

Dominated Consumer Acculturation: The Social Construction of Poor Migrant Women's Consumer Identity Projects in a Turkish Squatter

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We conduct an ethnographic case study of poor migrant women living in a Turkish squatter to explore how consumer acculturation operates in this important context. Poor migrants have no choice but to engage Turkish consumer culture because it is hegemonic and it conflicts ideologically with their village culture, and they do so with few resources. Our dominated consumer acculturation model specifies three modes of acculturation structured by this context: migrants reconstitute their village culture in the city, shutting out the dominant ideology; or they collectively pursue the dominant ideology as a myth through ritualized consumption; or they give up on both pursuits, resulting in a shattered identity project.

Mass migration is a crucial social phenomenon, one that has continually transformed societies, as well as the patterns of consumption therein. In recent decades, as global economic policies have encouraged the mass movement of rural peasants into cities in the less developed countries (LDCs) and as low birth rates in Western countries have led to increasing reliance on poor immigrants as laborers, migration has become an especially acute social issue. In particular, the migration of the rural poor to urban squatter communities mushrooming on the outskirts of global cities has formed what Mike Davis (2006) calls the "Planet of Slums"—the most significant demographic shift of the past hundred years (de Soto 2002). According to a recent U.N. report, 1 billion people—about 17% of the total world population—are former peasants who now live in slums on the urban periphery. Demographers predict that 3 billion people will live in squatters by 2030.

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The acculturation of migrants has long been a concern of the social sciences and has become a topic of increasing importance in consumer research. Acculturation becomes a focal issue when immigrants move into a new country and also when culturally divergent populations migrate internally (e.g., aboriginal populations, peasants, and ethnic and religious minorities). In a world where consumption is such a dominant domain of culture, we need to ask how acculturation works in terms of consumer identity formation. We seek to extend current theories of consumer acculturation through a study of a context as yet unexplored in the literature, the mass migration of poor rural people into an urban milieu dominated by Western consumer culture.

We draw upon ethnographic fieldwork in a squatter community outside Ankara, Turkey, focusing on the sociocultural structures that shape consumer acculturation and the resulting identity projects that women pursue within these structures. We develop a new model, which we call dominated consumer acculturation, and we specify how it differs from the predominant model, which we characterize as post-modern consumer acculturation.

POSTMODERN CONSUMER ACCULTURATION

Acculturation—generally, what happens when peoples socialized in one (minority) culture migrate and so come into continuous first-hand contact with a new (dominant) culture—has been a central topic for the social sciences at least

since the famous Chicago School community studies of the early twentieth century. While all of the social science disciplines have developed literatures on acculturation, psychology has had by far the most influence in consumer research, even in research that aspires to social and cultural levels of analysis. Most investigators work with constructs similar to the fourfold typology of acculturation attitudes associated with John W. Berry (see Rudmin [2003] for an extensive review and critique). According to Berry, migrants can proactively adopt the dominant culture and seek to rid themselves of their minority culture (assimilation), they can reject the dominant culture in order to retain the minority culture (separation), they can combine the two cultures into some sort of hybrid (integration), or they can become distanced from both cultures (marginalization). Consumer researchers have enjoined this long-running research stream by considering the role of consumption in various acculturation processes and outcomes (Askegaard, Arnould, and Kjeldgaard 2005; Oswald 1999; Peñaloza 1994). We use these three studies, all of which were published in the *Journal of Consumer Research*, as exemplars to synthesize this emerging literature.

Individual Hybrid Identity Projects

While these studies report some divergent results, from our perspective what is most noteworthy are their similarities (Askegaard et al. [2005] provides a synthesis). The unit of analysis is usually consumer identity, with particular focus on the way that identity formation expresses minority and dominant cultures. The analyses describe a diverse range of identities that together evoke the idea that the migrants' various encounters with the dominant culture produce a diverse and fluid range of individuated identity projects that combine both minority and dominant cultures—integrated identities, in Berry's terms.

Peñaloza's (1994) study of Mexican American immigrants focuses on consumer practices, not identities. Peñaloza sets up four consumer acculturation practices: resistance (favor Mexican practices over American practices), acculturation (adopt American practices while maintaining Mexican practices), assimilation (adopt American practices while deserting Mexican practices), and physical segregation (a spatial form of separation). Her analysis suggests that migrants commingle these practices in different ways to form identities; she notes the mixing and matching as informants both value and reject aspects of each culture.

Subsequent work has focused more squarely on identity formation. Oswald (1999) develops a performative model that focuses on the construction of hybrid identities as a playful and seamless set of situational acts. She introduces the notion of culture swapping, analyzing how a Haitian immigrant family unconsciously switches codes between the tastes of the Haitian elite and the American middle class depending upon the situation. From Oswald, we get a rich sense of how consumer identities result from the freewheeling dialogic interplay between the minority and dominant cultures.

Askegaard et al.'s (2005) study of Greenlanders in Den-

mark is particularly concerned with hybrid identities. Askegaard et al. find confirming evidence of the kinds of integrative consumer identities noted by both Peñaloza and Oswald. In addition, they introduce the idea of hyperculture: migrants draw upon the Greenlander culture commodified in the dominant culture (Denmark) as identity resources. These constructs are described as a portfolio of identity positions from which each migrant Greenlander in Denmark mixes and matches as they interpret and make use of the dominant and minority discourses available in Danish society. The authors describe hybrid identity formation as a potentially tenuous and existentially fraught enterprise but nonetheless a project that all of their informants are able to resolve with seemingly little difficulty.

In all three studies, migrants individually pursue various hybrid identities, the particulars of which vary across individuals and situations. These descriptions converge with what acculturation theorists term "integrative" identities and with what globalization theorists concerned with the cultural processes produced by migration have termed "hybrid" (Tomlinson 1999) and "creolized" (Pieterse 1996) identities. None of the studies report cases of individuals who abandon their minority culture in order to wholly reconstruct themselves using the dominant culture, or cases of individuals who wholly resist the dominant culture in order to maintain identities aligned with the minority culture, or cases of individuals who are unaligned with either culture. And there are no patterns reported in any of the studies. Rather we are left with the idea that each migrant selects a particular identity project from the range of discourses that are available.

Theorizing the Structuring of Postmodern Acculturation

From our sociocultural perspective, the sole emphasis on consumer identities and practices in this literature results in a conceptual myopia. None of the studies specify the sociocultural structuring of consumer acculturation:

- Is consumer acculturation socially patterned?
- If so, what are the social and cultural structures that generate this patterning?
- How do these structures—and, hence, patterns of consumer acculturation—vary across different contexts?

Both Peñaloza and Askegaard et al. note the role of acculturating agents (e.g., the media, the market, and transnational consumer culture), but they treat these agents as generic forces rather than as particular sociocultural structures that can differentially influence consumer acculturation. All of these authors note the importance of studying different acculturation contexts. However, if our goal is to explain consumer acculturation patterns, then advances will be made by attending to key differences in social and cultural structures that lead to differing patterns of consumer acculturation, not by using different contexts to test the robustness of a single universal model (the explicit goal pursued by Askegaard et al. [2005]). Contexts matter when they

harbor underlying structures that differentially affect consumer acculturation. In this study, we want to explore the social patterning of consumer acculturation. Rather than assume that hybrid identity projects are universal, we want to ask: what sociocultural structures produce this kind of consumer acculturation? Prior studies offer clues from which we hypothesize three such structures (see fig. 1).

Social Class Position. Oswald and Askegaard et al. study middle-class migrants. Peñaloza’s informants come from wide-ranging backgrounds. From the sociology of consumption, we can infer that constructing hybrid identities requires basic levels of economic, social, and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984; Douglas and Isherwood 1979). While prior studies do not theorize the role of social class in acculturation, they tend to include people who do have sufficient capital to participate in their new countries as consumers. We want to explore how consumer acculturation is affected when migrants do not have sufficient capital to participate meaningfully.

