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Author post-print (accepted) deposited in CURVE January 2012

Original citation & hyperlink:

Kipnis, E. and Broderick, A.J. (2011). The concept of place in international strategic marketing decisions. In: Melewar, T.C. and Gupta, S. (Eds.). *Strategic International Marketing: An Advanced Perspective* (pp.93 - 115), Palgrave Macmillan. <http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?pid=336070>

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The Concept of Place in International Strategic Marketing Decisions

Eva Kipnis and Amanda J. Broderick

At the end of this chapter readers should be able to:

1. Understand the fundamental role of place association affects in making coherent strategic and positioning decisions.
2. Identify key categories of place, or country-of-origin, stereotypes and comprehend their behavioural affects in the context of consumption.
3. Specify the dimensions of country-of-origin concept and understand the affects of using each of these dimensions as a positioning cue.
4. Appreciate the required advancements in the use of single and multiple place cues in brand positioning caused by the increased complexity of businesses' multinational operations and by the dynamic and dense inter-penetration of multiple cultures in lives of consumers in many societies.
5. Appreciate the ways place association affects can be utilised by social policy makers to promote sense of national pride, enhance community cohesion and migrant integration, and to advance countries' competitiveness in international marketplace.

Key points

- Understanding of consumer place associations is a salient strategic brand building instrument; products associated with negatively perceived places/countries/cultures may be boycotted by consumers irrespective of products' quality and functionality, while attributing a product to places/countries/cultures positively perceived by consumers enhances product's overall competitiveness.
- Globalisation of the international marketplace has led to products being designed, manufactured and assembled in multiple places, which, in turn, complicated communication of place associations to consumers. Several dimensions of place

associations' concept have evolved: country-of-manufacture (i.e., associations with country of final assembly); country-of-design (i.e., associations with country of development and design) and culture-of-brand-origin (i.e., cultural heritage associated with the product).

- Brand image cues, such as brand name, colour, sound, design, images, packaging, and language, are essential in communicating place associations. Brand building strategies may adopt using multiple place cues, to strengthen place association affects in consumer product evaluations by emphasising product's design or manufacturing association with country/culture favourably perceived by consumers, while maintaining product's association with a different cultural heritage context.
- Emergence of consumer groups that maintain affective associations with multiple places/cultures necessitates academics and practitioners to develop brand building approaches that enable to reflect relevant elements and dimensions of consumers' cultures/places associations in brands' image.
- Informed use of single and/or multiple place cues has valuable advantages both for companies and for social policy makers. Development of brand positioning strategies that integrate favourable place cues relevant for the target population groups assists companies with enhancing their competitive status in the international markets and enables advancement of countries' image to attract investors, tourists and high-skilled workforce. With the view of social policies, the use of place association cues can contribute to development of social marketing and branding strategies that enhance integration of ethnic minorities with the mainstream societies, promote community cohesion, and develop sense of national belonging and pride.

Introduction

Command of place associations, or image characteristics assigned to particular cultures and/or geographical locations, plays a critical role in development of competitive market strategies and brand building decisions. If used strategically, analysis and understanding of the positive or negative influences association with a particular place has on the perceptions of the company, its products and actions, provides managers with a marketing tool which can

deliver a competitive edge to the company's performance in a particular marketplace. On the contrary, neglecting to assess place association affects may have devastating consequences for the success of company's particular products and at times affect businesses' functions to an extent of them being forced to terminate operations in certain countries or regions and incur significant losses of invested capital.

Inadequate comprehension of the international marketplace leads to business failure; product positioning faux pas and consumer misunderstanding. Keller and Moorthi (2003) drew a number of conclusions about the uneven performance of such multinational brands as Kellogg's, Levi's and McDonald's in China, Brazil, Hungary, Poland and India. Whilst these brands were well-established in Western markets they failed to achieve a respectable market share in the newly developing marketplaces. Keller and Moorthi (2003) concluded this was due to: 1.) ineffective and miscommunication leading to image dysfunctionality and 2.) an incorrect understanding of consumer wants and buying habits and incorrect evaluations of the market opportunities leading to products' value dysfunctionality. Both of these dysfunctionality may be a consequence of poor understanding of the concept of Place which, in the context of international strategic marketing decisions, not only relates to the country the products or brands are distributed in but also to the country the product or brand represents.

