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Preface

The 2020 Consumer Culture Theory Conference was due to take place in Leicester in the UK from 25 to 28 June. Around 300 competitive papers, poster presentations and special session proposals had been submitted by January 2020 in response to the call for papers and the conference organising committee were looking forward to hosting what would have been one of the largest CCT conferences to date.

When the organising committee began to prepare the review process in late January reports about the outbreak of Coronavirus had already begun to feature prominently in the UK media. By early March the organising committee at Leicester and members of the CCT consortium committee met via Zoom and reluctantly agreed that the conference would have to be cancelled due to the likely difficulties conference delegates might be expected to face due to travel restrictions resulting from efforts to try and control the pandemic. The formal announcement cancelling the CCT conference at Leicester was made in late March 2020.

Authors who had submitted extended abstracts to the conference were offered the opportunity to have their work reviewed and included in these conference proceedings. 55 submissions are included in these proceedings.

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Failure in delivering: challenging the positive outcomes of the extraordinary experience

Fernanda Scussel & Maribel Suarez

Abstract— The essence of the work on extraordinary experience has over-emphasized consumer's motivations to escape routine and find peace, joy, connection and positive sensations. However, we do not know what happens when the search for this outcomes fails to deliver. More specifically, we are interested in understanding narratives created on social media when extraordinary experience "fails". To address this question, we analyze the Project Boston, developed by a Brazilian digital influencer who shared his journey of preparation to run a marathon with the objective of achieving the Boston Qualify Index, failing in three chances. Data was collected through a two years netnography, non-participant observation and an interview with the digital influencer. This study enhances current conceptualizations of extraordinary experiences by illuminating a possible and neglected outcome of experience performance. Our findings show how failure energizes the community of runners, reacting to failure enthusiastically and passionately. At the heart of this reaction seems to be an extraordinary experience that challenges the community ethos, driven by good results and continual overcoming. This unexpected result seems to release members of the runners' subculture from the uncontested search of ideal performance. The research also analyses how meanings of extraordinary experience are co-created at the heart of a subculture. Lastly, our findings show the role of social media in creating vicarious experiences, allowing the public to live or remember extraordinary experiences, maintaining and yet transforming subcultures.)

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Extraordinary experiences are uncommon experiences that enable consumers to escape routine and daily obligations and norms, with an intense emotional content capable of transforming the individual (Arnould & Price, 1993; Belk & Costa, 1998; Celsi, Rose, & Leigh, 1993; Kozinets, 2002; Tumbat & Belk, 2011; Scott, Cayla, & Cova, 2016). Researchers on this topic also agree that an extraordinary experience is generated in social interactions, raising the notion of communitas, integrating people to the context of experience by the sharing of team spirit, values and objectives. The essence of the work on extraordinary experience has over-emphasized consumer's motivations to escape routine and find peace, joy, connection and positive sensations.

Despite this romanticized view, the extraordinary experiences context holds conflicts and tensions (Tumbat & Belk, 2011); rules and pressures from community members (Kozinets, 2002) and the hierarchy based on competence and material possessions (Belk & Costa, 1998). Tumbat and Belk (2013) brought body performance as an element of this kind of experience, and Scott et al. (2016) discussed the role of pain in connecting people to their bodies in extraordinary experiences, thereby supporting the development of a market segment that offers what people do not find in daily life. Even though both

studies look on distressing aspects of extraordinaryexperiences, they do not focus on how performance and final achievement impact extraordinary experiences. Based on this lack, we wonder: what happens when performance and achievement fail in the process of pursuing extraordinary experience? More specifically, we are interested in understanding narratives created on social media whenextraordinary experience "fails".

Marathon running is associated with a long process in which advanced runners engage in a training regime to prepare for the challenge of 42,195km (Masters, Ogles, & Jolton, 1993; Rupprecht & Matking, 2012). The marathon training cycle demands changes in consumers' lives and routines regarding social life, sleep, nutrition and body preparation (Goodsell & Harris, 2011). This process is characterized by social interaction with other marathoners, who share an ethos and form a particular subculture (Robinson, Patterson, & Axelsen, 2014). Marathoners are focused on performance and results, and the most valued marathon, the Boston Marathon, which is the oldest marathon in the modern world. Participation in the Boston Marathon requires runners to execute and attest the year before the target Marathon, a document proving qualification under the Boston Qualify Index – a proof he has run a previous marathon within a certain amount of time. This index decreases every year, demanding runners to consistently compete as fast as they can if they want to run the Boston Marathon, the Holy Grail of the marathoner's subculture.

This research analyzes the Project Boston, developed by a Brazilian digital influencer who shared his journey of preparation to run a marathon with the objective of achieving the Boston Qualify Index. For ten months, he posted a weekly video on YouTube and shared his daily routine on Instagram, focusing on weight lost, training schedule, body development, mental preparation, expectations and learnings. He tried toreach the index three times in this period, failing in the three ofthem. The final episode of the Boston Project was recorded in the Florianopolis Marathon, in Brazil, his third and last chance. Project Boston became a national entertainment for the subculture and people traveled to Florianopolis to run with him or to be present in his achievement, besides the engagement of the online running community in the days before the event.

Data was collected through a netnography (Kozinets, 2015) in the digital influencer YouTube channel and in his Instagram account for two years, before and after the Boston Project. We also conducted observation in two moments: the day before the marathon, in a lecture given by the digital influencer named "The search for the perfect marathon", and the day of the marathon, following his arrival at the event and the finish line. Lastly, we interviewed the digital influencer. Interview and online observations (comments on Instagram and YouTube videos) were transcribed and coded. We followed Thompson's (1997) guidance for data analysis and interpretation.

Analysis of the data showed two main themes. First, there is the construction of the hero, based in this first two failures and his discourse of determination and incapacity of giving up, grounded in the core values of the community. This theme reinforces the runner as someone who faces fear, insecurity and doubt, accepting the challenge of trying again based on the belief that body preparation and the learnings from previous experience will conduct to the index. Nevertheless, besides the inherent pressure of achieving the result for the third time, the significant increase of his online audience during Project Boston raised the expectation about his performance. In this sense, digital influencers' discourse work as a representation of the tensions in the community, since many comments on social media complain about the psychological pressure of running a marathon and the obligation of achieving a certain performance.

The second theme is the downfall of the hero and the rise of the myth, regarding his change of perspective after the final test in Florianopolis Marathon and the path opened by him to live the outcomes of his extraordinary experience, which were sadness, disappointment and frustration. This time, he allows himself to live such feelings and not cover these outcomes with the determination and focus values that are the foundation of the community ethos. He explains that failure needs to be lived, and his fear around trying again and underperforming. In social media, comments multiplied and gained emotional energy. They highlight public compassion and identification with failures and overthrown, as many testimonials report their own disappointments of failing, but a necessity of overcoming any difficulties in name of the next challenge.

This research evidences that failure can serve as an extraordinary experience, enabling consumers to escape routine with an intense emotional content capable of transforming the individual. The perspective of failure complements the extant literature on extraordinary experiences and the positive feelings and learnings derived from this type of consumption. However, since performances carry an element of risk, and people put effort in building competences to enhance the chances of success (Tumbat & Belk, 2013), failing is a possibility, although neglected by consumers and under-theorized in consumer research. In this sense, the digital influencer journey outlines that the risks of marathon running are out of runners' control, since the distance tests the limits of the body and the mind. By failing, he challenges the ethos of contemporary culture, which is based in performance and achievement, and he confronts the notion of extraordinary, showing negative outcomes carry the extraordinariness factor as well. The failure in his extraordinary experience questions the ethos of the running community, as social media reveal a collective learning about the need of living the failure, and not escape bad feelings and emotions by looking for the next best extraordinary experience.

This study enhances current conceptualizations of extraordinary experiences by illuminating a possible and neglected outcome of experience performance. Our findings show how failure energizes the community of runners, reacting to failure enthusiastically and passionately. At the heart of this reaction seems to be an extraordinary experience that challenges the community ethos, driven by good results and continual overcoming. This unexpected result seems to release

members of the runners' subculture from the uncontested search of ideal performance. We also analyze how meanings of extraordinary experience are co-created at the essence of a subculture. Lastly, we reveal the role of social media in creating vicarious experiences, allowing the public to live or remember extraordinary experiences, maintaining and yet transforming subcultures.

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The Nation as a Polit-Brand Community: Perspectives from China

I-Chieh Michelle Yang & Juliana Angeline French

Abstract— Premised on the concept of brand community, this study explores how a nation functions as a political brand community (Polit-Brand Community). Dissimilar from conventional research on brands, this study conceptualizes the nation as the brand and its citizens as a community. Findings from ethnographic field work with Chinese outbound tourists shows that a polit-brand community has three temporal dimensions - the past, present and future. The "past" reveals how being in a polit-brand community, and through consumption, citizens become reminded of their country's past. The "present" reveals how consumption empowers citizens to guard their nation. Finally, the "future" illustrates how consumption allows Chinese citizens to imagine the future of the community.

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INTRODUCTION

The conceptualization of the nation as a polit-brand community is rooted in the research on politicized consumption (also commonly referred to as political consumerism). Fundamentally, it is posited that consumers leverage on market resources for political expression (Stolle & Micheletti, 2013). With certain overlapping characteristics, consumers who engage in politicized consumption can be theorized as a polit-brand community. As Trentmann (2007) propounded, consumption is increasingly interlaced with citizenship with the "renaissance of civil society" (p. 148). Prominent scholars in Consumer Culture Theory have called for greater academic attentions on the political facet of consumption (O'Guinn & Muñiz, 2004; Thompson, 2009). More importantly, the conceptualization of the nation as a political brand and that citizens are members of the brand community is not a novel theorization. Studies related to consumer animosity (e.g., Klein & Ettensoe, 1999) or consumer ethnocentrism (e.g., Shimp & Sharma, 1987) have discussed how nationalistic agendas have prompted citizen-consumers to engage in certain consumption behaviours, such as boycott and buycott (Sandikci & Ekici, 2009). These studies have provided sacrosanct knowledge in understanding how consumers wield their power to advance nationalistic agenda. The research strand has not made significant progress apart from identifying motives or quantitatively investigated the effects of such consumption behaviour. This study underlines that it is vital to move forward by conceptualizing them as a community, considering that nations have traditionally been regarded as a large community (Anderson, 1983). Therefore, anchoring on the theoretical underpinnings of both brand community and political consumerism, this study attempts to contribute to the scholarship by exploring how Chinese consumers become a polit-brand community, as well as the dynamics of the community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of *brand community* describes how the consumption of particular brands has led a new form of imagined community. Muñiz and O'Guinn (2001) defined *brand community* as one that is "specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand" (p. 412). While there have been several advances in the study of brand communities, O'Guinn and Muñiz (2005) noted that there are different facets of brand communities that may pose scholarly conundrums. One of such is the premise of the "polit-brand", a social form of brand community that revolves around a politicized brand (O'Guinn & Muñiz, 2004; 2005). Anchoring on the "new left revolution" since the 1990s, consumer culture and politics are increasingly interwoven. Accordingly, they argued that "consumption is inherently political" (O'Guinn & Muñiz, 2004, p. 100) and that "brands and politics blend, and to deny the inherently social form of human politics would fly in the face of reason, not to mention the evidence of everyday experience" (O'Guinn & Muñiz, 2005, p. 24). More importantly, the emergence of the political left-wing and consumerism have prompted political consumers to consume according to their socio-political identity and agenda (O'Guinn & Muñiz, 2004). To surmise, extant corpus of literature does not adequately address the political dimension or politicized dynamics of consumption communities and proffers a critical gap to be addressed. As O'Guinn and Muñiz (2004) underscored, the extant body of literature in consumer behaviour and related phenomena could benefit from "border-crossing of brand and politics" (p. 100).

RESEARCH CONTEXT & METHODOLOGY

This study explores the dynamics of polit-brand community in China. In this context, the unique political structure of China is considered as a "political brand" and that Chinese citizens are members of the polit-brand community. Notably, as a socialist state with a flourishing consumer culture as well as consumption power (Kuever, 2018), Chinese consumer culture may be different from its western counterparts. At the start, the growth of Chinese consumer culture has been touted as a potential threat to Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (Featherstone, 2007), as it is often seen as "anti-communism", given that communism operates with the belief that the state would provide all necessities of everyday life and that an ideal communist country is one where greed and personal egoism are removed (Croll, 2006). Nevertheless, recent studies have demonstrated that, rather than contradicting each other, communism and consumer culture in China co-exist, and flourish parallelly, and in some instances, facilitates the growth of one another (Gerth, 2003). Anchoring on these elucidations, this study aims to explore how consumer culture facilitates the building of a brand community where the brand refers to one's nation and that the brand community may help advance political ideologies of the nation. Using international tourism as the consumption context to build the study, the methodology adopted for this study is in-depth interview, a total of 28 interviews were conducted with Chinese nationals.

FINDINGS

Data analysis reveals that by engaging in the experiential consumption of international group tours, informants were able to (re)imagine themselves as members of their nation. Specifically, three dimensions characterizing the nation as a brand community are uncovered – the memory, the patriot and the vision. Firstly, "**the memory**" refers to how consumption facilitates a recollection of the nation's past. Informants in this study draw upon the country's history, such as Japanese invasion during the Second World War to showcase how they were "bullied" by foreign powers, and that they continue to reflect their consumption practices based on the history. As informant Fang shared, "*for Japan, it is a deep national estrangement and hatred between the Japanese and us. Even though ordinary Japanese citizens might not have such hatred towards us, and that Chinese people do not have such hatred towards Japanese people, but the two countries have experienced negative historical events that involved a deep harm inflicted on us, so the estrangement will always be there. I will never go to that country.*" Secondly, "**the patriot**" points to how consumption allows citizen-consumers to enact their citizenship responsibilities. Through the consumption of experiences obtained during international tourism, the informants were able to fulfil their moral obligation to their country, for instance, boycotting certain countries that are in present political dispute with China. "*When there are anti-Chinese behaviors, I would never visit those countries. When a country is anti-China or anti-Chinese, it means that it is not just the government, but most of the people coming together. I abhor that. I would understand if the dispute is between government, because it is normal, but once citizens are involved, I really detest it.*" (Zhuang, Male). Finally, "**the vision**" dimension reveals how consumption allows Chinese citizen-consumers to imagine a better China. informants shared that while traveling abroad allows them to observe how China is better than other countries, they also understand what other countries are currently doing better than China. This provides a sense of future optimism – of what China would be and how China will further rejuvenate. With greater travel exposures, Chinese citizens are positive about China's improvement, as they can learn from other countries and further China's rejuvenation. "*When I first arrived in Singapore's Changi Airport, I recognized that the technologies or facilities in Singapore is better than airports in China, but it does not mean that China is backwards, no. I was more focused on picturing the future of China, seeing what others do better than us now gives me a room for imagination, an imagination of China's future.*" (Yan, Male)

IMPLICATIONS

Corresponding with the theme of this conference, "*interrogating social imaginaries examining narratives of past, present and future in consumer culture*", this study's objective, along with its findings have demonstrated how it is fruitful to consider a nation as a brand community, specifically, a political one. It responds to the call by O'Guinn & Muñiz (2004) for greater exploration of polit-brand communities. Further, it also extends the original conception of brand communities – which largely emphasizes on the "present" by demonstrating that in order for a brand community to flourish and sustain, three important temporal dimensions: past, present and future collectively play a potent role.

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Tradition versus Postmodernity: The Politicization of Shark's Fin Consumption in Asia

I-Chieh Michelle Yang, Juliana Angeline French & Aminath Shaba Ismail

Abstract — Drawing on the premise of Political Consumerism, this study discusses how the contestation of tradition and postmodern values leads to the politicization of Shark's Fin consumption in Asia. The consumption of Shark's Fin can be traced back to the Song Dynasty in China, where Shark's Fin was reserved only for the Chinese Emperor. Nevertheless, modern fishing methods and growing affluence of Chinese people have precipitated a greater demand for Shark's Fin. In recent years, there is a growing recognition that Shark Finning is unethical and several initiatives have been undertaken to boycott the consumption. However, demand in Asia continues to rise, and the consumption becomes increasingly politicized

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INTRODUCTION

This study explores the contestation between cultural traditions and postmodernity. Postmodernity is characterized as a cultural logic, which contests traditional cultures to propel a shift in the cultural sphere of the contemporary society (Jameson, 1984). Yet, as Featherstone (2007) notes, the initial conceptualization of postmodernity is a Western-centric genealogy of modernity may not apply to other cultural contexts, particularly in Asia. The phenomenal growth of the Asian economies not only has introduced consumer culture to the region, the Western model of consumer culture is also increasingly contested with Asian cultures. Notably, Asia's unique historical, political and socio-cultural trajectories have altered the development of consumer culture (Dong & Tian, 2009). While there have been several scholarly explorations on the debate between modernity and postmodernity (Holt, 1997), they remain focused on Western contexts. A non-Western case, particularly with the rise of Asian consumers, seems timely and imperative. This study seeks to explore the contestation between tradition and postmodernity in Asia with a focus in the increasingly politicized consumption of Shark's Fin.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical foundations of this study are informed by literature on political consumerism as well as moral consumption. Micheletti et al. (2003) defined the political consumerism as the consumption practice with the aims of "changing objectionable institutional or market practices" (pp. xiv-xv). Consumption is increasingly politicized with growing concerns of how consumer culture impacts the environment and the society (Thompson, 2011; Zorell, 2019). Scholars such as Thompson and Arsel (2004) and Thompson and Kumar (2018) have demonstrated how demonstrated how local citizens seek to preserve their cultural uniqueness by resisting global brands and practices. Nevertheless, the crux of political consumerism lies in how contesting ideologies propagate the politicization of a consumption practice. A review of extant literature reveals that, despite the scholarly efforts to understand how consumers become citizen-consumers to advance political interests, there is dearth of understanding in how a particular consumption becomes politicized, specifically how the historical traditions influences the growing global ideology of moral consumption.

METHODOLOGY

Shark's Fin consumption is increasingly politicized in Asia, with growing pressures for governments to ban such practices, and the reluctance of consumers, merchants and restaurants to curb consumption. Data collection employs focus group and in-depth individual interviews with consumers of different ages in Malaysia and Singapore, and discourse analysis of Shark's Fin consumption in Asia is drawn from news articles and archival documents. The rationale for basing the data collection in the two countries is due to the rising demand and consumption of Shark's Fin in the two countries, despite international boycotts.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

To begin with, discourse analysis of Shark's Fin consumption in Asia reveals three important chronological and symbolic discourses: (1) **The Symbol of Royalty**, (2) **The Symbol of Prestige** and (3) **The Symbol of Cruelty**. The first discourse is grounded in the first documented consumption of Shark's Fin in Chinese history. The consumption of Shark's fin could be traced back to the Song Dynasty (960 – 1279 AD) (Freeman, 1977). For centuries, Shark's fin was only consumed by the emperors during banquets. Due to the outdatedness of fisheries during the era, Shark's Fin was generally regarded as a luxurious ingredient that is only accessible by the royalties and

autocrats. Specifically, it was institutionalized by the Chinese imperial court as an *haute cuisine* (Rose, 1996). More importantly, due to the exoticness of Shark's Fin, it was often offered to Chinese Emperors as a gift by neighbouring countries. The second discourse of Shark's fin as a prestigious food was popularized during the post-World War II period in Hong Kong, where advancements in modern fisheries greatly increased the supply of Shark's Fin. Based on the preceding discourse that Shark's Fin is reserved only for the Emperor, when the imperial system ended, and Shark's Fin became more readily available to the commoner, the symbolism attached to the food becomes that of a prestige and status display. Further, with the growing affluence of the Middle Class and increasing number of wealthy consumers, the demand for Shark' fin has meteorically risen. The rise of Chinese consumers during Deng Xiaoping's administration further increased the demand for Shark's Fin. Between 1980s to 2000s, Shark's Fin consumption has steadily increased. Alluding to Veblen's concept of conspicuous consumption, Shark's Fin consumption is associated with the display of wealth and status in Chinese culture. More importantly, the practice became institutionalized as a tradition for Chinese people as a form of status exhibition.

The final discourse illustrates how the consumption of Shark's Fin is seen as an act of cruelty. The growing depletion of Shark population and adverse impact on the marine eco-system, have engendered global attention to the method of Shark Finning. Notably, shark finning is viewed as a cruel practice as the extraction of fin from Sharks is often done when the Shark is alive, resulting in the sharks sinking to the bottom of the ocean dying of suffocation. Nevertheless, with globalization, and more importantly postmodern values that emphasizes on ethical consumption, traditional consumption practices are increasingly contested. Despite the ban and growing public awareness about shark finning, demand for Shark's Fin remains high in Asia, particularly amongst Chinese diasporas in Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore (Knott, 2018). While countries have moved to ban shark finning, the actual consumption of Shark's Fin remains unregulated in most Asian countries, particularly those with large Chinese community.

In addition to discourse analysis, our focus group also reveal a contestation between cultural value and postmodern value, which lies in the tension that an individual experience from being a responsible consumer and a filial child. The notion of the responsible consumer is often discussed in relation to a growing recognition of moralistic consumption (Giesler & Veresiu, 2018), whereas the notion of the filial child stems from the Chinese cultural value of filial piety – where individuals are expected to follow the instruction provided by their elders (especially parents) in order to honour their authority. Our informants in this study discussed about how, despite being aware and education about Shark's Fin as a cruel consumption, they felt compelled to continue the consumption, particularly when it is prepared by their elders and during family reunions. They also shared that while they would like to boycott Shark's Fin, they find it arduous to disobey their parents and often compromised. Fabinyi (2012) highlights that the consumption of Shark's Fin is a traditional practice – one that is historical and embedded in Chinese cultures. Moreover, reports have demonstrated that younger consumers, who are more attuned to the growing global discourse on ethical consumption and animal cruelty, tend to avoid such consumption, whereas their older counterparts continue to demand for Shark's Fin (Wang, 2018). The conflicting perspective on such consumption exacerbates the contest between tradition and postmodernity.

IMPLICATIONS

Corresponding with the theme of this conference, "*interrogating social imaginaries examining narratives of past, present and future in consumer culture*", this study's objective to uncover the politicization of Shark's Fin consumption in Asia by viewing it as a contestation between tradition and postmodernity would contribute to the knowledge on postmodern consumer culture as well as political consumerism. While various forms and contexts of politicized consumption have been explored in extant literature, an exploration of the tension between culture and postmodern value and how it leads to the politicization of a particular consumption practice is rare. As this research is still at its infancy, more data will be collected to provide greater insight on the phenomenon.

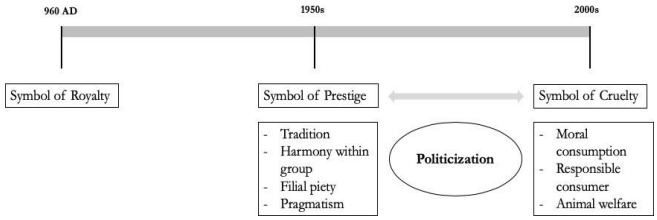

Figure 1. **Politicization of Shark's Fin Consumption**

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Giri and Jō: The Role of Offline Cultural Logic in the Accumulation of Online Social Capital

I-Chieh Michelle Yang, Motoki Watabe & Christina Lee

Abstract— This study seeks to understand how social capital is accumulated online. Using the Japanese Reproductive Tourism as the consumption context, a netnography fieldwork was conducted on Kodakara, the largest forum catering to Japanese reproductive tourists. The analysis reveals that three forms of social capital are accumulated through the forum: function, emotional and moral. Further, we also uncovered how dominant cultural ethos in the offline world pervades the online community and influence the production of social capital. Specifically, the Japanese ethos of "giri" (social obligation) and "jō" (human emotion" have influenced the ways in which the members of the community interact with each other.

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of online communicative media in recent decades has instigated new form of community to be formed. What is noteworthy is that the internet facilitates a new way of communication and allow individuals to connect with others who share similar interests or relational goals, such as consumption activities and brand preference (Horrigan, 2002). Donath and Boyd (2004) highlight that the formation of online communities also transforms the ways in which social capital can be built. The internet eradicates geographical and cost restrictions, allowing users to maintain a larger and diffused network of relationships where they can draw resources that may be unavailable in the offline world (Ellison et al., 2007). Despite the scholarly interest in online consumption communities, they have focused mainly on structural issues, such as how an individual becomes socialized to be an active member of the community (Kozinets, 1999) and how individuals draw on sub-cultural capital to build status within their community (Arsel & Thompson, 2011). Scholars such as Kozinets (2010) have recently called for greater exploration beyond a single consumption interest to incorporate greater complexities of the socio-cultural world that we reside in (Weijo, 2014). In tandem with calls in the Consumer Culture Theory scholarship to understand the role of macro institutions (social, cultural and political) in influencing consumer behavior, this study seeks to explore how dominant socio-cultural logics in the offline world may influence the ways in which social capitals are produced in an online community. This study explores the online consumption community of Japanese fertility tourists on a popular forum – *Kodakara*.

CONTEXT & METHODOLOGY

As one of the countries facing severe population ageing, Japan has experienced decades of low fertility rates. One of the key reasons that contributed to the low fertility is due to growing number of infertility. As the Japanese society place great emphasis on childrearing as an important life milestone (Yang, 2020), infertile couples often resort to Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART). Nevertheless, due to legislative and cultural reasons, more Japanese couples have decided to become "fertility tourists" by engaging ART in a foreign country. Authors (Akizuki & Kai, 2008) have found that individuals who undergo fertility treatments often undergo severe psychological pressure and receive little support from the society due to the stigmatized nature of infertility in Japan. Recent studies have demonstrated that infertile individuals are turning to the Internet to seek for advice and emotional support (Weissman et al, 2000). In the case of Japanese fertility tourists, Internet offers an important avenue for them to obtain social capital, such as information and emotional support that may be unavailabile in the offline world. The popular forum – *Kodakara*, for instance, boasts the largest community of Japanese fertility tourists. In recent years, along with the growth of fertility tourism from Japan, the number of members registered on the forum has steadily increased. The site, which allows members to organize discussion threads and befriend members with similar experiences, has provided a useful platform for social capital production. In this study, social capital is broadly defined as the tangible and intangible resources accumulated through social relationships (Coleman, 1988). While the liberty to seek for social capital online may portend a form of consumer agency,

extant empirical evidences have demonstrated that even in the most seemingly free consumption contexts, consumers remain influenced by the dominant ideologies in a given society (Murray, 2002). In the case of Japanese fertility tourist community, the production of social capital may be influenced by the socio-cultural ethos of Japan. This study seeks to explore how socio-cultural logics influences

The methodology adopted for this study is netnography, is an online fieldwork which uses computer-mediated communications as a source of data to arrive at the ethnographic understanding and representation of a phenomenon (Kozinets, 2010). Given that this study seeks to examine social capital of Japanese fertility tourists in an online community, netnography appears to the most appropriate methodology.

FINDINGS

The findings reveal three important forms of social capital that is offered in an online community – **functional**, **emotional** and **moral**. The functional aspect of the online community of Japanese fertility tourists shows how being in such community allows users to exchange useful information regarding fertility treatments provides functional advises to each other. The emotional aspect, refers to how the community allows users to form emotional connections with which other. As the users of the site consists of Japanese women receiving fertility care in different countries, they sometimes had to deal with the treatments alone, in a foreign country, therefore, the existence of the site, where they can connect with fellow fertility tourists, allows them to develop emotional bonds and a sense of belonging. Finally, the moral aspect delves into how members of the community adhere to a standard moral thought – internalized signs to exhibit one's membership to a social group (Bourdieu,1986). In addition to participating in the forum, members of the community seem to adhere to certain moral standards when it comes to their participation – through providing encouragement and expressing concerns for one another. Apart from the forms of social capitals that are produced in the community, the findings also reveal that the process of social capital production is influenced by the broader Japanese socio-cultural ethos, specifically the cultural logics of "***giri***" and "***jō***", which means social obligation and human emotions. Based on the findings, interactions in the forum is influenced by *giri* – where members often express their indebtedness for the help and support based on strong social norm of obligatory reciprocity. Its opposite, *jō* refers to emotional and voluntary commitment to social relationships. The influence of *jō* that is pervasive in Japanese society is also embedded in how individuals interact with each other in *Kodakara*. Specifically, members of the community share similar emotional trajectories and "shame" (*haji*) due to their infertility, which produces emotional bonds amongst the members, despite not knowing each other offline. As the two fundamental factors in shaping collectivity in the Japanese society, both *giri* and *jō* also influence how Japanese individuals foster social relationships. Yamagishi (2011) argues that *giri* is a dominant cultural logic in Japanese society, and reciprocal relationship based on *giri* may differ from conventional concept of social capital (e.g., Putnam, 1993). However, in *Kodakara*, mutual support seems to be provided by more emotionally and voluntarily. It suggests that *Kodakara* network accumulates social capital online based on *jō*, the emotional form of reciprocity. We further argue that the main reason why *jō* based social capital can develop particularly in *Kodakara* should be the shared feeling of "shame (*haji*)." With the sense of *haji*, people struggling with fertility problem cannot declare their problem in pubic in the real network. Only online community is the place where they declare and discuss their problem without *haji*. A conceptual model is developed (figure 1) to depict the social capital accumulation process and the role of Japanese cultural logics in the process.

IMPLICATIONS

Firstly, this study suggests that social capital could be characterized as obligatory / norm based network and emotion /voluntariness based network. The emotion/voluntariness-based network can be more online-oriented than real-life oriented due to the possibility of ostracization by a givensociety in a particular consumption context. This could be one of the unique aspects of online social capital forming (Lin, 2017). As a result, they voluntarily share and exchange information and utilize them. Secondly, the formation of an online community for Japanese fertility tourists corresponds toCharles Taylor's concept of "social imaginaries". Mainly, as the world confronts dwindling fertility rates, the consumption of technologies to assist one's journey to parenthood may grow to become common in near future. The formation of such community demonstrates how individuals can transcend geopolitical boundaries to connect with each other, and more important, it allows us to understand the nature of consumptioncommunities in the future.

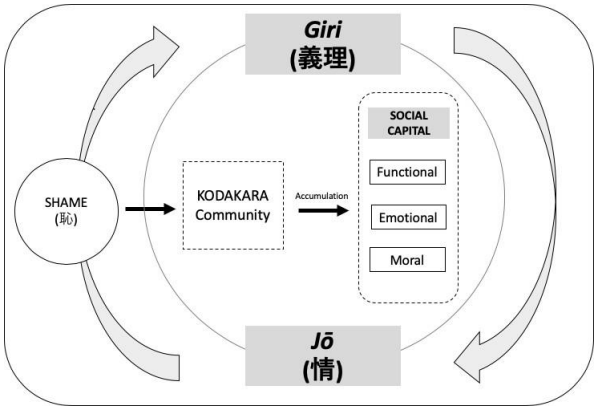

Figure 2. **Online Social Capital Accumulation**

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Marginal distinction: the social logic of hipster culture

Alessandro Gandini

Abstract— The article discusses the logics of social status and distinction that are peculiar to late modern hipster culture. I argue consumption in hipster culture represents a conduit to social status by means of practices that I define of 'marginal distinction'. These consist in the display of one's capacity to grasp the liminal differences that characterize certain products and tastes, particularly in the context of food consumption, and represent a means to valorize cultural capital – as opposed to economic capital – by participants in hipster scenes. The article theorizes the notion of marginal distinction and discusses the extent to which these practices might represent the proto-articulation of a new set of values underpinning the relationship between social status and consumption in the post-2007 recession era.

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INTRODUCTION

Hipster culture is a highly heterogeneous social phenomenon. Commonly associated with an obsession for trendiness and being in-the-know about fashion, lifestyle and cultural production (Michael, 2015; Scheirmer, 2014; Mailer, 1959), its late-modern iteration has been made object of attention from various sides since its emergence in the early 2000s. Over the years, hipster culture has affirmed as a conspicuous presence particularly (albeit not solely) in the once-industrial, now hyper-gentrified post-industrial neighbourhoods of Western global cities (Maly and Varis, 2016). Stereotypically connoted by its aesthetics, that entail a patchwork of styles and symbols mainly from previous decades and an all-encompassing attention to culture and 'coolness' (Michael, 2015; Scheirmer, 2014), existing research identifies late-modern hipster culture as a playground for new consumer practices, based on sophisticated taste and niche trends, particularly in the context of food consumption (Maly and Varis, 2016). While regularly dismissed as futile in the popular discourse (e.g. Grief, 2010), I contend these practices actually embed a peculiar social logic, which directly speaks to the evolving relationship between social status and consumption in the post-2007 recession era (Eckhardt and Bardhi, 2019).

To describe these practices, I hereby introduce the concept of 'marginal distinction'. I argue consumption in hipster culture represents a conduit to social status by means of practices that consist in the display of one's capacity to grasp the marginal differences that characterize certain products and tastes. The adjective, 'marginal', should be here intended in two different and complementary nuances. On the one hand, 'marginal' reflects the economics notion of marginal utility, which contends that the utility (i.e., satisfaction) of consuming a product or service decreases as the number of additional units consumed increases. Analogously, the more a certain taste or trend becomes incrementally popular in the mainstream consumer arena, the less it carries social gain in hipster circles – as epitomized by the typically-hipster expression "before it was cool" (Maly and Varis, 2016).

Yet, marginal distinction practices are not solely about knowing of something before others do. In fact, 'marginal' also means the capacity to detect the tiny little differences that set similar products apart, usually on the basis of their production features (Currid-Halkett, 2017). For instance, hipsters tend to prefer craft and artisanal products: in this sense craft beer, a typically hipster drink, is beer, but a tiny bit different. Similarly, hipsters are known for their inclination towards organic: in this sense organic coffee, for instance, is coffee, but a tiny bit different. In this second nuance, marginal distinction practices represent the valorization of one's cultural competence as expressed in the capacity to grasp the actually existing, or otherwise perceived, socially and discursively constructed difference between apparently identical products, and in the display of this capacity.

Underpinning these practices, I contend, is a process of cultural negotiation whereby "(i)t is not so much the taste in itself (what is liked) that matters" (Michael, 2015: 178), but how something is liked. As highlighted by Prieur and Savage (2013), the emphasis on 'how to like' certain things is typical of forms of cultural production based on 'emerging cultural capital' (Prieur and Savage, 2013; Savage et al., 2015). The way in which we like (and consume) certain things, as opposed to what is peculiarly consumed, represents a new

mode of distinction that is affirming in 21st century consumer culture at large. Hipster culture, as they also suggest, is a textbook example of this dynamic.

MARGINAL DISTINCTION AND SOCIAL STATUS

The article sustains that marginal distinction practices are a primary conduit to the acquisition of social status by participants in hipster scenes. This is underpinned by a peculiar social logic that is based on the valorization of cultural capital – of which the typical participant in hipster culture is rich – as opposed to economic capital – the possession of which by the typical participant of hipster culture is relatively scarce. Hipster culture, in fact, is a landmark manifestation of the Millennials cohort, which is commonly considered to be composed of individuals born between 1984 and 1998 and that is earmarked to be the first cohort after World War II to experience a decline in living standards as opposed to its antecedents and limited chances of upwards social mobility (Cairns, 2017).

As part and parcel of this cohort, many of the participants in hipster culture are highly-educated and work precarious or low-income jobs, mainly in the digital, creative or cultural economy (McWilliams, 2016), which do not grant them the same affluency and status that mid- and late-20th century corporate employment used to offer. Relegated to a peripheral and disadvantageous position in the job market, which gives them relatively low power in the consumption arena, I contend participants in hipster culture engage in forms of social status acquisition by leveraging on the valorization of marginal cultural competence, especially in the domain of food consumption, as an alternative to the impossibility to engage in 20th-century-style, work-based forms of aspirational consumption. Building on the analysis of Eckhardt and Bardhi (2019), I will suggest that hipster culture is epitomous of new dynamics of social status and distinction in the post-2007 recession era that move away from the intertwined relationship between consumption and full time, permanent work which was typical of the 20th century.

Conceived as such, the article pursues a theoretical contribution that has three objectives. First, it aims to advance the study of hipster culture, which has attracted the interest of scholars from various disciplinary backgrounds, from a perspective that sheds new light onto the intersubjective construction of meaning around certain consumption practices and the emergent relevance of cultural over economic capital. Second, it provides fresh reflections in the ongoing debate around omnivorous consumption and the emergence of new taste logics in the 21st century marketplace, highlighting the growing relevance of the 'taste for the particular' (Smith Maguire, 2016) and emphasizing the increasing social value of production practices in the consumption arena (Currid-Halkett, 2017). Third, it creates an explicit link between consumption practices and the decline of full time, permanent work in the study of social status and distinction, looking to move the agenda of consumer culture theory in the direction of a broader understanding of the 'liquidization' and flexibilization of consumption practices (Eckhardt and Bardhi, 2019) in the context of a society whereby full time, permanent employment is no longer the baseline for consumer power in the marketplace.

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Consuming place,contesting spatial imaginaries

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SESSION OVERVIEW

The last few years has seen the emergence of anti-consumption narratives (Chatzidakis and Lee, 2012; Cherrier, 2009), which contest the marketisation of places, and the way that property and space are currently organised by their exchange values, rather than use values (cf. Visconti et al., 2010). Anti-consumption acts disrupt key social imaginaries of places and are apparent in demonstrations and protests around the world related to macro societal issues, such as globalisation, climate crisis, migration, overtourism, and social inequalities (see Colomb and Novy, 2016). Such narratives do not only challenge the intensified commodification of space, but also the way that "socialities, subjectivities and spatialities are constituted in space" (Mansvelt, 2005, xvi).

This special session extends previous research in consumer culture theory on how anti-consumption acts challenge established imaginaries of place (Chatzidakis et al., 2012; Chatzidakis and Lee, 2012; Visconti et al., 2010) by focusing on the performativity of spatial imaginaries. Spatial imaginaries are here thought of as collectively shared performative discourses that intervene and shape social reality via embodied, material practices (Watkins, 2015; Butler, 1993). The aim of the session is to examine spatial imaginaries that contest conventional strategies of organising places according to a consumerist logic for increased economic growth. The session focuses on spatial imaginaries that challenge the spatial status quo and provoke new ideas of what it means to inhabit places. Each of the three papers in the special session address the logics and consequences of spatial imaginaries for the practices and organisation of place in various ways.

The first paper investigates how consumerist imaginaries of urban space are symbolically and materially reconsidered in citizens' protests acts against the bourgeoning touristification of inner cities in Europe. Informed by a relational and material understanding of space and theories on the public sphere, the temporalities and spatialities of public protests are analysed as ways of re-gaining the lifeworld from the material and expressive colonialization of tourism-consumption. It is argued that in order to preserve the public sphere, urban governing strategies are shifting focus from spatial imaginaries of consumerism to imaginaries of the lived city of dwellers.

The second paper problematizes the affective resonance and intensities of urban crowds, by exploring the role of individuals' moods (anxiety, apathy, stress, rage and boredom) in enhancing or disturbing spatial atmospheres. It argues that diverse co-located and intersecting mobility practices create affective intensities that simultaneously carry the potential of the urban buzz and the risk of coalescing into enduring anomalies in spatial imaginaries.

But where might spatial reimaginings take us? The third paper addresses this question with the concept of 'fourth space' as a virtual space of 'possible places'. Virtual spaces are understood as a plethora of 'possible spaces', where it is possible to foresee alternative futures and inhabit revolutionary imaginaries.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

Tourist go home: Exploring the spatialities of anti-consumption practices

Cecilia Cassinger, Henrik Merkelsen, Monica Porzionato, Lund University

This paper contributes to the emerging stream of research in consumer culture theory on public places as sites of anti-consumption protest and dispute (e.g. Chatzidakis et al., 2012; Visconti et al., 2010), by adopting a materialist approach to study the sites, bodies and artifacts entangled in discontents with the bourgeoning touristification of inner cities in Europe (Colomb and Novy, 2016; see also Lindberg et al., 2019). Scholarship has made important contributions in theorising anti-consumption in relation to consumer-resistant identities and discourse (Kozinets et al., 2010; Cherrier, 2009), boycotts (Hoffman, 2011), and consumer agency (see Chatzidakis and Lee, 2013 for a review), however, limited attention is paid to the non-representational, (i.e. embodied and intangible) aspects of anti-consumption practices.

The aim of the present research is to allow for the emergence of alternative spatial imaginaries and possibilities of consumption practices that can support the development of

sustainable urban places. Informed by works on the relational and material aspects of space (e.g. Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 1989; Massey, 2005) and the public sphere (Habermas, 1991, 2004), protests against tourism consumption are theorised as symbolic and physical interventions to obstruct the transformation of public places into spaces of consumerism (Manuel-Navarette and Redclift, 2012). Analysing social media postings and online news stories on protests held during 2017 and 2019 in Venice, Berlin, Barcelona, and Lisbon, we propose that anti-consumption practices reveal a spatial displacement of work and leisure, resident and non-resident, local and non-local in cities.

The conflation of work and leisure means that spatial imaginaries of everyday life merge with those of holiday life, which involves careless consumption, satisfying of bodily pleasures and desires as rewards for the time spent working. The building of hotels, rather than family houses and apartment blocks in city centres, and the emergence of home-sharing platforms, further enable consumer-tourists to "live like locals" during the time of their holiday, while depriving the local community of the lifeworld vital for its maintenance and thrive. In other words, urban spaces are constructed in the imaginary of the vacation experience of tourists, rather than of the lived experience of dwellers. Anti-consumption practices may thus be seen as attempts to regain the lifeworld from the spatial colonisation of tourism. Moreover, the paper argues that urban governing strategies promoting and maintaining consumerist imaginaries, ultimately not only fail to provide for the conditions necessary for the city's lifeworld to develop, but also, in this way, threat the very existence of the public sphere itself.

Urban buzz: Balancing between good vibes and sidewalk rage?

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The past decades' ontological recalibration of tourism as mobile consumption (enriching social sciences through the mobility and performativity turns) offers valuable perspectives to assess the affective, emotional and sensuous in the consumption of spaces. Across these contributions, there has been a tendency to focus on individual performances and embodied engagements with the places visited. Despite a preoccupation with the sensuous (Jensen et al. 2015) as well as with the haptic (Waade, 2018) or auditory (Bolderman, 2018) aspects of 'placemaking', less research addressed collective embodiment – and how affect is transferred between tourists and other mobile consumers.

It is argued that a scientific exploration of co-created atmospheres and affective intensities may be central to understand place contestation in cities – including anomalous ruptures in the "urban buzz". With the rise of overtourism and spatial saturation of city destinations, there is a need to nuance and problematize the effect of crowds, and the clash of diverse urban mobilities. Varying levels of cognitive familiarity, corporeal "fluency" as well as fluidity in a local spatial context may produce a range of affective intensities (ranging from thrill and excitement to anxiety, stress, apathy, boredom and even anger). The superposition of these individual resonances may produce collective atmospheres where a sense of community and solidarity emerges between guests and hosts, locals and visitors. However, urban good vibes are occasionally transformed into "sidewalk rage" (Eggers, 2018) This paper sets out to explore the affective atmospheres of the urban buzz in Copenhagen's touristic centre, by analysing the disruptions (and enhancements) in the affective fabric of the cityscape created by short term cruise visitors. The analysis will draw on sensous methods and combine distinct conceptual frameworks (Böhme's atmosphere construction 1998; Jansson's texturation, 2007), to explore how the co-located micro-performances and affective intensities of pedestrian take place and shape public space, and as such, reveal sensuous spatial imaginaries "in the making".

The concluding remarks will address the overt concern with tourists' disruptive mobility and mooring practices in media representations of overtourism and discuss the implications of affective perspectives for CCT scholarship.

Possible places: Theorising the 'fourth space' of the virtual with Deleuze

Jack Coffin, University of Manchester, Joel Hietanen, University of Helsinki, Oscar Ahlberg, Aalto University

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) studies of space and place tend to focus on sites that already exist, such as flagship stores (Sherry et al. 2001; Kozinets et al. 2004; Borghini et al. 2009), coffee shops (Thompson and Arsel, 2004) and restaurants (Debenedetti et al. 2014). Some studies have explored sites that open up new possibilities for thought and action, such as utopian festival malls (Maclaran and Brown, 2004), heterotopian sites of alternative provision (Chatzidakis et al. 2012; Roux et al. 2018), or ephemeral events that invert the status quo (Bradford and Sherry, 2015; Weijo et al. 2018; Hietanen et al. 2016; Hietanen and Sihvonen, 2020). Such spaces disrupt the trajectories of the past and allow the present to become a place of experimentation where alternative futures can be trialled. However, as existing CCT studies have focussed on the material-semiotic present and the normative past, less attention has been paid to conceptualising the various spatial imaginaries that subversive spaces might open up. In this paper we draw on Deleuze's notion of the virtual as unactualised possibilities that surround and suffuse current realities (see Colebrook, 2006; Schuster, 2016). This allows us to conceptualise virtual space as a topology of 'possible places', rather than frame the future from an 'anything is possible' discourse. This means that although many (anti-)consumption futures are concievable, only some are possible and even fewer are likely to be actualised. This inequality of possibility raises important practical and political questions: why is the spatial status quo so difficult to displace? Why are certain alternatives more viable than others? Questions like these suggest that theorising the virtual helps to attend to the spatial imaginaries of possible futures, complementing existing research on the politics of place by completing the tetravalent theorisation of place, past, present, and possibility (perhaps a more critical '4 Ps of Marketing'?). More broadly, Deleuze's virtual suggests extending the spatial imaginary beyond the lived/third space of Lefebvre (1991) and Soja (1991) to a virtual/fourth space in which activists and scholars can inhabit via their more revolutionary imaginaries. Conversely, critical scholars and activists must ask whether the possibilities of place are being limited by emergent systems like digital technologies

that quantify and capitalise spatial experiences into 'Instragrammable' and geolocated sites of consumption - what does this mean for Habermas's (1989) public sphere of discourse, which has been so effective at challenging the state but seems to have been infected with capitalistic desire?

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Critical inquiries into places of consumption and consumption in places

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A growing body of consumer culture theory (CCT) research has pointed to the way that places are increasingly conceptualised and commodified as brands and consumption objects (Lichrou et al., 2008; Giovanardi et al., 2018). Research has explored consumers' experiences with different kinds of spaces and places, including retail settings (e.g. Penaloza, 1998; Kozinets et al., 2004; Maclaran & Brown, 2005), natural and cultural attractions (e.g. Arnould and Price, 1993; Chronis et al., 2012), public (e.g. Visconti et al., 2010; Chatzidakis et al., 2012; O'Leary et al., 2019) and private places (e.g. Costa, 1989; Hirschmann et al., 2012) and virtual spaces (e.g. Denegri-Knott & Molesworth, 2010).

