveness of measures, following the idea of MacKenzie (2006). Finally, we sum up our study in the conclusion, show the limitations of our paper and point to possibilities for further research. The interested reader can find background material of our study, such as the interview guides and the transcribed interviews, in an appendix at the very end of this paper.

2. Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to outline our chosen methodology and to critically reflect on this. We present the use of our theory and how we approach our problem statement methodically. Further, we elaborate upon different approaches we could have chosen from a methodological approach.

2.1. Use of Theory

Our overall interest is to investigate on the impact of a measure in a specific market. An example for previous research in haute cuisine is the work of Rao, Monin, and Durand (2003) who describe an identity movement in the French haute cuisine from 1970 to 1997. Their longitudinal study focuses on institutional logics and role identities that change and are newly established in the market over time. With a similar approach, Svejenova, Mazza, and Planellas (2007) explore the role of one institutional entrepreneur for initiating change in the Spanish haute cuisine that are following the identities described in the work of Rao et al.. While Svejenova et al. focus on one particular chef, Rao et al. investigate on activists, all with the intention to elaborate on the role of organizational actors in causing change or movements. In contrast, with our work, we aim for an overall understanding of the role of a rating device for the haute cuisine market. Through the lenses of the organizational actors in the market we elaborate how they perceive the influence of a measure, instead of how organizational actors actively have influence on changes or movements. Also, our form of study has a shorter time horizon and is thus not able to identify movements or changes over time. Instead, we identify a social constructed picture in one moment.

The role of measures in general is widely discussed in previous research (e.g. Blank, 2007; Espeland & Sauder, 2007; Kornberger & Carter, 2010; Pollock & D'Adderio, 2012; Schultz, Mouritsen, & Grabielsen, 2011). For instance, Kornberger and Carter (2010) explore the role of city league tables on the development of strategies of cities and argue that league tables create competition between cities and elaborate on the "how". Espeland and Sauder (2007) investigate on the general form of influence of a ranking and rely on the concept of reactivity. Pollock

and D'Adderio (2012) further argue that the format and shape of a ranking can mediate and constitute a domain. We cannot identify similarities to strategy-making (Kornberger & Carter, 2010) or sociomateriality (Pollock & D'Adderio, 2012) in the effects of Michelin Guide, because its specific characteristics are contrary to the measures of each of their research. For our purpose of investigating on the general form of impact of this measure in haute cuisine, we see the concept of Espeland and Sauder as most valid. From the view of the organizational actors Espeland and Sauder elaborate on how and why measures have influence on the actor's behavior. By altering the principles of their study, i.e. another market and another type of measure, we see their concept of reactivity as very suitable for our market and for an in-depth understanding of the role of a measure. Thus, we rely on their work and apply their concept of reactivity.

Overall, we rely on our own distinction of rating over ranking, the theory of the market of singularities of Karpik (2010), and the methodological concept of reactivity, described by Espeland and Sauder (2007). We use the characteristics of a rating and the market of singularities as assumptions as well as boundaries for our analysis, whereas the concept of reactivity guides the process of our analysis. More concrete, we have chosen the concept of ratings in opposition of rankings and the market of singularities as a guiding principle enriching to the concept of reactivity. In their foundational work on reactivity, Espeland and Sauder use a combination of different theories in order to come up with a framework for investigating the reactivity of social measures. The concept of reactivity has been evaluated within one particular market setting in the general "proliferation of measures" (p. 1). We choose to investigate within the same area of social measures, but with a different measure and on a different market, namely a rating in a market of singularities. Our analysis is built on the foundation of these paradigm differences. As mentioned, we base our analysis on Espeland and Sauder's study and thus test their theory for generalization. In that way, our work differs in the way of analyzing to Espeland and Sauder, but we agree on their general philosophy of science.

2.2. Meta-Position

In line with our guiding theoretical pillar of reactivity and the work of Espeland and Sauder (2007), we decided to use a social constructivist approach for our research. Espeland and Sauder assume that measures are socially constructed and so do we. “Because we continually interpret our social worlds, objects are unstable; they emerge and are reconstructed through measurement” (p. 35). Furthermore, “reactivity is one form of interaction that reveals how difficult it is to maintain sharp distinctions between measures and objects of measurement, description and inscription, science and society, the social and the natural” (p. 35). As social constructivists, we understand the “reality of what is measured as shaped by measurement” (p. 12). In order to understand the reality, we thus take the human component into account and analyze how people are negotiated and frame the truth (Bourdieu, 1977; Goffman, 1989). In line with Bourdieu (1977) we argue that a society is defined by the relations between structures of power. In our case, these structures of power are created through the measures. In this regard, the interaction between measure and organizational actor is socially constructed (Goffman, 1989). Therefore, we intend to gain insights into the effects of this measure through the perception of the organizational actors, in our case, the restaurants in the German haute cuisine market.

2.3. Research Design

In line with our philosophy of science, we chose an explorative approach (Stebbins, 2008). Exploratory research “refers to a broad-ranging, intentional, systematic data collection designed to maximize discovery of generalizations based on description and direct understanding of an area of social [...] life” (p. 327). In that way, our study aims for an understanding of the social measure, such as the Michelin Guide in the haute cuisine market. For this approach, Marshall and Rossman (1995) suggest the use of a case study. Similarly to Espeland and Sauder (2007), we thus use a case study approach, as it is well suited for our goal of theory elaboration (Steinmetz, 2004). Yin (2003) argues that case study research is well suited for testing existing theories. In particular, Yin suggests a case study approach “especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly

evident” (p.13), meaning for capturing complex contemporary situations. Thus, it is a method that suits very well to grasp the impact of the Michelin Guide on the Germany haute cuisine.

The Michelin Guide as a rating was selected because it is perceived as the most important and influential rating in the field of German haute cuisine. In the market of singularities, it is seen as the most objective measure in comparison to its competitors. This high appreciation in the market legitimizes elaborating upon its influence towards the market actors. Furthermore, trends suggest that rankings as well as ratings have been rising in importance in diverse markets. In contrast, some interview partners pointed towards the missing economic feasibility of having a star, questioning the importance of the Michelin stars overall. This contradiction of the importance makes the assumptions behind ratings and their effects more clear, which we deepen in our analysis.

2.4. Research Setting

The primary data collection for our research took place with 14, more or less randomly selected individuals in the haute cuisine industry within 12 interviews lasting between 30 minutes and two hours. Our interview partners were mainly working in restaurants in haute cuisine, ranging from the owner over the chef to the maître d' and the restaurant manager. One interview partner was further working as an independent restaurant critic. 11 interviews took place in Germany and 1 in Austria. We interviewed restaurants with different amount of stars, i.e. three, two and one star, as well as restaurants without stars. Furthermore, they varied in their establishment in the German haute cuisine, meaning from young chefs in their first position as chef to established chefs working for many years in that position. This broad range of interview partners allowed us to get a deep insight into the German haute cuisine market in general, and the impact that the Michelin Guide has on the restaurants in particular.

In order to avoid biases and as we did not see any academic value added, we coded our interviews by denoting our interviewees with letters in a random order. We subsume the interview partners, if we are talking with two interview partners in

the same time. Table 1 presents an overview of the interviews conducted and gives a basic understanding of the character of the interview partner without any possibilities to identify his or her real name.

<i>Interview partner</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i># of stars</i>	<i>Current rating since</i>	<i>Chef rated since</i>	<i>Restaurant conception / cooking style</i>	<i>Own description</i>
A	Owner and chef de cuisine	1	2012	2009	Regional cuisine with extraordinary flavors	One of the youngest Michelin-starred chefs
B (2 persons)	Owner / Sommelier	0	-	-	Italian delightful cuisine	Local institution with exalted cuisine, but no Michelin star
C (2 persons)	Co-owner and Maître d' / Co-owner and chef de cuisine	1	2011	2011	Individual creativity with harmonizing contrasts	Entrepreneurs in haute cuisine; strong focus on economic feasibility; consider themselves as "guys next door"
D	Chef de cuisine	3	2011	1991	Avant-gardism, three-dimensional flavor cuisine	Newcomer with three stars and former "chef of the year" ⁶ ; considered as the most creative restaurant in Germany
E	Restaurant critic	-	-	-	-	Independent restaurant critic with regional focus
F	Owner and chef de cuisine	0	-	-	Seasonal and regional cuisine	Perceives his cuisine just below star rated restaurants; no ambitions for stars

⁶ <http://gaultmillau.de/auszeichnungen>. Retrieved May 28, 2013

G	Restaurant manager	1	2007	2007	Pleasure for all senses	Working for an ambitious chef who is aiming for further stars
H	Co-owner and restaurant manager	0	-	-	Creative gourmet cuisine with excellent service	Contradicting haute cuisine; focusing on the hot-spot character of the highly frequented restaurant
I	Executive director	1	1997	1997	Gourmet restaurant	Well-established and dignified restaurant in a luxury hotel in a main city
J	Owner and chef de cuisine	2	2005	1995	French touch with strong flavors	Former chef of different German starred restaurants; chef and owner now in Austria
K	Chef de cuisine	3	1992	1983	Symphony of superlatives	One of the most established and recognized chefs
L	Maitre d'	3	2006	2001	Great cuisine, creative accents and pure flavors	One of the leading restaurants in Germany

Table 1: Overview of Interview Partners (own illustration)

2.5. Data Collection

The collection of empirical data was conducted between the 19th of February and the 20th of March 2013. In all interviews, we let the interviewees tell stories based on the idea of *eliciting stories*, where the interviewer frames the topic of interest with questions (Gabriel, 2000; Czarniawska, 2008). The interviews are thereby used as a narrative production site (Czarniawska, 2008). In addition, we categorized the collected narratives like Gabriel (p. 36) in order to reach a deeper understanding of the data. Following the idea of an iterative process and for an in-depth understanding, we divided our interviews into three rounds. The first round of interviews (N=4) had an explorative character examining general patterns of behavior caused by external sources of influences outside the restaurants. The second

round of interviews (N=5) had a consolidating character elaborating how ratings in particular affect the German haute cuisine and in how far these effects vary. The third and last round of interviews (N=3) had a confirmative character validating our findings so far and test these with the help of the last interview partners. The research evidence is recordings as well as transcripts of the interviews. As the interviews were in German, also the transcripts in the Appendix are in German. Nevertheless, we use some direct quotes in the analysis section, which we then translated into English. If it was not necessary for the understanding, we refined the direct quotes. As this paper and the definition of our theoretical pillars considers all *local grounding, richness and holism, causality, and lived meaning* (Miles & Huberman, 1994), we see a qualitative approach with interviews as our primary data as valid for our purpose (Lee, 1998). The data collection method was semi-structured interviews. For each interview, we had a guiding questionnaire for orientation, which is shown in the Appendix. In there, we covered basic aspects of questions we would like to ask, but adapted them accordingly during our interviews in order to react towards the behavior and the story-telling of our interview partner. We did not know what exactly to look for in the beginning of our interview rounds. Consequently, the collection of data was conducted as an iterative process where we used the gained knowledge from one interview to revise our questions for the next interview, in order to deepen the understanding as much as possible. Except for one interview, both authors were present at all 12 interviews. After each interview we discussed the empirical findings, in order to share thoughts and ideas. Our interviews were *explorative, relatively structured, intended to test theory* and served as our *primary data* (Lee, 1998, p. 82).

In addition, we collected and reanalyzed other data to help interpreting our interview data. We visited all 12 restaurants on site and met our interview partners in person, allowing us to get personal insights into the setting, ambience and character of the restaurants. We further analyzed the web sites of the restaurants visited as well as other nonrandom restaurants operating in the haute cuisine. These further sources deepen our understanding and help to reduce the limitations of our interviews.

2.6. Data Analysis

Just like explained above, our interest in this study is the impact of the Michelin Guide on German haute cuisine restaurants. As stated by Espeland and Sauder (2007), organizational actors – in this case, the rated restaurants – adjust their behavior when being observed and evaluated. We find their concept of reactivity the most interesting theoretical starting point for our analysis in order to evaluate the impact of the Michelin Guide. Hence, our aim is to discover forms of reactivity in the context of a rating in the specific market of singularities – and test the theory of reactivity in a different setting.

In that matter, the impression from our empirical data is that we can identify three patterns of behavior that hold the biggest attention from our interview partners – these are: *aspects of reactivity*, *pseudo-reactivity*, and *non-reactivity*. Consequently, we first analyze our findings along the pattern of Espeland and Sauder (2007), following their idea of study. Nevertheless, our interview partners highlighted another impact that the Michelin Guide has for them, which lies outside the concept of reactivity. Thus, we second analyze the findings in the context of which benefits the restaurants expect through the Michelin Guide. At first glance, this seems to be alike reactivity. Thirdly, we analyze our findings in the context of non-impact of the Michelin Guide. For a better understanding of our aspects, we use illustrative examples for each of them. The sum of our examples is thereby the representation of the world how we perceived them as a constructed one and thus manifest our argument. Nevertheless, there might be more examples existing. In order to analyze these aspects, we keep a critical attitude to the interview statements and judge if each statement represents the honest opinion of the interviewee or are used for another reason, for instance as legitimization of something else. The judgment was based on the evaluation of their stories. In that way, we repeat the iterative process throughout the analysis.

2.7. Limitations

Our approach implies categorizing some statement of our interview partners as more important than others, which is a tricky process, as there are interesting

statements on more levels of the organizational behavior and picking one over the other is biased by the analyst. For the explorative purpose of our study, the case study analysis seems to be well suited, but nevertheless covers some limitations. First of all, with 12 interviews, there is the possibility that we were not able to catch all representative opinions, but only a sample of it. As there are in total 255 restaurants starred by the Michelin Guide, there are more opinions in that field that might change our result. For the purpose of testing a theory, Abbott (2004) nonetheless sees the amount of 12 interviews as valid to gain insights for a general understanding.

Second, the sample of our research group is biased. In total, we contacted 41 different restaurants from which only 20 responded to our request. Further, two restaurants declared themselves as interested for an interview, but were then not contactable for arranging an appointment of an interview. For the rest, six restaurants did not want to conduct an interview with us about the topic of the Michelin Guide. One of the contacted restaurants mentioned that it did not want to talk about this as it found the topic “too delicate”. The remaining 12 interview partners were interested and willing to share something about the Michelin Guide. This biased sample might cause a one-sided opinion about the Michelin Guide. Nevertheless, as our result is quite many-faceted and since we found multiple opinions among our interviewees, we see our interview sample still as valid.

Third, our interview partners were already biased in another way when going into the interviews: Since we mentioned the topic of the Michelin Guide in our contacting email, they were narrow-minded before the interview even started. In that way, we lost the surprise effect with our interview partners and the answers were well prepared. Nevertheless, except for one interview, we could filter their prepared answers to our questions and were able to ask followup questions in order to get more spontaneous and valuable answers. Generally, we think that the answers to our questions can be characterized as open and honest.

Fourth, it is questionable if the concept of reactivity is best observable by interviews. Interviews might itself cause reactivity. As interviews are a form of observa-

tion, the interview partners might have changed their behavior accordingly. In that way, through the interviews and the possibly caused reactivity, our interview partners were influenced in their answers about the impact of the Michelin Guide. Anyway, a qualitative approach for testing a theory suggests the use of interviews for a basic understanding and a broad and deep insight into the topic. Thus, we have to be aware of this possible falsification in our analysis, but were able to gain these insights, which were otherwise not possible to gather.

When overlooking our methods, we can identify alternatives we could have chosen. We could have chosen a broader sample of interviews for a more realistic picture of the haute cuisine. Furthermore, a broader scope of interview partners, i.e. not only restaurants and actors within the haute cuisine, would support a broader understanding of the haute cuisine itself. In that way, we would be able to also question the assumption of the haute cuisine being a market of singularities. Similarly, we could have interviewed other actors in the market, i.e. journalists, restaurant guests and suppliers. For our analysis, we see the Michelin Guide as black box and take their official statements as given. Anyway, some interview partners questioned their statements of their way of judging so that opening and investigating the black box might also lead to a different result.

In terms of an alternative for interviews, we could have followed the judging statements of the Michelin Guide and particular have focus upon the aspects that they claim they test, meaning “quality of products, the mastering of flavors, mastering of cooking, personality of the cuisine, value for the money and the consistency of what the restaurant offers to its customers” (MNA Inc., 2013). For instance, we could investigate upon the quality of the products by investigating on their cost of sales or the invested time to find products. Similarly, we could investigate the value for the money by creating a ratio comparing the amount of food with the prices all over Germany. However, with these criteria, we ignore the foundations of a market of singularities as we try to make this subjective field objective. This would be questionable in its appropriateness in that context. By a particular focus on these attributes, we would also have risked to overlook other attributes that we found with our research design.

Moreover, in order to prevent to cause a reactive behavior in the interviews, we could alternatively have used a participative role and investigate on the behavior of the restaurants while they are tested. Afterwards, we could have compared the behaviour to different other restaurants in the process. Therefore, it would be necessary, to visit several restaurants a couple of times over years, which would in turn affect the anonymity of the observers. Furthermore, a longitudinal ethnographical study would exclude the possible effects of reactivity through interviews and can give an overall answer, if there is reactivity in the haute cuisine market at all. As reactivity is originally a phenomenon of psychology, Campbell (1957) suggests using social experiments. Accordingly, we could investigate upon the difference of two similar restaurants in their style, character and chefs, one being rated by the Michelin Guide and the other not being rated to see if their behaviors differ and if in how far.

All in all, we are aware of the methodological limitations our work has. Therefore, we tried to minimize their influence. Our sample of interviews gives a very broad insight into the understanding of the haute cuisine market, as the opinions were quite diverse. Furthermore, with our interview technique of story telling, we encouraged our interview partners to speak boldly. By asking critical and unexpected questions, we are further able to decrease our interview partners` bias. The adjustment of our questions after each interview made it possible for us to gain the most out of each interview by ensuring each interview would be very rich in information. In this regard, we were able to minimize our influence as observer. This means that despite the different approach to Espeland and Sauder (2007) and the limitations of our study, we see our chosen method as valid and most appropriate for the purpose of our study: Understanding the impact of Michelin Guide in prospect of the concept of reactivity.

3. Theoretical Background

In this part, we elaborate on the three theoretical pillars this paper is based on. Two of our theoretical pillars are used as basic assumptions and orientation for our analysis. Therefore, we first outline the theoretical comparison of rankings and ratings and elaborate on the market of singularities by Karpik (2010). Then, we illustrate the third theoretical pillar, the concept of reactivity by Espeland and Sauder (2007). The third theoretical pillar is used as guiding principle for our analysis part. For all three theoretical pillars, we demonstrate the respective key findings and then indicate at which point of their work we contribute to their findings. In general, we amplify each concept in this part than we later use it in our analysis to give the reader an in-depth understanding of each concept.

3.1. Measures, Rankings, and Ratings

To start, we elaborate on the first pillar that we base our paper on: the overall differentiation between two specific types of measures, rankings and ratings. Generally, we assume that our paper about a particular rating, the Michelin Guide, is in alignment with the current zeitgeist. As Power (1997) already mentioned in the 90s, long time before the boom of the internet and online league tables such as TripAdvisor (Jeacle & Carter, 2011), we are living in an audit society. In his opinion, “auditing may be a collection of tests and an evidence gathering task, but it is also a system of values and goals which are inscribed in the official programmes which demand it” (Power, 1997, p. 7). Therefore, audits are the result of some values of the society. Moreover, he argues that, “institutionalized pressures exist for audit and inspection systems to produce comfort and reassurance, rather than critique” (Power, 2000, p. 115).

While Power mainly dealt with audits of organizations in the 90s, the “audit explosion” (Power, 1994) has even affected products and services meanwhile. In addition to Power’s (2000) argumentation, reasons for this trend to review, rate, and rank almost everything could also be the immense rise in product supply over the last decades. The growing supply is enabled by the fact that distance has increasingly becoming unimportant in times of cheap flights, public transport systems, and

car sharing (Blank, 2007, p. 198). As a consequence, the supply seems to be almost endless and decisions hard to make as a consumer. Any kind of help to make a buying decision is therefore highly welcomed. Nevertheless, measures for products and services are not only in the interest of consumers, but can also be very favorable for the producers. They are “a mechanism through which social status is made publicly visible” (Blank, 2007, p.1). A positive media reputation through a high ranking or rating may lead to competitive advantage (Deephouse, 2000). In contrast, an organization or product that is on the lower ranks might feel socially excluded (Amsler & Bolsman, 2012).

Similarly to Power (1997), Blank (2007) elaborates on the sociology of reviews. Review in this sense is used as a general term, similar to measure, and includes both rankings and ratings. Blank generally distinguishes between two kinds of reviews, connoisseurial reviews and procedural reviews. Connoisseurial reviews are based “on the unique skills, sensitivity, training, and experience of a single reviewer, a connoisseur” (p. 7). This means that an evaluation of a product’s performance is given by a single skilled person. An example is the restaurant reviews within the New York Times written by Craig Claiborne in the 1950s. In this case, a qualified journalist visited a restaurant and wrote a short article about his experience. Of course, Blank’s opinion is subjective and might lead to a one-sided, biased evaluation. Moreover, the process of a connoisseurial review might be a “black box”, meaning that the audience cannot fully reconstruct which criteria the reviewer used to come to his conclusion (p. 133). However, the credibility of the review can still be high as long as the “reviewer is someone an audience respects as an authority” (p. 33).

Procedural reviews, in contrast, are based on objective tests with well-defined procedures (Blank, 2007, p. 8). By testing all products according to fixed criteria, procedural ratings “transform something personal and subjective into an impersonal, objective reality. This transformation is the core of the credibility claim of these reviews” (p. 35). Furthermore, they are mainly authored by an organization rather than by one person, in contrast to connoisseurial reviews (p. 36) and their test procedures are clearly communicated and replicable for the audience (p. 133). A typi-

cal example is software reviews by organizations such as *International Consumers Research and Testing* (ICRT). Similar to Blank's approach, De Maeyer and Hooman (2011) generally differentiate reviews in this context. They distinguish between expert opinions and consumer testimonials (p. 1068). While the former "reflect systematic examination and testing of a product's performance features", the latter consists of "individual consumers' descriptions of their personal experiences with a given product or service" (p. 1068).