All places and/or countries have certain images in people's minds and often a country may have a different image in different parts of the world. Our understanding of what a particular country is, in relation to society and ourselves, is based on the specific historical, political, social and economical connotations of this country relevant to our personal context. Simply put, consumers use their associations with countries and places as a source of information when evaluating the product and how good or bad people feel about a country overall may define their perception of the products or brands associated with this country. This can influence perceptions of particular products or brands (Papadopoulos and Heslop 2002; Kaynak and Kara 2000; Li et al., 1997; Strutton et al., 1995). For example, consumer perceptions of French wine can be higher than perceptions of Australian wine, due to France's historical premier wine-producing image, but the more favourably people perceive

Australia as a country the better their evaluations of Australian products maybe, including wine. Likewise, if the majority of consumers in a given country negatively stereotype a product due to the negative overall perception of the country image this product is believed to be originating from, other strategic factors such as price or attractive advertising may have little effect. A recent noteworthy example of the significance of country-of-origin (COO) effects on product evaluations is the disastrous effect of public scares involving different products manufactured in China on consumer perceptions of Chinese-made products which instigated the 'made in China' campaign aimed at improving China's country image as a trustworthy producer (Bloomberg Businessweek, 2010).

Papadopoulos and Heslop (2002) note the importance of place association affects for companies' operating in international markets because, "*unlike brand and corporate images, those of nations and other places are not directly under the marketers' control*" (p. 295). That is, marketing strategies of a particular brand cannot create and control perceptions of country's image: consumer understanding of country meanings in a particular marketplace leads to products associated by consumers with certain countries to be either preferred or, in contrast, boycotted. For example, some consumers in China, whilst acknowledging the high quality of Japanese products, avoid purchasing them due to their negative Japanese historic and political connotations; some consumers in Nigeria prefer foreign products over domestic ones, irrespective of value for money in terms of price-quality, for status-enhancing reasons (Klein et al., 1998; Okechcku and Onyemah, 1999). Thus, marketing intelligence on what consumer Place associations (i.e. products' place image affect on consumer evaluations) is crucial for businesses as it forms the basis for strategic brand positioning decisions. The following sections consider the types and the role of Place associations in consumer behaviour and how single and multiple Place associations, as product attributes, can be expressed through brand communications.

Country-of-origin perceptions in consumer product evaluation: belonging or diverging, complying or opposing.

Country-of-origin (COO), also known as product-country image (PCI), studies date back over 45 years: the idea that knowledge or perception of where the product originates from may be a significant factor in consumers' acceptance of the product was first proposed by Dichter in 1962. He suggested that information about a product being 'made in' a particular geographical location plays an important role in people's evaluations and preferences of a product from a range of products which are otherwise similar in terms of quality, design and taste. The phenomenon of consumers' perceptions of their own country and other countries' images affecting consumer product evaluations due to products 'made in' associations is termed COO stereotyping. Country stereotypes or beliefs held by consumers about countries can be factual or inferred: in other words, they can be equally based on the knowledge consumers have about a country, or, on the contrary, the lack of it. COO stereotyping generates associations about functionality, acceptability and desirability of a product or brand based on the country it is perceived to be 'made in' or to come from. Our assumptions on products' functionality are based on evaluations of product attributes (quality, design, level of technological advancement, taste), and country-of-origin information is used as an indicator of these attributes. In other words, we use our beliefs about a country's image to infer products' functional attributes. For instance, good quality cars are associated with Germany; good wine is associated with France, good Vodka from Russia etc. Having formed the assumptions of products' functionality, we also evaluate whether it is acceptable and/or desirable to consume and be seen to consume these products.

Consumers constantly evolve behavioural norms through life experience, directly or indirectly acquiring knowledge about the standards of behaviour accepted within societies. Beliefs about right and wrong develop through socialization: one's family upbringing, interacting with other individuals through friendship, school or work and through the observation of societal role models (e.g. celebrities, fictional characters, politicians). Consumption is a large part of the behavioural norms we learn, as it allows us to visually materialize our beliefs about which norms or traditions of society we accept and follow and what our position is in relation to that society. In the context of COO, product evaluations are influenced by socially accepted norms of personal and collective integrity associated with consuming products stereotyped to originate from a particular location. Finally, countries' images have a symbolic and affective value to people and product attribute evaluations are

significantly shaped by the emotional significance of certain countries for consumers (Laroche et al, 2005; Askegaard & Ger, 1998; Cohen & Areni, 1991). For example, Western countries are perceived in some developing countries as symbols of modernity, wealth and success and often Western products are bought to convey the owner's sophistication and status, despite quality similar to that of local products, higher price, impracticality or even lack of appropriate knowledge and means (such as electricity) to use them (Batra et al., 2000; Philbert and Jourdan, 1998; Ger and Belk, 1996). Consumption generates appearance, and products act as symbols of people's accomplishments, righteousness, status and style. Through consumption of products stereotyped to originate from a particular location or country, people express either emotional attachment to and support of or dislike and opposition of the certain country or countries.

