EGE AKADEMİK BAKIŞ / *EGE ACADEMIC REVIEW*

Cilt 23 • Sayı 3 • Temmuz 2023
SS. 489/506
Doi: 10.21121/eab. 1215376
Başvuru Tarihi: 6 Aralık 2022 • Kabul Tarihi: 2 Mayıs 2023

Article Type: *Research Article*

Status Consumption and Negotiation of Tastes: Anchoring on Ethnic Capital

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ABSTRACT

This study examines status consumption and socio-cultural tensions between wealthy Turkish indigenes and newly enriched Kurdish migrants in Şanlıurfa, an underdeveloped city in Turkey. The article focuses on ethnicity, which enables the construction and negotiation of consumer identities and (re)production of distinctions between competing groups under the conditions of marketization. In this study, which utilized the qualitative research method, in-depth interviews were conducted with 32 participants, and techniques such as observation, participant observation, and historical methodology were utilized.

Ethnic capital, a subcategory of social and cultural capital, refers to the dispositions, rituals, and skills of an ethnic group and its members and serves as a source of social power to reproduce group distinctions. The findings contribute to the literature by revealing that, in a context where modernity is not completely entrenched, ethnic capital can explain the scope of competitive status consumption and power struggles. Consumers can still remain attached to their ethnic capital, as they move between different competitive positions in the field of consumption. It has been found that ethnic groups see themselves as having superior qualities—and yet a need to improve—and try to reflect this not by emulating necessarily 'the' or 'an' other but by emulating lifestyle consumption. .

Keywords: Rural-to-Urban Migration, Cultural Capital, Ethnic Capital, Status Consumption, Taste.

JEL Classification Codes: M31, E21, Z13

Referencing Style: APA 7

INTRODUCTION

A client walks into the florist and asks for a flower arrangement to decorate his son's wedding table. When the florist asks what he wants, he says, "Just don't make it look like an Aşayir style". The florist nods to indicate that he understands what the client likes and dislikes. He does not need to ask for more details about the type, shape or color of the flowers (Field note, 2018).

Aşayir, meaning a feudal tribe member, is a condescending name given to Kurdish rural-to-urban migrants by the Turkish indigenes in Şanlıurfa (simply Urfa), Turkey. In a context where the codes related to ethnic identities and their consumption tastes are known by everyone, the client easily negotiated his own consumer identity and drew social boundaries by referring to ethnic tastes.

In late capitalist economies, ethnicity has also become exchangeable. The exchange process of ethnicity involves not only the idea of it as a thing for sale but also as a construct that can be exchanged by all actors in the marketplace. While marketers capitalize on it as a tool for value proposition, consumers can also construct and negotiate their consumer identities based on ethnicity, and integrate with and differentiate from others in society. Visconti et al. (2014) noted that ethnicity, which is discursively constructed and implies lasting group privileges, has been studied in the field of consumer research with a focus on how and why consumers elaborate, negotiate, transform, and commodify their ethnicity in the marketplace.

Belonging to an ethnic community and accumulated cultural dispositions are analyzed as a part of social and cultural capital (Oswald, 1999; Askegaard et al., 2005; Ourahmoune and Ozcaglar-Toulouse, 2012; Luedicke, 2015; Veresiu and Giesler, 2018). We argue that the focus of ethnicity studies should shift to a concept of "ethnic capital". We draw attention to ethnic capital as a type of capital accumulated by consumers through the internalization of ethnic values and norms, participation in ethnic bonding activities, consumption of ethnic products, use of ethnic capital in ensuring social mobility and other social and cultural activities.

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Numerous researchers (Borjas, 1992; Cutler et al., 2005; Zhou and Lin, 2005; Vallejo, 2009; Shah et al., 2010; Mukherjee and Pattnaik, 2021; Iqbal and Modood, 2023; Haq et al., 2023) have examined the social and intergenerational mobility of immigrant communities within the context of education, employment, and the labor market. These studies have led to the development of the concept of ethnic capital."

Zhou and Lin (2005) argued that ethnic capital includes interactive processes of ethnic-specific financial, human, and social capitals, underlining that ethnic suburbs offer places and opportunities for ethnic bonding activities that facilitate upward social mobility in social networks. Vallejo (2009), in her study of immigrant middle-class ethnic communities that are neither class homogeneous nor lacking in social and human capital resources, found that ethnic communities provide a space where ethnic capital can be mobilized for upward mobility. Mukherjee and Pattnaik (2021) showed that ethnic affiliation translates into social capital, and ethnic capital is conducive to assimilation, rather than immigrants' socio-economic position and suburbanization. Ethnicity has been found to be a positive form of capital that allows consumers to challenge dominant and/or mainstream ideals, perceive a sense of being or belonging (Moran 2016), and ameliorate the effects of poor social class. Shah, Dwyer, and Modood (2010) argued that ethnic social relations and ethnic institutions can be conduits of cultural and social capital and therefore constitutive of class positioning. They found that some components of ethnic capital, such as family relationships, the transmission of values, and the enforcement of norms, are important in the educational context. Borjas (1992) revealed that the experiences and skills of ethnic groups rather than parents influence social mobility of the new generation. Thus, he suggested that ethnic capital can alter members' opportunity set and influence behavior, and labor market outcomes. Cutler et al. (2005) defined ethnic capital as having access to the set of individual attributes, cultural norms, and ethnic institutions that contribute to the well-being of an ethnic group. *Iqbal and Modood (2023) discovered that the ethnic capital of parents and the community can be a driving factor in their children's education, particularly in a socioeconomically disadvantaged context. Meanwhile, Haq et al. (2023) contributed to the field with their model that explains how ethnic minority culture shapes the development of human capital resources, as well as the relationship between these resources and business performance in communities that are often characterized as "left behind.""*

> "However, prior studies did not consider ethnic capital as a mechanism that reproduces distinctions between groups or as an element that is capitalized on within the framework of a positioning strategy. We argue that ethnic capital, which is a subcategory of Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of social and cultural capital and a form of inherited capital that individuals or groups use implicitly or consciously as a tool in their struggles within the consumption field, reproduces distinctions between groups. It can be utilized as a means of obtaining a contentious space in a society with high tensions stemming from migration. This study focuses on ethnic capital, which enables the construction and negotiation of consumer identities and the (re) production of distinctions between competing groups under marketization conditions, to examine the socio-cultural tensions and competitive status consumption between wealthy Turkish indigenes and newly wealthy Kurdish migrants in Urfa."

After briefly explaining the concepts of cultural capital and habitus, we discuss some influential studies that examine the socio-cultural patterning of consumption based on Bourdieusian theory. In the pages that follow, we scrutinize how cultural and ethnic capital are instrumentalized in tensions between wealthy but diverse ethnic women in the field of status consumption.

Socio-Cultural Patterning of Consumption: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu

Bourdieu (1986) argued that not only economic capital, but also social connections and tastes can serve as tools of positioning in society. Cultural capital refers to accumulated tastes, cultural practices, and knowledge, i.e. dispositions, rituals, and skills that serve as a resource of social power (Joppke, 1986). It is institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications, embodied in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body, and objectified in the form of cultural possessions (Bourdieu, 1986). In a consumer culture, products that are appropriated symbolically and materially serve as embodiments of shared cultural values, norms, and beliefs.