Earlier accounts almost entirely focused on compartmentalised spaces and commercial arenas as containers of consumption, but more recent research examine the mutual constituency of consumption and space. For example, attention has turned to the interplay between consumers' embodied spatial practices and the construction of place and space (Lucarelli & Giovanardi, 2016; O'Leary et al., 2019). However, further consideration of how consumer imaginaries and practices produce and transform places is called for (cf. Chatzidakis et al., 2018; Chatzidakis et al., 2012). Moreover, more consideration should be given to critical perspectives on the relational construction of consumption space.

Places around the globe are currently reimagined as spaces of consumption (Miles, 2010, Massey, 2005), where sensations, dreams and play are mobilised with the sole aim of creating profit (Amin & Thrift, 2002). These processes often transform places into commodified and exlusionary spaces that can be detrimental for those living in them (Kearns & Philo, 1993, Lichrou et al., 2014; Kavaratzis et al., 2017). The commodifying logic of the economic politics of places diminishes the spaces where people lead their everyday life, make decisions, and cope with things other than the purely economic (Habermas, 1987). Such spaces are, as De Certeau (1984, 87) puts it, "haunted by countless ghosts that lurk there in silence to be "evoked" or not". Yet, places are important sites of human activities beyond the commercial realm. The mobility of global capital, investments and growing volumes of international visitors and migrant labour have put these livehoods under multiple spatial and social pressures (ranging from crowding and environmental degradation to gentrification, and displacement), which has fuelled the upscaling of responsible or political consumerism and morally conscious policy agendas.

This roundtable discussion brings together researchers representing different critical perspectives on place consumption. The aim is to provide an opportunity to talk about the meaning and implications of critical theory for the conceptualisation, analysis and collection of data regarding consumption in and of place (Chatzidakis et al., 2018) on multiple scales, ranging from micro-level practices to macro-level perspectives. More specifically, the discussion focuses on the conjunction of commodified and lived space, as well as on the complexities and social imaginaries arising in shared spaces. By virtue of the critical inquiry, the aim is to identify the empirical potential and conceptual possibilities embedded in such hybrid spaces, with regard to sustainable and inclusive place consumption and governance.

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Performative role of handbags: The spatio-temporal construction of utility

Laura Rosenberg, Linda Lisa Maria Turunen, Eric Arnould & Saara-Maija Järvelä

Abstract— A major stream of research illuminates the special, symbolic meaning of possessions. We move away from viewing meanings as embedded in possessing, and possessions as passive vessels of meanings, and instead, focus on perceived utility. Furthermore, we illuminate the consumer's active role in constructing utility through the active management of their collections. Through 12 phenomenological interviews with women about the consumption practices of their handbag collections, we illuminate how perceptions of utility are ever shifting and changing, and experienced differently in different situations. Compared to the predominant view of possessions as containersor repositories of identity, this study foregrounds the performative role of possessions,and the transient nature of perceived utility.

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INTRODUCTION

"*I would feel naked without my handbag. Or impractical*." - Informant, 28 years

Why would a woman claim to feel naked, or impractical, without her handbag? The present study sets out to find an answer to this intriguing question. Departing from the major stream of prior research illuminating the special, symbolic meaning of possessions and their role in constructing identity (e.g. Kopytoff 1986; Belk 1988; Wallendorf and Arnould 1988; Ahuvia 2005), we aim to shed light on how consumers consume objects endowed with a multitude of meanings – including symbolic and practical – and that are actively consumed as part of everyday life. Furthermore, we move away from viewing meanings as embedded in possessing, or possessions as passive vessels of meanings, and instead, focus on consumers' shifting perceptions of utility. Our aim is to illuminate how utility is socially constructed and spatio-temporally bound.

Our research question: How is utility socially constructed through the purchasing, displaying and using practices of handbags?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Choosing to focus on "utility" calls for some explanations on what we mean by the term. The Cambridge dictionary defines utility as 'usefulness, more specifically, the ability to satisfy a particular need'. For Marx (1967), use value, or utility value, is embedded in the physical attributes of objects and is the outcome of labor. We move away from the concept of economic utility and focus rather on utility as experienced by the consumer (West et al. 2004). More specifically, we approach utility as defined by Sahlins (1976, p. 169), according to whom utility value does not reside on a "natural level of needs and wants" but rather, is continuously defined through cultural intentions. For us, utility is not something embedded in the object per se – a quality of the object but instead, "a significance of the objective qualities" (Sahlins 1976, p. 169). This utility value is ever-shifting and forming.

Some prior work has illuminated the social embeddedness of perceived utility. For example, Miller and Woodward's (2007, 2012) as well as Woodward's (2007) research on jeans reveals how they can serve as "default" modes for getting dressed and relieve socially constructed clothes-related anxiety. Miller's (2004) work on the black dress points to similar findings: the usefulness of the black dress is embedded in its ability to relieve anxiety that women feel when fearing to make wrong choices of dress – or having to make choices in the first place. Miller (2004) poignantly traced this fear into the freedom and emancipation of women that began in the 20th Century. He states that "this new freedom that feminism created about who you want to be inevitably brings with it a huge increase in that particular form of modernist anxiety, of just not knowing who you want to be" (Miller 2004, p. 10). The utility of the black dress is thus not embedded in its attributes per se – the color black – but the meanings that women experience in modern society and their increased anxiety of making clear choices about their role in it, which the black dress relinquishes.

CONTEXT AND METHODS

In order to examine how utility is constructed in use, we chose to focus on the consumption of handbags. Handbags provide a suitable context for us, as they are endowed with both symbolic and practical value and are actively consumed as part of everyday life.

To unveil handbags' role and value within everyday life settings, we conducted 12 semi-structured interviews with women who owned several handbags. The interviews followed the guidelines of phenomenology: the intent was to engage in a conversation rather than a question-answer -type investigation of the topic, and the course of the dialogue was mainly set by the informants (Thompson et al. 1989). All informants were purposively selected (Etikan et al. 2016): informants needed to possess several handbags that were in active use. For the purpose of the present study, we limited the interviews to 25-35 year-old women with a high educational degree. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data interpretation relied on the procedures of the hermeneutic circle and part-to-whole iteration (Thompson et al. 1989).

FINDINGS

Sharing similarities with Fernandez and Lastovicka's (2011) theorization of consumer fetishes, the utility of handbags manifests in their consumption, not so much possession. What's more, their perceived utility is highly situation dependent. Same features – such as the size of the handbag or the number of pockets – can be considered very important in one situation or a deal breaker in another. For example, it is common that women use different handbags for work, free time, parties and gym. When discussing their everyday handbags, women associate utility with larger sizes and neutral, one-colored exteriors of bags. Here we see one example of the social construction of utility: it is only because performing contemporary womanhood commands carrying daily a multitude of objects – ranging from makeup kits to laptops – that size becomes a utility-constructing matter. Likewise, it is due to the identity-linking role of fashion and the perceived need to change daily outfits, that a neutral, one-colored handbag is considered "more useful" for everyday consumption. Neutrality contributes to utility as it makes the same bag suitable for many outfits. Quite the opposite holds true for party bags.

As different handbags are consumed in different situations (Nel 2009), the spatio-temporal symbolism related to situational consumption suggests that handbags are context specific symbols conveying meaning in use. As such, constructing and sustaining a handbag collection becomes pivotal in achieving the varied goals women set for themselves – one handbag may inspire materialistic pleasures; another one enacts a desired self-image; a third helps survive a stressful daily task, for instance.

DISCUSSION

Through our findings, we illuminate how consumers perform their everyday lives through the active management of their handbag collections. Informants use their collections and enact selfhood through a multitude of practices that engage handbags. Handbags are not just passive vessels of symbolic, socially embedded meanings but actively witness and contribute to our informants' lives. Compared to the predominant view of possessions as containers or repositories of identity, this study foregrounds the performative role of possessions, and the transient nature of perceived utility.

CONSIDERATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

This is an independent study and has received no specific funding that would guide our research objectives. Besides the consumer theory community, our audience includes brand owners and marketers. Managerial implications pertain to the development of fashion brand portfolios, product design and service messages.

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Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde Consumer: New Forms of Consumer Subjects and Self-Governance

Ksenia Silchenko & Léna Pellandini-Simányi

Abstract— Drawing on Foucault-inspired market studies of consumer self-governance driven by the goal of self-improvement, this study examines new emerging forms of consumer subjectivity enabled by products and discourses grounded in the assumption that consumers need to be "saved from themselves". By regarding humans as inherently weak and hard-wired for biased (and even self-harmful) decisions, these products and the discourses accompanying them treat the consumer as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, who lives in limbo between a mindless beast-state and a mindful human-state managing the other via behavioural modifications. Besides identification ofvarious forms of 'beast taming' strategies, in this study we also reflect upon the new form of governmentality and the broader societal consequences of the new assumptions of consumer subjects.

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CONSUMERS' SELF-IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Askegaard and Linnet (2011) proposed a research agenda to move Consumer Culture Theory from (micro) interpretative accounts focusing on consumer experience to study the "context of context": the way meso- and macro-level social, cultural and political factors shape the individual consumer experience. Focusing on the making of the consumer subjects in this vein, Giesler and Veresiu (2014) proposed a model that theorises these influences as a four-step P.A.C.T. process, which can be usefully applied beyond its original focus on responsible consumers. The model, inspired by Foucault (1988, 2001a, 2001b), starts from competing discourses on the nature of the consumer subject, one (or some) of which gains authority over others. In the next step, concrete devices – such as consumer products - are developed that allow and encourage consumers to adopt the subjectivity assumed and called forth by the discourses; which leads to a transformation of consumer subjects.

In recent years, CCT studies drawing on Foucault and market studies unpacked the last step of the process, examining the ways in which consumers transform themselves with the help of specific devices to attain the self that is described as desirable by powerful social discourses. For example, Fuentes and Sörum (2019) traced how ethical consumer smartphone apps agence and create hybrid ethical consumers. DuFault and Schouten (2018) explored the self-tracking and self-improving practices through which 'consumer credit datapreneurs' seek to change their behaviour to build up a better credit score (see also Fridman, 2017; Peñaloza and Barnhart, 2011). The transformation of consumer subjectivity by acting on consumers' bodies has been further shown by Yngfalk & Yngfalk (2015) in the context of interactions between service workers and consumers in commercial weight loss programs and by Charitsis, Yngfalk and Skålén (2019) – in self-tracking via Nike+ app.

This research stream argues that such transformations of the consumer subject function as a key means of 'neoliberal governmentality' even though they are experienced by consumers themselves as acts of agency and expressions of freedom and empowerment. The 'governmentality' concept refers to a form of governance that unlike sovereign, coercive power, operates through people's free choices and thus through their self-governing mechanisms (Foucault, 2001a). This form of power works through instilling ideas of the self that serves its purpose into people's own ideals of who to become and how to live (that Foucault (1988) called 'technologies of the self'). This way, people submit to power while experiencing such submission as proactive work on their own projects of becoming a better, freer and wiser person. In the Foucauldian framework, new forms of consumer subjectivities are thus moulded by discourses and practices in the workings of power that penetrates into consumers' self-improvement projects.

NEW FORMS OF CONSUMER SUBJECTS

In recent years, however, a new wave of discourses and consumer goods appeared that operate based on a drastically different logic. In contrast to the model that builds on consumers' self-improvement efforts by giving them the tools of self-transformation, these discourses and products do not foster self-improvement by personal growth or self-education. Instead, they assume that the consumer cannot be improved and thus provide tools of (self-) control. For example, a product called kSafe is a time-locking container that physically locks away tempting items, such as chocolate chip cookies, for an amount of time chosen by the consumer. Devices that allow consumers to lock down their TV remote control or smartphone to force them to 'unplug' or those locking their credit cards to prevent them from spending operate based on the same logic. They do not enable transformation of subjectivity; rather they provide tools of control to help you "save you from yourself" (Aamoth, 2013). They promise to provide "powerful tool to build good habits" (kSafe, 2020), yet without the earlier emphasis on building a good character.

In this study we examine, first, these products and the discourses accompanying them focusing on what kind of consumer subjects they assume and produce. We show that they regard humans as inherently weak and hard-wired for biased (and even self-harmful) decisions. Products like kSafe build on an interplay of consumers' self-awareness about the need for self-discipline and about the realization of the realistic lack thereof. We propose that these products treat consumer as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, who lives in limbo between a mindless beast-state constantly craving for pleasure and hence in need of correction and a mindful human-state managing the other via (mindlessly-operating) behavioural modifications. By examining an array of talking examples of products belonging to the 'family' of kSafe and the likes, we identify various forms of 'beast taming' strategies (such as 'caging the animal', 'anthromorphising the animal', '(auto-)conditioning the animal', and 'animal breading') in order to show how this new modality of consumer subjectivity creates an 'oxymoronic consumer' since it provides no resolution of conceptual incompatibilities between 'Dr.Jekyll' and 'Mr.Hyde'.

Second, we analyse the new form of governmentality that these products and discourses enact compared to previous forms. Elaborating the 'transformation' element of the P.A.C.T. model, we propose a classification of different modalities of transformation, marked by different assumption of the consumer subject (subject to be improved, unchangeable subject and manipulable subject) and elaborate the forms of govenmentalities that they facilitate.

Third, we situate the shift of consumer subjects and forms of governmentality in shifts in public discourses informed by (media representation of) academic science, in particular in the rise of dual process theories in cognitive psychology and behavioural economic (e.g., Kahneman, 2011) and 'Neuromania'-inspired disciplines (Tallis, 2016; Nemorin, 2016).

We conclude by analysing the broader societal consequences of the new assumptions of consumer subjects and governmentality unpacked by the paper. What kind of consumer morality is being produced as a consequence of such self-governance modalities? If it's true that consumers, people at large, are inherently unchangeable, biased, hard-wired to err and seek indulgency and the only sure way to 'tame the beast' is via physical control, neuro change and auto-conditioning/self-reinforcement, does it mean then that we officially accept the end of Enlightenment ideal and open the doors to new (and potentially dangerous) forms of control?

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Luxury Customer Experience: Acting the Role of a Sales Associate

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Abstract—The changing dynamics of the luxury customer base will force luxury brands to rethink their retail strategies. Paying attention to symbolic relationships that are created from both the products and service is important in creating a more engaging holistic retail experience. We propose looking at the retail environment as a theatrical space that portrays the brand narrative as a performed interaction carried out by sales associates. The most engaging sales associates are themselves subtly transformed by the brands symbolic power. Understanding how to effectively utilise the sales associates, the most crucial resource in the sales environment, will enable luxury brands to emotionally and psychologically engage customers that lead to long term relationships with the brand. An interpretive, ethnographical method through a dramaturgical lens on men's tailoring will contribute towards refashioning the retail environments and strengthen understandings of the enduring relationships.

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INTRODUCTION

The nature of luxury consumers is evolving with Generation Z consumers forecast to reach 40% by 2035 (Bain's Luxury Report, 2019). Their significant presence and particular behaviours are expected to reshape market dynamics. With consumers seeing "themselves as critical actors of creativity and conversations with luxury brands" (Levato, 2019); brands will need to connect with customers personally; seeking relationships that truly connect and engage with them emotionally (D'Arpizio, 2019). Brands will be forced to re-write retail strategies placing greater emphasis on its retail stores frontline sales team to engage in creating experiences. By adopting an integrated customer experiential strategy, opportunities can be created where products, brand narratives and experiences merge, connecting customers emotionally and symbolically in an enduring manner. This paper explores the role of the 'sale associate' in constructing brand relationships through the use of theatrical elements. It emphasises the exclusive nature of its products (Kapferer and Laurent, 2016; Lee et al., 2015), and nurtures service encounters in line with brand messages and identities, whilst fulfilling customer needs. Whilst there has been discussion on the creation and effects of brand culture on consumers (Diamond et al. (2009), Sherry et al.,(2004), Peñaloza, (1998) and a look into retail theatre (Harris, Harris, and Baron (2003), van Marrewijk and Broos, (2012), Lucas, (2015), Bode and Kjeldgaard, (2017), inter alia), there has been less focus of its impact on its sales team and the importance of their performative role.

RESEARCH QUESTION

A selling-as-practice approach will aid understanding to the question of how luxury retail practice enables brand cultures to come alive. A theatrical view will address the question on how sales associates perform, enact and enliven brand narratives that ultimately engage customers. An ethnographic approach will explore theatrical elements within a luxury men's ready-to-wear (RTW) suit and tailoring store.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Through the integration of product, store environment and sales team (Pettinger, 2004) a unified and seamless brand image and customer experience is created to reinforce the brand message. Retail spaces transform intangible ideals of brand cultural narratives into obtainable material realities (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Sales associates provide a context for products to be sold by tangibly bringing the brand to life (Healy, 2007). Integrated clues are embedded within sales encounters with people, objects, processes and environment (Berry and Carbone, Lewis, 2002). This helps retailers to influence, immerse and engage the customer within the brand experience.

The effectiveness of the store environment is reinforced by ones innate tendency for aesthetic pleasure that is rooted in products and experiences (Townsend and Sood, 2012). This is particularly relevant within luxury retail settings, where experiences are staged to provide 'extra pleasure, flattering all the senses at once…' (Kapferer, 1997. p.253). A theatrical performance (sales encounter) can be aesthetically and socially designed to create an evocative aspirational world through its

staging, characterisation and social interactions. The sales interactions reinforce the brands aspirational feel by emotionally and psychologically transporting the customer deeper into its exclusive brand culture. As they become absorbed in the crafted aspirational world, the brand narrative becomes part of real life beliefs (Green, 2004). Imaginations are stimulated, strengthening the dream of owning something extraordinarily beautiful (Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2001). Such holistic and emotional experiences lead to meaningful brand relationships.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The context is a London based luxury men's RTW suit and tailoring store. RTW offerings include an extended service covering fittings, styling, etiquettes and an alterations service. The service interaction is complex and personalised.

METHODOLOGY

Eight months of observations and interviews with sales associates (A plus number) informed insights into retail stores as a performative experience of brand cultures, focusing on sales associate - customer performances. Dramaturgical concepts sought to understand the dynamics of men's luxury tailoring and how the brand is expressed through interactions and behaviours that inhabit its space; *what* is acted out, *how* luxury customer service (content) is delivered in an engaging way (adaptive performances) and by *who* - sales associates (the actors) for customers (audience) in *space* (staged theatrical production) and *time* (McCarthy, Pitt and Berthon, 2010).

FINDINGS

Sales associates act as brand ambassadors, humanising the brand as they act out narratives and try to control impressions given off (Pettinger, 2004). Immersed in the strength of brand essence, the sales associate becomes amenable to and influenced by aesthetics and relational elements. *Brand conditioning* (Kroeber-Riel, 1984) occurs, with a subtle transformation of their identity, affecting how they present themselves and customer interactions. A03 explains *'I think that the spirit that what happens to you over a couple of years like no matter how eccentric you are, you mellow down and you have to just let it sway you, the experience of the customers, the tailors and the clothes, that it should eventually bring out the slicker side of yourself, the more mature, manlier side'.* Emotional attachments, such as A38's experience '*To be frank every morning I get up and I enter the store I pinch myself because I just don't, I can't believe that I'm here'* are developed, as they begin to buy into the brand, resulting in a more sincere construction of the luxury brands culture. Sales encounter *scripts* were improvised to suit customers mood. A09 explains that *'If somebody is closed off, you just have to tear it down to its most basic things about the fitting, if they're comfortable with the colour and the style. You don't put any fluff in there, you don't necessarily have to talk about the wife and kids.'* Identity and morality scripts were adopted to express social and material aspects of an interaction (Darr and Pinch, 2013). *Identity scripts* allowed for personalities to come through in interactions adding elements of individuality and sincerity, enlivening the brand narrative. *Morality scripts* were used by sales associates who became so immersed in the brand narrative that they presented themselves as moral agents of sartorial elegance, such as A09's code of ethics *'If you're going to your own wedding you need to have a self-tie bow tie. If you are the only person who has a self-tie bow tie, it's got to be the groom, it's got to be, that's a personal standard that I bring to work with me every day.'*

The sales associate in his suit (*uniform, costume*) was seen as an embodiment of the brand (character), portraying a brand culture that was highly styled (Fuentes and Hagberg, 2013). A03 reminisced on how walking into the store was like *'walking into a GQ ad; so slick and stylish down to the shoes.'* Their display of fashion competency helped with the legitimacy (Joseph and Alex, 1972) of their role when advising and fitting. Sales associates appeared as consumers as well as employees, demonstrating different styles; modelling what is on sale and how it could be worn; living mannequins, on display. Each sales associate had his own style, becoming part of their individual character; the individuality message of the brand. *'Have you realised we love our fashion? We all wear suits, but there is something different in all. We all have our own style. It's the little details that make us different. I like high waisted trousers. I wear them up here and it's just the way I like it. Others laugh when they see me, they think it's high.'* The suit helped the sales associate's fit into their role/performance (Elsbach, 2004) and convince customers' of the role being played, provoking self-reinforcing reactions from customers (Bushman, 1988; Nelson, 2009). A14 recounts *'I don't know what impression customers get off me. They say things like you must know what it's like skiing in Aspen. But, I have no idea. I can't afford it. They don't realise that we are just normal people and not part of that world.'* The sales associates spoke of inviting the consumer on a '*magical journey'* where their every tailoring need and whim was taken care of and where at the end the consumer - sales associate took pleasure in the co-created transformational result created by the brand.

CONCLUSION

Paying attention to symbolic relationships that are created from both products and service combined within the retail store is important in creating a more engaging holistic luxury experience. We propose shining a light on the luxury retail environment as a theatrical space which conveys the brand narrative as performed by the sales associate through the use of the product. The most engaging sales associates are themselves subtly transformed by the brands symbolic power. Understanding how to effectively utilise the sales associates, the most crucial resource in the sales environment, will enable luxury brands to emotionally and psychologically engage customers that lead to long term relationships with the brand. An interpretive, ethnographical method through a dramaturgical lens on men's tailoring will contribute towards refashioning the retail environments and strengthen understandings of the enduring relationships that develop with the brand.

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A Heterotopology of the Anti-Cafe: Deconstructing a Beast from the East

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In January 2014, major media outlets across the world reported on London's new hot spot called Ziferblat (Baker, 2014; Duggins, 2014; Hjelmgaard, 2014; Reid, 2014; Soares, 2014). This place, unanimously described as quirky, cosy and extremely sociable, was the UK's first branch of a Russian chain of multifunctional venues charging customers for the time spent in the space, rather than food and drinks, and providing them with free wifi, refreshments and access to kitchen facilities. First founded in 2011 in Moscow by a popular blogger and cultural activist Ivan Mitin, Ziferblat was presented to the public as a 'loose space' that does not belong to any existing spatial category and thus gives people more agency and variability than they get in 'traditional cafes, cultural centres and other kinds of places, still stuck in the pre-internet era' (Mitin in: Gurova, 2012). A digital native born in 1984, Mitin envisioned Ziferblat as a physical embodiment of the unbounded sociability, participatory ethos, non-hierarchy and open-endedness of Web 2.0—or, as he put it, 'a social media in real life'. Although he insisted that Ziferblat is 'not a business model, but rather a social experiment' (Ibid.), his invention quickly gained commercial success. In just a couple of years, Ziferblat grew into a chain of a dozen venues and gave rise to hundreds of look-alikes in Russia and neighboring post-Soviet countries. The term 'loose space', however, did not stick—unlike the catchy word 'anti-cafe', coined by one of Mitin's successors and pithily capturing the (un)familiarity of these new spaces, inviting us to reimagine something we already know. The media buzz around Ziferblat's opening in London brought anti-cafes on a global map: by 2017, they spread across Europe, Asia and North America, while Ziferblat itself turned into an international franchise with 18 branches, including nine in Russia, five in the UK, two in Ukraine, one in Slovenia and one in Mongolia.

The paper responds to the conference theme by interrogating this new consumer trend through the lens of Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia—'an effectively realised utopia that simultaneously represents, contests and inverts other real emplacements that can be found within culture' (Foucault, [1967] 2008, p. 17). Drawing on a multi-site, multi-method qualitative case study of Ziferblat, I will trace the genealogy of anti-cafes to explain how and why this phenomenon emerged in Russia and became popular worldwide. The research, carried out between June 2015 and October 2017, combined a discourse analysis of media texts with participant observations (over 160 hours) and staff and customer interviews (N=56), conducted in four Ziferblat branches in Moscow, London and Manchester. Ultimately, this paper seeks to demonstrate how a given consumer culture phenomenon is constructed and interpreted through a complex interplay between the imaginary and the real, the global and the local, the personal and the political, and past, present and future.

In a nutshell, I argue that the anti-cafe is the product of local historical and cultural circumstances, including long centuries of state control over the public sphere, the interrupted development of entrepreneurship, and the abrupt transition from socialism to capitalism in Russia. On the other hand, anti-cafes reflect and embody three interrelated global trends: the growing impact of digital culture on social life, the increasing blurring of home, work and leisure, and the repercussions of the 2008 recession. The 'glocal' (Kjeldgaard and Ostenberg, 2007; Smith Maguire and Hu, 2013) genealogy of the anti-cafe was largely shaped by the life history of Ziferblat's founder Ivan Mitin and his hybrid identity of a post-Soviet millennial, who came of age in the 'Third Space' (Bhabha, 1994) between socialism and capitalism. While global media tend to frame Ziferblat as a quirky 'beast from the East' and link it with stereotypic images of Soviet culture, to Mitin his project represents his self-identification as a global citizen and digital native (Galperina, 2014; Taylor, 2014). On a local level, Ziferblat embodies the late-socialist sentiment of the 'Imaginary West' (Yurchak, 2005)—an idealised elsewhere, defined through its discursive opposition to the Soviet. For instance, the staff and customers of Russian branches often associate Ziferblat with English gentlemen's clubs (which never came up in the London and Manchester interviews) and the pre-revolutionary salons of the Russian westernised nobility. At the same time, Mitin's idea of Ziferblat is remarkably akin to the Soviet Constructivist concept of the 'social condenser' (Ginzburg et al., [1927] 2017). Just like the policymakers of early socialism designed experimental housing and leisure spaces, intended for the construction of 'the new Soviet man' (Kucher, 2007; Bokov, 2017), Mitin conceived Ziferblat as a laboratory producing sociability and community, turning consumers into producers and thus laying the ground

for future developments in society, economy, and politics. The founder's class identity also had a strong impact on Ziferblat. On the one hand, Mitin's precarious young adult life at the fringes of the creative class in neoliberal Moscow shaped his vision of Ziferblat as an affordable, friendly and cosy space, welcoming remote workers and people seeking a quiet hideaway from the city buzz, but not limiting their user rights to a single prescribed activity, like food consumption in cafes or work in coworking spaces. On the other hand, Mitin's intelligentsia background made him pursue the paternalistic socialist idea of 'culturedness' in Russian Ziferblats, resulting in a controversial power dynamic between their staff and customers.

In the same way that the classic European cafe was the symbol of urban modernity (Manning, 2013), the anti-cafe represents the postmodern regime of consumption and city life. Despite its ambition to be a 'loose space', Ziferblat, like any other heterotopia, was not created from scratch. Instead, it builds on a range of socio-spatial metaphors representing the reformative ethos of this project and embodied in its physical space and social practices and relations. Overall, Ziferblat was designed as a space where the domestic meets the social, the traditional forms of commercial hospitality (first and foremost, the cafe) are purified from the disengaging and dehumanising effects of the capitalist service economy, the negative aftermaths of the socialist and neoliberal capitalist ideologies and policies are mitigated, consumption is replaced with participation, and, finally, making new social ties is as simple as friending someone on Facebook. However, there are two factors impeding the realisation of this idyll. First, despite being largely influenced by the founder's personality and orchestrated by his will, Ziferblat is a contested space that is not single-handedly constructed but rather co-constructed with other agents of the market, including staff, customers, media, franchisees, and even landlords, each of which perceive Ziferblat in their own way. Second, each space that Ziferblat refers to carries specific power dynamics, mode of use and code of conduct; when juxtaposed in one space, these socio-spatial frameworks often contradict each other.

The paper will be of interest to researchers exploring the hospitality and leisure industry, cafe culture, and post-socialist and glocal consumer cultures.

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Technology and age: insights into the role of socialization agents in the context of older consumers learning information and communication technologies.

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Abstract— The fast pace of innovations in the technology sectors drive consumers to continuously learn and adapt to keep up with new digital devices and systems. This can be challenging for older consumers as physical and social challenges create impediments and barriers to engaging, learning and keeping up to date with new information and communication technologies (ICT). Consumers stay updated with the marketplace through interactions with socialization agents. Although much is known about the agents of consumer socialization for children and young adults, little is known about who (or what) the principal socialization agents are for older consumers. Through a mixed-methods approach, this research investigates the consumer socialization agents' older consumers use and how the agents shape their engagement with ICT. We find that older consumers use both human and non-human socialization agents. Patience, respect, and understanding of their learning rhythms are critical components of older consumers expectations of their socialization agents. Human agents, especially those closely related and frequently used, are not always providing agency in the way it is sought. The socialization agents utilized by older consumers to learn about ICT can both facilitate and obstruct the process.

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"My mom has had her new tablet close to a year, and I can't get anyone to help her learn how to use it. I can't be there, and no one else seems to care" (Karen)

"When I ask someone for help, they never help. They take my phone, fiddle with it, possibly get to where I wanted to be (possibly not) & hand the phone back. I am none the wiser" (Rodger)

"Being mad at young whippersnappers for not being able to teach tech is like being mad at them for not being able to teach you how to repair a toilet. 'They use the thing every day, right?'" (Donald)

"My mom gets frustrated when I do that, but most of the time […] I'm just going through the process of tapping different things I think are likely to have the result she wants. Trial and error your way down the results list. It's what most of us young people are doing whenever someone asks us for tech help" (Ash)

"The salespeople who sell you the phone is often the worst. If your phone has a minor problem, they will not slowly show you how to fix it. They whizz their hands around and say there you are. Then they get annoyed when you go back again for the same problem a few weeks later. If they SHOWED us, we could fix it ourselves" (Janine)

(From a Facebook thread about Older People and Tech)

INTRODUCTION

Older consumers often face heightened barriers to engaging, learning and keeping up to date with new information and communication technologies (ICT). On the one hand, the fast pace of innovations in the technology sectors drives consumers to continuously learn and adapt to keep up with new digital devices and systems. On the other hand, the specific physical and social challenges of life for older people create impediments to the continuous adaptations demanded of new ICT (Barnhart

& Peñaloza, 2013; Schau, Gilly, & Wolfinbarger, 2009). Older people face physical challenges (e.g., loss of coordination and consequent ability to use small devices like smartphones as intended), cognitive challenges (e.g., dementia or other conditions that limit the capacity to remember sequences of ICT operations), social challenges (e.g., loss of work-related networks that support ICT learning) and cultural challenges (e.g., stereotypes and beliefs associated with older people and ICT learning). As a result, many seniors experience frustration, disempowerment, and helplessness concerning ICT and are consequently less willing to continue learning and engaging.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior research endeavoring to understand older consumers engagement with ICT has focused on understanding barriers to adoption (Mostaghel, 2016). The main determinants of adoption of new communication technologies among older adults relate to attitudinal (e.g. interest, confidence, stereotypes), functional (e.g. access, education, digital skills), and physical factors (e.g. age-related health limitations) (Barbosa Neves, Waycott, & Malta, 2018). Although this literature has made significant advances in helping us understand the barriers for senior's ICT learning and engagement, it has mostly focused on individual adoption. Much less is known about how support-networks facilitate older consumers' learning and engagement; i.e. the agents of socialization. Socialization agents have a direct impact on the attitudinal and functional factors as they transmit norms, attitudes, and values to the learner by actively or passively communicating certain expectations and behavioral patterns (Moschis, 1987). Socialization agents are acknowledged as fundamental to consumer learning in earlier stages of adulthood (Hota & McGuiggan, 2006). This study addresses the fundamentals of socialization agency in the lives of seniors.

Socialization agents are considered fundamental to the process of consumer socialization, influencing; the development of skills, knowledge, beliefs and attitudes relevant to functioning in the marketplace (John, 1999). Research on consumer socialization agents has mostly focused on children and younger adults (Kerrane & Hogg, 2013) and considered how a variety of agents influence the socialization process including the family (Carlson & Grossbart, 1988; Cotte & Wood, 2004); peers (Mandrik, Fern & Yeqing, 2005; Moore & Bowman, 2006); advertising or the media (Lee & Conroy, 2005; Mangleburg & Bristol, 1998); schools (Shim, 1996); care providers (Cook, 1994) and culture (Singh, Kwon & Pereira, 2003). Findings from these studies provide a solid understanding of how agents socialize children and young adults into consumer roles. However, existing research has overlooked the role of agents of socialization in the learning of older people faced with ever-changing ICT. Thus, the purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the agents of socialization shaping older consumers' learning and engagement with ICT. We ask: *Who (or what) are the principal agents of socialization in the context of older consumers' learning ICT? How do these agents shape consumers' engagement with ICT?*

METHODOLOGY

Our research methods include a survey of the ICT socialization agents preferred by older consumers, as well as their perceived usefulness of the preferred agents. The purpose of the survey was to be able to describe the phenomenon since older consumers' experiences have largely been neglected in extant consumer research. We conducted four group interviews to gain a deeper understanding of how seniors experienced ICT and potential barriers to continuous engagement. Two non-for-profit senior organizations allowed us to gather data from their members. A total of 871 participants responded to the survey (630 paper, 241 online). The majority of consumers surveyed were female (78%), and 90% were above 65. The group interviews included four groups of 7 or 8 people with diverse levels of ICT understanding. All group members were over above 62. Finally, a public commentary of our initial analysis instigated 185 Facebook comments. We included these comments in the analysis as a measure of its resonance.

FINDINGS

The findings shed light on the relational dynamics underlying older consumers' ICT experiences. Four insights emerged from our analysis. First, adult children were the most popular source of ICT support, with 45.4% of respondents mentioning children as the first option, and 22.4% indicating them as a second option (Table 1). Although children were the most likely agent to use, they were not perceived to provide the most useful support (Table 2). The tensions intrinsic to their parent-child ties prevented a more fruitful engagement. Children are seen as being too busy or too impatient to teach their parents: "The older they get, the worse they get — the less tolerant" – Norma, 79. We found cases of children trying to convince seniors they did not need an iPad or computer to avoid the effort of having to support them in engaging with ICT. Some participants said they try to utilize other agents of socialization first to avoid unsettling their relationship with their children: "The first thing I do is google because I hate asking family - Nina, 62. As such, children may reduce confidence and perpetuate stereotypes; which may increase attitudinal barriers for ICT engagement (Barbosa Neves et al., 2018). The 'too busy' perspective also suggests limited functional factor support.

TABLE I. IF YOU NEED HELP WITH USING OR FIXING A TECHNOLOGY DEVICE, WHO WOULD YOU TURN TO FOR ADVICE?

Consumer Socialization Agent	1st option		2nd option	
	%	N	%	N
Child	45.4	318	22.4	142
Professional	15.7	110	21.4	136
Spouse/partner	13.9	97	6.9	44
Friends same age	7.3	51	14.5	92
Grandchild	6.7	47	19.1	121
Younger friends	4.0	28	8.5	54
Self-initiated (internet, library, ICT classes)	3.7	26	2.4	15
Sibling	2.4	17	4.3	27
Other	0.9	6	0.6	4
Total	100	700	100	635

Second, grandchildren are perceived as more tolerant, and understanding of their grandparent's ICT needs: "My grandchild is far more tolerant than what my grown-up adult children are" – Marina, 72. They were seen as more focused on entertainment than practical issues, and as such active socialization agents in terms of reducing attitudinal barriers to ICT engagement. However, they often lack the ability to transmit knowledge and digital skills (functional factors). There was some evidence of grandpas and grandmas trading service for help: "I will teach her

how to swim, and she helps me with the iPad" – Anne, *72*. Such reciprocal socialization was not discussed concerning children.

Third, service professionals were the second most favored option. Their help is often sought, but seniors also perceived them as the least useful (Table 2). The initial Facebook comment about 'salespeople being the worst', exemplify the frustration felt over not receiving any education or help with digital skills. Thus, salespeople can enhance the functional barriers for ICT engagement. This may also indirectly influence attitudinal barriers through a loss of interest and confidence.

Fourth, there seems to be a knowledge threshold separating those who proactively seek knowledge on their own and can search for solutions on their own by going online and those who cannot. For those above this threshold, searching for solutions is an effective way to avoid having to ask friends and relatives for help. YouTube has emerged as the critical non-human agent of socialization and one that enables older people to avoid the relational challenges of learning. Searching YouTube for help with ICT has the advantage of allowing seniors to control the rhythm of their learning: "YouTube is good because you can run a YouTube, and as you're running it, you can stop it, do what you've got to do, and then come back and run it a bit more, and do the next part of it" - Peter, 77. Consequently, the internet as a non-human socialization agent may be the most effective source for seniors to overcome both attitudinal and functional barriers to ICT engagement.

TABLE II. RELATIVE STRENGTH OF CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION AGENCY RECEIVED FROM CATEGORIES OF AGENTS.

Consumer Socialization Agent category	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Self-initiated (internet, library, computer class)	25	5.48	1.70
Younger friend or family (child, grandchild)	379	5.17	1.31
Same age friend or family (sibling, spouse)	157	4.61	1.35
Professional	101	4.53	1.74
Total	662	4.95	1.44

ANOVA: F 10.253 ($p < .001$). Receiving consumer-related advice is associated with 'Consumer Socialization Agency.' (CSA); acceptance of an agent's influence from another party (the learner) about consumption (Aleti Watne, Brennan, & Winchester, 2014). CSA was measured for the first and second source of advice on a 5-item, 7-point-scale. The scale was anchored in "Strongly disagree" and "Strongly agree" (Item example: "I get useful information from my [#1] about technology devices").

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Our findings suggest that older consumers utilize a range of socialization agents to shape their ICT engagement. However, the most frequently used are not the most useful. The closely related agents' older consumers regularly use, may not return agency in the way it is sought. Consumer socialization around ICT and seniors is a complex process, where the same socialization agents can provide both support and discouragement at the same time. Further research should investigate how socialization agents can assist seniors by enabling them to reach the threshold level where the internet as a non-human socialization agent can be utilized.

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Exploring Islamic Consumption and Marketplace: The Shaping of the Sacred and Profane Elements within Islamic Life Insurance Consumption in Malaysia

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The global Muslim population is an expanding market and anticipated to increase from 1.8 billion in 2017 to 3 billion in 2060, that is nearly a quarter of the world's population (Pew Research Centre, 2017). With growing attention directed on conforming to the halal (permissible) products and services, institutions are shaping their marketplace offerings to fulfil these needs. One area that generates much research interest is in Islamic financial services. In today's financial markets across the world, there is an array of different Islamic financial instruments, including Islamic life insurance. Islamic life insurance, despite theological debates, has recently gained in their consumption among Muslims not only in Muslim majority countries but also in Muslim minority countries (Reuters, 2018). Islamic life insurance deemed an important field to explore the impact of religious belief on the sacred and profane consumption given that this area intensely relates consumers towards their life and the afterlife.

While there is much interest in the formulation and consumption of Islamic financial services, little is known about its consumption. This research, working hand in hand, with the literature on Islamic consumption as well as Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) aim to explore the dynamic influence of the sacred and profane in shaping the marketplace within the religious context. The introduction of the sacred and profane within consumption research has directed many researchers to find holiness in every aspect of daily mundane materials (Rinallo *et al.*, 2012). It is understood that the sacred and the profane is unable to co-mingle together (Arnould, 2004). The sacred will always at risk of profanation. It would perhaps be applicable when religion is not a concern within the research setting. However, it is recognized that given a religious setting, the sacred and the profane may have a complex relationship (Iacobucci, 2001; Higgins and Hamilton, 2011; Rinallo *et al.*, 2012; Cova and Rinallo, 2015). The sacred and profane are evident to co-exist within the religious settings and deemed to be a 'frozen step between sacralization and desacralization' (Rinallo *et al.*, 2012). At the macro level, the sacred and profane are found to be managed by institutions and also the individuals themselves in a pilgrimage study (Cova and Rinallo, 2015). These findings are far yet to picture the sacred and profane phenomena within the religious context. It is believed that many other socio-cultural perspectives could have influenced the shaping of the sacred and profane elements within a consumption. Islamic consumption literature, on the other hand, still adopts a reductionist approach by making idealistic comparisons between the West and Islam (Jafari and Suerdem, 2012). Therefore, this paper intends to explore the elements of the sacred and profane within a religious context. For instance, how does the sacred and profane influence the shaping of a marketplace within a religious context? Whom are the actors involved in shaping the sacred and profane elements in the marketplace? How do consumers negotiate the sacred and profane in making their consumption?

A total of 44 in-depth phenomenology interviews with Takaful, conventional, non-consumer, both consumers and agents were conducted to understand the underlying meanings assigned towards this consumption. This includes their lived experience of their religion, social and cultural context within which they consume the service. The interviews were conducted around Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, Malaysia, where it would be the centers of many major conventional and Syariah compliant financial institutions. Malaysia was chosen based on the fact that not only it is a multi-ethnic community (Malay, Chinese, Indian and other ethnicities) with diverse religion (Islam, Christian, Buddha, Hindu, and others), Malaysians are living in harmony within different subcultures thus serve a rich and unique multicultural composition (Cui, 2001). The interviews, which yielded nearly 2000 minutes,

were then analyzed using six-steps thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Findings revealed that Malaysian Muslims would relate to multiple reasons for consuming life insurance. It was evident that there are different layers of influences that help to shape the sacred and profane elements within the Malaysian marketplace. This is due to the complex and multifaceted symbiosis between the sacred and profane as well as their religious belief, which in this case, the halal and haram. Therefore, the perceived sacredness and profanity is not only essential but critical in the consumption because of these multiple layers of influences that the participants experienced (as illustrated in Figure 1).

This research makes two contributions. First, it contributes to prior literature on the complex disposition of the sacred and profane within religious context (O'Guinn and Belk, 1989; Rinallo *et al.*, 2012; Cova and Rinallo, 2015). Second, the findings also illuminate the various social actors or social imaginaries that each individual perceive and believe while consuming Islamic life insurance within a religious context. This further demonstrates how social imaginaries are shaped and shared among the community which then become '*the right thing to do'* thus, reflected upon their consumption behavior (Taylor, 2004).

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APPENDIX

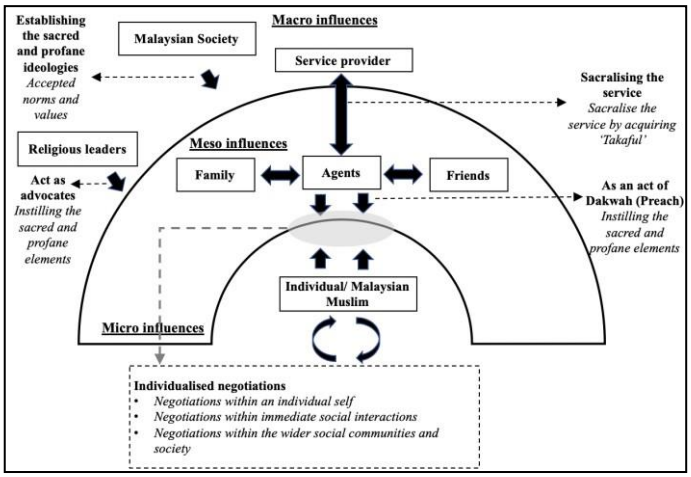

Figure 1 The multiple actors involved in instilling the sacred and profane elements in the consumption of Islamic life insurance in Malaysia

An existential trajectory of refracted self: the intersectionality of mothering, fashion and sustainability

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This working research has emerged after revisiting a previous empirical study from almost a decade ago: examining the existential lifeworlds of professionally working mothers as they negotiate the practicalities of their everyday duties, along with sustainable behaviour ideologies (Ritch and Brownlie, 2016). The aim is to explore how life stage impacts on fashion consumption and related practice, as well as the role of sustainability in informing ideologies and practice. As such, the research is grounded in an existential phenomenology, recognising that values are shaped through experiences and consciousness (Satre, 2003), that are subjected to changing conditions; therefore, the data provided a snapshot of a specific time and space which is constantly evolving. The research conceptualises mothering as a construct of self, illustrative of Giddens (1992) suggestion that self is a reflexive project, a socially influenced infusion that incorporates past and present.

In the original research, the participants described their lifeworld experiences as being imbued within the mothering role, work responsibility and related social experiences. However, this fell into two categories that represented existential concepts: totally focused on the internal family world (stay at home mum) and one foot in both the internal and external worlds (working either full or part time). Originally, this sample were selected as the extant literature had suggested that mothers were more likely to purchase sustainable food, and the research sought to explore if sustainable concepts could transfer to fashion consumption, for themselves and their children. Often, sustainability was a secondary consideration, albeit one that was sometimes a source of guilt, due to the abstractedness of the implications. The main consideration expressed by participants was that ideology and behaviours were idiographic constructions to manage their lifeworld, influenced by the resources (time, finances, etc.) available and the life stage of the family.

Sartre (2003) situated awareness of one's immediate surroundings is the positional consciousness of being before knowing. From this, it can be assumed that existential experiences have a greater influence over behaviours due to the immediacy of consequences. Analysis from the original empirical work revealed discursive fields of intersectionality, that were representative of social imaginaries that informed consumption practice. This included: identity constructs (represented in thoughts, behaviour and their appearance); their responsibility as a mother (caring for, nurturing and protecting their children); and, social status (reflected in value-signalling behaviours and appearance of the family). Consequently, sustainability was often reflective of caring and nurturing, as well as illustrative of good citizenship.

In revisiting five of the initial participants, this research builds upon the previous empirical study, by exploring existential trajectories of family life stage and how this shapes consumption ideologies. Originally, two of the narratives were particularly pivotal in recognising the evidential impact motherhood had upon their conceptualisation of, and perceived ability to, integrate sustainability within their respective consumption behaviours. This coincided with their constructed perceptions of self, also a reflection of their family life stage.

Participant-1 was completely immersed in the family, she was on maternity leave and had three young children. Prior to having children, she purchased convenience food and led a hedonistic life. Yet, as a mother, she concentrated all her efforts on buying sustainable food and related child commodities (clothing and toys were second hand) to align with her emerging moral ideology for equity and sustainability. Her practice was influenced strongly by her husband who introduced media news gained externally from the home. Participant-1 put her own needs as secondary, particularly for fashion. Her body shape had changed over three consecutive pregnancies and reduced her self-confidence; therefore, she was less interested in fashion and her appearance beyond mothering.

In contrast, participant-2 had returned to education and described multiple identities and conflicting responsibilities where she sought belonging: as a student; a mother; as well as working in a professional occupation. Seeking 'belonging' was a way of bridging the contrast between those diverse roles, often to establish affinity with each cohort of peers; her external world, therefore, was more diverse and reflected divergent ideologies. To manage the intersectional experience of returning to education, alongside household responsibilities and part time work, she adopted a refractive approach; pre-children, she had been very 'right on', a vegetarian and engaged within human global rights issues, these were practices that were suspended to prioritise managing the household budget and nurturing the children.

