Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

The Design Journal

An International Journal for All Aspects of Design

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rfdj20

The sacred and profane in design: Exploring the transcendent nature of ordinary products

Serkan Güneş & Çisem Ercömert Görgün

To cite this article: Serkan Güneş & Çisem Ercömert Görgün (07 Feb 2024): The sacred and profane in design: Exploring the transcendent nature of ordinary products, The Design Journal, DOI: 10.1080/14606925.2024.2311503

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2024.2311503

View supplementary material

Published online: 07 Feb 2024.

Submit your article to this journal

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=rfdj20

THE DESIGN JOURNAL
https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2024.2311503

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Check for updates

The sacred and profane in design: Exploring the transcendent nature of ordinary products

Serkan Güneş and Çisem Ercömert Görgün

Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey

ABSTRACT

This paper explores how specific products transcend their utilitarian purposes, evoking profound consumer fascination. These objects, characterized by an elusive quality surpassing practicality, acquire deeper meaning and allure. At the core is the concept of the sacred, intertwining the ordinary with the extraordinary, resonating profoundly on a personal level. Despite historical religious associations, the sacred in design extends beyond religion, inviting exploration of inherent sanctity in everyday products. It unravels the complex interplay between the sacred and the profane in design, examining how ordinary products gain heightened significance and become secularly revered by consumers. By assessing dimensions contributing to design object sacredness, particularly in fostering product loyalty, it seeks to delineate criteria defining sacred properties using precise user comments and product examples. Ultimately, this exploration of the secular sacred aims to inspire designers to delve into objects' profound potential, fostering a comprehensive understanding surpassing traditional religious associations in design.

KEYWORDS

Sacredness, profane, product design, transcendent experiences, Amazon.com

Introduction

Within the realm of design, certain products can transcend their utilitarian function and captivate consumers on a profound level. These extraordinary objects exhibit an elusive quality that surpasses their mere practicality, transforming them into entities with more profound meaning and mystique. At the core of this enigmatic allure lies the concept of the sacred, an intrinsic characteristic that intertwines the ordinary with the extraordinary, resonating with individuals on a profound and deeply personal level. While historically

CONTACT Serkan Güneş serkangunes@gazi.edu.tr Design Application and Research Center, Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey

Supplemental data for this article can be accessed online at https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2024.2311503.

© 2024 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

associated with religious symbolism, the notion of the sacred in design extends beyond its religious origins, beckoning us to explore the innate sacredness in ordinary products.

Throughout history, sacred objects have been revered for their connection to religious beliefs, serving as conduits to the divine. However, the concept of the sacred extends beyond religious contexts. In contemporary design, ordinary objects are elevated to a sacred status, intersecting the sacred and the profane; sometimes constructed by designers and sometimes unforeseen even by them.

To understand the sacred in design, it is vital to detach it from its religious roots. The sacred, multidimensional, and fluid manifest diversely in design. Designers wield the power to imbue products with enchantment, transforming them into unique artefacts, evoking awe and a spiritual experience. These objects serve as conduits for personal and collective meaning, fulfilling human desires for connection and transcendence.

Notably, consumers respond to the allure of sacred design objects, instinctively drawn to their symbolic value. Whether consciously or unconsciously perceived, the metaphorical associations attached to these products resonate with deep-seated yearnings for connection, meaning, and transcendence. Through engagement with these extraordinary objects, individuals enter a realm where the sacred and the profane intersect, experiencing a profound transformation that transcends the mundanity of everyday life. Significantly, the manifestation of the sacred in products invites contemplation and prompts critical examination of the nature of material existence and the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane. Such reflection challenges designers to reconsider their perspectives on the concept of the extraordinary and the production of the sacred within products.

This paper aims to embark on an exploratory journey, unravelling the complex interplay between the sacred and the profane dichotomy within the design. Drawing from marketing literature, we aim to investigate how ordinary products acquire heightened significance in the eyes of consumers, becoming secularly sacralised. Subsequently, by delving into design literature, we seek to shed light on the mechanisms through which the ordinary transforms into the extraordinary. By examining dimensions contributing to the sacredness of design objects, particularly within product loyalty, we question and categorise the 12 criteria defining sacred properties, using examples from products and accurate user comments. Ultimately, this expedition into the realm of the secular sacred, as it transcends religious motifs, aims to inspire designers to delve deeper into the profound potential of objects, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the sacred in design that extends beyond traditional religious associations.

The dichotomy of the sacred and profane

The concept of the sacred holds great importance in the tradition of phenomenology of religion, commonly employed within religious contexts. In phenomenology, the sacred is associated with divine or religious authority and reference to a priori religious reality—a transcendent, mysterious, and extraordinary object. This perspective suggests that anything embodying such special meaning can manifest the sacred (Leeuw 1963). Consequently, when the supernatural, or the sacred, is revealed through an object, it becomes a subject of analysis, offering insights into the experience of the sacred. However, it is essential to recognise that the sacred does not indeed reside within the object itself but in the consciousness of those who perceive it as sacred. Moreover, its content may change or fade over time for those who hold it sacred, as emphasised by Durkheim (1965). Individuals respond to the sacred as it manifests in the form of an object rather than the object itself (Paden 1999).

Durkheim views religion as a product of societal influences on human behaviour, emphasising the significance of the sacred as the core of faith where the sacred gains meaning from the profane (1965). They do not coexist seamlessly; mingling dilutes the sacred, stripping it of its essence. Durkheim contends that the sacred embodies ritual behaviour rather than a supernatural object, encompassing diverse concepts like law, the state, freedom, and the right to life. Epitomised by the Ottian meaning model, the sacred embodies secrecy, the supernatural, and the 'other' (*ganz andre*), evoking fear and reverence (Otto 1936). Conversely, the profane pertains to the earthly, the natural, and the secular, signifying the worldly and disrupting order. As an ontological facet of human emotional experience, the sacred possesses a sublime quality that transcends itself, eliciting admiration and fostering a connection with a perceived superior.

Mircea Eliade, a significant interpreter of the sacred post-Otto, evaluates it psychologically. He underscores the significance of symbols, such as myths and rituals, in comprehending the sacred (Eliade 1963). Symbols serve as codes beyond conscious understanding or awareness. Eliade argues that the sacred is evident through *hierophanies*, manifesting in objects, symbols, moral codes, or even ideas in the real world (1963). These *hierophanies* concurrently signify *kratophany*, conveying power, the abnormal, the mysterious, and the extraordinary, evoking fear and reverence. Individuals can discern the sacred from the profane. When an object is deemed sacred, it transcends its ordinary state, revealing its inherent sacredness.

The attribution of sacredness to products can be traced back to inherent human tendencies and practices related to religion and spirituality, a concept akin to the discourse of Merleau-Ponty. According to Merleau-Ponty (1968), humans possess an innate curiosity of anthropological origin, leading them

to explore the depths of the world. This perceptual world, replete with wonder and mystery, is what transcends human perception, not some external transcendental reality. The sacredness ascribed to products, following the Merleau-Ponty approach, does not originate from a religious framework but from an immanent curiosity, a natural human inclination to comprehend the world and one's existence, and a profound need for mystery.

In this perspective, the sacred holds a unique significance in human experience. As a phenomenon, religion reflects human attempts to answer existential questions and understand the universe's meaning. While Merleau-Ponty (1968) grounds perception in the sensory experiences inseparable from thought, shifts the focus from individual perception to historical and social development. According to Hegel (2010) religion, with its symbolic and spiritual expressions, constitutes a fundamental component of the social order. Religious symbols serve as tools to express profound emotional experiences and symbolically communicate complex thoughts, reflecting a profound understanding that the evolutionary development of the human spirit plays a central role. The concept of the sacred as the 'Absolute Spirit' necessitates a deeper and more comprehensive understanding within the framework of an evolutionary process.

