

## **Consumer ethnicity three decades after: A TCR agenda**

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## **Consumer ethnicity three decades after: A TCR agenda**

### **Abstract**

Research into consumer ethnicity is a vital discipline that has substantially evolved in the past three decades. This conceptual article critically reviews its immense literature and examines the extent to which it has provided extensive contributions not only for the understanding of ethnicity in the marketplace but also for personal/collective wellbeing. We identify two gaps accounting for scant transformative contributions. First, today social transformations and conceptual sophistications require a revised vocabulary to provide adequate interpretive lenses. Second, extant work has mostly addressed the subjective level of ethnic identity projects but left untended the meso/macro forces affecting ethnicity (de)construction and personal/collective wellbeing. Our contribution stems from filling both gaps and providing a theory of ethnicity (de)construction that includes migrants as well as non-migrants.

### **Summary statement of contribution**

We contribute primarily to setting the ground for a TCR orientation of research into consumer ethnicity. Through the identification of two substantive gaps (narrow and misleading vocabulary and micro focus predominance), we also offer a revisited vocabulary on ethnicity and a holistic model of the macro forces involved in ethnicity (de)construction. Both contributions foster a transformative agenda for future research and offer implications for both policy-makers and different stakeholders whose ethnic orientation/structure necessitates achieving wellbeing.

### **Keywords**

Acculturation; consumer acculturation; ethnicity; immigration; transformative consumer research; wellbeing.

### **Three decades after**

‘These are more than interesting times’ (Mick, 2008, p. 377). More than three decades of research into consumer ethnicity offer today an abundance of perspectives on how, why, and with what effects people elaborate, negotiate, transform, and commodify their ethnicity in the marketplace (for an updated overview see Jamal, Peñaloza, & Laroche, in press). We agree with Mick that it is time for a critical reconsideration of consumer research and more specifically, for our aims, research into consumer ethnicity. Luedicke’s 2011 article—on which this article elaborates—illustrates the state of the art of the field comprehensively and critically. To date, research into consumer ethnicity has mostly focused on: (1) ethnic minorities’ distinctive consumption patterns (1981-1988) (Desphande, Hoyer, & Donthu, 1986; Henstorf, Martinez, & Merino 2012; Hirschman, 1981); (2) the multiple adaptation strategies that migrants undergo to accommodate to a new (market) culture (1989-2006) (Askegaard, Arnould, & Kjeldgaard, 2005; Lindridge, Hogg, & Shah, 2004; Oswald, 1999; Peñaloza, 1989, 1994); and (3) the role of macro institutional forces in the (de)construction of ethnicity (2007-present) (Jafari & Goulding, 2008; Üstüner & Holt, 2007; Üstüner and Thompson, 2012; Visconti, in press).

Despite substantive theoretical advances, Luedicke (2011, p. 231) denounces that research into consumer ethnicity has seldom ‘developed implications for political or social remediation’. In line with the *Journal of Marketing Management*’s special issue on Transformative Consumer Research (TCR) (Mick, 2006; Mick, Pettigrew, Pechmann, & Ozanne, 2012; Ozanne, 2011) and Luedicke’s call for more dedicated research on ethnicity and wellbeing, this article addresses the broad question: How can we propagate a TCR agenda in research into consumer ethnicity? We identify three main aspects that are problematic for the development of a TCR-orientation in the field. All are grounded on Luedicke’s (2011) above-mentioned diagnosis: (1) lack of conceptual clarity and completeness; (2) paucity of studies maintaining a holistic macro perspective on

ethnicity; and (3) focus on migrants' acculturation, thus leaving untended discussion about non-migrants' ethnicity.

First, despite its three decades of life, research into consumer ethnicity has produced a number of contributions built on constructs that are sometimes confusing as well as incomplete. Confusion occurs because the same construct can assume different, and even competing, meanings. For example, ethnicity has been used either to describe an objectively stated position a person occupies in the social ordering (Laroche et al., 1998) or a subjectively chosen option (Song, 2003; Stayman & Deshpande, 1989; Waters, 1990). Ethnicity has also been defined as either a system of shared 'cultural characteristics' (Healey, 2012, p. 16) or the origin of 'structured social inequalities' (Aronowitz, 1992, p. 53), thus shifting its foundation from cultural to social categories respectively. Race, often associated with ethnicity, has been presented as a biological (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998), political (Aronowitz, 1992), and even socially constructed (Golberg, 1992) category. Beyond clarity, conceptual incompleteness also conditions theoretical robustness of research into consumer ethnicity. For example, extant studies mainly rely on binary oppositions, such as the 'home'/'host', 'origin'/'destination', 'minority'/'mainstream', and 'dominant'/'dominated' divide (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010). In the interest of simplification, binary oppositions can undermine theoretical robustness and reproduce stereotypes and prejudices (Askegaard et al., 2005), thus impairing personal and collective wellbeing. Among others, separation between 'home'/'host' culture may be reasonable for a long-term migrant but does not look so appropriate to describe the situation of second generations (Rumbaut, 1994) or that of people only temporarily sojourning abroad (Sussman, 2002a). Therefore, the first section of this article refines the vocabulary on ethnicity used in our field, whilst trying at the same time to attribute univocal meanings to key constructs and to enlarge our vocabulary in order to acknowledge the variety of ethnic positions we observe in contemporary

markets. This should provide a more inclusive theoretical framework from which scholars can build future TCR research.

Second, research into consumer ethnicity has only recently started to inquire into the role of macro institutional forces in the (de)construction of ethnicity in the marketplace. Yet, those studies holding a macro perspective tend to focus on one macro force at a time: the theocratic system in which ethnicity is shaped (Jafari & Goulding, 2008); space (Visconti, in press) and spatial segregation (Üstüner & Holt, 2007) embedding ethnicity; status games (Üstüner and Thompson, 2012); the impact of a shared capitalist ideology on ethnic identity (Peñaloza and Barnahart, 2011); and the role of marketplace agents on ethnic accommodation (Peñaloza, 2007; Peñaloza and Gilly, 1999). If transformative implications have to be drawn, our field needs to provide a holistic model of the macro forces at play in the construction, use, and commodification of ethnicity. As such, the second section of this article proposes an overarching model in which we include the main macro forces that extant research suggests as relevant in the continuous making of ethnicity in the marketplace. While the field often presents ethnicity as an immutable reference in consumer life, the model adds dynamism to understandings of the construct. In doing so, we address the call for more intersectional ethnic research suggested as a better way to support implications for consumer wellbeing (Crockett et al., 2011).

Third, research into consumer ethnicity has long explored the construction, accommodation, and role of ethnicity in the life of migrants (Oswald, 1999; Peñaloza, 1994). As Bouchet (1995) notes, dictionaries themselves define ethnicity as a quality and affiliation that characterize members of minority groups. This position reflects an ‘ethnicist discourse’ that ‘was used by colonialist groups to legitimize a certain way of acting toward other groups’ (p. 79) and dates back to a long tradition of boundary-tracing to separate autochthonous from migrants at different times in Western history (Fox & Guglielmo, 2012). In taking this approach, research

into consumer ethnicity has overlooked the dominant population's ethnicity often reproducing these colonialist positions. This article contends that, regardless of nationality and power positions, everybody has an ethnicity, which is potentially consequential for their life and consumption. By discussing migrants' and non-migrants' ethnicity in the third part of this article we address implications for personal/collective wellbeing. In order to do so, we review the literature on ethnicity through a broad lens—not only marketing and consumer research but also psychology, sociology, ethnic and critical race studies—including different ontological and epistemological perspectives (positivism, empiricism, interpretivism, etc).

Before proceeding we clarify ethnicity's relationship to ethnic identity. Ethnicity definitions are countless and vary across disciplines, times, and authors due to differing assumptions about the 'nature of ethnicity' (Zmud & Arce, 1992, p. 443). Building on Bouchet (1995), we also conclude that 'ethnicity' is discursively constructed through the interactions amongst key forces, like political actors (e.g. the role of nation states as producers of ethnic difference versus integrating agents of different ethnic groups) (Verdery, 1994), market agents (Costa & Bamossy, 1995), and traditional (Downing & Husband, 2005; Silverstone, 2007) and digital media (Lindridge, Henderson, & Ekpo, in press). According to the historical and the geo-cultural context in which such a discourse takes place, some of these forces exert stronger/weaker impact on the construction of ethnicity. For example, Bouchet (1995) observes that contemporary Western societies experience a dominance of the market. Whilst constantly adjusting the notion of ethnicity, these forces tend to stabilize ethnicity in order to preserve long-lasting political, economic, and ideological interests (Lipsitz, 1998) of given, and typically dominating, groups. Unequal access to material and immaterial resources and social opportunities occurs in the presence of 'social boundaries'—'objectified forms of social differences' (Lamont & Molnár, 2002, p. 168). However, social boundaries are also determined by forms of 'symbolic boundaries'

consisting of shared distinctions used to categorize reality and, for our aims, to categorize people on the basis of what is discursively constructed as their ethnicity. As such, (1) ethnicity is ‘constructed to last’ in order to maintain given privileges; (2) competing constructions of ethnicity express rival interests and power positions; and (3) groups’ interests are dissimulated behind discourses of ethnicity such as primordial peoplehood (Barth, 1969; Isajiv, 1974) and often mythicized ancestries (Waters, 1990). We illustrate the role of these, and other, meso and macro forces on the (de)construction of ethnicity in the second part of the article.

