Towards an Understanding of Religion-related Vulnerability in Consumer Society

Forthcoming (2015) in Kathy Hamilton, Susan Dunnett, and Maria Piacentini (Eds.)
Vulnerable Consumers: Conditions, contexts and characteristics. London: Routledge.

Aliakbar Jafari
Department of Marketing,
University of Strathclyde,
Sir William Duncan Building,
130 Rottenrow Street, Glasgow, G4 0GE, UK
Tel.: +44 141 5483768
Fax: +44 141 5522802
Email: aliakbar.jafari@strath.ac.uk

Abstract

This essay delineates how and why religion matters to vulnerability discourses in consumer society and sets forth a case towards conceptualising this type of vulnerability. It argues that, in the changing landscape of religion, such vulnerability should be understood primarily against the macro environmental factors that impact public perceptions of and engagement with religion and religiosity.

Towards an Understanding of Religion-related Vulnerability in Consumer Society

Introduction

Religion is significantly understudied in consumer vulnerability discourses and the limited existing work lacks conceptual clarity and relevance to the broader debates on the status of religious change in contemporary society. This essay is an attempt to address this oversight by (1) delineating how and why discussions of religion relate to the issues of vulnerability in consumer society; (2) problematising the notion of religion-based vulnerability; and (3) setting forth a case towards conceptualising this type of vulnerability. My core argument is that such vulnerability should be understood primarily against the macro environmental factors that impact public perceptions of and engagement with religion and religiosity. I will develop my argument in the following manner: First, I will clarify why religion matters to the subject of consumer vulnerability and set forth some anecdotal evidence to guide the discussion. Next, I will provide an overview of the key theoretical debates on the status of religion and religiosity in society. This should shed light on the prevailing trends in the landscape of religion and their underlying forces. In light of these, I will then discuss how perceptions of and engagement with religion can cause or influence vulnerability. I will conclude by highlighting some areas for further conceptualisation and empirical research.

Religion matters

Taken as either a 'social construction' (Durkheim, 1915 [1912]) or a 'transcendental reality' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]), religion matters. It matters not because having or not having one determines human's destiny in Paradise or Hell in the world hereafter and 'there' but because

people's perceptions of religion influence their very worldly life in 'here' and now. In everyday life situations (e.g., school, marketplace, work, and family and friends' networks) individuals' religious orientations impact their self-image (Cimino and Smith, 2007, 2011), perceptions towards and by others (Baumann, 1999), and multiple interactions with the world around them (Beck, 2010; Jafari et al., 2014). Religion matters also because having or not having one does not result in a clear-cut divide between the two groups of believers and non-believers or the majority and the minority. The seeds of divide keep multiplying as being and not being a believer become equally problematic in the social reality of life. While those who have one face the questions (and sometimes severe criticisms posed by both non-believers and believers of other religions or sects) of what religion they have, why they have it, and how they practise it (Modood, 2005; Kitcher, 2011; Jafari and Süerdem, 2012), those without one either proactively tend to form their own religion of 'belief in no religion' (Calhoun et al., 2011; Smith, 2011) or passively fall prey to the accusations of blasphemy (Luckmann, 1967).

Such issues of religious discrepancies are not new as they have historically existed in human societies (see Amarasingam, 2010; Sauer, 2003). Yet, the increasing presence of such divergences in public debate (Amarasingam, 2010; Kitcher, 2011; Wheeler, 2013) and the new vulnerabilities they may impose on different members of society (Pechmann et al., 2011; Jafari et al., 2014) necessitate systematic examinations of religion as a priority in marketing and consumer behaviour research agendas on vulnerability. This is particularly important because consumer vulnerability on the basis of religious orientation, affiliation, perception and experience has remained significantly understudied, both empirically and conceptually.

Even the limited existing work – e.g., Macchiette and Roy's (1994) reference to advertising in the religious context of the United States; Linh and Bouchon's (2013) discussion of Muslim tourists' food consumption; Broderick et al.'s (2011) mention of religious consumers' vulnerability in multicultural marketplaces – barely clarify the nature of religion-related vulnerability; neither do they explain how and why such vulnerability arises. On the other hand, as generally conceptualised in the broad context of social research, the nexus of religion and at-risk or vulnerable individuals has remained largely at the level of describing group stereotypes and social inclusion/exclusion in multi-ethnic/cultural societies (see Bhargava, 2004 for a summary) without documenting how religion-related issues may actually cause or influence consumer vulnerability and how they theoretically sit in the debates on religion and religiosity.