Following the flood of measures for product and service quality, academia has investigated on the effects of measures in various directions. Researchers focused on diverse measured objects such as law schools (Espeland & Sauder, 2007), universities (Saisana, d'Hombres, & Saltelli, 2011), places (Csaba & Stöber, 2011), cities (Kornberger & Carter, 2010) or restaurants (Christensen & Pedersen, 2011). However, this work has been almost exclusively done on a specific measure: rankings. A ranking can be defined as "the action or process of giving a specified rank to someone or something" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013b). Moreover, a ranking is always comparative (Coote, 2011, p. 1296), meaning that a specific rank for a product is given on the basis of comparisons between this specific product and other products within the same category. Usually, a limit of ranks and therefore products is defined beforehand and often announced in the title of the rankings, such as "The 100 best ..." or "The Top 10 ...". Even though definitions for the different measures exist in science, as shown, there seem to be a lack of awareness on them when research is done on their effects. Consequently, all measured objects that were studied closer by researchers mentioned above are typical examples for rankings. In our opinion, this focus was not chosen on purpose, but can be rather explained by the missing consideration of the measures' definitions.

Although rankings and ratings are often used as synonyms in an academic context, we perceive them as distinct measures. In contrast to rankings, "ratings are typically non-comparative and can therefore be quite abstract" (Coote, 2011, p. 1296). A rating classifies an object according to specific criteria and might rank the different classifications. However, the objects themselves are not put into a hierarchy. Famous examples for ratings are credit ratings, which evaluate the credit worthi-

ness of debtors. Rating agencies such as Moody's or Standard & Poor's classify debtors according to specific criteria and put them into groups of debtors with the same degree of credit worthiness. While the debtors themselves are not compared on a scale, in contrast to rankings, the category to which they belong to can be put into a hierarchy. Due to the lack of research on ratings we decided to focus on these special measures. It is interesting in how far phenomena experienced in relation to rankings are existent also in the context of ratings.

For our research, we chose the Michelin Guide and we explain in the following why we think that it is an example for ratings. Whereas it also has other classifications such as the Bib Gourmand or the fork and spoon designation, it is mostly known for its three-star system. On the one hand we see solid reasons why the Michelin Guide cannot be an example of a ranking. Even though the Michelin Guide has also been mentioned in the context of rankings in a paper about evaluative practices in the culinary field (Christensen & Pedersen, 2011), we perceive this as not correct. Firstly, the restaurants are classified by awarding them with a specific number of stars, but they are not compared directly or put into a hierarchy. This means that the Michelin stars are distributed independent of any behavior of other participants within the market. Consequently, the Red Guide does not fulfill Coote's (2011) definition of rankings: According to him, a ranking is always comparative (p. 1296). Secondly, there is not limit set by Michelin considering the number of restaurants awarded with stars. In contrast to a ranking, which mostly has a fixed number of ranks, the three-star system of Michelin is not restricted to a specific number of ranked restaurants. This accounts for the fact that the number of German two-star restaurants has doubled when comparing 2010 and 2013 and also explains how there can be a new record of 255 starred restaurants in 2013 (Michelin, 2013b). Altogether, the Michelin Guide cannot be defined as a ranking due to the before-mentioned reasons. On the other hand, however, we see indication that it is a matter of a rating. As it is non-comparative, we see Coote's definition of ratings fulfilled in the case of the Michelin Guide. Moreover, the Michelin rating is quite abstract – as a benchmark for the evaluation is missing, the final

categorization of the restaurants is sometimes hard to reconstruct, even for the parties involved, the restaurants.

Like with every other measure, it should be possible to sort the Red Guide as either a connoisseurial or a procedural review, according to Blank (2007). “Connoisseurial reviews rest on the unique skills, sensitivity, training, and experience of a single reviewer (...) [whereas] procedural reviews are based on the results of tests” (p. 7 f.). The Michelin Guide is based on the skills and experience of the reviewer, as every other restaurant review. Regarding this aspect, it could be perceived as a connoisseurial review. However, as all restaurants tested are visited independently by more than just one Michelin inspector, one cannot compare it to connoisseurial reviews like the one of Craig Claiborne. After numerous inspectors have tested a restaurant, they jointly decide, together with the national chief editor as well as the international director, about the amount of stars that they award the restaurant with (Michelin Reifenwerke AG & Co. KGaA, Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, 2012b). This is done to reduce the risk of bias and to ensure an objective evaluation. Hence, the Michelin Guide cannot be considered as a connoisseurial review as its testing procedure does not correspond with the definition of this kind of review.

As the Michelin Guide does not fully meet the criteria of a connoisseurial review, one might conclude that it is a procedural review consequently. Even though nobody knows about the exact evaluation processes, one can assume that the Michelin inspectors probably work with a set of fixed criteria when testing a restaurant. Therefore, one could argue that Michelin’s testing procedures are standardized and meet the definition of procedural reviews. However, the Michelin restaurant rating is not fully in alignment with Blank’s (2007) definition of procedural reviews: Firstly, the testing procedures do not finally lead to a ranking of the diverse restaurants, as he claims, but a rating instead (Blank, 2007). There is nothing such a “single winner” (p. 127). Secondly, the exact testing criteria of the Michelin Guide are by no means transparent and easy to understand for the audience nor replicable (p. 133). In contrast to connoisseurial reviews, which mostly have secret testing procedures, procedural reviews should differ to these black boxes. However, besides the information that restaurants are tested by more than one inspector,

Michelin creates a mystery around the exact testing procedures, as already mentioned. This implies that we cannot assign the Michelin restaurant rating to procedural reviews either. The fact that we cannot classify the Michelin Guide according to Blank's definitions shows that this rating might be of a special kind, which we elaborate on later in this paper.

All in all, we showed in this section why we perceive the Michelin Guide as a rating. In our opinion, it fully fulfills the criteria of Coote's (2011) definition of ratings. Moreover, we cannot classify the Red Guide according to the different types of reviews in general by Blank (2007). It does neither fulfill the criteria of connoisseurial reviews, nor does it meet the definition of procedural reviews. This could lead to the conclusion that the Michelin Guide is a rather special case of a rating, as it cannot be easily categorized. One reason why the Michelin restaurant rating is so special in comparison to other ratings could be the core of haute cuisine: food and restaurants. As taste is a rather subjective issue, food is a product, which is hard to compare and, therefore, could be an example of a singularity. In the following we thus elaborate further on that concept by Karpik (2010).

3.2. Lucien Karpik: Economics of Singularities

Our second theoretical pillar is the market of singularities in the understanding of Karpik (2010), which we introduce in this section. The core of the market of singularities is a specific kind of product that requires special attention: "Singularities are goods and services that are structured, uncertain and incommensurable" (p. 10). Karpik characterizes these three defining features of singularities more detailed in the following way: "Singularities are defined by qualities (structured multiple dimensions), quality uncertainty, and incommensurability – by all three together" (p. 13). First, they are multidimensional as well as indivisible and must be structured. They are "foiled by the way consumers interpret them" (p. 11). Second, singularities are characterized by two kinds of uncertainty: on the one side strategic uncertainty, arising from the interpretation of the relationship between product and customer; on the other side quality uncertainty, being contrary to neoclassical assumptions as there is at least partially imperfect knowledge of the product. The latter is in line with Knight (1921) and Akerlof (1970) and implies four consequences: "(1) it turns

the exchange of products into an exchange of promises; (2) it cannot simply be conflated with information asymmetry; (3) it cannot be eliminated by the sole extension of information or of calculation; and (4) in association with free competition, it leads to market failure” (Karpik, 2010, p. 12). Third, no general hierarchy can be justified between two singular products. In order to compare products, commensurability has to be pluralistic as well as reversible:

Commensurability is a modality of action that expresses the actor's autonomy and plurality of preferences. The oscillation between a relative stable common reality and the multiplicity of the constructions associated with individual and collective points of view is constitutive of market of singularities (Karpik, 2010, p. 13).

The general idea of the market of singularities is based on the limitations of neo-classical economy. Karpik (2010) criticizes neoclassical assumptions for missing out a particular category of the market: “The overlooked markets are markets of singular, incommensurable products. [...] They encompass those exchanges governed by the search for a ‘good’ or the ‘right’” (p. 3). Karpik suggests that the market of singular products “should be added to the markets of homogeneous and differentiated goods” (p. 8), which are already described in neoclassic economy. Because of the outlined defining features of singular products, a market in the neo-classical way cannot function:

It is just as impossible to compare without knowing as to rely on the experience that intervenes only after the transaction. If all choices are random, then there is no choice at all. Reciprocal commitments cannot be made and if they are made, they cannot be kept. The very existence of the market is therefore at stake (Karpik, 2010, p. 13).

In particular, the market of singularities contradicts one basic assumption of neo-classical economy in order to function: the nature of information. Both singular products and the actors in the market belong to different worlds and information cannot overcome the borders of any world. In this regard, the market of singularities contradicts the immaterial, homogenous and single worldview of neoclassical theory. Information is replaced by knowledge. Knowledge has to be produced through interpretation. This demands skills as well as time, making it costly.

Knowledge replaces information, making neoclassical economy no longer able to function. In neoclassic understanding, the economic world is only qualified by calculativeness (Williamson, 1993). Williamson (1993) argues that every wrong decision is the result of a miscalculation. However, Karpik relies on Arendt (1982) who asserts that judgment comes from taste and therefore lies outside of any calculation. Karpik therefore argues that knowledge causes plurality, making calculation of the most rational decision meaningless. Instead, judgment gives individuals the means to choose between two incomparable entities. "When the market encompasses the qualitative diversity of human works and the qualitative diversity of evaluation criteria, choice takes the form of judgment" (Karpik, 2010, p. 39). Judgment integrates the plurality of heterogeneous criteria and allows unification of these criteria and thus comparison of incommensurable products. Inter alia, it may be based on calculations.

In order to function in this different understanding of the economic world in contrast to neoclassical economy, the market of singularities is "equipped" with so-called judgment devices (Karpik, 2010, p. 14). They play an important role in sharing the unique knowledge: "In theory it is preferable for the qualifications of the singularities to be shared by producers and buyers, but despite the existence of judgment devices, this is rarely the case" (p. 15). This means, "without judgment devices, the market of singularities could not function" (p. 46). Overall, judgment devices have three functions: they "act as representatives of the producers and /or consumers, as knowledge operators in charge of reducing the cognitive deficit, and as competing forces striving to become more visible and more desirable than their competitors" (p. 46). Karpik underlines the importance of judgment devices by arguing that the competition in this market of singular products has been replaced by the competition between judgment devices (p. 54).

Overall, Karpik (2010) distinguishes five different categories of judgment devices: networks, appellations, cicerones, rankings, and confluences, which we briefly summarize consecutively. The first are networks, divided into two sections. On the one hand, there are personal networks, which are "composed of interpersonal relations", operate by "circulation of the spoken word", and are created by "personal

experience and capitalized knowledge” (p. 45). On the other hand, trade networks that are made up of sellers and buyers in situations of uncertainty; and practitioner networks, which is “composed of professionals” and ensure the “circulation of knowledge about nonobservable activities between practitioners” (p. 45 f.). For Karpik networks are invisible, very hardy and effective social structures (p. 45).

The second category of judgment devices, appellations are “names associated with the attributes and meanings that define singular products or families of singular products, e.g. quality labels and product brands”. Appellations “structure the sphere of singularities by structuring the designations that populate the shared imaginary space.” (Karpik, 2010, p. 45 f.) Thirdly, *cicerones* “comprise the critics and guides that offer specific evaluations of singularities. They embody a soft, symbolic form of authority whose influence [...] reduces or dispenses with the distress of individual choice” (p. 46). Fourthly, rankings are “hierarchical arrangements of singularities according to one of several criteria” (p. 46). Karpik distinguishes expert rankings, which include diverse realities, and buyers’ rankings, which are governed by the sale of one product. Finally, confluences “designate the numerous techniques used to channel buyers [...] and range from territorial location, spatial organization, and displays to selling skills” (p. 46). In our study, we rely on the example of *cicerones* and deepen its definition later in this part.

Karpik (2010) further claims that “quality competition prevails over price competition” (p. 54). Because of that, “the adjustment between products and consumers is achieved by seeking concordance between the evaluation criteria of the two sides” (p. 14). The causing uncertainty in this market “can never be dissipated by knowledge, calculation, or contract, alone or together: there must be trust as well” (p. 66). In order the market of singularities to work, Karpik identifies trust to be essential. Consequently, “judgment devices are also trust devices” (p. 55).

At this stage, we leave out Karpik’s (2010) characterization of the “homo singularities” (p. 67 ff.), as we do not focus on the point of view of the customer in our study, but focus on the market’s institutions instead. Karpik further outlines seven different regimes of economic coordination as a “toll for simplifying the reality of

singularities” (p. 96). Each of these regimes can be seen as a model. Each model “is a system of relations between particular qualified products, particular judgment devices, and particular forms of consumer commitment” (p. 96). With this, Karpik is the first to cluster as well classify different judgment devices. For each of these seven regimes, Karpik gives a specific example in order to show how it works. We leave out the illustration of these seven regimes, as they describe different constellations of markets (product, judgment device, and consumer) than the ones we rely on in our research.

Taken as a whole, Karpik (2010) contributes to a lack of research in economics, which is missing “global studies” (p. 54). In this manner, his analysis “concentrates particularly on the relationship between singularities, judgment devices, and consumers” (p. 54). As an economist, Karpik is focusing on the overall situation, thus taking a market perspective. In one of his examples throughout the book, he explicitly names haute cuisine as a market of singularities, as the restaurants can be seen as singularity each (p. 77 ff.). He further classifies the Michelin Guide as “an ideal figure of the judgment devices” (p. 80). Nevertheless, in his analysis he specifies neither the haute cuisine nor the Michelin Guide among his models.

We fill this gap and elaborate on his idea with our work: We investigate on the role of the Michelin Guide for one specific haute cuisine market, the German market. According to Karpik’s (2010) categories of judgment devices, we see the Michelin Guide as a *cicerone*. In particular, Karpik names comparative reviews about gastronomy a *cicerone*, such as the Michelin Guide. He characterizes a *cicerone* as ambiguous term and underlines that its “critics and guides designate not only the people [...], but also products” (p. 46). A *cicerone* embodies “a soft, symbolic form of authority whose influence [...] reduces or dispenses with the distress of individual choice” (p. 46). Based on Karpik’s market of singularities as assumption, we apply his conception to one specific setting, namely the Michelin Guide as judgment device and the haute cuisine market as market of singularities. In line with this, we find complementing aspects of the market of singularities. In contrast to Karpik’s market perspective, we focus on the role of judgment devices, leaving out the aspect of the customer in our analysis. In particular, we investigate what impact

one judgment device has on the judged subjects. In addition to that, we challenge his argument considering the importance of judgment devices: We show in how far our findings question this claim.

3.3. Wendy Nelson Espeland and Michael Sauder: Rankings and Reactivity

Our third theoretical pillar is the concept of reactivity, which we describe in the following. Although there are several sources that describe reactivity (e.g. Campbell, 1957; Reiss, 1971; Katz, 1983; Heimer, 1985; Suchman & Jordan, 1990; Burawoy, 1998), we mainly rely on the work of Espeland and Sauder (2007), who claim to be the first to link reactivity with public measures. According to Espeland and Sauder, all previous researchers in their various fields (from experimentalists and pollsters, to survey researchers and qualitative researchers) have the same basic idea of reactivity: “Individuals alter their behavior in reaction to being evaluated, observed or measured” (p. 6). So far, most research of reactivity is based on methodological terms. In this regard, however, reactivity “blurs the distinction between the act of measuring and its object which contaminates results” (p. 3). Thus, Espeland and Sauder argue that the sociological concept of reactivity needs more systematic investigations. They go further into the substantive terms of Heimer (1985) and “refine the concept of reactivity by identifying patterns of reactivity and the idiosyncratic consequences” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p. 6).

As indicated, Espeland and Sauder (2007) build their research on measures. They assume a growing importance of measures, which are designed to evaluate the performance of individuals and organizations. This proliferation is a response to the demand for accountability and transparency in society for them. According to Espeland and Sauder, assessments and rankings have become “pervasive” (p. 2), so that scholars got interested in this topic as well. By relying on Hoskins (1996), Power (1997) and Strathern (1996, 2000), Espeland and Sauder indicate that the growing use of quantitative indicators has caused a transformation in the meaning of accountability. While accountability once meant making institutions accountable, it “now usually means making them auditable, which involves devising indicators to measure performance” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p. 2). They cite Porter (1995) as

example of the diverse and important effects of the accountability movement, who described, that “the spread of quantification in decision making is linked to efforts to mitigate conflict, overcome distrust, and coordinate across both social and physical distance” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p. 5). Within this field of research of accountability and governance, they have particular interest in social consequences on an institutional level: “it can initiate sweeping changes in status systems, work relations, and the reproduction of inequality” (p. 2).

Espeland and Sauder’s (2007) particular interest of public measures lies in rankings. Relying on Power (1994), Strathern (2000), Hoffer (2000) as well as Shore and Wright (2000), they describe rankings as “just one manifestation of a vast proliferation of quantitative measures since the late 1970s” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p. 5). They characterize ranking as one “instance of widespread efforts to control public institutions and make them more accessible to outsiders” (p. 5). Linking ranking with reactivity, Espeland and Sauder argue, “that the methodological concept of reactivity [...] offers a useful lens for disclosing how these measures effect change” (p. 1). They see rankings as reactive “because they change how people make sense of situations; rankings offer a generalized account for interpreting behavior and justifying decisions” (p. 10 f.). Within existing research, Espeland and Sauder show that future research in this field needs to carefully investigate on the response of rankings in order to understand “the important institutional changes that performance measures set in motion” (p. 5). In their analysis, they emphasize on one specific ranking. Strictly speaking, their analysis is a case study approach on the so-called USN law school ranking.

Espeland and Sauder (2007) restrict their analysis “to the effects of social measures and adopt the concept of reactivity” (p. 6). Espeland and Sauder underline the complexity of the concept of reactivity. It “draws attention to the dynamic nature of quantitative authority and its capacity to intervene, sometimes dramatically, with other forms of authority” (p. 6 f.). On the one hand, they emphasize the tension that reactivity adheres, which is central to the use and effects of public measures. In this regard, reactivity “mediates two understandings of measures: as valid, neutral depictions of the social world, and as vehicles for enacting accountability and in-

ducing changes in performance” (p. 7). On the other hand, Espeland and Sauder accentuate that reactivity is able capturing reflexivity. “Because people are reflexive beings who continually monitor and interpret the world and adjust their actions accordingly, measures are reflexive” (p. 2). Thus, Espeland and Sauder argue for the importance to clarify “how actors make discourse meaningful in ways that shape their behavior” (p. 7).

To understand the concept of reactivity and its effects, Espeland and Sauder (2007) “propose a framework for investigating the reactivity of social measures” (p. 3). The two core issues of their framework are “(1) which mechanisms shape the reactivity of public measures, and (2) how to characterize the effects of the reactivity of public measures” (p. 3). Within their framework, they find two mechanisms and three patterns of effect in sum, which we layout forthcoming, as we rely on them during our work.

Generally, a “mechanism describes the causal patterns that generate and sustain relationships between variables, conditions, and events” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p 10). Espeland and Sauder (2007) identify two mechanisms, i.e. self-fulfilling prophecy and commensuration. With these two mechanisms, Espeland and Sauder concentrate on the causality, i.e. “*how* rankings are reactive” (p.10). “We conceptualize mechanisms of reactivity as patterns that shape how people make sense of things. [...] These patterns influence how people interacting with rankings, each other, and other institutions.” (p. 11) Both mechanisms show how rankings transform law schools and cause their behavior, the first by altering expectations and the latter by transforming cognition.

The first mechanism, self-fulfilling prophecy, is defined as “processes by which reactions to social measures confirm the expectations or predictions that are embedded in measures or which increase the validity of the measure by encouraging behavior that conforms to it” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p. 11). For the case of Espeland and Sauder (2007), this means that the law school “rankings create expectations about law schools, and people change their behavior accordingly” (p. 11 f.). Espeland and Sauder show, “how rankings evoke self-fulfilling prophecies that

gradually transform law schools into entities that conform more closely to the criteria used to construct rankings” (p. 33). This mechanism is analyzed in four ways: First, Espeland and Sauder identify the effects of rankings on external audiences. The evaluation that is created by rankings is getting more and more important and is taken for granted by outsiders. Thus, the distinction that is created by rankings is relevant for their behavior, e.g. how students decide which university to go to. Second, they analyze the influence of prior rankings: Most of the deans of the universities interviewed by them did not know anything particular about the other law schools, but they knew their rank. Third, Espeland and Sauder found a correlation between the distribution of resources and the ranking. The administrative functions use rankings to help allocating resources, especially when lacking other benchmarks. Last, they describe how law schools behave accordingly to assumptions created through their rank. Rankings thereby encourage schools “to be become more like what rankings measure, which reinforces the validity of the measure” (p. 15). This means that they identified activities of law schools that were created in order to be beneficial for their ranking position.

The second mechanism of reactivity, commensuration is described as a response to rankings. Commensuration “works mainly by transforming cognition; it changes the locus and form of attention, both creating and obscuring relations among entities” (Espeland & Sauder, 2007, p. 16). It transforms qualities into quantities that share a metric. Espeland and Sauder show, “how commensuration changes the form and circulation of information and how people attend to it” (p. 33). Overall, they find three features: First, commensuration simplifies information and decontextualizes knowledge. Thus, information is easier to access and process and at the same time it seems to be more authoritative, i.e. robust and definitive, as it would be when presented in a more complicated way. Thereby, people attend more to schools’ ranks and notice less on other characteristics, as they assume that the meaning of numbers is universal. Second, commensuration unites and simultaneously distinguishes relations. It “unites objects because all entities are measured bear a common relationship to each other derived from their shared metric” (p. 19). It also constructs a hierarchical relationship between the law

schools with their rank. At the same time, this point distinguishes law schools. “Assigning precise numbers to each school creates and highlights small distinctions” (p. 20). Final, commensuration encourages people to reflected on what numbers represent. So far, most people were “uninterested in ranking methodology and simply assume that rankings measure something real about the schools” (2007, p. 21). The understanding of rankings can also change over time. Overall, Espeland and Sauder show that these two mechanisms of reactivity can produce changes over time, especially when “rankings have diffused more broadly or become naturalized” (p. 23).