Consumer Culture. All three studies investigated migrants entering a cultural milieu—the United States and Denmark—dominated by postmodern consumer culture (Firat and Venkatesh 1995; Holt 2002). Postmodern consumer culture thrives on, and so celebrates, cultural difference. As opposed to the orthodox consumer cultures of the past, in which consumption was dominated by tastes trickling down through social classes, these consumer cultures are more fluid and fragmented and thus attuned to cultural diversity. American culture embraces Mexican culture (e.g., Corona beer, Cuervo and Patron tequilas, the ubiquitous taqueria, and holidays in Mexico). Similarly, Askegaard et

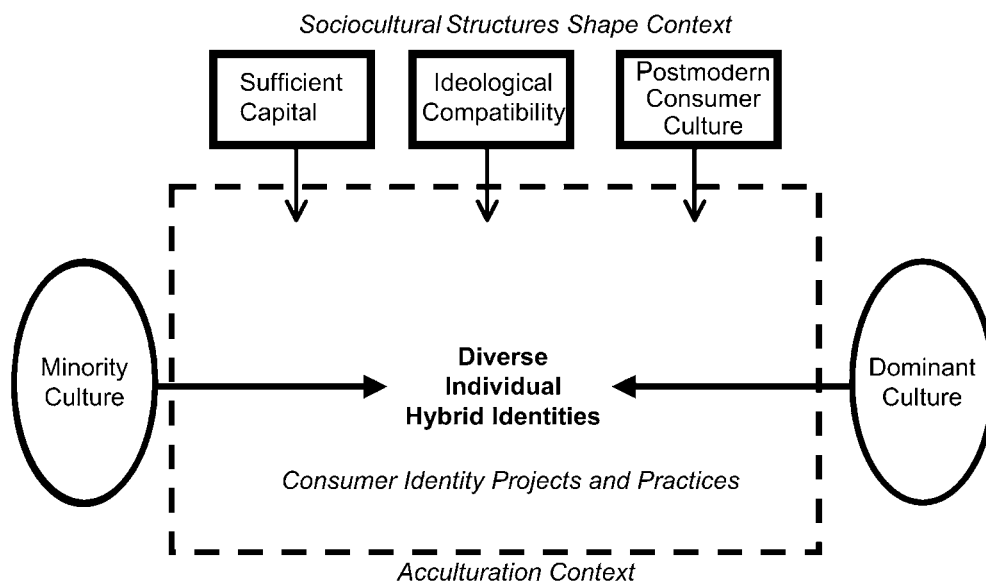
al. note that traditional Greenlander culture is now commodified in Denmark (e.g., building kayaks and making jewelry). While Haitians have only a small cultural presence in the United States, they are readily aggregated into what Americans consume as Caribbean culture (e.g., the reggae, jerk chicken, beaches, and easy living of Jamaica; the salsa, mojitos, cigars, and jazz of Cuba). In all cases, postmodern consumer culture celebrates marginal cultural ideals, thus bestowing legitimacy on the migrants’ home cultures, regardless of the actual discrimination that some migrants face in everyday life. So hybrid acculturation patterns may well be structured by the postmodern characteristics of the dominant consumer culture: the dominant culture legitimizes the minority culture and so legitimizes migrants’ identity construction using the minority culture as symbolic resources.

Ideology. Postmodern identity construction relies on the relative ideological compatibility of minority and dominant cultures. Askegaard et al. describe the two cultures as discourses that serve as fertile resources for personal expression. While both Peñaloza (1994) and Askegaard et al. (2005) report some tensions in this commingling when differing ideologies collide, informants nonetheless readily adjudicate any value conflicts that emerge as relatively innocuous expressions of taste and inflections of values.

However, this sort of management of ideological difference need not be the case. What happens when there are fundamental ideological conflicts—when taken-for-granted existential anchors are directly challenged by the dominant culture? And, particularly, what happens when one ideology is granted much more power in the dominant society (socially, economically, or politically) than the other? Recent debates on the fundamental ideological fault lines in the

FIGURE 1

POSTMODERN CONSUMER ACCULTURATION



world today around religious, patriarchal, and capitalist ideologies, though often overly essentializing, do usefully point out that ideological conflict often runs much deeper than what is reported in consumer acculturation studies.

In sum, we hypothesize that the various hybrid identity projects found in the three highlighted studies are produced by implicit sociocultural structures particular to the contexts of these studies. We use the term “postmodern consumer acculturation” to reference this constellation of structures and the identity projects that result.

DOMINATED CONSUMER ACCULTURATION: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY

We seek to extend theories of consumer acculturation by attending to the sociocultural structuring of acculturation and by doing so in a context that varies substantially from the postmodern acculturation context. We have selected a case—the consumer acculturation of poor Turkish migrants who have moved from a remote Eastern village into a large modern city—as one example of what we call “dominated consumer acculturation.” The dominated acculturation context differs from the postmodern acculturation context across the three dimensions noted above: migrating peasants have little of the economic, social, and cultural capital necessary to participate in consumer culture; consumer culture in LDCs tends toward an orthodox modern form; and peasants are often acculturated in ideologies that conflict directly with the Western ideologies expressed in consumer culture.

Our extended case analysis relies upon ethnographic fieldwork in a Turkish squatter community, using a research design similar to Arnould (1989). Turkey provides a useful national context, because, as in many other LDCs, consumer culture is relatively new to that country. The transformation took place largely in the 1980s, a period during which the mass media infrastructure was built (e.g., television networks and magazines were launched, and the urban middle class began to buy color televisions in large numbers) and the government opened up mass cultural content from the West, for instance, playing old films and allowing advertisements (Öncü and Weyland 1997). The construction of a middle class dominated by consumer culture soon followed (Balı 2002; Kozanoğlu 1992).

I conducted the fieldwork in Bahar, a pseudonym for a squatter neighborhood outside of Ankara, Turkey (the first author is referred to as “I” when we report on the fieldwork). Squatters are the poor ramshackle neighborhoods that have been built—often illegally—on the peripheries of global cities in the developing world as peasants have flooded in from rural areas (Erder 1996). The primary fieldwork, conducted in the late 1990s, lasted over 9 months, during which time I made regular extended visits, sharing in the rounds of everyday life, for example, participating in meals and chores, observing everyday conversations, and making shopping trips. Occasionally, I spent the night with key informants (see table 1 for a listing of informants). The fact

that I studied squatter life in situ, usually among groups, allows us to consider the social aspects of acculturation, moving beyond the individual focus of prior studies. Also, I returned to the field site 5 years later and spent several weeks with the same informants, which allowed me some insights into acculturation dynamics.

The research was initially motivated by questions concerning squatter women’s identity and consumption. As the research progressed, the importance of the *Batıcı* (Westernist) lifestyle, reported below, emerged. So our analysis consisted of tacking back and forth between the women’s on-the-ground identity work and the national discursive materials that they invoked in their projects. To simplify the exposition, we present these two levels of analysis in separate sections, a procedure similar to that used in Holt and Thompson (2004).

We focus on the women—more specifically, on the gendering of women’s identity projects—because women’s identity construction is so strongly tied to consumption. In Turkey, at the time of the study, a gendered division of identity construction held in which urban men emphasized occupational status and basic economic signals (e.g., the prestige of the neighborhood, the size of the house, and the children’s education), while urban women relied more on consumer goods and activities as their key identity resources (Ayata 2002; Durakbaşa and Cindoğlu 2002). Our analysis is organized around the differences between the gendered consumer identities of first- and second-generation women, whom we refer to as “mothers” and “daughters” for ease of communication and to emphasize that gender was the central axis of identity. To focus our discussion, we consider the two domains of consumption that are most important for Turkish women’s identities: beauty and domesticity (Ayata 2002). Rather than attempt to paint a complete portrait, instead we offer revealing snapshots. Due to space limitations, our analysis synthesizes a great many field notes and interviews. We rely on a few telling episodes to narrate the lives of the women, thereby summarizing a much greater amount of supporting evidence.

The Sociocultural Structuring of Dominated Consumer Acculturation

We investigate the particular sociocultural structuring of consumer acculturation that pertains to poor migrants who have moved to the urban peripheries of LDCs. Three characteristics that structure the consumer lives of poor migrants are central: (1) migration strips away the naturalized cultural moorings of prior local identities and forces migrants to grapple with an alien mass-produced culture, a process known as “deterritorialization”; (2) their minority ideology conflicts with, and is actively marginalized by, the dominant culture; and (3) they are compelled to grapple with the dominant consumer ideology from a position at the bottom of the class hierarchy.

