Taru Lindblom & Pekka Mustonen, Taste for shushi, culinary capital, and cultural goodwill

Taste is a fruitful topic for culturally oriented empirical sociology. Sushi provides with a good example when taste as its purest form, food taste, is examined. There are many prejudices, stereotypes, and structural assumptions that are connected to sushi. Many of these assumptions can be verified by using empirical data. In Finland, sushi represents a cultural product that echoes cultural and culinary capital. Those with higher education and income, as well as members of the creative class, like sushi more than others. Interestingly, however, when examining actual consumption, results prove to be opposite. Some of the upper status groups, most likely those ambivalent as to their position in the social hierarchy, prove to show signs of so called “cultural goodwill”. This comes forth in the consumption patterns that are contrary to the preference patterns: there are respondents who report not liking sushi yet they go eat out at restaurants serving sushi.

Thus, sushi can be considered a fitting test laboratory of taste. As a relatively new cultural product it has gained a huge success and has proven to be an arena of social status battle in which the structures of Finnish society are reflected in a very special way.

Sami Kolamo & Jani Vuolteenaho, Fandom, branding, and heritage industry: Constructing an authentic atmosphere at English football stadiums

In recent years, several English football clubs have built a new ultra-modern, professionally branded mega-stadium. On the one hand, these projects have generated protests among tradition-aware fans, and on the other hand market pragmatic and affirmative forms of fandom have become increasingly prevalent in the hypercommodified English football culture. In the article, we investigate how fans are persuaded to invest in the club brands, essentially including the construction of “authentic atmosphere” in the stadiums and their vicinity. The analysis concentrates on three strategies of authentication:

- historical authentication, commercial authentication and the desired emotional participation of (ideal) fans in the branding of new mega-stadiums as authentically lived social spaces.