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CONSUMPTION OF COUNTERFEIT DESIGNER BRANDS: REASONS, PRACTICES AND CONSEQUENCES

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CONSUMPTION OF COUNTERFEIT DESIGNER BRANDS: REASONS,
PRACTICES AND CONSEQUENCES

A Master's Thesis

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PRACTICES AND CONSEQUENCES

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ABSTRACT

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September 2005

This thesis examines the consumption reasons, practices and consequences of non-deceptive counterfeit designer brand clothing, which has been becoming rampant in Turkey as stressed by diverse resources. Utilizing qualitative research methods, the study was conducted through interviewing twenty counterfeit designer brand consumers nine of which additionally possessed the authentic items. Three consumers who solely consume the authentic items were also included in the sample. Findings suggest that consumers prefer counterfeit designer brand clothing not only for economic reasons, but also for symbolic reasons such as ardent desire, reference group influence, experiential fulfillment, nostalgic appeal as well as perceivably unfair prices of authentic items. Consumers selectively display the counterfeit items in different public domains and selectively disclose information about their consumption to avoid social anxiety and embarrassment. As a consequence, consumers authenticate an otherwise strange identity through such consumption practices. It is not only fantasy and real that commingle, but also fake and authentic, which mesh through a process of authentication as determined by the desires of the consumer. The study has implications for the literature on counterfeit consumption, price fairness, symbolic consumption as well as postmodernism and concludes with a discussion of limitations and opportunities future research.

Keywords: Counterfeit, symbolic consumption, price fairness, postmodernism, social risk, sosyete bazaar, embarrassment, social anxiety, self presentation, justification, materialism, authenticity, desire, reference groups, emulation, designer brands, ethical consumption.

ÖZET

TAKLİT ‘TASARIM MARKA’ TÜKETİMİ: SEBEPLER, UYGULAMALAR, SONUÇLAR

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Bu tezde çeşitli kaynaklarca Türkiye’de yaygınlığı vurgulanan taklit ‘tasarım marka’ giysi tüketiminin sebepleri, tüketim uygulamaları ve sonuçlarını araştırılmıştır. Çalışma, kalitatif araştırma methodları kullanılarak dokuzu hem taklit hem sahici ürün kullanan yirmi katılımcıyla, yüzyüze mülakatlar yapılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yalnızca sahici ürün kullanan üç tüketici de örnekleme dahil edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları göstermektedir ki, tüketiciler taklit ‘tasarım marka’ giysileri sadece ekonomik değil öykünme, örnek grup etkisi, deneysel tecrübe, nostaljik cazibe ve hakiki ürünlerin haksız fiyat uygulamaları yüzünden de tercih etmektedir. Sosyal endişe ve utanç duygusundan kaçınmak amacıyla taklit ürünleri farklı kamusal alanlarda seçici olarak sergilemekte ve satın aldıkları bilgisini seçtikleri kişilerle paylaşmaktadırlar. Sonuç olarak tüketiciler yabancı bir kimliği bu tüketim uygulamalarıyla içselleştirebilmektedir. Tüketicinin arzuları doğrultusunda sadece hayal ve gerçek değil, hakiki ve taklit de iç içe geçebilmektedir. Adil fiyatlandırma, sembolik tüketim, post-modernite ve taklit ürünler üzerine yapılmış diğer akademik araştırmalara da hitap eden çalışma, akademik bilgiye sınırlı kaldığı yönleri ve gelecekte yapılacak araştırmalara dair öneriler tartışılarak son bulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Taklit, sembolik tüketim, fiyat adaleti, sosyal risk, post-modernite, utanma, sosyal endişe, sosyete pazarı, özsunum, mazeret, maddiyatçılık, sahicilik, arzu, örnek gruplar, tasarım markaları, etik tüketim, öykünme.

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CHAPTER I

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1.Context

What motivated me to conduct research on counterfeiting emerged out of several personal and academic coincidences. Personally, for years I had heard many things about the ‘sosyete bazaars’¹ of Istanbul and the famous luxury designer brands sold at those settings from my friends and relatives, though I had never been there. Some of those remarks extolled the incredibly low price levels of the merchandise, while some others condemned them of being poor quality counterfeits of the authentic designer brands. Such confusion led me towards thinking why would people purchase such goods, if they were aware of the debate going on. Moreover, according to World Customs Organization, counterfeiting of trademarked goods constitutes 7% of the world trade –and increasing- hence, leads to losses amounting to billions of dollars -estimates of \$250 billion only for US businesses, excluding the resources spent to halt counterfeiting (Knight, Mannix and Smart, 2004). Though consumption of counterfeits cannot be attributed to a single country (Belk, Devinney and Eckhardt, 2005), counterfeiting of trademarked goods e.g. apparel and designer brands has been rampant especially in developing countries like Turkey such that

¹ ‘Sosyete’ is a Turkish word that roughly translates into English as ‘jet set’. Therefore, the term ‘sosyete bazaar’ owes its name to celebrities such as pop singers or fashion models who are known to buy designer brands from this rather flea-market-like setting.

those countries are placed under a watch list by the United States Trade Department (US Trade Department Special 301 Report, 2004). A recent report by the Ankara Chamber of Commerce (2005) echoes those concerns by stating that Turkey is almost a heaven for counterfeit goods as common for the case of counterfeits of well-known designer brands like Louis Vuitton, Armani, Gucci, Dolce Gabbana, Versace, Diesel, Ralph Lauren, DKNY, Prada, Lacoste, Paul & Shark, Adidas and Nike.

Despite the noteworthiness of the issue, from a marketing standpoint relatively little attention has been paid to counterfeiting and on what grounds consumers from very diverse backgrounds knowingly² consume counterfeit designer brands, though this is reported in non-academic publications (e.g. Tepeli, 2003; Uzunçarşılı and Ersun, 2005). From an academic standpoint, I was also attracted by the current stream of research in consumer behavior on the concept of authenticity (e.g. Grayson and Martinec, 2004) for which the case of counterfeits might have some implications. In particular, studies dwelled upon how people discern an authentic item/good/experience from a fake one³, but not on what authentic and fake mean for particular realms of interest like brands, as well as the consumption practices and consequences for consumers.

² Counterfeit goods can be procured either unknowingly or knowingly. Deceptive counterfeiting is usually observed in food, medicine or home electronics product categories (Grossman and Shapiro, 1988). On the other hand, the situation in which the consumer knowingly purchases the counterfeit is called non-deceptive counterfeit consumption, and it will be the major focus of attention in this paper since this is mostly the case for consumers who purchase counterfeit designer brands (Nia and Zaichkowsky, 2000). To keep the study focused, deceptive (unknowing) counterfeiting of brands in categories such as food, alcoholic beverages or non-prescription drugs will be left to forthcoming studies, although their consumption seems to have prominent consequences for human health and safety.

³ Merriam and Webster's Online Dictionary notes that 'fake' is a synonymous term for 'counterfeit', and these are both antonyms for the word 'authentic'. Therefore, from this point onwards, the terms 'counterfeit' and 'fake' are going to be used interchangeably unless otherwise stated.

1.2. Research Objectives

The major purpose of this thesis is to outline the motives, consumption practices/domains and particular consequences of consuming counterfeit designer brands which are available under the categories of clothing and handbags for the consumers in my research site Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. Here, clothing makes a proper research context because of two reasons. First, clothing is usually considered as a symbolic (Holman, 1980; Forty, 1986) as well as a high involvement product category (Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel, 1989) that plays a crucial role in individual self expressions (Munson and Spivey, 1981) with the further contribution of designer brands that enrich the scope of symbolism as Askegaard (2005) implies. Thus, clothing provides rich opportunities for exploring how people present themselves and their identities. Second, since clothing is one of the mostly cited product categories in which counterfeits abound in Turkey (see US Trade Department Special 301 Report, 2004), and it is cited as a non-deceptive counterfeit consumption context (Nia and Zaichowsky, 2000) it can be promising to address this affair's reasons and implications for the Turkish consumptionscape⁴.

1.3. Trajectory of the Thesis

The organization of the thesis is as follows: In Chapter 2, I focus on the literature on the self concept from not only a consumer research perspective, but also a

⁴ There are also some other symbolic product categories such as designer brand fragrances that can be counterfeited. Nevertheless, because of the rather exploratory nature of this research and to keep it focused in order to obtain more detail (thick description) about a particular case of consumption, in this thesis I focus on a single symbolic product category and leave the exploration of the consumption of other products (symbolic or non-symbolic) that can be counterfeited like cosmetics, books or software to upcoming studies.

sociological and social psychological standpoint. First, the concept of authenticity and its implications for the identity are revisited. Next, theoretical background of self presentation as well as its certain probable consequences like social anxiety, embarrassment and justifications is reviewed. This section also refers to the social risk concept that is relevant for the consumption of visible goods such as clothing. The third part of the chapter outlines the literature on symbolic consumption and two related research streams; emulation and reference groups, which also inform counterfeit consumption decisions. Related to symbolic consumption, studies on materialism were also reviewed.

Chapter 3 mainly concerns the ethical side of consumption. First, differing theories on individual ethical decision making are reviewed. Particularly, I discuss the Hunt and Vitell Theory of Marketing Ethics (1986) in the light of teleological and deontological perspectives. Finally, I give a brief outline of previous studies in consumer research that involve consumer ethical decision making.

Focusing on brands and consumers, Chapter 4 forms the last section of the literature review. Studies on why consumers prefer to consume brands are pinpointed in the light of the discussions on mind-share, emotional and cultural approaches to branding. Next, I elucidate studies that focus on the consumption of designer brand clothing. The chapter concludes with the findings and implications of the limited literature on counterfeit consumption.

In Chapter 5, I describe the methodology that guided the research. The study was conducted utilizing a qualitative approach since the research objectives necessitate a

holistic understanding of the consumption phenomenon with its reasons, practices as well as personal consequences. Data collection methods ranging from depth interviews to collages and metaphoric portraits were utilized. While in the first part of the study I pursued open sampling (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), as the findings emerged and the study progresses I sampled discriminately, and incorporated a criterion based on the relevant categories generated. As a result, those who consume only the counterfeits and those who consume both were included in the sample. Three informants who never consume the counterfeits but the authentic items were also contacted as bases of comparison. The resulting informant pool comprised of 23 three informants of both sexes aged between 22 and 56 and coming from different backgrounds, which also reflects the diverse consumer base of counterfeits. Data was analyzed in the light of corresponding theories, guided mainly by phenomenological and grounded theory approaches.

In Chapter 6, I present my findings. The thesis was organized around the reasons, consumption practices and consequences of consuming counterfeits. Findings illustrate that consumers prefer counterfeits primarily because of their affordability as well as perceived unfairness of designer brand prices that supplements the consumer's ethical attitudes toward counterfeiting. Various types of symbolic reasons also emerge. A desire toward what the brand connotes to the consumer, such as one's youthhood, an incomplete shopping experience in the exclusive store, or an emulative desire for an identity that is perceived as attractive (e.g. Western, gentle, modern, famous) and different from one's peers comprise some of those symbolic reasons. Interestingly, such a desire is also observed in the meaning of fakeness, which denotes an 'explicit desire for a praised other', such as towards something

‘authentic’ which is portrayed as different from the crowd, culturally challenging to understand and difficult to imitate. Some informants develop certain techniques demonstrated by their consumption practices such as selectively displaying the counterfeit, purchasing the authentic item, or denigrating ‘vulgar’ others who may also consume the designer brands -thanks to counterfeit-but cannot appreciate them. Through all these techniques, which I call ‘authentication of the fake’, the counterfeit consumer not only begins to believe that the fake is as good as the authentic, but may also authenticate an otherwise stranger identity.

In the final chapter, I discuss the implications of my research for not only the counterfeit consumption literature, but also to the literature on price fairness, self and symbolic consumption as well as postmodernism.

CHAPTER II

II. SELF

As the first chapter of the literature review, in this section I approach the notion of self from different angles. First, I dwell upon ‘authenticity’, in which counterfeit designer brands gains relevance because authenticity concerns the arguments authors such as Baudrillard (1994) and Eco (1975), who assert that in the postmodern everything becomes a copy of something else; hence, talking about authenticity makes little sense. Counterfeit goods are relevant to see whether the reality and fakeness blur for consumers in that particular realm of consumption. Because the concept is associated with self and identity (Arnould and Price, 1999; Askegaard, 2005), which can also be reflected or facilitated by the objects that we consume (Grubb and Hupp, 1968; Belk, 1988) and I explore the consequences of consuming fakes for the individual, the debate on authenticity is worth incorporating into the study.

As an extension of this, I also introduce literature on symbolic consumption, because my context –clothing – partakes considerably in consumer identity expressions (Munson and Spivey, 1981; Holman, 1980). Since such identity expressions are shown to be influenced by the presence of significant others, particularly I mention studies on reference groups, emulation and materialism as part of the product symbolism literature in order to show how they relate to reasons and practices of

consuming counterfeit designer brand clothing. Furthermore, as people present themselves in various ways depending on circumstances and goods play a role in those definitions and redefinitions of selves (Corrigan, 1997), self-presentation literature also becomes germane in assessing the consumption practices of individuals. Since I intend to learn more about the consumption practices and related consequences, self presentation literature as well as by products of self presentation such as social anxiety, embarrassment and related research on how such occurrences (tied to the concept of social risk) can be manifest in consumption, are also elaborated throughout the chapter.

II.1.Authenticity

The concept of authenticity can be approached from various perspectives. To start, we can talk about the authenticity of human beings as well as the authenticity of objects. From the former perspective, authenticity may imply reality, sincerity or truth (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). For the case of a non-living being's authenticity, definitions are made on the basis of dialectical attributions. "The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity" (Benjamin, 1986, p220). On the other hand, according to Schwartz (1998) we admire the unique such that we reproduce it faithfully and the outcome is a fake. According to the author, we need copies because they serve in the definitions of the authentic. In other words, an object begins to be regarded as authentic only when it is not regarded as a fake, which is supposed to be the antonym of authentic. From the words of Grayson and Martinec (2004) authenticity of an object is determined either by its indexicality; i.e.

through direct contact with the object of concern as in the case of getting an autograph from a movie star, or by its iconicity; i.e. based on an extra evaluation of comparing the available with what should the authentic look like when the authentic is not palpable from the beginning as in the case of the movie star. Following this, Grayson and Shulman (2000) assert that “while a reproduction of a special possession may look exactly like the original object, it cannot claim an indexical (real, factual and spatial) association with the context that are represented by the object” (p19). The other aspect of authenticity, iconicity, is maintained throughout an ongoing process, which evolves with experience. Camus summarizes this facet of authenticity by saying that it is about ‘creating meanings’ in a never-ending manner (Golomb, 1995).

Because it is about the creation of meaning, authenticity has implications for the self, too. Benjamin (1986) notes that the concept of authenticity is broader than mere genuineness of an object or of a work of art. Nietzsche dwells upon this broader meaning by saying that authenticity stems from our inherent selves and manifests itself as soon as we become aware of it. Awareness and a personal autonomy are necessary to explore authenticity because in order to determine the congruence/incongruence; i.e. relative position of an identity, one has to possess the ability to look at it through the eyes of the others (Ferrara, 1998). From these words, we infer that authenticity of an identity is defined in comparison to some ‘others’ (Simmel, 1971). From another dimension, authenticity is actually a becoming; becoming what one is according to Kierkegaard. Such a search for probing the innermost layers of the self begins when one becomes aware of the authentic and inauthentic patterns of life (Golomb, 1995).

As we can understand, authenticity of human beings indeed implies an effort of creating and managing an identity. Yet, Fırat and Dholakia (2001) cite that in modernist terms this is not a fixed project; rather it is moving back and forth between different contrasts and comparisons of the self within itself as well as with respect to others. This is because identity must be distinguishing the subject while it also needs to be coherent in order not to trigger disparities between diverse trials (Askegaard, 2005). Authenticity is the capacity to express the uniqueness that is socially constructed; but is not restricted to the influence of the society (Ferrara, 1998). For Askegaard (2005), there is a contrariety between being like others (authenticity of reflective uniqueness) and being oneself (authenticity of immediate uniqueness). On the other hand, for an identity to be coherent and consistent, ‘who I want to be’ should match with ‘who am I’ or vice versa. That is why, we keep on dynamically producing differences while we also try to blend them together successfully and not let them fall far apart from each other (Arnould and Price, 1999).

Nevertheless, again from a post-modern standpoint, speaking of authenticity -both for objects and persons- makes little sense. According to Harvey (1990) postmodernism was born out of the monotony of the modernist vision of the world, such as a belief in linear progress, absolute truths or standardized knowledge and production. Compared to modernism, postmodernism stresses fragmentation, indeterminacy and the rejection of meta narratives. In the post-modern realities are reproduced. Harvey (1990) gives the example of Raschenberg who collaged many themes such as trucks, apples, plates, and car keys into an image of the Ruben’s “Venus at her Toilet”. It is this characteristic of post-modernism that gives way to

quotation, excerption, accumulation and repetition of already existing images. The postmodern artist collides and superimposes different ontological words. Moreover, the far reaching of local tastes, music, cinema, culinary habits, and other aspects of cultural production in fact brings together different worlds of commodities under the same umbrella. While the spectacle becomes decontextualized, things are set apart from their contexts in the postmodern. Unlike the modernist claim that all signifiers are arbitrarily linked to the signified, postmodern declares that signifiers are free floating (Firat, 1992; Firat and Venkatesh, 1995). Images are disconnected from their contents and from their contexts. Since the world is constructed as a reproduction and signifiers can change gradually, it becomes almost impossible to discover/rediscover the 'authentic' (Little, 1991). Reality needs to be interpreted from signs, which are, in fact, no longer related to an initial reality (Connor, 1997). In his book 'Simulacrum' Baudrillard (1994) describes this scene with a four-phase model. At first, the sign is representative of the basic reality. Next, the sign moves away from the reality one step; it disguises the reality it was once affiliated with. In the following stage, there is an attempt to remove any evidence that masks the absence of a basic reality. Finally, the sign becomes independent of reality and becomes the reality itself in what Baudrillard (1994) calls as 'pure simulacrum'.

In simulacrum, Baudrillard (1994) argues, there is no need for counterfeited; i.e. copied signs because signs and images become counterfeits as they proliferate. In fact, "...the true (like the real) begins to be reproduced in the image of the pseudo, which begins to become the true" (Bruner, 1994, p.397). At an extreme "...copies can made to appear more original than the original or more real than the real in this cycle of production and reproduction" (Venkatesh, 1999, p.157). Objects become just

replicas of each other. As a consequence, one calls real that s/he wants to, thus things that are called 'real' are made 'real' (Eco, 1975) For this reason, in simulacrum people produce nothing but 'absolute fakes' according to Eco (1975). Then, the reproductions or even the reproductions of reproductions are 'perfectly real'. Since meanings are not rigid and we experience "the blurring of the real and the imaginary-of the original and the copy-" (Venkatesh, 1999, p.163), uniqueness or authenticity is no longer important. Baudrillard (1994) calls this as the hyperreal age.

The crucial part of this discussion for identities is that, at some point, agents who are the producers of signs become part of the simulacra. The self may not also be 'authentic' in hyperreality. The self gets rather decentred (Firat and Dholakia, 2001) like the identity, which is temporary, fluid and multifaceted. As a reaction, one can argue that the individual can enter into a desperate search for identity in the simulacrum.

As identities are decontextualized, symbolic entities augment this process (Askegaard, 2005). That is why, to understand how consumers construct/maintain an authentic identity or have it decontextualized while consuming designer brands in the form of counterfeits needs to be further explicated in light of the brands' symbolic connotations for the consumers.

II.2. Self Presentation

In one of the seminal works in its area, sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) defined the term self-presentation as the process of controlling how others perceive oneself. Because we hold concerns about how others think of us, we direct our efforts for keeping our behavior in a socially acceptable manner. The assumption is that, we are to what group we belong. Therefore, Goffman expects that people convey information about themselves in a manner consistent with who they are and their togetherness with particular others. As a by-product of this need, people engage in self-presentation to maintain meaningful interaction with others. Goffman (1959) argues that we need such an expression in order to convey impressions of our selves because the 'reality' is unperceivable at first but other clues such as hints; gestures and status symbols are needed to have an idea about it. During the course of the presentation, certain signs and symbols may play a crucial role. Although signs mean different things to different people, they are extremely useful in self-presentation because they still carry social information. In other words, the less available the authentic, the more 'appearances' are needed (Goffman, 1963).

Goffman (1959) argues that despite the negative emblem associated to it, self-presentation is a natural trait that can be manifest in multifaceted forms yet still remain non-deceptive. On the other hand, though people do not always impression manage for achieving a particular goal, sometimes this might be the case, which is defined by the magnitude of the individual impression motivation. Impression motivation is directed by the value and relevance of impressions for the attainment of goals and the perceived gaps between the ideal and true selves. First, the value of

desired goals is largely determined by the characteristics of the reference group (or the target audience) and the personal significance of the feeling of approval. The higher the desirability of the target audience, the harder it gets to impress them. Especially those who fear from negative evaluations or are high in public self-consciousness seek to build good first impressions through conscious techniques of self-presentation.

Some people's (named as significant others) opinions are important because we tend to evaluate our selves accordingly. Fiske (1989) asserts that the way one looks determines how s/he places himself/herself in the social order and helps to exert control over one's relationships with those significant others. Nevertheless, this is not an easy task all the time. Goffman (1959) warns that reliance upon representations begets the possibility of misrepresentation.

According to Leary and Kowalski (1995), some people may want to present themselves in a way that approximates their goals. Since the images we convey to other people are characterized by our phenomenal selves (one's consciously aware beliefs about the self), and we tend to form impressions consistent with the phenomenal self, but inconsistencies can sometimes arise. Since counterfeit designer brands vary in their qualities (Gentry et al. 2001) but since they are in the form of clothes which are somewhat visible, they might also leave the consumer with not only opportunities (Nill and Schultz, 1996) but also certain problems. That is why; self-presentation is inherent in the consumption of counterfeits and is especially relevant to the phenomenon because it may not always result in favorable consequences as set off in the upcoming sections.

II.2.1 Social Risk

In the previous section, the cruciality of self presentation for the individual and its reasons were outlined. However, as Leary and Kowalski (1996) affirm, failing to conform to a particular image can manifest certain problems. Although relevant for many consumption decisions, especially the visible ones such as clothing, the notion of social risk has received scant attention in consumer research. That is why; I first exhibit the theoretical background of the concept mainly by referring to social psychology related literature on social anxiety, embarrassment as well as techniques such as justifications that might be involved in socially risky situations. Then, I summarize the previous literature in consumer research regarding social risk bearing in mind whether this concept can exist in some counterfeit designer brand clothing consumption situations.

II.2.1.1.Social Anxiety

Anxiety is the instantaneous feeling of uncertainty regarding the outcomes of one's behavior under a significant self-presentational context. For instance, social anxiety is experienced in the presence of others such as giving public speeches, attending evaluations, meeting new or impressive people or modeling clothes (Leary and Kowalski, 1995). The common point is that such occasions tend to evoke concerns about others' evaluations of us. Saying that 'what would others think of me' is a manifestation of the tension if one violated propriety (De Certeau, Giard and Mayol, 1988). As long as people feel the need to belong, social anxiety will exist under

certain circumstances. Those circumstances can be the ones in which desired goals are of issue or in which the audience is a highly praised one; i.e. attractive, socially desirable and powerful. According to the social impact theory, evaluations of those people are perceived as more significant and valid than reactions of a less desirable audience. Furthermore, according to Leary's (1995) self presentational theory, the more motivated a person in making a certain impression and the less certain s/he is in executing this, the greater will be the social anxiety s/he experiences. Social anxiety is felt because people who form incompetent and inconsistent impressions can be excluded, ignored or punished if valued others form undesirable impressions of them (Leary, 1995).

Though social anxiety is contingent upon personality traits and the self-presentational context, it might still lead to anxiety and embarrassment. That is why, usually, people strive to maintain consistency of either way in their self-presentations. Alternatively, the person might develop certain techniques for alleviating or maybe totally avoiding situations that lead to social anxiety.

II.2.1.2.Embarrassment

While social anxiety is the feeling experienced during a personally significant occasion, embarrassment is the foolish feeling that indicates one has failed to live up to an expectation in front of significant others. While some authors confuse embarrassment with shame (Leary and Kowalski, 1995), they are two different concepts. The difference between shame and embarrassment is described as “shame

results from the violation of important moral or ethical standards whereas embarrassment exhibits momentary mistakes or awkwardness” (Leary and Kowalski, 1995, p84).

For many cases, embarrassment accompanies social anxiety, though not every socially anxious situation results in embarrassment. Similar to situations that bear social anxiety, embarrassment may typically occur in contexts in which the individual confronts a situation that poses him/her in a situation that typically demands a characteristic that s/he does not possess. An example might be the feelings a job applicant might experience when a job interviewer asks one’s foreign language proficiency but the interviewee lacks this property. When the self-presenter recognizes that s/he does not possess the desired trait and fears that this deficiency might lead to a negative evaluation, social anxiety occurs (Miller, 1996). If the negative evaluation is given, then the individual gets embarrassed.

Leary (1995) hypothesizes three possible courses of action when the person confronts such a dilemma, feels social anxiety and faces the threat of embarrassment: Behaving in an authentic fashion (telling the truth that s/he is not proficient in a foreign language), engaging in deception (lying that s/he is proficient), or trying to skip that particular aspect of the self e.g. by skipping the question, which is called exclusionary self-presentation. In the latter case, fear of negative evaluation leads to selective information dissemination about the self. On the other hand, if the agent engages in lying, s/he might still bear the threat of embarrassment. Actually, people who prefer to lie in a similar occasion might have a couple of reasons for choosing this method. Leary (1995) describes such motives for producing fabricated images as

insecurity and manipulateness. Insecurity applies to low self-esteem people that might try to hide their true selves when possible in favor of presenting more acceptable selves to their cohorts. Since they have a more favorable self view, high self esteem people can be seen as more self aggrandizing under scrutiny while low self esteem persons may be more cautious under situations of high potential embarrassment. Manipulateness, on the other hand, involves rather strategically calculated manners that might include telling lies if it is in the best interest of the individual. People scoring high in the Machiavellianism scale fall into that category according to the author. Doing everything necessary to achieve an end is demonstrated as a characteristic of high mach's because of their belief in the invalidity of any absolute moral laws that apply to every situation and that disregards some ethical conventions (Leary, 1995; Al-Khatib, Vitell and Rawwas, 1997). Also, Vitell (2003) argues that consumers ranking high in relativism and Machiavellianism may perceive it less wrong to engage in behavior that might be perceived as unethical by others. Alternatively, if the person is low-mach, and some kind of deception is involved; i.e. when the public image differs from the true self, we might expect to observe social anxiety in the individual and embarrassment, if the lie is somehow revealed. Accordingly, self-esteem can diminish and negative emotions may arise along with embarrassment.

II.2.1.3. Justifications

If the individual cannot manage the situational ambivalence and experiences anxiety and the threat of embarrassment, s/he might follow certain adaptive techniques to

cope with and ease the feeling either by resolving the ambivalent situation or adapting to it (Mick and Fournier, 1998). Called as ‘neutralization techniques’ by Strutton, Vitell and Pelton (1994), justifying the behavior is a technique in which the individual actively seeks to frame and resolve the issue in line with his/her actual behavior in order to eliminate or reduce the potentially negative effect of the norm-violating behavior on one’s self concept. While excuses reduce the degree of responsibility, justifications dilute the inappropriateness of a particular behavior (Tedeschi, Lindskold and Rosenfeld, 1985). At some point justifications may characterize socially unacceptable behavior more appropriate such that the individual believes that the behavior does not even need any defense against a subjective norm (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) in a rather relativist fashion (Kwak, Zinkhan and French, 2001).

There are several justifications that might be employed in a situation that others might consider as inappropriate: First, the blamed party may try to minimize the consequences of an event, such as claiming that nobody is really hurt. Furthermore, one can even argue that this behavior, while perceived as harmful by others, even benefits some others. Individuals also may try to justify their behavior in comparison to others, by usually exaggerating the number who might have been involved in the same incidence (Leary, 1995; Strutton, Vitell and Pelton, 1994). In sum, by framing the problem and the associated behavior in a distinct and self-fulfilling way, justifications help the individual confirm the appropriateness of his/her behavior to himself/herself as well as to others. In that way, justifications also help to relieve the embarrassment of a misrepresentation (Miller, 1996) and even can alter the negative denotation of the situation otherwise perceived as embarrassing.

II.2.1.4. Social Risk in Consumer Research

For some product categories, consumption can carry the risk of stealing away from one's social status. The risk associated with such products is termed as 'social risk' (Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972), which is the risk associated with one's loss of face in the eyes of others in public. The concept of social risk is studied under the broader concept of perceived risk in marketing (see Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972; Popielarz, 1967). Being among the few studies that concentrate on social risk, Perry and Hamm (1969) perceive social risk as contingent upon the significance of an outcome, especially when the outcome is visible to others. The authors demonstrate that for products such as men's cologne and men's sport jacket, social risk played an important role in shaping consumption decisions than economic risk. Hence, the authors conclude that the greater the importance of others evaluations of a product, the socially riskier it becomes for the consumer to make the purchase decision. Social risk is more obvious for socially visible products because it evokes the socially oriented self-concept most notably in visible consumption situations (Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972). Similar to the findings of Perry and Hamm (1969), Hwan Lee (1990) cites that as perceived product conspicuousness increased, housewives were guided more and more by the suggestions of their sororities. As a consequence, social risk necessitates some risk reduction methods, which can be in the form of buying brands on endorsement, relying on word-of-mouth or remaining loyal to a brand (Roselius, 1971; Hugstad, Taylor and Bruce; 1987).

Again, according to West and Broniarczyk (1998), other people's opinions and criticisms also shape consumer behavior. Consumers need significant others' or

experts' opinions to alleviate cognitive effort or perceived risk associated with a purchase. Similar to Perry and Hamm (1969), West and Broniarczyk (1998) found out that the higher this cognitive effort; the more sensitive consumers get to a negative outcome. In that case, consumers set a higher level of minimum acceptable threshold as their expectation from a certain purchase decision.

For Wright, Claiborne and Sirgy (1992), social risk also may arise as individuals evaluate the outcome of their self-image constructions throughout time. If self-image is worse than expected, self-debilitation can occur. For instance, if a consumer wished to belong to a perceivably high class but it turns out that his/her car has a lower class image then s/he may end up in a negative state and lowered self-esteem as a result of the purchase. The authors adjoin that the stronger the significance of the product category, the higher will be its influence on the construction of self-images. For instance, unique or highly differentiated conspicuous products tend to carry this effect.

Social risk is also relevant for services that concern one's physical outlook such as tattooing (Sanders, 1985) because of the stigmatizing nature of the operation as mentioned in the above paragraph. Sanders (1985) reports that novices follow certain risk reduction strategies to avoid the potentially negative social consequences of having a tattoo. Those include starting with a small, barely noticeable sign and having it on a concealable part of the body or bringing close friends to see the tattoo to ascertain acceptability within one's immediate circle.

Finally, social risk also has an impact on the preference of the place of purchase as well as what will be purchased from where. For instance, though high-income groups in the US shop from discount stores, they differ in what they purchase from lower income groups. Prasad (1975) found that high economic groups did not prefer to purchase high social risk products such as handbags, ladies dresses, men's suits and sports coats from discount stores though he affirms that his findings may not be directly applicable to contexts other than the designated one.

To sum up the discussion, self presentation involves utilizing certain techniques in making desirable images or avoiding negative ones. In order to sustain meaningful interaction with others and fulfill the need to belong, people also strive to maintain a coherent identity. As mentioned in the previous section on self-presentation and authenticity, this is an ongoing process informed by not only one's past, but also his/her present and aspired for future. As the individual presents the self in hope for shaping/maintaining his/her identity, s/he will be prone to public attention and scrutiny, which also bring about anxiety or consequences like embarrassment that also modify the self-presentation (identity reformulation) efforts. Similar scholars of consumption like Douglas and Isherwood (1996), Goffman (1959) posits that certain signs and symbols that carry information about an identity in line with the consensus in the society is needed to be a part of the social order. While this task seems easy, it still bears a possibility of failure in terms of inconsistency or unacceptance in the form of embarrassment. As previous literature suggests, such a possibility is more obvious for socially visible products. Since counterfeit designer branded good usually lacks the quality consistency offered by the authentic item (Grossman and Shapiro, 1998) but is still preferred, whether and how people deal with such an a

situation becomes an area of inquiry, which this study also aims to explicate by referring to the literature on social risk.

II.3. Self and Symbolic Consumption

As delineated in the first section on authenticity, identity, thus ‘self’, is defined relative to an ‘other’; be it a copy or another perceivably authentic identity. Since identity is constantly defined and redefined through contrasts to others, social interaction is a crucial aspect of self-construction efforts (Auty and Elliott, 2001). Indeed, mind, self and society derive from social interaction (Hwan Lee, 1990). Accordingly, focusing on the person without considering the social structure and interpersonal interaction is incomplete from this perspective, which is called ‘symbolic interactionism’ (Solomon, 1983). Consumer researchers pay attention to the self and social interaction because ‘self image’ is one of the key aspects that determine one’s behavior(s) in the society, including consumption (Munson and Spivey, 1980). Possessions can be tools of displaying identity when they represent one’s glories, skills, tastes or unique creative efforts (Jensen Schau and Gilly, 2003). In other words, symbolic concerns are important factors in a variety of consumer behavior (Belk, Bahn and Mayer, 1982).

There are numerous approaches to the self-concept in consumer research. According to Munson and Spivey (1980), actual self differs from others’ perception of the self; i.e. how one perceives himself/herself given others’ symbolic attributions to his/her consumption preferences. Similarly, in a critical review of the self-concept in

consumer research, Sirgy (1982) divides the notion of self in two parts: Actual self (how a person perceives himself or herself) and ideal self (how a person wants to perceive herself/himself). Since the self cannot be thought without reference to interaction with others he adds the terms ‘social self’ and ‘desired social self’ to this conceptualization. Social self (looking glass self) is about how we think others perceive us. Others’ perception of us may dominate our perceptions of self. In that case, expressive potential is largely determined by what we think others think about our consumption patterns (Munson and Spivey, 1980). Desired social self, on the other hand, points to the image that we want others to have about us.

Munson and Spivey (1980) have also introduced the term ‘expressive self’ to refer to self-evaluations that are shaped by one’s goals of value expression. Value expressiveness operates through self-identification with another person/group because this identification is part of a preferred self-defining relationship, while utilitarian influence is rather normative and operates through compliance that is needed for achieving rewards or avoiding punishments (Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel, 1989). Whenever there is a relative consensus (social agreement in Solomon’s sense) about the meaning of action, then related occurrences can be socially defined and behavior can be predicted. That is why images of the brands consumed- provided they are familiar to others- reflect one’s self image (Hwan Lee, 1990).

Indeed, Dolich (1969) found out that products, which are consumed in the presence of others, had significantly different levels of value expressiveness relative to products consumed when one is alone. Products and brands function in these self-expressions to such an extent that they are seen as extensions of the self (Belk, 1988).

