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SPECIAL SESSION
MULTICULTURAL MARKETPLACES: THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL GROUND
ADVANCES

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Catherine Demangeot, IÉSEG School of Management, France, c.demangeot@ieseg.fr

SESSION ABSTRACT

Several disciplines such as sociology and human geography have recognized that the new era of ‘superdiversity’, where social actors all evolve in ‘lived multicultural’ (e.g., Neal, Bennet, Cochrane, & Mohan 2013; Vertovec 2007; Wessendorf 2013), poses new questions and requires theoretical development. Similarly, in marketing and consumer research, several authors have pointed to the need to distinguish between international and multicultural marketing (e.g., Askegaard, Arnould, & Kjeldgaard 2005; Craig & Douglas, 2006; Jamal 2003; Laroche, Papadopoulos, Heslop, & Bergeron 2003; Yaprak 2008). Large proportions of contemporary marketplaces become increasingly culturally diverse – in terms of their populations’ composition, the cultural origin of the marketers and brands active in the marketplace, and their consumers’ exposure to brands, advertising, media and ideologies from multiple cultural origins. Such continuous multicultural interactions and experiences facilitate the integration, appropriation and, in some cases, transformation of cultural meanings from other marketplaces to consumers’ lived multicultural realities in a given marketplace (Cayla & Eckhardt 2008; Demangeot, Broderick & Craig 2015; Eckhardt & Mahi 2004; Kipnis, Broderick, & Demangeot 2014).

While international marketing research has primarily focused on cultural differences between geographically distant markets and, more recently, on the globalization of markets (Akaka, Vargo, & Lusch, 2013; Cavusgil, Deligonul, & Yaprak, 2005), multicultural marketplaces pose new questions and require theoretical development to reflect and cater for the complexities brought about by the unprecedented magnitude of cultural heterogeneity and interconnectedness in the majority of contemporary national markets. The purpose of this special session is to spotlight some of the recent theoretical and empirical advances in the ‘multicultural marketplaces’ research stream. The session brings together studies that each deploys different research lenses addressing four areas (identity complexity, intergroup conviviality, differentiation of socio-political contexts and multicultural adaptiveness) recently posed as requiring development in the multicultural marketplaces paradigm (Demangeot et al. 2015).

Specifically, the study by Cross, Harrison and Thomas distinguishes unique phenomenological complexities of multiracial consumer identity and discuss whether and how advertising representations of multiracial populations affect these consumers’ perceptions of acceptance by the marketplace. Regany and Emontspool consider how the ethnic-focused product representation practices by retail spaces elevate recognition of cultural difference by consumers within one multicultural marketplace, contributing to the rise of new intergroup barriers. Johnson, Cadairo and Grier, conversely, consider the role of country-level ideological stances on cultural diversity in driving differential consumer responses to ethnocultural-specific meanings represented in restaurant environments. Finally, Galalae, Kipnis and Demangeot propose the concept of consumer psychological mobility to capture and explain variations in consumers’ capacity to adapt and adopt multicultural living as a consistent, active practice extending beyond cultural consumption tourism.

The session highlights that mundane intersection of multiple cultural meanings and varying contextualizations of lived multicultural within societal ideologies facilitate emergence of new individual and group discourses informing distinctly different consumption expectations and practices. This necessitates innovative approaches to recognize and account for these differences. By empirically identifying specific challenges faced by marketing researchers and practitioners and debating their theoretical implications the session contributes to advancement of consumer behaviour and marketing research in multicultural marketplaces’ contexts.

References for all studies presented in this session available upon request

SPEAKERS

1. **The Multiracial Body in the Multicultural Marketplace:** Dr Samantha N.N. Cross (Iowa State University), Dr Robert L. Harrison III (Western Michigan University), and Dr Kevin Thomas (The University of Texas at Austin).

Samantha Cross is an Assistant Professor in Marketing at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. Her research focuses on the coexistence of diverse others and examines how diverse entities, identities, perspectives, beliefs, ways of sensing and consuming co-exist in individuals, households and society. Her work has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Marketing, Journal of Public Policy and Marketing, Journal of Business Research, and Consumption, Markets and Culture. Dr. Cross has presented at national and international conferences and has received several awards for her research. She received her Ph.D. in Marketing from the University of California, Irvine.

