MAKESHIFT MARKETS AND GRASSROOTS REPONSIBILIZATION

Please cite: Gollnhofer, Johanna & F. & A. Kuruoglu (forthcoming): “Makeshift Markets and Grassroots Responsibilization, Consumption, Markets & Culture.

ABSTRACT

Prior research has yielded insights into how market actors generate permanent, institutionalized structures. In this article, we investigate the emergence of a temporary and complementary marketplace, characterized by flexible socio-material constellations. We draw on ethnographic data collected within a refugee aid initiative in Germany, which assembled during the arrival of large numbers of refugees in 2015–2016, and was a response to the failure of institutional structures to accommodate this influx. We map out a process through which individuals are collectively moved to respond to a “refugee crisis,” form social networks, and engage in market-making practices. We identify this process as the emergence of a “makeshift” market, and argue that it is a complementary form of institutional work, constituted by a grassroots process of responsibilization. We contribute to the literature on responsibilization and market dynamics by discussing (1) the emergence and decline of temporary and complementary marketplace structures and (2) mapping out a responsibilization process driven by moral outrage at the experiential level.

Keywords: Makeshift market, grassroots responsibilization, refugee crisis, ethnography, institutional theory, institutional work

INTRODUCTION

*Darkness. Voices. Lights. Laughter. Foreign languages. Material infrastructures and individuals of different nationalities. Situated under a bridge in the center of the city – a refugee camp, consisting of several “living” containers and a bus for accommodation. Exchange of consumption goods and empathy. However not initiated by governmental or government-like structures but by individuals. Six months later: No trace of the place is left. The place under the bridge is quiet and empty. No refugees or helpers in sight.*

*(Fieldnotes of the first author; compiled from August 2015 and March 2016)*

Stories about the emergence and evolution of markets are commonly concerned with how structures, networks, and cultures of exchange are established and become institutionalized. Recent research has theorized on managers’ and consumers’ efforts to frame nascent markets as adherent to societal norms, values and regulations - such as the legitimation of the casino industry during the 20th century in the US (Humphreys 2010b) or the coffeehouse culture in the 16th century Ottoman Empire (Karababa and Ger 2011). Scholars have also been concerned with the emergence and entrenchment of new objects, norms, and actors of exchange, as in the emergence of a parallel “taste structure” as well as market organizations that serve pious Muslim consumers in Turkey (Sandikci and Ger 2010); or markets governed by countervailing norms and values of production and consumption, as in the case of a market for community-supported agriculture (Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007). Finally, the literature has demonstrated that consumers intervene in marketplace dynamics when they are unsatisfied with the market’s offerings: they may assemble socio-material resources and create new market sectors (Martin and Schouten 2014); or demand inclusion into existing markets (Scaraboto and Fischer 2013).

In many cases individual actors are compelled to connect, negotiate, and interact with institutional structures, including the state and mainstream markets, in response to their grievances related to these institutions. The literature has paid particular attention to entrepreneurial or collective action in response to feeling disenfranchised from, or excluded by, market institutions. For example, consumers and producers of organic food who were aggrieved by the corporate take-over of organic farming and distribution responded by engaging in new and alternative practices of farming, which generated the countervailing market of “community supported agriculture” (Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007). Plus-sized fashion aficionados, on the other hand, banded together and drew support from entrepreneurial bloggers in demanding inclusion from the mainstream fashion industry (Scaraboto and Fischer 2013). Another way of framing such instances is that individuals feel an urge to address, critique, and challenge the shortcomings and failures of institutional structures, particularly those that concern their own needs and wellbeing.

Yet, we know little about how individual actors are moved to take responsible action when they encounter institutional failures in response to broader societal challenges—such as poverty, epidemics, refugee crises, environmental disasters—rather than issues that are related to their own daily needs and demands. The literature on responsibilization draws attention to how the neoliberal political economy engenders regimes of self-governance: corporate / market actors (Shamir 2008) and individual “consumers” (Giesler and Veresiu 2014) are expected, or even forced, to take upon moral dispositions and to engage in responsible action in response to systemic and structural problems. As such, it is argued that the political economy drives the creation of responsible actors in the face of societal problems. This literature, however, does not explain how actors experience the motivation to take responsibility. We argue that investigating this responsibilization process from the experiential and grassroots level yields both theoretical and practical insights for regulators or the managers of institutions reacting to such challenges.

Finally, the literature on collective market-level action as well as on consumer responsibilization is concerned with the emergence of permanent and entrenched solutions - including the creation of new market institutions and organizations, demanding access to existing fields, and the change of consumer subjectivities. As such, we identify a lack in understanding of how and when more temporary and decentralized socio-material constellations—including makeshift and temporary market structures—as well as more temporary activist roles and networks, are generated in response to societal challenges.

We approach markets as “value creating economic, social and cultural systems” (Venkatesh and Peñaloza 2014, 135) constituted by bundles of practices (Araujo, Finch, and Kjellberg 2010; Lindeman 2012), which, in free market economies, are the central institutions for the distribution of goods and services (Ferguson 2015). To refer to non-permanent and minimally institutionalized markets that partake in such distribution of goods and services, we offer the term “makeshift market”: a flexible structure that is easy to (dis-)assemble. In this paper we inquire why and how makeshift markets may emerge, and how these temporary and minimally institutionalized structures provide one possible avenue for responsibilization.

Beyond consumers’ dissatisfaction or lack of representation within market dynamics (e.g. Martin and Schouten 2014; Sandikci and Ger 2010; Scaraboto and Fischer 2013; Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007), we stipulate that new markets may emerge as a moral-emotional response to societal challenges that involve the failures and impediments of institutions, organizations, and market-like structures that comprise the welfare state. These include both governmental and public organizations, as well as the voluntary sector—charities, NGOs, food banks etc.—and, finally, the market. We identify the triggers that compel marketplace actors to collectivize and engage in action that aims to *complement*—rather than oppose, (Kozinets and Handelman 2004), transform (Scaraboto and Fischer 2013), or maintain (Dolbec and Fischer 2015)—existing formal structures.

We offer “complementarity” as a term for referring to structures (in this case, markets) that align with and provide support to existing structures, without challenging or changing them. We note that market-making practices (Geiger, Kjellberg, and Spencer 2012; Lindeman 2012; Martin and Schouten 2014; Hietanen and Rokka 2015) may also be envisioned as a temporary rather than a permanent takeover of responsibilities that are traditionally in the domain of the state or other (market) institutions.

The following account is based on an eight-month long fieldwork (August 2015-March 2016) with a refugee aid initiative in Munich, Germany. We contextualize and map out the emergence and the decline of a makeshift market that specialized in temporarily distributing food, clothing, shelter and medical services to an influx of refugees during that period. We argue that the emergence of this makeshift market was rooted in the moral outrage and urge to take responsibility, as experienced by a group of Munich-residents. As such, it was a process of responsibilization – i.e., individual actors moved from a passive spectatorship to enact in a socially responsible manner, to aid the incoming refugees. This, we find, was driven through everyday encounters and took place at a grassroots level rather than through formal structures. We thus contribute to emergent literature on the production and disciplining of a “responsible consumer” as a form of neoliberal governmentality (Giesler and Veresiu 2014; Mikkonen, Vicdan, and Markkula 2014; Yngfalk 2016), by demonstrating how, at the phenomenological level, responsibilization may also involve engaging in collective action that aims to temporarily complement, rather than take over from, the (failing) institutional structures. As such, we also contribute to the theme of “bridging boundaries in consumption, markets and cultures” (Fernandez and Figueiredo 2016) by showing how temporally bounded new market and institutional structures and spaces might emerge. Our findings and empirical settings moreover offer extensive insights for Transformative Consumer Research (Mick et al. 2012) as we map out how makeshift markets based on grassroots responsibilization constitute an avenue for facing systemic and structural problems.