At an individual level, people are confronted with different representations of ethnicity, which they subjectively (Laroche, Kim, & Tomiuk, 1998) and situationally (Stayman & Deshpande, 1989) adapt to. Wimmer (2008) identifies five different types of personal strategies through which ethnic boundaries are accommodated and modified. In doing so, he supports the existence of personal agency regarding how people relate to existing definitions of ethnicity. The more we enter a multi-ethnic and symbolic society, the more people become ethnic ‘bricoleurs’ who use ethnicity as a ‘totemic’ resource to partially strip ethnicity of its historical and cultural meanings to elaborate upon their own ‘ethnic style’ (Bouchet, 1995). For instance, a person can avoid religious practice but use religious identification as a symbolic resource (e.g. young Arabs of second generation using their Muslim affiliation to challenge rejection from the dominant French society). Hence, at the individual level we locate ‘ethnic identity’ positions made through the creative assemblage of socially constructed representations of ethnicity/ethnicities. Notably, ethnicity evokes ideas of relative permanence and group privilege whereas ethnic identity evokes ideas of subjectivity and individual agency. Thus, in this article, (1) ethnic identity points to self-ascribed cultural origins and not to externally attributed political (e.g. the status of ‘foreigner’) or biological positions (e.g. the notion of ‘race’; Song, 2003); (2) it applies both to migrants and non-migrants; (3) it is an individual response to specific situations (Stayman & Deshpande,

1989), social pressures, and multilateral acculturation (Berry, 2006; Molina, Wittig, & Giang, 2004; Verkuyten, 2005); and (4) it is central to personal as well as social identity (i.e. forms of 'imagined grouping'; Goldberg, 1992).

The following part of the article comments on different ethnic identity positions people from different ethnicities undertake, some of them directly connected to their (pretended) ancestries and others 'borrowed' from life experience, the market, and/or the media. Given our focus on wellbeing, we ultimately clarify what we mean by wellbeing. Attention for consumer wellbeing has recently re-emerged as a significant concept in consumer research (Mick, 2006). By combining different multidisciplinary approaches such as functionalism, management science, buying-behaviour, macro-marketing, and consumer activism, Pancer and Handelman (2012) explore the historical origins of consumer wellbeing and the factors that have shaped its evolution. The authors highlight that the concept of consumer wellbeing, originally conceived restrictively as the possibility of having more things that a person wants (Riis, 2008), has progressively (1) overcome the economic dimension and (2) included both the personal and the collective sphere. While we align with such a comprehensive definition of consumer wellbeing (economic as well as non-economic; personal as well as collective), we focus on the specific links between consumer wellbeing and ethnicity (Crockett et al. 2011) as an individually and socially constructed category. We show that the way ethnicity is (de)constructed in a given context/time affects possibilities to secure self-identification and thus psychological wellbeing (Phinney, 2005). We also comment on how ethnicity (de)construction conditions collective representations of ethnic groups (Georgiou, 2012), their opportunities of reciprocal (market) acculturation (Berry, 1980), and the nature, extent, and quality of their commercial, social, and cultural exchanges (Peñaloza, 2007).

## **The vocabulary on ethnicity in consumer research: Clarifications and extensions**

Unprecedented migration inflows of the past 100 years have spurred research into consumer ethnicity and stimulated both researchers and managers to better understand how people of a different ethnic origin relate to a new (market) culture (Costa & Bamossy, 1995; Padilla, 1980). This has led to two main consequences. First, migrants and acculturation have been at the centre of the discipline (Luedicke, 2011), and thus made the vocabulary on ethnicity a ‘migrant-related language’. Yet, social transformations have shown that ethnicity is a more pervasive phenomenon, where both migrants and non-migrants confront their ethnic identities (Grier, Brumbaugh, & Thornton 2006; Peñaloza & Barnhart, 2011) and may act as ethnic ‘bricoleurs’ (Bouchet, 1995). Second, by maintaining the boundaries of the discipline around migration and acculturation, over the last three decades researchers have generated numerous contributions where the same concepts are used with a variety of often contradictory meanings. As a result, vocabulary on ethnicity/ethnic identity is concurrently too narrow to address the complexity of the field, whilst being overly contradictory.

The first section of the article aims to harmonize existing meanings for key concepts related to ethnicity/ethnic identity, and to include and value emerging concepts that are taking the discussion beyond migration/acculturation and their typical binary oppositions. As such, we do not aim to invent new concepts but to clarify when a given concept should be used, with what meaning, and under what assumptions. All the concepts we list refer to different ‘ethnic identities’, which people elaborate starting from different ‘ethnicities’ they find at local, national, transnational, and global level. Table 1 provides a summary of the vocabulary we assemble, where key concepts can be easily compared with reference to: (1) their context of application; (2) the notion(s) of ethnicity they embed; (3) the corresponding ethnic identity positions they stimulate; and (4) their ideological and political underpinnings. Entries are alphabetical. The first

entry (i.e. ‘acculturation’) represents a point of departure of the discipline we use as to highlight the novelty and distinctiveness of subsequent concepts. In line with Vygotsky (1978), we also believe that the language we use frames our ability to envisage the world we describe through it. By improving our language, we can limit risks of distorted representations, poor conceptualization, and stereotypical explanations, and thus support our ability to represent the people we research more respectfully.

-----Table 1 about here-----

### ***Acculturation and the dominant/dominated scheme***

As stated above, research into consumer ethnicity has long focused on migrants’ acculturation, defined as ‘the general process of movement and adaptation to the consumer cultural environment in one country by persons from another country’ (Peñaloza, 1994, p. 33). In line with Berry’s (1980) seminal conceptualization and his subsequent advances (1997, 2008), at an individual level, acculturation implies the interaction between a ‘culture of origin’ and a ‘culture of destination’—often qualified as the ‘host’ culture, which highlights the unfamiliarity and exclusion new-comers may experience. Scholars have also identified a plethora of ethnic identity positions during acculturation (Gudykunst, 1983), ranging from complete assimilation (Wallendorf & Reilly, 1983) to resistance and rejection (Berry, 1980; Devereaux, 1970). More often, scholars have explored multi-dimensional ethnic identity positions, as in the case of biculturalism (Luna, Ringberg, & Peracchio, 2008) and cultural swapping (Askegaard et al., 2005; Oswald, 1999), which researchers deem preferable in terms of personal wellbeing (LaFramboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). Apart from a handful of studies (Grier et al., 2006; Jamal, 2003; Kipnis, Broderick, & Demangeot, 2013) research has rarely investigated the ‘multidirectional cultural adaptation’ (Luedicke, 2011, p. 236)—the so-called process of ‘reverse

acculturation’ (Kim & Park, 2009)—through which the local ethnic mainstream acculturates to migrants’ ethnicity, thus reducing cultural distance and increasing opportunities of reciprocal exchange.

At a macro level, the ‘dominant conceptual scheme’ (Peñaloza, 1994, p.34) to discuss acculturation relies on the contrasting notions of ‘dominant’ (i.e. mainstream) versus ‘dominated’(i.e. subcultural) ethnic groups. The implications of this are twofold. First, this scheme frames discussion on ethnicity in conflicting terms. Whilst domination can be also numerical, it is mostly political, social, and economic (Aranowitz, 1992; Healey, 2012). As Lipsitz (1998) argues, appurtenance to the dominant ethnic group in a nation grants a rent position, which mainstream people defend by investing time and energies in the constant (re)creation of their ethnic caste (what he presents as their ‘possessive investment’). Second, we argue that the ‘dominant’/‘dominated’ scheme leads to contrast the host culture (that of the dominant ethnic group) to a comprehensive and indistinct culture of the ethnically dominated groups. In doing so, various ethnicities are brought together and flattened.

The ‘dominant’/‘dominated’ scheme also has remarkable implications for wellbeing. Positions of ethnic domination prompt a structured system of privilege reproducing unfair advantages while limiting dominated ethnic groups’ opportunities of ownership, education, employment, housing, and health care. Additionally, the common practice of questioning only the ethnicity of dominated minorities undermines ethnic mainstream’s salience about its own ethnicity. Recently, Peñaloza and Barnhart (2011) document how middle-class white male consumers in the U.S.A. dominate the North-American credit consumer culture while not perceiving themselves as a group with a clear-cut ethnic identity. Hence, they describe themselves as ‘ethnically deficit’ persons. On the one hand, limited ethnic salience from the dominant group may result in efforts geared towards maintaining such dominance (e.g. racist

behaviours). On the other hand, it negatively affects mainstream's wellbeing as a result of diminished ability to discuss their ethnic identity and perception of ethnic depletion.

### ***Cultural sojourning***

As seen, acculturation relies on two key assumptions: (1) ethnicity reconstruction presupposes migration; and (2) migration is a stable, or at least long-lasting, life-stage. Yet, in a globalised world, being a cultural sojourner—someone who temporarily spends time in another country (Sussmann, 2002a)—is an increasingly common feature. One should note that sojourning differs from migration because (1) it does not imply the stabilisation in a different country/culture and (2) it implies a double process of adaptation: first to the new space and later during repatriation (Leong & Ward, 2000; Lowe, Hwang, & Moore, 2011; Sussmann, 2002a, 2002b).

