Multiple Dimensions of Mediation Within Transnational Advertising Production: Cultural Intermediaries as Shapers of Emerging Cultural Capital

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Abstract

The paper re-conceptualizes cultural intermediaries as shapers of 'emerging cultural capital' (Prieur and Savage 2013; Savage et al. 2013) and re-frames their practice of signification and negotiation as informed by 'multiple dimensions of mediation'. Drawing on a case study of Nike's transnational advertising production and interviews with key actors within the context of production, the paper examines how the creative/cultural labour process cuts across global and national fields of cultural production and consumption through which popular culture and middle-brow tastes were mediated, signified and represented. In particular, a television campaign for the Japanese youth market was critically analyzed to reveal how specific new tastes, lifestyles and consumption practices were legitimized as emerging forms of cultural capital. Consequently, their taste-making practices are profoundly implicated in symbolic struggles and cultural changes emerging within/from the increasingly 'globalizing' field of cultural production.

Key Words: cultural intermediaries; Bourdieu; dimensions of mediation; cultural production; advertising; taste-making; emerging cultural capital; sport brand

Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) concept of 'the new cultural intermediaries' continues to generate scholarly debates about his intended meanings and various interpretations through which to analyze cultural production, mediation and consumption. Although the concept was initially used by Bourdieu to refer to a specific occupational group and widely applied by various scholars to a range of commercial production, the abstract and diverse use of the term was questioned by some and gradually relinquished by those who once popularized it in media and cultural studies—especially Featherstone (1991) and the contributors to the special issue of *Cultural Studies* edited by Nixon and du Gay (2002). In particular, the concept was severely critiqued by Hesmondhalgh (2006) who suggested that "the confusing array of uses to which the term has been put makes it a very poor starting point for an enquiry into the relationships between media and cultural production and consumption" (227). As Moor (2012, 574) asserts, the reasons for various interpretations of who cultural intermediaries are and what they do reside in diverse views on culture, and cultural capital in particular, revealing "something of a disjunction between Bourdieu's original project and the intellectual priorities of some

recent scholars". As a result, the concept had been abandoned from the mainstream theoretical discussions on cultural production and consumption until more recent years when a sense of conceptual validity was rejuvenated by a new strand of scholars (e.g., O'Connor 2015; Perry et al. 2015; Smith Maguire and Matthews 2012, 2014; Taylor 2015).

Nevertheless, the reasons underpinning this conceptual debate have never been theoretically clarified, nor have ways through which the incongruities might be overcome. This paper therefore attempts to re-interpret this conceptual disjunction and offer a framework of 'multiple dimensions of mediation' through which Bourdieu's use (high and low culture) and Featherstone's use (production and consumption) are synthesized. Following Smith Maguire and Matthews' (2012, 2014) call for re-focusing on taste-making as the cultural intermediaries' central practice, the paper also re-conceptualizes cultural intermediaries as shapers of 'emerging cultural capital' (Prieur and Savage, 2013; Savage et al., 2013). In doing so, cultural intermediaries are re-positioned centrally to the analysis of taste, capital and class within the increasingly 'globalizing' field of cultural production (and consumption), which as shown below is nonetheless comprised by semi-autonomous national and local sub-fields. In effect, this conceptual refinement assists in orchestrating Bourdieusian understanding of class distinction, taste-making and symbolic struggles as part of how particular new tastes, lifestyles and consumption practice are legitimized by cultural intermediaries as emerging forms of cultural capital. In particular, building on Cronin's (2004) 'regimes of mediation', the paper illustrates the ways in which particular tastes and cultural capital are mediated and negotiated by multiple actors and institutions across different dimensions within the context of production. An implication of legitimizing practice and process to consumer culture research is rather paramount because "[u]nderstanding the ways in which legitimacy is established and evolves provides insight into the

cultural, normative, and legal structures that orient consumer practice and perception" (Humphreys 2010, 491; see also Arsel and Bean 2013; Giesler 2012).[1]

Drawing on a case study of transnational advertising production by global sport brand Nike, the paper offers empirical evidence of how the creative/cultural labour process of taste-making cuts across global and national fields of cultural production through which popular culture and middle-brow tastes were mediated, signified and represented. Methodologically, the analysis was carried out by examining the signs of particular advertisements from the *Where is the Next?* campaign (released in 2007 in conjunction with the Asian Football Confederation's Asian Cup) and the context of production through interviews with advertising professionals. In particular, a television campaign for the Japanese youth market was critically analyzed to reveal how specific new tastes, lifestyles and consumption practice were legitimized as emerging forms of cultural capital. In this context, the research found that the practices of negotiation and legitimation were predominantly shaped by specific multiple dimensions of mediation between: 'high' and 'low' cultures; production and consumption; collectivism and individualism; national cultures; and, age.

The paper begins by tracing the development of multiple interpretations of Bourdieu's concept of 'the new cultural intermediaries'. First, following the recent debate, we identify 'taste-making' as Bourdieu's key attribute of the concept in relation to other key concepts such as 'the new petite bourgeoisie', 'the field of cultural production' and 'cultural capital'. Second, we review Featherstone's (1991) 're-definition' of the term and its critique by Hesmondhalgh (2006). Following this, we utilise a case study to demonstrate how Bourdieu's key attribute and Featherstone's interpretation are complementary in understanding the constitution and contestation of 'emerging cultural capital'—that is, how it is (re-)shaped through multiple dimensions of mediation—within the field of cultural production. Finally, we conclude by

highlighting the key contributions and implications of our findings. Overall, the paper aims to (re-)locate the work of cultural intermediaries at the centre of 'symbolic struggles' internal to the field of cultural production in order to reveal the emerging forms of taste and cultural capital as new principles of domination. This 'shaping' activity by cultural intermediaries is nonetheless also 'shaped' by mediation of 'the differences' in association with, for instance, consumption practices, signs of popular culture and representation of national cultures.