Yet, in the absence of solid empirical investigations, anecdotal evidence indicates that, as members of an 'increasingly dynamic' consumer society (Gauthier and Martikainen, 2013), people can experience or report different types of vulnerability in relation to their religious orientations, beliefs and sensibilities. This, however, does not mean that experiencing vulnerability is limited only to those who are religious; various groups of people (e.g., less religious, irreligious and anti-religious) may also be subject to experiencing different forms and degrees of vulnerability. Here I use the term 'experience' deliberately and emphatically because as I will explain later in this manuscript, religion-related vulnerability should be seen and studied from the perspective of those who experience it. Otherwise, as Karpov (2010) also implies, detachment from the religious experiences of the masses will not lead to the generation of just and progressive knowledge.

In order to clarify my own position as a researcher and in the interest of putting forward a logical proposition and critical analysis, I should emphasise that in this essay I do not intend to defend religion. Religion does not need my defence; the history of religion is as old as human existence and the ongoing heated debate on religion is a strong indicator of the prevailing influence of religion in social life. Neither do I mean to support or justify irreligious and anti-religious ideologies and movements. In this respect, I rather tend to agree with Polanyi (2001 [1944]) that society has the capability to (re)construct itself through creating a balance between different, and sometimes opposing, forces (e.g., secular and religious). Here, my proposition is simply but essentially a step forward towards understanding 'what is actually going on in society that requires empirical and systematic investigations?'

Setting forth the examples

During the past few years, when some churches in Wellington, Leeds and Glasgow (amongst other cities in the UK and the western hemisphere) were converted into bars, restaurants, and nightclubs, there was a hopeless anger amongst Christian authorities (e.g. the Vatican) (Squires, 2009) and some people whose religious sentiments were hurt because a sacred place had been transformed into an entertainment hub. Apart from Christian activists – some of whom would stand outside the church holding placards with religious mottos – some others (e.g., those who would call themselves 'spiritual' but not religious and those who believed in other religions such as Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism) also felt that what was happening was 'disappointing', 'immoral', 'insulting', 'shameful', 'disgusting' and 'hurting the feelings of others' as I remember the exact words of the people I have talked to during these years.

Hurting feelings, however, as other contributions in this book would indicate, may be seen as a case of experiencing emotional vulnerability.

There are different examples too. The advertising industry generates media contents (e.g., commercial advertisements and images) that are perceived as 'offensive' by different religious groups. For example, in 2013, a court case opened against Indian cricket team captain's (Mahendra Singh Dhoni) "posing for an advertisement in a business magazine as Lord Vishnu holding several things including a shoe in his hands" (The Times of India, 2013). In 2011, one of Phones 4U's mobile phone advertisement "featuring an illustration of Jesus winking and giving a thumbs-up" was banned by The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) for being "disrespectful" to the Christian faith (BBC.co.uk, 2011). The emphasis of ASA (2013) and The Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) (2014) on the sensitivity of organisations to religious issues itself demonstrates the importance of avoiding offence and harm to society. In a different case, in 1997, Nike had to "recall a range of sports shoes carrying a logo that offended Muslims in America" (Jury, 1997). The marketing (pedagogical) literature (e.g., Fam et al. 2004; Mohamed and Daud, 2012; Rosenbaum et al., 2013) is also full of instructions and case studies that alert (to-be) marketers on developing appropriate strategies (e.g., communications, packaging, products and services, and distribution) that would take religious issues seriously into consideration. These also testify to the fact that insensitivity to religious issues can have serious negative consequences.

During 2009-10 Domino's Pizza 'halal only menu' raised criticisms and caused offence to those who did not want to eat halal food and wanted their peperoni back (Wilkes, 2009; The Telegraph, 2010). In 2012, Lord Ahmet's (a Muslim British Member of Parliament) request

for *halal* meat at Westminster Palace's restaurant was rejected because "many of his non-Muslim colleagues" would see the *halal* process (slitting an animal's throat without first stunning it) as offensive (Hastings, 2012). In 2014, a British tourist was arrested for "hurting others' religious feelings" by her Buddha tattoo and was deported from Sri Lanka. For the readers of this essay, it is also really worth spending some time to browse Boycott Halal (2014) website (www.boycotthalal.com) to see a host of videos, images, and narratives that echo anti-religious views. I would regard this website probably the most tangible example that can justify my rationale in this paper: understanding religion-related behaviours and experiences (including vulnerability) needs a deep understanding of the macro dynamics that shape not only such behaviours but also the overall status of religion itself.