In the second core feature of their framework, Espeland and Sauder (2007) identify three patterns of effects of reactivity. First, law schools react to rankings “by redistributing resources in order to optimize their rank” (p. 25). This causes tangible and durable changes in law schools and large amounts of money are put into activities that could influence ranking criteria. Espeland and Sauder conclude that “rankings have clearly changed how legal educators make decisions about how resources are allocated” (p. 26). Second, law schools react to rankings “by redefining work in ways to optimize their rank” (p. 27). By highlighting changes in the career service work at law schools, Espeland and Sauder show that this type of reactivity can effect enduring changes within the organization. Generally, this type most frequently happens in administrative jobs. Last, Espeland and Sauder identify the most direct form of reactivity as gaming. Law schools thereby “game the numbers to maximize one’s rank” (p. 29). They define gaming “as manipulating rules and numbers in ways that are unconnected to, or even undermine, the motivation behind them” (p. 29). There are several cases of gaming, but all indicate that “organizational actors alter their behavior to try to influence their rank” (p. 32), while there are differences about the way and the degree.

Based on their analysis, Espeland and Sauder (2007) come to the conclusion that “the expansion of public measures and their capacity to change the institutions and the people they describe suggests why it is important to explain their significance” (p. 33). They also show a way of mediating the reactivity of rankings: “Schools with distinctive missions [...] can sometimes resist ranking pressures despite being pe-

nalized by the rankings' universalistic and elite-based criteria" (p. 33). By outlining the usefulness of their developed framework, they suggest further research to manifest and generalize the effects of reactivity as well as identify new mechanisms and effects for performance measures and comparisons. They suggest using this framework to apply to other measures, to compare public rankings with performance measure or to identify new mechanisms and effects of reactivity. Espeland and Sauder propose different fields of research, such as organizational, psychological or anthropological theory to conduct further research upon reactivity to deepen the knowledge about reactivity.

Inspired by Espeland and Sauder's (2007) appeal for further research, with our work, we aim to contribute to the understanding of reactivity. We therefore rely on their concept and test their application of the framework for generalization. Our understanding of reactivity builds on their's on two levels. On the one hand, there is a correlation between an altering behavior and the observation through the Michelin Guide. On the other hand, the purpose of the observed object is to influence the observer. As Espeland and Sauder described rankings as "just one manifestation of [...] measures" (p. 5), we base our study on another manifestation as well as on another market. We transfer their concept of reactivity into a different setting, the German haute cuisine, with a different measure, the Michelin Guide as rating. In this context, we refer to their understanding of reactivity and identify "patterns of reactivity" (p. 6). By using these patterns, we elaborate on the process of reactivity that seems quite mechanical at the first glance due to a cause and effect correlation: as the effect of an observation, there is a reactive behavior. We hence analyze the implicated causality. Additionally, with this procedure, we examine the meaning of reactivity and how it is distributed in our case. Thus, we are able to interpret the general impact of the rating from an organizational actor's point of view, namely the restaurants in the German haute cuisine. Overall, the concept of reactivity in the understanding and application of Espeland and Sauder is the primary theoretical pillar that is guiding our analysis.

4. Analysis

After we have presented the methodological background of our study as well as its theoretical foundation, we guide the reader now through our analysis to show what answer we found to our research question. In general, the following analysis section is divided into three parts: Firstly, we present the empirical context of our work with the insights that we gained through our interviews and give the reader a necessary insight into the world of haute cuisine. Secondly, we show the findings of the impact of the Michelin Guide on the German haute cuisine derived from the interviews we conducted. Thirdly, we discuss potential explanations for these findings by relating to the theoretical pillars of our paper as well as to the empirical context we showed at the beginning.

4.1. Empirical Context

To detect in how far the Michelin Guide has an impact on the German haute cuisine, one needs a sufficient understanding of the environment that the chefs and restaurateurs are working in. It is a small cosmos that strives for perfection on the plate everyday. Once a year this cosmos gains a lot of public attention, which is in autumn when the new yearly edition of the Red Guide is published. Then, a hype usually starts in the media and among the gourmets about the restaurants that gained a star and got remunerated for a year of continuous hard work. These restaurants experience a run considering their bookings for the next couple of months (A, 2013). Nevertheless, the public is also interested in the ones that got downgraded and often a big discussion starts as to why these restaurants lost a star. Besides this yearly racket, the haute cuisine chefs work secretly, and the maximum insight most of us can gain is the result of their work in form of the food on the plate when dining in their restaurants. To get an idea of what it means to be in the vanguard of the industry by working in a starred restaurant, we asked our interviewees some general questions about the world of the Michelin stars and the haute cuisine in general. This background information complements our assumption that the German haute cuisine is a market of singularities in terms of Karpik (2010). The insights we have gained through the interviews are presented in the following and we begin with an overall description of the restaurants' environment before we go

into details about their attitude towards the Michelin Guide as well as the Michelin stars. This section of our paper is not directly related to our research question, but provides necessary information on the context of our findings, before we elaborate on the latter in a later section.

4.1.1. Increased Competition and High Expectations for the Restaurants

Generally, the German haute cuisine restaurants are facing high expectations. Over the last decades, Germany's haute cuisine has significantly developed, as the overall increase of Michelin stars awarded shows. Consequently, the standards today are much higher than in the early days of the careers' of some chefs. "In Germany the level of cooking...it's beastly high, I mean extremely high, I think" (J, 2013). Previously lagging far behind, as mentioned before, all interviewees agreed that the German haute cuisine today is in no way inferior to any other market abroad, especially to the French inventors of haute cuisine. While the food processed in German haute cuisine kitchens had always been of a lower quality compared to their competitors in France, Spain or Italy, a German haute cuisine chef today cooks with at least equally good products as the chefs abroad (I, 2013). However, it is not only the starred restaurants that have caught up with the level of the restaurants outside of Germany. Generally, the high-class restaurants, no matter whether starred or not, serve their guests much more sophisticated dishes than 20 years ago (B, 2013).

In addition to that, the number and spread of German haute cuisine restaurants has significantly increased (K, 2013) which has led to a boosted national competition. *While the number of starred restaurants is yearly increasing, the chefs and restaurateurs perceive the number of gourmets in contrast stagnating* (L, 2013). This development in turn leads to a fight about guests and bookings as well as pessimistic outlooks concerning future turnovers, as the industry expects a continuing rise in the number of haute cuisine restaurants (L, 2013). The fact that the Michelin Guide is a rating with an indefinite amount of stars to award is perceived as very dangerous for the existence of many restaurants. So far, there seems to be no solution for this problem of unequal demand and supply within this industry.

However, it is not only the overall high standard that sets the bar relatively high for the chefs and restaurants, or the increased competition. There seems to be another source of pressure for our interviewees: the guest. *In parallel with an increased standard in the kitchens in Germany's haute cuisine restaurants, guests seem to have acquired much more knowledge about food and its preparation.* Ever since the pervasion of the Internet, chefs and caterers can see “that the people are much more well read” and “that you can't tell them any kind of nonsense as a sommelier” (G, 2013). The knowledge among gourmets about ingredients, preparation techniques, wines, and many other aspects related to haute cuisine has increased so that some of the guests today are almost as knowledgeable as the staff in the restaurants (B, 2013). This implies that service staff cannot afford any gaps in knowledge since very often they are serving guests that are almost experts in culinary. Consequently, the pressure on the restaurants is not only caused by an increased competition in the haute cuisine sector, but also by guests that are increasingly familiar with culinary issues.

Matters are complicated further by the fact that the more well versed the guests are, the higher their expectations are as well. In times of an increasing supply of haute cuisine restaurants, as mentioned in the theory section, the restaurants cannot afford to belie their guests' expectations; for the guests, the restaurants are replaceable. Displeased guests will not visit a restaurant anymore that did not meet their expectations. Consequently, all of our interviewees care a lot about the satisfaction of their guests. In the end it is first and foremost the guests as paying clients that have to be satisfied since they guarantee the restaurants' survival (C, 2013). Nevertheless, satisfied guests might be linked to a good rating as well, as some chefs have a “basic rule: If all guests are content, the inspectors are content as well” (D, 2013). Consequently, most chefs shared interviewee I's (2013) opinion: “I want to satisfy my guests, that's the prime principle.”

4.1.2. Extreme Price Sensitivity Among German Customers

While the German guests are very demanding, for one thing, they are unwilling to pay high prices for menus. This adds another difficulty to the chefs' work, as they always have to keep in mind the extreme price sensitivity of their German custom-

ers when creating a new menu. *In contrast to other nationalities, Germans are indignant to spend a substantial amount of money for a nice evening in a starred restaurant* (C, 2013). So on the one hand, their expectations concerning the meals are very high as mentioned before, but on the other hand, they want to spend as little money for the food as possible, as the statistics showed in the introduction section. This makes life difficult for the German haute cuisine restaurants. The price sensitivity means that some restaurants have difficulties to even pass the regularly increased prices for electricity or water or inflation effects for example on the customers (I, 2013). As a consequence, the value for money in German haute cuisine restaurants is almost unbeatable worldwide (L, 2013), as the restaurants have to keep the prices as low as possible. Especially when comparing prices for a menu to French or Spanish restaurants, German haute cuisine restaurants offer many bargains. However, this price sensitivity also results in that most restaurants would not be economically affordable without a sponsor in the form of a hotel or Maecenas. To cover the high expenses of this level of cooking is almost impossible in Germany, as already mentioned in the introduction of this paper.

4.1.3. Restaurants' Attitude Towards the Michelin Guide

When trying to figure out what impact the Michelin Guide has on the German haute cuisine sector, it is of course interesting to know what attitude the people working in that sector have towards the Red Guide. When asking our interviewees about their opinion, experiences, and feelings about this rating, we were surprised how unanimous the answers of all interviewees were. We had few other questions that lead to such homogenous answers like the one about the Michelin Guide in general. The long tradition of the Red Guide was mentioned very often (C, 2013; D, 2013; G, 2013) and seems to cause a lot of respect among the chefs, waiters, and restaurant managers. *Generally, the Michelin Guide is the most serious of all guides* (E, 2013; G, 2013). This good reputation is based, on the one hand, on the fact that its inspectors are perceived as unbribeable, which is obviously different to other guides (E, 2013; G, 2013). Moreover, the awarding of the stars is perceived as very neutral and objective (B, 2013). On the other hand, chefs and restaurateurs sense the guide, or to be precise, its final evaluation is quite fair (A, 2013). Some

even call it the “red bible” (A, 2013), which clearly shows the institutional role the Michelin Guide plays in the German haute cuisine (K, 2013).

In addition to its obviously good record among German restaurants, the global presence and reputation of the Red Guide was also stressed in all our interviews. “Michelin is simply just, just worldwide, it’s THE thing. The thing” (C, 2013). Interviewee D (2013) described it like this:

I think, if I’m in America and I go to a restaurant and they ask me “So what are you actually doing?” and then I say “I have a three-starred restaurant”, then everyone knows what I mean. When I say “I have 19 or 19.5 points in Gault Millau”, then this does not make it as clear to them. But same goes for Asia. Or anywhere else on the planet.

With this statement, he hints at the fact that none of the other guides that exist in Germany, be it Gault Millau or Feinschmecker, have gotten popular or influential abroad (K, 2013; L, 2013). The international pervasion of the Michelin Guide also arranges it that foreign gourmets find their way to the German haute cuisine restaurants. Considering that especially the three-starred restaurants are striving for international guests to fill their dining rooms, due to the comparably low demand of German guests, the Michelin Guide’s internationality is economically beneficial for the restaurants. This aspect already indicates a financial dilemma, which we present in more detail at a later time.

Nevertheless, not all decisions and stars awarded are comprehensible for our interviewees (F, 2013). Every autumn, when the ne Red Guide is published, there are a couple of restaurants, where even professionals such as our interviewees have difficulties to understand the respective rating and the reasoning behind. However, our interviewees stressed the fact that the human component in form of subjectivity in the rating may explain some of the results of the restaurant evaluations. As Interviewee E (2013) illustrates with a wink:

You cannot be objective to 100%. What I’d simply like to give as a comparison: If a Michelin inspector drives to work on a Monday morning and arrives in the first restaurant about lunch time, had stress with his wife all night long, wasn’t allowed to have sex, slipped and fell in the bathroom in the morning and knocked out half of his tooth, then maybe stick

into his eye while tooth brushing and then he even slipped before entering his car. Do you really think he's gonna test the restaurant equally good this lunch time as tomorrow, when the issues with this wife are different and all things in the morning don't happen? That's human!

All of our interviewees were aware that the Michelin rating, “is like the grading in figure skating. It will remain subjective” (D, 2013). Therefore, they are aware of the fact that they cannot understand all of the Red Guide’s final evaluations because of the subjectivity, which is in the nature of things.

In general, most of our samples were missing transparency of the evaluation criteria leading to the allocation of Michelin stars (A, 2013). As already mentioned in the introduction of this paper, Michelin does not publish more details about its testing procedures than a few corner points. Our interviewees therefore have no more knowledge about the evaluation criteria than any other person outside the haute cuisine industry. However, this low level of transparency of the rating does not decrease its overall reputation among the restaurateurs, restaurant managers, and chefs. The Michelin Guide seems to be the most important judgment device for the German haute cuisine and all other guides are not a patch on it.

4.1.4. Meaning of the Michelin Stars

Taking the Red Guide’s reputation among the German restaurants into consideration, it is not surprising that *the Michelin stars mean a lot to the chefs*. Especially the chefs working in three-starred restaurants perceive the third star as their “aim in life” (D, 2013; K, 2013), something they worked very hard for over a long time. Many of them devoted their whole life to achieve the third star and to become part of the “champion’s league” of cooking. Our interviewees used many metaphors to stress the meaning of Michelin stars. Interviewee K (2013) said in this context: “A third star is a like being victorious at the Olympic Games for a chef”. Nevertheless, even the restaurants that have less than three stars value this award a lot. Even though especially the one-starred restaurants tend not to work towards achieving a star but rather towards an economic profit of their restaurant (A, 2013; C, 2013), receiving a good rating in the Michelin Guide is considered as an “extreme moment of happiness” (C, 2013). It is “an honor to have a star” (G, 2013), Michelin stars are

perceived as “the highest form of appreciation” (K, 2013), “for a cook the star is like a knightly accolade” (I, 2013). It becomes apparent that Michelin stars are highly linked to the ego (H, 2013), especially of the chefs, and all interviewees were aware of that.

Moreover, the stars are also used to differentiate oneself from the competitors, especially the non-starred (I, 2013). Firstly, you belong to the worldwide group of excellent restaurants (J, 2013). Having one or more stars opens the door to the universe of high-class restaurants, so stars mean a fictional membership. “It’s a nice feeling to be admitted into, into this circle” (I, 2013). Generally, we experienced in our interviews that chefs whose cuisine has been awarded with stars for decades impressed almost all our interviewees with awe. These well-known chefs are adored within gastronomy and we could therefore think that it is very attractive for chefs, service staff, and restaurateurs to belong to the same category as these champions. Even though Michelin stars are usually only linked to the chefs’ work in the kitchen, they also mean a lot to the rest of a restaurant’s staff consequently. Secondly, starred restaurants can dissociate from regular non-starred competitors. This can be especially helpful in the local competition with restaurants close-by for guests (G, 2013). As a starred-chef you are not “just” a chef anymore, but you stand out of the crowd of chefs (K, 2013). A Michelin star is seen as a decoration, consequently (I, 2013). As Interviewee K (2013) sums up:

A star, it simply witnesses also a certain class of a restaurant, of a cook, which he needs to have as an attribute to finally get a star. Well, and the two-starred restaurant, there is, it becomes pretty tight at the forefront, that is definitively the elite, you can say that. And, well, the three-starred chef, that’s, that’s an institution, a personal institution, what ever made him such an institution, that’s standing out of the crowd.

Besides all this glamour and ego boosting, there is often also a dark side of a star, which was mainly stressed by our interviewees that claim to not want a star: Belonging to the elite of restaurants also means an increased daily pressure to perform very well. This pressure is caused by the heavy weight of customers’ expectations, on the one hand (A, 2013). A guest who is having dinner in a starred-restaurant has higher expectations than a guest who is going to an inn and the in-

interviewees of starred restaurants are very aware of this fact. On the other hand, having one or more stars also implies the yearly possibility of losing it (I, 2013). Who ever has been a member of the circle of excellence, denoted by the Michelin stars, mostly does not want to leave it anymore. This is a kind of existential pressure that many restaurants are not aware of when they enter the elite by achieving the first star (E, 2013). In this context, we were often told the story of Bernard Loiseau, a French chef who committed suicide in 2003 since he feared to lose the third star (Siebeck, 2003). This tragedy shows how extremely high the pressure through a rating system can be perceived and serves many interviewees as a cautionary tale. Nevertheless, there still seem to be many starred chefs who devote all their lives to the Michelin stars (A, 2013) and their ambitions seem to be limitless. Interviewee D (2013) for example was mentioned by other interviewees independently of each other in the context of highly ambitious chefs that seem to be dangerously dependent on the Michelin stars (A, 2013; C, 2013). Interviewee I (2013) gave us another example of a friend who got the third star a couple of years ago:

I know [name of the friend deleted for confidentiality reasons], we are friends with him, know him for years. He hasn't been approachable for the last two years. Really not responsive. That was so incredible. Well, I'm frightened, I was frightened due to that since he had already been in frail health. Because this was...he was so focused, so focused on the third star.

Even though everyone seems to be aware of the Michelin stars' risk to become addictive to this rating, there are obviously still people working within haute cuisine who know no limits when it comes to their dedication. The ego boosting effect of the Michelin stars seem to be so high that some chefs become absolutely obsessed about them. However, even though most interviewees mentioned this dangerous potential of the system Michelin, overall they linked more positive emotions to the stars than negative emotions.

In view of the fact that most of our interviewees had positive associations with the Michelin stars, which they expressed with a lot of similes, almost all of them would be very happy about an additional star (G, 2013; I, 2013). Even interviewee F (2013) who belongs to the group of interviewees that claims to not being interested

in a Michelin star, admits that “if we could get some [Michelin star], I mean, that would be sensational for our ego”. Many chefs dream of an additional star in secret, but never stated in the interviews that they would be qualified for the next level in the rating. This restraint is based on the experience that restaurants which publicly asked for the next star were on purpose not awarded with an additional star, as a punishment (I, 2013). Obviously, the Michelin Guide does not want to be told what to do or how to rate a specific restaurant. Consequently, everyone claims that they do not hold sway over an additional star, but some restaurateurs already had a chat with the persons in charge at Michelin about how to achieve the next star (G, 2013).

Altogether, Michelin stars mean a lot to people working in the German haute cuisine. Not only do the stars acknowledge the good work of all involved parties and boost their egos, but they also help the restaurants to differentiate from competitors. As all this has some kind of addictive potential, there is a group of chefs that have become even obsessed with the stars. However, our interviewees overall think that the situation is less worrying than abroad, where a chef even committed suicide because of a potential loss of a Michelin star. Consequently, all our starred interviewees would be happy about an additional Michelin star.

4.1.5. Economic Benefits Through Michelin Stars

The discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of additional stars lead back to the overall question as to whether Michelin stars are economically beneficial for a restaurant. As we had heard some rumors before the interviews, saying that only a specific number of Michelin stars would be profitable for a restaurant, we asked for clarification during our interviews. Surprisingly, we found disagreement among the people we talked to. The chefs without a Michelin star were convinced that “it’s a fact – with a starred-restaurant you can’t make any money” (H, 2013). Some interviewees that belong to starred restaurants claimed, “with the first star you can earn money, from the second star on it costs money” (A, 2013). Others think that the first star does not add any economic profit, while the second one does (J, 2013).

Moreover, there were especially different opinions on the profitability of three-starred restaurants. Even the two three-starred chefs varied in their assessment of the possibility for profitability in their sector. Interviewee K (2013) convincingly asserted to work in a profitable three-starred restaurant, on the one hand. Interviewee D (2013) thinks, “that in the three-starred sector it is impossible, impossible in Germany, to keep a restaurant profitable”, on the other hand. That is why he does not make any secret of the fact that his restaurant is sponsored by a Maecenas. However, *it was agreed upon the circumstance that Michelin stars do not guarantee fully booked restaurants anymore* (B, 2013; J, 2013; K, 2013). This comes back to the already mentioned problem of increased demand in the sense of the number of starred restaurants and a stagnating number of guests (L, 2013). Overall, we get the impression that ordinary peoples’ perceptions of the profitability of starred-restaurants are mostly wrong. Even though the haute cuisine sector might seem to be a glamorous world, the economical reality is harsh. To show how the reality is perceived by the people working in the haute cuisine sector as a contrast to many assumptions of outsiders, we would like to show the simple calculation of Interviewee I (2013):

See, they [the haute cuisine restaurants] have 20, 30, 40 seats at a max, well, and they have 10, 12 people standing in the kitchen, same amount in the service as well. Just think about what just these people cost per month and how often a restaurant is fully booked.

Even though Michelin stars do not serve as guarantors for increased profits anymore, they seem to attract gourmet tourists. Gourmet tourism in this context is a subcategory of food tourism, which is defined by the World Food Travel Association (2013) as “The pursuit and enjoyment of unique and memorable food and drink experiences, both far and near”. In contrast to a food tourist who aims for all kind of food experience, including street vendors or local pubs, a gourmet tourist focuses on gourmet restaurants, as the name already implies (World Food Travel Association, 2013). Michelin stars function like magnets that attract guests (G, 2013). There seems to be “Michelin fans from all over the planet, who travel all over the world with the book [the Red Guide] and trudge round all two-starred, maybe even some three-starred [restaurants]” (E, 2013). While one star mainly

attracts guests from all over Germany (C, 2013), three stars bring a restaurant on the international market (E, 2013). “It ensures that you have publicity throughout Germany, and in Europe and worldwide” (E, 2013), “you also have a certain reputation all over the world with one or two stars” (E, 2013). Since other nations are less price sensitive (L, 2013) as well as less demanding, this international clientele is sometimes even easier to handle than the national German guests. This positive side effect of the Michelin rating explains why some restaurateurs claim that “there is no better marketing tool for this price” (I, 2013) than Michelin stars.