Both participants provide illustrations of Giddens (1992: 75) assertion that '*lifestyle choices are constitutive of the reflexive*

narrative of self'. What was evident here was that participant-1 was internally focused on the home, whereas participant-2 straddled both internal and external worlds. This had consequences for consumption, practice, self-construct and self-identity. As such, revisiting those roles almost a decade later provided an interesting perspective on the trajectory of self and the influence of family life stage.

The initial empirical analysis revealed that motherhood had altered identity perceptions depending on the significance of their role as mothers, whether it was the primary role or another competing responsibility. Bailey (1999) recognised changing perceptions of identity are not only physical due to changing body shape, but symbolically represent the responsibility encountered through motherhood, as embodying mothering abilities. Within this, Bailey (1999) posited that high and late modernity, as developed by Giddens (1992; 1991), enabled women to reconceptualise themselves within the boundaries of subjectification. For example, Bailey (1999) identified that pregnancy provided an opportunity for her participants to be excused temporarily from their previous notions of self. In a sense, this offers time and space for reflection, and to reconceptualise self. This was evident in the narrative from participant-1, where she saw the birth of each child as an opportunity to review the family practice. Giddens (1992) recognises that the fusion of self into family leads to adopting a sense of 'we', rather than 'I', a trait that was unique within participant-1's transcript.

The similarity between Bailey's research and this research is that motherhood extends post-pregnancy and is an on-going process as the children become more independent. This was evident as the participants reconceptualised their previous notions of pre-mother self within a competing discourse of moral sentiment, self-identity and familial provisioning. Renegotiating their self-identity throughout the family life stages included recognising the tensions which exist in a multi-faceted lifeworld, where egocentricity is compromised through merging the needs and wants of others in the family structure.

Follow up phenomenological interviews (Thompson et al., 1989) are ongoing and the two completed have lasted around 60 minutes. They began with the broad research questions of how has the fashion accessed for you and your children changed over the last eight years, particularly as the children will have developed their own sense of self identity, and how have your preferences for sustainability evolved? The initial interviews had included fashion labels that depicted sustainable concepts, however the follow up interviews include questions that were informed from the analysis of the previous conversation and are therefore unique to each informant.

The data was transcribed verbatim and analysed again using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith et al., 2009), and each interview was analysed individually, then in conjunction to the informant's previous interview and finally similarities between all informants were examined. Preliminary findings have found that life-stage is an indicator of fashion involvement, as well as sustainability engagement, both of which are influenced by internal and external environments. For example, participant-1 was no longer immersed in her internal family nurturing lifeworld; the absence of her husband meant that she had to return to full time employment. This had a number of implications: she was more interested in her appearance and shopped more for fashion, both for work and her desire to be attractive to her new partner - her own needs were no longer secondary. She also relied more on convenience food and was no longer focused or sought information on sustainability behaviours. This could be rejection of her husband's sustainable ideology post marriage, or refractive coping strategies to manage work, home and childcare. Nevertheless, she presented with more confidence and authority than she had previously; no longer reliant on 'another' for financial support or information. Participant-2 no longer juggles multiple roles and had settled into a career. While she was still aware of the social signaling of her appearance, she now had the time and finances to include sustainability ideologies in her practice. She also presented self-confidence, no longer expressing guilt at the misalignment of ideology and practice.

The research contributes to understanding existential experiences of reflexive self, as narrated by participants at particular family life stages. While the main themes of self and family identity, mothering responsibilities and social status remained, those had evolved. For example, self-identity included participation, and contributions to, the external world. Status was sought outside the family, without guilt that family life would be compromised. There was also distance between the child's appearance and the family status, where previously this would have been reflective of family values; there was an acceptance that the child's sense of self was evolving. What this illustrates is that family life stages offer women opportunities to reconceptualise refractive self. As the children matured the mothering role evolved to allow for developed socialisation where both mother and child enjoyed bringing home new ideologies for experimental family practice. This situated awareness depicts that temporal experiences are existentially constructed to manage the evolving intersectionality of self.

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Reimagining Small Town Place Identity

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INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Place, a location in space, is critical to the construction, maintenance and expression of identity (Belk, 1988; Tian & Belk, 2005). However, despite calls to integrate the parallel yet separate streams of research on possession and place attachment (Schultz & Baker, 2004), consumer researchers continue to focus on possession rather than place. In the future, the movements of people across borders as immigrants (Fernandez, Veer and Lastovicka, 2011), refugees (Gollnhofer & Kuruoglu, 2018) and cosmopolitan employees (Bardhi, Eckhardt and Arnould, 2012) will continue, and even accelerate, thereby making it critical to understand how the varied acculturation processes (Luedicke, 2015) shape the identities of people and places (Gieseking, 2014) over time.

Historically, within these research boundaries, most moves have been from rural to urban areas (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). Yet, a new trend is emerging, where some people (e.g. working professionals, self-employed, retirees) are avoiding the high cost and pace of living in urban areas by moving to smaller towns. In less urbanized areas, an influx of newcomers is proportionately larger, and has a far greater potential to change or destabilise the places they locate to (Mackay, Perkins, & Espiner, 2009). Thus, there is an opportunity to examine how small-town place identity is influenced by newcomers from the perspective of the locals as they seek to acculturate (Luedicke, 2015; Sam & Berry, 2010) and adapt to the changes to their place.

In answer to calls for further understanding of how places and their identities are negotiated (Chatzidakis, McEachern, & Warnaby, 2017; Kalandides, 2011; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013) we present the findings of our initial study into how place identity is conceptualised in the extant literature and provide a working definition which we then interrogate with the findings of an exploratory case study of Kawerau, a small town in New Zealand.

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

Place identity, created by temporal, continually changing multiple ballets of patterns and colours (Cheetham, McEachern, & Warnaby, 2018; Warnaby & Medway, 2013) is a complex and yet critical concept to many disciplines such as geography (Cresswell, 2015; Massey, 1991, 1995, 2004; Relph, 1976, 2018; Tuan, 1975), psychology (Altman & Low, 1992; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983), architectural planning (Lynch, 1960; Sepe, 2013) and marketing (Anholt, 2008; Kavaratzis & Kalandides, 2015; Medway & Warnaby, 2008; Ntounis & Kavaratzis, 2017).

However, because place identity has been examined within disparate disciplines, the existing literature on place identity is fragmented. Recurring themes in literature about place identity are that it is a sub-set of self-identity, individual perceptions and shared meanings of specific physical settings (psychology), human meanings, feelings/intentions, human intervention of physical settings, distinction from other places, people's identity using place, relationality, processual through time, spatially interconnected, power-relations (geography) interconnectedness, human manipulations of built environments and distinction from other places (architecture). Of the themes identified, the four foundational cornerstones which hold all the other place identity elements together are people, place (e.g. Relph, 1976, 2018), power, time (e.g. Massey, 1995) and there is scope within marketing research to understand how these four elements work together to facilitate marketing practices on place.

METHODOLOGY/CONTEXT/METHODS

We conducted an interpretive, explorative study, gathering stories through unstructured questions, neutral probes and silence in a small town called Kawerau, located in the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand. The 21 participants (aged between 24 to 82; 11 women and 10 men) utilized a cognitive map to draw, write, or paste photos that depicted a map of their life's journey in the town. We used this to extrapolate changes to the town's identity and acculturation processes. Thematic and narrative analysis was used to extract main patterns and themes with the aid of NVIVO.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Our data revealed how people and place influence each other, as attested by Aroha (38), who felt she was changing her "path in life" to help "Kawerau change" because "my town" has had a "loss of identity" as the "original" residents are "stuck in a historical trauma that is hard to move on from". A student in her thirties, Aroha seemed to be confronted with self-doubt and issues of self-worth as the social world questioned her expression of her new extended self because she was "only from Kawerau and this is all you can be". Here, Aroha manoeuvres

through conflicting self-identity narratives both internally (psychologically within herself) and externally (in the social world) as she seeks to express her new preferred extended-self. Additionally, there was a sense from some participants, including Boyce (81) that powerful influences, such as other places, people or policies determining the dominant identity of the town, "killed us quite quickly" although they had once been a "thriving diverse population". The conflicts/tensions between different worldviews resonated in two distinct ways in which our participants viewed what an insider or being "from" a place meant, with some such as Moses (24) espousing that "this is my home" and that he was "from" the place since his family had been in the area for over a century, while "others" may "live here in Kawerau" but that "doesn't mean you are from here - they are two different things. No Māori would do that. It's a culture thing." A counter perspective was that insiders or locals were those that stayed in a place "because they want to, not because they have to," (Boyce, 81).

Family was a glue that created place identity for participants although the meaning of what "family" meant in identity construction seemed to differ. While participants such as Alfred (50) felt he was an "insider running towards the outside" as his connection to the place fragmented with the passing of loved ones, others felt that "family" extended to their ancestral identity and that no matter where they lived they would be "insiders" of the town and influence the town's identity. Tensions between those who lived in the town out of choice and those who felt they were "left behind and still struggling to move with the times" resonated. Yet some who felt "left behind" still chose to reside in the town despite hardship as they still felt there was a "sense of belongingness" and responsibility toward reshaping the town's identity. Kinship, comradeship and collective identity were common threads as "in the end we are all one people" and "immigrants anyway" and there seemed to be an acceptance of "others" or "outsiders" as long as "hope" and opportunities increased and "our people" were not "left behind".

CONSIDERATION FOR STAKEHOLDERS /AUDIENCES

The social imaginaries of place identity are a balancing act that requires distinguishing between and understanding both individual place identity and geographic (e.g., town/country) place identity prior to initiating place marketing practices. Where the former is what a place means to one's sense of self and one that enables or thwarts a person from manifesting their extended-self, the latter denotes what a place stands for in relation to its interconnectedness with and distinction from other places, is an ongoing and timeless acculturated process negotiated between the insider and the outsider, influenced by power-relations, inspired by collective human intentions, hopes, fears, interrelated feelings and experiences of physical settings, constructed, and narrated in the present from a preferred imagined past to create a desired future.

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Post-postmodern marketing and the paralysis of the neo-liberal consumer subject

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In the last decades, consumer culture theorists have theorized the societal implications of postmodernism in multiple ways (Brown 1993, Cova 1996, Firat and Venkatesh 1995, Firat and Dholakia 2006). This paper draws upon recent work which advocates the transition towards a post-postmodern era (Canavan and McCamley 2020, Cova et al. 2013, Skandalis et al. 2016) in order to theorize the nature of the neo-liberal consumer subject (Ashman et al 2018, Fitchett et al. 2014, Lambert 2019) within post-postmodern consumer culture. More specifically, we argue that the paralysis of the neo-liberal consumer subject constitutes one of the key dimensions of post-postmodernism and we illustrate how post-postmodern marketing moves away from celebratory and emancipatory discourses of postmodern consumption.

The hyperreal nature of postmodernity led to the mcdonaldization of consumption experiences whereby '[m]arketing [was] constantly involved in the creation of more real than real' and the blurring of the distinction between real and nonreal (Firat and Venkatesh 1995, 252) within the sphere of a fast-rising experience economy (Pine and Gilmore 1998, Schmitt 1999). The nature of consumption experiences within post-postmodernism is marked by a constant transition between offline and online modes of consumption; reality and fantasy; escape and everyday life (Skandalis et al. 2016, 2019). For instance, Skandalis et al. (2016) illustrate how consumers reconstruct online gaming experiences through the negotiation of a set of paradoxical tensions, which stand in-between reality and fantasy. As Belk and Llamas (2013: 5) note, 'we are now enjoying digital technologies of the self with the power to transform us. And even if they do not fully transform our identities, they have very likely changed our lives […] the distinction between the real and the virtual is no longer entirely clear'. The neo-liberal consumer subject is now trapped into a wide spectrum of mixed realities; transitional experiences (Skandalis et al. 2016) which sit somewhere in-between, they are neither this nor that, and act as rites of passage in and by themselves.

Although postmodern consumer culture was largely grounded within fragmentation discourses (*cf* Firat and Venkatesh 1995), post-postmodern marketing promises the gathering of fragmented pieces and their creative assemblage into a newly reorganised whole (Canavan and McCamley 2020, Cova et al. 2013, Skandalis et al. 2016; 2019). Yet, this pseudo- reconstructive ethos of post-postmodernism leads to the emergence of paralytic consumers which are either no longer able to identify authentic acts of production and consumption or they no longer feel the need to do so. For instance, Salgado (2018, 327) argues that post-truth politics are firmly associated with overconsumption of content whereby 'too much information without any filters can lead to a situation in which people do not have any basis for knowing what is relevant and what is irrelevant'. Similarly, McQuarrie et al. (2013) illustrate how social media practices are oriented towards a well-orchestrated and strategic cultivation of audiences via public displays of taste. Such practices are grounded within the present state of consumer society and neoliberal individualism (Fitchett et al. 2014) which is primarily concerned with the commodification of the self through constant promotion.

Social media prosumption turns into a narcissistic act (Patsiaouras et al 2016) whereby consumers become autopreneurs (Ashman et al. 2018); they are primarily interested in professionalizing their consumption practices and are trapped into a vicious cycle of constant self-promotion which promises individual fame and recognition within a given consumption field (Daskalopoulou and Skandalis 2019). This is also evidenced in the work by Kozinets et al. (2016) on technologies of desire whereby, in the context of online food porn, they argue that the rise of digital technologies has led individuals to a futile project of extreme forms of social media production and consumption. In other words, post-postmodern marketing sits within the sphere of '[n]eoliberal consumer culture [which] is evidenced as a harmful, dehumanising ideology that fosters competitiveness, individuality and meritocratic tendencies, encouraging a reliance on ever-changing, transient commodities to (in)form the self' (Lambert 2019, 329). Lambert's (2019) study provides additional evidence of the paralytic nature of the post-postmodern consumer via her analysis of young women who seemingly appear to feel trapped within and beyond their own consumption behaviour.

As per Firat and Venkatesh (1995), postmodern consumption involves pastiche as the underlying principle of juxtaposition, that is the contrast of contradictory emotions

and cognitions in relation to everything. Prior work has focused on such paradoxical features of postmodern consumer culture such as fluidity versus stability, ephemerality versus intensity, unity versus fragmentation, reality versus imagination, and self-control versus manipulation, amongst others (Featherstone 2007). For instance, the Star Trek subculture, in Kozinets (2001), is specifically used by consumers as a powerful utopian space and a means to engage actively in meaningful experiences that distinguish them, and in some cases alienate them, from the mundane world. In this sense, Star Trek utopias might be seen as 'popular paradoxes that stitch impossibility and dreaminess together with deep motivational power and desire' (Kozinets 2001, 73). Such inherent contradictions provide a solid narrative of the dialectical tension between agency and structure (Murray 2002) which lies at the core of the psyche of the neo-liberal consumer subject (Patsiaouras et al 2016).

As Foucault observed, 'we are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed' (Foucault 1986, 22). To these ends, Mick and Fournier (1998) theorized technology paradoxes as being structured by contrasting conditions that characterize the divergent experiences of consumers with technology. They understood paradoxes as an inevitable outcome of [neo-liberal] consumer society and highlight that consumers must accept and resolve them (Fournier and Mick 1999). While such postmodern theorizations largely position any contradictions and/or paradoxical tensions as problematic (Fournier and Mick 1999; Husemann et al. 2016; Tumbat and Belk 2011), recent studies illustrate that their unresolved co-existence contributes to the meaningfulness of the consumption experience itself (Skandalis et al. 2016, 2019); the free-floating status of such contradictions leaves consumers in an endless state of in-between ambiguity. Ultimately, this is exemplified by Zuboff (2019) whose discussion of surveillance capitalism portrays a dystopian and algorithmic consumer culture whereby individuals are increasingly being used as self-tracking commodities (Charitsis et al. 2019) and are increasingly placed into the 'automated pilot' of passive consumption whilst engaging with the biopolitics of their own data.

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Malaka, Habitus, and the Crafting of Consumer Moral Identity

Ateeq Abdul Rauf

Abstract — Why do consumers not behave in an ethical way even they feel or say they should? The above question, an eternal conundrum, can be studied in various ways. This study offers one particular examination. Juxtaposing the ideas of French academic Pierre Bourdieu with those of the medieval Arab sociologist Ibn Khaldun, I argue for a more micro-sociological understanding of ethical behavior to understand how the body is crafted into a specific moral construction.

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Research suggests that consumers exhibit discrepancies between saying what they will do and what they actually do (Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2010; Eckhardt, Belk, & Devinney, 2010). When asked about their rationales for such misalignment, consumers are unable to offer cogent explanations. The question is why do consumers not behave in an ethical way even they feel or say they should?

The above question, an eternal conundrum, can be studied in various ways. This study offers one particular examination. Juxtaposing the ideas of French academic Pierre Bourdieu with those of the medieval Arab sociologist Ibn Khaldun, I argue for a more micro-sociological understanding of ethical behavior to understand how the body is crafted into a specific moral construction.

For Bourdieu, human practice is a by-product of processes that are partially conscious and partially unconscious (Jenkins 2002, 72). Social actors are on a lifelong learning path from childhood onwards, and the social experiences and influences in which they are raised inform their knowledge about the world and factor in their choice-making. Hence, Bourdieu deemed the body to be a canvas on which culture is imprinted (Jenkins 2002, 75-76). To explain this phenomenon, Bourdieu coined the term habitus (Bourdieu 1990, 53). The dispositions and preferences that make up habitus take on an embodied character whereby responses become second-nature and more emotional than reflexive or rational (Swartz, 1997).

But how does habitus form and how does its formation shape consumer behavior? To understand this question, I use the ideas of 14th century Arab sociologist Ibn Khaldun. In his seminal work *Muqaddima*, Ibn Khaldun develops a framework for learning by the body. The Arab scholar theorizes that mastering a science or craft requires continuous repetition by which it becomes the body's *malaka* or Arabic for "habit" (Lapidus, 1984). According to Ibn Khaldun, the acquisition of a habit, once it has taken shape, is fairly durable (Khaldun, 1672).

Lapidus describes *malaka* as "that inner quality developed as a result of outer practice which makes practice a perfect ability of the soul of the actor" (Lapidus 1984, 54). *Malaka* then is the mastery of a moral or practical art, "learned through repeated practice until that practice leaves a permanent mark on the character of the person" (Mahmood 2001, 839).

Ibn Khaldun uses the word craft as a metaphor for this development in social roles, specific techniques and spiritual conduct and inner inclinations and character (Metcalf, 1984). Habitus of faith then can be taken to be a moral craft that is perfected over time through repetitive, disciplined practice. Here specifically faith is the crafting of the soul in its internal traits and outer behavior. To acquire this, repetitive virtuous acts like worship, observation of etiquettes in a controlled environment are performed to take the body from affirmation to conviction.

I use the context of the religious Islamic movement Tablighi Jamaat (TJ) to understand how *malaka* plays out in consumer lives. TJ forms a traditionalist reform approach to Islam that developed in late colonial India. The movement tries to bring Muslims to puritanical Islam through lay Muslim-to-Muslim preaching (Reetz, 2004) and by carrying out repetitive, mundane actions over a prolonged period of time. It is in this long-term, controlled environment inculcation that I argue we can see the formation of habits.

This study uses multi-sited ethnography and in-depth interviews. I underwent a *Tablighi Jamaat* (TJ) initiation program for four continuous months in Pakistan. I then undertook a 40-day sojourn with 10 other TJ participants. In a TJ sojourn, participants travel to a mosque in a particular locality and spend three days before moving on to another mosque at another locality. This process continues till a stipulated time period is complete (e.g. 40 days). Hence, I was able to gather observational data by following participants to *masjids* (mosques), religious centers, *bazaars*, homes, streets, playgrounds, bus terminals, transport vehicles, workplaces, and seminaries. I formally captured data in the form of audio and written notes. These methods helped obtain an understanding in assessing how participants change their beliefs and behaviors regarding material objects (e.g. food, shelter, transport, clothing)

with sustained involvement in TJ activities. The inconsistencies between action and words were important in uncovering the tensions that existed in the informant's lives (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Belk, Fischer, & Kozinets, 2012). In my findings, I see that TJ's program of disciplined routines may be a possible way to shape a moral soul. These practices affect the socialized body on three accounts: outer behaviors with internal dispositions, knowledges, and emotions. The behavior-to-disposition link has been covered using examples from research by Mahmood (2005) and Winchester (2008) through actions of prayer, fasting and dress, and I also see how this operates in TJ. Repetitive discourse and knowledge building activities help to gather knowledge pools in individuals.

Mahmood's study (2005) showed that Islamic veiling brings about shyness within its subjects who over time get accustomed to wearing the cover so much that they feel uncomfortably shy not wearing it. Hence, certain practices can induce moral capacities. In Islam, such practice is not only virtuous itself but also a means to virtues. This helps connect inner and outer spirituality. In the case of TJ, the *sunnah* (religious) dress then is the route to one's personal piety.

Ibn Khaldun adds a moral dimension to Bourdieusian concepts (Sayer, 2005). Moreover, Ibn Khaldun's ideas can help elaborate a mechanism for how habitus is fostered on the body as a set of dispositions. These have to be worked on incessantly in appropriate environments till they become embodied. An additional benefit of including Ibn Khaldun's philosophy is enabling us to understand how different ethical practices can produce different moral identities and how the body does not reflect social structure but inflects certain capacities that help individuals actualize the world (Mahmood 2005). Finally, in the Aristotelian and Ibn Khaldun tradition, ethics is a conscious process with unconscious results; this means that subjects, much like the skating girls (Thompson & Üstüner, 2015), opt-in to carry out specific actions so that ethical actions become an unconscious part of one's disposition. The opt-in explanation also matches earlier observations (Mahmood, 2005; Sandikci & Ger, 2010) about why *choosing* to submit is as a valid choice as not choosing to do so. However, this thought can be linked back to Bourdieu by suggesting that structuring structures help subjects make the 'deliberate choice' of selecting a religious faith or practice in the first place. Put in another way, Bourdieu explains how a habitus misfit may be accounted for; rationality takes over under such conditions of discomfort. How a person may rationally choose a path hereafter is dependent on the habitus itself.

The findings have bearings for understanding consumer morality and specifically offer an insight to the conundrum of the speech-action paradox. The study may be of interest to consumer researchers, the general public, and (marketing) managers who wish to address issues concerning ethics in their own firms, and also understand why consumers may behave unethically at times.

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Food and Identities: Continuity and Transformation Among Malaysian Chinese

Yee Wen Lim, I-Chieh Michelle Yang & Juliana Angeline French

Abstract— This study seeks to explore how Chinese diaspora in Malaysia (often labeled as Malaysian Chinese) acculturates to the multicultural environment in Malaysia (Malaysia has three major ethnicities: Malay, Chinese and Indians) through food, particularly in how food shape their identities of Chinese ethnicity and Malaysian nationality. This paper employs discourse analysis on local Chinese newspaper Sin Chew Daily, over a course of 8 months. Data analysis shows two prominent practices in food consumption of Malaysian Chinese – cultural continuity and cultural transformation. In particular, the cultural continuity and transformation of Chinese heritage as well as cultural borrowing from Malaysia socio-cultural influences in the past have collectively shaped the Malaysian Chinese identity we see today.

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INTRODUCTION

Research on food consumption and consumer culture is certainly not new. Extant literature has generally conceptualized food as a material object (Bugge & Almås, 2006) or a consumption ritual (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991). These studies demonstrate the importance of food consumption in our lives. Food studies should go beyond the mere representations of food functionality and extend to how food is consumed symbolically (Levy, 1981). Food describes not just what is being consumed, but also who consumes it (Fonseca, 2008), reflecting both our individual and collective identities (Mcdonagh & Prothero, 2005). In other words, food consumption is an important context for identity projects. However, a precursory review of the literature reveals that there is limited scholarly attention on food consumption being used as a focal consumption context in the acculturation of immigrants. Veresiu and Giesler's (2018) paper on the shaping of ethnic subject in a multicultural society provides sacrosanct findings that the consumption of food is used to assert ethnic identity. The study of ethnic consumers has recently captured the attention of scholars with Ger et al.'s (2018) call for greater accounts of ethnicity, consumption and marketplace. To answer this call, and to contribute to consumer research, particularly in how food consumption (the symbolic value and ritual) plays a pivotal role in acculturating an immigrant group to the dominant culture, this study seeks to explore how Chinese diaspora in Malaysia (often labeled as Malaysian Chinese) acculturates to the multicultural environment in Malaysia (Malaysia has three major ethnicities: Malay, Chinese and Indians).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer acculturation research examines how consumers shift and adapt into a new culture (Penaloza, 1994). Luedicke (2015) defines acculturation as "the phenomena that occurs when consumers (immigrants or indigenous) adjust their established consumption practices, brand relationships with consumers from unfamiliar national, social or cultural backgrounds" (p. 111). Notably, as immigrants relocate to a new environment, their initial consumption and culture is navigated in the foreign environment to ease their assimilation into the local culture, while retaining their ethnic identity. Mehta and Belk's paper (1991) on Indian immigrants in the United States, for instance, demonstrates the effort of these immigrants to retain their Indian identity, while simultaneously acculturating into the American culture. As such, consumer acculturation is interwoven with identity projects, as they seek to achieve both ethnic identity stability and integration into the local concurrently.

Consumer identity project revolves around the formation of coherent identity through working with marketer-generated materials, encompassing all goods and services in everyday life (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). In the consumption of food, several studies have exemplified food as a material object of consumer culture, through which people can create selves and identities. For example, Allison (2013) discusses how Japanese mothers prepare lunchboxes for their preschool children to construct a good Japanese mother identity.

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

This study examines how the consumption practices adopted by Chinese community in Malaysia (*huaren*) acculturates into the Malaysian society through food, particularly in how food shape their identities. Living in a Malay majority multi-ethnic society, the Chinese in Malaysia is culturally distinct from the other Chinese diasporas around the world, because they hold two identities – their ethnic Chinese identity and their national Malaysian identity. These identities reflect both the cultural continuity of their historical cultural heritage as descendants of China immigrants as well as the cultural transformation of them localizing and adapting to local geographical and social environment (Tan, 1997), especially for the second- or even the third-generations of descendants of China immigrants (or the first- and second-generations of Malaysian Chinese) who have gone through many years of adaptation.

The methodology employed in this study is discourse analysis of media text from Sin Chew Daily – the current leading local Chinese newspaper with readership of 1.3 million (ADQRATE, n.d.), as we intend to analyse Malaysian Chinese food culture through naturally occurring materials. Newspaper articles over 8 months from March 1st, 2019 to October 31st, 2019 were collected and analysed, in which the selected timeframe encompasses two important Chinese festivals – the Dragon Boat Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival.

FINDINGS

Data analysis shows two prominent practices in food consumption of Malaysian Chinese – cultural continuity and cultural transformation. Firstly, the food culture of Malaysian Chinese involves several forms of cultural continuity of Chinese heritage. This is evident through the performance of significant rituals according to the events on Lunar calendar, such as having reunion dinner in conjunction with celebrating Lunar New Year, practicing food offering during Dragon Boat Festival and gifting mooncakes during Mid-autumn festivals. A 65-year old mother continues the tradition of making rice dumplings for Dragon Boat Festival: "*Every year I would make rice dumplings. This year I made rice dumplings for my children and also as food offering for my ancestors. I do not want our tradition to be lost in the future.*" Rice dumplings symbolize Chinese-ness and Santos (2008) refers to Chinese families as "stove-family", signifying the importance of food in maintaining social ties. Evident, too is filial piety to elderly family members, even though they have long passed on. Also using the context of rice dumplings, another young lady has demonstrated the cultural transformation of Chinese heritage, admittedly as a part of their acculturation in Malaysia, where she innovated the traditional rice dumpling using new Kimchi taste: "*I hope that the innovated Kimchi rice dumpling will encourage more young people to learn making rice dumpling, so that the tradition can be passed down.*" Both the cultural continuity and transformation shown in the excerpts above reveals a desire to continue Chinese heritage and also plausible a concern of losing their cultural identity as Chinese. Besides consumption innovation, data also revealed several forms of cultural borrowing due to influences from socio-cultural environment, thus demonstrating the cultural transformation in shaping of Malaysian Chinese identity. An example is the unique coffee and tea culture of the Hainanese community in Malaysia arriving from south China in the 19th century (Lee, Wong, & Laxman, 2014), during the British colonial era. "*The Hainanese were hired by British as domestic maids hence they were greatly influenced by the British tea drinking culture, which inspired them to open 'kopitiams' (traditional Malaysian Hainanese coffee shops) after the British left.*" More importantly, the acculturation process of Chinese immigrants in Malaysia, even amongst the second and third generations is a continuous process that continues to be enacted to construct a unique hybrid collective identity – Malaysian Chinese. As a central component of Chinese culture (Ma, 2015), food, as an object or as a ritual is understandably an important consumption practice for acculturation and identity project. Further, the findings also illustrated the intricate nature of acculturation, as it involves not just cultural continuity, but also cultural transformation.

IMPLICATIONS

It is worth noting that, the cultural continuities were based on *affective* reasons such as relating to family and nostalgia, whereas cultural transformation were based on *pragmatic* influences such as socio-cultural environment and efficiency. Also, the cultural transformation occurred in the past was often due to the *experiences with local environment especially the socio-cultural environment*, while the cultural transformation occurred in the present has shown relevance to *modern innovation and globalization*.

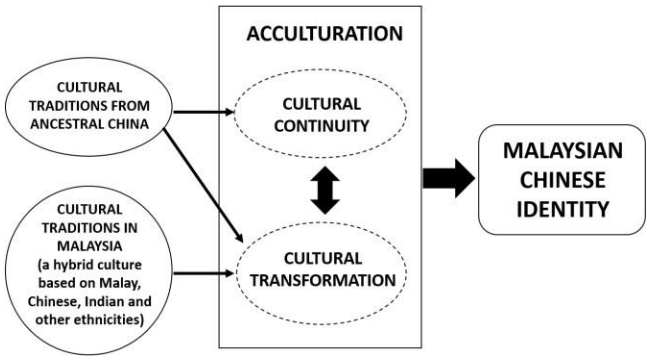

Figure 3. Acculturation of the Malaysian Chinese

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Inventing Marketplace Traditions: Italian Breakfast 1975-1995

Pirani Daniela

Abstract— Building upon Hobsbawn & Ranger (1983), this paper tries to understand if commercial traditions can be invented like social and political ones, and how that can be done. This question is answered through historical research, observing the marketing activity of an Italian brand in 20 years (1975-1995) and its role in establishing the national practice of Italian breakfast. Through rich and novel archive data, this paper attempts to demonstrate how commercial traditions are created by combining elements of nostalgia and innovation at the level of materiality, meaning and practices. Commercial tradition becomes productive of a marketplace shift, generating new products, competences and understandings.

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INTRODUCTION

Building upon Hobsbawn & Ranger (1983), this paper tries to understand how commercial traditions, like social and political ones, can be invented, and how they intersect with wider social stability.

This question is answered through historical research, observing the marketing activity of the brand Mulino Bianco in between 1975 and 1995 and its role in establishing the national practice of Italian breakfast. Through rich and novel archive data, this paper attempts to demonstrate how commercial traditions are created by combining elements of nostalgia and innovation at the level of materiality, meanings and practices. Commercial tradition are not only linked to the past, but they also become productive of marketplace changes, generating new products, competences and understandings, as in the case of the Italian breakfast

LITERATURE REVIEW

While drawing onto Hobsbawn & Ranger (1983), this paper is also indebted to Scares (1997) concept of living social tradition. According to Scares, traditions are not only the product of dominant powers, but they are productive of material and symbolic resources for those involved, who are engaged in their emplacement and preservation. Hence, this paper explores the role of tradition in the marketplace, established by brands and cultivated by consumers. The semantic of tradition is linked to nostalgia, whose potential in the marketplace has been already explored (Havlena & Holak, 1991; Holbrook, 1993). Nostalgia is a back-word idealisation that reimagines the past in the face of the current turmoil, producing past as an alternative rather than a prelude to the present (Stern,1992; Tosh,2013). Despite reimagining the past, traditions are conceptualised as distant from novelty. For instance, sociological literature on food consumption has defined novelty and tradition as key antinomies, since heritage is conceptualised at the opposite of new food products and recipes (Warde, 1997). Historical studies contribute to this literature by showing how food traditions are the result of drastic transformations that happened overtime (Geizen et al., 2019). This paper addresses this direction by observing how the Italian breakfast, based on a formula that includes coffee, milk and bakery products, has become a canonical model within Italian food habits (Vercelloni, 1998), despite having been introduced to Italian consumers only in the 1970s.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is based historical research of the Brand Mulino Bianco, that adopts the principles of 'brand genealogy' (Holt, 2006), to understand how the cultural context influenced the development of the brand. In doing so, this paper sits with other authors such as Pinchera and Rinallo (2017) who try to assert the role of consumer culture in historical research. The data collection spanned over two years and it used novel data that from the Barilla archive, that hosts Mulino Bianco's documents, the Italian bakery association and the Mondadori publisher archive. Such data include outsourced market researches, internal company's communication, documents from Mulino Bianco bakery and marketing departments. Interviews with

former Mulino Bianco managers have been used to integrate the documents.

FINDINGS

Findings show how Mulino Bianco managed as an Italian tradition to establish a kind of breakfast based on biscuits. The analysis shows how such a result was achieved in three stages.

The first was the testing and development of new recipes of the *frollino*, a rich biscuit developed from the know-how of British bakery. The second stage was the use of Motivational Research to build the marketing strategy of Mulino Bianco. Mulino Bianco is the first Italian brand that adopted such a method, and it did so by establishing a connection between biscuits and personal nostalgia. The third stage was the development of a PR campaign, aired between 1992 and 1995, that branded the practice of the Italian breakfast through media coverage and scientific support. This last step built on the previous stages, the materiality of the products and the nostalgic appeal they had acquired. Archive data show how these three stages all implied an element of innovation, such as new recipes, new marketing research and novel scientific data.

The example of Mulino Bianco shows how, to invent a tradition, a brand should innovate products and materiality, leverage on nostalgic meanings (both personal and collective), and emplace a legitimising narrative that combines both innovation and nostalgia. This paper contends that the Italian breakfast was a novel practice marketed as a comeback of tradition.

CONCLUSION

This paper offers a contribution to historicizing consumption practices, such as the Italian breakfast, and to bridging historical research and consumer culture theory. The analysis of Mulino Bianco offers a caveat on the importance of the socio-political background in which traditions are established. In fact, it observes how commercial traditions are linked to stability and reassurance, and thus how their effectiveness is related to contexts of instability and change.

The production of tradition at the turn of the 19th century worked as a device to stabilise the social fabric during the emergence of mass politics. Albeit not sharing the same scope of political or social traditions, commercial ones answer the same tension towards social stability. In specific socio-historical condition, commercial traditions provide the cultural tenants to reproduce a sense of common identity and continuity with the past, while contributing to change the marketplace.

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Value-in-non-disposition and object storage

Cristiano Smaniotto, Mikkel Nøjgaard, Søren Askegaard

Abstract—Several studies have documented that consumers across the globe tend to store their small electronic devices when they reach their end-of-life instead of disposing them. This is a problem because if end-of-life devices are not recovered from consumers' homes, the finite-supply metals they contain are lost and new metals must be extracted to produce new devices. We study what motivates consumers to store their end-of-life devices by looking at how storage creates consumer value. Applying a practice-based understanding of value, we find that storage is a social practice that generates value by protecting consumers from four different kinds of risk: practical risks, existential risks, environmental risks, and moral risks. Storage gives consumers a sense of security in their everyday lives and thus generates what we call 'security value'. This notion implies that even though end-of-life devices sit idle in consumers' homes, their value-generating capacity remain active. We refer to this phenomenon as the value of non-use.

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INTRODUCTION

The success of the circular economy hinges on the continuous return of resources into the production-consumption loops sustaining markets. Unfortunately, several studies have documented that consumers across the globe tend to store their small electronic devices when they reach their end-of-life instead of disposing them (Hanks, Odom, Roedl, & Blevis, 2008; Jang & Kim, 2010; Ongondo & Williams, 2011; Rathore, Kota, & Chakrabarti, 2011; Yin, Gao, & Xu, 2014; Ylä-Mella, Keiski, & Pongrácz, 2015). The failure to recuperate end-of-life devices from consumers' homes means that the materials are not entering the circular economy and that new finite-supply materials must be extracted (Wilson et al., 2017).

While Türe (2014) made the excellent remark that there is value in disposition, the problem highlighted above suggests that there is also value in non-disposition, i.e. in storing things that could (and should?) be disposed of. Yet the question of *how* value is attached to those objects remains unanswered. Building on a praxeological approach to value (see Arnould, 2014), we suggest that the practice of storage creates value for consumers by securing them against the actualization of four different types of risk (practical, existential, environmental and moral) associated to the consumption of electronic products. This value is attached to the stored end-of-life items, promoting their accumulation while hindering their disposal.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Graber (2001), there are three basic forms in which social theory has considered value: social value, as the social norm of what is ultimately considered socially desirable; exchange value, indicative of "price"; and value as meaningful difference, i.e. that which sets something apart from something else. Building on Graeber, Karababa & Kjeldgaard (2014) suggested that in the marketplace the value of a commodity is never singularly defined, but it should rather be conceived as a "bundle of multiple values created by the practices of a multiplicity of actors operating in different but coexisting fields" (Karababa & Kjeldgaard, 2014; 124). This observation is developed by Arnould (2014), who in his call for a praxeology of value underlines that "human creative activity is at the foundation of value creation" (130). From a practice perspective, then, "value resides in the actions and interactions" (130) occurring within the bundles of competences, material and affective engagements which are practices (Arnould, 2014). Put differently, value should not be considered as something there "is", but rather as something one "does" (see also Miller, 2008).

Building on this practice approach to value, we suggest that storage—the practice of ordering things in space and time

(Cwerner & Metcalfe, 2003)—creates and transforms the value of things. Storage is foundational to curatorial practices such as collecting (Belk, 2013) or caretaking of heirlooms (Curasi, Price, & Arnould, 2004; Epp & Price, 2009) that imbue objects with identity value. But storage also affects the value of less cherished things, such as those stored in bins as rubbish (of no value for consumers) (Thompson, 1979), or those stored in the garage for their potential use value (Hirschman, Ruvio, & Belk, 2012). For example, Cherrier & Ponnor (2010) show that hoarders assign symbolic value to stored everyday items, as they instill a sense of security against the uncertain future of a global risk society and provide an emotional connection to the past.

METHODOLOGY

We based the analysis on 29 in-depth interviews lasting between 1 and 2 hours. As the disposal of things is a reflexive practice reproducing social narratives (Gregson, Metcalfe, & Crewe, 2007), interviews focused on consumers' emic interpretations of their electronic objects (non-)disposal. When convenient to the study participants, we conducted a naturalistic investigation in their homes (Curasi, Price, & Arnould, 2004). We adopted a hermeneutical, iterative approach (Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1989) and analyzed interviews as fragments of narratives embedded in a sociocultural system of meanings and practices (Arnold & Fischer, 1994; Türe & Ger, 2016). Findings emerged through a comprehensive interpretation of the data.

FINDINGS

Our findings suggest that the practice of storage creates value by establishing a sense of security in consumers' lives against the potential actualization of four different types of risk (practical, existential, environmental and moral) associated to the consumption of electronic products. This security value is eventually attached to the stored end-of-life products, making consumers less likely to dispose of them. We explain here the four identified risks.

Practical risk. For modern consumers, electronic devices have become central to carrying out a multitude of daily practices, such as work, study, parenting and leisure. Our informants store used electronics to secure themselves against the risks that losing or breaking their current devices would pose to the stability of their everyday lives. Hence, storing used devices grants consumers a sense of security which allows them to live with less worry over the continuity of their everyday lives.

Existential risk. Consumers store devices to protect themselves against the loss of control over their identity that disposing of their electronics might entail. Storage helps consumers create a sense of security by managing two types of existential risks. First, it helps consumers maintain a connection with material memories (e.g. pictures) or extensions of themselves (e.g. an old, beloved phone) (see also Cherrier & Ponnor, 2010). Second, it helps consumers shield themselves from the manipulation of sensitive, identity-defining data (e.g., social security numbers, passwords).

Environmental risk. Storing (un)used electronics also provides value by allowing consumers to manage and secure themselves from the environmental risks associated with disposal. Our informants articulated concern about disposed devices not being processed properly and ending up in places where they would have a detrimental effect on the surroundings. Hence, storage helps containing the environmentally harmful effects that might follow from disposing one's devices.

Moral risk. Consumers relate to the end-of-life electronic objects also on the foundation on a very classic logic of "not throwing away good things". This in-and-by-itself honorable morality (opposed as it is to unsustainable throw-away logics of global consumer culture) in this context paradoxically becomes an impediment to a well-functioning circular economy.

CONTRIBUTION

The paper contributes to existing research in consumer disposal by highlighting four types of value-in-non-disposition. Hence, our study suggests that storing end-of-life objects is a practice of value creation and not only the consequence of consumers inability to move such objects along the intended disposition conduits (cf. Türe, 2014). This insight also extends our contribution to praxeological theories of value by revealing the value of 'non-use'. What is common for most practice-based approaches is that they approach the notion of value through positive acting. That is, valorization happens through an active interaction with objects and the environment. This notion of value is problematic for the case of consumer storage. In fact, it is by lying passively in the drawer (available, but not active) that the mobile phone generates security value. Conceptualizing this value as value-in-use would be misleading as it is in fact not using the device that generates value. Conceptualizing it as potential value-in-use (or potential functional value, Hirschman, Ruvio, & Belk, 2012) would be equally misleading because, as we have shown, the value of stored devices is not experienced after storage but in storage. This means that value creation does not require the active use of objects but can arise from less intimate and active engagements with them. Hence, we call for further attention to how the value of 'non-use' may be studied and understood from a practice perspective, complementing the value as an 'in-use' phenomenon.

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Transformative Body Practices in Consumer Culture: Religious and Secular Parallels

Zuzana Bártová

Abstract—While marketing and fashion scholars have addressed marketisation of religion for some time, in sociology of religion, marketisation and its dynamics have been taken into consideration only recently and remains understudied. Based on ethnographic fieldwork on convert Buddhism in France and the Czech Republic, this paper shows how consumerism as the current *zeitgeist* shapes Buddhist practices. While also discussing parallels with body transformations in consumer culture, the paper questions the consistency with neo-liberal subjectivities and middle-class worldview and resources. Finally, it examines the pertinence of the religious/secular divide. Overall, this study could contribute to our understanding of the growth of body-transformation practices in marketing or management.

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INTRODUCTION

While some sociologists of religion still prefer economic metaphors of religious market and religious consumers with their limited heuristic potential (Berger, 1967; Obadia, 2013; Stark & Finke, 2000; Stolz et al., 2016, Usunier & Stolz [eds.], 2014), others denounce capitalist corporations and their exploitation of religion in line with Marxist interpretations (Carrette & King, 2005; Craig, 2014; Mitchell, 2012). These two dominant approaches of contemporary religion either use economic language to describe religious pluralisation and individualisation, or claim that capitalist agents are orchestrating religious transformations.

Meanwhile, marketing (Einstein, 2008; Izberk-Bilgin, 2012; Rinallo, Scott, & Maclaran, 2013; Sandıçkı & Ger, 2005) and fashion scholars (Lewis, 2015; Tarlo, 2010) have begun to study religion and market economy. They focus mainly on religious uses of marketing techniques, commodification of religion and transformation of religious clothing into fashion practice. In sociology of religion, marketisation and its dynamics have been taken into consideration only recently by authors who integrate the theorisation of religion with that of the consumer society (Gauthier, 2020; Gauthier, Martikainen, & Woodhead, 2013; Woodhead, 2012). These authors argue that, since the 1960s, with the consolidation of the welfare state, religion has no longer been confined to the domain of religious institutions: it has become market-based. It has appeared in libraries or media and has adopted entrepreneurial principles. Furthermore, the authors show how consumerism as the current *zeitgeist* shapes religion into a lifestyle with dominant consumer values such as materialism, commoditisation, hedonism, freedom, choice, self-realization (cf. Slater, 1997).

However, case studies on the interaction between religion and consumerism are scarce in works by sociologists of religion. To redress this significant gap in sociology of religion and advance theorisation in studies of consumer culture, my paper aims to discuss how religion intertwines with consumer culture focusing on religious practices. It uses the theorisation of consumer culture as a market-based set of practices, representations and values (Lury, 2011; Sassatelli, 2007; Slater, 1997). This approach will also highlight similarities between religious and non-religious practices within consumer culture. The goal of the paper is to contribute to the discussion regarding body transformation and uses of the body in consumer culture. Consumer culture and consumerism, as its dominant cultural ethos, constitute here a common cultural ground for different body practices including religious ones. These practices are sometimes consumption practices.

The analysis of Buddhist practices is taken as an example of religious practices. It can be particularly illuminating due to the connection of Buddhism to consumer culture in light of the popularity of Buddhism in the media (Tweed, 2008) and its place in visual branding (Borup, 2016; Irizarry, 2015; Mitchell, 2012). Symbols of Buddha or a Buddhist monk in meditation and the notion of "Zen" have become synonyms for relaxation and well-being.

METHODOLOGY

The paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork on convert Buddhism (Prebish, 1993) in Buddhist organisations in France and the Czech Republic between 2010 and 2013. These organisations were non-profit associations that offered several Buddhist activities and objects on the market. The study

employed a combination of participative observation during regular and festive Buddhist activities, informal discussions and semi-directed interviews. While acknowledging the possibility of national differences, the study did not focus on comparing between French and Czech Buddhist experiences. It favoured the approach of "methodological cosmpolitism" (Beck & Sznaider, 2006) with consumer culture as the common background. The data were then treated in Atlas.ti.

BUDDHISTS PRACTICES AND THEIR SECULAR PARALLELS

Drawing on this fieldwork, this paper analyses everyday Buddhist practices such as sitting and walking meditation and Buddhist mantra and text recitations. It shows how these practices were central to individual identity and the newly adopted religious lifestyle. These time-consuming activities were embodied respecting orthopraxy because they were perceived as transformative for personal well-being, development and life satisfaction. As religious practices, they were understood as methods that bring ideals, stability and a holistic perception of the self to practitioners' everyday life.

The paper also examines parallels with body transformations in consumer culture (Featherstone, 1982; Ghigi & Sassatelli, 2018; Thompson & Hirschman, 1995), in particular with body-modification practices such as fitness practices (Sassatelli, 2010; Cederström & Spicer, 2015) and mindfulness practices (Borup, 2016; Cabanas & Illouz, 2019; Garnoussi, 2012; Kabat-Zin, 1994; Purser, 2019).

SHARED CONSUMER AND MIDDLE-CLASSED VALUES

While discussing common values linked to consumer culture, it questions their neo-liberal subjectivities (autonomy and personal responsibility) and the consistency with middle-class worldview and resources. Finally, it examines the pertinence of the religious/secular divide in light of the religious origins of mindfulness and the holistic aspect of body-transformation practices.