Towards a conceptualisation

In all the above-mentioned scenarios, where there are *indicators* of vulnerability, it is difficult to differentiate between the offender and the offended. It is hard to determine who is and who is not vulnerable. Seen from different perspectives, there is a thin, or no, line between the two sides of the argument. The rationale of those who might claim that have been offended may be seen as illogical or even offensive by those who are perceived as offender(s) and vice-versa. These examples which often dominate the public domain (e.g., media) need to be systematically investigated in consumer society. Investigation of such experiences or perceptions of vulnerability, however, needs an in-depth understanding of various movements (i.e., religious, irreligious, and anti-religious) that either already exist or are emerging in contemporary society and their theoretical explanations.

Religion in contemporary society

Discussions on religion are predominantly centred on whether religion is declining, resurging, or expanding in society. There are many dimensions to this debate; yet, a review of the extant literature reveals three main theoretical camps. What is important is the relevance of these debates to the 'forces' that influence the status of religion and religiosity in society. Given the space constraints of this short manuscript, I should stress that what follows is only a customised overview of these discussions to serve the purpose of this essay and is not by any means intended to represent an exhaustive analysis of the sociological accounts of religion.

Secularisation thesis

Secularisation thesis is not uniform as it entails different opinions (see Casanova, 1994; Berger, 1999; Norris and Inglehart, 2004). Yet it generally asserts that religiosity is declining and there is a universal shift from religious to non-religious values. The origins of this thesis come from the early social theorists (e.g. Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim) who argued that with the progress of modernisation, the degree of religiosity decreases in society. Karpov (2010, p. 239) summarises Casanova's (1994) "influential view of secularization as inclusive of three *unintegrated* (emphasis added) processes: differentiation of societal institutions from religious norms, decline of religious beliefs and practices, and privatization of religion (i.e., its marginalization form the public sphere)."

The secularisation thesis is also closely related to the development of markets and consumer culture in modern society. As Gauthier and Martikainen (2013) demonstrate, the

secularisation thesis denotes that market generated consumerism gradually breaks down traditional religious norms as people immerse in hedonism, materialism, and temporary and superficial relationships with market contents.

Modern advocates of the secularisation thesis often base their studies largely on the statistical analysis of church attendance (implying a decrease) in the west and also the rise of secular movements (e.g., nationalist or liberal activism in religious countries and the secularisation of the forms of governance and nation-state relationships in Muslim countries such as Turkey) in the world. There are also those (e.g., Norris and Inglehart, 2004) who believe that secularisation is indeed happening but not ubiquitously. For them, secularisation is a "trend" which has been occurring "most clearly among the most prosperous social sectors living in affluent and secure post-industrial nations" (Norris and Inglehart, 2004, p.5). Another key point that Norris and Inglehart's empirical study indicates is that religiosity is more evident amongst those strata of society that experience existential risks; that is, those who feel vulnerable to physical, societal, and personal risks.

De-secularisation thesis

As the term suggests, this thesis is the opposite of the secularisation process. As one of the key theorists of this stream, Berger (1999) rejects the thesis of secularisation and argues that there has been a 'counter-secularisation' movement. As Karpov (2010, p.234) indicates, de-secularisation theorists see "the rise of Christianity in the "global South," the worldwide Islamic resurgence, the revitalization of religion in Russia and China, and other cases" as evidence for their argument. De-secularisation thesis also differentiates between proper de-

secularisation (i.e., counter-secularisation and religious resurgence) and the manifestations of religious resilience and vitality (i.e., survival and adaptation). Karpov's analysis of de-secularisation is particularly vital as he argues that secularisation thesis fails to take into consideration some fundamental issues such as 'believing without belonging', 'material substratum', and 'cultural dynamics'.