4.1.6. Consequences of Losing a Michelin Star

As already highlighted, Michelin stars are very much connected to the chefs’, restaurateurs’, and restaurant managers’ egos and in some cases also to the economic prosperity of haute cuisine restaurants. Moreover, “success is always addictive, isn’t it?” (D, 2013). Therefore, *any withdrawal of Michelin stars is considered to be painful by our interviewees*. When asked what would happen if they would lose a star in the upcoming edition of the Red Guide, most of them described this scenario as a personal defeat, as if “a top-flight team is relegated to the second division” (K, 2013). Since the Michelin Guide is perceived to be very fair and objective, a downgrading in this rating would be taken very serious, as interviewee C (2013) explains: “Well, of course, it would be a loss first of all, I mean generally for the moment, because it is also a recognition of what we’re accomplishing here. We would certainly, ehm, critically question ourselves, reflect on what happened.” Others do not want to experience this loss and would even go so far as to retire due to the damage of their image (K, 2013). As interviewee G (2013) sums it up: “Without, without the star it would be a disaster, I think”.

Although the potential loss of a Michelin star seems to be a dark prospect, people working in the German haute cuisine perceive it less existence-threatening than chefs and staff abroad, as the example of Bernard Loiseau shows. “If you have it [the Michelin star] for so many years, you don’t want to lose it, of course. However, there are much worse things in life” (I, 2013). Generally, we got the impression that the loss of a Michelin star was a more frightening scenario to the more experienced chefs that have kept the star(s) for many years. Their colleagues who just recently

joined the starred elite of restaurants seemed to be more relaxed about this danger. All our interviewees confirmed that a downgrading in the Michelin Guide would not lead to their suicide (C, 2013; D, 2013). Nevertheless, “it would definitely not be nice” (D, 2013) as the loss of a star also implies a drop in turnover of the haute cuisine restaurants (L, 2013). This is also caused by the already mentioned gourmet tourists: They are not known to be loyal to the restaurants they visit, they rather travel only to the best rated ones. Consequently, if a restaurant loses a star, it will not be taken into consideration for a visit by these tourists anymore. They just follow blindly the Red Guide (G, 2013). To sum up, the loss of a star is a scenario that every haute cuisine restaurant wants to prevent as it is not only negatively affecting its egos and image, but also its income.

4.1.7. Reasons to Maintain a Non-Starred Restaurant

As discussed earlier, most of our interviewees had positive feelings about Michelin stars, because many of them work in starred-restaurants that obviously benefit from the rating of the Michelin Guide. However, we also included three interviewees in our sample that claimed not to be interested at all in receiving a Michelin star. One interviewee even insisted that he would take a legal action against the Michelin Guide in case he would be awarded with a star (H, 2013). We were wondering what reasoning they might have to come to this opinion so we asked them as well as all other interviewees about potential motives to not join the imaginary world of the elite restaurants. Basically, we were told *three reasons: lower ambition than starred-restaurants, lower daily pressure in the kitchen and service and, finally, economic considerations*.

Everyone in the German gastronomy sector is aware of the fact that it means a lot of personal effort to make it up to the top, meaning to receive Michelin stars and to belong to the small group of haute cuisine chefs. Interviewee F (2013) admits freely that he is not ambitious enough to bear all the negative aspects of starred-restaurants – the missing leisure time, the perfectionism on the plate, and the financial pressure in that league. He especially mentions the pressure within the starred restaurants, a pressure to deliver 100% every day on every plate. Interviewee B (2013) agreed with F and resumed it like this: “We’re not striving for

stars, we strive for happy and content guests. Stars would also put us under a certain pressure, which we don't want." On the one hand, the non-starred interviewees saw the positive aspects of having a pressure to always perform excellently. On the other hand, they dislike the fact the pressure is omnipresent in a starred restaurant. "That's a curse, for sure" (H, 2013). All interviewees working in restaurants without Michelin stars appreciate the fact that they do not have to care about any Michelin star, which decreases their overall pressure and ensures a clear mind (B, 2013; F, 2013; H, 2013). As all of them have worked in starred restaurants for a while, they probably know the difference in pressure between a starred and a non-starred restaurant quite well.

Besides the assumption that restaurants that are not rated with Michelin stars avoid pressure caused by the rating, it can also make sense to not join the circle of excellence denoted by stars for economical reasons. In this context, Interviewee H (2013) sums up what the general attitude of many non-starred restaurants seems to be: "Important is the economic viability, always. That's, that must be ensured. Well, I...Better a full restaurant than a good article in some stupid magazine". Our interviewees see a shortcoming of having a Michelin star in the increased costs. "Well, there's always lots of money involved if someone wants to cook a star. Because you simply have to invest for it, into things that don't pay off at the end of the day" (H, 2013). Therefore, some people generally think that you can be more profitable in non-starred restaurants since the bookings would be more and the costs for the restaurants lower than in starred restaurants (E, 2013).

Another shortcoming of Michelin stars seems to be the altered guest structure. Interviewee H (2013) fears that a Michelin star would lead to a negative image of his restaurant among its regulars: "The guests are driven away, they'd say "For Christ's sake. Well, now he's losing the plot, now he's absolutely losing the plot. Now he's not the same as before." Especially regular customers would expect a price rise for the menus and therefore be deterred, even though the prices would probably not really increase according to our interviewees (H, 2013; B, 2013). As a consequence, the restaurants would lose some of their patrons but also gain new guests who are attracted by the high rating. Nevertheless, our interviewees regard

these latter clients, often gourmet tourists, as less loyal and therefore not dependable compared to their regular guests. Michelin stars, therefore, are sometimes perceived as barriers to the profitability of a restaurant (H, 2013). Others would not generalize it like that but think a starred-restaurant can only survive in specific areas of Germany, where there is enough local guests to ensure a specific patronage (F, 2013).

All in all, it cannot be clarified in all cases whether the non-starred restaurants were really not aiming at having a star or whether they were just missing the competences in service and cooking to gain a Michelin star. Typically, they claimed it would be a free decision to not have Michelin stars. “Sure, I’d say, I can guarantee, if we meant to cook a star, in XY [the city his current restaurant is located in] in a small restaurant, then we would have a star because we meant to do it” (H, 2013). However, some people like Interviewee J (2013) have strong doubts about their reasoning for not having Michelin stars: “But these young men or gentlemen either lie to themselves or just can’t do it better. Generally, everybody wants to gain three stars”. Moreover, even interviewee F (2013) who is working in a restaurant without stars admits that he would not reject a Michelin star in case they would be awarded with it. However, we relive how interviewee K (2013) – interestingly a three-starred chef – summarized the reasoning of non-starred restaurants:

If I open a restaurant today and I cook the way I like it and I win the hearts of my guests, have my restaurant fully booked and everyday, guests are coming, are content with what I do, I earn money, lead a business according to my own interests – like hell I will strive for a Michelin star!

4.2. The Impact of the Michelin Guide on the Restaurants

So far, we presented rather general information about the Michelin Guide, or to be more precise, the Michelin stars and their personal as well as economical relevance to our interviewees, who represent the German haute cuisine. All this information is important to get an idea of the German haute cuisine market and the issues our interviewees are facing everyday. In our interviews, it turns out that the stars are very important to the chefs, restaurant managers and restaurateurs from a personal point of view, as they are perceived as a big honor. From an economi-

cal perspective, Michelin stars are not beneficial in every case, in contrast. However, as soon as a restaurant is rated with a star, it does not want to lose it again, even though Michelin stars mean a daily high level of pressure to the staff and overall high costs. These side effects as well as a lower level of ambition are also the denoted reasons why some restaurants are not striving for stars and do not want to join the imaginary circle of excellence in haute cuisine. All in all, we perceive the information generated through the interviews in line with our theoretical pillar about Karpik's (2010) concept of markets of singularities. As judgment device, the Michelin Guide seems to generally play an important role for the restaurants in the German haute cuisine, as we have shown so far.

On the basis of this general knowledge about the German haute cuisine as well as our theoretical pillars, we forthcoming elaborate on the influence of the Michelin Guide on the German haute cuisine in terms of behavior. Therefore, we also asked more specific questions to figure out in how far the Michelin Guide influences our interviewees in their daily work or in the way their restaurants are acting in the industry in order to answer our research question. An inspiring example for us to analyze the impact is the paper of Espeland and Sauder (2007) who found evidence for reactivity in a different environment. When analyzing all data that we generated through the interviews, we were looking for patterns throughout the interviews. This means that a behavior that seemed to be related to the Michelin rating became relevant for us as soon as more than one interviewee mentioned it independently from each other.

All in all, we find some examples of reactivity in the German haute cuisine, which means different kinds of behavior that are influenced by the Michelin Guide and its evaluation criteria. Considering the high personal value of Michelin stars, it is not surprising that German haute cuisine restaurants try as much as they can to achieve a good rating in the Red Guide. In addition to that, we come across patterns of behavior that seemed to be reactivity on the first glance. However, when taking a closer look, we realize that these behaviors do not fully cover the definition of reactivity. As a consequence, we pool them as an own category, called pseudo-reactivity. Furthermore, we also find a couple of examples for behavior that is ab-

solutely independent from the restaurant rating. The interviewees are aware of the fact that these examples of behavior could have an influence on their rating in the Michelin Guide, but still their main motivation for the way they act is not to achieve the best possible rating, but other rationales. Since we find indicators pro reactivity as well as contra, we conclude that there is reactivity in the German haute cuisine, but it seems to be limited. The examples of pseudo-reactivity furthermore show how ambiguous the process of categorization of the patterns of behavior is. In the following, we present our findings in more detail and show how we come to the before mentioned conclusion.

4.3. Examples Indicating Reactivity in the German Haute Cuisine

Through the interviews we conducted and our own experience when visiting the interviewees, we find aspects confirming reactivity in the German haute cuisine sector. As we see similar behavior and actions adjusted to the potential criteria of the Michelin Guide among diverse interviewees, we conclude that reactivity is a phenomenon on the industry-level and not only observable on the level of the individual organization. In this point we have a similar result as Espeland and Sauder (2007) in their study about law schools. What makes our study quite unique is the fact that the criteria of the rating studied are not completely known to the measured objects. Our interviewees do not receive more information about the criteria from the Red Guide than outsiders like us do. The only details the Michelin Guide is providing about its evaluation criteria are the ones we already mentioned in the introduction:

The star symbols judge only what's on the plate, meaning the quality of products, the mastering of flavors, mastering of cooking, personality of the cuisine, value for the money and the consistency of what the restaurant offers to its customers both throughout the menu and the year.
(MNA Inc., 2013)

Whether these are really the only criteria for the final rating or not and what they exactly mean remains a mystery. Consequently, all people working in the German haute cuisine have their own assumptions and interpretations about them. Coming back to the topic of reactivity, this means that reactive behavior bears a subjective component: As nobody is really aware of the Red Guide's exact evaluation criteria,

any behavior aimed at receiving a good rating is based on an assumption. People assume that there is a specific criterion and align their behavior accordingly. However, they cannot prove whether their assumption is right, nor can we as scientists. In contrast to Espeland and Sauder (2007), who can compare any behavior of the observed objects, the law schools, with the ranking's official evaluation criteria, we have to rely on the assumptions of our interviewees about the criteria. Consequently, we classify a behavior as reactive if it was linked to an aspect that was perceived as vital for a good rating by the majority of our interviewees. Hence, we always connect reactive behavior with an interviewee's purpose to influence the observer. Additionally, in order to be classified as such, these patterns of behavior have to fulfill Espeland and Sauder's definition of reactivity as a phenomenon where "people change their behavior in reaction to being evaluated, observed, or measured" (p. 1), in our case by the Michelin Guide. Interestingly, we find all these patterns of behavior to some extent related to the officially stated evaluation criteria.

4.3.1. Quality of the Foodstuffs

An example in which the German haute cuisine is influenced by the Michelin Guide rating is the quality of foodstuffs. "Well, that's, purchasing is the name of the game. If that doesn't work out...the best cook can't cook with low quality products. Nevertheless, that doesn't mean that a pretty bad cook can deliver something brilliant with good raw materials" (H, 2013). Our interviewees perceive quality of food as an important criterion of the Michelin Guide and, therefore, devote a lot of attention to their suppliers and the goods they deliver. They have realized that it is not only the final dish that needs to impress the Michelin inspectors, but also the quality of its ingredients (F, 2013). Interviewee F (2013), who works in a non-starred restaurant, professes to know what it needs to receive a good rating in the Red Guide. According to him, restaurants that are striving for a star should "get even better suppliers, more regional if not more international". Interviewee C (2013) gives an example in this context. While he is working in a one-starred restaurant, he clearly sees a difference to two-starred restaurants: "We always assume that, well, a turbot, which is sufficient for us if it weights 6 kilos, it has to be a 10kg turbot for them [the two-

starred restaurants], cause it's a much thicker filet". Consequently, the haute cuisine restaurants are always looking for even better products and suppliers to finally not only impress the guest but mainly the Michelin inspectors. This can lead to enormous efforts, especially out of season of specific products, as Interviewee K (2013) describes:

However, unfortunately it is like this, that by the end of September, it's over. Well, and if I want to have something to offer between September and April, then thank God there is the Iberian Peninsula which has four harvests per year, or thank the air traffic that we can get cherries from Chile or king boletes from South Africa even for Christmas.

This statement shows that the restaurants spare no efforts or costs to always serve the best quality. Especially in the three-starred restaurants, the best possible quality and freshness of foodstuffs are a must-have (J, 2013). This is aggravated by the fact that extraordinary raw material raises the bar – if you have once tried a very good turbot any ordinary turbot will not thrill you anymore (F, 2013). Since the Michelin inspectors have eaten in so many excellent restaurants, it is easier to disappoint them than to excite them with the quality of your products (J, 2013). Overall, we perceive the selection of foodstuffs as a first example of reactivity within the German haute cuisine.

4.3.2. Creativity on the Plate

Another example of reactivity in the German haute cuisine results in the extraordinary dishes on the plate, which a guest gets served. When asked about what the Michelin Guide probably values the most, our interviewees mentioned the point "creativity on the plate" (D, 2013; F, 2013; I, 2013). It seems as if "the Michelin Guide (...) simply expects a certain creativity on the plate" (E, 2013). This leads to some "pressure to deliver something new all the time" (I, 2013). As already mentioned, Michelin does not officially publish its exact criteria according to which the specific ratings in form of Michelin stars are calculated. However, creativity is in fact one of the general cornerstones of the evaluation that are released, which we mentioned already before. Therefore, our interviewees seemed to be pretty sure that creativity is very crucial for their grading. Interview D (2013) sums it up in this context:

It's getting more and more difficult, it's like that. It's a bit like driving in Formula One – you don't need to compete with the car from last season. It is difficult because you have to take the right decisions over the years (...), as doing always the same will finally result in losing a star.

We perceive creativity as an example for reactivity, due to the fact that the restaurants align their behavior to a criterion of the rating. The ways of how they adjust their behavior to score high in the Red Guide differ. Most of our interviewees are continuously trying to come up with creative new dishes that aim at surprising the guests, but especially the Michelin inspectors. When the chefs are turning older, their creativity often decreases and they try to compensate for that by expanding the kitchen team with young cooks who are full of ideas (C, 2013; I, 2013). Some top class restaurants hire cooks from different nations to ensure a diverse background among the kitchen staff, which in turn shall increase the overall creativity on the plate (A, 2013). Interviewee D, who is working in a three-starred restaurant, even goes one step further: In his restaurant there is a special separate kitchen where a specific cook experiments with new flavors, textures, and ingredients (D, 2013). This person's job is to make sure that there are always enough fresh ideas for new dishes when the new menu is created. In general, the more stars a restaurant has and the more budget, the more sophisticated are its mechanisms to ensure creativity on the plate. As we have shown, this potential criterion of the Red Guide affects hiring decisions for the kitchens of the restaurants to positively influence the rating. Creativity and the actions taken to ensure it is an example of how the Michelin Guide influences the German haute cuisine, so we take this as an example of reactivity.

4.3.3. Consistency in Performance

Even though some of our interviewees said they would not have a clue about the exact evaluation criteria of the Red Guide, they were all sure that consistency would play a very important role (A, 2013; L, 2013). This is also in line with the corner stones that the Red Guide publishes about its evaluation processes, which we already mentioned in the introduction:

The star symbols judge only what's on the plate, meaning the quality of products, the mastering of flavors, mastering of cooking, personality of

the cuisine, value for the money and the consistency of what the restaurant offers to its customers both throughout the menu and the year (MNA Inc., 2013)

It is not sufficient to be creative from time to time, but it is the consistency in creativity and quality that counts. “You don’t become German soccer champion because of one single win. You have to be powerful for a whole season” (C, 2013). However, it is not easy to implement this recognition and it is seen as one of the biggest challenges for a chef to deliver perfection on the plate for every guest and not just from time to time (E, 2013). This is why people working for starred-restaurants believe that it is generally easier to receive a star than keeping it (G, 2013). Furthermore, consistency does not only concern the food on the plate, but it refers to quality of the foodstuffs, the performance of the cooks in the kitchen, but also the proficiency of the service staff when dealing with the guests. Therefore, “a starred restaurant is a Gesamtkunstwerk. I used to say ‘good gastronomy begins with the reception of the guests and ends with the farewell’” (K, 2013).

Consistency seems especially important in relation to the Michelin Guide when considering its evaluation process of the haute cuisine restaurants: Since the Michelin inspectors visit the German restaurants unannounced, can often not be identified by the restaurant staff, and the number of visits by the inspectors per year remains unstable, there could be theoretically every day an inspector in the dining area. In addition to that, the interviewees stressed the fact that even if they recognize an inspector in their restaurant, they cannot change their menu and quality of food all of a sudden, just because an inspector is dining at that specific day and they would like to impress him or her (A, 2013; C, 2013). As a consequence, the chefs as well as the service personnel try hard to deliver a high quality on a daily basis in order to satisfy any potential Michelin inspector visiting their restaurant. Having a Michelin star always means 100% on the plate (E, 2013).

Of course, it is not only the Michelin inspectors that demand consistency in the restaurants’ performance. Since the restaurants are first and foremost dependent on guests who ideally come more often, they also try to perform consistently high to satisfy them. Interviewee D (2013) mentions in this context:

Well, guests entering the restaurant one day, who are super content, and then the next day...or they come three weeks later in a different composition or because friends recommended it [the restaurant] and then it's [the food] is godawful – that doesn't work out.

Nevertheless, consistency was mostly mentioned in the context of the Red Guide and to a lesser extent in the context of customers. As our interviewees perceived consistency as one of the criteria for the Michelin rating and aligned their behavior and actions accordingly, we perceive this as another example of reactivity in the German haute cuisine.

4.3.4. Giving the Menu a Personal Touch

Just cooking creatively and on a fantastic level every day is not sufficient for gaining a Michelin star. At the latest on the three-starred level, it becomes apparent “that it is important that a cook has an own [cooking] style” (D, 2013), “everyone has to find his own style” (J, 2013). This is also in alignment with the Michelin Guide’s spare official statements about its evaluation criteria, which we already mentioned in the introduction. So it is necessary “to use exclusively good products, in the whole menu, and to make sure it bears your hallmarks” (C, 2013) when striving for a star or trying to keep it. To describe this personal note is actually very hard, “to put it into words now...I think there are not enough words to define the different styles, cause the words that are used already are actually pretty similar” (I, 2013). The difficulty to describe the personal touch might be related to the fact that food is a singularity.

As a non-professional you might wonder how the chefs can acquire their personal style in practice. The answer is pretty simple, according to interviewee C (2013) and Interviewee J (2013): Young cooks usually receive their trainings at up to 10 different restaurants and chefs in their early tenure. At every station of their career they get inspiration in form of specific recipes, which they combine and modify according to their own preferences. After some years of cooking on their own, they will finally be able to give their cuisine a personal touch.

In addition to the Red Guide’s statement about the importance of a personal touch on the plate, our interviewees can find another indication for its importance: The

fact that chefs who have been paying attention to this rating criterion have been rewarded with high ratings. As an example, there is chef K (2013), a luminary in the German haute cuisine, working in a three-starred restaurant for a long time, who realized his formula for success during our interview:

I've always been stirring out, I have never just followed the majority. I said "let them do their stuff". It can be seen from this that they don't have anything, that they don't have own roots, that they follow every trend. Then I polarized and that was exactly... I've always been in vogue with this.

Considering the success that chefs like him have in the rating, it is consequential that people working in the German haute cuisine are convinced about the importance of a personal style. Therefore, ambitious chefs try hard to develop a personal touch too. It seems to be wise in this context to express your own character in the way you cook, because, "what the Michelin loves as well, is if it sees the characters of the chefs on the plates again" (E, 2013). To conclude, we perceive the pursuit of finding a personal cooking style to receive a good rating in the Red Guide as another example of reactivity in the German haute cuisine.

4.3.5. Organization Chart

A visible sign of reactivity is the haute cuisine restaurants' organization chart. While non-starred restaurants' staff mainly consists of several cooks as well as waiters, we could see on site that especially three-starred restaurants employ additionally many more people. Restaurant managers, front desk ladies or gentlemen, sommeliers – the list of positions in starred-restaurants becomes longer and longer the more stars they have, according to our observation. On the one hand, there is a need for more staff in three-starred restaurants due to the increased complexity of the menus and the higher expectations of the guests, compared to ordinary restaurants. A regular waiter, for example, would not be able to welcome the new guests arriving at the front door while serving the seated guests in the dining room at the same time. Moreover, to give another example, the desserts in three-starred restaurants are so sophisticated that a specialist in form of a pâtissier in the kitchen is needed.

On the other hand, our interviewees saw a link between their organizational chart or, to be more precise, increased costs for personnel and the gain of an additional star (F, 2013). This lets us conclude that the haute cuisine restaurants' organization charts are an example of reactivity. The restaurants seem to think that a complex organizational chart increases the likelihood for additional Michelin stars. Consequently, they top up their staff to achieve a good rating. Due to the missing transparency of the rating, there is no certainty whether the Michelin Guide really values the existence of specific jobs in haute cuisine restaurants. However, our interviewees believe in the importance of some job positions in high-class restaurants and act accordingly.