COO stereotypes, or biases, can influence consumers preferring products originating from their own country (local products) or from other countries (non-local products) (Batra et al, 2000; Okechku and Onyemah, 1999). Whether negative or positive, COO biases held by consumers can be generic and/or country-specific and product category-specific (Batra et al, 2000; Klein et al, 1998; Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Table 1 presents a summary of the categories of the COO stereotypes (Laroche et al., 2005; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999) and provides examples of generic and specific COO effects on consumer behaviour.

Table 1 Country of Origin Stereotypes and their Affects

COO stereotype	Definition	Generic COO affects	Specific COO affects
Cognitive	Country of origin used as an indicator of product's quality, taste, safety.	Consumers believe that a particular country or region has vigilant (or poor) production and product safety standards and/or high (or low) levels of technological advancement and infer these characteristics to all or a group of products originating from this country or region (Elliott and Cameron 1994; Steenkamp 1990; Han 1989; Bilkey and Nes 1982).	Consumers hold positive associations with a country as with a leading connoisseur within a product category and prefer products within this category that are associated with this country's expertise and style (Leclerc et al., 1994; Laroche et al., 2005).
Normative (or conative)	Consumer beliefs about the socially accepted norms of personal and collective integrity associated with engagement with certain countries and consumption of product originating from these countries.	Consumers either: - believe in the importance of supporting their own country's economy and protecting local manufacturing and favor home country and local produce on the basis of the products' 'localness' while avoiding non-local products (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2004; Han 1988; Shimp and Sharma 1987)	Consumers either: - have strong negative perceptions of a particular foreign country and boycott its products (Klein et al. 1998) Or: - belong to a group of individuals who are strongly connected with a certain country or region (ethnic

		<p>Or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prefer non-local products over local ones for the reason of hostility toward own society's regime or values (Mueller et al., 2009). 	<p>groups and diasporas), guide their lives by the norms of that country's society and base their product choices on beliefs of the rightfulness to preserve their heritage and lifestyle (Bhatia and Ram, 2009; Vida et al., 2008; Snauwaert et al., 2003; Georgas et al., 1996; Berry 1980).</p>
Affective	The symbolic value of country for consumer and the emotional significance of this value.	<p>Consumers hold affective associations with countries and either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - favour local products due to the feelings of national pride and beliefs of own country's uniqueness, superior status and the importance to preserve country's authentic images and ways of life (Balabanis et al., 2001; Frank 1999; Han 1988). <p>Or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aspire to foreign countries or group of 	<p>Consumers hold emotional attachment to a particular country or region and favour products originating from this country either due to willingness to support this country or region or due to willingness to be associated with this country's images, values and ways of life (Oberecker et al., 2008; Vida et al., 2008; Askegaard et al., 2005; Quester and Chong 2001;</p>

		foreign countries due to beliefs of certain countries' or regions superiority and advancement and prefer non-local products to be associated with these countries' image, values and accomplishments (Mueller et al. 2009; Laroche et al., 2005; Cannon and Yaprak 2002; Thompson and Tambyah 1999).	Penaloza 1994; Berry 1980).
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COO research is not without its controversies: the significance and equivalence of COO stereotyping effects have been found to be dependent on age, education, personal background, level of consumer expertise and involvement (Ettenson and Klein 2000; Maheswaran 1994; Cordell 1992; Shimp and Sharma 1987). Consumers also tend to use COO stereotypes in different ways with some consumers not to using them at all (Heslop and Papadopoulos 1993). Therefore, market intelligence on consumers' general and specific perceptions of country images and on the significance of place associations in evaluation of local and non-local products is essential for strategic brand building in international markets. By attributing the brand with either a 'localised' or 'foreign' image, the brand can be positioned to minimise or neutralise the COO stereotyping conflict and be more appealing to consumers (see Alden et al 1999; Alashban et al. 2002; Batra et al. 2000; Beverland and Lindgreen 2002; Broderick 2007; Douglas et al. 2001; Elliot and Cameron 1994).