Dr Robert Harrison is an associate professor of marketing at Western Michigan University. He obtained a Ph.D. in marketing from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He researches in the area of advertising representations and consumer culture theory. More specifically, his interests include advertising depictions in the family/fatherhood and multiracial contexts, competitive consumption, and consumer socialization. He has made numerous presentations at national academic conferences. His work has been published in the Journal of Business Research, Journal of Advertising, Journal of Macromarketing, Marketing Theory, Consumption, Markets, and Culture, and others. Before pursuing his academic career, Harrison worked as a business news reporter.

Kevin D. Thomas is Assistant Professor in the Stan Richards School of Advertising & Public Relations at The University of Texas, Austin. Dr. Thomas utilizes a critical theory lens to investigate the socio-cultural impact of marketing communication and consumer behavior, particularly among marginalized/oppressed populations. His research work has appeared in the Journal of Public Policy and Marketing, Journal of Business Research, Consumption Markets & Culture, and Advertising and Society Review. Dr. Thomas is the co-founder of two justice-oriented community organizations, Black Media Council and Food for Black Thought. Prior to entering academia, Dr. Thomas worked in the food marketing sector.

2. **Celebrating Ramadan and the Chinese New Year in a French supermarket? Liquid retail and the challenges of ethnic inter-group tensions in multicultural marketplaces:** Dr Fatima Regany (Institut du Marketing et du Management de la Distribution) and Dr Julie Emontspool (University of Southern Denmark).

Fatima Regany is Assistant Professor at the University of Lille North of France (IMMD - Institut du Marketing et du Management de la Distribution). She holds a PhD in Marketing and Management at University of Lille. Her research interests fall within the interpretive consumer research with a focus on consumer acculturation, consumption of market minorities and their religious and cultural identities, cultural perspectives in retailing. Her research interests also relate to intergenerational relationships, family consumption and gendered consumption. Her work has been published in Journal of Marketing Management, Marketing Theory, Research in Consumer Behaviour and in various book chapters.

Julie Emontspool is Assistant Professor at the Department of Marketing and Management of the University of Southern Denmark. She holds a PhD in Management Sciences from Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium, and joined faculty in Denmark after a brief research stay at Schulich School of Business, Canada. Her main research interests in consumer research relate to adaptation and contact between cultures. Her work about consumer acculturation, cosmopolitanism, global cities, the glocalization of (food) cultures and immigrant entrepreneurship has among others been published in International Marketing Review, Advances in Consumer Research, Research in Consumer behaviour and in various book chapters.

3. **Sociopolitical ideologies and target marketing effectiveness:** Dr Guillaume D. Johnson (CNRS, Dauphine Recherches en Management), Dr Romain Cadario (IÉSEG School of Management) and Dr Sonya A. Grier (American University).

Guillaume Johnson is a CNRS research fellow at Paris-Dauphine University. Before joining the CNRS, Guillaume held academic positions in China (University of Nottingham Ningbo), France (Paris-Dauphine University), and South Africa (Witwatersrand University and Rhodes University). His research interest focuses on multicultural marketing and the implications of the coexistence of multiple cultures within the marketplace. He has explored these issues in France, South Africa and the United States. His work has been published in the Journal of Public Policy & Marketing, the Journal of Advertising, and the Journal of Business Research, amongst others.

4. **Re-Thinking the Notion of Mobility in Multicultural Marketplace: Psychological Mobility:** Dr Cristina Galalae (Coventry University), Dr Eva Kipnis (Coventry University) and Dr Catherine Demangeot (IÉSEG School of Management).

Cristina Galalae is a Lecturer in International Business at Coventry University and a Fulbright Alumna of the University of Texas at Austin. Her research interests include transnational markets, mobility and multiculturalism, movement and consumption in motion, consumer acculturation. Her research was presented at various international conferences, such as the European Marketing Academy Conference (EMAC), the Consumer Culture Theory Conference, the Congress of the Academy for Intercultural Research, etc. Before starting her academic career, Cristina worked as a Marketing Consultant for various multinational companies, such as GDF SUEZ and Betafence.

Eva Kipnis is a Senior Lecturer in marketing at the School of Marketing and Management, Coventry University. She holds a PhD in marketing from Durham University for which she earned the Best Thesis Award. Eva's research interests lie at the intersection of consumer behaviour and branding, comprising three strands: 1) multicultural consumer identities and cultural branding; 2) brands in illicit markets; and 3) political resistance brands and marketplace-mediated consumer resistance. Her work appeared in the Journal of Business Research, Marketing Theory, Consumption, Markets & Culture, Journal of Public Policy and Marketing, Journal of Marketing Management and others.