To better understand how the failure of institutions may engender market-making activities based on grassroots responsibilization, we first turn to the literature on how individuals are responsibilized. We then explore how institutional theory can provide a theoretical lens to understand how individuals relate to existing institutions, and interrogate and negotiate with existing structures and responsibilities.

RESPONSIBILIZATION AND MARKETS

Market institutions are a central presence in modern society - it has been noted that “distribution in capitalist societies is organized by *the market* - that the exchange of labor is the source of most people’s purchasing power, and that purchasing power in the market is both the fundamental mechanism of distribution and the underlying source of consumption.” (Ferguson 2011, 201). When a person is unable to partake in this network of labor, distribution, and consumption, particularly in the context of a welfare state, welfare institutions are expected to step in and provide care. These institutions in Germany include the state, as well as “a quasi-statutory sector which, through public funding, provides a range of services related to caring” (Daly and Lewis 2000, 289). What happens, though, when existing institutions and market structures - including the state - fail to take care of larger problems in society (e.g. illness, poverty or vulnerable subjects, such as refugees)?

Increasing attention has been drawn to how the (neoliberal) state “delegates” its responsibilities to regular citizens. Literature on responsibilization draws attention to the macro forces - such as the political economy - that compel individuals to responsible dispositions and action. One element of responsibilization is the governing and disciplining of the self as a normal and happy subject (Foucault 1988; Ahmed 2010; Mikkonen et al. 2014), but another element concerns citizenship and social action geared towards ameliorating social problems. Shamir (2008) has defined “responsibilization” as a “call for action; an interpellation which constructs and assumes a moral agency and certain dispositions to social action that necessarily follow” (4). The concept of interpellation, in the Althusserian sense, implies that there is no direct “order” to move to action, but rather that individuals recognize and resonate with a situation, in which they are compelled to move. Shamir notes that citizens, activists, consumers, NGOs, and other actors push market actors and organizations to display ‘ethical behaviour’ in ways that fill the gaps left by the retreat of the state (Sklair 2002; Wright and Rwabizambuga 2006; Shamir 2008).

Following up on Shamir, and also drawing upon a Foucauldian notion of governmentality, Giesler and Veresiu (2015) have drawn attention to how a responsibilized *consumer* subject is produced through moralistic governance regimes. Such a consumer subject, the authors argue, is grounded in the neoliberal logic of “shared responsibility” which “valorizes the solution of social problems through morally responsible market actors” (Giesler and Veresiu 2015: 843). That is to say, individuals feel the urge to share the responsibility in identifying and addressing societal problems, particularly through adjusting their consumption activities. Giesler and Veresiu identify four steps through which the morally responsible market actor emerges: first, a particular “problem” is personalized by allocating a solution at the level of an individual actor (rather than at the systemic level). Next, this moralized problem is legitimated through authoritative discourses. The third step is the management and “capabilization” of the actors through a material infrastructure - such as a marketplace. This means that the related responsibilization practices take place within market institutions. Finally, concrete behavior change (Read 2009) - that is, “transformation” takes place.

It is through this regime that the morally responsible consumer emerges, at the confluence of the “welfarist” ideology of state protection and the “liberal” ideology of the market. Responsibility is shifted from structural and systemic dynamics - the state, comprising a number of governmental and nongovernmental organizations - to the individual actors - the “consumers.” From this perspective, the individual subject is cultivated to become disposed to take responsibility and move into action. Yet, from this account, we cannot gather how individuals experience the “call” to responsibilize and how this urge is transformed into practices and socio-material structures.

Sensitized to the literature on responsibilization, we are thus moved to ask how the call for “shared responsibility” is *felt* and enacted at the grassroots level, rather than viewing responsibilization as solely a “governmental process” (Giesler and Veresiu 2015). We moreover identify in the literature that markets afford avenues to interrogate existing societal dynamics, and generate social change. For instance, social movements that aim to transform societal dynamics may work through markets in generating societal impact, creating new organizational forms, business practices, and markets or segments (e.g., Sine and Lee 2009; Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007; Weber et al 2008). In a case where the societal challenge at hand is a constituency’s inability to become consumers of vital goods and services - as is often the case with refugees - the market constitutes not only a “problem” but also emerges as the means through which solutions can be negotiated. We thus ask, why and how do individuals experience and respond to structural and systemic challenges? When do individuals feel compelled to take responsibility and how do they become organized?

To that end, we turn to the literature that examines consumer action instigated by discontentment with existing market and institutional structures.

ACTIVISM AND MARKETPLACE INSTITUTIONS

Market system dynamics, in consumer research literature, has increasingly been examined through the lens of institutional theory (Humphreys 2010a, 2010b; Scaraboto and Fischer 2013; Dolbec and Fischer 2015). Institutions refer to the “supraorganizational patterns of human activity by which individuals and organizations produce and reproduce their material subsistence and organize time and space” (243). Institutional theory conceives of society as an “interinstitutional system,” and each institution that constitutes society has a central logic (Friedland and Alford 1991; Thornton and Ocasio 2008), which gives substance and meaning to the institution (Scaraboto and Fischer 2013). Institutional theory has been useful for understanding how markets solidify and stabilize, and how market practices and operations are shaped by widely shared norms, understandings and regulations (Scott 1995; Humphreys 2010b). As such, institutions govern the practices, interactions and behaviors of market actors, which in turn results in routinized behavior that reproduces existing structures. In our context of the refugee crisis we see an institutional network – comprising the German Welfare State, and including governmental and nongovernmental organizations – that steers efforts to provide relief to refugees.

While institutionalized structures and networks are fairly durable, they may also fail, conflict with each other, or come under threat. Lack of participation in and representation by market culture(s) constitutes an emergent theme in the literature on marketplace dynamics (Giesler and Fischer 2017). The literature suggests that consumers may engage in entrepreneurial or collective action when they feel they are insufficiently represented by, have unequal access to, or are dissatisfied with extant market offerings, or when they feel that institutional structures pose impediments upon their consumption activities (e.g. Kozinets and Handelman 2004; Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007; Giesler 2008; Varman and Belk 2009; Karababa and Ger 2011; Izberk-Bilgin 2012; Scaraboto and Fischer 2013; Martin and Schouten 2014). Collective action may be geared towards resisting existing market(ing) logics, practices, and entities - such as anti-consumption movements (Kozinets and Handelman 2004; Varman and Belk 2009) or brand boycotts (Izberk-Bilgin 2012); whereas other movements lead to the creation and stabilization - that is, institutionalization - of new organizational forms, practices, and fields - such as microbreweries (Swaminathan and Wade 1999); grass-fed meat (Weber, Heinze, and DeSoucey 2008); windmills (Sine and Lee 2009); community-supported agriculture (Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007); the ‘dubstep’ electronic music scene (Hietanen and Rokka 2015); religion-based alternative economies (Scaraboto and Figueiredo 2017); or a marketplace inflected with Islamic culture (Sandikci and Ger 2010).

The concept of “institutional work” provides a theoretical lens to understand how actors take action to maintain or transform institutions, or to create new ones (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006) - particularly in response to institutional tensions, ruptures, impediments, and failures. When existing market logics and practices do not acknowledge or accommodate certain consumers, for instance, this may provide a motivation for these actors to engage in transformative or disruptive work. Using an institutional theory lens, Scaraboto and Fischer (2013) have argued that “Fatshionistas,” that is interconnected plus-sized consumers of fashion, employ social movement discourses in demanding inclusion from the world of fashion (Scaraboto and Fischer 2013). They engage in entrepreneurial work, creating their own looks, photoshoots, and blogs, and collaborate with powerful actors in the field of fashion who recognize and try to accommodate their demands. This can be read as disruptive institutional work aimed at challenging and transforming the institutions and logics that operate within the field of fashion.