Habitus, a spontaneous and preconsciously acquired system of generative schemes, embodies implicit cultural knowledge and forms the basic frameworks of cultural tastes (Bourdieu, 1984; 2005). Driven from social structures, such as the structure of relations between the

groups or classes, it is a scheme of generative principles that shape a person's thoughts, dispositions, and actions. It also structures these structures as practices and representations are practically adapted to their outcomes (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

Consumption is a social setting in which consumers, who are cultivated in a socio-historically structured marketplace, position themselves, form relationships, interact and compete for capital, power, and status through products, brand images, and consumption practices (Arsel and Thompson, 2011). Some of the influential consumer research that draws on Bourdieu's sociology focused on habitus (Saatcioglu and Ozanne, 2013), cultural capital and consumer (dis)tastes (Wilk, 1997; Gayo-Cal et al., 2006; Sandikci and Ger, 2010; Arsel and Bean, 2013, Ustuner and Holt, 2010; Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, 2013), socio-cultural patterning of consumer acculturation (Ustuner and Holt, 2007; Luedicke, 2015; Hamlett et al., 2008), fields of consumption (Arsel and Thompson, 2011), symbolic capital, power and market dynamics (Ustuner and Thompson, 2012; Vikas et al., 2015), subcultures of consumption (Kates, 2002; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995), class structure and consumer identities (Ourahmoune and Ozcaglar-Toulouse, 2012).

The findings of these influential studies show that there are still gaps that need to be addressed in Bourdieu's sociology when used to explain social life organized around consumption practices and tastes. As Holt (1998) remarked, several important lacunae remain that need to be put under further scrutiny. When considered on the basis of ethnicity, Visconti et al. (2014) argued that there remains a lack of research on meso/macro forces influencing ethnicity (de)construction and personal/collective well-being. Similarly, Ger et al. (2018) urged consumption researchers to go beyond the lens of acculturation and focus on ethnic group conflicts.

Applying the Bourdieusian theories to consumer culture literature, Holt (1997;1998) focused on consumption practices and investigated the systematic differences in tastes and consumption practices driven by cultural capital. He showed that consumption serves as a powerful site for the (re)production of social stratification. Üstüner and Holt (2007) found that poor rural-urban immigrants internalize, exclude, or live outside the dominant Western consumer culture ideology and suffer from a fragmented identity project, but never follow cultural hybrid identity projects. Contrary to Bourdieu's (1986) argument that habitus and cultural capital are accumulated quite unconsciously through unintentional learning mechanisms, they (2010) showed that cultural capital accumulation in Turkey proceeds differently from his propositions. They highlighted high-cultural-capital consumers' deterritorialization of global consumption practices and deliberate adoption of Western cultural codes into their consumption fields in order to strengthen their social position.

Karademir-Hazir (2017) analyzed how cultural capital that is manifested in the "presented" self of (un)veiled Turkish women shapes consumption tastes. She found that the "dressed body", which expresses embodied cultural capital, can increase or limit opportunities and shape distinctions. Arsel and Bean (2013) extended the theoretical knowledge of taste by defining the regime of taste as a discursively constructed normative system that permeates daily practical knowledge and shapes the meanings attributed to products and actions. Skandalis et al. (2018) demonstrated that consumer tastes are also shaped by the spatial aesthetics of the marketplaces. Vikas et al. (2015) demonstrated how new capitalist socio-economic motives and status contests transform cultural dispositions of Indian caste members under conditions of marketization. Contrary to what is known, they found that young elite caste groups imitate the ostentatious consumption practices of the newly-rich lower caste groups based on aesthetic appeal.

Moreover, contrary to the general idea that dislikes are more revealing of taste than likes and they may result in cultural hostility between social groups, Warde (2011a) did not find expressed dislikes as the primary indicator of meaningful social boundaries. Wilk (1997) found that dislikes are not inherently anti- or pro-consumption, but instead form a complex and diverse social field in which they are often juxtaposed with their opposites. He also demonstrated that not all dislikes are associated with a despised class or group. Adding to Bourdieu's view that tastes are homologous between forms within the confines of one's habitus, Paddock (2018) pointed to omnivorous taste as an example of a new form of distinction

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHOD

This study focuses on the instrumentalization of ethnicity in social distinctions and social inclusion/exclusion through competitive status consumption. As a southeastern city in Turkey that is home to diverse ethnic communities (Turks, Kurds and Arabs, largely Muslims), Urfa provides a relatively isolated context in which ethnicity plays a vital role in the status consumption practices of close-knit, patriarchal, and hierarchical ethnic communities.

Urfa is a city known for the piety and conservatism of its inhabitants, who are mostly uneducated and relatively unreceptive to other cultures. Women often marry early, are overwhelmingly unemployed, and play the traditional roles of housewives and mothers. Feudal tribes still exist in the region, consisting of families or other groups that share a common ancestry, kinship and ethnicity. Oktem (2004) pointed to the active participation of Turks as the dominant ethnic group in the continuation of ethno-nationalist rituals and discourses, and the emergence of an aggressive Kurdish ethno-nationalism that mirrors the Turkish majority. While Turkish indigenes mostly resided in the old city center, Kurdish ethnic groups migrated to the outskirts of Urfa. Although the migrations were mainly due to economic difficulties before, their reasons have changed after the 1980s. Following the initiation of agricultural development programs, especially the Southeastern Anatolia Project, the rural people became prosperous and moved up socially. It is also claimed that income increases are due to the smuggling of weapons, oil, drugs, and alcohol (Gokce, 2009). Thanks to the transition to a free-market capitalist economy, the city attracted private capital and offered migrants a better income (Tore and Som, 2009). As villagers earned more, they were able to migrate to the city center and escape the unrest created by the armed conflicts between the Turkish Army and terrorist groups from the mid-80s onwards. Some other groups had to migrate from rural areas to central city districts, taking the compensation given to them after the lake created by the Atatürk Dam flooded their lands. The villagers, whom the government recruited as security forces against terrorists and earned good income, were also among those who migrated. Thus, Urfa has become an area where social encounters and polarizing tensions between indigenes and migrants become evident in daily life and consumption practices. The Turkish indigenes, who believed that the migrations polluted their places, defined themselves as the eternal owners of the city. They try to belittle the Kurdish migrants by calling them Aşayir. In response, Kurdish migrants gave them names such as isotçu, meaning leisure-loving and lazy person. By calling each other offensive names, they limit the shared understandings between the two groups and build social boundaries. The rising tensions and competition between rich indigenes and newly enriched migrants are also reflected in consumption practices.

This study examines how two rival ethnic groups living in Urfa construct and negotiate their own ethnicity through consumption practices in a marketplace where images of the Western global and authentic local are consumed as indicators of modernity and/or nobility. For the purpose of the study, the struggle of wealthy women to acquire and maintain status through status consumption practices is analyzed. To provide a cultural perspective on women's authentic experiences, the lead author conducted ethnographic fieldwork for two years. The dataset (participant observations, oral history, in-depth interviews, and archival materials) was interpreted by both authors. The fieldwork focused on rituals, language, interactions, physical environment, consumption practices, and tastes. However, due to the conservative culture of the participants, visual data could not be recorded except for home decoration photos. Phenomenological in-depth interviews were conducted with thirty-five participants in order to illuminate the participants' interpretations of their own experiences. The first part of the interviews included the participants' comments on migration and the resulting transformation in the urban area, and their identification of their own and others' identities. The second part included detailed interviews on women's interactions and competitive status consumption practices. Two interviews were conducted with mothers and their daughters to explore generational dimensions. Group interviews were also conducted with a local and a migrant who met during a home visit to explore tensions and compromises between them and learn more about their assessment of the other group. "The data collection process for this study was conducted through intermittent visits to the field from 2015-2017, and informed consent forms were signed by all participants prior to their interviews." After analyzing data from 20 interviews collected in a year in the field, 15 more interviews were conducted in the second year to collect more data on unsaturated themes. The interview database contained 735 transcribed pages of the 1912-minutes long audio recording. The visual dataset consisted of 716 photographs taken at home by the lead author and the participants themselves. The profiles of the participants are shown in Table 1.