Overall, this study could contribute to our understanding of the growth of some body-transformation practices and the growing popularity of mindfulness and other meditation practices beyond the religious domain, in marketing or management. If advertising is still dominated by the idealised and beautiful body, it may also convey a religious aspect of life.

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(Il)Legitimate in the Homeland? The Co-Construction of a Collective Consumer Identity of Repatriate Migrants

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Recently, countries all over the world have begun to invite emigrants to return to their home countries, motivated to counter shrinking populations, by labor shortage or the wish to reunite their people. Because of the favorable starting position vis-à-vis other migrants, one would expect that these returnees adapt easily to the consumer culture back home and will be seamlessly accepted. However, exploring the case of ethnic German repatriates from the former Soviet Union – in whose case consumption was operationalized as a legitimacy criterion –, we found out that their public collective consumer identity is rather negative instead.

Most scholars have studied one-way, permanent migration from home to host country; much less is known about other migration patterns such as return migration and reacculturation in the homeland (Ndione, Rémy, and Bah 2017). Moreover, extant consumer acculturation literature has increasingly moved from investigating consumers' individual-level experiences and outcomes (Peñaloza 1994) to exploring relational (Luedicke 2015), structural (Üstüner and Holt 2007), and institutional influences (Veresiu and Giesler 2018). The latter have been portrayed as internally conflict-free, patterning consumer experience (Üstüner and Holt 2007) or prescribing a consumer identity without granting migrants much influence in shaping it (Veresiu and Giesler 2018).

How did the Germans mentioned above become Russians in the public view? In order to examine this phenomenon, we ask the following research questions. Which forces and dynamics are involved in the co-construction of the collective consumer identity of repatriates? What is the role of consumption and markets in this process? Addressing these questions, we illuminate the dynamic co-construction of migrants' collective consumer identity, which is especially interesting in the underresearched context of repatriate migration, "the return of ethnic minorities to their historic homelands" (Remennick 2003, 24), often from the diaspora (Brubaker 2005). We also discover that, contrary to extant literature, institutional influences might actually be of a contradictory nature. We do not just answer Veresiu and Giesler's (2018) and Askegaard and Linnet's (2011) calls for further research embracing institutional frameworks, but we also respond to the conference's invitation to engage with macro-level approaches.

Theoretically, we build on legitimation and delegitimation, the process of granting or withdrawing legitimacy (Suddaby, Bitektine, and Haack 2017). According to Berger and Luckmann (1966), legitimation entails both cognitive explanation and normative justification, and may be given regulatively through laws and regulations (Scott 2001). Delegitimation is not just the withdrawal of legitimacy, but may also be associated with stigmatization (Suddaby et al. 2017), the process of labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination (Link and Phelan 2001).

Our concrete context is the repatriate migration of ethnic Germans from the former Soviet Union. Their migration history predominantly started in 1763, when Empress Catherine the Great invited foreign settlers to colonize the vast lands. After periods of success and discrimination, most settlers were allowed to leave the diaspora and return home around the time of the fall of the Iron Curtain. Nowadays, repatriates from the former Soviet Union constitute the second largest group of people with migration background in Germany (Federal Administration Office 2019).

In terms of method, our ethnography contains triangulated interview, field, archival, and netnographic data. Inerviews are our main data source. 47 interviews were conducted with institutional representatives, indigenous consumers, and repatriate consumers. Field data include 551 photographs and videos taken during observations in the marketplace and at events. Archival data include 197 newspaper articles and 13 court judgments. Data have been analyzed in an interative process, adhering to Thompson's (1997) principles.

Our findings contain two parts. First of all, we give a historical overview, distinguishing five phases in which repatriates' collective consumer identity has taken important terms, ranging from anticipation to replacement. Second of all, our findings show that four forces – policy-making, market exchange, repatriate institutional work, and repatriate consumer practices – both legitimize and delegitimize repatriate consumers in the collective identity co-constitution trajectory. These four forces are intensified by amplifying forces – media discourse, territory, language, and marketplace sentiments. Delegitimation dominates these dynamics, as we found much evidence of stigmatization in the form of labeling, stereotyping,

separation, status loss, and discrimination (Link and Phelan 2001). Thus, the broader societal identity ascribed to repatriates is polysemic at best, and outright negative at worst. Furthermore, we show that the forces are contradictory, exhibiting both legitimizing and delegitimizing potential. In the following, two key forces are explained in more detail.

In terms of legitimation, policy-making has granted high regulative legitimacy to repatriates. They were given immediate German citizenship and various financial benefits, as well as the opportunity to change their first name to a typical German one. Remarkably, the state operationalized consumption as a legitimacy criterion. Only in case Germans had consumed in a specific way in the former Soviet Union and its successor states (for instance cooking German meals and celebrating German traditions) and formulated these consumption habits during the application process, they counted as "proof of Germanness" and the migrants were allowed to repatriate. At the same time, this legitimation was delegitimizing, since the state legitimized a version of German consumer culture from 250 years ago, as the consumer culture had not developed much over time in the German diaspora communities. Also, public authorities did not recognize the majority of qualifications, which is why most repatriates have worked in lower-level positions, sometimes unrelated to their former occupation (Federal Employment Agency 2007), further decreasing their public image. In terms of market exchange, repatriate consumers coming from a socialist or transitioning economic system were suddenly able to participate in a capitalist market system. Since the late 90s, stores and supermarkets with products primarily known in the former Soviet Union with Cyrillic labels have appeared in many German cities, which are on the one hand an expression of the newly gained market freedom, on the other hand they have contributed to segregation, since indigenous consumers are mostly sceptical of these stores. Also, repatriates made discriminatory experiences with the market, as they were, for instance, due to their lacking consumer skills, exploited by sly salesmen.

Our paper is relevant for various audiences. It gives actors in policy-making a complete picture of the dynamics at work in terms of repatriates' collective consumer identity. Even though many policymakers call repatriates the poster child of integration or admit that they have fallen into oblivion, it should serve them as a reminder that repatriates are to a large extent not fully accepted members of the local society. Government officials should sensitize newly repatriating migrants about the fact that the maintained German consumer culture is not likely to correspond to contemporary consumer culture anymore. Findings also show that indigenous consumers have very little knowledge about repatriates' background, which is why we suggest to include it in history lessons at school. Our findings also allow marketers within the repatriate marketplace to reflect upon their own offerings and inform them how these are viewed by indigenous consumers. They should invest in making their stores and advertising material more attractive for indigenous consumers as well as training their frontline employees. Last but not least, the findings are relevant for repatriates who will benefit from a hopefully higher understanding of their history.

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Exploring the construction of the consumer subject in the healthcare system

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INTRODUCTION

Recent scholarship has investigated many ways consumers' behavior constructs identity (Tumbat and Belk, 2013) and transforms market, shapeing offerings (Dolbec and Fischer, 2015; Martin and Schouten 2014; Scaraboto and Fischer, 2012). Further, the development of the consumer subject has been explored in historical contexts of resistance (Karababa and Ger, 2011), and identified as something that is both created and affected by moralistic regimes of governance (Giesler and Veresiu, 2013). However, previous work largely looks at consumers in situations where they have the capacity to develop and use their own agency, and has paid little attention to situations of vulnerability in which consumer competences, assets and power are highly threatened (Hamilton, Dunnett and Piacentini, 2016).

Through three presentations, this session explores the creation of the consumer subject and the activities of that subject within the healthcare system, a context that highlights consumer behavior in an inherently vulnerable state. Visconti (2016, p.371) defines consumer vulnerability as a "market condition exposing one or more individuals to the risk of obtained limited utility from market transactions, with implications for their well-being." Consumers in healthcare contexts are especially vulnerable (Asbring and Narvaren, 2002; Charmaz, 1999; Mason and Pavia, 2016; Pavia, 1993; Soderberg et al. 1999), because they lack expertise, they are stressed, physically in pain and in many cases, they are dealing with multiple complex social issues as well, including poverty and financial hardship, complicated family situations, declining mental facilities, and isolation. Further, critical reflection has been developed in the healthcare literature (Foucault, 1988), in particular, on public and private healthcare institutions which ask consumers to become more agentic in their relationship to healthcare (Brown and Baker, 2012; Giesler and Veresiu, 2013; Lupton, 1997b). In this special session, we draw on these two perspectives to present current research, and encourage future research on the agency of healthcare consumers, being *a priori* defined as vulnerable. Instead of considering that these consumers experience a holistic reduction in consumer agency (Baker, LaBarge and Baker, 2016) or that their experience of empowerment is exclusively determined by patient responsibilisation (Gabe, Harley and Calnan, 2015), we explore the various activities, roles, expectations and experiences of people that define them as consumers in the healthcare system. We therefore offer a more nuanced account of the reflexive healthcare consumer (Dunnett, Brownlie and Hewer, 2011; Lupton, 1997a; Schneider-Kamp and Askegaard, 2019; Thompson, 2005).

In detail, the first paper uses assemblage theory to understand how patients can live with the challenges of life-threatening illness, and in which way the market interacts in the experience of illness to create conditions of hope for patients. The second paper explores the role of digital technologies in supporting care processes for vulnerable consumers such as elderly consumers, and argues for viewing technology as a fourth actor complementing the elderly consumption ensemble. The third paper investigates at how the construction of the healthcare consumer subject is influenced by conflicting logics, by exploring the ways medical and social logics operate and complement each other in a "transitory space" meant to treat vulnerable people. To close the session, Søren Askegaard, from the University of Southern Denmark, will serve as discussant. His expertise on consumers' identity projects and his focus on healthcare interactions will be particularly valuable to engage a discussion on the theoretical implications of the construction of the consumer subject in the healthcare system.

ASSEMBLAGES OF HOPE: SUSTAINING HOPE IN THE CONTEXTE OF LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESS

This study explores healthcare through the lens of illness experience, under conditions of responsibilisation (Anderson et al., 2016; Giesler and Veresiu, 2014). We use theories of assemblage to map out how patients gather and collate resources to sustain a sense of hope. We ask, how do healthcare consumers assemble and reassemble hope in the shifting context of life-threatening illness? Our context is people living with incurable cancer, accessed through a network of patient-led support groups. Chronic forms of cancer move in and out of remission and patients go through periods of treatment and recovery. (Re)assembling hope is therefore crucial, as the contours of illness are shifting and hope has been linked to survival and quality of life (Novas, 2006). We break down hope to view how it is constructed, affected and enacted, moving beyond the idea that it is an inner sense of optimism or goal oriented sentiment (MacInnis and de Mello 2005), to show that it is a complex and shifting arrangement between embodied experience, illness culture and market logics. This study has been conducted through extended, and ongoing, engagement in the field. Data collection has taken place in North America since 2006, through field visits, non-participant observation at support group meetings and depth interviews. MacInnis and de Mello (2005, p12) define hope as "*a positively valenced emotion whose intensity is a function of the extent to which a goal-congruent outcome is yearned for and appraised as uncertain but possible*". This psychological perspective is complemented by more culturally oriented research that reveals the collective nature of constructing, sustaining and expressing hope (Wang, Joy and Sherry, 2013; Beruchashvili, Moisio and Gentry, 2015). Resonating with the responsible consumer (Giesler and Veresiu, 2014), Novas (2006) explores "*the political economy of hope*" within healthcare support groups to refer to the hope invested in medical science through patient activism. We extend existing research on hope by adopting an assemblage theoretic approach.

Assemblages are arrangements of diverse and evolving components (DeLanda 2006), a perspective that resonates well with how hope is sustained through an amalgamation of physical, social, material and spatial relations (Duff 2015). Epp and Velagaleti (2014) present care assemblages as structures over which consumers have some control, whereas our context shows much is out of control and we explore conditions under which assemblages of hope are unstable and prone to dissipation or rupture. Our findings add nuance to depictions of the healthcare consumer, which have largely focused on co-creation and resource integration (Mc-Coll-Kennedy et al; Anderson et al. 2016). In the assemblage of hope we identify the interplay between markets and the embodied experience of illness and its treatment. Hence the logics of the pharmaceutical market, healthcare providers and medical insurers, jostle with those of the wider illness culture, support group community and embodied knowledge. We conjecture that conditions of responsibilisation (Giesler and Veresiu, 2014) are central to this particular assemblage, creating, as they do, the healthcare consumer as choosing, empowered subject. Indeed, we find that, for this community, hope is located in the bio-medical model rather than alternative or complementary approaches. Reflexive doubt (Thompson 2005), instead of turning the consumer away from the mainstream marketplace, encourages the seeking of optimal resources within. Hence, assemblages of hope are largely located in market logics (rather than for example, forms of spirituality) and sustain a sense that solutions can be found. The marketplace, thus, has a therapeutic function (Higgins and Hamilton, 2019) and is used to redress the uncertainty of illness. Assemblages of hope, collectively and individually, overcome the negative discourse of cancer and disrupt the hegemony of medical and scientific certainties. This assemblage changes epistemology, from incurable, life-threatening cancer to treatable, chronic condition. An implication for both patients and practitioners is that it may be challenging to move the subject of hope from treatment to palliation and the timing of this transition may be contested.

CONSTRUCTING THE VULNERABLE CONSUMER SUBJECT: DIGITALIZATION OF EVERYDAY HOME CARE

The proliferation of mobile and Internet-of-Things (IoT) technologies provides opportunities for increasing consumers' involvement in everyday health management by creating a participatory culture (Appelboom et al., 2014). While these digital opportunities are naturally taken up by more educated and resourceful consumers (Goldstein & Bowers, 2015), their adoption by vulnerable health consumers (Hare et al., 2013) is less straightforward. Elderly consumers are often vulnerable due to deteriorating physical and mental abilities and unable to "consume independently" (Barnhart and Penaloza, 2013).

In this context, the construction of the vulnerable consumer subject integrates other instituents such as family members, friends, and home care providers. This conglomeration is referred to as the "elderly consumption ensemble" by Barnhart and Peñaloza (2013). This study investigates the construction of the vulnerable consumer subject in light of the digitalization of everyday home care through mobile and IoT technologies. As a case, we consider an IoT sensor-based solution for monitoring elderly consumers living independently in their homes. This solution integrates with the mobile devices of family members, friends, and care professionals and notifies these in an appropriate order in case the system suspects that the elderly consumer is in need of help. Through an ethnographic study, we collected qualitative data in 2018/19 as part of a collaborative research project studying the impact of integrating IoT technologies into healthcare processes, providing access to the field of vulnerable health consumption with its ethical challenges. The ethnographic methods allowed to uncover subject experiences of health consumers (Charmaz & Olesen, 1997) and included

extended home visits with observations and in-depth interviews with elderly consumers living at home. In the spirit of Barnhart and Peñaloza's (2013) work, we also recruited informants from the close network of the elderly consumers (Bell et al., 2017). In addition, expert interviews with a general practitioner and the producers of the technology informed the study.

The analysis yielded a spectrum of six consumer priorities regarding the integration of healthcare technologies in everyday health management: *protection* (safety from health hazards, secure environment), *trust* (reliance on others, reliance on care processes), *connection* (being part of something, not feeling alone), *efficiency* (saving time, saving resources, saving efforts), *support* (solving everyday challenges, pragmatic benefits), and *user-friendliness* (accessible, stable, and easy-to-use technology). The priorities of the vulnerable consumers, their close network, and care professionals are found to be guided by a set of differing normative philosophical ethics: *deontological ethics*, which judge actions based on whether they are right and moral; *utilitarian ethics*, which judge actions solely on whether their outcome provides value for society at large; and *pragmatist ethics*, which judges actions based on a flexible and developing set of norms, principles, and moral criteria (Cornelius, 2002).

These results give rise to a model for the construction of the vulnerable consumer subject in the presence of integrated digital technologies, defining the tensions of moral obligation, alienation, convenience, and enticement spanning the four actors: vulnerable consumers, close network, healthcare professionals, and technologies. This model generalizes Barnhart and Peñaloza's (2013) elderly consumption ensemble to vulnerable consumers and extended it by technologies as the fourth group of actors. Inspired by Kozinets's (2008) semiotic square model for the ideological field of technology, the three guiding care ethics are supplemented by the complementarity of emotion, yielding a four-pronged support for the model and allowing to likewise embed it in a semiotic square.

CONFLICTING INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS AT PLAY IN THE DEFINITION OF THE HEALTHCARE CONSUMER

Institutional logics are the shared understandings of legitimate organizational behavior (Scott 1995; Press et al. 2014). Dealing with conflicting logics is challenging for organizational members who are the ones enacting their particular institutional logics (Battilana and Dorado 2010; Glynn, 2000; Heimer, 1999; Zilber, 2002). Past work addresses how conflicting logics are navigated (Reay and Hinings 2009; Battilana and Dorado 2010), identifying different strategies individuals use to navigate these conflicts and how individual actions can add up to meaningful changes (Reay et al. 2006). What is not discussed is how these conflicting logics define the space and desirable behavior for individuals.

Our study focuses on a structure called the "health-solidarity network" (HSN), funded in 2005 in a region of France, and which gathers several organizations – public hospitals, NGOs in the field of health, and city office. The healthcare system in France is a hybrid public-private system. To access the mainstream system, consumers must have a state-issued "health card." The purpose of HSN is to serve those who do not have their health card and thus can only access emergency care, such as migrants and the homeless. The ultimate goal is to get the vulnerable consumers it serves out of the HSN and back into the mainstream healthcare path, through curing their important health issues and getting them the mainstream healthcare path. However, it is not clear that all HSN users want this outcome. We explore how the conflicting logics of a health care network define the healthcare consumer space. In particular, we explore the different discourses among participants in the network, how they are presented to each other and the implications and outcomes for the network users. A first wave of data collection has been conducted, through 12 long interviews (McCracken, 1988) with actors implied in the network (social workers, practitioners, health coordinators) and a set of non-participant observations during the network's meetings when the actors discuss about complex patient cases. A hermeneutic analysis (Thompson, 1997) has been conducted, which reveals the conflicting notions of patient choice and constraints in this healthcare system.

The mainstream healthcare system (MHS) contains a medical logic and a social logic. The first logic focuses on finding a cure for immediate health issues, in increasingly constrained time slots. The second logic focuses on demonstrating compassion towards people while navigating complex socio-economic problems. The HSN tries to bring these logics together to address health issues of people who are excluded from the MHS. By doing this, the HSN creates what we call a "transitory healthcare consumer space." However, the HSN itself also harbors conflicting logics. The actors of the HSN consider the space they create as transitory, highlighting that it should help patients overcome their past, largely negative, experiences with the MHS by giving them a positive experience of healthcare. Providers in the HSN want patients to become autonomous in resolving their health issues and try to get these users health cards. Therefore, the HSN is seen as a transitory space that leads toward integration into the MHS. However, users of the HSN have their own logic. Their social, family and economic situations, as well as previous negative experiences with the MHS, influence whether they want to move toward the MHS. Ultimately, HSN users can choose which health system prefer to use, pushing back against the transitory nature of the space created by HSN providers.

Our research contributes to a discussion on how institutional logics (Pache and Santos, 2013) create outcomes for users, here, by obliging them to enter the MHS. While the

HSN is aimed at improving the well-being of patients, it leads to unintended consequences (Ringold, 2002) such as eroding the trust of HSN users by urging them to assimilate to a health culture they do not qualify for, are not able to navigate, and do not want to adopt.

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Stealing the Thunder: Reverse Proposals that Break the Script

Vera Hoelscher & Daniela Pirani

Abstract— Traditionally, marriage proposals are initiated by men. This research considers reverse proposals and how deviant gender performances are evaluated within consumer culture. Beginning with 'mangagement rings' as symbolic objects worn by men to signal their intent to marry the giver of the ring, this research explores how the heteronormative consumption of wedding traditions is changing in the light of emancipation from gendered norms. (*Abstract*)

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Introduction & Research Questions

This paper looks at deviant performances of gender within the highly heteronormative institution of marriage proposals. Beginning with the symbolic object of the mangagement ring, defined as rings worn by men to outwardly symbolise their intent to marry the giver, we explore how the institution of marriage is reshaped within the social imaginary (Taylor, 2004). Historically, discussions on engagement rings and marriage proposals have mainly focussed on heteronormative practices (Howard, 2008; Ogletree, 2010; Otnes & Scott, 1996; Sassler & Miller, 2011). Yet, with the advent of fourth wave feminism, the #MeToo movement and the rise of same-sex marriage, this is changing.

This involves an exploration of how gender performances change in the context of the restrictive social institution of marriage. Consumer culture and its institutions not only rely 'rules, norms, and cultural-cognitive beliefs', but also on material resources and their associated consumption patterns (Scott, 2013: 15). Thus, we probe and assess the repeated activities and symbolic practices that outwardly form part of social life and herewith enshrine institutionalised perspectives on acceptable conduct.

As part of an exploratory, qualitative study, we consider the experiences of women proposing to their male partners, and how this might disrupt heteronormative practices of engagements and marriage. We adopt a qualitative study that combines a netnography with in-depth interviews to understand if niche-market practices reinforce or downplay mainstream ones. Our leading research questions are: how do women negotiate gender conformity when proposing? How does this affect the heteronormative underpinning of marriage as an institution?

Literature Review and Context

Marriage as an institution has lost its near-compulsory status as the basis for sexual relationships, living together, and rearing children (Carter & Duncan, 2017). Instead, it is now often perceived as an aspirational consumption spectacle amounting in lavish and often hyper-gendered weddings (Otnes & Pleck, 2003). As the first milestone within the gendered consumption of weddings, engagement ring gifting traditions have received a considerable amount of attention within the literature (Howard, 2008; Ogletree, 2010). Debates cover diamond rings as a quintessential part of the wedding industry (Bergstein, 2017), criticisms of the sexist societal structures that reinforce the narrative of women playing the waiting game (Sassler & Miller, 2011), and the legalities enshrined in engagement ring giving (Brinig & Dame, 1990). What unites these debates is their heteronormative narrative of women being the receivers of engagement rings, and men being their buyers.

Akin to Scaraboto and Fischer's 2013 JCR article exploring market choices for marginalised consumers, we employ institutional theory as a lens for how consumption practices can change in the context of highly gendered and emotionally-charged consumer goods. Scott and Meyer (1994) posit that distinct types of institutions together determine norms that are widely accepted, practiced, and form the expected standard of conduct. There are three-fold mechanisms at play in enforcing these norms according to institutional theory: the regulative, or the power that is held by legislation (such as laws pertaining to marriage equality), the normative, or the hold institutions have over consumers by setting a standard of social obligation (such as religious institutions and vendors within the wedding industry), and finally the cognitive or how the prevalence of a practice influences consumers to accept it as the expected conduct (such as men buying their fiancées brilliant-cut, solitaire-style diamond engagement rings).

As relationships and gender roles are changing, a sub-set of consumers no longer want to prescribe to the heteronormativity inherent in the scripted ritual of a modern marriage proposal. Butler's (2002) concept of gender as performance postulates that it is not our biological differences, but the culture within which we are raised that shape norms of "ideal" gender behaviour. Gender is thus performed rather than inherited. These all-pervasive modes of consumption can trigger outward rejection by subgroups of consumers, who perceive dominant collective gendered performances as 'smothering' in that they are so 'normative that celebrators assume participation, or at least acceptance, presumptively including those who do not celebrate' (cf. Levey, 2006; Weinberger, 2015: 378). These sub-sets of consumers do not themselves lie outside of the realm of symbolic consumption but can create their own liminal spaces within which new rituals may be established (Bradford & Sherry, 2015). These gendered practices utilise symbolic material resources of their own, subverting pre-existing product categories and consumption spaces to re-appropriate them.

METHODOLOGY

Our paper rests on a hermeneutically-grounded framework that places consumption practices as central to cultural conditions and personal narratives (Thompson, 1997). We thus devised a qualitative, exploratory methodology involving two-phases. During the first phase we conducted a netnography according to Kozinets (2010) that included wedding blogs, discussion forums about reverse proposals, and a content analysis of @HowTheyProposed, the leading Instagram profile for proposals. Instead of observing a community, we treated these spaces as those of a public catalysed by a shared interest in a specific consumption practice, producing and elaborating on a social imaginary (Taylor, 2004). The data collected included screenshots of relevant posts, comments sections of newspaper articles, and forum text discussing reverse proposals. These data allowed us to grasp the dominant discussions within the field, which we were able to follow up in the second research phase comprised of 20 in-depth interviews with women, who had proposed marriage to their male partners. All research participants were sampled in a purposive manner (Bryman & Bell, 2007) and written consent was obtained prior to the interviews. Our open-ended question guide aimed to further probe the themes emergent from the first phase. We analysed this data with the help of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and employed NVivo as an organisational tool.

FINDINGS AND CONSIDERATIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

Our findings suggest that reverse proposals challenge the traditionally male domain of the marriage proposal and renegotiate its gendered meaning. Yet, while women proposing to their male partners introduce new practices within their social circles via the means of cognitive isomorphism (Scott & Meyer, 1994), this was hindered by the normative isomorphism of mainstream institutions within the wedding industry. In this, reverse proposals also demonstrate that gender performances that deviate from the standardised heteronormative conduct often replicate, rather than challenge, the imaginary of weddings. Through drawing on and re-appropriating, the symbolic and performative elements of choreographed wedding traditions, legitimacy for reverse proposals is sought. We therefore move towards a feminist critique of institutional theory that suggests the need for gendered practices to inform our understanding of how normative institutions still perpetually manifest societal norms. This derives urgency from a new 'moral order' (Taylor, 2004: 2).

Crucially, this divergence from the accepted institutionalised norm of men proposing to women questions the legitimacy of the male gender as playing the active part in how a heterosexual relationship progresses. Altering the institution of marriage by moving away from traditional, heteronormative engagements removes men from the seat of power with regards to the pace at and direction into which a relationship is evolving. The legalisation of queer marriage has further introduced new conundrums into who is to take the first step towards marriage in non-heteronormative relationships. "Deviant" proposals are on the rise, opening a new market and understanding of gendered performances within the wedding industry.

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Vegan Communities Under The Light of Consumer Culture Theory

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Abstract— The paper examines creation, retention and consumer's interactions processes in consumption communities, based on Consumer Culture Theory, consumption communities' and vegan communities' literature. This is an in progress work aimed at contributing to marketing research with the definition of consumer typologies and community retention mechanisms applicable to other research contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980's, the visions of consumer behaviour shifted from the traditional views of consumers as isolated individuals who seek utility maximization to the study of the symbolic aspects of marketing with the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). One of the main theoretical frameworks analysed in consumer culture theory is marketplace culture, which is connected to the constitution of consumption communities.

At the same time, ethical and political concerns are increasingly putting pressure on brands (Cherry, 2015). In this context, and since brands are the result of value co-creation experiences (Payne, Storbacka, Frow, & Knox, 2009; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004) and activities (Merz, He, & Vargo, 2009), it is important for marketers to understand how consumption communities are born and sustained over time, and in particular the role that consumers' interactions play in sustaining them. Since vegan consumption is an actual phenomenon and is increasing every day (Cherry, 2015), it constitutes a good case to analyse the "life" of consumption communities, in terms of how they work and of the types of consumers inside of the communities.

This paper examines the theoretical backgrounds of consumer culture theory, consumption communities and vegan communities. This in progress study aims to provide a template for other consumption communities' studies, by analyzing how communities are created and sustained, as well as by generating typologies of consumers that can be applied to future studies.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

CCT is a multidisciplinary approach, grouped in four research domains: (1) consumer identity projects; (2) marketplace cultures; (3) the socio-historical patterning of consumption; and (4) mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretive strategies. In what concerns marketplace cultures, consumers are seen as culture producers rather than simply culture bearers. (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). The division is not static and a phenomenon can be analysed through several frameworks (Joy & Li, 2012).

The coproductive activities by consumers and marketers are studied by consumer culture theorists in terms of consumer collectives or communities (Schau, Muñiz, & Arnould, 2009). Canniford (2011) distinguishes among three types of consumption communities: subcultures of consumption, brand communities and consumer tribes. The main body of the literature in the field is concerned with brand communities (Canniford, 2011; Goulding, Shankar, & Canniford, 2013). Hook, Baxter, & Kulczynski (2018) define the antecedents and consequences for brand community participation. The antecedents can be related to the pursuit of individual (self-related) or social benefits (social-related); or in relation to the search for information, entertainment and technological features (information-related, entertainment-related and technology-related, respectively). The consequences of brand community participation include, among others, commitment, integration and loyalty to the brand community, as well as, word of mouth and recommendation to others (Hook et al., 2018).

Since many consumption communities are not focused around a brand, more recent research is related to consumer tribes (Canniford, 2011; Goulding et al., 2013). Vegan communities can be seen as consumer tribes, since there is an interaction with different brands, products, activities and services. Veganism can be defined as a life without reliance on animal products, generally related to eating, which can be gradually extended to all possible sorts of consumption, such as toiletries, clothing, among others (Arppe, Mäkelä, & Va, 2011; Cherry, 2015). There are three main motivations behind suppressing meat consumption: concern with health, environment and animal welfare (Armstrong Soule & Sekhon, 2019). Cherry (2015) outlines three aspects of consumers' change to a vegan lifestyle and how this change is maintained: recruitment, social support and retention, and the "virtuous circle" of veganism. Recruitment generally involves reading about animal cruelty and cookbooks, among others; or is related to a catalytic experience, according to McDonald (2000, cited by Cherry, 2015). Maintenance of a vegan lifestyle is further facilitated by the social support from friends and family (Cherry, 2015). Moreover, inside vegan social networks and groups, members are informed about practices and shape their identity as according to them (Cherry, 2015; Arppe et al., 2011), forming a "virtuous circle" of acceptable behaviour (Cherry, 2015).

Main Objective and Research Question

The main purpose of this research is to analyse an online consumption community under the light of consumer culture theory in order to establish a typology of consumers regarding their different styles of interaction within the community. The study aims at understanding how a vegan community is born and keeps active on social media and how their members stay engaged. The categorization of consumers according to their community interaction can contribute to analyse consumers in other consumption contexts, as suggested by Belk and Sobh (2019). Therefore, it contributes to the consumer culture theory and to marketplace cultures from a consumer point of view, specifically in the context of social media interactions. Another expected contribution of this study is to expand the theoretical frameworks presented by Arnould and Thompson in 2005.

Research proposes to analyse the vegan community through the four main theoretical frameworks proposed by Arnould and Thompson in 2005. A community can only be sustained through its practices, as defined by Schau et al. (2009). Moreover, according to Arvidsson and Caliandro (2016), consumers create value for brands through their community participation. Hence, this research will examine the development of a vegan community, its sustainability, by observing its members, in particular, their level of engagement within the community. The main study's research question is: How can a vegan community endure over time and boost the engagement of its members?

Conclusion

The paper analyses the concepts of consumer culture theory, consumption/brand communities and vegan communities. Departing from a vegan community context, this research aims to identify typologies of consumers in vegan communities and clarify the way in which consumption communities are created and sustained. This research presents a limitation: as the empirical study focus on an online community, differences on the offline behaviour of consumers are not considered. Nevertheless, this work attempts to serve as a template that can be extended to analyse other online consumption communities and the respective consumers in their symbolic particularities, thus advancing research in CCT and consumption communities.

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"If I had lived on my own, I could be vegan" – Negotiating competing moralities within family food practices

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Abstract— The increasing plurality of consumption moralities in modern societies necessitates a deeper understanding of how competing moralities around consumption can be handled. Having to accommodate multiple moral demands within their shared food consumption, families present an especially meaningful context to explore the potential coexistence of competing moralities. Therefore, we ask how families handle competing moralities concerning their everyday food consumption. Findings based on ethnographic data from 10 Swedish families accommodating vegans and non-vegans show that categorical moralities and the mutual moral responsibilities within families require strategies different from those previously identified. We also find that families negotiate not only the 'right' way to eat, but the 'right' way to live together. Analytically separating moral 'procedural' norms of social conduct from personal ethical visions of the good life, we propose that families may handle irresolvable moral consumption conflicts by instead focusing on the meta-level of family ethics and the practical level of food provisioning. Our findings extend existing research on consumer morality and ethical as well as family food consumption.

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INTRODUCTION

The urgent need to change our current unsustainable consumption levels has brought ethical and moral aspects of consumption to the fore, especially the question of what constitutes 'good' consumption. Due to the increasing plurality of moral guidelines in modern societies (Bauman, 2009), a deepened understanding of how competing consumption moralities can be handled is needed (Luetchford, 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Moralities are defined as specific normative principles of good/bad that are employed to judge or justify objects, people, or practices (Caruana, 2007a, Caruana, 2007b, Askegaard et al., 2014). We argue that families represent a meaningful context to explore the potential coexistence of competing consumption moralities as they need to accommodate a range of these within their shared consumption practices – for example regarding the family dinner (Cappellini et al., 2016, Coveney, 2006, Epp & Price, 2018). Secondly, having to prioritise between moralities of e.g. the environment, animal welfare, health, 'proper' food, or thrift (Askegaard et al., 2014, Stamer, 2018, Watson & Meah, 2012) results in both intrapersonal dilemmas and interpersonal conflicts within families (Carrington et al., 2015).

Perceiving of individuals as autonomous, rational, self-interested, and fully responsible for the consequences of their consumption (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giesler & Veresiu, 2014), the ethical consumption literature has though rarely investigated how families negotiate competing moral demands. Instead, it has identified individual strategies such as balancing moral demands with personal preferences (Chatzidakis et al., 2007), presenting oneself as morally superior (Caruana et al., 2019), or denigrating those perceived as morally superior (Minson & Monin, 2012).

Acknowledging the moral character of social obligations (Held, 2006), the consumer morality and family consumption literature finds however that parents tend to prioritise being a 'good parent' over competing moral demands of being healthy

or ethical consumers (Molander, 2011, Heath et al., 2016, Shaw et al., 2016). Ethical consumption and sociological studies touching upon families' moral consumption conflicts have also described strategies of situation-based compromise, where family members somehow settle what moralities to prioritise in a situation (Andersen, 2011, Darmon & Warde, 2016). Other studies found that occasional 'immoral' consumption based on 'authentic' needs, i.e. taste or cravings, may be accepted by other family members (Grauel, 2016) or that families adapt to the moral demands of one member by eating only what suits everyone (Valentine, 1999, Coveney, 2006, Evans, 2012).

However, research explicitly focusing on moral consumption conflicts within families appears largely absent, leaving the question of how families reach such agreements – especially in the face of incommensurable moralities – unanswered. Hence, we ask: how do families handle competing moralities concerning their everyday food consumption?

Further, we argue that the literature has failed to include the competition between larger social imaginaries impacting consumption, such as the neoliberal individual with the right to their own life versus the caring parent/partner, which force families to reconcile mutual support with personal freedom within their collective consumption (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Hence, we employ the theory of Swedish collective individualism (Berggren & Trägårdh, 2006) and Discourse Ethics (Habermas, 1990, 1993), as utilised for consumption issues by Pellandini-Simányi (2014), to theorise our findings.

Context and methodology

Ten Swedish families (8 with children aged 0-15, 4 couples) accommodating both (aspiring) vegans and non-vegans within their shared food routines were followed over ~10 months. This as veganism, being based on the morality of animal rights (Singer, 1995), has been shown to significantly impact food consumption and cause conflict within families (Larsson et al., 2003, Cherry, 2015). Sweden was chosen as the recent rise in veganism has been especially pronounced there (DjurensRätt, 2019, Ipsos, 2019, Livsmedelsföretagen, 2019), and due to its high levels of gender equality and strong social norms.

We employed ethnographic methods of participant and non-participant observation, interviews, and consumer diaries to explore the dynamics of veganism and family food practices.

The data is currently being analysed, following interpretive analysis on a first an intra- and then inter-case-level, prior to connecting the derived interpretations to the larger societal/cultural context (Spradley, 1980, Thompson, 1997).

Findings

Preliminary findings show that strategies different from those previously identified are required within families to handle competing consumption moralities for four reasons: 1. The existence of 'interpersonal moral dilemmas', i.e. feeling morally responsible for a partner's/child's actions without being able to change them, 2. Having to make moral decisions for children and morally educate them exacerbates potential moral conflict between partners, 3. The morally superior/inferior other being a family member invalidates previously identified strategies such as moral denigration and may cause further moral dilemmas, e.g. feeling guilty for morally judging partner/children due to their consumption. 4. Moral beliefs may be categorical, making situation-based compromise impossible. Moreover, these categorical beliefs can invalidate taste/bodily cravings as a legitimate reason for 'immoral' consumption.

We also find that in the cultural context of Sweden, animal rights conflict with a range of societal moralities expressive of collective individualism (Berggren & Trägårdh, 2006). This theory explains how high levels of individual autonomy and low levels of interpersonal dependency are enabled by a strong welfare state and social norms of equality, i.e. the freedom of individual self-realisation requires tolerating others' beliefs. Through norms such as 'avoiding extremes', 'not burdening others with personal choices" or 'respecting others' right to their choices', these moralities are embedded in and reproduced through family food practices. Hence, we show that families not only negotiate the 'right' way to eat, but the 'right' way to live together. Claiming that moral theories in today´s pluralised societies cannot make substantive moral claims, but only procedural claims of how to solve conflict around collective action, Discourse Ethics (Habermas, 1990, 1993) enables us here to analytically separate moral questions concerning universal, procedural norms of the 'right' social conduct from ethical questions of what constitutes the good life/consumption for an individual. Applied to consumption (Pellandini-Simányi, 2014), the core principle that only those norms are valid that are met with the approval of all affected (Habermas, 1990) allows thus to theorise families` handling of competing moralities.

We hence propose that families may handle irresolvable moral consumption conflicts by focusing on 1) the meta-level of family ethics, i.e. the 'right' way of being a Swedish family, and 2) the practical level, i.e. meals that satiate everyone and fairly distributed food work. Within the frame set by these, each family member is then allowed to realize their personal ethical vision of the 'good' way to eat.

Viewed through the lens of Swedish individual collectivism (Berggren & Trägårdh, 2006) we understand thus that family members strive for respect, equality, and support of their individual freedom and ethical beliefs, but also concerning the workload and meals eaten. Prioritising procedural moral issues of how to be a 'good' Swedish partner/parent, as well as practical support, may then lead to reframing so-called 'ethical consumption' as 'egoistic' and hence enables consumers to perceive themselves as moral while excusing or supporting 'immoral' behaviour by family members. The practical level can though also represent a continuation of the underlying moral conflict, as behaviour such as buying/not buying certain produce has the effect of enabling, reinforcing or constraining others' choices by making vegan/non-vegan meals the easiest choice.

In conclusion, our findings extend existing research on ethical, family and food consumption, as well as consumer morality, by offering a deeper understanding of how families handle the competing moralities of their collective consumption.

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Sacrifice and self-image of female consumers in beautification rituals of hair aesthetics procedures

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Abstract— This paper aimed to discuss the ritual consumption of hair straightening from the perspective of individuals' self-image and sacrifice. We can consider that sacrifice is present in several elements of consumption and that individuals maintain different relationships with the objects and services they acquire and experience. The findings pointed the complex intersection between race, beauty, and gender present in the context of the Brazilian culture.

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INTRODUCTION

Influenced by socially imposed aesthetic patterns, some consumers participate in rituals of beauty considered essentials for them. Aesthetic appearance is perceived as a factor of great importance to both personal and group acceptance. Beauty is grasped as both a right and a duty in society, achieved through effort, thus working as a prize for the individual (Lipovetsky and Naranjo, 1999; Edmonds, 2002).

In this sense, consumption can be a way to achieving a transcendental experience, thus acquiring characteristics of the sacred. Individuals act according to passionate and exaggerated behaviors, willing to make sacrifices in order to follow established standards (Belk, 1988). These sacrifices can often be achieved through practices of consumption (Agnew et. al., 1998; Agnew and Etcheverry, 2006).

The consumption ritual is an important aspect to understanding how sacrifice influences both buying behaviors (Belk, 1988) and aesthetic consumption practices. Hence, consumption rituals act as elements that aim to obtain the desired reward. As pointed by Arnould, Price and Zinkhan (2004), consumer practices that concern style, aesthetics, and fashion are often considered to be feminine. Blumberg (1998) points out that in order to expose certain parts of the body such as breasts, abdomen, and legs, some female consumers adopt beauty and diet regimens that require time, self-control, and money spent.

Aesthetic consumption rituals related to women's hair are perceived as a means of enabling group identity (Manning, 2010). Johnson and Bankhead (2014) emphasize that these rituals are also an important aspect of how women perceive themselves and, consequently, their self-image.

Therefore, this research aimed at understanding how sacrifice is related to aesthetic consumption rituals in the pursuit of the desired self-image and idealized beauty standards. To do so, we investigated hair straightening consumption rituals among black female individuals in Brazilian society.

Despite the country's image of a racial democracy, amongst Brazilian popular culture afro-descendance physical features have been historically associated with concepts of ugliness and poverty (Caldwell, 2003). These ideas come from the exploitation of the black population in slavery times and the economic and geographical marginalization of its descendants for centuries after the slavery abolition in 1988 (Gordon, 2013; Andrade, 2013; Jarrín, 2017). This social process reverberated in a 20th century marked by a complex relationship between race, gender, social class, and beauty.

Also, due to the miscegenation phenomenon, many afro descendants still face issues of race identification with black characteristics, leading several of them to a process of whitening their physical features through aesthetics procedures (Edmonds, 2007; Machado-Borges, 2009; Gordon, 2013; Jarrín, 2017). In other words, considering that having a flat nose or a certain type of hair could sometimes devalue the individual amongst other members of this society, some afro descendants who do not consider themselves as being Black, might perform specific consumption practices while attempting to become *whiter*.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical lenses supporting this study consider the body as an important capital (Goldenberg, 2009), while also acknowledging the historical intersection between race and beauty in Brazilian culture. We consider that sacrifices can be made aimed at the cult of body image and that the changes and improvements performed by an individual characterize the body as an object to be sacralized (Raskin and Novacek, 1989). Concomitantly, this phenomenon is paralleled by the fluidity of appearance supported by aesthetic patterns imposed in our consumption society, in which the ephemerality of fashion, media, and advertising, infiltrates the changes amid different rituals of hair aesthetics (Lipovetsky, 2009).

More than as a habit, some women repeat rituals aimed at sending desired social symbolic messages and achieving the ideal self. Individuals undergo sacrificing behaviors, through which it is intended not to show the undertaken effort, but to highlight its result as natural. Beauty can be polysemic, but it consists of a necessary premise in the eyes of society (Rook, 1985; Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry, 1989).

In concern to the individual's self-concept or self-image, this study has adopted the theoretical perspective suggested by Sirgy (1982), which evidences the construction and adaptation of the self according to the societal environment, aspirations, and context. Regarding the concept of sacrifice, the study by Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989), does not clearly exemplify it in consumption; but it differentiates sacred and profane consumption, which serves as a background for understanding that the concept of consumption is surrounded by symbolic meaning; thus, due to the importance it is given by individuals, people can make sacrifices to obtain it. Belk and Coon (1993) and Badje (2005) regard the act of giving as altruist, representing sacrifice. Rook's (1985) seminal work is used as a basis for discussing consumption rituals.

METHOD

To capture female consumers' significance and experiences regarding their hair aesthetics, a basic qualitative approach was adopted. We contacted beauty salons that perform the the hair straightening procedure to indicate possible clients who could answer the interview, as well as people from our own lives (convenience selection). Twenty-two in-depth interviews based on the method of oral history were made with black female consumers.

DISCUSSION

The data collected so far corroborates with previous research, such as Chapman (2007) and Pires and Mocellin (2016) which addressed consumers' capillary transformations.

Straight hair is still perceived as predominantly accepted through diffused socially constructed messages (Chapman, 2007). The market clearly signals that the straight hair pattern is still hegemonic, and women may suffer sanctions for assuming their natural hair. Therefore, the process is not a purely free choice, with the curly hair option always being subject of discussions by third parties (Pires and Mocellin, 2016). Some Black women interviewed stated that they generally had their hair straightened since children, denoting the existing pressures for an aesthetic that would be more appropriate. For them, straight hair would represent a better social representation. One of the respondents admits that the lack of representativity of black women with curly hair during her young age had influenced her to start straightening her hair. Nevertheless, the theoretical discussions of the hereby summoned constructs can also support new insights on the topic. For instance, some of the respondents note that they feel pressured to make the hair transition. For them, assuming the natural hair would also represent a social pressure and they claim not to feel comfortable about this imposition to their identities.

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Navigating Ideal Bodies in Advertising: The Role of Strategic Ideological Filtering in Female Recreational Athletes' Identity Construction

Carly Drake, Scott K. Radford

Fitness advertisements tend to treat the woman's body as a machine, normalizing and prescribing an obsession with athletics for the sake of the "ideal" lean, muscular-but-not-too-muscular shape prized in many athletic contexts. To understand how consumers relate to these advertisements – and to offer an additional perspective to complement research on the often-studied professional sport context – in this study we ask how recreational female athletes construct an embodied sense of self as they engage with images of the female body in fitness advertising. Our data show that participants purposefully employ a process we title "strategic ideological filtering" in order to purposefully negotiate advertising's images of the ideal body. In so doing, they draw upon discourses of bodily perfection; relational learning; and embodied experience.

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INTRODUCTION

Historically, women have faced challenges entering and thriving within sport culture, with mixed results (Brace-Govan 2010). Indeed, women's viability as athletes is often questioned, even when they perform at a high level (Cooky et al. 2015). For example, although women have been competing as professional boxers since the late 1880s, the sport was considered deviant for women and their participation took one hundred years to gain acceptance in North America (Halbert 1997). On the recreational level, although Canadian females take up sport at a young age, they participate in sport at lower rates than males, and their participation drops into adulthood due in part to a lack of social support (O'Reilly et al. 2018).

Despite women's marginalization in sport culture, the female sporting body is especially salient within media and advertising. Analyses of text and images in fitness media illustrate that a woman's value lies in her bodily femininity. For example, images in fitness publications often trivialize women's athletics but sexualize female athletes (Cranmer et al. 2014). Advertisements, in particular, tend to treat the body as a machine, normalizing and prescribing an obsession with athletics for the sake of the "ideal" lean, muscular-but-not-too-muscular shape prized in many athletic contexts (Drake and Radford 2019). These findings operate within a gendered, neoliberal sociocultural moment that "empowers" women to be subjects while discursively maintaining their positions as objects (Gill 2017).

