5

Fetish, Magic, Marketing

Eric Arnould, Julien Cayla, and Delphine Dion

Since Weber's ([1922] 2013) magnum opus, an immense literature has propounded a rationalist, universalizing, utilitarian theory of business, marketing, consumer behaviour, and society as a whole. Critiques come from anti-utilitarian social theory,[1] economic sociology (e.g. Zelizer 2011), and general social theory (Latour 1993, 2010; Miller 1987). Euro-American marketing scholarship has largely ignored these critiques. This chapter argues that magical thought and action, supposed by modernist theory to be in decline, is foundational in marketing practice. In

This chapter is based on the article Arnould, E., Cayla, J., & Dion, D. (2017). Fetish, magic, marketing. *Anthropology Today* 33 (2), 28–32.

E. Arnould (✉)
Aalto University Business School, Helsinki and EMLYON Business School, Lyon, France
e-mail: eric.arnould@aalto.fi

J. Cayla
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, Singapore

D. Dion
ESSEC Business School, Paris, France

B. Moeran, T. de Waal Malefyt (eds.), *Magical Capitalism*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74397-4_5

this way, this chapter responds to calls to identify the specific forms of "the magic of modernity—those enchantments that are produced by practices culturally specific to modern … economies, and societies" (Pels 2003: 5).

Many researchers have examined the relevance of magic to modern-day consumption (Arnould et al. 1999; Fernandez and Lastovicka 2011; Meyer 2003). Thus, Belk (1991: 17) pointedly observes that:

> We reside in magic places and make pilgrimages to even more magical places. We eat magic foods, own magic pets, and envelop ourselves in the magic of films, television and books. We court magic in a plethora of material loci that cumulatively compel us to conclude that the rational possessor is a myth that can no longer be sustained. It fails because it denies the inescapable and essential mysteriousness of our existence.

We might substitute Belk's term mysteriousness with fascination, which as Freud suggested is the mode of apprehension appropriate to fetishism. The presence of an object that is compelling but remains opaque fulfils our sense of fascination, unlike curiosity or scientific investigation that stimulates further action. Opacity is the key characteristic of the capitalist commodity that for consumer culture dissimulates actual social relations behind appearances (Mulhern 2007).

Ideas about fetishism and magic can be put together with conceptions of materiality and performativity to provide a revived magical theoretical template appropriate to market capitalism to show that magical thought and action is not only present in, but perhaps necessary to, contemporary social life (Meyer and Pels 2003) as well as marketing practice. In the sections that follow, we present briefly some theoretical ideas about magic from anthropology, link them to two examples, and finally offer a discussion linking fetishism, magic, performativity, and materiality.

The Consumer as Organizational Fetish

A good example of a magical object is a fetish. Previous theory argues that the fetish mediates incommensurate worlds, whether cultural (Pietz 1985, 1987, 1988), between humans and a transcendent environment

(Pels 1998) or between labour and capital (Marx 1974; Pietz 1988). Common to these uses is the idea of singular, material objects "believed to be endowed with purpose, intention, and a direct power over material life" (Pietz 1988: 106) and which can "deflect the course of human traffic" (Pels 1998: 95). How might these ideas relate to consumers?

The consumer has become the object of intense corporate interest, with scholars equating the hyper-centricity of consumer desires as the "cult(ure)" of the consumer pervading organizations (du Gay and Salaman 1992). Modern organizations are replete with talk, images, and tangible manifestations of consumers (Cayla 2013; Cayla and Peñaloza 2012; Mazzarella 2003). Beyond organizations, the diffusion of consumer-centricity has expanded to various spheres of contemporary society (Moor 2011; Kennedy et al. 2003). The consumer has become "a god-like figure, before whom markets and politicians alike bow" (Gabriel and Lang 2006: 1).

Instead of operating as an unproblematic translation of consumer needs into marketing actions, several scholars have demonstrated the nefarious effects of consumer hyper-centricity on societal welfare (Applbaum 2011; Moor 2011). Yet, beyond an institutional approach to understanding this phenomenon (Varman et al. 2011), we must also try to understand the affective hold that consumers, transformed into fetishes, can have on organizational actors.

Our research on the consumer as organizational fetish is part of a larger research programme to understand the way consumers live within organizations, particularly within the realms of advertising (Cayla 2013; Cayla and Peñaloza 2012), brand consulting agencies (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008), and market research (Arnould and Cayla 2015; Cayla and Arnould 2013).

As part of our research on the way commercial ethnography lives within the walls of corporations (Cayla and Arnould 2013), we became especially interested in understanding the power that the image, voices, and other representations of consumers could have on organizational members. Gabriel and Lang (2006) had already alluded to the current obsession with consumers in firms, government, and academia stating that "the consumer has become a cultural fetish, something that people get obsessed about to the point at which it can dominate their lives" (p. 187).