In order to understand the research context socio-historically, archival data were collected through a 5-year systematic sampling from a local daily newspaper called "Hizmet Gazetesi" (initially named "Demokrat Türkiye"), which started publications in 1959. News and columns were collected on events that could point to the relations between two ethnic groups. In addition to cross-checking the different data, the findings were shared with the participants who agreed to be contacted for member checks to confirm the accuracy of the findings. Men and migrants who are neither indigene nor "Aşayir" are also interviewed to achieve credibility by triangulating the data source and incorporating different etic perspectives.

Table 1. Profiles of Participants

Nick Name	Sex (F/M)	Age	Education	Occupation	Marital Status	Indigene/Migrant	Data Gathering Technique
Kamile	F	36	Bachelor's Degree	Lawyer	Married	Mother: Indigene Father: 1st generation migrant.	Interview (Group)
Safiye	F	34	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	Married	1st generation migrant	Interview (Group)
Ziynet	F	48	High School Graduate	Housewife	Married	2nd generation migrant	Interview
Gülendam	F	36	Master's Degree	Housewife	Married	Grown-up in Istanbul, married to 2nd generation migrant	Interview
Nilüfer	F	55	Bachelor's Degree	Retired Teacher	Married	2nd generation migrant but she defines herself as indigene	Interview
Özge	F	32	Bachelor's Degree	Interior Architect	Married	2nd generation migrant but she defines herself as indigene	Interview
Zümrüt	F	45	Primary School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview
Esra	F	29	High School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview (Group)
Zarife	F	48	Primary School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview (Group)
Ferhunde	F	44	Primary School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview (Group)
Zekiye	F	26	Master's Degree	Teacher	Married	Indigene	Interview (Group)
Hamdiye	F	27	Bachelor's Degree	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview
Muvaffak	F	35	Bachelor's Degree	Lawyer	Married	1st generation migrant	Interview
Meliha	F	50	High School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview
Mahmut	M	65	Bachelor's Degree	Lawyer	Married	Indigene	Oral History
Zuhal	F	55	Secondary School Graduate	Housewife	Married	1st generation migrant	Interview
İbrahim	M	60	Associate's Degree	Freelancer	Married	Indigene	Oral History
Sevda	F	44	Primary School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview
Aynur	F	46	High School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview
Beril	F	40	Associate's Degree	Housewife	Married	2nd generation migrant	Interview
Çisem	F	37	Master's Degree	Academician	Married	Grown-up in Adana, married to 2nd generation migrant	Interview
Edibe	F	87	Uneducated	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Oral History
Fahriye	F	42	Primary School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview
Fadile	F	48	High School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Indigene	Interview
Güler	F	69	Primary School Graduate	Housewife	Married	Migrated from another city, but not "aşayir"	Interview
Sema	F	42	High School Graduate	Housewife	Single	1st generation migrant	Interview
Sumeyye	F	28	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	Married	Indigene	Interview
Zeynep	F	35	Master's Degree	Public Official	Single	Indigene	Interview
Reşit	M	48	Bachelor's Degree	Freelancer	Married	Indigene	Oral History
Mehmet	M	45	Bachelor's Degree	Sales Person	Married	Indigene	Interview
Bülent	M	36	Associate's Degree	Shop Owner	Married	1st generation migrant	Interview
Mine	F	33	Bachelor's Degree	Interior Architect	Married	Indigene	Interview
Güven	M	46	High School Graduate	Sales Person	Single	Migrant, but not "aşayir"	Interview
Gülşen	F	36	Associate's Degree	Sales Person	Single	Migrant, but not "aşayir"	Interview
Kamil	M	49	Bachelor's Degree	Shop Owner	Married	Indigene	Interview

The broader historical socio-cultural context, i.e. the context of context (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011), that structures competitive status consumption practices between wealthy women of different ethnicities, includes socio-cultural patterns of consumption and past and present ethnic struggles between the two groups. It is expected that examining consumption practices in the gendered context in Urfa, where there is religiously motivated gender-based segregation (i.e. *harem* and *selamlık*) in social life (Ozbay, 1999) will provide deep insights. Moreover, since most of the research focuses on middle-class subjects to illuminate the phenomena studied (Kandiyoti, 2002), this study attempts to fill the contextual gap by examining the consumption practices of wealthy consumers. In Urfa, women spend more of their social lives at home rather than socialize in public places. Even though women are just starting to appear in public, domestic gatherings are still common. Interviews and participation in meetings at the participants' homes allowed the researchers to uncover specific ideas about their consumption tastes and practices and the ethnic and cultural capital that is embodied in home decorations.

"To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, a diversification strategy was employed based on the requirement that "theories and explanations deduced from the research data should accurately cover what is actually happening" (Gibbs, 2002: 13). Firstly, the mutual compatibility of the data obtained through observation and in-depth interviews was examined. Additionally, data obtained from participants were cross-verified by themselves and other participants through member audit and sample diversity was also ensured. Moreover, to ensure the authenticity of the collected data, individuals from cultures outside the research field were asked about these practices. The diversification strategy was also applied to the data collection techniques; in addition to the in-depth interview technique, oral history studies were also included."

FINDINGS

Struggle with Capital within the Field of Consumption

The economic capital of indigenes was based on long-term land ownership, while migrants often acquired their capital from government compensation for the seizure of rural lands and from agricultural subsidies. Land ownership, proof of wealth for indigenes, satisfies their "desire to excel in pecuniary standing" (Veblen, [1899]2015) and is a sign of honor and prestige for them. While migrants use their entrepreneurial spirit as a means of struggle in the urban area, indigenes struggle by protecting their inherited wealth and avoiding entrepreneurial risks. Given their tribute for property ownership, the passive transfer of capital from ancestors, and their emphasis on dignity and honor as the basis for their dominance, they can be seen as a leisure class, as defined by Veblen ([1899]2015).

Vikas et al. (2015) illuminated the impact of marketization on the cast-based social order that dissolves old status hierarchies, and generates new power relations between competing agents. Although marketization in Turkey after the 1980s transformed the social sphere by reshaping/subverting the rules of competition (Boratav, 1999), the current findings do not indicate major transformations in status hierarchies among Urfa's old-money elites. This may be due to the conservative structure of the upper classes in Urfa and also to the prominence of ethnicity-based distinctions. However, Kurdish migrants emerged in the field through their newly-accumulated economic capital and their cultural capital built on education, entrepreneurship, and consumption and became the new agents of an indirect conflict. Aşayirs, who identify themselves with their ethnic communities, have become important actors in the market thanks to their entrepreneurship and innovativeness.