To understand how consumers relate to these images – and to offer an additional perspective to complement research on the often-studied professional sport context – in this study, we ask: how do recreational female athletes construct an embodied sense of self as they engage with images of the female body in fitness advertising? In answering this question, we employ the poststructuralist feminist theory that bodies *become* through other bodies (Coleman 2009). We understand advertising as existing in a mutually influential relationship with consumers' bodies, wherein the boundaries between these entities blur so they can be known, understood, and experienced in relation to each other. This perspective aims to challenge a traditional "media effects model" (e.g., McCracken 1986) that rests more firmly on a unidirectional relationship in which media images affect consumers.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

We use a hermeneutic philosophy and practice to generate a rich understanding of our research topic (Arnold and Fisher 1994; Moules et al. 2015). Our data come from semi-structured, 60- to 90-minute interviews with 26 female recreational endurance runners who live in a large Canadian city. Topics included their exercise habits, relationships with their bodies, and media consumption habits. We also asked

them to evaluate a series of 16 advertisements found in popular North American running magazines, such as *Runner's World*. In keeping with Thompson and colleagues' (1994) guidelines, we interpreted the interview transcripts in an iterative, part-to-whole, fashion punctuated with regular conversation and debate.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Our data show that participants engage in a process we title "strategic ideological filtering" in order to negotiate advertising's images of the ideal body. Through this process, the women assess advertising in order to take up aspects that suit them and discard or modify those that do not. The process has three components that respectively draw upon: discourses of bodily perfection; relational learning; and embodied experience. We will discuss each of these components below.

First, we argue that participants filter advertisements through the competing discourses of bodily perfection and body positivity to construct identities as "healthy." Liz notes that if "strong is the new skinny," as so many advertisements promote, this may simply be another way of asking people to lose weight. As an example of the pervasiveness of this discourse, Stephanie laughs at the doom-and-gloom nature of health-related information, but such studies nonetheless occupy her thoughts in a manner she would describe as negative. "With running," she says, "I always knew that it was something I should do because exercise helps your body, and you hear these studies that if you sit for eight hours a day . . . it's worse than smoking or something, and you're gonna die [laughs]." Similarly, Lauren says that when she was a kinesiologist, she was conscious of what her appearance communicated to clients. "There's kinda that cliché," she says, "like would you trust an overweight dietician to give you nutrition advice? That's the perception of it?" These quotes illustrate that "healthy" and "ideal" bodies are distinct, but closely related and powerful, concepts.

Second, we argue that participants filter advertisements through their relationships with other bodies as a way of constructing identities as self-compassionate. Many participants recall their teenage years and early twenties as tumultuous times when they were especially prone to comparing their bodies to other bodies, generally in a negative way. Yet, an awareness of the futility of this exercise changes how participants relate to media today. For example, TMB says, "I think that's something I used to do a lot when I was younger. I'd look, 'Oh, I wanna be like that girl in the magazine,' but it's really, there's no way I could look like some of my friends. I'm a lot taller than them, I'm a lot chestier than them [laughs]. We just look different, right?" Now, the women avoid comparing themselves to the elite athletes in fitness advertising because they know that the athletes' full-time training demands, perhaps more than any innate physical superiority, earn them that "ideal" body. This sense of perspective stops the game of comparison that plagued their earlier years.

Third, we argue that participants filter advertisements through their embodied experience of doing "too much" or, alternatively "not enough," in their diet and exercise regimes. This process allows them to construct an understanding of themselves as balanced. As an example, Anna reflects on her high school years. "I would take photos of myself and criticize myself," she says, "And I think that's because, by nature, I'm very critical and I have very high standards for myself." As an example of how these practices may evolve over time, when asked what the words "ideal body" mean to her, Tina says, "At first I think of 'the' ideal body. But then, when I take a second back, I'm like, 'No, no, 'my' ideal body, what is best on me?' Right? So, I think perspectives change as you get older." Participants demonstrate an undercurrent of perfectionism and desire to be in control of their lives, even though these tendencies have diminished with age.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Given these findings, we argue that although fitness advertising is a powerful force in consumer culture, female athletes exhibit a deliberate, cultivated form of agency. Strategic ideological filtering allows them to reject the single-minded pursuit of bodily perfection and instead foreground their identities as healthy, self-compassionate, and balanced individuals. However, strategic ideological filtering is a form of affective labor that creates new standards. For example, as mentioned, Lauren holds herself to a high standard, appearance-wise, to earn credibility in her profession. This process involves the mind as much as it does the body.

Such affective labor assists in the curation of biographies that highlight the tenuous relationship between self-control and self-compassion. In the spirit of body-becoming theory (Coleman 2009), strategic ideological filtering offers a reasonably successful avenue for extending, rather than limiting, bodily experiences and associated identities. It shows consumers' subjecthood and objecthood, adding to an understanding of how advertising impacts sporting embodiment (Brace-Govan 2010) and illustrating that female athletes require advertising that demonstrates an understanding of their multiple, often competing, identities.

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Tracing non-consumption through space and time: A historical analysis of how spatial-temporal politics of practices restrain contemporary sustainable consumption.

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This historical ethnographic project explores the spatial-temporal dimensions of the politics of practices and their impact on non-consumption. Within an intensified sustainability debate in marketing (McDonagh and Prothero, 2014, McDonagh, 2017), practice nexi (Hui et al., 2017) become central to understanding the impossibilities of sustainable consumption (Scheurenbrand, et al. 2018). Research indicates that practice constellations, intersections and dynamics give insights into political tensions and power relations (Watson, 2017, Denegri Knott et al., 2019), which can have negative impact on the life of sustainable practices. It is thus time to revisit the concept of non-consumption under a practice ontology to explore why unsustainable ways of life persist, while sustainable consumption is unsuccessful in establishing itself despite policy attempts and willing consumers to resist (Cherrier et al., 2011, Evans, 2011, Chatzidakis and Lee, 2012).

Attempts to explore non-consumption are scarce (Wilk, 1997) and have, within the context of sustainability, mostly been framed as part of the anti-consumption movement. Non-consumption in this stream of research is seen as a deliberate individualist choice against a consumption possibility. (Cherrier et al., 2011, Connolly and Prothero, 2003). However, instead of individualist decision making, practice scholars insist on understanding consumption as an outcome of established, living, functioning practices (Strenger and Maller, 2015, Shove et al, 2012, Shove, 2010, Warde, 2005). Must non-consumption then be an outcome of non-existing, dead, restrained or deprived practices? And if so, what leads to these conditions?

Looking at the conditions in which sustainability can thrive, consumer research has stressed agentic space as a co-creational feature of sustainable practices (Chatzidakis et al., 2017). Embodying the setting and 'system' (Vicdan and Hong, 2017, p.169) where sustainable consumption takes place, studies have demonstrated the dynamic reciprocal shaping of space and consumption activities (Chatzidakis et al., 2012). However, studies have yet to explore the intimately linked temporal dimension of space in regard to sustainability and its impact on the consumption possibilities over time. Tracing space-activity shaping processes might engender fresh insights into why unsustainable practices still persist, while sustainable practices struggle to thrive.

In an attempt to theorise non-consumption through a practice ontology, this paper proposes Schatzki's (2012) hierarchies of practices as a starting point to map out power constellations of practices. In doing so the paper identifies tensions between practices that impede sustainable consumption activities. In a second step, and suitable to the sustainable practice of urban cycling, we link ‘time and space in a processual, co-productive and performative way’ (Chatzidakis et al., 2017, p.150), allowing ‘a dynamic role that is both fluid in nature and transforms the actions and relationships of its actors’ (Vicdan and Hong, 2017, p. 170).

As part of a larger PhD project, this paper offers a practice based historical ethnographic view on the spatial-temporal changes of an urban setting in Spain, eager to convert the city into an urban cycling friendly environment. Tracing the bicycle in the city’s past, the author conducted a historical screening between 1855 until 2015. Methods included archival research and documentation of the historical development of

the urban environment and urban transportation (museums, historical archives, newspapers, online videos and movies), documentation of urban planning outlines and strategies.

Findings suggest that temporal shaping took place under power imbalances between lobbying and environmental, innovative policy practices. Data shows early attempts of sustainable and public collective transportation in the 1970's; however, these were aborted due to tensions with other private practices such as car driving and privatised bus services. Until today, attempts to create sustainable ways of moving in the city are tempered by lobbying practices sustaining privatised unsustainable practices.

The introduction of a theorisation of non-consumption through a practice lens over time yields two contributions to CCT. Firstly, this study reveals how hierarchies and partnerships among practices have the ability to constrain or enable sustainable consumption and thus non-consumption. It offers an innovative and contemporary flat ontological attempt to conceptualise the under-explored notion of non-consumption and thereby advances that 'flattening' consumption studies still can address power imbalances by acknowledging the existence of hierarchies and domination among practices as entities. Secondly, this study extends the concept of agentic space by linking it to the temporal dimension of a practice ontology. Doing so, this study highlights the importance of spatial-temporal consideration for policy work, emphasising historical impact on contemporary unsustainability.

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Challenging Regulation: Societal, Marketplace, and Consumer Dynamics (Special Session)

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Session Overview: Past CCT work has explored the role of government institutions in the development of new industries' legitimacy (Humphreys 2010; Geisler 2008; Handelman and Arnold 1999; Humphreys and Thompson 2004; Ertimur and Coskuner-Balli 2015) and their role in the balance of power and responsibility between firms and consumers (Henry 2010; Geisler and Veresiu 2014). This session adds to the literature by enriching our understanding of other nuanced roles government's play in the marketplace. Specifically, when the necessity and validity of government regulation is called into question by marketplace activities. At the societal level, the first paper shows how governments, firms, and consumers compete for authority over social issues that governments are traditionally responsible for. At the marketplace level, the second paper shows when new buisnesses circumvent government regulations, governments act as dynamic and 'playful' (Firat and Dholakia 1998; Firat and Venkatesh 1995) actors. At the consumer level, the third paper shows how consumers who engage in government opposing practices experience a seesaw of emotions and legitimize their decisions using discourses that healthcare providers could incorporate into custom interventions. The papers in this session expand our understanding of the more nuanced roles governments play in the marketplace.

The Responsibilization of Firms

Sarah Evans and Tandy Thomas

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"As the reach and impact of the Facebook family of companies continues to grow, so does the responsibility we have to ensure the safety, health and well-being of the members of our diverse global community, particularly young people and other targeted or vulnerable constituencies." (Facebook 2019)

Traditionally, governments were held responsible for protecting citizens and maintaining social order (Foucault, Burchell, Gordon, and Miller 1991). However, as illustrated by the above quote, firms are increasingly appropriating these government roles by taking responsibility for protecting consumers' health and safety and protecting the nation's security (Shamir 2008). Taking on these roles differs from firm's engagement in corporate social responsibility (Winston 2002; Wright and Rwabizambuga 2006; Rowe 2006; Handelman and Arnold 1999), and contrasts with theories of shareholder primacy (Aguilera and Jackson 2003).

Shifts in responsibility—the process of responsibilization—is driven by neoliberal ideologies that promote shifting responsibility away from governments to consumers and firms (Shamir 2008). The responsibilization process prepares firms and individuals to take responsibility for governing themselves—that is, to perform acts of self-governance (Shamir 2008; Foucault et al 1991). Giesler and Veresiu (2014) explore how responsibility shifts to consumers and describe how firms enable consumer responsibilization. However, they do not explore firms taking on responsibility themselves. We redress this knowledge gap by exploring how responsibility is shared, and shifted, between governments, consumers, and firms.

To explore our research question, we conducted a media analysis to assess whether and how public discourse shows a shift towards firms taking on greater responsibility. Our analysis used Facebook as the focal firm because they have taken on a range of responsibilities including stopping terrorism and hate speech, and protecting democracy (Facebook 2018a; Facebook 2018b; Facebook 2019; Feiner

2019). We first examined how public discourse about government and responsibility in relation to Facebook has changed over time using an automated content analysis (ACA) of news articles about Facebook published from 2009 to 2019 (N=19,791) (Humphreys and Wang 2017). Next, we analyzed a stratified random sample of these articles (n=600) using grounded theory procedures to develop a nuanced understanding of Facebook and the responsibilization process (Glaser and Struass 1967; Charmaz 2006).

Our analysis shows that public discourse has moved towards firms taking on greater roles in governance and community responsibility. From 2009 to 2019, the percentage of articles about Facebook that included words associated with government and responsibility increased from 8% and 7% to 51% and 26%, respectively. As responsibility has shifted towards firms, the complexity of where community responsibility lies has increased.

Our grounded theory analysis highlights how governments, consumers, and firms engage in an ongoing competition where they vie for authority over three categories of responsibility: protecting privacy, regulating online content, and spurring innovation. The competitions stem from actors having differential capabilities that strengthen or weaken their roles as holders of responsibility.

Notably, the categories also act as oppositional forces such that the fulfillment of one responsibility detracts from an actor's ability to fulfill another (Figure 1). The result is that some responsibilities are perpetually unaddressed, and each actor is positioned within a paradox as their responsibility portfolio shifts. Our findings add to the literature on responsibilization by articulating the mechanisms and challenges inherent in this process. This knowledge can help governments, firms, and consumers better manage social responsibilities that are diffused across stakeholders and can help policy makers determine the optimal levels of regulation.

The Playful State: Government and Dynamic Market Shaping

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Firms are increasingly pursuing business model innovations that largely ignore the rules set out by existing regulatory regimes (Edelman and Geradin 2016). For example, AirBnB and VRBO have transformed the hospitality sector with a model that directly connects hosts with travelers seeking short-term accommodation, while Uber and Lyft facilitate private transportation through a model that directly connects drivers with passengers. Often linked with the notion of a sharing economy (Sundararajan 2016), these firms argue that by side-stepping regulations, their approaches alleviate current market inefficiencies and offer enhanced customer value (Edelman and Geradin 2016). In pursing these business approaches, firms exemplify the core ethos of neoliberalism by challenging the necessity and validity of the state as a market actor. Inherent in these challenges is a critique of the state as unable to participate in the market in the kinds of dynamic ways necessary for markets to flourish (Harvey 2007; Mudge 2008; Slater and Tonkiss 2001). This impoverished view of the state is directly opposed by current theories of entrepreneurial innovation (Mazzucato 2013). Here, the state has been shown to behave in more dynamic ways to help foster environments that foster innovation (Block 2008; Block and Keller 2009, 2011).

Despite their theoretical and methodological strengths in capturing dynamic relationships amongst market actors, studies in consumer culture and market shaping have had relatively little to say about the role of state-based actors (hereafter the state). Despite calls to expand the scope of market studies investigations to include a greater range of stakeholders and other interested actors (Giesler and Fischer 2017), the prevailing perspective is one that resigns the state to the proverbial margins. While respecting the state's regulatory power to create and police the marketplace, socio-cultural researchers exploring market dynamics tend to focus on the ways in which non-state actors contribute to the shaping of market arrangements (Ertimur and Coskuner-Balli 2015; Handelman and Arnold 1999; Humphreys 2010; Humphreys and Thompson 2014; Scaraboto and Fischer 2013). At the heart of this expanding body of work is the view of non-state market actors as multidimensional, pursuing their market-based activities capably, strategically, and dynamically. The state, on the other hand, remains conceptually unidimensional and largely excluded from analyses of market change.

In this project, we explore state responses to the disruptive entry of the ride-sharing platform Uber, and in so doing, contribute to our understanding of an understudied market actor. When introduced, Uber's car sharing platform offered a two-sided market (Landsman and Stremersch 2011) connecting consumers with drivers that simultaneously ignored existing regulations governing taxis and other transportation providers. From the company's perspective, their ride-sharing offering was distinct from existing taxi services and thus was not subject to the same regulations governing these existing services. However, Uber's market entry was met with resistance in many jurisdictions, and civic governments worked to bring the company into the regulatory fold in a variety of ways. We explore how state actors worked to respond to this disruptive entry, and in so doing, engaged in dynamic market shaping behaviors. Specifically, we examine Uber's entrance into the cities of Toronto (Canada), Los Angeles (USA), San Antonio (USA), and London (United Kingdom), drawing on archival data in the form of public debates, analyses by state agencies, and media discourses. To analyze our data, we adopt a cultural entrepreneurship approach (Lounsbury, Gehman, and Ann Glynn 2019; Lounsbury and Glynn 2001; Überbacher, Jacobs, and

Cornelissen 2015) which develops an understanding of legitimacy not as an organizational or market-based outcome (Handelman and Arnold 1999; Humphreys 2010; Scaraboto and Fischer 2013) but an on-going and never-ending process "where organizations continually make and remake stories to maintain their identity and status" (Lounsbury and Glynn 2001, 560). This perspective attunes our work to the ways in which the state pursues legitimacy not for particular practices (e.g. Humphreys 2010) but for its involvement as a meaningful market participant.

Our findings illustrate the state as a dynamic market actor responding to the ideological challenges initiated by a disruptive innovation. Uber's two-sided platform business model reflects a largely neoliberal approach to the marketplace; in particular, it embodies the foundational neoliberal premise that the state's role should be minimized or eliminated altogether (Harvey 2007; Prasad 2006). We find state-based actors challenge the ideological foundations of disruptive innovations through ideological play of their own. State actors across our data set draw on welfarist views that support stronger state involvement in market affairs, especially in terms of protecting the rights and well-being of citizens (Lindblom 1977; Slater and Tonkiss 2001). Leveraging the interplay of these disparate ideological positions, we observe 'playful' (Firat and Dholakia 1998; Firat and Venkatesh 1995) state actors pursuing market regulation that is fundamentally open-ended and sensitive to the array of value sought by market participants. In this way, the state behaves in a manner consistent with socio-cultural perspectives on consumers (Arnould and Thompson 2005).

Our findings further illustrate a set of mechanisms that state actors use to dynamically work through these challenges and thereby shape markets. Through these mechanisms – which we label Emptying the Box, Borrowing from the Bandits, and Benchmarking – the state engages in behaviors that align with both market orientation (Kohli and Jaworski 1990) and market driving (Humphreys and Carpenter 2018) and are thus consistent with the dynamism exhibited by commercial market actors.

In illustrating how the state engages in dynamic market-shaping behaviors typically associated with consumers and marketers, this work contributes to our knowledge of an under-examined yet highly influential market actor and helps expand the scope of market dynamics studies beyond the marketer-consumer dyad.

The Seesaw of Loss and Hope: How Vaccine-Hesitant Parents Make Sense of and Experience their Choices to Engage in Oppositional Social Practices

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As a normative social practice, childhood vaccination remains the cultural ideal in the US. Social practices - defined as behavior which consists of interconnected meanings, materials and competences - provide a cultural script that individuals draw on in their enactments (Reckwitz 2002). When parents' enactments depart from normative scripts, they often experience harsh moral judgements from others (Epp and Velagaleti 2014; Thomas and Epp 2019). Yet, the World Health Organization lists vaccine hesitancy, the reluctance or refusal to vaccinate, among its top ten threats to world health (The Lancet 2019), directly contributing to epidemics of vaccine-preventable diseases over the past two decades (Feikin et al. 2000; Parker et al 2016; Omer et al 2008). Given its counter-normative position, we consider vaccine hesitancy an oppositional consumer practice, where legitimacy of participation is called into question. In prior studies, legitimacy of oppositional practices often occurs via multi-actor work that aligns to transform a practice's status (Goulding et al. 2009; Humphreys 2010; Sandikci and Ger 2010). For childhood vaccination, however, anti-vaccine consumer movements face fierce criticism from government, scientific, and medical communities. Without alignment, vaccine-hesitant parents may find it challenging to defend and legitimize their practices.

How do vaccine-hesitant parents make sense of and experience their choice to engage in oppositional social practices? More specifically, within the context of state-mandated conversations with health care providers, what discourses do parents rely on to legitimize their engagement in oppositional practices? This study is part of a broader study in partnership with the University of Michigan-Flint and a local health department of a mid-Michigan county aimed at developing a customized healthcare intervention to increase pediatric immunization completion rates. The State of Michigan requires parents to attend a one-on-one vaccine education session prior to granting non-medical vaccine waivers for their children. After approaching all parents residing in a mid-Michigan county and who requested a non-medical waiver (between 5/25/16 to 9/9/17), we audio recorded and qualitatively analyzed 388 parent-nurse conversations to identify parents' complex vaccine stories (Czarniawska 2004; Thompson 1997).

Three discourses emerged from initial analysis of this data: 1) reacting to personally lived/empathically observed health traumas, 2) believing in the body's superior natural immunity, and 3) acting on institutional-level distrust (Robinson, July, and Freed 2020). Across the themes, we observed parents' experiences of loss and hope that we describe through a seesaw metaphor. The seesaw has two interconnected ends: protection of their child(ren) from communicable diseases (CD) versus protection of their child(ren) from presumed negative outcomes following immunizations. For example, following a personally lived health trauma, parents saw themselves thrown high up on one end of the seesaw with little agency or control over their children's health ("Thrown High"). Many parents who

empathically observed a health trauma forwent the vaccination lever to avoid being thrown high as well ("Bystanders"). Other parents spread-out immunizations, tipping one end of the seesaw toward protection against CD, but then immediately tiptoeing back by delaying future vaccine doses in order to assess potential negative immunization outcomes ("Tiptoe").

In addition to the practical implications for healthcare providers to create more effective interventions, our study also joins an emerging body of work on engaging in oppositional practices (Goulding et al. 2009; Humphreys 2010; Sandikci and Ger 2010. In part, parents' feelings of anxiety and loss evidenced in the seesaw metaphor relate to the normative judgements they face in relation to the social practice of childhood immunization.

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Retromarketing: Affective Horizons and Lost Futures

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Abstract— We propose to intensify theorizing on retromarketing and nostalgic consumption by introducing 'hauntology' as a conceptual lens for assessing the retro aesthetic as a commodified affective excess of meaning. The concept allows us to explore consumption of marketized retrospective signs not from the perspective of individualist experience or creative meaning-makings, but rather as affective encounters that desire in consumption desperately latches onto. In our view it is thus not an aesthetic satisfaction or nostalgic comfort that is offered to us by retro consumption, as we are rather thrust into spectral presences, ghostly matters that we can never reach, an invisible presence and gaze that haunts our desires in consumption in an affective atmosphere where the 'future has been cancelled'. We make attempts to peel beneath the retro veneer and to also look past it to explore its affective horizons.

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INTRODUCTION

As commercial offerings, the retro commodities have been seen to employ aesthetic bricolage that "judiciously combines past and present" (Brown, 1999: 365), typically in conjunction to the notion of *nostalgic* appeals in contemporary consumer society (Brown, 1999, 2018; Kessous et al., 2015). For heralding scholars such as Brown (1999; 2001ab), the retro aesthetic is inherently paradoxical, offering both novel expressions and experiences in the postmodern era, but also somehow pointing to the problematic grounds of a secure future that used to be promised by the union of liberal democracy and capitalism (also Cova et al., 2013). What makes the general aesthetic of the retro commodity theoretically alluring is its striking epistemological differences to other fascinations with the old. Retro (unlike vintage), was never in its past, it's *pure aesthetic simulation*, a commoditized *resemblance* that gestures towards abstract pasts in various ways by an active production of signs of the old. Retro thus denotes brands and goods with the flair of yore, but updated and repackaged to the expected performance of modern technological standards (also Brown, 2001a). This ambiguity is what seemingly gives retro its semiotic and experiential potency, for while nostalgia may be bittersweet (Brown, 2001a), retro products instead offer simulations of pasts that never truly existed (Brown et al., 2003), thus effectively purging them from all potential bad connotations (Brown et al., 2001; Hamilton and Wagner, 2014). While a certain looming eeriness of the retro has been already recognized in culturally-oriented marketing and consumer research (e.g., Brown, 2001a, 2009; 2018), the work has tended to remain rather descriptive, neutral or even optimistic about retro experiences (e.g., Brown, 2001a; Holbrook and Schindler, 2003; Kessous and Roux, 2008; Sierra and McQuitty, 2007). In stark contrast, it has been also pointed out how any account of past longings that eschews the notions of misery, lack and instability in the present, fails to understand how nostalgia operates by fetishizing the past to save the present (e.g., Fisher, 2014; Higson, 2014). We thus wish to intensify theorizing on retromarketing by exploring an affective account of this 'dark' remainder, and by developing the concept of 'hauntology' to assess the affective horizon of the retro in consumer culture.

It was the French post-structural philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) who coined the notion of *hauntology* in the 1990's. For him, something on our time is eerily off balance, and thus 'time is out of joint' becomes repeated in an all but shamanistic fashion in his 1994 book *Specters of Marx*. This disjointedness of time is set up not as a representational state of affairs, but rather as an unsettling encounter with a spectral presence of possible historical futures that makes our present condition feel uncanny in ways one cannot quite map out or articulate (also Fisher, 2014). As such, time being out of joint is about time, but also necessarily its contemporary absence in the contemporary optimisms related to the finality of capitalist consumer culture (also Jameson, 1991; Lyotard, 2004). What we are thus dealing with is an affective excess of viable social alternatives other than capitalism, which were seemingly

jettisoned long ago and now assumed forgotten. By adopting Derrida's contemporary spectral tension in the form of hauntology, we contribute by furthering the looming light cast on retromarketing and consumption, and to argue, as Brown (2018) recently also suggested, that the attractiveness of the retro-aestheticized commodity should perhaps not be written off as benign and pleasurable nostalgia, but rather a seductive relation to the past that still *offered* futures to inhabit (also Fisher, 2014). We thus add to Brown's ongoing oeuvre by arguing that retro consumption is better characterized as *a hauntological tendency*, where an affective excess of meaning in the retro aesthetic channels consumer desire to desperately latch onto *past futures that have now increasingly evaporated* in contemporary commodity capitalism that seems to only perpetuate a horizon of 'more of the same' (Fisher, 2009, 2014).

Early on in marketing, it was Maclaran and Brown (2001) who noted that "no-topia is the utopia of our sated postmodern times" (p. 370), which was followed by Shankar and colleagues' (2006) notion of a more desperate societal trajectory in Western consumer societies, where it would seem that material well-being was not bringing about well-becoming even for the affluent. In this context, *hauntology* becomes the speculative study of an affective backdrop of our time that overcodes each situation, specifically in how all social relations are increasingly infused by an absence of alternatives to the ongoing march of global capitalist ideology (also Davis, 2005; Dean, 2008; Fisher, 2009; Hussey, 2001), that mark "a penumbral burden of suppressed meanings and closed-off social possibilities that cannot be completely eliminated or denied" (Gibson-Graham, 1995: 25). In a consumer culture increasingly haunted by its own repetition of a lack of alternatives and a 'slowly cancelling future' (Fisher, 2014; also Campbell et al., 2019; Hietanen et al., 2019), the past becomes *not only* attractive, but *the only* avenue open, offering comfort in what once potentially was (also Maclaran and Brown, 2001). This affective backdrop, even for those who are economically relatively secure in the West, is now something increasingly politically disenchanted (also Wilson and Swyngedouw, 2014), what has been also called a vapid 'disaffected consent', a future foreclosed by a general 'mood of dread' (Gilbert, 2015; also Zwick, 2018). In this view, the desire for retro consumption is thus far more quixotic and desperate than experientially nostalgic or ironic – an attempt to libidinally reinsert a history in culture that has largely occluded it (Berardi, 2017; Jameson, 1991; Stiegler, 2011). Retro then becomes the commodity narcissism of maintaining the fantasy of "what we wish to have been the case" (Cluley and Dunne, 2012: 7), thus permitting consumers to consume a simulation of a temporal relation that was never subjectively experienced (also Brown et al., 2001).

Thus, to add to the conceptual toolkit of marketing and consumer research dealing with retro, we believe affectively charged concepts such as hauntology are increasingly necessary for theorizing that seeks to express affective relationalities rather than representations of meaning, which continue to constitute the most of the CCT corpus (also Askegaard and Linnet, 2011; Thompson et al., 2013). We also echo Jameson's (1991) notion that the temporality of the present is hardly as stable as it might appear. As such, our work here is intended to intensify our thinking of the excesses of affect at play when we consider the cultural commodification of retro. Hauntology is the term for this speculative endeavor, the sensing of an excess in all relationalities, a sublime overcodedness that is 'in the air' of every social situation – the 'what could be otherwise' but what nevertheless never quite made it (also Hietanen and Sihvonen, 2020). Hauntology opens us up to affectivity and the attractions of 'darker' libidinal desires than what is typically the focus of theorizing dealing with consumer meaning-makings (also Hill et al., 2014). While speculative and perhaps challenging, we need a theoretical retro-connection where we "remember that I no longer remember" (Lyotard, 2004: 118). If nothing else, we find it paramount to peek behind the curtain to view retro from its more pallid vantage point.

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Paradox of Humour: The Use of Disparaging Humour as a Form of Social Control in the Social Media Discourse

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Abstract—The widespread proliferation of social network sites (SNSs) in contemporary society has opened up the ways that consumers approach self-representation and self-promotion, raising new questions around the authenticity of SNS portrayals. SNSs and their features have enabled social media users to portray an exaggerated, curated and idealised version of themselves whilst simultaneously evaluate their own abilities and attributes, and thereby running the risk of experiencing feelings of inadequacy. Using Foucault's concept of power and governmentality, we explore the role of humour as a mechanism of control, and consider its role in the production and negotiation of power relations and social order in the social media landscape. Preliminary findings found that disparaging humour, through the apparatuses and institutions of biopower, may inadvertently participate in the continuous production of both normative and deviant categories of (in)authentic practices on SNSs.

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INTRODUCTION

The widespread proliferation of social network sites (SNSs) in contemporary society has opened up the ways that consumers approach self-representation and self-promotion (Hjorth & Hendry, 2015; Hogan, 2010; Liu & Baumeister, 2016). These self-presentation endeavours largely evolve around image-based postings, raising new questions around the authenticity of SNS portrayals (Brown & Tiggeman, 2016; Liu & Baumeister, 2016; Marwick, 2015). While a number of SNSs claim that they are platforms for authenticity, SNSs and their features have enabled and pressured social media users to portray an exaggerated, curated and idealised version of themselves (Belk, 2013; Marwick, 2015; Ong et al, 2011; Seidman, 2013). This is particularly problematic, especially when users post self-promoting content on SNSs to gain social acceptance, attention and validation. Often this is in an attempt to compete with others' 'perfect' lives, while simultaneously evaluating their own abilities and attributes, and thereby running the risk of experiencing feelings of inadequacy (Bergman et al, 2011; Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Festinger, 1954). The mechanism for such feelings can be harnessed in the SNS spaces through the thoughts, social interactions and commentaries of social media users, which can lead to forms of control of the social order online.

Using Foucault's concept of power and governmentality, we explore the role of humour as a mechanism of control, and consider its role in the production and negotiation of power relations and social order in the social media landscape (Bergson, 2008; Billig, 2005; Foucault, 1979, 1997). This research considers that authenticity in participatory social media is "strategically and reflexively displayed and negotiated" (Androutsopoulos, 2015, p. 75) where there may a spectrum of (in)authenticity rather than dichotomous categories of normality and deviancy. As such, the paradoxical nature of humour will be explored in this research. The specific research questions are (1) What is the role of humour in the construction of social media (in)authenticity?; and (2) How is power enacted through the use of humour on social media? The research questions allow the examination of disparaging humour as an internalised disciplinary mechanism, and how biopower may be responsible for the regulated formation and production of docile bodies (Bergson, 2008; Billig, 2005; Foucault, 1979, 1981).

LITERATURE REVIEW

To Foucault, power is omnipresent and circulates within society where it cannot be imposed by one individual or group

on another (Dore 2010; Foucault, 1979, 1980; Mills 2003; Pickett, 1996). Foucault conceptualised the concept of 'governmentality' where he utilised the notion of biopower to control and regulate the human bodies and their behaviours through the use of surveillance and discipline that is imposed and constituted in society (Danaher et al, 2005; Skålén et al, 2006). Biopower cannot holistically regulate the human body and minds of individuals but there is no denying that SNSs are implicated in the production of docile bodies through the institution's discourse of surveillance and regulation (Danaher et al, 2005). That is, social media users volunteer themselves to "a panoptic form of constant scrutiny" where they became their own agents of surveillance and judges of normality, imposing social control while conforming to normative conventions (Foucault, 1979; Kelsey & Bennett, 2014; Sauter, 2014, p.834; Thompson & Hirschman, 1995).

The appreciation of humour encourages consumers' social competencies and bonds through the shared intimacy of laughter and amusement (Gradin Franzén & Aronsson, 2013 Kuipers, 2009; Warren et al, 2018). However, humour can also be used as an expression of aggression and hostility, a form of social correction to enforce social rules and norms to protect the institution from deviancy (Davis, 1995; Koller, 1988; Kuipers, 2009; Gradin Franzén & Aronsson, 2013; Warren et al, 2018). Disparaging humour involves the use of humour to denigrate those considered incongruous; to penalise and punish those who deviated from or challenge the accepted norms of how things are or supposed to be, often at the expense of others (Bergson, 2008, p. 65; Ford & Ferguson, 2004; Foucault, 1979; Warren et al, 2018). This is because individuals do not only laugh with others but also at others where they will take pleasure in these breaches in social order (Gradin Franzén & Aronsson, 2013). This echoes Foucault's view on disciplinary power where disparaging humour can incorporate a disciplinary gaze to impose control over individuals' bodies and mind (Foucault, 1979). It is in this disciplinary structure that penalties and punishment are imposed on those who deviate from the norm, facing the social pressure to conform to the economy of power; reinforcing the normalised judgement aspect of the disciplinary power (Shankar et al, 2006; Foucault, 1979).

METHODOLOGY

The first phase of data collection commenced in September 2019, and is ongoing. The research adopts a 'pure' netnographic approach to further understand how disparaging humour participate in the construction and maintenance of (in)authenticity discourse on SNSs. This approach will allow the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the power relations in the studied communities with a thick description (De Valck et al, 2009; Kozinets, 2010). The data is framed by a set of predetermined manifestations of social media (in)authenticity that was widely reported in the media, focusing on a specific microcelebrity or Instagram account that expose and relay (in)authenticity on SNSs. Data collection and analysis included the examination of all relevant English language media stories, gathered through search engine(s), which takes the form of textual and document files, plus screenshots of all relevant media stories in addition associated field notes (Kozinets, 2015; Kozinets et al 2018; Scaraboto & Fischer, 2013).

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Our research questions addressed the role of humour and how power is enacted through the use of humour on social media. In the preliminary data analysis, the humour used are often disparaging and transgressive using sarcasm, irony, absurdity, condescension or tongue-in-cheek. The producers of the humorous disciplinary content used disparaging humour to deliberately criticise inauthentic portrayals while disguising its harsh nature on a non-serious footing (Crawford, 2003; Ford & Ferguson, 2004; Goffman, 1981; Gradin Franzén & Aronsson, 2013). Conversely, rebellious humour was also used to mock and challenge the social rules by making light of the breached in the norms surrounding inauthentic portrayals (Billig, 2005; Gradin Franzén & Aronsson, 2013). At present, the lack of authenticity in these online portrayals will be viewed as belonging to the deviant categories where disparaging humour is used in an attempt to repress undesirable behaviours while reinforcing desirable ones. Disparaging humour played an extensive role to social order as it can be profoundly corrective and disciplinary, further encouraging conformity to the social norm and maintenance of social order (Bergson, 2008; Billig, 2005; Gradin Franzén & Aronsson, 2013).

Disparaging humour, through the apparatuses and institutions of biopower, may inadvertently participate in the continuous production of both normative and deviant categories of (in)authentic practices on SNSs (Danaher et al, 2005). Further data collection and analyses will be conducted to further understand the role of humour as a multifaceted disciplinary mechanism. Particularly, the responses to the disparaging humour as a form of resistance to the biopower and associated social norms that are imposed on the supposed inauthentic practices. Because as Foucault repeatedly stressed: power cannot exist without resistance, particularly by those who were excluded through opposition, non-compliant and non-conformance through the production of truth and knowledge of biopower (Foucault, 1981; Danaher et al, 2005).

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From Aesthetic to Epistemic Consumption: Analyzing Knowledge Pathways in Consumption Collectives

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Abstract— This paper explores the collective pursuit of quasi-scientific knowledge practices as a consumption activity. By empirically analyzing the highly-specialized collective practice of *game-breaking* we grant insights into consumption collectives constituting knowledge systems. We show that the collective explorative endeavor of epistemic consumption relegates the aesthetic dimension of collective consumption to the backstage. By uncovering knowledge pathways, this study sheds light on the structuring forces of knowledge in consumption collectives in contemporary consumer culture.

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I. Introduction

For well over 2000 hours, Informant 1 (26 years old) has now been playing the video-game *Super Mario 64*, a game he used to play as a child. However, instead of casually playing through the game, letting the game guide him, getting lost in the game's storyline, and immersing into the colorful world of *Super Mario 64*, for hours Informant 1 has been concentratedly playing the same sequence over and over. Together with ten fellow-players, Informant 1 tries to save time, some frames or even some seconds if they do well. By division of labor, they are currently working to complete the game in less than four minutes and 55 seconds. In fact, *Super Mario 64* is not about speed at all, but about reaching the end of the game in the first place. Released in 1996 by *Nintendo*, the game is designed as a single-player game for six hours of gameplay or more. By now, Informant 1 and his fellow players know every aspect of every single level, every trigger, every opponent, every item, and everything about the physics of the game, which allows them to further *break the game* and thus to save more time. For further analysis of the game, frame-specific data regarding the frame count, the position in space, the memory cache, Mario's speed per frame, and much more information is displayed.

Game-breakers like Informant 1 are well-connected and engaged technology enthusiasts who are keen to experiment. They enjoy the intellectual challenge of creatively exploring the game to overcome limitations and to achieve novel and clever outcomes. To reach their goal they collectively, dedicatedly, patiently, and persistently engage in, sometimes painstaking, quasi-scientific processes for hundreds over hundreds of hours of exploring, analyzing, deconstructing, and optimizing. Hereby, consumers become researchers and developers. We define game-breaking as a highly demanding activity of collaboratively exploring a focal game to optimize for speed. Game-breaking exists since video games have been around. However, once an underground hobby conducted by videogame players exchanging footage through obscure internet forums, since 2010 it has become an ever more rapidly growing global phenomenon, influencing the multi-billion dollar video game industry (Lewis, 2020; Warman, 2019). Worldwide, game-breakers actively discuss in forums and via livestreaming platforms and stream and upload videos, with the most popular videos viewed tens of millions of times.

Studying game-breaking is interesting because it allows us to better understand the epistemic dimension of consumption in consumption collectives. This case is theoretically rich, as game-breakers do not (primarily) focus on the aesthetic and/or symbolic dimension of consumption but *consume epistemics*. Hence, this collective is heavily and obviously pervaded by (epistemic) knowledge. New insights into knowledge-intensive consumption collectives allow us to better understand phenomena in contemporary consumer culture such as expert systems (Latour & Deighton, 2018), nerd-cultures (Seregina & Weijo, 2016), self-trackers (Bode & Kristensen, 2016; Etkin, 2016; Lupton, 2014), users of smart technology (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017; Bettany & Kerrane, 2016; Hoffman & Novak,

2017), online forums (Arvidsson & Caliandro, 2015), open-source (Arvidsson, 2011), fandom (Kozinets, 2012), craft consumption (Campbell, 2005; Watson & Shove, 2008), and consumers communing around complex focal objects (Muniz & Schau, 2005). This literature has shown us, that collective consumption is inherently intertwined with knowledge and that there are no consumption collectives not pervaded by knowledge. However, we know little about the epistemic dimension of consumption since prior analysis of collective consumption has primarily focused on its symbolic, aesthetic and/or cultural dimension (cf. Kozinets, Patterson, & Ashman, 2016; Maciel & Wallendorf, 2016; Schau, Muñiz Jr, & Arnould, 2009; Seregina & Weijo, 2016). To close this gap, we do not take knowledge, its existence, and its characteristics in consumption collectives as an epistemological a priori but ask: *How is Knowledge Practiced in Consumption Collectives?* To answer this question, we conducted a case-study on game-breakers, using interviews and netnographic inquiry (Belk, Fischer, & Kozinets, 2013). We followed game-breakers online, as well as on special occasions such as on fairs or meet-ups, resulting in numerous hours of netnographic investigation, as well as in ten informal interviews and eight recorded in-depth interviews. We extend the state of research as we study game-breaking collectives by focusing on pervasive circulating knowledge *pathways*. Hereby, we learn (1) how individuals communize[1] around knowledge-intensive domains provoking complex consumption activities, and (2) how the epistemic dimension of consumption decisively shapes consumption practices. We contribute to the analysis of *know-how* (Maciel & Wallendorf, 2016; Seregina & Weijo, 2016), of consumption knowledge (experiential expertise) (Clarkson, Janiszewski, & Cinelli, 2012), and of tacit knowledge (Arsel & Bean, 2012) in consumption collectives. We uncover that consumers craft *epistemic knowledge* in quasi-scientific ways internally in consumption collectives. Adding to the vast literature strand on aesthetic and/or symbolic consumption we show, that these individuals do not only contribute to the knowledge system for building social status (Kozinets, 2001; Schouten & McAlexander, 1995), for establishing interpersonal connections (Cova, 1997, 1999), or for defining their identity (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) but that knowing and the knowledge-system (at least partially) guides their passion. Hereby, we neither draw on knowledge in a Bourdieuian sense of accumulable field-specific disposition nor in a Wittgensteinian sense of (sub)*cultural competence* (Schatzki, 1996; Warde, 2005) but analyze knowledge and knowledge pathways in their epistemic sense (Knorr Cetina, 1999).

II. *Analyzing Knowledge Pathways*

Building on Lévi-Strauss' (1966) pioneering analysis of human (problem-solving) thinking, we trace *knowledge pathways* in consumption collectives emphasizing the collective (questioning) mindset "that uses knowledge, experimentation, and speculation to solve problems and reach goals" (Maciel & Wallendorf, 2016, p. 728). Hereby, we analyze pathways of knowledge in consumption collectives from their creation, to the legitimization, to the dissemination, to the archivation and thus uncover the structuring forces of knowledge as well as different natures of pervasive knowledge.

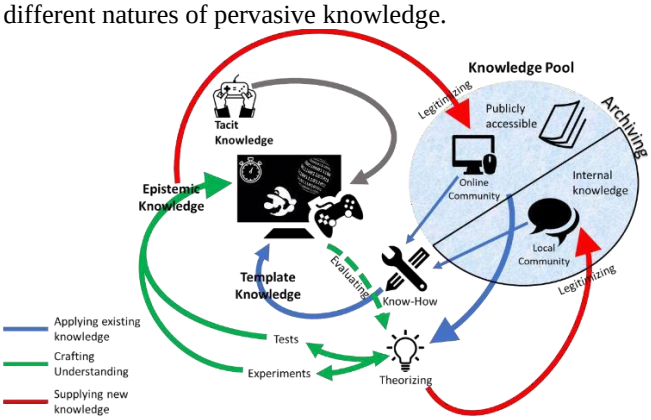

Figure 2: Knowledge Pathways in Game-Breaking Collectives

We show that knowledge-intensive consumption collectives archive knowledge, e.g. in wikis or forums. This archived knowledge is applied as a basis for further investigation. To gain new knowledge, mostly game-breakers firstly theorize possible ways of further breaking the game. New theories/hypotheses are shared with the game-breaking collective. Based on this, game-breakers engage in an iterative process between testing/experimenting and theorizing/hypothesizing. If improvements of the game are not discovered by accident, they are systematically and often collectively worked out in tests or experiments. We call this crafted knowledge *epistemic knowledge* based on the quasi-scientific quality of the settings from which it emerges (Knorr Cetina, 1999). Even if tacit knowledge is often required for performing certain actions, epistemic knowledge is not tacit but codified and explicated. Through this crafted understanding, the game is further optimized. Crafted epistemic knowledge is often instantly shared with the collective via video platforms or blogs. Here, it is discussed by the collective and thereby legitimized or not. Only by social legitimization practices such as submission processes, epistemic knowledge becomes new knowledge that extends the knowledge pool and is taken for granted henceforth.

This analysis of knowledge pathways uncovers that in game-breaking collectives epistemic consumption relegates the symbolic and/or aesthetic dimension to the backstage. We conclude that game-breakers rather consider the game as a set of data which can successively be unfolded by collective investigative and explorative practices in a spirit of playfulness to craft understanding than an aesthetic consumption object as which it was originally designed. That is why we conceptualize the game as an *epistemic object* (Knorr Cetina, 1997; Zwick & Dholakia, 2006).

[1] Translated by Schatzki (2002), original: *Vergemeinschaftung* (Weber, 1922)

This study grants insights into knowledge-intensive consumption collectives constituting knowledge systems. Not only consumption communities in their narrower sense but all collectives pervaded by knowledge can hereby be re-enquired. We show a new but increasingly important form of consumption collectives where consumers primarily communize to enter the knowledge system, as well as to contribute and hereby challenge the market, and do not (only) do so for aesthetic and/or symbolic reasons.

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Bringing consumer culture theoretics to policy debate

Søren Askegaard & Eric J. Arnould

Abstract— This roundtable aims at providing a platform for discussing strategies for knowledge dissemination in consumer research, particularly consumer culture theoretics and transformative consumer research. We aim to drive improved governance of consumption-related issues related to social and environmental sustainability through better policy-making.

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INTRODUCTION: THE CHALLENGE

The OECD estimates that the middle classes engaging in some form of modern consumer culture on a global scale will grow from the present approximate 2 billion people to around 5 billion in 2030. Given problems of environmental sustainability, climate change, biodiversity, poverty and inequality this development seems simultaneously impossible and unavoidable. Consumption is at the center of these challenges and understanding consumer culture and its logics as well as consumer practices in their institutional embeddedness and daily life conditions constitute keys to assessing the viability of various paths for the resolution of the dilemma of human consumption.

THE GOOD NEWS

A. *What Do We Have to Offer?*

The body of CCT/TCR literature has something to offer contemporary discussions of the nexus between climate footprints (e.g. Cherrier et al. 2012), inequity among consumers (e.g. Dolan et al. 2014; Farrell & Hill 2018; Lee et al. 2019) and market agents (e.g. Arnould & Press 2019; Steinfeld et al. 2014), sustainability (e.g. Wilk 2010; Chatzidakis et al. 2014), development (e.g. Ger 1997) and consumption. This short list is of examples is, of course, far from exhaustive. The good news is that this research is visible through a variety of journals. The better news is that this contribution is potentially much bigger – something to which this roundtable shall contribute. The bad news is that the message doesn't seem to be broadcast, to be disseminated, or to stick where it might matter (cf. Humphreys & Thompson 2014). In spite of considerably improved media coverage of consumer research, most of the public information concerning the nexus between consumption and sustainability is still embedded in a (neo-liberal) economic logic and cast as decision processes under various constraints of rationality.

Consider food consumption, where a political objective has long been to reduce the consumption of red meat because of the harmful and hurtful conditions of production and marketing. However, politicians seem to fumble in the dark, relying on economic incentives to do the trick, for lack of more sophisticated understandings of what motivates consumers in their seemingly shortsighted, ill-informed, and illogical – animal serial killing. The political debate on red meat mirrors the debate on CO_2 emissions from transport, that of fashion consumption, consumption of bottled water, and many others. Political debate and policy discussions are simply deprived of thinking of cultural consumption logics. The inefficacy and inadequateness of policy measures sadly reflect this deprivation in abundance.

