STRONG BRANDS, STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

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THE ROLE OF CULTURAL CAPITAL IN CREATING "GLOCAL" BRAND RELATIONSHIPS

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Introduction

It is well established in the marketing literature that consumers have a variety of relationships with brands (Fournier 1998). There is now an annual conference dedicated to exploring the nature of these relationships (Brands and Brand Relationships), and the current volume is the second major book to explore this topic in depth. One aspect of consumers' relationships with brands that remains relatively unexplored, however, is how brand relationships may evolve and change in a global context. That is, when a consumer experiences Carlsberg beer in the USA, Africa, Hong Kong, and Brazil, does the nature of the relationship stay the same across these contexts, especially seeing as how the brand positioning may be vastly different in each of these locales given competitive differences, the level of market development, and consumer culture differences? This is precisely the issue we wish to explore in this chapter.

We argue that brands are not global or local to a consumer because of their country of origin, but rather, because of the nature of the cultural myths that a brand chooses to invoke in a particular context. Thus, country of origin is much less straightforward in today's creolized, hybridized global marketplace and should be considered as contextualized product-place imagery. Consequently, brands have much more freedom and flexibility to position themselves in a way that is strategically savvy, and their positioning does not have to be consistent around the world. We demonstrate how cultural capital can be used in varying ways to create these myths and illustrate how one global brand – Carlsberg Beer – has varied its use of local and global cultural capital around the world. Essentially, our model recognizes that consumers have "glocal" relationships with brands. That is, the relationship can be global or local depending on the type of cultural capital evoked and consumers' interpretation of it. Furthermore, "glocal" indicates that global

relations always are locally instantiated and local relations must be understood in relation to the global. We offer recommendations for when to invoke global or local cultural capital in brand positioning to account for these glocal relationships.

Global and local culture in brand symbolism

Global branding can be said to involve two dimensions: market presence and brand image. In the discussion of what constitutes a global brand, the two dimensions are often intermingled so that a global brand is construed as one that 1) is present globally, i.e., sold in so many different markets that it is perceived as being present everywhere, and 2) its brand image as perceived by consumers is partly the perception of this globality: it is used as a global symbol (Holt *et al.* 2004; Steenkamp *et al.* 2003).

Leveraging the cultural mythologies of the global and the local for brand competition can be understood as forms of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984; Ger 1999). Cultural capital alongside economic and social capitals are particular resources that determine power within particular socio-cultural fields. The concept of cultural capital views cultural sets of skills and knowledge as assets that can be brought into play in different fields. While traditionally used to analyze consumption and taste patterns, Bourdieu in his later work applied his apparatus to marketplace phenomena such as real estate (2005), which he defined as a particular social field of economic transactions. Transferring the concept of cultural capital to branding allows us to analyze how brands must take into account which forms of cultural capital are deemed legitimate within particular market contexts. Just as global companies may attempt to obtain local cultural capital (through brand acquisition, for example), local brands can use global cultural capital for both home and export markets.

It is important to understand how to use global and local cultural capital strategically because the interpretation of brand meaning is highly contextual. A brand may be imbued with global or local meanings, or both. For example, Alden *et al.* (1999) point out that many global brands originating in the US may become dissociated with the US at a global level since they have become part of "the global consumption set," but, at a local level within the US, they may be perceived as quintessentially American and hence be considered as culturally local or national. While a brand may be interpreted as global, this globality is further subject to consumer interpretation. For example, the global brand McDonald's, while a powerful symbol of the West in China, can also be used to support local cultural values such as in-group harmony in the Chinese market (Eckhardt and Houston 2002). The brand's meaning as global can hence serve as a symbolic resource for local cultural issues.