The sacred resides in the depths of the existing world, whether in flux or immanent, individual or historical and social. This depth encompasses everything existing in the world, including human-made entities such as architectural structures, designs, artworks, and elements of the natural environment. It is crucial to consider how these human creations impact human behaviour and experiences within different cultural contexts. Phenomenological studies, which examine how people perceive the world and the resultant effects on human behaviour and experiences, are gaining significance, particularly in studies related to spatial dimensions (Rapoport 1982; Bachelard 2014). Although marketing concerns often dominate the field of product design, there is an emerging discourse exploring whether sacredness can be integrated into contemporary product design. This exploration delves into the design-oriented cultural process, where design becomes a means of expressing sacredness through creativity and materiality and a way of comprehending the world (Chimenz 2017). Furthermore, there are discussions regarding the production of elevated values in design within the context of sacredness (Varadarajan 2010).

The sacred can materialise in places, objects, or situations, demonstrating its potential ubiquity on a symbolic level. This suggests a discernible division between the sacred and the profane, often requiring a deliberate abstraction. What holds sacred value for one person might appear mundane to another. Within consumer culture, 'sacred' assumes a secular dimension, describing specific products, experiences, or rituals holding profound personal or

communal significance. It conveys a sense of uniqueness, reverence, and respect toward physical objects, linked concepts like sustainability and ethics, as well as activities like shopping rituals and shared experiences. In design, the sacred often references objects surpassing functionality or aesthetics, becoming conduits for emotional, cultural, and spiritual experiences. Aligned with users' beliefs or aspirations, these products evoke awe, instil peace, or foster a connection with something beyond oneself. The sacred dimension in design is inherently subjective, where an everyday object may reveal sacredness through diverse experiences. Products revered by many may seem secular to individual consumers.

This study acknowledges the secular aspect of sacredness in products, acknowledging its emotional underpinning within subjective experiences. Nevertheless, it contends that despite the subjective nature of sacredness, designers can create products transcending mere materiality, serving as vessels for emotional, cultural, and spiritual experiences. This pursuit aims to cultivate more profound and meaningful connections between users and designed objects, ultimately enhancing well-being and enriching lives.

The sacred and profane in marketing and design literature

In assessing the distinction between the sacred and the profane through consumption practices and consumer goods, Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry's award-winning work (1989) revealed, based on a large-scale empirical study, the visibility of the sacred in the contemporary world of consumption. Rather than precisely defining what the sacred is, the authors analysed classical literature, particularly the works of Durkheim and Eliade, and later authors who focused on the distinction between the sacred and the profane. Through this analysis, the authors identified 12 properties of the sacred. By citing empirical work for each part, they argued that through sacralisation, particular objects are freed from the secular dimension of everyday life and become vehicles of transcendent experiences for consumers.

In the following years, other studies attempted to explore the sacred aspects of consumption through further research, focusing on specific products, brands, and consumer communities. Schouten and McAlexander (1985) delve into the sacralisation process of Harley Davidson, exploring how it undergoes taboo and ritual transformation. Masset and Decrop (2016) analyse the sacralisation of tourist objects through myths, magical powers, or narratives. Muñiz and Schau (2005) examine Apple Newton's creation of transcendental and magical-religious experiences. Belk and Tumbat (2005) explore the religious and magical implications associated with the Macintosh brand. Muñiz and O'guinn (2001) investigate the ritualistic fiction surrounding the Saab brand. The production of sacredness and the creation of

communitas is analysed in the X-Files and Star Wars series (Kozinets 1997; Kozinets 2001; Brown, Kozinets, and Sherry 2003). Tynan and McKechnie (2005) explore secular Christmas spending and its connection to the production of sacredness. Chalmers and Arthur (2008) examine how sacred subcultural experiences are enacted in spaces traditionally considered profane, involving objectification, devotion, sacrifice, mystery, ecstasy, and flow. These studies collectively contribute to understanding the sacred in the context of consumption, providing insights into how certain products, brands, and consumer communities take on sacred dimensions, offering transcendent and meaningful experiences for consumers.

Schindler and Minton (2022) introduce duality as the 13th sacredness trait. Their study focuses on Starbucks and exercise culture and proposes a marketing-based checklist. This checklist implicitly and ambiguously lays out the designer's responsibilities. It is, therefore, vital to explore how understanding sacred properties can inform design and encourage positive emotions associated with the product.

The design literature exhibits a noticeable dearth of directly employing the term 'sacred', likely due to its association with religious connotations. Although a few studies have explored the design values inherent in genuinely religious and sacred objects, the comprehensive examination of various dimensions of personal and secular sacredness and their manifestation in the realm of design still needs to be addressed. In this context, personal sacredness refers to elements that hold profound significance within the individual or group's natural experiences. In contrast, secular sacredness pertains to elements recognised as sacred by individuals or groups due to their connection with earthly institutions and natural processes rather than a divine reality (Evans 2003). Numerous studies have explored the awe-inspiring and ecstatic relationship between products and users, employing attachment theory as an emotional and psychological framework through which users develop a connection with specific products or brands. Various frameworks have been proposed to address how this connection is formed. However, it is crucial to distinguish between product attachment and product sanctity, as they represent distinct concepts.

Sanctity-based product loyalty, or product sacralisation, is closely related to product attachment. It refers to the profound beliefs, values, and identity that consumers associate with a particular product, but it encompasses a stronger emotional and psychological connection than product loyalty alone. The notion of sacredness implies a sense of reverence and significance attributed to what is embodied in the product. This sacredness is often rooted in an alignment with an individual's core values, social identity, or deeply held beliefs. Consequently, the product assumes a unique position in the person's life, becoming intertwined with their identity and sense of self. At this stage,

the product transcends its material existence, and its possession symbolises one's values, beliefs, and aspirations. This transcendent aspect surpasses the rational dimensions of the product and gives rise to a unique attachment that is challenging to explain or replicate by an external observer.

The attachment between the consumer and the sacred product is an association between two inherently unequal elements: the consumer seeking fulfilment in their symbolic world and the product that fulfils this need. The product's selflessness engenders devastation upon its loss, while possession and interaction with it evoke reverence, awe, and ecstasy. These emotions arise due to the sacredness conferred upon the product.

In addition to exploring the emotional and psychological dimensions of product attachment, a body of valuable research indirectly examines how consumers perceive products. Some of these studies provide designers with reference attachment factors using specific product examples (Figure 1). Meanwhile, other studies explore the relationship between product loyalty, its degree, and higher-order values, such as sustainability. These investigations delve into long-term product usage, environmental values, increased social impact, and the overall selection of sustainable alternatives. Consequently, these studies yield partial implications of personal and secular sanctity (Durgee 1999a; Varadarajan 2010; Orth, Thurgood, and Van Den Hoven 2020; Kowalski and Yoon 2022).