Gülendam, 34: Migrants have business skills. Indigenes are the owners of large lands and live only on agricultural products. They built their self-esteem on the wealth inherited from their farming ancestors. They spend half of the year in their houses in the luxurious districts of Istanbul. Most of the indigenous families I know have no jobs, they live on inherited wealth.

Ziynet, 47: I get annoyed with men who don't step forward. They live in a vicious circle. For the rich, life consists of Istanbul and Urfa. Immigrants built factories, engaged in politics, and succeeded in many other things. They got educated. In the past, [Turkish] men from Urfa did not attend school. There are very few educated men. Indigenes say: I am unreachable. Unfortunately, they are not. Their new generations are attending school just now.

Ferhunde, 44: Hotels and restaurants are run by Aşayirs. Locals wish to not descend to running such businesses. After all, you need to show undivided attention.

Meliha, 50: Indigenes don't take any [entrepreneurial] risks. They are engaged in

agriculture and buy real estate. They're lazy; they get up at noon, buy meat, and visit their "oda"- (a place used only for men's gatherings).

The trajectory of social transformation is primarily shaped by indirect struggles in the field of consumption. The finding that both groups transform each other's practices and dispositions supports the notion of consumer acculturation as an interactive and relational process involving mutual adaptation (Luedicke, 2015; Wang et al.,2020). Competition for higher positions in the social hierarchy is based on status consumption. Kurdish migrants took advantage of luxury brand consumption to improve their social standing. Home decoration is a consumption area where migrants pamper themselves relatively more. According to one migrant participant, indigenes are "stingy".

Ziynet, 47: The Aşayir man has many mouths to feed, and they give a quarter of their income to their tribes. His family takes the rest. For example, a rural family became rich with "haram" [ill-gotten] money. Others acquired their wealth through their vast lands. But there is always a trick. I call them new money. The rich of the dam… They were peasants and had ordinary lives. They came to the city after their lands were expropriated. They destroyed the city. They create a rift in the economy with the easy money they spend. I am not exaggerating: I would not pay 1.5-2 million TL to a purse. But the rich of the dam are showing off with their Louis Vuitton and Victoria's Secret wallets. You can build a city with the spoiled expenses of these women in Urfa. There is a gulf between old-money and an upstart. Their jewelry, their clothes, their house. You can establish an organized industrial zone with the value of only fifty of their houses.

Indigenes believe that migrants' wealth was acquired through unfair means and that their competing position in the market was not based on hard work. They attribute the gradual deterioration of their legitimate market power and status to their avoidance of illegal economic activities. Rather than spending their inherited legal wealth on ostentatious materialistic consumption, the indigenes differentiate themselves from the migrants by spending on subtly marked, inconspicuous but luxury items that can signal their distinctive cultural capital embedded in traditional social life. Eckhardt, Belk, and Jonathan (2015) point out that the dilution of the signaling ability of luxury goods and the inconspicuousness becomes the new conspicuousness. Similar to wealthy consumers (Warde, 2011b; Berger and Ward, 2010), who consider "conspicuous modesty" to be a collective ethical imperative, indigenes prefer subtle brand descriptors that fit their traditional tastes. In doing so, they differentiate themselves from those "not-in-the-know" and avoid unsophisticated consumption, which is bought with illegitimate money.

Ziynet, 47: They shop but they don't pay for it. Instead, they bully the helpless shop owner. They grow narcotic plants. They're state-supported mafia. Such wealth? There are many lies in many things said and a lot of haram in much of the money.

Zekiye, 26: Indigenes don't engage in trade. How can we let a brother bid on an auction? For God's sake, he'll be shot. We're afraid and don't approach them. My cousin tried to do business but had to quit. He would either die or be killed. This is how things work in Urfa.

The findings indicate that historical exclusion of Kurds tends to lead to the development of dependence on means and resources not utilized by the ones originally excluding the other; modernization and marketization provide the chance to improve one's standing by being entrepreneurial and innovative.

Urban Marketplace and Ethnic Capital

Noting that definitions of ethnicity are numerous and their connotations are plural, Visconti et al. (2014) argue that while ethnicity is about group privilege and relative permanence, ethnic identity is about subjectivity and individual agency. Besides being biological, ethnicity is also a characteristic belonging to a social group that shares a complex set of characteristics such as culture, race, religion, language, and customs (Jamal, 2003; Bouchet, 1995). Ethnic identity is related to the self-ascribed cultural origins and a person's self-definition influenced by others, that is, defined and categorized by oneself and others based on reference to ethnicity (Sekhon, 2015; Visconti et al., 2014).

Beji-Bécheur et al. (2012) studied the relationship between ethnicity and consumption and found that ethnic identity, a dynamic and relational concept, is constructed through social interaction with others. Ourahmoune and Ozcaglar-Toulouse (2012) identified two discourses that reflect the dialectics of ethnic group inclusion and exclusion and found that consumers prioritize collective identity goals over individual ones when faced with concerns of class and group survival.

Echoing these findings, In Urfa, both indigenes and migrants construct their relational identities based on ethnicity rather than simple urban-rural dialectics, using two discourses. One of the discourses is about self-identification with an ethnic group and its consumption and ethical references, and the other is about the exclusion of the rival group by being condescending toward its consumption tastes and practices.

In the Bourdieusian (1986) theoretical framework, cultural capital is conceptualized to explain differences in cultural practices, while social capital is concerned with social connections and interactions in a network. Our findings reveal that the status consumption practices of ethnic groups are driven not only by cultural capital, as demonstrated by Ustuner and Holt (2010), but also by ethnic identity. Even if they share the same spaces, send their children to the same schools, or shop at the same stores, they distance themselves from each other based on ethnic capital and compete to determine the boundaries of the consumption field.

We argue that in markets where modernity is not fully entrenched, ethnic capital can explain the scope of competitive status consumption and power struggles that cannot be explained by other types of capital. Although rural-urban migration in Urfa began in the 1960s and both ethnic groups share the same region and history, their relationship is rooted in tensions stemming from long-standing political ideologies and ethnic identity negotiations. Their differences cannot be explained simply by reference to ethnic differences, as shared ethnic dispositions and identities constitute a form of capital that can be used as a tool in constructing the social and market order, acquiring and maintaining power. We consider ethnic capital as a form of capital that refers to the habitual dispositions, rituals, skills of an ethnic group and group members and serves as a source of social power to reproduce group distinctions.

Luedicke (2015) examined indigenes who interpret certain immigrant consumption practices as a threat to the existing social and market order, functioning, and morality, and viewed it as additional manifestations of indigenous culture in decline. Echoing his findings, we found that Turkish old-money elites set boundaries to conserve the established order (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Swatz, 1997), while parvenu Kurdish migrants challenge their hierarchies, redefine legitimate tastes, and establish new competitive positions. The excerpt below illustrates that aesthetic legitimacy is assessed based on inherited ethnic dispositions and consumers draw on ethnic capital rather than cultural capital acquired in the educational system as indicators of tastes. In women's meetings held at houses, when both wealthy groups come together, they do not 'get close and cross boundaries', as an indigene put it, since 'money cannot veil ignorance and bad taste'.