Our findings build on this suggestion to detail several parallels between the fetishization of consumers and the fetishization of objects (Ellen 1988; Pels 1998; Pietz 1985, 1987, 1988). Specifically, four moments in the fetishization of consumers appear: (1) the fetish as a material embodiment of the market; (2) the consumer-fetish as a boundary object mediating between the organization and an imagined market; (3) the animation of consumer-fetishes into sensuous enlivened objects; and (4) an agentic dimension of consumer-fetishes as they influence organizational members.

Organizations deploy various market research tools to bring the consumer materially into the corporation. Visualization, materialization, and persona-fication are specific techniques. These techniques—which we term "making fetish," following original seventeenth-century usage—produce autonomous commercial facts—"factishes"—whose making is soon forgotten (Latour 2010).

As part of this research, we were intrigued especially by the ubiquity and power of video as a market research tool. Organizational actors made recurring references to video's ability to bring "consumers to life" and produce "real consumers." Beyond the fact that video enables a more multi-dimensional and sensory rendering of consumers' lives that facilitates narrative transportation (Green and Brock 2000), we saw, in their reactions to watching videos, something quasi-magical and powerful.

For instance, in an interview we conducted at a major household care company, a research executive talked to us about the way her team ritualistically and exhaustively videotaped consumer behaviours and encounters:

> When I say we videotape everything, we videotape e-ve-ry-thing. Whenever we're talking to a consumer, whether it's in their home or in the grocery store, if we get permission from a store to do consumer work, we're videotaping … I purchased a video camera for our team, because we videotape everything now. (Janet, senior research manager, Upstate Care; emphasis in the original)

Consumer videography that produces material visual artefacts is ubiquitous in market research for market-oriented firms. No effort is spared to

produce "deep" narrative detail, materially captured and assimilated, as an executive involved in these projects shared with us below:

> Then the baton passes to us and we say "we're going to go deep on these segments now so we will go out to maybe five countries and we'll spend a day and a half with each person who represents that segment. We'll do a two-hour-long introductory interview and then we'll come back and spend a whole day with them, sometimes from 7am to 10 o'clock at night. So we collect this very rich contextual data *and we bring it back to the office.* (Diana, manager of user experience, software company; emphasis added)

In the quote above, Diana emphasizes the necessity to "go deep on these segments." Many of the projects that executives talked to us about involved working from existing marketing segmentation projects and trying to add narrative detail to these segments. The intensity of these projects (spending the whole day from "7am to 10 o'clock at night" with a particular person) is directly related to this organizational imperative of adding narrative detail to large quantitative survey-based results. Note though, that such research focuses on "each person who represents that segment" rather than trying to place that person in a larger socio-cultural context. The focus of commercial ethnography is often to materialize "the consumer" rather than the market relationships framing consumer culture.

While various technologies and artefacts (video, PowerPoint presentations, cardboard cut-outs, posters) enable organizations to bring the consumer materially into the corporation, videography seems to play a critical role in materializing the consumer. Many of our research participants shared their enthusiasm about the ability of ethnographic films to bring "to life" a specific type of consumer who is there to give "quotes":

> Recently we went into people's homes for some research and we filmed everything from where they kept the product to what kind of glasses they served it in. We filmed them giving us quotes and the purpose of that is *really to bring the consumer to life* when we come back into the Brand team. (Janet, consumer planner, British Spirits)

Amalgamated video clips become ubiquitous artefacts of finished commercial ethnographies. Amalgamated snippets, like the heterogeneous nuts, bones, bits of string, nails, rosaries, mirrors, beads, fabric, and liquids that compose West African fetishes, and whose value escaped seventeenth-century European gold and slave traders (Pietz 1988: 10) are perlocutionary (Austin 1978). "Little individual clips which in and of themselves provide some sort of compelling evidence for the client" (Rick, ethnographer, Ethnographic Research Company). Videographic "quotes" provide evidence of, and materially shape, the imagined consumer.

Beyond visualizing and materializing, commercial ethnographers and their clients suggest that the research goal is to animate and enliven organizational spaces. Grace (consumer insights manager, American Bank) explained:

> When the research company came back to present the findings, they had a PowerPoint presentation but embedded in the PowerPoint presentation were quotes *to bring to life* [emphasis added] what the consumer had said.

Similarly, Linda, an innovation consultant, talked about a project where the client asked her company to bring "a segment to life." She mentioned the selective recruitment of exemplars and the careful staging employed to craft personas, as the client expected to widely circulate the end product ("show it to all their sales staff"):

> If the objective is really about sort of *bringing a segment to life* we are going to be very picky about who we talk to, sort of *find the exemplary person* … when clients explicitly state that they want a high end deliverable that they want to show it to all their sales staff, or to all their executive team, we'll rent specialized equipment, we'll work with a videographer, *we'll stage it much more*. (Linda, VP of research, Upstate Consulting; emphasis added)

Video and consumer quotes help materialize the consumer by operating as sensuous forms of market figuration.

Beyond video as a particularly powerful technology to "bring the consumer to life," persona-fication has become especially popular as a way to

materialize the elusive consumer within corporations. In Latin, the word persona refers to the mask an actor dons to play a character. In literary theory, persona-fication refers to the narrative trope through which abstractions are given personalities (Paxson 1994). Advertising agencies use persona widely as shorthand narrative devices (Stern 1994). Within the walls of the firms we visited, we found that persona-fication had become a standard organizational practice.