An ordinary product's attainment of sacredness or symbolic significance relies on contextual factors and procedural intricacies linked to its usage. This transformative process, occasionally evolving into a ritual, assigns a distinctive meaning to a product, lifting it beyond mere utility to a realm of more profound spiritual or symbolic importance. The scholarly focus has centred on the ritual structure as a lens for interpreting consumer behaviour in the consumption domain (Rook 1985). Extensive studies have sought to classify ritualistic behaviour (Park 1998; Vohs et al. 2013), apply it in brand establishment (Amati and Pestana 2015), cultivate and manage it (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Muniz and Schau, 2005; Sharma, Kumar, and Borah 2017), and explore its role in influencing consumption patterns (Vohs et al. 2013). Moreover, research has explored rituals' socialisation and guiding influence, extending to digital or virtual products *via* structural ritualisation theory (Bartholomew and Mason 2020). Consequently, rituals are acknowledged in consumption research as a series of actions conveying value and significance, characterised by recurrent patterns and regulations.

Existing literature has also investigated various forms of rituals beyond consumer rituals. Daily rituals, for instance, are perceived as non-functional behaviours, leaving an emotional imprint on daily life. These intermittent actions hold symbolic significance despite lacking functional necessity. Examples include bathing rituals among the elderly (Karaca Şalgamcıoğlu

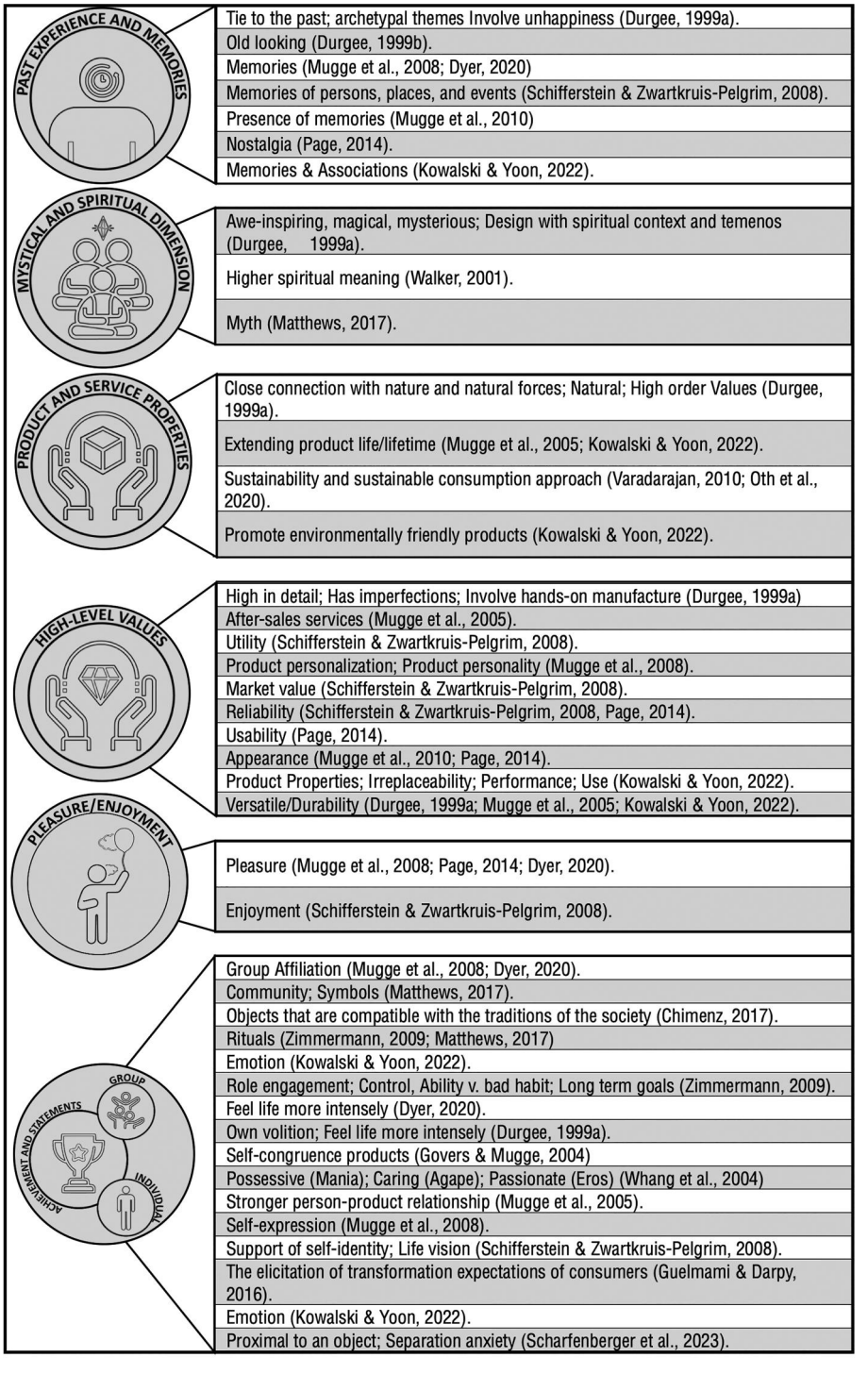


Figure 1. Product attachment properties and categorisation.

PROPERTY	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
HIEROPHANY	Sacredness emerges from revealing beyond physical properties, making sacred objects distinct, challenging perceptions of pure functionality due to subjectivity.	Objects possessing unexpectedness and surprise, such as a gift pen, a hidden car feature, or even points earned through credit card purchases.
KRATHOPANY	Signifies sacred power that can evoke devotion, fear, or disgust, creating a blend of respect and apprehension in users.	Companies address consumer uncertainty by offering warranties, returns, fixed tariffs, and efficient services, reassuring about potential losses
OPPOSITION TO PROFANE	Possibility of the sacred becoming profane and losing its enchantment through contact with the ordinary.	Defect detection, mishandling, unaware purchases, belittling diminish a product's sacredness, equating it with the mundane, representing blasphemy.
CONTAMINATION	Elevating a product's sacred status by linking it to something revered, allowing it to sanctify the profane through association with pre-existing sacred elements.	Associating with respected brands, designers, prominent figures, parental choices, or high-level values like sustainability and social justice.
SACRIFICE	Ordinary items gain sacredness when produced and used with sacrifice, signifying renunciation for the sake of a greater good.	Dyson's persistent prototyping and financial efforts, as well as meticulous craftsmanship and personal savings, enhance the perceived value of products.
COMMITMENT	Emotional commitment to the sacred, driven by positive experiences and satisfaction, integrates it into one's identity, fostering brand loyalty.	Repeated purchases of the same automobile brand, investment in a brand's ecosystem, or preserving ancestral or heirloom objects.
OBJECTIFICATION	Involves making the sacred more explicit by representing it in tangible forms.	Certificates, souvenirs, gifts, and symbolic items like lapel pins and badges can embody sacredness, signifying meaningful experiences and affiliations.
RITUAL	Imbued with sacred symbols, entail prescribed actions and rules, fostering engagement, respect, and protection among participants.	Shared activities like restaurant gatherings, coordinated outfits, and family heirloom care foster group identity, sustaining sacred traditions.
MYTH	Shapes sacred symbolism, explaining product significance, connecting to identity, imbuing rituals with meaning, and guiding proper use and consumption	Inspirations like Starck's Juicy Salif, Dassler brothers' split fostering Puma, Saab's aviation roots, and Volvo's durable reputation, shaped iconic brands.
MYSTERY	Evokes awe, deepens product engagement, separates insiders from outsiders, preserves sacredness, enhancing products' allure through enigmatic narratives.	Enigmatic narratives, undisclosed ingredients, and hidden features in products deepen connection, fostering a profound sense of belonging and intrigue.
COMMUITAS	Fans unite around a product, even if it is not always owned. Entry-level products offer membership but are respected differently. Easy access can cause backlash.	Brand communes in Apple, Jeep, Harley Davidson, textile, and food products, emphasizing bonds, illustrated by shared guitar use among musicians.
ECSTASY AND FLOW	Elevated states of joy experienced with the sacred. Feeling euphoria or flow during product use, that fosters positive attitudes, loyalty, and repeat purchases.	Premium smartphones, high-performance cars, gourmet dining, famous brand stores, and exotic vacations offering top-tier, exhilarating experiences.
DUALITY	Sacredness recognition is subjective; guidance helps focus, allowing conscious, self-aware choices, acknowledging diverse perceptions in surroundings.	Businesses enhance mindfulness by diversifying representation, collecting feedback, emphasizing sustainability, and promoting cultural experiences, fostering conscious consumer choices.