In contrast to Cushman's argument for empty self; i.e. consumers relentlessly consuming and disposing, Belk (1988) and Ahuvia (2005) argue that objects mediate between and synthesize various identities that consumers possess. Even though they might live in a fragmented society that exposes them to many lifestyle options and subcultures with diverse underlying philosophies (Firat, 1992) consumers still compose and maintain identities through the consumption of objects. This relationship between objects and consumers is augmented by usage or ownership of a product, which further helps to shape both one's self-concept and the product's image (Grubb and Hupp, 1968).

Instead of a utilitarian versus value expressive distinction, Solomon (1983) argues that most consumption is actually part of our social life because all products carry an inherent/agreed upon social information with them (This perspective follows from Peirce's philosophy in that all signs need human interpretants). Other than that, consumption can be a tool for fulfilling a social need or achieving a desired goal because of some cues inherent in products as symbols. As a result of the consumption process, through the appraisal of significant others product images can be incorporated into self-definitions as Grubb and Hupp (1968) also have advanced.

According to the Self-image/Product-image Theory (Sirgy, 1982), we express our self-images, in congruence with the products/brands we consume. Following this, four following outcomes can be observed: Positive self-congruity, positive self-incongruity, negative self-congruity and negative self-incongruity. The theory posits that, consumers' purchase motivation is highest when the product's/brand's image is

as positively evaluated as self-image belief, which is similarly positive (Dolich, 1969). When this happens, positive self-congruity occurs.

Alternatively, Dolich (1969) has posited that some products are purchased for the sake of spoiling the real self while some others for approximating to the ideal self (the person we would like to be). If the consumer is away from his/her ideal self and approaches towards this ideal self through the positive image that a product/brand maintains, then positive self-incongruity is experienced. In that case, the consumer enhances his/her self-esteem through the consumption of the positive image of the product/brand. However, from a self-consistency perspective, the greater the congruence, the easier it takes to be self-consistent (Grubb and Hupp, 1968; Belk et al., 1982). Supporting these with an empirical study, Belk, Mayer and Driscoll (1984) state that individuals who actually hold a possession tend to give more favorable descriptions of the product's owners.

Similarly, as part of the need to be self-consistent, consumers try to avoid situations that can lead to contradictions with their self-conceptions. Known as self-verification, people seek to create an environment that is self-confirmatory. For example, driving a certain model or brand of automobile but avoiding another can be viewed as a strategy to achieve self-verification (Edson Escalas and Bettman, 2003). In case there is a discrepancy between the product and self-image, we might expect the consumer to avoid either the negative self-image or sacrifice from the positive product/brand image. According to Sirgy (1982), the final decision depends on which of the two is eminent during the time of the purchase.

For products that have a stereotyped image for users such as cars, clothing, etc. product preferences are based on the congruence between the consumer's self concept and product's perceived image (Sirgy, 1982; Edson Escalas and Bettmann, 2003). Furthermore, as we infer from Dolich (1969), congruence between not only the real self and product's image, but also between the ideal self-images and the brand user image is crucial in forming positive attitudes toward the brand. For instance, people also tend to associate themselves with desired prototypical users, or in other words, role models. According to Edson Escalas and Bettman (2003), by maximizing similarity to a desirable prototypical user, people may enhance their self-images. In particular, self-enhancers strive to use brands that their aspiration groups possess. Yet, whether brand/product preference is guided by the actual or the ideal self may not be clear-cut because of the multiplicity of self-presentations (Goffman, 1959; Hwan Lee, 1990).

As a result, the self has garnered considerable attention in consumer research, as the above studies suggest. From these, we can infer that product/brand choices are directed by not only one's actual self-perceptions, but also by what kind of a self the person wants to possess and by what others think about the person of concern. At a broader level, this might also give us clues about the power relations in a society (Bocock, 1994). Therefore, in the upcoming two sections, I try to further detail the reasons of symbolic consumption, with a broader focus on the interpersonal relationships.

II.3.1.Emulation

In their seminal work “The World of Goods”, Douglas and Isherwood (1996) refer to Duesenberry’s proposition, which states that consumption is not an isolated act, but rather is subject to scrutiny. For Douglas and Isherwood (1996), goods are the bases of communication through the social meanings that we attach to them. Objects are not valued for only their functionality; they are also valued for generating social interaction (Solomon, 1983). A possession’s actual value is determined from the ability to generate meaning within the society and particularly for the agent.

At that point, we must cite Richins (1994), who mentions that objects possess both public and private meanings and distinguishes between the two. According to Belk (1988), some possessions hold private meanings for the owner. Though they might have low exchange values in terms of utility, such objects are not even exchangeable - because the owner has adhered a particular meaning to them. On the other hand, while private meanings emerge out of consumers’ relationships with objects, public meanings are co-constituted with others. For Richins (1994), public meanings are particularly the loci of status and aspiration; hence desire, since they demonstrate of power relations in a society. This point is in line with De Certeau (1984) who asserts that consumption is a set of tactics that demonstrates the interplay of power struggles of everyday life. In modern societies where there is no blood superiority or titles of nobility consumption becomes a fundamental way of establishing and communicating differences (Canclini, 1995). In fact, Rae affirms that no blame could be assigned to individuals who felt the need to protect their social standing by

conspicuous consumption (Mason, 1998). Hence, goods are involved in endless definitions and re-definitions of social status (Corrigan, 1997).

For Veblen (1994 [1899]), what lies beneath all social honor, prestige and status is wealth. Since lower classes cannot rely on leisure as a way of displaying honor, they turn to goods as a major way of displaying wealth and status. Following this, Liebenstein (1993 [1950]) argue that what makes a product conspicuous and of higher utility is its price, in what he calls as the ‘Veblen Effect’. Nevertheless, although many associate conspicuous consumption to an attribute of being high-status, Veblen (1994 [1899]) himself contends that, “...no class of society not even the most abjectly poor forgoes all customary conspicuous consumption” (p85). In a similar vein, De Certeau (1984) thinks that demonstration through consumption is necessary especially for the ‘weak’ since the powerful do not want to reveal their strategies to the public through being visible by consumption. The weaker the agent, the ampler is his/her need to show off. Furthermore, Kempen (2003) claims that incentives to seek status are common among not only the leisure class, but also among the poor even to a higher degree because provided that a status good is possessed the marginal utility from surpassing a peer would be higher for those people. The author cites the example of the French urban lower classes in the 18th century, among who cheap fakes of aristocratic luxuries such as fans and umbrellas were extremely popular.

As mentioned in the above paragraph, consumption, though not always successfully, disguises the underlying strategies about the power relations, which are not so easily identifiable (De Certeau, Giard and Mayol, 1988). In an attempt to characterize the

antecedents of these power struggles, Zablocki and Kanter (1976) affirm that the resulting consumption patterns may not necessarily stem from production relations or economic location since these two variables no longer constitute a coherent set of values. Instead, the basis of emulation is the interpretive skills and tastes of the individuals in the society (Bourdieu, 1986; Holt, 1998) which is manifest through goods.

In fact, Bourdieu, who revived the term ‘taste’ after Weber, set the ground for distinguishing individuals and groups not solely on the basis of economic criteria or production relations such as Marx or Wright has suggested, but rather by using all kinds of consumption decisions that seek to ascertain prestige and honor. Where economic capital or production relations cannot explain the class formations within the society, consumption is recognized as the indirect way of signaling inequalities and one’s status in a community (Douglas and Isherwood, 1996). Yet, the underlying factor in those consumption decisions is related to this person’s ‘taste’ according to Bourdieu (1986). The author relates this capacity of producing symbolically distinguishable works and the ability of appreciating these practices and products (i.e. taste) to one’s cultural capital.

According to Kant (1989 [1790], p17), it is the most refined taste that is separate from all immediate sensory pleasures: “Beauty is an object’s form of purposiveness as far as it is perceived in the object without the presentation of a purpose”. Therefore, those low in cultural capital tend to go for the anti-Kantian aesthetic; i.e. for the immediate sensory gratification (Corrigan, 1997). Conversely, Kantian aesthetics disparages the overt display of wealth and consumption such as that

practiced by Veblen's leisure class and favors the more inconspicuous that can only be appreciated by those 'distinct' civilized classes. To give an example, in the 19th century USA, ownership of folk portraits (portraits of the self) or family portraits was a sign of success since not many people possessed not only the economic but also -maybe more importantly- the cultural capital to own them. Nevertheless, when an artist was to portray a popular person in town, he usually was besieged by more orders. By imitating the behavior of a significant figure, people felt prominent and prestigious, though the outcome might not be tasty let alone artistic, according to Vlach (1991). "So long as ordinary people consumed folk paintings they were contained by –and mocked for- their bad taste" (p188).

Bourdieu (1986) theorizes that now each contradictory class location is defined by its own intrinsic properties, and a system of appreciation determines classifiable practices and works. Taste, as a system of appreciation, directly intervenes in the production of classifiable practices. Those classifiable practices and works also find a place in 'life-styles', which Bourdieu (1986) define as a system of already classified and constantly classifying practices. In other words, habitus is not only a structuring structure, but it is also a structured structure. And we can infer that without a taste to appreciate, production becomes meaningless.

Naturally, consensus plays a great role in determining what reflects a higher set of values and tastes for assessing who is more powerful (Lee, 1993; Gronow, 1997). Yet, in the post-modern identification through lifestyles becomes a novel ground of political struggle. Now 'individuals' need to choose a lifestyle or in other words, an ideal self to work on (Featherstone, 2000). Visibility re-gains importance for some

people, since appearance becomes an overwhelming indicator of one's self worth and a source of expressing social status or class (Chaney, 1996). In this process, objects constitute the terms of the social distribution of value; they can work to keep people in a certain place in the order (Baudrillard, 1981; Mick, 1986). Each symbol is meaningful as long as it holds a relationship with other competing symbols. Objects are also like symbols; such as linguistic units that emerge from differences between meanings they arise out of the competing positions of symbols. Hence, objects have degrees of ranks. From the words of Kempen (2004) "status signifying material possessions claim superior position in the social hierarchy for the owner as they command the respect and admiration of others and provoke envy among them" (p207).

In fact, Belk et al. (1982) and Belk, et al. (1984) illustrated that depending on their age, sex and social class even children can understand social standing differences based on consumption patterns and particularly hold stereotypes for certain product user images. This ability of making distinctions sharpens as the age increases. Similarly, Munson and Spivey (1981) asked the respondents from various social statuses to gauge the typical user of sixteen brands across eight product categories that vary in their value expressive dimension. The authors found support for the hypothesis that stereotypes of people who own a specific brand differ across social classes. The authors also acknowledge that those nuances exist for some, especially value expressive product categories such as clothing, jewelry, and automobiles. From these, we can infer that the consumption patterns of status groups revolve around the goal of establishing certain outlooks that create a sense of belonging yet protect and

enhance the group's exclusivity. Scarcity is the guarantor of differences (Mick, 1986).

Although the modernist ideology of social progress encourages individuals towards upward social mobility, in modern times, scarcity puts individuals under pressure as the availability of lifestyles around them become more and more resembling. Moreover, display of identity through symbols becomes even harder because of the fraudulent use of symbols theoretically by everyone. For Gronow (1997) this is one of the ways in which an object becomes kitsch; i.e. culturally irrelevant to the agents as it moved from its original context. At this phase, similar to what Kant proposes those whose consumption is primarily structured by economic capital are denigrated as materialist, showy or ostentatious by the ones with the highest level of cultural capital as they usually hold the power to shape social hierarchies (Lee, 1993). Nevertheless, Holt (1998) manifests that the cultural elites who disapprove prioritizing goods without proper reference to taste are no different than the ones whom they disapprove. Cultural elites are in a way seeking for status as they try to distance the 'vulgar materialists' and strengthen the habitus boundaries set by consumption practices. The Gramscian notion of 'hegemony' interrogates this perspective, which states that dominant classes rely on the continuity of a modern cultural capital that guarantees the continuity of the social structure. In a less fatalistic way, Gramscians "...grant the popular classes a certain initiative and power of resistance, but always within the contradictory interaction with hegemonic groups" (Canclini, 1995, p181). One of the manifestations of this interaction is seen in what is termed as the trickle down effect; i.e. a product/brand losing status value when appropriated by people of lower rank while being gradually abandoned by the

superior (Mason, 1998). In fact, this is one of the realms for which Bourdieu's work has been criticized as not explaining what happens when the signs that differentiate the elites are mixed with those that characterize the ordinary members of the society (Canelini, 1995).

While conspicuous consumption can draw certain borders within particular groups in a society, it can also distinguish people of equal social status. Duesenberry introduced the term "demonstration effect", which implies that consumption may not always involve claiming superiority above others as Veblen argued, but can entail the need to keep up with a designated group of people or eliminate feelings of inferiority within that group (McCormick, 1993). Ambitions of this membership group determine the degree and direction of conspicuous spending. Liebenstein (1993 [1950]) calls this as the "bandwagon effect", which is different from the 'snob effect' that is associated with the desire of exclusivity from everyone else. Mason (1998) argues that desire for fashion goods is driven by both the love of distinction and the tendency of imitation.

In sum, consumption conveys generating and displaying symbolic meanings, exalts enjoyment, fun, memories of the past and provides aesthetic pleasures associated with play mentality from consumption apart from functionality in a utilitarian sense (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). But this endeavor also encompasses emulation between agents in a society. While this underlying process remains, consumption practices that serve as intermediaries –whether they are termed as material, experiential or humane- are in constant definition in line with the necessities of power struggles. Since designer brands are perceived as luxury goods but are

available to everyone thanks to the more suitable prices of the counterfeits (London, 2003) such consumption might also have some consequences for the negotiation of status and identity for the consumers of counterfeits and the consumers of authentic items, which is again relevant to the research domain of this thesis.

II.3.2.Reference Groups

Though sociological/anthropological research has long been interested in the role of goods in expressing social standing relative to others, social groups termed as reference groups have been a locus of interest in consumer research, too, in order to describe what roles interpersonal influences play in consumption decisions of individuals. From a consumer research perspective, consumers engage in activities that aim to learn about the behavior of reference group members to assist in their own consumption decisions (Ratner and Kahn, 2002). Obviously, marketers benefit from the effect of reference groups such as using opinion leaders or celebrities in their marketing communications. By exposing people to desirable lifestyles, marketers can "...alter self-concept development, contribute to the formation of values and attitudes and generate pressure for conformity to group norms" (Bearden and Etzel, 1982, p184). In that respect, reference groups refer to social entities that people associate themselves with (other than their actual membership groups) in shaping their behavior (Bearden and Etzel, 1982).

Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel (1989) developed a scale to measure the construct 'consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence', as a result of which they defined

as "...the need to identify to enhance one's image with significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands, the willingness to conform to the expectations of others regarding purchase decisions and/or the tendency to learn about products/services by observing others and/or seeking information about others" (p474). Similarly, Calder and Burnkrant (1977) assert that mediated by the level of social compliance, individual's readiness to be influenced by others (termed as normative beliefs) shape consumer behavior. Yet, subjective norms' influence on consumer behavior varies from situation to situation (Bonfield, 1974).

Such 'normative beliefs' are also mentioned by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). According to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TORA), an individual's behavioral intentions are predicted by the individual's personal attitudes and subjective norms (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ryan, 1982). Individual's personal attitudes are formed by his/her own beliefs of the consequences of a particular behavior. Subjective norms are the individual's beliefs about what others (beloved friends, family, authority figures, etc.) might be thinking about the desirability/undesirability of a behavior. "The influence of subjective norms is presumed to capture the social pressure a decision maker feels to make a purchase or not (Bagozzi, Wong, Abe and Bergami, 2000, p98).

The term 'normative beliefs' garnered attention in the Attribution Theory (Calder and Burnkrant, 1977), too. According to this theory, whether behavior will be matched with the consumer's attitudes depends on the social desirability of the related consequence. For instance, if everyone prefers Brand A but Mr. X prefers another brand, his preference would be indicative of his uniqueness. Calder and

Burnkrant (1977) propose that consumers wish to engage in behaviors that can make other people form desirable impressions about them based on their beliefs about what others think about the desirability of a behavior (desired social self in Sirgy's (1982) terms). Moving from a set of surveys, the authors found out that social evaluation and personal effectiveness scores for cosmetics differed in public/private occasions. The difference stemmed from the fact that one brand was more heavily advertised than the other. The highly advertised brand was expected to yield lower distinctiveness and weaker chances of internal attribution; but it produced stronger attributions and higher social desirability instead. Therefore, the authors concluded that uniqueness was not always desirable, especially when the unique brand's name is unknown to others. Nevertheless, attribution theory falls short of explaining why some people need to feel compliant and some do not under certain other circumstances such as people who would never consume the mainstream cosmetic brand but go for a high end offering to differentiate themselves from the others.

According to Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel (1989), susceptibility to interpersonal influence is a general trait that varies across persons and across products. Indeed, in order to talk about reference group influence, other people, either the reference group or the actual membership group, must identify the item. Since clothing is such a visible product that everyone owns, consumption choices are prone to public scrutiny and thus, to reference group influence. The authors propose that as clothing is a publicly consumed necessity, group influence for the product should be weak but influence of group on the particular brand should be strong.

Moreover, different reference groups exert different levels of influence on consumer behavior. According to Childers and Rao (1992) reference groups can be classified into two: Socially proximal; i.e. with which one can interact, and socially distant; i.e. with which one has significant opportunities of outside scrutiny. Family and friends are proximal reference groups especially for private consumption domains, and social influence of family might vary by culture and family size. On the other hand, socially distant reference groups such as a celebrity may exert influence on consumers as well.

In a nutshell, research on reference groups stress the significance of the concept for consumer behavior, describe the actors and possible incidences involved in interpersonal influence. For instance, echoing the notion of social risk, Bearden and Etzel (1982) propound that reference group influence is especially valid for value expressive, conspicuous products that are publicly consumed. On the other hand, varieties of such incidences as well as social consequences of reference group conformity/deviance were not specified in detail. Since counterfeit designer brand clothing fall into the value expressive category, reference group influence may shed light on consumption decisions and practices of those items, too.

II.3.3. Materialism

After settling the potential significance of emulative concerns and reference group research to counterfeiting, in this section I focus more on the personal significance of consuming possessions. Materialism is a path to explore in that respect. Materialism can be considered as a style of living in which material consumption lends more meaning to life than anything else and directs its purpose (Richins, 1994). In his seminal article on the topic, Belk (1985) evaluates materialism –the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions- as combination of three sub-traits that are envy, non-generosity and possessiveness. Possessiveness is the wish to be controlling one’s belongings, which might include objects, past experiences or even persons. Non-generosity is characterized as a reluctance to share possessions with others, and perhaps having negative attitudes towards charity. Envy, on the other hand, involves a desire for possessing others’ possessions, persons or experiences. In short, Belk (1985)’s explanation of materialism can be summarized as this: Those who have for various reasons experienced dissatisfaction in life turn to materialism in an effort to find happiness. Materialists may rely on material goods not for the sake of possessing per se, but because their lives may be deserted in terms of meaning (Micken and Roberts, 1999). Similarly, Wright, Claiborne and Sirgy (1992) imply that since product symbolism can fulfill gaps in people’s lives, highly materialistic individuals can be expected to rely more on symbolic cues demonstrated by the goods they own. In other words, individuals try to compensate for the lack of critical symbols in their lives with possessions that fall onto the lacking space on the identity area (Claxton and Murray, 1994).

Another research stream by Richins and Dawson (1992) also attempts to develop a scale to measure materialism in better reliability and construct validity terms than that of Belk (1985). The scale revolves around three main factors, which are success, self-centeredness (selfishness) and happiness (satisfaction with life). Accordingly, Richins and Dawson (1992) suggested that materialists would center on acquiring more possessions, be less willing to share with others, less willing to pursue a life-philosophy based on voluntary simplicity (e.g. sharing instead of owning, or relying on bicycles instead of cars) and be less satisfied with their lives.

As an extension of the efforts of scale development Richins (1994) also conducted an empirical study on materialism. For the author, people holding strong material values center on the acquisition and consuming of possessions since they think of possessions as signs of success. Since first impressions are heavily influenced by the material goods people own and lifestyles are purchasable (Dittmar and Pepper, 1992), those ranking high in materialism value possessions for mastery related reasons but not for the sense of collective pleasure of sharing the experience with others (Burroughs and Rindfleish, 2002). Furthermore, Richins (1994) argues that high materialists view financial worth and security as more important than interpersonal relationships; thus, they tend to proclaim their prestige based on goods that have this property. Again, from the terms of Micken and Roberts (1999), this preoccupation with security is nothing but a manifestation of the materialist's search for certainty.

From another standpoint, Wong (1997) considers conspicuous consumption as an extension of the will to sustain envy. The authors' conceptualization is rather in line

with that of terminal materialism; i.e. consumption directs no goal other than possessiveness, as described in Richins and Scott (1994). Since conspicuousness is part of the self-presentation and envy is a part of the materialism scale, Wong (1997) argues that public self and materialism collide in that respect. Nevertheless, the author can be criticized because material goods constitute only part of the self-presentation (Goffman, 1959). Overall, we can only theorize that if an individual cannot fulfill the aspired well being through interpersonal relationships, s/he will be more prone to displays of success/happiness through material goods that might in turn generate more conspicuousness.

Holt (1995) advocates a similar conceptualization materialism such as the one described in the last sentence of the above paragraph. For the author, it would be a better idea to label people as materialists depending on how they use their possessions. Holt (1995) defines materialists as “consumers who perceive that value inheres in consumption objects rather than in experiences or in other people” (p13). Non-materialism, then, consists of two consumption styles: Experiential consumption (value inheres in the experiences but not in objects) in Holbrook and Hirschman’s (1982) terms and playful consumption (value is inherent in other persons). Nevertheless, Micken and Roberts (1999) argue that while they might rely more on goods, materialists’ actual desires might in fact be shaped by a desire for socializing. Since possessions, especially conspicuous ones are noticeable, people who turn to material goods might be aiming to gather attention as a way of ensuring interaction with others. Hence, Micken and Roberts (1999) conclude that “If Kant is right that we can only know our phenomenological self, then high materialists are those who search among the phenomena for concrete representations of self” (p56).

Finally, despite the finding that materialism is common to all to some degree and it is regarded as an essential facet of satisfaction and well being in life, Belk (1985) concludes that materialism does not bring the expected happiness to those who adhere to it more because boredom arises as possessions fall short of suggesting any goal and the quality of life declines as the quality of experience wanes (Cziksztentmihalyi, 2000). This finding also emerges in later studies (see Richins 1987, 1994). For instance, Shaw, Leung and Wallendorf (2004) utilize multiple discrepancies theory (MDT) in explaining why materialistic individuals are less happy, less satisfied and more depressed than less materialistic ones. The theory proposes that material well being is guided by the individual's ability to satisfy his self-set aspirations and is influential on emotional well being of the individual. In other words, if the individual has highly set goals and expectations, this leads to both reduced material and emotional well being, hence less satisfaction in life. Burroughs and Rindfleish (2002) use 'values theory' to show how well being is reduced whenever values become incoherent. The authors' findings suggest that materialistic values do not cohere with collective oriented (or interpersonally oriented) values such as those pertaining to family, friends or religious memberships. For individuals ranking high in collective values, materialism creates conflict since it threatens those underlying values that the consumer holds.

Nevertheless, Richins (1987) also found out that some objects are necessary for humane well being as those cherished objects might remind the owner of the past. In Solomon's (1985) words, "objects, which are retained for long periods of time, provide a record of the continuity of the self" (p621). Referring to a similar

exceptional circumstance, Belk (1985) suggests that egoism leaves the person as s/he gets older, therefore older people would be less inclined to form attachments to worldly possessions but rather value symbolic ones that remind them of their past. These findings suggest that material possessions are not inherently evil since they can narrate one's identity not only on a personal level such as one's life history, but also on a social level, too (Dittmar and Pepper, 1992). In other words, some possessions (as well as brands) may hold a cultural psyche or iconic power for consumers (Holt, 2003).

To sum up the discussion, while the aforementioned perspectives seem to refer to different aspects of materialism, actually they all have a common point: Materialism has degrees and when individuals are devoid of the experience, consumption could become a devastating activity that demolishes entropy (Czikszenmihalyi, 2000; Ahuvia, 2005) while on the other hand it is beneficial when it enriches social interaction, which is also the primary function of possessions for Solomon (1983).

Yet, one cannot ignore that possessions are also tools of communicating one's aspirations, passions, desires, in which case a product can pursue the role of fulfilling expressive gaps in people's lives (Wright, Claiborne and Sirgy, 1992). Indeed, highly materialistic individuals can be expected to rely more on symbolic cues demonstrated by the goods they own. Additionally, Richins (1994) maintains that those high in material values can be expected to consider publicly consumed items as well as items that are expensive in relative price as more crucial in expressing their identities. This finding is also supported in O'Cass (2004) who argues that materialism is "... a key variable in the development of a consumer's involvement with products, particularly

fashion clothing” (p871). Since designer brands are thought of as expensive and prestigious objects (D’Astous and Gargouri, 2001; Dubois and Paternault, 1995) and consumers of counterfeits have a clear preference for them over non-branded items in some cases (Bloch et al., 1993), understanding the implications of materialism and where it leads to on this consumption affair becomes a proper task for the context at hand.

CHAPTER III

III. ETHICS AND CONSUMPTION

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that follows “...an inquiry into the nature and grounds of morality where the term morality is taken to mean moral judgments, standards and rules of conduct” (Rawwas, Swaidan and Oyman, 2005, p184). Ethics has been an issue of interest for social scientists of all disciplines, including consumer researchers, because consumption is generally characterized as an unproductive activity (Marx, 1976), which steals from entropy (Cziksentmihalyi, 2000) or challenges some religious norms (Bocock, 1994; Belk et al. 2003). Leaving the debate of whether consumption is ‘evil’ or not to future studies, in this section I elaborate on various theoretical perspectives in individual (ethical) decision making and particularly review studies in consumer research that aim to characterize consumers’ ethical attitudes about a variety of consumption situations and demonstrate how this reflects onto their behavior. Though it has been claimed that consumers do not value an ‘ethically superior’ alternative to a less ethical one (see Belk, Devinney and Eckhardt, 2005), the reasons and circumstances under which these remarks are made were not specified in detail. Examining those circumstances and observing the role of consumer ethical judgments, like those in counterfeit designer brand consumption, can be relevant for presenting a more holistic grasp of the phenomenon of counterfeit consumption of branded goods, which is perceived as

an ‘unethical’ as well as illegal affair (Nill and Schultz II, 1996; Cordell et al., 1996; Chow, 2000; Hetzer, 2002).

The Hunt and Vitell Theory of Marketing Ethics (1980) propose two processes that shape individual agents’ decisions: Proposed by John Stuart Mill, teleological theory considers the likely consequences of an action, the related stakeholders and the importance of those consequences for this audience (Mabbott, 1967; Vitell, 2003). Utilitarianism and egoism constitute two bases in interpreting teleological theory. First, utilitarianism posits that a particular type of action is worthwhile as long as it brings additional pleasure and welfare, or as long as it avoids painful outcomes (Smart, 1967). Its main tenet is that actions should be guided by the aim of yielding a greater balance of good than bad than any other alternative (Vermillion, Lassar and Windsor, 2002; Kwak, Zinkhan and French, 2001). In extreme utilitarianism, rules do not matter when the consequence if we follow them is worse than the potential consequence if we break them.

‘Psychological egoism’, on the other hand, predicts that people always act with a view toward their own (perceived) self-interest. Although this might sound like contrary to utilitarianism, indeed Kalin (1981) argues that Hobbes uses the term ‘self interest’ synonymous for happiness or personal welfare. While it might be suspected that selfish people are generally happy, the author presumes that if selfishness leads to unhappiness, an egoist should not be selfish. Then, the conclusion follows as: Whatever the alternative is, altruism or selfishness are acceptable as moral philosophies as long as they lead to one’s welfare. The individual cannot be self-contradictory as an egoist if s/he helps a person in need, as long as s/he holds

personal interest in the other party's well being. To clarify, this perspective differs from utilitarianism, which aims for the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number'.

On the other hand, coming from the Greek word 'deontos' (obligation), deontological theory emphasizes independent, moral codes or sets of values that need to be applied to the situation at hand. While self-determination regarding which alternative gives the greatest amount of welfare is the tiebreaker in teleological theory, here universally adapted rules render individual interpretation minimal (Kwak et al., 2001). In arriving at a decision, the deontologically motivated individual compares various alternatives with a set of established deontological norms (Vitell, 2003). The argument is that universal obedience to rules overriding self-interest is necessary because following the latter may be harmful to others (Baier, 1981). This view is rather parallel to idealism (Al-Khatib et al., 1997) in which the assumption is "desirable consequences can always be obtained with the right action" (p754).

Immanuel Kant was an advocate of the deontological theory. In the 'Critique of Practical Reason', Kant (1997, [1788]) mentions about a determinative 'moral law' that the agent can accept as authoritative, without direct appeal to his/her desires/wishes. According to Kant, self-interest is a very powerful motive, but moral obligations can move people without the presence of self-interest for some cases. There are sometimes contradictions between morally required actions and self-interests of individuals. The Kantian moral theory suggests that we put moral principle ahead of our own individual interests and concerns (Jacobs, 2002). The aim of the critique of such a practical reason is then, establishing the current

principles of practical reasoning. Yet, the philosopher also noted that acknowledging the moral law constituted the ground for ascribing freedom to ourselves; by redefining the moral law each time we recognize our transcendental freedom. Indeed, Kant (1997, [1788]) maintains that happiness and freedom are above all the “supreme determining ground of choice” (p22). He then argues that as long as it is in line with the moral theory –i.e. universalizable- an action that contributes to one’s happiness should be adopted. As long as the individual is conscious, s/he will be free while at the same time his/her actions will be guided by the moral law: “...freedom and moral law reciprocally imply each other.” (p29). Furthermore, “...since in a morally good will, the law itself must be the incentive, the moral interest is a pure sense-free interest of practical reason alone” (p80) rather than the fear of punishment. That is why; depending on the degree of our effort in accomplishing it, we can all reach levels of freedom and happiness provided that everyone complies with the duties that moral law gives (Kant, 1981 [1785]; 1997 [1788]). A challenge to deontological theory comes from Camus who asserts that we cannot talk about an order in this world; our lives are already devoid of meaning. There can be no guiding principle in a life without a proper *raison d’être* so no ethical rule can be maintained in this rather absurd world: “What rule then can emanate from that unreasonable order?” (Jacobs, 2002: 179).

Applying both, Hunt and Vitell suggest that both the deontological and teleological processes influence the agent’s ethical judgments. However, in order to reach some desirable ends, individuals can bypass some ethical norms/values that are inherent in the deontological process (Vermillion et al., 2002, Vitell, 2003). That is why for some cases in which there is an opportunity to be pursued, ethical judgments may

differ from intentions or actual behaviors (p275). Though many of the studies on marketing ethics have focused on the firm and management aspects of the issue or environmental consciousness of consumers, following Hunt and Vitell, a stream of empirical research also has sprang on ethical consumption including a wide array of issues that concern ethical judgments by consumers (Shaw and Shiu, 2001).

To start with, Burke, Milberg and Smith (1993) define ethics in buyer behavior as “an expression of the individual’s moral judgment in his or her purchase behavior”. Explicating the term ‘questionable activities’ in Muncy and Vitell’s terms, Marks and Mayo (1991) acknowledge that consumers might also embrace ethical dilemmas in trying to pursue their competing interests. The authors also note that when actions of the consumer -shaped by his/her desires- runs counter to the interests of other people, a consumer ethical dilemma may occur. In other words, if the situation is ‘enabling’ in terms of its consequences, actual behavior may not follow the most ethical solution to a problem as suggested by deontological norms. In this case, tension may arise. Thus, the authors maintain that consumers, when confronted with an ethical dilemma, may elect to resolve it by furthering their self-interest, similar to an ethical egoism.

Next, in an empirical study by Muncy and Eastman (1998), the authors question the relationship between materialism levels of the consumers and their ethical attitudes regarding shopping practices such as drinking a can of soda in a supermarket and not paying its price or saying nothing when the seller under calculates the bill. Overall, the authors found out that consumers’ materialistic orientations are negatively correlated to their ethical standards. In other words, people who are more

materialistic might be behaving less ethical in some shopping situations if possessions become the focus of their life.

Basing their results on a large sample of 'ethically conscious' consumers in the UK (the authors sampled among subscribers of the magazine 'Ethical Consumer'), Shaw and Shiu (2001) also tried to develop a model for decision-making regarding social and environmental concerns. As a result, though their sample was an extreme group of consumers (readers of the magazine), the authors underpinned their claim that consumers were not always motivated by self-interest, but are sensitive to ethical issues in their shopping behavior. Along similar lines, Burke, Milberg and Smith (1993) examined the situations under which firms are sanctioned; i.e. lose/enhance their competitive advantage because of organizational practices, and in what ways brand performance was affected provided that the firm complied with/violated consumer determined ethical conduct. Environmental responsibility in producing the brand and discriminatory organizational employment policies were the practices assessed in the study. Burk et al. (1993) conclude that organization based practices - even characterized as unethical- had little effect on the consumer's attitude towards the individual brand, and also brand-based practices do not deteriorate the organizational image of the firm. Thus, the authors entail that consumers are not as sensitive towards unethical conduct of organizations as hypothesized.

Finally, Rawwas, Swaidan and Oyman (2005) use diverse scenarios grouped under four contexts as they assess consumer ethical reactions. Those situations can be described as 1) actively benefiting from illegal activities 2) passively benefiting 3) actively benefiting from legal but questionable activities and 4) no harm/no foul

activities (Muncy and Vitell, 1992). Though their scale did not include items about counterfeit good purchases, the authors demonstrate empirical support on their hypothesis about the higher obedience and idealism (higher sensitivity for engaging in questionable practices) levels of Turkish consumers relative to Americans. The authors lay claim that Turkish consumers tend to be more sensitive to unethical practices and “avoid uncertainties by following rules and norms” (p191).

To sum up, mixed findings in the existing literature, mostly informed by Hunt and Vitell’s proposition, stresses the co-existence of teleological and deontological theories. This indicates that consumers engage in different behaviors and act according to different -sometimes contradictory- ethical approaches in their diverse consumption practices. Therefore, it would be fruitful to see if and how consumers apply the aforementioned ethical perspectives in the context of counterfeit designer brands, which is an ostensibly prevalent affair in our country, though condemned of being in collaboration with unethical and illegal practices by many scholarly studies.

