

---


2022

## Establishing Meaning and Values in Marketing and Broadening Perspectives in Understanding Nationhood and Climate Change

Deniz Atik  
*University of Texas Rio Grande Valley*

Nikhilesh Dholakia  
*University of Rhode Island*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/mgdr>

 Part of the [Anthropology Commons](#), [Economics Commons](#), [Marketing Commons](#), [Other Business Commons](#), and the [Sociology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Atik, Deniz and Dholakia, Nikhilesh (2022) "Establishing Meaning and Values in Marketing and Broadening Perspectives in Understanding Nationhood and Climate Change," *Markets, Globalization & Development Review*. Vol. 7: No. 4, Article 1.

DOI: 10.23860/MGDR-2022-07-04-01

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/mgdr/vol7/iss4/1>

This Editorial is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Markets, Globalization & Development Review by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu).

## Markets, Globalization & Development Review



# **Establishing Meaning and Values in Marketing and Broadening Perspectives in Understanding Nationhood and Climate Change**

## **Introduction**

In this last issue of Volume 7 in 2022, we offer insightful, theoretically profound, and at times provocative thoughts and scholarly findings of prominent scholars in the field of marketing. Varman and Belk (2022) invite marketing scholars to adopt a more nuanced approach in understanding nationhood, localism, and anti-consumption, pointing to divergences from consumer resistance theories as well as from conventional narratives about globalism, nationalism, and localism. Bouchet (2022) calls for a sociological understanding of marketing, to overcome the limitations that arise from its economic foundation. To counter the negative effects of marketing globally, Bouchet offers ideas to deepen the sociological meaning-making processes at play in the marketing practices that surround us. Godefroit-Winkel (2022) examines consumers' responses to climate change actions in different institutional contexts, drawing from research done in three distinct national contexts. Finally, Firat (2022) stresses the power of design – a process that creative people excel at and can control – for envisioning a more equitable future for marketing. This last contribution is presented as a Dialogue, to invite further reflections on 'design power' in future issues of MGDR. Let us turn to the details of the contributions in Volume 7, Number 4 of MGDR.

## **Articles in this Issue**

In the first article of this issue, Varman and Belk (2022) study an anti-consumption movement in India by an activist organization they call Apni Banao Azadi (ABA) – a pseudonym – that boycotts multinational goods in the northern part of India. This organization adheres to Gandhian nationalism and his anarchist conception of localism, revolving around the principles of minimum centralization and government intervention in localized production and marketing processes. Indeed, ABA started by urging the boycott of multinational brands but evolved into asking its followers to shun mega-national brands also, because the ABA leaders saw the mega-national brands as no different from giant foreign brands. Based on this field study, the authors suggest a wider interpretation of nationhood as demonstrated in the case of ABA. They say, “a dichotomized understanding of national versus foreign is limiting and we find in ABA a

more nuanced interpretation in which buying national brands can be perceived as an anti-national act because of its distance from localized spheres of consumption” (p.8). This article by Varman and Belk offers rich theoretical insight to MGDR readers also by differentiating anti-consumption from consumer resistance “as a deeper systemic challenge to consumerist lifestyle and consumer culture” (p.1), and by showing the relationship between product-origin imagery and anti-consumption.

In the second article, Bouchet (2022) opens up a critical discussion on why the spreading of marketing practices does not necessarily contribute to global peace and prosperity and social creativity. The quick answer is the strong rootedness of marketing concepts and practices in economic foundations. A much more profound answer comes in Bouchet’s lengthy and insightful analysis where he first introduces how, originally developed as a sales technique, marketing evolved into being an institution that plays an economic and political role globally. The author examines marketing as a bureaucratic form of sophism and argues that a sociological understanding of marketing is necessary to reconstruct its problematic economic foundation that has undermined democracy as well as the quest for meaning. He states: “In order to serve social relations, it [marketing] has to pay attention to what actually is exchanged and what actually is communicated even though it was originally informed by its economic foundation that it did not matter much. It was not the content that was important, but the flow” (p.22). Bouchet also makes interesting analogies as to how, at the turn of the century, marketing still has more in common with religion than with science; however, he also finds hope in that marketing has finally started realizing that the market is not only about supply and demand. He suggests “[C]onfronted with social change, social actors have to make priorities with reference to their updated local and global answers to the question of meaning. If what matters in politics is only that which can be expressed in business relations, democracy does not have a chance” (p.35).