Sojourning instead of migration/acculturation should then be preferred to address the ethnic identity position of people living in such situations. A sojourner confronts his/her culture of origin, the host culture as well as a supranational cultural identity platform common to other sojourners around him/her. For example, Teichler (2004) documents how ERASMUS students temporarily studying abroad develop a shared culture that exceeds established national boundaries and identifies an ERASMUS 'way of living'.

With reference to its outcomes, sojourning has been studied in different disciplines. Whilst in policy studies it has been analysed through the lens of the economic and societal implications of temporary or circular migration (McLoughlin & Muenz, 2011), in social psychology it has been examined with a focus on the dynamics that emerge during cultural contact (Allport, 1954). In her Cultural Identity Model (CIM), Sussmann (2002b) identifies four ethnic identity positions (namely: affirmative, subtractive, additive, and global), which act as predictors of a sojourner's repatriation distress based on acculturation outcomes during host

country stay. Within consumer research, Tambyah and Chng's (2006) analysis of 14 returning students in Singapore empirically validates and develops Sussmann's (2002a) model. The authors add two types of ethnic identity positions: (1) a resistive shift, when sojourners react adversely to cultural change, and (2) a marginal shift, when sojourners identify with neither home nor host culture ('rootlessness').

Notably, implications for wellbeing refer not only to the moment of temporary sojourn abroad but also to repatriation. Sussmann (2002a) demonstrates that repatriation distress is higher when host culture adaptation is high and identification with home country is low or superseded. Repatriation distress is lower if the sojourners confirm their home identity, either through low levels of adaptation during the sojourn or through providing the complementary cultural identity platform mentioned above. Also, the more overseas experience the sojourner has, the easier both adjustments and adaptation abroad and at home will be (Cui & Awa, 1992). We suggest that future research can apply the CIM model and its extensions to explore further how cultural sojourners use material and symbolic consumption resources and relate to acculturation agents to express ethnic identification during repatriation in order to improve or sustain their wellbeing.

### ***Cosmopolitanism***

Many different strands of cosmopolitanism exist across disciplines. Recurrent traits attributed to cosmopolitanism include: (1) the habit and interest of travelling abroad (Hannerz, 1996), as a means of cultural enrichment, self-enhancement, and 'worldly enactment' (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999, p. 217); (2) an acquired mode of practice or a competence to adapt more rapidly and effectively to new cultural contexts (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002); and (3) an ideological, philosophical, and political project towards multiculturalism that fosters affiliation with like-minded people (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999). Hence, cosmopolitan people show—or are

assumed to show—degrees of cultural openness, mixing, and ethnic pluralism (Appadurai, 1996; Calhoun, 2002). Differently from acculturation, cosmopolitanism does not necessarily imply migration. Cosmopolitan people are not socially represented as dominated ethnic groups, being more often described as part of a cultural elite. Differently from cultural sojourning, cosmopolitanism does not imply a temporary stay and repatriation. Instead, it relies on ‘proteanism’ (Hannerz, 1990), that is, the willingness to inhabit more places and a form of home-phobia.

Cosmopolitanism suggests that ethnic identification can emerge beyond previously popular bounded notions of ethnic identity (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Desphande et al., 1986). Notably, cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan consumption express identification with a place over an ethnic sense of identification with a nation, with consumers drawing from a local, national, and transnational toolkit of cultural resources (Askegaard et al.; 2005; Tonkinwise, 2005). In relation to their original ethnic identity, cosmopolitan identity is paradoxical. At the same time, it presupposes preference for non-local and unfamiliar cultural/ethnic references (i.e. openness to other cultures) but it also implies extensive preference for local and familiar consumptions (i.e. closure on familiar material cultures) to cope with the complexity of constant re-adaptation (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999).

Implications for wellbeing are straightforward. First, cosmopolitanism invites us to consider that experience in a local place can be more relevant to defining ethnic identity than national or supranational ethnicities. Unsurprisingly, cosmopolitanism has been particularly studied in cities, as these are sites of condensed physical and social spaces where individuals are exposed to a diversity of people, objects, and lifestyles (Sennett, 2002). Second, ethnic identity positions should be conceived as unbounded, emplaced and fluid, with new ethnic identities simultaneously being forged from various cultural sources (Çaglar, 2002; Scheffler, 1999;

Sennett, 2002). This conceptualisation expands upon Riefler and Diamantopoulos (2009). Third, along with other forms of ethnic identity positions, cosmopolitanism also represents a way of participation in public life in which both consumers and organisations play a role. In a study of media consumption amongst German Turks in Berlin, Çağlar (2002) finds that the consumption of a localised ethnic radio station in Berlin leads to adoption of a localised cosmopolitanism where consumers mix a local perspective with multiple cultural affiliations. The increasing popularity of the radio station has also led to other media outlets in Germany adopting media outputs relevant to German Turks, raising their profile and visibility in public life and thus ultimately affecting their wellbeing.

### ***Global citizenship***

Defining global citizenship is complex. Whilst early conceptions focus on a Western-dominant mind-set (Broeckerhoff & Wadham-Smith 2007; Hannerz, 1996), recent research argues that new forms of global governance have unequivocally transformed the very notion of global citizenship (Iwabuchi, 2002, 2010). Regardless of the Western/non-Western perspective, global citizenship as a form of ethnic identity position represents a belief in and a sense of belonging to an (imagined) translocal collectivity of like-minded people from around the world (MacDougall, 2003) who, irrespective of nationality, ethnicity and geographical location, share universal ideas, values, beliefs, and modes of living, commonly known as ‘global culture’ (Beck, 2000; Cornwell & Stoddard, 2001; Nederveen Pieterse, 2007; Strizhakova, Coulter, & Price, 2008). Consumption of artefacts such as brands and media assigned with the meaning of ‘globalness’ is thought to serve as a passport to achieve global citizenship (Strizhakova et al., 2008).

As per cultural sojourning and cosmopolitanism, global citizenship does not imply migration. With reference to cosmopolitanism, global citizenship is also an ideology but: (1) it

does not rely on the mythology of traveling and exploring different locales; (2) it prefers the global culture that cuts across national and ethnic boundaries to the mix of different local cultures; (3) more than being a philosophical system, it is enacted through ownership and consumption of the (global) material culture; and (4) more than being purely ideological, it supports the political agenda of global citizenship.

With reference to wellbeing, global citizenship stimulates reflexivity on positions of cultural superiority. It holds that global culture is preferable to the local. As mentioned before, the main context of dispute is the extent to which notions of global culture have to reflect a Western versus a non-Western perspective. As non-Western societies boom economically and politically, they increasingly are co-creators of global culture, as reflected by emergent non-Western consumption artefacts utilizing global meanings (Bengtsson, Bardhi, & Venkatraman, 2010; Cayla & Eckhardt, 2007; Eckhardt & Mahi, 2004; Jafari, Firat, Süerdem, Askegaard, & Dalli, 2012). These developments de-stabilize the global citizenship discourse in both Western and non-Western societies (Dower, 2003). Specifically, as non-Western societies assume a de-Westernized outlook on global citizenship, choices between Western-origin and non-Western origin 'global' brands will increasingly constitute an act of asserting national pride and elevating one's own nation/ethnicity in the global arena (Dong & Tian, 2009; Venkatesh, Khanwalkar, Lawrence, & Chen, 2013; Jafari & Goulding, 2013). Furthermore, Western consumers' responses to non-Western brands are mixed (Melnyk, Klein, & Volckner, 2012). Whilst undoubtedly there are several contributing factors, this may be reflective of an unwillingness of Western consumers to accept the shifting distribution of power in how global citizenship is defined and created. Overall, by using a global citizenship frame devoid of a West/East divide, we as researchers are better able to understand the dynamic process by which people make meaning using a myriad of cultural objects and practices.

### *Hyphenated ethnicity*

As seen, during acculturation the construction of ethnic identity can imply the maintenance of a plurality of ethnicities. Sometimes, one of them dominates the others. For example, Berry (1980) suggests that assimilation to the host culture depends on a migrant's acknowledgement of the superiority of that culture whereas rejection implies a strict preference for the culture of origin. Other times, ethnic identity implies non-hierarchical ordering of different ethnicities with which a person identifies. For example, cultural swapping and biculturalism (LaFramboise et al., 1993; Lau-Gesk, 2003; Luna et al., 2008; Oswald, 1999; Peñaloza, 1994; Tadmor & Tetlock, 2006) support ethnic pluralism and identity plasticity.

Such an ideological, political, and psychological rejection of hierarchical ordering also occurs in the phenomenon of hyphenated ethnicity, an identity position that entails one's sense of multilocal identification with various equally important ethnic collectivities developed through ancestral links and/or life experiences (Caglar, 1997). Originally, Appadurai (1996) conceptualized hyphenated identity to describe ethnic identity positions of diasporic people (i.e. migrants) who concurrently identify with the culture of putative ethnic origin (delocalized ethnicity by ancestry) and with the new host culture (localized ethnicity by residence). In line with more recent research (Jiménez, 2010; Kipnis et al., 2013), we argue that hyphenated identity does not require a direct migration experience. Factors motivating an extension of the definition include: (1) the rapid rise of mixed-ethnic families (Aspinall, 2003; Clark & Maas, 2009; Luna & Peracchio, 2005); (2) acculturation to co-residing (at times multiple) ethnic groups (Jamal, 2003; Luedicke, 2011; Wamwara-Mbugua et al., 2008); (3) short and long-term travels (Bardhi, Eckhardt, & Arnould, 2012; Bardhi, Ostberg, & Bengtsson, 2010; Sussmann 2002b); (4) identification with other collectivities' beliefs, rituals and traditions—irrespective of geographical proximity—via media and consumption (Craig & Douglas, 2006; Iwabuchi, 2010; Oberecker,

Riefler, & Diamantopoulos, 2008); and (5) social movement activism and multicultural political ideals (Peñaloza, 2004).