Deterritorialization. Migration from villages to squatters leads to an important phenomenological shift that pow-

TABLE 1
INFORMANT DESCRIPTIONS

Name	Age	Marital status	Children	Education	Arrival	Occupation	Five years later	
							Marital status	Occupation
Mothers:								
Ayten Can (Sen's mother)	53	Married	2 daughters, 1 son	Primary	35 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Fadime Aldi (Asil)	64	Married	1 daughter, 1 son	None	26 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Fatma Akbas (Aliye, Arzum, Aysu)	52	Married	3 daughters, 1 son	None	33 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Ferah Güzel	58	Married	3 daughters	Some primary	24 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Feriyeye Duran	61	Married	2 daughters	None	17 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Gül Güzel	29	Married	2 sons	Primary	11 years	Cleaning lady	Married	Cleaning lady
Gül Okur	49	Married	3 daughters, 1 son	Primary	22 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Hatun Canli (Deniz)	49	Married	2 daughters, 1 son	Primary	25 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Hayat Ver (Sema)	45	Married	1 daughter, 1 son	Primary	25 years	Cleaning lady	Married	Cleaning lady
Hayriye Gel (Kadriye)	51	Married	2 daughters	Primary	28 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Kadime Tez	67	Widowed	2 daughters, 3 sons	None	21 years	Housewife	Widowed	Housewife
Mahire Çiçek	47	Married	2 sons	Primary	18 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Pamuk Kaya	53	Married	2 sons	Some primary	20 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Suna Tüccar	45	Married	2 sons	Primary	20 years	Housewife	Married	Housewife
Yonca Akbas (Sevda)	69	Widowed	2 daughters, 2 sons	None	33 years	Housewife	Widowed	Housewife
Daughters:								
Aliye Akbas	22	Single	None	High school	Ankara	Preparing for exams	Single	Housegirl
Arzum Akbas	18	Single	None	Continuing	Ankara	High school student	Single	Housegirl
Asil Aldi	23	Married	1 son	High school	Ankara	Housewife	Married, 2 sons	Housewife
Aysu Akbas	16	Single	None	Continuing	Ankara	High school student	Single	Housegirl
Deniz Canli	20	Single	None	High school	Ankara	Housegirl	Married, 1 son	Housewife
Kadriye Gel	25	Single	None	College (2 year)	Ankara	Secretary	Married, 1 daughter	Secretary
Sema Ver	23	Single	None	High school	Ankara	Secretary	Married, 1 son	Secretary
Sen Can	27	Single	None	High school	Ankara	Secretary	Single	Secretary
Sevda Akbas	23	Single	None	High school	Ankara	Receptionist	Single	Receptionist

erfully affects the construction of consumer identities. In their Eastern village, our informants experienced the local peasant ideology as naturalized common sense. This ideology was reproduced and evolved by the peasants themselves through their local culture (e.g., music, weddings, and home decor) and everyday social practices—such as working in the field, taking care of livestock, and looking after elder family members and children—influenced only tangentially by Western consumer culture. As a result, women's identities constructed within this milieu—as brides, wives, and mothers—were relatively stable, rarely understood reflexively as identities, and never questioned (Delaney 1991). The concept of “identity project” was not applicable.

When they moved to the Ankara squatters, these women were suddenly surrounded by an alien new culture that felt imposed from outside. Further, this culture was no longer locally produced—by the men and women of their Ankara neighborhoods—but rather was “fed” to them by mass media and mass marketing emanating from such faraway places as Istanbul, Europe, and the United States. As second-generation city women, the daughters of Bahar are affected even more by this shift. Living on the periphery of Ankara under the protective wings of their mothers, the daughters also experience Ankaran culture from a distance. But while mothers retain some cultural grounding due to their childhood socialization in peasant culture, the daughters experience peasant culture as an equally distant, unnatural way of life, as one experienced mostly secondhand through the oral histories of their parents and the visits of relatives.

In sum, the migration from village to city is an exemplary case of what globalization theorists call “deterritorialization”: “the loss of the natural relation of culture to geographical and social territories” (Garcia-Canclini 1995, 229). When people are unmoored from the geographic and material anchors of their culture, localness moves from an immanent and unquestioned property of culture to a contested property that must be constructed. This deterritorialized context of the migrant squatter produces a kind of vertigo brought about because migrants no longer perceive themselves as coproducers of the culture that surrounds them. More important for our analysis, deterritorialization creates an identity vacuum that migrant peoples have no choice but to fill. Poor migrants must make identities a “project”—something they now have to strategize and work at. And they are compelled to construct their identities from particular cultural materials and in relation to particular gender ideologies, as we will now describe.

The Batıci Lifestyle: Consumer Expression of Hegemonic Ideology. In 1923 Mustafa Kemal and his followers introduced the Modernization Project, which constituted the founding principles of the new Turkish Republic. Kemal's extraordinarily ambitious cultural project was to immediately Westernize and secularize Turkey across every dimension—including law, education, science, polity, dress, and expressive culture (Ahmad 1993). Elites soon became orthodox advocates of the Kemalist cultural project, which was eventually established as the country's hegemonic ideology.

Turkish consumer culture has evolved to give this ideology meaningful content. Within the realm of mass commodities, what we will term the “*Batıci* lifestyle” is the central constellation of consumer activities, goods, practices, and sensibilities that expresses the ideology of the secular, urban elite (Göle 1996; Öncü 1997). Similar to middle-class consumption in other developing countries and quite unlike that in the contemporary West, middle-class consumption in Turkey pursues a relatively uniform lifestyle ideal, one which has only recently started to fragment in Istanbul (Akay et al. 1997; Ayata 2002; Öncü 2002). Class consumption patterns are well known and are followed with an almost scriptlike dedication; little deciphering is necessary.

The *Batıci* lifestyle was coconstructed over time by an unspoken alliance forged among the Turkish media, corporations, and elite consumers, who have selectively culled and reinterpreted media, tastes, fashions, and ideas circulated from Europe and the United States to work in the local context. The goods expressive of the *Batıci* lifestyle have been shaped in a commercial discourse: in television programs, fashion magazines, fashion boutiques, department stores, and journalists' reports of the lifestyles of the rich and famous (Balı 2002; Kozanoğlu 1992). *Batıci* offers a way of living—a constellation of tastes and sensibilities and their material expressions—that expresses a particular modernist ideal of being Turkish. This lifestyle is constituted by marker goods and activities across the key lifestyle domains: the home and interior decor, fashion, vacations, clubs, autos, and food, as well as other placeholders of the good life such as children's education (Acar and Ayata 2002). Until the 1980s, Western consumer goods only trickled into Turkey, muffled by limited media, tariffs, poor distribution, and the lack of multinational subsidiaries based in Turkey. So the hegemonic lifestyle of the day was constructed primarily around European influences, such as tastes for high culture, imported by the Turkish elite who traveled abroad. But in the past 20 years, with the enactment of neoliberal trade policies, the market for Western lifestyle goods has exploded (Keyder 2000). Global brand names are everywhere and are universally preferred for virtually any lifestyle good, from shirts to jeans, from underwear to socks. Belk, Ger, and Askegaard's (2003) analysis of the Western-facing quality of Turkish desires provides additional support for this view.

The *Batıci* lifestyle flourishes in the suburban subdivisions that have mushroomed in the last 15 years and in the recently developed gated communities close to city centers (Ayata 2002). Travel is a key part of this Western-focused way of life: occasional travel to different parts of the world, particularly Europe and the United States, is a sign of Western cosmopolitanism. Many elites have summer houses on the popular coasts of Turkey. Their children attend Western-styled private schools, where they are taught in English starting from kindergarten (Acar and Ayata 2002). The parents want their children to attend prestigious Turkish universities and hopefully to complete their education in Western universities, particularly those in the United States. Tastes in a wide variety of fashion, household goods, leisure

activities, and services are structured around this Turkish interpretation of the American good life (Öncü 1997).

Ideological Conflict. The modernization project was initially a juggling act since the vast majority of the population were villagers, that is, they were rural people, practicing Muslims immersed in premodern village cultures. The modernists embarked upon a massive civilizing effort to educate villagers into the new culture (Cantek 2001). At the time, this effort to erase the undesirable aspects of village culture in the national discourse was balanced by a nostalgic mythic treatment of villagers in novels and children's textbooks as pure, honest, hardworking people willing to sacrifice their lives for the nation's independence (Cantek 2001). Kemal was widely quoted to declare that villagers "are the *efendis* [masters] of the nation." This dialectical discourse—become civilized like the West but always respect your villager roots—made sense in an era in which everyone in the city still had close ties to the village. For example, the lyrics of a favorite primary school song establish urban ties to the village: "That village is our village. Even if we don't go, even if we don't see, that village is our village."