Hence, one ethnographer recounted how she became involved in a ritualized persona-fication project in a high-tech company's drive to be "consumer focused":

> So a VP comes in and says, "yeah, we need to be consumer focused, consumer-centred, and we need to use personas because they're really awesome" … nobody really knows why you need to do it, or exactly how to do it or what you are actually supposed take from it. (Patti, user interaction researcher, Telecommunications Company)

In the same way that PowerPoint has come to occupy a central role in the process of strategy-making (Kaplan 2017: 320), persona-fication has become an important technology to symbolize customer-centricity. What was especially surprising, though, was the way personas would often take on a life and a death of their own, detached from the process of meaning-making they were supposed to animate. Consistent with Patti's remarks above, a user researcher employed by a large American telecommunications firm talked about personas "floating" in the corporation and about organizational actors struggling to find meaningful uses for them:

> Somebody had started the persona project a few years ago, so they were kind of floating but nobody really knows what to do with them. (Sabrina, user interaction researcher, Telecommunications Company)

Not unlike the persona-fied fetish created in mercantile West Africa, firms name consumer personas; detailed fictional narratives describe their lives, their likes and dislikes. The firms inscribe these details in booklets and posters that live inside company walls (Fig. 5.1) and appear in advertising as in the example of Antonella, the Ford factish (Fig. 5.2).

Fig. 5.1 Photo of persona developed in a corporate setting

Fig. 5.2 Ford factish

Animation and ambiguity of control are two final moments of fetishization (Ellen 1988).

Ambiguity of control refers to the ambiguous power relations between the animator and the fetish (Pietz 1988). Indeed, once personas are "brought to life," they literally take on a life of their own. The visualization of the consumer through persona-fication triggers persuasive power that may trump other forms of knowledge, "because you can argue with what the words on the page say but you can't argue with the video" (Matthew, vice president, market research company). Factishes become agentic boundary objects (Star 2010) that circulate in discourse and practice. Thus, Malcolm (VP of planning, advertising agency) described how organizational members identify with persona and how the factish's circulation starts impacting on various company actors:

> When we show the film, the client says [lowered voice] "Oh, I went to that ethnography, that's my person. That's my person, and I was there." So there's a real strong sense of identification.

Similarly, Coby (senior user researcher, American Bank) spoke of the bank's personas "sitting" with other executives. Once consumer-factishes begin to circulate as boundary objects, they begin to anchor the action of partners and people outside of the groups that created them. Diana, a user experience manager at a software company, explained:

> Personas are really powerful in our company. You take a consumer segment, and you give them a name and a face and you make that person come alive. For engineering teams this is really powerful … everyone understands the consumer.

Hence at Diana's firm, the persona has come to stand for "the consumer." They have the "power" to direct product development teams. Once materialized and animated, the factish becomes part of a mutual entanglement with organizational members, where the factish's vitality and power passes along to organizational members who feel "excited" and use the power of the fetish to "tell their other people about it." Beyond fictional archetypes, persona become real, but they also become objects of

control. Employees should serve them; real people should behave like them. In the next section, we suggest that in consumer culture, other factishes also induce adoration and emulation.

Modern Magicians: Creative Directors in Luxury

As anthropologists have documented, magicians are undeniable figures of fascination who employ bodily techniques to modulate and attune words, sounds, objects, and other sensory elements of the environment to affect the behaviour and even the consciousness of their patients and targets (Novellino 2009). Magical intervention in material, immaterial, and social worlds has a number of characteristic features. First, magic provides evidence of contact with transcendent forces (Malinowski 1935; Mauss and Hubert [1902] 1972). Second, it incorporates ritualized, rhetorical words sometimes glossed as "spells" which are not unlike commercial speech (McCreery 1995) and clearly perlocutionary in intent (Austin 1978): that is, to do by saying. Third, magic entails non-discursive, embodied acts intended to persuade a particular audience of the efficacy of performers' words and deeds. Fourth, it requires engaged performers with charismatic characteristics, that is, transformational abilities (Pels 2003; Takala 2005). Fifth, magic transfers qualities among objects, whether persons, things, or other beings, through relations of similarity and contiguity, but it also attunes them one to another (Novellino 2009).

