

Impact of culture via rooting variables on the sweet nostalgia and bitter nostalgia

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Abstract:

The aims of this article are to test the relationship between the variables of rooting (attachment to the native country, cultural attachment and language) and the two nostalgic characters (soft / bitter). The quantitative study was conducted on a sample of 101 expatriate consumers to our variables. The statistical results of the logistic regression show that: attachment to the home country influences soft nostalgia, cultural attachment influences soft nostalgia, and language influences soft nostalgia. It also shows that our study involves relationships that are more gentle than bitter towards nostalgia. This study is a new approach in the field of nostalgia, it responds to Holbrook's call for intercultural research. The interest of our study is primarily theoretical; indeed, we validate the literature that has been made on nostalgia. But we also show the managerial impacts. Regarding the positioning of nostalgic brands in relation to the expatriate segment.

Keywords: *Attachment, Culture, Expatriates, Rooting, Nostalgia.*

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Introduction

Nostalgia has become a concept increasingly appreciated by brands. Retro and vintage touch all marketing mix (Robert-Demontrond, 2003), to answer various issues such as segmentation, positioning or the optimization of the point of sale. But it also touches the virtual world because many consumer communities like to share their childhood memories or moments of the past (Kessous, 2010). Although nostalgia is widely studied to serve marketing strategies, very few studies are interested in culture as the antecedent of nostalgia. Hepper (2014) were interested in nostalgia as a Pancultural emotion, they conducted their study across a range of cultures, to prove the universality of nostalgic emotions. Kessous (2015) investigated the impact of culture on the relationship of consumers with brands considered as nostalgic, his study proved that brands are associated with traditional celebrations and rites of passage. Thus, consumers buy traditional products and are faithful to these products. On the other hand, these brands facilitate consumer confidence. Kessous has also shown that consumers' relationship to nostalgic brands is softer than bitter. Our study is in line with that of Kessous, the object of the article is to study the relationship between culture and nostalgia sweet / bitter. We used rooting variables to test attachment to home country, culture and language on sweet / bitter nostalgia. The aim is to show that the attachment to origins, traditions, language can take expatriate consumers to buy more authentic and traditional products. We will see this later in the managerial impact of our study. We interviewed a sample of expatriates with specific criteria to answer our research problem. We first present the literature review that allowed the development of our hypotheses, we will then expose our methodology and finally we will expose our statistical results and discussion.

2) Literature review and research hypotheses

Nostalgia deserves an intercultural examination; indeed, it is present in everyday life through cultures (Hepper, 2014). Research shows that British people aged 18 to 91 feel nostalgia at least once a week (Hepper, 2014), most Japanese adults feel nostalgia through old music (Kusumi, 2010). But nostalgia is also integrated into the world through literature like Homer's *Odyssey* (Trilling, 2009) or Chinese Confucian writings (Legge, 1971), but also through popular music or cultural practices such as rituals (Jagannathan, 2005). Thus, nostalgic emotion is part of the human experience no matter the culture of the individual; it is present in global cultural practices and arts (Hepper, 2014). Although the conceptions and experiences of nostalgia may vary from one culture to another, this latter plays an important role in propensity or the intensity of nostalgia. Thus, we will study the relationship between culture via the variables of rooting and sweet/ bitter nostalgia.

2.1) The concept of Nostalgia

The etymology of the word nostalgia comes from the Greek, *Hostos* (back) and *Algos* (pain). The concept of nostalgia is old and dates to 1688 when Johannes Hofer (1934) described nostalgia for the first time as a pathology due to homesickness (Bolzinger, 1989), whose consequences were psychic (depression, behavior disorders (Divard, 1997), neurosis, frustration ((Auenbrugger, 1808)) and physical disorders (insomnia, fever, anxiety (McCann, 1941)). But since then, nostalgia has evolved and a new definition is born thanks to the great philosophers,