Beyond some analogies, we contend that hyphenated identity does not coincide with acculturation since: (1) hyphenation always implies equal importance among a person's ethnic identities (Phinney, 1989), whereas acculturation may lead to forms of hierarchical nesting (Berry, 1980); (2) hyphenation may not imply a direct migration experience (Kipnis et al., 2013); and (3) despite exceptions (Askegaard et al., 2005), acculturation is typically conceived around two ethnicities, whereas hyphenation expands to a plurality of them. Moreover, hyphenated identity differs from cosmopolitanism and global citizenship since: (1) hyphenation is not an ideological, political or philosophical ethnic identity position but a psychological identification with more and equally valued ethnicities acquired through personal life experience (Çaglar, 1997); and (2) whilst global citizenship preaches the superiority of a global consumer culture, hyphenation rejects hierarchization.

Since secure ethnic identity is pivotal for psychological wellbeing (Phinney, 2005), physical and symbolic obstacles to maintain commitment to one or more ethnic collectivities of importance may de-stabilize people of hyphenated ethnicity, with results ranging from passive segregation to violent opposition of communities regarded as enforcers/creators of these obstacles (Berry, 1997; Maalouf, 2000). Conversely, ability to commit to a new collectivity (without required decrease in commitment to other relevant ethnic collectivities) empowers people to develop new skills to achieve belonging (Dona & Berry, 1994). Therefore, wellbeing for hyphenated people is highly sensitive to national ideologies and sociopolitical governance contexts, which may (not) support its belief in the equality of different ethnicities. For instance, whilst in the U.S.A. hyphenation is a legitimized societal norm (e.g. Irish-American), Europe has a rooted tradition of nation-states, which can more easily support an ideology of national

sovereignty that stresses ‘the potential dangers of multiple loyalties’ (Çaglar, 1997, p. 177-178). For example, the French socio-political model encompasses an integrationist view, the idea of French nationality being a sole legitimate descriptor of all citizens. Nevertheless, studies of migrant populations (Ribert, 2006; Simon & Clément, 2006) reveal a similar pattern of identity hyphenation in France and the U.S.A. These investigations confirm the ideological and political use of hyphenated identity with the objective of improving personal and collective wellbeing through rejection of imposed and stigmatizing ethnic identity positions (Simon & Clément, 2006).

### ***Pan-ethnicity***

Acculturation and hyphenation deploy ethnicities defined at a national level, whereas cultural sojourning, cosmopolitanism, and global citizenship hypothesize the existence of a higher ethno-cultural level, which is however defined ideologically (for cosmopolitanism and global citizenship) or existentially (e.g. the ERASMUS culture in the case of cultural sojourning; Teichler, 2004). Differently from former concepts, pan-ethnicity consists in a supranational ethnic identity that, either for personal reasons or for external pressures, people of different nationalities but similar ethnic/racial characteristics are said to share (Lindridge et al., 2013). For example, research on Latinos/as (Castro, 1997; Peñaloza, 1994; Peñaloza and Gilly, 1999) has overcome nationality and questioned to what extent Latinos/as (do not) share given common traits (e.g. stronger family orientation and brand loyalty, when compared to Whites) (Peñaloza, 2004). Also, research into Mediterranean marketing (Cova, 2005) takes the supranational reference of the Mediterranean basin—thus a geo-political and geo-historical reference level—as a collective basis for detecting a shared approach to self-definition, worldview, and attitude to consumption (Carù, Cova, & Dalli, in press). Then, Mediterranean consumers are said to be more inclined to appreciate slowness of life and consumption, more open to diversity, and particularly

sensitive to authenticity (Cassano, 1996; Silva, Carù, & Cova, 2005). Similar discussions hold for Afro-Americans, Blacks outside the U.S.A., Asians, etc. In sum, pan-ethnicity is grounded on race as a socially constructed form of imagined grouping (Song, 2003), which serves as a large *dépositaire* of common ethnic traits, rituals, norms, and cultural values that people sharing the same supranational identity deploy in order to define themselves and others (Lindridge et al., 2013; Paani, 2001; Visconti, 2005; Wamwara-Mbugua, Cornwell, & Boller, 2008).

Implications for personal and collective wellbeing depend on the extent to which pan-ethnicity is imposed upon or created by these sub-groups. In this regard, Okamoto (2006) argues that pan-ethnicity is the result of institutional imposition of pan-ethnic categories onto differing ethnic groups. Hence, a national government categorising ethnicities as ‘African-Caribbean’ or ‘South Asian’ would be imposing a pan-ethnicity, whilst ignoring the inherent heterogeneity within pan-ethnic groupings. Lopez and Espiritu (1990) show that the more society views differing ethnic groups as a homogenous sub-group, the more likely those groups will develop a pan-ethnic identity. For example, Lee (2000) suggests that Asian sub-groups living in America demonstrate higher levels of intra-group homogeneity based on national boundary categorisations. Min (2010) also documents how pan-ethnicity may be a political-cultural response to discrimination. Pan-ethnicity, therefore, arises from differing ethnic groups recognising that pooling their resources together will produce economic, political, and psychological gains for all. Min’s study echoes prior works (Waters, 1999; Woldemikael, 1989), which demonstrate how, unlike their parents, second generation African-Caribbean and Haitians, are unable or unwilling to identify themselves with their parents’ nationality, and reluctantly accept the pan-ethnicity categorisation of being ‘Black.’

### *Transnational ethnicity*

Transnationalism also reflects a plurality of meanings. The foundations of transnationalism date back to the late nineteenth century, when the massive migration of non-Anglo-Saxon migrants from Eastern and Southern Europe to the U.S.A., whilst giving rise to a new American nation (Bourne, 1916), caused apprehension (Nagel & Staeheli, 2004). More recently, in order to challenge the principles that define a nation, scholars (Glick Schiller, Basch, & Szanton Blanc, 1992; Jusdanis, 2001) have used transnationalism in Western societies as opposed to nationalism. Within research into consumer ethnicity, transnationalism has been restrictively referred to as transnational consumer culture (Askegaard & Özaglar-Toulouse, 2011; Cayla, & Eckhardt, 2007; Matthews, 2000; Smith, 1990) and thus associated with—either as a synonym for or a side effect of—globalization.

This overview shows that transnationalism has been used as a synonym of broad migration/accluration processes (Bourne, 1916; Nagel & Staeheli, 2004) or as a contemporary expression of global consumer culture and global citizenship (Askegaard & Özaglar-Toulouse, 2011; Cayla, & Eckhardt, 2007; Glick Schiller et al., 1992). In line with other scholars (Levitt, 2011; Üçok Hughes and Kjeldgaard; 2006), we also contend that transnationalism is a distinctive concept that should be used more restrictively. Transnationalism highlights the situation of those persons living between two (or more) places, with which they maintain stable relationships (Levitt, 2001). For example, Üçok Hughes and Kjeldgaard (2006) document the dual life of Turkish migrants in Denmark who, by moving back and forth between Denmark and Turkey, maintain enduring social, economic, and cultural connections with both countries. Studies (Nagel & Staeheli, 2004; Portes, 2001; Rumbaut, 2002; Somerville, 2008) confirm that the possibility of developing a transnational identity is stronger for first generation migrants than for the second generation. Yet, second generations are more likely to develop transnational identities whenever:

(1) they are fluent and use parents' native language; (2) they make frequent travels to their parents' home country; and (3) they participate in their parents' native consumption practices (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004; Purkayastha, 2005).

Hence, transnationalism differs from acculturation/migration since: (1) the country of destination is not the unique place of stay; (2) as such, whilst migrants can re-start their life in a new place, transmigrants remain suspended between the places they inhabit; and (3) transmigrants keep updating their cultural endowment in both cultures, which might not be the case for migrants *tout-court* (especially after family reunion, migrants see their opportunity to be exposed to their culture of origin diminished; Visconti & Napolitano, 2009). Moreover, transnationalism coincides neither with cosmopolitanism nor with global citizenship since: (1) in line with our definition, it does not imply a philosophical system or a global consumer culture but the two (or more) cultures of the countries of stay; and (2) it presupposes a direct migration experience, which might not be the case for cosmopolitanism and is even less likely to be the case for global citizenship.

Generally, studies (e.g. Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000) in this domain confirm that developing personal relationships within the host context and remaining connected to other cultural backgrounds (i.e. home country) enhance people's sense of wellbeing. Such ties provide people with resources that can help develop coping strategies in dealing with effects of negative life events (Wilkinson, 1999; Wangaruro, 2011) or maintain higher levels of self-esteem (Phinney & Charia, 1992).