Catherine Demangeot is an Associate Professor of marketing at IÉSEG School of Management, Paris. She received a PhD in marketing from Aston Business School. Her research interests lie in the area of consumers' interactions with multicultural or virtual environments as well as the strategies they may deploy and the competences they may acquire. Her research appeared in the Journal of Public Policy and Marketing, Psychology & Marketing, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Marketing Management and others. She is the recipient of British Academy of Management's 2008 Tony Beasley Award in recognition of outstanding work derived from doctoral research.

THE MULTIRACIAL BODY IN THE MULTICULTURAL MARKETPLACE

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ABSTARCT

The conceptualization of multiculturalism has evolved with a focus on migration and the multicultural person, defined as “an individual who has been exposed to and has learned more than one culture” Benet-Martínez (2012, 627). However, multicultural identification today can take other forms and can evolve through other processes. Kipnis, Broderick and Demangeot’s (2014) consumer multi-cultural identity orientations (CMIO) matrix addresses the contemporary complexities of multicultural identification by identifying eight cultural identity orientations individuals can develop through multiple cultural experiences, including hyphenated identities.

Our research focuses on one type of hyphenated multicultural identity, that of the multiracial body in contemporary U.S. society. We argue that while multiracial identity is a form of multiculturalism, it is still important to acknowledge and understand phenomenological differences between mixed race and other forms of multicultural identity in the marketplace. Building on earlier work on multiracial identity development and the negotiation of cultural ambiguity in the marketplace (Harrison, Thomas, & Cross 2015), this research focuses on marketplace representation and legitimization of the multiracial consumer in the U.S.

The buying power of multiracial consumers is valued at \$148 million (DaCosta 2007), and the 2010 US census identified more than nine million self-identified mixed-race Americans. Among US children, the multiracial population increased 50 percent to 4.2 million since 2000, representing the fastest growing youth group in the country. Politically, economically and increasingly in the media (Williams 2011), multiracial consumers are being recognized as an important component of an evolving society.

However, in spite of the increased acceptance of multiracial as a legitimate consumer and racial category in the U.S., it is debatable whether multiracial consumers have achieved full marketplace access and legitimacy, as attempts to recognize this consumer segment still results in considerable backlash (e.g. the virulent online comments to the 2013 Cheerios ad featuring a multiracial family). In addition, representation of the multiracial body is of concern. When marketers utilize a narrow range of phenotypic characteristics, body types and social roles to represent multiracial populations, a myopic understanding of who is (and is not) multiracial can result. It is clearly important that we understand how multiracial consumers learn and, by their very presence, define the expectations of marketers and retailers in this paradoxical environment.

We ask the following research questions: 1) What are multiracial consumers’ perceptions of current marketplace practices? 2) What are the social/cultural ramifications of the ways in which advertising represents multiracial identity? 3) What is the experience of multiracial consumers and their family units as legal recognition transfers to marketplace legitimacy and societal acceptance? We use data collected from 33 in-depth interviews with multiracial women, 11 interviews with advertising professionals, and a data set of 107 advertisements containing multiracial/ambiguous-race individuals featured in eight popular US magazines from January through December of 2011. Findings reveal that while multiracial consumers may be members of the U.S. multicultural marketplace, their lived experiences, socialization processes and perception by society, and the process of constantly moving between two disparate worlds, not fully accepted by either, differentiate them from others who share the same multicultural classification. Using the emergent themes stemming from our research, we develop a theoretical model that highlights the socialization and identity development process of multiracial consumers; a model that we hope will be applicable to other cultural and intersectional contexts that impact consumer and marketplace identity.

CELEBRATING RAMADAN AND THE CHINESE NEW YEAR IN A FRENCH SUPERMARKET? LIQUID RETAIL AND THE CHALLENGES OF ETHNIC INTER-GROUP TENSIONS IN MULTICULTURAL MARKETPLACES

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ABSTRACT

This paper studies the supermarket as a mundane retail marketplace where contact between different cultures occurs. Those places indeed constitute important illustrations of multicultural marketplaces (Demangeot, Broderick, & Craig 2015), but remain understudied for now. The paper investigates in particular the emergence and management of inter-group ethnic conflict in multicultural retail places. Consumer segments of large socio-economic and ethnic diversity indeed co-exist on a daily basis in those places (Esbjerg et al. 2012; Martin & Pranter 1989). The co-existence of those segments has a heightened conflict potential in comparison for instance to brand or flagship stores, which attract customers of more similar lifestyles (Borghini et al. 2009; Kozinets et al. 2002). Also, supermarkets increasingly become the stage of in-store animations aimed both at ethnic minorities and mainstream population, which sometimes create tensions and conflicts between groups (Authors 2015). Multicultural retail environments therefore require marketing strategies that respect customers' sensibilities and maintain customer compatibility, since the close co-existence of different customer segments can upset one or the other segment (Martin & Pranter 1989; Verhoef et al. 2009).