Bourdieu's (1984) 'New Cultural Intermediaries': Mediating High and Low Cultures

One reason for the confusion in the varied interpretations and uses of the concept, 'the new cultural intermediaries', is that Bourdieu (1984) was not explicit in defining what he meant by the term. To begin with, it is clear that the new cultural intermediaries are meant to be "a small sub-set" (Hesmondhalgh 2006, 226) of what Bourdieu (1984) refers to as 'the new petite bourgeoisie'. In his frequently cited explanation, Bourdieu (1984, 359) states that "[t]he new petite bourgeoisie comes into its own in all the occupations involving presentation and representation (sales, marketing, advertising, public relations, fashion, decoration and so forth) and in all the institutions providing symbolic goods and services".[2] Here, Bourdieu recognizes the expansion of what he characterized as 'the dominated fraction of the dominant class' under the conditions of 'the new economy'.[3] Within this classification of the new petite bourgeoisie, Bourdieu's new cultural intermediaries are inferred to be a specific occupational group distinguishable from his other groupings such as 'commercial executives', 'industrial employers', 'medical services', 'engineers', 'office workers', 'craftsmen', 'higher education teachers' and 'small shopkeepers'.

5

In order to make sense of his intended conceptualization, we will review some of the most explicit and extensive explanations of who the new cultural intermediaries are. The first one represents the most popular interpretation of the concept:

> ...the new cultural intermediaries (the most typical of whom are the producers of cultural programmes on TV and radio or the critics of 'quality' newspapers and magazines and all the writer-journalists and journalist-writers) have invented a whole series of genres half-way between legitimate culture and mass production... The petit-bourgeois spectators know they have no need to be alarmed: they can recognize the 'guarantees of quality' offered by their *moderately revolutionary taste-makers*, who surround themselves with all the institutional signs of cultural authority... (Bourdieu 1984, 323-326, emphasis added)

Although Bourdieu specifically names some mass-media-related occupations as 'the most typical' of new cultural intermediaries in the above quote, he nonetheless confuses matters by offering different descriptions elsewhere such as: "the new cultural intermediaries (youth organizers, play leaders etc.)" (Bourdieu 1984, 91). In short, Bourdieu's conceptualization is intentionally or unintentionally ambiguous at best and, in turn, leaves considerable room for others to interpret differently and refine its meaning and use (Smith Maguire 2014). Although most scholars including Hesmondhalgh (2006) paid specific attention to 'the producers of cultural programmes' and 'the critics' of the mass media in reference to the new cultural intermediaries from the above quote, we think what is more important here is Bourdieu's interpretation of them as 'moderately revolutionary taste-makers'.[4] In this sense, we concur with Smith Maguire and Matthews' (2012, 2014) view that cultural intermediaries should be defined by what they do—that is, taste-making—rather than what types of occupations or organisations they work in.

Despite Bourdieu's diverse and inclusive descriptions of what occupations are subsumed under the concept, our reading suggests that he refers to the new cultural intermediaries most directly as:

> ...all those who, in industry or in the great bureaucracies of cultural production—radio, television, research organizations, the major daily or

weekly newspapers—and especially in the occupations of 'social work' and 'cultural facilitation', perform the tasks of gentle manipulation assigned to them by the new division of labour. Occupying a dominated position within the hierarchy of the institutions of cultural production and circulation…, the *new cultural intermediaries* are inclined to sympathize with discourses aimed at challenging the cultural order and the hierarchies which the cultural 'hierarchy' aims to maintain… (Bourdieu 1984, 366, emphasis added)

While still abstract and not definitive, this second quote confirms that the new cultural intermediaries—who are also cynically referred to as "intellectual lackeys" (Bourdieu, 1984, 366)—can be found *across* various occupations and industries of cultural and media production including radio, television and newspapers within 'the new division of labour'. Essentially, it was argued that these new tastemakers cultivated middle-brow taste/culture by articulating and mediating legitimate (established-bourgeois) taste/culture and popular (mass-produced) taste/culture in the field of mass production or through the use of the mass media.

Notably, in the endnote (no. 6) inserted directly after the first block quote above, Bourdieu (1984, 583) infers the possibility of dynamic changes emerging within the field of cultural production due to the rise of the new economy, the new division of labour and the new cultural intermediaries:

> ...there is no need to invoke censorship or 'political complicity' (although this is not unknown) to explain why the most typically academic products, and also the most typically middle-brow products, have derived considerable reinforcement from television. Partly through the economic effect of the publicity supplied by television and the corresponding changes in publishing and marketing strategies, this tends to modify the relations between the field of restricted production and the field of large-scale production.

Bourdieu here delineates that academic (intellectual) and middle-brow (para-intellectual) products mobilized by the new cultural intermediaries constantly blur the division between the fields of restricted production (oriented towards 'art for art's sake') and large-scale/mass production (oriented towards economic gain) (see Bourdieu 1993, 1996).[5] Thus, the rise of new cultural intermediaries highlights "the logic of the

struggles internal to the field of production" (Bourdieu 1984, 233; see also Chávez 2012) while their practice of taste-making is central to the challenge, or 'symbolic struggles', over "the imposition of the dominant principle of domination within the dominant class" (Bourdieu, 1984, 310). Moreover, these struggles via taste-making have a direct impact on the contestation and re-constitution of 'cultural capital', which represents power resources of a legitimate culture including educational qualifications, linguistic competence and aesthetic appreciation (Holt 1998). Bourdieusian scholarship on the concept acknowledges that cultural capital is also constituted by, and constitutive of, the differences in gender (Huppatz 2009), ethnicity (Lareau and Horvat 1999), nationality (Erel 2010) and other bio-social attributes including physique (Shilling, 2004). In short, the work of cultural intermediaries is implicitly or explicitly shaped by, and shaping, power struggles in the field of cultural production as they try to legitimize new forms of cultural capital and ultimately change the relations of domination—or tastes as principles of domination.

Notwithstanding the valuable concepts and insights offered by Bourdieu's analysis, several scholars have identified the inconsistencies associated with the universal link between taste, capital and class; rather, different articulations are formulated across various groupings, localities and temporalities (Fowler 2012; Lamont 1992; Prieur and Savage, 2013; Rocamora 2002; Savage et al. 2013) and even at the intra-individual level (Lahire, 2008). For instance, Bourdieu has been criticized for his reductive view towards popular culture and his own arbitrary, elitist construction of the hierarchy between 'high' and 'low' cultures (Bennett 2005; Fowler 2012; Lahire, 2008; Moor 2012; O'Connor 2015; Rocamora 2002; Savage et al. 2013). In light of the class-oriented role of cultural intermediaries in challenging high-brow cultures and producing new middle-brow tastes, we employ 'emerging cultural capital' (Prieur and Savage, 2013; Savage et al., 2013)[6] as a concept to recognize newly emerging forms of

legitimate taste or principles of domination. In this sense, contrary to Bourdieu's (1984, 48) limited understanding of popular culture as "degradation or self-destructive rehabilitation" which has "never received systematic expression", the concept of emerging cultural capital rejuvenates and reaffirms cultural studies' approach to popular culture "as expressive of a particular subordinate social life that resists its being constantly made over as low and outside" (Hall 1996, 469). Although Bourdieu (1984, xii) intends to offer "the structural invariant" beyond the spatial and temporal context of his research (conducted in France in 1960's), it is within this transnational and inter-industrial context that the concept of cultural intermediaries lost its intended meanings when applied elsewhere and has been in need of vigorous conceptual re-working. In this regard, the next section explores Featherstone's (1991) application of the concept of cultural intermediaries, which has been adopted and advanced by a range of scholars (e.g., du Gay et al. 1997; Nixon and du Gay 2002) but critiqued by others (Hesmondhalgh 2006, 2007; Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011; Molloy and Larner 2010).