In some cases, brands that have a global market presence can benefit from establishing brand symbolism that expresses the exotic or foreign (what Alden *et al.* 1999 term "foreign consumer culture positioning"). These types of brands leverage local cultural capital to a global market level. This type of branding strategy often

relies on a product-place image where the origin of the product testifies to specific values or qualities (e.g., watches from Switzerland). When foreign consumer culture positioning is used, the brand may nevertheless be perceived of as being part of the "global consumption set" by being acknowledged as a brand that has a global presence and consumer following. Riefler (2012) suggests that consumers categorize brands in terms of perceived brand origin and perceived globality. We go beyond this in suggesting that how consumers do this will differ in varying regions of the world. In sum, global brands can invoke global, local, or foreign cultural capital in their brand positioning (Kipnis *et al.* 2014), depending on where they are from and what the fit is between their country of origin and their position in the global marketplace in varying competitive spaces.

Cultural capital and global branding

Figure 3.1 offers a framework that organizes the diverse findings and the often disparate empirical evidence of the global-local cultural dynamic of global branding. Our model is a visualization of the complex dynamic between the types of cultural capital (global-local) and how these work at different levels of brand/market competition (local-global). In other words, the figure represents a visualization of the competitive fields of global brand competition. Each of the quadrants represents different competitive fields determined by market level and the type of cultural capital that can be transformed into brand assets.

Cultural Capital

		Global	Local
Market Level	Global	Global branding	Country of origin appeals Exotic aura
	Local	Global brands in local markets Local globals Global aura	Local branding Local aura Nostalgia

FIGURE 3.1 Deployment of local and global cultural capital

Global cultural capital/global market level

In the upper left quadrant, the field is constituted from competition using global cultural capital at the global market level. In the literature, this encompasses what has been referred to as global branding. Global branding refers to the kind of brand competition frequently referenced in international marketing literature: the traditional dualistic and antagonistic battles between dominant global iconic brands such as Pepsi-Cola and Coca-Cola, or Windows versus Linux (see Steenkamp *et al.* 2003). Brands utilize their global cultural capital on a worldwide field of competition for power. For example, see HSBC's globally uniform positioning in terms of global market presence in the banking domain, as exemplified by its current branding campaign, "In the future …".[1] Brands are not trying to localize in this field, but tend to seek a consistent image across cultural boundaries, and that image is global and not from a particular country (Holt *et al.* 2004).

Global cultural capital/local market level

Next, in the lower left quadrant of global cultural capital at the local market level, we see brands leveraging global cultural capital to capture local markets. Here the allusion to globalness is used in brand positioning strategies, typically by global or foreign brands, and seeks to capture local markets and fight off local competition – the strategic perspective outlined by Levitt (1983). Typically, we see global iconic brands enter local markets and transform competition and the cultural meaning of existing marketplace structures such as product categories. For example, Askegaard and Csaba (2000) demonstrate how Coca Cola entered the Danish market and forced local competitor Jolly Cola to alter the type of cultural capital it used to try to remain successful in its local market. In other words, the logics of competition for power in the field were altered.

Global cultural capital can also be used by local brands in their domestic marketplace. Local brands that are in a situation where the legitimate form of brand symbolism for a product is global can be forced to establish global cultural capital. For example, this strategy has been used by Chinese brands Haier and Lenovo; Haier focused on penetrating the US market to accumulate global cultural capital in order to compete in the Chinese market, and Lenovo purchased IBM's laptop division to do the same (Wang 2008).

In this quadrant, we also see a positioning strategy in which brands seek to cloak themselves in a global aura through Anglo-sounding names (cf. Eckhardt 2005). That is, some brands have not acquired global cultural capital per se (for example, through acknowledgement of global market presence), but use brand symbolism to create a global aura that allows them to compete in their local marketplace. One study showed how local coffee shop owners took pride in the authenticity of their mimicking of the standards set out by the global chain Starbucks and, hence, sought to leverage global cultural capital against local competitors (Kjeldgaard and Östberg 2007). This mimicry can also be in the form of exoticism such as when the Asian

brand Tiger Beer explicitly draws upon its Asian cultural heritage in its global branding efforts (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008) in Western markets, while not emphasizing traditional stereotypes of Asian culture in the Asian region. There, the brand emphasizes the urban global lifestyles of Asian metropolises; hence leveraging global cultural capital at 'local' market levels.