> **Interviewer:** Can you distinguish an educated indigene couple from an uneducated one, both wealthy, just by looking at their interior design?
>
> **Esra, 29:** No. But I can tell the differences between the house of an Aşayir and indigene. My house isn't different from my better-educated friends. When you visit the house of an Aşayir (with a scornful tone), you can observe fancy wallpaper, lightning, and everything, but the way she decorates is so tactless.

Individual practices of agents are socio-culturally and historically contingent. Formation and utilization of dispositions, skills, and tastes rest on interpretive, intersubjective, dialogical and also, reflexive production, signification, and negotiation processes and are bound to more particularistic and less universalistic contexts (Bourdieu, 2005; Swartz, 1997; Aaskegaard and Linnet, 2011). Distinctions are formed through negotiation between available or accumulated capital compositions in a particular context. In the context of Urfa, the taste distinctions of Kurdish migrants and Turkish indigenes, both wealthy, are built less on class culture and more on ethnic culture. Suggesting that culturally-scripted behavior needs to be institutionalized to capture the ethnic nature of the practice, Gowricharn (2019) also revealed that taste differs between class cultures and also by ethnicity and ethnic taste implies consuming products that maintain the ethnic identity.

Our findings reveal that migrants compete with indigenes via conspicuous status consumption, and do not comply with the legitimate aesthete of the old-money indigenes. Then again, their taste distinctions and standards of superiority rest on interpretations of modernity and tradition, as well as the continuous and deep-rooted influences of ethnicity. Because of their ethnic origins, they do not expect to resemble the Turkish elites, so they pursue strategies of subversion of the established order and challenge their dominant position in the field of consumption (Bourdieu, 1984; Swatz, 1997). We argue that the current environment of global ethnic identity politics changes the game of 'differentiation and emulation' that Simmel (1957) explored in the diffusion of fashion. Differentiation and emulation are still existing phenomena, but this is a game between 'different'

groups, not between upper and lower classes/groups. Considering that each ethnic group sees itself as having superior qualities—and yet a need to improve—and tries to reflect this not by emulating necessarily 'the' or 'an' other but by emulating lifestyle consumption.

Desired Identity: Diverse Readings of the "Istanbulian"

The quotations below illustrate that the desired identity for both ethnic groups is that of the Istanbulians. Historically, Istanbul, the center of modernity and "the city with the golden soil", has attracted rural-to-urban migration. Even though Istanbul offers multiethnic and multicultural space (e.g. Erder, 1999; Secor, 2003; Kandiyoti, 2002) and for Keyman (2018), its identity is shaped by postmodernity, the Istanbulian has been envisaged to have a distinct urban identity by most rural Turkish citizens. As upstart Kurdish migrants invaded the consumption field, Turkish indigenes held on to their "noble and indigenous" identity. They tried to reconstruct their identities by reading the Istanbulian identity based on continuities with the noble and pious Ottoman history. In a struggle to protect their identity and lifestyle from the gradual discrediting in the context of globalization and marketization, they distance themselves from the Kurdish parvenus they hold responsible for the negative transformation. For Kurdish migrants, Istanbul connotes western modernity. They try to become a modern Istanbulian while avoiding the identity of underdeveloped and rural Urfa. One of our informants, Ozge, explained that she registered Istanbul as her son's birthplace to avoid the problems that the "subaltern" Urfa's identity might cause.

> **Çisem, 37:** People, in the western part of Turkey, say "They're from Urfa, they don't know anything." They think we live in caves. Media reflects Urfa with adobe houses, dirt roads, and naked children. We can eat, swim and dress up like them. We have nice buildings and cars. My husband used to live in Istanbul. He says that after getting to know him, they gave up their prejudices. When I go shopping in the Urfa center, and local people ask me where I'm from, I say Urfa. I realized that it satisfies me that they get surprised. I don't want to look like an Urfa citizen. Western culture is high culture.

> **Özge, 32:** (Talking about her years in Istanbul) You can't talk to people for a while. They keep asking about çiğ *köfte* [meatball made with raw meat], *sıra nights* [men's gatherings]. I never prepared çiğ köfte for them, although I craved it. Urfa is not about çiğ köfte. All they know about us are these.

Ethnic schemas and resources available to Kurdish women facilitate exercising agency to a greater extent compared to indigene women. Having grown up in a western city of Turkey, married to a wealthy Aşayir, and a migrant to Urfa, Gülendam argued that the Kurdish ethnic capital proved to be advantageous in status competition in the age of modernity. Ziynet, a Kurdish participant, proudly stated that they do not embrace gender segregation and women's oppression in their life, and are less religious compared to indigenes who pursue rather conservative and traditional lives.

> **Gülendam, 36:** According to my observations, indigenes are more nationalistic, conservative, and tradition-bound. Rural-to-urban migrants are more Kurd-nationalists. They like to spend more just to prove themselves. They are more open to modernity.

> **Ziynet, 47:** By calling Aşayirs as polite Kurds, indigenes say "You are peasants. Kurds are crude, and here you are holding a civilized wedding (she is referring to ceremonies without gender segregation)". But Kurds have always been a modern tribe. I tell them "Our life is modern already. That's our life; men and women live together". We don't do it for the sake of modernity or westernization. Rural weddings are held with all the family.

The mixed-married participants believe that since Kurds' ethnic lifestyle is more compatible with the Istanbul urban identity than indigenes' lifestyle that heavily rest on tradition and religion, Kurdish migrants "sprinted" in the race of becoming an Istanbulian and constructing a consumer identity that resonates with modernity.

> **Ziynet, 47:** Tribe members live together in public places. Their women are more cultured and farsighted. Unlike the indigenes, mother-in-law and brides don't quarrel. Unlike the indigene man, who forces his wife to obey his parents, tribal members don't even interfere in the bride's spending. Their culturally-modern lifestyle sets a bad example for indigenes.

> **Özge, 32:** Aşayirs were oppressed. To close the gap, they pave the way for women's emancipation. An indigene family doesn't buy a car for their newlywed bride, but Aşayirs do.

They can allow me to get the education I want and study abroad. I said that I want my son to have a good primary education, I don't want to live in Urfa", they say "OK, why not?" Just name a novelty, they're ready for it. They're at the forefront of being able to say "Me". They compare their weddings with the indigenes'. Women are like on the fashion podium. Indigene's weddings are gender-segregated. They are innovative.

Kamile, 36: My mother is an indigene and my father is an Aşayir. We lived differently than my mothers' sisters' families. I could apply for a university education. I was the first girl who was allowed to study abroad. We could go on a holiday. Unlike us, women in my mother's family are veiled. Thanks to my father, we're comparably freer.

In a struggle to protect their identity and lifestyle from the threat of gradual discredition in the context of globalization and marketization, wealthy indigenes distance themselves from the Kurdish parvenus they hold responsible for the negative transformation. Indigene women, on the other hand, developed subjectivities shaped within the boundaries of their habitus, ethnic traditions, and norms. Switching between emulation and appropriation of western consumption habits, they construct a consumer identity that also corresponds to their religious and traditional values. Sumeyye explained how they emulate western consumption practices. "Halal circle" corresponds to the fields in which the religiously-permissible practices can be carried out.

Sumeyye, 28: They lived behind closed doors. Hence, they try to adapt the different lives they see on TV to their own lives. They have to do it in halal circle. At women's gatherings and weddings, they offer open-buffets. They serve cola or juice in wine glasses. They hold wine glasses funny: pinky lifted or the goblet part is grasped. The ways they see on TV. They try to create a cocktail atmosphere by setting up small tables, chatting with each other, and throwing those cocktail aperitifs into their mouths. They're wannabes. The expression of the oppressive system in young girls erupts somewhere.