But three shifts in the social structure have altered the idea of the villager in Turkish culture. First, direct village ties receded with the second and third generations living in the city. Second, a substantial middle class emerged in Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir, which took up Kemal's civilizing project with gusto by absorbing Western values and drawing upon Western consumer culture to express their modern civilized identities, vastly expanding the cultural distance between city and village (Cantek 2001; Öncü 1997). Third, the village "invaded" the city as squatter communities mushroomed around the largest cities (Keyder 2005).

As a result, the inherent contradictions in the modernist project finally took root in the culture (Öncü 2002). More and more, identity production among upper-middle-class urbanites has relied upon constructing as "other" those who do not idealize the West, that is, the villagers and the Islamists. Among urbanites, the peasant was transformed from the authentic core of Turkish nationalism into a "country bumpkin, lacking in education and therefore the accoutrements of modernity" (Öncü 2002, 185). In the current era, peasants who have migrated to the squatters have borne the brunt of this status battle. They have been depicted in cartoons, movies, and novels as uneducated, primitive people naively trying to attain urban status (Öncü 2002). Even academic writings reflect this discursive shift: from the "rural Other" (1950s to 1960s) to the "disadvantaged Other" (1970s to 1980s) to the "urban poor Other" and "culturally inferior Other" (mid-1980s to mid-1990s) to the "threatening Other" (since the mid-1990s; Erman 2001). Rather than being seen as the nation's heroes, peasants have recently been depicted as obstacles to joining Europe.

As consumer culture has come to dominate city life, commodities have become a key material embodiment of this fault line. Because peasants are perceived as invading villagers who pollute (in the symbolic sense noted by Mary Douglas [1969]) the geographic borders that reflect the ideo-

logical split between city and village, their very existence is a threat to the middle-class view of city life as modern. This ideological-spatial threat has the effect of flaming the ideologies imbued in the *Batıcı* lifestyle and is in large part responsible for the upper-middle class closing ranks in their exodus to the suburban development and the new gated communities (Ayata 2002; Öncü 1997). So urbanites have developed a tremendous distaste for villager outfits, conduct, music, and traditions. This dominant construction of the villager condemns the village ideology, forcing squatter women into an ideological struggle that becomes central to the formation of their consumer identities.

Class Position. When Turkish villagers moved into squatter communities, they entered a world that celebrated and vigorously pursued the *Batıcı* lifestyle. Since squatter women are perceived by city people with respect to the hegemonic *Batıcı* lifestyle, they have no choice but to manage their identities within this discourse (Erdoğan 2001). Moreover, they are forced to encounter the *Batıcı* lifestyle from a dominated position at the bottom of the class hierarchy. Squatter women have little money to pursue this lifestyle (economic capital), they have virtually no social ties that allow them to easily participate (social capital), and they have not been socialized in the tastes and practices required to find enjoyment in this way of living (cultural capital).

Mothers: Reterritorializing the "Modern Village Woman"

Mothers collectively pursue a counterhegemonic project focused on reconstructing what they now understand as their gendered village identity, defending against the threatening new gender ideals of the *Batıcı* lifestyle. They pursue this identity by symbolically circumscribing the squatter neighborhood as a relatively autonomous ideological space and reterritorializing this space—with adaptations of the local cultural practices of the village—to invest it with a gender ideal we call "the modern village woman."

Indigenizing Modern Technologies. Mothers are happy to partake in the material advantages of the city, but they refuse to imbibe its underlying consumer ideology. The village from which Bahar women emigrated was a subsistence economy dominated by self-provision and barter: food was grown locally and bartered, clothes and other textiles were handmade, and people built their own homes with the help of friends and relatives. In their new domestic roles, the mothers have enthusiastically adopted many modern domestic technologies: every squatter has a TV set, a washing machine (some manual, some automatic), a refrigerator, and a "boom box" for playing music. Only one squatter family can afford to own a car, but all would like to have one. These goods are valued as practical devices, as the fruits of modern life that make living easier. During one of our afternoon chats, two of the women compared the hardships they faced when they first came to the city to the life when

“things started to go well” for them economically, which was when they were able to acquire basic consumer technologies such as a television set.

But while consumer technologies have made a tremendous difference in the material conditions of living, they have had little impact on social practices or on the mothers’ local construction of village life. Bahar families use their homes in a manner quite similar to the everyday practices in the village. For example, even though there are tables in most living rooms, almost all squatter families eat their meals on the floor as they did in the village. They set the food on top of a large tray on the floor, and family members sit around it. Rather than pull the squatter women into the cultural nexus of the city, these technologies are often used to elaborate the women’s ties to their villages. For example, Ayten’s son—a blue-collar worker in Switzerland—recorded scenes from the village on his video camera, copied it to a videotape, and gave a copy to his mother as a present, even though his mother does not have a VCR. So occasionally the mothers gather in Yonca’s home, because she has a VCR, to watch the village video. All wedding ceremonies, conducted in the traditional manner, are recorded on video, and the family and friends watch these wedding ceremonies again and again, making fun of each other’s images on the screen. Similarly, every Monday the mothers tune their radios to a particular music station to listen to a radio show directed by a folk singer from their village. Between songs, the singer weaves in news from the village on births, marriages, and deaths. He talks about the village in a nostalgic yet colorful style, often referring to it as “a piece of heaven.” The next day, the mothers use the news and songs from the show as fodder for their daily chats.

Squatter families tend to share with other families the scarce modern technologies they acquire, rather than treat these items as individuated goods. For example, the first families able to afford refrigerators shared the machines with their neighbors. Now that everyone has refrigerators, this communal practice has moved to other scarce goods. For example, one family was able to afford a large stand-alone freezer. So the neighbors pitched in to have a whole cow slaughtered, and each family’s share of the meat was stored in the freezer. The mothers tend to avoid convenient technologies if they would erase social interactions. For example, mass-produced bread is very cheap, yet the women continue to bake bread in the time-consuming village tradition. The husband of one of the first families to settle the neighborhood constructed a small oven in front of their house, one very similar to the one they had in the village. The family lets all of its neighbors use the oven to cook bread, and it often receives a gift of a free loaf in return. The oven acts as a meeting place where women gather throughout the day. In sum, technologies are valued for their convenience but only if they can be indigenized to fit within the ideology and practices of the squatter; the *Baticı* ideology imbued in the normative understandings and uses of these technologies has been stripped away.

Constructing a Myopic Aesthetic. Squatter mothers have constructed their everyday life to approximate that in

the village in terms of both goods and activities. For instance, they place a high value on colorful rugs that look handloomed, and they all have show cabinets packed with memorabilia prominently placed in their living rooms. In order to secure this symbolic boundary, mothers must also somehow collectively manage the extraordinary abundance of market goods (and the *Baticı* ideology embedded in them). In part, they do this by avoiding the city and its goods as much as possible. However, as with technologies, they do not completely isolate themselves from the world of mass-produced goods. Rather, they allow a few select city commodities to enter the squatter through a very selective filtering process so that they can readily weave these goods into their ideal of the modern village. Since the mothers rarely travel into the city, the few commodities that enter the squatters are introduced primarily by peddlers. For example, most women had adopted colorful bed covers (red, dark blue, or yellow) made of shiny nylon and sateen fabric, as well as bright-colored plastic flowers, both of which were introduced by the local peddler.

Occasionally, a mother who works as a cleaning lady uses her direct social ties to the city to act as a consumer conduit, introducing a “city” good into the neighborhood. These goods usually enter the squatter when one mother buys something new and then, through encouragement and cajoling, most of the remaining mothers follow so that the community quickly shares a similar aesthetic. For example, Gül saw a sofa bed in one of the urban houses, and she purchased one for her living room. Now in four houses there are sofa beds, which are used as sofas during the day and as beds for the guests visiting from the village. The mothers view these small shared aesthetic innovations as creating a “citylike” feeling that gives their squatter dwellings a distinctive look, even though Ankara city dwellers would not recognize this aesthetic as having anything to do with *Baticı* norms. In all, the women work collectively to create an aesthetic myopia: they playfully compete with one another around the introduction of a few new items while purposely ignoring the mass of additional goods on offer less than 10 miles away.

