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Fiddler on the Street: How Roma Refugees Enact Host Cultural Images of Nostalgic Otherness

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Building on the idea that race is a type of performance, and an in-depth ethnography of Roma refugees, we develop the construct of ethnic entrepreneurship as the strategic actions of migrant consumers to enact and embody the host culture's positive institutional images of nostalgic otherness to ensure smoother acculturation.

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Expanding the Theoretical Boundaries of Consumer Acculturation: Investigating the Role of Institutional Forces and Nostalgic Consumption

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Paper #1: Fiddler on the Street: How Roma Refugees Enact Host Cultural Images of Nostalgic Otherness

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Paper #2: Generations at the Mirror: First and Second Generation of Turkish Consumers' Home Country Nostalgia

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Paper #3: Locals as Migrants in German Unification and Acculturation: How Nostalgia Enchants the Former East

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Paper #4: Asserting Integration through Nostalgic Discourses: Acculturation to the International Community

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SESSION OVERVIEW

Consumer acculturation is on the rise and of interest to consumer researchers (Askegaard, Arnould, and Kjeldgaard 2005; Chytкова 2011; Dion, Sitz, and Remy 2011; Fernandez, Veer, and Lastovicka 2011; Oswald 1999; Peñaloza 1994; Vihalemm and Keller 2011). Although this research stream's overarching goal is "to understand and conceptualize the various forces that define, allow, facilitate, or complicate consumer acculturation under specific cultural conditions" (Luedicke 2011, 238), prior studies have predominantly focused on the micro-processes of individual migrants' cultural adaptation. A few notable exceptions include works on how migrants succumb to institutional domination (Üstüner and Holt 2007) or escape from it by using the market as a form of empowerment (Üstüner and Thompson 2012).

Hence, previous research has devoted surprisingly little attention to the role of macro-institutional variables. In line with this year's conference theme, this session aims to unpack various institutional forces that *make a difference* in migrants' market acculturation through four mature empirical studies (see Appendix 1 for project overview). The papers investigate how different institutional forces (market-mediated ethnic myths, market agents' imagined ethnic communities, political mergers, and multicultural environments) lead to different manifestations of nostalgia, commonly defined as "a sentimental longing for the past" (Holbrook and Schindler 1991). The authors then examine how these forms of context-driven nostalgia impact various migrant groups' market acculturation practices and experiences. Collectively, the projects show that different institutional conditions of acculturation 1) lead to distinct and previously unexplored manifestations of nostalgia, theorized here as performances, enchantments and discourses; 2) impact social networks with which to share nostalgic consumptions and feelings; and 3) result in unusual patterns of acculturation.

In detail, Veresiu and Giesler first conceptualize ethnic entrepreneurship as the strategic actions of migrant consumers to enact

and embody the host culture's market-mediated images of nostalgic otherness in order to ensure a smoother and speedier acculturation process, based on an ethnography of Roma refugees in Toronto, Canada. Second, Visconti and Stamboli focus on how institutional agents participate in the construction of an ethnic imagined community mediated by nostalgic market discourses in France's Turkish migrant community. Third, Brunk and Hartmann discuss how nostalgic enchantment for the former GDR's consumer culture may actually inhibit or even reverse acculturation of East-German consumers who have become migrants in their own country following Germany's political merger. Fourth, Emontspool and Kjeldgaard show that instead of exclusively promoting cosmopolitan detachment from home culture, multicultural environments, such as the one found in Brussels, can encourage displays of national belonging, expressed in nostalgic discourses about mundane and global products.

This session is relevant since it expands the theoretical boundaries of consumer acculturation by exploring macro-institutional forces and nostalgic sources. Secondly, it involves four empirical projects employing diverse data collection methods (depth-interviews, ethnography, netnography, and introspection). Thirdly, it has the potential to appeal to a broad audience interested in the interactions between macro (institutional variables and ethnicity) and micro (identity and personal emotions) dimensions in consumer research.