### **Forces (de)constructing ethnicity and implications for wellbeing**

We already commented that research into consumer ethnicity has only recently started to assess the role of macro institutional forces in the (de)construction of ethnicity in the marketplace. We

also observed that the few studies holding a macro perspective (Jafari & Goulding, 2008; Peñaloza and Barnahart, 2011; Peñaloza and Gilly, 1999; Üstüner & Holt, 2007; Üstüner and Thompson, 2012; Visconti, in press) typically focus on one macro force at a time. However, this limits the ability of our discipline to develop implications for personal and collective wellbeing, because it lacks a holistic view of the many meso/macro forces at play in the (de)construction of ethnicity in the marketplace (Luedicke, 2011).

Moving away from the individual level of analysis in the first part of the article (i.e. ethnic identity positions), in this section we elaborate on the principle of intersectionality that Crockett et al. (2011) recommend. In doing so, we identify the main meso and macro forces that are capable of stimulating the personal and collective (de)construction of ethnicity in the marketplace, and that ultimately impact wellbeing in relation to ethnicity and consumption. As we will elaborate, peoples interactions with these forces can be direct, indirect, observational, or virtual. We contend that at a meso/macro level what stimulates ethnicity (de)construction depends on: (1) the social and historical power dynamics at a given moment (Aronowitz, 1992; Healey, 2012); (2) the representations of ethnicity within social groups and in the media (Downing and Husband; 2005); and (3) the market opportunities that may (not) result for given ethnic groups over time (Costa & Bamossy, 1995; Grier et al., 2006; Jamal, 2003; Peñaloza, 2004; Peñaloza & Gilly, 1999). Our proposed model (Figure 1) is intentionally abstract to capture the meso and macro forces applicable to the plurality of ethnic identity positions (acculturation, cultural sojourning, cosmopolitanism, etc.) that we unpacked earlier. Moving from the meso to the macro level, we detail each form of interaction that stimulates ethnicity (de)construction and the implications for personal and collective wellbeing in relation to consumption. We also distinguish between key forces in ethnicity (de)construction and some moderating variables.

-----Figure 1 about here-----

## ***Key meso forces in ethnicity and wellbeing (de)construction***

### *Ethnicity and wellbeing in family interactions*

In her formative work, Peñaloza (1989, 1994) highlights the importance of family when she conceptualizes consumer acculturation processes. In particular, her comments unpack how social interactions within the family transmit consumption knowledge, consumer skills, and behaviours across generations. Whilst migration has a particularly destabilizing role for the structure of migrant families indiscriminately from Western and Eastern cultures, the conclusion of family being the key structure of (consumer) socialisation (Ward, 1974) is not exclusive to migrants. In fact, any family represents a critical site of cultural maintenance, transmission, and rupture from one generation to the next (McCubbin & McCubbin, 1993). Nonetheless, consumption in a family is used daily to negotiate ethnic boundaries (Lindridge et al. 2004; Sekhon & Szmigin, 2011). As Lamont and Molnár (2002) observe, mechanisms supporting boundary creation are psychological (e.g. mental processes of categorization), cultural (e.g. interpretive strategies tied to cultural traditions), and structural (e.g. unfair access to resources and opportunities). Hence, it is important to inspect how consumption within the family can attenuate or reproduce ethnic psychological, cultural, and structural boundaries.

It is largely maintained that, regardless of its structure (e.g. dyads or triads) or direct migration experience, each family exerts pressures on its members (Epp & Price, 2008) to establish a shared ethnicity, as an expression of common heritage and family collective ethnic identity (Lindridge & Hogg, 2006; Oswald, 1999). As McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto (2005) observe, ethnic identification within the family is a precondition to a person's possibility to develop a 'sense of belonging' to that family. Notably, such process of ethnic identification can become more difficult in situations of migrant families, mixed families, and more broadly for any family living in multicultural societies. Ultimately, a family affects members' wellbeing by

(de)constructing positive/negative representations of different ethnicities relevant to family members (i.e. ‘us’ versus ‘others’; Valdés, 1996). Consumption visualizes such complex and profound ethnicity-related family dynamics. For example, Oswald (1999) documents how Haitian families migrated to the U.S.A. use consumption within the family to perform a ‘culture shopping’ (p.310), which is used to negotiate the perceived differences between host and home ethnic identities.

We identify three main types of family interactions central to ethnic consumer wellbeing: marital, generational, and diasporic. First, within marital interactions ethnicity connects to gender roles and structures typical of one or more ethnic collectivities, which also impact (il)legitimate gendered consumptions. The marital dyad can liberate or inhibit a spouse’s personal freedom, and may thus contribute to his/her wellbeing stimulating feelings of liberation, frustration or resistance (Chytкова & Kjeldgaard, 2010; Üstuner & Holt, 2008). Second, the articulated intergenerational interactions play a crucial role in identity and wellbeing for both parents and their descendants. As cultural gatekeepers, parents orient their children’s consumption in ways that confirm or contradict their ethnic heritage (Lindridge & Hogg, 2006). In the case of migrant families, as ‘cross-generational’ individuals (Visconti, 2010) children can be ‘cultural chameleons’ (Sekhon & Szmigin, 2010) seeking suitable but not easily available products to fit their complex ethnic identity. They can also be agents of acculturation to the local culture for their parents, in particular as soon as they enter the local education system (Favaro, 2009). Third, within the precincts of migration, the remaining diasporic family living in a migrant’s country of origin is also influential. Research (Skribis, 2008) shows that the diasporic family maintains an emotional and symbolic influence on migrated family members. This influence is also exerted through the circulation of ethnic goods that reinvigorate memories of ancestral ethnicity (Peñaloza & Cavazos, 2011).

### *Ethnicity and wellbeing at school*

On an international level, scholars have studied the relationship between school/education, ethnicity, and consumption with particular attention on the inclusion of students coming from ethnic minorities and migrant families (Defensor del Pueblo, 2003; Demestrio & Favaro, 2002; Eurydice, 2004; European Union, 2004; Portes & MacLeod, 1996). Among them, ‘third culture children’ research (Cockburn, 2002; Greenholtz & Kim, 2009) focuses on these young consumers, whom it locates in the midst of parents’ culture of origin, host/local culture, and a mix of the two. The uniqueness of their ethnic identity positions has stimulated scholars’ interest and creativity in trying to capture their complexity using labels such as: ‘second generation’, ‘children of migration’ or ‘children of immigrants’ (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Rumbaut, 1994), ‘post-immigrant generation’ (Rumbaut, 2002), ‘cross generation’ (Visconti & Napolitano, 2009), and indeed ‘third culture kids’ (Cockburn, 2002; Greenholtz & Kim, 2009). Alba (2005) shows that the clarity of demarcation between ‘third culture children’ and their peers belonging to the ethnic mainstream depends on two factors: (1) third culture children’s ethnic origin; and (2) the geo-cultural context where demarcation occurs. For example, in the U.S.A. and for children of Mexican origins, the author proves a dominance of ‘blurred boundaries’. Differently, in Europe and for children of Muslim origins he observes a prevalence of ‘bright boundaries’, which exclude any ambiguity about group membership.

We identify two bodies of works within third culture children literature. The first focuses on children’s ethnic identities and consumption at school and within the group of peers. It shows that consumption is decisive to manifest, hide, and alter a child’s ethnic identity in line with personal identity projects and social pressures. Commonalities in consumption are used to manifest children’s solidarity with the group and feel confident with their ethnic identity (Lindridge et al., 2004). Hence, choice and use of goods acquire multiple meanings, which span

from reciprocal negotiation to gratuity, and from conflicting opposition to mediation among multiple expectations (Visconti, 2010; Visconti & Napolitano, 2009). Notably, the strength and type of family ties a child has with his/her parents affect his/her tensions with peers (Sekhon & Szmigin, 2011) since family ties set the boundaries of what can (not) be consumed and with whom. An interesting study on ethnic conflicts at school (Hanish & Guerra, 2000) in the U.S.A. tests the impact of school context and ethnicity on the likelihood of being victimized by peers. Three ‘pan-ethnicities’ are compared: African-American, Latinos/as, and Whites. Unsurprisingly, ethnicity predicts the probability of victimization by peers. More counter-intuitively, this study indicates that African-Americans are more exposed to victimization by peers, with Latinos/as less likely to be victimized than White children. Also, the more ethnically integrated the school, the higher White children’s risk of being victimized by peers and the lower the risk for African-Americans. These and similar studies have the merit of highlighting key variables that may impact quality of life at school with an immediate impact on a child’s wellbeing.