At the helm of many luxury brands stands a creative director who is presented as art lover and artist, brand underscoring his/her links to the world of art and to an aesthetic vision. By building on its links with art, luxury branding strategy accentuates both the aesthetic gift of the creator and also the singularity of that genius (Lipovetsky and Roux 2003). The artist creates new things; he or she moves towards the unknown in this quest for novelty; and transgresses prevailing aesthetic norms and regenerates them. Management and various cultural intermediaries incessantly associate creative directors with claims of creative skills and exceptional, transformational abilities:

> Galliano's imagination, storytelling and research trips are legendary. Each season he searches the globe, travelling through cultures, continents, literature, the arts, fantasy, and the unexpected to innovate and pioneer new ideas. He brings the future, fantasy, and romance to life.[2]

Besides offering an aesthetic vision and creating the singular and original, the artistic director has also the magical power of creation (Dion and Arnould 2011). We find here the concept of transformative power (Becker 1982; Heinich 2004). The artist has the magic power to turn any object into an artwork by the force of his name, sanctioned by his recognition as an artist, which in turn, is infused by belief in his authenticity (Becker 1982; Bourdieu and Delsaut 1975). Thus, any object can be considered a work of art on condition that it results from the action of an artist; an artist who has been recognized as such by society, generally via processes of framing and performing of actions in conformity with generalized notions of artistic behaviour. Similarly, for luxury goods to attain the status of artworks and thereby highlight their auratic qualities, it is crucial their creator be recognized as an artist. He thereby acquires the magical power to transform an everyday object into a work of art.

This representation of the artistic director as artist/magician is vital to luxury brands. As Kapferer (1998: 5) argues, magic "deals with the forces of intentionality and its transmutations that are at the heart of the creation by human beings of their social … worlds." In this framework, we see the artistic director who not only passes on his/her revelation but also "transmutes" (rewrites) codes of beauty and creates a distinctive world, a "style" (Bourdieu and Delsaut 1975; Dion and Arnould 2011).

"Not just anybody can be a magician: the magician possesses qualities which distinguish him from common men" (Mauss and Hubert [1902] 1972: 19). Like magicians, artistic directors stand apart, but not only by singular artistic gifts. They tend to distinguish themselves by projecting transgressive images (Takala 2005). Alexander McQueen evoked sado-masochistic themes.[3] Gaultier made lingerie into outerwear. Marc Jacobs tweets about orgies and appeared naked in a fashion spread. Eilish Macintosh shows models tied in leather and rope.[4]

Galliano practices shape-shifting, appearing as a sequence of mythic characters tied to his collections: a Mad Hatter, a Bonaparte pirate

grotesque, a French street tough with a brassiere, even a conservative banker, or a cavalier.

Transgressing expectations about reality is dramatically illustrated by the talking Jean Paul Gaultier mannequin in the recent retrospectives in Montréal, Paris, London, Brooklyn, and San Francisco. Similarly, Karl Lagerfeld's costumes are so iconic—dark glasses, white shirt, fingerless gloves, ponytail—that he photographed a model dressed up as himself for the Harper's Bazaar March 2010 issue,[5] and often repeats this gesture. Gaultier and Lagerfeld evoke magical doubling—magicians' ability to project simulacra—noted by Mauss and Hubert ([1902] 1972: 42–44).

As with traditional sorcerers, creative directors sacrifice for their powers (Kapferer 1998; Mauss and Hubert [1902] 1972; Stoller and Olkes 1987). Thus, many have difficult personal relationships (Chanel, Dolce, Gabbana, Jacobs, Galliano, Lagerfeld, McQueen, St Laurent, Versace). Creative directors sacrifice everything for their passion, for their art, thus:

> Printemps Haussmann featured window displays with artistic directors, living artistic directors! They were obliged to spend several hours in the windows. Well, Karl Lagerfeld played along. He spent many hours in the display window … many hours in the window at 90 degrees. He played the game and he loved it. He really gave of himself. But, he has given his life to this. (Sophie, merchandising director)

This discourse mixes ideas of singularity, sacrifice, dedication, and force of will ("many hours in the window," "90 degrees"), all Romantic characteristics of artists/magicians. Again, with Lagerfeld, as with Jacobs and Galliano, informants evoke the creative director's exceptional, even magical, persona.

Public consecration is integral to the magician's authority (Mauss and Hubert [1902]: 50). At the source of magicians' power are publically recognized actions where beliefs are rooted and whence charismatic figures draw their authority (Bourdieu and Delsaut 1975; Mauss and Hubert [1902] 1993: 50; Takala 2005; Weber 1915). Similarly, to establish the artistic director's charismatic authority, it is important for there to be a consecration that simultaneously legitimizes the creator and his or her creations (Bourdieu and Delsaut 1975). This consecration takes place

through collective rituals. Fashion shows constitute the most important collective ritual for luxury brands and they are a major symbolic moment for them. There we find the principal properties of magical ritual: repetitive formal and normative sequencing and a ceremonial cadence (Mauss and Hubert [1902] 1993: 63; Sackrider 2006). The whole thing is "bizarre, involving artifice and unnatural features" (Mauss and Hubert [1902] 1972: 62): staging, actors (the freakish models), strategically positioned celebrity spectators, décor, stage design, and dramaturgy (a tense period of anticipation, a very intense display accentuated by visual and auditory effects that are like an adrenaline rush). Successful shows conclude with a Durkheimian collective frisson: applause for the designer. This is one way the creative directors' charismatic auras are transmitted to their creations, and these transformed into what Baudrillard would call "the model," a pre-commodity, in fact.

