Flying Carpets: the Production and Consumption of Tradition and Mystique

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ABSTRACT - This paper examines the interplay between the local material culture and the global forces in the construction of an "authentic" cultural product, in this case, the Turkish carpet. The preliminary results of an ethnographical study on the production, marketing, and consumption of handmade Turkish carpets (piled, knotted) and kilims (flat woven) are presented. We discuss how contemporary carpets trek the thin line between being authentic, aesthetic and cultural objects versus exotic souvenirs. A new wave of revivalism amidst a general decline in carpets indicates that authenticity is emergent. We discuss the issues of representation of the aesthetics of the Oriental "Other" in the global relations. While the traditional has become modern, some modern Turkish carpets recreate authenticity. In this process, tradition and mystique of cultural products may come to be branded.

Wherein lies our amazed admiration for this oriental art?... It is thousand times deeper art of color and composition and makes a shamble of our conventional theories.

(German Expressionist Franz Marc, 1911, in Cootner 1990, p.17)

GLOBALIZATION AND CONSUMPTION OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

Studies of global consumption focus almost exclusively on the commercial challenges and cultural consequences of the worldwide dissemination of modern, Western products. Very little attention has been paid to the reverse flow of cultural products of the Other-traditional crafts and objects of art from less developed countries-to consumers in the West (for exceptions, see Belk and Groves 1999, Howes 1996, Jamison 1999, McGuckin 1997, Spooner 1986). However, trade and consumption of the objects of the Other have proliferated with the global flows of people, money, technology and information, media images, and ideologies. The study of the creation and consumption of such cultural goods will allow a fuller appreciation of the cultural dimensions of globalization and consumption of cultural difference.

With global flows, there is a contemporary quest for "authentic" and "exotic" objects amidst spread of global brands and marketing. In a modern world of mass-produced ubiquitous brands, cultural products, representing the Other, come to be desired as the original and the unique. Modernity is the condition of rootlessness and mobility. If modernity is felt as lost authenticity and as "pure products going crazy" (Clifford 1988, p.4), "traditional" "pure" products of the Other are sought to supply what is missing in modern life. Valuation of various "exotic" objects, collected in the West for centuries, change over time reflecting socio-historical transformations (such as industrialization and mass consumption) and reproduction of Western cultural categories and distinctions. In contemporary Western culture, the consumption of cultural products of the Other relates to the aura of the authentic, defined in opposition to mass-produced commodities, and the constructions of the Other, in the historical power relations between the West and "the Rest".
Within the Other, in the global flows, production, trade, and consumption of local cultural products are part of daily lives and reflect the tensions of the lived modernity. In a modernizing and developing society, traditional cultural products connotes the past that the society is striving to break away from (see Ger 1997). Ali (1997) argues that the faster a country industrializes, the faster its traditional arts decline. For local consumers, Western art forms and decorative objects become more valuable than and replace traditional ones, at least until modernization becomes relatively normalized. While cultural goods may be displayed as heritage in museums, with dwindling local demand, production comes to be for the fickle tourist and export markets. From a local perspective, production and consumption of cultural goods relate to the valuation and construction of the Others-the modern/new/Western and the temporal Other, the past-as well as conceptions of the global market.

The objective of this paper is to enrich understanding of the cultural complexity of globalization through the study of non-Western cultural products, in this case handmade Turkish carpets. We investigate how the realms of consumption and production change with the impact of modernization and globalization. The flying carpet of the tales of A Thousand and One Nights, featured under the feet of The Snake Charmer in GTIr(me's painting on the cover of Said's Orientalism, faces decline in its contemporary global voyage. Yet, a curious emergent revival, or a "rehabilitative commercialization" (see McCutchn 1997) is also manifest. We address the constitution of authenticity, value, and meaning of cultural objects and draw on postcolonial perspectives in the analysis of representations of the Other.

CULTURAL PRODUCTS AND THE PROBLEM OF AUTHENTICITY

Oriental carpets can be understood as multifaceted cultural products. Carpets have always been woven for exports as well as for home use. In the Western realm of consumption, they have long served as prestigious social markers, objects of aesthetic appreciation and sources of aesthetic influence as well as icons of the mystique of the Orient in the Western cultural imagination. Now, despite being a commodity available to middle classes, they have not lost their elitist appeal and continue to receive special attention from collectors (Alexander 1993, Cootner 1990, Glassie 1993). Spooner (1986) states that carpets have had artistic, social, commercial, religious, and practical everyday significance. Today, in Turkey, while replaced by the machine-made carpets in village homes where they are handmade for commercial purposes, they are displayed in museums and private collections and decorate modern urban living rooms. They represent quintessential cultural heritage and can be viewed as index and conveyor of a people's traditions as well as an indication of the lived experiences of technological, social and cultural changes.