Amongst colleagues it is easy to make the case that many regulators and politicians could benefit from CCT-informed insights. The question before this roundtable is how to become a pertinent and valued voice in a policy debate, increasingly dominated by 'attention scarcity' and information overload. In this session we want to explore avenues for CCT-oriented research to become available, pertinent and applicable for political actors of all sorts (for one example, the relational engagement approach, see Ozanne et al. 2017). How can we help politicians, NGOs, policy wonks, journalists and other policy influencers discern our research? To what lengths should we researchers go in facilitating and enabling policymaking?

The Roundtable Reflections. The roundtable reflections could take their point of departure in the sample themes evoked below, but they are obviously not the only pertinent issues for discussion.

We invite reflections on examples of CCT/TCR- related research which have already had significant political impact as well as CCT/TCR-research with the potential to inform policy solutions to ongoing sustainability issues

We invite reflections on novel strategies, methods and media designed to reach new audiences - not only consisting of students who voluntarily signed up for our course, but of many more out there in demand for a more sophisticated understanding of the consumer

We invite reflections on how to integrate CCT/TCR-oriented research into existing political "narratives" such as the UN SDG framework, raising these concepts above mere managerial chit-chat to a level where they become tools for information and intellectual enrichment of the public debate

We invite reflections on the role of the researcher as communicator: should we leave dissemination of research to journalists and communicators? Should consumer researchers be less occupied with accuracy and more focused on impact?

New Format of Knowledge Dissemination. We in the CCT/TCR community constitute a virtual, global "think tank". We address this global community of scholars concerned with such issues, for example participants with theoretical or practical experiences with dissemination and communication of CCT/TCR related research to an audience beyond academic circles. The aim of the roundtable is to contribute to the establishment of a knowledge dissemination structure, that can facilitate the mobilization of the insights from this virtual "think tank" for policy making on international and national levels. What we can also discuss is the potential for including related but also differing academic environments in this dialogue, notably colleagues in the Critical Marketing, Macromarketing and Sociology of Consumption communities.

Academy of Consumer Culture Equitability and Sustainability Studies

In order to facilitate the debate, the organizers of the roundtable will present an initiative that may provide a template or a platform for the bridge-building between agents in the public policy debate; politicians, organizations, journalists – and the researchers from the CCT community. In order to underline the seriousness of the academic approach that is necessary to maintain a balance between an a priori political stance (which is to be avoided) and a willingness to accept the politicizing consequences of engaging in policy making, we suggest use of the possibly dusty qualifier of "academy". The primary purposes of this "academy" is to bring to the policy debate on global and local equitability and sustainability the insights that we can draw from our investigation of consumer culture, thus making of CCT a significant contributor to societal development. It is our experience that there is a growing political interest in the behavioral aspects of sustainability issues and that not all solutions can be located in the realm of technology. But also that policy-makers lack ways of accessing the insights that we represent. The Academy of Consumer Culture Equitability and Sustainability Studies (ACCESS) is conceived as just that – an entry point for a dialogue between CCT researchers and policy makers to increase the social impact of our work.

Social impact is becoming one of the most salient audits of research quality in the academy. ACCESS is therefore conceived as a mediating link between the virtual, global think tank of consumer culture researchers and policy-makers, political influencers and the media. Its primary purpose is to diffuse insights and facilitate the societal impact of scattered researchers and research environments. The mediation can go both ways, facilitating policy-makers searching for knowledge and insights and researchers searching to increase the societal impact of their work.

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Social Imaginary of the Hijras: Dominant Cultural Narratives Mediating Ritualistic Consumption of Transgender and Gender Non-Binary Consumers in Bangladesh

Hossain Shahriar

Abstract— This research interrogates ritualistic consumption of hijras, Transgender and Gender Non-Binary individuals in Bangladesh, manifested in a perpetual negotiation of ideologies, myths, religion, politico-legal and sociocultural imperatives. The study enacts social imaginaries of hijras to animate how hijras are oppressed but occasionally granted peripheral inclusion, journey through a liminal rite of passage into communitas and co-opt hegemonic ritualistic consumption, and has been relegated from being viewed in the trope of purity to pollution. The study contributes to prior CCT theories on marginalisation/stigmatisation and literature on intersectionality of gender.

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INTRODUCTION

A pair of hijras walked into an eatery in Dhaka during peak iftar (Islamic ritual of breaking fast in Ramadan) hours and brooked some awkward glances. Suddenly two people confronted them to leave. But then something remarkable happened – guests across diverse demographic jumped to defend the hijras' right to dine. Turned out, it was a social experiment by a brand that sparked social media conversation across Bangladesh about the rights of *hijras*, a marginalised community prevented from access to such ritualistic consumption.

Scholars in Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) have looked into disenfranchisement and stigmatisation of consumers on the fringe, such as immigrants (Luedicke, 2015; Peñaloza, 1994; Üstüner & Holt, 2007), sexual minorities (Kates, 2002; Peñaloza, 1996; Visconti, 2008) and racial/ethnic/religious groups (Askegaard, Arnould, & Kjeldgaard, 2005; Crockett, 2017; Rinallo, Maclaran, & Stevens, 2016). Previous CCT studies have also looked into the role of political (Crockett & Wallendorf, 2004; Varman & Belk, 2009) and religious (O'Guinn & Belk, 1989; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2010) ideologies in structuring consumption, in particular, how ideologies confluence with myths (Luedicke, Thompson, & Giesler, 2010; Thompson, 2004) and religion (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012a; Jafari & Goulding, 2008). Izberk-Bilgin (2012b), singularly, depicted how religious myths, ideologies, politics, globalisation and historical conflicts reproduce consumer culture in an Islamic LIC (Less Industrialised Country) as consumers perceive themselves as marginalised on a global, political and religious level, as committed Muslims.

This research explores ritualistic consumption of Transgender and Gender Non-Binary (TGNB) individuals, in the nexus of ideologies, myth, religion, politico-legal and sociocultural context of Bangladesh, an Islamic LIC. Although scholarships in other disciplines have investigated how hijra subjectivities are constructed and reproduced (Cohen, 1995; Hall, 1997; Nanda, 1990), there is a dearth of studies in CCT that explore TGNB consumption from an Eastern viewpoint at the intersection (Gopaldas & Fischer, 2012) of gender, religion, ideology, myths and politics, where, in turn, this research aims to contribute.

CONTEXTUALISING CONTESTING CONTEXT OF TGNB CONSUMPTION COMMUNITIES

Hijras, Transgender and Gender Non-Binary individuals (TGNB) in Bangladesh – popularly known as eunuchs, hermaphrodites, transvestites and transsexuals – are intersex or male-bodied individuals but identify as female (Hossain, 2017). Drawing upon ancient myths and historical narratives can help

contextualising the context (Askegaard & Linnet, 2011) of hijra communities to understand contesting sociocultural norms, religious myths and politico-legal imperatives structuring their consumption. In 2013 Bangladesh became one of the few countries in the world to officially recognise hijras, permitting them the use of third-gender in identity documents/passports, to vote and run for office (McNabb, 2018). This politico-legal recognition conflicts with religious ideologies, which, to a large extent, govern politics in Bangladesh. With over 90% Muslims and emergence of intolerant values, homosexuality is shunned and condemned. Hijras uphold their Islamic beliefs but concurrently engage in Hindu myths, rites and practices (Hossain, 2012), pushing the religious envelope. Hijras lack cultural and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1984), as they are rejected by families and forced to live in destitution, working as prostitutes or beggars and their sacred rituals of *badhai* (playing tom-toms to confer blessings on new-borns in exchange of gifts) and *birit* (alms collection in the marketplace) (Hossain, 2012) have become a violence of holding people hostage over money.

METHODOLOGY

This research investigates the aforesaid social experiment in online and offline communities through (1) netnography (Kozinets, 2002, 2019) to observe discussions in four Bangladeshi Facebook groups about the social experiment, and (2) face-to-face interviews with six urban middle-class Bangladeshi to understand hijras' access to ritualistic consumption. Interviews were semi-structured, lasting from 60-120 minutes, and were supplemented with field notes.

DOMINANT CULTURAL NARRATIVES

Dominant cultural narratives are deep-seated stories and social practices, ingrained in our cultural configuration that are enacted through normative interactions and social institutions (Ewick & Silbey, 1995; Rappaport, 2000). As contextual contradictions unfold three cultural narratives manifest from the empirical materials, that mediate hijras' access to ritualistic consumption.

B. Oppression and Inclusion Narratives

Oppression narratives employ normalised cisgender gaze to paint TGNB individuals sympathetically with pity, as an outgroup, rather than empathising with and including them in the cultural constructions of "us" (Green, Hoskin, Mayo, & Miller, 2019). As marginalised consumers seeking inclusion, hijras encounter exclusionary pressures such as fear of unknown, inhibiting their access to ritualistic consumption. But respondents also revealed exclusion on religious grounds is attenuating as Islamic leaders are asserting hijras as creations of God and their emasculation is deemed analogous with circumcision as well as a cure for homosexuality, granting them peripheral inclusion in certain ritualistic consumption.

C. Stigma and Communitas Narratives

Goffman (1963) postulated stigma as a 'deeply discrediting attribute' on three echelons, all of which applies to hijras – bodily abomination (genetically at fault), character blemishes (deviant sexual tendencies) and tribal stigma (damaging attributes). In a country where sex/sexuality is taboo, hijras are viewed in the trope of blight and disability (Hossain, 2017) and such misconceptions breed stigma. These institutionalised stigma narratives (Bradford & Clark, 2011) are used to score political currency by showcasing TGNB initiatives to activists and concomitantly flaunting, to the mass, attempts to alleviate violence on the streets. Abandoned by their families, hijras live in a *communitas*, which Turner (1969, p. 96) explicated as a rudimentarily structured society, led by a *guru*, that emanates in the *liminal* period with "relatively undifferentiated comitatus, community, or even communion of equal individuals". As with other tribes, hijras go through *nirvan*, a liminal initiation rite of passage into the communitas through the removal of male genitals, scrotum and testicles. As a counterculture (Hebdige, 1979), hijras use their collective identity to subvert and resist stigma and internalise or appropriate hegemonic ritualistic consumption, such as *shinni* (feeding the underprivileged after completing the Qur'an) with their own rendition.

D. Mythical and Religious Narratives

The reverence of androgyny in the Indian subcontinent stems from ancient Hindu mythology, which accorded hijras power and status, analogous with their ritual sacrifice of emasculation (Nanda, 1990). Hinduism regarded hijras as touched by God, who bring luck and bestow blessings. With the rise of Islam during the Mughal Empire, hijras were reduced to 'eunuch slaves' and *harem* guards, followed by criminalisation during British colonisation (Nanda, 1990; Taparia, 2011). Drawing on rituals of 'purity' and 'pollution' by Douglas (1966), this research found that respondents frequently use rhetoric of 'God's curse' to emphasise the contamination and lack of purity of hijras, who are looked down as trouble that threatens to destabilise the social gender order built on the hallowed grounds of binary gender codes. The relegation of social status of TGNB consumers from sacred to profane (Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry Jr., 1989) is the fundamental impediment inhibiting unholy hijras to access Islamic holy ritualistic consumption, like iftar.

CONCLUSION

According to Taylor (2004), social imaginaries are a broad understanding of how people imagine their social existence. This research helps us navigate the dominant cultural narratives of hijras in Bangladesh, which are social imaginaries of hijras constructed from a hegemonic non-hijra viewpoint. This study renders an understanding on how these imaginaries structure ritualistic consumption of TGNB consumers, manifested in a perpetual negotiation of myths, religion, ideologies and politics. This research advances our theoretical understanding by animating how brands and consumer change agents pose historical challenges to the gender binary and how ideological change efforts are inflected. While this study is from a past-present social imaginary vantage point, the findings also indicate waning influences of religious ideologies mediating TGNB consumption in an Islamic LIC, where religion is still used as a major impediment of access to ritualistic consumption for women and homosexuals. Future researchers can explore how TGNB consumption is constituted in this fragmentation of gender/sexuality and religion.

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The Impact of Stigmatization and Segregation on Markets and Capital

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Although modern societies are built around the values of equality and fairness, we see rising inequalities of opportunities and access to resources (Alvaredo et al. 2018). Certain individuals, as consumers and producers, often find themselves struggling against such inequalities. This research focuses on inequalities resulting from religious discrimination. The questions that encapsulate our research are: (a) How does spatial segregation resulting from religious discrimination shape consumption and production practices of the stigmatized? (b) What are the limits to these consumption and production practices of the stigmatized? We execute a meso-level analysis at the meeting point of structural mechanisms and individual actions. The structural mechanisms (political and cultural) have shaped and institutionalized religious stigmatization. The individual actions we study include social interactions for consumption and production purposes. We utilize the works of Bourdieu (1986) and Wacquant, Slater and Pereira (2014) as tools towards understanding spatial segregation as a condition to analyzing it as a process. The motive is to leverage the structural analysis of the topography of space towards an ethnographic analysis of the topography of stigmatization. We situate this work in prior research on marketplace exclusion (Scaraboto and Fischer 2012), redlining (D'Rozario and Williams 2005), spatial exclusion (Castilhos 2019), and stigmatization (Sandikci and Ger 2009), among others.

The study is set in the city of Ahmedabad (India), which has been fraught with repeated incidents of interreligious conflict. The most recent large-scale conflict occurred in 2002, leading to increased segregation of Hindu and Muslim populations. As of 2002, 71% of Ahmedabad's population lived in religiously homogeneous neighborhoods (Field 2008). The context is unique in that out-migration from one religious neighborhood to another is lodged in political and legal structural webs that have, thus, guaranteed residential segregation based on religious identity (Disturbed Areas (DA) Act 1976).

To analyze this segregation from a lens that extends beyond the well-researched aspect of residential segregation, we conducted a spatial mapping of the city's marketplaces. We mapped prominent retail outlets, restaurant chains, private and public banks, and malls onto the ward-wise segmented map of the city based on secondary information available on government websites and Google Maps. Using the QGIS application, we generated a GIS map (Figure 1) with the count of the amenities. This spatial visualization provides an overview of the intersection of economic (market) fields and religious fields. Further, we conducted in-depth interviews with 16 participants to elicit accounts of their production and consumption activities in this context.

As the context deals with aspects of distinction (between Hindus and Muslims), we found Bourdieu's 'thinking tools,' such as capital, doxa, interest, and symbolic violence, useful in analyzing the data. Bourdieu argues that symbolic violence is reproduced when arbitrary is considered legitimate by the dominated and that individual's act through their interest, capital, and doxa to improve their positions in the field (Bourdieu 1986, Grenfell 2014). Moreover, the context also involves aspects of spatial segregation as a critical characteristic. Wacquant combines Goffman and Bourdieu by integrating the elements of space (territorial stigmatization) with symbolic power and reproduction of the arbitrary as natural (Wacquant, Slater and Pereira 2014). Both these theoretical lenses enable us to interpret our data and situate our work in the existing literature on stigma, discrimination, and consumption.

The GIS map and interviews illuminate redlining- refusal by a service provider to serve customers, lack of discount chain stores, and absence of malls in a physical area of sizeable Muslim population (refer D'Rozario and Williams 2005). Not only does redlining lead to inferior choice availability for Muslim consumers - in terms of opportunities to avail loans, school admissions, houses, and business opportunities, but it also hurts businesses that accommodate inefficiency to maintain social legitimacy.

We find that stigmatized Muslim producers rely on market logic of entrepreneurship, individual effort and growth, and market-mediated solutions for overcoming discrimination and under-served markets. They configure the marketplace and stretch the existing boundaries (Weinberger and Crockett 2018) to address the problems of segregation and production. "Forced entrepreneurs" (in the words of a participant) emerge as they develop alternative markets for schools, supermarkets, and real estate, among others. Participants worked in their 'interest' to

improve their field positions by relying on market doxa to redress the inferior position imposed through religious doxa.

Success stories of a few entrepreneurs inspire one to rely on one's effort and wit to overcome discrimination (reliance on market logic). However, the presence of market solutions does not imply that a stigmatized situation is remedied. The segregated Muslim neighborhoods act as prisons as they prevent entrepreneurs from expanding their business. The associated responsibilization and individualization through market logic preclude any collective political action demanding change. Further, we find several instances when participants strategically choose to highlight or invisibilize specific religious markers in the interest of gaining customer patronage which only further exaggerated differences between the communities. Thus, while solving immediate problems of discrimination and lack of products, the market and neoliberal ethos appear to reproduce distinction and segregation between Hindus and Muslims.

Our participants discussed relying on their social capital to establish and run their businesses. However, due to cultural and institutional legitimacy of religious discrimination resulting in territorial stigmatization (DA Act, history of violence, fear of the 'other'), physical location of the Muslim entrepreneurs and consumers arrests their attempts towards converting economic capital to social and cultural capital (buying commercial and residential spaces in good localities, education, etc.).

Our context and data allow us to the foreground and understand the nexus of symbolic space (religious capital), physical space (DA act, spatial segregation), and economic space (markets and consumption/production activities). Our work contributes to theory in the following ways. First, we uncover how the location (physical capital) inhibits the conversion of economic capital into cultural capital. Despite having economic capital, participants could not convert it to cultural and social capital because they lacked legitimate physical capital. Thus, we could add a nuance about how physical spaces interact with aspects of distinction and reproduction (Bourdieu 1986). Second, we uncover the dual role of markets, in the way they help survive discrimination by enabling means of living, but foreclose opportunities of collective action and structural changes, through individualization and responsibilization. From a substantive perspective, this work can inform contexts wherein spatial segregation is institutionally or culturally legitimized (refugee camps, gated communities, redlining, etc.). Often, it is believed that the market and its logics (entrepreneurship, neoliberal values) will eventually resolve underlying segregation and discrimination. We found that without efforts through other collective means, the market may aggravate the conditions it is meant to alleviate.

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The best for you is what I don't want anymore: the meanings of donation in a collaborative network

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Abstract— This article discusses the meanings of donations and how they can vary not only from individual to individual, but from individual to object. It also addresses the context of collaborative donation networks, which reunited donors and recipients, without interference from intermediary actors and which confer the donor's ability to choose who will receive its object. The result of in-depth interviews with nineteen donors, non-participatory group observation for one year, and network post capture for one and a half months reveals the meanings of altruism, connection with the past and retribution that are evident in the donation process on the collaborative network.

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INTRODUCTION

Historically, consumer culture studies have focused on the consumption itself with some scarce studies about the need of understanding what happens when it ends. Recent research has shaded light on the disposition as part of consumption process revealing its deserved importance in this fieldwork as much more meaningful that just an act of throwing things away (Eden 2015; Guillard and Del Bucchia 2012; Aptekar 2016). Individuals spend time and money to discard or even to avoid discarding objects that are no longer used, involving "the living honouring a debt-they feel they have to the departed" (Hetherington 2004, 168). As consumers, we influence objects as we are influenced by it (Miller 2013), and even in the disposition process, different cultural aspects can emerge enriching our comprehension of consumption's phenomenon.

In the convenience of seeing objects no longer desired leaving their homes (Arsel and Dobscha 2011), consumers are forming a circular economy (Eden 2015, 6), defined as the reframing of objects that are transferred in a network donation. When dealing with absence management (Hetherington 2004, 170) donors would be concerned about finding a good destination for their unwanted objects: whether they will reach out to those who need them most and how they will use them (Aptekar 2016). However, concerns about the best destination for their goods ultimately lead to what Türe (2016, 69) calls the "dark side of disposal": in seeking to ensure the safe transfer of the meaning of the object in donation, donors take authoritarian attitudes that accentuate the difference between "them and us" or "who asks and who gives", respectively, reproducing a social order that reinforces their social position.

Our purpose is to explore the nature of consumers' relationships to donated objects and the meanings evoked in the context of donation in a heterogeneous collaborative network. The context of the exchanges was analyzed through the lens of the concept of heterogeneous collaborative network (Scaraboto 2015; Figueiredo and Scaraboto 2016). The concept of product meanings and its contribution to the understanding of the consumer-object relations and consumer behavior has been extensively explored (Friedman 1986; Hirschman 1980; McCracken 1986; Mick 1986, Fournier, 1991). However, it seems that object meanings in a liquid consumption context like a collaborative network have not been studied before.

CONTEXT: FREE YOUR STUFF PORTO ALEGRE

The Free Your Stuff Porto Alegre (FYSPOA) is a heterogeneous collaborative network housed in Facebook, founded in Brazil, in 2014 - the first FYS was created in Berlin, in 2011-, with 27.000 members in 2019, with the aim of allowing members to donate and ask for goods. Members can interplay the roles of donor and receptor. There is no mediator in the network. The participants can define who is going to receive the donation and how it will be pursued. The criteria employed to choose the receptor are defined in accordance with the donator's relationship to donated object and the clues from what role the object donated will play in the receptor's life. According to this perspective, the actors try to mitigate bad feelings in the process of donating their objects, since they are or were part of their extended self (Belk 1988). Some studies have shown different ways to explain different meanings associated to disposal of goods, (Arsel and Dobcha 2011;

Nelson et al. 2007; Herrmann 1997), but all stress the importance of the specific consumers' relationships to objects person-object. Although the main purpose of the group is to discard objects no longer desired, studies also reveal that members engage to save money, for curiosity about the objects that can be donated, by bargaining and also by encouraging more conscious consumption (Nelson, Rademacher, and, Paek 2007; Aptekar 2016).

METHOD

Although the meaning of giving in collaborative networks has been addressed in several studies (Eden, 2015; Aptekar, 2016; Guillard, Del Bucchia, 2012, Türe, 2016), none of these explores the meaning of giving to individuals and how these meanings relate to the purpose of the giving context in the network. With the freedom to choose how they will donate their objects in FYSPOA, donors can define different ways to exchange on the network. From this reflection, we question how consumers detach from their items in a collaborative network? What do these objects mean to donors and how do they relate to the purpose of the network? How the meanings attached to these objects evolve during the donation process? For this study, 19 in-depth interviews were conducted with FYSPOA donors, non-participatory group observation for 1 year, and network post capture for one and a half months. The interviews, which lasted an average of forty minutes, were all audio recorded with the permission of the participants (Belk, Fischer, and Kozinets 2013), and then transcribed. In total, there were more than 656 minutes of interviews, transcribed on 134 pages. The results were made according to content analysis, seeking convergence and divergence of participants' responses about their donated objects, the experience of donation in the collaborative network and the relationship with other members.

FINDINGS

Our findings reveal that the meaning of donations varies from donor to object, not from donor to donor, which deepens our perception of the meanings of donations in collaborative networks studied in previous research (Arsel and Dobscha 2011; Eden 2015; Aptekar 2016). Three different types of meaning for donations were analyzed, namely, altruism, connection with the past, and retribution, and define how consumers will offer their object and choose their new owner. It is important to make a distinction among the types of meaning evoked here. Both altruism and retribution are meanings that emerged from the process of donation carried out in FYSPOA. That means that the fact of being engaged in a collaborative network has emulated the emergence of new meanings.

In the case of altruism, objects need to help other people, and to do so they need to maximize their future use. The donation goes beyond giveaway something you no longer want, but someone else can use. For example, E1 donated a futon, which served as a visiting mattress, to a member who wanted a bed to your dog, and E13 donated her shoes to a teacher who would wear them in a play. Both could not imagine, before the donation, that their items could serve to these purposes, but because they realized that the gesture would help other people, they gave anyway. The FYSPOA characteristics allows the donor to have a whole picture of the second or further life of the donated object and reinforce the perceptions of helping someone. In the second case, bestowal carries the meaning of connection with the past, when the memory and soul of the object must be revered in finding a new home. Here, we found consumers that used some possessions to manage temporality (Price, Arnould, and Curasi 2000), but they have decided to get rid of it, despite some sadness. That's why they go after interested parties, investigating their profiles and chatting in private messages in an effort to find the one who reveres them. When E12 moved with her boyfriend, the first purchase was a purple sofa, which had to get rid of it with the arrival of the first child. Therefore, they made a search for the new owner of the object, but were frustrated when, in the collection, the recipient complained of some use marks, even though in the donation publication were explicit, what in turn mitigated the emotional tenets related to their beloved sofa or its role as extended self. Objects play a central role in the construction of narratives of belonging, personal and family identity (Bardhi, Eckhardt, and Arnould 2012). The last type of meaning is retribution. This meaning emerges when donors perceive themselves as privileged to possess objects desired by and inaccessible to many people - what can be especially meaningful and frequent in a social and economic unequal society like the Brazilian one -, even if these objects are used or damaged. In this sense, the donation represents a gateway to the experience provided by the interaction with the item for those who could not have it without the donation. E3 regularly exchanges its eyeglass frames for aesthetics and understands that this expense is a luxury for o some people in function of its cost in Brazil. Therefore, it chooses to donate the old frames in FYSPOA and prioritize those who cannot afford to buy a new frame.

Finally, the peculiar freedom given to FYSPOA donors to choose from their stakeholders allows them to express their intentions, which engages them in a more intricate and elaborated process than economic exchanges with a bargaining chip. This increases the importance of understanding the meaning of donations in collaborative networks. From the lens of assemblage theory (Bradford and Schouten, 2015), we found that object meanings are relational, affected by the time and the context, and, moreover, deterritorialized by interactions between donators and receptors emulating new meanings and configuring new assemblage. Understanding the process of donation in an heterogeneous collaborative network as an instance of resignification of objects meanings enlarge the role performed by this type of arrangement.

Our limitations were to analyze only part of this circular economy (EDEN, 2015). We suggest the exploration of meanings emerged to people that receive donated goods in collaborative networks in future research.

TABLE III. INTERVIEWED

Interviewee	In-deep interviews participants		
	Age	*Occupation*	*Group Activity*
E1	30	Producer	Only donor
E2	31	Reviewer	Only donor
E3	32	Student	Only donor
E4	31	Planner	Only donor

Interviewee	In-deep interviews participants		
	Age	*Occupation*	*Group Activity*
E5	34	Entrepreneur	Donor and receiver
E6	27	Theater director	Donor and receiver
E7	27	Bank officer	Only donor
E8	27	Lawyer	Only donor
E9	30	Advertising	Donor and receiver
E10	37	Journalist	Only donor
E11	36	Video maker	Donor and receiver
E12	37	Housewife	Donor and receiver
E13	27	Journalist	Only donor
E14	27	Designer	Only donor
E15	32	Advertising	Only donor
E16	28	Entrepreneur	Only donor
E17	30	Cooker	Donor and receiver
E18	27	Producer	Only donor
E19	34	Brewer	Donor and receiver

Source: elaborate by the authors

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How the practice of commercialising comes together and falls apart in a market of wearable technologies

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Abstract— Wearable technologies, or wearables, are a combination of design and technology—for instance, a smartwatch that measures blood pressure, or lingerie that imitates the touch of one's lover. Regardless of initial optimistic forecasts for wearables' market growth, there are few examples of successfully commercialized wearables, except those by technology giants like Apple. In contrast to large companies, start-ups developing wearables struggle to survive. Previous studies on commercializing failures suggest that this is due to poor design of wearables, inappropriate business models, or an extended time lag needed for customers to accept such novel technology. In this article, we add to the ongoing discussion by approaching the commercializing process as a complex integrative practice and analyse how the practice of wearables' commercializing takes shape, perpetuates and falls apart.

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INTRODUCTION

Wearables are a combination of design and technology (Seymour 2008) that can be carried on one's body (smartwatch, lingerie that imitates touch of one's lover, etc.). It is a new market where mostly technological giants like Apple or Xiaomi have managed to succeed, while numerous start-ups show an extremely high failure rate (cf. Lee et al. 2016).

Problems with commercialising of technological and digital startups have been interpreted from several perspectives. First, the dominance of large corporations can constrain market entry for small and inexperienced players (see O'Connor and Rise 2013; Oderanti and Li 2018). Next, commercialising of new technologies, as a rule, are accompanied by high product development costs (Gans and Stern 2003). In addition, commercialising of a new technology might proceed slowly due to trust issues on the consumers' side (O'Neill et al. 2003; Grubler 1998). Next, commercialising of an innovative technology might as well require new business models that are yet to be invented (O'Neill et al. 2003; Grubler 1998). Finally, reasons behind failure of commercialising of wearables are explained through the drawbacks of a product, like poor design or limited battery capacity, due to which the consumers are reluctant to purchase them (Dunne 2015).

RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Theory

In this research, however, we suggest using a novel theoretical perspective by looking at commersialising of the wearable technologies as a practice, i.e. a routinized type of behavior consisting of different interlinked elements such as bodily and mental activity, know-hows, material things, emotional attitudes, etc. (see Reckwitz 2002). In contrast to a traditional interpretation of market as a supply and demand meeting point, the practice-based paradigm interprets it as a constellation of different practices and circumstances in which they are embedded (Korkman et al. 2010, p. 237). Therefore, in order to succeed, entrepreneurs have to either adopt already established practices or develop ones of their own through reconfiguration and improvement of the elements of previous practices (p. 239). Within this approach, focus shifts from a market exchange to a practice and its elements, whereas successful commersialising is conceptualised not as an increase in

profit through higher sales, but as a reproduced practice with smoothly integrated elements (see Kjellberg and Helgesson 2006). However, it is unclear what happens if an entrepreneur enters a new market, such as the market of wearables, where there is yet no established and normalised practice.

B. Research Question

Therefore, a question that we pose is "How can practice theory explain commersialising of wearable technologies, and thus contribute to understanding of wearables' startups success and failures?" We have chosen startups as an object of analysis because these innovative businesses are important for economic growth and job creation (Storey and Tether 1998; Bruderl et al. 1998), and are traditionally facing high level of uncertainty, including lack of information on production facilities, investment opportunities and benchmarking examples (see Backes-Gellner and Werner 2007).

Following Shove et al. paradigm (2012), we offer looking at commersialising as a practice comprised by three elements (materials, competences and meanings) and links between them. Depending on the presence/absence of the links between the elements, there can be a proto-practice (links have not yet been made, but can potentially emerge), an integrated (established links), and an ex-practice (links used to be there, but have fallen apart) (see Shove et al. 2012, p. 24).

C. Methodology

Data was elicited through thirteen expert interviews (Bogner, Littig and Menz 2009). We defined experts as professionals (artists, fashion and textile designers, engineers, students, IT specialists) working on projects on wearables. The country of residence was not a search criterion, so, as a result, the interviewees were coming from six different countries.

The conducted interviews were semi-structured (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009); and real names of the experts were changed. We coded our data using Gioia's methodology (2013) for thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). Finally, for the analysis part we chose three interviews from different countries (Russia, the Netherlands and Finland) corresponding to a proto-, existing or ex-practice, respectively. This is done in order to insure coherent and in-depth storyline (Fournier 1998) and to track complex dynamics between different states of commersialising practice across a variety of contexts (Holt and Thompson 2004).

FINDINGS

Based on our findings, we suggest that the entrepreneurs have to obtain materials (funds to purchase materials, equipment or hire apprentices), to possess necessary skills (networking, conducting research among the consumers, organizing crowdfunding) and to find certain meaning (serving the society, enriching, developing the wearable industry) in the commercialising practice. However, availability of the elements does not guarantee emergence of the practice since they have to be linked together. Formation of the links depends on a context, including – but not limited to – social and cultural norms, infrastructure, laws and local policy (Shove et al. 2012, pp. 63 – 79). Depending on how these contextual characteristics play out, different actors possessing different resources might be willing to join the practice of commersialising. For example, Nina – a successful start upper and wearables' populariser from the Netherlands has partnered up with a large corporation that brings with ideas and money. Matti (Finland) has secured sufficient funding from the state willing to support the wearable industry. In contrast, in Evgeniya's example (Russia), the context characterised by lack of trust between the start upper and potential investors has been preventing the practice from formation.

Next, we found that perpetuation of the practice of commercialising wearables depends on bundles of practices, i.e. its relation to other practices that an entrepreneur participates in (Schatzki 2016; Shove et al. 2012, pp. 81-84). For example, Evgeniya (Russia), in addition to her project on a wearable, has a full-time job that consumes most of her time. For Nina (the Netherlands), on the contrary, commercialising practice harmoniously overlaps with lecturing activity as this is the main way to find clientele. Finally, for Matti (Finland), the practice of commersialising lost competition with full-time PhD studies, not just in terms of sharing time, but also through disintegration of the meaning element (freedom to experiment as a PhD researcher versus careful risks evaluation for a start upper). Therefore, when studying commersialising of wearables, relations with other practices (competition, sharing of elements) should be taken into consideration.

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Population Management and Social Sustainability: Precarious Consumers in Asia

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The purpose of this special session is to explore varying perspectives on how macro-forces, such as the power of sovereignty and government policies involving population management, have created segments of vulnerable consumers. The gap between the rich and poor has not only widened, but has also been made more visible. Geography is destiny. We focus on these problematics in Asia. The ecology that creates consumer culture affects the actions of governments which, in turn, lead to pockets of population growth and decline and affects patterns of migration within and between nations (Anderson 2019). We look at consumers' struggles and practices within national boundaries, with particular attention to thanatopolitics in India, surveillance in China, inequality in Japan, and internal migration in China.

This session presents a set of four thought-provoking studies focused on the violence involved in the governmentality of superpowers and the social sustainability of consumers and their cultures in contemporary precarious Asia. These studies are united by the theme of population management and its consequences. Precarity refers to a human condition that is insecure, undependable, and dangerous. Often controlled by influential elites and organizations, governments are increasingly opting for diverse schemes of disguised and undisguised surveillance and brutality toward mass targets for managing their populations (Howard-Hassman 2016). For instance, Myanmar is blamed for the massacre of Rohingya. Practices of power maintenance—coercion, persecution, detention, expulsion, massacre—executed by governments can be effective, disruptive, and for some, catastrophic.

Consequentially, resilient micro forces coexist in societies: precarity provokes solidarity, sociality, and rituality as strategies of consumer resistance. This session documents transformative practices to sustain sociality at the meso- and micro-levels: specifically, the making of the community to sustain consumer death rituals, and gift giving to maintain and expand kinship. All the four studies in this session share the intention of questioning the future aftermaths of such governmentalities on the population management. Since the world appears to be heading to the wider disparity between a small number of elites and the vast poor who have no more than a "bare life" (Agamben 1998; Anderson 2019), this session also aims to initiate the conversation for pro-vulnerable growth and governance that reduces or eradicates poverty with both macro and micro development strategies (Wignaraja and Sirivardana 2004).

The first paper discusses governmentality (Foucault 1975, 1979) of the nation through the social credit system and surveillance along with Big Data in China. The second contribution examines the thanatopolitics: a violent and unscrupulous, biopolitical manipulation of the bare life (Agamben 1998) within the healthcare system in India. In contrast, the third paper involves the domain of consumer ritual—gift giving and reciprocity—by provincial rural male migrants in an urban city in China who struggle to establish fictive kinship in the context of a modern consumer society in which gifts help to create a sense of the "intersubjective belonging" (Sahlins 2011, 2). Finally, the fourth paper examines consumer death rituals among the single urban elderly in super-aged Japan. The group studied use these rituals and their social network as a way to prevent solitary death. The paper uses actor network theory (Latour 2005) to discuss how the consumer community is formed through these shared death rituals.

The session relies on a set of multi-method studies. They are both conceptual and ethnographic and cover a wide geographical scope within Asia. All studies have been completed. We believe that this session would have drawn a large and varied audience and its abstracts deserve a similar readership. Given that currently over 60 percent of the world's population lives in Asia and that the management of this population is precarious, we think that the issues of surveillance, thanatopolitics, migration, and inequality should be of great concern. Furthermore, these papers hope to jointly stimulate research concerned with the impact of the macro forces of population management on precariousness, and how consumer culture can contribute to social sustainability or unsustainability. We intend to include the full papers in book form in the near future.

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Big Brother is Watching you! A Case Study of China's Social Credit System

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Beginning in the early 2010s, the Chinese government launched a new Social Credit System (hereafter, the SCS) to monitor and examine citizen-consumers' and businesses' behaviors that will ultimately determine their access to goods and services. Aiming at installing the SCS scheme nationwide by 2020, both governmental and a number of private enterprises have been mobilized by the central government to collaboratively work on constructing a "reward and penalty system" designed to evaluate the "trustworthiness" of both organizations and individuals, assign social credit scores to them, and eventually impose sanctions and rewards on them according to these scores. The "reward and penalty system" is fuelled by the enforcement of the "real-name system." In the "real-name system," it is compulsory for every Chinese citizen-consumer to provide legal identification documents in order to get access to day-to-day services provided by companies and governmental organisations in all sectors ranging from communications, to financial services, to social media, to online shopping, to transportation and to public services (The Chinese State Council Notice, 2014).

While the launch of the SCS is made possible by relying on the advanced internet and mobile technologies that have rapidly developed in China in the past decade, and, as explained by the Chinese government, is primarily intended to create a more socially responsible market and a more ethical and ordered society, it raises a number of concerns related to citizen-consumer privacy. For example, data collected from consumers can be used by both private companies and governmental authorities to track Chinese citizen-consumers' daily lives for not only commercial but also political purposes. In addition, scoring mechanisms used in the SCS scheme to evaluate the "trustworthiness" of individuals and organizations are not transparent to the public.

Through Foucauldian lenses of panopticism and governmentality, we study the case of the Chinese SCS scheme to elaborate on the new age of digital panoptcism. With the help of internet-based technologies, SCS is becoming a surveillance mechanism that allows the Chinese government to collect the vast amount of data that can be used to closely monitor the conduct of the entire Chinese society and thus help its governance of the Chinese population. The SCS scheme resembles Foucault's (1975) concept of the "gaze," which consists of a state apparatus of power that effectively forms a panopticon-like surveillance system designed for monitoring the conduct of the entire Chinese society at societal, industrial, organizational and individual levels. The smooth operation of the SCS scheme relies on 1) the enforcement of the "real-name system", which makes accurate identities of citizens visible to authorised agents and thus helps the government translate citizens into easily identifiable and trackable objects, and 2) the non-transparent scoring mechanisms used in the SCS scheme, which contribute to making the government invisible to citizen-consumers, who have to assume themselves to be under ceaseless surveillance and thus behave in certain designated ways.

In addition, we consider the recent implementation of the social credit system in China as a new governance tool that integrates the Internet of Things technologies with social expectations set by the government. It was used to track infected coronavirus patients in Wuhan forward and backward in time, for example. The SCS scheme is obviously the largest and the most technologically advanced monitoring systems in the world at the moment. It is considered a gigantic urban experiment where the new governance mechanism may move between utopia and dystopia.

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Precarious Consumers and Thanatopolitics

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In this research, we examine the causes of the deaths of thousands of children over the last ten years in and around Gorakhpur, India, due to encephalitis. In particular, we attend to the event of the shortage of oxygen supply at Baba Raghav Das Medical College Hospital, Gorakhpur, in which more than 60 children died within 72 hours in 2017 (Bhuyan 2017; Singh 2017a; 2017b). We examined three cases of encephalitis in the region spread over a period of the last ten years to trace the violence in the form of the epidemic against the poor that the oxygen shortage has surfaced. We build on the work of Giorgio Agamben (1998, 1999, 2005) to show that the lives of the poor are reduced to bare lives that are in a state of aporia between *zoe* and *bios*. We further argue that the violence against precarious consumers has to be concealed by sovereignty as part of thanatopolitics. We contribute to consumer research by surfacing thanatopolitics and violence in markets.

We uncover several modes of concealment of sovereign violence against precarious consumers. First, everyday deaths of bare lives are concealed through ellipsis. We found that deaths of consumers go unaccounted with the State and media not reporting the complete picture. Second, enumeration and statistics are critical techniques of concealment that are commonly used in public representations of the tragedy. We found that an extraordinary occurrence like the oxygen shortage becomes an event that gets included in media reports and is noticed by the State but the systemic features that contribute to it are neglected (Povinelli 2011). Third, deaths are normalized as consequences of under-development and poverty. In this discourse of development, the poor are pathologized as unaware and weak bodies that need to develop to overcome their problems (Gupta 2012).

Discourse of development creates two mutually reinforcing moments. On the one hand, the public medical delivery system is deemed as corrupt with the problem of commissions and kickbacks that hamper its functioning. The arrest of various officials at BRD and the media attention to it reinforce this feature of the thanatopolitics in the region. Moreover, the crisis is used by India's planning body to propose privatization of government hospitals to create a more 'efficient' healthcare delivery system. The tragedy is used to render a public health facility as a site of corruption and incompetence. In doing so, it normalizes the privatization outside the public health facility (Rao 2017; Sharma 2017). It is also used as a neoliberal ploy to showcase public ownership as problematic and make a case for further privatization (Harvey 2003). This is an example of what Klein (2007) describes as disaster capitalism. At the same time, behind the façade of development, farmland is acquired for a private residential complex that will provide the more privileged with the infrastructure they need for neoliberal lives. Therefore, furthering the region's thanatopolitics, a death world of precarious consumers is used by the ruling classes to create opportunities for private capital and, in the process, to normalize the state of crisis.

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Gifts of The Male Phoenix in China

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Gift-giving plays an important role in establishing and sustaining social relationships, especially in family and marriage (Belk 1996; Caplow 1982; Cheal 1988; Mauss 1925/1990; Ruth et al. 1999). Social class also shapes gift exchange (Vatuk and Vatuk 1971; Yan 1996). In this study, we focus on examining how gift exchange helps to integrate inter-class marriages in China. The so-called "male phoenix" are men who grow up in rural areas, but obtain higher educations and settle in major cities through efforts, talent, and diligence (Lin 2010; Wu and Treiman 2004; Wang *2014).* Many are married into higher social classes in urban China. Interclass marriage is often regarded as inappropriate and stigmatized because of different values and practices that each class embraces.

We examine how kinship is made through gift-giving in a modern society, in which indigenous kinship systems are often jeopardized by rapid social changes and social mobility. Kinship refers to the "mutuality of being, or people who are intrinsic to one another's existence of life itself" (Sahlins 2011, 2). It is created both by procreation or collective arrangements of common descent, and by social construction and performance (Schneider 1980). Within the small social worlds that are dominated by a moral economy (Cheal 1988), gifts help to create a sense of mutuality, or a sense of the "intersubjective belonging" (Sahlins 2011, 2). In consumer culture theories, gift-giving has been examined in various family contexts and giftingoccasions (e.g., Joy 2001; Otnes et al. 1993).

However, it remains to be explored how gift giving helps to establish and sustain family, extended family, and kinship networks. Extended kinship networks are more important in sustaining social solidarity in societies where the sense of self is independent versus nuclear families in countries in which the sense of self is interdependent. In previous research, kinship distance is taken to be a deciding factor in shaping gift-giving (Sahlins 1972). However, in such studies of reciprocity, kinship is already established. We study how gift-giving and reciprocity may help to establish kinship in the context of a modern consumer society. We examine how failed reciprocity may lead to renouncing kinship.

The data for this study were collected over a two-year period in both Northern and Southern China—Shandong province and Shanghai. Ethnographic in-depth interviews and ethnographic observations (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott 2003) were adopted for data collection. Twenty-five interviews were conducted in informants' homes or coffee shops by participants' choices. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed (Saunders et al. 2009). In our analysis, we paid attention to family tensions related to inter-class marriages, and how gifts are used bridge the sociocultural differences. Different gift-giving practices were categorized in the three stages of pre-kinship gifts, establishing kinship gifts and sustaining kinship gifts. Gift-giving plays different roles at each of these stages.

Kinship is an important mode of relating in social worlds (Sahlins 2011); so is gift-giving (Sherry 1983). Our findings suggest that marriage does not necessarily legitimize the bonding connection of affinity, and that gifts help to consolidate the conflicting relationships between urban and rural extended families, and to bridge the sociocultural differences between the male phoenix and the urban girl in Chinese society. Reciprocities within the extended family that we have studied go beyond Sahlin's (1972) notions of generalized, balanced, and negative reciprocities based on kinship distance. In this social world of extended families, gifts are more active in creating, integrating, and sustaining social relationships than what has been suggested by Cheal (1988), whose work focuses on the moral economies of Canada.

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Death Rituals, Social Sustainability, and Market System Co-creation in Japan

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This study examines shifting death rituals and the market in super-aged Japanese society. The focus is on the making of community through the sustaining practice of death rituals. It contributes to a body of research written from consumer and marketing theory perspectives on death culture, by examining the juncture of super-aging, societal sustainability, and market system co-creation.

This study addresses two questions. One is how are the market and marketing of death rituals—forces of cultural transition—changing in super-aged society, particularly those offerings involving the elderly without kin in urban cities? The other question is how have both the market and the community for preplanning of death rituals been co-created by a network of actants—various human and non-human agencies?

Extensive studies on death culture—rites and rituals—have been conducted within anthropology, sociology and ethnology in general (Metcalf and Huntington 1991) and specifically in Japan (Suzuki 2003, 2013; Yanagita 1946). On the other hand, there is limited literature on this topic in the field of consumer culture and marketing, with the prominent exception of Dobscha (2017). Death-related consumption in Western (Gable, Mansfield, and Westbrook 1996; Gentry et al. 1995; Price, Arnould, and Curasi 2000) and non-Western contexts (Bonsu and Belk 2003; Hackley and Hackley 2017; Zhao and Belk 2008) has been empirically investigated in recent years. But no study on contemporary death rituals in Japan seems to exist in consumer research, however. This study fills that gap in the literature.

An ethnographic study, with 25 interviews, interrogated both consumers and suppliers of the end-of-life activities in the metropolitan Tokyo area in Japan over four years. The providers comprised industry professionals, officials from the metropolitan government, and religious institutions. Their accounts were fortified by participant observations at Shūkatsu Festa, shūkatsu seminars, funeral workshops, a networking event by a senior's club, and a monthly meeting of the memorial community. Published materials augmented interviews in the fieldwork. Actor-network theory (Callon 1999; Latour 2005) was used as the analytical approach in examining the societal practice of both human and non-human elements through actor networks.

Due partly to the inadequate population management, Japan's super-aged society has generated a segment of the lone elderly, often isolated and threatened with solitary death. Dying without the proper death ritual—direct cremation—is growing. One solution is the memorial community (*kuyō no kai*), that comprises a group of people who pay in advance to be buried in a communal burial site. They create a supportive network while alive, call each other "tomb friends," and hold mass memorial services at an institution, often at religious premises, such as Buddhist temples, for the repose of departed souls. This study interrogates the development of end-of-life activities (*shūkatsu*) and its market. It includes preparation for death rites and rituals. It investigates the formation of the memorial community.

The study found that controversies are deployed to constitute the community, and the roles of actors are agreed upon through multilateral negotiations. The sources of material semiotics include sacralized material objects and consecrated natural and religious artifacts: they act as a symbolic channel between social and natural entities. The assemblages of collectives concerning the consumer death culture may be explicated by Bauman's (1992) theorizing: survival is a social construct, and these thanatognostic consumers are denying death by incessantly preserving the past and creating the future with fellow actors within the network. Bauman (1992, 31) postulates that death is resisted through the "counter-mnemotechnic…of culture," meaning that culture functions as a means to repress mortality. This study should be relevant to a broad array of stakeholders, ranging from consumer culture researchers, marketing practitioners, as well as government policy makers.