notably Rousseau and Kant who put forward a less clinical explanation. Kant writes on this subject: *"When the nostalgic return to their native country, they are very disappointed in their waiting and at the same time cured; they have the impression that in the country everything is changed; in truth they could not bring back their youth"*. Therefore, Kant explains nostalgia as a painful regret from the past (Kessous, 2010). Many authors approach the Kantian vision until the arrival of Davis (1979) who passes from philosophy to sociology. He considers that nostalgia is a way of preserving one's identity to cope with the changes in life. Gradually, nostalgia spreads, and it is only at the end of the 20th century that marketing is interested in this phenomenon (Holbrook, 1993). Many definitions appear. It is sometimes an evocation (Davis, 1979), a mood (Belk, 1990), a preference (Holbrook, 1991), an emotion (Bellelli, 1991), a state (1992) or an affective reaction (Divard, 1997), others evoke its double game, the bitterness that represents the inability to relive certain events and the gentleness that makes us think of the good old days (Belk 1989, Hirsch 1992). Holbrook (1991) Proposed a definition that became the reference in the literature review: *"Nostalgia is a preference (positive connection, positive attitude, favorable affect towards objects, people, places or things) that were common (popular, fashionable, or widely available) when one was younger (in his youth, adolescence or even before birth)"*. Bellelli (1991) argues that nostalgia is a double-faced emotion: **Gentleness: "the emotion of memory" The individual can find or relive his memories through thoughts, so they will not be lost. Bitterness: "the emotion of desire and absence" The individual is aware that the object, places or events he has loved cannot be reached again.**

2.2 Rooting

There is a strong emotional connection between the individual and its environment (a geographical area such as his country) (Rivlin 1982, Shumaker 1983). This link builds his identity (McAndrew 1998, Proshansky 1983, Feldman 1990, LITTLE III 1987, Dovey 1985, Belk 1992). Individuals who leave his place of life sometimes feel a loss of identity or homesickness. So, they adopt nostalgic behaviors (Robert-Demontrond, 2008). On the other hand, the links between the individual and his physical environment may be religious, cultural, or economic (Low, 1992). And the intensity of this attachment varies from one culture to another (Robert-Demontrond, 2008). Rooting is associated with the concept of attachment to the place (Robert-Demontrond, 2008). But we also use the terms identity, place identity (Proshansky 1983, Lalli 1992, Brown 1985, Moore 1994, Williams 1992) or the sense of belonging (Fried 1961). All these terms have one thing in common: the relationship of the individual to his environment does not matter whether he is physical or psychic (Lalli, 1992). According to Shumaker (1983), the most rooted people do not like change very much. They represent an interesting segment for a study on nostalgia. Indeed, nostalgic people often take refuge in their past because it does not change, and they feel safe as well. There are several types of measurement scale. For this research we are inspired by the definition of Di Méo (2001) which defines rooting as a concept comprising 3 dimensions: attachment to the territory, sense of belonging and sharing of values. We did not need Churchill's paradigm to build our scale because we adapted that of Robert-Demontrond (2008) for his study on regional attachment. He proposed five dimensions: attachment to the territory, attachment to culture, practice of the regional language, solidarity and

ethnocentrism. And after careful study, we eliminated the last two components that are of little interest for our study and adapted the other three. In the end, we chose, the attachment to the native country, the attachment to culture and the practice of the mother language. Our choice draws upon this scale because of its emotional highlights as well as cultural dimensions.

2.3 The influence of culture on nostalgia

Nostalgia is a concept that interests many researchers in marketing, there are now several types of research: Kessous (2010) have studied the consequences of nostalgia on consumer relations with brands, Batcho (1995) was interested in the triggers of nostalgia (inventory of nostalgia), and Holbrook (1993), Perrusson (2003), Boulbry (2003), Vignolles (2010) measured nostalgia. The purpose of this article is to measure culture as antecedent of nostalgia to understand its influence on it. Because everyone is related to his place of life (Moore, 1994) and his identity (McAndrew 1998, Proshansky 1983, Feldman 1990, LITTLE III 1987, Dovey 1985, Belk 1992). and many adopt nostalgic behaviors when they are far from their cultural and physical environment (Hepper, 2014).

2.3.1 Attachment to the country:

Attachment to the country corresponds to the ability of an individual to live far from his place of birth, his sense of belonging and his sense of identification (Robert-Demontrond, 2010). The physical remoteness of this country often gives rise to nostalgic behavior (Robert-Demontrond, 2010). This results in more favorable behavior towards communities that share the same culture (Guàrdia 2002, Pol 2002, Uzzell 2002). Nostalgia is linked to homesickness (Bolzinger, 1989). Hofer attributes the cause of nostalgia to the recurring thoughts and memories of the house. On the other hand, homesick part of loyalty concepts and allegiance to his social group and his ideology (Bacho, 2013). In some studies, respondents mentioned the nostalgic connection with objects associated with a distant land that they left.