Cultural products are defined by dissociation from commodities, fakes or mere curios (Clifford 1988). From the 19th century on, non-Western artefacts have been seen as if not-then objects of aesthetic value. But mostly they have been perceived and appreciated as objects of historical or anthropological significance, at least when they could be regarded as genuine and rare representations of traditional culture. Other, more common objects were not seen as authentic and remained exotic curiosities, or, later, souvenirs or tourist art. The distinctions and evaluation of cultural products depend on judgments of aesthetic and cultural authenticity.

The meaning of a cultural product rests on its material and symbolic production. The historically constituted social relations authorize and sustain the meaning and value of cultural products. An object, to be able to objectify cultural capital, must be authenticated or officially recognized as something distinctive. "The legitimacy and authority of a specific critical interpretation derive at least in part from the legitimacy and authority of those who propagate it" (Bourdieu 1993, p.19). For example, museums authenticate meaning of the artwork through research, documentation, and accreditation and create an aura of value placing it in the museum space (Duhaime, Joy, and Ross 1995). Authenticity, usually defined by cultural authorities, legitimizes the object and, through the object, the cultural capital of the consumer.

Authenticity does not lie in the object: it is "a form of cultural discrimination projected onto objects" (Spooner 1986, p. 226). For example, carpets types are rationalized in terms of criteria such as age, provenience, materials, color, design, feel, condition, fineness, and evenness of the weave. These criteria are recognized in different degrees by a wide variety of consumers, from those buying their first handmade piece to the most discerning collector. "Becoming an aficionado means entering the debate about the recognition and appreciation of the criteria-criteria of authenticity" (Spooner 1986, p.197). Spooner indicates that authenticity has to do not only with the genuineness of material attributes of the object, but also with the interpretation of genuineness, the interpretation of cultural distance over space and time, negotiated in a social arena. "Authenticity is a conceptualization of elusive, inadequately defined, other cultural, socially ordered genuineness" (Spooner 1986, p.225).

When tourists, consumers, and collectors acquire "exotic," "traditional," or "primitive" objects, part of what they consume is the images of the Other, representations of cultural difference. Construction of a cultural difference/distance as real or genuine depends on concepts of cultural and aesthetic authenticity. As Western consumers aestheticize and consume representations of the Other, authenticity is "the currency at play in the marketplace of cultural difference" and functions as an ideal (Root 1996, p.78). Even if not neocolonialist or orientalist, and however romantic or indicative of a new respect for local cultures (see Belk and Groves 1999), Western ideals of authenticity tend to reproduce representations of the Other, in ways that can be the related to historical power relations.

The forces of globalization have affected the consumption of non-Western objects and notions of their authenticity in contradictory ways. On one hand, the increasing flows of people and goods have expanded markets for the exotic and traditional. On the other hand, the expansion of communication, commerce, and modernization threaten to undermine the tradition, cultural difference, and purity on which Western judgments of authenticity are based. To be seen as authentic, genuine, or maximally distant, the Other must be preserved in its pristine form (see Spooner 1986). However, in the global modernity, there is no going back. Besides, while any reduction in cultural distance threatens authenticity, carpets sell only if they suit Western tastes and fashions. Producers reflect upon and cater to Western preferences and images of tradition and authenticity. For example, the color preferred by the weavers can be deemed crude and ugly by the Western consumers. The consumer's choice, crucial to the local economy and social relations, depends on definitions of cultural and aesthetic authenticity by cultural authorities, not by the local producers. If the authentic is deemed ugly, genuineness does not place value on or legitimate the cultural object. But, the beautified authentic is no longer genuine or traditional either.

To be able to elucidate such dilemmas of authenticity, investigations of cultural products of "the Other" must consider the interplay between consumers and the meanings and values of producers and intermediaries. Based on the premise that preservation of pristine forms is neither possible nor desirable and that the very concept of authenticity needs to be reconsidered, we focus on the constructions of contemporary "authentic" cultural products. We examine the ongoing disappearance and reappearance of natural dyes and how contemporary carpets trek the thin line between being artistic and commercial objects versus exotic souvenirs or fakes. That is, how aesthetic and cultural authenticity of carpets (and thus, the cultural capital of their owners) is constructed and legitimated in the interaction between weavers, producer/managers, consumers, and cultural authorities such as museums, connoisseurs, and dealers.