Being stuck between the western lifestyle they observe and the traditional and religious lifestyle they have, they playfully juxtapose opposites without necessarily adopting the new one. During the field research, the lead author attended a wedding. The wedding hall was organized like a ballroom in western fairy tales. Only women were invited. The common point of all of them, from those who dressed as if they were going to nightclubs to those who dressed as if they were going to a third-class pavilion, was the decollete they have in their clothes. The author was surprised to learn that a woman who had shaved one side of her hair and looked quite vamp in leather mini shorts and fishnet stockings was a covered woman with two children from Urfa. The women danced with each other while gazing at each other. At the end of the night, the groom and his friends would come to the hall to pick up the bride. When it was time for the men to come, one of the waiters turned the music down and took the microphone: "The men are coming!" said. With this warning, a great noise broke out in the hall. The women rushed to their seats, chairs pulled, tables pushed, everyone was trying to find their coats and headscarves and put them on. It was as if they were turning into Cinderella. When the men arrived, there was no trace of the old hall. They imitate western consumption patterns and swap cultures by using consumption objects to add novelty to their traditional lives. As for the consumers' culture swap, this case confirms the theory of Oswald (1999): they wear western, non-muslim, and global consumer identity, but switchback without complete commitment to it.

Competing through Consumption Tastes: Modern/ Traditional and East/West Collages

The cultural distinction between two wealthy ethnic groups is reproduced in the field of conspicuous consumption. The wealth of both ethnic groups shift the ideological/political conflicts to a focus of conflict based on consumption. Inter-group struggles take place under the symbolism of consumption objects. Although the logic of inclusion/exclusion is exercised through ethnic capital, the identity discourses are (re)produced and negotiated through status consumption in the marketplace.

Newly-rich Kurdish migrants' pursuit for higher social status has broken with their ethnic ideology and taken on a consumerist symbolism. As the newly-rich began to buy the well-known brands, the indigenes abandoned them to assert their distinction vis-a-vis the "Aşayirs" to an extent that the brands have been marked as the ones preferred by Aşayirs and the others by indigenes. They (re)produce distinction mechanisms and struggle for status using consumption objects and practices dynamically. Unlike the economic or cultural capital-based strategies elites use for differentiation from others (Veblen [1899]2015), the distinctions between indigenes

and migrants rest on the ethnic capital. The excerpts below show that while Kurdish ethnic groups identify themselves with western brands, indigenes desert these "denigrated" brands and switch to alternative brands to sustain their competitive status.

> **Zekiye, 26:** (Showing a video of Kurdish students dancing the halay with their Burberry shirts and Hummel shoes) Aşayirs prefer Hummel. They see it on TV shows. It's their brand now. They buy all Hummel products. Another tribe prefers Lacoste; it has become their uniform. Indigenes prefer Nike.

> **Kamile, 36:** We used to buy Vakko. Now, aşayirs buy it, we got estranged from it. They live in the best houses, in the best locations. They drive Mercedes with a puşi (scarf worn by Kurdish men) on their heads. They took over our things. Indigenes despise them and avoid all these.

> **Ferhunde, 44:** Indigenes prefer Aker, Ipekevi (scarf brands). They prefer simplicity. Syrian style. Aşayir's preference for Vakko alienated indigenes. To distinguish themselves, they changed their brand.

The symbols of distinction vary greatly between rival ethnic groups. The patterns of taste of the group are used founded upon, inter alia, ethnic capital. The findings reveal that they compete via their consumption tastes in a way that they oscillate between modern and traditional consumption signs and symbols. Consistent with their conservative and traditional lifestyle and social identity, they still prefer living in old houses that have traditional architecture and are located in the old neighborhoods in the city center. However, paradoxically, the interiors of their houses are designed according to the principles of aesthetic simplicity (Ustuner and Holt, 2007) that are associated with simple, elaborate, and plain styles, neutral and light colors, and a modern style (Figure 1). As Kurdish migrants appeared in the marketplace, they left their traditional taste that rested on the former Ottoman style to their rival ethnic group. We argue that they compete using practical logic; they abandon their consumption patterns as soon as Kurdish migrants contaminate them and develop a new competitive stance. Since their rivals cannot easily take over the old neighborhoods and houses, they still claim their own spaces. After the newly-rich migrants emulated traditional home decorating tastes with their "haram" money, the indigenes turned to an interior design discourse constructed through

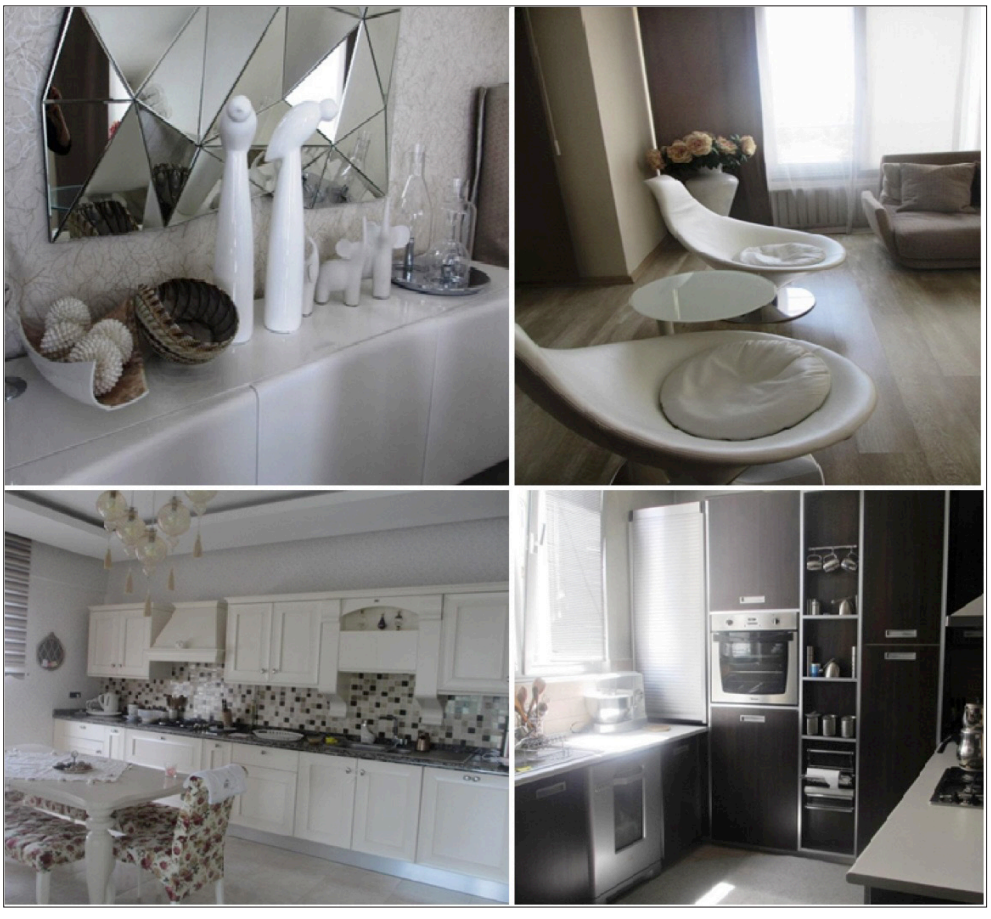

Figure 1. Interiors of an indigene's house. Photography by researcher, 2018, with permission.