Other consumer research has also drawn attention to the transformative and generative action taken by actors that are dissatisfied with the products, services, and spaces afforded to them by the dominant orders. Read from an institutional theory lens, these can also be interpreted as institutional work performed by dissatisfied or disenfranchised market actors. Sandikci and Ger (2010) show how market actors blend market and commercial logics with Islamic values to generate new market offerings and consumption practices. As such, a field of consumption and production with Islamic inflections achieves permanence and becomes entrenched as an alternative accepted order. Thompson and Coskuner-Balli (2007) on the other hand demonstrate the emergence of a “countervailing” market that operates with ideologically inflected norms of exchange, and its unique valuation structures. Karababa and Ger (2011) demonstrate the impact of institutions - the state and religious authorities - in (de)legitimizing market actors and practices. The market actors, in response to the state’s and religion’s de-legitimizing influences, draw from supportive discourses and appeal to powerful state and religious authorities, and consolidate their marketplace activities. Martin and Schouten (2014) draw attention to the role of consumers in assembling materials and practices - thus demonstrating the role of intent and practice in generating a new market. All these point towards the activities of unsatisfied and/or motivated individuals in generating communities around shared goals, and engaging in activities that make and protect markets.

We note that generative, disruptive, or transformative work are not the only types of action possible in the face of institutional failures or impediments. The institutional theory literature indicates a third type of institutional work, “maintenance,” that refers to the ways in which actors engage in practices and activities that support (rather than resist or subvert) mainstream institutions, and are especially geared to ensure their continuity and stability (Micelotta and Washington 2013). Institutions are not entirely “self-reproducing” (Hwang and Colyvas 2011), and literature indicates that maintenance work is often triggered by threats to the existing order. Maintenance work entails attempts to preserve and re-enforce existing institutional orders, and also to adapt and adjust to changed conditions.

We also find implications in the literature that institutional work may comprise more than one of these types at the same time: Fashion bloggers, for instance, engage in maintenance work (Dolbec and Fischer 2013) through their interconnected activities, not only support the existing logics of the field of fashion, but also by inadvertently creating new types of practices and actors, i.e., their maintenance work also has a creative component. The Fatshionistas, similarly, are not interested in disrupting the arts logics of fashion - their photoshoots and other efforts work towards preserving the aesthetics, while demanding inclusion for different body types. As such, their work also combines maintenance and transformation.

We find, however, that literature on institutional work as well as market emergence offers little understanding of the emergence of *complementary* practices, networks, and structures - that is, institutional work that aligns with and provides support to existing structures, without challenging or changing them. We also note that the literature identifies institutional work that is geared towards identifying more permanent forms of creation, change or inclusion, and that temporality is an understudied aspect of institutional work (Granqvist and Gustafsson 2016). Emergent research has problematized the role of “timing norms” - that is, the embedded and internalized rhythms of activities and changes within a field (Ancona et al. 2001; Granqvist and Gustafsson 2016) - in institutional work and change. Yet, we find that this literature does not question whether more temporary types of institutional work might take place, and what function such work might serve. We are especially interested in exploring impermanence through institutional work, i.e. not striving for entrenched structures that would replace the role of the state and other welfare institutions, but which have an ethical and complementary character.

We thus turn our inquiry towards non-permanent, complementary market-like structures. Such structures have become increasingly relevant and prevalent: actors organize through social media, assemble resources, but also disassemble after a relatively short period. Instances of “makeshift markets” have been observed as a response to societal challenges, such as environmental disasters (e.g. floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes) as well as a response to refugee crises (e.g. the Jungle of Calais). These incidences offer rich contexts for advancing theory about non-permanent, complementary institutional structures and further offer implications for policy makers, regulators or other market actors that are involved in such endeavors.

We thus take as an institutional field the political economy and its material institutional and market structures aimed at catering and dealing with the arriving refugees. Our particular focus is on “refugee helpers” in Munich, Germany: volunteers who took on a central role in providing care and provisions to a massive influx of refugees, particularly when the state and other welfare institutions, as well as charitable organizations, failed to do so in an efficient manner. We view the refugee helpers as situated within but also constructing a part of the institutional field, and identify them as engaging in a complementary and “responsible” form of institutional work, as a response to institutional failure. We turn to contextualizing the emergence of makeshift markets as a grassroots process of responsibilization, through the case of the “refugee crisis” of Germany in 2015.

CONTEXT

In order to study makeshift markets, we chose an empirical context where individuals experience an urge to take responsibility, and are moved to build up market and institutional - albeit temporary and minimally institutionalized - structures, thereby becoming “market actors.” Germany provides an ideal context: masses of refugees - particularly those escaping conflict in Syria - were arriving daily. However, the refugees were unable to meet their needs through existing market structures. The state and other welfare institutions were also unable to deal with this massive influx. Thus, these refugees were to a large extent aided and accommodated by grassroots, independent, and emergent refugee initiatives.

Chancellor Angela Merkel propagated a welcoming culture towards the refugees in August 2015 by declaring “Wir schaffen das” (We can do it), triggering the arrival of masses of refugees. The southern part of Germany was most affected as refugees on the Balkan route crossed the borders here. On some days more than 20,000 refugees arrived in Munich, the capital of Bavaria, exhausted, hungry, thirsty and looking for accommodation (FAZ 2015). Those numbers represent only a fraction of the 476,649 (2015) and 745,545 (2016) asylum applications. In comparison, in 2008 the number of asylum applications was at a low with 28,018 individuals asking for a permanent right to stay (Statista 2016). The German State, the 16 Federal States, and affected cities and villages tried to mobilize and coordinate available material, human and financial resources in order to provide humanitarian aid. It is estimated that German taxpayers provided 20 billion Euros indirectly for the refugee crisis in 2016, which was mainly spent on accommodation and food provisioning (Zeit Online 2016). The federal police accumulated over 3 million extra hours (Bewarder 2016). More than 1,000 sport halls across Germany were transformed into refugee accommodations (Seyffarth 2016).

Germany is the largest national economy in Europe and the fourth largest by nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the world. Germany is a social-protectionist state (hereafter referred to as a welfare state) that takes extensive care of its citizens through social security. Neoliberal and welfare systems differ in conceptualizing the role of the state: In a welfare state, solidarity is one of the ideological foundations. The state plays a major role in protecting and promoting economic and social well-being, using taxpayer money for broader social good and to balance out inequalities. Welfare states often rely on low unemployment rates and high tax rates to finance the welfare system (Bealey and Johnson 1999). In contrast, states where neoliberal policies are on the rise are characterized by a rapid and unconstrained model of economic growth, and typically delegate healthcare or unemployment insurance to individual citizens.

Refugees often encounter normative, cultural, and other institutional barriers (Lang 2015) upon arrival. They moreover suffer from a lack of resources (food, drinks, place to sleep), against a backdrop of a rich and prospering society. They do not possess sufficient social, economic, or cultural capital to participate in conventional monetary transaction markets, and are excluded from the German market. Thus, many newly arrived refugees need basic sustenance goods and services. Particularly in a welfare setting, the responsibility to take care of refugees is allocated to existing institutional actors - the state and other “third sector” actors. However, in our empirical context, institutionalized market-level entities were overwhelmed as those masses over-stressed resources and capacities that could be provided and assembled by the state institutions. We saw, in our context, that concerned individuals and activist-collectives took over responsibility, welcoming the refugees at the train station in Munich (Jansen 2015). We find that some of these refugee helpers, instead of directing the refugees to the official channels, built up their own structures, practices, and interactions. In order to conceptualize makeshift markets, this paper explores at depth the initiative of a particular group of independent refugee helpers, tracing it from its inception and thus providing an emergent account of market-level aid initiatives and their characteristics.

