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A Time of Transition: Globally and at MGDR

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Markets, Globalization & Development Review



A Time of Transition: Globally and at MGDR

Introduction

The world is of course always in transition. The intensity of the churn and the turmoil increased drastically with the inauguration of the second American presidency of Donald Trump (Jackson 2025).

By all indications, the global political-economic turmoil – and the associative and consequential social-cultural turmoil – show no signs of abating. This makes it imperative for a journal such as MGDR (Dholakia et al. 2024) to keep seeking, reviewing, and publishing articles that provide some conceptual handles to understand and navigate these turbulent times.

At MGDR, we are also having a semi-seismic transition. After nine years, our founding editor Deniz Atik has decided to step down. Indeed, while the idea of MGDR had been discussed at various conferences of the International Society of Markets & Development (ISMD), see Dholakia (2016) for a recap of these discussions, it was not until Deniz Atik took it upon herself to actually launch the journal, persuading Nik Dholakia to be the senior founding co-editor. As is evident to regular readers and contributors, the journal has made steady progress. Consistent with its name, MGDR has focused on all three elements: markets (including consumptionscapes and consumer culture), globalization (including international business, international politics, and international law), and development (striving to reach into many national settings, especially in the Global South). As a way to say farewell to Deniz, let us reflect on her scholarly path, achievements, and her mid-career legacy.

Deniz Atik is a marketing scholar whose work reflects a deeply personal commitment to social and environmental responsibility. Her core research interests lie in macromarketing and transformative consumer research, especially focusing on fashion systems, environmental impacts, and the vulnerabilities of marginalized consumer groups. As a founding co-editor of *Markets, Globalization & Development Review*, she has encouraged interdisciplinary research that challenges conventional marketing thought and promotes transformative change, demonstrating her dedication to create a platform where diverse, underrepresented and critical perspectives are represented. In their biographical reflection of Atik, Navarro and Joy (2022) share her journey from an early fascination with the sea and ecology to a career critiquing consumerism and fast fashion, which reveals a scholar motivated by care for both people and the planet. Deniz Atik's collaborative work with Zeynep Ertekin reflects a shared commitment to explore how fashion, identity, and consumer practices intersect with broader societal issues. Their co-authored research has gained notable scholarly recognition, with "Sustainable Markets: Motivating Factors, Barriers, and Remedies for Mobilization of Slow Fashion" receiving the Shelby D. Hunt Award from the *Journal of Macromarketing* in 2020, and "The Restless Desire for the New versus Sustainability: The Pressing Need for Social Marketing in the Fashion Industry" earning the *Journal of Social Marketing's* 2024 Literati Award for Outstanding Paper.

With this issue, we also bid farewell to two of our Managing Editors, Yuri Martirosyan and Khondoker Hossain, who helped MGDR diligently stay on top of the copy and style issues of the journal. As we previously emphasized (Dholakia, Atik, and Godefroit-Winkel 2024), we appreciate their efforts in assisting our authors throughout

the manuscript preparation process, verifying manuscript style, ensuring compliance with publication standards, and advising authors on required revisions to enhance the overall quality of the submissions. We extend our best wishes to Yuri and Khondoker for continued success and growth in their future career endeavours.

Starting from issue number 2 of volume 10, we welcome two new Managing Editors to the MGDR team. Damlasu Uyug Sengun has been working as a Research Assistant in Department of Business Administration of Izmir University of Economics since November 2023. She also continues her studies in Ph.D. in Business Administration at the same university. Damlasu's research interests are on the intersections of consumer culture, gender, and meaning-making, examining how marketplace discourses and ideologies construct identities and shape consumer experiences. She aims to specialize in critical perspectives to investigate the cultural narratives and institutional dynamics that sustain processes of responsabilization and resistance. Berker Özcureci is also pursuing his Ph.D. in Business Administration at Izmir University of Economics, focusing on regulating energy transition and climate change, examining how individuals, institutions, firms, and societies adapt to sustainability transformations through interdisciplinary and multi-theoretical perspectives. He has been a Research Assistant at the same university since 2021, participating in academic studies and projects on sustainable energy and policy development. We wish Damlasu and Berker good luck in their new roles and we are confident that they will provide valuable support in guiding authors through the manuscript preparation and editorial processes.