We discuss theoretical issues pertaining to the construction and consumption of cultural products informed by the preliminary results of an ethnographic study on the production, design, marketing, and consumption of handmade Turkish carpets (piled, knotted) and kilims (flat woven). Our research entails observations and interviews in various key production and sale sites and homes and readings of connoisseurial literature. The sites include villages where carpets and kilims are woven, "washing" establishments where some carpets are treated to attain the desired look, and shops and auctions where they are sold. The informants are dye and yarn producers, weavers, "washers," dealers, and Turkish and Western consumers and collectors.
Carpets made their first appearance in Europe with the 11th century crusaders (Anderson 1998). Imported carpets were depicted in European paintings from the 15th century on (Alexander 1993). Carpets, having been indispensable ceremonial items in courts and churches and prestigious furnishings in the homes of the nobility in the 15th-17th centuries, and forgotten in the 18th century, were rediscovered in the 19th century and now decorated the homes of the bourgeoisie (Anderson 1998, Cootner 1990). The growing Western interest in Oriental carpets in the late 19th Century was related to the emergence of mass consumption of industrially produced commodities. This was also a time when all things Oriental became fashionable. A series of international expositions held in London, Paris and Vienna between 1851 and 1876 and Orientalist paintings stimulated the increased demand for these objects of the mysterious and exotic Orient.

Aesthetic and cultural judgments of connoisseurs and art critics have elevated the aesthetic status of carpets in the 20th Century. The evolution of modern Western art has been linked to carpets: non-representational color expression in kilims and carpets is argued to have inspired artists such as Gauguin, Derain, Bonnart, and Matisse (see Alexander 1993, Cootner 1990). Such judgments have changed the appeal of various carpet types. Historically fine carpets have been urban and courtly artefacts while flatwoven kilims and “village” carpets a part of rural life. “Kilims have played second-fiddle to their knotted cousins. Popular conception . ranked them as humberl and less refined variants of the courtly pile carpet” (Cootner 1990, p.15). However, in the 1980s, this ranking was reversed as the more culturally distant versions, the tribal, came to be valued more. Kilim exhibitions as well as the revelation of kilim’s pre-Islamic origins and its links to archaic times contributed to this reversal. The archaeologist Mellart and others suggested that the motifs (evocative of Goddess figures and related to wall paintings and pottery found in Anatolian kilim excavations) of Anatolian kilims were of neolithic origins (Cootner 1990). With the past re-made, prices of kilims, thought to contain descendants of Goddess figures, increased twenty times in the next five years (Eiland 1993). Now, connoisseurs consider kilims, with their color design features, to be more in accord with 20th century sensibilities and taste than carpets (see Cootner 1990). The tribal and folkloric nature of kilims, as with African art (Torgovnick 1990), concurs with the cultivation of associations with exotic and primitive artistic antecedents.

Local production of carpets had to increase to meet the growing Western demand from the 19th century on. To allow that increase, traditional root and vegetable dyes were replaced by synthetic dyes available since the late 19th century. However, the colors of carpets made with natural dyed yarn blend and fade in a characteristic fashion that distinguishes them from carpets woven with chemically dyed yarn. As natural dyes began to disappear this patina-effect was lost, and with it one of the main aesthetic and symbolic qualities for which hand-woven carpets were revered. Not only did natural dyes disappear, but also sooner-finished, less fine designs made by industrial rather than hand-spun yarn came to prevail.

As the qualities that inspire the passion for carpets have been disappearing in the 20th century expert consumers or dealers were not interested in new carpets at all. It was clear that something was missing. I twice tried to sell new goods. I failed not because the rugs would not sell, but because dealing in them felt dissatisfying, even dishonest. I knew they wouldn’t look better in twenty years but worse. . . Nothing in the patterns-stiff and repetitive—or the colours would reawaken the sense of wonder, of respect, that collectors feel for fine old pieces and which buyers of good rugs in the past felt when enjoying their acquisitions (Opie 1998, p.199).