Featherstone's (1991) 'Re-Definition' and Its Critique: Mediating Production and Consumption

Drawing on Bourdieu (1984), Mike Featherstone (1991, 19) elaborated on the new cultural intermediaries as "those in media, design, fashion, advertising, and 'para' intellectual information occupations, whose jobs entail performing services and the production, marketing and dissemination of symbolic goods". Subsequently, Featherstone (1991) applied Bourdieu's concept of the new cultural intermediaries to a more general analysis of the global expansion of (postmodern) consumer culture while slightly shifting an emphasis of the conceptual meaning centred on mediation between 'high' and 'low' cultures to another mediation between production and consumption. Featherstone's emphasis on the role of cultural intermediaries in mediating production

and consumption has been widely accepted and applied by a range of scholarly accounts on a variety of cultural workers including, but not limited to, fashion designers (Skov 2002), business managers and accountants (Negus 2002), bookshop workers (Wright 2005), public relations practitioners (Curtin and Gaither 2005; Hodges 2006), fashion buyers (Entwistle 2006), personal fitness trainers (Smith Maguire 2008), branding consultants (Moor 2008), journalists (Doane 2009; Ma 2006), arts administrators (Durrer and Miles 2009), television buyers (Kuipers 2012), marketing/advertising practitioners (Amis and Silk 2010; Cronin 2004; du Gay et al. 1997; Gee and Jackson 2012; John and Jackson 2011; Kelly et al. 2005; Kobayashi 2012a, 2012b; McFall 2002; Moor 2012; Nixon 2003; Scherer and Jackson 2008, 2010; Soar 2000, 2002), wine promoters (Smith Maguire 2013), specialist advisors (Rojek 2014) and more recently diary-keepers (Perry et al. 2015).

Given the prevalence of media and managerial discourses on the salience of marketing, branding and consumer research, it comes as no surprise that various terms have been used to represent this group of cultural workers or symbol creators including: 'cultural specialists', 'cultural entrepreneurs', 'para-intellectuals' and 'symbolic specialists' (Featherstone 1991); 'immaterial labour' and 'affective labour' (Hardt and Negri 2000); 'aesthetic labour' (Warhurst et al. 2000); 'knowledge labour' (Mosco and McKercher 2008); and, 'creative labour' (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011). Even though these various terms may have different emphases with respect to indicating the centrality of creative and cultural aspects within the production of culture, 'cultural intermediaries' seems to be the most eloquent term to draw immediate attention to *mediation*—and legitimation of taste—as a key element of their work.

This attention to mediation and legitimation of taste is especially important and relevant to consumer culture research because it alludes to the understanding of consumption culture and practice as integral parts of signification and encoding

practices by creative and cultural workers (Featherstone 1991). For instance, Soar

(2000) asserted a direct link between production and consumption in what he calls the

'short circuit of culture' where "the cultural intermediaries act as producers and

consumers" (431). Cronin (2004) extended this assertion by adding that the "recursive

relationship between practitioners' dual status as producers (of ads) and consumers (of

ads and products) reproduces social division s and hierarchies" (353). Following this,

Amis and Silk (2010) explored transnational organization of marketing campaigns and

found the "infrastructure capable of facilitating the engagement with consumers at

multiple levels across different markets" (175) through which cultural intermediaries

negotiated the idiosyncrasies of local culture and consumption practice.

Nevertheless, for Hesmondhalgh (2006, 226), Featherstone misreads and

misuses Bourdieu's concept because "Featherstone equates the new petite bourgeoisie

with a small sub-set of that social class, the (new) cultural intermediaries". Thus,

Hesmondhalgh (2006, 226, emphasis in original) asserts that "in Bourdieu's sense of the

term, it is *critics* that act as cultural intermediaries". While Hesmondhalgh (2006) is

right to point out the confusion in the various interpretations and uses of the term, his

interpretation of cultural intermediaries as 'critics' seems to be narrower than our

reading of Bourdieu's diverse descriptions. Moreover, although Hesmondhalgh (2007)

alternatively suggests using more specific descriptions such as 'symbol creators' and

'creative practitioners' to represent the role of advertising personnel, these descriptions

do not capture the central meanings of the new cultural intermediaries with respect to

taste-making and mediation between legitimate and popular cultures. In what follows,

rather than viewing the discrepancy between Bourdieu's and Featherstone's respective

uses as conceptual inconsistencies, we suggest that their contrasting perspectives

constitute different *dimensions of mediation*—that is, mediations of high/low cultures

and production/consumption can be analytically distinguished but conceptualized as operating concurrently in the actual work of cultural intermediaries.

Methodology

Research Context

Located within a larger project on advertising production and signifying practices by global sport brands, this study examined advertising texts, the conditions of the production and the perspectives of the workers involved as they were located and framed by the 'circuit of culture' (du Gay et al. 1997; Johnson 1986; Johnson et al. 2004; Scherer and Jackson 2008). With this framework, du Gay et al. (1997) demonstrated the ways in which a particular 'cultural artefact', in their case the Sony Walkman, was produced, represented and consumed through different stages of the circuit while being encoded or decoded by a variety of actors involved in the creation of symbolic meanings and associations. Likewise, an advertisement can be considered as a 'cultural artefact' which is then analyzed to understand meanings, ideologies and values associated with production and consumption. Following Featherstone's interpretation of the term, du Gay et al. (1997) assert that cultural intermediaries are strategically positioned to fill, or 'articulate', symbolic gaps between production and consumption of cultural artefacts.