The second stream we detect focuses instead on children’s academic performance in relation to ethnicity. This group of studies is relevant for research on both consumption and consumer wellbeing since it assumes that academic performance often predicts future professional opportunities and access to material wealth (i.e. market citizenship). Portes and MacLeod (1996) provide a large-scale test in the U.S.A. on the role of (1) ethnicity, (2) class, and (3) school context in the academic performance of third culture children. First, they find that ethnicity plays a major role, with children belonging to marginal/dominated ethnic groups performing worse academically than children from the ethnic dominant group. Second, parents’ social class and education attenuate this negative effect. Third, the school context (inner-city schools, quality of the school, etc.) flattens the negative effect on education performance but only for ethnically disadvantaged children. Valdés’ (1996) ethnography of 10 Mexican-born and low-

income families living at the U.S.A.-Mexican border documents the ambivalence of parents' expectation about children's education. On the one hand, parents understood the risks of school dropout for both children's and family's future possibility to buy and consume. On the other hand, they expressed doubts for the intrinsic value of education since school education can be too abstract in comparison to urgent life needs, including the possibility of granting immediate material subsistence. Generalizing from Valdés, his work shows that several variables affect parents' attitude towards school: (1) parents' educational level; (2) parents' understanding of the rules and aims of the local education system; (3) quality of relations established with teachers; (4) endogenous cultural factors; and (5) actual work opportunities for their children after education. Implications for wellbeing are straightforward. These variables identify key levers that policy makers could and should use to support children's education at family level and beyond, and to eventually support their future opportunities of material wealth. One example is explicative: in 2005, Parisian suburbs (i.e. 'the *banlieu*') hosted violent riots between second generations and autochthonous French people of the dominant ethnic group. Often presented as an ethnic conflict, these riots are mainly due to the reiteration of mistakes that policy-makers have made with reference to Paris' city governance (Fourcaut, Bellanger, & Flonneau, 2007), which have limited professional opportunities of second generations in France, despite their level of education and acculturation to the French culture. Ultimately, such conditions do not support parents' positive attitude towards education for their children (Valdés, 1996), thus jeopardizing future opportunities of becoming empowered consumers.

### *Ethnicity and wellbeing in religious communities*

Research into consumer ethnicity has long questioned the role of religion in relation to ethnicity and consumption. In her investigation of Jewish consumers in the U.S.A., Hirschman (1981)

suggests that Jewish ethnicity comprises two main axes: Jewish culture and Jewish religion. She also highlights that consumption preferences respond to a person's rate of self-identification with given religious norms (i.e. a 'self-designated religion'). Analogously, in their work on Hispanics in the U.S.A., Desphande et al. (1986, p. 214) provide a Weberian definition of ethnicity that implies appurtenance to common 'religion, values, morality and etiquette.' Similar studies are invaluable for having set the path for subsequent research and for the sensitivity to individual agency in religious identification. Yet, they assume that ethnicity and religion are structurally intertwined—that is, to a given ethnicity corresponds one given religion, to which a person is then free to identify. Social and cultural transformations contradict this tenet, as we increasingly observe people of one ethnic group converting to the religion historically specific of another ethnic group (Rambo, 1993). From a psychological perspective, Paloutzian, Richardson, and Rambo (2001) demonstrate that conversion affects a person's attitudes, emotions, behaviours, and lifestyle—including consumption—but that it does not modify profound personality traits (i.e. the 'Big Five' traits of temperament).

Hence, recent research into consumer ethnicity has tended to maintain a separation between ethnic and religious identity, instead focussing on the 'politics of consumer identity work' (Thompson, 2013). Such political use of consumption within the precincts of religion and ethnicity has attracted increasing scholars' attention (Sandikci & Jafari, 2013; Sandikci & Rice, 2011). With reference to low-income Muslim consumers in Turkey, Izberk-Bilgin (2012) presents an in-depth exploration of the motivations behind the rejection of 'global brands', which these consumers largely perceive as 'infidel'. Within the same geo-religious context, Sandikci and Ger (2010) document the way middle-class Turkish women negotiate meanings of the veil in a secular urban setting. Their study is particularly interesting as it shows how a typical religious symbol/consumption (i.e. the veil) can be contested within the religious community that is

supposed to defend it (i.e. Islam). Moreover, this study shows that what becomes a religiously legitimate consumption depends on a convergence of meso/macro forces: (1) religious norms, which should support the consumption of the veil; (2) space, here the secular urban setting, which echoes stigmatization for the veil as a symbol of traditional, rural Islam; (3) social class, which affects a person's power to contradict social and religious norms; and (4) fashion/external culture, which may (not) support deviant religious and consumption behaviours.

The impact of religious communities, both formal and informal (Hirschman, 1981; Jafari & Goulding, 2008; Nagel & Staeheli, 2004; Jafari, 2012), on wellbeing is relevant. Jafari et al. (in press) identify three main types of implications. First, they claim that religion can be manipulated for political and ideological reasons, which transform the 'religion' into the 'religious'. In similar contexts, new forms of vulnerability emerge that raise preoccupation for the physical, psychological, economic, and socio-cultural risks they encompass. Second, these authors underline how the marketplace can feed or attenuate religious and ethnic conflicts, through companies' and consumers' use of commodified religious signs and symbols. As Thompson (2013) evokes, consumers with limited access to political channels have often used consumption and the market as 'tools for socio-economic mobilization'. Third, Jafari et al. (in press) invite to consider how modernity is modifying religion. They point out that our liquid society (Bauman, 2005) nurtures forms of hybrid religiosity and hybrid ethnicity, which question the nature and porosity of extant religious and ethnic boundaries, with both opportunities and risks for wellbeing.

### ***Key macro forces in ethnicity and wellbeing (de)construction***

#### *Ethnicity and wellbeing in the marketplace*

Ethnicity is constantly (de)constructed also within the marketplace. Consumer acculturation research demonstrates that people and organisations operate as acculturation agents by providing migrants with cultural information and behavioural templates for consumption (Peñaloza, 1989). Migrant consumers can draw from different sets of agents, such as home-country agents, host-society agents, agents of co-residing ethnic groups, and transnational agents (Askegaard et al., 2005; Peñaloza, 1994; Wamwara-Mbugua et al., 2008). Studies adopting a multilateral acculturation view (e.g. Berry, 1980; Luedicke, 2011) suggest an extended frame of analysis to account for other potential contributors to the (de)construction of ethnicity: (1) non-voluntary agents that exert agency but unintentionally, either due to indifference or to particular self-motives (Broderick et al., 2011; Kipnis et al., 2013); (2) non-agentic actors that do not actively exert agency but partake in intercultural interactions (Luedicke, 2011; Peñaloza & Gilly, 1999); and (3) migrant actors that have reciprocal effects on multicultural experiences of non-migrant people (Grier et al., 2006).

Market actors, which interact with and have potential to influence ethnicity (de)construction for both migrant and non-migrant populations, include: (1) human actors (sales personnel, other consumers); (2) material actors (brands, retail and leisure spaces); (3) symbolic actors (advertising and media); and (4) institutional actors. Whilst market actors may perform agentic (voluntary or non-voluntary) and non-agentic functions for different ethnic groups, they all produce and communicate specific cultural meanings that are interpreted by other actors and consumers (McCracken, 1986). For example, Lamont and Molnár (2001) documented how marketing professionals in the U.S.A. participate in the construction and circulation of given representations of Afro-American consumers (e.g. people with a ‘stigmatised social identity on their body’; p. 37) as well as in the presumed meanings of consumption for them (e.g. a means to defy racism and express appurtenance to the American middle-class). The authors argue that

marketing professionals specialized in the Afro-American market—along with Afro-Americans—have an interest in claiming difference between Afro-American consumers and other consumers. A difference that allows for tailored products that leverage on these consumers' lack of social esteem to subsequently increase their willingness to purchase status brands.

Interpretation of cultural meanings may differ across ethnic groups. For example, brand culture literature (Cayla & Arnould, 2008; Schroeder, 2009; Schroeder & Salzer-Mörling, 2006) demonstrates that brands as cultural forms evolve differently across cultural contexts since their meanings are embedded in historical, geographical, and socio-cultural specifics. Also, some market actors mediate production and communication of other actors' meanings. For instance, positioning of a cooking sauce brand in the 'ethnic' foods section of a retail space elevates the ethnic element of this brand's meaning in a particular context. Similarly, since people use consumption as a resource for construction and manifestation of their (ethnic) identities (Thompson, 2013), their interpretation of and response to meanings of particular actors may involve meanings' reproduction or alteration to suit their ethnic contexts and worldview.

Furthermore, response to market actors' meanings goes far beyond market transactions. The most recent example is the multi-ethnic makeover given to *Elsa the Snow Queen* (a princess character in Disney's new animation) by Tumblr users' reflecting their frustration with the lack of ethnic diversity in Disney's movies (Whitelocks, 2013). Finally, actors themselves (e.g. companies) can adapt the meanings they produce and the ways they communicate these meanings to (1) suit newly-evolved realities and (2) extend their agency to more consumer segments. In turn, meaning adaptation evokes different responses from segments for which an actor already performs agentic functions, from segments on which an actor attempts to extend agency, and from segments for which an actor is a non-agent. For example, multiple ethnic backgrounds in advertising has been shown to intensify discriminatory and prejudicial cognitions amongst host

and migrant ethnic consumer groups irrespective of whether these groups are a target audience (Broderick et al., 2011). Similarly, promotions targeting ethnic groups have been shown to create a backlash from segments of host populations, such as opposition to Halal certified food signage in a supermarket during Ramadan by right-wing non-Muslim consumers in the U.S.A. (Süerdem, 2013).

In sum, the way different market actors produce, reproduce, and exchange consumption meanings has significant social implications for intercultural relations and wellbeing in ethnically diverse societies. Thus, understanding the processes that underlie consumer interpretations and responses to these meanings, and how this interrogates ethnic identity, is foundational for advancing migrants' and non-migrants' wellbeing as well as for orienting how companies can best support consumers' ethnic identity goals.