An antique carpet is considered to be the authentic par excellence. The magic is only in the old: in the words of a dealer, “old carpets talk to you, new carpets don’t”. The disdain for new carpets among collectors, of course, also expresses the carpet’s patina-effect related to the fading of (natural) colors and to the prestige of rarity. While the connoisseurs despised the new carpets, popular export demand and development of Turkey as a tourist destination in the 1980s opened up new markets for these affordable carpets.

In addition to being items of trade throughout history, locally, carpets and kilims were functional art. Carpets had religious uses: mosque floors were covered with carpets, donated in memory of a deceased family member or as payment for Koran classes, and believers used prayer rugs at home. Fine pile carpets were aesthetic luxuries in urban life, commissioned by the court or the wealthy. Village and nomadic carpets and kilims were practical art in rural life. They covered walls, floors, sofas, beds, for decoration and warmth, placed under the dinner tray, used to make baby cribs, baby carriers, cereal sacks, and were bartered for other goods. They were also significant as dowry pieces. Made by females with loving care, carpets represented the nature and the cosmos experienced by the weaver, who, much like a painter, expressed her feelings, hopes and dreams in the designs, motifs, and colors she used.

With the industrialization of Turkey, factory-produced carpets (called “machine carpets”) began to replace the hand-woven ones. Increasingly, urban residents preferred wall-to-wall carpeting while rural residents bought “machine carpets” of traditional designs. Many rural women traded in their kilims for modern machine carpets with factory agents who came to the villages in pick-up trucks. Reasoning that machine carpets are durable, large enough to cover the whole floor, and thick and keep the floor warm, they no longer wanted to bother with difficult-to-make-kilims. Yet, peasant women are still proud to show the few pieces they made for themselves. An older woman said that her daughters could take anything from her except one small piece of kilim (sack) from her dowry that she keeps under her mattress, barely visible hanging under the sheets. She will not hang it on the wall lest it wears.

Today, while handmade Chinese carpets may decorate urban Turkish homes, ritual uses of carpets still persist in rural areas. An urban consumer chooses among various types of Turkish or Chinese carpets in upscale stores or auctions, to adorn her fashionable wooden floors and match her furniture. She buys according to the styles and colors depicted in home decoration magazines and her decorator’s taste. On the other hand, in a village, a bride-to-be makes two prayer carpets to give to her father-in-law and the person driving the car taking the bride to her husband’s home. She spreads the carpet in front of the car so that the driver lets her get into the car. In the past the latter piece was placed on the saddle of the horse taking the bride to the groom’s house. Both in the city and the village carpets continue to be lived tradition as dowry items. In addition, to some modern urban elites, Turkish carpets represent the aesthetics of their exotic Others—the past, threatened cultural heritage, and “remote” folk.

Prevalent Patterns in Contemporary Relations of Carpet Production and Marketing

Despite the aesthetic and cultural importance of carpets, the current state of both the art/craft and business seems bleak. Dealers claim that the domestic market has long not been thriving and exports crashed in the past 5-10 years. They maintain that most Turks, especially the...
new rich, don't have a "carpet culture," and that decline of exports is due to a growing international demand for cheaper items and the increased competition from Turkey, China, and India, where labor costs are far lower than in Turkey. Now, they claim, in global markets, only the most expensive and the cheapest carpets sell and the proliferation of low quality Turkish carpets reduces the appeal and status of Turkish carpets in general. Renowned production areas have almost stopped manufacture for lack of demand. While an antique Usak carpet will fetch exorbitant prices at Sotheby's auction, no carpets are made in Usak any more. A local carpet businessman recounted: "30 years ago each house here had a loom. There is not a single one now. The so-called-Usak carpets are being made in Kırıkkale and China".

The sense is that the local tradition is disappearing as the forces of modernization, urbanization, and globalization erode the landscape and culture of carpets. Governmental attempts of revival have had little success. During the past 15 years the government has formed cooperatives, published catalogues of traditional designs, and held carpet festivals. With a few exceptions, most cooperatives, without clear conceptions of quality and design, and with a goal to improve local economic standards, set prices too high for the quality of their carpets, which end up decaying in basements. Such poor management leads to high payment expectations for low quality and lowers weaving standards. Not able to match such high payments for low quality, local merchants, who already face problems of globalization struggle. At the end, most local weaving activity spirals further down.