Nike's *Where is the Next?* campaign was selected for analysis as it reflected the increasingly global nature of complex division of creative and cultural labour in the field of production. In turn, it was anticipated that this was likely to intensify tensions in 'negotiation' during the encoding processes for effective communication to specific local audience as target markets. In this context, we follow Hall's (1980) understanding of 'negotiation' which "accords the privileged position to the dominant definitions of events while reserving the right to make a more negotiated application to 'local

conditions'" (127). Specifically, the production of the campaign, which was launched in 2007 to coincide with the AFC's Asian Cup, involved a wide range of creative and cultural workers from the global corporate headquarters, national subsidiaries, advertising agencies and local production companies and media organizations across various countries. Thus, this entailed us to go beyond conventional analysis of a 'national' field of cultural production—something often unacknowledged by Bourdieu as a crucial unit or boundary of the field analysis (Erel 2010; Marginson 2008; Prieur and Savage 2013).

Methods

The main methods used in this study were textual analysis and interviews. Firstly, in order to understand the symbolic and ideological meanings represented in the advertisement, a semiotic analysis was undertaken to 'decipher' the process of signification, along with identifying elements of culture and identity within the advertisements (Barthes 1972; du Gay et al. 1997; Leiss et al. 2005). In addition, other relevant, publicly available materials such as press releases and a media interview with the Creatives were analyzed. In particular, the key texts within this study consisted of the four television commercials which were tailored for different national markets in Asia and the Pacific—the Japanese version will be closely examined below.[7] All the commercials were produced by Nike Asia Pacific Headquarters (Nike APHQ) as part of the *Where is the Next?* campaign, with each commercial lasting about 30 seconds and targeted specifically at respective national markets. Following the semiotic tradition of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes, the commercials were deconstructed in terms of 'signifiers' and 'signifieds', both of which in combination constitute a particular association of objects and meanings in the minds of readers (Zhao and Belk 2008). Along with this, the narratives of the commercials were transcribed and analyzed

at both denotative and connotative levels by drawing upon the guiding questions identified by Fowles (1996, 173) including: "how might the intended audience interpret it?".

In terms of analysis of qualitative data, the research followed the guidelines of Miles and Huberman (1994) in relation to grounded theory. While coding categories were drawn from the previous literature and theoretical/methodological frameworks deployed, as is common in a grounded theory approach, the inductive analysis of the advertising texts and interviews enabled a continued modification of inferences (Miles and Huberman 1994). Through this iterative process, some key codes were identified (e.g., 'Japanese youth popular culture and lifestyle', '*bukatsu*' and 'individualism/collectivism') and used as part of the analysis and the development of questions for the subsequent interviews.

Secondly, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five cultural workers who played central roles in making decisions on the production, representation and distribution of the advertising campaign. As shown in Table 1, the participants represented a range of relevant roles and institutions including Nike Asia Pacific Headquarters (Nike APHQ), Nike Japan, Wieden+Kennedy Tokyo (W+K Tokyo) and Daiko (a Japanese advertising agency). Since the researcher's own "reading must be open to the strangeness and specificity—or alterity—of the other's reality and truths" (Johnson et al. 2004, 236), it was imperative to understand the process of encoding as this was constructed through multiple points of negotiation by cultural intermediaries from different institutional, occupational and cultural backgrounds. Given the centrality of the Creative Team at W+K Tokyo in encoding the advertisements, interviews were originally sought out with all the members of the Creative Team. Unfortunately, only the Account Executive (AE) was available and active at the agency with other members having already left the agency or moved to other W+K offices.

Interviewees' titles	Institutions represented	Lengths of interviews	The roles in the production
Director of Advertising	Nike APHQ	60 min.	Establishing the central theme of the region-wide advertising campaign and overseeing the entire production
Supervisor of Marketing	Nike Japan	150 min.	Communicating with Nike APHQ and localizing advertising communication for the Japanese market
Digital Producer	Nike Japan	60 min.	Developing digital content for advertising through mobile phones
Account Executive	Daiko	40 min.	Communicating with website developers and television stations for media distribution
Account Executive	W+K Tokyo	120 min.	Working as a member of the Creative Team and liaising with Nike APHQ

Table 1: Profiles of the Interviewees

All the interviews (except one phone interview with the Director of Advertising) were conducted face-to-face at relevant workplaces between December 2009 and March 2010. While the number of interviews was limited due to purposive sampling (i.e., the participants had to be involved in the production of a particular campaign) and inevitable difficulty in securing access to busy cultural workers (i.e., the participants had to be willing to volunteer their time and knowledge including sensitive information about marketing strategy and communication), they constituted the core members involved in the production of the particular advertising campaign in Japan and provided valuable information and insight. In particular, each interview with Supervisor of Marketing at Nike Japan and AE at W+K Tokyo, which will be frequently referred to in this paper, lasted longer than two hours and therefore generated extensive and rich data from which evidence for this study was examined. All the interviews were transcribed, translated and coded by theme (Creswell 2009). In turn, this process identified the key information about: the purpose and backgrounds of the campaign; the

various roles in the production, representation and distribution; and, specific judgement of national culture and identity.

The Transnational Context of Production and Representation: Nike's *Where is the Next?* Campaign

We now turn to our case study to elucidate how cultural intermediaries' practice of taste-making is undertaken and shaped through multiple dimensions of mediation and negotiation. To illustrate the flow and roles of cultural work, Figure 1 indicates the creative processes and actors involved in the production and distribution of Nike's *Where is the Next?* campaign.

Insert Figure 1 Here

Figure 1: The creative processes and actors involved in the production and distribution of Nike's *Where is the Next?* campaign

The production was initiated by Nike APHQ, the regional headquarters located in Oregon, U.S.A., which was in charge of the overall production of the advertising campaigns across selected national markets in Asia and the Pacific. According to the Director of Advertising (DA) at Nike APHQ, the primary idea of the marketing campaign was to use Brazilian soccer star Ronaldinho (Ronaldo de Assis Moreira) to promote the message that "you can make it to the top of the world like Ronaldinho". While Ronaldinho was recognized as one of the best soccer players who was admired by soccer youth globally—therefore representing 'cosmopolitan cultural capital' (Prieur and Savage, 2013), the campaign was also intended from the outset to create localized stories to fit the tastes, cultures and identities of each national market. In turn, the global production of the advertising campaign was effectively delegated to the actors and institutions in particular regional/national fields of production and consumption because the level of affection and appeal that the commercials could produce was largely

dependent on how much they invoked a sense of everyday reality and authenticity in the mind of local youth (Amis and Silk 2010).