Figure 2. Summarised representation of sacramental properties with examples.

and Er 2018), makeup routines (Gentina, Palan, and Fosse-Gomez 2012), food-related rituals (Fiese, Foley, and Spagnola 2006; Dyen et al. 2018), and the broad spectrum of religious rituals shaping daily existence (Güneş 2022). Objects or products embedded within these daily rituals can transcend their utilitarian essence, assuming emotional significance for users. Over time, routine-use items may acquire sacred or holy connotations within personal, familial, or societal contexts, interlinked with emotional, spiritual, or symbolic meanings. In this context, sacredness emerges as a quality attributed by individuals, imbued with spiritual or emotional worth, surpassing the mere materiality of the object.

In their seminal work, Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry (1989) delineated twelve attributes of sacredness, namely hierophany, kratophany, opposition to the profane, contamination, sacrifice, commitment, objectification, ritual, myth, mystery, communitas, and ecstasy and flow (Figure 2).

Methodology

Existing literature extensively discusses the marketing implications of the 12 sacredness attributes by Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry (1989), yet product design lacks attention in this domain. While Schindler and Minton (2022) study touches on designing the sacred in product design, it primarily focuses on marketing. We propose consciously integrating sacred qualities into the product design phase, akin to other features, enabling users to perceive

products' spiritual significance. This research aims to identify prevalent sacredness features perceived by users across a product's lifecycle, offering practical implications for designers. Our methodology systematically samples products from Amazon.com's 'Most Wished' category (as of July 4, 2023), representing sacred qualities (www.amazon.com/gp/most-wished-for). Wish lists, denoting customer interest without immediate purchase intent, are utilised for analysis. This approach enhances comprehension of sacredness in consumer products within contemporary culture, providing valuable insights for designers.

We curated a sample of 105 products from various categories on Amazon.com, focusing on items with a minimum rating of 4.5 out of 5 stars and at least 1,000 customer reviews. Up to three products meeting these criteria were selected per category. Using a web scraper (Firefox - Open Web Scraper), we collected user reviews from the respective Amazon pages, ensuring strict adherence to ethical guidelines and user privacy. The extracted reviews were saved in .csv format in our database.

We analysed 10,500 user reviews by categorising each product's top 100 positive reviews by product type. Each review underwent Document Level Sentiment Analysis (DLSA), revealing a high average correlation of 0.857 between user ratings and comments. This strong correlation validated the quality of the content for subsequent analysis. Pre-processing steps, including removal of non-textual elements, tokenisation, stop word removal, and stemming/lemmatisation, were applied to prepare the reviews for further analysis.

In this study, we use text mining techniques, specifically the Latent Dirichlet al.location (LDA) model with the GENSIM library in Python, to analyse wisdom-filled user comments (Güneş 2012) and investigate the effects of sacred attributes. The analysis focuses on 12 predetermined themes representing sacramental characteristics. Unique keywords for each theme are created to capture central aspects. Utilising the Gibbs sampling algorithm, the LDA model uncovers hidden themes and determines each document's contribution. This approach provides weighting percentages for each theme, emphasising sacred attributes in user reviews. The results offer valuable insights for product design, marketing strategies, and customer satisfaction management, enhancing our understanding of consumers' perceptions of sacred qualities.

However, like any scholarly research, it has limitations and suggests avenues for future exploration. The reliance on user-generated reviews raises concerns about their quality and representational accuracy. These comments are subjective, complicating their objective analysis through LDA. Verified purchase markers and DLSA were used to enhance authenticity. However, initial comments often receive higher helpfulness scores due to social

validation. The study's scope is also limited to American consumers, lacking cultural diversity. Future research could explore diverse cultural contexts for a nuanced perspective on secular sacredness.

The focus on wish list products from Amazon.com limits the study's applicability, although Amazon.com's prominence in e-commerce is acknowledged. Replicating analyses across varied e-commerce platforms and product categories could enhance generalizability. The analysis relies on twelve themes from existing literature, but boundaries between these themes can be ambiguous. Collaborative efforts with end-users could refine these themes, enhancing the understanding through qualitative methodologies like in-depth interviews.

This user-centric exploration suggests the potential for exploring design implications. Integrating these themes into product design could enhance the consumer experience. This synergy between user insights and design innovation creates a mutually beneficial relationship between these paradigms.

Outcomes

A dataset comprising 35 categories with 300 comments each was organised as .text files for LDA analysis. Python functions were developed to extract text data, enabling LDA analysis using the GENSIM library. The model trained on 12 themes, prepared the dataset, created a dictionary, and converted texts into a corpus format. This trained LDA model depicted each document as topic probability distributions, offering significant features for machine learning applications. Assigning thematic weights indicated document engagement with different topics, facilitating grouping, categorisation, summarisation, and content similarity, efficiently converting text data into numerical vectors. We assigned decimal weights to 100 user comments per product across 12 themes. These thematic weights were averaged at the document level and further averaged within the same product category, generating the categorical theme distribution as depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 4 displays key themes associated with sacredness in various categories. Ritual, communitas, and objectification are recurrent properties with high weight scores (223, 214, 171). The most significant sacramental properties are kratophany (25.1%), Ecstasy (22.4%), and opposition (21%). Hierophany is prominent in specific categories like baby products and musical instruments, representing indirect revelation of the sacred within art.

Hierophany is significant in CD and vinyl categories, while kratophany is prominent in Automotive and Sports Outdoors products due to users' intense feelings of ownership. Opposition appears in brand loyalty and unique consumption items like Amazon Renewed and Grocery & Gourmet