Repurposing Village Rituals. One of the most striking observations one has upon entering the squatters as an outsider is that all of the women knit continuously. Knitting sweaters, vests, and undergarments of wool and synthetic materials is the mothers’ most time-consuming and valued everyday activity (White 2004). Rarely does a mother go through an entire day without knitting something. Knitting accompanies virtually all activities, for example, watching TV, chatting in front of the houses during the summer, or visiting with a neighbor.

Mothers wear the hand-knitted vests year round, even on the warmer days. They also use the vests as a part of their underwear. In the winter, they wear another type of vest, one knitted from thin wool, underneath their dresses and on top of their underwear. They love to tell stories about village life, especially the harsh winters. They wore this vest underwear year round when they were in the village, and they still feel

more comfortable having a vest as opposed to the underwear sold in the city, claiming that it keeps them warmer.

All mothers acknowledged that they knit far more in the squatter than they ever did in the village. The mothers have been inventive and industrious in exploiting their new environs to “improve” upon traditions in cases where they can make life a bit easier and more pleasant. Yet they do not readily forsake the time-consuming activity of making hand-knitted sweaters for the abundant cheap clothing that is now available to them.

The mothers’ collective gusto for knitting and for wearing knitted underwear and socks reflects the central ritual role that knitting now plays in their efforts to solidify their ideal of the modern village woman and to acculturate their daughters into this life. Bahar families come from remote rural locations in Eastern Turkey that are near the mountains. In their stories of hand-knitted sweaters, the village is full of scarcity, a constant struggle with nature and with mothers-in-law. These memories, even though they seem negative to an outsider, highlight their feelings of safety and belonging and underline their roles of bride, mother, and wife. In particular, the women associate village life with heavy winters, where it often snowed so much that the roads in and out of the village were closed for months. During these cold days and nights, they spent much of their time knitting sweaters. So knitting in the harsh winter is associated with the safety and security that village home life provided against the harsh elements of nature. When the weather is so cold outside, being inside the home with all the family members gave them a feeling of security and belonging.

The mothers have repurposed this taken-for-granted village activity into a potent ritual of counterhegemonic identity construction. The mothers’ frenzied knitting is a direct expression of their intensive desire to “protect” their daughters from *Batıcı* inroads by socializing them into their invented village traditions.

Contesting Aesthetics. The mothers’ interactions with their daughters are marked by tenacious, if playful, efforts to get them interested in knitting and to get them to value wearing the knitted wears as they do. Because their daughters idealize the *Batıcı* woman, as we will develop in the next section, and do so largely through the prism of fashion and beauty, the mothers’ sweaters serve as the center of an ideological battle between generations that is cast in terms of aesthetics. (We also witnessed the same dynamics for home decor but have omitted this analysis due to space constraints.) While they adore their mothers, the daughters reject these constant pleas to wear hand-knitted sweaters and dramatically perform their disgust over what they see as an obvious fashion taboo. Sevda liked to make fun of the mothers’ enthusiasm for knitting, and she routinely complained that the ugliness and uniformity of the knitted items made them unfit for wearing in public:

I cannot go anywhere dressed like that. To me, if I am going to get out of the house, it does not matter whether I am in

the neighborhood or going down town for shopping or whatever. I put on my makeup, do my hair. It is respect for myself. And of course I am not going to wear them.

The daughters were particularly concerned to perform their repulsion to the aesthetics of the modern village woman for me, a *Batıcı* woman in their eyes. Aliye once took my camera and started to take pictures of women garbed in hand-knit sweaters who were wiping the carpet, commenting sarcastically “Oh darling, you are so villager!”

The daughters understand the sweaters as their mother’s ideological tool to acculturate them in the modern village woman, and they will have none of it. They readily make the linkages between aesthetics and gender ideology. They especially abhor the constant surveillance that their mothers faced from mother-in-laws, the constant work, and the total lack of freedom. For example, Kadriye points out: “They had to stay at home and knit, and take care of the house. All winter long. No place to go. Isn’t it horrible? And my grandmother. Always on top of her. Even I remember. When she came here (she is dead now), she would tell my mother not to let me go out. I cannot imagine myself in that life. Horrible.” This revulsion toward the patriarchal system of the village is manifested in their emotionally loaded rejection of the hand-knitted sweaters.

In sum, mothers collectively construct the squatter neighborhood as a cultural enclave isolated from the dominant *Batıcı* gender ideology. Instead, they imbue this community with a counterhegemonic ideology, as a materially improved version of their ancestral village, a more comfortable place but one that nonetheless upholds the ideals of the village woman. Either they avoid *Batıcı* commodities entirely or they decouple the goods from their conventional ideology and reinscribe them with their local ideology of the modern village. Mothers use their tastes and rituals and status mechanisms to maintain a symbolic boundary separating the modern village aesthetic they have nurtured in the squatter from the middle-class aesthetics of the *Batıcı* woman. As a result, they have largely avoided the seductions of the *Batıcı* lifestyle.

Daughters: Performing the *Batıcı* Woman as Myth

The daughters of Bahar industriously pursued the *Batıcı* woman ideology rather than follow their mothers to defend against it. forged identity projects in direct opposite to those of their mothers. The nine daughters who served as key informants revered virtually everything associated with the city, and they wanted to spend as much time there as possible. While the mothers found the city to be an unintelligible and alienating space, the daughters were compelled by its sounds and congestion. They compared the village unfavorably and did what they could to distance themselves from their village roots. For instance, Aysu proudly proclaimed that she had never been to her ancestral village. Rather than use the squatter as a means to physically distance themselves from the *Batıcı* lifestyle as their mothers did, the daughters yearned to escape the neighborhood to be in the city. Aysu says that she is “filled with hope” just hanging out and looking at clothing,

kitchen wares, and home decor items because they represent her dreams of an adult life immersed in the *Batıcı* lifestyle. I spent many days hanging out with the daughters, both in the squatter and while accompanying them on their frequent trips into the city. Their pursuit of the *Batıcı* lifestyle was most prominent in our shopping trips and in discussions about their dream homes.

Performing with Batıcı Goods. I accompanied six daughters to a party held by relatives in another squatter neighborhood. The host's daughter asked the girls if they wanted to go to the city, claiming that she knew all of the "cool" places. The other girls willingly accepted the offer. They rushed to change their outfits for the occasion. It took some time for them to get ready. I was surprised to see them in their interpretation of the *Batıcı* woman's outfit—for example, Deniz was wearing a tight shirt, a pair of jeans, very high-heeled sandals, and thickly applied, shiny, blue eye shadow outlined with blue eye pencil. Several mothers murmured that her outfit was too tight, but they did not pursue their criticisms. She acted as if she did not hear the comments and dragged me out.

On another occasion, Aslı, who has a son, asked to try on Deniz's jeans. She tried to squeeze into them, but they were too tight. When I asked if she had her own jeans, she shook her head and acknowledged that her husband and her father-in-law forbade her to wear jeans. She went on to say that her husband refused to let her buy the cassettes of a well-known male Turkish singer (Ibrahim Tatlıses) because he is very jealous and does not want her to find someone else attractive. Then Deniz took her makeup kit out of her purse and began to apply makeup on Aslı's face, which she happily accepted. The others joined in, and the enthusiasm built as everyone was dabbing makeup onto her face and then on themselves, trying out the various products in the bag. They asked each other about their makeup preferences: "Do you use mascara? Do you use a foundation? How do you put it on?" Everyone was enjoying the moment in which each of them pretended to be *Batıcı* women by applying and talking makeup as if it was part of their everyday life. Then the performance was suddenly called to a halt, they all washed their faces, and we went to bed.

Performing Batıcı Knowledge. On one occasion, I took a minibus with four of the daughters to the central shopping district, and we started walking. We stopped at almost all of the window displays, regardless of what the store was selling: furniture, men's clothes, women's clothes, kitchen supplies, knickknacks, beauty items. As the girls carefully eyeballed the items on display and commented earnestly about them, it became clear to me that the purpose of the trip was pedagogical and performative—to quickly digest the lessons of the *Batıcı* lifestyle and then to perform them for each other—rather than for shopping or socializing. They loved most of the items and fantasized about owning them. Yet they seemed uncomfortable about the store itself, and they never attempted to go inside to try on the items they admired. When a salesman invited them inside, the

girls waved him away, saying that they were just looking, and they immediately started walking toward the next store.