Cronin (2004) refers to the complexity of cultural production as the 'regimes of mediation', and the production of Nike's *Where is the Next?* advertising campaign was no exception to this. Using the creative brief provided by Nike APHQ, W+K Tokyo was tasked with the creation and production of the four television commercials for Australia, China, Japan and South Korea. In this sense, the regimes of production and mediation for the campaign cut across both the different—thus relatively autonomous—sub-fields of cultural production (e.g., advertising industry, film industry and television industry) and the multiple national fields of advertising consumption (e.g., the targeted four national markets). For this campaign, W+K Tokyo, and the Creative Team in particular, was central to the 'taste-making' while encoding the commercials with particular signs and meanings in a way that appeals to local soccer youth.[8] As Cronin (2004, 356) identifies, the negotiation over the initial storyboards often constitutes "a tense moment" between a corporate client and a creative agency (see also Negus and Pickering 2004; Nixon 2003).[9] Specifically, the 'storylines' of the commercials for *Where is the Next?* were mainly developed by the 'American' Creatives consisting of a Copywriter (CW) and Art Director (AD) at W+K Tokyo. Hence, the 'American' Creatives had to go to great lengths to learn the tastes, symbols and cultures of the target markets.

For example, the American Creatives indicated that they created the script for the Japanese commercial,

> …based on our experience of engaging in everyday life of *bukatsu* youth [see below for more details about *bukatsu*]… We provided a lot of details for each [version of commercials] based on serious background research for each nation like what kind of posters are in a locker room… although Ronaldinho was featured in all versions, we created them in a way local people would be able to recognize that "this is our nation". With the basic advertising idea and story that fits any national culture, our task was to make Ronaldinho look like a local

youth in that nation. (quoted in Honeyee.com, 2008, re-translated by the authors)

As the American Creatives were based at W+K Tokyo in Japan at the time of production, it was relatively convenient for them to do research on Japanese youth culture by consulting with their Japanese co-workers including the two Creative Directors and the Account Executive (AE) in the Creative Team and their own observations of Japanese youth. In order to explicate the social relations and ideological forces at the workplace, it is important to note that W+K Tokyo has been constituted as a particularly significant site of taste negotiation between national cultures, which unquestionably underpins and shapes the practice and communication of creative production. As the AE describes:

> …what we try to do as an agency is to see from both Western and Eastern eyes… We have a lot of Japanese staff with a lot of American influences… [The ratio of Japanese and American staff is] about 7:3, I think. But, the 70% of our staff, who are Japanese, have more than just a single culture… For example, the co-worker that I worked with grew up in San Francisco until the age of 18, went to [a Japanese university] and worked at a Japanese company for a while before joining Wieden+Kennedy… Everyone thinks he is American because he often goes to eat hamburgers for lunch… He speaks Japanese when he jokes, so I know that when he talks in English, he is very serious… I think for him it is easier to say things directly in English.

Within this organizational culture featuring a multicultural learning environment, the American Creatives were strategically positioned to maximize opportunities to develop a nuanced understanding of Japanese culture on a daily basis. For the other versions of the commercial in Australia, China and South Korea, the geographical distance between where they worked and where those target markets were located made it more difficult for them to increase their knowledge of local youth's authentic experience to the same extent. However, according to the AE, substantial input was sought through conversations within the global networks of cultural intermediaries at W+K and Nike:

> Since Wieden+Kennedy is truly a global company, there are many employees from, for example, South Korea, China, and Australia… at different offices. [The CW and AD] made conference calls to our offices across the world to ask something like "What is the situation in your country?" Each office has its own planner who knows things such as details of the recent soccer scene in China, how many hours youth are spending for practice, which athletes they admire, and who are the up and coming athletes as well as demographic information about them.

In addition to Creatives as key encoders, Cronin (2004) identifies the important role of an account manager who "takes the client's comments back to the Creatives and presents the criticisms, comments and ideas as diplomatically as possible" (356). While the CW and AD were unambiguously central to the taste-making activities for the campaign, the AE also played a vital role in mediating different interests and views among the parties involved:

> The role of Account Executive at Wieden+Kennedy is a little different from how it is generally understood at other advertising agencies. It is more like a project manager and closer to what a producer does… It involves liaison of a Creative Team consisting of Creative Director, Copywriter and Art Director as we move the project forward. It also involves liaison between the Creative Team and a client. Of course, it manages such things as a budget and a schedule, but also about a half of my job actually relates to creative work. So, it is absolutely justifiable for me to say "We can't do it" when it comes down to a critical discussion and we are running out of money or time.

As W+K's primary work is to generate advertising ideas and storylines, their speciality can be clearly distinguished from, for instance, the advertising agencies which focus on media distribution. For instance, Daiko fell into the latter category for the *Where is the Next?* campaign in which it negotiated commercial spots with Japanese television stations at the end point of distribution (see Figure 1; also see Kobayashi 2012b for this process of negotiation). Lastly, details of the representations in the commercials for Nike's *Where is the Next?* campaign were also negotiated with the Film Director and Partizan (production company) who carried out another encoding-oriented task in turning the two-dimensional script written by the Creatives into a three-dimensional format for film shooting (Kobayashi 2012b). This was also at the stage where the staff

from Nike Japan made adjustments with respect to authentic representation, which will be explored further in the following section.

Taste-Making of Japanese Youth Culture Through Multiple Dimensions of Mediation

In order to illustrate specific sites of taste-making and negotiation, this section focuses on the production and representation of the Japanese version of Nike's *Where is the Next?* campaign. In this context, W+K Tokyo and Nike Japan played a key role as cultural intermediaries in localizing the promotional materials through representations of local youth lifestyle and selecting local media outlets including television, website and mobile content. In response to the question about how the commercial content was localized for the Japanese market, the DA at Nike APHQ explained "I think an important part of the Japanese one was *bukatsu*". *Bukatsu*—an abbreviation of *bukatsudō*—is an extracurricular school activity typically ranging from sports to music and to traditional arts while our focus here is on the *undōbu* or sport club. This school-based club activity is very common, sometimes mandatory depending on school policies, and widely engaged by Japanese youth during after-school hours—especially at junior-high and high schools (aged from 12 to 18). The uniqueness of *bukatsu* generally emanates from its physical and disciplinary form of education, collective or team orientation, seniority-based hierarchy, *konjō-ron* (discourse of gutsy spirit) and Japanese forms of masculinity (Horne 2000; Kobayashi 2012a; McDonald 2009; Miller 2013). Indeed, it is where nation-specific cultural capital including attitudes, manners and aesthetic preferences are learnt and embodied. In this sense, the commercial for *Where is the Next?* in Japan can be considered as one of the popular representations of national youth tastes and lifestyle:

> The commercial depicts a typical day for Hiroshi, a Japanese high-school male student, compressed within 30 seconds. The scene starts with Hiroshi brushing his teeth, looking at himself in a mirror and saying: 'I want to be a professional

soccer player someday.' His reflection in the mirror becomes Ronaldinho. Hiroshi, hereafter played by Ronaldinho, goes to school by train and participates in a soccer *bukatsu* practice. His coach talks about him saying: 'Hiroshi is quick and creative, but he doesn't listen to me!' Hiroshi then has fun with his teammates in a locker room and goes to eat ramen noodles with them. Hiroshi returns to his home and kicks a soccer ball against a wall in his room for more practice. His mother, upset with the noise he makes, yells: 'Stop it! This is enough!' Hiroshi is determined: 'No matter what people say, I will do it.' The audience then sees text on the screen, 'WHERE'S THE NEXT RONALDINHO?', followed by Nike's trademark swoosh logo.[10]

The narrative of the commercial was centred on a soccer *bukatsu* youth, named Hiroshi, who expresses his individualistic desire and attitude to become a professional player against his coach and mother's condemnation of his egoism (e.g., the coach laments that "Hiroshi is quick and creative, but he doesn't listen to me!"). His words and expressions, including "No matter what people say, I will do it", apparently contradict the Confucian ethics of conformity and self-restraint as dominant/legitimate norms of Japanese society. Bourdieu (1984, 219) noted that differences in age is an important indicator of the opposition between old and new forms of taste, and this commercial reiterates age as an important dimension of mediation. Furthermore, this dimension is also clearly intersected with the tension between an old generation's collectivism and a young generation's individualism (see Table 2 for examples of this mediation). Thus, within the Japanese context, it is plausible to interpret the commercial as representing the symbolic struggles for liberation of youth and legitimacy of their "not-yet-legitimate" (Bourdieu 1984, 326) tastes or 'emerging cultural capital'.[11]

In what follows, Bourdieu and Featherstone's interpretations of cultural intermediaries are examined through the texts and the interviews with the key actors for constructing the tastes and lifestyle of soccer youth in Japan. In the first dimension, following Bourdieu's sense of the term, Nike's representations of *bukatsu* were imbued with the tension between legitimate (high) and popular (low) cultures. Our interviews revealed that, within the context of production, the taste negotiation between the American and Japanese cultural intermediaries shaped the ways in which particular

middle-brow tastes of *bukatsu* were (re-)constructed and represented. For instance, one such middle-brow taste that was signified in the commercial was incorporated from the conversation between the Creatives and the AE. As the AE describes:

> When the first presentation was delivered, [the DA at Nike APHQ] gave us feedback, saying "let's try to search for the ways in which we can dig deep for insights into each country's youth"… To respond to the feedback, [the CW and AD] started to ask questions to various people like "Hey, [the AE], are *bukatsu* youth usually going straight back to their home after practices?" I told them "I often went to eat ramen noodles with my *bukatsu* friends because I was hungry after the practices and my home was a bit away". And they said "Oh, yeah?" and, later on, actually incorporated the scene of a ramen noodle restaurant in the next presentation.

As ramen noodles are generally considered to be an affordable everyday dish even for school students in Japan, it is clear that it was *intended* to portray a ramen noodle restaurant as a signifier of national identity and middle-brow taste. Likewise, the SM at Nike Japan recalled his input of particular youth taste and preference as a source of authenticity at the stage of film shooting:

> For example, we used a vinyl bag. When a *bukatsu* boy wears it, it is common to wear it across body. We can tell if he understands soccer *bukatsu* or not by seeing the length of the bag's strap… I remember that I suggested making the strap longer when the commercial was filmed.

From his view, the longer strap connotes a sense of 'coolness' and 'rebelliousness' for *bukatsu* youth because wearing anything 'tight' represents conformity to authority and collectivism. Another set of negotiations were undertaken when choosing a location for filming the scene of Hiroshi's individual room at home:

> While there was the script describing that the youth kicked a ball against the wall and was interrupted by his mother, we were not sure whether this would take place in a Western or Japanese-style room… [The Creative Team] wouldn't have been able to narrow it down until the last minute. I think it was quite difficult to find an ideal location for a Japanese-style room. As you know, there has to be a bed [as opposed to a traditional Japanese *futon*] where most kids sleep today in Japan. So, you got to have a bed, and you got to have an authentic Japanese-style room – that is actually very hard to find (SM at Nike Japan).

Whereas a traditional Japanese-style room may have satisfied the needs of the American Creatives for differentiation and incorporation of the local culture, the Japanese cultural

intermediaries were particularly meticulous in reflecting the reality of youth living in contemporary architecture with certain selective features of Western and Japanese styles. The other signs—that are divided into signifiers and signifieds—of relevant popular taste and the specific dimensions mediated by them are presented in Table 2. Consequently, through the narrative of rebellious youth and the representations of *bukatsu* experience, it is considered that the 'styles' of Japanese youth (e.g., where/what to eat and what/how to wear) were legitimized as an emerging form of cultural capital in a way to implicitly challenge a more conservative, collectivistic nature of 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1984) of the older generations and aristocrats in Japan.[12]

Signifiers	Signifieds	Dimensions mediated
Playing soccer on the 'dirt' field	Although soccer is played on grass in England where the sport was originated, it is more commonly played on dirt in Japan. Thus, Japanese youth can better relate to the representation in terms of authentic local experience.	3
Ramen noodle restaurant	Going to a ramen noodle restaurant with friends is a symbol of friendship and independence for youth. The dish represents a middle-brow taste in Japan. The incorporation of this idea was based on actual experience of the former *bukatsu* participant.	1, 2, 3
Vinyl bag with key chains	The vinyl bag was a trendy item among *bukatsu* youth at the time, showing active—and middle-brow—lifestyle, while personalization of key chains allowed for individual expressions. The incorporation of these ideas was based on the consumer research.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Relatively long hairstyles	As opposed to traditional notion that *bukatsu* youth should keep their hair short, the youth's long hairstyles in the commercial have symbolize individual freedom of expression by fashion conscious youth.	4, 5
School uniform	Japanese traditional school uniform represents collectivism and conformity whereas fashion conscious youth tend to wear it in a way to express individual differences (e.g., unfastening buttons).	3, 4
School club locker room	The locker room is a space of male bonding and specific rituals that bring members together. The room was decorated with posters and goods that reflected the tastes of Japanese youth.	2, 3
Youth's individual room at home	The individual room has features of Japanese-style architecture including the door and closet as well as Western-originated products including the bed and	1, 2, 3, 5

	window. The size, quality and design of the room is consistent with middle-brow tastes.	