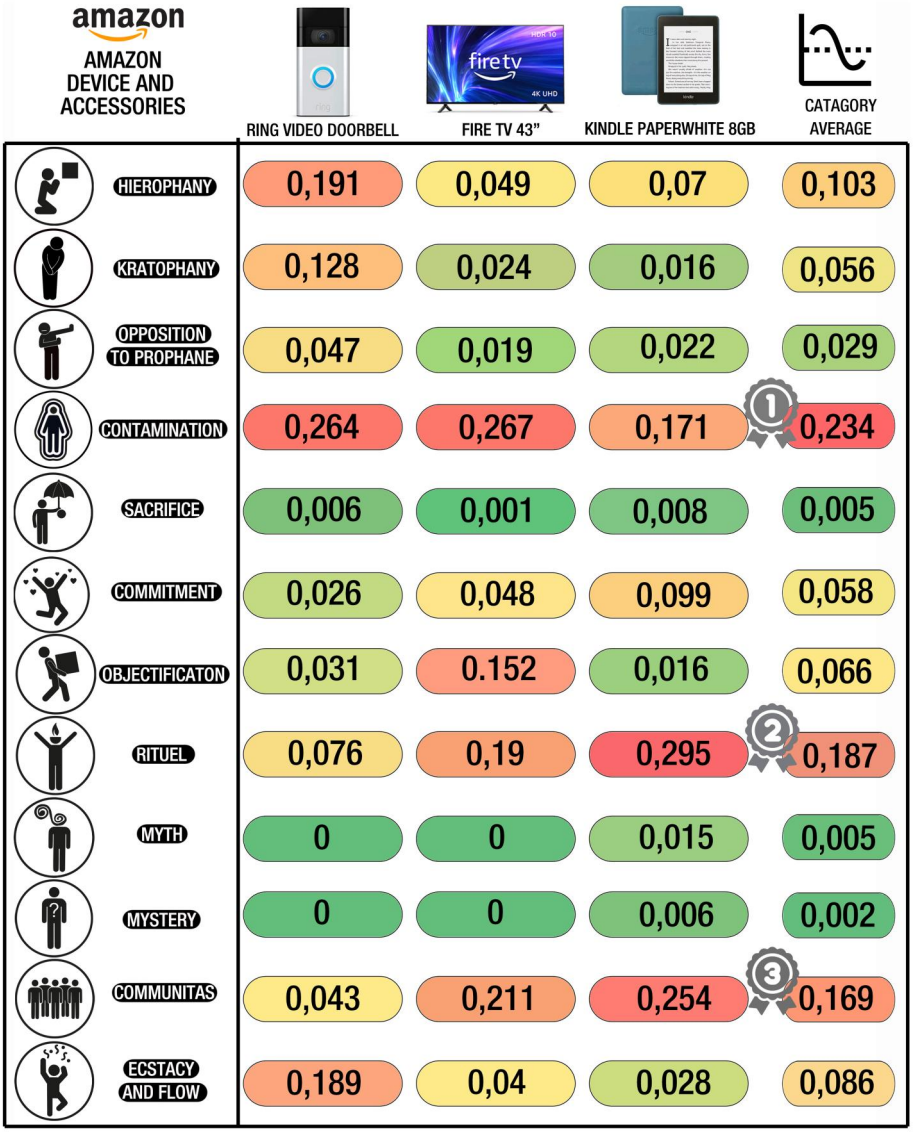


Figure 3. Example categorical weighting scores.

Food. Contamination is linked to brand prestige and loyalty in books, music, and sustainability products. Sacrifice is associated with labour, time, and preferences, as seen in car and garden maintenance and sustainable product choices. Commitment is identified in automobile and baby products. Objectification embodies products' qualities, representing beauty, elegance, and high-end values. Ritual, the most common property, pertains to usage habits and repeated steps, contributing to effective product use. Myth is observed in collectable and past-based entertainment products, and Mystery in books and entertainment items. Communitas signifies community bonds

PRODUCT CATEGORY	PROPERTY											
	HIEROPHANY	KRATOPHANY	OPPOSITION TO PROPHANE	CONTAMINATION	SACRIFICE	COMMITMENT	OBJECTIFICATION	RITUEL	MYTH	MYSTERY	COMMUNITAS	ECSTACY AND FLOW
AMAZON DEVICES & ACCESSORIES	X	X	X	0,234	X	X	X	0,187	X	X	0,169	X
AMAZON RENEWED	X	X	0,136	0,119	X	X	0,153	X	X	X	X	X
APPLIANCES	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,153	0,170	X	X	X	0,136
ARTS, CRAFTS & SEWING	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,153	0,170	X	X	0,136	X
AUDIBLE BOOKS & ORIGINALS	X	X	X	0,170	X	X	X	0,153	X	X	0,187	X
AUTOMOTIVE	X	0,266	X		0,187	0,170	X	X	X	X	X	X
BABY	0,204	X	X	X	0,187	0,170	X	X	X	X	X	X
BEAUTY & PERSONAL CARE	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,204	0,187	X	X	X	0,170
BOOKS	X	X	X	0,213	X	X	X	X	X	0,196	0,153	X
CAMERA & PHOTO PRODUCTS	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,199	0,182	X	0,157	X	X
CDS & VINYL	0,204	X	X	0,187	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,174
CLIMATE PLEDGE FRIENDLY	X	X	X	0,173	0,222	X	0,168	X	X	X	X	X
CLOTHING, SHOES, JEWELRY	X	X	X	0,288	X	X	X	0,195	X	X	0,201	X
COLLECTIBLE COINS	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,197	0,182	X	X	0,257	X
COMPUTERS & ACCESSORIES	X	X	X	X	X	0,261	X	0,151	X	X	0,148	X
DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,112	0,184	X	X	0,161	X
ELECTRONICS	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,302	0,195	X	X	0,254	X
ENTERTAINMENT COLLECTIBLES	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,111	X	0,244	X	0,103	X
GROCERY & GOURMET FOOD	X	X	0,276	X	0,111	X	0,103	X	X	X	X	X
HANDMADE PRODUCTS	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,205	0,234	X	X	0,221	X
HEALTH & HOUSEHOLD	X	X	X	X	0,164	X	X	0,206	X	X	X	0,600
HOME & KITCHEN	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,233	0,276	X	X	0,229	X
KITCHEN & DINING	X	X	X	X	0,276	X	X	0,231	X	X	X	0,198
MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,203	X	0,174	0,268	X
MOVIES & TV	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,147	X	0,198	0,182	X	X
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS	0,235	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,154	X	X	0,156	X
OFFICE PRODUCTS	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,198	0,195	X	X	0,162	X
PATIO, LAWN & GARDEN	X	X	X	X	0,213	X	X	0,309	X	X	0,196	X
PET SUPPLIES	0,123	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,141	X	X	0,228	X
PRIME VIDEO	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,128	0,116	X	0,105
SOFTWARE	X	X	0,261	X	X	X	X	0,208	X	X	0,203	X
SPORTS & OUTDOORS	X	0,236	X	X	0,191	X	X	X	X	X	0,201	X
TOOLS & HOME IMPROVEMENT	X	X	0,168	X	X	X	0,209	0,177	X	X	X	X
TOYS & GAMES	0,238	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,184	X	X	0,295	X
VIDEO GAMES	X	X	X	X	X	X	0,191	X	X	X	0,251	0,187

Figure 4. Product theme weightings for all product categories.

during shared experiences like magazine subscriptions and pet ownership. Ecstasy represents positive outcomes, like successful makeup or enjoyable book experiences.

General evaluations and discussion

Secular sacredness refers to non-religious entities endowed with religious attributes by society, often through human-created artefacts. Consumers can perceive products or brands as having unique value, leading to behaviours akin to religious rituals. In our analysis, all twelve sacred attributes proposed by Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry (1989) were observed (Figure 5), leading to intriguing implications compared to previous findings (Figure 2).