The artistic director never secures his/her charismatic authority definitively. It is constantly subject to test. If belief is not confirmed periodically and materially, it risks evaporating (Weber 1915). This explains why the twice-yearly fashion show ritually mediates between artistic directors and their special publics, and through which their artistic genius and its imaginary "dream" is legitimized:

> People buy the dream, the immaterial, the impression of becoming chic. It is an accession to the immaterial. The dream, it must rely upon the real, it must be legitimate. Haute couture is there to maintain the dream. People project themselves into the models that wear the clothes in the shows. (manager, luxury)

Artistic directors must be sanctioned by "the authorities in the art world" (Becker 1982), that is to say, cultural intermediaries (McCracken 1989) who are authorized to decide for others, who have the authority to appreciate the work of artists, and to authenticate the artistic character of their work. Such intermediaries are qualified to sanction luxury brands because they too have an innate gift for doing so (artists) because they are in the know (journalists), or else they are opinion leaders (celebrities) (McCracken 1989; Sackrider 2006). All have acquired the cultural capital that allows them to consecrate the work (Becker 1982). Social media

has turned fashion models into powerful digital publishers, some of whom have far larger audiences than brands or traditional magazines. For instance, fashion model Liu Wen, China's most successful supermodel has over 3 million followers on Instagram alone. During the 2017 Paris Couture Week, she didn't walk in a single show. Instead, she sat front row at Chanel as part of her ambassadorship for the house where she shot and posted a video on social media.[6] Diffusing a selfie with Karl Lagerfeld (Chanel artistic director) on social media wearing Chanel jacket and bag, Liu Wen secures the charismatic authority of the designer and reinforces his aura at the same time.

Transferring the designers' charismatic aura to the fashion, the fashion shows, and luxury boutiques enlists two laws of magic: contamination by similarity and by contiguity (Dion and Arnould 2011). The law of similarity stipulates that sympathetic effects are transmitted by actions: absorption, touch, infusion, and so forth (Mauss and Hubert 1902/1993). Similarly, when a person recognized as an artist lays his hands on a product it can be transmuted into a work of art through his intermediation (Heilbrunn 1999; Honnef 1990; Millet 2006). Contamination by similarity can be carried out by any intermediary who has the legitimacy to do so (Mauss and Hubert 1902/1993). Insofar as the artistic director is accepted as an artist, he or she enjoys the legitimacy necessary to manipulate objects and transmit new properties to them. In addition, consistent with the principle of sympathetic magic, luxury brands enlist other artists to create works based on the brand. Chanel worked with the deconstructive architect Zaha Hadid, the conceptual artist Daniel Buren, and the multimedia artist Yoko Ono. Displayed both in museums and in the flagship boutiques, the aura of art is transferred to luxury. Recently, Vuitton collaborated with artist Jeff Koons, remixes the iconic artworks of the old masters such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Vincent Van Gogh, Titian, or Rubens.

Luxury brands contamination through similarity with the art world is conveyed through the flagship boutiques' architecture, which themselves are conceived of as works of art (Joy and Sherry 2003). Flagship boutique is now considered a distinctive architectural project: the Maison Hermès in Tokyo (2001), Prada in Tokyo (2003) and Los Angeles (2004), and

so forth. Star-architects are called on to design these stores: Renzo Piano for Hermès, Rem Koolhaas for Prada, Frank Gehry for Vuitton.

Flagship boutiques set up additional mechanisms for fostering contagion through similarity between brand and fine art. In their substantive staging, luxury brands deploy a range of formal mechanisms derived from the world of museums so that the commercial luxury object obtains the aura of non-commercial art works. Sales items and items drawn from the designer collections are placed on pedestals, shiny display cases are ubiquitous, lighting is focused on the objects, clients are placed at some physical distance from the items, and so forth (field notes). These museological techniques have been identified in other contexts (Peñaloza 1998; Borghini et al. 2009; Hollenbeck et al. 2008), but their use in luxury retailing is part of a holistic strategy designed to sanctify the creative director's vision, at the limit his or her lineage, not primarily the brand as in other retail contexts. Thus, art is not only in the object: it is also a mode of display that uses similarity to transfer meaning (Melot 1994). It is not the properties of the work of art that have been transmitted to the luxury goods, but rather things associated with works of art such as cases, lighting, pedestals, and so forth.

The second sympathetic law of magic—that is, the law of contiguity—states that elements once in contact may continue to affect one another across time and space even after contact is severed (Mauss and Hubert [1902] 1993; Newman et al. 2011). Simple contact between luxury objects and the world of art means that the former may acquire the properties of the latter. With a view to this, luxury brands include art at their flagship sales outlets. Works of art are installed even in the best in-store locations and the focus is on the artist's imprimatur. Through the intermediary of works of art on display at the point of sale, luxury products bathe in an artistic ambiance so that artistic properties will infuse and contaminate them but more importantly will continue to emanate from them after sale.

