THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHETYPAL FEATURES ON MILLENNIALS IN THE CONTEXT OF BRAND DIFFERENTIATON – A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Paul-Alexandru FĂRCAŞ, Carmen Maria MUREŞAN

Abstract: The archetypes are human models who cross time and cultures. This qualitative research approaches the archetype use topic within branding in Romania, by means of a mixed approach, trying to provide a perspective upon the capacity to differentiate the millennials, when it comes to choosing certain brands. By means of the 3 qualitative methods used, we will try to identify the perspective of a branding specialist, but also the way in which such archetypes reflect the archetypal features upon the millennials in the context of certain brand differentiation. The results will show that the millennials do not remember the brand's visual elements, but they are able to identify the archetypes used by the brands. The strategy of using certain archetypes influences the brad preference and it wraps up everything in such a manner as to fit the way in which they relate to similar brands. The research shows the potential brought by the archetypes in the brand differentiation process, supporting the understanding of the popularity fluctuations between the Romanian competing brands.

Key words: Brand, brand management, archetype, differentiation, millennials.

1. INTRODUCTION

When we talk about creating a brand, we associate this process with notions such as creativity, innovation. We tend to believe that a successful brand is one that is born from something completely new. Paradoxically, if we analyze the brands we know, we reach the conclusion that these brands are transmitting similar features, which, although are repeating, are not disliked by the consumer, on the contrary, they attract him/her even more. Gardner and Levy have captured the transcendence beyond the strict need of differentiation towards other attributes, accentuating the meaning of the name and what the brand represents for the consumers. According to them, the name of a brand is more than a label meant to differentiate the producers. It is a complex symbol and represents a variety of ideas and attributes. It communicates many things to the consumer, not only by means of how it sounds, but most of all by means of the combinations it has built and it has won over the years [1]. These models have initially been conceptualized in psychology by Carl Gustav Jung, under the name of archetypes. Jung defines the archetypes as mental models based on a relationship between primordial mythical images and ancient beliefs, which are common to the ancestors of all humans and represent a true basis of the individual psychic [2]. Being initially used for explaining certain psychological phenomena, currently, the archetypes are used in several humanities: literature, cinema, advertising. Although these structures have certain effects upon the consumers, being rooted in the human psychic, the impact is a subtle one, maybe even an unconscious one. The children, for instance, like to watch movies/cartoons and they identify themselves with their hero. The sensitive, romantic persons need to be surrounded by affection, by the promise of a safety feeling. And advertising provides the solution to a need,

by means of a branding that adapts based on the target-group, proposing it a certain product or service, depending on psycho-graphical features specific to that group. The consumer creates an image based on all the signals sent by the brand, more specifically the name of the brand, the visual signs, the products, the commercials, the partnerships and the other elements of the brand [3]. Therefore, for building a strong brand identity, it is necessary for the brand to understand, first of all, how the brand's consumer thinks, more precisely, which are the personality features he/she identifies with.

The vision, which shapes the purpose of the brand and its philosophy, involving the mission, expresses what the brand should do in order to achieve its goals. Thus, it is necessary that a brand's employees know and identify with this vision, so that the brand develops efficiently. The vision may be also a motivating factor for them, providing them a clear perspective upon the role they play in building the brand. And the values of the brand are called, by certain consultants, „the glue that fixes the mission and the vision in your mind"[4].

The brand's visual elements play an essential role in building the brand and in maintaining it on the market. The visual interpretation of the brand provides the promise that the brand may develop memorable signals and easily recognizable, which will help the clients create a connection between the brand and its position on the market. The logos are visual representations that serve two functions: the brand's identification and differentiation. In time, these are equated with the brand itself [5].

The use of archetypes in the context of the brand's identity and personality brings benefits due to the emotional impact they produce. Mark and Pearson underline the importance of the archetypes, asserting that the individuals identify with the emotions sent by a brand through archetypes in the same way they identify with the characters of the novels. According to two authors, the consumers exposed to archetypes relive critical moments of their life or anticipate them [6]. The same authors identify four basic needs, depending on which, people may be categorized: the