Thus, we draw the following hypotheses:

H1: the attachment to the home country influences nostalgia

Kaplan (1987) argued that for nostalgia to be normal, it must contain both a pleasant affect and a depressive effect. Indeed, theorists agree to characterize nostalgia as "Bittersweet, indicating a melancholy pleasure, a joy full of sadness. (Werman 1977, Castelnuovo Tedesco 1980, Hertz 1990, Kaplan 1987, Peters 1987).

H1a: the attachment to the homeland influences the Sweet nostalgia

H1b: the attachment to the home country influences bitter nostalgia

2.3.2 The attachment to culture

This factor corresponds to the interest of the individual for his culture, the festivals, the music and the history of his country. Indeed, nostalgic emotion is culturally important (Davis 1979, McCracken 1988, Rothenberg 1989). Cultural heritage is a major player in the determination of nostalgia for a given society (Rousseau, 1999). There are several brands that are considered nostalgic. Some are related to a cultural context. In addition, brands that cause cultural nostalgia (Havlena and Holak, 1996) are associated with iconic brands (Holt and Thompson, 2004). Nostalgic brands reflect values and beliefs (LaTour et al, 2010). They are rooted in culture, traditions, arts and family heritage (Kessous, 2015).

H2: cultural attachment influences nostalgia

H2a: cultural attachment influences the sweet nostalgia**H2b: cultural attachment influences bitter nostalgia****2.3.3 Language**

Language is an indicator of culture. It is significantly related to nostalgia (Rousseau, 1999). The understanding and practice of mother language proves attachment to the country and the past.

H3: the original language influences nostalgia**H3a: the original language influences the sweet nostalgia****H3b: the original language influences bitter nostalgia****1) Methodology of the study****3.1 Measurement of variables**

Rooting: We selected three variables from the rooting scale of Bougeard Delfosse (2008), the attachment to the native country which includes fourteen items. The cultural attachment that includes three items and finally the language that groups two items. The scale has been adapted to serve the objectives of this study. The predisposition to nostalgia: she has been evaluated from the scale of Perrusson (2003). This scale shows two dimensions: the dimension recall memories / Sweet (four items) and regret dimension of the past / bitter (three items).

3.2 Method of data collection**Sample**

Our questionnaire is composed of two parts; the first part was used to evaluate the three variables attachment to the native country, cultural attachment and language. Respondents rated their attachment with a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In the second part we evaluate the nostalgia variable. Respondents rated this variable on a scale ranging from never to very often. To meet our objectives, the questionnaires were distributed to expatriates in France, in companies and sites dedicated to them. A total of 101 questionnaires were analyzed (Table 1, 2 and 3).

Table 1. Age

Age	10 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69
Effectives	3	56	24	12	3	3
Percentage	3%	55.4%	23.8%	11.9%	3%	3%

Table 2. Gender

Gender	Man	Woman	Total
Effectives	71	30	101
Percentage	70.3%	29.7%	100%

Table 3. Native Country

Native Country	Maghreb	South Africa	West Africa	East Africa	Southern Africa	Asia	Europe	Overseas Region	Total
Effectives	35	8	6	14	4	10	23	1	101
Percentage	34.7%	7.9%	5.9%	13.9%	4%	9.9%	22.8%	1%	100%

Our sample is mainly represented by: men (70.3% vs. 29.7% women), young people (55.4% for 20-29 years old and 23.8% for 30-39 years old) and the Maghreb (34.7%) as well as Europe (22.8%).

To best meet our assumptions, logistic regression is used.

4) Results and discussion

4.1 hypotheses Validation

H1a: attachment to the homeland influences Sweet nostalgia

Table 1.1a Model fitting information

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept only	55.998			
Final	35.588	20.410	4	.000

We have a statistically significant KHI2 ($55.998 - 35.588 = 20.410$) (Sig = 0.000), which indicates that our model is improved by the explanatory variable and that the independent variable (attachment to the native country) influences the ordinal dependent variable (sweet nostalgia).