CHAPTER IV

IV. CONSUMPTION OF BRANDED GOODS

Brands and their societal impacts have been surrounding contemporary consumptionscapes for several decades. From toilet paper to ‘home entertainment systems’, from toothpicks to countries today almost every product is offered ‘branded’. Together with this, according to Holt (2002) brands have started to cause trouble which is patent in the anti-branding movements of various social organizations who argue that brands in the postmodern era lack the cultural authenticity that typically acts as a cultural resource. Nevertheless, while consumers of the more affluent world can direct such a criticism to their brands, in the ‘less affluent’ world there is considerable demand for those branded goods (Ger and Belk, 1997; Classen and Howes, 1996) which also include all kinds of designer brands mentioned in this study. While relevant literature is full of competing paradigms/approaches to branding, consequences of the proliferation of brands in other parts of the world have been barely paid attention throughout the branding literature. Since counterfeits ease the penetration of the Western brands to those countries including Turkey, in this section I review previous studies on consumption of branded goods brands –particularly focusing on the context of designer brand clothing- and their significance in the less affluent world after giving a brief account on current approaches to branding. In doing so, I attempt to give the current line of

thought on why people prefer branded goods –and particularly designer brand clothing- in their lives, before embarking on presenting and comparing findings from my field study.

To start with a definition, a brand is a term, design, or symbol intended to identify and distinguish a particular good or service from others (Arnould, 2005). According to Arnould (2005) brands provide consumers with four types of values. First, reputation value provides confidence and hence, reduces various types of performance, psychological or social risks. In consumer research literature, it has been widely argued that brands are designated primarily for providing this type of value; i.e. for helping consumers simplify their decision-making tasks while also providing a benefit (see Erdem and Swait, 2004). As an extension of this perspective called as mind-share branding, in some marketing literature brands are regarded to be credible entities in terms of trustworthiness in keeping ‘value propositions’ and expertise (effectiveness) in doing so. Yet, this viewpoint trivializes the value residing in diverse brand stories to generic product attributes that can be found in almost every product after a while (Holt, 2002).

A second perspective, called emotional branding, is based on presenting a relationship value to consumers. This subsumes that while they solve/avoid problems, brands should form emotional laden relationships with their target markets. Even though a brand lacks the important element of reciprocity, e.g. brand cannot respond to the consumer as if it were a human being, consumers still maintain relationships of varying qualities with brands (Bengtsson, 2003). Yet, Holt (2004) challenges this perspective by saying that emotions cannot simply be added to a

relationship, but they emerge out of the potential identity myths underlying the brand. Brands, indeed, are nothing but accumulated histories (or stories) as part of a society's veins of meaning construction/reconstruction (Holt, 2004).

Therefore, a brand is not just a tangible symbol, logo, design or name; but it is a combination of all these traits (Ward, Light and Golstine, 1999) together with intangible attributes (meanings) that individuals load to objects. Meanings that are attached to brands are consumed, but not the objects per se. From the words of Arnould (2005), brands help consumers build up identities through the identity value they possess. In that respect, brands gain the status of icons; i.e. representative symbols, which people identify themselves with. According to Holt (2002), icons can represent core values, beliefs in a society such as the Statue of Liberty representing the search for a new life in a new land. They stand for identity myths that consumers can internalize to express their desires or avoidances. Icons are powerful because they are continuously reinforced and validated throughout everyday interactions in a society. Equally, brands may become icons if consumers value the brand stories largely for their identity value and they begin to represent core values of particular groups termed as subcultures or brand communities (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995). However, in order for a brand to be perceived as authentic [Holt (2004) rather uses this term to imply 'credible'], it should be attached to a myth that is rooted in a society's desires and anxieties within a historical time frame, such as the case for Coke. The author argues that consumers do not purchase Coke for only the feeling of refreshment, but they are also consciously/unconsciously consuming the identity myths of Coke such as the one built on celebrating the American victories against the Nazis during the World War II.

To conclude, brands cannot solely be thought as entities that ease the decision making task one they are recognized and solve/avoid a problem in an efficient way. Consumers rather 'rely on' brands as they construct, communicate and reinforce the links between various 'consumer identity projects' (Arnould and Price, 1999) that swim in various seas of cultural domains that the brand and consumer exists in. Perhaps for this reason people need brands to convey information about them, either consciously or unconsciously.

IV.1. Designer Brand Clothing

The noteworthiness of brands in consumption is evident in the demand for Western goods in the less affluent world (Milanova, 1999), especially for visible consumption categories such as eating out at McDonalds (Ger and Belk, 1997) or purchasing designer brand goods such as a 'Chanel No: 5' or a 'Lacoste' label Polo (Classen and Howes, 1996). The motives of purchasing designer brands, at a first glance, seem like belonging and adaptation, which are at the crux of the idea of fashion (Simmel, 1971 [1904]). Given the proliferation of styles, brands embody the designer that creates them as well as the character of the wearer (Fiske, 2000 [1989]). That is why, fashion is but one of the examples in which we sometimes observe the supremacy of social value over functionality or aesthetics, for the purpose of distinguishing the owner (Baudrillard, 1981). Nevertheless, though we can theorize that being fashionable is a macro level explanation of why people purchase designer brands but

not unbranded clothing, there is limited literature in consumer research to support this proposition.

Among those few, O’Cass and Lim (2002) concentrate on the young consumers’ conceptualizations of Western fashion brands in terms of manipulating price, degree of image congruency and ethnocentrism as variables. Previously, using several brand names as cues for determining the user’s social class, Gronhaug and Trapp (1989) have evinced that brands as well as the retail outlets they are sold vary in their perceived social class associations. O’Cass and Lim (2002) extend this conclusion by incorporating country of origin. Asserting that country of brand origin is a more detailed cue than country of origin information in consumer behavior, the authors investigate young Singaporean consumers’ evaluations of six selected brands with Western and Eastern connotations with respect to price and actual self-brand user image congruency. The results show that there are no significant differences between image congruency levels for neither of the two origins. That is to say, young Singaporean consumers found Western brands as self-congruent as brands of perceived Eastern origin. Moreover, ethnocentrism levels of the consumers seemed to have no relationship on the preference of Eastern origin brands over the Westerners. Overall, though lacking to shed light on the particular reasons of the phenomenon, O’Cass and Lim’s (2002) findings describe that images of designer brands of Western origins can be well inherited as well as desired by consumers from an Eastern origin.

According to Lu Wang, Siu and Hui (2004), the above findings are meaningful because consumers from less developed countries tend to favor imported as opposed

to domestic brands, especially for visible products. After having conducted a mall intercept survey with Chinese consumers who have purchased imported clothing labels, the authors argue that consumers from all socioeconomic levels are willing to pay premium prices –provided that they had the resources- mainly for the prestige appeal of imported brands.

Kempen (2004) also reaches a similar conclusion after studying Bolivian consumers' willingness to pay a premium for a designer label perfume. The author argues that even those consumers with poor living conditions were eager to do so. As indicated his observation, the author contends that even second hand clothing carrying designer labels can be sold at a price premium over the no-logo alternatives, which might be of comparable quality. Claiming that a 'quality illusion' exists as a result of the lack of proper consumption experience for poor consumers of developing countries, Kempen (2004) criticizes those who claim that designer labels are preferred because of their higher intrinsic quality. "A designer logo, beyond being a quality cue, entails symbolic utility [inclusive of the desire of prestige and pride] in the eyes of low-income consumers" (p206). Friedman (1990) agrees with this proposition by stating that by consuming the designer brands people consume an identity; i.e. they construct a self, which is but primarily targeted for the admittance of others. Leaving to detail the roots of the symbolic utility that are so charming to poor consumers, Kempen (2004) broadly contends that status seeking is correlated with the consumption context and the socio economic background of the consumer.

The previously mentioned conclusion of Lu Wang et al. (2004) can also be compared to that of a study from a similar context. In the domain of consumption luxury brands

of infant apparel in Hong Kong, Prendergast and Wong (2003) explored the roles of conspicuous consumption and materialism in mothers' shopping preferences. The authors define luxury brands as "...the highest level of prestigious brands encompassing several physical and psychological values such as perceived conspicuous value, perceived unique value, perceived social value and perceived quality value" (p159). Moved by the fact that some parents in Hong Kong purchase luxury brands of clothing for their babies even though the infants are still young to make a conscious decision about Armani, Versace and other brands, the authors hypothesized that parents strive to impress others also through the appearance on their children. This is because "when the clothing bears a luxury label, it may be perceived as an ostentatious display of wealth" (p159). After having surveyed 124 mothers, the authors discovered that mothers purchased the designer labels for their quality and notable design features but the motives for conspicuous consumption were not significant. Nevertheless, Prendergast and Wong (2003) also found out that there is a positive correlation between the mothers' level of materialism (as measured through Richins and Dawson's (1992) materialism scale) and their expenditures on luxury brands for their babies. Hence, the authors imply that while the intention is not claimed as showing-off, mothers feel happier as they can afford to purchase these relatively more expensive items for the infants. Overall, we can infer that the small sample size and the limited scope of the study might have led to such a questionable finding, in which two interrelated concepts -conspicuousness and materialism- (Micken and Roberts, 1999; O'Cass, 2004) are not found together.

Implications of the above studies can be merged with Lachance, Beaudoin and Robitaille (2003), who scrutinized the influence of socialization agents on French

Canadian adolescents' brand sensitivity in clothing choices. The authors identify three main sources of social influence for young adolescents as friends, parents and mass media since these are the main agents of social interaction during adolescence. Parents can act as role models that are observed and imitated. Peers also provide informative or normative influence on one's consumption, especially on visible products. Finally, the authors cite advertising and TV programs as a factor on shaping consumer desire for products and brands. Controlling for both informant socio-economic levels and gender, Lachance et al. (2003) conclude that consumer brand sensitivity in clothing is mostly influenced by peers, while TV exposure does not play a direct role in the young adolescents' brand sensitivity.

Along similar lines, Elliott and Leonard (2004) conducted a research but this time on poor British school children's attitudes towards various fashion brands of trainers and athletic shoes. The authors also explored the role of peer pressure on these children's shopping behavior since it has been asserted that peer pressure and bandwagon effect is most influential for the consumption of 'public luxuries' such as clothes and fashion items (Bearden and Etzel, 1982) and this pressure might be even higher for the poor because of their economic as well as cultural deprivation (Ger, 1997). Elliott and Leonard (2004) found out that more expensive fashion brands were associated with richer people, and peer pressure was evident for many of the poor kids, as they did not want to be excluded from 'other', wealthier kids at school. That is why; Elliott and Leonard (2004) perceive brands as part of the symbolic self-completion project. In that respect, brands may be filling the gap between the actual sufferings of the individual (primarily because of the inability of consuming) and where s/he wants to actually see himself/herself in the society (Solomon, 1983).

Clothes then, provide the consumer with a sense of belonging as well as cues for reinforcing self-identity (Piacentini and Mailer, 2004).

A final subset of research set dwells upon the gift exchanges involving designer brands since designer brands can also be preferred gift items (Phau et al., 2000). Andrus, Silver and Johnson (1986), for instance, have analyzed the role of the brand's perceived status in gift exchanges. The authors stated that consumers exchange gifts considering the status of the brand given as well as the place where the gift is purchased. Since gifts can be used for impressing others, Andrus et al. (1986) hypothesized that consumers who are more status and brand conscious would prefer to give designer labels as gifts, too. Using a student sample, the authors confirmed that designer labels are perceived as high status indicators and thus, are perceived appropriate gifts for status conscious consumers.

Hence, the literature on designer brands suggests that such brands carry different referent powers. In that respect, it is claimed that those brands claim 'signature status' (Elliott and Leonard, 2004). That is why, for signifying their social status through a meaning transfer between the signature of the brand and the self, consumers are willing to pay a premium for such a designer label (Jolson, Anderson and Leber, 1981; Kempen, 2004).

IV.2. Counterfeiting of Branded Goods

A counterfeit good can be described as a copy of the authentic item, that intends to carry exactly the same brand name, logo, and product attributes like taste, touch or scent. Unlike an imitation good that indirectly refers to the established brand and still creates another slightly different offering (such as launching a brand called ‘Crocodile’ to compete with the more reputable ‘Lacoste’), a counterfeit is a copy of what can be termed as the ‘authentic’ in an outright fashion and practically without the slightest attempt of differentiation (Phau, Prendergast and Chuen, 2000).

Rooting back to words ‘counter’ (duplicate) and ‘feit’ (made), the word counterfeit means ‘made in imitation of something else with an intent to deceive’ according to Merriam Webster’s Online Dictionary. Counterfeiting is not a novel phenomenon in human history and has captured scholarly attention throughout ages mainly in art criticism (Jones, 1992; Shiner, 1994; Phillips, 2003; Goodman, 2003) and cultural anthropology (Spooner, 1986; Bruner, 1994; Ger and Csaba, 2000) the latter being for the case of cultural artifacts. Besides, mass production and the advent of the World Wide Web makes not only artwork but almost every object -tangible or intangible- prone to being copied (Benjamin, 1986; Schwartz, 1998), which brings about the contribution of disciplines such as law (Chow, 2000; Hetzer, 2002), economics (Grossman and Shapiro, 1988; Feinberg and Rousslang, 1990; Van Kempen, 2003; Schadlen, Shrank and Kurtz, 2005) as well as marketing in the ongoing research stream.

As detailed in the preceding section, brands may hold iconic power as Lacoste identifies with the alligator logo or Chanel No.5 with its distinct bottle shape (Classen and Howes, 1996). Today designer brands are even more abundant in supply, thanks to the mass manufacturing techniques that render them prone to be copied almost instantaneously (Baudrillard, 1994). Up to date, scholarly work in marketing on counterfeiting of branded goods has evolved around two trajectories namely, supply side perspective and the demand side perspective.

First, studies from a supply side perspective strive to prevent counterfeiting in general, so as to cut manufacturers' financial and governments' fiscal losses due to these informal economic activities. For example, Olsen and Granzin (1992) propose that retailers' cooperation and willingness to resist informal gains is needed to alleviate counterfeiters' price advantages over the genuine items. Chakraborty, Allred, Sukhdial and Bristol (1997) recommend that firms should underscore the financial, performance and safety risks that will arise if the consumers prefer the illegal counterfeit good. Alternatively, Nill and Schultz II (1996) mention stressing product quality and differentiation through high tech labeling for original brands as well as issuing strict antitrust laws and stiffing international trade agreements on the issue. Likewise, London (2003) argues that the multinational brand holders should seek for the support of the governments in capturing the counterfeit merchandise and enforcement of the sales of authentic items that are usually recognized by a hologram or barcode. Despite its relevance, the supply side perspective is mainly criticized for neglecting the real causes of counterfeiting-such as the underlying consumer attitudes that allows it- and trying to impose top down, ready made, legally enforcing solutions to fight piracy (Bloch, Bush and Campbell, 1993). In fact, Chakraborty,

Allred and Bristol (1996) admit that the supply for counterfeits will always continue as long as there is demand for them.

From another point of view, 'demand side perspective' puts the consumers to the forefront. Among the studies pertaining to this research pattern, firstly we can cite Bloch, et al. (1993)'s study on different perceptions and attributions consumers make on genuine, no logo and counterfeit branded shirts. The authors contend that in some cases the counterfeits might even be preferred over no logo, no brand items. This finding re-confirms the value that consumers associate to designer labels. Following this, Wee, Tan and Cheok's (1995) exploratory study tried to explore other factors like materialism, brand status, novelty seeking and attitude towards market practice in understanding why Singaporean consumers preferred fake goods. However, in this study the authors were not able to find support for any of those variables.

Cordell, Wongtada and Kieschnick (1996) studied why would consumers be willing to purchase counterfeits, but their study was limited in that they used a non-consumer student sample and they scrutinized the 'intentions to purchase' counterfeits rather than actual behavior. Other studies that delved into the consumer side of counterfeiting include Phau, Prendergast and Chuen's (2001) study on the descriptions of the demographic profiles of counterfeit consumers in Hong Kong and Nia and Zaichkowsky's (2000) study on the affluent Canadian consumers' attitudes toward counterfeits of luxury brands and whether their presence destroys brand equity for the genuine product consumers. Interestingly, although they were not able to explicate the reason(s), both studies illustrate that even affluent people had previously used counterfeits.

To summarize, the current line of thought identifies counterfeit consumption as a less expensive alternative for purchasing the genuine designer brands (Gentry, Putrevu, Schultz, and Commuri, 2001) and getting the prestige at no additional cost (Nill and Schultz, 1996). Nevertheless, while economic reasons can be a plausible reason for consuming counterfeit goods for some product categories and for some consumers, different socio-economic groups can prefer counterfeit designer brands (Phau, Prendergast and Chuen, 2001). Furthermore, contending that counterfeits are cheaper does not say much about other possible underlying reasons of preference, such as the influence of peer groups, or maybe consumer beliefs regarding the superiority of brands that are counterfeited. Such a perspective does not also inform us why consumers may not prefer an unbranded item but the counterfeits that carry the logo or emblem. Therefore, further study is needed on the reasons of counterfeit designer brand consumption as well as the importance of those brands for consumers. I present my findings regarding these questions right after I describe my research methodology in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

V. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted utilizing qualitative inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994), mainly guided by the principles of grounded theory and phenomenology in order to elicit first person comments on the meaning and consumption practices of counterfeit designer brands while constantly comparing the findings from data with existing theories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Creswell, 1998). In this section, I will illustrate sampling strategies, data collection and analysis methods employed along with how I dealt with issues of validity.

V.1. Research Site and Sampling

In an attempt to get familiar with the place and consumer base of the counterfeit goods, I started my research activities by visiting where these goods are sold. My aim was also recruiting informants, if available. Because of time and money limitations, data collection part of this study is conducted in Ankara, where all the informants live. Currently, there are a few bazaars in Ankara selling counterfeit designer brands as well as other non-branded clothing items: Ümitköy, Birlik (recently moved to Dikmen), Ayrancı and Sıhhiye Public Sösyete Bazaars. Each

bazaar is assembled on a different day of the week; e.g. Ayrancı on Wednesdays and Sıhhiye on Thursdays. All of those settings are called as ‘sosyete pazarı’ because their customer profile encompasses virtually everyone, as they are open to public (Tepeli, 2003).

I visited each of the bazaar settings several times between December and April. During my first visits, I thought that it would be reasonable to first approach the retailers that operate formally in these settings and request their cooperation in recruiting informants who shop from them regularly. Nevertheless, getting the cooperation of the retailers was more difficult than I expected. They were reluctant to share any information, and what is more, they criticized my logic of conducting research on counterfeits, though I assured them that my research was not related to their business but the customers of this affair. Eventually, one retailer urged me to leave their place and talk to people elsewhere, since my research, if publicized, could attract the attorneys of designer labels on them. The fact that counterfeit retailers all know each other and attend every bazaar setting made my task even more difficult to secure another entrance. Another difficulty arose because of the rather crowded nature of the bazaar setting. Mainly because of this reason, not every counterfeit shopper was willing to participate in the study and most left immediately after the purchase. Nevertheless, independent of the retailers’ help I managed to get the contact numbers of six actual counterfeit shoppers during my presence in the bazaars. Only two of them refused to participate mainly due to work and health problems and eventually I interviewed the remaining four informants at their homes and workplaces and also got some referrals for others who fulfill the criterion of having personally consumed designer brand clothing.

As Wallendorf and Belk (1989) asserts post-positivist qualitative research has an emergent nature rather than a pre-determined, quite formal sequence of refuting or failing to refute hypotheses. Janesick (1998) best illustrates this point by saying that "...qualitative design is adapted, changed and redesigned as the study proceeds, because of the social realities of doing research among and within the living" (p218). Despite its seemingly flexible nature, qualitative inquiry necessitates relying on research questions (in my terms, purpose) in selecting the sample unit (Miles and Huberman, 1994) rather than random selections because "...the initial definition of the universe is limited and...social processes have a logic and coherence that random sampling can reduce to an uninterpretable sawdust" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p27). Therefore, my main strategy in sampling remained purposive; understanding the consumption reasons, practices and individual consequences of counterfeit designer brands while still remaining open to discovery like a grounded theory research is (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

During the first phase of my study (first nine interviews) I was guided by open sampling as described by Strauss and Corbin (1990). My aim was "...to uncover as many potentially relevant categories as possible along with their properties and dimensions" (p181). That is why; I did not restrict the informants especially during the collage-making task on the meanings of authenticity and fakeness. For example, during the interviews with the bazaar informants, I became aware that some informants also purchased the designer brands from the authorized dealers (e.g. Guess jeans, Benetton t-shirts, Tommy Hilfinger shirts, etc.) as well as the same brands' counterfeits from the bazaar. Since this was not mentioned in previous

literature on counterfeit consumption, it grasped my interest. Having discovered a possible basis of comparison within the sample (especially on consumption reasons and consequences), I deliberately sought for informants who both purchase the brands from authorized dealers as well as from counterfeit dealers at bazaars. Looking for such variation was not only part of purposeful sampling but also akin to ‘searching for disconfirming cases’ in the constant comparative method of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In the beginning I sampled systematically for uncovering subtle differences within the sample, and from then onwards, I sampled discriminately –e.g. going to persons who are consumers of both kinds- for data relevant to the categories generated (Strauss and Corbin, pp181-187).

As another sampling extension related to my research questions, I also included three informants who reported that they never consumed counterfeits but originals in the study. Though limited in number because of the difficulty of locating many people who purchased a \$2000 worth Louis Vuitton handbag from the dealer, I tried to grasp the reasons of their not consuming the counterfeits but paying a premium to the authentic offerings, and demonstrate any convergence/divergences between that of the reasons of counterfeit designer brand consumers. The inclusion of these critical cases, taken together with previously mentioned sampling strategies enhanced the depth and complemented my understanding of what makes the designer brands a focus of interest for all three groups and from which perspectives/practices they differ.

In addition, as part of the emerging conditions that rendered it impossible to locate informants individually in the bazaar, my sampling strategy followed a snowball

stream, in which people that could supply the greatest amount and richness of information are selected (Maxwell, 1996) as well as well as referrals from my acquaintances whom I knew were consuming counterfeit designer brands. Nevertheless, I evidently applied ‘criterion sampling’ as Miles and Huberman (1994, p28) advocate: “All cases that meet some criterion” are taken. This is similar to a phenomenological study that requires every informant to having “experienced the phenomenon being studied” (Creswell, 1998, p118). Particularly, I reached informants who purchase counterfeits; those who purchase both counterfeits and originals; and those who purchase only the originals from authentic dealers but never from the bazaar in a deliberate manner. On the other hand, those people who never consumed any designer brands, counterfeit or original, were not included because of the irrelevance and lack of particular experience on the phenomena.

Overall, I followed a mixed sampling strategy that combined several methods as Miles and Huberman (1994) describe. The resulting sample comprises 11 informants who only consume counterfeits (like DKNY, Diesel, Levis, Tommy Hilfiger, Lacoste, Paul & Shark and Vakko); 3 consumers who only consume the authentic designer brands they procure from authorized dealers (such as Lacoste, Louis Vuitton and US Polo) and 9 informants who consume both the originals and counterfeits of designer brands (e.g. Lacoste, Marks and Spencer, Tommy Hilfiger, Benetton and Guess). Akin to the diversity in brands consumed, the informants also differ in their education levels (from primary school to PhD.), age (from 22 to 56) and gender (14 females and 9 males).

Despite the seemingly heterogeneous nature of the sample, this study does not attempt to measure or to spawn new measures for locating socio-economic status groups (see Bourdieu, 1984; Holt, 1998) or to compare informants based on their income levels or age groups. Indeed, if carefully investigated, one can find out that consumption of counterfeits is a widespread phenomenon in Turkey that extends well beyond traditional socioeconomic status measures like occupation, education (of both the individual and parents) or disposable income (Tepeli, 2003). This variance in socioeconomic backgrounds of counterfeit consumers is eventually reflected in my informant pool, although the purpose and scope of this study does not involve verifying that the notion of socio-economic status and even distinction through lifestyles is blurring as mass manufacture of goods and availability to virtually everyone renders them purchasable (Askegaard, 2005; Bocoock, 1994). In fact, throughout the study I discovered that such demographic variables were not enough to account for the differences in reasons, domains and individual consequences of counterfeit designer brand consumption. For instance, there is a medical doctor and a librarian who possess the counterfeit clothing designer brands while their consumption reasons seem to be the same. While the librarian cannot afford the authentic designer label but still needs to comply with the peers around him who also purchase counterfeits, the medical doctor, well-off enough to shop from the authorized Lacoste dealer, again purchases the counterfeit for both economic (frugality) and symbolic reasons (for belonging to her peer group).

In addition to these, my attempts to compare informants across age and gender provided no significant difference in terms of their consumption (or non-consumption) reasons and practices. To give an example, a 56 years old housewife

and a 24 years old male kiosk clerk had the same consumption domains (all public) and reasons (ardent desire towards a praised other but unaffordability to purchase the originals) in purchasing the counterfeits, though their peer and aspirational groups consisted of different people. These two informants fall into the same category since they only consume counterfeits, and their consumption domains and reasons are similar.

Therefore, the informant pool is primarily comparable across their ownership of designer brands (counterfeit, authentic or both) and their consumption domains (public or selectively public), while it also reflects the aforementioned diversity in backgrounds. Data on the informants' socio-demographic circumstances can be followed in Table 1. Apart from this, I do not particularly attempt to compare the informants based on other socio-demographic traits, which are beyond the research questions.

V.2. Data Collection Methods

Maxwell (1996) suggests that the selection of data collection techniques ultimately is guided by the purposes of the study and then the particular research questions to be answered. As indicated by the research trajectories, since the primary aim of this study is to try to gain an in depth understanding of the reasons of and domains of consumption as well as consequences of consuming counterfeits for the informants, naturalistic inquiry is appropriate (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). One main advantage of this choice is in enabling the researcher to focus on the life-worlds of the informants more deeply than a quantitative approach can. Qualitative inquiry encompasses following a research design that meshes the ‘emic’ point of view and the ‘etic’ interpretations, which relate to comparing them with theory or other divergent data (Maxwell, 1996).

In order to reach a more holistic grasp of the phenomenon (Janesick, 1998), a couple of data collection methods were used in this study. Such triangulation across methods also enhances the validity of the study together with the sampling strategy that intended to triangulate across data sources such as “several types of informants” (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989, p72) as described in the section on sampling.

The data collection phase consisted of in-depth interviews supported by metaphoric portraits and a collage-making task completed only by the first set of informants. I utilized such alternate methods not only to triangulate across methods but also because it was required by the nature of my research questions. However, participant observation was not utilized to give a description of the phenomena. This is primarily

because of the nature of research questions. Although we have to recognize its strengths, as Arnould and Wallendorf (1994) state, observational data cannot equip the researcher with complete insights about the ‘inner dynamics’ of the actor. As my research questions involved learning the meaning of authenticity/fakeness and the particular meanings of counterfeit branded goods consumption to better grasp the reasons of consumption, non-participant observation remains short of attaining the emic perspective. For this reason, one of the main methods I employed was semi-structured interviews (see the Interview Guide in Appendix A) which is structured enough to ensure that a predetermined core set of questions is answered by the informants, but also delved into other potentially interesting/new areas of inquiry related to the research questions as they evolved throughout the study (Berg, 2004). In the next part, I detail the particular methods I utilized.

V.2.1. In Depth Interviews

For the purposes of this study I conducted semi-structured interviews with 26 consumers over a six-month horizon. Before the interviews, I obtained the informed consent of my informants and guaranteed their anonymity in order to comply with ethical principles of conducting research (Berg, 2004). I also reminded the informants that there was no right or wrong answer to the questions and they are free to withdraw from whenever they felt it to be necessary (Maxwell, 1996).

All meetings took place either at homes or workplaces of informants. The informants were not offered any monetary premiums. Yet, depending on the circumstances,

informants were presented some gifts such as deserts, munchies, souvenirs or home textiles in the end in order to stress the appreciation of the researcher for their time and effort. The first nine interviews lasted over one and half hours, mainly because they required the informant talk on two collages -whose preparation took another one hour- on average. In some cases, the informant was not able to complete both tasks at once, so another session was arranged or the collage-making task was completed one night before the interview. Interviews without the collage-making task lasted between 45 minutes and one hour. On the other hand, three interviews were discarded because of the inappropriateness of the informant for the study, i.e. having never purchased designer brands whose counterfeits are made.

Overall, the interviews commenced with grand tour questions as recommended by Wengraf (1990) and McCracken (1988). After giving a brief description of the research topic I attempted to detail the demographic characteristics of the informants in this stage. Then, I inquired about which brands the informant consumes, where does s/he procure it, where does s/he prefer to consume it, whether s/he has been to the authorized retailer's store before, and whether s/he thinks counterfeiting harms somebody and why/why not. The order of the questions was altered if the informant brought up an issue earlier (Berg, 2004). Still, I ended the interview with questions on the ethical side of counterfeiting from consumers' perspective, since this could be a sensitive issue to raise in the beginning. Probing and echoing were extremely useful, especially when the informants described their consumption domains and talked about the designer brands they possess. Informants also shared their feelings on the brands they consume through metaphoric portraits and personification tasks, which are discussed in the next section.

V.2.2. Projective Techniques

Projective techniques are fruitful in articulating images and impressions about phenomena by triggering associative mental processes in the consumer (Zaltman and Coulter, 1995). In addition, projective techniques can overcome self-censorship and consciousness, which can be impediments to the richness of data in studies about sensitive topics and uncover underlying reasons/alternate explanations of social phenomena including consumption (Branthwaite and Lunn, 1985). Since designer label clothing is a symbolic consumption category, projective techniques were essential part of my data collection methods. In the following sub-sections, I will specify the projective techniques that my research questions required to be used in supplementing the in depth interview questions.

V.2.2.1.Collages

Similar to the premises of a Thematic Apperception Test (Levy, 1985) projective techniques such as collage making (Belk, Ger, Askegaard, 2003) are known as suitable for uncovering the hidden thoughts/meanings that the person might otherwise may not be conscious of (Levy, 1985). In order to first grasp the meaning of authenticity and the concept that contrasts to it, I first started by requesting my informants to create collages on A3 papers through composing their ideas on what do the terms ‘authentic’ [sahici, hakiki] and non-authentic (sahici, hakiki olmayan) mean to them.

In this part of the study, informants were each given 6 magazines that included photos and texts of different places, products and settings. Those magazines were FormSante, Home and Technology, Istanbul Life, Home Décor, Cosmo Girl and Garage (a ‘consumption’ guide for males). I sampled across a variety of magazines available in the market in a manner that tried to maximize the facilitation of different concepts on the finished collage so that I learn more about what those people think of the phenomenon of authenticity before they elaborate on their consumption of counterfeit goods. That is why the magazines cut through different headlines ranging from fashion to home decoration, technology to dietary food, or celebrities to ordinary people on the street. In addition to this, I tried to accommodate the gender wise preferences of informants, so along with magazines that might be considered as female targeted (such as Cosmo Girl) I also handed out a male magazine called Garage, which is a ‘consumption guide’ for males according to the cover page.

Without providing any specific clues for the research, the purpose of this task was to first understand what it meant for the consumer to be authentic and non-authentic in general so that the meaning of counterfeits and originals for the case of designer brands can be constructed upon this understanding. Having completed the collages, the informants spoke on why they pasted the particular pictures/texts on the paper; i.e. what it reminded to them. This task was further elicited by probing from the part of me. Furthermore, to elicit constructs I also asked the informants to compare the two collages in terms of their convergences and divergences. In addition, I encouraged the informants to feel free in describing any thoughts/feelings regarding authentic/non-authentic that they were not able to reflect in their collages due to

limitations in media. In that way, informants were again able to articulate other possible connotations that authenticity bear for them.

V.2.2.2. Metaphoric Portraits

After a thorough analysis of the collage data interviews, it was clear that many of the categories did not refer to the meaning of fakeness but rather succumbed to fantasy and unreality as the opposite meanings of 'hakiki and sahici'. As a part of the evolving design in data collection, I decided to learn the meanings of 'taklit' (counterfeit) and its opposite and support this question with narrations of metaphoric portraits (Rook, 1988) to keep the study focused on my research questions and save time. Therefore, for the remaining 10 informants I replaced the collage making task with the metaphoric portrait task, which also took place in the beginning of the interview for similar reasons; i.e. for not biasing consumer conceptualizations on fakeness and authenticity with the specific topic of interest at the onset.

Similar to collages, sensory metaphors are valuable for uncovering unconscious thoughts and feelings (Zaltman, Coulter and Coulter, 2001) and take less time to complete. Specifically, informants were asked to associate the term 'taklit' (authentic) and its opposite with senses; feel/touch, sound, taste and smell. In that way, I was able to get more focused answers as compared to the collage making task, though examples of collages will be provided in the Appendix as well as the metaphors emerging for fakeness/authenticity will be presented in the analysis and results section.

According to Swartz (1983) and Belk (1978), individuals differ in their interpretations of brands and make judgments on the personalities of others based on characteristics such as the brands they consume. In addition, I requested the informants to associate their designer brand and its counterfeit version with a person; i.e. what kind of a lifestyle/outlook/character would it have. Independently, informants also portrayed the user image of the brand and its counterfeit. This exercise was crucial in understanding the brand insignia mentioned about counterfeits in the previous literature such as Gentry et al. (2001). In sum, completing this task was beneficial in capturing the informants' perspectives on both counterfeit and authentic designer clothing brand while also eliciting some values of the person; i.e. what is termed as the unique personal culture by Wengraf (1990), since part of what the informant comments on the brands' personality would be reflecting his/her conceptions of the actual/ideal self (Branthwaite and Lunn, 1985).

V.3.Data Analysis

Although analysis seems to be one of the last sections of the study, it actually starts even before data collection. Indicating the importance of thorough planning, Maxwell (1996) maintains that analysis is a crucial part of the design. It is shaped by the possible requirements of the study and is something "that must itself be designed" (p77), though it follows in a rather cumulative, inductive manner (Patton, 1990).

Creswell (1998) argues that there is no single, all encompassing method for any kind of qualitative study. Instead, the author advocates that the analysis section rather should integrate various different approaches some of which can be cited as case study, biography, phenomenology, grounded theory and ethnography. In line with this philosophy, the analysis section of the study borrowed from the strengths of grounded theory and phenomenology.

The purpose of grounded theory is not solely describing phenomena but rather develop a theory though demonstrating the process and underlying context (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The authors underscore that “to trace a conditional path, you begin with an event, incident, happening, then attempt to determine why this occurred, what conditions were operating, how the conditions manifest themselves, and with what consequences” (p168). Relating the data to specific research questions and generate analytic categories is a crucial part of the grounded theory tradition (Berg, 2004). After coding and rereading the data several times, interviews were also cross analyzed for each question (Patton, 1990) and key themes, patterns and regularities are identified (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996) and provisional answers about the relationships within the data are obtained. In other words, there is a conversation between the data and the theory, which is mainly the literature on authenticity and product symbolism for the first two research trajectories and the ethical side of consumption for the last one. One advantage of the grounded theory approach is that it sketches out the relationships within the data while the researcher systematically moves back and forth between the theory and data in an effort to come up with the etic perspective. Particularly, my analysis phase was guided by comparing my the answers to each question stream, e.g. consumption places of

counterfeits vs. originals across informants and then meshing those with the previous literature on not counterfeiting but also social risk, self and authenticity as examples of sensitizing concepts (Patton, 1990).