Local cultural capital/global market level

In this quadrant, local cultural capital is a source of competitive advantage leveraged in global competitive fields. This encompasses much of the strategy discussed in literature pertaining to country-of-origin (Magnusson *et al.* 2011). These country-of-origin appeals can take the form of umbrella brands such as 'Danish Design' or IKEA's blatant references to their Swedish heritage to leverage local cultural capital that is recognized as valuable in global markets. Other examples are ham from Parma and wines from France or many of its wine-producing regions (e.g., the umbrella brand of Grand Vin de Bourdeaux). The literature stream that theorizes how and why country-of-origin appeals are successful is applicable to understanding the cultural dynamics in this quadrant (for an overview, see Roth and Diamantopolous 2009). While being global in terms of market scope, these brands rely on specific country-of-origin imagery and, hence, draw on local cultural capital. This category thus more systematically differentiates global brands into those that rely on global cultural capital from those that rely on local cultural capital, a distinction missing in much of the literature on global branding.

Similar to the global aura, another strategy in this field is to construct symbolism that connotes "foreignness." That is, brands that do not necessarily possess local cultural capital seek to be perceived as if they do. For example, the US ice cream brand Haagen-Dazs seeks to establish a "Euro/Swiss" brand image through its non-US sounding brand name for the global market. That way they can capitalize on country-of-origin beliefs surrounding Swiss ice cream without actually accruing the local capital they would gain if they were really from Switzerland. This is similar to Steenkamp's (2014) idea of cultural arbitrage, where a company such as Apple, for example, will emphasize "Designed in California," to try and overcome the negative country of origin implications of being made in China.

One strategy for making sure that local cultural capital may not be copied is to use systems of authentication (Ger 1999), which are exemplified by the French AOC system for wine that ensures that only wines produced in specific regions with particular technologies can carry that label. The flows of the globalizing ethnoscapes may also form the ground for a type of global branding based on appealing to ethnic cultural identity dispersed transnationally. Such "diaspora branding" is seen, for example, in the international marketing of the Turkish cola brand Cola Turka which is distributed in Western European markets with a large Turkish migrant population (Özkan and Foster 2005).

Local cultural capital/local market level

In the field constituted by local cultural capital at the local market level, brands leverage their local cultural capital to compete in the local marketplace, as described in Ger (1999). Often discussed in the literature as the opposite of global branding, local branding implies a branding strategy in each marketplace that is localized and inconsistent across markets. Particularly if the brand is local rather than global, there will often be an affinity with or allusion to nationalism, seeking to establish a brand that emphasizes its natural belonging to a given market on the basis of historical legitimacy. Hence, local branding uses local cultural capital to be able to make these claims to legitimacy: often the amount of years the firm has operated in the marketplace, the use of local workers to make the products, and the use of local ingredients. Essentially, utilizing local cultural capital implies that the brand knows the marketplace more intimately than a global brand, and can appeal to the unique identity of local consumers in a way that global brands cannot (Ger 1999).

Similar to the global aura and exotic aura already discussed, local aura strategy is often used by foreign brands that wish to compete in a market field where local cultural capital is deemed legitimate. Creating a local aura allows a global brand to appropriate local cultural capital and hence to appear local, which involves adaptation to local cultural contexts and systems of meaning. This is often done through acquisition strategies, since local brands possess innate local cultural capital, and also because there might be an inherent problem of legitimacy among consumers if the brand which has established well-known global cultural capital (e.g., a global presence) at the same time attempts to appear local.