The patterns of behaviour in the German haute cuisine that we have shown so far are recognizable as reactivity in our opinion. For particular aspects, such as the creativity on the plate, our interviewees deliberately behave in a specific similar way. The purpose of their behavior is to improve the Michelin rating of their restaurants. The behavior we have presented is aligned also because the interviewees see a direct correlation between the alignment and a good rating in the Red Guide. This means that our interviewees are convinced that their adjusted behavior is finally rewarded with additional Michelin stars or the at least with the maintenance of them. In this regard, these reactive patterns of reactivity go beyond the officially stated evaluation criteria. All in all, it shows that the Michelin Guide has an impact on the restaurants as they chose their behavior deliberately to finally influence their rating.

4.4. Pseudo-Reactivity

Nevertheless, we also detected behavior, which was related to the Michelin Guide, but where we did not see a cause and effect in the rationale of our interviewees. We come across examples of patterns of behavior which claimed the purpose of influencing the Michelin Guide, but instead were justified by the Michelin Guide and its evaluation criteria, as the rating did not seem to be affected at all. With the help of storytelling we were able to unmask some of the descriptions of our interviewees. As the explanations for some patterns of behavior seemed to be implausible, we perceived them as noncredible stories. In these cases, our interviewees

claimed that their behavior was reactive to the Red Guide. However, when taking a closer look, we realized that the behavior did not exactly meet the definition for reactivity both used by Espeland and Sauder (2007) – “the idea that people change their behavior in reaction to being evaluated, observed, or measured” (p. 1) – and in our shaped understanding. The discrepancy from reactivity can be manifested on two levels. On the one hand, the critical word in Espeland and Sauder’s definition is “in reaction to”. The examples of reactive behavior we mentioned so far fulfilled this criterion. However, the examples of behavior that we present in the following do not. On the other hand, the purpose of influencing the observer was altering. It turns out that the Michelin Guide is used for the additional purpose to legitimize patterns of behavior through the observer in these cases, but the Michelin Guide does not have a direct impact on the restaurants’ behavior. We call this kind of behavior pseudo-reactivity, for two reasons: Firstly, the patterns of behavior are labeled as reactivity by many of our interviewees. Secondly, our interviewees finally confess that it is rather a matter of legitimization and it is without a direct correlation to a possible observation of the Michelin Guide. Therefore, it is no reactive behavior; reactivity is in appearance only. The word-forming element “pseudo-“ has its origin in the Greek “pseudés” meaning false as well as “pseûdos” meaning falsehood (Oxford University Press, 1996) and is used today to indicate that something is “feigned; erroneous; in appearance only; resembling” (Harper, 2013). Therefore, we found it appropriate to name any behavior, which looks like reactivity, but does not meet the exact definition of it when taking a closer look, pseudo-reactivity. In the following, we give examples of pseudo-reactivity that we found in the German haute cuisine and we demonstrate why this behavior is not an indicator for reactivity.

4.4.1. Setting

The first example of a behavior that we classify as pseudo-reactivity is the setting of the German haute cuisine restaurants. By setting we mean the environment and context of a restaurant. This setting is very distinct from haute cuisine restaurant settings outside of Germany. Abroad, there are almost no restrictions concerning the environment where a restaurant is embedded in. Numerous interviewees al-

ready visited unique locations in other countries, such as *The Fat Duck*⁷ in Great Britain or street kitchens in Asia like *Tim Ho Wan*⁸ in Hong Kong, which are awarded with Michelin stars. These restaurants cook premium dishes, but their setting is everything but exquisite. The Fat Duck for example is described by Interviewee J (2013) as “a pub, where you enter and almost knock your head because it [the restaurant] is so low-ceilinged, yes, and there is a big timber, cooks three stars”. Another story about an haute cuisine restaurant experience was told by interviewee L (2013): “I was in a three-starred restaurant some day which didn’t have an own toilet. You had to go to a subway station close by to go to the toilet. That is actually unimaginable in Germany”. Nevertheless, these uncommon restaurants are still rated high by the Michelin Guide, just as their German colleagues that offer their menus in a more sophisticated surrounding. This raised the question for us why the setting of German haute cuisine restaurants is rather standardized.

When asking our interviewees why their restaurant setting is so elevated, from the property to the concept of the restaurant, they often justified the setting by the ambitious Michelin inspectors. Interviewee I (2013) visualizes the influence of the Michelin Guide with a story:

Nobody can expect me to believe that he is ushered into a restaurant with an eyepatch and keeps wearing the eyepatch and only sees what’s on the plate when eating – that’s bullshit! (...) Of course, the atmosphere plays an important role.

We were told that the restaurant setting was predefined by the evaluation criteria of the Michelin Guide and that our interviewees would align their behavior accordingly by sticking by a certain sophisticated setting. This would be necessary to achieve a good rating in the Red Guide.

However, this reasoning seemed to be weak when considering the different examples of haute cuisine restaurants abroad, which we talked about earlier, as Interviewee C (2013) admitted:

⁷ <http://www.thefatduck.co.uk/>

⁸ <http://www.timhowan.com/>

In the US, in New York, there is a restaurant that is rated with two stars, that is integrated in a supermarket. At this time, it didn't even have a wine list, because it needed a special licence for alcohol, as it is the case for other countries as well. Well, has changed now. However, just this example proves that you actually not necessarily need all these clichés, service, silver.

This statement shows that many of our interviewees were fully aware of the ample scope considering the restaurant setting that they probably have in the eyes of the Michelin Guide. Any influence of the Red Guide concerning the restaurant setting does not seem to be likely, therefore, and reactivity is rather a pretense. Instead, our interviewees used the Michelin Guide as legitimization for the choice of their setting. Interviewee L (2013) spoke in images to underline the missing link between the restaurant setting and a good rating in the Red Guide: “You could have a farmstead and you could, let’s say sit on hay and if someone serves you extraordinary dishes, it will eventually be awarded with three stars”. When asked in how far such a farmstead would be feasible, Interviewee C (2013) agreed and added a possible explanation for the fact that you cannot find such a farmstead in Germany: “Well, theoretically conceivable, it’s easily conceivable. Whether he will be successful with the guests is a totally different question”. However, according to Interviewee K (2013), who has been working in haute cuisine for decades and is highly respected within the haute cuisine sector, it is not the guests who would block an extraordinary concept.

Well, when something unusual happens somewhere, ehm, then it can be located wherever, it will, people pilgrim to every place. I’m sure. Well, if somebody does something absolutely extraordinary, it can be even in a tree house, if it’s good and if nobody else does the same, then it will spread itself out, I’m very sure.

Whether it is the guests that prevent the haute cuisine restaurants from being opened in unusual settings or not, it is probably not the Michelin Guide’s evaluation criteria that do not allow for other settings. Even though our interviewees claimed in the beginning to be reactive to the Red Guide, many of them later admitted that the choice of the restaurant setting is not influenced by the Michelin Guide. Instead, the Red Guide was used as legitimization for a sophisticated setting. Therefore, we perceive the setting as an example for pseudo-reactivity.

4.4.2. Setting of the Tables

When we visited diverse starred restaurants in Germany to conduct the interviews for this paper, we realized that the interior design of the dining areas differed, but not the laid tables: Every table was set with a couple of white tablecloths, expensive silver dinnerware was shining on the table, and lots of the wine glasses were mouth-blown, as the interviewees proudly explained to us. No matter in which haute cuisine restaurant in Germany one goes, the tables look basically the same (G, 2013). To prepare the tables for the guests at lunch or dinner seems to be very elaborate. Indeed, it is, as interviewee C (2013) admitted:

Some people ask me “well, when do you start working?”. Well, sometimes at 8 am, sometimes at 9 am, sometimes at 10 am. “What are you doing in a restaurant at 8 am?” However, the logistics are really huge here, til a table is set, which is putting on a tablecloth, ironing it on the table, wrinkling up the napkins, etc.

The haute cuisine restaurants spare no effort as far as the laid table is concerned. During our interviews, the question arose why the haute cuisine restaurants are going to considerable length: The acquisition costs of the china are very high and so are its replacement costs (B, 2013) - “if we buy just three plates it will make 5.000,- [Euro]” (L, 2013). Moreover, silver cutlery is not as hygienic as Cromargan (K, 2013) and needs to be polished, and setting up the table takes ages (C, 2013). Our interviewees claimed that the reason for all these efforts would be the Michelin Guide. “What kind of china do I have, what kind of cutlery do I have, that’s what they [the Michelin inspectors] watch out for” (B, 2013). Any investment related to the features of the set table were justified by the Red Guide’s evaluation criteria and, finally, by a desired good rating.

However, this reasoning becomes curious when taking a look on the dining rooms in haute cuisine restaurants abroad. Our interviewees noticed that there are starred-restaurants that do not even have tablecloths (C, 2013). Nevertheless, these restaurants are rated high. *Noma* in Copenhagen (DK) is an example for a rather unpretentious décor of the tables (L, 2013), which is contradistinctive to a typical laid table in a German haute cuisine restaurant. Considering that the pub-

lished evaluation criteria of the different national subsidiaries of the Michelin Guide are the same, this phenomenon cannot be explained by different national criteria.

Moreover, the fact that many haute cuisine restaurants acquire expensive china, exquisite wine glasses, and many more *after* they have gained a Michelin star arouses the suspicion that the set table is not a case of reactivity. If it were reactive behavior according to Espeland and Sauder (2007), we would expect an opposite chronology: Firstly, the restaurants invest into specific decoration of the tables. Secondly, they gain an additional star as a consequence of the aligned behavior. The behavior that we can observe, in contrast, does not seem to be a correlative pattern as described by Espeland and Sauder. However, many of our interviewees are aware of the inconsistency of the reasoning concerning laid table. As interviewee I (2013) said:

Well, whether it is really necessary to do this [making investments in exclusive dishes etc], that's a different issue. I don't think so. Because someone who was here [in the restaurant] before, when it had less stars, and was content, should be equally content now that it has an additional star.

Interviewee D (2013) agrees with his colleague and stresses the missing link between the supposedly necessary acquisition of more expensive tableware and the Michelin Guide's criteria: "Even if a modest restaurant receives one star, it won't have to purchase sterling cutlery or new plates or anything else".

Although our interviewees justified the way they arrange the tables and all the investments related to this by the Michelin Guide, they presented another reason due to our insistent demand at a later point of the interviews: The haute cuisine restaurants tend to use the rating system as a legitimization for new investments in their restaurant (G, 2013; I, 2013), likewise with the restaurant setting. The Michelin Guide serves them as a justification to spend money and put a lot of effort into the table décor. However, there is probably no real causality between the laid tables and a good rating in the Red Guide and most interviewees were aware of that. A well-laid table is not defined by the Michelin Guide and does not affect the rating in any way, which people working in the German haute cuisine are aware of, like

interviewee G (2013). Rather, “many people create a personal necessity” (K, 2013).

Considering the fact that our interviewees initially claimed to behave reactive, but are aware of the fact that there is no correlation between a well-laid table and a good rating, we perceive the behavior related to the setting of a haute cuisine table as an example for pseudo-reactivity. These behaviors are labeled reactive by our interviewees, but when taking a closer look one can see that they are probably not. As these behaviors are not the result of any observation through the Michelin Guide, even though they are claimed as such, they do not fulfill the definition of Espeland and Sauder (2007) of reactivity. There might have been a change of behavior of our interviewees and they are indeed observed and evaluated by a rating agency such as the Michelin Guide. However, their behavior is not a reaction to the fact that they are evaluated. Instead, the Michelin Guide is used for legitimization of their behavior. As this behavior could easily be mistaken for reactivity since some of the criteria for reactivity by Espeland and Sauder are fulfilled, even though not all, we call it pseudo reactivity.

4.4.3. Composition of the Wine List

We also found another example for a behavior that we almost classified as reactive before we realized that it is rather pseudo-reactivity: the composition of the wine list in German haute cuisine restaurants. Our interview partners claim that the more Michelin stars a restaurant has, the more important are the wines that accompany the exclusive meals (G, 2013). This is a result of the highbrow guests that expect a full package when going to a starred restaurant, which we introduced in the context section already. Due to these guests, a sommelier is also part of the increased organizational chart that we mentioned as an example of reactivity caused by the Michelin Guide. However, while the need for a sommelier seems to be warranted by the high expectations of the customers, restaurant owners also justify their assortment of wines through the Michelin Guide. Our interviewees made us believe that a large wine list would be necessary to be part of the starred-elite. Consequently, there are haute cuisine restaurants in Germany that have 1200 different wines on their list (K, 2013), true to the motto “the more the better”. Interviewee F

(2013), who owns a non-starred restaurant, mentioned in this context he would need „to increase the wine list even more“, among others, if he would strive for a Michelin star.

However, we question this correlation. From a pure economic perspective, a bulging wine cellar is not beneficial: Firstly, there are the high acquisition costs for the wines. Secondly, as wine is perishable, the haute cuisine restaurants are not only facing the high acquisition costs for good wines, but also high losses in case the wine goes off. Interviewee K (2013) therefore challenged the huge wine cellars of some of his colleagues:

I mean, if I have 700 items on the wine list and I don't like 400 of them, why are they put on the list at all? Why don't I cut it down to 150 wines which are so good that the guest who aims at having a really good one also pays up for it? Then I don't have to store everything else. (...) Just explain to me how to keep control about them [the hundreds of wine bottles], so that you always chose the wine which is at the height of its drinkability.

In case the creation of the wine list was an example of reactive behavior, any costs and efforts could be justified by the possibility of gaining an additional star. Since Michelin stars can lead to a higher profit, as mentioned earlier in this paper, any costs related to the wine list could be negligible. The end justifies the means. However, as with the example of the set table, we perceived the composition of the wine list only at first glance as reactivity. On closer examination, it seemed as if our interviewees would not believe their own reasoning about reactive behavior concerning the wine list. They were rather aware of the fact that there are starred restaurants outside of Germany that do not even serve any wine (J, 2013). As mentioned already, the criteria for the Michelin rating are internationally standardized. Examples of restaurants that do not have any wine list, but do still have Michelin stars, just show that the wine list cannot be an important criterion of the Michelin inspectors and our interviewees were actually aware of that. Moreover, they kept stressing that the inspectors have their focus on the food on the plate (L, 2013; K, 2013) and the wine does not seem to be a part of this focus. This is also in alignment with the published criteria of the Michelin Guide, which we mentioned already in the introduction.

As a consequence, we see the composition of the wine list as another example for pseudo-reactivity. Our interviewees might call it reactive behavior aimed at improving their restaurants' rating, but we do not see the criteria for reactivity according to Espeland and Sauder (2007) fulfilled. The reasoning for our claim is similar as in the case of the laid tables in German haute cuisine restaurants: We agree that there has been a change of behavior in the process of becoming a Michelin-starred restaurant or remaining starred. Moreover, the restaurants are observed and evaluated by the Michelin Guide and they are aware of that, of course. However, we question that the change of behaviour is causal to the presence of a rating such as the Red Guide. We rather think that the rating is used as a means of legitimation. As a justification for heavy investments into exclusive wines, for costly trips to diverse vineyards (G, 2013). Consequently, we do not perceive this behavior as an example of reactivity in the German haute cuisine, but as pseudo-reactivity.

4.5. Interim Result

The previous chapter mentioned patterns of behavior that are examples for pseudo-reactivity. One reason we mentioned them is to show the fine line between behaviors that can be categorized as reactive and behaviors that are pseudo-reactive. The examples of pseudo-reactivity exhibit how ambiguous patterns of behavior can be perceived when trying to categorize them as reactivity. At the first glance, these patterns of behavior were similar to reactivity. As we have indicated, the patterns of behavior and actions of our interviewees do often fulfill some aspects of Espeland and Sauder's (2007) definition of reactivity or our shaped understanding. To some extent, the purpose of influencing the observer was still in place. However, they do not meet all criteria to be categorized as examples of reactivity. The direct correlation was missing and an additional purpose of influencing the observer evolved: to legitimize behavior through the Michelin Guide. No matter whether it was related to the setting, the wine list or the laid table – any behavior in this context was not a real reaction to the Michelin Guide's evaluation criteria. To phrase it differently, all these patterns of behavior would probably be the same in the hypothetical case that the Michelin Guide would not exist. Therefore, the behavior is not dependent on that rating. Our interviewees are mostly aware of the

fact that this reasoning is not airtight and confirmed that they used the Red Guide to legitimize the behavior. As the Michelin Guide is highly respected in the haute cuisine industry, we argue that it can serve as a strong justification for all kinds of behavior.

Altogether, the existence of pseudo-reactivity questions the extent of the direct influence the Michelin Guide has on the German haute cuisine. The examples for reactivity in the first part of our analysis might suggest that this impact is substantial. However, this substantial impact needs to be limited to some specific areas within an organization. We have shown in the section about pseudo-reactivity that one has to be very careful when evaluating the behavior of the measured objects. In some cases, an evidence for the high influence of the rating at first sight does not bear the definition of reactivity when taking a closer look. Espeland and Sauder (2007) do not mention any comparable experiences. Nonetheless, for our study the pseudo-reactivity provides an indication for a limited influence of the Michelin Guide on the German haute cuisine. This adumbration is strengthened within the next section of this paper, where we go one step further and elaborate on examples of non-reactivity in the German haute cuisine.

4.6. Examples That Contradict Reactivity in the German Haute Cuisine

Even though the organization chart, the selection of the foodstuffs, the creativity on the plate, the consistency in performance and the personal touch in the menu could be perceived as reactivity, we also found some aspects that are contrary to reactivity in all levels of its definition. We could neither identify any correlation between altering behavior and observation or the purpose of influencing the observer nor a claim of reactive behavior. In these cases, our interviewees did not care about potential consequences of their patterns of behavior on their restaurant's rating. This non-reactivity differentiates our paper further from the work of Espeland and Sauder (2007), who only present examples pro reactivity in their study. The aspects that we perceive as examples against reactivity in the German haute cuisine are aspects where one could easily imagine an influence of the Michelin Guide. However, we figured out that the restaurants act independently in these

cases. In the following, we illustrate what we mean by non-reactivity through presenting examples for non-reactive behavior.

4.6.1. Concept of the Restaurant

An example of a pattern of behavior, which is not influenced by the Michelin Guide, is the concept of the haute cuisine restaurants. While some years ago all haute cuisine restaurants were more or less similar in Germany, you can find all kinds of restaurants, even Sushi restaurants, with Michelin stars today (C, 2013). “There has occurred some tolerance, 30 years ago you also needed a big ambience” (K, 2013) to receive one star or even more. Even though all restaurants dedicate themselves to excellent food as well as extraordinary service, the concept behind every restaurant is very different. The differences are expressed through the specific names of the German restaurants, too: *La Vie* [≈ the life], *Aqua* [≈ water], *Schwarzwaldstube* [≈ black forrest snuggerly], *Residenz Heinz Winkler* [≈ residence of Heinz Winkler] or *Buddenbrooks* [a novel by the German writer Thomas Mann] are already revealing about the concept behind the particular restaurants. While *La Vie* for example is committed to a rather classical French concept⁹, *Schwarzwaldstube* stresses the regional context of the restaurant¹⁰. Even though successful haute cuisine restaurants could serve as a role model especially for young aspirant restaurateurs, we could not see any trend considering the restaurant concept.

In addition to the names of the restaurants, there is also the chefs’ attitude towards their guests, which shows that there is a huge variety of concepts on the German haute cuisine market. As a representative example, we take the interviewees A and C. Both work in one-starred restaurants, but both have a different understanding of their restaurants and their role as hosts. Interviewee A (2013):

I know guests who don't get their bearings up here any more cause they don't find Schnitzel with French Fries on my menu. Don't have this here, cause I set high standards to my location and myself, with the result that I don't cook this. That doesn't mean I dislike Schnitzel. Rather... doesn't fit the concept, I simply exclude it.

⁹ <http://www.restaurant-lavie.de/deutsch/das-ambiente/la-vie/index.html> . Retrieved May 23, 2013

¹⁰ <http://www.traube-tonbach.de/de/schwarzwaldstube-in-baiersbronn>, Retrieved May 23, 2013

In contrast to that, Interviewee C (2013) works in a restaurant where the guests can just come and say “ ‘Mr [last name of the interviewee]’ or ‘[first name of the Interviewee], depending on whom, ‘could you cook some Spaetzle [ordinary dish from Southern Germany] for me?’” and the restaurant fulfills all desires of the guests, no matter whether the desired food is rather basic and unusual for a starred restaurant. While Interviewee C sees himself as a service provider and his restaurant as a place where the customer is always right, Interviewee A defines his restaurant in another way, even though both restaurants are part of the same league when it comes to the amount of Michelin stars: The standard of his restaurant need to be kept up even though that might imply that a customer is left standing with his special request. This example shows how much the concepts behind the haute cuisine restaurants differ and that there is obviously no reactivity with regard to this aspect.

4.6.2. Interior Design

We also found another explanatory aspect where the Michelin Guide seems to not have any influence: the restaurants’ interior design. We base this claim on our own experience during our interviews, which mostly took place in the dining areas of the restaurants where our interviewees work. There we got a nice impression of how Germany’s haute cuisine restaurants look like. However, even if you do not have the possibility to get an insight on the spot, you can still get an idea of the restaurants’ interior design when having a look at the websites of some German haute cuisine restaurants. As an example, we recommend the websites and the galleries there of *Tantris* in Munich¹¹, *Amador* in Mannheim¹², *Lorenz Adlon Esszimmer* in Berlin¹³ and *La Mer* in List¹⁴. *Tantris* is famous for its retro charme of the 70s, *Amador* has a cool modern interior design, *Lorenz Adlon Esszimmer* looks classy and the dining room of *La Mer* is rather puristic. Considering the fact that there are starred restaurants which have a very classical interior design such as *Lorenz Adlon Esszimmer* but also restaurants such as *Amador*, which contrasts with its modern/futuristic style, we conclude that the interior design is not chosen in

¹¹ <http://www.tantris.de/impressionen.php?gid=3>. Retrieved April 10, 2013

¹² <http://www.restaurant-amador.de/>. Retrieved April 10, 2013

¹³ <http://www.kempinski.com/de/berlin/hotel-adlon/dining/restaurants/lorenz-adlon-esszimmer/>. Retrieved April 10, 2013

¹⁴ <http://resort.a-rosa.de/sylt/kulinarik/gourmetrestaurant-la-mer-2-michelin-sterne/>. Retrieved April 10, 2013

alignment with any preferences of the Michelin Guide, but that there is rather other influences for it such as the personal preference of the restaurant owners, the concept of the restaurant as mentioned before, or particular design trends. Even though high rated restaurants could serve as a role model for the industry, we could not spot any similarities in the interior design among our interviewees' restaurants. The choice of the interior design is therefore another example of an aspect within German haute cuisine that is fully independent of the Michelin Guide as the most important rating for the industry.