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Exploring the Role of the State in Shaping *'The Woman Question'* in Malaysia

Aminath Shaba Ismail, Juliana Angeline French & Christina Lee

Abstract—Women have always been considered integral to national projects by virtue of their role as biological reproducers and cultural custodians of nation-states (Yuval-Davis, 1997). Their bodies have long represented sites of contestation where socio-cultural struggles and embodiments of modernity materialize (Hale, 1996; Baron, 2005). Having been a British colony for over 200 years, however, the historical trajectory of women's struggles in Malaysia differs markedly from that of Western countries (Ariffin, 1999). Drawing on textual and pictorial data from Malaysia's oldest newspaper still in print — The New Straits Times, this paper explores the role of the state in shaping 'the woman question' in Malaysia. Translated from the French phrase, "querelle des femmes", the origins of 'the woman question' can be traced back to the intellectual debates about the nature and status of women that sprung up in France during the 13th century (Duchen, 2005). Drawing on governmentality theories, this study is interested in delineating the role of the state in shaping this 'woman question' in Malaysia by analysing the historical shifts in gendered discourses that circulated in the Malaysian press in the years immediately following independence from the Colonial British to present times (i.e. 1959-2018).

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INTRODUCTION

Women have always been considered integral to national projects by virtue of their role as biological reproducers and cultural custodians of nation-states (Yuval-Davis, 1997). Their bodies have long represented sites of contestation where socio-cultural struggles and embodiments of modernity materialize (Hale, 1996; Baron, 2005). Having been a British colony for over 200 years, however, the historical trajectory of women's struggles in Malaysia differs markedly from that of Western countries (Ariffin, 1999). Drawing on textual and pictorial data from Malaysia's oldest newspaper still in print — *The New Straits Times*, this paper explores the role of the state in shaping '*the woman question'* in Malaysia. Translated from the French phrase, "*querelle des femmes"*, the origins of *'the woman question'* can be traced back to the intellectual debates about the nature and status of women that sprung up in France during the 13th century (Duchen, 2005). Drawing on governmentality theories, this study is interested in delineating the role of the state in shaping this *'woman question'* in Malaysia by analysing the historical shifts in gendered discourses that circulated in the Malaysian press in the years immediately following independence from the Colonial British to present times (i.e. 1959-2018).

CONTEXT & METHODOLOGY

Using a governmentality approach to study gender has been argued to facilitate the generation of valuable insights into the ways in which gender is produced and rearticulated through the usage of well-defined gendered identifiers and the affixation of the self to a specific gendered identity; even by those who do not identify themselves as distinctively male or female; because of the lack of recognition afforded to those that fall outside the gender binary (Sanger, 2008). Often taking the form of historical or longitudinal studies, theories of governmentality, discursive power and performativity have been applied in consumer research to study the ways in which market-place ideologies and related politico-economic structures affect consumer subjectivity and become normalized in fields of action (Sredl, 2018). For instance, the formation of the active consumer in sixteenth century Ottoman empire (Karababa & Ger, 2011), the responsibilized consumer in the age of neoliberalism (Giesler & Veresiu, 2014) and gendered market subjectivities in post-socialist Croatia (Sredl, 2018) have been explored within this literature. Notwithstanding these studies, Ger (2018) identifies a dearth in current consumer behaviour literature that explores the intersectional relationships between subjectivity, power,

resistance and socio-political structures and highlights the pressing need for consumer research that is able to deconstruct power and privilege differences that play out in marketplaces given their role in shaping consumer choices and practices. Sredl (2019; 2018) also emphasized how consumer research in this line could stand to benefit from using transnational perspectives by opening up doors for comparison that could highlight similarities and differences in the interactions and workings of gendered consumer subjectivities, marketplace ideologies and state logics between different contexts. By drawing on governmentality theories and focusing on the context in Malaysia, this study answers these calls, at least in part, by exploring the role of the state in shaping the woman question in Malaysia.

This study makes extensive use of textual and pictorial data obtained from the archives of the local newspaper, '*The New Straits Times'* [TNST] published over the period 1959-2018. It remains the oldest English newspaper in Malaysia with its historical archives mostly intact and accessible for research. In deciding a sample size, close attention was given to other studies in consumer research that have analyzed similar texts using a structuralist or poststructuralist approach (i.e. Humphreys, 2010a, 2010b; Walsh, 2011; Travis & Wallendorf, 2012). Accordingly, using a stratified random sampling approach, 2 issues were selected from each year (every other year or so from the 1980's onwards due to accessibility issues) to be reviewed end-to-end in order to identify and select news clippings that contained traces of gendered discourses. In this manner, approximately 2500 articles were singled out, carefully coded and analysed following best practices in the grounded theory coding approach pioneered by Charmaz (2006; 2008).

FINDINGS

Mohamad et al. (2006) argue that the outcome of state policies is contingent upon the nexus of discursive struggles within which the state is situated at any given point of time in history. The findings of this study accentuate contingencies such as these and bring to light how discourses both internal and external to the state produce, alter and intersect with its policies producing interaction effects that are often unintended and unprecedented in their consequences as illustrated in Figure 1. Under this context, this study finds that in the years following independence, the state exerted its influence on the gender dynamics in the country largely through its existence as a relic of the Colonial British with its inherited constitutional, educational and legal frameworks and labour systems that institutionalized women as homemakers. The post 1970's witnessed the state function as a passive conduit that facilitated the legitimization and establishment of *'the career woman'* through its role in making the abundant cheap and feminized labour supply at home accessible to the foreign capital interests that flocked to Malaysia as a result of its export industrialization policies. However, as the state increasingly embraced authoritarian neoliberalist policies in the 1980's through to the early 1990's, it began to play a more active role in this process by putting into place policies that purposefully facilitated the development of Malaysia into a site specialized in a highly feminised form of low-wage export-oriented manufacturing (Elias, 2009). Gaining momentum in the 2000s, it was only in the late 1990's that the state had begun to place a growing emphasis on the role of women in maintaining national competitiveness compelled by the growing transnational consensus on the issue (Ibid, 2009). Despite this shift in focus, the strategies discussed in government policy documents to integrate women further into the formal labour market continued to draw their legitimacy from the explicit recognition of the reproductive economy (i.e. through their emphasis on the establishment of workplace crèches)(World Bank & EPU , 2007). As a result, the official discourse on women in Malaysia continue to remain riddled in contradictions due to the enduring construction of women as homemakers. Elias (2009) states that also imbricated in this discourse, is a concerted effort to cast the family and household as the focal site for the (re)production of economically productive citizenry. Consequently, the participation of women in the productive economy is viewed more as a necessary evil for fear their role in the social reproduction of labour may be compromised.

IMPLICATIONS

In accordance with the theme of the conference, this study adopts a socio-historic lens to analyse the role of the state in shaping *'the woman question'* in Malaysia. Responding to the call by Sredl (2019; 2018), Steinfield et al. (2018) and Ger (2018), this study draws extensively on governmentality theories to identify and deconstruct the changing and overlapping relationship between gendered consumer subjectivities, power, resistance and the state (as a socio-political structure) focusing on the context in Malaysia.

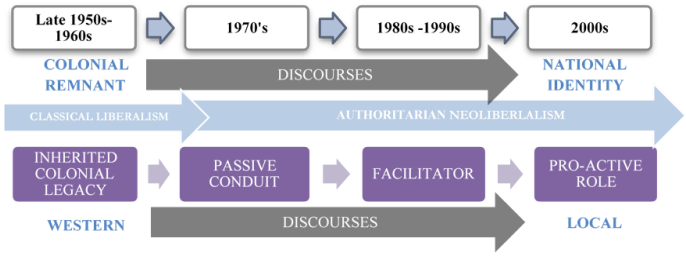

Figure 4. The Role of the Malaysian State in Shaping '*The Woman Question'* in Malaysia.

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Institutional Intersectionality in Framing '*The Woman Question'* in Malaysia

Aminath Shaba Ismail, Juliana Angeline French & I-Chieh Michelle Yang

Abstract— Gender research within marketing has often been criticized for its apparent lack of cultural specificity (Askegard & Linnet, 2011; Hearn & Hein, 2015; Sredl, 2018, 2019), analyses of power, change and social structures (Hearn & Hein, 2015; Steinfield et al., 2018, 2019) and insensitivity to temporal changes (Askegaard & Linnet, 2011; Travis & Wallendorf, 2012). Numerous researchers have voiced out the pressing need for more contextually and historically grounded work to address this paucity of marketing research, particularly with respect to non-Western cultures (i.e. Karababa, 2012; Sredl, 2018, 2019; Travis & Wallendorf, 2012). Answering this call, this paper analyses the development trajectory of '*the woman question'* in Malaysia paying particular attention to the role of institutional actors in shaping this process. Translated from the French phrase, "*querelle des femmes"*, the origins of *'the woman question'* can be traced back to the intellectual debates about the nature and status of women that sprung up during the 13th century in France (Duchen, 2005). Having been a British colony for over 200 years, the historical trajectory of women's struggles in Malaysia differs markedly from that of Western countries (Ariffin, 1999). This study makes extensive use of textual and pictorial date from Malaysia's oldest newspaper still in print to facilitate the analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

Gender research within marketing has often been criticized for its apparent lack of cultural specificity (Askegard & Linnet, 2011; Hearn & Hein, 2015; Sredl, 2018, 2019), analyses of power, change and social structures (Hearn & Hein, 2015; Steinfield et al., 2018, 2019) and insensitivity to temporal changes (Askegaard & Linnet, 2011; Travis & Wallendorf, 2012). Numerous researchers have voiced out the pressing need for more contextually and historically grounded work to address this paucity of marketing research, particularly with respect to non-Western cultures (i.e. Karababa, 2012; Sredl, 2018, 2019; Travis & Wallendorf, 2012). Answering this call, this paper analyses the development trajectory of '*the woman question'* in Malaysia paying particular attention to the role of institutional actors in shaping this process. Translated from the French phrase, "*querelle des femmes"*, the origins of *'the woman question'* can be traced back to the intellectual debates about the nature and status of women that sprung up during the 13th century in France (Duchen, 2005). Having been a British colony for over 200 years, the historical trajectory of women's struggles in Malaysia differs markedly from that of Western countries (Ariffin, 1999). This study makes extensive use of textual and pictorial date from Malaysia's oldest newspaper still in print to facilitate the analysis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As a relatively nascent strand of literature within marketing, intersectionality has yet to be explored in its entirety within marketing research (Corus et al., 2016). Davis (2008, p.68) defines intersectionality as the interactions between categories of difference [i.e. gender, race] in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power. Because of their functionality as identity markers, negative perceptions or biases attached to such categories of difference can become problematic by condoning injustices such as discrimination (Steinfield et al., 2019). These biases are socio-historically shaped and often naturalized or taken for granted (Fisk, 1998) and thus are time and context specific (Nash, 2008). Therefore, when wielded as an analytical tool, intersectionality can

illuminate how the intersection of certain identity categories can amplify or mitigate oppressions and privilege embedded in societal structures and practices (Cho et al., 2013; Collins, 2015). However, the extant literature on intersectionality within marketing has often been criticized for its apparent lack of breadth and depth in analysis with few studies going past the identification of overlapping categories (Ger, 2018; Golpadas, 2013; Steinfield et al., 2019). Some scholars have called for the pressing need to move beyond this identification (Steinfield et al. 2019, Ger; 2018) to explore the oppressions (i.e. sexism, racism, classism) entrenched in historically grounded power asymmetries that make these overlapping categories of identities problematic in the first place (Steinfield et al., 2019). In order to do so, they argue that the focus needs to shift to analyse the processes (i.e. economic exploitation) and interactions between systems (i.e. the family, workplace, marketplace, state) that (re)produce such overlapping oppressions. This study answers this call, at least in part by exploring the intersections between various institutional actors in shaping the woman question in Malaysia historically. For the purpose of this study, only the institutional actors (i.e. state, market [MNC's], civil society [women's NGO's]) that emerged as playing the most influential role during a particular historical time frame will be discussed.

METHODOLOGY

This study makes extensive use of textual and pictorial data obtained from the historical archives of the local newspaper, '*The New Straits Times*' [TNST] published over the period 1959-2018. It remains the oldest English newspaper in Malaysia with its historical archives mostly intact and accessible for research. In deciding a sample size, close attention was given to other studies in consumer research that have analyzed similar texts using a structuralist or poststructuralist approach (i.e. Humphreys, 2010a, 2010b; Walsh, 2011; Travis & Wallendorf, 2012). Accordingly, using a stratified random sampling approach, 2 issues were selected from each year (every other year or so from the 1980's onwards due to accessibility issues) to be reviewed end-to-end in order to identify and select news clippings (commercial advertisements and comic strips included) that contained traces of gendered discourses. In this manner, approximately 2500 articles were singled out, carefully coded and analysed following best practices in the grounded theory coding approach pioneered by Charmaz (2006; 2008).

III. FINDINGS

The findings of this study illuminate how the state continue to play an instrumental role in shaping the woman question in Malaysia though almost always in conjunction with other institutional actors (i.e. state, market [MNC's], civil society [women's NGO's], UN) as illustrated in Figure 1 below. As evident, during the late 1950's through to the 1960s, the woman question in Malaysia framed women primarily as homemakers emphasizing their role as wives and mothers. Driven by the state through its existence as a relic of the Colonial British, its inherited constitutional, educational and legal frameworks and labour systems confined women to the domestic realm through the continuing institutionalization of women's role as homemakers. The 1970's, however, witnessed the emergence and establishment of the working woman driven by the MNC's that flocked into the country as a result of the export industrialization policies that were put into place by the Malaysian state. Through their preference for a cheap and feminized labour supply in their factories, their arrival created a surge in employment which helped legitimize the working woman as a complementary identity position for Malaysian women despite being largely restricted to blue-collar professions (i.e. factory workers, secretaries). The 1980s through to the 1990's signalled yet another shift in the women question in Malaysia with the discourses signalling the emergence and establishment of the career woman. Symbolizing an independent, educated woman with a professional life (greater access to white collar jobs) in addition to her personal life, the women's NGOs in Malaysia played an active role in bringing about these changes by putting pressure on the state through its publicity and advocacy activities (i.e. pushing for equal employment opportunities, eradicating gender wage gaps). This period also witnessed the increasing influence of global consumer culture in Malaysia. Newspapers, in particular, were mobilized as a potent tool to encourage greater consumption by women which in turn, exposed them to more empowered identity ideals. By the 2000s, however, the woman question had changed to revolve around the empowered and empowering woman. Propelled by the state's extensive gender mainstreaming policies and increasing co-optation of women's NGO's in their development and implementation, Malaysian women benefitted from greater access to education, employment, and leadership opportunities in both the public and corporate sectors (i.e. gender quotas, funding and training designed specifically for women).

IMPLICATIONS

In line with the theme of this conference, a socio-historical perspective is adopted to analyse the institutional intersectionality in shaping 'the woman question' in Malaysia. Responding to the call by Steinfield et al. (2019) and Ger (2018), this study moves beyond identifying the intersectionality of gender with other identity markers [i.e. ethnicity] to analyse how the intersectionality between various institutional actors, particularly at the macro and meso levels, can (re)produce the privileging of men and the oppression of women in society.

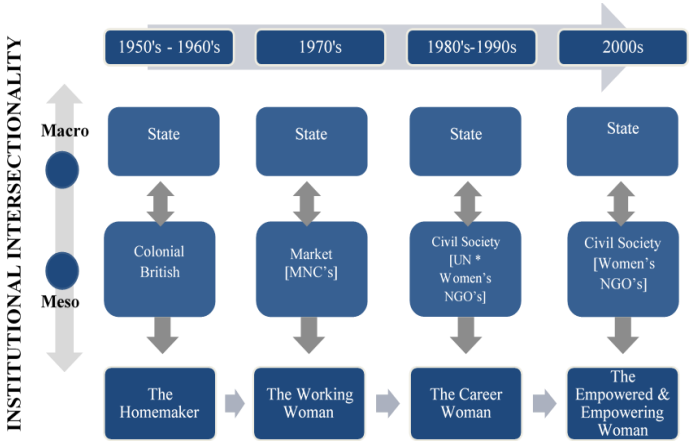

Figure 5. Institutional Intersectionality in Framing '*The Woman Question*' in Malaysia.

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O Bella Ciao: Nostalgia and Hauntings from the Future

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Research explores the legacy of consumer culture in the context of antifascist heritage sites revival in post-Yugoslavian space. Despite the overarching threat of populism and turbo-capitalism globally, manifested as politics of promoting national hegemony, and social exclusion through adhering to neoliberal norms in post-Yugoslavian space, antifascist heritage sites promote the values of shared humanity and antifascism. Adhering on ethnographic fieldwork, research explores how these antifascist heritage sites reclaimed their position through the return of the values of antifascism and socialism which survived in those spaces. Nostalgia plays an important part in these processes, yet it is a nostalgia for the hope that tomorrow is going to better than today, positioned as nostalgia for a future that haunts through being unfulfilled due to nationalism and turbo-capitalism. Rediscovery of shared humanity and antifascism through the agency of consumerism, provides solace from social injustices ever present, and empowers the legacy for the hope for social justice.

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INTRODUCTION

Representation of the past has always been loaded with the contemporary clues, values, and ideologies (Goulding and Domic, 2009; Chronis, 2005). The research presented here is embedded in the social settings which accompany the transformation of the legacy of antifascist heritage sites after the break-up of former Yugoslav Federation. The research focuses on the contemporary period (2015-2020), which is both in the global context and in the context of former Yugoslavia overwhelmed with the climate of historic revisionism, right-wing populism and hate speech (Thorleiffson, 2017). Through the agency of consumer culture, this research explores the meaning of nostalgia in the context of the transformation of the legacy of antifascist heritage sites in former Yugoslavia. It aims to understand the influence that global political context has on the promotion and interpretation of the heritage sites that carry with them the legacy of a Yugoslavian antifascist heritage and celebrate building connections across divides, creating a sense of what Jacques Derrida (2000) refers to as shared humanity.

RESEARCH APPROACH

This study adopted a retrospective approach that used ethnographic intent, i.e. conformity to ethnographic principles (Wolcott, 1985), and auto-ethnography manifested through introspection upon the interpretation of the fieldwork,enabling unique knowledge production and insights to be reflected upon as an irreplaceable analytical resource (Bourdieu, 2003). The ethnographic fieldwork was undertaken in the period 2015-2020, at the commemorative and museum sites located in the former Yugoslav socialist republics, now sovereign states, namely Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H), Croatia and Serbia. The fieldwork also featured guided tours through Sarajevo (B&H), Belgrade (Serbia), and Rijeka – European Capital of Culture 2020 (Croatia), observing the opening ceremony which featured the city's legacy of working class community, antifascism, social justice and inclusion, accompanied by the lyrics and melody of a famous Italian antifascist song 'Bella Ciao' (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hUzWdF7OzU). The fieldwork included observations of guided tours, specifically focusing on the narrative of the interpretation of the antifascist legacy of former Yugoslavia and the role which commodification of nostalgic sentiments played within the process. It also included interviews with tour guides, museum directors and custodians.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

During the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the mid-1990s, the heritage sites that celebrated antifascism and shared humanity have essentially been subverted in the official ideological discourse by the dominant political parties in the exercise of building new national identities, namely subverting Yugoslavto Slovenian, Serbian, Croatian, etc. identity (Rivera, 2008). Under these circumstances, accompanied by rising populist

rhetoric in a global space, visiting antifascist heritage sites works as a protest against populism, cronyism, social injustices, populist rhetoric and historical revisionism. Thus, commodifying and consuming antifascist heritage intersects political activism with consumerism (Chatzidakis, Larsen, & Bishop, 2014), providing temporary solace against contemporary evils such as right-wing populism. The ethnographic part of this research also reveals the importance of understanding the commodification of nostalgic sentiments for the antifascist past, so called Yugo-nostalgia through which antifascist legacy is reclaimed. In social science literature, Yugo-nostalgia is defined as a psychological and cultural phenomenon occurring among citizens from the former Socialist Yugoslavia who still share experiences and memories of their common past (Lindstrom, 2005). Giving the example of the Berlin Wall, Derrida (1994) argued that the idea of communism remains as a spectre, i.e. a visible corporeal spirit which is transcendent and, in its transcendence, it fills the time and space (Causevic, 2019). The fear of its transcendence is haunting capitalist societies. That fear has manifested itself recently as austerity, social immobility and populist rhetoric which characterise post-2008 neoliberal capitalist societies (Fisher, 2014). Volcic (2017) also reflects on post-2008 capitalist ideology, i.e. neoliberalism, and explains that it is manifested through consumerism which commodifies the welfare state of 1960s and 1970s to be able to sell it as a bitter-sweet nostalgia. Fisher (2014) notes that by locating nostalgia in the past through the simplification of nostalgic sentiments through the act of consumerism, the attention is taken away from the deeper meanings of nostalgia, i.e. nostalgia for the future. Indeed, the hope for a better future was a significant part of popular culture until the 1980s, but that hope has been officially abandoned because of turbo-capitalist relations embodied in contemporary society. Fisher specifically uses Derrida's (1994) concept of hauntology to describe a sense in which contemporary culture is preoccupied by the lost hopes of modernity cancelled out by neoliberalism and post-modernity. Popular culture is haunted not by the past, but by a hope for better future which was promised, but never came materialised. It remained as a spectre (Derrida, 1994), visible incorporeal spirit which failed to materialise, but still haunts neoliberal capitalism. Since their independence, the post-Yugoslav countries have borrowed large International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans and encountered economic challenges caused by cronyism, populism, and lack of economic growth. This has resulted in sociocultural, economic and environmental injustices, causing longing for the Yugoslav past, i.e. 'Yugo-nostalgia' (Volcic, 2007). In many western media outlets, Yugo-nostalgia has indeed been a constant source of infantilising. Buchowski (2006) notes different shades of Europeaness understood in a hierarchical sense, encourages a perception of the 'otherness' of former socialist countries. Yugo-nostalgia, for example, is used to justify the perception of people from former Yugoslavia as infantile due to their supposed longing for the communist past. This 'infantility' places them outside the norms of European modernity, enabling subversion, othering and exotification. Yugo-nostalgia is thus often referred to as longing for the things which have gone by, such as Yugoslav socialism, thus overwhelmingly simplifying the phenomenon to achieve a marketable version of the past (Volcic, 2007). Research presented here, on the contrary, sees Yugo-nostalgia as longing for the future. In contemporary contexts, visitors actively try to find solace from the socioeconomic injustices exacerbated through crony capitalism and populism, by seeking out experiences that induce nostalgia towards the times of the former Yugoslavia. This is not nostalgia for the past or political ideologies such as communism, but rather hauntings from the future which never happened, manifested as nostalgia for the hope that tomorrow will be better than today. Thus, the present moment informs the past, but is also haunted by the future. Further, this is not some kind of specific ex-Yugoslav trend, but these kinds of longings for the 'past' have been present in the global context, for instance, Fisher notes (2014, p. 25), 'What should haunt us is not the no longer of actually existing social democracy, but the not yet of the futures that popular modernism trained us to expect, but which never materialised.' Thus, being haunted by the futures that failed to take shape is fertile ground for othering, populist rhetoric and historical revisionism to enter the mainstream, both globally and in the post-Yugoslav space. Voicing an antifascist narrative by visiting museum exhibits, events and visiting antifascist sites, is subversive in the current socio-political and economic settings of social exclusion, othering and crony capitalism, and it is precisely this process of subversion that enables the feeling of empowerment and solace in the visitor experience. Thus, these are not only the actors who co-create and subvert the narrative, but rather the social context that feeds into the subversion. Hence, via the agency of consumer culture, through intersecting political activism with consumerism (Chatzidakis, Larsen, & Bishop, 2014), socialism returns manifested as a nostalgia for the future that still haunts and survives in these spaces.

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Value creation mechanisms in the contemporary art market

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In the visual art market, the intermediaries play the critical role of presenting art to consumers in a manner that helps them form rational expectations about the quality of the work (Zorloni and Ardizzone, 2016), as visual art has no substantial indicators of the artist's competence. These intermediaries include art critics, galleries, dealers, curators, auctioneers and artist's representatives (Heinich, 2012). The limited amount of existing research that explores the crucial role of art intermediaries includes large (non-profit) museums (Alexander, 1996), high profile (profit-driven) auctions such as Sotheby's (Galenson, 2005; Thompson, 2009), prestige-driven prizes such as the Turner Prize (Penet and Lee, 2014) and art galleries. Of all the intermediaries, the market making abilities of gallerists are the most important because they are situated in a space where all types of negotiations take place. Thus they enable different motives to be co-constitutive in the same market system. The gallerists not only translate the price, but also produce different types of values in conjunction with the artists, not the least of which is relational value. Relational value creation by gallerists is under theorized in the current literature. Systematic research on the dynamic artist-gallery relationship is limited, even though scholars often contend that gallery representation plays a crucial role in the valuation of an artist's work (Heinich, 2012; Prinz et al, 2015). In this paper, we take a meso-level analytic approach to unpack the value creation mechanisms taking place between artists and gallerists whose social position, negotiation aims and tactics might vary based on market characteristics. To this end, we use the market systems approach as it is well equipped to study relationships. Also, this approach can accommodate actors with multiple motives in a way that the neoclassical approach (the traditional way we study channels) fails to do.

The study examines the artist-gallery relationship in two markets. The first market, City A, is a less developed market with few savvy customers. The other market, City N, is an emerging high-volume market that focuses on sophisticated tourists. These markets also differ in terms of the number of intermediaries present, pricing structure of artwork, sophistication of their customers and the extent of collaboration between artists and gallerists (see Kharchenkova, 2018). For reference, according to our data, the impulse buying price point for artwork in City A is $30 and in City N is $300. By comparison, the New York City price point in is $1200.

We conduct in-gallery observations in City A and City N (both based in the US) during the first eight months of 2019 and conduct a total of 25 in-depth interviews with visual artists (10), gallerists (14) and the editor of a prominent alternative weekly newspaper. The gallerists interviewed actively represent commercial or non-profit art centers.

Unlike market-based exchanges that exclusively follow the singular logic of self-interested profit maximization (Hyde, 2009), we identify four different ideal types of value creation mechanisms through the analysis of the artist-gallery relationship. Though some overlap between them is inevitable, our informants suggest that they are quite distinct.

(1) "Real Estate Agent" relationships follow the logics and basic practices typical of market-based exchanges. The value creation mechanism for this relationship is aptly described in neoclassical theory. The notion of wanting artwork to move with a steady flow by having a wide price range that caters to a variety of segments is a key driver of running a gallery in this relationship type. In fact, galleries in this category usually run other related businesses to generate additional revenue. The artists in this category rely on other avenues for additional income as well, such as producing commissioned work and showing at exhibitions and festivals. Here, pricing is oriented around appearance and location. Many galleries of this type frequently change their set of artists. The value that accrues to artist in this relationship type is almost entirely in the gallerist's collector base and the resources they provide for promotional activities. The value is fundamentally transactional.

(2) "Artist's Agent" relationships signal high-status to artists and collectors, and protection from actors who would 'sell-out' to popular tastes. Gallerists in this relationship type believe themselves to be taste-makers who send quality signals to the market precisely by not catering to clients' unsophisticated tastes but offering expertise, by selling art exclusively rather than engaging in other business activity like making frames, selling art supplies, etc., and by following their artists' work for years before representing them. They underscore Arsel and Bean's (2012) finding that particular taste-making practices attract medium-to-high cultural capital buyers with an interest

in self expression, social change and experiential activities. In that regard, Artist's Agent gallerists serve as a central resource for market mediated discursive taste regimes, sitting at the intersection of the aforementioned socio-cultural forces.Artist's agents swear by industry best practices such as square inch pricing. This pricing technique is considered best practice because it lends objectivity to the process of pricing artwork. Gallerists in this relationship generate value for artists by standing on their notions of 'good art' rather than responding to market tastes, heavily promoting their artists, and investing in long-term relationships.

(3) "Low-end/Specialty" relationships cater to low-status actors at low price points. Artists and gallerists struggle to keep their product from being treated as a commodity. Low-end Specialty galleries have limited expertise and generally represent artists who lack well-built reputations. The gallerists keep afloat by diversifying into other product categories, some unrelated to fine arts. In sharp contrast to the rigorous implementation of best practices, like square-inch pricing by Artist's Agent gallerists, they entirely forego such techniques because they don't understand their rationale, indicative of their low cultural capital in this context.

(4) "Social Enterprise" relationships target and serve traditionally underserved artists and customers, most commonly racial minorities and women of any race. They aim to bring about a change in the society through the creative industry. Fine-art is one of the many art forms they use to channelize the social cause.

In sum, our study synthesizes different theories/ motives that govern the market as coexisting in the same space. Since prior literature examined them in different domains, the motives were considered to be at odds with one another. Our study provides an empirical demonstration of different value creation mechanisms functioning interdependently in the same market system. To our knowledge, this has not been previously shown. The research is intended not only for researchers but also practitioners/managers. The results are transferable to different fields and can provide a theoretical framework for managers to act in their respective markets.

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The Construction Of A Performativity: The C-Section Market In Brazil

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According to the World Health Organization (OMS, 2015), the ideal proportion of C-sections is between 10% and 15% of all births. In Brazil, however, C-sections reached a peak of about 55.5% in 2018 the second-highest rate in the world (Ferey & Pelegri, 2018). The World Health Organization pointed out several possible causes for this phenomenon, such as the medicalization of childbirth, the convenience factor for doctors' and hospitals' scheduling, and cultural perception of the C-section as the safest way to give birth (UNA-SUS, 2015). Upper-class women around the world also have started to choose scheduled C-sections in recent years, avoiding labor pains and choosing the best time for the birth by considering work vacations, availability of the family to help them, and even what zodiac sign the baby will have. Scheduled C-sections performed before the labor had started, though, can increase the number of premature babies and create medical complications for mothers and babies during childbirth and afterward (Ferey & Pelegri, 2018).

The main objective of the current research is to understand how a consumption becomes normalized in a performative marketplace. Using the context of the childbirth marketplace in Brazil, we try to understand how in the Brazilian healthcare system, C-section became the new norm and natural birth the exception.

Cabantous and Gond (2011) defined the performative praxis as a flow of activities that normalizes a social concept. The performative praxis model is composed of: a) a social concept, b) actors, and c) tools and techniques. Foucault (2004) explained that a social discourse is formed by discursive and nondiscursive elements. Discursive elements about women, for example, are related to domestic life, caring, and motherhood. This is the social concept (Cabantous & Gond, 2011) or the social statements (Callon, 2007) that compose a performativity; these statements are taken for granted and disseminated by society, which creates and uses expressions such as "housewives," "work wives," "just-a-job wives," "career women," "super-women" (Bristor & Fischer, 1993). Nondiscursive elements (Foucault, 2004) are practices used to reinforce the performativity of femininity. In a performativity assemblage (Scaraboto, 2015), these practices are called tools and techniques (Cabantous & Gond, 2011) or materials and technical systems (Callon, 2007). The idea of being a mother, which is a central concept in a woman's social identity (Voice Group, 2010), uses a lot of nondiscursive practices, such as prenatal tests and procedures, baby room decoration, breastfeeding, and childbirth choices. These tools and techniques help engineer the social concept (Cabantous & Gond, 2011). Callon (2007) explained that objects can be the agents of performativity when they compose the discourse. The author noted "constative utterances," in which the object is an external reality that exists regardless of human beings, emerging from "performative utterances" in which the objects "cause the reality that they describe to exist" (p. 10). To Callon (2007), all the non-discourse praxes "are not constative; they are performative, that is, actively engaged in the constitution of the reality that it describes" (p. 11).

Researchers have used the performative theory to understand the boundaries of a marketplace, studying how materials, technical systems, and statements can remove the signs of a marketplace and a social world, creating something that is a non-market performative (Harrison & Kjellberg, 2010; Diaz Ruiz, 2013). Scaraboto (2015) brought up the concept of hybrid marketplaces to blur the boundaries of a marketplace assemblage, showing how the elements of a social world and a traditional marketplace that is based in exchanges can build a marketplace that contains the active participation of consumers and providers. In this paper, we explore how the elements of a social world can be used in a marketplace to disempower consumers and create a performative marketplace assemblage in which providers increase their power and define the rules of consumption.

To better understand this, we collected and analyzed the historical data from medical research literature (issues since 1998 of the main Brazilian academic journal on gynecology and obstetrics), parenthood specialized presses (issues since 1969 the oldest magazine in Brazil that focuses on parenthood - mainly motherhood), and official documents about the childbirth marketplace (documents published online, including research, legislation, and official data). We started the analysis with the data collected from the magazine because it included a more extended period (1969–2018). We conducted a manual analysis of the data published until the end of 2000, reading the material while looking for relevant themes and the relation between them to create frames (Humphreys, 2010) to understand the legitimation and

delegitimation movements in the marketplace over time, creating the performativity. After the manual analysis of the early issues of the magazines, we analyzed the online magazines published from 2001 to 2018, searching for themes, expressions, and words as in the first analysis. Table 1 illustrates the frames created with the analysis and examples of the expressions and words used to create these frames and the examples of consumption associated with each frame. The words and expressions composed the statements of a marketplace assemblage, and the consumptions related to the expressions bring new actors, materials, and technical systems to the market.

TABLE I. FRAMES OF ANALYSIS

Frame	Example of words / expressions	Example of consumptions related
Fear	"fear of the pain"; "labor pain"; complications in the labor"; "life risk for mothers and babies"; "late pregnancy"	Anesthesia, prenatal, oxytocin, acupuncture, episiotomy
Humanized childbirth	"eccentric"; "without interventions"; "at home birth"	Doulas, bathtubs, massages, midwives
Medicalization of childbirth	"comfort"; "suavity"; "without pain"; "less risks"; "induction of the labor"; "security"; "listen the doctor"; "the sex of the baby"	Anesthesia, prenatal, oxytocin, episiotomy, ultrasonography, pediatrician in the labor, hospitals
C-section	"no risks"; "innovation"; "women choice"; "humanized"; "doctor's decision"	Surgery, anesthesia, hospital, doctor, medical team
Natural birth	"pain"; "how our mothers and grandmothers"; "no safe"; "outdate"; "fear"	Massages, anesthesia, episiotomy, doctors, hospitals

The medical journal first edition was in 1998, which is when the medicalization of childbirth discourse was already normalized in the media. In a general analysis, medical research recognized the high rates of C-sections as a problem in Brazil. However, most of the research at this point did not show significant differences between C-sections and natural birth in women's and fetus' mortality. These results were not aligned with the World Health Organization's declaration about childbirth, which stated that C-sections could cause significant disturbances in women's and in the fetus' health and should be used only in confirmed cases of life risk.

The results showed that the statement of "childbirth's fear" came from the social world and moved into the marketplace assemblage, empowering the doctors to use technical systems and materials and turning the marketplace increasingly technical while disempowering the consumer regarding what way she can give birth. The movements inside the marketplace assemblage are shown in a model of the creation of a performative marketplace over time that oppresses consumers and empowers providers (Figure 1). The results showed the delegitimation of the consumers' decisions about consumption.

Figure 1. Performative marketplace assemblage model

The fear discourse is used in different ways by the actors. The consumers bring to the assemblage the statements of fear related to the labor; these statements are reproduced and disseminated in the marketplace by the media, and providers use their exclusive medical systems and materials to combat this fear discourse, which results in empowerment for providers and disempowerment for consumers.

Although the statement of fear was mobilized in different ways during all the analyzed periods, it always legitimized medicalization and C-sections. Until the 1980s, the fear of natural birth was opposed by an innovation discourse, represented by medicalization and C-section being shown as the solutions to a painful birth. With the increase in the number of C-sections and the arise of public policies trying to decrease this number, the fear discourse was mobilized by actors to reinforce the empowerment of doctors as the decision-makers of the form of childbirth. Currently, the fear of a natural birth discourse is associated with respecting the mother's decision to perform a C-section while looking for a safe way to give birth.

Scaraboto (2015) studied hybrid markets to understand how consumers bring the statements, technical systems, and materials of society (non-market) into a marketplace assemblage. This hybrid assemblage generates conflicts, but the providers and consumers tend to resolve them, empowering consumers as active actors in the market and help them maintain the marketplace assemblage over time. The presented results show that these hybrid markets can bring statements of the non-market space—such as fear—to disempower the consumers and create a performative marketplace in which providers decide the right way to consume. The advantages of the performative market for providers are the increase and legitimization of more profitable services and products in the marketplace.

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Algorithmic Consumer Culture

Soonkwan Hong

Abstract— Consumer research has been relatively taciturn about the big data-induced transformations most consumers experience on a daily basis; therefore, this study provides a critique of the current state of the new socio-technical environment, relevant practices, and the political economy of the big data. I focus on algorithms that encompass IoT, AI, big data, machine learning, and all other forms and functions of the fetishized assemblage. I argue that future discursive endeavors must focus on some other specific characteristics of algorithms, such as opacity, messiness, inscrutability, hyper-legitimacy, hyper-functionality, and equal distribution of accountability, that are abused and misinterpreted as the source of authority or governing power of the "hollow" system.

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INTRODUCTION

Big data as one of the most iconic apparatuses in human history proliferates in most, if not all, domains of our lives, and the consequences have been palpable for long enough for individuals and organizations to make sense and use of the technological esoterica (e.g., Deighton 2019). Consumer research, however, has been relatively taciturn about the big data-induced transformations most consumers experience on a daily basis. A few specific aspects of the data-intensive sociocultural innovation have been discussed in the literature: self-quantification (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017; DuFault and Schouten 2018), sentiment analysis using big data (e.g., Gopaldas 2014), and recommendation mechanisms (Wilson-Barnao 2017). More recently, Deighton (2019) discussed the brief history, essential characteristics, and potential perils of big data, which ultimately motivates researchers to redraw the big picture of big data as something more than a tool, strategy, manifestation of social interactions and relationships, or just a giant machine as a whole.

In this essay, therefore, I provide a critique of the current state of the new socio-technical environment, relevant practices, and politics of the big data. It is also of importance to explicate and theorize the entanglement between big data and consumption, based on the universal phenomenon in action with full throttle in relation to current consumer culture and consumer subject. In order to provide more theoretically sound descriptions and discussions followed by some considerations for future research in this highly "infectious" field of study, I focus on algorithms that encompass IoT, AI, big data, and all other forms and functions of the fetishized assemblage.

CELEBRATION, BALANCE, AND CRITIQUE

Algorithmic consumer culture refers to a culture in which binaries (i.e., the visible and invisible, human and non-human, the ephemeral and permanent, the private and public, the simple and complex, participation and nonchalance, acquiescence and resistance, just to list some) in the conventional consumer-market dynamics are conjugated, imbricated, hybridized, and ultimately integrated into a system that perpetuates the cycle in favor of logic and control, which in turn, increasingly obfuscates the actual workings and makings of the system and often restricts the performativity of human actors and consumer agency in any network or assemblage (e.g., Lash 2007; Galloway 2012). Given the epistemic disassembling and reassembling in recent times, the current state of algorithmic consumer culture, as a constellation of individual practices as well as the isomorphic end-state of any successful enterprise, calls for a meaningful diagnosis upon which consumer research can theorize the ever-growing and ubiquitous ambiguity in the form of products and services offered by (and for) algorithms.

The extant literature and public discourses help identify at least three related and yet theoretically divergent stances academics, practitioners, and consumers can take responding to the highly obscure but ostensibly effective mechanism that governs almost everything without authority. First, algorithms are taken for granted and even willfully trusted when the stance

is celebratory. Social media users, active online shoppers, day traders, users of dating apps, and most of us as hyper-diligent search-engine users perform required roles and complete a variety of tasks through a voluntary denial of concerns and criticisms toward the black-box that promotes the new normal for all (e.g., Striphas 2015).

Second, a balance between appropriating the new technologies and being appropriated by them is also sought in the market. This particular stance connotes strategic participation in the new tech-intensive unfolding into all dimensions of everyday life. Such an approach inherently entails constant, reflexive negotiation and subsequent adjustment of our lifestyles. Turning off location services, shutting off cookies, careful use of social media, and overall cutback of exposure to the system as daily practices all constitute the calculated involvement in the inexorable cultural system that claims to offer convenience, entertainment, efficiency, precision, and more importantly the future (e.g., Vaidhyanathan 2018).

Lastly but not least importantly, critiques have been offered by many in various fields of study, cultural studies in particular. A critical stance visualizes some conceivable issues witnessed and directly experienced by different actors in the market system. Those issues growing on multiple levels of the current sociocultural system include determination of creditworthiness, optimization of insurance premium, biases from voice/facial recognition, evaluation of individual performances at work, not to mention the encroachment of the algorithm on our judicial system (e.g., O'Neil 2017). This justifiable fear is, however, not from the quantifiable range or speed of the phenomenon, but the nature and quality of the change. Culture in this day and age has been reimagined and reconfigured based on the casual trust in algorithms upon which current generations operate as free agents for the system. Trust is the only one particular virtue such a cultural system promotes because it is indispensable to maintain the system. Consumer culture should also be rearticulated when trust becomes the new prerequisite for all to maintain the status as consumers in the market system. Sovereignty and autonomy may have become obsolete values that are replaced with a highly statistical proxy, an algorithmic projection of a subject.

Resonating with Thompson's (2019) recent critique on big data myth and thick data opportunism, I argue that an ontological overhaul is due for consumer subjects who conduct "businesses" with algorithms, and the balance is enormous because of the invasive nature of the new culture. The predictable opportunism in the forthcoming discourses and theories will converge upon the conspiratorial facade of algorithms. Such an attitude will cut both ways. It can be vastly advantageous or seem greatly precarious. However, insofar as the future research endeavors focus on some other specific characteristics of algorithms, such as opacity, messiness, inscrutability, hyper-legitimacy, hyper-functionality, and equal distribution of accountability, that are abused and misinterpreted as the source of authority or governing power of the "hollow" system, consumer culture research will gain further momentum and a higher level clearance as an institution more erudite for the times ahead of us.

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Crafting masculinities: going beyond representation of masculine identity re-construction and lived experience

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We take a non-representational view that helps us go "beyond the limits of social construction" (Thrift 2008), that is prevalent in current research theorising muscularity and masculine identity construction and focus on fluid and evolving network of interplays that exist between multiple actors in muscular body constellation networks. Methodologically, investigating from an Actor-Networking (Latour 1996; Bruni and Teli 2007) lens and drawing from a longitudinal ethnographic research process that spanned over two years, we map the muscular body construction journey of 12 professional and amateur bodybuilders by particularly sensitising to onflow of their everyday body crafting experience to understand their tensions, frustrations, and responses.

Literature shows that body images are propagated in cultural media and contribute to foregrounding of muscularity as a cultural ideal whilst normalising strict body regimes among men (Gill, Henwood and McLean 2005). Muscularity plays a fundamental role in expressing hegemonic masculinity and provides a powerful resource that has greater social and economic capital for men (Gorely et al. 2003; De Visser et al. 2009). It promotes and encourages masculine self-transformation pursuits through carefully calibrated body crafting practices (Fernandez-Balboa et al. 2018). Often such strict and compulsive training practices that sculpture the "perfect body" (Edwards 2016; Wesely 2001) become narcistic pursuits of self-indulgence (Giddens 1991), however, not all males are capable of producing and achieving muscular body traits, not even if they desire to, therefore, leading to complex tensions and frustrations that typify masculine body constellations (Sasson-Levy 2003). Accordingly, the ability of males to achieve a body that is pervasive in hegemonic masculinity vary upon a range of factors such as those associated with natural biological potential (Raudenbush 2003), meal patterns and nutrition (Thomas et al 2011) and everyday training routine and intensity (Hubal et al. 2005). This explains that the muscle size that a male can achieve and the nature of masculinity they inhibit is not simply socially constructed but a product of the interplays of multiple sociocultural, biological and mundane discourses that are entangled in the onflow of everyday life of these males. However, hegemonic theorisation of masculinity grounded in social constructionism dominant in current research does not explain this intervening potential of body constellation networks. It particularly silences many actions initiated and directed by various actors such as training partners, family and friends in harnessing body construction knowledge and mobilising such knowledge to instigate body transformation actions of male consumers within these networks.

Origins of herculean traits and malleable masculine networks. Entering the fitness world introduces the informants to an ecology filled with hyper masculine traits and enactments. The gym context prioritises self-enhanced masculine ideals and normalises weight training and gaining muscular definition as the process to obtain this enhanced alpha male status that provides them with a physical bodily capital. They may rely on mainstream media, such as in advertising imagery, movies, music and other forms of market mediations to construct their ideal male bodies (Hearn and Hein 2015), however, the appeal and relevance of such discourses to individual male consumers, or more specifically, the trajectory of body constellations during everyday practice is complex. For example, it is the presence of peers, friends, and even the ordinary men they meet at work and play that put pressure on male body builders to rely on the widespread market imagery that are considered normative in their social sphere (Coles 2009). Therefore, our first theme suggests that although cultural knowledge has the potential to be transformative and inspirational, it is meaningful only when such knowledge is relevant to personal circumstances, consistent with immediate social milieu and aligns with the biology of these men.

Interfering nature and limits of cultural knowledge. Although biology is always present, it is not clearly understood and highly taken-for-granted. There is a consensus amongst body-crafting males that their natural body is flawed in comparison to hegemonic social ideals. Such natural limitations become

salient within the network interactions as they rely on their training partners, friends and the market to perpetuate their body constellations. Consequently, these body constellations become further entwined in complex discourses between cultural and natural potentials within the network, therefore, challenging the male bodybuilders to re-work their network as well as the trajectory of their pursuits. It also further layers the body constellation networks, and our second theme shows how masculine body construction is a constant iteration between social and cultural knowledge of muscular body and disruptive or enabling potential of natural registers that constitute male biology.

Reconciling hegemonic masculine gender politics and Sculptured masculinity. Masculine gender politics are frequent in body constellation networks. The experience of muscular body relies on negotiation of gender politics involving not just hegemonic men but also women and other parallel masculinities. Data reveals that men who desire hegemonic status differentiate the men inside their network (such as the men who are training with them) from the ones outside. Experience of male muscularity was also often shaped by the presence of female weight trainers, whom they often refer to as *"freaks*", *"not women"* and *"men wannabes".* Our final theme shows how these masculine politics that involve both men as well as women a network constellation that is deeply embedded in the onflow of everyday life of being a man.