For example, Nestlé's ownership of Perrier and San Pellegrino, the quintessentially French and Italian brands of bottled water, is well concealed (Douglas *et al.* 2001). Nestlé as a conspicuous carrier of global cultural capital would not be able to claim itself a legitimate local brand in the French and Italian bottled water markets, nor at the global level. These brands are carriers of a local cultural capital which can be leveraged locally as well as globally. The concealed nature of the ownership may help in maintaining local cultural capital, but not necessarily. One might argue that this is an example of a brand with global cultural capital that seeks to compete in fields where local cultural capital has higher value at both local and global levels.

Finally, some brands, in establishing themselves as legitimate bearers of local cultural capital, will rely on local pride. This can be done either by conjuring up imagery of local sociocultural history, such as a venerated Soviet-era cheese brand in contemporary Russia (Kravets and Örge 2010), or by demonstrating the brand's historical presence in the particular market setting and playing on national sentiments, such as emphasizing how much local employment is provided by the brand (Strizhakova *et al.* 2008).

In sum, our framework provides managers with a template for analyzing the competitive situation for brands in multiple market contexts. For example, Amis

and Silk (2010) provide a compelling in-depth analysis of the multiple meanings pertaining to the beer brand Guinness across different cultural contexts as one way of illustrating how brand management needs to think beyond the classic dualisms of global-local, cultural-non-cultural, and national-international in order to capture the multi-layered polysemy of global brands. The Guinness brand, they underline, "has a currency that varies upon the ontological constitution of particular consumer groups" (Amis and Silk 2010: 175). Guinness is simultaneously just another beer brand in a global selection of beers, yet, in Africa, it is deeply linked to a certain pan-Africanness through its linkage with the movies featuring Michael Power, the "black James Bond", and is also a nostalgic reference to their Ireland home for the Irish diaspora. We might want to add a fourth signification pertaining to the role of Guinness as a symbol of quintessential Irishness, consumed by non-Irish in countless hyper-real Irish pubs across the global marketplace. Consequently, the framework suggested here seems to be able to capture and systematize quite neatly the various symbolic productions of Guinness that for Amis and Silk (2010) constitute the complexity of the brand's meanings. A simple mapping of the cultural capital at stake, as done by our framework, may make the seemingly endless complexities of a cultural approach to branding much easier to relate to and bring about active usage by brand managers.

Case study: Carlsberg

In the following, we use our model in an analysis of the competitive brand positioning situation for another global beer brand, Carlsberg. This analysis is developed from secondary resources such as popular and trade media, as well as informal interviews and insights from company marketing communications, in line with case study recommendations from Kates (2007). Carlsberg is a brand with a strong position in its home market of Denmark where it is an iconic national brand (Holt 2004), and it possesses a brand image of globalness (Holt et al. 2004) as well as a global market presence, hence offering an exemplary case to illustrate the model. Carlsberg is the world's fourth largest brewery corporation with net revenues exceeding 66 billion DKK in 2013, and a portfolio of over 500 brands.

This case illustrates how the competitive situation is more complex than much of the global brand literature would suggest, in that global brands face new competitive fronts due to cultural movements that arise from globalization. Importantly, our analysis suggests that one consistent response to these varying competitive fronts is not necessarily the most desirable response, and thus that brand positioning should not always be consistent globally.

Global cultural capital/global market level

In much of its brand positioning, Carlsberg draws on global cultural capital: most notably exemplified by its tagline, "That calls for a Carlsberg." Introduced in 2011, this tagline positions the beer as a reward for the drinker's hard work. The

campaign focuses on humankind's greatest achievements (landing on the moon, climbing Mt Everest), and positions Carlsberg as the appropriate reward for such endeavors (Silverstein 2011), rather than focusing on Carlsberg's Danish origins. Carlsberg uses this global brand positioning to compete with other major beer brands that constitute the global set; that is, other brands that also rely on global cultural capital, such as Heineken and Budweiser (Gammelgaard and Dörrenbächer 2013). The competition between Carlsberg and Heineken is an ongoing drama in the international beer market. Heineken's global campaign "Open your world," also introduced in 2011, focuses on Heineken being a strong and reliable brand in new situations, with the brand being defined as worldly, open minded, and confident, using the tagline, "Born in Amsterdam, raised by the world" (O'Neill 2013). Carlsberg is in competition with Heineken regarding which brand can be more global, and calls on its global cultural capital to continue competing in an increasingly globalized competitive field (Swinnen 2011). The global presence of Carlsberg historically enables the company to position itself as part of the global consumption set.