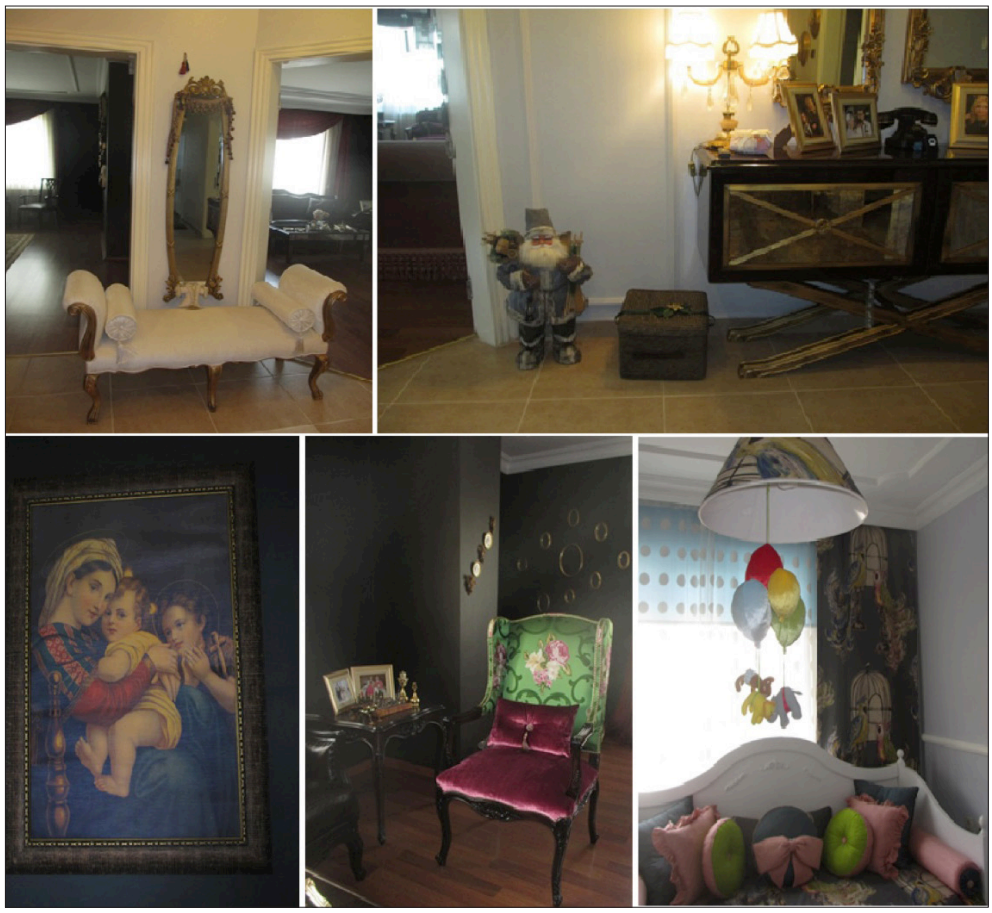

Figure 2. Interiors of a migrant's house. Photography by researcher, 2018, with permission.

decoration magazines, TV shows, and social media. They appropriate simple and western-style decoration objects' meanings to signify nobility and rootedness. Their tastes are constructed as a tool for ethnic group inclusion/exclusion.

Although wealthy Kurdish migrants have built a consumer identity that resonates with modernity and live in modern-architectural designed homes in new neighborhoods, their interior design choices combine traditional components with western and modern objects. Figure 2 depicts the interiors of a Kurdish (and Muslim) migrant: the living room is decorated both with Ottoman-design and western-design sofas together with paintings of Mona Lisa and Madonna della Seggiola hanging on the walls and a Santa Claus figurine standing next to the traditional buffet. Like other rooms, the nursery was designed with modern and traditional components that incorporate strong contrasts and vivid colors, bright hues, and a traditional organization style. Zekiye and Kamile's explanations above reveal that they juxtapose the traditional and the modern, east and west in their consumption practices and preferences. Their consumption tastes still have an ostentatious character that can be distinguished in the observer's eyes.

Bourdieu (1984: 56) argued that "tastes are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference". Tastes are expressed in form of likes and preferences and, also, by dislikes. Through denial and refusal of "illegitimate" tastes, a social group constructs cultural boundaries against other groups (Warde, 2011). Observing that distaste shapes social distinctions more than taste, Wilk (1997) suggested that identities and social boundaries are built through non-consumption, non-association, and avoidance. The findings reveal that stereotyping based on ethnic identities can emerge as a discrimination mechanism based on the judgment of taste. The following quotations reveal how indigenes draw cultural boundaries by condescending and rejecting the migrants' ethnic tastes. Arguing that Aşayirs' exaggerated taste and over-indulgence in gold and glitters stemmed from their need for power and prestige, Sumeyye, an indigene married to a Kurdish migrant, said that simple interior decoration of her home embarrasses her husband's family. According to another informant, although they prefer trendy and well-known brands, a famous painting on the wall of an Aşayirs' home does not fit there.

> **Zekiye, 26:** X's house is so tasteless. She loves exaggeration and glamor. She's a Kurd, after all. That's why she has an "Aşayir" taste. So gaudy.

For example, she buys cocktail dresses with belts, furs, roses... Her furniture is huge, bright, and exaggerated. She had a rotating bed. The chandeliers and everything are so exaggerated. Glitters, everywhere. We burst into laughter when we first saw it. A typical Kurdish home. They like things that we dislike.

Fadile, 48: Indigenes and Aşayirs are distinguished by their finest clothing and their speech. Aşayirs' clothes are exaggerated. I mean, they look down on our humble style. Because, as I say, they are uncultivated. They didn't grow up learning these.

The wealthy Kurdish migrants dislike indigenes' preferences and build cultural boundaries, as well. Their accounts reveal that as a competing, yet newly-rich migrant group they do not consider Turkish indigenes as the dominant group that have the power to establish legitimate tastes. Bourdieu (1984) suggested that social distinction is built by the high class that has the power to establish legitimate culture and indicators of prestige. As Daloz (2007) observed that societal differences can challenge any general theory of elite distinction, our findings reveal that, in the competition between two ethnic groups, the old-money elites do not have a monopolizing position on establishing legitimate tastes to be used for inter-group comparisons. Furthermore, migrants' evaluations do not indicate any resentment or accommodation as two possible conditions of forming social boundaries that are indicated by Warde (2011a). Some informants explained that indigenes cannot develop an insight into their way of living, for instance, they fail to understand that Kurdish tribe leaders do not have "servants" that work for them. They have tribe members that spend their life with them and serve.