While window shopping at a beauty products store, Deniz announced to the group that she had to ask for something. I followed her into the store while the others waited for us outside. Seeing me follow her, she stopped in the middle of the store and took out a little package from her bag to show me: "I only use this for my face. I bring it everywhere with me." When I asked what it was, she replied, "It's Dove. I wash my face with this soap every night. This soap has some lotion in it, which keeps my face from drying out." She described the brand in language that paraphrased the long-standing Dove advertising campaign. She confided to me how she uses the soap as a makeup remover. Every night she washes her face with Dove. In the morning her face feels clean and soft, ready for fresh makeup. Then she walked over to the salesperson and asked whether the store carried Pantene Pro-V shampoo. When the salesperson confirmed that they did stock the product, Deniz asked for the price. Showing no interest in buying the shampoo, she then asked whether they carry a particular deodorant, and she asked to try it. When she asked for yet another deodorant, the salesperson communicated with her gestures and sighs that she was getting annoyed. Yet Deniz continued on, oblivious to these cues, and she asked about yet another deodorant. The salesperson said that she never heard of it. Deniz began to lecture her, noting that it was a new line. The salesperson dismissively retorted "sorry we don't carry it" and walked away from us. Deniz turned to me: "I can't believe that she has not heard of this deodorant. It is a new one, and smells like jasmine flowers."

This vignette demonstrates a commonplace event in my interactions with the daughters: they routinely used knowledge of brands they associated with the *Batıcı* lifestyle, which they had learned primarily through advertising, to perform their inclusion. Because they cannot afford to purchase these products on an ongoing basis, it is performance of knowledge that carried a status claim.

Performing Batıcı Experience. In late 1990s Turkey, European style cafés sprouted up in virtually every middle-class urban and suburban locale. These cafés quickly became weekend hangouts for middle-class youth. The squatter daughters soon caught on to what was happening and wanted to participate in this scene. Three of my key respondents (Sen, Sevda, and Kadriye) invited me to join them on one of their café outings. I arrived early in their neighborhood and used the time to chat with the mothers and daughters who were hanging around outside, all dressed in their everyday outfits, long skirts or loose trousers and sweaters. Shortly before our scheduled departure, Se, Sevda, and Kadriye suddenly disappeared. They returned decked out in tight jeans, some in Levi's 501s, shirts, and boots. I asked whether their jeans were new, since they seemed barely worn. They said that they kept their jeans in a "safe" place for "special" occasions. When we arrived at the café, I realized that their jeans-shirts-boots was the dress code for the *Batıcı* youth who frequented these places.

While waiting for our drinks we did not talk. The girls were watching the regulars. Others in the café were laughing and talking; new arrivals were saluting their friends. After awhile I started to ask questions, and we started to chat and laugh like the regulars. On the way home, their enthusiasm revealed that they had greatly enjoyed our café trip. When we arrived in the neighborhood, they quickly changed their outfits once again. They folded their jeans and put them back in their “safe” places. A week later, as we reminisced about our café outing, Kadriye said “It’s very frustrating. Seeing all that cool stuff, and not really being part of it.” I replied “I thought you enjoyed being there?” She reflected “Yeah, it was fun. But still. . . .”

Performing Battıcı Tastes. While all of the daughters still lived in the squatters with their families, they were nearly old enough to marry and start their own households, and so their conversations were alive with dreams about how they would organize their adult lives. Much of this talk concerned how they would set up their homes. Their tastes for interior decor, adamantly expressed, reflect their interpretation of the *Battıcı* lifestyle.

The villages are places of material scarcity, so having enough food, clothing, and basic household goods is a central concern. Hence, the idea of abundance informs squatter women’s aesthetics. In the mother’s modern village reconstruction of this aesthetic, quantity remains a central sign of comfortable living. Having many rugs and laces throughout the home, a huge “show cabinet” in the living room, multiple huge wooden wardrobes in the bedroom, and multiple mattresses for guests are the ultimate symbols of the good life (a particular Turkish squatter articulation of Bourdieu’s [1984] taste for necessity). The mothers evince an aesthetic in which filling up the home with as many rugs and laces and furniture as possible is considered to be beautiful.

The daughters uniformly and adamantly reject this aesthetic code as too cluttered and crowded. Aliye, Sen, and Sevda offer nearly identical critiques in separate conversations, complaining about houses that are “crowded” with furniture, with huge show cabinets that are stuffed full of stuff. They appropriate from the *Battıcı* lifestyle a key aesthetic code, *sade*, which they continually use in conversation to champion their tastes while condemning their mothers’ modern village aesthetics as the ugly counterpoint. *Sade* is an aesthetic term that means simple, unmixed, plain. And *sade* requires matching. The daughters are particularly disturbed by the mix-and-match patchwork of colors typical of squatter homes, which comes from laying different handloomed rugs side by side. They all want wall-to-wall carpeting and matching furniture because, as Kadriye declared, it “looks much more sophisticated. *Sade*, but chic.”

And they want valuable items to fill their homes. Aysu, only 16 and still in high school, says: “I want my future house to be full of chic furniture, decorative things, paintings on the walls, silver in the cabinet. All valuable things. We don’t have anything like that in our house right now.” The daughters have internalized an aesthetic where expensive

items are beautiful. So they view their mother’s valuables as cheap trinkets. The daughters still want display cabinets, but they want to display precious things.

Consuming Battıcı as Myth. The daughters consume the *Battıcı* woman as a myth (Barthes 1972). They are seduced by the *Battıcı* lifestyle and the gender ideology that *Battıcı* expresses. But they engage from the social position of an outsider who is eavesdropping on a conversation to which they are formally excluded. The *Battıcı* lifestyle provides an irresistible fantasy world of commodities and images that the daughters use to imagine themselves as glamorous, modern, independent women. And so the daughters have industriously developed enough ritual performances of the *Battıcı* to create this world as “true” for them.

Hegemonic Ideology Bounded by Consumer Culture

The *Battıcı* lifestyle is an articulation of consumer culture; it is a form of identity construction that moves through the mass media and mass commodities. The daughters’ adamant pursuit of the *Battıcı* woman evaporates when they move into lifeworld contexts that have not been colonized by *Battıcı* commodities, such as cleaning with their mothers or sitting with the mothers chatting. When I attended several wedding ceremonies, held in the basement of an unfinished building, there were always as many young people as elders. The daughters dressed up in cocktail dresses, makeup, and perfume, yet they enthusiastically sang the folk songs and danced the folk dances. The daughters also enjoy listening to the local folk music tapes in their Walkmans, and they listen to the village radio show every Monday. Despite their extreme distaste for their mothers’ aesthetic (and gender ideology) when it counters *Battıcı* tastes, the daughters find regular respite in the noncommodified practices of their mothers’ modern village. It is only when contested commodities force them to choose between two identities—a *Battıcı* woman or a modern village woman—that the daughters are compelled to assemble themselves reflexively as *Battıcı* women through the lens of consumer culture.

Five Years Later: Shattered Identity Projects

In this section, we attend to the dynamics of consumer acculturation. I returned to Bahar 5 years later to examine changes in mothers’ and daughters’ consumer identity projects. People form self-narratives as they project the constructed past into the imagined future, and they selectively update their narratives as they interpret and incorporate the real twists and turns as their lives progress. We were interested in observing how both mothers and daughters had adapted their consumer identity projects as a result of changes that had transpired over the 5 years.

The mothers had pursued a reactionary project, the goal of which was to hold the village ideology in suspension even as the *Battıcı* lifestyle threatened to encroach. So as long as their symbolic boundaries held firm, their identity

projects would remain constant. Indeed, this is what I found upon return. The mothers had incrementally evolved their modern village aesthetic, in particular, by adding urban-styled curtains. Also, several mothers had bought freezers. But the only real change to their modern village practices was that they now limited baking bread to the winter months because the smoke dirtied their new curtains in the summer. Knitting continued nonstop.

The daughters, conversely, had been industriously and optimistically pursuing an assimilative project bent upon dramatically altering the life in which they grew up. They understood *Batıcı* as a transformative promise: come join our way of life, and you will be happy, free, and admired. But, 5 years later, seven of the nine daughters no longer pursued the *Batıcı* lifestyle; indeed, they had given up on any sort of identity project at all.