Global cultural capital/local market level

In contrast to the above, Carlsberg competes in its national market of origin, Denmark, as a "global national" player. Here, Carlsberg faces competition from national breweries that draws upon global cultural capital, in particular around Odense where its market share is considerably lower than the national level.[2] Since this is seemingly a case of out-localing the globals (Ger 1999), the response from Carlsberg has been to mobilize the most global of capitals, namely money, by offering the local leading football team a lucrative sponsorship contract with which the large local brewery cannot compete, a thinly veiled attempt to simply buy some local sympathy. The national dominance of the Carlsberg Corporation in the Danish beer market has furthermore provoked resistance from a number of micro-breweries. According to the manager of micro-brewery Refsvindinge, the motivation for launching the successful craft beer brand Ale no. 16 was to "provide something better than Carlsberg." The brewery explicitly draws on global micro-brew culture in branding its product an "ale" (personal interview). So, while global cultural capital was, in one sense, a competitive advantage for Carlsberg, other forms of global cultural capital were mobilized by local competitors.

Local cultural capital/global market level

Here, Carlsberg faces competition at the global level from brand name competitors that leverage local cultural capital on a global scale. This can be in the form of exoticism such as that used by the Asian brand Tiger Beer, which explicitly draws on its Asian cultural heritage in its global branding efforts in the West (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008), or those that reference specific artisanal traditions, such as many of the Belgian Trappist beers that market their products on the basis of centuries of

accumulated artisanal knowledge in monasteries (Beverland *et al.* 2008). The response from Carlsberg has been to launch two lines of craft beers under the sub-brands "Jacobsen" (the name of its nineteenth-century founder) and "Semper Ardens," realizing that the Carlsberg name is too associated with global competition within the standard pilsner beer market. This enabled Carlsberg to become a legitimate player in the craft beer market.

Local cultural capital/local market level

Here, the global and national-dominant brand image of Carlsberg acts as fuel for references to specific product-place imagery and local cultural traditions aimed at local markets. One such example is the local brand "Springtime in Funen" (*Fynsk Forår*) that refers to a specific locality in Denmark (as well as a piece of classical music) from a brewery that does not distribute outside of Denmark. Yet the micro-brew industry, whether drawing on local or global cultural capital, has, in less than five years, attained a significant position in the Danish beer market. The number of micro-breweries has expanded from nine breweries in 2000, to 24 in 2003, and to more than 120 in 2012.[3] We see this as a result of the demand for cultural differences expressed through brands, rather than the dominant idea in global branding literature that consumers always prefer the global brand to the local (e.g. Holt *et al.* 2004; Steenkamp *et al.* 2003). In much of its branding strategy towards the home market, Carlsberg leverages its historically accumulated local cultural capital. For example the 'That calls for a Carlsberg' slogan is hardly ever used in the home market, where Carlsberg instead runs campaigns featuring prominent Danish actors in everyday situations to illustrate how much the brand is part of everyday life. A famous campaign that played explicitly on being *the* national beer was a series of commercials in the 1990s ironically playing with well-known Scandinavian self-perceptions of collectivity and solidarity using the slogan 'Our beer'.[4] This strategy enabled Carlsberg to sustain its role as a national iconic brand (Holt 2004).