belonging, the independence, the stability and the change. The belonging implies the adaptation desire, the desire of being part of a group, as opposed to the idependence, which refers to doing something on your own, even if it goes against the principles of people around you. The stability manifests itself through routine, while the change manifests through ambition and achievements. Based on these factors, 12 archetypal models are identified: Caregiver, Ruler, Creator, Innocent, Explorer, Sage, Magician, Outlaw, Hero, Jester, Regular Guy, Lover. Each of the 12 archetypes may be positioned in relation to the 4 dimensions, providing a clarity upon the needs of each archetype [7]. Tsai underlines the cultural aspect, more specifically, the fact that the archetypal models and images exist in all cultures and during the entire history, the conclusion being the fact that people don't have an unconscious mind, separated and individualized in the absolute sense, but there is an unconscious connection between the individuals. They share a single unconscious group [8]. Stevens points out their stability in time and their cultural coding through symbols or images [9]. Therefore, these archetypal models, although they may be represented differently depending on the culture, have the same content and produce the same emotions manifestation emotions, regardless of the culture. The patterns are spread in all the civilizations and recognized more or less consciously by all people. This aspect leads to the consumers being attracted by the products these aspects are associated with. They are characters of certain stories with which we identify ourselves and which, by means of their historical and personal meaning, generate emotional reactions [10].

Although the consumers are exposed to archetypes in the promotion campaigns, this notion is not familiar for all individuals. Therefore, this research starts from the need to identify the way in which the consumers perceive the archetypal features included in the campaigns for the Romanian brands promotion, with which they interact in their day-to-day life. The archetype topics within branding shed light on the way in which a brand manages to stand

out in its category due to the brand's personality, which makes it possible for certain emotional content messages to be transmitted. This work aims at analyzing the cases in which it is not the product itself the one determining the customer's choice, but the branding. Likewise, the research aims at illustrating the way in which the individuals perceive the personality of the brand from the archetype perspective, more precisely, if they identify the archetypes or not and the way in which they relate to those archetypes.

Being exposed daily to a great number of brands, the consumers remember less information. The logos usually remain for a longer time in the consumer's mind, as compared to the words. Likewise, they can communicate the organization's characteristics and identity and can be a complementary elements to the brand's name.

2. QUALITATIV RESEARCH REGARDING THE DIFFERENTIATION ELEMENTS OF SIMILAR BRANDS IN THE CONSUMER CHOICE

2.1 The preliminary investigation

The research starts from the following work hypotheses:

- the millennials in Cluj-Napoca have the capacity to identify the archetypes of the brands.
- the millennials in Cluj-Napoca remember very few of the brands' visual elements, which should differentiate them from their competitors.
- the use of a certain archetype influences the preference of the millennial consumers in Cluj-Napoca towards a certain brand.
- the millennials in Cluj-Napoca relate differently with the archetypes of the brands to the same category.

Therefore, a qualitative research has been conducted, with the purpose of identifying the millennial perception upon the brand archetypes.

2.2 Drafting the research design for the investment objective

In order to validate the hypotheses, three research methods have been used. First, the interview method has been used, with a specialist in a brand's capital management, for identifying the perspective beyond certain brands creation. Second, by means of the content analysis method, an analysis design has been applied, with the purpose of identifying the archetypes of certain Romanian brands. Third, a focus-group has been created, in order to discover the way in which the millennials relate to these brands and to the archetypes adopted by the brands concerned.

2.3 The results of the qualitative research

The most relevant results obtained following the research conducted will be presented below.

Interview Results

The interview has been conducted by e-mail, based on a set of questions, which have analyzed the advantages brought by the use of the archetypes and the way in which this process is influenced by time or context.

According to the respondent, the archetypes play an important role in „creating a consistent and purposeful expression of the brand". They build a „soul" of the brand, humanizing it, and an emotional relationship with the consumers. By means of the archetypes, the brands manage to resonate with the consumers at emotional level. Such resonance determines the consumers to choose a certain brand and not another.

The interview underlines the fact that the archetypes are not stereotypes and must not be mistaken with them. This is precisely why, the archetypal model helps within the process of differentiating the brands of the same product category. There are certain archetypes that dominate product categories (Lover in the chocolate industry or Regular Guy in the beer industry), and by means of the differentiation, the brand is able to stand out in the category it belongs to. For instance, the M&M's brand identifies with the Jester archetype in a category dominated by the Lover, or Lurpak,

which adopts the Creator archetype in a category dominated by the Caregiver.