Weavers in Anatolia are typically peasant women weaving in their homes or workshops of cooperatives. Kilims are easier to make and sell. While a fine carpet may take one to two years to make, a cheap kilim can be woven in a week. Most current production is for commercial purposes with the exception of a few dowry pieces. Typically, the weaver is interested in simple, easy designs that are sooner made and allow a higher turnover rate and more frequent payments. The weaver's income becomes an important part of her social life. One ritual is the "mark" day, where weavers meet weekly bringing German marks (used to be a golden coin) to the hostess of the week. This becomes a way to save money, helping each other, and forging social bonds among the women. The savings are spent on circumcision and wedding celebrations and downes but also on appliances, such as refrigerators and TV sets.

Young girls in the villages are no longer interested in weaving. They would rather go to school and watch television. Mothers do not want weaving to interfere with their homework and would rather not have their daughters follow the weaver's way of life. Echoing the attitude expressed by many weavers, a woman in a municipal cooperative offered the slogan: "I did not sit on four wooden planks. I did not make my ass hurt" (referring to the hard benches weavers are seated on in front of the vertical looms). In the local rural tradition, she pointed out, a girl would only weave 5-6 pieces for herself throughout her life. But when one weaves many carpets and works the whole day it is extremely boring and arduous: "anyone who can find another job will not weave". Some women do take pride in the quality of their work, but the overriding concern for most is make saleable or quality approvable pieces.

Freedom of expression in weaving depends on how the weaver sells her work. If a weaver sells independently, continuing with tradition, she expresses herself with varied pattern-colors, while weaving as she has seen from previous generations-previous carpets provide a theme for her imaginative creation. However, many weavers work with local dealers rather than sell independently. For example, one informant, +mer, goes to each house to give models, looms set up with wefts, and dyed yarn and to make cash payments upon collecting the finished carpet, establishing friendly relations with the weavers whom he refers to as "labourers". When a weaver works with a local merchant, a cooperative, or a firm, she is asked to execute a given pattern, with total to some fidelity to the pattern. The templates are small model carpets, sketches (called cartoons), or pictures from catalogues. More professional outfits use computerized design diagrams. The specifications for model and color are determined by the demands of the dealer's customers (city dealers).

In this process, regional designs are uprooted and produced in other regions that traditionally had different styles and motifs, removing the purity of design origins. For example, with models from catalogues published by the Ministry of Culture, +mer has the weavers in Kayseri "reproduce" say a 17th century design from any region of Anatolia, not necessarily from Kayseri. Weavers explained that they still make their own design-color modifications and sometimes resort to a less fine, easier weave. +mer, not being satisfied with the quality of weaving in Kayseri, has moved most of his work to Manisa, where weavers maintain higher standards. And now, "traditional" Kayseri carpets are made in Manisa.

To obtain the desired look and feel, the lesser carpets are treated with various techniques after the weaving. Carpets are washed in various chemicals to remove excess oils and to give a vibrant or subdued tone of colors or an antique look. To make carpets more even and add softness and shine, the finished carpets are pressed in a large machine. These efforts to "doctor" carpets represent both an attempt to compensate for poorer yarn, dyeing, and weaving and to cater to consumer tastes and ideas of what a carpet should look like and cost. It is clear that the role of the weaver has dwindled in the production of many contemporary handmade carpets, and the concern for authenticity has come mean fidelity to industrial standards of weaving and washing processes and materials.

While some marketing channels are informal and loosely organized, others are integrated. An Usak-based family business processes wool from Turkey, Central Asia, and New Zealand and dyes yarn in its local factory using a mixture of natural and synthetic dyes. They send dyed yarn to China to be woven and bring the finished carpets back for washing before sending them to the United States for sale as Turkish carpets in a store run by a partner. "Turkish yarn, Turkish dyes, Turkish designs, Turkish weaving technique, so Turkish carpet," the managing director explained, prompting a customer in the office to question whether he ought to be revealing this to us. This firm and others send Turkish weavers as "teachers" to train the Chinese in Turkish technique, so Turkish carpet, the specifications for model and color are determined by the demands of the dealer's customers (city dealers).

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Carpets of various quality levels find their way to major cities and tourist areas. In Istanbul, collectors from around the world search for fine carpets and tourists find themselves invited into hidden lairs full of carpets and historical artefacts that evoke a sense of Ottoman opulence and oriental mystique. Another kind of adventure awaits tourists in the coastal resort areas, where they can join arranged tours to carpet villages to witness how oriental carpets are made. Such places are usually staged by companies who recreate the experience of traditional weaving in more conveniently located settings. The "weavers" change from their traditional dresses to jeans when the workday is over and the tourist buses leave. Few if any carpets are actually woven there. They are brought from around the country or from abroad. Carpets sell better when accompanied by the experience, real or imagined, of how they are produced. Here as elsewhere, the carpet selling and buying process is an experience in itself.