The refugee initiative we study was founded by several concerned mothers, located in Munich’s city center, and had more than 1,600 members (who communicated through a Facebook group) at its peak. This group accommodated and welcomed refugees from August 2015 to March 2016. Volunteers in the group assembled material and human resources; provided drinks, food, clothes, and, at times, accommodation to the refugees. As institutional and market structures recovered from the initial shock and started to coordinate and distribute refugees and resources efficiently, this initiative shifted into a stand-by mode (April 2016), with the promise that if needed, the disassembled structures could be reactivated. By studying this case, we are able to theorize about grassroots responsibilization and how this phenomenon is translated into temporally and spatially limited market structures, i.e. a makeshift market.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

The first author was immersed in the larger context of the refugee crisis through continuous observation and participation at various institutionalized entities (that is, non-governmental or governmental market-like structures in order to accommodate the refugees) and emerging, independent refugee initiatives in Munich. The empirical setting of the paper is a refugee-help initiative founded by two women and run by a collective of volunteers. The first author engaged in ethnographic fieldwork with this initiative from 15 August 2015 until March 2016. Her prolonged engagement enabled the authors to map out both the emergence and the decline of this refugee initiative.

The first author conducted 19 in-depth interviews with volunteers of this initiative (average length 53 minutes). The interviewees were between 19 and 54 years old. Thirteen were women and six were men. Twelve of the interviewees worked full-time jobs and seven were stay-at-home mothers. Four co-founders of the refugee initiative, as well as the owners of three shops located next to the refugee initiative were interviewed, for a more holistic understanding of this makeshift marketplace. The interviews centered around the motivations and actions of the refugee helpers. Informal interviews with 8 volunteers of institutionalized entities and 5 refugees complement the data set. Due to our interest in grassroots, market-level solutions that were developed in response to the crisis, interviews with refugees are not included in the analysis. All interviews were conducted in German, transcribed, and translated into English.

Observation and participation (in total 67 hours) resulted in 59 pages of single-spaced written fieldnotes. After every visit to the field, the first author wrote theoretical memos and fieldnotes to capture the empirical context and to link emergent themes to theoretical ideas. Additionally, 183 articles from major German newspapers were included in the sample. Using these data sources together allowed for a better understanding of the “context-of-context” of the structures and systems that shaped the way that the refugee initiative emerged in Germany (Askegaard and Linnet 2011). The following table gives an overview of the collected data.

\*Insert Table 1 here\*

Both authors analyzed the unfolding of the observed grassroots responsibilization process. By focusing on the process, the authors identified different steps that led to the emergence of the makeshift market (Giesler and Thompson 2016). The insights from the semi-structured interviews with volunteers were constantly compared against media articles and the first author’s own experience at other refugee initiatives. The second author took a “naïve” perspective on the phenomenon and challenged emergent assumptions and theorizations. As such, analysis was iterative (Miles and Huberman 1994), wherein the first iteration was concerned with the emergence of makeshift market structures, and the second iteration identified the process of responsibilization that drove the market-making institutional work. Triangulation of the results (Denzin 1970) was achieved through the analysis of netnographic data (Kozinets 2002), newspaper articles, photos, the informal interviews with refugees, and the interviews of the shop owners.

FINDINGS

Analyzing our data from an institutional theory perspective, we identify grassroots responsibilization as one possible underlying process for institutional work that leads to the emergence of a makeshift market. The identified process of grassroots responsibilization maps out the unfolding of the makeshift market, from the first spark of interest regarding the refugee crisis to the material and physical manifestation of the makeshift market. The first step occurs when the affluent host consumer society is overwhelmed with the arrival of refugees, producing “shocking” media images and real life experiences. Some of the refugees are unable to access the market for even their most basic needs, such as food and clothing. These highly expressive images, as well as the German peoples’ real life encounters with the refugees at train stations, are situated against the backdrop of a prosperous German consumer society. We note that this contradiction activates “moral spectatorship” (Boltanski 1999) - a state of consciousness that develops in response to a specific societal challenge. Moral spectatorship might be transformed into an “impromptu public” (Mortensen and Trenz 2016) - a collective of market actors that has an urge to take action, which in our case is based on a moral outrage stemming from the media images/real life images that exist in tension with humanitarian and egalitarian discourses. Finally, shortcomings in existing institutional and market structures push the responsibilized individuals to build new structures, i.e., a makeshift market characterized by flexible socio-material constellations, temporality, and complementarity.

We identify moral outrage - a strong moral emotional response that is shared across participants and thus becomes an *orientation* (Gopaldas 2014; Kuruoglu and Ger 2015) - as a mechanism that may underpin responsibilization at the grassroots level. We moreover note that as moral outrage is tempered, the need for shared responsibility may cease, and the makeshift market may hence be disassembled.

The following figure highlights the presentation of our findings: the tension between institutional structures, materialities, and discourses drives grassroots responsibilization and consequently the creation of a makeshift market.

\*Insert Figure 1 here\*

Activating Moral Spectatorship

Moral spectatorship has been characterized as situations in which media confront audiences with suffering at a distance (Boltanski 1999). Compassion for refugees has been linked to these visuals and media representations (Höijer 2004), as it is these representations that “shape perceptions of and responsibilities towards asylum seekers” and also “frame political discussions on the topic” (Bleicker et al. 2013, 399; see also Mortensen and Trenz 2016). This was also the case in our fieldwork, where emotionally loaded pictures, media images, opinions, and other representations were articulated and shared on online spaces and networks. Marlene - a volunteer refugee helper from the very beginning – reports about her vacation in August 2015:

*I was on vacation. On Facebook I kind of saw it…There is something going on in Munich. I asked a friend and he just wrote me back that it is unbelievable what is going on here in Munich. He was regularly sending me pictures of the refugees. I could not stop thinking about it, I was liking more and more sites. I was at the most beautiful place on earth, relaxing on the beach, and then I just look at my phone, just thinking: This cannot be true what is happening there. (…) and the pictures that you see…they just reflect human suffering. And the report and everything. I want to know everything, I want to know what is going on there. But it is also quite depressing. (Marlene, refugee helper)*

Marlene describes how these awful images from her home country disrupted her holidays on a faraway pristine beach. She juxtaposes the suffering of the refugees with her own relaxing activity on the beach, producing a cognitive dissonance. These emotionally loaded images triggered her interest in societal challenges in light of the refugee crisis. Marlene’s quotes illustrate a form of moral outrage, an emotional orientation that emerged based on the tension between socio-material structures and the arriving refugees. The paradox of disenfranchised refugees embedded in a flourishing Western consumer society also becomes evident in the fieldnotes of the first author:

*They were just lying on the street – in front of a shopping center. Dozens of them. And this in the middle of the city center. They were wearing a strange combination of clothes. Flip flops paired with winter jackets. As we started to distribute food, we saw that food was a rare resource. Most of them were eating as if they had not eaten anything else for a couple of days. They were lying in front of a shopping center... The most paradoxical to me was that at this point a delivery truck with food and drinks arrived for the shopping center. (Fieldnotes of the first author)*

With no real destination, arriving refugees had to sleep on the street. Their mismatched clothes spoke about their vulnerability, destitution, and the harsh escape routes they had survived, spanning different seasons of the year, regions, and countries. The Western shopping center in the background was paradoxical as it illustrated that the arriving refugees were now situated in a relatively rich and prosperous country, where food, drinks and accommodation were not scarce resources. The shopping center was a material symbol of local market structures and consumption culture. Yet the refugees did not have access to these resources, and their presence was a stark contrast to the affluence of the shopping center in particular, and Germany in general.