#### *Ethnicity and wellbeing in the media*

In Silverstone's (2007, p. 5) words, media are 'resources for thought, judgment, and action, both personal and political', which influence public opinion on ethnicity and on how/what different ethnic groups consume. Therefore, they should be seen not only as reflections of pre-existing socio-political realities, but also as constitutive elements in the process of meaning creation in a society (Georgiou, 2012) as well as in a market (McCracken, 1986). Understanding these kinds of judgements becomes critical in ethnically diverse societies and markets. Notably, although these societies and markets claim to hold certain values such as equality, diversity, and multiculturalism, the way they use media frequently produces negative, divisive results.

For instance, Downing and Husband (2005) argue that Western media represent ethnicity unfairly, too often politicizing discussion on ethnicity and increasing the risks of racism surrounding ethnicity discourse. They further posit that when ethnicities are categorised on the

basis of race, a powerful social category with no scientific reason (Goldberg, 1992), they can be effectively excluded/included from/in social groups. This categorisation then feeds the media's commercial and political agenda with cultural and social representations. Given that the ideological use of race (dis)empowers people based upon their ethnicity, when racial/ethnic representations are institutionalized, they generate feelings of superiority/inferiority among ethnic groups in a given society and market. As Winant (2000, 2005) also contends, new metaphors (e.g. nationality and ethnicity) create new types of power domination in social relations with evident implications for wellbeing.

The historical roots of such representations can be found in 'race-thinking'. According to Barzun (1965/1937), such an outlook postulates that, due to their different physical features, human beings are said to belong to stable and separate types. In other words, what differentiates or connects human beings is not their moral values or intellectual capacities but race, a myth historically developed in human society. Media images often demonise these people as 'others' and sometimes 'criminals' and 'undesirables' (King & Wood, 2001). When such ethnic images are continuously reproduced in the mass media, society's biased perceptions of ethnicity are created, resulting in easier adaptation of institutionalised racism (Downing & Husband, 2005). Interestingly, migrants themselves can either generate their own media or stick to the home country media. The result of such engagements can be disintegration of the migrants in the host country (King & Wood, 2001).

Representations of ethnic 'otherness' are also frequent in commercial media. Marketers' decisions about how to segment a market according to consumer ethnicity direct their advertising and communication choices. Instead of facilitating ethnic groups' spontaneous self-ethnic identification (Stayman & Deshpande, 1989), commercial media tend to impose external representations of ethnic identities (Visconti & Üçok Hughes, 2011). Lindridge (in press) warns

against the risks of ethnic segmentation and argues that marketers should consider more attentively to what extent they wish to target ethnic groups via overt ethnic segmentation and communication or instead via product adaptation, which is more neutral in terms of creation of ethnic stereotypes.

Demonization of ethnic groups or migrants may also be related to ideological and political factors that shape migrants' image in the host country. For example, Saeed (2007) demonstrates how the British press often portrays British Muslims as aliens, in line with a new form of racism called 'Islamphobia'. This racism, as Saeed argues, is rooted on the separation between 'Britishness' and 'un-Britishness'. Similarly, Jafari and Goulding (2008) demonstrate how Western media have demonised 'Muslimness', with the effect that Iranian migrants in the UK feel excluded from society and experience increasing anxiety and dislocation. This misrepresentation relies on the West's orientalist approach to Muslim societies, a stance accelerated after 9/11 (Sandıkcı & Jafari, 2013), which at the same time serves the double objective of politicizing discussion on certain ethnic groups and stimulating media sales since racism may sell at the level of the marketplace (Bloxham & Kushner, 1998). These studies necessitate in depth understanding of the role of media in (re)generation of ethnic images and their subsequent implications for personal and collective wellbeing.

### ***Moderating variables***

#### *Identity threats and opportunities*

The way people and groups negotiate tensions arising from identity threats—real or perceived threats posed by ethnic others to one's personal and in-group security—against opportunities—appraisal of what resources can be gained through different avenues of threats' alleviation or avoidance—result in ethnic identity (de)construction (Kosic, Mannetti, & Lackland, 2005;

Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999). Integrated Threat Theory (ITT) identifies four types of perceived threats: (1) realistic threats (i.e. threats to political, financial, and material wellbeing); (2) symbolic threats (i.e. perceived violation of cultural values, norms, and practices); (3) intergroup anxiety (i.e. concerns about being embarrassed, rejected, ridiculed or exploited on the basis of a person's ethnic background); and (4) negative stereotypes (i.e. expectations of cultural interactions and justification for prejudice and discrimination) (Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, & Tur-Kaspa, 1998; Stephan et al., 1999). As mentioned above, consumption can provide either threats and opportunities for ethnic identity.

Psychological stress has profound implications for wellbeing both at a market and social level. From a TCR perspective, the key aspect is how to safeguard personal and collective wellbeing in a stressful ethnicity-related event (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Wang & Patten, 2001). First, some situational factors such as acuteness, predictability, imminence, and controllability of a stressor, affect the likelihood of (not) controlling the stressful event. Second, personal agency and resources play a significant role. Elaborating upon Hobfoll et al. (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll & Liebermann, 1987), we suggest protecting and empowering the following personal resources in order to safeguard wellbeing in the instance of ethnic stress: (1) personal resources (self-esteem, skills, and self-efficacy) used to contest being associated with one's ethnic group; (2) energy resources (finances and knowledge); (3) condition resources (relationships, social standing, and status arising from belonging to an ethnic group); (4) object resources (valued possessions and material objects having unique ethnic meanings); and (5) collective support used as a means for attainment/preservation of all other resources.

*Capital, collective efficacy, and collective leverage*

In line with Bourdieu (1986), four types of capital are relevant in the (de)construction of ethnic identity and for personal and collective wellbeing: economic, social, cultural, and political capital. Respectively, they consist of: (1) accumulated institutionalized labour convertible into financial terms; (2) accumulated social obligations institutionalized as belonging to a(n) (ethnic) community; (3) accumulated cultural dispositions, rituals, goods, and possessions institutionalized as original properties of a(n) (ethnic) community; and (4) accumulated resources institutionalized as systems deployable to effectively influence policy. When a dominating ethnic group appropriates these capitals exclusively, being accepted as a member of that group is the prerequisite for receiving support, trust, and information sharing. Likewise, inability to access capital makes people susceptible to threats and may drive mobilization of actions to acquire/replenish capital.

Wellbeing is pursued through mobilization, which may consist of: (1) collective efficacy (Crockett et al., 2011) resulting into willingness and capability of a group to support its members and accumulate capital for their in-group; and (2) collective leverage (Guzzini, 2006), which implies acceptance of acquiring/sharing capital from/with ethnic out-groups. Conversely, when collective efficacy and leverage are low, people's mobilization may be directed towards gaining membership in out-groups that are perceived to hold capital. With reference to collective efficacy, dominated ethnic groups have been shown to mobilize ethnic solidarity in economic relations and entrepreneurial activities so to determine enclave economy and ethnic nepotism (Ram, 1994; Salter & Harpending, 2013; Sanders & Nee, 1987). For example, with reference to collective leverage, authentic Latino brands and media benefitted from American organizations seeking to strengthen their presence in the American-Latinos market through development of partnership and by providing consultancy (Henstorf, Martinez, & Merino, 2012).

### *Coping strategies*

Coping strategies may be activated as a personal or collective response to alleviate stress related to ethnicity (de)construction. Broadly speaking, these strategies consist of the maintenance of personal and/or collective (material) resources and of the reinterpretation of threats (Hobfoll, 1989), for example, by focusing on what can be gained rather than lost in a particular stressful circumstance. Since ‘employing resources for coping is (...) stressful in itself’ (Hobfoll, 1989, p. 518), people initially judge the benefits and costs of pursuing coping strategies.

Relying upon acculturation studies (Berry, 1997; Tadmor & Tetlock, 2006; Triandis, Kashima, Shimada, & Villareal, 1986; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999) and identity strategies documented within host populations (Arnett, 2002; Druckman, 1994; Oberecker & Diamantopoulos, 2011; Oberecker et al., 2008; Wallendorf & Reilly, 1983), we categorize three main types of coping strategies to reduce stress related to ethnic identity (de)construction and to improve personal and collective wellbeing. First, coping may result in extreme ethnic identity change, as in the case of assimilation and marginalization (Berry, 1980) in which consumption is used to visualize such a strategy (Peñaloza, 1994). This coping strategy is more likely to happen whenever adoption of ethnic out-group’s (market) identity grants superior opportunities or minimizes losses for the dominated person/in-group. Second, coping may more mildly consist of adaptation or modification of ethnic identity, as in the case of biculturalism and cultural swapping (Luna et al., 2008; Oswald, 1999; Peñaloza, 1994). This type of coping strategy is justified whenever an out-group’s granted opportunities or threats are confronted with a personal/in-group’s resources too valuable to lose. Through swapping, a person either shifts between consumptions typical of different ethnic consumer cultures or combines these cultures together. Third, coping can result in affirmation of ethnic identity, as in the case of separation (Dona & Berry, 1994), nationalism, resistance, and rejection (Berry, 1980; Deveraux, 1970). Again, such

strategies can use consumption to show national pride and rejection of an ethnic group's consumer culture, as in the case of 'infidel brands' mentioned before (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012). This strategy is likely to emerge in case of insignificant opportunities/threats coming from the out-group or in case of so highly significant threats to justify reinforced employment of one's own and ethnic in-group resources to withstand the posed threats. Regardless of the type of strategy, coping abilities and effects moderate ethnicity (de)construction as well as personal and collective wellbeing.