By 'believing without belonging' he critiques the dominant statistical measurements of individuals' attendance in religious activities, such as churchgoing, and argues that not attending church does not mean that there is lack of belief in religion. Such individualistic self-reported surveys also ignore the importance of 'supra-individual' cultural and collective manifestations of religious presence. To explain this, he refers to Durkheim's (1915 [1912]) notion of 'material substratum' (the material and symbolic dimensions of religion in the cultural life; things such as artefacts) and asserts that secularisation thesis needs to empirically study such manifestations. Last but not least, he uses Sorokin's (2006 [1957]) idea of 'cultural dynamics' to explain that in their everyday life situations people oscillate between 'ideational' (transcendental truth; e.g., religion) and 'sensate' (material, rational, and profane) realities of life.

Karpov then presents his definition of de-secularization as follows:

> "Desecularization is a process of counter-secularization, through which religion reasserts its societal influence in reaction to previous and/or co-occurring secularizing processes. The process manifests itself as a combination of some or all of the following tendencies: (a) a rapprochement between formerly secularized institutions and religious norms, both formal and informal; (b) a resurgence of religious beliefs and practices; (c) a return of religion to the public sphere ("de-privatization"); (d) a revival of religious

> content in a variety of culture's subsystems, including the arts, philosophy, and literature, and in a decline of the standing of science relative to a resurgent role of religion in world-construction and world-maintenance; (e) religion-related changes in society's substratum (including religiously inspired demographic changes, redefinition of territories and their populations along religious lines, reappearance of faith-related material structures, growing shares of religion-related goods in the overall economic market, and so on)." (p. 250)

In sum, de-secularisation asserts that religion is actually making a return to the social life. The resurgence of religion and religious movements (e.g., Russia and Eastern Europe, post-Revolutionary Iran, and some African countries) is used to support the thesis. Commodification of religious signs and symbols in society is also taken as a strong indicator of a counter-secularisation movement.

Religious reconfiguration thesis

This thesis doubts the usefulness of secularisation and de-secularisation theses, claiming that involvement in these debates will only deter researchers from understanding the real landscape of religion in everyday life situations. The gist of this stream can be seen in the work of Gauthier and Martikainen (2013) who propose that religion is neither disappearing nor returning; rather it is being reconfigured. The authors argue that "the twin forces of neoliberalism and consumerism are penetrating and transforming the 'religious' worldwide, though in locally-embedded forms" (p. xv). Emphasising the importance of consumerism, as a "culturally dominant ethos" of modern society, Gauthier and Martikainen invite social theorists to "understand and analyse a growing number of religio-cultural phenomena" through the lenses of the "cultural phenomena that are born and have grown out of consumer

cultures" (p. xv). In their view, seeing "the world of religions through those lenses clarifies many discussions on contemporary religious change" (p. xv).

With reference to the concepts of 'liquid' and 'transient' (Bauman, 1997, 2000; De Groot, 2008; Beck, 2010) realities of life, this thesis establishes that religion is not fading away; rather, it is the form of religiosity which is changing as people's needs are answered in different ways. Elsewhere (Jafari, 2014) I have summarised Gauthier and Martikainen's notion of the changing form of religiosity as follows:

> "…in many societies (particularly western), there has been a shift towards "more experiential rather than creed-based forms of religion", "a move from a regime of orthodoxy towards a regime of orthopraxy" (p. 4). Other factors – such as the rapid growth of communication media, erosion of nation-state boundaries that historically described religion and prescribed religiosity, emergence of new forms of religiosities, and the transformation of traditional religious institutions – have collectively given rise to a homogenous form of religiosity that seeks salvation (not necessarily in the life hereafter but in this very worldly life and now) in different ways. The emergence of the notion of 'spiritual' (as an alternative for the 'religious') therefore signifies the rise of privatized experiences of religious authenticity."

This thesis recognises alternative religiosities and spiritualities as a form of religious reconfiguration which can theoretically explain the changing nature of religious practices and beliefs in secular and religious settings worldwide. On this basis, the notion of religiosity becomes a problematic term for labelling and measuring religiosity as is the case with the secularisation thesis.

Prevailing 'trends' and 'forces' in the landscape of religion

In light of the above theses and a review of the extant literature, it could be argued that people's religious orientations happen somewhere between militant religionism (fighting the manifestations of the irreligious and anti-religious) (Ashouri, 2011) and militant atheism (fighting the manifestations of the religious) (Kitcher, 2011). These two extreme ideologies form two ends of an extensive spectrum that encompasses different types of religious, spiritual, secular, and atheist tendencies (see Asad, 2003, 2007; Roy, 2004; Cimino and Smith, 2007; Karpov, 2010; Amarasingam, 2010; Calhoun et al., 2011; Jafari and Süerdem, 2012; Gauthier and Martikainen, 2013). These trends are not always fixed; to borrow from Bauman (1997) and De Groot (2008), they are 'liquid' and 'transient'. That is, based on attitudinal and behavioural positions (e.g., conformism, innovation, ritualism, retreat, and rebellion) (see Karpov, 2010), people can switch between different religious trenches. The relationship between them is also an 'unintegrated' one (Karpov, 2010), in the sense that the boundaries between them are loose and unstable.