Fiddler on the Street: How Roma Refugees Enact Host Cultural Images of Nostalgic Otherness

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

It looks like there are two big reactions: the very exotic reaction like oh wow the Gypsies make their dreams, it's like the life of freedom and stuff or there is also the thing with us being thieves and you know like we take the chickens and steal the stuff. So you find the two same stories, but it looks like at some point we are accepted here [Toronto, Canada]. Here we can make a living, we are not living in extremely poor conditions or anything like that, maybe a bit like out of the society, but it looks like we have more power and we have more space and we don't have to live in camps. (Gabriela, 52, Roma Refugee, Freelance dancer, in Toronto for 4 years)

Gabriela's reflexive remark illustrates the important institutional influence of local stereotypes and attitudes about ethnic minorities on the lived experiences of migrant consumers. The Canadian host culture commonly defines "Gypsy" as either a lifestyle or a distinct nomadic ethnicity existing predominantly in Europe (Lee 1998a). More specifically, overview studies (e.g., Csepe and Simon 2003; Liégeois 1994; Rehfish 1975) consistently distinguish between two main market-mediated myths of the Roma ethnicity that dominate popular opinion: one characterizing these individuals as passionate, mysterious, and talented "Gypsy" artisans and the other typecasting them as thieving, lazy, and dirty "Gypsies." Previous consumer acculturation research has explored in detail the processes and agents through which migrant individuals socialized into a different (mi-

nority) culture adapt to a new (dominant) consumer culture (e.g., Askegaard, Arnould, and Kjeldgaard 2005; Chytikova 2011; Dion, Sitz, and Remy 2011; Fernandez, Veer, and Lastovicka 2011; Luedicke 2011; Oswald 1999; Peñaloza 1994; Üstüner and Holt 2007; Vihalemm and Keller 2011).

How host cultural images about ethnic populations shape consumer acculturation experiences and practices has received much less attention, however. To redress this key theoretical oversight, as well as empirically engage Luedicke's recent (2011, 730) call for "consumer researchers to explore the reflexive interactions between local and migrant groups that compete for (or share) consumption spaces, services, objects, symbols, and natural resources," we conducted an in-depth ethnographic investigation of the interactions between Roma refugees (colloquially known as "Gypsies") and local residents in Toronto, Canada. Overall we found that Roma refugees, like Gabriela, are not only well aware of the two opposing ethnic stereotypes circulating throughout popular culture, but also strategically employ enactments of the market-mediated nostalgic image of the artisan "Gypsy" through everyday consumption-related activities in order to actively dispel the negative myth of the thieving "Gypsy."

To better understand this phenomenon, we draw on performance theory (e.g., Schechner 2006). According to performance theory scholars, ethnicity can be seen as a performance since it involves patterns of behavior that have been socially constructed, learned, practiced and revised by a certain group for a particular audience, over time. More specifically, this approach "underscores ethnicity as behavior, as a social skill of manipulating, masking, and assuming various cultural characteristics through innumerable symbolic activities. In this sense, one can view ethnicity as performance" (Staub 1989). Building on the idea that ethnicity is a type of performance, we develop the construct of ethnic entrepreneurship, which we define as the strategic actions of migrant consumers to enact and embody the positive images of nostalgic otherness from the host culture in order to ensure a smoother transition into the new consumer cultures. In particular, our findings section unpacks how Roma refugees in Toronto strategically employ enactments of the market-mediated nostalgic image of the artisan "Gypsy" to 1) dispel negative competing images of Roma as lazy, thieving, and dirty, 2) ensure ethnic acceptance is increased, 3) enable economic gains, and 4) allow for a smoother consumer acculturation process by resolving tensions between dominant and minority cultures.

Methodologically we used an ethnographic approach that combines both a discursive level (related historical documents and cultural materials from mass media channels and online), as well as a practical level (non-participant observation and in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 18 Roma refugees, aged 16-75, 56% female, 16 locals working in the immigration service industry, aged 25-65, 56% female, and 9 local residents, aged 25-61, 33% female). We analyzed the complete dataset (34 interviews, 1125 pages of historical and cultural data) using the hermeneutical analysis mode of tacking back and forth between data and theory (Thompson 1997).