From Country-of-origin to Country-of-manufacture, Country of design and Country-of-brand-origin

Globalisation of the international marketplace has led to companies outsourcing their manufacturing and assembly processes, making it difficult for consumers to evaluate products and brands on the basis of the country they are made in. In the conditions of the global marketplace, very often a single product can be associated with a variety of countries through ownership, manufacturing and advertising. Many products whilst being designed or developed in one country have different elements produced in a number of different countries, are assembled in another country, and have headquarters located in yet another country. For example, in 2005 only approximately 50% of the total production of Sony, a brand widely associated with Japan, took place in Japan. Other Sony manufacturing bases include USA, Canada, China and many others – in total Sony have subsidiaries and affiliates in over 35 world countries (Euromonitor International, 2007). Brands from developing economies such as Acer (Taiwan), Lenovo (China), Tata Motors (India), GazProm (Russia) have expanded into the multinational arena and are now manufactured and marketed in many countries all over the world. The expansion of such hybrid multinational brands has prompted various perspectives on the COO concept. Generally speaking, it became difficult to maintain the definition of COO as the country where the company that manufactures and

markets the product or brand is located (Johansson et al. 1985), to describe various elements of countries' images associations in consumer product evaluations. These elements have been categorised into:

Country-of-Manufacture (COM) - the country where final assembly of the good took place (see the review by Samiee 1994; Toncar 2008; Essoussi and Merunka 2007; Inch and McBride 2004; Hui and Zhou 2003). COM information is a salient determinant of product quality evaluations. Unfavourable COM image associations can have damaging effects on overall consumer perceptions and can present challenges even for well-established reputable brands such as Sony (Tse and Gorn 1993). Favourable COM image associations can have stronger effects on overall product evaluations than brand name (Han and Terpstra 1988).

Country-of-Design (COD) – the country where the product was designed and developed (see review by Nebenzahl et al., 1997; Jaffé and Nebenzahl 2001; Chao 1998). Image associations of countries' competence in product design and in establishing its overall image and production standards have a significant effect on consumer product judgements (Essoussi and Merunka 2007).

Culture-of-Brand-Origin (COBO) – consumer associations with the cultural origin or heritage communicated by the brand (Lim and O'Cass 2001; Hulland 1999). Lim and O'Cass (2001) suggest that for consumers, it is easier to identify and extract COBO associations from brand communications rather than elaborating on the COM or COD. In the modern marketplace the ownership structures constantly change: companies often acquire or sell brands, dividing and selling off parts of family brands. Multinational corporations maintain complex structures of worldwide operations where the same brand is developed and marketed in a number of markets in a standardised manner whilst being manufactured by subsidiaries all over the world. For example, Procter & Gamble's manufacturing operations for such globally known brands as Ariel, Head and Shoulders, Gillette and Pampers are based in 8 different regions (USA, Canada, Mexico, Latin America, Europe, China, Africa and Australia). Such complex organisational structures are difficult to clearly communicate to consumers in marketing messages and complicate identification of COO, COM or COD evaluations for consumers. Finally, the development of global trade and media facilitate the emergence of a homogenous global culture with people across the world sharing unified values, beliefs and ways of life (Alden et al., 2006; Askegaard et al., 2005; Zhou and Belk

2004; Ritzer 2003; Crane 2002; Alden et al., 1999; Levitt 1983). Some consumers seek brands that will symbolise their belonging to the global society rather than a particular place or country (Strizhakova et al., 2008). Therefore, COBO associations (with local, particular foreign or global culture) become more relevant in the international marketplace and contribute to creating brand value (Schuiling and Kapferer 2004; Steenkamp et al., 2003; Alden et al, 1999; Leclerc et al., 1994).

Creating Place associations: an overview of brand positioning tools

How can brands create place associations relevant to the context of a particular marketplace? The most powerful tool in creating Place associations is brand communications. Brands are evaluated by consumers by receiving and interpreting the image messages sent by the brands to consumers. Such messages, termed cues, are used by marketers to generate the unique set of associations with brands' attributes (quality, taste, values etc). In other words, brand cues act as signals that lead consumers to develop particular associations with and assign a particular meaning to the brand. A simple example would be a picture of fresh oranges on a box of orange juice – the picture provides a mental shortcut for consumers to associate the brand with fresh orange juice and identify the brand's position in consumers' mental frame of products (juices). Positioning strategies create or increase consumer brand awareness, i.e. the amount of brand associations retained in consumer memory, and, most importantly, contribute to consumer perceptions of brand image, i.e. the uniqueness, strength and favorability of these associations (Keller 1993).