Now well into their adult lives, all of the daughters still lived in squatters (four of them were now married with children). Four daughters worked in paid jobs outside the squatter, while the rest helped out with housework. Three daughters had taken the university examination, but because the squatter school was so poor and they could not afford private tutors, they had all failed. So they were forced to live with their families, helping their mothers with housework and maintaining a slim cynical hope that a nonsquatter man would marry them and allow them to move out.

Seven daughters had lost enthusiasm for their lives and were depressed because they felt immobilized. Sen, still living with her parents, aptly conveys the sense of anomie pervasive among these seven daughters: "There is no meaning for me to wake up and continue. Actually I am doing it just for my parents. I am continuing for them. I have no expectations from life for myself. I am just trying to make them happy." Kadriye briefly "escaped" the squatters and thought that she had truly become *Batıcı* only to be forced back when her husband lost his job:

Living in the squatters, and having to watch my daughter grow up here among these squatter kids. I just cannot stand it. But I had to come. Here I am what five years later? In the same neighborhood? Sometimes my father tells me that I talked too big. I was so spoiled, always criticizing them, the house, the neighbors. And here it is I am living a life very similar to theirs. When he says this, I feel like something is stuck in my stomach. I feel like I cannot breathe. I really think that it is all my fault. I started reading a book to help me out of my misery.

Two daughters were much happier, having carved out meaningful adult identities. Arzum now spent her time with the mothers and their friends. She had even picked up knitting. She was knitting nonstop during the weeks I revisited the neighborhood, and she gave me a kitchen cloth she had made as a gift. She had fully accepted the mothers' modern village identity project and added a new element—modern Islam. Arzum had consciously adopted Islam as part of her identity project, as a counterhegemonic lifestyle to the *Batıcı*. A reflexive modern Islamic lifestyle had recently

emerged in Turkey (Saktanber 1997; Sandıkçı and Ger 2005), and Arzum had joined up. She was involved with a religious charity organization, knitting goods for their charity sale, and she spent time reading the Koran and discussing religious texts with other women. She told me that she no longer had any interest in going to the university or moving out of the neighborhood.

Sevda was the only daughter of the nine who continued to pursue the life of the *Batıcı* woman. She still lived in the squatters, but she was not married, and she still worked as a hospital receptionist. She offered to meet me for lunch close to where she works, and we went to a burger shop. She told me about the many new live music bars downtown that she thought I might enjoy, saying that she and her friends were regulars and that her mother had become used to her coming home late from the city. She went on at length about the kinds of music she liked, mostly Turkish rock and pop-folk hybrids that had become popular. She described a vacation with a friend from work to Antalya, detailing the features of the hotel and the food at the restaurants and excitedly portraying the bikini she had bought for the vacation. When I asked whether she had any particular plans for the future, she responded with a question:

Do you mean whether or not I have a boyfriend? Well, I have none, and I really do not care. Boys always restrict the girls. They seem nice and stuff at the beginning, but soon enough they show their real faces. They all want their way. I have a great life. I do not want to spoil it for a boy. Even my mother has lost all her hopes for me. I don't care.

To maintain this *Batıcı* construction, Sevda had dramatically restructured her social network, avoiding her childhood best friends even though they lived nearby and instead forging connections with city women. She says: "Our paths have separated. They are living a very different life from me. They don't really understand me, and I do not understand them."

In the first round of fieldwork, all of the daughters equated the *Batıcı* woman with their emancipation from the modern village ideology of their mothers. But economic, social, and cultural barriers caught up with seven of the daughters. Because they were unable to move out of the squatter and were never able to effectively integrate into the *Batıcı* lifestyle in Ankara, their failures eventually wore down their belief in the myth. Myths are fragile constructions. When the distance between the myth's ideals and the reality of everyday life becomes too large, the myth's ritual power to make the imagined real comes unglued. Accepting that this acute contradiction would likely never be resolved brought them sorrow and even depression.

We characterize this finding as a shattered identity project. While this outcome has parallels to Berry's (1980) concept of marginalized identity, Berry's psychological term does not well capture two aspects of the phenomenon that we view as crucial. First, "marginalized" does not capture the fact that sociocultural structures literally crush the assimilation process that the daughters had fervently striven to

follow. Second, the lived experience of this identity is not at all marginal: the daughters are continually surrounded by both the mother’s modern village identity, which they had hoped to abandon, and the *Batici* identity, which they once had thought was within their grasp. They are constantly reminded of what they cannot have. It is this betwixt-and-between lived reality that we want to represent as accurately as possible with our choice of term.

DOMINATED CONSUMER ACCULTURATION

We use an ethnographic case study of poor Turkish migrant women to extend existing theories of consumer acculturation. We analyze the ways in which particular sociocultural structures shape the consumer acculturation process—detailing these structures, as well as the range of consumer identity projects and practices that these structures encourage. We find very different identity projects than prior studies found, which we attribute to the distinctive structures that pervade our case context. Our analysis led us to develop a model of dominated consumer acculturation, which we distinguish from the post-modern acculturation model implicit in prior research (see fig. 2).

Sociocultural Structuring of Dominated Acculturation

A key contribution of our study is to specify the socio-cultural structures that shape consumer acculturation and to specify the linkages between these structures and the particular identity projects and practices that constitute the acculturation process. Prior studies have acknowledged that

such structures exist but have conceived them in generic form. As a result, these studies have advanced a general model of consumer acculturation rather than a contextual model that attends to the different acculturation outcomes that result from different structures. In the structural context that we term dominated acculturation, we find the following sociocultural structures to be central.

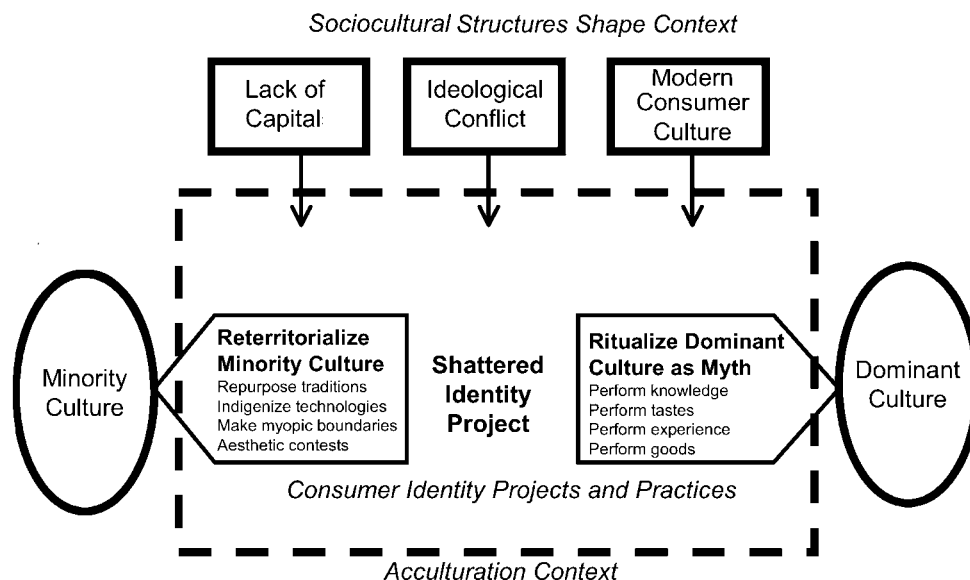
Modern Consumer Culture. Squatter women’s identity projects were dominated by an orthodox West-facing constellation of tastes, goods, and practices that we call the *Batici* lifestyle. The *Batici* lifestyle is the idealized upper-middle-class style of consumption that inspires uniform aspirations of the good life that trickle down through the class structure. As a result, squatter women had no choice but to either internalize this ideology and pursue it or to attempt to live outside it. Turkish consumer culture simply did not allow poor migrants to pursue the cultural hybrid projects that have been central to prior studies.

We also distinguish between consumer identity construction—operating through the mass media and commodities—and identities produced through the local cultural practices of the squatter (reterritorialized versions of village traditions). Unlike postmodern consumer cultures, which aggressively commodify local, folk culture (see Askegaard et al. 2005) and so blur these boundaries, for women in the squatters, the commercial and local cultural spheres were still relatively autonomous.