The rising interest in refugees was not only present in our ethnographic data, but also in google trends for Germany. The following figure shows the number of searches for the term “refugee” from April 2015 until April 2016. A peak of interest into refugees is noticeable in September, abating soon after.

\*Insert Figure 2 here\*

We thus identify that real life experiences and media spectatorship have the force to set a responsibilization process into motion. We argue that driven by the morally outrageous disparity between the affluence of the host consumer society and by the destitution of the refugees, people experience a growing interest in this societal challenge. Our findings indicate that this is the start of the grassroots responsibilization process that market actors experience - versus responsibilization as a governmental process (Giesler and Veresiu 2014). We further show how this initial stage of outrage leads to the animation of an impromptu public, and finally to the assembling of a makeshift market.

Formation of an action-oriented impromptu public

Extant literature indicates that merely rallying around a cause may not be sufficient to lead to action (Scaraboto & Fischer 2015). However, when the cause, fed by moral spectatorship, creates a tension against a backdrop of humanitarian and egalitarian discourses, we find that it acts as a catalyst for transforming interest into the urge to take action. We further map out the formation of an impromptu public, which is a loosely organized collective around “shared emotional orientations” (Kuruoglu and Ger 2015), or a “collective affect” (Arvidsson and Caliandro 2016). In this case, it is the shared feeling of moral outrage that structures and organizes collective action.

The refugee crisis had been going on for a few years, earning only limited media attention. However, when masses of refugees arrived into a prosperous European society, it triggered heightened media attention. Simultaneously, people began encountering the refugees in person at train stations and other public spaces. These experiences not only triggered an emotional reaction (as in the activation of moral spectatorship) but also engendered an orientation towards taking action. This orientation was formed as informants contrasted what they saw with prevailing egalitarian or humanitarian discourses in German society. Anna especially captures this contrast: “I do not know whether you already saw it? But they are sleeping there, on the floor. Outside. And then you just go home. You have your fancy apartment, I just kept staring at my sofa and wondering whether I should have offered it to a family of refugees.” And Catherine concurs, “I just don’t want anyone to be suffering, while I am sitting at home in my cozy bed and waiting until the world falls apart.” Michaela, similarly, paints an evocative portrait:

*They were just lying on the street. From their strange looks I could tell them apart from homeless people. When I offered them some food, they were hesitant in the beginning. But then they started grabbing it – like someone that hadn’t been eating for a couple of days. Most probably they could just not afford to buy food. (…) I don’t want anyone to starve while food is being wasted in our society everywhere (Michaela, refugee helper)*

Michaela expresses her shock and concern for the refugees, and evokes humanitarian arguments, noting that no one should starve in this prosperous consumer society. This humanitarian and emotional response - a moral outrage - is similar to the feelings that Catherine and Anna experienced regarding an *urge* to help the arriving refugees. Encountering those refugees or their representations activates not only humanitarian but also egalitarian discourses. Says Louis:

*Why shouldn’t they have the right to be here? Just because they have the ‘wrong’ passport? Me with the right passport, am I entitled to live here? I do not think so. We all have the right to find a peaceful place on earth and to live there a peaceful life. So I think they have the right to settle down here. And I want to support them in doing this. (Louis, refugee helper)*

In Louis’s view, individuals should not be excluded, regardless of their citizenship, from a specific state. Something similar is claimed by Marlene who emphasizes that the refugees should “also have the right to be here, and to be welcomed and integrated,” and by Christian who considers refugees to be “equal humans in our contemporary world that have a right to choose where they want to live their lives.” Further, Domen sees refugees as part of society, and draws attention to the need to take action:

*I just realized that I CAN actively shape the life of someone else. I can really shape the political and social landscape – and this in the long term. I am an active part of a process, where we have influence. It is not about me, but about bringing people into mainstream society – and doing this consciously. And this is a great way to spend my resources! (Domen, refugee helper)*

Domen clearly transforms the interest for the cause (i.e. the refugee crisis) into an urge for action based on his moral outrage about refugees being “treated like animals, or even worse,” an approach that runs counter to his egalitarian and humanitarian concerns. This humanitarian discourse activates a goal to make refugees feel included in society - according to Domen, refugees do not exist outside the nation state boundaries, and should be an integral part of it. Domen also explicitly underlines his orientation towards action; he realizes that he can play an active role and can shape the environment, while engaging with refugees.

We find that the tension between moral spectatorship and humanitarian and/or egalitarian discourses triggers the formation of an impromptu public based on moral outrage. The impromptu public is not based on pre-existing ties to communities such as the nation state, but is based on a shared emotional orientation (Kurouglu and Ger, 2015) that engenders an urge to take action.

Our concerned individuals are thus converted into market actors and are driven through their moral outrage to confront a societal crisis, rather than through their concerns related to their own inclusion in the market (e.g., Scaraboto and Fischer 2013), the lack of their own preferred products in the marketplace (e.g., Martin and Schouten 2014), or through their political stances rubbing up against the logics of existing markets (e.g., Izberk-Bilgin 2012; Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007; Varman and Belk 2009). The market *emerges* as an avenue through which these loosely connected individuals can take action; regular individuals are thus transformed into “market actors” through their urge to share responsibility and meet the shortcomings of the welfare institutions.

The Creation of the Makeshift Market

*Existing institutional and market structures.* There are many institutional and market structures in Germany that can accommodate refugees. Governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as the Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, and Doctors of the World, are expected to tend to the arriving refugees. These bodies are institutionalized structures, with established bureaucratic norms and practices. Most of our informants started by volunteering at these existing organizations (governmental and non-governmental) but soon questioned their direct impact and the benefit of their volunteering. Amelia, one of the founders of the refugee initiative we studied, talks about close personal contact vs. distant bureaucracy:

*In the huge institutions, you are so far away from the refugees –you may be sorting clothes for hours in a building far away from the camp. It is just bureaucracy. And sometimes you are not even allowed to interact with them. (Amelia, refugee helper)*

Amelia describes her first volunteering experience as being very distant from the refugees. Her efforts had no visible direct impact. While she sought out personal interaction with the refugees, institutionalized structures prevented her from engaging directly with them. She compares the independent refugee initiative to the institutionalized entities and notes that “[people] can have a direct influence, they can help people directly.”

Emma similarly reports:

*You do not have to offer anything to them – just your presence. There are no separate rooms. I was thinking about offering German classes, but where? And with which books? There is just no structure…it is chaos… And I feel helpless. It is just a huge bureaucracy in cooperation with welfare institutions. (Emma, refugee helper)*

Emma voices the feelings and experiences echoed by most of our informants. Institutionalized entities seemed to be overwhelmed, sometimes resulting in accommodations without running water (Maurer 2015) or showers for weeks on end (fieldnotes). Bureaucratic structures seemed to impede collective action or activism. Other informants went further and blamed the institutional structures directly, stating their moral outrage. Chris, a refugee helper, says “the state does nothing, except for delivering care packages – […] big failure,” suggesting that institutional structures not only impeded collective action and activism, but had also failed. The theme of (state) failure was also picked up by several major European newspapers when covering the refugee crisis (Aust et al. 2015; Burckhardt 2016; Holland 2016; Kingsley 2016). Our informants experienced the urge for responsible action in connection to a moral- emotional response to such institutional failure. In other words, institutional tensions (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2015) incited some individuals to take action and even to translate this instigation into the building up of their own market-like structures. The structures that emerged in response to the failure of the (welfare) institutions were temporary and flexible rather than permanent and entrenched. In the next section, we will explore how informants created their own flexible socio-material structures through institutional work.