Thus luxury products bathe in a mysterious and artistic ambiance so that mystery and art will infuse and contaminate them, and will continue to emanate from them after sale (Wunenburger 2001). Central to this world is the artistic director, a figure of fascination, who attracts the gaze while obstructing the vision. The bourgeois luxury market is the jewel in

the crown of capital, the site where money and genius merge. As fetishized objects of fascination and adoration themselves and as producers of objects of fascination and adoration, artistic directors are the apotheosis of the commodity fetish. Behind the irreducible, even undeniable, false appearance of their art, the commodified social relations at the heart of capitalism are magically concealed (Mulhern 2007). Lest there be any doubt of the latter point, consider:

> Under Slimane, Saint Laurent sales revenues more than doubled in just three years … While at Lanvin, during Elbaz's 14-year tenure, the brand expanded from just 15 stockists to over 400 worldwide and estimated revenues of 250 million euros … At Valentino, Pierpaolo Piccioli and Maria Grazia Chiuri …. pushing revenues to exceed the $1 billion mark for the first time in 2015. At Dior, Simons' intellectual, modernist designs were a hit … a 60 percent growth in revenues since 2011.[7]

Ethnological Reflections

Whether due to anthropology's lingering guilty conscience about its orientalizing legacy (Pels 2003) or magic's relative inaccessibility to ordinary scientific language, scholars may disparage studies of magic relative to those dealing with "serious" topics: inequality, imperialism, or conflict. But according to the examples above, capitalist firms turn to fetishes and magical action to bend the world to their way. Magic too is serious business; magical belief is not merely part of consumer experience (Arnould et al. 1999; Fernandez and Lastovicka 2011; Meyer 2003). If consumer culture is a "phantasmagoria" (Lash 2007: 6), the world of modern corporations, as well, is a world of dream and magic.

Performativity

Performativity is concerned with perlocutionary effects—how actions both say and do something (Austin 1978). Moreover, many actions both "cite" a cultural template and perform that template. Actions entail both citational template and performance; the performance cites or evokes the

template, but overflows that template in the sense of enacting meaningful variation on that template (Hodgson 2005). From the perspective of the anthropology of magic, what we have are spells, a bricolage of words and actions that produce material effects (Kapferer 1998; McCreery 1995).

It seems to us that both consumer videographers and artistic directors in their own ways are producers of magical spells in this sense. The collections, fashion shows, and heritage stores are material manifestations of a claim to define beauty and style, and to assert the charismatic authority of the artistic director (Dion and Arnould 2011). Weber had to allow for the possibility of non-rational transformational power in including charisma in his taxonomy (Weber 2013/1922). So it seems artistic directors are modern magicians in their uncanny ability to transcend commodity fetishism by recapturing both their labour and its product, in the form of their unique style (Baudrillard [1968] 2005; Bourdieu and Delsaut 1975). Brands try to impose their offerings on the market, not by responding to customer demand but by developing an aesthetic ideology that can be diffused to the consumer. The aim is that the bewitched consumer becomes a willing adorer. He or she becomes receptive to the codes of taste, beauty, and fashion that are proposed because this is the way that the creative director, at once creative artist and magical being, has defined these codes (Dion and Arnould 2011). This kind of symbolic domination is about accession to an "emotional community," that relies not on constraint but on enthusiasm (see Arvidsson and Malossi 2011).

For their part, consistent with the tendency to express ideologies as personae (Pietz 1988: 119), consumer videographers and their clients let loose their persona-fied factishes to reorder behaviour and priorities within organizations. They assert who and what the "consumer" is and what the consumer does.

Materiality

Miller (1987, 2005) has repeatedly argued that material forms constitute that which they create; they are not mere covers, symbols, or surfaces. He points out that making the immaterial manifest is also a practice of explanation and persuasion. As both our cases show, material practices play a crucial role in ideological consolidation in rendering objects—whether

consumer factish or luxury brand—both intelligible and opaque. Moreover, designers' and consumer videographers' practices are figurative gestures that assert something about the nature of the world and various actors' roles in it. Commercial videographers transform persons into consumer persona—not representations of them, but exemplars. Through ritual, creative directors simultaneously produce and reproduce themselves (Hodgson 2005), and exemplars of luxury in the objects they bring forth. Again, haute couture does not symbolize luxury: it is a claim to be the thing itself.

Conclusion

Consistent with the anti-utilitarian critique of contemporary economic life, we have shown that magical practices are constitutive of two central marketing constructs: the consumer and the human luxury brand. Thus, as Kapferer argues, magic "deals with the forces of intentionality and its transmutations that are at the heart of the creation by human beings of their social and political worlds" (1998: 5). Marketing magic enacts relations between man and the transcendent, bringing consumer persona "to life" and manifesting luxurious ideals of the beautiful (Tambiah 1990: 106). Marketing magic is a practice of power, a non-rationalist strategy for resolving intractable problems (de Surgy 1997; Evans-Pritchard [1937] 1975; Malinowski 1935), creating the manageable consumer interlocutor and concealing commodity relations behind artful luxury. Finally, magic "restructures and integrates the minds and emotions of the actors" (Kapferer 1998; Tambiah 1968: 202), producing a change of state in the marketers fascinated by the persona or the fashionistas fascinated by the creative directors' artful commodities.