Since creating an identity is about experiencing or interacting with the phenomena around ourselves (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) and the phenomena of fakeness attracted my personal attention, phenomenology was also a relevant tradition for analyzing this context. In particular, I examined the meanings pertaining to the self that are generated through the consumption of counterfeit clothing by the active participation of consumers. Though it is widely claimed that bracketing personal experience about the phenomenon is difficult (Creswell, 1998), in the analysis section I tried to incorporate the emic understanding of the informants with my interpretations, while also being aware of my predispositions on the phenomenon under study. To conclude, in the analysis section, I tried to make use of the powerful aspects of both grounded theory and phenomenology as the design evolved.

V.4.Trustworthiness

As mentioned throughout the text, I dealt with the issue of validity through multiple methods. First, I searched for discrepant evidence and negative cases (Maxwell, 1996) through the choices I made in sampling. In a phenomenological study, establishing the truth of things begin with the researcher's personal attributions about the meanings of the phenomena (Creswell, 1998). During the interviews, I refrained from manipulating the contents of informant's descriptions, such that some

informants told me that I have not been leading them at all. Moreover, during the analysis phase I sought alternative/self-contradictory informant propositions as well as was peer debriefings; i.e. questioning of the premises of the analysis with peers who are not members of the study (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989; Patton, 1990). Furthermore, the alterations in the sampling procedure from discovery oriented to one that was guided by both the research questions and emerging categories (i.e. differences in consumption practices and consequences depending on ownership type) fulfilled the criteria of judging a grounded theory study (Creswell, 1998).

On the other hand, employing multiple methods of data collection as demanded by the research questions facilitated a solid basis for triangulation and prevented any fallibility in a particular method of data collection. Constantly comparing the data with the theory also enriched the conceptual basis as Sanjek (1990)'s first canon of theoretical candor suggests and enhanced supplemental validity; i.e. how the findings relate to existing literature (Creswell, 1998) of the study.

In sum, this research aims to provide an answer to certain theoretical problems posed by a newly emerging consumption context, counterfeiting of branded consumer goods. Following a qualitative path, data collection was conducted in Ankara with consumers who actually consume and refuse to consume counterfeit designer brand clothing, in an effort to comprehend the consumer research implications of counterfeiting. Data was gathered through multiple methods including semi-structured in depth interviews and various projective techniques. Data was analyzed in the light of the corresponding theories, guided mainly by phenomenological and grounded theory approaches. Validity of findings was enhanced through

triangulation across informants and data collection methods as well as constant search for disconfirming evidence and constant comparisons with relevant theories.

Ethical concerns regarding the privacies of the informants were not ignored, too.

CHAPTER VI

VI. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Before embarking on describing the motives and practices of the consumption of counterfeit designer brands (from now on used interchangeably with fake), in this section, I will first elucidate on the meaning of authenticity and fakeness from the informants' perspective. While previous studies in consumer research on authenticity focused on how people distinguish between authentic and non-authentic experiences (Grayson and Schulman, 2004) or products (Gentry et al. 2001), and demonstrated that people search for authentic offerings, why authenticity is so important to human beings is still not noted. To link the discussion to our context, since counterfeits are by dictionary definition not the 'authentic' ones, it is interesting to observe that consumers can be content with knowingly consuming something they already define as fake. Then one might question whether authenticity is not so important for consumers of counterfeits as opposed to what previous studies characterized. That is why, for portraying the connotations associated with authenticity/fakeness and gaining as holistic as possible grasp of a phenomenon relevant to counterfeiting in order to enrich the theoretical scope of the study, I decided to learn meaning (s) of authenticity and fakeness for consumers of counterfeit designer brands as a first step. Data for this task came from collages and the metaphoric portraits (Rook, 1988), which are useful for garnering more detailed as well as emic descriptions of

concepts. As a consequence, I came up with the themes ‘ardent desire’ for characterizing fakeness and ‘difference from the crowd’ for signifying authenticity, both of which later emerged as integral themes in the consumption reasons of counterfeits. Furthermore, this task also helped me in showing the mutual relationship as well as tensions between these two opposing concepts.

To start with the metaphoric portraits, in this section, the informants associated the terms ‘taklit’ and ‘hakiki’ with four senses; namely sound, texture, smell and taste in a rather comparative manner. To start, informants associate the term counterfeit with disturbing, loud sounds such as the voice of an underrated singer as Melike (F, 30s) suggests:

“...if fake were a sound...for example, does this one count; there are singers in these taverns who sing the same, bad songs...probably it would be the sound of it”

(“...taklit bi ses olsaydı...mesela şu şey olur mu, bu meyhanelerde kötü, yani aynı şarkıyı söyleyen, ıı, sanatçılar var...onun sesi olurdu herhalde”)

Not only the counterfeit has an unfavorable sound, but it is also reluctant to appear as Arzu’s (F, 41) forthcoming comment discloses.

“Utku: Ok, if it were a sound, of what kind?
Arzu: ...low...(laughs)
Utku: How come?
Arzu: Because it does not have much courage.”

(“Utku: Peki bir ses olsa, nasıl bir ses?
Arzu: ...Kısık...(gülüyor)
Utku: Neden?
Arzu: Çok fazla cesareti yok çünkü.”)

Counterfeits are also associated with bad smells, not only by non-users of counterfeit brands but also by consumers of counterfeits. For instance, Ayşen (F, 22) calls it a disgusting smell: “...I mean, it would make one sick, it would disgust.” (“...yani, mide bulandırır, tiksindirdi”). For İrem (F, 22), the smell of the ‘fake’ is like: “If it were a smell, what’s smell would it be...for example daisies, which stink when they languish. It can be its smell.” (“Koku olsa neyin kokusu olurdu...mesela papatya

mesela çürüyünce çok iğrenç kokuyo. Onun kokusu olabilir”) Similarly, Mehmet (M, 32) and Tolga (M, 28) correspondingly name the smell as: “It would be a bad smell...like the smell of sweat.” (“Kötü bi koku olurdu...ter kokusu gibi”) and “...honestly fake...would be a mechanical smell, such as that of oil or grease.” (“...valla taklit...yani mekanik bi koku olurdu, yağ, gres gibi”) The only different comment comes from Gülşen (F, 25), who affirms that fakeness is not disturbing, but provided that it becomes common to all and one gets used to it:

“...If it were a smell...it could be a smell that you would very likely sense on everyone. And since you are accustomed to it, it would not disturb you.”

(“Koku olsa...herkeste yani çok rahatlıkla karşılaşılabileceğin bir koku olabilirdi. Ve bu kokuya alıştığın için seni rahatsız etmezdi.”)

Textural quality of fake is evaluated in a similar fashion. For instance, Orhan (M, 42, Retailer) is rather anxious about the feeling experienced when one contacts the fake: “...it would not leave a soft and silky touch but...hard...a feeling that makes you say ‘how come’.” (“...yumuşak böyle ipeksi bi his bırakmazdı da...sert böyle şey...acaba nasıl diye bi his”) For Arzu (F, 41), the fake is rather ‘rough’ (pütürlü). Pelin (F, 30) makes a related but more detailed remark:

“...rough...I mean seems to me that while the authentic is clearer and softer, it [the fake] is more disturbing. Resembling the authentic, but not giving the same feeling; such as velvet and another ordinary fabric.”

(“...Pütürlü...yani hep şey gibi geldi, şey gibi geliyo bana, orijinali daha net yumuşakken o daha rahatsız edici. Benzemesine rağmen orijinaline, aynı hissi vermeyen. Bi kadifeyle normal bi kumaş gibi.”)

Finally, informants also distinguish between fakeness and authenticity, stressing the inability of the fake in contrast to the authentic for some cases as Fevzi (M, 30s) suggests in the following quote:

“...for instance Hacibey Baklava. That’s a trademark, for instance. If it is of certain sweetness, if it has a certain taste, its fake cannot be as tasty as it is. Or it can be fattier or less sweet. It depends on the product. If we talk about ‘cigkofte’, the authentic ‘cigkofte’ is spicy,

fake 'çigkofte' is less spicy. It cannot be as spicy [as the authentic]. It cannot reach its level of quality.”

(“..Mesela, Hacıbey baklavası. O bi markadır mesela. O, belli bi tatlılıktaysa, belli bi tadı varsa onun taklidi onun kadar tatlı olmaz. Veya ondan daha yağlı olabilir, daha tatsız olabilir. Ürününe göre değişir...Çiğköfteden bahsederseniz orijinal çiğköfte acılı olur, işte taklit çiğköfte daha az. Onun kadar acılı olamaz. Onun seviyesine veya onun kalitesine ulaşamaz.”)

Other than that, fake again has negative connotations for Mehmet (M, 32, Librarian) who associates fake with a sour and bitter taste; and Begüm (F, 32) who asserts that fake does not taste good:

“I mean the authentic one is not sourish, but through time and waiting or something like that it [fake] may have a taste that has lost its authenticity and has become sourish. Like food becoming sourish.”

(“Yani orijinali mayhoş olmayıp zamanla hani beklemekten dolayı bi takım şeyden dolayı orijinallliğini kaybedip mayhoş bir tat olabilir. Beklemiş bir yemeğin mayhoşlaşması gibi.”)

Among the informants, the only exception to this was Tuğba (F, 26), again a counterfeit consumer like Mehmet, for whom fake is almost the same as the original in all senses: “Its taste...frankly I'd say it would be sweeter than honey (laughs)...I mean it would be all right” (“tadı...valla baldan tatlı olurdu diyecem (gülüyor) ...yani iyi olurdu bence”) Yet, I have to note that this informant is one of the most involved and content shoppers of counterfeits among all informants, which might have led her to believe that fake (at least for the domain of consuming counterfeits) is not something unfavorable.

On the other hand, sensual characteristics attributed to the authentic were contrasting to those of the fake. Even if it resembles the authentic, as what Ebru (F, 30) it is still smells nice. For example, Ayşen (F, 22) identifies authentic with the scent of a select type of flower: “It could be something like a soothing scent of flowers...Like the scent of a rare, precious flower.” (“Güzel, çiçek kokusu gibi birşey olabilirdi...Böyle bir kıymetli bir çiçeğin kokusu gibi olabilirdi, az bulunan”). For Orhan (M, 42), authentic would be his favourite smell: “If it were a smell, it would be pine...since I

like its scent very much. Alternatively, it could be the scent of roses. Scent of pine is a soothing and relieving one.” (“Koku olsaydı çam olurdu...ben onu çok severim de onun için. Ya da gül kokusu olurdu. Çam kokusu şeydir, insanın içini açan rahatlatan bi kokudur”). As opposed to the filthy nature of fake informants who all involve a degree of fakeness in their lives associate authenticity with refreshing odors.

Sounds related to the authentic were also soothing ones. Authenticity reminds Zekai (M, 48) of the sound of water because: “they say that certain things...the sound of water, the sound of springs, and then there is the sound of woman, was it like that?...there is such a saying I mean...people termed all these as pleasant sounds.” (“...belli şey derler...güzel ses diye su sesi, pınar sesi bi de kadın sesi mi derler...öyle bi terim vardır yani...Bunları insanlar güzel ses olarak tanımlamışlar.” Pelin (F, 30) follows the same lead as she affirms that authentic could be “a pleasant human voice, for example. A song...The pleasant sound of a musical instrument. But not from a distorted one.” (“güzel bi insan sesi olabilir mesela. Şarkı. Güzel bi enstrüman sesi. Ama şey değil yani...bozuk bi müzik aletinden çıkan”) Similarly, for Orhan (M, 42) ‘authentic’ could be the voice of his favorite singer, Müzeyyen Senar.

As a texture, authentic is also relieving. If it were a texture, authentic would leave a soft and pleasurable feeling on one’s skin according to Fevzi (M, 30s). Arzu (F, 41) gives the example of ‘silk’ as a substance that leaves this mark. In contrast to fake, which is rough, authentic also slips easily as its nature of texture says Mehmet (M, 32): “I mean smooth...we said rough for the authentic, this is smooth I mean. It is a bit slippier.” (“Pürüzsüz yani...orijinale göre pürüzlü demiştik, pürüzsüz yani. Biraz daha kaygan.”)

Finally, if it were a taste, authentic would resonate with “sweet ones” (“...tatlı bişey”) (Mehmet, M, 32) like “honey” (“bal”) (Zekai, M, 48) or that of a pleasurable one: If it were a taste, it would be a select taste, a delicious one. I mean when you taste it, you like it.” (“Tat olsa, seçici bir tat olur, lezzetli olur. Hani onu tattığınız zaman hoşunuza gider”) as Gülşen (F, 25) affirms.

In sum, the metaphoric portraits illustrate that authentic and fake have rather opposite characteristics; while the former has been associated with likeable feelings, the latter, though it sometimes approximates the same feeling, has rather different and negative connotations for the informants.

Next, I will dwell upon the themes that emerged from the collage data. As described in the methodology section, the first half of informants was asked to produce two separate collages; one that portrayed their emic understandings of ‘sahici’ and ‘hakiki’ (authentic) and another that displayed the opposite of these concepts. Not directly asking for the meaning of the term counterfeit (taklit) produced richer collages in term of meaning. For instance, many informants pasted scenes/items that are relevant to their lives and values on the authentic collage whereas they preferred to exclude those that either did not make sense to them or were contrary to their values/beliefs. To give an example, Sevgi (F, 49) put the picture of a pink living room, decorated in ‘party style’, and a cup embroiled with ‘egg shaped figures’ on the non-authentic collage in order to express that these objects do not have a place in her life (because of her different tastes). On a similar note, Beril (F, 29), chose the pictures of a ‘Rakı’ bottle and watermelon to tell me since sorrow is ‘relevant’ to every human being and a glass of ‘Rakı’ dispenses it, drinking is in her life, too.

On the other hand Vahit (M, 29), an informant with previous alcoholism history, attached a Vodka bottle and a scantily dressed woman fashion model's picture to tell me that the former is "mantıksız" ("irrational") as it had lead to family problems but no longer existed in his life, and the latter was contrary to 'their environments' values/beliefs; i.e. he could let his own wife dress like that, although he found the woman in the picture attractive. Mehmet (M, 32) similarly talks about a car (Audi A3), a vacation in a luxury resort, a night out in an expensive-looking restaurant, visiting the U.S. and going out with two charming celebrities (Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen) as experiences he desires, but cannot fulfill given his economic situation. That is why; he calls these as 'gerçek dışı' (unreal) and 'hayal' (dream) to him. To give a similar example from a different realm, Tolga (M, 28) pastes a Nescafe Gold bottle on the non-authentic collage as he thinks that granule coffee is not but the filtrated coffee is "asıl" (the authentic). Yet, he also adds that he drinks Nescafe everyday. Beril (F, 29) again notes that though she does not believe in the American dream as portrayed on TV (an idea represented by the Statue of Liberty on her non-authentic collage) she still admits that she wants to visit the States.

To conclude, although all the informants try to make distinctions between the authentic and non-authentic as an extension of determining self-congruence/incongruence, for some of them these two can exist (or already have existed) simultaneously in their lives, sometimes because of a desire towards the not-authentic, such as Vahit (M, 29) and Mehmet (M, 32) describe, and sometimes because of the unavoidable instances beyond one's control, as Tolga (M, 28) and Beril (F, 29) suggest.

Apart from those above, authentic has other meanings as a concept for the informants. When I further analyzed the collage sheets, I noticed 5 dimensions that refer to ‘fake’ and ‘authentic’ as the opposite. Informants pasted pictures of brands, products/services, places, looks and people to describe what they understood from these two terms.

VI.1.Characteristics of ‘Authenticity’

On their collages, informants raised examples about brands like Boss, Guess, Audi A3, Tonet; products like chocolates and bijou; people like Nil Karaibrahimgil and David Beckham; and services like ‘Ne Bu Çalan’. Based on informants’ comments on these images I spotted three major themes about the meaning of authenticity for my informants.

VI.1.1.Different from the crowd

Overall, one dimension of authenticity for informants involves being different from others, which is evident for people as well as for brands consumed as an extension of the self. First, İrem (F, 22) considers a young pop-singer, Nil Karaibrahimgil as a character who is different from the others not only with her songs but also with her outlook and character.

“First of all, this one, Nil Karaibrahimgil...I think this is authentic because it does not look like anyone else, it is original, I mean...her songs, her outlook, what not...she is an original person, I mean.”

“Önce şu Nil Karaibrahimgil...bunun orijinal olduğunu düşünüyorum çünkü ben...yani hiç kimseye benzemediği için, kendine has hani...şarkıları da, giyimi de, bilmemesi...kendine göre bir insan yani.”)

The informant also refers to the rarity principle (D’Astous and Gargouri, 2001) when she associates an automobile brand she likes, which only few people own on campus with being authentic and as being different from the majority who owns another rather cult brand.

“Utku: Is there anything that you did not mention?

İrem: There is. For example, the automobiles. This one is because of Peugeot 206. Some time ago, in our school everyone had Peugeot 206. I realized this, I mean. [206] is something everyone possesses.

Utku: Is that original?

İrem: No. But say, A3 [Audi A3]. Currently not many people own it.”

“Utku: Bahsetmediğin bişeyler var mı?

İrem: Var, arabalar var mesela. Bu işte şeyden dolayı, Peugeot 206. Bir ara bizim okulda mesela herkeste Peugeot 206 vardı. Onu düşündüm yani. Herkeste olan birşey.

Utku: Orijinal mi?

İrem: Değil. Ama mesela A3 [Audi A3]. Şu anda çok fazla insanda yok yani.”)

Ayşe (F, 25) cites David Beckham as a distinct figure among the celebrities one can encounter in daily life. Though she has some doubts about the ‘naturalness’ of the man’s appearance and even the ‘sincerity’ of his accomplishments such as having authored a book, she distinguishes him from the ‘average football player’, because he has his own ‘style’.

“Ayşe: Here is David Beckham. Many people in the world think that he is someone authentic. Despite the fact that he may be going to a coiffeure, using beauty creams because he is a metrosexual, he may not look like as his own but may look different through care, he may be considered as not-authentic. But here, the reason I found him authentic was that he has his own style...there are few people like him...for me, he is an authentic person. We can understand it from people slandering him (laughs). He has authored a book. This means that he has something to tell. This means he is someone different. Whoever has written the book, maybe him, maybe someone else? And people are purchasing the book, it sells. This means, many people also think that he is different. Being different, for me, might also mean being authentic. From my point of view, he is an original person. He has no substitutes, no look alikes. I think, my choosing him might mean he has no substitutes, no look alikes.

“Ayşe: “Burda David Beckham var. David Beckham’ın dünyadaki çoğu insan da orijinal birisi olduğunu düşünüyor. Her ne kadar estetik dolayısıyla, m, kremler sürüyor olabilir, hani metroseksüel olduğu için kuaföre falan gidiyo olabilir, kendine gerçek hali gibi değil de bakımla daha farklı bir görünümlü hale getiriyor olabilir o yüzden belki orijinal olmayan

kapsamına da giriyor olabilir ama benim burda orijinal bulmamın sebebi kendine has tarzı olması...onun gibi başka çok az insan olması...bence özgün birisi. Diğer insanların ona çamur atmasından da bunu anlayabiliriz (gülüyor). Kitabı var. Demek ki kitabı var...daha doğrusu kitabın olması anlatacak şeylerinin olduğunu gösteriyor demek ki değişik biri. Kitabın kim yazdığını da, belki kendi yazmıştır ya da başka biri yazmış olabilir. Ve birileri o kitabı alıyo ki o kitap satılmış. Demek ki birçok insan da onun farklı olduğunu düşünüyor. Farklı olmak da bence yine orijinal olmak anlamına geliyor olabilir. Yani benim için orijinal bir kişi yani. Eşi benzeri yok anlamında da olabilir. Yani onu seçmiş olmam eşi benzeri yok anlamında olabilir.”)

In that way, Ayşe associates being ‘authentic’ not with ‘being exactly yourself’ but rather with being somehow different from others. Nevertheless, she also notes that the quest for difference can entail certain perils, because differences imply ‘non-conformity’ and ‘non-conformity’ can sometimes be ridiculed, as is the case for Nil Karaibrahimgil:

“...in fact she tried to be authentic...but she was not able to. The meaning of authentic here is that, she tried to be authentic but she rather looked like a clown. One needs to be careful when trying to look different. I mean, being different... being authentic should not entail being absurd and foolish.

(“...aslında orijinal olmaya çalışmış...ama olamamış. Burdaki orijinalin anlamı da farklı olmaya çalışmış, ama biraz palyaço gibi olmuş. Farklı olmaya çalışırken de dikkatli olmak gerekiyor. Yani farklı olmak...ııı, abuk subuk olmak...orijinal olmak abuk subuk olmak anlamında da gelmemeli bence.”)

As the quotes imply, informants associate authenticity with rarity and difference from others in terms of a desirable trait. In fact, one informant defines authenticity as something that is unique to you: “Everyone sees it on you, but you do not see it on anyone else” (“Herkes sizde görür siz başka kimsede görmezsiniz”) (İrem, F, 22). However, while informants appreciate being unique through having a style that others respect, we can also infer that not every type of authenticity is admirable and independent of others’ approval as the tensions inherent in contrasting evaluations for Nil Karaibrahimgil and David Beckham suggest.

VI.1.2. Difficult to copy

Though having no fakes casts no hint on understanding authenticity in and of itself, as Grayson and Martinec (2004) admit, “the word authentic is sometimes used to describe something that is thought not to be a copy or an imitation” (p297). Indeed, the fake lives only in relation to the authentic (Schwartz, 1998). As one of my informants suggests, authentic is a source for the fake; “fake sources from the authentic” (“taklitlere kaynak sağlar”) (Gülşen, F, 25). In my study, many collages depicting brand names usually witnessed this rather dialectical characteristic of authenticity. For instance, Guess, Boss, Samsung and Baileys were such brands according to informants.

“Tolga (M, 28): For Boss [fragrance] and Samsung [TV set], I used it in the meaning of no production of counterfeits.”

“Boss [parfüm] için ve Samsung [TV] için de taklitlerinin yapılmaması anlamında kullandım.”)

“Irem (F, 22): Let me continue with this one, this is a wristwatch of Guess, an authentic model, its imitability is low I think. Since it is authentic, the same model cannot be launched by other brands.”

“Mesela şununla devam edeyim bu Guess’in saati, bu orijinal bir model, bunun taklit edilebilirliği az diye düşündüm ben. Orijinal olduğu için yani başka markalar tarafından aynı model çıkarılamaz.”)

“Sevgi (F, 49): Its aroma, its taste...I mean...for example you smell the Baileys. It is evident that it’s Baileys. As far as I know, it does not have counterfeits, too.

Utku: Its counterfeit is not made?

Sevgi: I have not seen Baileys’ counterfeit. It is a drink that has its own properties. It always reminds me of this, I mean, its bottle, outlook, label do not make me think that it is a counterfeit of something.”

“Aroması, tadı...yani...Mesela Baileys koklarsınız. Onun Baileys olduğu bellidir. Taklidi de olmaz diye biliyorum.

Utku: Taklidi yapılmaz...

Sevgi: Ben görmedim Baileys'in taklidini. Çok kendine has özellikleri olan bir içki. Bana hep onu hatırlatır. Yani şişesi, görünüşü, etiketi bana bir şeyin taklidi olduğunu düşündürmüyor.”)

Thus, informants identify the authentic in contrast to being imitable. Yet, what makes an object/experience inimitable changes from context to context. For the case of certain products and brands the nuance comes from a difficulty in producing or designing the item, such as the distinct bottle shape or taste of Baileys as described above and the examples of cosmetics, and ‘Ne Bu Çalan’, a new service from Turkcell:

“Tolga (M, 28): um, in general, cosmetic products, especially creams like this...their counterfeits cannot be made, it's hard, in fact they also harm the skin extensively. Therefore, creams are generally authentic.

Utku: What makes them so?

Tolga: You need very advanced equipment. One needs to establish a facility to assemble the chemical ingredients. If one has such money, probably s/he can launch his/her own brand.”

(“ııı, genel olarak kozmetik malzemeleri, özellikle kremler böyle...bunların taklitleri de yapılamıyo, zor, zaten cilde de çok zarar veriyolar, genelde kremler onun için orijinal, otantik oluyolar.

Utku: Nedir onların öyle olmasını sağlayan?

Tolga: Yani çok iyi teçhizat olması lazım. Yani onları kimyasal olarak içindeki malzemeleri birleştirecek alacak...tesis kurması lazım. Belki, kendi marka yaratır o kadar parası varsa...”)

İrem (F, 22): If we think, this costs you 10 SMS, and noone would pay 10 SMS for this. However, this is still an original idea and its imitability is low. Another, I mean, if Telsim launches this [service], it is obvious that they stole it from Turkcell.

Utku: What makes it authentic for you?

İrem: umm...it is authentic because...well...it is an original idea and, um, it is not easily imitable.”

(“Şöyle düşünersek, bu 10 mesaj parası, kimse buna 10 mesaj parası vermez. Ama gene de orijinal bir fikir ve taklit edilmesi zor yani. Başka hani Telsim gitsin bunu alsın koysun, direk Turkcell'den çaldığı belli olacak bişey.

Utku: Bunu hakiki, sahici yapan ne senin için?

İrem: ııııı, sahici yapan.....işte şey...orijinal bir fikir olması ve şey, ııı, çok kolay taklit edilebilecek olmaması.”)

As Tolga and İrem elaborate, authenticity also requires some intellectual investment; i.e. innovation and commitment from the perspective of the producer in order to be

not imitating anything. Imitating something is associated with unfavorable traits, as discussed previously. Like Benjamin (1986) contends, “The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity” (p220).

VI.1.3.Culturally Challenging to Understand

As authenticity is intellectually challenging to produce –which makes it hard to copy- from the side of its manufacturer; it also requires a cultural and historical background from the audience to realize its meaning. This is best expressed from the words of Ayşe (F, 25), who contrasts the authentic with non authentic in terms of the agent who produces the meaning.

“...um, I thought these were the traditional designs, I mean, those original and authentic ones that we know exist for centuries. This is one called modern style, but this is a Turkish rug that has a particular design. This is but a styleless, ‘flower rug’. This is a rug that only has flower motifs, or motifs like that; postmodern, absurd...Because, in this one every motif carries a certain meaning, though I do not know much about it. To make all these tiny details, a lot of effort was exerted...and...after long years and the labor of people working on, these pieces were developed.”

(“...ııı, bunlar geleneksel desenler diye düşündüm yani, bildiğimiz desenler, yüzyıllardır olan, orijinal, kendine özgü. Ama bu belli bir tarzı olan, modern tarz deniyor ama şu bir Türk halısı...bu...ııı, tarzı olmayan çiçek halı. Sadece çiçeklerin, çiçeğe benzer şeylerin olduğu bi halı, daha çok postmodern ya da böyle abuksubuk... Çünkü buradaki [Türk halısı] desenlerin her biri bir anlam taşır...ben çok bilmememe rağmen. Her birine çok büyük emek harcanmış bu küçücük desenleri yapabilmek için...ve...uzun yıllar sonucunda geliştirilen ve emek harcayan insanların yaptığı işler sonucu bu işler oluşmuş.”)

At a first glance, being culturally challenging to understand also seems to make an object/identity different from crowd. Yet, for my informants being different from others is not enough for being intellectually/culturally challenging to produce and appreciate in Bourdieu’s (1984) terms. This seems to be different than the case of David Beckham and Nil Karaibrahimgil, who can be appreciated by larger masses as

Ayşe suggested. When we probe deeper, we see that for some cases, being different expresses one's taste, which is shared by restricted others who are able to understand the cultural codes that envisage this difference. Sevgi (F, 49) characterizes this dimension of 'authenticity' by giving an example about a product that seems like an ordinary commodity to an ordinary person but not to her:

“Sevgi (F, 49): I also know about Tonet, that is why to me it is very...perhaps another person does not know this chair style, this is a very classic Tonet chair. I think that this is really the photo of a Tonet chair. Yet, if I did not know...if I mention it to people here, if you ask, they would only say 'chair'. But I know its name and reputation.”

(“...Tonet'i de biliyorum, bildiğim için bana çok...belki bir başka insan bu sandalye biçimini bilmiyordur ama, Tonet marka, çok klasik bir sandalye, oturma grubu. Bu gerçekten Tonet bir sandalyenin fotoğrafı diye düşünüyorum ben. Ama bilmesem...belki arkadaşlara söylesem, sorsanız bunu, sandalye deyip geçer. Ama ben adıyla sanıyla biliyorum.”)

Here, Sevgi pinpoints another aspect of authenticity that also relates to iconicity, which will be explored in the upcoming section. In addition, her knowledge about the particular brand, which is an old and rooted one, and her attempt to stress the lack of others (namely her employees) in identifying with the brand clarifies that 'authenticity' has something to do not only classifying objects but also classifying persons through the awareness of it.

VI.2. Characteristics of 'Fakeness'

Similar to the collages on authenticity, the collages on non-authenticity bear certain implications for characterizing fakeness. Again, products (snow boats, clothing, books, wristwatches, handbags), brands (Tommy Hilfiger, Vakko, Shimdy), and people (Tülin Şahin aka 'Sivaslı Cindy', 'Akademi Türkiye Barış') were emergent in data representing fakeness. In addition, there were looks, especially that informants

interpreted as made-up, and finally places, such as a scene of a Turkish bath on these collages. Analysis of the interview texts reveals two main characteristics of fakeness: Lack of iconicity and ardent desire for being something praised.

VI.2.1.Lack of iconicity

As previously noted by Grayson and Martinec (2004), iconicity refers to verisimilitude between two things not by direct physical connection but through symbolic inference. For instance, a member of the mountain-man rendezvous (Belk and Costa, 1998) is perceived as authentic to the extent that he is believed to look like a typical 19th century rendezvous participant. The mountain man of today, therefore, represents an icon that we associate with a reenacted past. Grayson and Martinec (2004) claim that in order to claim iconicity on something, one needs to have previous experience/beliefs about the thing of concern, so that s/he can make a comparison. On the other hand, Arnould and Price (1999) argue that the issue is not whether the individual experiences authenticity himself/herself, but rather whether s/he relates the experience with authenticity.

While iconicity characterizes authenticity, lack of iconicity is an aspect of fakeness in the narratives of informants. For instance, Sevgi (F, 49) pasted a brass bowl picture on the non-authentic collage to state that in her mind the object seemed fake rather than authentic, when compared to an Ottoman antique bowl, which is also supposed to be unique but not multiple in number. Below are two instances, one in which the informant compares an personal experience with an image that did not

remind herself of hers, and the other in which the informant constructs the narrative based on her beliefs about the authenticity of an antique item.

“Sevgi (F, 49): This [bowl] is an Ottoman counterfeit. This has counterfeits, maybe even Paşabahçe’s one is a counterfeit. In the Old Ottoman times, those would be unique, I mean, not be three. Since I saw this in the retailer’s advertisement, this reminded me of something done for keeping those [traditional artifacts] alive.”

(“...Bu da bir Osmanlı taklidi. Taklitleri de var, belki Paşabahçe’ninkisi de taklit. Şimdi kendisi yapıyor, çoğaltıyor. Eski Osmanlı’da bunlar birebir, yani üç tane falan olmuyor. Ben onu bir mağazanın şeyinde gördüğüm için, ilanında, yani şu bana yani şu anda onların yaşatılması için gelen birşeyi hatırlattı.)

In the above example, the informant mentions about what is termed as ‘authentic reproduction’, and notes that though they are intended to rejuvenate the past, such goods are still considered fake. From a different perspective, Kadriye (F, 48) talks about the authenticity of an experience, in the context of a snapshot from a place she attached to the non-authentic collage:

“Utku: What do you observe here?

Kadriye: Here, I observe things that are made to appeal to more people and targeted for tourism, but not things that possess the characteristics of our old hamams.

Utku: What kind of characteristics did the old hamams possess?

Kadriye: What kind of characteristics...they were more natural in terms of their edifices. Stone was dominant...Their domes were different; they had glass domes facing the daylight. I am from Antalya. They had examples even in the middle of the Antalya bazaar, if you notice. When you looked through the ceiling, through the glass cap, you could see the sky. This one was constructed differently. It is different in terms of its architecture. People inside the Turkish Hamam for example, they are also different. I mean there are lots of differences.

Utku: ...who frequents this place?

Kadriye: In my opinion...this is intended primarily for tourism purposes. More or less, it gave a gist of the Turkish Hamam.”

“Utku: Neler görüyorsunuz burada?

Kadriye: Burada turizme yönelik, daha böyle insanlara cazip hale getirilmiş. Bizim eski hamamlarımızın özelliğini taşımayan şeyler görüyorum.

Utku: Ne gibi özellikleri vardı eski hamamların?

Kadriye: Eski hamamların ne gibi özellikleri vardı...yapı itibarıyla daha doğaldı. Taş hakimdi...Onların kubbeleri daha farklı, gün ışığına bakan cam kubbeleri vardı. Antalyalı’yım ben, Antalya’da çarşının ortasında bile örnekleri vardı. Baktığımız zaman çarşının orasında bile örnekleri vardı yani. Tavandan baktığımız zaman camdan, gökyüzünü görürsünüz. Daha farklı şekilde yapılmış. Yapı itibarıyla farklı, ortam itibarıyla farklı...giren çıkan kişiler mesela bir Türk hamamına, onlar farklı. Yani bir sürü farklılıklar var.

Utku:Buraya kimler girip çıkıyor?

Kadriye: Yani bu bende.....daha çok turizme yönelik, daha çok bir esinti vermiş Türk hamamından bence...”)

Kadriye was able to notice the picture of the Turkish bath to express how non-authentic she perceived the place compared to the image of that place in her childhood memories. The scene from the bath reminds her of a recreated Turkish bath, though one might also claim that the ‘traditional’ Turkish bath of her childhood was also a reenactment of the past. The Turkish bath might also been exposed to what Arnould and Price (1999) would call as an ‘authenticating act’, perhaps with added features targeted for the enjoyment of tourists. In that respect, lack of iconicity is one of the characteristics of non-authenticity, as the Turkish bath seen on the picture can only be an inspired by the authentic, but cannot give the same experience to the informant.

VI.2.2.Ardent Desire

For the case of fakeness, there is also a desire for becoming ‘something else’. This something else is usually a praised one that informants (all of whom are purchasers of only counterfeits) name as the ‘authentic’. According to Schwartz (1998), though fakes are sometimes disgusted, we admire the unique and reproduce it faithfully. This desire –which also brings about a tension- is also relevant for the meaning of fakeness, as can be observed from the below comments.