*Assembling flexible socio-material constellations*. In the following, we describe how market actors “mobilize human and nonhuman actors to co-constitute products, practices and infrastructures” (Martin and Schouten 2014). These socio-material structures are crucial in order to enact responsibilized action (Giesler and Veresiu 2015). Flexible socio-material constellations allow our informants to avoid bureaucratic structures, which impede impact.

Our informants create market-like structures (Martin and Schouten 2014) – namely a makeshift market – that yields value (Venkatesh and Peñaloza 2014), i.e., humanitarian and ethical value (Stevenson 2002). The makeshift market has no profit motive but aspires to create social justice or equality (Creed, Scully, and Austin 2002; Maguire, Hardy, and Lawrence 2004). In doing so, actors are able to draw from the multifarious material, technological, and human resources that are readily available in the prosperous German context.

The social space of the refugee initiative empowers the participants (Arvidsson and Caliandro 2016) and allows for the mobilization, organization, and management of available resources. This process is illustrated by how two concerned mothers began with a provisional set-up that steadily grew in the following days and months. Sandra, one of the founders, describes her first serendipitous experience:

*I just cooked an Arabic dish at home. Then I filled it into a large container. The largest one I could find. And then the other mother, she just brought bread. No idea where she got it from. And then there were other people. Everyone was just adding something. (Sandra, refugee helper)*

What is described in the quote are the first instances of flexible socio-material constellations that, eventually, would come together to generate a makeshift market. As described in the words of Louis, “Every person does what he can to offer” or by Susanne, “We just help where our help is needed.” Assembling the material resources, such as food, bread, and plastic tables, constituted the starting point of the initiative, and led to the emergence of a market (Martin and Schouten 2014) and also to new practices (Epp, Schau, and Price 2014). Other concerned individuals joined in once they discovered the initiative, starting by mobilizing the resources they had on hand: looking through their old clothes, searching their basements or garages to find objects that could be of use to the refugees. The founders of the initiative then broadened the circle, inspiring family, friends, acquaintances, and even employers. For instance, an employer offered their conference room for regular group meetings. The digital space and associated networks (such as Facebook and Twitter) allowed for scaling up the initiative to a higher level.

Resources were mobilized primarily in the Munich metropolitan region. This was efficient as refugees showed up on a daily basis and therefore more resources were needed. Regular postings on the initiative’s Facebook page assured that helpers got hold of the needed resources. These included goods that were directly redistributed to the refugees, as well as infrastructural material to construct the physical space for the makeshift market (for instance, light bulbs). At a later stage, commercial marketplace actors, such as companies, restaurants or nightclubs, also participated: these commercial actors provided resources at no cost, aiding the makeshift market in building up infrastructure and distributing basic necessities to refugees. For instance, a major accounting firm donated water and snacks for refugees on a daily basis, an Italian restaurant chain delivered several pizzas a day, a nightclub provided free Wi-Fi access, and a shop owner next to the refugee camp offered them the use of his toilets.

In order to mediate between a lack or excess of objects offered, responsibilized actors conscripted social media networks, which became an essential tool in this flexible and adjustable constellation. A software engineer volunteered a signing-up platform for managing human resources according to needs. New purchases were discussed and voted for in specific chat rooms. Publicly available Amazon wishlists indicated exactly what kind of objects and products were needed for the refugees (netnographic data). Resources were assembled keeping in mind the needs of refugees, available resources in German society, and the requirements of regulators. For instance, car seats for babies turned into one of the most precious resources, as official guidelines required small children to wear them on long-distance buses.

These flexible and adjustable socio-material constellations manifest themselves through a low degree of institutionalization and a high degree of independence from other institutions. The minimal institutional hurdles of the makeshift market are described by Domen as follows:

*We try to put no barriers. Everyone who wants to help is welcome to help. This is what we understand as instant help. For instance, there is no need to provide a criminal record certificate as in state camps. And we also try to avoid hierarchy. You can decide freely on your task. And when you don’t want to sort clothes, that is totally fine. We will find another task. We want to create kind of an intelligent swarm with self-determination. It is really meant the easy way: when you have time to help, just show up. You can leave whenever you want to. You also do not have to sign up for fixed, regular dates. (Domen, refugee helper*)

Domen positively compares participation in this makeshift market to participation in institutionalized entities. Significant institutional barriers, e.g., high degree of paper work or a criminal record certificate to qualify for participation, hinder institutional entities. In contrast, independent makeshift markets are flexible initiatives, open to everyone. They allow for individual flexibility in terms of hours and tasks. Tasks are not assigned, but chosen. Marketplace actors create a self-steering network, where everyone can focus on the task she/he likes best or can do best, from building a webpage to welcoming the arriving refugees.

Further, in contrast to existing governmental or non-governmental structures that rely on extensively developed institutional structures, our studied refugee initiative is small and efficiently organized. As Lara points out;

*It is just so small. And you are just so close to the refugee. You can directly see where your help is needed, but also its impact. And when I see that no one is sorting the clothes, but refugees need something, I just go there and do my best. Someone might argue that this is inefficient, but it kind of works out. (Lara, refugee helper)*

Lara argues that the initiative’s focused scope facilitates individuals to feel responsible and empowers them to take action where needed. Individuals can directly see the impact of their work. Overlap between tasks and activities is not seen as detrimental to the organization of the makeshift market, but are accepted for the purpose of self-determination.

In order to sustain this freedom in action, the makeshift market strives to stay as independent as possible. In other words, only a minimum of interference from regulators, state-representatives, or the law is tolerated. Lucia speaks about the initiative’s approach to structure and organizing:

*We want to make our own rules. Without any interference. And this also opens up possibilities. For instance, we can help refugees that are not registered. And others that fall through the cluster. (Lucia, refugee helpers)*

Lucia points to gaps in the efforts of state-led institutions that individuals can fill in. The initiative can provide help to everyone in need, without tying it to certain criteria and requirements (e.g. registration). As Janna continues on the registration issue:

*If you are not registered you do not get anything. They just send the refugees away. The problem is that the refugees do not want to be registered. Once you are registered at a place you have to stay at this place. Often they have family in other cities or countries and they want just to go on. But where should humanitarian aid stop? I would say nowhere. (Janna, refugee helper)*

The flexible socio-material constellations where everyone and everything can take part at any time offer an avenue for our refugee helpers to enact their objective of providing immediate relief to all newly arrived refugees, registered or not. Existing institutional structures constrain the intent of the refugee helpers - but by breaking away from the institutional structures, and by creating new temporary structures, our informants translated their intent into market making practices (Martin and Schouten 2014). Market making practices involve assembling and coordinating socio-material resources into a network that produces value. This, we argue, is how the makeshift market emerged.