This paper anticipates making two contributions. First, we expand the consumer acculturation literature by unpacking the important institutional role of the host culture's market-mediated ethnic stereotypes on migrant consumer acculturation practices and experiences. Second, this paper contributes to the literature on marketplace mythologies by exploring the impact of ethnic myths on the identity construction projects of migrants.

Generations at the Mirror: First and Second Generation of Turkish Consumers' Home Country Nostalgia

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Migrants, as well as their children, typically live in a 'hyper-ethnicized' world. Institutional pressures coming from the outside—the dominant society as well as the ethnic communities (Zouaghi and Darpy's 'ideal us'; 2006)—and even from internal confrontations with family members—for example, across generations (Visconti and Napolitano 2009)—constantly reinvigorate the ethnic discourse. Hence, migrants are not allowed to overcome their often presumed ethnic diversity, and the way they behave and consume is permanently interpreted in the light of such (self)attributed difference. Elif, a Turkish second generation living in Lille, voices this institutional hurdle: "Look, have you seen how Turkish people are represented by French television? Think of what integration means. Are we willing to integrate by watching this stuff? No! We do on our own..."

Elaborating upon Benedict Anderson's (1983) idea of 'imagined community', we claim that ethnic discourses produced by institutional agents represent powerful imagined communities, invisible as much as immanent in the life of migrants and indigenous people. This idea complies with Jenkins' (2002) analysis of the 'imagined' but not the 'imaginary' nature of ethnicity. As Jenkins observes, ethnicity is constructed within an institutional scenario—thus, it represents its agents' 'imagination'—but its invisibility and immateriality do not make it 'imaginary', that is, without social consequences for the people producing and embodying that imagination. In a nutshell, fostered by increased mediatization and connectivity, imagination appears today as a form of 'organized social practice' (Appadurai 1990/2011).

By acknowledging a large array of institutional agents (dominant society, consumer culture, the mediascapes, ethnic communities, families, groups of peers, and marketers of different ethnicities), our paper attacks two main outcomes of these agents' imaginative production: 1) the broad category of ethnicity, here largely meant as 'Turkishness'; and 2) the more specific category of generational ethnicity, under the assumption that also different generations might constitute different 'imagined communities', which often receive specific juridical recognition within a nation. More precisely, we observe how first and second generations of Turkish in France refer to, elaborate, and use feelings of 'home country nostalgia—'the psychic suffering caused by expatriation' (Robert-Demontrond 2001, 319)—in the market. By home sickness we mean an obsession to be (back) to a different physical space, cultural context, social network, market, and institutional setting. As our data shows, these nested references combine factual as well as imaginary traits, and can be addressed specifically to migrants' country of origin or more broadly to a generic 'elsewhere'. Our aims are threefold. First, we want to relate home country nostalgia to institutional agents and unpack their interplay. Second, we wish to mark differences across first and second generations in terms of institutional forces at play and their impact on nostalgic discourses and consumption practices. Third, we contextualize former findings on migrants' acculturation in order to inspect the effects of home country nostalgia—as mediated by institutional agents—for first and second generations' acculturation.

Empirically, the work relies upon an ethnography on 18 Turkish informants (7 first generations and 11 second generations) around the city of Lille during a period of 18 months. Methods include depth interviews, participant observation and observation of indirect indicators (e.g., indicators of social and economic capital), collection of factual data, and photography. Interpretation is granted by iterative data analysis and field/theory alternation (Thompson 1997).