During a four-year ethnography of French grocery retail contexts, we collected three types of data: (1) in-depth interviews with customers and retail experts, (2) in-stores observations of customers, retail stores environments and in-store promotions, and (3) online data from websites and social media. All data were transcribed and anonymized. We used theoretically-oriented coding and categorization processes through the use of constant comparison mode (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Miles & Huberman 1994), and interpreted the data hermeneutically (Thompson 1997). Relying on assemblage theory (DeLanda 2006; Deleuze & Guattari 1987), this study conceptualizes retail environments as assemblages of people and products, symbols and material elements. It shows how diverse components and their interactions either stabilize or destabilize the fragile equilibrium that a retail environment is. We find for instance that instead of integrating ethnic diversity, retailers' use of ethnic-themed animations or ethnic product areas enhances cultural and ethnic boundaries between the different segments of customers. Simultaneously, the multiplication of ethnic influences creates a setting where clear borders between local, global and foreign cultures (Kipnis, Emontspool, & Broderick 2012) continuously shift. Retail environments therefore become increasingly liquid in a global world (Bardhi, Eckhardt, & Arnould 2012), but this liquidity in turn creates new barriers between customers. These insights contribute to existing knowledge by providing a clear overview of the interactions between the main components of multicultural retail environments, unexplored until now. Doing so, this paper provides elements of answer to various calls in previous research for further insights into the dynamics and the increased fluidity of multicultural marketplaces (Demangeot et al. 2014; Demangeot, Broderick, & Craig 2015).

Furthermore, our findings provide a range of specific managerial strategies for managing the co-existence of different segments of customers in a shared marketplace, both ethnic minorities and mainstream population. We indeed find that retailers need to build fluid retail environments that allow for flexible boundaries between customer segments. The adaptation of communication and merchandise policies are of particular importance (Ebster & Garau 2011; Samli 1998) to minimize negative customer experience (Martin & Pranter 1989; Verhoef et al. 2009). Communication elements such as images, words and semiotics as particularly subject to misinterpretation in multicultural marketplace assemblages. Using communication elements in the supermarket that do not "exoticize" ethnic customers is therefore of great importance, simultaneously with consideration of local sensibilities.

SOCIOPOLITICAL IDEOLOGIES AND TARGET MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

In the political debate of many countries, two contradictory ideological perspectives on cultural diversity can be distinguished. The first one, multiculturalism, aims to integrate all cultural groups while preserving their own identities. The second, assimilation, seeks to transform each individual, irrespective of his/her cultural background, into the dominant culture. Extant consumer research examining the effectiveness of identity-based segmentation has not taken into consideration these sociopolitical differences. Most of this literature, rooted within the North American context, implicitly assumes that international generalization of findings is possible without specific reference to political contexts. To redress this gap, the present study investigates whether the preference for one or the other ideological model (multiculturalism versus assimilation) predicts non-targeted consumers' responses to target marketing strategies. We examine this influence at the individual-level (Study 1) and at the national-level (Study 2).

Study 1 used a 2 (Targeting Strategy: Non-culturally Targeted [Organic restaurants] vs. Culturally Targeted [Organic-halal restaurants]) × (Individual-Level Sociopolitical Ideology) between-subjects experimental design. We conducted this experiment in March-April 2013 with 68 non-Muslim French students. In the cover story, participants were told that the study assessed their opinion about a project for a new restaurant. In the first condition, respondents read a project description for new restaurants that will only sell organic foods. In the second condition, the restaurants will only sell foods which are simultaneously organic and halal. After the project was presented, purchase intention was measured as well as the personal attitudes towards assimilation and multiculturalism (see Guimond et al. 2013). Results showed that purchase intention was significantly higher for the organic restaurants compared to the organic-halal restaurants. However, we also found that this main effect was moderated by respondents' sociopolitical ideology such as the purchase intention for the culturally targeted strategy was significantly lower for consumers that exhibited preference for assimilation (vs. those who displayed preference for multiculturalism). Consequently and as expected, individuals' sociopolitical ideologies determine their reaction to culturally targeted strategies.