Ziynet, 47: A wealthy Aşayir thinks differently: my carpet should fit my sofa and curtains. They should be classy and elegant rather than ostentatious. But the indigenes don't care when the curtain and sofa don't match. Then that house seems very chaotic. They don't know anything about the interior design of the house. Everything from the arrangement of the sofa to the arrangement of the coffee table suffocates your soul. She is rich and has two sofa sets, but she has them all lined up like a furniture store. Plain, simple.. Such an eyesore. Aşayirs give more importance to order and tidiness. Women make a house a home. Aşayir women think more decorative than indigene women.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Building on Bourdieu's theory of capital, this interpretive study focuses on ethnicity as the driving force of struggles in the field of consumption under marketization conditions and analyzes socio-cultural tensions between wealthy Turkish indigenes and upstart Kurdish rural-to urban migrants in Urfa, Turkey. Turkey's economic upturn in the 1980s fostered the proliferation of products and services and the emergence of Western-style consumerism. Scholars demonstrated that resting on complex socio-cultural dynamics, Turkey's journey through consumer capitalism and modernity culminated in many diverse cultural fragments and multiple identities (e.g. Kandiyoti, 2002; Sandikci and Ger, 2002). The findings from this study provide further insights that uneven west and east, as well as urban and rural economic development, lead to a heterogeneous consumption field that allows for diverse trajectories and interpretations of modernization. Supporting the argument of Firat (1992) that the nature of postmodernism will be different in cultures based on the extent of entrenchment of modernity, Sandikci and Ger (2002) remarked that the Turkish case indicates the complex relationship between modernity, postmodernity, and consumption. Urfa, located in the southeastern and less developed part of Turkey, provides a culturally-fragmented context where feudalistic structures, values, and lifestyles continue to exist alongside modernity. Elsewhere, we argued that we can still observe difference, interplay, and undecidability between modern and traditional in eastern Turkey (Özhan Dedeoğlu & Karaçizmeli Güzeler, 2016). The present findings reveal that, in a context of status competition, the struggle to construct and negotiate a distinct consumer identity for each group embraces paradoxical postmodern juxtapositions. Although both wealthy Turkish indigenes and newly-rich Kurdish migrants construct marketable identities by collaging modern/traditional and east/west, they have different readings of east/west and modern/traditional, nobility and commonness.

Oswald (1999) revealed how ethnic consumers culture-swap, i.e. move between cultural identities by using consumption objects. Our findings reveal that consumers swap, and also, juxtapose the modern and the traditional, the east and the west, and engage in status consumption based on their "collaged" social identities. They are bricoleurs (Bouchet, 1995) as they construct a "practical" consumer identity piece by piece. Echoing Sandikci, Ekici, and Tari's (2006) view of dialogical consumer acculturation process, our informants collage

different cultural resources and construct and negotiate consumer identities as they move between multiple and incompatible cultural positions. The present study contributes to the literature by revealing that, in a context where modernity is not completely entrenched, consumers can be still anchored in their ethnic capital as they oscillate between different competitive positions in the consumption field. Although newly-rich Kurdish rural-to-urban migrants' lifestyle and consumption practices indicate modern subjectivity and their desired identity is that of the western, urban, and modern Istanbulian, their consumption tastes rest on deep-rooted cultural continuities with the traditional, rural, and the eastern. Their habitus facilitates omnivorous openness in their consumption practices to modern, traditional, and to east and west. Wealthy Turkish indigenes, who occupied a dominant position in the social relations in the city and in politics, have begun to lose their power after mass rural-to-urban migrations. Since upstart Kurdish migrants challenge their hierarchies, redefine legitimate taste and establish new competitive positions, they try to preserve the established power position. Being inspired by the "noble and traditional" Istanbulian identity, their lifestyle and consumption practices rest on traditions. However, they imitate the Western consumption style by reshaping their consumption tastes in order to differentiate their own tastes from their competitors.

The study contributes new theoretical insights to Bourdieu's (1984) status consumption theory by demonstrating that ethnic capital explains the scope of the power struggles and the competitive consumption field that remained unexplained by other capital types. Even though ethnic identity has been widely studied in the consumption field (e.g. Penaloza, 1994; Oswald, 1999; Askegaard et al., 2005; Luedicke, 2015), ethnic capital is not considered a distinct type per se. Tambyah and Thompson (2012) remarked that ethnicity, a protean cultural resource, but not a stable characteristic, is used by consumers to construct their identities. They also conceptualized ethnic identity as a social brand and argued that symbolic ethnicity organized around product/brand signs and consumption practices resembles consumption-centered communities rather than traditional ethnic communities. Their insights can be further enriched by considering that, further than a social brand that fosters feelings of communal solidarity, it can be conceptualized as a capital that is firmly embedded within the field of consumption.

Ethnic capital refers to habituated dispositions, rituals, skills of an ethnic group and group members. It is accumulated by individuals who belong to an ethnic group through internalization of ethnic values and norms, participating in ethnic bonding activities, consumption of ethnic products, utilizing ethnic capital in achieving social mobility, and other social and cultural activities. It is embodied in tastes and practices and serves as a resource of power to produce social distinctions. The present findings revealed that, in the field of consumption, both rival groups use ethnic capital in (re)producing and negotiating consumption tastes, and thus, express aesthetic legitimacy, produce power relations, construct boundaries and gain status. To compete for status, they apply different and even incompatible cultural and ethnic schemes and resources to a wide variety of conditions and thus form a matrix of consumption patterns and tastes. As to the role of ethnic capital for competition strategies, the findings reveal that newly-rich Kurdish migrants compete with the Turkish indigenes through strategies of subversion (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) based on ethnic dispositions such as an entrepreneurial spirit, relatively secular lifestyle, and tastes. The Turkish indigenes try to conserve their established order by relying on their rootedness, tradition, urban identity, and on religious values. They construct their relational identity by defining the other, i.e. "Aşayir". To confront the competitive challenge in the game of status consumption and differentiate themselves, they reshape their consumption tastes, so that they appropriate western, simple yet sophisticated consumption signs to signify nobility and rootedness. The present findings contradict the assumption that the tastes of the upper classes in Turkey have a homogeneous structure and they typically see to the West as a source of refinement and superiority are based on. (e.g. Vicdan & Fırat, 2013).

The present study extends the literature by showing that wealthy consumers in Urfa keep their distance from each other driven by their ethnic identification, not only by cultural capital. Existing studies on the socio-cultural patterning of consumption in Turkey (Ustuner and Holt 2007;2010; Ustuner and Thompson, 2012; Sandikci ve Ger 2002;2010; Sandikci, Ekici and Tari,2006; Karademir-Hazir, 2017) mostly focused on Western/urban consumption contexts. Our study contributes new insights by uncovering contextual differences in the socio-cultural patterning of consumption between urban and rural and east and west. For example, unlike the western contexts, in Urfa, old-money elites use indigenization as a strategy in their power struggles while newly-rich Kurdish migrants are more prone to western modernity. This finding reminds us of Ustuner and Holt's (2010)

study about status consumption in Ankara that found that high-cultural-capital consumers strive to construct a civilized lifestyle on an idealized West image, while low-cultural-capital consumers choose indigenization against it.

> ***"This study contributes to the literature by investigating how ethnic capital is utilized as a tool that reproduces distinctions between groups, particularly in struggles within the consumption field."***

Although this study has limitations in terms of keeping social class and gender constant, it focuses on the role of ethnic capital and status consumption in Urfa, a city where modernity is not yet fully entrenched. By examining how ethnic capital shapes consumption in an upper social-class context, we can better understand the social distinctions and consumption preferences of consumers, while setting aside their economic concerns related to status consumption. Future studies should explore ethnic capital in a variety of contexts, including economically developed, modern, and post-modern western societies, while taking into account differences in social class and gender.

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