Within the brand strategy, choosing the archetype is one of the steps. This step is influenced by the entire internal and external audit of the brand. „It is essential for us to find the universal and fundamental need our brand answers to". Besides analyzing the market, understanding the consumer motivation and the consumers' psycho-geographic profile, an important aspect is that of the brand's mission. We must look for relevant answers to questions such as „Why do we exist we on the market?", „What exactly makes us unique?" or „Which is our motivation or goal?". Once all these aspects have been clarified, an archetype is looked for, which should match the brandˇ, in the best possible way, and by means of which, the deepest connection possible with the target-group is created.

The cultural aspect plays an important role in the archetype manifestation, according to the respondent's assertions. The specialist claims that „the archetypes are psychological structures reflected in symbols, images and topics common to all the cultures and to all times. Although the characters are universal, each one of us expresses them in a different way, giving them different styles, features and manners. The expression of the archetype will be influenced by the culture, stability and time of a person within history, but it will also be a manifestation of his/her individuality". The social-cultural differences can determine different interpretations of the same archetype, while the symbols it sends can influence the purchasing decision. The archetypal expression is understood at individual level. An example could be the use of the Ruler archetype by the Mercedes brand.

Asked how the passing of the time affects the brands and if it is recommended that the brands change the archetypes, the specialist has said that the brand „must remain relevant to the audience it desires, so that it not only stays on the market, but it also grows and sometimes this thing involves changing the brand archetype". In time, „the brands grow up, just like people". The growing up needs also a change of the archetype, in order to make sense to the target-group. Other reasons that can

determine the change are modifications at the level of the market dynamics, of the consumer needs or the consumer behavior. The specialist has underlined the fact that archetypes help brand differentiation, especially by using a different archetype than the one used by your competitor. Likewise, the social and cultural context influences the way in which an archetype is sent or perceived. The respondent said that „although the characters are universal, each one of us expresses them differently, giving them styles, features and manners". Consequently, the same archetype can generate different emotions for the consumers, the process being influenced also by the individual experience. This fact supports the fourth hypothesis, according to which, the consumers related differently to the brands' archetypes.

Content Analysis Results
Following the content analysis, we found that the brands feature characteristics of more archetypes, to different levels. Nevertheless, in case of each brand, the dominance of certain archetypes can be seen. Analyzing these archetypes from the perspective of the scheme created by the researchers Mark and Pearson, it is visible the fact that the archetypes that have gathered most of the points in case of each brand are centralized towards one of the Stability-Mastery, -Independence categories.
In the case of the water brands, the results show opposite approach directions. The Borsec brand, within which, the Sage, Ruler and Magician archetypes are noticed, shows, according to the scheme above, a tendency towards stability and independence. On the other hand, the Dorna brand, the representative archetypes of which are Hero, Caregiver and Regular Guy, shows a tendency towards Belonging and Mastery.
The dimensions and the archetypes approached are not the same when it comes to the milk product brands either. The Albalact brand, which identifies with the Jester and the Hero archetypes, fits into both the Belonging category and into the Mastery one. While the Napolact brand, represented by the Sage, Creator and Magician archetypes, illustrates independence.

Consequently, the brands do not approach a single archetype, but more neighboring archetypes, by means of which they send their values. They differ from one another by means of the archetype combinations they use in their communication with the potential clients.

Focus-Group results

Once the participants have watched commercials and remembered their previous experience with the brands, they have identified the related brands. In the case of each brand, at least an archetype has been identified, which has obtained an increased score. Therefore, the Borsec brand has been associated with Sage or Ruler, while the Dorna brand, with Hero or Caregiver. The Napolact brand left the participants with the feeling that Sage or Creator are its archetypes. The impressions related to the Albalact brand have had different directions, the brand being associated not only with the Jester archetype, within the content analysis, but also with the Regular Guy, Innocent or Sage archetypes. There have been also other archetypes that have been associated with the brands and this fact supports the fourth hypothesis, according to which, the millennials in Cluj-Napoca relate differently to the brand archetype. The Albalact brand, for instance, has been associated with Regular Guy, Innocent, Sage, Jester, Magician or Explorer. This could be generated by emotional baggage sent by the purpose, by the playful elements.

The answers of the participants to the focus-group have confirmed the fact that their way of relating with the brand archetypes differ. The combinations made by the participants with the Borsec brand have been different, such as leader, power or joy of living. In the case of the Dorna brand, the use of the Caregiver and Hero archetypes within the campaign carried out with the Salvați Copiii Association (Save the Children) has been sympathetically seen by some of the participants, while others believed it was a method for emotional manipulation.