Stores, tourist-oriented or connoisseurial, construct the "traditional" selling-buying experience. In stores aiming at the lower end of the market and tourists without much knowledge about carpets, piles of carpets will be spread out on the floor as the dealer iterates some basic judgment criteria to substantiate the claimed qualities of his stock. As the process lingers on, tea will be offered to reinforce rapport and the hospitable, friendly atmosphere. At that point, customers will often be deeply involved or even dazzled by the carpets facing them. Bargaining is common, but the lengthy ritual of presentation and the rapport that will develop will discourage aggressive haggling. In finer stores, the owner will often be a collector himself, and appreciate customers who appreciate carpets. Although he might sell both relatively inexpensive and rare pieces, he would be offended by customers stooping so low as to haggle. The decorum will be broken and the exchange about carpets disrupted. Inexperienced buyers should be interested in learning more about the merits of carpets, experienced ones are entitled to engage in discussions of the details of specific pieces with the dealer. Buyers who develop a taste for carpets often develop a close
The decline in carpets, fewer and fewer consumers encounter such enchanting and enticing buying experiences. Losing their aesthetic and cultural authenticity, new carpets have been facing the threat of being reduced to tourist art, souvenirs, common decorations, or even fakes. However, amidst the general decline, a wave of revivalism is rising.

Recreating Tradition and Mystique

Since the late 1970s, several commercial enterprises have been attempting to revitalize traditional carpet making and restore the integrity of the craft in Turkey. These attempts are based on rediscovering ancient formulae and techniques for dying yarn, a doctrine of reintroducing traditional virtues of hand-spun local wool, natural dyes, and pure designs. Motivated by their own passion for antique carpets and disappointment with the "ugly and lifeless" carpets in the market, some carpet lovers began their rediscovery of natural dyes as amateurs.

They undertook extensive field research and conducted interviews with the rural elderly (most of whom had forgotten how to make natural dyes) and trial-and-error experiments in their kitchens and bathrooms using old recipes found in medieval European books and plants, roots, and insects found in the mountains.

Claimed to be the most important initiator of revivalism, DOBAG is a cooperative formed by Dr. Harald Böhm, a German chemist, in collaboration with Marmara University in Istanbul and with a loan from the Turkish government. Now dubbed "tomorrow's antiques," DOBAG carpets are fine replicas of ancient village carpets (Anderson 1996). DOBAG does not select designs or supply cartoons as a guide for the weaver. The weaver is claimed to improve, refashion and update the traditional, while integrating village prototypes in her own style. "The carpets speak for themselves-alive with colors that glow and harmonize, breathing with resurrected family designs woven from memory, and born of the weaver's new-found confidence in her work" (Anderson 1998, p. 15). To "return to tradition," DOBAG teaches dyeing methods in selected villages, has the weavers travel annually to San Francisco and Oslo to demonstrate carpet weaving (in for example, California Academy of Science), and markets the "new" carpets in California and Norway.

In this "return to tradition," a Lufthansa airplane or a yellow school bus comes to appear on the carpet as motifs documenting weavers' recent experiences in California. DOBAG website promotes this "return to tradition" and weaving sites welcome tourists.

Another interesting revitalization has been undertaken by a German-educated Turkish architect, Tulga Tollu, and his German wife. Weavers in various areas follow computerized models of innovative designs created by the couple. Bauhaus-like minimalist designs and colors allude to and are informed by the ancient. Only 5-8 pieces of a particular design are woven. Tulga sees himself as the artist and the weavers as the engravers, whom he pays well and treats fairly. The Tollus avoid advertising or publishing catalogues of their limited edition carpets, distancing their carpets from notions of mass production. They also avoid using New Zealand wool that they regard to be a contamination: "It is a different fiber, making a different texture, not a Turkish texture. . . . Lower priced New Zealand wool is destroying Western Anatolian sheep breeding structures and Turkish carpets." With the woven TT sign, Tollu carpets are sold mostly in Germany at premium prices. The contemporary designs and colors cater to German tastes: "We work with Europeans. What is the Zeitgeist of the times? We do that" (Tulga Tollu). The Tollus claim that their carpets are sincere as their designs reflect how the moderns think, while the 17th-18th century designs reflect how the women of those times thought. Tulga is against invented tradition as in DOBAG: "Reproduction carpets are like reproduction paintings, not real art. . . . Authenticity is the honesty of materials, the integrity of being in the times." Contrary to DOBAG, which advertises and displays its "return to tradition", the absence of catalogues and pictures and the concealment of the weavers create a mystique, of the hidden, the secret.