Articles in This Issue

The struggle to transition household waste management into truly circular systems is a critical challenge, derailed not solely by lack of political intent and poor public awareness but by glaring systemic failures within Household Waste Supply Chains (HWSCs), particularly in emerging economies. In this regard, the article in this issue by Ozdamar and Göçer (2025) examines how bottlenecks within current HWSCs undermine structural and process interconnections, influencing waste flows and hindering the transition toward closed-loop circular systems. Drawing on industrial network theory, the authors analyse how actor relationships and system configurations influence waste flows and hinder circularity outcomes. Based on content analysis of forty-seven semi-structured interviews supported by field observations, this research study maps the existing HWSC framework and identifies thirty-three bottleneck points related to role ambiguity, institutional disconnections, and limited inclusion of informal actors. The findings demonstrate actor misalignment and lack of collaboration as the central bottleneck points to effective and circular household waste systems, and reveal that inefficiencies are not isolated events but rather interconnected failures in governance, coordination, and operational flow. Consequently, this study provides a critical foundation for MGDR readers and researchers, practitioners and policymakers to rethink HWSC frameworks, where the transformation requires a holistic approach, one that prioritizes improved coordination, actor engagement, and systemic redesign, to establish resource recovery in emerging economies.

Dialogues in This Issue

This first Dialogue contribution started out as a Media Review of the movie *The Substance*. Upon reviewing this piece, the editors found that there was very substantive

discussion of intertwined serious topics like agism, sexism, feminism, fashion marketing, cinematic representations, gender stereotyping, and – at the threshold – emergent bio-info technologies. As a result, a decision was made to ask the authors to do some work and to make this into a Dialogue instead of a Media Review.

This first dialogue in this issue offers a critical lens to discuss how the portrayal of aging female bodies are still shaped by market-driven ideals of youth and beauty (Uyug Sengun, Aydın and Ozdamar Ertekin 2025). Through examination of body horror, self-hate, the visual language and the male gaze in *The Substance*, the authors discuss the marketization and the commodification of the female body and the consumption of youth. Unlike other positive representations of female aging bodies in recent media, *The Substance* illustrates how women still have to endure cultural and societal pressures to look young and beautiful and their increased visibility and representation remains as an illusion of empowerment, rather than reflecting their agency. As the authors signify, the process of aging eventually becomes a terrain for consumption, control, and identity negotiation. Consequently, the dialogue opens up avenues for further critical discussions on agism, consumption, markets, media and gender issues. We hope that in the coming issues MGDR readers and authors are ready to reflect and contribute on these discussions.

The second Dialogue contribution highlights the challenges posed by images created by AI. The authors, Varghese and Rani, urge readers to approach digital representations created by AI with caution. They draw on three case studies, using digital creations of different Indian routines and ceremonies. Their social semiotic analyses reveal the deep influence of orientalist foundations in AI-generated images. Long-standing orientalist artistic traditions, visual vocabularies and aesthetic categories, have shaped AI image generation, and embedded colonial interpretations. Beyond Varghese and Rani's analyses of representation, MGDR readers will appreciate their call for more sustainable development and justice that transcend the material world, embrace the digital, and acknowledge local expertise in cultural representations.

Media Review in This Issue

Terri P. Bowles (2018) did an excellent media review of the Ryan Coogler film *Black Panther* in the electronic pages of MGDR. We are therefore very happy to have in this issue of another landmark Ryan Coogler film: *Sinners*. In this media review, she is analytical, culturally very insightful, and lyrical: the reader can sense how the film touched this reviewer at multiple levels. In the view of our reviewer Terri Bowles as well as the views of others, the film has an autobiographical element relating to the childhood and youth of Ryan Coogler. As Bowles (2025) writes: "The movie opens with an illustrated prologue detailing histories of Irish, Choctaw Nation, and West African folklore traditions – intertwining preternatural musicality with supernatural abilities – and, via such intermingling, communicating the film's thesis of music as a portal to evil or as a healing force." Somehow, in these politically turbulent times, as the producer-director Ryan Coogler imaginatively attempts – and Terri Bowles forcefully underscores – phantasmagoria is one of the few pathways open to keep moving in a direction that would, hopefully, open the doors to a just and equal future.

Concluding Observations

As we said in the beginning, the world keeps moving. At MGDR, our goal always is to probe the ways in which the regressive pathways can be studied, exposed, and avoided; and to keep the search going for ameliorative pathways that will make the world a better place. Another MGDR goal is to keep stretching the global diversity of our content and authors. We hope to keep doing so in the remaining two issues of Volume 10, and in future volumes.

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