To start with, Ebru (F, 30) defines ‘fake’ as “...not stemming from itself per se, not from its origins, but it is doing something that you saw from someone else...because you like it and you saw it at someone else” (“Taklit...esasından değil, kendi içinden gelen bişey değil ama bi başkasından gördüğün bişeyi...bi başkasında gördüğün için

yapıyo olmandır...ve hoşuna gittiği için yapıyo olmandır”). Similarly, Esra (F, 56) introduces the term ardent desire in the definition of fakeness: “this is an ardent desire...fakeness means ardent desire. I mean you ardently desire a particular object. For me, this is the meaning of fake; an ardent desire” (“Bu özenmektir...Taklidin karşı anlamı özenmektir. Yani karşıdaki bir şeye özeniyorsunuz. Bence o gelir taklidin karşıtı, imrenmek”). Finally, Tuğba’s (F, 26) definition refers to the existence of a role model who cannot yet be superseded: “You know, it wants to become something [else] but it cannot...there is someone that s/he idealizes and wants to be like, but whatever it does is not sufficient”. (“Yani bişey olmak istiyor da olamıyor...bir örnek aldığı biri var kendine, onun gibi olmaya çalışıyo, ne kadar şey olsa da nafile geliyo yani.”) To sum up, though has the ardent desire, fake is deceptive because it cannot supplant the attributes of the praised idol. In accordance with the metaphoric portraits, Mehmet asserts the social dictum; though it exists in our lives, fakeness and copying others is not so nice “Fake is always bad...I mean fake is bad for everything; for an idea, for movies, for a product, I mean for all. Even though your work may be poor, it must be yours at full in the end”. (“Taklit her zaman kötüdür..yani her şeyin şeyi kötü yani fikrin, ürünün, yapılan ürünün, sinemanın, her şeyin taklidi kötüdür. Yani o yaptığın iş kötü bile olsa senin bi emeğin olsun, özün olsun sonucunda.”)

Back to the collages, Tolga also attached the picture of a cosmetics set as a tool for making oneself unnatural yet attractive. Ayşe (F, 25), pointing a couple of eyes with some make-up, also claims that the eyes in the picture are not the authentic beauty. Similarly, Beril (F, 29) asserts that the smooth skins and well-shaped bodies of

women depicted in advertising are nothing but displaying every woman's desires, to conceal/get rid of something they are not satisfied with.

"This is everybody's dream, such as being as beautiful as this woman. If I used this moisturizing cream, could I be like this? Or if I used this anti-cellulite cream could my skin become perfect like this woman's? All these pinpoint something which everybody is lacking or dreaming of"

("Bu herkesin hayalinde nedir işte bu kadın kadar güzel olabilmek. Bu nemlendirici kremi kullanırsam böyle olur muyum? Ya da bu selülit kremi kullanırsam bu kadinkı gibi kusursuz bi vücudum olur mu. Bunların hepsi işte insanın eksikliđinin olduđu, hayalinin olduđu bi noktaya parmak basıyo.")

That is why; fakeness again conveys a meaning identical to ardent desire towards an external reference point, towards an idealized 'authentic', even if this task necessitates utilizing deceptive means. In fact, the word make-up also connotes a gist of fakeness, per se. The picture of the cosmetic set is a metaphor that characterizes an underlying goal the informant perceives as crucial in some situations. Tolga, for instance, affirms that displaying make-up and deceiving others is welcome for some situations, especially where one needs to show off 'something' or even 'someone':

"Tolga (M, 28): Consequently, these also show people differently than what is their natural or real outlook. For me, this is fakeness; it shows something as different than it actually is; it is not authentic in a way. Evidently, it displays women's eyebrows and eyelashes different than it actually is. It makes them both voluminous and straighter.

Utku: So is it something good?

Tolga: Ah...I would like to say 'it depends'. Honestly when I go somewhere at night or with a girlfriend, I would be pleased to see it. But it is not natural. Yet, showing off is necessary in some cases. Of course, this is in line with the conventions of the society. When you take her out to somewhere at night...if she went there as she is and without it [the make-up] she would not be impressive."

("Bunlar da yani sonuçta bence insanları bu doğal veya gerçeđinden farklı gösteriyo, bu taklit bence olduđundan farklı göstermesi, asıl olmaması yani. Kadının kaş ve kirpiđini olduđundan farklı gösteriyo sonuçta. Hem volume'unu artırıyosun hem de şey yapıyosun daha dik gibi.

Utku: İyi bişey mi...sence?

Tolga: Yani...yerine göre demek istiyorum. Çünkü şimdi açıkça gece bi yere giderken veya bi kız arkadaşınla falan görmek isterim. Ama doğal deđil. Ama hani belli yerlerde de gösteriş için gerekli. Tabii toplumdaki düzen o yönde. Oturup da yani bi gece bi yerlere götürürken....böyle doğal, o olmadan giderse olmaz hani etkileyici olmaz.")

For the informant, the meaning of taklit (fake) is something that is not ‘you’ but still resides in your life for its appeal. In addition, conforming to the order of the society is an important justification for the ‘desire for otherness’ and more importantly, the deception going on. At an extreme point, if everyone engages in such a fake presentation of self (sometimes through others) and deceives others, there may be no need to conceal anything from others since the fake becomes the new norm; i.e. the authentic. This seems to be Tolga’s need for justifying authenticity with a reference to the conduct of the society in general.

In a similar fashion, İrem (F, 22) pasted the picture of a fashion model who claimed to be the Turkish version of a famous and attractive American top-model, Cindy Crawford. Rather disappointingly, she also remembers the male winner of a talent contest, who owes his success to imitating the style and songs of an older and reputable singer. Because those two people try to bask in the glory of successful others and blur the purity of authenticity (Askegaard, 2005), İrem (F, 22) perceives them as fake identities:

“Barış, no...he is not someone I support (laughs). I mean, but, because he is not himself; not authentic.

(“Barış, yok...Desteklemediğim bir insan kendisi (gülüyor). Yani ama, kendi olmadığı için, orijinal olmadığı için”)

Similar comments were also made for Tülin Şahin:

“This is like the fake Cindy Crawford. I mean, she first broke through like that. At this moment, she does not use that exactly, but in the beginning...and it [the image] still sticks to her.

(“Bu da [Cindy Crawford] taklidi gibi. Yani öyle gibi çıktı ilk başta. Şu anda tam olarak onu kullanmıyo ama ilk başta...ve hala da o üstüne yapışmış şekilde duruyor...”)

Ayşe (F, 25) also articulates some negative feelings about fakeness in personal identity, though she prefers to talk not about a celebrity, but about an ordinary man that unsatisfactorily strives to look like someone else:

“This man’s pose...I mean...he tries to seem like rugged, but the way he crosses his legs can be called as ‘tender’. It can be a bit affectionate, I do not mean to vilify the man, but his looks also seem to be showing something that he is not. In other words, if he crosses his legs more appropriately, like in a more masculine way, it could be more suited to his type, right? But in this way, he is a bit trying to look like someone that he is not. Isn’t it a more original, different style of crossing the legs? He wanted to look like different. But he could not manage it.”

(“...şu adamın pozunu...yani...biraz sert olmaya çalışmış ama bacak bacak üstüne atışı biraz yumuşak olarak nitelendirilebilir. Biraz özentili olabilir ama şimdi adamı kötülemek de istemiyorum, şimdi biraz bakışı falan da yani olmadığı şeyleri gösterir gibi geldi. Mesela daha doğru düzgün bacak bacak üstüne atsa daha erkeksi falan...tipine falan da daha uygun olacak değil mi. Ama bu şekilde biraz...olmadığı şey gibi görünmeye çalışmış olabilir. Daha özgün bi...değişik bi bacak bacak üstüne atış şekli değil mi. Daha değişik görünmek istemiş. Ama çok başarılı olamamış.”)

Again the word ‘özentili’ connotes something desirable, which is toughness and masculinity in the case of the man in the picture, according to the informant. A similar tendency to make a reference to the superior other by trying (but not achieving) to mimic it also abounds for brand names with foreign origins, such as the one İrem (F, 22) spots:

“...for example, this is Turkish, probably something that a Turkish firm has launched. In other words, it is not authentic. It seemed to me like more of...non-authentic, fake. One that has an ardent desire toward other things. This is also because of its name, since they wrote ‘Şimdi’ but with a ‘Sh’.”

(“...mesela bu Türk, herhalde Türk bir firmanın çıkardığı birşey, ‘Şimdi’ diye birşey. Yani orijinal değil. Biraz daha hani...sahici olmayan, taklit gibi geldi. Diğer şeylere özenen gibi geldi. İsminden dolayı da yani, çünkü ‘Şimdi’ ama ‘Sh’ ile yazmışlar falan.”)

In both cases, the informants realize the explicitness of deception efforts and seem to condemn it. Yet, a careful investigation reveals that the informants do not condemn the ardent desire, but rather disapprove the way it is presented. In other words, the condemned ‘desire’, which symbolically manifests itself in fakeness, may not always be so distant to us (Belk et al. 2003). For example, Beril (F, 29) comments on a

tradition she has been pursuing for many years, decorating a Christmas tree on every New Year's Eve, though she is ambivalent about whether this pattern is authentic to the Turkish culture that she admits to belong.

“Beril (F, 29): ...inevitably, Christmas Tree connotes something related to Christianity in our country. But not for me. I also decorate a Christmas Tree at home on the New Year's Eve. But I end a year and welcome a new one. Obviously, this is different for us. For them, [tree] exists in the process of celebration which stems from the Jesus Christ. When you look at us, we also celebrate, I also decorate a tree, really...but in fact, this is not something to be celebrated, really. Only, um...not a trend, but, um, like the continuation of certain habits. Otherwise, really celebrating the Christmas in Turkey, but for Christians this is something the festival brings about...partially a kind of ardent desire, partially like...ah, look, let's have something more colorful and different in our lives, because we do not have such customs that our religion brings to us.”

(“...çam ağacı da sonuçta ben,ııı, çam ağacı bizim ülkemizde, ııı, Hristiyanlığa ait bişeyi çağırıştırır. Bana göre öyle değil. Yani ben kendi evimde de bi çam ağacı yapıyorum yılbaşında. Ama ben biten bi yılı işte yeni gelen bi yılı karşılıyorum. E tabi daha farklı bizde biten bi yıl yeni...onlarda Hristiyanlığın İsa'dan kaynaklanan bi kutlama süreci içerisinde yer alıyo. Ha şimdi bize baktığınız zaman biz de kutluyoruz, ben de bi ağaç yapıyorum, gerçek...ama aslında çok kutlanabilir bişey değil...Sadece bi...ııı, trend de değil de, ııı, bi takım böyle işte alışagelmiş şeylerin sürdürülmesi gibi yoksa onu gerçekten kutlamanın, Türkiye için konuşuyorum, yoksa Hristiyanlar için bir bayramın getirdiği bişey bu...sadece birazcık işte yarı özenti, yarı...aman işte hayatımızda renkli, değişik bişey olsun çünkü bizim dinimizin getirdiği bu tip bi takım şeyler yok, doneler yok elimizde.”)

Canclini (1995) argues that boundaries between cultures are not fixed, but rather dynamically changing. Hence, there are re-contextualizations of customs and habits that are once thought to be particular to a culture. Celebrating Christmas with a Christmas tree can also be a form of hybridization, in which we can observe the interplay of local versus global as in the case of Japanese decorating the tree with local figures, such as Astro Boy, and with perceivably Christmas related objects such as red underwear (Kimura and Belk, forthcoming). While the informant does not dwell upon those efforts of localizing, she demonstrates awareness that her Christmas consumption involves an ardent desire that does not ‘authentically’ relate to a Muslim context. This aspect of fakeness rather contradicts with the previously mentioned cultural challenge that ‘understanding’ authenticity demands. Nevertheless, as demonstrated by the Christmas tree metaphor, consuming ‘the

other' enriches her life, makes it more colorful and pleasurable compared to the indigenous.

Overall, data from collages depict that ardent desire is inherent in the meaning of 'fakeness', though 'fakeness' sometimes threatens a unique, purified identity (Askegaard, 2005) and creates tension as it creates an inevitable comparison of fake with authentic or multiple identities with each other.

VI.3.Reasons for Consuming Counterfeit Designer Brands

In this section I present the findings regarding the consumption reasons of designer brands. Echoing previous literature (eg. Gentry et al. 2001; Nill and Schultz II, 1996), counterfeits are preferred for their lower prices and aesthetic similarity to authentic items in some cases. Nevertheless, another pivotal issue emerges in my analysis, which is usually not paid much in the related literature. Counterfeit designer brands are also consumed for their symbolic meanings for the informants. Those symbolic meanings may reflect the consumer's ardent desire for another identity, desire for uniqueness within the cohort as well as desire to fulfill an otherwise incomplete shopping experience and reenacting the past through the designer brand whose counterfeit is consumed. Besides these symbolic reasons, the subsection concludes by giving clues about the ethical understanding that lays the ground for such widespread counterfeit consumption in our country.

VI.3.1.Affordability

Price is cited as one of the most influential variables in the consumer decision making process (Erdem and Swait, 2004) in which some purchases are made based on considering the perceived value of the product of concern. In the previous literature, counterfeits are termed as low cost, but high value alternatives to generic brands (Chakraborty et al., 1996; Cordell et al., 1996). Furthermore, some authors also emphasize that like any other ‘status good’, counterfeits hold functional purposes and “it cannot be simply assumed that these goods are bought for status signaling purposes only” (Van Kempen, 2003, p160). Echoing the findings of Gentry et al. (2001), informants cited either inability to afford the authentic designer brand clothing or their willingness to save money as one of the major reasons of consuming counterfeit designer brands. Since this study uses clothing as its context, it is reasonable to anticipate the utilitarian motives behind purchasing counterfeit clothing, e.g. for covering the body. Nevertheless, as it will be mentioned in the upcoming sections, brand symbolism cannot be ignored as it might be one of the major underlying determinants of counterfeit clothing purchases, since people also pay a premium to procure the counterfeits as Van Kempen (2004) and Classen and Howes (1996) mention.

The informants frequently cited affordability as a major cause of all sorts of counterfeit consumption. While some of them can afford shopping from the retailers, for relatively lower income informants like Mirza, Vahit, and Zekai counterfeit goods constitute an important part of the affordable clothing purchases. For example, Mirza (M, 24) notes that he wears counterfeits almost everywhere, both at work and

at a night out. In the following lines, the informants stress their financial situation that renders it impossible to procure the designer brands from the designer brand's own stores.

“Mirza (M, 24): ...people are adapted to fakes...how can I say...people whose financial situation is not well...they purchase such things. They cannot afford to purchase those things costing 300-400 million TL. Let's say Diesel. It has such customers that spend 2 billion TL all at once. My friend tells me those. They purchase believe me...but they are well of people. People like you and me...we cannot afford, really. Just think, my montly salary is 300 million TL...”

(“...İnsanlar adapte olmuş böyle fason şeye...nasıl söyleyeyim...durumları iyi olmayan insanlar...böyle şeyler alıyolar yani. Gidip de 300-400 milyonluk şeyleri alamıyolar. Mesela Diesel...Diesel'in öyle bir müşterileri var ki.....adam bi geliyo....2 milyarlık alışveriş edip gidiyo mesela...Arkadaşım anlatıyo...anlatıyo yani, alıyolar valla diyo hiç...Ama onlar durumları iyi olan insanlar...Senin benim gibi insanlar...güçleri yetmez ya. Benim çalıştığım bi maaşıma, üçyüz milyon bi maaşım yani, insaf...”)

“Vahit (M, 29): Counterfeit goods are cheap merchandise for us...Knowing that they are counterfeit, we still purchase them because they are cheap...what differs is the huge price gap between them and the high quality merchandise.”

(“Sahte mallar bizim için ucuz mallardır...Gider alırsız onu ucuz olduğu için alırsız...sahte olduğunu bile bile de alırsız yani...Ama ne olur, kaliteliyle arasında çok büyük fiyat farkı vardır.”)

“Zekai (M, 48): I also wear Lacoste but...my purchasing power suffices this one so I buy this one.”

(“...Lacoste giyiyorum ben de ama...benim de gücüm buna yetiyo ben de bunu alıyorum...”)

Similarly, though she is currently more affluent, Ayşe, a female electrical engineer, makes a similar explanation about the motive behind purchasing a counterfeit t-shirt a couple of years ago. Since she was a university student at that time, affordability was again of issue for Ayşe. She wanted to purchase a ‘Tommy Hilfiger’; a brand she already knew, but was not able to possess because of financial matters:

“Ayşe (F, 25): ...I mean it displaying the Tommy Hilfiger label might have been influential on my liking the item (laughs).

Utku: What kind of a contribution did it make, in your opinion?

Ayşe: I mean, it does not make any sense right now but maybe I thought like that at that time. Not rationally, but emotionally maybe. I might have thought like 'we cannot purchase the authentic items, so let's get the counterfeits and wear them'."

("...Yani Tommy Hilfiger damgası olup olmaması almamı beğenmemi etkilemiş...olabilir (gülüyor)

Utku: Ne gibi bir artışı olabilir sence?

Ayşe: Yani şu an hiçbir mantığı yok ama belki o an öyle düşünmüş olabilirim. Bi mantık olarak değil bir duygu olarak hani. Gerçeklerini alıp giyemiyoruz, bari taklidini alıp giyelim diye düşünmüş olabilirim...")

As we can understand, informants have a clear opinion about price levels from which the authentic items are sold. Because of the economic constraints at the time of shopping, they may prefer the counterfeit items, since they are considerably off price items not to forget that they are also functional in covering the body like other clothing choices. Nevertheless, some counterfeit consumers like Esra (F, 56) and Gülşen (F, 25) underscore the prices of counterfeit designer brands, which usually sell at a premium over other, no-name clothing items in the bazaar⁵ and even at other designer brand retailers.

"Esra (F, 56): ...even the ones she buys from the bazaar and calls as cheap are expensive to me. And I sometimes think; how come it was cheap to her and not to me. Because, for example, some bazaar prices like 70-80 million TL appear as gratis to her [one who purchases authentic Vakko items]. She says, 'Look, I got it for 70 million, it's amazingly cheap'. But it is not cheap for me, I mean."

("...o pazardan alıp ucuz dediği bana bile pazardan pahalı gelir. Ve ben düşünürüm ona nasıl ucuz geldi de bana pahalı. Çünkü mesela bazı pazarların 70-80 milyona olan birşey varsa o ona [sahici Vakko alan da kişiye] bedava gelir. 'Ay 70 milyona aldım, çok ucuz' der. Ama bana o ucuz gelmez. Onu demek istiyorum.")

"Gülşen (F, 25): It also leads to such a direction, for instance. Prices are surging in the bazaar. For example, the t-shirt at the bazaar is 5 million TL. It is also 5 million TL at Collezione. And Collezione is a trademark. And its fabrics are of higher quality than the product at the bazaar."

("Öyle bir yöne doğru da gidiyor mesela. Fiyatları pazarın gittikçe pahalaniyo. Mesela pazarda t-shirt 5 milyon. Collezione'da da 5 milyon. Ve Collezione bir marka. Ve kumaşları pazardaki ürüne göre çok daha iyi.")

⁵ For instance, "after some negotiation, a middle aged man purchased a Paul & Shark sweatshirt for 40 YTL in front of me. Prices of Daniel Hechter and Lacoste shirts (both sexes) vary between 25 and 40 YTL at the Ayrancı bazaar" (January fieldnotes). Price of Benetton cap sleeve female t-shirts is 10 YTL at the Sıhhiye bazaar (May fieldnotes).

In that respect, though their affordability resides as a constituent of the value of counterfeit designer brands, comparing their prices with alternative offerings such as Collezione -a low end designer brand- there seems to be other factors behind consumers' preferences towards counterfeits.

Different from the above examples in which the consumers were in no way able to afford the authentic designer brands, some of my informants, such as Beril, Gülşen and Melike also possess the authentic offerings but are also actively involved in consuming the counterfeits as can be understood from the title of the section. What then, motivates them to prefer these 'low cost' alternatives compared to informants who wear only the counterfeits? One major account of this tendency is circumventing the 'excessive' prices of the brand's own stores while counterfeits can offer similar quality levels:

"Beril (F, 29): Oh, some people might say that 'I do not shop from the bazaar, I only wear designer brands, shop from the brand's own stores. Certainly, this is not valid for me. Sometimes I purchase something from the designer brand worth 500 million TL, sometimes I wear something that I bought for 5 million from the bazaar. I have tons of clothing, pants, sweaters I bought from the stores. But bazaar has a different place in me because I can purchase the same quality at a lower price. Bazaar has such an advantage. Noone can convince me that the bazaar is of inferior quality and the store is of higher. I have lots of merchandise that I purchased from the bazaar and have been using comfortably for ten years, but also ones that I bought from the stores only to find out that they squeeze after the second wash."

("Ha bi kısmı da der ki 'ben pazar alışverişi yapmam, ben sadece marka giyerim, markadan alışveriş yaparım' düşüncesinde ama bana çok yakın bişey değil. Yeri gelir, 500 milyona marka bişey de alırım, yeri gelir 5 milyona pazardan aldığım şeyi de giyerim...Mağazadan aldığım bi sürü kıyafetim var, pantolonum, kazağım var. Ama pazarın bende şeyi farklı. Çünkü aynı ürünü...bana göre aynı kalitede ürünü çok daha ucuza alabiliyorum. Pazarın öyle bi avantajı var. Pazarın kalitesiz mağazanın kaliteli olduğuna beni hiç kimse inandıramaz. Çünkü pazardan aldığım, on senedir giydiğim, hiç bir tarafına birşey olmamış; ama mağazadan aldığım aldığım ikinci yıkamada çekmiş bi sürü ürünüm var benim."

"Gülşen (F, 25): um, there is something like this...I do not think that the authentic item is worth the price. For this reason, I prefer it when it is on sale."

("Ya, ııı, şöyle bişey var. Ben orijinal olarak o ürünün o fiyat edeceğini düşünmüyorum. O yüzden indirim günlerinde o ürünü tercih ediyorum.")

“Melike (F, 30s): So, why do I go and shop from there...I do not think that something with that material and design is worth that price. I know its price abroad, I know its price here. I know that they are extremely different. So I think the worth of that item is not it. I think here the price is exaggareateredly high, so I purchase [the counterfeit] from the bazaar.”

(“E yani çünkü ben şahsen neden gidip ordan alışveriş yapıyorum...o materyalde ve o tasarımda bi şeyin o fiyat etmeyeceğini düşünüyorum. Yurtdışındaki fiyatını biliyorum, burdaki fiyatını biliyorum. Çok farklı olduğunu biliyorum. Yani o malın ederinin o olmadığını düşünüyorum. Burda çok fazla bir, bir şekilde abartıldığını düşünüyorum fiyatının o yüzden pazardan alıyorum.”)

As Beril mentions, provided that they fulfill the purpose in terms of durability and quality, counterfeit designer label clothing can be frugal choice though complemented by the items sold at authorized retailers. This may be because of the perception that counterfeits provide equivalent or even superior perceived value compared to the authentic offerings. Many consumers –even ones who also possess the authentic designer brands- contended that unless examined well by an expert eye, well-made counterfeits were not easily discernible from them.

“Ayşe (F, 25): ...the ones in the bazaar, for instance, can sell it to you as ‘it is an export surplus Tommy Hilfiger t-shirt’ since it looks like [the authentic] so much. I mean, it resembles [the authentic] completely, with its appeareance and apparel.

(“...pazardaki direkt sana mesela, bu Tommy Hilfiger’in t-shirt’üdür ihraç fazlasıdır diye satabilir. Çünkü o kadar çok benziyo (sahicisine). Yani görüntüsüyle herşeyiyle, kumaşıyla benziyo.”)

“Sevgi (F, 49): However, it is such a perfect counterfeit that its fabric is already Lacoste’s. It has an emblem, and its design is the same. Combining all of these, one strolls like s/he wore Lacoste. Do you examine whether it is Lacoste or not?”

(“Ama öyle güzel taklit ki; kumaş zaten gerçekten Lakos’un kumaşı...Özelliği var, modeli de aynı. Bi de amblemi var. Onları koyduktan sonra ben Lakos giydim diye dolaşiyor. Sen açıp da bakıyor musun yani, Lakos mu değil mi diye?”)

“Beril (F, 29): ...say you go and purchase the t-shirt of a good brand...if it is a good fake...if you know the place, the fabric and so on...it is impossible to discern it from the one sold at the brand’s store, they even put it in the designer brand’s bags...I mean, even the bags are the same. Once I purchased something from Benetton and the man put it in the Benetton bag neatly. They put it in the bags as if you purchased from the store”

(“...Diyelim ki gidersiniz işte, iyi bi markaya ait bi t-shirt alırsınız...İyi bi taklitse...bildiğiniz bi yerse kumaşını, şusunu busunu bildiğiniz...normal bi mağazada satılanla bunu ayırt edebilemeniz mümkün değil, pazarda artık ürünlerin üzerinde yazılı olan torbalara falan koyarak [satıyorlar]... Yani ne diyorum, torbası bile aynı bunun pazarda. Ben Benetton armalı bişeyler almıştım bi keresinde, adam çıkardı bana Benetton torbasına koydu gıcır gıcır. Aynı, yani böyle mağazadan almışın gibi torbaya koyuyorlar.”)

In short, appearance can also be a cue that facilitates the consumption of counterfeits. Thus, belief in the aesthetic (or sensual) similarity plays a vital role in consumer’s preference of counterfeits of designer brand, as understood from their efforts of doing the best to sustain it. Nevertheless, as Orhan’s below quote illustrates, it may not be the tangible product that convinces consumers that the authentic items and the counterfeits are indistinguishable.

“Orhan (M, 42): But you see the point here...There is an appealing product, the alligator...and an attractive Polo with a definite arm length. Even though it is a counterfeit, it still is charming...ah, whether its material is fine or not, this is not attended. People can see the...perspective that Lacoste has created in some way. You know it has a classic ‘pine green’ t-shirt. And the guy comes with the same green. After putting the alligator with a lighter color, a wonderful photo emerges. Even with the counterfeit, that photo is in front of you...and it looks good.”

(“Hayır ama burda ne var biliyo musunuz, ortaya koyduğu o cazibeli ürün var ya, timsah...çok güzel bi Polo, belli bi kol boyu, taklidi de olsa o cazibeli ürün gözüküyor ya orda...ha illa bu malzemesi iyi mi kötü mü buna bakılmıyor. Lacoste’un yarattığı o şey var ya...pencere...onu görebiliyor insanlar bi şekilde. Hani o güzelliği görebiliyor bi şekilde. İşte onun belli bi klasik çam yeşili vardır, polo t-shirtlerinde...e aynı yeşilden yapmış adam...üzerine de daha açık renkle bi timsahı koyunca...çok güzel bi fotoğraf çıkıyor. Taklitte de olsa o fotoğraf karşında duruyor senin...yakışmış.”)

Moreover, the fact that some consumers also possess the authentic labels implies that authentic designer brand carries some significance for informants. Though it is argued that aesthetic product attributes (such as design) provide utility, based on the descriptions of brand’s meaning, it seems that those attributes are important and selectively coded sources of self-expression that also constitute another important consumption reason for counterfeits. Then, solely relying on the perspective, which focuses heavily on utilitarian functions of shopping, neglects another dimension of

the issue, which Kempen (2004) terms as ‘symbolic utility’. Therefore, I next present the symbolic reasons of consuming counterfeits that emerge from the data.

VI.3.2.Symbolic

As for any product, clothing serves functional attributes for the consumers such as covering the body. Functionality refers to the product’s ability to most thoroughly fulfill the designated task with the maximum possible utility. On the other hand, apart from its functional benefits, clothing provides consumers with experiential opportunities and cues for establishing/maintaining/altering identities (Ligas, 2000). Such symbolic products can possess roles in expressing ourselves to others, e.g. how unique or conformist we are depending on the context. While the functional meaning is generally thought to be supplying benefits to the consumer by solving problems; symbolic meaning is argued to either crystallize a new life task (in periods of transition) or later mental/physical state of the individual. Though Ligas (2000) uses the term ‘motive’ to refer to the symbolic and functional roles of consumption, he acknowledges that in many cases meaning of an object is as much important as its reason for use. Likewise, in this section I will mainly demonstrate that symbolic reasons of consuming counterfeits is linked to the reasons of consuming the brand, for which counterfeits can be encountered. In sum, consumers strive to approximate to a desired identity –both symbolically and experientially- and communicate it to others, which is usually in the form of ‘ostentation’ from consumers’ words.

VI.3.2.1. Emulation and Materialism

Emulation, which reveals itself in the desire for otherness seems to be an important reason of consuming counterfeit designer brands. Similar to this, materialism is also linked to mastery related reasons (Dittmar and Pepper, 1992). Since clothing is a conspicuous product category that is consumed in public, Wong (1997) has identified it as a potential realm in which consumer envy – as an important indicator for materialism- can be exercised. The findings of this study on the reasons of counterfeit consumption also confirm the existence of materialistic prompts. However, different from the envy sub-trait of Belk (1985), which characterizes materialism as a desire for other's possessions, people or experiences, counterfeits convey a meaning that incorporates emulation for the charming and superior other per se. That is why; the counterfeit designer brand undertakes a role in the negotiation of one's identity with respect to that 'other' through the experience of consuming the material object.

As indicated previously, human beings' interest for the 'other' has attracted remarkable attention in consumer research literature especially after the Westernization of the previously closed economies (Belk and Zhou, 1987; Ger, 1997; Milanova, 1999) and research on consumer desire has attained momentum with recent studies such as Belk et al. (2003). Images of goods can sometimes serve as bridges to displaced meaning that resides in the mind of the possessor, such as a desire for a certain lifestyle. Goods seem to have images that aid in catching up with desires (Belk, et al. 2003) rather than being valuable solely for their price tag as Veblen (1994 [1899]) concluded. In Simmel's (1978) words, "we desire objects only

if they are not immediately given to us for our use and enjoyment; that is, to the extent that they resist our desire” (p66). We call those objects valuable that are distant to us and that require a sacrifice from us, usually in form of another object. In that respect, “...exchange presupposes an objective measurement of subjective valuations” (Simmel, 1978, p81), which in turn are surrounded by desires.

Since designer brands are the primary objects of counterfeiting, one cannot ignore the meanings that consumers attach to those brands, so that their fakes are produced and demanded. In my data, facets of consumer desire for these brands are easily noticed. This desire is not primarily for the product level attributes such as durability or quality of materials used, but is rather for the ‘attractive Western other’ image that the brand communicates to those consumers. This theme recurred heavily in the interviews of consumers who only consume the counterfeits:

“Utku: Who could be Levis if it were a human being...as an image, whom do you recall?
Mirza (M, 24): In my opinion, then, it could be Brad Pitt.
Utku: Brad Pitt...what made you associate him with Levis?
Mirza: Dude, I don’t know, he is ace. He’s charismatic from all aspects...with his hairstyle, his face, the style of his face...with his clothing...with the way he moves...
Utku: What does he do, for instance?
Mirza: He is a charismatic guy, I mean, he’s cute. He’s someone all the girls adore and dream of...he’s the prince of their dreams, I mean. He’s really such a person.”

(“Utku: Kim olurdu mesela Levis bi insan olsa...bi imaj olarak...kimi hatırlatıyo sana?
Mirza (M, 24): Bence şey olurdu o zaman, Brad Pitt.
Utku: Brad Pitt.....nesi sana onun Levis’i hatırlattı?
Mirza: Abi ne bileyim, dört dörtlük birisi. Her, herşeyiyle karizma bi adam ya...saçlarıyla falan...yüzüyle...yüz tipiyle...giyinmesiyle...yaptığı hareketleriyle...
Utku : Neler yapıyo[r], mesela?
Mirza: Karizmatik bi adam yani, hoş...bütün kızların beğendiği, rüyasında gördüğü biri.....hayallerindeki bi prens yani. Gerçekten öyle bir insan.”)

“Mehmet (M, 32): I mean, let me tell you this, he’s either French or American. No other places came to my mind.
Utku: What kind of an outlook would it [Paul and Shark] have?
Mehmet: I mean, sporty. I mean, he’s someone who exercises, runs, body builds; whose body is well shaped and quite muscular, things like that...he has such an outlook.”

(“Yani ya Fransızdır ya da Amerikalıdır, öyle söyleyeyim. Başka yerler hiç aklıma gelmedi.

Utku: Nasıl bir dış görünüşü olurdu [Paul and Shark]?

Mehmet: Yani sportif görünüşlü. Yani ne bileyim işte, spor yapan, koşusunu yapan, vücudu bakımlı, biraz işte ağırlık çalışmış, biraz işte hafif kaslı falan...böyle bir dış görünüş...”

“Ayşe (F, 25): I thought it would be a foreigner...I mean, it could be Turkish as well, but more akin to a foreigner...at worst, a Turk who lives abroad.”

“[Tommy Hilfiger] Yabancı olarak düşündüm...yani Türk de olabilir de daha çok yabancıya yakın...Yani en azından yurtdışında yaşayan bi Türk olabilir.”

“Tuğba (F, 26): [Donna Karan] I mean it can be a European style Turk....They are more of European style people...foreigners. Let’s say it’s a modern person, because when you say Turk, somehow

Utku: What kind of a life does a modern person have?

Tuğba: I mean it is like, s/he’s working...living fast, going out in the evenings as well as weekends, energetic. S/he spends some time for exercising, too. Such kind of person, I mean.”

“[Donna Karan] Yaani böyle Avrupai tarzı bir Türk olabilir yani...Avrupai insanlardır böyle daha...yabancı. Modern insan diyelim yani çünkü bazı Türk derken

Utku: Modern insan derken nasıl bir yaşantısı oluyor mesela?

Tuğba: Yani böyle şey, işinde gücünde...hızlı yaşayan, gecelerini de akşamlarını da hafta sonlarını da değerlendiren, enerjik. Sporuna da vakit ayıran. O tarz bir insan yani.”

In their comments, informants actually refer to a ‘desired self’ in the form of a European style, modern outlook, whereas their actual self may not be ‘completely’ coherent with it. Therefore, informants like Tuğba and Ayşe incorporate both identities in the name of the brands they consume. A desire for ‘otherness’ prevails for other counterfeit users, too, who describe the brands they prefer as “strong, affluent, attractive (both physically and personally), cool, and usually as a Westerner or someone who lives in the ‘West’. This might be akin to Belk et al. (2003)’s finding, which illustrates the case of a Turkish male informant who was eager to escape from his undesirable roots (such as being rural, traditional) towards a more ‘civilized’ and ‘culture prone’ life like that of the Westerners. Belk et al. (2003) introduce the term ‘mimetic desire’ to account for the feeling that prepares the ground to further battles for prestige. It is not the “...objects’ distance and resistance to our pursuit that intensifies our desire” (Belk et al., 2003) but our desire for the distant and admirable ‘other’ that captivates us towards it. Here, mimetic desire

manifests itself in consumers' affirmations of belonging to a global consumer culture.

Since many global brands emanate from all over the West, it might not be surprising to hear people talking about the Western world as the heaven (Ger and Belk, 1996) and trying to emulate the West through possessing material artifacts associated with the West, such as brand name goods. Nevertheless, Wilk (1995) argues that there is still a degree of localness (i.e. a gist of an authentic identity) in brands even though the global hegemony of a global structuring pervades. The author calls this as "global systems of common difference". In other words, identities of foreign brands are not swallowed wholly but are negotiated according to one's indigenous tastes (Classen and Howes, 1996). The above findings suggest that the identity of the 'charming stranger' in the name of the identity of the brand, is not taken for granted but is appropriated in accordance with one's identity (Wilk, 1995). This is also because "identity is never singular but always relational and contextual" (Sandikci and Ger, 2002, p469).