Table 2: Analysis of the Signs in the *Where is the Next?* Commercial (Note: Dimensions mediated are represented by the numbers as follows: 1 – high and low cultures; 2 – production and consumption; 3 – national cultures; 4 – collectivism and individualism; 5 – ages)

Furthermore, the production of middle-brow tastes—through the mediation of 'high' and 'low' cultures—was not completely isolated from the mediation of production and consumption. In the second dimension and drawing upon Featherstone's interpretation, Nike's production of *bukatsu* culture and lifestyle was also mediated through the reflexive incorporation of consumer viewpoints, experiences and practices. Here, the subjectivities of Japanese cultural intermediaries at W+K Tokyo and Nike Japan played a pivotal role in generating an understanding of a "particular *imagined consumer*" (du Gay et al. 1997, 53, emphasis in original) as informed and constructed by their own embodied *bukatsu* experiences along with quantitative/qualitative data on the target consumers. In terms of authentic representation, the Japanese cultural intermediaries were particularly cognisant of the generational gap between them, as they were middle-aged or presumably in their 30s or 40s, and contemporary *bukatsu* youth. This generational gap was recognized as significant enough by the AE at W+K Tokyo to conduct ethnographic research as part of this campaign. The AE commented on the importance of research as follows:

> . . . we know that contemporary *bukatsu* is different from the *bukatsu* I experienced more than ten years ago. In order to see the world through their eyes, we have to engage in their way of life by synchronizing ourselves with the rhythm of their everyday life. While we gather general data like a daily timetable of *bukatsu* youth, we think it is more important to spend time with them by, for instance, walking to school together . . . For instance, we walk with a youth to a station in the morning, get on a train and talk with him, or listen to the conversation with his friends… We observe everything to understand what their interests are.

In turn, the key chains among others were used as signs of consumption by contemporary soccer youth:

> . . . the Japanese youth at the time preferred to be unique only a bit, you know? While they wore the same school uniforms and similar vinyl bags for *bukatsu*, little things like key chains were fashionable . . . because they really loved the sort of custom-made ones for differentiation, you know? . . . So, because the youth in the commercial admired Ronaldinho, we made key chains in the shape of his iconic hand sign.

Thus, these quotes provide concrete evidence that the moments of production and consumption were mediated through reflexive practices shaped by cultural intermediaries' aesthetic senses, embodied experiences and consumer research (Kelly et al. 2005; Kuipers 2012; Soar 2000). Subsequently, these youth fashion trends were observed, incorporated and ultimately legitimized as forms of emerging cultural capital by the cultural intermediaries during the process of creative production.

While the dimensions of mediation informed and framed by Bourdieu (high and low tastes) and Featherstone (production and consumption) were manifested in the practice of cultural intermediaries within the context of Nike's *Where is the Next?* campaign production, our analysis, as identified in Table 2, suggests that the most explicit dimension of mediation was national cultures. In addition to the interplay between American (or Western) and Japanese cultures which has been already discussed with respect to the organizational culture of W+K Tokyo and the representations of *bukatsu*, the SM at Nike Japan offered his perspective on 'judgement of Japanese taste' specifically in terms of authentic representations within the commercial:

> For example, the school uniform that Ronaldinho and his friends wore… If they fasten the top button plus the hooks [of high neck collar], that is the correct way to wear but absolutely odd, isn't it?… Isn't it so strange if *bukatsu* boys go to a ramen noodles restaurant after training and keep the hooks of their uniforms tied when they are eating? It's correct but odd, strange and so uncool… So, when you represent Japaneseness, I think there are an 'official' version of Japaneseness and a more natural or real version of Japaneseness… It is important to use them according to a situation because either of them is not necessarily better or worse.

Such nuanced differences in the understanding of authenticity in a way that appeals to the tastes of local youth were regarded as crucial when representing the *bukatsu* culture

and lifestyle. Thus, the cultural intermediaries involved in the production of Nike's *Where is the Next?* campaign engaged in taste-making, or 'taste negotiation', cutting across a range of dimensions—in terms of not only high and low cultures and production and consumption but also collectivism and individualism, age and most intensely national cultures. Consequently, this case study demonstrated how the work of cultural intermediaries needs to be framed and analyzed by the 'multiple dimensions of mediation' in revealing contested sites of symbolic dominance and struggles within the increasingly 'globalizing' field of cultural production.

Conclusion

This paper examined the concept of new cultural intermediaries that was originally introduced by Bourdieu, interpreted differently by several scholars, and here re-worked to accommodate the multi-dimensionality of their work as 'moderately revolutionary taste-makers' (Bourdieu 1984, 326) or in our words 'shapers of emerging cultural capitals'. This refined use runs counter to Cronin's (2004) interpretation of cultural intermediaries as reproducers of "social divisions and hierarchies" (353) through "a self-referential, recursive enactment of creativity, change and consumption" (354).[13] While creative and cultural workers do reproduce social norms especially in relation to "certain classed, racialized and gendered workplace practices" (Cronin 2004, 351), the refined concept of cultural intermediaries suggests that their taste-making practices are profoundly implicated in symbolic struggles via mediation and legitimation of 'low' cultures (in Bourdieu's sense), consumption practices (in Featherstone's sense) and other forms of 'the difference' in a way that challenges the existing cultural hierarchies and boundaries. In effect, its refocus on the *mediation*, *legitimation* and *taste-making* provides the concept with the heuristic and analytic integrity necessary for analysis of the global field of cultural production where

national/local taste and cultural capital are contested and (re-)constituted within the 'regimes of mediation' across sub-fields of cultural production. Thus, the framework of multiple dimensions of mediation assists in examining the ways in which mediation and legitimation of cultural intermediaries shape, and are shaped by, the link between production and consumption within the global culture industry – a point that complements the works in consumer culture research by Arsel and Bean (2013), Humphreys (2010), Doane (2009), Zhao and Belk (2008), Holt (1998) and Thompson and Haytko (1997).