These trends, however, are neither autonomous nor ubiquitous, meaning that they are influenced by multiple forces and function differently in diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and politico-ideological contexts. Karpov (2010) tactfully analyses such tendencies in the light of two mega forces of secularisation and de-secularisation that shape the two ends of the above-mentioned spectrum. These forces are either from 'above' (institutional) or from 'below' (the masses). From 'above', political and ideological regimes and actors (such as states, religious authorities, and elite leaderships) who are equipped with sufficient institutional resources (e.g., finances, media, power, networks, and education) can pursue their goals to either

secularise or de-secularise societies, either partially (i.e., institutional levels such as central states) or entirely (i.e., public and private domains of life), depending on their goals and interests. From 'below', secularisation and de-secularisation movements occur from the side of the masses. For a variety of reasons (e.g., historical, political, economic, and sociocultural), people may seek either a return to religion or removal of religion from society. In this case, the masses' are mobilised by activists such as religious (e.g., militant religionism) or anti-religious (e.g., militant atheism) individuals and groups. Yet, the success of these masses highly depends on their access to resources; otherwise, the resourceless majority masses can be marginalised by the resourceful minority groups.

Vulnerability in consumer society

In contemporary society, opinions on religion are articulated by all groups from 'above' and from 'below'. These opinions vary in terms of their logic, public acceptance, and enforcement. The presence of mass media (online and offline) and social networks in particular (Beck, 2000) plays a significant role in the way these forces receive, transmit, transform, interpret, and react to such opinions in the global context. One's (un)deliberate (ir)religious opinion may be perceived as (un)pleasant to others. In societies where forces from 'above' purposefully and resourcefully pursue and accomplish secularisation or de-secularisation policies, there is little or no freedom for explicit ideological pluralism. In the presence of this form of governance, market contents (e.g. commodified symbolism, goods, and services) and structures (e.g. governing bodies of the market and systems of production, promotion, distribution and disposition) can become potential sources of vulnerability for those who may (claim to) experience feelings of marginalisation, exclusion, stigma, disrespect, and so forth. In the absence of explicit freedom of expression, some people may

embark on expressing their opinion through unorthodox engagement with the 'material substratum' (Durkheim, 1915 [1912]) (e.g., underground anti-religious lifestyles in religious societies). That is, using religiously sensitive symbolic consumption and material manifestations to rebel the dominant cultural order of society. An example of this can be underground lifestyles associated with witchcraft in Saudi Arabia (see Ali, 2009).

Likewise, in societies where, in favour of freedom of expression, ideological pluralism is tolerated and/or encouraged, "overwhelming emphasis on unlimited self-expression" (Karpov, 2010, p. 243), verbally and/or through 'material substratum', can create the same issues of vulnerability (e.g. the case of Boycott Halal). Research on the sacred and the profane (see Jafari and Süerdem, 2012 for a summary) has already established that markets and consumption practices can sacralize the profane and desacaralize the sacred. Nowadays, the increasingly endemic forces of neoliberalism are further loosening the boundaries between the sacred and profane. In such a landscape, where expressions of multiple opinions and life practices are allowed, new *rights* can be claimed by different groups (i.e. religious, irreligious, and anti-religious); for example, the right to practise one's belief through one's own work and life style. As such even the most sophisticated monitoring bodies (e.g. The ASA, as explained before) cannot convince all members of society. Somewhere in society and at some point in time, there will always be some people to make claims of experiencing vulnerability or discontent.

The anecdotal evidence I explained earlier should be analysed within this framework. Why does a magazine image create so much anxiety in public? Why does an individual's tattoo receive so much media coverage? Why does a simple request for halal food at work become

the subject of political debate? Why does some groups' inclusion in the market result in others' exclusion from the same market? It is wrong to assume that all of these are the creation of media. Media is only a means. Stereotypes exist; so do the issues of inclusion and exclusion, but these are not causes; they are consequences. Research on vulnerability should, therefore, endeavour to understand causes, the forces that pave the way for expressions and experiences of vulnerability.