Conflicting Ideologies. For migrant women, the *Batici* lifestyle is understood primarily in terms of its idealized portrait of femininity—a set of tastes, goods, and practices associated with the most successful and admired upper-middle-

FIGURE 2

DOMINATED CONSUMER ACCULTURATION



class Turkish women. This aspect of the *Batıcı* lifestyle is central because it is this consumer expression of a gender ideology that directly challenges the traditional patriarchal ideology of Turkey's eastern villages. Ideas of women's relationships to men, of sexuality, of dependence, of marriage, and of family, are all condensed into the aesthetics of the *Batıcı* woman. For mothers, still deeply vested in village ideology, the *Batıcı* lifestyle is a very troubling existential threat. In contrast, for the daughters the *Batıcı* woman is an ideological promise to escape the patriarchal bonds of village married life for the more independent woman of the Turkish upper-middle-class society. While squatter mothers recoil from this ideologically saturated aesthetic, the daughters, who have encountered the *Batıcı* lifestyle since they were young and who grew up at a remove from village patriarchy, find it to be extremely appealing.

In contrast to previous studies, we show that the dominant culture structures acculturation through competing gender ideologies, not as an independent normative force. In prior acculturation studies, dominant and minority cultures are viewed as national entities: Mexican and American, Haitian and American, Greenlander and Danish. We show that national culture becomes a meaning-laden driver of identity as it gets articulated to key social categories such as gender, class, and ethnicity (see also Holt and Thompson 2004).

Class Position: Lacking the Capital Necessary to Participate. Our study demonstrates how the social class position of migrants affects their resulting consumer identity projects. Unlike prior studies, we examine a community where our informants share similar levels of economic, social, and cultural capital, so we are able to explore social patterns of acculturation. While mothers required only minimal capital resources, given their reactionary project, the daughters' lack of economic, social, and cultural capital powerfully influenced their acculturation. Further, we develop how the cultural condition facing migrants—deterritorialization—exacerbates the debilitating characteristics of their class position by forcing them to grapple with identity construction in a mode that is alien to them.

Past acculturation studies have studied migrants with considerably more capital resources (mostly middle-class adults and students, along with some working-class people), coming from disparate backgrounds, and they have not used a class lens to inform their analysis. We believe that class can explain otherwise puzzling anomalies. For instance, Oswald (1999) vividly describes how her key informant—an elite Haitian woman schooled in French academies—seamlessly engages in culture swapping, while Askegaard et al. (2005) report no culture swapping among their informants. Rather than this being conflicting data, we posit that the confident cultural plasticity of that Haitian woman is a direct result of her high cultural capital (through upbringing and education). Because she does not examine class, Oswald proposes culture swapping as a general feature of consumer acculturation rather than as a particular feat of an informant socialized to consume in this manner.

These structures combine to produce what we term dom-

inated acculturation. Compared to the elective, individuated hybrid mode of acculturation reported in prior studies, these structures produce collective modes of acculturation shaped by conflictual power relationships.

Collective Identity Projects

Our study analyzes how migrant women in common structural positions collectively construct their consumer identities. In contrast to prior studies, which have developed an individual-level voluntarist model of acculturation, we find that our informants collectively develop consumer identity projects and practices in response to the sociocultural structures in which they live. Our analysis highlights how mothers and daughters differentially construct consumer identities within these structures, based upon their differential socialization. Because we studied consumer acculturation ethnographically in a community setting, we were able to observe the collective and social interactional nature of consumer acculturation.

Our informants share very similar projects, and these projects take the form of either a counterhegemonic reactionary project or an assimilative project. We find no examples of hybrid consumer identity projects. This result stems directly from the dominated acculturation context in which these projects are formed. We use the terms “hegemonic project” and “counterhegemonic project” to convey the substantial power of the gendered version of Turkey's hegemonic consumer ideology—the *Batıcı* woman—in structuring the migrant women's acculturation. In addition, unlike prior studies, we specify the consumption practices that our informants use to produce these identities.

Counterhegemonic Identity Project: Reterritorializing the Minority Culture. The first-generation migrant women—the mothers—collectively construct a counterhegemonic identity premised upon the ideal that the squatter has allowed them to create an improved version of the village culture that they left behind. This reactionary project is an imaginative and effortful endeavor to reterritorialize the village ideology, that is, to recreate the feeling of their locally produced culture in a new world in which an alien mass culture dominates. Their successful identity construction is something that the squatter community produces for each of its members. It is “territorial” in globalization parlance. Identity construction flows from this communal accomplishment; it is not an individual project. Mothers accomplish this identity through a variety of everyday practices, which we catalog: repurposing traditional rituals, constructing myopic symbolic boundaries, indigenizing mass technologies, and contesting aesthetics.

Hegemonic Identity Project: Ritual Pursuit of Dominant Culture as Myth. Daughters industriously pursue the *Batıcı* woman as a myth. They have collectively developed episodic rituals in which they seek to viscerally experience this ideal in a way that is rich enough to feel real. They do not live this ideal in everyday life. It is not

an “outcome,” as prior studies conceive of acculturation, but a myth that is episodically instantiated via ritual. The daughters were seduced by the fantastic images of *Batıcı* lifestyle and made every effort to create moments in which they could feel as if they were participating in this life. We catalog the practices that they use to do so: performing *Batıcı* goods, experience, knowledge, and tastes.

In the first stage of the analysis, all of the daughters were deeply committed to this assimilationist identity project. However, it was never a done deal. In a dominated acculturation context, migrants encounter assimilation as a chasm that is extremely difficult to cross. Their performances of the *Batıcı* lifestyle were never credible or durable enough to break down the class barriers separating them from middle-class women. The daughters were constantly aware that they were staging an ephemeral performance, and they were unable to maintain the suspension of disbelief required for myths to completely take hold.

Shattered Identity Project. When we revisited the nine daughters 5 years later, we found a dramatic change. Only Sevda continued to pursue the *Batıcı* myth, while Arzum had reversed course and identified now with the mothers’ modern village but with an Islamist inflection. The other seven daughters had given up on thinking of themselves as *Batıcı*s. Yet, because of their ideological commitments at a younger age, they could not realign themselves with their mothers’ identity project. They were participating in squatter life but doing so with little enthusiasm—using it as a means of satisficing, getting by, knowing well that women who live in the world they admire look down on this life. They learned too well to despise the village aesthetics and the version of it that their mothers have adapted to the squatters. Consumer acculturation had erased their traditional identities as it encouraged them to pursue a new identity. Yet the daughters’ lack of economic, social, and cultural capital kept them from realizing this ideological promise.

As a result, these daughters experience a betwixt-and-between anomie. On the one hand, culture continually “teases” them with a life that is immensely attractive but that out of reach; on the other hand, they are forced to tolerate the unwanted identity squatter life forces upon them. The daughters’ shattered identity is a structural outcome—a patterned result produced by the particular social and cultural structures in this acculturation context—not an individual difference. That these shattered identities were prominent in our case and nonexistent in prior studies suggests that they are a specific consequence of the dominated acculturation context.

Disentangling Dominated Consumer Acculturation

Dominated acculturation is particularly important to understand given that it potentially represents the experience of over 1 billion people, poor peasants in less developed countries who have moved from traditional rural towns into the squatters surrounding global cities. While such bold generalizations must await future studies, it is possible that

dominated acculturation is the predominant mode of consumer acculturation in the world today. The Turkish context may well have idiosyncratic features, so future research among migrants in other countries could better specify this context. As well, it is important to study the similarities and differences between internal migration of peasants to cities and immigration across national borders.

In addition to the usual caveats regarding a single case, another limitation of our study is that several structural factors differ between the dominated and postmodern acculturation contexts. So it is impossible for us to specify with any authority whether dominated acculturation is created by these structures in combination or by one or two structures alone. In particular, we believe that it is essential to investigate the acculturation of poor migrants who, moving out of their native country into a Western postmodern culture, find themselves with deterritorialized lower-class status and ideological conflicts similar to those described in the current study. There are similarities between our findings and recent media reports on the acculturation of poor Muslim minorities in Europe. For example, the media relied on related explanations (combined with thwarted masculinity) for the alienation experienced by Pakistani and North African immigrants in the United Kingdom responsible for the recent London bombings (Waldman 2005). Likewise, similar sociocultural dynamics seem to underlie the recent spate of car burnings in the Paris *banlieue* by young Muslim men who were mostly second-generation immigrants from Algeria and Morocco. Dominated consumer acculturation, therefore, may be a crucial phenomenon in the developed world as well, and the shattered identity projects that consumer culture readily produces can lead to outcomes other than despondent resignation.

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