Chapter 5

A Rhetoric on Diversity and Marketing Theory:
How Does Islam Fit?

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to present a highlight of how Islam, and thereby Islamic marketing as an emerging research domain, fits within mainstream marketing thought given the marginalization of some ethnic groups and the calls for diversity therein. The chapter argues that the Islamic paradigm can integrate within marketing theory in light of the critical marketing discourse, whilst creating a "theistic science" that links to Islamic civilization and builds a bridge to the future of this science.

The Case for Diversity in Marketing

The "case for diversity" is well-established (Emslie et al., 2007; Jamal, 2003; Muléy, 2009). On the macro-level, diversity results in a harmonious society where all diverse groups interact, with a focus on commonalities, and fulfill their potentials in a fair and equitable manner. Both communications literature and mainstream media, however, clearly alienate certain ethnic groups and address the global white population more concisely (Emslie et al., 2007). In marketing terms, Wilkie (1997) looked at this marginalization in the context of public policy issues in marketing as a threatening

departure from mainstream thought (cf. El-Bassiouny, 2014). Klein and Hill (2008) noted that marginalization is represented in what is termed "restricted consumer behavior" and an obstructed consumer decision process (cf. Burton, 2005).

In marketing scholarship, this has also broadly reflected in many publications including the need for multicultural marketing courses (Burton, 2005; 2002), the need for Transformative Consumer Research (Mick, 2007), the need for incorporating public policy issues in mainstream marketing literature and the subsequent acceptance in top-tier academic journals (Wilkie and Moore, 2003), among many others.

Marketing, Multiculturalism, and Society

In their article, Tadajewski and Saren (2008) noted the marginalization of certain marketing concepts especially critical perspectives in modern marketing thought which overlooks the historical basis on which marketing was developed. Burton (2002) as cited in Emslie et al. (2007: 168) notes that "in multicultural societies, ethnicity plays an important part within the marketing concept, but this has not attracted significant amounts of attention in either marketing theory or practice and tends to be dominated by research undertaken in the US." From an inherent marketing theory perspective, however, Hunt (2002: 11) notes that "the scope of marketing is unquestionably broad" and has social obligations to society, students, marketing practice, and to the marketing academy "for upholding its mission of retailing, warehousing, and producing knowledge, its contract with society of objective knowledge for academic freedom, and its core values of reason, evidence, openness, and civility" (Hunt, 2002: 64).

When it comes to both marketing textbooks and marketing practice, however, the implementation of this comprehensive conceptualization that incorporates social responsibility and the values of openness and civility is quite lacking (Foxman and Easterling, 1999; Muléy, 2009), especially in terms of incorporating the perspectives of marginalized ethnic groups (El-Bassiouny, 2014; Emslie et al., 2007; Jamal, 2003). According to Burton (2002: 227), "as management educators, marketing researchers have a central role to play in the project of social change and transformation…" The incorporation of a broad-base theoretical perspective that factors in different ethnic groups, addresses values, and considers all stakeholders is important in marketing education. Based on the critical marketing discourse, it is the inevitable foreseen future for marketing thought. In *Marketing 3.0*, Kotler, Kartajaya, and Setiawan (2010: 6) note that marketing in the future is "values-driven" with an objective of "making the world a better place". They also note that "supplying meaning is the future value proposition in marketing" (Kotler et al., 2010: 20). They highlight that "by adding society, the new definition (of marketing by the American Marketing Association[1]) recognizes that marketing has large-scale impacts beyond

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