In conclusion, we argue that cultural knowledge of muscular masculinity is shaped and re-shaped within body constellation networks, thus, evolving the trajectory of male body pursuits. Various forces and actors such as individual's biology and psychology, training partners, other people who attend training centres, facilities available in training centres, family members, friends, and individual's occupations and lifelong passions intervene to change body perceptions significantly from the original inception. Therefore, this type of "sculptured masculinity" is a product of constant iterations between the market and individual's body constellation networks, that has escaped the scrutiny of current research that focus on the market-individual consumer intersection. It is a highly spontaneous attempt to individuate and construct a sense of masculinity that is appropriate and practical to continue within the body constellation network of the individual. Routine pains of and commitments to muscular gains allow males to endow their masculine experiences with authenticity within self-constructed frameworks of what masculinity means to them. In this regard, the muscular body crafting is an adaptive and iterative "authenticating act" (Arnould and Price 2000) that relies upon its network for construction and re-construction of the experience of masculine self.

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From “mine” to “ours”: the role of sharing in negotiating contamination during shifting family configurations

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How do two or more individuals become so close that they become one? How do they learn to act as a singular social unit bound by love, caring and intimacy when personal boundaries are trespassed? In this research, we explore the ways in which families develop a sense of togetherness and caring through consumption, particularly through addressing contamination of extended selves and sharing (Belk 2010).

Extended self (Belk 1988) exists not just at the individual level but also in multiple layers in families (Edirisingha et al. 2015). Contamination (Fernandez and Lastovicka 2011), which is both pathological (Rozin et al. 2008) and symbolic (Douglas 2003), is one of the ways in which possessions become a part of extended self (Belk 1988) - albeit less explored this process is in consumer research. There is evidence that contamination draws different reactions, both positive and negative (Argo et al. 2006). For example, it can lead to feelings of disgust (Rozin et al. 2008), thus, denouncing it as a negative construct (Rozin and Royzman 2001) whilst on the contrary, positive reactions could be expected when the source of contagion is someone the recipient is fond of (Nemeroff 1995). Yet, little we know about how these positive or negative reactions emerge within family relationships and how they influence identities of the people who are involved. For example, we know that food creates a fertile ground for contamination, both pathological and symbolic (Rozin et al., 1984), but how is it perceived in the families when members are expected to share their meals, utensils and meal consumption spaces and ecologies with others when sharers know each other and expected to accept some levels of contamination? What are the ways in which it influences family relationships and how they negotiate such contamination? Even though these concepts appear to be inter-twined (Karanika & Hogg, 2016), researchers have not yet empirically examined how extended self, contamination, and sharing interplay in families. Prior research also suggests that group level identity interplays not always exist in homogenous environments (Kerrane & Hogg, 2016), therefore, making it problematic to assume an automatic extension of self onto others through interpretations of simplistic forms of sharing that occurs at these levels. Particularly, when extending self involves intentional or unintentional intrusion of personal boundaries of others resulting contamination that is potentially undesirable to the sharee (Lastovicka and Fernandez, 2011), the role of sharing and contamination of extended self could be more complex to understand and warrants further research.

Family transitions, such as the formation of a new family, extend over time (Hogg et al., 2004) and most of the family consumption, especially sharing, occurs behind closed doors (Miller, 2008) during the normalcy of everyday life (Price, 1975; Belk, 1988). Therefore, we draw from an interpretive and hermeneutic research process that combined semi-structured interviews, participant observations, elicitation tasks and online conversations. Although all our families are heterosexual families, they represented a range of other demographics, in different stages of the family life cycle. We converged all forms of data including interview transcripts, field notes observations, researcher diaries from elicitations tasks, and transcripts of online conversations. Using a thematic process of interpretation building, we first used open and axial coding to identify emergent clusters and develop themes.

Our findings show that various aspects of individual, relational and family level extended selves become overlapped and contaminated, thus, producing both interlayer and intralayer contamination and creating endogenic tensions in family relationships. Interlayer contamination is the overlapping of essence that constitutes and represents two different layers of family identity. Intralayer contamination occurs as a result of exchange of essence (e.g. symbolic meanings) within the same layer of family engagement, such as within the individual, relational, or collective layers. Although not every aspect of extended self in families may not be at odds with others’ in the family, when they do, the proximity of possessions to respective core manifestations of self at individual, relational and collective levels of family do matter and influence the family member’s resistance to contamination. For example, an

everyday routine that matters to an individual's sense of normalcy, such as a specific way of cooking, can be

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Business Events as Mirrors, Models and Laboratories of Social Imaginaries: The Paradox of Suffering in Ritualized Contexts

Laura Litre Valentin, Olivier Badot

Abstract — If painful or disappointing experiences generally drive consumers away, the results of a recent study about the experience of participants attending big fairs and trade shows reveal that suffering, whether physical, psychological or moral, steams from ambivalent experiences and is massively accepted with resignation. This article seeks to understand why suffering is still accepted in the overwhelming contexts of business events while it destroys the experiential and economic value, and to explore which alternative scenario could be imagined. Drawing on anthropology, sociology and social psychology literature, as well as on history and philosophy, this multi-sited ethnography sheds light on the nature of business events. We call to see them as secular rituals that perpetuate social orders and asymmetries but simultaneously endowed with the power to operate social imaginaries transformations.

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INTRODUCTION

Ambivalent experiences result from the interplay between internal emotional states and expectations, and external components that are specific to the market (Otnes, Lowrey, and Shrum 1997). If customers usually deploy coping strategies to reduce the arduous feeling of ambivalence, its persistence may not only be a hindrance to consumption but can have a negative effect on satisfaction and customer loyalty (Olsen, Wilcox, and Olsson 2005). The way this ambivalence is managed constitutes a key source of experiential and economic value.

According to previous research (Litre Valentin, Badot 2019), fairs and trade shows' attendees experience multiple forms of physical, psychological and moral suffering ranging from: "my feet hurt", "my nose bleeds at the end of the day here", "the ambience is hostile", "boring", to: "business is business", "if you don't end up dead, you haven't done your job!" While recognizing their negative impact, organizers, exhibitors, visitors, and service providers seem to bear the experiential and economic value co-destruction with resignation. This paper aims to shed light on the underlying reasons of this paradox that could explain the legitimization of suffering in collective business events.

Our work aims to answer the following research questions: Why is participants' suffering accepted with resignation during business events while it destroys their experiential and economic value? Can an alternative scenario be envisaged?

While still ongoing, our paper makes the following contributions: 1- we provide a wider vision of the event experience by integrating the perspectives of visitors, exhibitors, organizers and service providers seen as *co-agents* (Taylor, 2004) of a collective embodied experience; 2- we identify three dimensions of the paradox of suffering: spatial concentration and standardization, time optimization and ambiguous relationships between the co-agents; 3- we call to see business events as secular rituals that fail to build a common sense of the event togetherness. Instead, they maintain an asymmetrical social order under an apparent cohesion which prevents the community to be regenerated; 4- we highlight a drift of the event performance, too focused on logistic and aesthetic aspects, while neglecting ritual ethics; 5- drawing on Charles Taylor's theory of social imaginaries (2004), we posit the relevance for business events to go beyond their current status of market showcases to become the laboratories of individual, collective and societal transformations.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is based on a three years multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995) consisting in thirty-five *in situ* participant observations [2] of fairs, trade shows, congresses with business expositions, hybrid events, and four negative cases [3] (Becker 2008) in Europe and North America. The nature of our research questions led us to combine two ethnography approaches: market-oriented (Arnould andWallendorf 1994) and organizational ethnographic case studyresearch (Visconti 2010).

In addition to the author's participant observation field notes, the data were collected from fifteen in-depth interviews, informal *go-along* (Kusenbach 2003), photos, videos and materials distributed in the stands. One of the cases was the object of a longitudinal observation[4] (Leonard-Barton 1990) consisting of the presence of the author at the HQ of an event organizer. The objective here was to access the co-creation process of a big trade show. Row data from the case-by-case descriptions and the interviews transcriptions were analyzed at an intra-case and inter-cases level (Eisenhardt 1989, Spiggle 1994) following the Grounded theory method (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton 2012).

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Thematic data analysis highlighted three dimensions of the paradox of suffering: spatial concentration and standardization; time optimization and, ambiguous relationships between the event co-agents. The nature of these findings led us to establish an interdisciplinary conversation with human and social sciences, and philosophy.

From a psycho-sociological perspective, the spatial optimization is a consequence of the functionalism stream that between 1950 and 1970 was imposed as the style of most modern buildings (Fischer 2011; Pellegrino 2007) including exhibition venues whose construction proliferated during this period. However, this explanation does not tell us much about why the functionalist patterns resisted to the post-modern turn and still persist in event venues. The effects of time compression have been studied by many canonical sociologists and anthropologists. To Georg Simmel, a fine connoisseur of industrial exhibitions, goes the credit of identifying, at the dawn of the industrial era, a link between urbanization, technological acceleration and the societal transformations of his time, illustrated by the figure of the "blasé" (Simmel 2018 [1902], Rowe 1995). Recently, Hartmut Rosa (2015, 2018) spotlighted the link between acceleration, alienation and the imperative necessity to re-think our relationship to the self and the other in terms of *resonances*, a key concept of Charles Taylor's philosophy (Goldstein 2018).

A detour through the history of fairs and trade shows sheds light on how business events have reflected and shaped the social imaginaries of their time for centuries. Medieval fairs established the basis of a first globalization (Braudel 1979). Modern universal and industrial exhibitions of the 19th century performed in the art of mobilizing crowds around a vision of the economy, technology, politics, education, and human's relationship to nature and science (Litre Valentin and Badot 2019). We may infer that modern events were great secular rituals devoted to technological innovation and acted as models (in the sense of Handelman 1990) of modern social imaginaries. The three pillars of social imaginaries: the economy as the path to interests harmony and peace, the public sphere as the locus where people can come to a "common mind", and the sovereign people as a new kind of "collective agency" (Taylor, 2004), have been identified.

According to the anthropology, the power of events lies in their capacity to operate transitions (V. Turner 1969, 1977). Whether it takes place in a religious or a secular framework, the sacralization of space and time creates the conditions of the liminality necessary to the emergence of a new social order. By the flattening, even the inversion, or the abolition of hierarchical orders and the renouncement to individualistic postures, each participant contributes to regenerate and strengthen the community around a common sense.

Now, what about the contemporary business events, object of this paper? If all of them show a form of transition corresponding to the ancestral tripartite structure common to most rites of passage (Van Gennep 1992 [1909], Turner 1969), our results reveal their poor transitional efficacy. The ritual efficacy unfolds in the transformation of a social order. However, the contrary (its perpetuation, especially when the *statu quo* benefits the powerful agents) is also possible (T. Turner 1979, Isambert 1979). In most of the observed events, the formality and the unquestionability of the ritual order (Moore and Myerhoff 1977) infuse the space and the time. Logistics and aesthetic performance occupy a central place while the ethical aspects of performance: individual and collective well-being, community building (Driver 1991), are neglected. Events only fulfill a role of mirrors. They maintain an order based on a power asymmetry. As a result, ambiguous relationships nourish a *spurious loyalty* (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) and an artificial feeling of cohesion.

In this context, can an alternative scenario be envisaged?

By their very nature, business events possess the power of transforming social orders and propelling social imaginaries. Although this discussion still needs to be matured, we argue that the major challenge resides in the events capacity to switch from their current mirroring status to a modeling and experimental one. Business events should become the laboratories of new social imaginaries in tune with global environmental, economic and social issues of our times.

[2] Participant observations (425 hours) were carried out by Author 1 between October 2016 and March 2020.

[3] Two religious, one small/non-profit, and one digital event.

[4] The longitudinal observation was carried out by Author 1 between February and March 2019, before the Paris international agribusiness show (SIMA). It was followed by the observation of the exposition set-up, and that of the event.

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Network constellations of consumption collections

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This research explores how consumption collections change and take different shapes over time particularly by unpacking the network constellations of curatorial practices evolve consumption collections over time. Adopting a materiality perspective (Borgerson 2009; Miller 2008), we draw from a netnographic research process (Kozinets 2015) to investigate micro social, potentially hierarchical networked interactions that involve collection items (designer handbags), their owners, and various other actors in collections constellations.

Collectors rely on a range of activities, such as acquiring, organising, maintaining, using, displaying and disseminating (Hohn 2008; Graham and Cook 2010), referred to as curatorial practices (Scaraboto et al. 2016), to bring meaning and a sense of continuity to collections (Miller 2008). These curatorial practices are essential to evolution of collections (Scaraboto et al. 2016) and research has responded by exploring various curatorial practices, albeit considering the individuals as the unit of analysis and overlooking the myriad of possibilities in which collections can be patterned and evolved. However, collecting is far from an individual activity mediated by the market and cultural knowledge that it contains.

Consumption objects that make up those collections are deeply embedded in identity projects of collectors (Belk1995; Belk et al. 1991). Consistent with the flickering (Borgerson 2013) and fragmented (Firat and Venkatesh 1995) nature of poststructuralist identity pursuits, collecting as a practice is driven by multiple and emergent motivations such as self-expression, sociability, financial gains, sense of personal continuity, and even addiction (Formanek 1991). AsBelk et al. (1988) posit, beginning of a collection may be either accidental or incidental (Johnston and Beddow 1986), however, the growing of a collection involves a highly selective and meticulous process of acquisition, possession, and disposition of interrelated objects that are meaningful for the integrity of the collection.

Therefore, collectors act selectively to distinguish what should and should not be in collection sets (Belk et al., 1988, Bianchi 1997) and there is evidence suggesting collecting relies on other people and objects for support (Dannefer 1980). Also, items in a collection set are not isolated and single-purpose units, rather they hold multiple features and relationships with other items in the collection (Danet and Katriel 1994), thus, it can be argued that there is an internally ordered structure within collection sets, which Bianchi (1997) argues as "seriality". In this light, collecting could be argued as a networked practice that decomposes objects from their original relations and recomposes those into a relational network patterned by the interactions between the members within that network in an innovative way. However, current research does not shed light onto how these multiple and potentially layered interactions change curatorial practices and evolve consumption collections.

A serendipitous gift or an accidental purchase may trigger an ingrained personality trait and the symbolism of designer objects might remind an individual of their ambitions of living an affluent life. However, findings show that serious collecting behaviours and purposeful singularisations are inspired by encouragement and appreciation of others and rely on many situational realities of individuals, such as the collector's financial situation, and the practicality of collection items for continuity. This shows that, although the beginning of collecting behaviours could be incidental or accidental, the actual internalisation of a collector's identity and mastery of curatorial practices emerge within a networked constellation rather than within the intersection of the consumer and the market.

Materiality of collections includes aspects of material biography, micro-environmental factors, synergy of embedded meanings between the collection set and other objects, and compatibility with other family members and their identity needs. Our data reveals that the active participation in online handbag communities, sharing photos of collection sets, and talking about storage, organisation, display and re-circulation of objects on social media is essential to ensuring seriality within collections constellations. Collectors often rely on their social

environment for providing advice, tips, and suggestions about caring for cherished collections and also inspire other collectors in similar ways, thus, creating a relational and dialogical discourse. Furthermore, the external physical world - of which the collection set is part of it - actively influences and shapes all aspects of curatorial practices. Our data shows that a network is formed between subjects (i.e. collectors, their social network, and other collectors) and objects (i.e. the material world). Through these networked interactions, curatorial practices are shaped, and seriality of collections constellations emerge.

Objects such as designer handbags are wearable consumer goods and they are not completely stripped away from the original intended utility. Although they are a cherished part of a collection, objects may lose their position within collections as their meanings become redundant due to presence of similar objects or as collectors outgrow their once passionate lifestyles. Our findings reveal that the network reveals inherent needs for collection sets to evolve and encourages re-configuration of existing serialities between objects and re-circulation of items back into commodity markets as a natural reality of evolving a collection. Thus, consumer collection relies on these network constellations and its agency to produce novelty and evolve into something that is more meaningful.

In conclusion, this study unpacks the involvement of various material as well as non-material actors that is interwoven within the mundanity of curatorial practices. It goes beyond the market-consumer intersection in its investigation and theorises collecting as a layered and iterative "networked constellation". From the time a collection has been found by a collector to its countless re-configurations, network composed of a focal collector (the person who owns the collection), other people (such as immediate family members, friends, sales people, and various other collectors who has a stake in a particular type of collection), and things (collection items and other material objects) plays an essential role that challenge the agency of market and the individual that is highlighted in the current literature.

Decluttering trend: Why do consumers start disposal processes?

Birte Karoline Manke, Johanna Franziska Gollnhofer

Abstract— People increasingly declutter consumption objects. What motivates them to start this form of disposal process? Prior research gives us interesting insights into divestment processes but only provides limited insights so far on what may start these processes. We explore consumer motivations to start disposal processes. To do so, we studied consumers and their decluttering practices. In our study, we so faridentified three motivational factors for starting disposal processes: special events, spatial factors, and social factors. This study contributes to consumer research by providing insights on the starting points of disposal processes, the relevance of spacefor disposal processes, and the role of social interaction in disposal processes.

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INTRODUCTION

Western consumers have come to a place of abundance and are owning more and more objects (Arnold, Graesch, Ragazzini, & Ochs, 2019). One estimate suggests that the average American home is filled with about 300.000 objects (MacVean, 2014). Overwhelmed by their accumulations and the clutter that can be accompanied with it (Löfgren, 2017), a significant amount of consumers is parting with their superfluous consumption objects or even downsizing their lifestyle overall (Ballantine & Creery, 2010).

The phenomenon we are referring to is "decluttering". Over the past years Decluttering has grown into a trending form of large-scale disposal processes including various kinds of consumption objects. Just the single hashtag "declutter" is connected to around 750.000 posts (Instagram 13.12.2019). Previous research focused mainly on the consumer-object-relations in disposal processes and gives us interesting insights into the transfer of meaning through divestment processes. However, less attention has been dedicated to what may start the disposal processes of consumers. Therefore, we looked more closely into the question of why consumers start their disposal processes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior research on disposal processes with objects offered a few insights about motivations to start the decluttering process. Price, Arnould, and Curasi (2000) studied the processes of elderly consumers disposal decisions. Within their research, they identified a process of life review as a relevant starting point to stimulate a disposal decision (see also Roster, 2001). Examples for that could be a personal crisis, rites of passage or progression, certain family norms and traditions, a conversation within the family, an experience of other or the illness or death of a loved one. The focus of their study was on meaningful and special possessions. However, in our understanding so far, decluttering processes include more than just special but also very mundane objects. Further, Lastovicka and Fernandez (2005) studied the divestment processes in the context of garage sales and online sales of bridal dresses. They explained the decision to part with a specific object with a lack of being "one-self " (Belk, 1988; Kleine, Kleine, & Allen, 1995). Nevertheless, Lastovicka and Fernandez (2005) have not shared any motivators that would shed light on why people realized that their relationship deteriorated with a specific object. The process of object detachment is gradual and does not happen overnight. Therefore, we wanted to understand what made consumers reflect upon and then realize that they don't have a relationship anymore with the object.

A second literature stream relevant for our research focuses on the concept of tidiness. For many consumers a tidy home is the result or even goal of the disposal process (Cwerner & Metcalfe, 2003). Therefore, an untidy environment could be a motivator to start the disposal process. Dion, Sabri, and Guillard (2014) explained consumer's discomfort with untidy environments with the concept of symbolic pollution. Assuming that consumers develop a set of classifications for their consumption

objects in their households and fear a transgression of those boundaries.

We showed, prior research shed light on divestment processes of meaningful objects and reasons for the disposal, however, much less is known so far about the initial starting point of disposal processes.

CONTEXT & METHODOLOGY

In order to gain a better understanding of the starting point of divestment processes, we chose to study the practice of decluttering. We focused on the decluttering of various objects in the household context, including for example clothes, books, kitchen wear, but also more sentimental objects. So far, we conducted 8 in-depth interviews (average time: 60 minutes). To gain an overview of the phenomenon we included two decluttering experts, 5 'recent declutterer', and one person who identified as an 'ongoing declutterer'. The decluttering experts were part of the Swiss Association of Professional Organizers. One of them was also a minimalist. The participants defined as 'recent declutterer' have gone through a big decluttering process in the last 8-6 months. The person identifying as an 'ongoing declutterer' said that she was not doing big clear outs but rather disposing of objects on a constant basis. The interviews were transcribed and systematically coded.

FINDINGS

Based on our analysis we find three motivational factors that start the decluttering process: Special events, spatial factors, social factors: The first motivational factor, special events, encompasses events that lead to 'life reviews', a concept introduced by Price at al. (2000). Two of the interview candidates had for example recently gone through transition phases in their life in the form of rites of passage or progression: They had moved recently to start a new job or started living with a new partner. Another participant reported to have followed a very regular routine of decluttering throughout the year before her birthdays, Christmas, or New Year's Eve. Brigitte said:

"When I was younger, I used to have regular decluttering dates. Before big events like my birthday or Christmas, I wanted to have everything neatly in order. I was even a bit obsessed. I would stay up late on these days, to get everything done and ready. Or after each semester when I was studying, I had a regular routine that I would clear out all my folders, bind my old scripts and transfer all the digital folders to a hard drive and then prepare new folders for the upcoming semester. That felt really good. I had the feeling of being in control. But then my life kind of accelerated. I hadn't had the time to do these things anymore and there were no clear cuts, like the end of the semester and I don't really like birthdays nowadays. So, it is a day I want to get over with, not celebrate and prepare for. Live is now ongoing. And then it is hard to decide: 'Today is the day I am decluttering!' Because tomorrow could be as good as today. And then it becomes never." (B., female, 25)

The second group of motivational factor builds on Dion's et al. (2014) ideas of symbolic pollution and aesthetic perceptions. We call these spatial motivational factors. They are related, for example, to overflowing drawers and cupboards. Martin, one of the participants, who does smaller clear outs from time to time describes his process as following: "*I have this one drawer, where I collect different things. I start the decluttering process, when I no longer can fit things in there. Then I know that I have to start tidying and sorting things." (M., male, 65)* Another participant describes her discomfort of overflowing spaces: *"It annoyed me, that everything was flying around. That is why I wanted us to throw out some stuff."* (J, female, 32)

The last group of motivational factors are social motivational factors. Two interview candidates name different forms of social motivational factors as a start for the process of decluttering. One reports that her partner started a decluttering process and that this 'infected' her. In contrast, another participant describes starting a process after having a conflict about the level of untidiness with her partner.

DISCUSSION

In this study we investigated motivational factors in disposal processes. This way we make several contributions to existing literature. First, we extended the understanding of relevant starting points for a disposal process by adapting the concept of 'life reviews' so that they are including also more ritualized disposal processes. As decluttering is not only affecting special possessions, but also includes mundane consumption objects, we add to prior research, which focused mainly on motivational factors for meaningful objects by introducing spatial and social factors. We identified the degree of symbolic pollution as a motivational factor to start a decluttering process. Putting an object in an assigned place may not be possible anymore when a space is overflowing with objects. We extend prior research by highlighting the relevance of reducing consumption objects in order to avoid transgressions of domestic classifications. Rules applied after the decluttering process in the form of "one-in-one-out" intend to help maintaining the appropriate object-to-space-ratio. By reckoning social interaction as relevant to start a decluttering process we extend previous research's perspective that focused on the theoretical lens of consumer practices to explain the establishment of aesthetics and order in the home (Arsel & Bean, 2013). We extend research by highlighting the role of negotiation and social interaction in order to develop joint domestic classifications. Comfort around different levels of symbolic pollution may lead to conflicts between partners or within families. Decluttering processes may act as boundary-making mechanisms to agree upon a joint level of symbolic pollution.

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Saunascape in the Nexus of Socio-Material Sauna Bathing Practices

Hanna Leipämaa-Leskinen, Henna Syrjälä, Hannele Kauppinen-Räisänen & Minna-Maarit Jaskari

Abstract—In this paper, we introduce the concept of saunascape. To that end, we explore *what kind of socio-material practices are carried out within sauna bathing, and thereby discover the elements of saunascape*. We focus on interrelated practices of sauna bathing and address the agentic capacity of saunascape as it structures these practices. The data were generated through interviews that took place in sauna departments at five different hotels in Finland. In total, 39 informants participated in interviews. The findings show four interconnected socio-material practices relating to sauna bathing: purification, nostalgization, medicalization and democratization. As saunascape emerges in the nexus of these practices, its spatially-constructed elements (places, people, meanings and material processes) appear connected to practices. The study participates in discussions in which the spatiality and non-human agency in consumption practices are evolved. Furthermore, it showcases an example of how an understudied cultural-historical phenomenon may be linked to modern consumption trends.

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In this paper, we introduce the concept of saunascape as it appears in the nexus of various socio-material sauna bathing practices. The historical roots of sauna can be located in Finland, even though sauna bathing is common in several other cultural contexts. It is assumed that there are over 2.3 million saunas in Finland, which is a country of 5.5 million inhabitants (Official Statistics of Finland 2019). Besides private saunas, there are numerous public saunas in apartments, gyms, and hotels, where also tourists are able to experience Finnish sauna bathing. When referring to Finnish sauna, we follow Tsonis' (2016, 44-45) definition of the sweat bathing; i.e. a very hot room in which people sit and throw water on hot rocks, usually followed by a cold shower or water plunge.

To date, surprisingly few academic discussions have taken sauna into the focus of analysis. Most of the prior studies regarding sauna have approached sauna bathing from the viewpoint of health and well-being (Tsonis 2016). Majority of these studies have examined precisely Finnish sauna bathing, and addressed its medical benefits (Hannuksela and Ellahham 2001). Also, a couple of works in technology and design discipline have elaborated on the technical aspects of sauna. There are only a few culturally and sociologically oriented studies on sauna, which are most aligned with the current investigation. This very dispersed and rather outdated array of literature addresses mainly the historical and cultural aspects of sauna bathing (Lockwood 1977; Edelsward 1991). When it comes to prior consumption research, our literature analysis reveals that sauna is still largely untouched area, and when sauna appears, it is only a by-product in a couple of studies. To illustrate, Jalas and Rinkinen (2013) bring forward sauna as a spatial place related to socio-technical practices of wooden heating.

Inspired by the idea of sauna as a spatial place, we explore *what kind of socio-material practices are carried out within sauna bathing*. By so doing, we aim to discover through which kinds of practices saunascape is constructed. We lean on the post-human practice approach, noticing also the agentic capacities of non-human entities that are considered pivotal in carrying out socio-material practices (Schatzki 2001).

The suffix of scape has been used in various fields to refer to the complex interaction systems of spatially arranged artifacts, social systems, environments and humans (Mikkelsen 2011). The prior examples include foodscapes (Brembeck and

Johansson 2010; Dolphijn 2004), snackscapes (Syrjälä et al. 2017), sensescapes (Markuksela and Valtonen 2011), servicescapes (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy 2003) and therapeutic servicescapes (Rosenbaum et al., 2020; Leighanne and Hamilton, 2019). All the works build on Appadurai's (1996) seminal typology of five scapes: financescapes, ideoscapes, technoscapes, mediascapes and ethnoscapes, in which it is proposed that people live in ever-changing worlds, where people, materiality, ideas, countries and economies are connected situationally to each other at a global scale (Askegaard and Eckhardt 2012; Ger and Belk 1996).

In this paper, we lean on the general idea of foodscape as "a dynamic social construction that relates food to places, people, meanings and material processes" (Johnston and Bauman 2014, 3), however to generate the practices taking place within saunascape, the central focus is on sauna instead that of food. We, thus, highlight the agentic capacity of saunascape as it structures the practices of sauna bathing (Mikkelsen 2011; Syrjälä et al. 2017) by creating spatial, material, sensory, cultural and social boundaries for carrying out the practices. Further, we agree with Fuentes (2014, 6) as while discovering socio-material practices, we regard "materiality and its meanings, image and things, humans and non-humans simultaneously and as intrinsically interlinked."

The data were generated through interviews with39 Finnish sauna bathers, 11 women and 28 men. The interviews took place in sauna departments at five different hotels in Finland. The informants stayed at the hotel either for vacation (13 persons) or because of work travelling (26 persons). They were encouraged to discuss freely about the rituals and practices of sauna bathing, elements of sauna environment, and physical objects related to sauna bathing. The discussions dealt with sauna bathing in various contexts, covering the current sauna experience but also how the informants practice sauna bathing in their everyday lives. Therefore, the current experience acted as an elicitation technique to generate cultural talk (Moisander and Valtonen, 2006, p. 79) on sauna bathing in general, and not as the sole focus of the interviews. The findings derived through an iterative process between the data, theory and the emerging concepts.

Figure 1 illuminates our findings. The findings show four interconnected socio-material practices that are connected to sauna bathing and build the elements of saunascape.

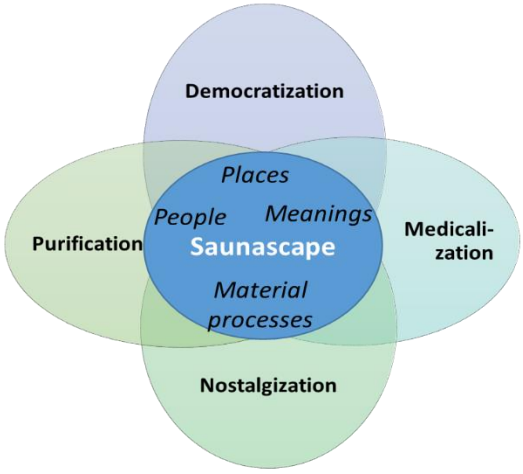

Figure 1. Saunascape in the nexus of practices.

Purification practices stem from the Finnish cultural-historical roots in which the purity of sauna comes from closeness to nature (Canniford and Shankar 2013) as it is described as a spiritual place, where all sorts of ills are healed. The spirituality of sauna is related to its multisensorial nature that shows how visual aesthetics of sauna environment and its materialities carry the meanings of silence and relaxation. Thus, for humans, it is not only physical purification, but also mental washing of worries, stress and burdens as they are literally sweat away. *Nostalgization practices* connect sauna and Finnish cultural identity together. The places, material processes and meanings of saunascape provoke recollections of earliest sauna experiences in which certain spatial and material elements are traditionally connected to sauna (e.g., ideally located by the waters). This also brings up the cultural rituals of the whole family bathing in the sauna together and often the most sensitive discussions taking place in sauna. *Medicalization practices* show how the traditional meanings of sauna as a health-boosting place are interconnected with present day activities related to wellness. While sauna is historically used for various health-care related purposes (e.g., cupping), the current trends relating to well-being give a novel hint to medicalization practices. To illustrate, increasingly popular self-tracking activities and knowledge about medical benefits of sauna bathing may boost its usage as a means to the meditative relaxation, where both muscles and mind get relaxed (Ertimur and Coskuner-Balli 2015). Finally, *democratization practices* are intertwined with the ideologies of equality and approval. Sauna constructs as a place that collects people together as they are, without fancy titles or external status symbols. Besides the obvious reason – nudity – democratization practices arise from unwritten sauna etiquette in which good manners and gentle small talk even with strangers are expected.

These practices reveal the emergence of the elements of

saunascape constructing of place, people, meanings and material processes. The place is not only the physical sauna room or building, but also the idea of sauna being created over the decades varying from traditional smoke saunas to modern plainly aesthetic saunas. Material processes refer to the various non-human objects (e.g., washing equipment, towels) and interactions between and with those objects in the saunascape. The element of people includes all the subtle ways of social interaction that are "allowed" in sauna. For example, it brings forward the virtue of being silent in company. Finally, the element of meanings is connected to beauty, purity, traditions, equality and healing. It is strongly emphasized that sauna is the place where all the social hierarchies are taken off and individuals are presented in their purest forms.

Theoretically, the current study participates in discussions in which the spatiality and non-human agency in consumption practices are evolved (e.g., Fuentes 2014; Kjellberg and Helgesson 2007; Syrjälä et al. 2017). Further, it shows an example of how an understudied cultural-historical phenomenon is linked to contemporary consumer trends, such as wellness (Askegaard and Eckhardt 2012), spirituality (e.g. Rinallo, Scott, and Maclaran 2013) and therapeutic consumption (Rosenbaum et al., 2020; Leighanne and Hamilton, 2019.) Also, the study offers new insights for practitioners, e.g. travel providers, hotel managers and health professionals, operating with businesses related to sauna.

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Social Imaginary and Fantasy: an account of Brazilian Consumer Culture

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Abstract— We intend with this paper to discuss articulations between consumption and naturalization of racial violence in Brazil. Based on Souza's (1994) notion of "fantasy of Brazil", where racist practices, culturally rooted, endure in new configurations and emerge in an objective and naturalized violent form (Žižek, 2014), and considering the centrality of consumer culture in contemporary society (Slater, 1997; Arnould & Thompson, 2005), we argue that consumption acts as one of the naturalized violent practices that shape contemporary racism in Brazil. Through a discursive analysis of media material, we aim to investigate how are the elements that constitute the Brazilian social imaginary organized around the fantasy of Brazil in the context of modern consumer culture.

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Introduction

In 2019 the now Vogue Brazil's former editor, Donata Meirelles, threw a birthday party of extraordinary proportions held in Salvador, Bahia (a Brazilian state). She was photographed sitting in a peacock chair, surrounded by Afro-Brazilian women dressed as *baianas*, a popular costume of Afro-Brazilian women that addresses colonial times. The rattan chair in which Donata appears sitting became a symbol of the black movement when in 1967 Huey Newton, leader of the Black Panthers, was photographed sitting in one of these chairs. In 2018 the Black Panther movie's promotion poster features the image of the main character seated on a throne, bearing a close resemblance to Newton's picture. In Brazil the chair is also a symbol of African heritage and is used by priestesses (*ialorixá*) of Afro-Brazilian religions. Meirelles' picture resonated through the web, drawing attention to the "fetish of the Brazilian white elite for slavery" (Silva, 2019). After the controversy, Meirelles resigned from her post. At the time of the event, Santos (2019) wrote about how the party resembled Brazil's colonial period, and the illustrations of slavery made around 1834 by the French artist Jean-Baptiste Debret. Brazil was a slavocratic country until 1888, when slavery was abolished. Meirelles' example evokes what Souza (2017) describes as the continuity of slavery in contemporary times, the result of the lack of criticism regarding the theme, and also the effort undertaken to make it invisible in our society, as if it had never existed.

Literature Review and Research Question

Today's racist practices are regarded by Souza (2017) as "continuing practices with modern masks" that are neither perceived as continuity (Souza, 2017), neither as a form of racism, nor violence, assuming the form of objective violence (Žižek, 2014). Considering the centrality of consumer culture as the dominant form of production and reproduction of meaning and identity management (Slater, 1997; Arnould & Thompson, 2005) it can be inferred that consumer practices are included

among the "continuing practices" of domination mentioned by Souza (2017). Intellectual efforts were made to obliterate racism during Brazilian's history. Freyre's (1986) work is remembered for its culturalist approach to racial miscegenation during the 1930s, and was strongly criticized national and international wise. DaMatta (1987: 58-85), for instance, refers to Freyre's idea as the persistent fable of the three races or as "Brazilian racism". Hall-Araújo (2013: 240) describes Freyre's approach as a "romantic miscegenation tale from whence there theoretically emerged Brazilian racial and cultural hybridity". Nonetheless, it is Souza's critical analysis (1994) that is central here. He understands the Brazilian identity as constituted from the point of view of the European, oscillating between exoticism and racism that still resonates today. It comprises "a view that even today Brazil fuels with its cultural production that reinforces the idea of this place of ours being 'different'" (Fontenelle, 2011: 95). The interchangeability between racism and exoticism draws attention, taking into account the "small changes in the sociocultural set of circumstances that serve as the background" (Fontenelle, 2011: 95). Thus, Brazil can be simultaneously perceived as a country in which miscegenation is seen as a cultural advantage, the land of *samba* and carnival as well as a country where Afro-Brazilians are 2.7 times more likely to be murdered than whites (Agência Brasil, 2019), and where consumption plays an important role in organizing the "fantasy of Brazil" described by Souza (1994).

"The power of fantasy in human affairs is such that it is surprising that it does not play a much larger role in the social sciences", states Gabriel (2008: 107). Thus, we intend to fill this gap in Consumer Studies, because even though previous works have dealt with fantasy and feelings (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982), and how the concept of fantasy in Sade's texts offers an understanding of contemporary consumer (Fitchett, 2004), the concept of social fantasy remains poorly explored. The psychoanalytic approach, though, is no strange to the field. For instance, Shankar, Whittaker e Fitchett (2006) deal with marketing (and why not?, consumption) not delivering the happiness it promises; Cluley & Dunne (2012) wrote about the commodity narcissism; and Gabriel (2015: 25) stated that "psychoanalysis opens a variety of windows into understanding contemporary consumption". Although the concepts of social fantasy (Žižek, 1996) and social imaginary (Taylor, 2004) come from different ontoepistemic views, they tackle the same phenomena. On the one hand, social (or ideological) fantasy is described by Žižek (1996: 316) as the fetishistic inversion that guides social reality, an illusion that structures real social activity, that allows people to know how things really are and at the same time, enable them to act like they "do not know". On the other hand, Taylor's (2004: 23) social imaginary is described as a "common understanding that makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy".

Our goal is to discuss the elements that constitute the Brazilian social imaginary, and describe how these elements are articulated around Souza's (1994) "fantasy of Brazil" in the core of consumer culture. We further highlight that this social fantasy is perverse (Fontenelle, 2011), an idea that calls on "a culture that was entirely structured, from its own nature to its relationships of direct violence between the classes and its up-dated insertion into the modern life of its time, on this slippery, double and divided norm" (Ab'Sáber, 2007: 276). In addition we argue that the fantasy of Brazil establishes a "plateau of indifference", a level of objective violence below which any act becomes invisible thanks to a veil of naturalization (Ayrosa & Oliveira, 2018). Therefore, our research question goes as this: *how are the elements that constitute the Brazilian social imaginary organized around the fantasy of Brazil in the context of modern consumer culture?*

Methodological Procedures and outcomes

We intend to collect empirical evidence associated to the elements of the social imaginary, such as, "images, stories, and legends in the public sphere" (Taylor, 2004: 87-88), and analyze them by employing discourse theory, founded by Laclau & Mouffe (2001) and furthered by authors who followed the Lacanian psychoanalysis. The data collection will be held using media produced material (*eg* newspapers, magazines, websites, social media). As outcome, we hope to form a collection of empirical instances through which will be possible to understand and describe how the social fantasy of Brazil is articulated nowadays, in the midst of consumer culture, instances that may well describe the situation of similar contexts in other countries and cultures as well.

Final Considerations

Approaching the social imaginary/social fantasy and how it is constituted in particular contexts are useful for practitioners. For instance, advertising companies can benefit from its outcomes. It is moreover relevant for organizations, local and transnational ones, which have to deal with social imaginaries that are not always known at first. Finally, we believe that analyzes such as this might help interested audiences by exploring naturalized contents that are related to everyday issues.

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Consumer De-responsibilization: Changing Notions of Consumer Subjects and Market Moralities after the 2008-9 Financial Crisis

Léna Pellandini-Simányi & Leonardo Conte

Abstract — A growing body of literature discusses consumer responsibilization under neoliberalism. However, after the 2008-9 financial crisis, countertendencies emerged, which have not been sufficiently theorized. Analyzing post-crisis mortgage regulatory discourse in the UK, Hungary and Switzerland, this paper examines these countertendencies and proposes the concept of 'consumer de-responsibilization', referring to the shift of responsibility from consumers to the state and financial institutions. We argue that de-responsibilization was underpinned by shifts in conceptions of the consumer subject (from the entrepreneurial to the limited rationality consumer) and in moral ideas of the market (from a deontological to a consequentialist morality). De-responsibilization operates through a top-down, sovereign form of governance. It does not replace, yet constrains the fields of neoliberal governmentality and responsibilization, constituting a hybrid governance system of 'controlled freedom'. We situate de-responsibilization as a new modality of neoliberalism, which safeguards markets by excluding borrowers that may not be profitable enough.

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I. Introduction

Consumer responsibilization refers (1) to the process of assigning decisions and thus responsibility to the individual level for issues that require systemic solutions (in the sense of making people responsible) and (2) to the discursive-cultural process that invites people to willingly accept these responsibilities in the name of freedom and choice (in the sense of making people *feel* responsible). A substantial body of research discusses consumer responsibilization in neoliberal regimes (Giesler & Veresiu 2014), with various applications ranging from ethical consumption to development (e.g. Fuentes & Sörum 2019; Yngfalk 2016; Gollnhofer & Kuruoglu 2018; Langley 2007; Eckhardt & Dobscha 2019; Kipp & Hawkins 2019) and finance (DuFault & Schouten 2018; Langley & Leyshon 2012; French & Kneale 2009). This paper studies and analyses the counter-tendencies to responsibilization within the area of consumer finance in the context of the regulatory restructuring following the 2008-9 financial crisis (Ramsay 2016; Moloney 2012). In doing so, we focused on a key area of consumer finance, namely the mortgage market; particularly, on changes in consumer-related mortgage regulation between 2009 and 2016 in Europe. Since we were interested in how neoliberal responsibilization has been reshaped, we chose three countries that took a predominantly neoliberal approach to financial market regulation before the crisis (Busch 2008; Bohle 2014; Nield 2012), yet whose different political traditions and experiences

of the financial crisis led to different post-crisis regulatory responses: the UK, Hungary and Switzerland. We show the commonalities in the overall direction of the shift of responsibility, what we call 'de-responsibilization'; and analyze the minor differences in the conceptions of the consumer subject and the market underlying the de-responsibilization trend in the three countries.

II. Method

After identifying and examining the most important pieces of regulatory changes for each country, we compiled a dataset including the (1) texts of the major regulations and (2) policy commentaries relating to them. We analyzed regulations using discourse analysis (Tonkiss 2004; Hall 1997), informed by a broadly Foucauldian framework, in order to (1) theorize the ways in which borrower subjects are conceptualized; (2) identify which kind of market moralities emerged; (3) understand how responsibility for specific risks is assigned from one actor – consumers, banks, states – to another. Finally, we conducted a comparative analysis by highlighting the main differences and similarities between the three cases (see Table 1).

III. FINDINGS

Our findings suggest a shift of responsibility for assessing and minimizing financial risks from the consumers (individual level) to the state and to banks (systemic level). In the context of the mortgage market, this means that borrowers are no longer expected to fully understand and assess the risks of mortgages, nor to be able to choose the ones best suited to their needs and budget, with financial institutions and the state taking over a large part of these judgements and decisions. Institutional actors are expected to evaluate and serve consumers' best interests through expert-based assessments while putting their self-interest partially aside – to exercise some degree of paternalistic benevolence, acting as "guardians of consumers".

We call this tendency 'consumer de-responsibilization'. 'Consumer de-responsibilization' is underpinned, first, by a shift in conceptions of the consumer subject: from the autonomous, rational, and responsible subject of neoliberal governmentality to the 'limited rationality' one. The second shift was in market moralities: whereas previously markets were deemed as moral as long as they allowed agents to act in an autonomous manner (deontological view), now they are seen as moral if they deliver moral outcomes (consequentialist ethics). Both of the shifts have been theorized through the overall discourse analysis of the regulatory data mentioned above, while the direction of those shifts emerged from the comparative analysis of each of the three countries (see Table 1).

TABLE I. COMPARISON OF THE THREE COUNTRIES

	Countries		
	UK	***Hungary***	***Switzerland***
Consumer subject	Limited knowledge, careless, subject to biases	Rational, yet ill-equipped to see through misleading bank communication	Rational, yet unable to gauge the long-term consequences of their actions
Market	State and banks serving consumers' best interest	Markets should be in the service of citizens	Long-term market stability is the ultimate aim
Responsibility shift	From borrowers to banks	From borrowers to banks and the state	From banks (and borrowers) to the state

Albeit showing common features, the de-responsibilization trend also exhibits differences across the three countries. In the UK, de-responsibilization involved shifting responsibility from consumers to banks, who are made responsible for assessing borrowers' needs and for pre-selecting mortgages with minimal risks for them. In Hungary, in turn, responsibility has shifted from borrowers primarily to the state that sets upper limits to how much one can borrow and bans mortgages that it deems too risky. In Switzerland, finally, consumers' responsibility is not directly addressed by regulation but the state increasingly limits banks' risky lending, which indirectly means taking over the responsibility for preventing risky borrowing from consumers.

IV. Discussion

These shifts towards top-down regulation, we argue, reflect a transformation of neoliberal governmentality. While regulation also exists in neoliberal governmentality, it is usually adopted to ensure the freedom of the subject; in the new regime, however, it is used to curtail its freedom in order to shape individuals' choices. As a result, the crisis led to a hybrid governance system of 'controlled freedom' (see Figure 1), which balances sovereign power – in the form of regulation – and the neoliberal freedom of choice. In contrast to existing studies that suggest the persistence of the pre-crisis responsibilization regime (e.g. Clark 2015; Langley 2009a; Marron 2012, 2014), we argue that the 2008-2009 crisis led to the emerge of a new compromise between social protectionist and neoliberal discourses (Giesler and Veresiu 2014) which shows both differences and continuities with the neoliberal agenda.

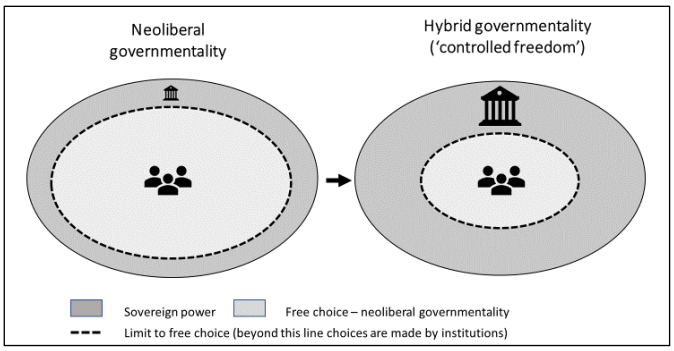

Figure 2. The shift from neoliberal governmentality to the hybrid governance system of controlled freedom

At the same time, the trends that we identified share the responsibilization regime's core assumption that markets are the answer to solving social and allocation questions – in this case, housing. Before the financial crisis, mortgage markets were celebrated as the answer to housing problems with 'financial inclusion', the 'democratization of finance' (Erturk et al. 2007) bringing everybody a mortgage; even if at a different price and of a different size. Post-crisis regulation, instead, no longer shares these optimistic hopes. Its core concern is to prevent people who may not be able to afford a mortgage in the long run from getting one. In this sense, we argue, de-responsibilization simultaneously protects consumers 'from themselves' – and the market from consumers who are not profitable enough.

V. conclusion

Consumer de-responsibilization, rather than implying a dichotomy of responsibility in which either banks and states or individuals are fully responsible for systemic risks, presents a hybrid solution. On one hand, it delegates some of the risks from the individual to an institutional level, thus representing welcome improvements in consumer protection. On the other hand, financial meltdown consequences are still ultimately born by borrowers. Therefore, far from representing a substantive change in the neoliberal logic of the economy, it rather serves to isolate the market from the social problems that may threaten it. Our paper opens three areas of further research questions: (1) to what extent de-responsibilization is happening in different areas of consumption; (2) to what extent non-policy actors apply de-responsibilization frames; and (3) the modalities through which consumers' 'best interests' are defined.

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