Our LDA analysis of 10,500 user comments revealed 1,095 comments associated with twelve distinct themes, indicating that approximately 10% of users link secular sacredness to products, notably wish-listed items. Ritual,

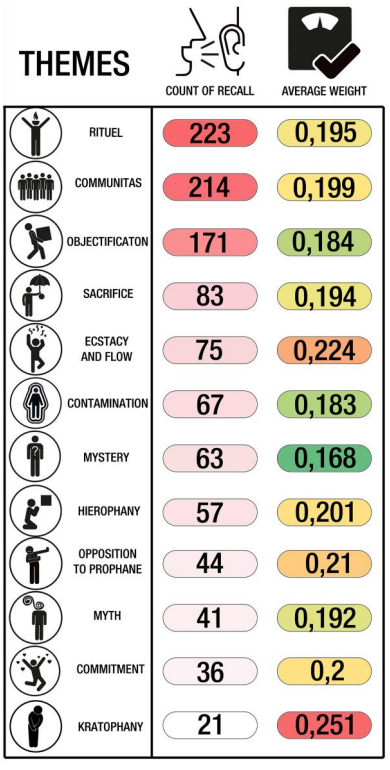


Figure 5. Theme counts and average weights.

communitas, and objectification emerged as prominent themes across the consumer journey, influencing purchase decisions and post-purchase evaluations. Objectification, aggregating user references, notably stood out among wish-listed items. Detailed scrutiny showed rituals and communitas associated with verified purchases, signifying tangible, experiential processes. The study highlighted hierophany's role in need identification, kratophany in information search, and objectification in purchase decisions during consumer buying. Post-purchase evaluations emphasised ritual, myth, mystery, communitas, and enthusiasm/flow. Further analysis emphasised kratophany, ecstasy, opposition to the profane, and hierophany as predominant themes based on both average weights and frequency. Kratophany appeared in performance-driven products like automobiles and sports items, while ecstasy was evident in beauty and entertainment products. Opposition to the profane related to products emphasising distinctions, such as organic, vegan, renewed, and iOS vs. Android. Hierophany was prominent in products associated with babies, children, pets, and music, where sacredness prevailed over intrinsic qualities.

These findings establish a correlation between the twelve themes and design procedures, offering valuable insights for designers. The study evaluates how these themes can be incorporated into crucial product design phases.

Identifying design problems is a complex and time-consuming process, requiring meticulous attention. Designers possess a unique ability to perceive latent issues that users might overlook. They have an intuitive capacity to detect imperceptible problems and devise innovative remedies. In design narratives, themes like 'myth' and 'opposition to the profane' often play a prominent role during problem identification in product development. Designers aim to reveal challenges mysteriously and endow products with distinctiveness, setting them apart from established solutions. For instance, the discovery of Post-it adhesive notes exemplifies this process. Similarly, designers frequently challenge norms, exploring solutions beyond established boundaries. Dyson's product line illustrates this resistance, such as wheelbarrows with globe wheels and bladeless fans. These motifs of mythology and aversion to the ordinary amplify the unique problem-solving trajectory in design narratives, emphasising designers' innovative approaches.

Integrating hierophany and mystery concepts in the initial design stages and research processes sparks curiosity by introducing unique product elements. Designers strategically incorporate supplementary features, creating allure and fostering user curiosity. Unforeseen interactions establish a deeper connection between users and products, aiming to transform the product from a mere object into an immersive experience with a profound narrative. For instance, Apple's 'Find My' service exemplifies this approach by utilising location tracking and innovative features across various devices, enhancing user engagement. Similarly, the closely guarded formulas of brands like Coca-Cola and the intricate mechanisms of luxury watches align with this concept, emphasising the value of mystery and curiosity in product design.

Incorporating the elements of hierophany and mystery in the early stages of design concepts enhances the product narrative. Designers increase engagement and elevate the user experience by stimulating curiosity and infusing products with enigmatic subtleties. The themes of objectification and ritual gain significance during concept development. Cultivating an emotional bond between users and products through objectification and associating products with symbolic rituals fosters connections beyond functionality. Symbolic artefacts often encapsulate meta-values, seen in examples like First-Class air travel's reinforcement of privilege and Tiffany & Co.'s recognisable blue boxes symbolising 'Unforgettable Excellence'. The strategic formulation of rituals aligned with sustainability, as seen in Nespresso coffee machines, further enhances the product's appeal and emotional resonance with users.

In the initial phase of user feedback and concept refinement, the themes of kratophany, ecstasy and flow are crucial for fostering enduring customer

loyalty and sustainable design. These themes create a fulfilling user interface, enhancing product engagement and emotional bonds. Iterative refinement is essential to augment user immersion and elicit profound elation during product usage. Examples include Michelin's performance-oriented tire offerings, Apple's cohesive Eco System Approach, and Lego's commitment to endless permutations, ensuring enduring product enjoyment. Designers can enhance a brand's identity by aligning their expertise with reputable corporate entities, elevating the design's prestige. Themes like contamination and sacrifice can be purposefully emphasised during the exploratory design phase to enrich the product's value. Designers can shape a brand's identity and bolster its equity by leveraging their ingenuity, expertise, experience, and distinctive artistic style. Aligning the designer's brand value with a reputable corporate entity can significantly elevate the design's prestige. By accentuating the meticulousness and ardour intrinsic to the design and production journey and skilfully transposing these attributes onto the product, users are inclined to bestow heightened value upon the product.

Creating a sense of prestige involves aligning the product with a respected brand, incorporating the brand's iconic imprints, emphasising the designer's distinctive signature, and highlighting the unwavering commitment to the design and production process. These motifs are shared with users through captivating narratives. For example, Chanel's fashion collection offers opulence and prestige, while Herman Miller emphasises craftsmanship and manufacturing excellence as embodiments of sacrifice. Collaborations with eminent designers, such as Mercedes' A.M.G. series vehicles, embody power and performance, illustrating the concept of contamination. The designer's dedication and sacrifices, demonstrated through numerous sketches and iterative prototyping, reflect the pursuit of perfection in the product.

Marketing and promotion are vital in conveying a design's message to users and building a sense of communitas among consumers. Communitas emerges from shared experiences involving existing members and aspirants seeking to join. However, the collective focus may weaken as the number of members increases.

The power of design goes beyond physical products, residing in cohesive narratives that connect with people. Marketing endeavours aim to influence those on the periphery, emphasising themes like philosophical perspectives or lifestyles. The key is for the audience to establish a personal connection with the narrative, fostering communitas. Nike, for example, nurtures communitas around integrating sports into lifestyle, reinforced by their slogan 'Just Do It'. This sense of communitas revolves around motivational and achievement-oriented values linked to sports, reflected in Nike's product design. Communitas extends beyond product attributes, forming an identity

grounded in shared values. For instance, Mercedes consistently echoes themes like exclusivity and comfort throughout their car design, emphasising the brand's commitment to these principles.

This study offers an intricate perspective on integrating secular sacredness within the design realm. The twelve outlined themes hold substantial potential for profound exploration and innovative implementation by designers, consistently significant across various stages of the design process. Leveraging these thematic elements enhances product functionality and enriches them with deeper meaning, emotional connections, and transformative user experiences. By adeptly manipulating these themes, designers can foster stronger connections between products, brands, and their user base.

Integrating these themes into design frameworks ethically requires judicious execution, avoiding manipulation or superficiality. Designers should view adopting these thematic paradigms as a means to reflect the inherent essence and values of the products authentically.

The outlined themes significantly influence products and the overall user experience, nurturing emotional connections with the artefacts. These thematic dimensions serve as tools to enhance designers' creative processes, adding layers of significance within societal and cultural contexts.

However, this study emphasises the need for further scholarly exploration into secular sacredness within design. Investigating the effectiveness of these themes in design, their potential to deepen the connection between users and products, and their societal impact requires additional scholarly attention. Such efforts will enrich design scholarship, cultivating design paradigms prioritising efficiency and aligning with holistic human experiences.

This study delves into secular sacredness in everyday products, revealing its significance in shaping user perception and product engagement. By analysing user comments, the study identifies the prevalence of sacredness attributions in product evaluations, suggesting that users often imbue everyday objects with unique values and meanings. While social and cultural norms shape these attributions, the study posits that designers can consciously embed sacredness into products as a strategic design input.