Conclusion

In this essay I demonstrated that religion-related vulnerability is more complex than it seems to be. Therefore, the phenomenon needs conceptualisation and empirical investigations. Social researchers should particularly study such vulnerability in the context of markets and consumption and in different socioeconomic, cultural, and politico-ideological settings. As Karpov (2010) also contends, understanding 'material substratum' is essential to our analysis of the status of religion and a variety of forces that shape it. And 'material substratum' is most visible in the context of markets and consumption. It is also vital to understand: (1) whether such vulnerability is vicarious or actually lived out; (2) how, in everyday life situations, this kind of vulnerability comes to existence; (3) whether perceptions of religion and religiosity influence it; and (4) the forces and mechanisms that create or accelerate it.

References

Ali, A.J. (2009) Conducting Business in Saudi Arabia: A Brief for International Managers. *Global Business and Organizational Excellence*, 28(6), pp. 64-84.

Amarasingam, A. (2010) *Religion and the New Atheism: A Critical Appraisal*. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers.

Asad, T. (2003) *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity (Cultural Memory in the Present)*. CA: Stanford University Press.

Asad, T. (2007) *On Suicide Bombing*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ashouri, D. (2011) 'Creeping Secularism', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East,* 31(1), pp. 46-52.

Bauman, Z. (ed.) (1997) *Postmodernity and Its Discontents*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Bauman, Z. (2000) Liquid Modernity. Cambridge: Polity.

Baumann, G. (1999) *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic and Religious Identities*. New York: Routledge.

BBC.co.uk (2011) Phones 4U mobile phone Jesus advert banned. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-14815616 (Accessed 10 May 2014).

Beck, U. (2000) What is Globalization? Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beck, U. (2010) *A God of One's Own: Religion's Capacity for Peace and Potential for Violence*. Cambridge: Polity.

Berger, P.L. (ed.) (1999) *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Bhargava, R. (2004) Inclusion and exclusion in South Asia: The Role of Religion. United Nations Human Development Programme Report. Available at:

http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2004_rajeev_bhargava.pdf (Accessed 11 May 2014).

Boycott Halal (2014) http://www.boycotthalal.com/ (Accessed 11 May 2014).

Broderick, A.J., Demangeot, C., Adkins, N.R., Ferguson, N.S., Henderson, G.R., Johnson, G., Kipnis, E., Mandiberg, J.M., Mueller, R.D., Pullig, C., Roy, A., and Zúñiga, M.A. (2011) 'Consumer Empowerment in Multicultural Marketplaces: Navigating Multicultural Identities to Reduce Consumer Vulnerability,' *Journal of Research for Consumers*, 19, pp. 1-13.

Calhoun, C., Juergensmeyer, M., and VanAntwerpen, J. (2011) *Rethinking Secularism*. New York: Oxford university Press.

Casanova, J. (1994) *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cimino, R. and Smith, C. (2007) 'Secular Humanism and Atheism beyond Progressive Secularism', *Sociology of Religion*, 68(4): PP. 407-424.

Cimino, R. and Smith, C. (2011) 'The New Atheism and the Formation of the Imagined Secularist Community', *Journal of Media and Religion*, 10(1), pp. 24-38.

De Groot, C.N. (2008) 'Three Types of Liquid Religion', *Implicit Religion*, 11(3), pp. 277-296.

Durkheim, E. (1915 [1912]) *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. J.W. Swain. New York: Free Press.

Fam, K.S., Waller, D.S., and Erdogan, B.Z. (2004) 'The influence of religion on attitudes towards the advertising of controversial products', *European Journal of Marketing*, 38(5/6), pp. 537-555.

Gauthier, F. and Martikainen, T. (eds.), (2013) *Religion in Consumer Society: Brands, Consumer and Markets*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Hastings, C. (2012) We won't eat halal meat, say MPs and peers who reject demands to serve it at Westminster. Available at: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2080805/We-wont-eat-halal-meat-say-MPs-peers-reject-demands-serve-Westminster.html (Accessed 11 May 2014).

Jafari, A., Özhan Dedeoğlu, A., Üstündağli, E., Regany, and F., Batat, W. (2014) 'Rethinking Religion in the Context of Ethnicity and Wellbeing', *Marketing Theory*. Forthcoming.