Notes

1. See http://www.journaldumauss.net/.
2. http://www.johngalliano.com/ (accessed 12 May 2009)
3. http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/alltherage/2011/03/paris-fashion-week-at-alexander-mcqueen-dresses-fit-for-a-queen.html. (accessed 12 December 2016).

4. http://www.omgblog.com/2013/03/omg_knot_to_be_missed_eilish_m.php/#axzz3weFLLlCp (accessed 26 July 2017).
5. www.chanel-news.com/en/page/2/ (accessed 15 March 2015).
6. https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/intelligence/models-the-new-power-publishers (accessed 21 July 2017).
7. www.businessoffashion.com/articles/intelligence/thebigparisshakeup-saintlaurentlanvindiorandvalentino. Accessed October, 19, 2016.

References

Applbaum, K. 2011. Broadening the Marketing Concept: Service to Humanity, or Privatization of the Public Good? In *Inside Marketing: Practices, Ideologies, Devices*, ed. Detlev Zwick and Julien Cayla, 269–298. New York: Oxford University Press.

Arnould, E., and J. Cayla. 2015. Consumer Fetish: Commercial Ethnography and the Sovereign Consumer. *Organization Studies 36* (10): 1361–1386.

Arnould, E., et al. 1999. Making (Consumption) Magic: A Study of White Water River Rafting. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 28: 33–68.

Arvidsson, A., and G. Malossi. 2011. Customer Co-production from Social Factory to Brand: Learning from Italian Fashion. In *Inside Marketing: Practices, Ideologies Devices*, ed. Detlev Zwick and Julien Cayla, 212–233. New York: Oxford University Press.

Austin, J.L. 1978. *How to Do Things with Words*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Baudrillard, J. 2005 [1968]. *The System of Objects*. New York: Verso.

Becker, H.S. 1982. *Art Worlds*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Belk, R.W. 1991. The Ineluctable Mysteries of Possessions. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality* 6: 17–55.

Borghini, S., N. Diamond, R.V. Kozinets, M.A. McGrath, A.M. Muñiz, and J.F. Sherry. 2009. Why Are Themed Brandstores So Powerful? Retail Brand Ideology at American Girl Place. *Journal of Retailing* 85 (September): 363–375.

Bourdieu, P., and Y. Delsaut. 1975. Le couturier et sa griffe: Contribution à une théorie de la magie. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 1: 7–36.

Cayla, J. 2013. Brand Mascots as Organizational Totems. *Journal of Marketing Management* 29 (1–2): 86–104.

Cayla, Julien, and Eric Arnould. 2013. Ethnographic Stories for Market Learning. *Journal of Marketing* 77 (4): 1–16.

Cayla, J., and G.M. Eckhardt. 2008. Asian Brands and the Shaping of a Transnational Imagined Community. *Journal of Consumer Research* 35: 216–230.

Cayla, J., and L. Peñaloza. 2012. Mapping the Play of Organizational Identity in Foreign Market Adaptation. *Journal of Marketing* 76: 38–54.

Dion, D., and E. Arnould. 2011. Retail Luxury Strategy: Assembling Charisma Through Art and Magic. *Journal of Retailing 87* (4): 502–520.

Ellen, R. 1988. Fetishism. *Man* 23: 213–235.

Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1975 [1937]. *Witchcraft, Magic and Oracles Among the Azande*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Fernandez, K.V., and J.L. Lastovicka. 2011. Making Magic: Fetishes in Contemporary Consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research* 38: 278–299.

Gabriel, Y., and T. Lang. 2006. *The Unmanageable Consumer*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Green, M.C., and T.C. Brock. 2000. The Role of Transportation in the Persuasiveness of Public Narratives. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 79 (November): 701–721.

du Gay, P., and G. Salaman. 1992. The Cult[ure] of the Customer. *Journal of Management Studies* 29 (5): 614–633.

Heilbrunn, B. 1999. In Search of the Lost Aura: The Object in the Age of Marketing Romanticism. In *Romancing the Market*, ed. S. Brown, A.-M. Doherty, and B. Clarke, 187–201. London and New York: Routledge.

Heinich, Nathalie. 2004. *La Sociologie de l'Art*. Paris: La Découverte.

Hodgson, D. 2005. "Putting on a Professional Performance": Performativity, Subversion and Project Management. *Organization* 12: 51–68.

Hollenbeck, C.R., C. Peters, and G.M. Zinkhan. 2008. Retail Spectacles and Brand Meaning: Insights from a Brand Museum Case Study. *Journal of Retailing* 84 (September): 334–353.

Honnef, K. 1990. *Warhol*. Cologne: Taschen.

Joy, Annamma, and John F. Sherry Jr. 2003. Speaking of Art as Embodied Imagination: A Multisensory Approach to Understanding Aesthetic Experience. *Journal of Consumer Research* 30 (2): 259–282.

Kapferer, B. 1998. *The Feast of the Sorcerer: Practices of Consciousness and Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kaplan, Sarah. 2017. Strategy and PowerPoint: An Inquiry into the Epistemic Culture and Machinery of Strategy Making. *Organization Science* 22 (2): 320–346.