Desire for otherness is also portrayed in associating celebrities with the bazaar setting. Consumers rather happily report that even celebrities like actresses, pop-singers or fashion models shop from the bazaar. This tendency not only creates a sense of confidence in shopping for fakes (because even the 'sosyete' do it) but also illustrate their purchase satisfaction as they now can associate themselves with the 'sosyete' through being able to share the same consumption patterns with that aspiration group.

“Kadriye (F, 48): I mean...I also mentioned this recently; we know a handbag retailer in Istanbul. All Turkey’s jet sets purchase such counterfeit items; I thought like that because I know it...I mean, the counterfeit handbags. She purchases one counterfeit if she has three authentic items. This is because someone from the jet set dresses up differently everyday. Complementing those authentic items, she also buys the counterfeits. Our handbag retailer gives names...such as...that person came and bought this one; Aşkın Nur Yengi [a pop singer] came and acquired this, I mean, today Billur Kalkavan [old fashion model] was here five minutes before you arrived...um, I hear such things.”

“Yani, ben...işte demin de bahsettim, İstanbul’da bir çantacıımız var bizim. Tüm Türkiye’nin sosyetaesi yani bunu bildiğim için herhalde öyle düşündüm, o tip taklit şeyleri alıyorlar...Yani taklit çantalar. Bir tane, üç tane orijinali varsa, on çeşit kıyafet, yirmi çeşit her gün bir çeşit giyiniyor sosyeteden biri de. Ona uygun olarak taklitleri de yanında artık gerçek gibi, isim vererek bizim çantacıımız...şu geldi şunu aldı, bunu Aşkın Nur Yengi aldı, bunu bilmem kim aldı, yani bugün, ııı, Billur Kalkavan burdaydı, senden beş dakika önce çıktı diye...ııı, şeyler duyuyorum.”)

“Ayşe (F, 25): Two of my distant relatives, not so close but...people who are constantly with the jet set. They are not so visible, though. One is a lawyer, the lawyer of the jet set. Though she does not show up in magazines, she is in close contact with them. She says that they [the jet set] also go and shop from the famous bazaar near Akmerkez in Istanbul.”

“...benim akrabalarımından ikisi, yani uzak akrabalarım, çok yakın değil de...sürekli sosyetenin içinde olan kişiler. Kendileri çok görünmüyorlar da...Birisı avukat, sosyetenin avukatı, ııı, dergilerde falan görünmese de onlarla yakın muhatap olan bi insan. Onların da pazara gidip yani İstanbul’daki o ünlü Akmerkez’in yakınına kurulan pazardan falan, oralardan da alışveriş ettiklerini söylüyo.”)

While the first two interviews make an implicit reference to the aspiration group, quotes from Esra and Mehmet clearly illustrate those people’s desire towards a more powerful life, a life of the upper sets.

“Esra (F, 56): You know, in fact people want to find cheap [things] from those bazaars, they want to enjoy. They want to acquire. But of course, the quality [of items] is quite a bit different.

Utku: Could you please tell me more about the “they want to enjoy” part?

Esra: You know, like every normal person they want to live like the upper set people. The middle class cannot enjoy it. So they try to adapt themselves to them [upper sets] with the counterfeits.”

“Yani zaten bu pazarlarda da insanlar ucuz bulup yaşamak istiyorlar. Almak istiyorlar. Yani tabii ki biraz kalitesi, ııı, bir hayli farklı oluyor...”

Utku: Yaşamak istiyorlar derken onu biraz anlatır mısınız?

Esra: E yaşamak istiyorlar, normal insanlar gibi, üst kademedeki insanlar gibi. Bi orta kademe yaşayamıyo. İşte biraz taklidinlen kendini onlara uydurmaya çalışıyorlar.”)

“Mehmet (M, 32): ...in some way it’s like satisfying your own ego...or getting in the mood by saying ‘I am this’ to people around you, or saying ‘I like this lifestyle, this lifestyle is the best one for me.’”

“...bi şekilde kendi egonu tatmin etmek mi...ya da çevrendeki insanlara..ben buyum...gibi bi havaya sokmak mı, ya ben bu yaşam tarzını seviyorum, bu yaşam tarzı benim için mükemmel gibi demek mi.”)

In fact, one can almost hear the “I can buy this, too”, statement in the above interviews. Furthermore, for Esra possessing designer labels pave the way for acceptance into an aspiration group that they strive to belong to. Esra (F, 56) is a housewife, who defines his family as a “memur ailesi” (civil servant family). In her spare time, Esra participates in the activities of a women’s association, whose member profile is relatively wealthier, where emulation between members in terms of outlook and fashion consciousness is reasonable as is the case for many sorority groups (Murray, 2002). Esra owns counterfeit Vakko items, whose user profile is described below:

“Esra (F, 56): One who shops from the Vakko’s own stores is someone of an upper rank. She would be very elegant since an upper level person shows herself. When you see her, you recognize her.”

“Vakko mağazasındaki alan, bir üst kademedeki insan olur. Çok şık, üst kademe insanlar zaten belli ediyor kendini. İnsanı gördüğün zaman, sen onu farkediyorsun.”)

Having joined this rather ‘elite’ association, Esra felt rather ambiguous. For cases like this, in which the individual does not know how to fulfill the requirements of a new role because of inability or lack of experience, s/he can rely on material symbols such as a ‘nouveau riche’ person overtly displaying possessions to communicate status. Solomon (1983) explains this by symbolic self-completion theory, which can also be observed during periods of transition characterized by uncertainty and social anxiety from the part of the novice agent.

Nonetheless, as Arzu (F, 41) and Tolga (M, 28) disclose that purchasing the authentic items is also a matter of pride among a group with a majority only

shopping from the own stores of those designer brands, as well as being psychologically beneficial. Thus informants also shop for the authentic offerings:

“Tolga (M, 28): Of course, of course...you know, psychologically it is good thing to say ‘I wear authentic items’”

(“Tabii, tabii...yani biraz psikolojik olarak...orijinal kullanıyorum demek iyi bişey.”)

“Arzu (F, 41): I mean somehow it does not disturb you...even though it is a counterfeit...I mean, um, of course maybe it could be psychologically relieving to consume the authentic items.

Utku: How come?

Arzu: You know...I purchased it from there...not the counterfeit, but the authentic item...in that sense...people...like that of housewives...for instance they say, ‘hey look, this is the authentic one’, and things like that.”

(“Arzu: Yani rahatsız etmiyor bir şekilde...taklit olsa da...yaani, ıı, tabii böyle şeyini almak, gerçeğini almak belki psikolojik olarak daha rahatlatılabilir.

Utku: O nasıl?

Arzu: Yani...gittim şurdan aldım...taklidi değil gerçeği...o anlamda...insanları işte...ev kadınlarında vardır ya bu...der ki, ‘aa işte gerçek’ falan...”)

Thompson and Haytko (1997) conclude that the purpose of fashion goods such as designer brands employed in this study is to provide a basis for self-identity construction (re-construction) and foster a feeling of social belonging rather than variety seeking. Auty and Elliott (2001), along similar lines with Simmel (1971), argue that the role of fashion is not only differentiating but also socializing and compliance. The authors illustrate that the stronger the desire of young adolescents to identify with their peer groups, the more likely they were in choosing widely preferred fashion brands. Because Esra has an ardent desire towards the lifestyles of her peers, which seem to be different than hers, she also tries to compensate it by purchasing the counterfeit handbag:

Esra (F, 56): Hoşuma gittiği için alıyorum. Yani belki alamadığım için. İmrendiğim için belki.....

(“I buy because I like it. I mean, perhaps because I cannot afford [the authentic item]. Perhaps because I long for [the authentic item]...”)

Counterfeit clothing is one of the means to pursue that desire, which evidently involves seeking pleasure through possessions. In a cross-cultural study of materialism, Ger and Belk (1990) challenge the widely held assumption that materialism and its constituent envy is an affluent and Western trait. In fact, Turkey, the least affluent country in the authors' study, turned out to be the most materialistic one. "Lower classes as well as the elites were after the riches, showing off and had a desire for gold and silver" (p190). Moreover, showing off accentuates envy, which augments the desire, according to the authors. Nevertheless, for Ger and Belk (1990) such an attempt of attesting power through possessions could be nothing but a manifestation of deprivation as well as an actual loss of personal self-esteem. Whether counterfeits actually help them accomplish this goal then becomes a doubtful issue and will be closely examined in the third section of the paper when I detail the consequences of counterfeit consumption of designer brands.

VI.3.2.2.Reference to Peer Groups

As mentioned in the above section, reference group influence of socially proximal people such as family and friends constitute an important basis of consumer decision making for especially goods that are considered as public necessities (Childers and Rao, 1992). Since clothing is such a visible product that everyone owns, consumption choices are prone to public scrutiny and thus, to the influence of one's immediate social groups. According to Attribution Theory (Calder and Burnkrant, 1977) people seek for conformity to their peers. The importance of conformity to one's peers is also implied in the consumption of designer brands as Auty and Elliott

(2001) affirmed. Such influence is observed in Fevzi (M, 30s) who purchases the designer brands in an attempt to be on the same line with the members of a club that he belongs to. Here is a brief description of how he describes the usual customer profile of the brand (Lacoste) that he consumes both the counterfeit and authentic:

“Fevzi (M, 30s): If you visit Sports International, they are all there. That profile. Sports International Tennis Club or the fitness section is like the second home of those kind of people...I mean, they are generally people...who are like me...or like us...people of our profile.”

“Sports International’a gidersen onların hepsi ordadır. O profil. Direkt Sports International tenis klubünde özellikle o tür insanlar...yaşadığı yer diyebilirim yani, ikinci evi. Veya Sports International’ın fitness kısmı...ya genelde bana benzer...bize benzer profilde insanlar.”

Different from Esra’s ardent desire towards the lifestyles of the members of the woman association she strives to belong, here Fevzi consumes the counterfeit designer brand in order to fulfill a social belonging rite to his ‘second family’.

Nevertheless, according to McCracken (1988), uniqueness is also an important concern for humans because it is pleasurable to possess a unique piece that no one else holds. Since nothing is supposed to displace the meaning from a unique and authentic item, one can obtain superiority over the others if s/he has this unique item. Attribution Theory maintains that people prefer uniqueness if this might form desirable impressions about them in the eyes of significant others (Calder and Burnkrant, 1977). As a complement to the desire for otherness, designer brands also convey a sense of uniqueness within the peer group and this seems to be favored by the group. For instance, few people around Tuğba (F, 26) own the brands that she possesses, such as Donna Karan, Gucci and Prada. Here, she also notes that those brands are not sold through authentic retailers in Ankara. In fact, since she cannot

find those brands in the bazaar, she rather goes to small boutiques in Karum⁶ that sell such counterfeit merchandise, as evident from their low prices. Tuğba (F, 26), though aware that she purchases counterfeits, recognizes that those designer brands become status symbols that hone the prestige of the owner in the eyes of others, thanks to their perceived exclusivity among people who do not consume these brands.

“Tuğba (F, 26): ...apart from that, there are brands which became status symbols...you know, when you wear them you indeed position yourself at a certain place...I mean, in the society. That is to say, these are the advantages of brands for me.”

(“...ya onun dışında belli bir...artık statü sembolü haline gelmiş markalar var...hani giydiğin zaman sen kendini belli bir yerde konumlandırıyorsun aslında...yani toplum içine girdiğin zaman. Yani odur benim için markaların avantajları.”)

Uniqueness is also an important concern for Ayşen (F, 22) and Begüm (F, 32) who never purchase counterfeits but rather prefer the authentic merchandise.

“Begüm: Now...I buy designer brand merchandise as I like the designs. Their designs are more elaborate. Like authentic...they have nuances, and frankly, those nuances bring chicness.

(“Şimdi...markalı ürün aldığım zaman dizaynları seviyorum. Dizaynları daha özenilmiş oluyo. Kendine has böyle...nüansları oluyo, ve o nüanslar şıklık katıyo açıkçası.”)

“Ayşen: To dress up well is different, to dress up with designer brands is different, and to become a quality mark is different...that is...preferring a designer brand is a very different thing.”

(“...iyi giyinmek farklıdır, marka giyinmek farklıdır, kaliteli olmak farklıdır...İşte...marka tercih etmek çok farklı birşeydir yani.”)

As common to the above comments, for counterfeit consuming informants like Vahit and Yılmaz, designer brands such as Tommy Hilfiger and Diesel constitute a major basis of differentiation from their peers who are perceived as less chic or not being

⁶ A shopping mall in Kavaklıdere region of Ankara, renown for some authentic retailers selling designer brands, and some others who sell designer brands without an authentic retailer certificate.

able to purchase any brands. Because of the scarcity of these brands around them, the informants can feel distinct, though these brands imply ‘fakeness’ to non-counterfeit consumers like Pelin and Ayşen.

“Vahit (M, 29): Because I am fond of dressing up...I mean I am careful about what I wear. I am currently employed at a university. We also have friends who...are very improperly...there are ones who wear the same thing for a couple of months...this is very rude against our professors. One feels pity about it.”

(“Şık giyime yani düşkün olduğumdan...giyimimize çok dikkat ettiğimden yani. Yani şu anda bir üniversitede çalışıyorum. Bizim arkadaşlarımız da var yani...Çok...dengesiz halde.....bi giydiğini bir ay iki ay giyenler var...hocalarımıza karşın çok mantıksız oluyo bu. İnsan acıyo...”)

“Utku: What about the people around you?

Yılmaz (M, 24): People around me are like me, their incomes are a bit lower than mine...they are a bit more constrained. But honestly there aren't any...very rich ones among them.

Utku: Don't they ever buy [counterfeit designer brands]?

Yılmaz:no generally they do not.

Utku: Never?

Yılmaz: No, they never buy.

Utku: But you occasionally do.

Yılmaz: Yes, but occasionally.”

(“Utku: Çevrendeki insanlar nasıl?

Yılmaz: Çevremdeki insanlar da aynı benim gibi, benden biraz daha...düşük...gelir durumu...biraz daha şey kısıtlı. Ama öyle çok çok da şey yok açıkçası...çok zengin olan kişi de yok açıkçası.

Utku: Hiç mi almıyorlar?

Yılmaz:yok genelde almıyorlar.

Utku: Hiç?

Yılmaz: Yok hiç almıyorlar.

Utku: Sen ama arada sırada alıyorsun?

Yılmaz: evet, ama arada sırada.”)

For the above cases designer brands, though counterfeit, provide a basis for claiming superiority among the immediate peer group(s) and gives the owner respect and admiration. Choosing another option rather than complying with others provides the individual a sense of uniqueness. That is why; people may choose to incorporate distinctiveness in their consumption to make particular impressions on others. This view contrasts with the findings of numerous studies such as Zimbardo's, which assert that individuals comply with social norms in most occasions whenever their behavior is identifiable or made anonymous, or with Bearden and Etzel (1982) which

concludes that for conspicuously consumed products group influence on brand is significant. In contrast to this view, Ratner and Kahn (2002) found that people preferred a greater degree of uniqueness through seeking variety in their consumption decisions when they were prone to public scrutiny. However, Ratner and Kahn's (2002) respondents' main motive was being different from the crowd through making an interesting choice. Differently, Vahit and Yılmaz purchase counterfeits not based on the variety that those products offer to them but for the purpose of being unique and different.

Consequently, consumption of counterfeit designer brands are indeed implicit attempts of self-differentiation for some informants while it facilitates compliance for others like Esra. However, different from the previous studies who pointed to materialism and seeking upward mobility as causes of counterfeit consumption (Nill and Schultz II, 1996; Wee, Tan and Cheok, 1995), the above results inform us that counterfeiting can indeed be an attempt for differentiating oneself within the immediate reference group rather than an attempt to get closer to the upper classes.

VI.3.2.3. Experiential fulfillment

Perhaps as part of the previously mentioned affordability issue, some of the informants reported distractions when they attempt to enter the retail store. At an extreme level some even avoid it completely. For those, the stores of the designer brand convey such an image that the retail scape becomes rather a prohibited zone.

İrem (though she owns both the counterfeits and authentic items) and Esra give such illuminating examples:

“İrem (F, 22): Well, for example, in Tommy’s own stores, for example you enter Tommy [Hilfiger]. You sometimes feel bad when you ask the price. You know, there are sometimes people who stare at you as if ‘what are you doing in this store’. That is why.”

(“İşte mesela Tommy’nin mağazalarında, Tommy’ye giriyosun mesela. Fiyat sorarken bile bazen kendini kötü hissediyosun. Sanki hani, senin bu mağazada ne işin var diye bakan insanlar oluyo bazen yani. O yüzden.”)

“Utku: Could you please tell me what kind of a place is Vakko?

Esra (F, 56): Very elegant...very elegant...you know, if you have the money and you look like customer you are really treated well.

Utku: Some places make you feel good, is it such a place?

Esra: Yes...but because it is evident from my entering the store that I cannot afford to shop, they don’t pay much attention to me...they know who is a customer and how...”

(“Utku: Nasıl bir ortamdır [Vakko] anlatabilir misiniz?

Esra (F, 56): Çok şık...çok şık...hani ye kürküm ye misali paranız varsa çok şık. İtibar görüyorsunuz, alıcı gibiyse de çok güzel itibar görürsünüz.

Utku: Bazı yerler size kendinizi iyi hissettirir, öyle bir yer midir?

Esra: Evet...ama alışveriş yapmayacağım girişimden belli olduğu için zaten çok fazla da yüz vermezler...Onlar bilirler, kimin nasıl müşteri olduğunu...”)

The narratives of İrem and Esra is rather confirmed with Ayşen (F, 22), for whom an authentic Louis Vuitton is more than a product, but rather part of an ‘exclusive’ experience that is limited to some privileged ones:

“Utku: Have you ever entered the store for shopping purposes?

Ayşen: Of course I did, they are very nice...amazingly beautiful. And then...you know...but they can behave you accordingly after they judge your appearance. If you went there with a nice handbag, they would show you the bonny models. But if you went there with a shabby appearance (laughs) and wanted to see a certain model...of course you do not encounter anything rude but...when you first go there a security guard opens the door, you know, it is a very classy place...really, recently I thought to myself, maybe it’s unrelated but, inTurkey there is no such thing as customer value. None. Nowhere. You ask for an item, they bring it in ages, as if they do not want to sell it. But this is not the case at Vuitton’s. They pay attention to you till the end. They are informing you about the leather, price and compared to the other items...they guide you like ‘you can use this very conveniently with such and such’. Because the price you pay is really phenomenal. They can pay attention to you for hours, without any hurry. Since it almost costs as much as a car, noone says anything even you contemplate for hours.”

(“Utku: Girdin mi mesela içine hiç alışveriş etmek için?

Ayşen: Tabii canım, girdim, çok güzeller...çok inanılmaz güzeller. Ondan sonra...Yani...ama mesela tipine bakıp da biraz muamele yapabiliyorlar. Şimdi sen orada iyi bir çantayla girdiyse, sana güzel modelleri çıkartıp gösteriyorlar. Ama böyle çapulcu tiple gittiyse (gülüyor) hani belki şu modeli gösterir misiniz dediğinde...tabii ki bi şeyle karşılaşmıyosun

ama ilk girişinde böyle kocaman bir güvenlik gibi birşey kapıyı açıyo falan, böyle çok şık bir ortam...hakkaten geçen gün, alakasız olacak belki ama, kendi kendime düşündüm de, hiç müşteri kıymeti diye birşey yok Türkiye’de. Hiç yok, hiçbir mağazada yok. Birşey soruyorsun bin saatte getiriyorlar, sanki satmak istemez gibi. Mesela diyelim, Vuitton’da öyle değil hani. Sonuna kadar ilgileniyorlar. Fiyatını söyleyip, bunun derisi çok güzeldir, diğer şeyle kıyaslayıp...mesela bunu daha rahat kullanabilirsin gibi. Çünkü verdiğin para gerçekten büyük bir para yani. Orda karambole gelecek değil yani, orada seninle saatlerce ilgilenebilirler yani. Çünkü...inanılmaz neredeyse bir araba parası, sen baksan saatlerce aynada çanta nasıl duruyor diye, kimse sana birşey demez yani.”)

Like what Ayşen describes, De Certeau, (1984) asserts that places have characteristics that might forbid others to enter. Saying that ‘I feel good here’ not only refers to a spatial practice but also is a political statement about who cannot feel good there. As one can observe, the exclusionary aura of the retail store can be so strong that the informant might not leave the store of the designer brand with nice feelings though s/he owns the counterfeit of. While it seems that this upscale image is and should be a major characteristic of any luxury brand, I would argue that it can foster consumers’ preference for shopping from bazaars, where they are able to shop more ‘independently’ and eventually encounter the designer brands they were not able to purchase from the brand’s own store. Hence, the counterfeit can grant consumers a kind of opportunity to fulfill an otherwise incomplete or impossible experience because of the distractions felt at the designer label’s retail setting.

VI.3.2.4.Nostalgic Appeal

In general, nostalgia is termed as “a longing for the past, a longing for yesterday, or a fondness for possessions and activities associated with days of yore” (Holbrook, 1993, p245). Holbrook and Schindler (2003) add that nostalgia may involve preference toward objects that were more common during one’s youth or even before his/her birth. For this case, Rindfleisch, Freeman and Burroughs (2000) suggest

that a nostalgic appeal can emanate from the distinctive fashionability of an item when one was younger such that the individual may develop a bond with the brand even years after the initial encounter. For instance, it has been demonstrated that consumers may appeal to music styles popular at times of their youth even in later years of their lives (Holbrook and Schindler, 2003). This tendency is not constrained to products with periodicity. In fact, any product can be an object of nostalgic attachment provided that it reminds the consumer of past excitement and enthusiasm. For instance, Schindler and Holbrook (2003) found strong nostalgic attachment to automobile designs popular in their youth, while nostalgia proneness mediated their interest. In the data, a similar nostalgic appeal is observed for the brand Lacoste. This is especially relevant for Zekai (M, 48) who was surrounded by this brand in his youth but somehow cannot consume it in the present:

“Zekai: ...when I was young there was Lacoste, we were consuming it, but currently I don't consume designer brands much.”

(“Zekai: ...ben gençliğimde Lacoste vardı, kullanıyoduk ama şu anda pek marka...kullanmıyorum.”)

While Zekai admits that he does not consume designer brands currently, he also has an appreciation toward the brand Lacoste, which was a fashionable brand when he was young.

“Zekai: About Lacoste...Lacoste was in fact a brand that was very popular between 1975 and 1980....and then, suddenly people who wore it [Lacoste] got older...it was no longer [the brand] for them.

Utku: Currently, is Lacoste a brand that you like?

Zekai: Yes, of course.

Utku: So, can we say that it reminds you of the past?

Zekai: Could be...And of course, in addition, Lacoste has taught people what double-reed fabric is. Before that, there wasn't any double reed fabric like Lacoste's.”

“Zekai: Lacoste ile ilgili...Lacoste aslında 75-80 yılları arasında çok revaçta olan bir markaydı...sonra işte birdenbire bunu o yaşta giyen insanlar yaşlandı...onlara hitap etmedi pek.

Utku: Şu an Lacoste sizin hoşunuza giden bir marka mı?

Zekai: Evet, tabii.

Utku: Yani size geçmişti hatırlattığımı söyleyebilir miyiz?

Zekai: Olabilir...Tabii bir de Lacoste insanlara penyenin ne olduğunu öğretmiştir..ondan önce yoktu Lacoste gibi penye.”)

A similar admiration is also observed in the quoted paragraph from Orhan (M, 42), who was never a consumer of Lacoste in the past but currently wears the counterfeit, like the one on him at the time of the interview:

“Utku: At those times, were there others around you who consume Lacoste?

Orhan: Not many. First, there was not even a Lacoste shop [in Turkey]. If it came, its authentic items came from France in some way. Or the guest workers from Germany were bringing. However, when I went abroad, I was spotting its shops e.g. in Paris. Even there I was not able to buy because it was expensive. There is Galerie Lafayette in Paris. It's a huge, multi-storey mall such as our Karamürsel. At their Lacoste stand, they had lowered down its price. I cannot remember how much it was, but I had relished a polo neck t-shirt. Would I buy that one or climb the Eiffel Tower, because I was going to spend the money on either one...At that moment, I decided to climb the Eiffel and was not able to buy it. And later on, it was never possible for me to own the authentic item.

Utku: What were you thinking about Lacoste at that time?

Orhan: I have never thought anything negative. I have always liked that alligator logo...I mean, I don't like the alligator as an animal, but since with that alligator he created a worldwide brand. And maybe there is also an implicit admiration [in me]...oh, I don't know whether I elaborated on this much when was at that age but...then the logos were extremely...for instance when we were at high school we were drawing Nike logos on our notebooks. It [designer brand] was very rare at that time. It has not been penetrating much into the Turkish market.”

“Utku: O zaman da var mıydı çevrenizde Lacoste kullanan?

Orhan: Çok fazla yoktu. Lacoste mağazaları yoktu bi kere burda. Gelirse Fransa'dan falan bi şekilde orijinalleri gelirdi. Ya da Almancılarla falan gelirdi. Ama ben dışarıya çıktığım için gördüm, Paris'te falan mağazalarını. Orada bile pahalı olduğum için alamamıştım. İşte Galeri Lafayette var Paris'te....İşte büyük çok katlı bi mağaza....Bizim Karamürsel gibi bi yer düşünün. Orda, Lacoste reyonunda ucuzlatmışlardı Lacoste reyonunda fiyatını. Hiç hatırlamıyorum kaç liraydı, gene bi polo t-shirt beğenmişim...Onu mu alsam Eiffel kulesine mi çıksam, çünkü ona, ikisinden birine verecem o gün parayı...Eiffel'e çıkmayı tercih edip onu almamıştım o zaman. Sonra da orijinalini almak kısmet olmadı dediğim gibi...

Utku: O zamanlar ne düşünüyordunuz Lacoste markası hakkında?

Orhan: Hiç kötü bişey düşünmedim ki. O timsahı beğenmişimdir hep...Yani timsahı yaratık olarak çok beğenmem de, onu orda markalaştırabilmiş ya, o timsahla o adam dünya çapında bi isim yapmış. E, bi gizli bi takdir filan da söz konusu herhalde...ha çok gençken o kadarını düşünmüş, tartmış mıyım bilmiyorum ama...o zamanlar ürünlerin üzerindeki logolar fazlaca şey yapar...Mesela şey, lisedeyken Nike ayakkabı çizerdik defterlere. Çok azdı o zaman. Girmezdi pek Türkiye piyasasına...”)

After the 1980s, Lacoste was one of the brands that introduced luxury choice to Turkish consumers. It was a status symbol, because it was a ‘foreign’ and imported

textiles brand in a country with almost no textiles industry. Thus emerged the ‘Cult of Lacoste’; i.e. a strong brand image or cultural psyche (Holt, 2004) that lasts together with others in the minds of some consumers such as Zekai and Orhan. For Zekai, Lacoste is the reminder of those days when they wore the brand as a young boy. Since he still likes the design, and remembers Lacoste as it has once been -but constrained by economic considerations- he prefers to wear its counterfeit. On the other hand, for Orhan, who also experienced difficulties after their family business’ financial situation worsened, Lacoste is a desirable brand to possess even years after its peak popularity as Holbrook (1993) noted. Today the counterfeit helps him in fulfilling not only the desire for the brand, but also the incomplete experience at LaFayette’s.

VI.3.3.Ethical

According to Bauman (1992) the postmodern lays the ground for ethical dilemmas since it deprives individuals of the comfort of the universal guidance that modernity once promised. “Under the post-modern condition the agent lives and dies with choices. This makes him/her subject to responsibility from action, whose consequences might be well founded or not in terms of ethical reasoning.” (p22). The postmodern subject is set free, yet faced with increased social and ethical uncertainties from Bauman’s point of view. Such preoccupation with ethics and its role in daily life –which can be manifest through consumption-, have also been an issue of interest for researchers like Hunt and Vitell (1980), as identified in the literature review. In this section I present the results regarding informants’ individual

(ethical) decision making when counterfeit designer brands are of concern, and show how this relates to their behavior.

Presence of counterfeit items is regarded as causing unfavorable consequences in terms of losses of profits for the owners of designer brands, hence damaging the creative potential of these firms as well as disrupting chances of high quality employment and preventing the state tax revenue (Chakraborty, Allred, Sukhdial and Bristol, 1997; Knight, Mannix and Smart, 2004). While in many cases the producers of counterfeits are blamed and consumer vulnerability is stressed, there is also an ethical aspect of the issue from a consumer perspective.

Indeed, my informants were all aware that what they purchased from the bazaar were not the items sold at the authorized retailer of the designer brand. Here, we recognize that they are engaging in what Phau et al. (2001) characterize as ‘non-deceptive counterfeiting’, which means that they are well aware of the reasons and consequences of their behavior. Cole (1989) posits that what is acceptable and unacceptable in a society depends on the particular culture such that even the consciousness of the consequences (e.g. punishment) may not prevent people from engaging in behavior considered unethical in another culture or even people within the same culture. Therefore, I asked the informants what kind of a behavior is purchasing counterfeits is, and whether there is someone negatively influenced by this affair. Responses reveal that, informants see no problem in purchasing counterfeit items though they believe that not only brands, but also producers of intellectual property such as authors are hurt and this is an illegal activity.

“Orhan (M, 42): ...ah, you know...it’s not a legal behavior in my opinion. I mean...first, it is against the law because...from time to time, the peddlers I shop from tell me that the brand’s lawyers come and they remove all their merchandise. This means there is something illegal as well as something not so ethical. However...this is so widespread that...people do not think about it much. No one cares about it. And for this reason, there is a moral collapse.

Utku: You said moral collapse...why do you think people don’t care?

Orhan: ...this is a very hard question...it can be answered on many pages...this is about Turkey’s last 20-30 years’ development. Just take the prevalence of bribery...all are linked together. Economic hardships...and you know, hardships beget corruption.”

(“...ya işte...çok legal olmayan bi davranış bence. Yani ortada...kanuni olmayan bi kere...çünkü...zaman zaman işte marka avukatları geldi bütün ürünü kaldırdık abi diyorlar benim alışveriş yaptığım insanlar, pazarcılar. Demek ki ortada illegal bi durum var. Hem çok da ahlaki olmayan bi durum var. Ama artık...o kadar yayıldı ki bu...insanlar çok da fazla düşünmüyorlar. Kimsenin umurunda değil bu. Ahlak çöküntüsü de var o yüzden.

Utku: O ahlaki çöküntü kısmından bahsettiniz...neden sizce insanların umurunda değil?

Orhan:o çok ağır bi soru ya...sayfalarca cevap verilebilir...o zamanla Türkiye’nin, 20-30 yıldır gelişiyile ilgili bişey yani. Rüşvetin yaygınlaşmasından tut...hep birbirine bağlı. Ekonomik sıkıntılar...e sıkıntı ahlaksızlık doğurur...”)

Although Orhan (M, 42) seems to care about the prevalence of counterfeiting and its ethical implications, he takes it for granted as he criticizes the order of the society, rather than the micro level behaviors of individuals like him. As Marks and Mayo (1991) put forward, Orhan (M, 42, Retailer) suggests that since the societal context is described as ‘enabling’ actual behavior of individuals do not match the deontologically ethical alternative. Attempts of justifying the behavior through the principle of self-interest were also common in explaining the behavior:

“Utku: What kind of a behavior is this counterfeiting?

Vahit (M, 29): The fact that it is counterfeiting does not concern the person who buys it...He only purchases it because the price is appropriate. He does not feel guilty because he pays the money and gets it. He likes it...”

(“Utku: Hani ne tür bi davranış bu sahtecilik?

Vahit: Alan kişiyi ilgilendirmez yani onun sahtecilik olması...Fiyatı uygundur sadece almıştır yani. Bi suçluluk hissetmez, çünkü parasını veriyö alıyo. Hoşuna gidiyo...”)

“Utku: And are people aware that they harm others by doing this?

Yılmaz (M, 24): They know, they absolutely know but eventually everyone thinks about his/her own budget and acts accordingly.”

(“Utku: Peki insanlar farkındalar mıdır bu şekilde zarar verdiklerinin?

Yılmaz (M, 24): Biliyo, yani mutlaka biliyorlardır ama sonuçta herkes kendi kesesini düşünür hareket eder.”)

“Fevzi (M, 30s): Ethical...it’s a non-ethical behavior...but it happens. Such things happen in the society. It happens in consumer behavior. It is very serious I know...but in a way, every

individual thinks himself/herself. Whether it is ethical or not, or what we call public responsibility, ethical responsibility is not taken into consideration much. Evidently...every individual thinks about himself/herself.”

(“Etik...non-ethical bi davranış, hareket...ama oluyo. Toplumda bu tip şeyler oluyo. Tüketici davranışlarında oluyo. Çok ciddi evet...ama herkes bi birey, her birey de sonuçta kendisini düşünüyö. Etik mi değil mi, veya toplumsal sorumluluk dediğimiz etik sorumluluk dediğimiz olay çok fazla da düşünülüyö. Sonuçta kendini...birey kendini düşünüyö...ııı, yani...”)

Nonetheless, Strutton et al. (1994) note that consumer behavior as well as attitudes are situationally determined rather than taken for granted. While consumers explain their behavior, they can also contradict with themselves in what is called ‘situational ethics’ by Cordell, Wongtada and Kieschnick (1996). Accordingly, the authors demonstrated that consumers’ evaluations of own accountability of purchasing an illicit counterfeit is different than their evaluations of the behavior of the retailer who supplies such a product. A modified example for situational ethics can be followed in the case of counterfeits, too:

“Beril (F, 29): ah now listen, as a customer whether it is unethical is not wrong for me. But if I were its retailer and someone comes up with the counterfeit, this time I would be irritated. Yet, as a consumer, I think about myself.”

(“Ya şimdi şöyle, müşteri olarak bana ters gelmiyor. Etik mi değil mi diye. Ama ben bunun satıcısı olsam, birisi de gelse yapsa fason olarak bunu, o zaman bozulurum. Yani tabii ama ben tüketici olarak bakınca, kendime bakarım.”)

Putting all these together, we discover that counterfeit consumers face a dilemma between what is right-depending on the deontological norms- and what maximizes their utility –teleological theory- and consequently prefer to behave in a rather ‘egoistic’ manner (Kalin, 1981) for their personal welfare. This is also valid for consumers who purchase both the counterfeits and authentic items, because they seem to be purchasing the designer brands from the brand’s own store not because of an ethical dissonance, but because the counterfeits have a negative image in symbolic

terms. Additionally, these consumers wish to follow up the latest fashions of the designer brands through shopping from the designer brand's stores.

Ethical reasoning; i.e. letting the authentic brand owner earn profits is not again a concern for all the three informants who do not consume counterfeits. Interestingly, as opposed to the results of a previous study (see Hugman and Zaichowsky, 1995) in which the non-user respondents considered purchasing counterfeits as willful theft that could even threaten the social contract of the society, none of the informants mentioned this issue. Though they state that consuming counterfeits is not ethical as it hurts the trademark owners' efforts, they also argue that it is understandable for 'poorer' people to purchase counterfeits:

“Utku: What do you think the consumers are doing?