First, we demonstrate that nostalgia is seldom, if at all, possible in the absence of institutional pressures. Data reveals that nostalgia is often presentable as ‘imposed nostalgia’. Consistently with Emonstopool and Kjeldgaard in this session, we also observe that the dominant society expects Turkish people to be homesick (Matt 2007). We argue their expectation reflects both imaginative stereotyping about ‘enduring ethnicity’ and opportunities to consume Turkish difference made visible by nostalgic market behaviors in an attempt of ‘cross-over dreaming’ (Grier, Brumbaugh, and Thornton 2006). Second, we show that while the dominant society and the ethnic communities exert highest institutional pressures on the first generation, the first generation and the group of peers exert substantial pressures on the second generation. As such, Turkish parents’ nostalgic consumptions are more displayed beyond the family whereas children’s nostalgic consumptions are more domestic. Finally, by being institutionally stimulated, nostalgia and nostalgic-related consumptions play a major role in acculturation. In order to organize different effects of imposed home country nostalgia on first and second generations’ acculturation, we identify two conceptual dimensions: 1) individual versus social nostalgia; and 2) nostalgic consumptions having a defensive versus an offensive function against institutional pressures. By crossing these two dimensions, four different ends of nostalgic consumptions appear (cfr. Appendix 1).

Our contributions are threefold. First, we show that home country nostalgia is not only the consequence of hostile or favoring institutional agents (Stern 1992) that stimulate a ‘myth of return’ (Akhtar 1996) but that it can become an additional institutional force whenever external agents expect migrants to feel homesick: from an institutionally-led to an institutionally-leading nostalgia manifested via the market. Second, in its defensive manifestations, home country nostalgia is not an expression of ‘desire for a place’ (i.e. being there) but of ‘desire for a nonplace’ (i.e. being elsewhere) that are objectified through material possessions. Ideally, the home country becomes the context in which migrants are able to forget their ethnicity, and thus “subvert the imagined world of the official mind and of the entrepreneurial mentality that surround them” (Appadurai 1990/2011, 285). Third, we demonstrate that home country nostalgia is not only a side effect of acculturation but a force able to orient market acculturation effectively.

Locals as Migrants in German Unification and Acculturation: How Nostalgia Enchants the Former East

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Consumer acculturation is commonly understood as a process of physical movement and the resulting adaptation to the cultural environment in one country by persons from another country (Peñaloza 1994). However, acculturation processes may take place even without migration. This project analyses such consumer acculturation instantiated in the specific institutional context of Germany’s political unification in 1989. With the fall of the wall, consumers in former East-Germany were—metaphorically—‘being crossed by the border’ becoming local migrants exposed to Western consumer culture and an inescapable process of cultural learning and adaptation.

This particular acculturation process is intertwined with a specific form of nostalgia. Emically glossed by the term ‘Ostalgie’—a combination of *Ost* (east) and *Nostalgie* (nostalgia); or Eastalgia—we witness an increasing nostalgic revival of East-German brands and consumptionscapes. Although East-Germans considered their products of low quality as well as unattractive back then and aspired Western brands as the ‘real things’ (Veenis 1999), today, many of these previously disliked commodities are cherished.

While public discourse has interpreted Eastalgia primarily as a longing for East-German life, anthropological literature suggests that the stereotypical image of the eastalgie East-German is an invention by West-German media to cope with Germany’s past (Boyer 2001; 2006). This suggests that Eastalgie consumption exceeds notions of being a mere retro phenomenon (Brown 1999; Brown, Sherry, and Kozinets 2003). Underneath its retro-coat, Eastalgia represents a resource for coping with acculturation processes in the institutional context of political re-unification. Given that we know surprisingly little about these deeper-routed cultural functions of nostalgia, this study explores and illustrates the sources, roles, and underlying functions of Eastalgia as a specific form of nostalgic consumption vis-à-vis acculturation processes for ‘local migrants’.

The current consumer cultural dynamics are rooted in the past and lived today, hence methodologically, the historical and contemporary context necessitates various materials. Our research starts with seven guided introspections (Wallendorf and Brucks 1993) of ‘local migrants’ reflecting upon the experienced changes and various aspects of their life before, during, and after the unification using a written essay format. Introspections were followed by long interviews (McCracken 1988) including photo elicitation and review of historical materials where possible. Moreover, netnography of facebook fanpages, blogs and commercial sites relating to Eastalgia, as well as newspaper articles and documentaries complement our material. This combination of methods allows a deeper understanding of the ‘then’ and ‘now’: the symptom, its manifestations, and its roots.