### *History of present*

External forces representing both threats and opportunities for ethnicity (de)construction as well as personal and collective wellbeing are not evaluated equally and permanently as positive/negative by all people since their interpretation is subjective and contextually-specific. For instance, Bhatia and Ram (2009) show how members of the Indian diaspora in the U.S.A. re-evaluated their acculturation strategies in light of 9/11. They argue that the idea of invariant acculturation strategies requires re-examination since coping strategies may change gradually or drastically in response to environmental changes. Hence, the meanings consumers attribute to their and others' consumptions can change over time. We define this moderator of ethnicity (de)construction as 'history of present'. Campbell (1998, p. 5) argues that 'neither history of present is an instance of presentism—where the present is read back into the past—or an instance of finalism, that mode of analysis whereby the analyst maintains that a kernel of the present located in the past has inexorably progressed such that it now defines our condition'. Rather, a history of present represents an incitement from the present that can be traced to how it occurred and gained importance.

We believe that history of present is a valuable concept advancing that of ‘situational ethnicity’ (Okamura, 1981; Stayman & Deshpande, 1989) since it not only highlights importance of the context in which ethnicity is (de)constructed through consumption but also acknowledges the longitudinal aspect of situational variables affecting consumption. Hence, we contend that the focus of the study of ethnicity should shift from identifying types of coping strategies to understanding the circumstantial drivers of threats interpreted as negative or positive stressors.

### **Conclusions: A TCR agenda for future research into consumer ethnicity**

This article has systematically and critically reviewed research into ethnicity from different disciplines—marketing and consumer research, psychology, sociology, ethnic and critical race studies— and different ontological and epistemological perspectives and approaches—positivist experiments, field work, national data bases, firm and media case studies—towards the dual goals of developing transformative conceptual insights and formulating programmatic research suggestions. The former discussion has extensively addressed the transformative insights for personal and collective wellbeing that we detect at the level of both the vocabulary to describe individual ethnic identity positions and the meso/macro forces (de)constructing representations of ethnicity over time. In the interest of brevity, we do not summarize these implications for personal and collective wellbeing.

Instead, we direct attention to suggestions for future TCR-sensitive research into consumer ethnicity. Consistently with the holistic interpretive model we provide, we encourage creative conceptualizations of personal empowerment and wellbeing that engage with the world as we know it, where consumption and markets are not separate domains for those we study (Peñaloza, 2007; Peñaloza, Toulouse, and Visconti, 2011). Instead, accelerating multicultural

experience—whether it be as the result of migration and international travel for work opportunity, leisure, family reunification, or to flee economic and political hardship and instability— blurs with uneven labour conditions and skewed distributions of wealth (Reinert, 2007), against a dramatic backdrop of politicians leveraging ethnic strife for political gain (Downing & Husband; 2005), marketers targeting them with products and services (Costa & Bamossy, 1995), and a striking contrast of government ideals of equal opportunity with social hierarchy (Mick et al. 2012). A transformative agenda for research into consumer ethnicity is thus grounded on such conditions.

We derive suggestions for future research at both the micro, meso, and macro level. TCR implications at the micro level encourage work that uses the precision of experimental and survey methods to specify the factors, forces, threats, and mediating and moderating relationships among variables, in ways that contribute to deeper understanding of the antecedents and processes of personal ethnic expression, as also captured in Figure 1. Our work documents that, since the foundation of research into consumer ethnicity almost three decades ago, contextual factors as well as individual life conditions have changed at tremendous pace. The fluidity, rapidity, and multiplication of ethnic identity positions and representations of ethnicity in various societies today raise unprecedented questions about how ethnic interactions occur, the way they affect individual ability to and strategies of self-identification, and the extent to which ethnic identity positions and strategies are maintained over time. In some contexts, people make choices about the types of boundaries they try to maintain or attempt to deconstruct (Weinberger, 2012), and these choices affect their wellbeing. Consumption often sits at the nexus of these focal interactions and decisions; it draws focus to ethnic boundaries and often becomes a boundary making or spanning tool.

We also encourage meso level work attending to collective manifestations of ethnic identity and belonging, as well as fragmentation, disavowal, discriminations, and even violence (Bar-Tal, 1990; Beck, 2010). Such work might explore contemporary patterns of ethnic identity positions and relations between them, as well as more historical group-level, relational identity trajectories in ways that generates particular, context-dependent insights while building robust frameworks for comparative analysis. Further, advancing the meso study of collectivities beyond migrants to include sojourners, cosmopolitans, global citizens, and hyphenated identity formations offers tremendous potential in illuminating the intersectional social relations described by Crockett et al. (2011). It also helps bring to the fore the dramatic scale and scope of transnational and global flows of people and resources that inform emergent and recessive social group formation.

At a macro level, we encourage transformative consumer research to pursue action-oriented case studies within market agents in order to document the personal and organisational activities and ways of thinking that constitute ethnic market targeting programs over time. We invite researchers to engage with ethnic activists and social movements in challenging denigrating representations and formulating new metaphors for ethnic identity and collective development. Another promising possibility is interning in government and non-governmental organisations and educational institutions. In doing so, scholars can gain access and document the development and implementation of ethnic, social and economic policy, where conceptualisation and operationalization at the network-based, system level, are required. Such macro level, transformative work could explore the ways marketing activity as an institutional practice draws from, fosters, and inhibits hierarchical relations between social subgroupings (Lamont & Molnar, 2002). Also important at this level is conceptualising and empirical examination of the ‘unintended effects’ of (ethnic) marketing practices and (ethnic) marketing research programs

(Smith, 2006), to better understand how being researched and targeted as a market affects personal ethnic wellbeing as well as interethnic relations. In line with Saperstein and Penner's work (2012), future research should also consider the mutual influence between the collective construction of ethnicity and conditions of racialized inequality, and between micro individual processes making ethnicity more fluid and macro social stratification effects.

Finally, we strongly encourage all researchers, regardless of their disciplinary appurtenance and level of analysis, to take a reflexive stance in researching ethnicity, examining taken-for-granted presumptions about the 'ethnic consumer', to bring to light how ethnic stereotypes operate in marketing and consumer research, and to bring about more consciously egalitarian forms. Such work need not cast a blind eye to existing social dynamics and hierarchical relations. To the contrary, only by engaging with the world in which we live as it is, inhabiting and exploiting the positions we are trained for in doing research and teaching students, managers, and future executives, may we succeed in transforming ourselves, our work, and the cultural worlds, ethnic social positions, and ethnic identities which we inhabit.

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**Table 1**

A refined vocabulary for research into consumer ethnicity

<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Scope of application</b>	<b>Ethnic references</b>	<b>Identity positions</b>	<b>Implications for wellbeing</b>
Acculturation (Dominant/dominated frame)	Long-term migrants versus local dwellers  Typical of confrontations between different ethnic collectives	- Host culture - Culture of origin (often crystallized) - Ethnic minorities' meta-culture	- Assimilation - Resistance/Segregation - Biculturalism/ Swapping	Pure, separate, stereotypical, and crystallized ethnic identities used for political confrontation  Disparities in economic, political, and symbolic power between different ethnic groups is acknowledged and contested
Cultural sojourning	Sojourners (not migrants)  Typical of prolonged stays abroad for study or work	- Host culture - Culture of origin - Sojourners' meta-culture	- Affirmative - Subtractive - Additive - Global - Resistive shift - Marginal shift	Attentive consideration of the effects of adaptation and repatriation on personal wellbeing
Cosmopolitanism	Protean travellers (not migrants)  Typical of multicultural societies offering an array of ethnic/cultural references	- Local culture - Multiple cultures - Cosmopolitan culture	- Cosmopolitan identity (multi-space-related)	Boundary-less ethnic identity with liberatory effects for personal and collective wellbeing
Global citizenship	(Migrants) and non-migrants  Often idealized appurtenance to a community of like-minded people  Typical of markets experiencing a global culture	- Global culture (overarching culture)	- Imagined translocal identity	Sense of personal and collective empowerment with like-minded people through imagined citizenship and global consumer culture  Confrontation between a Western and a non-Western definition of global citizenship that challenges national pride
Hyphenated ethnicity	Frequent migrants, frequent long-term sojourners, and mixed ethnic families  Typical of people having a multi-ethnic competence due to life events	- Multiple local cultures - Multiple cultures of origin	- Hyphenated identity (alternating and equally ranked ethnic identities)	Personal empowerment due to identification and commitment to multiple ethnic references  Multiple ethnic references are not organised hierarchically
Pan-ethnicity	Migrants and non-migrants  Typical of superregional ethnic identities	- Local culture - (Culture of origin) - Superregional meta-culture	- Pan-identity (convergent ethnic identities)	Bi-dimensional references for ethnic identity construction are overcome  Seeks similarity over difference among included groups
Transnationalism	Migrant (or second generations)  Typical of a constantly rejuvenated confrontation with multiple ethnic references	- Local culture - Culture of origin (constantly updated)	- Transnational biculturalism (spatial and cultural alternation)	Extended perception of belongingness and rooting in multiple ethnic collectives  Higher self-esteem

**Figure 1**

Meso and macro forces (de)stabilizing ethnicity and personal/collective wellbeing