4.6.3. Cooking Style

Another example of a behavior which is not influenced by a rating such as the Michelin Guide, is the cooking style of the German haute cuisine chefs. By cooking style we do not mean the personal touch, which we saw as an example for reactivity in our study. We rather define cooking style as the technical orientation or an overall category of cooking that classifies the cuisine of the chefs. It is a first differentiation criterion before you can make even further distinctions based on the already mentioned personal note of a cuisine. The personal touch of a cuisine, in contrast, goes further and expresses a certain personality of a cook. Samples for different cooking styles are fusion, Mediterranean or French. When taking a look at their current menus, it seems as if the German haute cuisine chefs are "as far as cooking style and culinary character are concerned, indeed a motley crew" (Bröhm, 2011). This is also in alignment with our assumption that the German haute cuisine is a market of singularities (Karpik, 2010). There are chefs in Germany that are famous for their molecular gastronomy, such as Juan Amador in Mannheim, as well as chefs who are known for their regional cooking, such as Joachim Wissler in Bergisch Gladbach. "If you look at all German three-starred restaurants and even eat there, you will note that they're all different" (D, 2013).

In contrast to Scandinavia, for example, Germany's cooking styles are well-diversified, as interviewee L (2013) explains:

I've been to Scandinavia at least ten times, I always find the same cooking style there. There is one leader there and all others cook in the same manner. If we take a look on Germany, we don't have 200 identities,

naturally, but we sure have the best portfolio possible in the broad segment that we have.

This independence from the Michelin Guide in the sense of the cooking style also became apparent during our interviews. When asking our interviewees what advice they would give an aspiring young cook that strives for Michelin stars, they never recommended a specific cooking style. Rather, we got answers such as the one from interviewee A (2013): “There is one sentence: Remain true to yourself”. It would be reasonable if chefs would orientate themselves towards the cooking styles of experienced colleagues who have maintained their stars for a couple of years. The latter are obviously successful with their cooking style, therefore copying them would be rational. It would also be reasonable to orient a cooking style on current trends, as it seems to be the case in Scandinavia. However, when observing the haute cuisine restaurants’ menus, one can see that this does not happen – all menus and the cooking style behind it differ a lot. As an example you can compare the menus and, therefore, the cooking styles of three-starred chef Harald Wohlfahrt with the styles of his former apprentices such as Christian Bau, Klaus Erfort or Kevin Fehling who all have three stars meanwhile. Consequently, we see the cooking style as an example of a behaviour, which is not aligned to the Michelin Guide and weakens Espeland and Sauder’s (2007) theory of reactive behavior as a consequence of monitoring. Nevertheless, it is interesting that the cooking style as an overall category for someone’s cuisine is not influenced by the Red Guide, while the personal note as subtler differentiation possibility can be categorized as an example of reactivity in the German haute cuisine.

4.7. Summary and Assessment of our Results

The question is what conclusion we can draw based on our findings in relation to our research question. Therefore, we sum up our findings in order to give an answer. In the empirical context section in 4.1, we identify seven characteristics that delineate the German haute cuisine as well as the meaning of the Michelin Guide for the industry. We perceive them as vital for the general understanding of the haute cuisine, before we elaborate on reactivity in that sector. These characteristics complement our assumption that the haute cuisine is a market of singularity in

terms of Karpik (2010). We show that there is an increased competition in the industry due to a rise in starred restaurants caused by the Michelin Guide. Moreover, the German guests put pressure on the restaurants by having high expectations on the one hand, while being extremely price sensitive, on the other hand. In addition to that, restaurants have a very positive attitude towards the Michelin-stars, as they guarantee publicity, and can be used for differentiation to other players on the market. Consequently, the loss of a star is perceived as a big danger and would be very painful for the restaurants. Furthermore, we show both sides of the economic impact of the Michelin stars and the reasons why some restaurants in the German haute cuisine prefer to maintain a non-starred restaurant.

With these basic understanding of the market in mind, we analyze the patterns of behavior that we identify within our interviews. Taking all patterns of behavior, which we classify as reactive, pseudo-reactive or non-reactive, into consideration, we believe that the Michelin Guide has only limited influence on the German haute cuisine. Our findings imply that reactivity is an accompanying effect of a rating such as the Michelin Guide, but to a less extent than in study of Espeland and Sauder (2007). Moreover, we show how ambiguous the process of the classification of behavior can be by introducing the concept of pseudo-reactivity. We figure out that there is a fine line between reactivity and pseudo-reactivity.

The examples that we find confirming reactivity among the restaurants indicate that the Michelin Guide indeed has an influence on the haute cuisine. Patterns of behavior that we classify as reactive are not chosen for individual reasons, but to achieve a good rating in the Red Guide. As a consequence, the restaurants are quite similar in these aspects as everyone agrees on the importance of these aspects in relation to a good rating. Since the evaluation criteria of the Michelin Guide are only partially known, it cannot be said for sure whether the efforts of the restaurants really result in a better rating in the end. However, as all interviewees behave in a specific way with the purpose to positively influence their rating, we perceive the prerequisites for reactivity as given. Based on the examples of reactivity in the German haute cuisine, we confirm Espeland and Sauder's (2007) hypothesis: Measures, such as the Michelin Guide in our case and the law school ratings in

their study, influence the observed objects. However, our study differs in the extent of the influence of these tools. We find diverse indicators for the limitation of the impact of the Michelin Guide.

Firstly, we show that some patterns of behavior cannot be categorized easily as reactivity, as they do not meet the exact criteria of reactivity. Even though our interviewees claim their behavior to be reactive in these cases, they themselves do not really believe in a correlation between their behavior and the rating for their restaurants. They rather use the Michelin Guide as a reference for legitimization of specific actions. In this regard the purpose of influencing the observer evolves to the purpose of legitimization. Therefore, one can hardly speak of a direct influence that the Red Guide has on the restaurants by referring to these examples and that is why we call them pseudo-reactivity. Of course, they might show another meaning of this rating to the haute cuisine restaurants, but do not indicate reactivity in its original meaning. In this regard, we stress the fact that patterns of behavior of the observed objects can generally be ambiguous. With the concept of pseudo-reactivity we show how fine the line between reactivity and pseudo-reactivity can be. This implies that researchers should be very careful when classifying patterns of behavior. The pseudo-reactivity we find in the German haute cuisine reveals that there is less evidence for reactivity in the industry than one might think at first sight. Consequently, the dimension of reactivity is identified as less extensive as in the study of Espeland and Sauder (2007).

Secondly, we find more indicators for the limitation of the Michelin Guide's impact on the German haute cuisine: patterns of behavior documenting non-reactivity. These patterns are not adjusted in any way to a potential evaluation of the Red Guide. Instead, other rationales are the main driver for decisions taken in relation to these aspects. Overall, the examples for non-reactivity show that the Michelin Guide's influence on the haute cuisine restaurants is restricted to specific topics. There are obviously decisions that are taken without taking the Red Guide's potential evaluation criteria as a guideline. The discovery of non-reactivity is another finding which differentiates our study from the inspiring paper of Espeland and Sauder (2007), in addition to the pseudo-reactivity mentioned above.

All in all, we answer our research question as to what impact a rating such as the Michelin Guide has on the German haute cuisine with two statements: The Red Guide leads to reactive behavior among the haute cuisine restaurants and, therefore, has an impact on them. However, the impact is limited which means that not all behaviors and actions of the restaurants are aligned to its evaluation criteria. We perceive this finding as deviant from the conclusion of Espeland and Sauder (2007), who stated that, “rankings [...] gradually transform law schools into entities that conform more closely to the criteria used to construct rankings” (p. 33). According to our study, this effect is weaker in the context of the German haute cuisine since we found numerous examples, which counter this conformation to the criteria. Therefore, we agree with Espeland and Sauder (2007) on the existence of reactivity, which leads to a harmonization of the restaurants in some aspects. However, we question the scope of reactivity. In the discussion section of this paper we elaborate further on this topic.

4.8. Possible Explanations for our Result

So far, we have elaborated on the result of our study, which only partially confirms the observations of Espeland and Sauder (2007) about measures and their impact on measured objects. As our study’s recognitions differ from previous research, it is vital to look for possible explanations for our result. These in turn could give some indication on the generalizability of our findings in a next step. Moreover, these attempts to explain also show general needs for further studies to clarify. In the following part, we go back to our three theoretical pillars that served as foundation for our study to find possible explanations for our findings. Especially our assumptions concerning ratings as well as Karpik’s (2010) concept of the market of singularity are elaborated in more detail with regard to our paper’s result. We investigate in how far this theoretical basis of our study might have influenced the outcome of our exploration. In a second step we critically assess these pillars in an iterative process. Therefore, we elaborate on the question in how far our chosen fieldwork – the German haute cuisine and the Michelin Guide – is representative for their whole field of research, which is the influence of measures in general. Consequently, we investigate on whether the specific characteristics of our chosen

measure and the researched market could have influenced our result as well. Finally, we illustrate how differences in data analysis between Espeland and Sauder's (2007) and our paper could also explain different conclusions. By the end of this section the reader should be aware of numerous factors related to our approach that might have had an impact on the outcome of our study.

To start with, we see our focus on ratings as a possible reason for the differing result compared to Espeland and Sauder's (2007) study. It could therefore be that ratings and rankings differ in the extent of the reactivity they cause. In our theory section, we defined ratings and rankings as two distinct measurement devices. Moreover, we stressed that ratings, according to Coote (2011), are non-comparative, abstract, and without any hierarchy among the measured objects. We categorized the Michelin Guide as a rating and, therefore, suitable for our study. Espeland and Sauder as well as Kornberger and Carter (2010) point in their studies towards the impact of hierarchy among the measured objects to their result. As these studies both dealt with rankings, there was a clear comparative tendency in their field of study, as the measured objects jostled for position in the respective rankings. In an environment that is dominated by a rating, in contrast, there might be less rivalry among the observed objects. Although we identified an element of hierarchy in ratings as well, this characteristic is by far not as crucial as within a ranking and thus have not the same implications on the measured actors. As the number of favorable ratings is generally not restricted, our interviewees might overall focus less on their competitors but more on themselves, in comparison to ranked organizations. We find cues for that in the way our interviewees talk about competitors or other haute cuisine restaurants in general. They are very well informed about all other restaurants in the haute cuisine sector, but we never experienced situations in which they compared each other, so the competitiveness seems to be rather low. Moreover, they spoke very generously about their colleagues, which we perceived as exceptional. In this regard, the Michelin Guide seems to create a fictional membership club for haute cuisine restaurants, which unites them.

The assumption that there is less rivalry in a market observed by a rating could thus explain why we found reactivity to a lesser extent than Espeland and Sauder (2007). If the measure is less dramatic, in the sense that many measured objectives can receive a good evaluation at the same time, its influence on the objectives might be smaller. This is to say that the Michelin Guide as a rating might have less impact on the haute cuisine restaurants than the rankings on the law schools in Espeland and Sauder's paper – simply because its consequences are perceived as less severe by the measured objects. Since there is only a restricted number of ranks within a law school ranking, the pressure to make it into this elite group of universities might be comparably high. However, if there is a theoretically endless amount of Michelin stars that can be distributed, the haute cuisine restaurants might be less competitive and more relaxed in general. In turn, this could lead to the assumption that the Michelin Guide does not affect all of their behaviors and actions. Thus, the Red Guide as a rating can explain our limited extent of reactivity. In any case, we see a need to further explore the effects of ratings on measured objects and the differences to ranked objects.

Additionally, following our iterative approach, we have to question this theoretical pillar. We claimed the Michelin Guide to be a typical example for a rating and, therefore, a good measure to study for us. However, there are some aspects that question our assumption. The Red Guide has many specific characteristics in addition to the outlined features of a rating, which might also explain our study's result. Especially the missing transparency of this rating could have affected our findings, as we already indicated in the examples confirming reactivity. Since the evaluation criteria are not published, besides some general key data, the rating process is mysterious to our interviewees. As they do not know all criteria of importance to the Red Guide, the final rating is not always clear to them. This limited knowledge about the criteria in turn restricts the possibilities to align behavior and thereby to influence the Michelin rating. To phrase it differently, our interviewees have only limited possibilities to act reactively. Therefore, it could be self-explaining that we discovered merely a limited reactivity in the German haute cuisine market. In contrast to the German haute cuisine, an American law school is probably more aware

of the criteria for a university ranking. Consequently, there might be much more opportunities to find reactivity as a researcher than in our field of research. This would imply that our study's result could be also explained by the Red Guide's specific characteristics in addition to the general difference between rankings and ratings. All in all, the Michelin Guide might go further than a typical example for a rating and has more characteristics than we outlined that define a rating. To some degree, our findings might also not be representative for reactivity in the context of ratings, but nevertheless explain our result of limited form of reactivity.

Our second theoretical pillar might as well have influenced the result of our paper. In contrast to our first pillar, this pillar can explain our result in two ways, confirming reactivity as well as supporting our limited extent of reactivity. Our assumption was that the German haute cuisine is a market of singularities, according to Karpik (2010). This concept implies that measures, such as ratings and rankings, are of utmost importance for these singularities as they further create a market for the latter. They artificially make incommensurable goods comparable and therefore create information, which is necessary for the functioning of a market. While Karpik mainly argues from the perspective of the consumer, one could argue that not only consumers, but in the same manner the rated actors in a market of singularity are heavily relying and dependent on a judge of their product or service. Without a reliable judge, no consumer is likely to buy the product or service. As the judgment devices are perceived as a prerequisite for the existence of a market, this could explain why the Michelin Guide has such a standing in the German haute cuisine. Our interviewees are obviously very aware of the meaning the Red Guide has for the whole haute cuisine. The rating creates awareness among the public and is therefore vital for the wellbeing of their business. Furthermore, it provides potential clients with information about a very subjective product – food. This importance of the Michelin Guide for the whole sector could explain why we found aspects of reactivity. As the product of the restaurants, the food, is a very subjective issue, they might have an interest to be evaluated as objective as possible to attract guests. If the rating is very important for the restaurants, they have good reasons to align their behavior to its criteria to achieve a good rating. Consequently, the haute cui-

sine as a market of singularity could be a reason why we found evidence for reactivity in that industry.

As with the first theoretical pillar, we also have to call the second pillar, the haute cuisine as market of singularities in the understanding of Karpik (2010), into question. As mentioned above, we perceive the market of singularity as a possible explanation for reactivity in our study. However, in case our assumption is wrong and the haute cuisine is a regular market as any other, we could argue that this might be another explanation for our result. In case we cannot define haute cuisine as a market of singularity, a judgment device as the Michelin Guide might be less important to a market than Karpik claims. In the case of our study, this would imply that the Michelin Guide is probably less important for the German haute cuisine as the concept of singularities implicates. As a consequence, the limited reactivity we found could be explained by the fact that the Red Guide is less important to the market of haute cuisine as connoted in our assumption.

As we have shown, the concept of the market of singularity could have lead to both of our results: In case our assumption was right and the haute cuisine fulfills the criteria of such a market of singularity, it would explain the importance of the Michelin Guide to the interviewees and therefore reactivity. In case our assumption was incorrect, this could explain the limited reactivity because judgment devices would be less important for the market than in Karpik's markets of singularities.

In addition to the theoretical foundation of our paper, we think that the general specifications of the researched industry could also be an influencing factor for our result. As we showed earlier in the analysis, the German haute cuisine is a small world in itself. We presented characteristics of the industry that we perceived as complementary to its nature as a market of singularities. In our opinion, these characteristics could also explain why we found reactivity, but, at the same time, why its extent is limited in our study. Therefore, the empirical information about the German haute cuisine can offer further possible explanations for our result.

We showed earlier in this paper that the Michelin stars carry great weight among our interviewees. Consequently, it seems reasonable to try hard to achieve at least

one, even with the causing downsides. As the Michelin stars are also a fictional membership for the club of top class chefs, this might explain why our interviewees partially adjusted their behaviors to the criteria of the Michelin Guide. Furthermore, as the stars can be used to differentiate from the competitors, it might also be in the restaurants' interest to take a lot of trouble by acting reactive to receive (a) Michelin stars. Due to the fact that Michelin stars create publicity even abroad, this creates another motivation to strive for stars since the haute cuisine restaurants are increasingly dependent on foreign guests. As the previous arguments show, there could to be many reasons for reactivity in the German haute cuisine based on its specifics.

However, we also see many potential explanations for the limitedness of reactivity in the characteristics of the industry. As mentioned in the beginning of our analysis, our interviewees are struggling with very price sensitive clients, among other things. Since in the end it is the guests who ensure a restaurant's survival, our interviewees might have put their focus rather on them and their demands than on the Michelin Guide. Moreover, a Michelin star does not necessarily imply increased profits, as mentioned in our background information part. This could also explain why their desire to positively influence the rating is lower than in the case of Espeland and Sauder's (2007) law schools. Moreover, we were told about the tragic death of French chef Bernard Loiseau, which acts as a deterrent within the industry. His obsession with the Michelin stars finally drove him into suicide. We could imagine that many restaurateurs, chefs, restaurant managers, and other people working in the German haute cuisine consequently try to keep a sane mental distance from ratings. This would could also explain why the Michelin Guide is not perceived as the central clock in the industry and therefore why reactivity is limited.

Finally, the difference in result between our study and the study of Espeland and Sauder (2007) could also be explained by the methodological data analysis of the latter authors. So far, we always anticipated that their findings differed to ours. We focused on their result, which distinguishes to our conclusion, but we did not investigate further on the basis for their findings: the way they analyzed their data. However, the fact that Espeland and Sauder do not mention non-reactivity or pseudo-

reactivity does not stringently imply that they did not discover these phenomena in their study. Instead, they could have discovered it to a less extent or they only got insights about this aspect from a small amount of data so that they did not followed on this, similar to the bias we have chosen. Consequently, their data analysis might concentrate on the particular aspect of confirming reactivity. In this or also other possible cases, our study's result could be more similar to Espeland and Sauder's findings than we have assumed so far. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify their interpretation of their data to come to a final conclusion.

In sum, our explanations for the study's result are related on the meaning of our theoretical pillars, of the industry characteristics, and of the data analysis of Espeland and Sauder (2007). The difference between rankings and ratings was one possible explanation for our differing study result in comparison to Espeland and Sauder. However, our finding could also be the result of choosing a very specific rating for investigation, which might not be generalizable in terms of rating. In both cases, this would explain why we found a weaker extent of reactivity. Furthermore, we discussed in how far Karpik's (2010) concept of the market of singularities could have influenced our study's result. On the one hand, we believe that it could explain reactive behavior in our field of study. On the other hand however, the importance of judgment devices might be less than Karpik's concept describes and could therefore also explain the limitedness of reactivity. Moreover, we went into the specific characteristics of the sector we studied, which could also explain both our finding of reactivity, but also its limitedness. Finally, we indicated the possibility that our result could be more similar to Espeland and Sauder's findings than presumed. Their way of interpreting their data could be another explanation why our study's result is different to theirs. Altogether, we cannot detect whether one of the mentioned factors that possibly influenced our result is weightier than the others. Maybe, it is a combination of diverse aspects that we have shown. Therefore, we see a clear need for further research on the topic of ratings as well as on markets of singularities. Based on these possible results, in the next part we discuss implications that we can draw from our result.

5. Discussion

Inspired by the paper of reactivity and rankings of Espeland and Sauder (2007), our analysis identified different patterns of behavior. Some of them were caused by the Michelin Guide, others were legitimized through the Michelin Guide and some were not caused by the Michelin Guide. Accordingly, we differentiate between reactivity, pseudo-reactivity and non-reactivity. Our interview partners in sum claimed a less important role of the Michelin Guide for their behavior than Espeland and Sauder showed for their ranking. This led us to the conclusion that the Michelin Guide has a limited impact on the behavior of the restaurants. In consequence, reactivity in our case is not as strong as in the study of Espeland and Sauder. For our result, we found diverse possible reasons, both from a practical and from a theoretical point of view. In this regard, we see especially for the latter the need for further discussion.

Based on the outcome of and the reasons for our analysis, in this part we investigate on our result and generalize our findings with regard to our chosen theories as well as further research. First, we discuss the implications that we can draw from our result onto our first two theoretical pillars, ratings and market of singularities. We show for each pillar where we see possibilities for our findings to contribute to existing research. Second, in line with our analysis, we focus on the argumentation and implications of reactivity. Consequently, we go in depth about our third theoretical pillar, discussing the meaning and understanding of reactivity. Third, we elaborate on our result with regards to the meaning of measures at all. Therefore, we connect our findings with the implications of the work of MacKenzie (2006) in order to investigate the overall meaning of the Michelin Guide for the German haute cuisine market. For each of our points of discussion we postulate hypotheses.

5.1. Implications for the Research on Ratings

Our first theoretical pillar was a theoretical discussion about the difference between two kind of measures, ranking and ratings. Coote (2011), for example makes a general distinction between rankings and ratings in their basic understanding.

However, when it comes to the application and possible effects of measures, this distinction in research is lacking. Most previous research was conducted upon rankings in the context of the effects of measures. However, this focus was not deliberately chosen as previous research is lacking a clear delineation between ranking and ratings. To some extent, ranking and ratings are used as synonyms.