Projects like these stimulated a wave of revivalism. Variants of these examples, with a broad quality and price range, have been spreading to, from large firms to talented independent weavers whose locally-continuous carpets fascinate upscale Istanbul dealers and American museums alike (Glassie 1993). Some of the new revivals delight and amaze prominent connoisseurs who think this emergent trend is here to stay (Opie 1998).

TRADITION AND MYSTIQUE: EMERGENT AND BRANDED AUTHENTICITY

The realities and dilemmas of global markets are profoundly reshaping the world of Turkish carpets. The declining carpet tradition has become modern: wool is imported from far away places; designs, colors, textures doctored by industrial treatments cater to popular global fashions; many weavers choose to move to "better" occupations; computerized designs reduce the artistry and agency of laborer-weavers; weavers cannot afford what they make and buy "machine carpets" or make their few dowry pieces with synthetic dyes as natural ones are too expensive; specificity of local (authentic) origin gives way to diffuse indistinct places of production, anywhere in Turkey or in China.

While the traditional has thus become modern, some modern Turkish carpets recreate authenticity and mystique. This authenticity rests on the technical and the artistic, as well as the reconstructions of tradition, integrity, genuineness, and most of all, passion. DOBAG and TT illustrate two ways of recreating original authentic cultural goods: by reinventing and displaying tradition and by designing Zeitgeist aesthetics of the Other, wrapped in secrecy. A new mystique is authenticated as connaisseur-entrepreneurs teach to dye and as cultural authorities teach to "see" and consumers learn to "see," as in art museums (see Duhaime, Joy, and Ross 1995). With the respect gained, DOBAG and TT labels are coming to evoke passion and trust. Representing cultural and aesthetic distinction, these brands are moving carpets up to the status of authentic objects rather than mere exotic souvenirs or fakes. Within the production-marketing-consumption nexus and with strict quality controls, emergent authenticity is becoming branded. In the impossibility of pristine forms, brands may rise to certify aesthetic and cultural authenticity of cultural products.

The plight of DOBAG and TT carpets illustrates that authenticity emerges from the interplay between the local material culture and the global forces. Historically, the motifs in carpets used to tell weaver's/women's stories. They still do, if now in the Lufthansa plane rather than the Goddess figure. But, they also tell the stories of global consumers, cultural authorities, and links. The stories told by modern carpets, the nature of emergent authenticity, raise questions as to the agency of the Other relative to the global in legitimating the aesthetic and cultural authenticity of its own cultural goods. Sensual to the gaze and touch and made by female hands, contemporary carpets merge branding-a practice of mass production and modern marketing, with passion-a historic representation of Said's mysterious Orient.

REFERENCES

More generally, and importantly, this is a book about consumption and it is clear that Baudrillard was far ahead of his time in focusing on this issue. While most of his contemporaries in France (and elsewhere) were mired in stale old debates about production, Baudrillard recognized that consumption was where the important new issues and problems were to be found. Time has clearly borne Baudrillard out. Of goods and services, but rather on the production and manipulation of social signifiers. It is structural analysis that is deemed the appropriate approach to the latter issue? Not only are the two theories not integrated, but Baudrillard already clearly privileges structuralism. Because structural analysis takes priority over. The Invention of Tradition book. Read 51 reviews from the world's largest community for readers. Many of the traditions which we think of as very ancient... He further distinguishes â€œtraditionâ€ and â€œcustomâ€ by claiming that the former is invariant while the latter does not preclude change. These â€œinvented traditions, however, differ from other â€œtraditionsâ€ because they claim to be old despite their more recent origins and they tend to emerge when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which â€œoldâ€™ traditions had been designed. Hobsbawm identifies three major reasons that traditions are invented: to foster social cohesion among artificial communities, to legitimize authority, and to inculcate beliefs into a â€œnewâ€ world. The energy produced by the USA also showed a rise throughout the years.