Our theoretical approach is inspired by literature on enchantment, disenchantment, and re-enchantment, discussing how consumers carry the burden of enchanting their lives (Ritzer 2005; Firat and Venkatesh 1995) and how they turn towards shelters of collective enchantment projects (Arnould, Price, and Otnes 1999). While enchantment has previously been portrayed as instantiated in religiosity (Muñiz and Schau 2005), magic (Arnould et al. 1999), utopia (Kozinets 2001), or pastoral myth (Press and Arnould 2011), there are explicit links between nostalgia and enchantment: Brown et al. (2003) observe that retro-brand meanings are channeled through enchantment as storied forms of nostalgic myths. Building on this, we frame nostalgia as a form of (re)enchantment that is collectively achieved and utilized by consumers to deal with various aspects of the acculturation process, and ultimately with dominated, modern cultural conditions in the context of (macro) institutional changes

Our findings contextualize Eastalgia across three cultural-historical phases of the re-unification process: (1) the ‘unification honeymoon phase,’ characterized by euphoria and hyper-consumption of Western brands experienced as enchanting, but also by eradication, discarding, and de-valuing anything East-German (Berdahl 1999; Veenis 1999); (2) the ‘hangover phase’ where Western consumer culture is no longer capable of enchanting, a realization facilitated by the dominated conditions under which political changes occurred, mass unemployment, and shattered dreams of ubiquitous prosperity; and (3) the ‘recovery phase’ during which Eastalgia emerges as a symptom of idealization and re-enchantment of the formerly despised products and consumption experiences through storied forms of myth about life and consumption in the former GDR. Thus, we reveal how Eastalgia mediates re-enchantment in three ways (ideological, re-enacted, re-appropriated) and unveil the different functions of eastalgie (re-)enchantment in acculturation processes: Eastalgia *inhibits*, *reverses*, and *facilitates* acculturation.

This paper aims to make the following contributions to existing literature. By investigating the novel context of ‘locals as migrants’, this study expands our understanding of consumer acculturation, the cultural functions of nostalgia in these adaptation processes, as well

as conceptually links nostalgia and (re)enchantment. We find that Eastalgia is both a symptom and coping strategy for dealing with problematic and contested acculturation and thus acts as a mediator for re-enchantment in dominated, modern cultural conditions. Our findings demonstrate how the sources for the manifestation of nostalgic enchantment are multiple, as are the consequences for acculturation. Nostalgic consumer projects can play a central role in facilitating, inhibiting or even reversing acculturation processes. By offering evidence for reverse acculturation, our study supports Luedicke's paper (2011) in that acculturation should no longer be seen as a progressive, directed process but rather as a complex recursive system of adaptation by migrants and local consumers.

Asserting Integration through Nostalgic Discourses: Acculturation to an International Community

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The concept of nostalgia has played an important role in consumer research for the last decades. Its main conceptualization is one of "bitter-sweet" feelings of longing for a past considered as better than the current situation, which leads consumers to prefer products reminding them of these happy times (Holak and Havlena 1998; Schindler and Holbrook 2003). In the migration context, recent research points to its beneficial side, for instance in easing migrants' adaptation to a new (consumption) culture (Stamboli-Rodriguez 2011), nuancing nostalgia's initial link to negative experiences of homesickness (Matt 2007).

Increased migration around the world due to globalization has led to a diversification of migrants' socio-economic and geographical profiles, which diversifies the cultural influences during acculturation. As a large share of research has however focused mainly on permanent, low-skilled labor migration between two cultures, investigating the role of nostalgia in consumer acculturation of more diversified types of migrants is therefore timely. Hence, the aim of this paper is to investigate individuals' recourse to nostalgic consumption discourses during multicultural encounters.