With our research, we focused on ratings and saw some defining disparity to other rankings. In this regard, we argued that the Michelin Guide as a rating is a possible reason for the difference in our result in to the result of Espeland and Sauder (2007). We distinguished between Espeland and Sauder's ranking of law schools and our rating, the Michelin Guide, on two levels. On the one side, it is the aspect of hierarchy and comparativeness in the ranking; on the other side it is the opacity of the Michelin Guide. While the latter can be seen as specific for the Michelin Guide, the missing element of hierarchy in a rating is key of its understanding and definition of Coote (2011).

However, we go one step further. We hence generalize the characteristics of the Michelin Guide that we see as relevant for understanding its effects and which can be sorted into the definition of Coote (2011) as well. Thus, our findings suggest a more detailed possible differentiation between rating and rankings, when investigating their particular effects. We herewith provide a suggestion on how to close the gap in previous research. Following the outcome of our analysis as well as on the basis of Coote, we find in total four aspects that define a rating, but not exclusively, in contrast to a ranking. We thus can see a rating as *non-comparative, abstract, subjective, and mostly based on different sources of testimonials*.

We think these four characteristics of a rating are the most distinctive with regards to the way a ranking is defined in previous research and most relevant for the Michelin Guide as a rating. We understand these four aspects in the following way: *Non-comparative* indicates the outlined aspect of a missing hierarchy in a rating in comparison to rankings. *Abstract* shows the created classification that a rating manifests, which sorts the market into new distinct patterns, in our case for example one, two, or three stars. This also gives every rating a unique shape. *Subjective*

indicates that the outcome of the rating represents one or many subjective opinions and interpretations on the measured object. Subjectivity further creates the outcome in the rating, in our case about a restaurant and its food, and is in contrast to the appearance of objectivity of rankings. *Different sources of testimonials* finally indicate that for the creation of a rating that they can include a wide scope of sources for the creating of the rating. This goes hand in hand with the previous point of subjectivity. Different sources are important for the reliability and acceptance that is created through these different sources towards the reader of the rating (e.g. several incorrupt testers, all educated in the field of haute cuisine, with (different) opinions about specific restaurants).

Due to this lack in previous research, our characteristics can be seen as a first basic suggestion on how to differentiate these two measures when it comes to their application. We claim this principle understanding to be necessary for a fundamental differentiation. In this regard, the outlined characteristics are the most distinctive for our case, but there might be more aspects, when evaluating more and different ratings, also in different contexts in the future.

Espeland and Sauder (2007) assume the “proliferation of measures” (p. 1), which they break down to rankings. As examples such as TripAdvisor, Parker, or Amazon product reviews show ratings are also used more frequently to respond to “demands for accountability and transparency” (p. 1). We see our differentiation as necessary because of the lacking emphasis in previous research and the distinct understanding. Our work suggests a focus on ratings in particular in the future. For further research, it would be a possibility to take our suggested delineation between rating and ranking as a starting point for both understanding ratings and evaluating its effects.

5.2. Implications for the Research of Singularities

While the implications that we can draw from our first theoretical pillar are more a debate on general definitions, for the implications for our second theoretical pillar we can rely and discuss on the basis of a specific theory. Our second theoretical pillar is the market of singularities, introduced by Karpik (2010). He defines singu-

larities as “goods and services that are structured, uncertain and incommensurable” (p. 10). He also claims that the haute cuisine is a market of singularities as each restaurant is seen as a singularity (p. 78 ff.). Karpik especially highlights the importance of judgment devices, which are important for the market of singularities to function (p. 46).

Subsuming our findings, we found complementing aspects for the haute cuisine being a singularity in the terms of Karpik (2010) that confirm our assumption that the German haute cuisine is a market of singularities. In line with the assumptions of the market of singularities and the argumentation for the importance of judgment devices within such a market, we identified the Michelin Guide being an important and shaping judgment device for the German haute cuisine market. Following its rating criteria, we argued that the Michelin Guide as a rating allows the market actors to operate more individually. In the end of our analysis, however, we questioned whether the German haute cuisine market is a market of singularities or if other specific aspects of the haute cuisine market were also influencing.

Taking this thought further, this means that if the market is not a market of singularities, its implications might also no longer be valid. As indicated, this can for instance be manifested in the role of the judgment device for the market. To figure out in how far the Michelin Guide is vital for the haute cuisine market, we spoke to a German chef in Austria. Austria is very interesting in this context, since the Red Guide decided to reduce costs and, therefore, focuses only on the two biggest cities for a couple of years. The Austrian haute cuisine restaurants were shocked when being informed about the termination of the regular Austrian Michelin Guide. Nevertheless, the Austrian haute cuisine is still existent today, even though the Guide has not been published for a couple of years now (J, 2013). In a similar way, one of our interview partners stated that if the Michelin Guide was gone, there would be another guide that would fill this gap (K, 2013). In sum, this could either mean that the Austrian Michelin Guide was replaced by a couple of other ratings which now ensure the existence of the national haute cuisine, or it means that Karpik's (2010) claim is not fully correct.

Taking the statement of our interview with the Austrian chef into consideration, we claim that the Michelin Guide is not mandatory for the functioning of the Austrian haute cuisine market. Although this is one specific case, we suggest that for an established market, like the haute cuisine market in Austria as well as in Germany, one specific judgment device might not be essential for the survival of the market, even if it is perceived as the most important for the market.

Due to the fact that there was no rated restaurant when the Michelin Guide was founded in 1910, we argue that the Michelin Guide was co-responsible for the creation of the haute cuisine in Germany. Its constant publication in the German market after World War II can be seen as an aspect that the haute cuisine is still in line with the understanding of haute cuisine since its foundations. Although some basic aspects of the haute cuisine changed over time, such as the rules of cooking or the role of the chef (cf. Rao, Monin, & Durand (2003), Svejenova, Mazza, & Planellas (2007)), the haute cuisine is still in place and market actors agree upon. Our interview partners as these market actors agreed that the Michelin Guide is the guiding judgment device. This, nevertheless, does not mean that the Michelin Guide is prerequisite for the functioning of the market. Instead, the Austrian case suggests the assumption that the Red Guide can easily be substituted by other judgment devices. In this case for instance, the substitution could be performed by devices that operate on a less comparative level, such as word of mouth or establishment, i.e. habitu . This raises the question whether judgment devices are as important as Karpik (2010) argues. Our findings in Austria raise doubts upon this claim. Thus, we suggest that *a judgment device might play the most important role when establishing and creating a new market of singularities. When it comes to sustaining the market, it might play a less important role and can be substituted.*

Although we generalize our findings here, we are aware of the fact that we identified the Michelin Guide as one specific judgment device, the *cicerone*. This means that our hypothesis has the highest feasibility in terms of a cicerone, which include ratings. However, we claim this hypothesis due to importance and guiding character of the analyzed cicerone for our specific market of singularities. In line with Kar-

pik (2010), we highlighted the comparative, “soft and symbolic” (p. 46) form of this measure.

Interestingly, ratings in general are the most influential judgment devices for the German haute cuisine market. In this regard, it is probably no coincidence that the Michelin Guide is the most important judgment device, followed by the Gault Millau, which is a rating as well. In contrast, the Pellegrino list for the best 50 restaurants, which is a ranking, is appreciated neither by market actors nor by the guests (K, 2013).

Taking this generalization further, we argue that in the combination with our theoretical pillar of the rating and ranking discussion, a rating is the best suitable judgment device for the haute cuisine market. Due to the incommensurability (Karpik, 2010) of the product (in our case food), we see the characteristics of a rating (e.g. not to compare the product (Coote, 2011)) in this market as beneficial. It guides the market user, i.e. the customers, to rely on its evaluation when buying the product. At the same time, it gives the market actors, i.e. the restaurants, the flexibility to take individual decision. This flexibility is manifested through the missing element of hierarchy and a less intense competition in terms of the evaluation. In combining our two theoretical pillars, the market of singularities and the role of the Michelin Guide as a rating, we hence see possibilities for enriching existing research. Thus, we propose *for a market of singularities, a rating as a cicerone can be the most value-adding judgment device in order to understand and guide through the market as well as to allow market actors to operate independently from its evaluation.*

Overall, Karpik (2010) puts emphasis in analyzing from the point of view of the customer. In contrast, we focus in our work on the impact of singularities with regards to its organizational actors, in our case the restaurants. We thus were able to give further implications upon his theory of the market of singularities. Our contribution to the work of Karpik is limited to the separation of cicerone over a ranking. Karpik mentions also other judgment devices, which are out of the scope of this paper. Similar to the suggestion that we made from the differentiation of ratings versus

rankings, we see our hypothesis as a starting point for further researches and in line with the importance of judgment device.

More generally, in our research, the market of singularities was a guiding assumption, which helped us understanding the market and thus the way actors behave. Karpik (2010) also points out that the understanding of the market of singularities differs fundamentally from neoclassic assumptions. We hence suggest further research putting emphasis upon the market as a whole instrument with its specific characteristics, before focusing on the research aspect. In this way, we consider it necessary to understand the market (as for instance it is different to a *neoclassic market*) in its basic assumptions in order to sort the findings in a way that they make sense in the whole picture.

5.3. The Meaning of Reactivity

After discussing the implications that we drew from our two guiding theoretical pillars, in this part we focus on the third theoretical pillar of our analysis, the concept of reactivity in the understanding of Espeland and Sauder (2007). Based on their work, in this section we show implications and thus contribute to it. With the focus on the concept of reactivity in our analysis, we generalize our analyzed aspects of reactivity first separately, before we put them in context together and discuss on the meaning of reactivity.

In the core of the understanding of reactivity of Espeland and Sauder lies a causal pattern (“in reaction to”, p. 1). Our analysis identified for their work a quite mechanical understanding of the concept of reactivity that lies within one unambiguous form of reactivity. When analyzing the effects of reactivity that they found within their analysis, we identify their patterns of behavior all with the purpose of influencing the observer. Thus we assumed the purpose of influencing the observer as defining characteristic of reactivity. In this regard, we went even further than the study of Espeland and Sauder by focusing on the underlying aspects of reactivity. We rely on their form of reactivity to evaluate on the two core characteristics in their understanding of reactivity: The correlation between observation and effect and the purpose of influencing the observer.

In the first step of our analysis, we found confirming examples for the understanding of reactivity of Espeland and Sauder (2007). For our aspects that were in line with the understanding of reactivity of Espeland and Sauder, we find different patterns of behavior of the organizational actors. As the exact evaluation criteria of the Michelin Guide were not clear and the restaurants made assumption, we also found reactive patterns of behavior that were outside of the scope of the observing criteria, which the Michelin Guide officially state. Our interview partners claimed nevertheless that these aspects are important for a good or better rating. When going deeper in this form of reactivity, which is caused by a measure, we can identify a further distinction that might be important to be considered when evaluating the meaning of reactivity for the organizational actors in their specific observation context. Thus, we argue that *in the form of reactivity that has the purpose influencing the observer there might be differences in realization of reactive behavior. When the observed objects do not know the exact observing criteria, the patterns of behavior are based on assumptions and can go beyond the scope of observation.*

In the second step of our analysis, we identified patterns that were beyond the form of reactivity in the understanding of Espeland and Sauder (2007). Because of its appearance as reactive behavior, we called these patterns of behavior pseudo-reactivity. On the first glance, they seemed to be reactive, but the purpose of influencing the observer altered and the Michelin Guide was used for legitimization of their actions. Also, they were not reactivity in the causal understanding of Espeland and Sauder. To some extent, the organizational actors change their behavior *when* being observed, but they also change their behavior *after* being observed – without the mentioned causal aspect integrated. Thus, we might argue that reactivity implicates a causal pattern of behavior when being observed. When considering research of reactivity in general, we suggest an awareness of this differentiation between reactivity and pseudo-reactivity. In this regard, we transfer our findings into the understanding of reactivity of Espeland and Sauder (2007), when generalizing our findings. Hence, we define *pseudo-reactivity as an appearance of reactivity that can be characterized by the legitimization of patterns of behavior*

through the observer. Furthermore, our findings suggest a distinction between these two findings: *In contrast to reactivity, pseudo-reactivity might miss this causality and is only linked to the observer implicitly.*

In the third step of our analysis, our findings differed even more to the analysis of Espeland and Sauder (2007). In this part, we found examples that underline the weaker extent of reactivity in our study. We identified patterns of behavior that were apart from any definition of reactivity. We named these patterns of behavior non-reactivity. In this regard, the restaurants decided not to react in all aspects according to the Michelin Guide and its criteria. Instead, the restaurants operated to a high degree autonomously. This shows us that the impact of the Michelin Guide in restaurants operating in the German haute cuisine market is not limitless. Adding this onto the understanding of reactivity in general, we argue that *to a certain extent reactivity can be limited.*

Taking all three steps together, this limited influence is especially supported through the specific characteristics of the Michelin Guide. As previously outlined, the Michelin Guide only publishes some guiding criteria of its rating and is not going into detail about the exact composition of the rating, which we also identified as a reason for the ambiguity. Thus, for the restaurants it is hard to react on the observation of the Michelin Guide. We identified that the Michelin Guide as a rating in the specific context of the German haute cuisine market encourages individual action. The restaurants as observed objects are therefore working to some degree autonomously. This creates individual decision making to some degree, which we further identified as aspects contrary to reactivity. Thus, we argue that *reactivity might be stronger when the observed object knows about the criteria of the evaluation, so that it can alter its behavior accordingly.*

These last two hypotheses unlock a potential for further research on the extent of reactivity. We claim that the reactivity in our field of research is *weaker* in comparison to Espeland and Sauder (2007), but this raises the question of the extent. We show that there are different levels of intensity of reactivity and that its extent can differ. However, we are limited in giving a distinct scale. In this regard, we suggest

further research that could elaborate on extent of reactivity in different settings. Moreover, due to our limited insights into the results and research data of the study of Espeland and Sauder we are not able to identify any similar patterns of behavior in their findings in comparison to ours like pseudo-reactivity. This does not mean that Espeland and Sauder did not observe pseudo-reactivity; they might just not have focused on that. In this regard, we suggest further research to be aware of this ambiguous perception of behavior, when observing reactivity. The combination of reactive behavior in accordance to measures is generally new, so that further research is required in order to get a more distinct understanding of it.

Overall, we based our analysis on the assumption that reactive patterns of behavior have the purpose to influence the observer. This means that we investigated on a possible link between the observer and observed object, namely the Michelin Guide and the restaurants. In this constellation, we rely in our analysis on the effects that Espeland and Sauder (2007) describe and took an organizational viewpoint. This particular frame helped us to create an in-depth analysis and our own understanding of reactivity. We used the concept of reactivity as means for the end of our overall focus which was on the general impact of the Michelin Guide. Thus, we were able to find aspects that lie outside of the applied definition of reactivity, namely pseudo-reactivity and aspects contradicting reactivity. We found more and different patterns of behavior than the meaning of reactivity of Espeland and Sauder imply. Nevertheless, the meaning that we identified for reactivity is by far not comprehensive. This means that there might be also other forms of reactivity with different purposes. Furthermore, as reactivity has its origin in the fields of psychology, the original meaning has less distinct understanding of the alteration of individuals in their behavior when being observed – without any particular purpose in mind, also with no regard to the observer itself. By sticking to the general understanding of reactivity in its original meaning, it is suggested that also other aspects could have been observed. It is important to note this in order to sort our result and leave the possibility to open for more forms of reactivity. When generalize our findings onto the overall meaning of reactivity, we assume a huge variety of possibilities. Thus, our ambiguous patterns of behavior showed that *the meaning of reactiv-*

ity in their appliance to measures is significant, i.e. that it is broader than the first appearance claimed to be.

Altogether, our findings created a unique conclusion. In this regard, our findings and the theoretical background of reactivity call for further research. We showed possible explanations of our result, which were identified as quite unusual. Our specific and unusual setting raises the question of reproduction in further cases, as we think that this setting is difficult to be found in another market in this particular combination. We thus encourage researchers to take this unusualness into consideration for their research and suggest considering our work as a starting point to deepen the knowledge about the concept of reactivity. All in all, we think that the concept of reactivity is very profound and requires further research in order to understand more of its effects.

5.4. The Michelin Guide in Light of MacKenzie (2006): Camera or Engine

Our specific and unique research setting, context, and overall result finally require a further categorization in a broader context. We open our scope and leave the specifics of our theoretical pillars and our organizational viewpoint. Instead, we discuss the expressiveness of the Michelin Guide for the haute cuisine market in Germany. The tension of reactivity - either the independent measure of a targeted social world, or causing people to change their behavior in desired ways - is one key aspect of the study of Espeland and Sauder (2007) and is central to the use and effects of public measures. In this regard, we sort our result in the field of measures and discuss our findings and implication in the paraphrase of the work of MacKenzie (2006). MacKenzie argues that economic models are an engine of inquiry rather than a camera to reproduce empirical facts. Although economic models are intended to serve as objective analysis and operate as a camera, they are rather intrinsic parts of economic process. They thus take influence and act as engine. At first sight, this is not directly linked to our work on measures, but its findings create the question of the role of measurements for a market. Similarly, Kornberger and Carter (2010) used MacKenzie to define their analyzed league tables as engines for their market. This means that these measures influence the way

market actors behave. Accordingly, we discuss the question about the overall role of the Michelin Guide for the German haute cuisine.

Taking our specific result and transferring it onto the role of the Michelin Guide, we can discuss an anomaly in the distinction of MacKenzie (2006) that is also in contrast to the finding of Kornberger and Carter (2010): The rating of Michelin Guide can be defined as both, as a camera and an engine. On the one hand, as the Michelin Guide engages competition, it can be identified as an engine. The aspects that confirm reactivity are in line with the understanding of the measure as an engine. In this regard, the Michelin Guide in our case encourages the restaurants to rely on its guiding rating criteria. In line with this reactive behavior, the restaurants try to take influence upon the Michelin Guide in favor for a possible better result in their evaluation. This means that the Michelin Guide causes a particular behavior that the actors would otherwise not have. It thus can be seen as an *engine*. Nevertheless, in our empirical understanding, we described the competition in the German haute cuisine market as less intense.

On the other hand, the Michelin Guide gives no clear statement about its criteria to get one, two, or even three stars. Due to this nontransparent rating system, restaurants are less able to implement actions that influence the rating of the Michelin Guide, even if they want to do so. This means that the possible influence of the Michelin Guide is restricted, as the restaurants cannot react to it. This attribute of the Michelin Guide, which we beforehand analyzed as a possible reason for our result, further supports the observing character of the Michelin Guide. Furthermore, the aspects that contradict reactivity implicate that the restaurants act to some degree in autonomous way. At the same time, our interview partners identified the Michelin Guide as the most serious guide that portrays the most realistic picture in a very subjective market. This further indicates that the Michelin Guide is at the same time a *camera* observing what restaurants do. Altogether, the non-reactivity arguments show that the restaurants are still able to rely on their own behavioral aspects and do not only focus on the Michelin Guide.

All in all, we found arguments for both sides of the argumentation of the paraphrase of MacKenzie (2006) – both camera and engine. We consequently describe the Michelin Guide as a *hybrid* of camera and engine for the German haute cuisine market. As a consequence, we found another proof for the Michelin Guide's uniqueness, which we already figured out beforehand. We see the understanding of the mechanical way of either or more in a Hegelian way, which means that there are more forms than *either or*. We argue that a *measure can be hybrid of a camera and an engine*. Overall, we can draw the conclusion that there are more forms than a pure camera or a pure engine and the Michelin Guide is one of these possible hybrid forms. We thus suggest further research with contrary measures to join into this discussion.

5.5. Forms of Pseudo-Reactivity From the Viewpoint of Institutional Theory

When leaving our focus of the impact of the Michelin Guide, in the context of pseudo-reactivity, patterns of behavior that we perceived as uneconomical caught our particular interest. As stated, in these examples the Michelin Guide was used as reason to legitimize certain actions. We identified that the pseudo-reactive patterns of behavior were mainly economical inefficient from an organizational point of view and that these examples were similar across the German haute cuisine. Furthermore, the restaurants seemed to be driven by an overall market professional ethics and used the Michelin Guide as means to keeping up with the high standards of the industry. The Michelin Guide was used as legitimization for these patterns of behavior.

Instead of investigating on the overall influence, one could also focus on these aspects of pseudo-reactivity from an institutional theory perspective. Institutional theory therefore could offer an enhanced understanding of pseudo-reactivity. In this regard, Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that, "many formal organizational structures arise as reflections of rationalized institutional rules" (p. 340). These institutional rules serve the organizations as legitimacy for their behavior:

Organizations are driven to incorporate practices and procedures defined by rationalized concepts of organizational work and institutionalized in society. Organizations that do so increase their legitimacy and their survival prospects, independent of the immediate efficacy of the acquired practices and procedures (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p. 340).

Furthermore, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) describe “rational actors make their organizations increasingly similar as they try to change them” (p. 147). They argue that, “change in organization seems less and less driven by competition or by the need of efficiency. Instead, [...] organizational change occurs as a result of processes that make organization more and more similar” (p. 147). According to DiMaggio and Powell, this process “is effected largely by the state and professions” (p. 147).

We can identify parallels of this theoretical conception to the findings of pseudo-reactivity in our study. The stories of our interviewees might be the tip of an iceberg, but they show an interesting aspect outside of reactivity for the role of the Michelin Guide for the German haute cuisine market. Going even further, this would mean that the Michelin Guide would define institutional rules outside its evaluation criteria that cause further patterns of behavior of the restaurants. Applying this basic understanding of institutional theory onto the pseudo-reactive patterns of behavior that we found, it can be argued why the Michelin Guide is used for legitimization by our interview partners. We can assume the Michelin Guide as an institution, as the restaurants give this status to him. Accordingly, the patterns of behaviors were interestingly similar across the haute cuisine and were not caused by the competition, which is an indicator for an institution in the argumentation of DiMaggio and Powell (1983). This institution is therefore causing a change in behavior. Following Meyer and Rowan’s (1977) study, it is likely that the Michelin Guide creates institutional rules for the market. According to these authors, institutional rules in turn cause organizations to incorporate these practices and adapt their behavior accordingly. Aspects that we all can find within the pseudo-reactivity. In sum, our examples of pseudo-reactivity seemed to be driven by this institution Michelin Guide, not for efficiency reason, but for legitimization reasons. Thus, we suggest that *forms of pseudo-reactivity may further be explained and understood with institutional theory.*

Our insights into the background of pseudo-reactivity are limited due to the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, the parallels between institutional theory and our form of pseudo-reactivity are quite substantial. Therefore, we suggest further researchers to investigate upon a possible correlation between institutional theory and pseudo-reactivity and the deeper understanding of the patterns of behavior that seemed to be reactive.