*Temporality and Complementarity of the Makeshift Market.* Flexible socio-material constellations allow for the impermanence of the makeshift market. The structures that emerge from the refugee helpers’ intents and practices constitute a makeshift market; yet, these intentions do not involve permanence. As such, the makeshift market is meant as a temporally restricted remedy to the societal challenge on hand. As pointed out by Louis:

*It is not the goal to do this forever. It is just meant for the short time. (…) I could not bear people dwelling on the street without doing nothing, but for the long-term this is not a solution. I cannot do this forever. Sooner or later I have to refocus on my family and work. (Louis, refugee helper)*

Louis sympathizes with the stressed state machinery due to the acuteness of the situation. However, he clearly emphasizes that this makeshift market constitutes a remedy only for the short-term. These temporal and spatial limitations bear parallels to a *hypercommunity* (Kozinets 2002a), but with the aim of supporting and complementing societal institutions. As such, these actors also comprise a *community of purpose* (Martin and Scouten 2014) which disbands once welfare and market institutions re-embrace their responsibilities and take care of the arriving refugees. Sophie explains the role of a makeshift market:

*We cannot cope with a permanent emergency state. But this is the good thing about our initiative. You can go home and hopefully you manage to gain some distance. A lot of people stop after a couple of weeks and that is also totally fine. Once we need their help again, I know we can count on them. And we can easily reach and mobilize them on Twitter, Facebook or Whats-App. (Sophie, refugee helper)*

Sophie clearly believes in moral and humanitarian responsibilities, and her beliefs and feelings are transformed into action in emergency situations, animated in particular through social media. However, she also emphasizes the limited capacity and responsibility of the refugee helpers. The set-up of the makeshift market reflects the temporary character of humanitarian aid. Catherine talks about the impermanence of the material setup:

*We could disassemble the whole structure from one day to the next. It is all rough-and-ready. The infrastructure is just assembled. We could even disassemble the containers and assemble them at another place. (Catherine, refugee helper)*

Catherine thus highlights what is implied by our term “makeshift market.” It is easily assembled and disassembled, and has a provisionary character that can be adjusted to the flow of refugees, political circumstances, and regulations. As such, it is only complementary to existing structures. Our refugee helpers do not necessarily try to disrupt or challenge existing structures, and expect the state and other institutional actors to take over in the long run. In this way, we refer to a different kind of institutional work compared to the maintenance, disruptive, or transformative interventions of market actors identified by prior studies.

Disassembling the Makeshift Market

The structures were easily disassembled once the refugee helpers found that the makeshift market was no longer needed. As evidenced from the note on the Facebook page of the initiative, the market shifted into stand-by mode after approximately six months of existence. As it reads on the official Facebook page:

*Dear Community, as announced we are since April 1st in a form of Stand-by modus. This means that we are not present every day. But we keep a close eye on the situation. Most of the equipment is stored in the containers. This means that we could anytime reboot our resources. (…) Stay tuned! (Official announcement on the Facebook page)*

After disassembling, some refugee helpers moved to other refugee initiatives or engaged in long-term solutions, such as German classes in their neighborhoods, while still others dropped out entirely from voluntary work. Material resources were either given to their legal owners or were stored in basements.

The reason for this disassembling was that the institutional structures (governmental and non-governmental as well as market organizations) recovered from the initial “crisis” and became equipped to cope with the arriving refugees. As reported by Ulla in March 2016 when their refugee initiative was put into a stand-by mode:

*Just fewer and fewer refugees came. In the beginning, we often had more than 100 refugees a day, some days right now it is down to 25. And we have 12 helpers taking care of them. On the one hand this is because fewer refugees are coming into Germany due to the closing of the borders and on the other hand it is because the State has become more organized. They have a structure now. And I think that refugees are treated better now. (Ulla, refugee helper)*

What Ulla here describes is a loss of purpose. As the number of refugees coming to Germany dropped, and, simultaneously, existing institutional and market structures seemed to deal with arrivals more efficiently, Ulla no longer sees it as her role to intervene. This is also reflected in more objective measures: due to the closure of borders, the uncoordinated flow of refugees to Germany was significantly reduced (Zeit Online 2016b). The tension between the urge and intent to help (captured by the step-by-step process of responsibilization) and the existing socio-material structures was tempered. As explained by Thomas:

*For me it was essential that the refugees were welcomed and taken care of. As I see it right now, this is done. When I go to work they are not sleeping on the street and also in media reports and on my Facebook it is more the question about integrating refugees in the long term and not about a current crisis that we have to solve. (Thomas refugee helper)*

Thomas sees his job as done, since existing structures seem to have recovered. He does not see it as his role to work towards the integration of the refugees - that is the job of higher level institutional structures. Rather, at the more immediate level, media representations of refugees against the background of an affluent Western consumer society had receded from his consciousness, and, with those, his intent and urge to take action. This development has to be interpreted against the prevailing political setting, i.e., that Germany is a social state with an extensive security network. Thus our refugee helpers show a more demanding stance regarding the role and intervention of state-like or already institutionalized structures. For instance, Louis questions “For what do we have a strong government? And for what do I pay taxes?” Louis was referring to the fact that he expected the State to take over in the refugee crisis as he had already fulfilled his duties by paying taxes. This reliance on, but also trust in, the State and existing institutional structures was reflected throughout our fieldwork. As says Catherine:

*I trust the government to take over. It is not as if that they are mistreating refugees. It is more a management issue. But I am confident that we all together can cope with the refugee crisis. We just have to make a joint effort. Existing camps have everything available – it is just a question of time and organizing. (Catherine, refugee helper)*

Catherine voices her trust in existing structures. She does not blame the government or existing structures; it is more a question of time and the organization of available resources in a more efficient way.

The number of asylum applications has been consistently on the rise, however existing structures seemed to be better equipped to dealing with refugees (Bundesamt für Migration 2016). Moreover, rather than makeshift markets, what refugees who have been granted asylum require are more institutionalized and permanent structures. The disassembling of the makeshift market was thus an anticipated and desired consequence.

DISCUSSION

In our findings, we show the emergence and decline of a makeshift market driven by an underlying process of grassroots responsibilization. We conceptualize makeshift markets as temporary, minimally institutionalized structures of exchange. We add several contributions to prior theory on market emergence and dynamics – showing that market-making activities may yield temporary structures – and contribute to the literature on responsibilization by drawing attention to a grassroots activism-driven form of sharing responsibility. Further, we respond to the call to better understand “the motivational side of market emergence” (Komarova and Velthuis 2017, 2) and to illuminate how actors’ intents to provide aid to disenfranchised consumers “translates” complementary institutional work, which engenders market-building practices (Martin and Schouten 2014). We add to the special issue by exploring new temporalities and spaces that bridge cultural boundaries and by identifying makeshift markets – in the light of Transformative Consumer Research – as one avenue to face societal or environmental challenges.

Why does a makeshift market emerge?

Prior research in Consumer Culture Theory has discussed responsibilization as a governmental process (Giesler and Veresiu 2015) through which market actors are constituted as “responsible” subjects. We extend this line of research by proposing that responsibilization may also be conceived as a process that is driven through lived experiences, and thus takes shape at the grassroots level. We show how the urge to share responsibility may be triggered through collective moral outrage. “Grassroots responsibilization” refers to activities that are based on a “shared responsibility” and that are driven by individuals as a response to the failure of existing institutional structures. Similar to studies on why and how consumers take action in institutional fields, we show how discontentment with existing institutional structures and markets (Scaraboto & Fischer 2013, Thompson 2007; Lindeman 2012; Martin and Schouten 2014) may drive individuals to collectively seek market-level solutions. We thus contribute to this body of research by taking political actors and structures (including the state and welfare institutions) into account.

In our case, individuals do not engage in market creation practices for their own sake (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2013; Martin and Schouten, 2014), but do so out of moral reasons and with the aim of complementing existing institutions. We thus suggest that it is possible to conceive of responsibilization as an instance in which actors are morally moved to take action when they experience institutional tensions or ruptures. The temporary structures that emerge through collective action may constitute market systems, particularly when they are geared towards the distribution of goods and services to a disenfranchised constituency. Similar to “alternative” economies (e.g. Albinsson and Perera 2012), such markets have a strong moral component and generate social, rather than economic, value. However, unlike most alternative economies, the makeshift markets we describe are disassembled when the mainstream institutions are able take charge.