Interestingly, Carlsberg has been able to successfully establish brand symbolism from both local and global cultural capital, defying much normative brand strategy literature recommending brand image consistency across markets. Furthermore, in the standardization/adaptation debate, the question is often whether adaptation should be made to the cultural contexts of exports. Carlsberg has inversely executed this by adapting to the home market cultural context and using a relatively standardized strategy globally. Carlsberg still has a way to go in terms of managing how its cultural capital is utilized, though. For example, the French brand Kronenbourg 1664, acquired jointly by Carlsberg and Heineken in 2008, recently had its ads removed from television in the UK by the government because it was thought that the ads implied the beer was French, when it is actually brewed in Manchester, England (Poulter 2014).

Discussion

Having a global standardized brand image is not necessarily desirable or possible. This has implications for the assessment and discussion of the power of global brands, and the nature of the relationship between consumers and brands on a global scale. On the consumer side, brands are part of the spread of globally-shared values that consumers identify with and also part of the construction of imagined social spaces through brand practices (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008; Steenkamp and de Jong 2010). On the producer side, branding has become a common managerial approach to think about and manage cultural meanings – whether local or global – in the construction of brand image and brand positions (Askegaard 2006). Consequently, branding can be said to be a phenomenon that is both exemplary of globalization, as well as a driver for it. The literature on global and local appeals, to some extent, deals with the local and global as essential sets of symbolism which, in some cases, emerge in creolized form (e.g., Zhou and Belk 2004; Hung *et al.* 2007). However, we argue that the symbolism of the global and the local emerge as the result of brand positioning in varying competitive fields. Our argument hence situates and provides an explanatory framework for previous findings on the variety of consumer preferences for global or local appeals (e.g., Steenkamp and de Jong 2010).

From a managerial perspective, for a brand such as Carlsberg, the framework we develop helps systematize and explicate the types of brand competition that they are facing and offers a template for considering which types of cultural capital should be utilized in these competitive situations. For example, in the competitive fields that rely on local cultural capital, a brand development or brand acquisition strategy might prove most successful, since local culture is the legitimate cultural logic for competition. Future research can investigate how a brand can combine global and local cultural capital, if they are operating in a market where more than one positioning simultaneously exists.

Importantly, our framework and analysis suggests that a consistent brand image is not always desirable for global brands, given the varying discourses in particular markets around the world. The global brand literature emphasizes consistency as a key to success (e.g., Johansson 2009); we contend that global brands should emphasize local, global or creolized cultural capital dependent upon the competitive situation in varying local or regional markets. Even if demand for global brands is increasing around the world, à la Levitt (1983), how those brands compete will not necessarily be homogenized or consistent. This analysis is in line with Strizhakova, Coulter and Price's (2012) findings that show consumers' cultural identities are not static, but evolving, and that these transformations are more noticeable in markets undergoing larger shifts. Thus, brands need to shift in line with global consumers' shifts. This analysis is also in line with recent findings by Brown, McDonough and Shultz (2013), who suggest that ambiguous brands (which do not have clarity of meaning, but rather, identities that are imprecise) have increased longevity in terms of consumer appeal, as consumers can attach varying salient meanings to the brand over time.

Brands draw on mythologies of the global, the foreign, the national, and the local in constituting brand symbolism, and we help systematize when and why particular mythologies will be appropriate for brand competition, in order to assist managers in navigating the complex world of global cultural branding. Consumers' relationships with brands will change based on varying contexts in varying regions of the world, and brands need to be able to draw from a pool of global and local cultural capital to respond. In sum, our framework helps to decouple brand positioning from country of origin, and provides managers with a map of how to harness global and local cultural capital as strategic resources.

Notes

1   www.hsbc.com/about-hsbc/advertising/in-the-future.
2   www.fyens.dk/article/207603:Business-Fyn—Carlsberg-stormer-Fyn-for-at-faa-markedsandele.
3   www.business.dk/foedevarer/frygt-for-konkursboelge-blandt-mikrobryggerier.
4   www.business.dk/ledelse/fra-vores-oel-til-verdens-oel.

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