Finally, the article by Godefroit-Winkel (2022) examines how marketing actions of governments and organizations to combat climate change might affect consumer attitudes towards their countries, companies, and stores. Through the lenses of institutional theory, her review of empirical studies in three different national and organizational contexts shows that consumers’ responses to climate change actions vary across distinct countries, revealing local specificities. For instance, “Moroccan consumers attribute more importance to actions to combat climate change when they emanate from their national institutions (i.e., governments) than France or the United States. [...] In the United States, individuals also have

a deeper understanding of their governmental actions as compared to France. In contrast, French consumers tend to negotiate norms and regulations, or to reject governmental decisions” (p.11). When the actions are observed at another institutional level (i.e., retail level), the findings change. Godefroit-Winkel’s analysis offers many implications for marketers and managers, as well as educators, to enhance participation in the fight against climate change.

## **Dialogue in this Issue**

In the final item of this issue, a Dialogue-initiating commentary contribution, an item that has many aligned with Bouchet’s views, Firat (2022) discusses the changing patterns of power globally and historically. He first explores the notion of wealth that has changed meaning historically – from spiritual wealth in traditional societies to land-based aristocratic wealth of the middle ages to the capital-based material wealth in modern culture – and how wealth is transformed to power. He argues that in contemporary society information is the source of wealth, which transforms into power. According to the author, the mode that transforms information wealth into power is design. He argues that “control of design will result in power in this age of wealth in the form of information or knowledge”. In his concluding remarks, Firat offers interesting possibilities to MGDR readers for envisioning more equitable distributions of design power under contemporary circumstances. As editors, we invite the MGDR readers to not only develop their own views about design power in contemporary settings, but also to suggest to us key thinkers that we could possibly approach to help deepen the conceptual and practical aspects of design power. We hope to continue this Dialogue in Volume 8 of MGDR; and even beyond that.

## **Concluding Remarks**

In this last issue of 2022, we were fortunate to tap into the thinking of key marketing scholars to extend some critical conversations for instilling meaning into marketing and consumption processes and incorporating sociocultural values in marketing institutions, pushing the boundaries of the marketing discipline beyond the heavily economic axes that emphasize exchange and profit maximization. We also reiterate the call of our authors to adopt more nuanced approaches in understanding critical concepts such as nationhood, localism, market power, and climate change.

Finally, in closing, we would like to extend our gratitude to our managing editor and dear colleague, Rabia Bayer. In a devoted fashion, she brought her steadfast scrutiny to the stylistic issues of MGDR and

helped the authors and editors to improve the manuscripts. She meticulously served as the MGDR overseer of style for four years. With her devotion and dedication, our editorial processes ran smoothly. While of course we are sad to see her leave this MGDR role, we also want to wish her the very best for her future professional and personal endeavors. In the next editorial, we will introduce to our readers the successors to Rabia, sharp-eyed overseers of style who have already started helping us.

## References

- Bouchet, Dominique (2022), "Marketing, Development, and the Question of Meaning," *Markets, Globalization and Development Review*, 7 (4), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.23860/MGDR-2022-07-04-03>
- Firat, A. Fuat (2022), "Design Power and Potential Future of Global Organization of Life," *Markets, Globalization and Development Review*, 7 (4), Article 5. <https://doi.org/10.23860/MGDR-2022-07-04-05>
- Godefroit-Winkel, Delphine (2022), "An Institutional Perspective on Climate Change, Markets, and Consumption across Three Countries," *Markets, Globalization and Development Review*, 7 (4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.23860/MGDR-2022-07-04-04>
- Varman, Rohit and Russell W. Belk (2022), "Privileging Localism and Visualizing Nationhood in Anti-Consumption," *Markets, Globalization and Development Review*, 7 (4), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.23860/MGDR-2022-07-04-02>