In this context, the discursive side of nostalgia is particularly important; migrants resort to different discourses about food consumption as indicator of social identity in one context or the other (Luna, Ringberg, and Peracchio 2008; Oswald 1999). In particular, cultural reflexivity, that is, conscious reflection on one's culture, impacts consumption practices (Askegaard, Kjeldgaard, and Arnould 2009). As Emontspool and Kjeldgaard (2012) indicate, consumption discourses in multicultural communities can exacerbate this cultural reflexivity, which then becomes a "conscious consideration and enactment of a cultural identity in order to comprehensively and adequately represent cultural affiliation" (Emontspool and Kjeldgaard 2012, 229). The authors show how nostalgic discourses can then illustrate migrants' cross-cultural consumption experiences.

What has not been discussed until now, is how institutional discourses may induce this behavior. Indeed, as Luedicke (2011) indicates, more focus is needed on the role of host cultural institutions in order to fully investigate migrant consumers' relationship to markets, as well as different outcomes of their adaptation to these new consumption environments (Askegaard, Arnould, and Kjeldgaard 2005; Peñaloza 1994). Acculturation is not only an individual, psychological change; individuals' surroundings greatly impact it. In this paper, we therefore propose an exploration of nostalgic acculturation discourses, asking how consumers integrate institutional expectations in those discourses.

To address this issue, the paper firstly analyses 17 in-depth interviews (McCracken 1988) with migrants of different socioeco-

nomie and ethnic origins, and investigates consumer acculturation and nostalgia in this population. Secondly, this study draws on interviews undertaken with young migrants living in shared an apartment in Brussels, to focus on cross-cultural discourses, as well as on perceptions of institutionalized discourses within these communities. The chosen sample is particularly representative of multicultural environments of higher cultural capital, as Brussels welcomes large numbers of migrants due to the presence of the European institutions, which provide strong institutional discourses about cultural identity.

The findings of this study illustrate the emergence of nostalgic discourses that are less due to the acculturation process in itself, but rather follow upon migrants' impression that nostalgic discourses are expected from them. The respondents relate that during social contact, other migrants express curiosity as to the respondents' country of origin. In consequence, they feel required to express national pride and longing to their culture of origin, although they don't necessarily feel nostalgic themselves. Nonetheless, they adopt nostalgic discourses about a large range of consumption items.

In an international community as exists in Brussels, nostalgia discourses can thus display integration in multicultural societies rather than longing for a lost past. This finding finds an explanation in the differentiation made by Cannon and Yaprak (2002) between local and global cosmopolitans. While global cosmopolitans, who have no attachment to particular places, consider nostalgia a failure (Thompson and Tambyah 1999), our findings show the compatibility of attachment to the country of origin with multiculturalism as promoted by supranational organizations such as the EU, influencing local cosmopolitans' consumption discourses and encouraging nostalgic discourse in multicultural settings.

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APPENDIX 1

Project overview: forces, contexts and conceptual contributions

	Institutional forces	Acculturation context	Type of Nostalgia	Manifestations of nostalgia and impact on acculturation
Veresiu and Giesler	Dominant market-mediated ethnic stereotypes	Strategic Acculturation	Performed Nostalgia	Nostalgic performances as a survival tactic and type of ethnic entrepreneurship
Visconti and Stamboli	Pull forces of migration (migrants for job or family rejoining)	Assimilation, acculturation, resistance, swapping	(Imposed) home country nostalgia	Nostalgia as survival; sewing; contestation of the imaginary community; and nurturing
	Generational forces (first vs second generations)	Reculturation	Inherited and imposed home country nostalgia	Nostalgia as sewing; and nurturing
Brunk and Hartmann	Political merger (acculturation in absence of immigration or displacement)	Non-migratory acculturation	Nostalgia as enchantment	Ideological, re-enacted and re-appropriated meanings of enchanted nostalgia can facilitate, inhibit or even reverse acculturation
Emontspool and Kjeldgaard	Multicultural environment	Reflexive acculturation	Discursive nostalgia	Reverse process: Reflexive acculturation leads to developing nostalgic discourses (something expected by others)