2.4 The conclusions of the research

The following conclusions may be drawn concerning the qualitative research:

- The interview – the archetypes build a „soul" of the brand and an emotional relationship with the clients. Likewise, by means of the brand's humanizations, it differs from its competitors. The differentiation in the category by approaching a different archetype helps the brand to stand out.

- The content analysis – the brands do not approach a single archetype, but features of more neighboring archetypes, by means of which, they send their values. In the case of each brand, a few dominant archetypes have been noticed in the video campaigns analyzed.

- The focus-groups – the millennials have identified different features in commercials and have made different combinations.

Following the research, two apparently opposite directions have also been noticed. The participants' brand choices have been based, mainly, on previous experience. They have either heard about the brands, or prefer the quality of the brand's products, or they are used to the brand. Nevertheless, the fact that the individuals are willing to choose another product brand and not the one they are used to when they sympathize with the archetype used by the brand. Thus, analyzing the two directions, the conclusion is that by means of an efficient communication with the clients and of the use of an archetype that could contribute significantly to the differentiation, a brand can attract the clients of another brand.

The results obtained within this research show the potential brought by the use of the archetypes within the Romanian branding. Likewise, the research sheds light on the importance of the archetypes within the differentiation process regarding the same category brands. Consequently, this research is a starting point for understanding the success of certain Romanian brands at the expense of other brands.

3. REFERENCES

[1] Gardner Burleigh, Levy Sidney J., *The Product and the Brand*, Harvard Business Review, 33, March–April, 1955, p. 35

[2]. Carl G. Jung *The archetypes and the collective unconscious* (R. Hull, Trans.) (2nd ed.), Princeton University Press, 1968, p.67.

[3] Whan Park C. et al., *Evaluation of brand extension: The role of product feature similarity and brand concept consistency*, Journal of Consumer Research, Vol. 18, September 1991, p. 135.

[4] Chernatony Leslie, Riley Francesca D. O., *Modelling the components of the brand, European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 32 No. 11/12, 1998, MCB University Press, 0309-0566, p. 1038, în original "the glue to stick the vision and mission in your mind"

[5] Farhana Mosarrat, *Brand Elements Lead to Brand Equity: Differentiate or Die*, Information Management and Business Review, Vol. 4, No. 4, Apr 2012, p. 226

[6] Mark Margaret & Pearson Carol S., *The Hero and The Outlaw. Building Extraordinary Brands Through the Power of Archetypes*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 2001, p.14

[7] [Ibidem]

[8] Tsai Shu-pei, *Investigating archetype-icon transformation in brand marketing.* Marketing Intelligence & Planning, Vol. 24 No. 6, 2006, p. 649.

[9] Haddad L., Hamza K., Xara D. *Archetypes and brand image an international comparision,* Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences, 9(34) Special 2015, p.23.

[10] Faber Michel & Mayer John D., *Resonance to archetypes in media: There's some accounting for taste*, Journal of Research in Personality 43 (2009) 307–322, p.310.

Importanţa caracteristicilor arhetipale asupra milenarelor în contextul diferenţierii mărcilor - O abordare calitativă

Rezumat: Arhetipurile sunt modele umane care traversează timp şi culturi. Această cercetare calitativă abordează tematica utilizării arhetipului în branding în România, printr-o abordare mixtă, încercând să ofere o perspectivă asupra capacităţii de diferenţiere a mileniului, atunci când este vorba de alegerea anumitor mărci. Prin intermediul celor 3 metode calitative folosite vom încerca să identificăm perspectiva unui specialist în branding, dar şi modul în care aceste arhetipuri reflectă trăsăturile arhetipale asupra milenarelor în contextul unei anumite diferenţieri a mărcilor. Rezultatele vor arăta că milenii nu îşi amintesc elementele vizuale ale mărcii, dar sunt capabili să identifice arhetipurile folosite de mărci. Strategia de a folosi anumite arhetipuri influenţează preferinţa brad şi împachetează totul într-un mod care să se potrivească felului în care se referă la branduri similare. Cercetarea demonstrează potenţialul adus de arhetipuri în procesul de diferenţiere a mărcii, susţinând înţelegerea fluctuaţiilor de popularitate dintre mărcile concurente româneşti.

Paul-Alexandru FĂRCAŞ, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, farcas@fspac.ro
Carmen Maria MUREŞAN, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, carmen.trif@gmail.com