

**SENSE-MAKING OF ANTI-OTHERNESS GLOBALLY:
AN INTERNATIONAL MARKETING IMPERATIVE**

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ABSTRACT

Utilizing deontological vs. teleological approaches of ethics, this explores sense-making for international marketers as they grapple with the significant rise in anti-otherness within socio-political environments internationally. As politicians, leaders and key public figures espouse anti-other vitriol that much of their respective national environments share, marketers find themselves in difficulty at times where they must engage with such discussion one way or another. In such times, they need to engage in sense-making to understand how to resolve “right or wrong”. This paper offers a comprehensive “sense-making” approach for marketers to the problem of anti-otherness.

Keywords: Sense-making, international marketing; anti-otherness; ethnocentrism

1. INTRODUCTION:

A key feature that international marketers must now contend with, particularly over the last three decades, has been right wing populism replacing left wing populism around the world.

While both types of populism tend to be driven by anti-establishment ethos and “politiphobes” (Rauch, 2016), this latest right wing populism is particularly alarming in that its visceral reaction against “otherness” (for example, perceived “Islamization”, migrants and refugees, black lives matter (BLM) movement, or perceived foreign ideals) has struck a chord – and very large populations of adherents - throughout developed, relatively well-educated Western countries as well as important emerging markets.

Countries touched by this phenomenon span the globe, with some serving as poster cases – like the United States, Hungary, Brazil, India, Italy and Israel to name just a few. In all these countries, a glaring common theme is the extreme turn to right wing politics among the body politic. This paper undertakes an ethical primer to aid international marketers in “sense-making” through the noise of contentious political and social debate internationally.

2. EXISTING THEORY:

The paper leverages deontological vs. teleological approaches to help marketers understand when viewpoints contained in marketing communications that may need to address ethnocentric issues globally – the labor of what is called “sense-making” (Weichold & Candiotto, 2023) in this paper. Schwartz’ (1994) work on human values included the key component of “universalism”.

A classic work by Thompson & Tambyah (1999) analyzed “cosmopolitanism” as an ideological system, paying particular attention to ideological tensions within expatriates. On the opposite end from cosmopolitanism are anti-other tendencies – the lifeblood of extreme ethnocentrism and anti-otherness.

In the realm of ethical philosophy, two major perspectives dominate discussion – deontology and teleology, these perspectives offer distinct approaches to understanding morality and their applications in diverse contexts, including international cultures, have significant implications.

Deontology, rooted in the work of philosophers like Immanuel Kant, emphasize the importance of adhering to moral rules and principles regardless of their consequences, According to this perspective certain actions