Table 1.2a

Goodness of fit test

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	7.607	12	.815
Deviance	8.130	12	.775

If $p < 0.05$, Then, the model does not fit well the data.

Results of our analysis suggest that the model is suitable and that the data are consistent (P is not significant). Table 1.3a shows us that 20% of the variance of our result is explained by our explanatory variable (we always observe that of the middle Nagelkerke). Pseudo-Rsquare nevertheless suggests a limited performance of the model, as is often the case with this kind of modeling and estimates.

Table 1.3a

Pseudo R-square

Cox et Snell	.183
Nagelkerke	.205
McFadden	.091

Table 1.4a Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
NullHypothesis	35.588			
General	27.458	8.130	12	.775

If P is significant, then that would mean that there is a problem on our model. This is not the case here because Sig = 0.775. The KHI2 of the parallel lines test is the same as the quality of fit, because we only have one explanatory variable in our model, so the two tests are the same. However, when we have several explanatory variables, this will not be the case.

H1b: attachment to the homeland influences bitter nostalgia

Table 1.1b

Model fitting

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept only	50.315			
Final	45.767	4.548	4	.337

Sig = 0.337 (not significant), the independent variable (attachment to the homeland) exerts no influence on the dependent variable (bitter nostalgia).

Table 1.2b**Goodness of fit test**

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	4.047	12	.983
Deviance	4.659	12	.968

Table 1.3b**Pseudo R-square**

Cox et Snell	.044
Nagelkerke	.047
McFadden	.016

The model is well fitted, and the data is consistent
The values are significant. (Table 1.3b)

Table 1.4b Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
NullHypothesis	45.767			
General	41.108	4.659	12	.968

P is not significant, Sig = 0.968, there is no problem in our model.

H2a: cultural attachment influences the sweet nostalgia**Table 2.1a Model fitting**

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept only	52.098			
Final	42.475	9.623	4	.047

Sig = 0.047 (significant), the independent variable (cultural attachment) influences the dependent variable (sweet nostalgia)

Tables 2.2a and 2.3 a show that the model is good, and the data is consistent (P is not significant). Table 2.3a shows us that 10% of the variance of our result is explained by our explanatory variable.

Table 2.2a**Goodness of fit test**

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	8.707	12	.728
Deviance	9.592	12	.652

Table 2.3a**Pseudo R-square**

Cox et Snell	.091
Nagelkerke	.102
McFadden	.043

Table 2.4a Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
NullHypothesis	42.475			
General	32.883	9.592	12	.652

P is not significant, Sig = 0.652, there is no problem on our model.

H2b: cultural attachment influences bitter nostalgia**Table 2.1b Model fitting information**

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept only	62.053			
Final	56.127	5.927	4	.205

Sig = 0.205 (not significant), the independent variable (cultural attachment) has no influence on the dependent variable (bitter nostalgia).

Table 2.2b**Goodness of fit test**

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	16.401	12	.174
Deviance	14.853	12	.250

Table 2.3b**Pseudo R-square**

Cox et Snell	.057
Nagelkerke	.060
McFadden	.020

The model is fine, and the data is consistent (P is not significant). The variables are significant. (table 2.3b)

Table 2.4b Test of Parallel Lines

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
NullHypothesis	56.127			
General	.000 ^b	56.127	12	.000

P is significant, Sig = 0.000, there may be a problem with our model.

H3a: the original language influences the sweet nostalgia

Table 3.1a**Model fitting information**

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept only	41.408			
Final	29.626	11.782	4	.019

Sig = 0.019 (significant), the independent variable (language) influences the dependent variable (sweet nostalgia).

Table 3.2a**Goodness of fit test**

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	4.563	12	.971
Deviance	5.986	12	.917

Table 3.3a**Pseudo R-square**

Cox et Snell	.110
Nagelkerke	.123
McFadden	.052

The model is fine, and the data is consistent (P is not significant). Table 3.3a shows us that 12% of the variance of our result is explained by our explanatory variable.

Table 3.5a**Test of Parallel Lines**

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
NullHypothesis	29.626			
General	23.640	5.986	12	.917

P is not significant, Sig = 0.917, there is no problem on our model.