Begüm (F, 32):um..of course they somehow foster such an activity by purchasing [the counterfeits]. Nevertheless, when we consider the income distribution in our country, it is not the first thing that our people would care about. They strive to survive, and um..thinks that it is the only way to get it [designer brand].

Utku: Do you think it is normal?

Begüm: You know, everybody has certain desires. And to satisfy those...though it is counterfeit I am sure they adore it.”

“Utku: Tüketiciler peki sizce ne konumda?

Begüm (F, 32):ııı, şimdi tabii onlar da bir nevi satın alarak teşvik ediyorlar böyle birşeyin varlığını. Ama yine ülkemizdeki gelir dağılımını düşünecek olursak, insanlarımızın da ilk düşüneceği şey bu olmuyor. Hayatta kalma mücadelesi veriyor, ve ııı, bunu da bu şekilde alabileceğini düşünüyor doğal olarak.

Utku: Doğal mı sizce bu?

Begüm: E biliyorsunuz, her insanın belli bir takım arzuları vardır. Ona ulaşabilmek için taklit de olsa, hoşlarına gidiyordur eminim.”)

“Pelin (F, 30): I have nothing to say to those who purchase only one. If she cannot acquire the authentic item, she will get one from the bazaar, it's cheaper than the store's and she has nothing else to do.”

“Gidip de bi tane alana benim sözüm yok. Tabii gerçek alamıyosa ne yapcak, pazardan alcak, dükkandan ucuz, yapabileceği bişey yok...”)

“Utku: ...what kind of a behavior is purchasing [the designer brand] from the bazaar?

Ayşen (F, 22): I think, for the one who is not aware, I say alright...but for the one who knows...its about ostentatious display.”

“(Utku: ...pazardan satın almak sence nasıl bir davranış oluyor insanların yaptığı?
Ayşen (F, 22): Bence, bilmeyen için dersin hadi...ama bilen için...kendini yüksek göstermek...”)

Consumers find nothing unethical in this context because of either their lack of better alternatives or for their ‘humane desires’ as Vahit described previously. In that case, desires also justify behavior as Schuler (2000) argues.

Apart from poorness as a justification, consumers –especially the ones who own both the fakes and authentic items- also mention the extreme price levels of designer labels. To start, Xia, Monroe and Cox (2004) define fairness as whether an outcome or a process to reach an outcome is reasonable or acceptable by the concerned parties. The authors cite equity theory and dual entitlement principle as two current theoretical perspectives towards fairness. Dual entitlement principle reviews the issue from a supply demand equilibrium perspective. For example, consumers may find it unfair if a firm increases prices whenever a corresponding shift in demand occurred. On the other hand, equity theory and distributive justice emphasize the equal sharing of outcomes between two parties in an exchange. This judgment is based on a comparison with similar others according to ‘Social comparison theory’. Such comparisons lead to three judgments; equality advantaged inequality or disadvantaged inequality. Accordingly, one can expect that the consumer feels guilty whenever inequality is to his/her advantage but feels agitated in the opposite case.

From another perspective, Aggarwal (2004) delineates a broad classification of fairness in terms of two major aspects: Interactional fairness focuses on the relationship, i.e. how consumer feels s/he is treated in the interaction. Distributional fairness, on the other hand, regards the favorability of the final outcome as critical.

The author asserts that when the relationship is an exchange relationship, i.e. based solely on giving and receiving, consumers would be more concerned about how much of the pie they get rather than what the mutual interaction provided them.

Different from the findings of Cordell, Wongtada and Kieschnick (1996) in our context informants do not attribute the responsibility of the abundance of counterfeit goods to the manufacturers of counterfeits, but rather blame the manufacturers for commanding unfair prices as a reason for many consumers' preference for counterfeits:

“Gülşen (F, 25): If the price of the merchandise were really reasonable...allright, the item is high quality. I don't suggest they sell it cheaply...but they shouldn't inflate [the price]. For example, asking for 120 million TL for a tiny skirt...it has neither manual labor nor [high quality] fabric. It does not cost much to these people. This is not ethical. If you encounter such unethical behavior, you go and buy a counterfeit.”

(“Eğer gerçekten fiyatı, ürünün fiyatı uygun düzeyde olsa...tamam ürün kaliteli, düşük fiyatla yapınlar demiyorum...Ama abartmasınlar. Mesela minicik bir eteğe 120 milyon demek...çünkü ne üzerinde bir iş var, ne üzerinde kumaş vardır. Hiçbir şekilde adamlara bir maliyeti yok. Bu etik değil. Eğer böyle bir etik olmayan durumla karşılaşırsan sen de gidip taklidini alırsın.”)

“Beril (F, 29): Noone can tell me that buying this [counterfeit] is unethical. The real thing that is unethical is the profit margins at those stores. All those sold there, both at the stores and the bazaar, are Turkish. Let's not deceive each other. Instead of paying 60 million, I pay 6 million TL. The peddler at the bazaar sells it from 6 million, and still profits. You sell it here for 60 million TL. Then I would say to the store owner 'Is yours ethical'.”

(“Kimse gelip de bana aa işte bunu almak etik değil diyemez. Asıl etik olmayan o mağazalardaki kar oranları. Oralarda satılanların hepsi, mağazası da pazarı da 'türkîş' [Turkish]. Kimse kimseyi kandırmasın lütfen. Ben gidip 60 milyon vereceğime 6 milyon veririm. Pazarda pazarıcı bunu 6'ya sattırıyor kar ediyor. Sen getiriyosun burada 60'a. Senin ki etik mi derim ben asıl o mağazacıya.”)

“Mirza (M, 24): ...as a result, that person also earns money. Doesn't he earn, he also earns but...this person [peddler] sells 10 items for 15 million TL each...sums up to 150 million, isn't it? That man [store owner] makes this amount in one transaction.

Utku: 150.

Mirza: Not 150 but 200-250 [million TL]...twice the amount of the other...but how much does this man [peddler] suffer to sell it...the other sells it within a day, an hour or half an hour...it has its customer...it has its customer, but ones who have the money buy from there. This is a choice. You want the other [peddler] to earn money, too. In any case, the other has its customer, the riches frequent there, it has its customer, I mean...that person [store owner] does not starve but the other [peddler] does.”

“...o insan da para kazanıyo sonuçta...O kazanmıyo mu, o da kazanıyo ama...bu insan on tane satıyo 15 milyona...napıyo abi, 150 milyon...di mi? O adam bi pantolda [pantalonda] çıkartıyo...

Utku: 150.

Mirza: 150 değil de 200-250....adamın iki katı...ama bu adam satmak için neler çekiyo onu...Bu adam bi günde, bi saatte, yarım saat içerisinde satıyo...Onu da alan var...Ondan alan var ama...parası olan alıyo ondan...öyle insanlardan da alanlar da parası olmayan insanlar alıyo işte....o insanın tercihidir. O kazansın diyosun ya...ne de olsa ona giden var, kodamanlar gidiyolar, ondan alan var yani....o insan aç kalmıyo ama o insan aç kalıyo, 15 milyonluk malı satan insan...”

“Şermin (F, 48): As a consumer, at some point I think that people [the designer brands] are fooling us. They sell this one for 100 million TL; I buy it for 5 million [from the bazaar]. Shopping from the brand’s own store seems foolish to me, really.”

“tüketici olarak bir yerde de diyorum insanlar bizi ne kadar enayi yerine koyuyorlar. Şunu orda yüz milyona satıyorlar, ben orada beş milyona alıyorum. Gidip bir yerde bayiliğinden almak bir yerde bana hakikaten enayilik gibi geliyor.”

In other words, distributional justice is a major concern for informants who purchase both the counterfeits and the authentic items. Even quality differences between them did not account for the price differentials that reach more than 10:1 for many cases. Moreover, they might also claim that their behavior, perceived as harmful by some, in fact benefits the retailers of counterfeits who earn their living out of this business. This finding contrasts with Xia et al. (2004), who claim that the informants regard the seller’s fine reputation as a justifier of the high prices of merchandise. Remarkable price differentials between the regular and sale prices make consumers suspect of the fairness of the retailer for the case of designer brands. Consequently, counterfeit designer brands provide a ground in which justifications described by Strutton et al. (1994) can become operational.

Marks and Mayo (1991) assert that when actions of the consumer -shaped by his/her desires- runs counter to the interests of other people, a consumer ethical dilemma may occur. In my study, consumers were rather convenient on this topic as they claimed that there is nothing unethical about consuming counterfeits. Though they

also cited certain justifications this reveals that such a tension exists when one is questioned about the ethicalness of his/her behavior.

As a major source of justification, many informants in the sample accused the designer brands for commanding unfair profits. In a way, they condemned the condemners (Strutton et al., 1994). Consequently, they pursue a rather teleological perspective in which actions are guided by the balance of good over bad for not the others, but for one's self interests. Only for informants who do not consume counterfeits apply both deontological and teleological norms as suggested by Vitell (2003). However, they do not either stress universal obedience of rules such as not harming others per se, but rather have other, symbolic reasons for not consuming the fake versions of designer brands.

The case of counterfeits also is distinguished from other ethically sensitive issues described in previous literature such as purchasing the products of environmentally unconscious firms, which might be regarded as unethical (Burke, Milberg and Smith, 1993) and consumers' sensitivity is context dependent rather than generalizable as Rawwas et al. (2005) suggest for the Turkish context.

VI.4. Consumption Practices

While consumers cite a variety of reasons of consuming counterfeit designer brand clothing, it is still unknown whether those goods are consumed/displayed in the same way as the authentic offerings at the designer brand's own stores or other non-branded alternatives. In this section, I will attempt to outline the 'how of consumption' for counterfeit clothing and share my findings on how these practices actually pertain to social anxiety and embarrassment that are found to be guiding the individual's behavior. Particularly, I found that some consumers distinguish between the consumption domains of counterfeit designer brand clothing they consume.

Such accounts reveal that this practice stems from a threat of social anxiety as well as embarrassment among significant others who might condemn the individual's consumption of counterfeit items if they become aware of it. That is why; while lacking in previous studies, this thesis also outlines that counterfeit designer brand consumption has certain drawbacks for the individual that needs to be compensated by the alternate consumption practices as well as exclusionary self presentation in Goffman's (1959) terms.

Informants of this study are grouped under three categories; those who consume counterfeit clothing, those that consume the authentic designer brands and those who have them both. Based on the data, I discovered that those consumers differed also in their consumption places, which in the end gave me clues about a by-product of this consumption experience; i.e. social risk. While some informants prefer to display counterfeit clothing in public, some of them selectively wear these items. This

tendency exists not only for informants possessing both authentic items and counterfeits, but also for informants who only hold the counterfeits. On the other hand, for informants Pelin, Begüm and Ayşen (who never consume the counterfeits but only shop from the brands' own stores for the authentic items) the consumption place of the authentic items is always in public.

I first detail the consumption places/practices of counterfeit consumers, namely Esra, Mehmet, Zekai, Mirza, Şermin and Vahit who do not distinguish between places they use counterfeit designer brand clothing. These informants say that they can use counterfeits at every occasion, because of the appeal of the designer brands.

“Şermin (F, 48): I mean if I purchased something for night, I can wear it when I go somewhere at night. The fact that it is counterfeit does not...disturb me...so I think it does not disturb those people, too.”

(“Yani mesela abiye birşey almışsam, onu bir gece bir yere giderken kullanabilirim. Onun taklit olması beni.....rahatsız etmez.....onun için o kişileri de rahatsız etmeyeceği kanısındayım.”)

“Utku: So where do you wear the one you acquired from the bazaar?

Esra (F, 56): I use it everywhere. It is a luxury for me.

Utku: Any place that you might prefer not to use?

Esra: No. If I purchase it fondly I wear it everywhere. ”

(“Utku: Peki siz nerede kullanırsınız pazardan aldığınızı?

Esra (F, 56): Her yerde kullanırım. Benim için o lükstür.”)

Utku: Kullanmamayı tercih ettiğiniz bir yer olur mu?

Esra: Hayır. Eğer severek aldysam her yerde kullanırım.

“Utku: Ok, for example do you wear it when you go the club?

Mirza (M, 24): Yes, I do.

Utku: Really?

Mirza: Of course I wear...if you like let's go together oneday.

Utku: To the club?

Mirza: Right.

Utku: To which one (laughs)

Mirza: Well, there is Dikmen, Öveçler...someplace called 'Faces'...”

(“Utku: Peki mesela mekana giderken bunu giyer misin?

Mirza (M, 24): Hıhı, giyerim...

Utku: Harbi?

Mirza: Tabii giyerim....bi gün istersen gidelim

Utku: Mekana...

Mirza: Tabii.

Utku: Hangi mekana (gölüyor)
Mirza: Şey Dikmen, Öveçler var...Faces diye biyer var...”)

For Mirza, a kiosk clerk who enjoys nightlife, designer brands are occasionally encountered items on people at nightclubs such as Faces. That is why; he prefers to show the counterfeit as a prerequisite for belonging the group at the ‘mekan’ [club]. From a different context, members of the women’s association Esra attend to possess various designer labels. Because she defines herself as a middle-income household, counterfeit is the only way for Esra to keep up with her peers. As she brings up, designer brands whose function is to be displayed are of luxury status for these informants, while they can also grant membership/access to a socially proximal group (Childers and Rao, 1992). Other informants like Mehmet, Vahit consume counterfeits at their workplaces, or at family visits like Zekai does, where they can even exchange information with colleagues/friends among whose wardrobes counterfeits are also widespread. Since the majority wears those brands, they can join the bandwagon (Liebenstein, 1950) and wear the counterfeits around.

VI.4.1.Social Risk

Despite the informants who consume the counterfeit items they purchase in almost every domain including for special events, not all counterfeit designer brand consumers feel the same relaxation in use. For informants like Yılmaz, Tuğba and Ayşe counterfeits are sometimes consumed in public, or selectively displayed depending on the social occasion. Ayşe (F, 25) prefers her Tommy Hilfiger t-shirt while she’s doing outdoor sports. On the other hand, Yılmaz and Tuğba are more

careful about the places they wear the counterfeit items and about people who they share this fact with:

“Yılmaz (M, 24): If it is a designer brand, you cannot easily see it on everyone...yet, the counterfeits reveal themselves...I mean they get attention.

Utku: How do they get attention?

Yılmaz: I don't know, take their appearance...let me tell it truly, the colors seem lively, right...the color of the bazaar [item]...is more dull.”

(“Marka olunca göremezsiniz öyle ya herkeste...ama belli oluyo ya pazardan alınan şeyler[taklitler]...dikkat çeker yani.

Utku: Nasıl dikkat çekiyo?

Yılmaz: Ne bileyim görünüş olarak falan...yani açıkçasını söyleyeyim renk biraz canlı durur ya...pazarın biraz daha...soluk gibi durur yani...”)

“Tuğba (F, 26): I cannot find the right word but...maybe she can feel bad when she is with them (louder voice) as a matter of fact, they purchase the authentic item, (descending voice) and I am purchasing this one [counterfeit]...or she can be preoccupied about what they think about her...maybe she does not want them to know that she wears counterfeit...she may not reveal that it is counterfeit...”

(“ ...tam kelimeyi de bulamıyorum ama...belki kendini kötü hissedebilir onların yanında, (yüksek sesle) sonuçta onlar gerçeğini alıyorlar, (alçalan sesle) ben işte bunu alıyorum gibi...veya onlar benim hakkımda böyle düşünürler mi gibi bi endişesi olabilir...belki hani onların bilmesini istemez sahte giydiğini...Hani söylemeyebilir sahte olduğunu...”)

As Tuğba's comment suggests, consuming counterfeit designer brands entails an extra social anxiety from the side of the consumer. Since we are living in a society we must develop certain conformities in order to minimize deviance and being labeled as the other (De Certeau, Giard and Mayol, 1988). So, if the individual feels needs to conform to the ideal standards expected of him/her then s/he can avoid or conceal deviant behavior (Goffman, 1959). On the other hand, if the individual encounters a situation that demands a characteristic s/he does not possess, embarrassment may occur (Leary and Kowalski, 1998). Goffman also argues that if the act is satisfying in some respect then secret ways of doing it can be elaborated. Example is middle class women who sometimes try to pass cheaper substitutes to coffee or butter surreptitiously, while giving the impression that they serve their guests high quality food. Extending Goffman (1959), Kempen (2003) speculates that

it is more probable to deceive someone without proper knowledge of detection. For instance, he argues that risk of detection is low when trying to impress a poor person with the counterfeits since s/he will be less likely to be familiar with the authentic items sold at the designer brand's store. The informants thus imply that counterfeits may not be worn when with people who can recognize that they are not authentic, but rather preferred when together with the ones that cannot realize the fakeness of the item. If his intention is understood, the consumer might be embarrassed in front of these significant others.

Besides the careful choices behavior, in order to save one's show the performer can take some protective measures concerning the communication of a practice such as withholding information from others who are not a team member. Goffman (1959) exemplifies the case of team members who keep information confidential to sustain privacy in case of failure. In Leary's (1995) terms, this is exclusionary self-presentation in which fear of negative evaluation leads to selective information dissemination about the self. A familiar technique of protection is observed in data for informants who consume both the counterfeits and authentic offerings. For instance, they report selectively disseminating information about their counterfeit consumption. For instance, İrem (F, 22), an informant who wears the counterfeit in some occasions, limits information to her close friends and relatives who also purchase counterfeit designer brands but does not dwell upon the issue in front of someone who does not know her much. Fevzi reports a similar practice, too.

“Fevzi (M, 30s): ...I mean that is somehow...I reveal it but...I think that does not make a nice impact on my image. Because generally, I don't want to hear things like ‘oh Fevzi, do you also buy from those places...did you fall to those places, too’ even as a...as a joke”

“...ya o bi şekilde...ya ben söylerim ama...o benim imajıma iyi bi etki yapmaz diye düşünüyorum. A işte Fevzi sen de mi altyosun oralardan...sen de mi oralara düş..düşün gibi şaka...şaka bile olsa onu duymak istemediğim için genel olarak.”)

Fevzi’s goal seems to be preventing a failure in the presentation, which might be complemented by embarrassment and even ‘social exclusion’. Another locus of social anxiety and embarrassment is the possibility that deception can somewhat be surfaced. Changes in the space of consumption also change in this group of informants, who distinguish between where they consume the counterfeits and authentic items.

“Kadriye (F, 48): I mean, I don’t use it when I...go out for a special occasion or something...But for daily use, I don’t know, such as going to a nearby friend or the friend who was here recently lives nearby, I wear and use for these occasions. I mean I don’t distinguish much.”

“Yani, çok şey bir...gezmeme, ne bileyim çok özel birşeye giymem.....Ama gündelik ne bileyim yani, işte şurada arkadaşına gidiyorum veya demin gelen arkadaşım az ileride oturuyor. Onlara giyerim, kullanırım yani, çok ayırt etmiyorum.”

“İrem (F, 22): ...if it is an ordinary occasion for me, I wear it at home or like that. But I wear those good quality merchandise that I paid a lot, at night-outs. For example, if I went to a dinner with friends or at other times.”

“...normal bi zamansa benim için, evdeysem falan giyerim. Ama diğer aldığım hani kaliteli, bayağı para saydığım ürünler varsa onları mesela işte gece giyerim. Arkadaşlarımla yemeğe gidiyosam mesela. Başka zamanlarımda giyerim.”)

“Fevzi (M, 30s): ...where I use...I...am careful about not using it [counterfeit] while with friends. I use the authentic items when with friends, at social occasions. The others [counterfeits] for daily use...for sport, fitness or inside the house. Or I use them for casual wear. However, when I go somewhere like meeting with friends I definitely try to wear the authentic.”

“...nerde kullanıyorum...ben daha...arkadaş çevresinde...kullanmamaya dikkat ederim. Orijinalleri arkadaş çevrelerine, sosyal okazyonlara kullanırım, diğerlerini, diğer aldıklarımı böyle günlük kullanıma....sporda olabilir, fitness’ta olabilir veya ev içinde olabilir. Veya rahat kullanım için kullanırım. Ama bi yere gittiğimde, arkadaş toplantılarında muhakkak orijinal giymeye çalışırım.”)

“Gülşen (F, 25): ...so I mean...let’s put the authentic Benetton and the counterfeit on the same line...Authentic Benetton is on and above the line, the counterfeit is on and below...I mean there are things that make them common...you can wear both of them outside. However, you prefer and wear the authentic Benetton for more special events. But you choose to wear the counterfeit Benetton for more ordinary matters, like when you stay at home. But you don’t wear the authentic Benetton at home.”

(“...yani şöyle...orijinal Benetton’la taklit Benetton’u aynı çizgi üzerine koyalım...orijinal Benetton, çizgi ve çizginin üstü, taklit Benetton, çizgi ve çizginin altı...yani ikisinin de ortak yapan şeyleri var..ikisini de dışarda giyebilirsin. Ama Benetton’u, orijinal Benetton’u, daha özel şeyler için de giyersin, tercih edersin. Ama taklit Benetton’ı, ikisinin dışında daha sıradan şeyler için...evde kalırken de giymeyi tercih edersin. Ama sen orijinal Benetton’u evde giymeysin...”)

On the other hand, West and Broniarczyk (1998) assert that when there is ambiguity about the appropriateness of a decision, consumers seek for critical data in assessing the desirability of a behavior. The reason could be “...the possibility, albeit remote that the aspirational level could be achieved” (p47). An alternative explanation can be that, as the perceived risk increases, the tendency to avoid regret about making a bad choice increase, and this makes consumers more cautious in their decisions. This tendency holds for counterfeits, too. For instance Ayşen, though says she never wears fakes, shares her expertise over the authentic versions with friends who request feedback on their counterfeit purchases:

“Ayşen (F, 22): To give an example, one of my friends acquired a Louis Vuitton handbag from somewhere, and then –she likes the one of gold color and white-...she asks me: ‘Ayşen, does this model exist at Vuitton?’...And then, I said I have never seen it before. ‘But I liked the color’ [said she], I wear it, golden color, and it fits well’ (laughs)...she does not believe you see...one can encounter such circumstances (laughs)...there is no such thing [at Vuitton] but if you bought, if you liked, you put it on as a result.”

(“mesela benim bir arkadaşım atıyorum işte Vuitton’un fake bir çantasını bulmuş bir yerden, ondan sonra, o çok sever böyle beyazlı altın renklisini...mesela bana soruyo Ayşen bu modelden var mı Vuitton’da diye...Ondan sonra, dedim, ben hiç görmedim dedim. Ama ben rengini beğendim [dedi]. Takarım, altın rengi. Çok güzel uymuş diye (gülüyor)...inanmıyor yani...böyle durumlarla da karşılaşılabilir (gülüyor)...Böyle birşey yok [Vuitton’da], ama...aldıysan, beğendiysen, takarsın sonuç olarak.”)

Here, one can detect both the search for confirmatory information and the authentic brand’s consumer’s rather disparagingly evaluating the behavior of a friend. In fact, such a disparagement manifests itself in Pelin’s embarrassment on behalf of counterfeit consumers who seem to put themselves in a funny situation though they

might not perceive this state as embarrassing according to social psychologists (see Miller, 1996).

“Pelin (F, 30): um...what I myself think about the one who wears the counterfeit is like, ‘what a pity, she must have taken pains (laughs) and I don’t want the same thing to be thought about me...It’s like lack of self-esteem. Using a fake of something gives me such a feeling. If you want to have one, get the authentic one. If you cannot, there are other things of same quality or even higher quality but with a different brand name.”

(“ııı...ya ben kendim nasıl düşünüyorum taklit giyen hakkında, şey gibi, yaa özendi herhalde, yazık falan gibi (gülüyor) aynı şeyin kendim için de düşünülmesini istemem...Kendine güvensizlik gibi bişey, bi his veriyo bana bişeyin taklidini kullanmak. Alıcaksan gerçeğini al. Alamıcaksan aynı kalitede, daha kaliteli olup markası başka marka olan şeyler var.”)

Pelin and Ayşen believe that others will negatively evaluate them or counterfeits will not cohere with their actual selves if they consume them. The social risk dimension forms a major reason of their not purchasing counterfeits. For those consumers, authentic designer brands are part of the daily consumption routines taking place in public but never discerningly public as is the case for counterfeit and/or authentic item users like Fevzi, Gülşen, Tuğba and Yılmaz.

Interestingly, there is a final category of consumption practice. In contrast to informants who never consume counterfeits or selectively display them, some informants like Beril and Melike see no risk in consuming counterfeits everywhere though they also affirm that they use the authentic versions for similar purposes, too.

“Melike (F, 30s): I use it everywhere. I can use it even when I go out for a night out. For example, this on me is a t-shirt I purchased from the sosyete bazaar. I typically use it here at school or at every other place.
Utku: Like when going to a dinner?
Melike: Right, I use it.”

(“Melike: Her yerde kullanıyorum. Bi gece çıkarken de kullanabiliyorum. Normal mesela şu üstümdeki sosyete pazarından aldığım bir t-shirt. Normal okula gelirken de kullanabiliyorum, her yerde kullanıyorum.
Utku: Mesela bi akşam yemeğe giderken?
Melike: Kullanırım, hı hı.”)

“Beril (F, 29): Once I went to the Polo store on Istanbul’s Bagdad Avenue. On me there was a Polo t-shirt that I purchased from here, from the bazaar...quite you know...then a salesclerk came to me and said ‘Madam, from which of our stores did you purchase this t-shirt; I also looked for this color recently but was not able to find it’. So, what does this mean? I cannot bring such a beautiful colored model to my store, but you have purchased one”

(“İstanbul’da Bağdat caddesindeki Polo mağazasına gittim bi keresinde, üzerimde de burdan pazardan aldığım bi Polo t-shirt vardı...Gayet işte...Geldi orda çalışan kız, biri, bana dedi ki işte ‘hanımefendi bunu hangi mağazamızdan aldınız, ben de bu renkten baktım ama bulamadım geçenlerde’...Yani ne demek bu; ben burada mağazamda böyle güzel renk, model getiremiyorum siz bunu almışsınız diyor.”)

The above informants commingle the authentic items with the counterfeits they purchase from the brand’s own store –to the extent that visiting the store with the counterfeit on- so that no one at any point can understand that they are also wearing counterfeits. Other informants such as Esra and Ayşen have also brought up this kind of a potpourri of fake and authentic at different times.

“Esra (F, 56): Of course they buy, I mean, the well-off can also shop from the bazaar. But since she always purchased fine quality merchandise, you cannot associate the bazaar merchandise with her. It shows as genuine on her. She is phenomenally of high quality...she buys designer brands...but most of the time she also purchases from the bazaar...since we know that she always consumes fine quality merchandise, I don’t believe that she uses the bazaar stuff.”

(“Alıyorlar tabii, yani çok zengin de pazardan alışveriş edebilir. Ama o devamlı kalite mal aldığı zaman, pazardan aldığı malı sen onda yakıştırmazsın sen, o hakikidir diye gösterir onda. Yani bu tip insanlar da vardır. Çok kalitelidir...marka alır...ama çoğu zaman da pazardan alır...biz hep kaliteli mal kullandığımızı bildiğimiz için onun Pazar malı kullandığına inanmam.”)

“Ayşen (F, 22): ...now it is obvious that she wears designer brand clothing, I mean most of her clothes are brand name. If she wears a fake once, noone can understand it unless she reveals. In any way...”

(“...şimdi bunun marka giydiği belli birşey yani birçok kıyafeti marka. Bir tane fake kullansa kimse de onun fake kullandığını anlamaz söylemediği sürece. Nasıl olsa...”)

Having pursued this tactic, these informants also think that counterfeits can be as authentic as the ones sold at the brand's own stores and totally eliminate the need to be careful to avoid social exclusion.

To sum up, when one knows that the outside audience may form bad impressions on him/her, s/he can avoid transparency because the performance can convey false impressions that do not represent the desired self. This is because what is intended to convey prestige and social exclusivity (Bourdieu, 1984) can backlash and lead to exclusion from the desired setting, if the impression is not managed properly. Hence consumers develop certain techniques or coping mechanisms in Mick and Fournier's (1998) terms, such as using counterfeits in some settings or going back and forth between the authentic items and fakes to tackle any negative outcome such as embarrassment or lowered self esteem (Wright, Claiborne and Sirgy, 1992). This practice is not clearly mentioned in the literature on counterfeit designer brands (see Nill and Schultz, 1996; Wee et al. 1995; Green and Smith, 2002) and is also relevant for the social risk literature as it demonstrates risk reduction practices other than described by Roselius (1971) and Hugstad, Taylor and Bruce (1987).

VI.5. Consequences of Consuming Counterfeits

After analyzing the reasons and consumption patterns of consumers who possess designer brands, counterfeits and both, in this section I will elucidate certain consequences of consuming counterfeits. As mentioned in the reasons section, counterfeits may grant affordability to some informants like Mehmet, Tuğba, Mirza

and Aslı and an opportunity to try a brand they desire which would otherwise be impossible because of tremendous price levels at the designer brand's store or items that they cannot even find at their current area of residence such as the case of Prada for Tuğba. For some other informants like Melike, Beril, Fevzi, Gülşen and Tolga counterfeits provide an opportunity to save off some money, though they also continue to visit the designer brand's store and sometimes purchase those brands from there.

Besides these benefits, counterfeits also bear some symbolic consequences, too. First, consumers of designer brands fulfill the expectations of an aspiration group that they strive to belong to through materialistic cues such as counterfeits. In that respect, counterfeit designer brands play a role in the power struggles within the strong and weak in the society, in which the weaker party can appeal to such fake appearances for communicating belongingness. Counterfeits may also help the individual maintain a sense of distinctiveness within the peer group, especially when noone in this group is aware of/able to access the designer brand, which is still considered rare despite its fakeness.

From a differing standpoint, the unfair pricing practices of designer brands also challenge the supply side definitions of counterfeiting as an illegal and unethical activity that is even detrimental to the conduct of the society (Hupman and Zaichowsky, 1995) and one in which noone but the consumer is fooled. In contrast, as a consequence of consumption of counterfeits, provided that they encounter a high quality item at the bazaar, consumers (especially who also consume the authentic items) feel that they are actually fooled by the designer brands that command unfair

prices at no reason. That is why; they pursue their self interest to the detriment of a more powerful other as an emerging new subjective norm.

In addition, as not previously mentioned in the literature, counterfeits provide opportunities for the fulfillment of an experience that would otherwise remain incomplete, such as the case of shopping without purchasing anything. In a way, being able to procure the counterfeits helps the individual overcome the symbolic difficulty of comfortably shopping from the designer brand's store. Moreover, counterfeits also provide means to re-highlight relationships with the brands that were popular in one's past, even though the informant might not be able to consume the designer brand beforehand. For instance, for Zekai and Osman who used to be familiar with the brand Lacoste when they were young, counterfeits constitute bases for renewing the memories of the past (Fournier, 1998).

On the other hand, consequences for consuming the counterfeit in public do not lead to social anxiety and embarrassment for any informant either because of the consumption practices that inhibit such outcomes (e.g. purchasing the authentic item as a complement or selectively consuming the item) or because the consumer has nothing to lose in terms of losing face, but instead has something to gain as in the case of Mirza who wears the counterfeits at night clubs.

Finally, consuming counterfeits might prepare certain identity negotiations for the informants. Such negotiations are involved in diverse consumption practices as described in the previous sections. In a way, counterfeit designer brand consumption also has implications for informants' self-concepts. If we start with the informants

who possess only counterfeits and consume them publicly, we see that they usually cannot associate the brand image and the user's image with the image of the counterfeit of the same brand. The images of the brand and the images of the counterfeit brands as persons are highly different.

“Utku: So who would be Levis' fake, if it were a celebrity?

Mirza (M, 24): A famous person...he would be a tramp like me (laughs), who could he be...”

(“Utku: Peki Levis'in fasonu ünlü birisi olsa o nasıl biri olabilirdi?

Mirza (M, 24): Ünlü birisi mi....benim gibi çapulcu birisi olurdu herhalde (gülüyor), kim olabilirdi...”)

“Mehmet (M, 32): The bad one is the non-authentic.

Utku: For example, what kind of a character would it possess?

Mehmet: To be honest, it would be a hairy man with a big moustache (laughs)”

(“Kötü olan orijinal olmayan.

Utku: Mesela onun nasıl bi karakteri olurdu?

Mehmet: Valla sakallı, kıllı, pos bıyıklı bi adam (gülüyor).”)

“Orhan (M, 42): His character is already terrible but his appearance is...wears the polo with all three buttons open...hairs are seen here (laughs)...but the authentic Lacoste most probably does not behave like that. He buttons up till up here. He must not fluff even at that.

Utku: ...and when you think of Lacoste as a person?

Orhan: I mean, I try to think in that way...when we meet he would most likely impress me.

Utku: In what ways?

Orhan: I don't know, perhaps the things he possesses fascinates me...Certainly, he has a yacht, too. He must be speaking very fluently...he must be dancing well, things like that.”

(“İç görünüşü zaten kötü de...dış görünüşü de Polo...üç düğmenin üçünü de açar, öyle giyer herhalde...kıllar gözüktür burdan (kahkaha)...Ama asıl Lacoste onu yapmaz herhalde. O böyle buraya kadar bağlar. Orda bile falso vermemesi lazım onun.

Utku: ..Lacoste'u bi insan olarak düşündüğünüzde.

Orhan: Yani öyle düşünmeye çalışıyorum da...Tanırsam beni etkiler herhalde.

Utku: Ne yönden etkiler?

Orhan: Bilmiyorum belki sahip olduğu şeyler etkiler...Muhakkak yatı filan da vardır. Ne bileyim çok düzgün konuşuyordur...iyi dans ediyodur falan.”)

This lack of coherence between the phenomenal self (or actual self) and desired self, though not manifest in public, still leads to certain tensions as seen in the above quote. To resolve, some informants like Esra and Sevgi try to re-position themselves to somewhere in between the ‘vulgar materialists’ or ‘wannabes’ and the praised elites who consume nothing but the authentic items of the designer brand.

“Sevgi (F, 49): Some people buy it for boosting...some purchase for saying ‘I have the same habitus as you have’”

(“Bir kısmı övünç meselesi için...alıyor. Bir kısmı, ben de seninle aynı kültürdeyim demek için alıyor.”)

“Esra: (sighs)...but when you look, [you see that] she has stepped on her shoes’ back, and she also buys a lot from Vakko. For me, these are the money launderers...those impolites that have appeared afterwards, very recently.”

(“Esra: (iç geçiriyor) ...Ama bakıyorsun ki, ayakkabısının üstüne basmış, giyim tarzı değişik, o da Vakko’dan almış paket paket. İşte bu benim için kara para aklayanlar...sonradan...yani bu son zamanlarda ortaya çıkan paracılar.”)