How does a makeshift market emerge and decline?

We show in our findings that grassroots responsibilization may flourish on tensions that produce moral outrage. Similar to the process of countercultural market emergence as conceptualized by Hietanen and Rokka (2015), we identify that tensions drive and energize market emergence (Giesler 2012). We show how tensions related to the failure of institutions unleash a generative potential, subsequently activating “moral spectatorship” (Boltanki 1999), forming “impromptu publics” (Mortensen and Trenz 2016), and creating a makeshift market. We identify moral outrage as the underlying mechanism that drives those steps in our case. Moral outrage is an action-inducing emotional orientation: through their collective moral outrage spectators assemble into an impromptu public that engages in practices comprising a makeshift market. Literature on moral spectatorship (Boltanski 1999) draws attention to the role of media and images in shaping perceptions and discussions related to societal problems - such as the suffering of refugees (Mortensen and Trenz 2016).

While moral spectatorship may not be action-oriented from a distance, the immediate encounters with institutional ruptures - such as physical encounters with refugees in one’s own daily life - are more likely to animate “impromptu” and “affective” publics with shared ethical dispositions. We thus note that moral outrage, which stems from encountering images and bodies of suffering, may be a means through which individuals are driven to identify institutional failures and decide to take market-generative action. As such, we contribute to literature that identifies the role of emotions in generating collectivities (Kuruoglu and Ger 2015) and shaping practices (Gopaldas 2014) by drawing attention to how new market(places) may also emerge in conjunction with moral-emotional reactions and orientations.

The creation of a makeshift market is supported by social networks that allow consumers to interact in creative ways that are not structured by institutional or well-known market actors (Arvidsson and Caliandro 2016). Phenomena in the digital space can disappear from one day to another. In our case, this temporary nature of the digital space was transferred to the material structures of the makeshift market, allowing for disassembling instantaneously. Once the moral outrage is tempered – as existing institutional structures are able to deal with the situation – the makeshift market loses its purpose and is disassembled. We highlight that practices of providing and distributing goods and services to the refugees translate into a makeshift market, which is both informal and temporary.

What are the characteristics of a makeshift market?

We identify flexible constellations, temporality, and complementarity as characteristics of a makeshift market; while these characteristics are interdependent, we present them as distinct analytical categories for the sake of clarity. Prior research has shown that individuals create and strive for institutionalized market solutions (Martin and Schouten 2014; Hietanen and Rokka 2015; Sandikci and Ger 2010; Sine and Lee 2009; Weber et al. 2008) to their grievances about and dissatisfactions with existing market and societal structures. In contrast to this stream of literature, this paper shows how market actors assemble market structures without striving for permanence, and without aiming to criticize or replace existing mainstream structures. The makeshift market is only meant as a temporary remedy to institutional failures – and is to be kept up until institutional structures regain their ability to take responsibility. As such, our findings depart from prior research on institutional work and institutional entrepreneurship: the institutional work performed by our informants does not strive to disrupt existing structures but rather to complement them. By “complement” we refer to institutional work that aligns with and provides support to existing structures, without challenging or changing them. As such they act in harmony with existing market offerings (Martin and Schouten, 2014). Whereas “informal” (Lindeman 2012) or consumer-driven (Martin and Schouten 2014) markets may still become well-entrenched, makeshift markets emerging from complementary institutional work may not seek permanence. In this manner they are similar to communities of purpose (Martin and Schouten 2014) or to hypercommunities (Kozinets 2002). Rather than providing an escape from institutional structures, however, as other temporary or liminal marketspaces do (e.g., Kozinets 2002), these temporary market-like structures may emerge as and provide a venue for responsibilization.

We argue that the concept of makeshift markets is also applicable to other settings where individuals take temporary action and engage in market-making practices. For instance, foodsharing – a German initiative for redistributing food from retailers to consumers – emerged due to institutional failures evident in large amounts of food waste (Gollnhofer and Schouten, 2017). However, still today, food waste at the retail level is still a pressing problem. In other words, since institutional structures did not take on the responsibility, the makeshift market is still in existence and will itself gradually become institutionalized (Gollnhofer, Hellwig and Morhart 2016). Another example in the realm of the refugee crisis would be the French initiative Care4Calais (<http://care4calais.org/>) – founded by two concerned individuals, but finally turned into a registered charity. Comparing these examples under the umbrella concept of makeshift markets would allow future research to explore the boundary conditions in the field of activism and markets with temporary structures. As such, we call for researchers to continue posing questions about when and how individuals or collectives seek permanent and institutional-level change, and when they pursue temporary solutions.

**CONCLUSION**

This article examines how institutional failures in the face of disasters can drive collective responsible action; and how emergent market structures provide an avenue for individuals to organize and take responsibility. Through our ethnographic engagement with a refugee-aide initiative, we find that media exposure to and everyday encounters with the “refugee crisis” in Europe generated moral outrage and drove groups of concerned individuals to assemble resources and exchange structures. While an overarching narrative about neoliberalism and late modernity concerns the delegation of institutional responsibilities to individual citizens/consumers; we complement this view by identifying the moral and emotional underpinnings of responsibilization as a grassroots process. We find that responsibilization constitutes a complementary form of institutional work, particularly in the face of institutional shortcomings and failures, and that it may manifest itself through makeshift markets that work in harmony with existing structures, and are geared towards temporarily providing solutions in areas where the state (and other welfare actors) fail.

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Tables

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| --- | --- |
| *In-depth Interviews with refugee helpers*  *(semi-structured)* | 19 in-depth interviews (average length: 53 minutes with refugee helpers; including four interviews with co-founders of the refugee helpers initiative) |
| *Interviews with shop owners next to the refugee initiative* | 3 in-depth interviews (average length: 34 minutes) |
| *Informal interviews with refugee helpers & refugees (unrecorded)* | 8 interviews with refugee helpers; 5 interview with arriving refugees; conducted during fieldwork |
| *Observation & Participation* | 67 hours of participation and observation resulting in 59 pages of single-spaced text |
| *Netnographic Data* | Publicly available blog data, resulting in 132 pages of single spaced text including daily stories from helpers about their experience |
| *Newspaper Coverage* | 183 articles from major German newspapers |
| *Photos* | 54 photos for triangulation purposes |

Table 1. Overview of collected data.

Figures

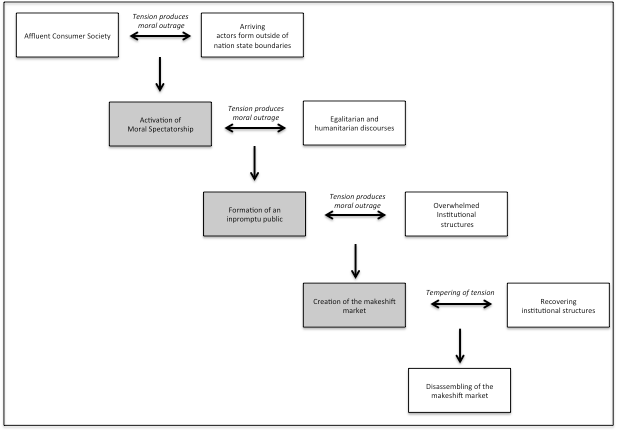


Figure 1. The steps of grassroots responsibilization resulting in the assembling of a makeshift market.

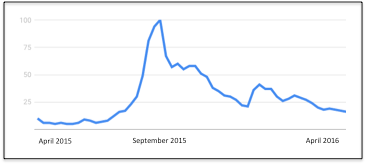


Figure 2. Google trends (for Germany) for the key term of refugees from April 2015 to April 2016.