Kennedy, K.N., J.R. Goolsby, and E.J. Arnould. 2003. Implementing a Customer Orientation: Extension of Theory and Application. *Journal of Marketing* 67 (October): 67–82.

Lash, Scott. 2007. Capitalism and Metaphysics. *Theory, Culture & Society* 24 (5): 1–26.

Latour, B. 1993. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
———. 2010. *On the Modern Cult of the Factish Gods*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Lipovetsky, G., and E. Roux. 2003. *Le Luxe Éternel de l'Âge du Sacré au Temps des Marques, Le Débat*. Paris: Gallimard.
Malinowski, B. 1935. *Coral Gardens and Their Magic*, 2 vols. New York: American Book.
Marx, K. 1974. *Capital: Volume 1*. Trans. B. Fowkes. New York: Vintage.
Mauss, M., and H. Hubert. 1902/1993. *A General Theory of Magic*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.
———. 1972 [1902]. *A General Theory of Magic*. New York: Routledge.
Mazzarella, W. 2003. *Shoveling Smoke: Advertising and Globalization in Contemporary India*. Durham: Duke University Press.
McCracken, G. 1989. Who Is the Celebrity Endorser? Cultural Foundations of the Endorsement Process. *Journal of Consumer Research* 16 (December): 310–321.
McCreery, J.L. 1995. Negotiating with Demons: The Uses of Magical Language. *American Ethnologist* 22: 144–164.
Melot, M. 1994. *L'Estampe Impressioniste*. Paris: Flammarion.
Meyer, B. 2003. Ghanaian Popular Cinema and the Magic in and of Film. In *Magic and Modernity*, ed. B. Meyer and P. Pels, 200–222. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Meyer, B., and P. Pels, eds. 2003. *Magic and Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Miller, D. 1987. *Material Culture and Mass Consumption*. Oxford: Blackwell.
———. 2005. Materiality: An Introduction. In *Materiality*, ed. D. Miller, 1–50. London: Duke University Press.
Millet, C. 2006. *Contemporary Art in France*. New York: Random House.
Moor, L. 2011. Neoliberal Experiments: Social Marketing and the Governance of Populations. In *Inside Marketing: Practices, Ideologies, Devices*, ed. D. Zwick and J. Cayla, 299–319. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Mulhern, F. 2007. Critical Considerations on the Fetishism of Commodities. *ELH* 74: 479–492.
Newman, G.E., et al. 2011. Celebrity Contagion and the Value of Objects. *Journal of Consumer Research* 38: 215–228.
Novellino, D. 2009. From 'Impregnation' to 'Attunement': A Sensory View of How Magic Works. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15 (4): 755–776.
Paxson, J.J. 1994. *The Poetics of Personification*. No. 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pels, P. 1998. The Spirit of Matter: On Fetish, Rarity, Fact and Fancy. In *Border Fetishism: Material Objects in Unstable Spaces*, ed. P. Spyer, 91–121. New York and London: Routledge.

———. 2003. Introduction. In *Magic and Modernity*, ed. B. Meyer and P. Pels, 1038. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Peñaloza, L. 1998. Just Doing It: A Visual Ethnographic Study of Spectacular Consumption Behavior at Nike Town. *Consumption Markets & Culture* 2 (4): 337–400.

Pietz, W. 1985. The Problem of the Fetish I. *RES: Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics* 9: 5–17.

———. 1987. The Problem of the Fetish II: The Origin of the Fetish. *RES: Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics* 13: 23–45.

———. 1988. The Problem of the Fetish IIIa: Bosman's Guinea and the Enlightenment Theory of Fetishism. *RES: Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics* 16: 105–124.

Sackrider, F. 2006. Du podium à la boutique. In Musée Galliera, pp. 64–73.

Star, S.L. 2010. This Is not a Boundary Object: Reflections on the Origin of a Concept. *Science, Technology & Human Values* 35: 601–617.

Stern, B.B. 1994. Authenticity and the Textual Persona: Postmodern Paradoxes in Advertising Narrative. *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 11 (September): 387–400.

Stoller, P., and C. Olkes. 1987. *In Sorcery's Shadow: A Memoir of Apprenticeship Among the Songhay of Niger*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

de Surgy, A., ed. 1997. *Religion et pratiques de puissance*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Takala, T. 2005. Charismatic Leadership and Power. *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 2 (3): 45–57.

Tambiah, S.J. 1968. The Magical Power of Words. *Man* 3: 175–208.

———. 1990. *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Varman, R., B. Saha, and P. Skålén. 2011. Market Subjectivity and Neoliberal Governmentality in Higher Education. *Journal of Marketing Management 27* (11–12): 1163–1185.

Weber, M. 1915. *Sociologie des religions*. Paris: Gallimard.

———. 2013 [1922]. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Ed. G. Roth and C. Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wunenburger, J. 2001. *Le sacré*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Zelizer, V.A. 2011. *Economic Lives: How Culture Shapes the Economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.