H3b: the original language influences bitter nostalgia

Table 3.1b**Model fitting information**

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept only	42.517			
Final	40.130	2.387	4	.665

Sig = 0.665 (not significant), the independent variable (language) has no influence on the dependent variable (bitter nostalgia).

Table 3.2b**Pseudo R-square**

Cox et Snell	0.023
Nagelkerke	0.025
McFadden	0.008

Table 3.3b**Goodness of fit test**

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	6.977	12	0.859
Deviance	8.515	12	0.744

The model is fine and the data is consistent (P is not significant). The values are significant. (Table 3.3b)

Table 3.4b**Test of Parallel Lines**

Model	-2log-Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
NullHypothesis	40.130			
General	31.615	8.515	12	0.744

P is not significant, Sig = 0.744, there is no problem in our model.

4.2) Discussion

The aim of our study is to test the connection between culture and predisposition to nostalgia. We chose rooting to represent the culture variable that considers the attachment to the territory, the sense of belonging and the sharing of values (Di Méo, 2001). Nostalgia is measured in its two facets (sweet / bitter). The relationship between these two concepts helps elaborate a new conceptual framework that describes the relationship between culture and nostalgia. This frame shows the influence of the attachment to the homeland, the cultural attachment and language on sweet and bitter nostalgia. Ordinal logistic regression showed significant relationships between attachment to the homeland, the cultural attachment and the mother language to sweet nostalgia. It showed, however, a non significant relationship between the variables of rooting and bitter nostalgia.

Conclusion, Limits and Future Research

The contribution of this paper draws upon three levels:

On the theoretical level, Hofer's idea of nostalgia as homesickness is confirmed. As a result, theories of nostalgia that have persisted for years are still valid and timely.

Methodologically: culture is often observed and not measured; in this research we used quantitative methodology to measure the cultural aspect.

On the managerial level: nostalgia makes selling. As a result, brands can use this tool in their strategies to reach the hearts of consumers, because today emotional marketing is an undeniable asset in marketing. Our results show that respondents feel more frequently the sweet nostalgia. On the other hand, culture implies a softer brand relationship than bitter (Kessous, 2015). We advise companies to position

themselves with nostalgic brands that are associated with a culture (holidays or occasion). These brands should ensure to create soft relationships and attachment to the brands and avoid rejection (Fournier & Alvarez, 2013) that can be linked to stereotypes or labels embedded in some cultures (Kessous, 2015). Nostalgia is therefore an interesting marketing tool. It gives an authentic and quality image of the brand (Sierra and McQuitty, 2007). It also provides a sense of credibility (Merchant, LaTour, Ford & LaTour, 2013, Zeitlin & Westwood, 1986). Nostalgic cultural brands are a way for the expatriate consumer to relive some important events from his past. They can be happy or sad, it is up to the brand to make sure to alleviate the sad feelings. The cultural attachment is related to sweet nostalgia, in fact, nostalgia reflects the values, beliefs and identity of each culture and each society (LaTour et al, 2010). As a result, managers are encouraged to use nostalgic brands that can trigger cultural connections. Using iconic and reassuring brands for the expatriates (Holak, 2014). Or the use of brands in connection with celebrations, parties, or with the history of the country of origin, it is important to create an affective and sentimental relationship with the brand. We can also suggest launching retro products with strong cultural roots (Kessous, 2015). Therefore, the brand will establish with the expatriate consumer a relationship of trust, which will promote his loyalty. The attachment to the homeland is related to sweet nostalgia and expatriate consumers are rooted. And as Hofer has already mentioned, nostalgia is homesickness. And to compensate for this uprooting, consumers are turning to their past (Kessous, 2015). And to keep their memory they will attach to objects or brands that recall their roots and their identity. Finally, nostalgia brings cultural communities closer together. Indeed, it favors social connections (Wildschut et al, 2010). we suggest using nostalgia in the virtual sphere by creating nostalgic brand discussions to attract cultural communities and foster interaction between them.

Limits: Although our study has provided interesting results, it also has some limitations, such as the composition of our sample that includes a large majority by men of Maghrebian culture.

Future research could explore Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 1984). Nostalgia could be studied in communities representing these cultural differences. Perrusson's scale of nostalgia (Perrusson, 2003) is the only one that has been found capable of clearly delineating the sweet and bitter side of nostalgia. Thus, future research could develop specific scales for each facet of nostalgia.

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