6. Conclusion

The overall aim of our study was to answer the question what impact a rating such as the Michelin Guide has on the German haute cuisine. This research question was based on a paper by Espeland and Sauder (2007), who studied the impact of university rankings on American law schools. By using the methodological concept of reactivity, Espeland and Sauder showed how the behavior of people in charge at law schools was highly influenced by the criteria of the respective rankings. Reactivity was defined as the phenomenon that “individuals alter their behavior in reaction to being evaluated, observed or measured” (p. 1). They demonstrated how law schools acted in a deliberate way with the purpose to improve their position in a famous university ranking. We developed our study on this two-leveled definition of reactivity.

As the study of Espeland and Sauder (2007) was based on a very specific case study, we were wondering whether their finding could be generalized. On the one hand, we were interested in how far Espeland and Sauder’s observation that “rankings [...] gradually transform law schools into entities that conform more closely to the criteria used to construct rankings” (p. 33) also applies to a different environment. On the other hand, we asked ourselves whether the reactivity observed by Espeland and Sauder was just a phenomenon in the context of rankings or whether it would also be a concomitant feature of ratings. To clarify these two questions of generalizability, we chose a different market to American law schools and a different measure to rankings. As a consequence, we studied the Michelin Guide rating and its impact in form of reactivity on the German haute cuisine. Finally, our finding indicated that Espeland and Sauder’s observation concerning reactivity cannot be easily generalized.

Besides our personal interest in cuisine, we perceived the German haute cuisine as a qualified industry to study. Germany and haute cuisine seemed to be two incompatible issues for a long time. Nevertheless, “the Krauts” have established a conspicuous haute cuisine sector over the last decades. Only France, the origin of the haute cuisine, has more Michelin-starred restaurants today than Germany. Be-

sides its transformation, the German haute cuisine is also interesting because of its specific characteristics. German haute cuisine restaurants are facing a tough environment: A nation that devotes little attention to culinary pleasures in general, price-sensitive German customers, and increased competition make life difficult for the restaurants. Therefore, many of the restaurants are struggling to even cover their expenses.

The haute cuisine sector in general is also interesting to analyze from another point of view: the subjectivity of flavor as the central theme of the industry. This makes any comparison of food or restaurants difficult if not even impossible. Due to this special characteristic of the industry's core product, we based our analysis on the theoretical work of Karpik (2010) who introduced the concept of singularity. We perceived this concept as another theoretical pillar of our approach. Karpik defines singularities as, "goods and services that are structured, uncertain and incommensurable" (p. 10). These singularities are traded in special markets, the markets of singularities. According to Karpik, neoclassical economics miss out this particular species of markets. We assumed that haute cuisine in general is a market of singularities, as the goods provided – food – can hardly be objectively evaluated. In view of the fact that the industry's central theme is so hard to rate, we found the German haute cuisine a very interesting field of research on measures. Karpik (2010) additionally claims that the existence of markets of singularities is dependent on so called judgment devices, by which he means measures such the law school rankings in the study of Espeland and Sauder (2007). For our study, we chose the Michelin Guide as the judgment device to investigate on. According to Karpik's distinction, we sort it into the category of cicerones.

Besides its worldwide prominence, we picked the Michelin Guide because it is the most respected measure in the German gastronomy with the longest tradition, compared to other guides in Germany such as Gault Millau or Feinschmecker, according to our interviewees. Moreover, the Michelin Guide was also attractive for us to investigate on as we perceive it as a rating, since it is not comparative and does not put the measured objects into a hierarchy consisting of ranks (Coote, 2011). A rating classifies an object, such as haute cuisine restaurants, according to

specific criteria. The classification in the world of the Red Guide is expressed through the catchy stars that announce the level of an haute cuisine restaurant. Generally, we see a lack of precise distinctions between rankings and ratings in academic papers when it comes to their effects. Therefore, a clear differentiation between the two measures is the third theoretical pillar we based our study on. More accuracy is needed in our opinion, since the different characteristics of rankings and ratings might have an impact on the result of studies, as it is probably the case with our study's finding. Even though both measures are often used as synonyms in previous research, we state that most papers dealing with measures are actually about rankings. Therefore, we deem the Michelin Guide as a rating very suitable to add value to the research done so far, which mainly focused on rankings.

Overall, we looked for patterns of behavior among our interviewees that would indicate the impact of the Michelin Guide on the German haute cuisine. In the analysis, we found indication for reactivity in alignment with Espeland and Sauder (2007). We therefore detected indicators for a correlation between certain patterns of behavior and the fact that our interviewees were observed by the Michelin Guide. Since our analysis aimed at presenting examples for reactivity on the industry level instead of the individual level, we looked for similar patterns among different restaurants to generalize for the whole haute cuisine sector. To illustrate the influence of the Red Guide, we presented examples in our analysis section where our interviewees adjusted their behavior to the rating's potential evaluation criteria. The word "potential" is crucial in this context, as the rated objects of the Red Guide were not aware of its exact evaluation criteria and could only make a guess. This means that any reactive behavior was finally based on an assumption as to what behavior the rating probably appreciates and rewards, but this did not need to be true. Thus, we also considered the interviewee's purpose to influence the Michelin rating as crucial for categorizing a pattern of behavior as reactivity. Reactivity in the German haute cuisine could be found in different areas of the restaurants, as can be seen in the following.

Firstly, we stated that the selection of the foodstuffs is an example of reactivity in the German haute cuisine. The whole industry believes that the quality of foodstuffs really matters in the eyes of the Michelin Guide. Therefore, everybody spares neither trouble nor expense to get the best possible products for their meals. Again, the main driver for this behavior does not seem to be the regular guest in the dining room, but the potential Michelin inspector who might take the quality of foodstuffs into consideration when coming to his or her final rating.

Secondly, we perceived the creativity that is inherent in the meals as another example of reactivity in the whole haute cuisine sector. The German starred-chefs are convinced that they need to surprise the Michelin inspectors all the time. Therefore, they would do everything to ensure a creative environment in their kitchens to be finally rated high in the Red Guide. This can even mean that they hire special cooks for experimenting with ingredients or that they at least diversify their kitchen team.

Thirdly, we showed that the restaurants' striving for a consistent excellent performance is a result of the Michelin rating. As our interviewees believe that it is consistency which distinguishes them from non-starred restaurants, they always keep in mind to maintain a very high level on the plate as well as in the service. As the main driver for their high performance is the Michelin Guide, we state this is another example of reactivity.

Fourthly, we indicated that there is another aspect related to the food on the plate that is influenced by the Michelin Guide: the personal touch of the menu. Since the chefs think that the Michelin inspectors appreciate an own, characteristic cooking style, they try hard to differentiate themselves to other chefs with the overall goal of receiving an additional Michelin star. As a consequence, we do not see the personal note as a side effect of many years of cooking experience but as an aim in itself which is based on the Michelin rating.

Fifthly, we showed the influence of the Michelin Guide on the restaurants' organizational chart. Most of our interviewees increased their staff to enhance the likelihood for a good rating by the Red Guide. Consequently, the haute cuisine restau-

rants created new jobs, which they perceived as necessary to receive another star, even though any additional employee further increases the already immensely high costs.

The five examples of reactive behavior mentioned above indicate that the Michelin Guide is influencing the people working in the German haute cuisine sector. We found indicators that in many aspects of the restaurants' daily business the rationale behind an action is not any financial reasons or any consideration of the guests, but the purpose to be rated high in the Red Guide. In this regard, the influence is substantial.

In addition to these examples of reactive behavior, we also detected patterns of behavior that seemed to be reactive, but bore no close examination. We figured out that some patterns of behavior might be labeled as reactive by our interviewees on the first glance, but did not fulfill the definition of reactivity. We realized that our interviewees did not really see any correlation between their behavior and an observation in these cases. Also, the purpose of influencing the observer was altering. They hence used the Michelin Guide in their argumentation to legitimate their actions. Therefore, we called these cases pseudo-reactivity. "Pseudo" in this case means "in appearance only". We presented three patterns of behavior that we classified as pseudo-reactive in our analysis and clarified why these patterns could not be regarded as reactive.

The first example for pseudo-reactivity was the restaurants' setting. While there are some restaurants abroad in unusual environments, such as a snack stall or a restaurant in a supermarket, the German haute cuisine restaurants are all embedded in a sophisticated setting. Our interviewees explained this circumstance by pretending to be under the influence of the Michelin Guide with regard to the setting. Nevertheless, we realized that this is not a case of reactivity. Insistent inquiry finally let the interviewees admit that there is probably no correlation between a sophisticated setting and a good rating in the Red Guide. The latter was rather used as means of legitimization for a specific pattern of behavior.

The second example for pseudo-reactivity, which we presented, was the setting of the tables in haute cuisine restaurants. Major investments into china, cutlery, and other table related items were justified by our interviewees with the requirements of the Michelin rating. A good rating would therefore be dependent on the correct, expensive setting of the tables in the dining area. Nevertheless, our interviewees came to the conclusion after further inquiries that there is probably no necessity for these investments with regards to the Michelin Guide. They recognized that the Red Guide served as a legitimization for major investments that are otherwise hard to justify. Consequently, we perceive the setting of the tables as another example of pseudo-reactivity in the German haute cuisine.

The third example for pseudo-reactivity was the composition of the wine list. Large and expensive stocks in the restaurants' wine cellars were explained by the Michelin Guide's evaluation criteria, which supposedly included the restaurants' choice of wines. However, as with the previously mentioned examples of pseudo-reactivity, our interviewees critically questioned their own reasoning when we asked further questions on the issue of the wine list. Again, the Red Guide was used to legitimize the ongoing purchase and our interviewees did not really see a link between the wine list and a good rating. As a consequence the correlation for defining it as reactivity is missing in this example as well, although it appeared to be.

The examples of pseudo-reactive behavior showed how fine the line is between reactivity and pseudo-reactivity. Patterns of behavior of the interviewees can be more ambiguous as it might appear at first sight. The concept of pseudo-reactivity, therefore, reminds us as researchers to critically assess behavior before categorizing it as an example of reactivity. Missing closer consideration of patterns of behavior might finally lead to a wrong conclusion about the extent of reactivity, in the worst case. In contrast to this often ambiguous patterns of behavior mentioned so far, we also came across examples of behavior that we could classify unequivocally: the non-reactive patterns of behavior. In contrast to Espeland and Sauder (2007), we also figured out aspects in the routine of the restaurants where behavior was not adapted to potential criteria of the Michelin Guide. In these cases, the res-

restaurants rather acted according to other considerations, such as economic reasonableness for example. The examples for non-reactivity showed that our interviewees do not align all their patterns of behavior to potential criteria of the Red Guide, even though they might see potential to influence their final rating. This led to the conclusion that reactivity is restricted in the German haute cuisine sector and the influence of the Michelin Guide is limited to certain areas in the restaurants.

The first indicator for a restricted influence of the Michelin Guide was the overall concept of the haute cuisine restaurants. While the concept is already indicated by the name of a restaurant, it also becomes apparent by the self-image the restaurants have. It was evident that the concepts of the German haute cuisine restaurants differ a lot and was therefore probably not influenced by the Michelin Guide rating. Old hands of the industry explained that this has not always been like that. However, today restaurants independently chose their kind of concept. To conclude, we perceived this as an example for an aspect that was not influenced by the Red Guide and confirmed limited reactivity.

The second indicator for the Michelin Guide's constrained impact was the interior design of the German haute cuisine restaurants. In this context, we could not figure out any specific trend that the restaurants try to follow. Even restaurants that have kept Michelin stars for a long time did not serve as prototype with regards to the interior design within the industry. Basically, restaurant owners freely chose the interior design and did not care about any preferences of the Michelin inspectors.

The third indicator for our conclusion that reactivity is not all encompassing in the German haute cuisine was the cooking style of the starred chefs. While the personal note of the chefs was an example for reactive behavior, we thought that the overall cooking style serves as the opposite. Even though experienced starred-chefs have been very successful with their cooking style, there was no need for the newcomers to copy these styles. Nevertheless, they were neither forced to delineate themselves from the already existing cooking styles, they rather felt free to cook the way they want. Altogether, their behavior in this aspect was not influenced at all by the Michelin Guide.

To sum up all our observations presented above, we found various indicators that the Michelin Guide is highly respected by all actors in the haute cuisine market, but that its influence is restricted. Considering our research question, which dealt with the impact of ratings such as the Michelin Guide on the German haute cuisine market, we found a less clean-cut picture in our study than Espeland and Sauder (2007). Likewise Espeland and Sauder, we came across reactive behavior in the German haute cuisine. Nevertheless, the overall influence of the Michelin Guide seems to be restricted, as we also found some patterns of behavior within the haute cuisine that seemed to be reactive, where the Red Guide was used as legitimization and some that were all independent of the guide. Even though we learned that the Michelin Guide has more impact on the haute cuisine restaurants than any other measure, the restaurants' world does not revolve around it. The Red Guide influences many patterns of behavior in the haute cuisine sector, but not all.

In addition to carrying on research on the extent of reactivity in the German haute cuisine, we developed attempts to explain our finding. We started by elaborating on the theoretical pillars that served as foundation for our paper. Two of them delimited our paper from Espeland and Sauder's study. Therefore, we investigated on the impact that these pillars could have had on our study's result. When considering the pillar consisting of the differentiation of rankings and ratings, we could see an explanation for our findings in the general characteristics of the Michelin Guide as a rating and their consequences for the climate in the market: A lower rivalry among the restaurants, characterizing a market observed and evaluated by a rating, could explain the limitation of reactivity. By going back to our iterative approach for this pillar, we also questioned one of our assumptions concerning the Michelin Guide: We challenged our assumption that it is representative for ratings in general. In case it is not a typical example for ratings due to its specifics, our result could be as unusual as the measure of our choice.

We also investigated on another theoretical pillar of our paper, Karpik's (2010) concept of the market of singularities. In this sense, reactivity could be a consequence of the importance of judgment devices, which Karpik perceives as inherent

to markets of singularities. The restaurants could perceive the Michelin Guide as very important to attract guests as it evaluates a subjective product as objective as possible. Therefore, our result could be explained by the assumption that the haute cuisine is a market of singularities. However, our findings could also partially be explained in case our assumption concerning this pillar was wrong: If our market of interest was not a market of singularities, the importance of judgment devices could be lower than in Karpik's model. If judgment devices were not perceived as being vital for the existence of a market by its participants, reactivity might also not be perceived as necessary to survive. Therefore, this could explain the limitedness of reactivity.

Besides the assumptions that are latent in the theoretical pillars of our study, we also suspected the industry characteristics of the German haute cuisine as likely to have an impact on our paper's result. As a consequence, we showed how the market's specifics presented in the beginning of the analysis, which complement Karpik's (2010) market of singularities, could have had an influence on our conclusion. Interestingly, we found both, characteristics of the market that could explain the existence of reactivity as well as characteristics that could explain its limitedness. Finally, we could not exclude that differences in the data analysis in Espeland and Sauder's (2007) and our paper led to varied results.

All in all, there are numerous aspects that could have influenced the result of our paper. We presented possible explanations for our findings, but cannot be sure whether we took all existing factors into consideration. Moreover, we do not know whether the degree of impact on our conclusion between these aspects differs and whether it could be the combination of all aspects mentioned. As a consequence, we see a need for further research on all theories we have used as foundation for our paper to clarify.

At the end of our study, we elaborated on the implications of our findings for existing research in the discussion section. We firstly showed inference from our conclusion to the theories which we used as basic pillars for our approach. Therefore, we went back to the aspects of Espeland and Sauder's (2007) concept of reactiv-

ity, to Karpik's (2010) concept of the market of singularities, and to our elaboration on rankings versus ratings. For all these theories, we presented implications derived from our study. Secondly, we brought our findings into the more general context of MacKenzie's (2006) discussion about the role of measures as either cameras or engines. As we classified the Michelin Guide as a hybrid in this relation, we found another indicator for our assumption that the Red Guide is a very special kind of rating. Finally, we draw a link between the phenomenon of pseudo-reactivity, which we detected in our analysis, and institutional theory by showing common features. In general, all aspects mentioned in the discussion section need further clarification and therefore initiate additional research.

6.1. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

At the end of the paper at hand, we follow the idea of our iterative process and generally reflect on our study and its limitations. We furthermore show aspects that require further attention by future research and show different starting points we could have chosen. Based on our methodological limitations, which we outlined already in chapter 2, we demonstrate further limitations that our study has. Therefore, we rely on the assumptions that we made and on the aspects that we took for granted.

As already indicated in the analysis as well as discussion section of our paper, our study shows diverse aspects that further research could possibly rely on. These include our theoretical pillars, the discussion on the effects of a rating, the market of singularities and understanding of reactivity. Therefore, our study can serve as a first step for additional scientific work. Furthermore, we discussed the overall role of the Michelin Guide for the German haute cuisine market and the application of institutional theory for our specific market. All these aspects with the hypotheses we made can be seen as a possible starting point for further research based on our study. However, we also see different initial points, which are less related to our approach. In the following, we consequently show other fields of interest that might inspire future research.

Firstly, we are aware of the fact that our field of research was very unique. The German haute cuisine as well as the Michelin Guide has specific characteristics that might exclude the generalization of our study's result, as indicated already. As a consequence, we propose to investigate further on reactivity in the context of ratings. Therefore, it would be vital to test our hypothesis for different markets and for different ratings than our field of study. This would also enable to get a clearer insight into the difference of ratings and rankings regarding reactivity. So far, we have some indication that the measured objects of ratings behave differently to the objects of rankings, but this needs to be verified in a different context.

Secondly, we assumed the organizations as one actor and did not differentiate between any responsibilities within the organization. Nevertheless, there might be difference between the roles of different organizational actors. With regards to forms of reactivity, we can argue that for instance the chef is more influenced from the Michelin Guide, as primarily his work is the crucial factor according to the statement of the Red Guide. We found indicators for a difference of the personell, but did not investigate upon due to our scope. Instead of focusing on the overall impact of the Michelin Guide, another possible focus would be to investigate on the organizational actors individually. This approach would further enrich the knowledge of reactivity in a more psychological way.

Thirdly, our paper focused on one specific source of influence for the chosen industry. However, during our interviews, we also found predictors for other sources of influence in the German haute cuisine. Especially the leading role of some chefs within the industry made us curious about other potential sources of influence in general. We therefore see potential for further research on the clock generators in this sector. First steps to gain detailed insights into the world of haute cuisine have already been made: Svejenova, Mazza and Planellas (2007) investigated on the role of the famous Spanish chef Ferran Adrià with regards to institutional change. On a more general level, Rao, Monin and Durand (2003) studied the motors behind the nouvelle cuisine movement in France. Based on their study, we believe that there is many potential for further studies on sources of influence in the haute cuisine.

Fourthly, in our study, we considered the impact of a judgment device on a specific sector. However, in our opinion, it would also be interesting to study the impact of the measured objects on the measures. This is to say, to study influence the other way round. We got aware of potential influence in this opposite direction when some of our interviewees declared some chefs as sacrosanct for the Michelin Guide. Unfortunately, it was beyond the scope of our paper to verify their claims about the impact of these chefs. Therefore, it would be interesting to gain more insights into potential impacts of the observed objects on the judgment devices. In a similar way, it can also be interesting to conduct research upon forms of influences between different judgment devices.

Fifthly, and similar to the aspect before, we did not investigate on the Michelin Guide and its evaluation criteria. As we were not able to get first hand information, we took its official statements for granted. Deepening the understanding on the evaluation of the Michelin Guide might lead to an evaluation of the meaning of reactivity and extend or even change the conclusions that we drew. In this regard, another aspect related to measures, which we did not elaborate further on, is the concept of sociomateriality, which is linked to reactivity. Recently, Pollock and D'Adderio (2012) investigated on further aspects succeeding reactivity. They examined "how the format and furniture of a ranking can mediate and constitute a domain" (p. 565). By investigating on the way rankings can shape the economy, they generally agree with the mechanisms of reactivity and go one step further by suggesting "that sociomateriality is also a significant aspect of a ranking's influence" (p. 565). Following the idea of Orlikowski (2007), Pollock and D'Adderio note that social and material are inseparable and theorize these elements that mutually constitute one another. Basis for their result is a study on one specific performance measure within the information technology field. Transferring their approach on the haute cuisine, this would imply to have access to the exact evaluation schemes of the Michelin Guide. Consequently, researchers would need to compare these schemes with the haute cuisine in general to figure out whether these schemes influenced the overall domain as such. Since we did not have any access to the

Michelin Guide's evaluation criteria, this aspect was beyond the scope of our work. However, we perceive it as interesting starting point for additional research.

As we have shown, our study contained many aspects that could be analyzed from different angles as well: The German haute cuisine, the Michelin Guide, markets of singularities and the differentiation between ratings and rankings open up new perspectives for future research. We therefore hope our paper will serve as inspiration for many future projects, like the study of Espeland and Sauder (2007) served for us.

7. Literature

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8. List of Interviews

A. (2013, February 19th). *Interview with owner and chef de cuisine.* (M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

B. (2013, February 20th). *Interview with owner resp. sommelier.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

C. (2013, February 21st). *Interview with co-owner and maître d' resp. co-owner and chef de cuisine.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

D. (2013, February 22nd). *Interview with chef de cuisine.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

E. (2013, March 4th). *Interview with restaurant critic.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

F. (2013, March 4th). *Interview with owner and chef de cuisine.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

G. (2013, March 4th). *Interview with restaurant manager.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

H. (2013, March 4th). *Interview with co-owner and restaurant manager.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

I. (2013, March 5th). *Interview with executive director.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

J. (2013, March 18th). *Interview with owner and chef de cuisine.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

K. (2013, March 19th). *Interview with chef de cuisine.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.

L. (2013, March 20th). *Interview with maître d'.* (F. Müller and M-S. Sagasser, Interviewer) in the restaurant.