In a way, the above informants try to eliminate the negative connotations of fakeness through convincing themselves that though they may not own the authentic brands they still have the taste to appreciate them. As Etöz (2000) puts it similarly, according to these informants the ‘wannabes’ can possess the brand but not necessarily the taste to appreciate it. Because they have the taste to appreciate, Sevgi and Esra do not think that they consume a fake identity through consuming the fake and continue displaying the counterfeits in public. Yet, if we apply Holt (2003)’s perspective, they also seek for status by strengthening habitus boundaries. On the other hand, Mirza is rather in a different situation because he clearly observes the difference between him and the audience in the night club (called as ‘kodamanlar’ (well-offs), but is enjoyed to go after the desirable ‘other’.

When possessions are involved, ideal images also generate envy through conspicuous consumption among the non-possessors (Wong, 1997; Belk, 1985). It is interesting that strategies of self-presentation can involve supplanting the personal information regarding self with modified or fabricated ones that exist in the desired self. In their study, Jensen Schau and Gilly (2003) describe the motives of consumers

who want to convey their unique selves through the personal websites they prepare. In doing so, consumers also rely on hyperlinks to some brands for adding depth into their self-presentations even when they do not actually own the brand. The logos displayed on the website serve as a medium of linking or dissociating oneself from others. Jensen Schau and Gilly (2003) argue that even on the net “consumers are actively commingling brands and their images in the service of self-presentation” (p398). Nevertheless, though they strive to be self-consistent with regards to their real selves, consumers might tend to display cues that they do not possess such as a particular brand.

For the case of Mirza, the brand is possessed but whether the meaning inherent in this brand is authentic to him or not is questionable for Esra and Sevgi. Nevertheless, lured by the desire of being perceived as a member, Mirza rather tries to hide his actual self (being the son of a civil servant and working on minimum wage) for a while and goes on to chase this ‘kodaman’ (upper set) identity, which can make him happier because consistently behaving this way helps him establish the congruence between the actual self and brand user image. For his case, manifested through his envy for the upper sets and his desire for designer brands and leisure, materialism seems to be idealized as he states in the folloing quote.

“Mirza (M, 24): ...for instance, when I go there, with this appearance they understand that I wear counterfeit. He wears counterfeit...they understand it anyway...when you make money...money changes everything you know, it changes even the person. The looks...it makes you hip I mean...if I have money, I can be everyting.”

(“...mesela ben gittiğim zaman oraya...bu tiple benim şey olduğumu anlıyolar, imitasyon giydiğimi anlıyolar, fason giymiş işte...anlarlar yani.....para kazanınca...para herşeyi değıştiriyo biliyosun, insanı bile değıştiriyo. Üst baş...Şekilli falan yaptırıyo yani...Benim param olsun, ben açıkçası herşey olurum yani...”)

Although Mirza strives to maintain interaction with the desired others, from his words we understand that he cannot sustain this with counterfeits in the end. This inability to authenticate the identity makes him further possessive and materialistic as Belk (1985) suggests.

Next come informants who also consume the counterfeits but try to disclose that they do so from people who consume the authentic items of the designer brands. For example, Yılmaz (M, 24) prefers to wear Diesel when he is with close friends –as Diesel is not common to them-, but he reveals that he does not know much about the brand and how could its original designs look like, so he does not wear it in larger public. In this case, as Belk et al. (2003) noted, desire engenders fear and reluctance in people, since desiring much may not only engender a threat of social exclusion but also leads to ‘imbalances’. Similarly, Leary’s (1995) self presentational theory asserts that the gap between desire and reality will be expressed in the social anxiety experienced. Yılmaz’s fear does not preclude them from his desire for the designer brand that is supposed to render him unique and chic. Tuğba (F, 26) and Ayşe (F, 25) also experience a slight image incongruence, which leads to hybrid identities as the Turco-European and Turco-American brand as person images of Donna Karan and Tommy Hilfiger reveal. The informants supplant the consistency between the meanings of authentic and fake when they state that fake and authentic Donna Karan/Tommy Hilfiger would be the same persons. In fact, by doing so the informants tend to alleviate the tension between their desired self; i.e. being modern and their actual self, which derives from the culture they come from.

This negotiation in the name of creating an authentic identity through the consumption of fakes is also difficult for informants who also possess the authentic items but need to selectively demonstrate the fakes and authentic items in line with different extensions of their selves (Belk, 1988). As it is the case for the informants who purchase only the fakes, the counterfeits bear a paradoxical situation for them, too. At times, consumers can imbue products with negative meanings if they associate those with undesired others (avoidance groups) or an undesired self (Hogg and Banister, 2001; Auty and Elliott, 2001). While counterfeits promise to transform some individuals to a desired self; i.e. modern, charming, distinct, etc., they also render informants prone to being copied and perceived negatively as a copycat even though they might possess the authentic items sold at the designer brand's own stores. Since he also purchases the counterfeits, Fevzi (M, 30s) finds himself on the same boat with those who copy the superior others. That is why, he tries to resolve this tension by making similar statements as Esra and Sevgi made in an attempt to distinguish himself from everyone else that might also consume the counterfeits:

“Fevzi: By and large, I am affirming this for those people who shop from the sosyete bazaar, you know, between ages 25 and 35, lower middle income, can be male or female. For education, let's say below high school, because this is the general profile. Exceptions do not change the rule of thumb. I and people like me, who are university educated and with a PhD, can shop from there, but now I am giving you the general profile...um, generally lives closer to the ghettos or areas like Ulus or Kızılay...has an ardent desire for others' lifestyles. Wants to possess those brands or wants to convey that image.

Utku: Why does s/he want to convey such an image?

Fevzi: Simply because of his/her ardent desire.”

(“Fevzi: Genel olarak oradan o tip sosyete pazarından alanlar için söylüyorum bunu, işte 25-35 yaş arası, işte ortanın altı gelir seviyesi olan. Kız erkek olabilir. Lise...ııı, ve altı eğitilmiş diyelim. Çünkü o genel olarak oradan alışveriş yapanlar...istisnalar kaideyi bozmaz. Ben ve benim gibi üniversite, doktoralı insanlar da oradan alışveriş yapabilir ama genel profili veriyorum ben şimdi, ııı, genelde varoşlara doğru yaşayan veya Ulus, Kızılay gibi bölgelerde veya şehrin varoşlarında yaşayan...özenti bi tarzı olan...başkalarının hayat, yaşam biçimlerine özenen. O markalara sahip olmak isteyen, veya o imajı vermek isteyen.

Utku: Neden öyle bi imaj vermek istiyordur sizce?

Fevzi: İşte özentiliğinden ötürü.”)

Moreover, Fevzi not only adjusts the user image of Lacoste with how he wants to be perceived, but also tries to manage the places he consumes the counterfeit like Gülşen and İrem so as to minimize being perceived as ‘wearing’ a fake identity, which is instead the attribute of the ‘less educated and low-culture wannabes’ he described. Because of the tension of inconsistency, this category of informants consumes both the counterfeits and the authentic items. In the end, since the authentic is idealized, counterfeits are destined to consumption only when no one can understand their fakeness.

Thompson and Haytko (1997) argue that consumers may ‘use’ fashion to “engage in novel juxtapositions and creative reworking of dominant meanings” (p16). Since the signs are freely floating, meaning is hard to fix, and the agency is- though helping to reconstruct the cultural discourse- welcome in creating a style that renders anything ascribed as obsolete. While it can be argued that counterfeited designer brands prevail along fashion discourses, it is notable that consumers like Beril, Ebru and Melike see no social risk in consuming counterfeits provided that they also possess the authentic items. The answer to this paradox lies in the process employed; going back and forth between both and at the extreme believing that fake is as good as the authentic. In a way, things that are called real are made real (Eco, 1975).

CHAPTER VII

VII. CONCLUSION

This thesis portrays the reasons, consumption practices and consequences of consuming counterfeit designer brands for consumers of these items as well as consumers who do not possess the counterfeits but the authentic items. Since the study is exploratory and phenomenological in nature, by utilizing projective techniques, first meanings of authenticity and fakeness were garnered. Those meanings provided a conceptual richness in emic terms before the analysis of the data regarding consumption reasons of counterfeit designer brands. Collage data as well as metaphoric portraits suggest that authenticity is associated with nice feelings like a soothing smell or silky touch. Authenticity is challenging to appreciate and difficult to match. Fakeness, in contrast carries negative implications such as a bad taste or a disturbing volume. The fake lacks the iconic power of the authentic and it is commonly encountered as opposed to the unique nature of the authentic. Overall, fakeness and authenticity are two sides of the same coin. While the former initially contains a desire for the latter, after a while they may collide. Although fakeness is condemned as it is perceived as unfavorable and something that cannot cohere with the authentic, which is supposed to be unique and self belonging –be it an object or an identity- the fake is still ‘desirable’ and present in one’s life because of the attraction of the ‘authentic other’.

In addition, meanings of the particular designer brands; i.e. emic meanings for the informants, were detailed. Focusing on these meanings laid the ground for learning the consumption reasons of counterfeits, which involve not only factors such as affordability or frugality, but also beliefs about the aesthetic similarity of the counterfeits as well as various symbolic reasons such as desire for uniqueness with respect to other members of a peer group, emulating an aspiration group or referring to experiential and nostalgic cues. Ethical cues especially regarding the pricing practices of designer brands were also cited as reasons of consuming the counterfeits but the authentic items.

It is widely claimed that people's consumption choices –especially those visible- lead to different perceptions by others about one's persona or social standing (Belk et al., 1982). Milanova (1999) stresses the importance of publicly visible goods in consumer's satisfaction of symbolic needs over even survival needs, in post-communist Bulgaria. The author notes that especially the poorer consumers fall to symbolic and materialistic pressures created by the emergence of such branded goods. Nevertheless, as Claxton and Murray (1994) express, such reliance on symbolic cues may connote the lack of certain critical symbols in the life of the consumer so that s/he incorporates the counterfeit designer brand to fill this incomplete space in the identity area. Ardent desire towards the 'well-offs' or towards a Western lifestyle was also evident for some informants' reason of consuming the counterfeits. In that respect, findings also confirm studies on designer brand clothing like Lu Wang et al. (2004), Kempen (2004) and Elliott and Leonard (2004) who respectively assert that fashion items such as clothing are regarded as

public luxuries in which emulation towards an aspirational group plays an important role in consumption motives and this tendency can even be stronger for consumers from the less affluent world who are eager to pay premium prices for the appealing import designer brands.

In addition to the above findings, consumption of counterfeits aids in keeping up with peer groups in what Liebenstein (1993 [1950]) calls 'bandwagon effect', which states that consumption of certain goods aims to eliminate feelings of inferiority within a particular group. While economic concerns combined with the pressures of emulation were relevant for explaining some cases, findings also demonstrate that counterfeits designer brands distinguish the consumer from others in the group. Related to this, counterfeit designer brands also make the members of the cohort envious who do not possess even the counterfeit. That is why; uniqueness is a concern not only for the authentic item consumers, but also for the consumers of counterfeits. To summarize, while some counterfeit consumers have a rather socially higher reference point and seek upward mobility through consuming counterfeits (Nill and Schultz II, 1996; Wee et al., 1995), some also prefer the counterfeits because of the associated designer brand's scarcity within the peer group. Hence, Attribution Theory (Calder and Burnkrant, 1977) which suggests that whether behavior will be matched with the attitudes depends on the social desirability of an action, and Social Impact Theory (Sirgy, 1982) which asserts that behavioral compliance to significant others is crucial in many acts consumption, only partially account for why people might prefer to consume counterfeit designer brands.

On the other hand, while some informants consume both the authentic items as well as counterfeits, at a symbolic level their consumption reasons of designer brand clothing do not differ much from those who only consume counterfeits or those who purchase only the authentic items, though purchasing both are related to affordability, in particular, frugality issues. Since those informants are known to possess the authentic items, they pass off the fakes as if they are authentic. Nevertheless, they also continue shopping from the designer brand's own store to learn about the latest designs and avoid the risk of using an obvious fake next to significant others who consume only the authentic items.

Since some of the counterfeit designer brand consumers interviewed in this study cannot consume the authentic items, they may also feel reluctant to enter the store, or if they do, they feel mixed because of the rather exclusionary aura of the place. Thus, the shopping part which would itself fulfill a desire of inclusion into the aspiration group, is lacking in those informants. Therefore, for them counterfeits play a role in the completion of an experience, which is otherwise incomplete or obsolete. In previous studies, it has been widely claimed that non-deceptive counterfeiting of designer brands stem mostly from the high economic value propositions of the counterfeit items (Nill and Schultz II, 1996; Phau et al., 2001; Gentry, et al., 2001). Yet, the above finding helps us understand why the perceived value viewpoint, in and of itself, may not explain consumer preference for counterfeits. By referring to the actual shopping experiences, the term 'affordability' gains not only an economical but also an experiential meaning. It entails a kind of symbolic difficulty, which is overcome by procuring the counterfeit items from a 'public' bazaar.

From another symbolic standpoint, for older informants the reasons of consuming the counterfeit designer brands can stem from a nostalgic attachment to a brand, such as Lacoste, which was fashionable among their cohort during their adolescence. In that respect, counterfeit designer brands also play roles in the symbolic self completion project (Solomon, 1983; Auty and Elliott, 2001; Ahuvia, 2005) even years after the first encounter with the brand.

What is more, findings also indicate that informants do not perceive the pricing practices of designer brands 'fair' and mark this as a reason for consuming the counterfeits. This was especially true for informants who consume both the counterfeits and authentic items; i.e. who are involved in the designer brands enough to claim a 'fair price'. As opposed to the arguments of Xia et al. (2004) that price is perceived fair when costs of the manufacturer is high, my findings illustrate that consumers do not consider this as a justifier of the premium prices commanded even though they can anticipate the cost structures of the designer brands. Though Grayson (2000) argues that counterfeit designer brand consumers are fooling themselves with products that cannot be 'authentic', consumers do not always agree with this proposition. In a way, consumers think that they are actually fooled by the designer brands, and consume the counterfeits whenever they encounter a high quality one. Yet, this is not an activist, anti-corporate stance because many of those who claim unfairness also shop from the brand's own stores.

My findings also compare with those of Rawwas et al. (2005), which denote that "Turkish consumers are more sensitive to unethical practices and follow rules and norms" (p191) in making judgments about illegal or legally questionable incidents.

In our case, though all informants affirmed that counterfeiting was illegal and hurting the designer brands, they still pursued their self interests and desires by acquiring and consuming the counterfeit designer brand clothing. Thus, counterfeit consumers do not find it unethical to purchase the counterfeits and rely on teleological cues such as egoism. Interestingly, though they do not favor it because of symbolic concerns, from an ethics standpoint even consumers who only shop from the designer brand's stores agree that the consumption of counterfeits is not unethical if the counterfeit consumer does not have the adequate resources to buy the authentic items. In the context of such consumption, subjective norms do not play a significant role as opposed to the rather deontological perspective offered by Kantian Moral Theory (Kant, 1981 [1785], 1997 [1788]) which predicts that consumers also consider deontological norms that overrides one's self interest in making consumption decisions. Nevertheless, harming the designer brands does not seem to generate ethical dilemmas; i.e. conflicts between one action and the actions, interests, values of self/others. Consumers rather neutralized them through economic and price fairness justifications. Only those informants who never consume the counterfeits but the authentic offerings seem to perceive such behavior as unethical; though their primary reason of not purchasing the counterfeits is not ethical but symbolic in nature. For others, justifications serve to make a 'deontologically unethical' behavior (because the results violate the rights of designer brands) acceptable such that subjective norms mentioned in the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) are altered in favor of the individual's and similar others' behaviors. Informant quotes like 'even the jet-set consume counterfeits' not only indicate a desire for otherness but also 'normalize' the consumption of counterfeits referring to those significant role models. Furthermore, the power asymmetry in favor of the designer

brands helps to frame the situation as enabling in Hunt and Vitell's (Vitell, 2003) terms and allows consumers to actively pursue their self-interests. Consumers creatively make use of this asymmetry in their rather utilitarian reasoning about counterfeit consumption. In sum, the case of counterfeit consumption demonstrates that pursuing one's own interest to the detriment of a more powerful other, when even more advantageous others are doing the same thing, becomes the new subjective norm.

Findings also shed light on consumer practices of consumption such as distinguishing between the public and private uses of counterfeits, selectively distributing information about this act of consumption and (for some informants) also purchasing the authentic items to complement/to be complemented by the counterfeit items. For informants who never consume the counterfeits but authentic items, the consumption practice is always visible to guarantee that the item is seen by everyone. This practice also valid for some informants in whose cohort nobody possesses the product purchased from the brand's own store. Conversely, counterfeit consumers who have acquaintances who possess the authentic items are careful to not display the counterfeit clothing around them. Furthermore, there are differences in consumption practices among informants who possess both the authentic items and counterfeits. Fearing from labeled as counterfeit consumer, some of these people consume counterfeits in private (e.g. home) or where there is no authentic item user. Likewise, they do not disclose this affair to people who do not similarly consume counterfeits. On the other hand, some informants consume counterfeits in the same way as they do with the authentic items. The reason is either the faith that the counterfeit is undetectable from the authentic (aesthetic similarity) or the belief that

nobody can understand that they consume counterfeits, because they are already known for shopping from the brand's own stores.

In their study on non-deceptive counterfeiting, Bloch et al. (1993) manifested that consumers can willingly choose counterfeit goods to take price advantages as long as performance risks claiming that the risk of proper functioning is tolerably low like in the case of clothing or jewelry. Making such a compromise may not always mean that consumers feel completely easy, though. In particular, the practices outlined above constitute supporting examples of how social risk can be manifest after the purchase. Consumers not only become cautious in the beginning to prevent negative post-purchase remarks (West and Broniarczyk, 1998), but they also become wary in their consumption practices afterwards if the decision entails a possibility of embarrassment. Other than preventive techniques developed to prevent social risk; such as purchasing on endorsement, remaining brand loyal, or searching for higher quality produce within the offerings as Roselius (1971), Hugstad et al. (1987) and Gentry et al. (2001) exemplify, social risk also enforces alternate consumption practices even when the object is desirable to consume.

Finally, consumption of designer brands also informs our understanding about the personal consequences of this affair. Based on counterfeit consumer informants' remarks on the brand personification task, it can be argued that counterfeit has a different personality –usually with inferior traits- than the authentic. For that case, the authentic one's more admirable image explains why it is desired; consumers attain the brand for enhancing the actual self or approximating to the desired self. Nevertheless, while in some cases the consuming the counterfeit helps the consumer

to go after this goal, for some others like Esra and Sevgi, some facets of the actual self (such as being able to appreciate the brand's meaning) are needed to fill the gap between the favorable image of the authentic and the vulgarity of the counterfeit which the informant 'happens to be' using. In that respect, the counterfeit designer brand cannot surpass the idea of exclusion inherent in the designer brand even from the side of some counterfeit consumers, who wish to de-associate themselves from negatively evaluated others who can have access to their identity projects regardless of the fact that they themselves also follow this project through fake goods.

Despite this, some other informants claim that for them counterfeit and the authentic (e.g. Tommy Hilfiger) would have the same personality. Yet, it is not coincidental that those informants are the ones who either consume the counterfeits in selectively public environments or purchase the authentic items in addition. Since the counterfeit has some negative connotations, that difference is alleviated through the consumption practices described before. In a way, such practices not only alleviate and tame the negative attributes of fakeness, but they also play a role in the negotiation of the identity. Through consuming the authentic item as a supplement, informants are able to differentiate themselves from ordinary people who might also have access to the counterfeits. In that respect, these practices help to authenticate the fake; and at the same time authenticate a desired self that the fake -though partially- represents. In that respect, authenticity is creatively reconstructed through consumption of counterfeits in selective public domains and sometimes with the addition of the authentic merchandise. Through consistent public usage of the counterfeit (or alternatively, through commingling it with the 'authentic') the desired identity sticks to the counterfeit's image as well as to the self-image and the

consumer not only makes the counterfeit's image self-congruent, but also authenticates an identity which would otherwise remain stranger. Consumption of counterfeit designer brands then challenges the notion that "consumers view brands as valuable sources of identity construction when brand meanings are perceived to be authentic" (Holt, 2002, p85), because the brand meaning or the product may not be perceived as authentic, hence there is the task to authenticate it.

In that respect, we might also argue that the distinction between fake and authentic is blurring for the case of designer brands as Venkatesh (1999) and Classen and Howes (1996) argue. But still, this does not mean that authentic is the same as fake. Counterfeits can only replace the authentic items under certain, consumer determined circumstances. Evident from this process, it can be inferred that authenticity is still important unlike Baudrillard (1994) would argue within 'pure simulacrum' in which the sign becomes independent of reality and becomes the reality itself. In contrast, the authentic needs the fake, like the efforts of managing the identity needs an 'other' as its own other and boundary maker (Sandikci and Ger, 2001).

To sum up, this thesis contributes to the consumer research literature on several grounds. To start with, unlike the previous literature on counterfeiting that characterizes counterfeit consumption as buying the prestige gratis. Nevertheless, the study contends that consumers may develop some practices such as selectively consuming the counterfeit or selectively conveying information about this affair in order to avoid losing face in front of significant others. Besides, those practices also demonstrate that other than preventive techniques to prevent social risk as previous

literature describes, consumers develop alternate practices even during the course of consumption.

Second, the study extends the price fairness literature which supports the view that whenever consumers recognize the high costs of the manufacturer, they are less prone to question the highness of a price. As I demonstrate, despite their recognition about the costs of the designer brands, even consumers who can afford the authentic items do not perceive the pricing practices of those firms as fair and use the argument of 'power asymmetry' to justify their consumption behavior, which eventually works against the designer brand.

Third, the thesis confirms the notion that distinction between fake (or simulacra in Baudrilard's terms) and the fake is blurring, but also shows an exemplary process by using the counterfeit designer brand consumption as context. Particularly, it is not only fantasy and real that commingle as cited by postmodern authors, but also fake and authentic, which mesh through a process of authentication that is determined by the desires of the consumer. In that respect, the thesis also extends the symbolic consumption literature by showing what kind of coping mechanisms can be employed when the brand's image is desirable to possess but is not self-congruent because of possible association with an undesired self. In a way, this study sheds light on one of the brand guided pathways through which the symbolic self completion project evolves.

VII.1.Limitations and Future Research

Finally, as with any research, this study has some limitations, too. To begin, though the informant pool was comprised of people from diverse backgrounds, because of the nature of the research site; i.e. Ankara Sosyete Bazaars, the variety in the designer brands consumed is low. In fact, some informants mentioned they also shopped from Istanbul, where they can see more offerings to choose from. That is why, to increase the external validity of the study, such triangulation across research sites and informant sources may be sought in future studies.

Another limitation of this thesis is that, while it brings forth the usually ignored consumer perspective, it does not focus much on the marketing and media side of the issue. Future studies may dwell upon the role of mass media and advertising in how designer brands become objects of desire, and how they influence the prevalence of counterfeiting or even ‘counterfeit lifestyles’ as well as consumer ethical discourses on this issue. In addition to newly emerging studies on the brand’s role as cultural entities, conducting such a study also informs our understanding on the cultural significance of the marketing communication efforts of those foreign designer brands in people’s lives.

Because social interaction is a dynamic process changes can occur in the significance of symbols as well as in the structures of interaction (Solomon, 1983), brands that are associated with a particular lifestyle can begin to be associated with another provided that the social structure has changed in favor of another competing one. Therefore, future research may examine what happens to the brand equity of designer brands for

consumers who only shop from the brand's own stores when the brand comes to be consumed by groups other than targeted. From a related standpoint, future studies may also incorporate perspectives of consumers who never use designer brands whose counterfeits are made and elaborate on why they do not prefer to consume even the authentic offerings of these items.

Finally, this thesis only focused on a single product category that is considered as symbolic. However, to better grasp the definitions and social implications of counterfeiting, research is needed in other product categories in which non-deceptive counterfeits abound, such as books, cosmetics or software.

Indeed, germs of such social implications are already observed in the data especially regarding consumer skepticism on the distributional fairness of the transaction between the designer brands and consumers. Extending this, future research can explore the consumer perspectives on the interactional fairness of the 'relationship' and whether designer brands are perceived as trustworthy relationship partners as Fournier (1998) argues for some incidences and if not, what kinds of marketing communications strategies can be pursued to ameliorate the situation for every party concerned. Needless to say, such social implications can supply interesting information for the marketing institution as well as for the companies and governments who need to spend considerable resources every year to halt copyright infringements through legal and diplomatic enforcements (see US Trade Department Special 301 Report) but not through direct contact and collaboration with consumers who may be facilitating this affair even knowingly as this research suggests.

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TABLE 1

Pseudonym	Age	Education	Occupation	Designer Brand(s) Consumed	Consumed Item	Consumption Space
Ayşen (F)	22	High School	University Student	Louis Vuitton	Only Authentic	Public
Pelin (F)	30	MBA	Phd Student	US Polo	Only Authentic	Public
Begüm (F)	32	PhD	Instructor	Lacoste	Only Authentic	Public
İrem (F)	22	High School	University Student	Tommy Hilfiger, US Polo	Counterfeit	Selective Public
Yılmaz (M)	24	High School	Pharmacy Clerk	Diesel	Counterfeit	Selective Public
Ayşe (F)	25	University	Electrical Engineer	Tommy Hilfiger	Counterfeit	Selective Public
Tuğba (F)	26	University	MBA Student	Prada, DKNY	Counterfeit	Selective Public
Vahit (M)	29	Primary School	Doorman	Tommy Hilfiger	Counterfeit	Selective Public
Şermin (F)	48	High School	Retired Dormitory Officer	Tommy Hilfiger	Counterfeit	Public
Esra (F)	56	High School	Housewife	Vakko, Burberry	Counterfeit	Public
Sevgi (F)	49	MD	Medical Lab Owner	Lacoste	Counterfeit	Public
Orhan (M)	42	High School	Clothing Retailer	Lacoste	Counterfeit	Public
Zekai (M)	48	High School	Retired Supermarket Clerk	Lacoste	Counterfeit	Public
Mirza (M)	24	High School	Kiosk Clerk	Levis, Tommy Hilfiger	Counterfeit	Public
Mehmet (M)	32	University	Librarian	Paul and Shark, Lacoste	Counterfeit	Public
Kadriye (F)	48	High School	Housewife	Marks&Spencer	Both	Selective Public
Gülşen (F)	25	University	MA Student	Benetton	Both	Selective Public
Fevzi (M)	30s	PhD	Instructor	Lacoste	Both	Selective Public
Tolga (M)	28	MBA	PhD Student	Guess	Both	Selective Public
Melike (F)	30s	PhD	Instructor	Tommy Hilfiger	Both	Public
Beril (F)	29	High School	Housewife	Tommy Hilfiger	Both	Public
Arzu (F)	41	Vocational School	Housewife	Benetton	Both	Public
Ebru (F)	30	University	Cafe Owner	Marks&Spencer, Tommy Hilfiger	Both	Public

F: Female, M: Male

TABLE 2

GROUPING OF INFORMANTS ACCORDING TO CONSUMPTION DOMAINS	Only Counterfeit	Both Counterfeit and Authentic
Public	Esra (F, 56) Mehmet (M, 32) Zekai (M, 48) Mirza (M, 24) Şermin (M, 48) Orhan (M, 42) Sevgi (F, 49)	Arzu (F, 41) Ebru (F, 30) Melike (F, 30s) Beril (F, 29)
Selective Public	Vahit (M, 28) Yılmaz (M, 24) Tuğba (F, 26) Ayşe (F, 25)	Fevzi (M, 30s) Gülşen (F, 25) İrem (F, 22) Kadriye (F, 48) Tolga (M, 28)

APPENDIX A

Interview Guide

- 1) What does 'fake' mean to you? Can you please give examples on what makes something 'fake'? If 'fake' were a smell/taste/texture/sound whose smell/taste/texture/sound would it be?
- 2) What is the antonym of the word 'fake'? Can you please give examples on what makes something ____? If ____ were a smell/taste/texture/sound whose smell/taste/texture/sound would it be?
- 3) How often do you go to 'sosyete pazari'?
 - a) With whom?
 - b) What kind of an ambiance does the 'sosyete pazari' have? What kind of a customer profile does it have?
 - c) What do you purchase from there? What percentage of the merchandise you purchase carry brand names?
 - d) In your conception, what are the advantages/drawbacks of purchasing branded goods?
 - e) In the 'sosyete pazari' are there any brands that you also see in the stores? (if yes) Which of those have you consumed?
- 4) If we think of the designer brand ____ as a person, what kind of a person would it be?
 - a) Male/Female? About how old?
 - b) What kind of an appearance would s/he have?

- c) What kind of a character would s/he possess?
 - d) What kind of a lifestyle would s/he have?
- 5) If we think of the counterfeit of designer brand _____, what kind of a person would s/he be?
- 6) Suppose you meet the brand _____ and s/he learnt that you also consume _____. What would his/her response be?
- 7) What kind of a person would be the one who consumes the designer brand _____ from the store?
- a) What brand of automobile would s/he own? New/Antique? What would its model be?
 - b) How old would s/he be? Male/Female?
 - c) What could his/her profession be? In which district (of Ankara) could s/he be dwelling?
 - d) What hobbies could s/he have in his/her spare time?
 - e) What other designer brands would s/he consume?
- 8) What kind of a person would be the one who procures the brand _____ from the ‘sosyete pazari’?
- a) Where and in what occasions does s/he consume the designer brand _____ s/he procures from the bazaar?
 - b) (if she does) Where and in what occasions does s/he consume the designer brand _____ s/he purchases from the store?
 - c) When someone asks, would s/he reveal that s/he purchased the designer brand _____ from the bazaar but not from its store? (repeat the same questions for the informant’s own practice)

9) Have you ever entered the store of the designer brand ____? What kind of a place is it? (In some places you feel good, is that such a place?)

10) Can sometimes our behaviors knowingly/unknowingly hurt others? For instance?

- a) Is there someone who is negatively affected from the counterfeit products?
- b) (If yes) Why are those people prone to such unfavorable outcomes?
- c) (If someone is hurt) What kind of a behavior is purchasing the designer brands from the bazaar?

Mülakat Rehberi

- 1) “Taklit” sizce ne demektir? Bir taklit yapan şeyler nelerdir, örnek verebilir misiniz? “Taklit” bir koku/tat/doku/ses olsaydı, neyin koku/tat/doku/ses’i olurdu?
- 2) “Taklit” kelimesinin zıddı sizce nedir? Bir şeyi _____ yapan şeyler sizce nelerdir, örnekler misiniz? “_____” bir koku/tat/doku/ses olsaydı, neyin koku/tat/doku/ses’i olurdu?
- 3) Hangi sıklıkla sosyete pazarına gidersiniz?
 - a) Kimlerle gidersiniz?
 - b) Nasıl bir ortamdır sosyete pazarı, anlatabilir misiniz? Nasıl bir müşteri kitlesi vardır?
 - c) Sosyete pazarından neler alırsınız? Aldığınız ürünlerin ne kadarı markalı olmaktadır?
 - d) Sizce markalı ürün almanın avantajları/dezavantajları nelerdir?
 - e) Sosyete pazarında mağazalarda gördüğünüz markalar da olabiliyor mu? (Varsa) Siz hangilerini kullandınız?
- 4) ____ markasını bir insan olarak düşünürsek nasıl bir insan olurdu?
 - a) Kadın/Erkek? Kaç yaşlarındadır?
 - b) Nasıl bir dış görünüşü olurdu?
 - c) Nasıl bir karakteri olurdu?
 - d) Nasıl bir yaşantısı olurdu?
- 5) ____ markasının pazarda satılanını bir insan olarak düşünsek o nasıl bir insan olurdu?

- 6) ____ markasıyla karşılaştınız ve sizin ____ kullandığınızı öğrendi. Size ne söylediler?
- 7) ____ markasını mağazasından satın alıp kullanan kişi nasıl birisi olabilir?
- a) Ne marka bir arabası vardır? Yeni/Antika? Arabası ne modeldir?
 - b) Kaç yaşlarındadır? Kadın/Erkek?
 - c) İşi ne olabilir? Hangi semtte yaşıyor olabilir?
 - d) Boş zamanlarında ne gibi aktiviteler yapar?
 - e) Başka hangi giyim markalarını kullanır?
- 8) ____ markasını sosyete pazarından satın alıp kullanan kişi nasıl biri olabilir?
- a) Pazardan aldığı ____ ürününü nerelerde, hangi ortamlarda kullanır?
 - b) (Alıyorsa) ____ mağazasından aldığı ürünü nerelerde kullanır?
 - c) Birisi sorduğunda ____ markasını mağazadan değil pazardan aldığını söyler mi? (aynı sorular katılımcının kendi davranışı için de sorulacak)
- 9) ____ markasının mağasına girdiniz mi? Nasıl bir ortamdır, anlatabilir misiniz? (Bazı yerler size kendinizi iyi hissettirir, öyle bir ortam mıdır?)
- 10) Bazen yaptığımız davranışların bilerek/bilmeyerek başkalarına zarar verebildiğini düşünür müsünüz? Örneğin?
- a) Sizce taklit ürünlerden olumsuz yönde etkilenen birileri, bir kesim var mıdır?
 - b) (Varsa) Bu kişiler neden olumsuzluğa maruz kalmaktadır?
 - c) (Birileri zarar görüyorsa) Orijinal markaları pazardan satın almak sizce nasıl bir davranıştır?

APPENDIX B



Authentic Collage, Ayşe (F, 25)
Counterfeit, Selective Public



Authentic Collage, Beril (F, 29)
Both, Public



Authentic Collage, Tolga (M, 28)
Both, Selective Public



Authentic Collage, Vahit (M, 29)
Counterfeit, Selective Public



Non-Authentic Collage, Beril (F, 29)
Both, Public



Altın Kozmetik San. A.Ş. Beşyol Birlik



sen ve sen

1. Tabii kutunu açtıktan sonra en çok ne görgüyorsunuz?

a. Anlaşılabilirlik.
b. Bencülük takıları.
c. Tırtıllardan ya da diğer küçük hayvanlardan yapılmış takılar.
d. Altın takılar.

2. Dondurma sipariş ettiğinde nasıl olur?

a. Vanilyalı dondurma.
b. Dube çikolata dondurma.
c. Çeviz dondurma dondurma.
d. Çiklatlı ve berrak dondurma.
e. Çikolata parçası dondurma.

BEMBEYAZ DIŞLER

Rembrandt uzmanları, sizlere hayal ettiğiniz bembeyaz dişlere kavuşmanın tümünü sizlere öğretiyor. Rembrandt, öğretilmekte olan bu kit ile 1 ay içinde dişlerinizi 5 tona kadar beyazatabiliyor. Bunun yanı sıra, kemide dişlerinizi keskinlikle asındırıyor. Özel formülü sayesinde diş problemleri, tartar, plak ve diş lekeleri gibi problemlere de iyi geliyor.



K

maralı genç unuyor. Bilekler bun- k kalımay- olarak kullan- ve krem rengi zulu edecek bir

Non-Authentic Collage, Kadriye (F, 48)
Both, Selective Public



Non-Authentic Collage, Tolga (M, 28)
Both, Selective Public



Non-Authentic Collage, Mehmet (M, 32)
Counterfeit, Public