Next, we examined the reactions to target marketing using a different proxy for sociopolitical ideologies, one based on cross-national differences. France was used to represent a preference for assimilation whereas the US was used for multiculturalism. Study 2 used a 2 (Targeting Strategy: Non-culturally Targeted [Organic restaurants] vs. Culturally Targeted [Organic-halal restaurants]) × 2 (National-Level Sociopolitical Ideology: USA vs. France) quasi-experimental between-subjects design. We conducted a web-based experiment in April 2013 with 54 non-Muslim French students recruited from a Parisian university and 70 non-Muslim American students recruited from a university in Washington, D.C. We used the same manipulation and measurements as in study 1. Confirming our operationalization, American students were higher on multiculturalism while French students were higher on assimilation. Second, we found a significant interaction between country group and targeting strategy such as in France the purchase intention for the organic halal foods company was significantly lower than for the organic foods company, whereas there was no significant difference in the US.

This paper provides preliminary insights into the role of sociopolitical ideologies in the effectiveness of target marketing and reveals the challenges that (international) businesses may face as their increasing recognition of cultural diversity may encounter divergent political visions.

RE-THINKING THE NOTION OF MOBILITY IN MULTICULTURAL MARKETPLACE: PSYCHOLOGICAL MOBILITY

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ABSTRACT

Mobility is a historically significant phenomenon, with the role of consumption in the appropriation of living environments by geographically mobile persons representing an important research topic throughout the last five decades. However, recent studies posit that in multicultural marketplaces: (1) experience of geographical movement is not a precondition for exposure to diverse range of cultural ideologies represented by products, brands and institutions (Kipnis, Broderick, & Demangeot, 2014); (2) both migrating (i.e., those experiencing geographical mobility) and local (i.e., those without geographical mobility experience) consumers construct their identities in a “circle of mutual observation, translation, and recreation of discourses and practices” (Luedicke 2011, 239). Overall, there is a growing recognition that, in spatial units where consumers, marketers, brands and ideas of multiple cultures interact continuously, both migrants and locals experience mobility in relation to self and/or other actors and (re)appropriate their cultural identities and values against multiple socio-cultural frames (Demangeot, Broderick, & Craig 2015; Lucke, Kostova, & Roth 2014; Seo & Gao, 2015).

Whilst prior studies largely focus on identifying the variations in consumer identity strategies selected through contact with new cultures (e.g. Askegaard, Arnould, & Kjeldgaard 2005; Lindridge, Hogg, & Shah 2004; Oswald 1999; Peñaloza 1994) so far the individual dispositions that leverage adaptiveness to day-to-day existence in a multicultural marketplace have received less attention. In this presentation, we put forward the initial empirical findings of an ongoing study that explores consumer psychological mobility. Drawing upon studies in the fields of development communication (Lerner 1958) and organizational behaviour (Lazarova & Taylor 2009; Sullivan & Arthur 2006), we define consumer psychological mobility as consumers’ desire and perceived ability to utilize consumption experiences to project themselves into unfamiliar (real or imagined) places, situations and ideologies. Our study suggests that multicultural marketplaces facilitate the enactment of psychological mobility through multicultural consumption experiences.

The analysis of 30 in-depth interviews conducted with migrant (19 interviews) and local (11 interviews) consumers in the UK outlines (1) manifestations of psychological mobility through consumption of a broad variety of brands assigned with diverse cultural meanings as an act of appropriation to actual and imagined future multicultural living; (2) historical and social forces shaping different consumption mobility dispositions. We explore and conceptualize two main dimensions of psychological mobility, namely (1) the preference for being geographically mobile (in a physical or virtual context) and (2) the preference for multicultural market resources. Analyses of the factors affecting these two dimensions reveal new patterns guiding identity and consumption manifestations, as well as the social and historical forces guiding these manifestations. Our initial findings suggest multicultural marketplaces may facilitate psychological mobility manifestations through consumption. Examples of such manifestations are the desire to engage in geographical mobility as a consequence of exposure to multicultural market resources, the willingness to explore multicultural resources beyond “cultural consumption tourism” (e.g. eating in a foreign restaurant) etc. Social and historical forces, such as life changing events and positive intergroup attitudes, shape mobility dispositions in multicultural marketplaces, whilst influencing consumers’ capacity to adapt to their current and future consumption experiences.

Rather than focusing on differences between markets (e.g., foreign vs. domestic), this study contributes to multicultural marketplaces research by introducing a more fluid conception of consumption identity. The latter can be employed to understand why dispositions such as diversity seeking are being formed and how consumers evolve to select multicultural orientations as identity strategies, irrespective of direct involvement in geographic mobility.