This study expands the existing literature on product attachment by organising it into 12 thematic categories (Figure 6). These themes, spanning emotional attachment to social bonding, construct a comprehensive framework for understanding product sacredness. This classification aids in analysing product loyalty and serves as a meta-category for secular product sanctity. It emphasises that the relationship between a product and its user encompasses diverse qualities beyond a singular term like 'attachment', incorporating aspects associated with the sacred. Addressing and categorising each unique product-user relationship through themes of secular sacramentality becomes essential, distinguishing subtleties. Context-specific

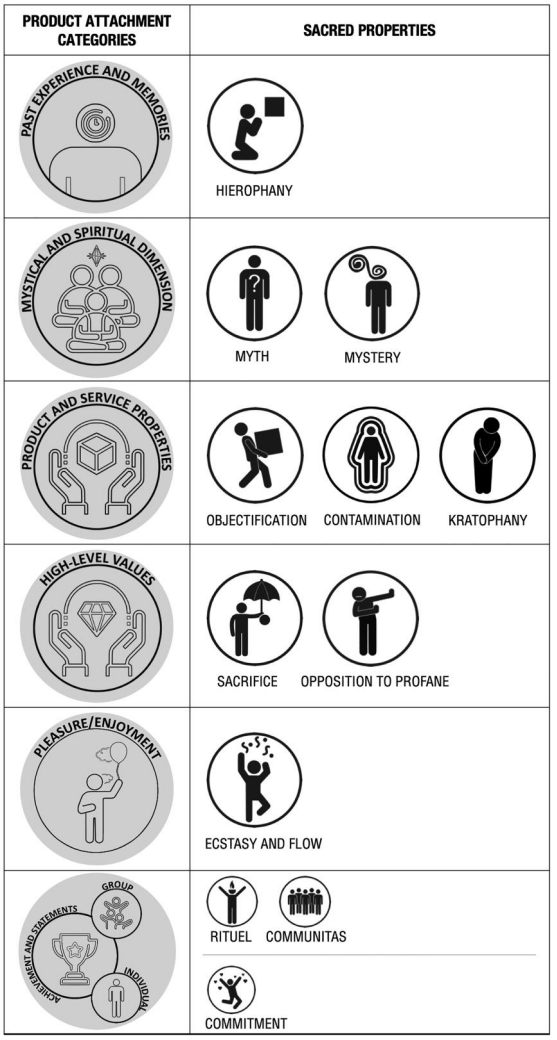


Figure 6. The relationship between categorical product loyalties and sacramental possessions is mentioned in the literature.

strategies evolve from this detailed exploration, avoiding broad generalisations and aligning closely with diverse contexts. Therefore, a deeper exploration of product engagement and loyalty is warranted, vital for understanding the foundational aspects of product loyalty formation. Product design strategies should stem from a comprehensive comprehension of the distinct grounds fostering loyalty.

Harnessing the power of secular sacredness in design practice requires careful consideration of ethical guidelines and methodological approaches. By integrating sacredness into product design, designers can create objects that transcend functionality and establish profound emotional connections with users. However, when applying these themes, one must be mindful of

ethical considerations, ensuring that sacredness is not manipulated or used superficially.

Designers should approach secular sacredness to reflect products' intrinsic essence and values rather than employing it as a manipulative tool. Designers can foster a deeper emotional connection between users and products by consciously incorporating sacredness into the design process. This approach elevates the design journey beyond mere functionality, imbuing products with a more profound and sustainable significance.

Current research on product engagement primarily focuses on the product-user relationship, often overlooking the designer's role in shaping this interaction. While designers may consciously or unconsciously incorporate sacredness dimensions into their product narratives, a systematic theoretical framework for evaluating this strategic formulation is lacking. Bridging the gap between design practice and theory remains a central challenge in design thinking.

This study addresses this gap by first reviewing the literature on product engagement and classifying it into distinct themes. Subsequently, the study reveals the presence of secular sacredness in products based on user comments. This finding is then connected to the literature on secular product sacredness, culminating in a framework for designers to apply at various design stages. While this study does not propose a complete methodology, it lays the groundwork for future investigations into the empirical presence of secular sacredness in the user experience. Further research should explore whether designers intentionally incorporate sacredness motifs into their narratives, whether these discourses resonate with users, and whether secular sacredness arises solely within the user's mind independent of the designer's influence.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributors

Serkan Güneş received his B.ID and MSc. in Industrial design from Middle East Technical University (1999–2001). Earned his Ph.D. degree in Planning from METU (2007). He currently works as a Professor at Gazi University, and his interests include design management, economics, and philosophy.

Çisem Ercömert received his B.ID and MSc. in Industrial design from Gazi University (2018). She continues his doctoral education at Gazi University. Currently works as a Research Assistant at Gazi University. Her main research interests include design education, user research, and user representation.

References

Amati, F., and F. Pestana. 2015. "Consumption Rituals: A Strategic Marketing Framework." *Economic Studies* 2: 229–246.

Bachelard, G. 2014. *The Poetics of Space*. London: Penguin.

Bartholomew, Darrell E., and Marlys J. Mason. 2020. "Facebook Rituals: Identifying Rituals of Social Networking Sites Using Structural Ritualization Theory." *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 19 (2): 142–150. https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1799

Belk, Russell W., and Gülnur Tumbat. 2005. "The Cult of Macintosh." *Consumption Markets & Culture* 8 (3): 205–217. https://doi.org/10.1080/10253860500160403

Belk, Russell W., Melanie Wallendorf, and John F. Sherry. Jr. 1989. "The Sacred and the Profane in Consumer Behavior: Theodicy on the Odyssey." *Journal of Consumer Research* 16 (1): 1–38. https://doi.org/10.1086/209191

Brown, Stephen, Robert V. Kozinets, and John F. Sherry. Jr. 2003. "Teaching Old Brands New Tricks: Retro Branding and the Revival of Brand Meaning." *Journal of Marketing* 67 (3): 19–33. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.67.3.19.18657

Chalmers, Tandy D., and Damien Arthur. 2008. "Hard-Core Members' of Consumption-Oriented Subcultures Enactment of Identity: The Sacred Consumption of Two Subcultures." *Advances in Consumer Research* 35: 570–575.

Chimenz, Luisa. 2017. "Sacred Design. Immaterial Values, Material Culture." *The Design Journal* 20 (Suppl. 1): S3436–S3447. https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2017.1352847

Durgee, Jeffrey F. 1999. "Deep, Soulful Satisfaction." *The Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior* 12: 53–63.

Durgee, Jeffrey F. 1999. "Product Soul." *European Advances in Consumer Research* 4: 287–292.

Durkheim, Emile. 1965. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Dyen, Margot, Lucie Sirieix, Sandrine Costa, Laurence Depezay, and Eloïse Castagna. 2018. "Exploring the Dynamics of Food Routines: A Practice-Based Study to Understand Households' Daily Life." *European Journal of Marketing* 52 (12): 2544–2556. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-10-2017-0775

Dyer, Bryce. 2020. "An Investigation into the Product Attachment Between Athletes and Their Sports Equipment." *The Design Journal* 24 (2): 189–206. https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2020.1859167

Eliade, Mircea. 1963. *Myth and Reality*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Evans, Matthew T. 2003. "The Sacred: Differentiating, Clarifying and Extending Concepts." *Review of Religious Research* 45 (1): 32–47. https://doi.org/10.2307/3512498

Fiese, Barbara H., Kimberly P. Foley, and Mary Spagnola. 2006. "Routine and Ritual Elements in Family Mealtimes: Contexts for Child Well-Being and Family Identity." *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 2006 (111): 67–89. https://doi.org/10.1002/cd.156

Gentina, Elodie, Kay M. Palan, and Marie-Hélène Fosse-Gomez. 2012. "The Practice of Using Makeup: A Consumption Ritual of Adolescent Girls." *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 11 (2): 115–123. https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.387

Govers, Pascalle C. M., and Ruth Mugge. 2004. "I Love My Jeep, Because İts Tough Like Me: The Effect of Product-Personality Congruence on Product Attachment." Paper presented at the Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Design and Emotion, 1–14. Ankara, Turkiye.