Jafari, A. (2014) 'Review of Religion in Consumer Society: Brands, Consumers and Markets, François Gauthier and Tuomas Martikainen, eds. Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited', Consumption, Markets & Culture, iFirst. Available at http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10253866.2014.889406#.U3AVdChLqJU (Accessed 17 May 2014)

Jafari, A. and Süerdem, A. (2012) 'An Analysis of Material Consumption Culture in the Moslem World', *Marketing Theory*, 12(1), pp. 59-77.

Jury, L. (1997) Nike to trash trainers that offended Islam. Available at: http://www.independent.co.uk/news/nike-to-trash-trainers-that-offended-islam-1257776.html (accessed 10 May 2014).

Karpov, V. (2010) 'Desecularization: A Conceptual Framework', *Journal of Church and State*, 52 (2), pp. 232-270.

Kitcher, P. (2011) ‘Militant Modern Atheism’, *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 28(1), pp. 1-13.

Linh, H.H. and Bouchon, F. (2013) ‘The Relationship between Food Constraints and Destination Choice of Malaysian Muslim Travellers’, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Innovation in Hospitality and Tourism*, 2(1), pp. 69-86.

Luckmann, T. (1967) *The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Societies*. New York: Macmillan.

Macchiette, B. and Roy, A. (1994) ‘Sensitive Groups and Social Issues: Are You Marketing Correct?’, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 11(4), pp. 55-64.

Modood, T. (2005) *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity and Muslims in Britain*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Mohamed, R.N. and Daud, N.M. (2012) ‘The impact of religious sensitivity on brand trust, equity and values of fast food industry in Malaysia’, *Business Strategy Series*, 13(1), pp. 21-30.

Norris, P. and Inglehart, R. (2004) Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Pechmann, C., Moore, E.S., Andreasen, A.R., Connell, P.M., Freeman, D., Gardner, M.P., Heisley, D., Lefebvre, R.C., Pirouz, D.M., and Soster, R.L. (2011) ‘Navigating the Central Tensions in Research on At-Risk Consumers: Challenges and Opportunities’, *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 30(1), pp. 23-30.

Polanyi, K. (2001 [1944]) *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Rosenbaum, M.S., Moraru, I., and Labrecque, L.I. (2013) 'A Multicultural Service Sensitivity Exercise for Marketing Students', *Journal of Marketing Education*, 35(1), pp. 5-17.

Roy, O. (2004) *Globalized Islam*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Sauer, E. (2003) The Archaeology of Religious Hatred in the Roman and Early Medieval World. Gloucestershire: The History Press Ltd.

Smith, J.M. (2011) 'Becoming an Atheist in America: Constructing Identity and Meaning from the Rejection of Theism', *Sociology of Religion*, 72(2), pp. 215-237.

Sorokin, P. (2006 [1957]) *Social and Cultural Dynamics: A Study of Change in Major Systems of Art, Truth, Ethics, Law, and Social Relationships*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Squires, N. (2009) Vatican condemns 'immoral' church conversions. Available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/vaticancityandholysee/6670813/Vatican-condemns-immoral-church-conversions.html (Accessed 11 May 2014).

The Advertising Standards Authority (2013) Public perceptions of harm and offence in UK advertising. Available at: http://www.asa.org.uk/~/media/Files/ASA/Misc/ASAHarmOffenceReport.ashx (accessed 10 May 2014).

The Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) (2014) Religious Offence. Available at: http://www.cap.org.uk/~/media/Files/CAP/Help%20notes%20new/religious_offence.ashx (Accessed 12 May 2014).

The Telegraph (2010) Domino's Pizza scraps halal menu. Available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/foodanddrink/foodanddrinknews/7946771/Dominos-Pizza-scraps-halal-menu.html (Accessed 11 May 2014).

The Times of India (2013) Case against Dhoni for “hurting” religious sentiments. Available at: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/sports/off-the-field/Case-against-Dhoni-for-hurting-religious-sentiments/articleshow/19912916.cms (Accessed 10 May 2014).

Wheeler, B. (2013) What happens at an atheist church? Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-21319945 (Accessed 14 May 2014).

Wilkes, D. (2009) The Domino’s branch where you can't get a pepperoni pizza - because they only do halal. Available at: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1142022/The-Dominos-branch-pepperoni-pizza--halal.html (Accessed 11 May 2014).