More specifically, drawing on a case study of the perspectives and practices of the cultural intermediaries who played central roles in the production of Nike's *Where is the Next?* advertising campaign in Japan, this paper identified a range of tensions that were mediated by the cultural workers across multiple dimensions when negotiating and legitimizing youth popular culture and lifestyle as 'emerging cultural capital'. According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), "[t]he forces that are active in the field— and thus selected by the analyst as pertinent because they produce the most relevant differences—are those which define the specific capital" (101). While the two dimensions prescribed by the early theorizing of cultural intermediaries were recognized in our analysis, the case study also identified dimensions such as those of collectivism and individualism; national cultures; and, age. In particular, national cultures were found to serve as a major dimension as they were signified through mediation and negotiation by the American and Japanese cultural intermediaries who were located centrally within the encoding practice. Therefore, it can be inferred that, in contexts of transnational advertising production, the dimension of national cultures needs to be considered as a potent site of taste-making and negotiation for (re-)constitution of nation-specific cultural capital when constructing authentic representations of particular culture, lifestyle and consumption practice.

It is worth emphasising that these dimensions often intersect, or manifest concurrently, to form certain hegemonic relations of cultural dominance and resistance within a given context of production, and within society more generally (Holt 1998; Humphreys 2010). To be clear, the multiplicity of dimensions and the potency of each dimension rest upon the contextually specific analysis of cultural production. Therefore, the dimensions of mediation identified in this case study are not exclusive—there are no doubt other dimensions.[14] What is important about the recognition of different cultural dimensions however is that they provide an interpretive framework that points to where and how particular tensions and conflicts are most likely to emerge among various institutions and individuals within a context of transnational cultural production (Brannen and Salk 1999).

As Bourdieu (1984, 250-251) contends, "the symbolic struggles between the classes have no chance of being seen and organized as such". Given that difference, negotiation and struggle within cultural production are often levelled out in the finished products and services—so as to provide simple and consistent messages to audiences, empirical studies such as this are highly valuable in revealing the contested sites of symbolic struggles and changes—or in Bourdieu's (1984) words 'symbolic transgression' (48) or 'symbolic revolutions' (233). Given that such negotiation of cultural intermediaries is central to legitimizing particular new tastes, lifestyles and consumption practices in an emerging form of cultural capital, future research is needed to examine how legitimizing practices and processes operate similarly or differently among a range of fields and sub-fields of cultural production. And then ultimately, future research—and the ethnographic approach in particular—needs to examine the intensity of negotiation, the multiplicity of dimensions and the intersections of these dimensions through which symbolic struggles and cultural changes emerge within/from the increasingly 'globalizing' field of contemporary commercial production.

28

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Notes

[2] The 'newness' of the *new* petite bourgeoisie, and therefore the *new* cultural intermediaries, is attributed not only to the emerging occupations related to symbolic goods and services but to "a strong cultural inheritance and relatively low educational capital" (Bourdieu 1984, 91) that contrast with those of the old petite bourgeoisie.

[3] As Smith Maguire (2014) points out, Bourdieu was among many others who attempted to theorize the parallel expansions of the service sectors, cultural industries and consumerism across Western (and some of Eastern) nations during the late twentieth century.

[4] This is also asserted by Philips (2005) who suggests that Bourdieu's concept of the new cultural intermediaries was developed based on Russell Lynes' (1980) concept of 'the tastemakers'.

[5] Bourdieu's (1993, 1996) work on the field of cultural production focused largely on the sub-field of restricted production and did not explore the dynamic changes emerging from the sub-field of large-scale/mass production (see Hesmondhalgh 2006). Although he did not use the term 'cultural intermediaries' in these studies, it can be inferred that the 'old' cultural intermediaries have existed for a longer time and are found in the sub-field of restricted production as taste-makers who consecrate and legitimize avant-garde arts over symbolic struggles emanating from the opposition "between consecrated art and avant-garde art, or between orthodoxy and heresy" (Bourdieu 1993, 83; see also McFall 2002, for discussions on the 'old' cultural intermediaries).

[6] In the work of Savage et al. (2013, 227), emerging cultural capital was found in association with such activities as "video games, social network sites, the internet, playing sport, watching sport, spending time with friends, going to the gym, going to gigs and preferences for rap and rock".

[7] We acknowledge as a limitation that our analysis focused on the Japanese version of the advertisement as the authors were familiar with the contexts of both school sports environment and advertising production in Japan. Our understanding of the commercials for the other markets was limited due to the lack of knowledge and experience in appreciating local counterparts, and these were therefore used mainly for a comparative purpose.

[8] Notably, Goldman and Papson (1996, 4) suggest that Wieden+Kennedy is "[a]n avant-garde of advertisers" who "bypassed the clutter by stylistically differentiating their methods of narrative representation".

[9] This tension is often underpinned by "the apparent dichotomy of commerce versus creativity" (Negus and Pickering 2004, 46). For example, Cronin's (2004) interviews reveal a case in which Creatives had a moment of nervousness when they received feedback on the proposal from their corporate client and another case in which the client's requests for inclusion of

several advertising messages interfered with Creative's visual preferences. This dimension has been also discussed in terms of self-exploitation and actualization of cultural workers in our previous work (Kobayashi 2012a).

[10] The commercial can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDLPVzd-4-Q

[11] Notably, this commercial narrative linking individualistic youth and popular culture is consistent with "the Nike moral vision of sport as an anchor for moral individualism" (Goldman and Papson 1998, 80).

[12] It is also worthwhile noting the similarity in Bourdieu's explanation about how the new cultural intermediaries were susceptible to American influences of popular culture when creating the new forms of tastes and cultural capital that challenged the dominant fraction of the dominant class in France (see also Rocamora 2002 for another example).

[13] In other words, the refined concept suggests that, when advertising practitioners or any other creative workers engage in the reproduction of social hierarchies through recursive enactment of production/consumption, they are not acting as cultural intermediaries.

[14] In this sense, we note that Holt's (1998) framing of six 'dimensions of taste', and in particular 'local versus cosmopolitan' and 'communal versus individualist', has certain similarity with our analysis of mediation. We also acknowledge that all the interviewees were male, which may reflect a form of hegemonic gender relation in a wider field of advertising production (see Gee and Jackson 2012; Nixon 2003).

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