Guelmami, Ziyed, and Denis Darpy. 2016. "Self-Transformation Expectations and Magic Relationships to Products: Conceptualizing and Measuring Product Fetishism." Paper

presented at the Proceedings of the 32e Congrès International De L'Association Française Du Marketing. Lyon, France.
Güneş, Serkan. 2012. "Wisdom of Firms Versus Wisdom of Crowds." *International Journal of Business, Humanities & Technology* 2 (3): 55–60.
Güneş, Serkan. 2022. "Religious Products, Product Design, Meanings, and Economy of Religion." *Journal of Engineering* 10 (2): 48–55.
Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. 2010. *Philosophie De L'esprit V2 (1869)*. Montana: Kessinger Publishing.
Karaca Şalgamcıoğlu, Berrak, and Özlem Er. 2018. "Behind the Shower Curtain: Seven Poems on Aging and Body Cleaning." *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 18 (4): 272–282. https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708617727757
Kowalski, Michael Christopher, and JungKyoon Yoon. 2022. "I Love It, I'll Never Use It: Exploring Factors of Product Attachment and Their Effects on Sustainable Product Usage Behaviors." *International Journal of Design* 16 (3): 37–57. https://doi.org/10.57698/v16i3.03.
Kozinets, Robert. 1997. "I Want to Believe: A Netnography of the X-Files' Subculture of Consumption." *Advances In Consumer Research* 24: 470–475.
Kozinets, Robert. 2001. "Utopian Enterprise: Articulating the Meanings of Star Trek's Culture of Consumption." *Journal of Consumer Research* 28 (1): 67–88. https://doi.org/10.1086/321948
Leeuw, Gerardus van der. 1963. *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
Masset, Julie, and Alain Decrop. 2016. "God, I Have So Many Ashtrays!" Dependences and Dependencies in Consumer–Possession Relationships." *Journal of Business Research* 69 (1): 94–109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.07.024
Matthews, Ted. 2017. "Sacred Service: The Use of 'Sacred Theory' in Service Design." *Journal of Design, Business & Society* 3 (1): 67–97. https://doi.org/10.1386/dbs.3.1.67_1
Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 1968. *The Visible and the Invisible Followed by Working Notes*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
Mugge, Ruth, Hendrik N. J. Schifferstein, and Jan P. L. Schoormans. 2010. "Product Attachment and Satisfaction: Understanding Consumers' Post-Purchase Behavior." *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 27 (3): 271–282. https://doi.org/10.1108/07363761011038347
Mugge, Ruth, Jan P. L. Schoormans, and Hendrik N. J. Schifferstein. 2005. "Design Strategies to Postpone Consumers' Product Replacement: The Value of a Strong Person-Product Relationship." *The Design Journal* 8 (2): 38–48. https://doi.org/10.2752/146069205789331637
Mugge, Ruth, Jan P. L. Schoormans, and Hendrik N. J. Schifferstein. 2008. "Product Attachment: Design Strategies to Stimulate the Emotional Bonding to Products." In *Product Experience*, edited by Hendrik N. Schifferstein and Paul Hekkert, 425–440. Amsterdam: Elsevier Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-008045089-6.50020-4
Muñiz, Albert M., and Thomas C. O'guinn. 2001. "Brand Community." *Journal of Consumer Research* 27 (4): 412–432. https://doi.org/10.1086/319618
Muñiz Jr, Albert M., and Hope Jensen Schau. 2005. "Religiosity in the Abandoned Apple Newton Brand Community." *Journal of Consumer Research* 31 (4): 737–747. https://doi.org/10.1086/426607
Orth, Daniel, Clementine Thurgood, and Elise Van Den Hoven. 2020. "Embodying Meaningful Digital Media: A Strategy to Design for Product Attachment in the Digital

Age." Paper presented at the Proceedings of the Fourteenth International Conference on Tangible, Embedded, and Embodied Interaction, 81–94. Sydney: Australia.

Otto, Rudolf. 1936. *The Idea of the Holy,*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Paden, William E. 1999. "Reconceiving the Category of the Sacred." In *Comparative Studies in History of Religions*, edited by Erik Reenberg Sand, 93–108. Copenhagen: Museum of Tusculanum Press.

Page, Tom. 2014. "Product Attachment and Replacement: Implications for Sustainable Design." *International Journal of Sustainable Design* 2 (3): 265–282. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSDES.2014.065057

Park, Cheol. 1998. "Consumer Ritualization: Exploring the Relationships Between a Dressing - Up and Clothing Buying Behaviors." *ACR Asia-Pacific Advances* 3: 113–119.

Rapoport, Amos. 1982. *The Meaning of the Built Environment: A Non-Verbal Communication Approach*. Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press.

Rook, Dennis W. 1985. "The Ritual Dimension of Consumer Behavior." *Journal of Consumer Research* 12 (3): 251–264. https://doi.org/10.1086/208514

Scharfenberger, Philipp, Daniel Wentzel, Luk Warlop, and Verena Riegler. 2023. "The Proximal Self: Why Material Objects Are Particularly Relevant for Consumers' Self-Definition." *Psychology & Marketing* 40 (6): 1196–1210. https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21804

Schifferstein, Hendrik N. J., and Elly P. H. Zwartkruis-Pelgrim. 2008. "Consumer-Product Attachment: Measurement and Design Implications." *International Journal of Design* 2 (3): 1–13.

Schindler, Robert M., and Elizabeth A. Minton. 2022. "What Becomes Sacred to the Consumer: Implications for Marketers." *Journal of Business Research* 151: 355–365. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.06.022

Schouten, John W., and James H. McAlexander. 1985. "Subcultures of Consumption: An Ethnography of the New Bikers." *Journal of Consumer Research* 22 (1): 43–61. https://doi.org/10.1086/209434

Sharma, Amalesh, V. Kumar, and Sourav Bikash Borah. 2017. "Ritualization: A Strategic Tool to Position Brands in International Markets." *Journal of International Marketing* 25 (2): 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1509/jim.16.0104

Tynan, Caroline, and Sally McKechnie. 2005. "Sacralising the Profane: Creating Meaning with Christmas Consumption in the UK." *European Advances in Consumer Research* 7: 182–188.

Varadarajan, Soumitri. 2010. "How the Sacred Could Be a Framework for Sustainable Design Practice." *Design Philosophy Papers* 8 (1): 35–47. https://doi.org/10.2752/144871310X13968744282791

Vohs, Kathleen D., Yajin Wang, Francesca Gino, and Michael I. Norton. 2013. "Rituals Enhance Consumption." *Psychological Science* 24 (9): 1714–1721. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797613478949

Walker, Stuart. 2001. "Beyond Aesthetics, Identity, Religion and Design." *The Design Journal* 4 (2): 30–41. https://doi.org/10.2752/146069201790718621

Whang, Yun-Oh, Jeff Allen, Niquelle Sahoury, and Haitao Zhang. 2004. "Falling in Love with a Product: The Structure of a Romantic Consumer-Product Relationship." *Advances in Consumer Research* 31: 320–327.

Zimmerman, John. 2009. "Designing for the Self: Making Products That Help People Become the Person They Desire to Be." Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, 395–404. Boston: USA.