Brand image cues include brand name, colour, sound, design, images and characters, packaging, language of the textual information. In the context of place associations, all these elements of brand image can be placed within a particular cultural heritage context as they provide consumers with signals which can be interpreted into an association with a particular country or culture. The interpretation of and associations with the meaning of these cues can be different across cultures. For example, language and linguistic systems act as culture-specific cognitive and heuristic associations held by individuals in a given culture and play a significant role in determining consumers' processing of brand communications and brand

name evaluations (Luna and Peracchio 2001; Zhang and Schmitt 2001). Language, alphabetical and lexical-semantic (related to writing systems and styles) information communicated by the brand name and messages places a brand within a specific cultural context (for example, Italian looking and sounding brand name connects the brand with Italian culture). Colors are used to express feelings and the same color can represent different meanings for different cultures (red means beautiful in Russia, symbolizes good luck in China but is the color of mourning in South Africa; purple is a colour of royalty in the UK and a colour of widow's mourning in Thailand). Certain images have symbolic meanings associated with countries and place (national flags are unique for each country; images of certain landmarks such as the pyramids for Egypt or Eifel Tower for France). Textual information (such as 'traditional Italian recipe' or 'finest Swiss chocolate') creates place-specific design or manufacture associations.

Some brands incorporate multiple cultural cues in their image. Sometimes multiple cues can emphasise brands' associations with positively perceived COBO, COD and/or COM. For example, Picture 1 shows a recent advert of Honda, a Japanese-origin brand, in the United Kingdom. The advert's main message, 'Local' (manufactured in the UK), accentuates the brand's association with the UK for consumers and may appeal to normative (caring for the needs of local society, protecting local jobs and economy) and affective (UK as homeland) COO stereotypes of the UK consumers.

Multiple place cues can also be used to appeal to consumers' associations with multiple places and cultures. Studies of the impact of globalisation on consumers' cultural preferences discovered that people can develop and maintain positive attitudes both to local and non-local places and cultures and be willing to integrate their preferences in lifestyle and consumption preferences. For example, people integrate and interpret global culture's norms and practices in the context relevant to their own local cultures (Kjelgaard and Ostberg 2007; Kjelgaard and Askegaard 2006; Ritzer 2003; Turner 2003). People in diasporas and migrant ethnic groups integrate practices and norms of their nation state with cultural and consumption norms associated with the place of their ethnic origin/ancestry (Wamwara-Mbugua et al., 2008; Vida et al., 2008; Askegaard et al., 2005; Benet-Martinez et al., 2002; Oswald 1999; Penaloza 1994). Also, people develop an affection or liking of a particular foreign country through travel, short and long-term migration (for study or work), interaction with people from this country/culture or culture which results in them willing to adopt this culture's customs and ways of life and to consume brands that provide symbolic associations with this culture. Proliferation of multicultural consumption requires brands to be aware of the realities of consumers' cultural and place associations and incorporate relevant elements of cultures or places favoured by consumers into their image (Hsieh & Lindridge, 2005; Zhang & Schmitt, 2001). In some cases place cues can imply an association with a country or culture to enhance consumers' positive perception of its brand image. A study by Mueller et al (2001) terms this phenomenon 'captious cues' (note that captious cues can be single and multiple). Captious cues are the deceptive or misleading country of origin brand associations. For example, the advert of Ristorante pizza brand (Picture 2) incorporates an image of pizza and brand name, Ristorante, with corporate brand name of the producer, Dr.Oetker which is also clearly visible. The brand name and pizza image provide a cue to Italy which may evoke both cognitive COO stereotypes of Italy as the premier origin of pizza and the emotional affection of consumers to Italy as a place. The display of Dr.Oetker's corporate brand can be interpreted either as an association with the Germanic traditions of quality or reference to Dr.Oetker's status as a multinational company whose brands are known and available in many countries around the world.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have considered the affects of place, or country-of-origin stereotypes on consumer behaviour and strategic brand building with a view of increasing intricacy of multicultural inter-penetration within societies and multinational market operations. Both these factors exemplify the pertinent need for advancing conceptual understanding of the nature and the dimensions of place-based biases held by consumers to inform managerial decisions on adopting either single or multiple place cues approach for brand building. We outlined three major categories of place stereotypes that may be held by consumers, cognitive, conative and affective, and considered scenarios where these stereotypes lead to different consumption behaviours. We have also demonstrated that by integrating multiple place cues in brand communications product associations can be placed within a number of (factual or implied) manufacturing, design or cultural dimensions which can enhance product's cognitive and affective appeals for consumers. Seldom countries nowadays do not actively engage in international trade and migration flows: both products and people travel around the world and mix with varying cultural groups. As a result, consumers may develop positive (or negative) associations with multiple places or cultures which will affect their product evaluations. These realities of the contemporary marketplaces dictate that to maintain market share and the competitive advantage marketers are required to perfect the art of creating brands that communicate relevant place or cultural appeals both to those consumer groups favouring a single culture and to those associating with and favouring several cultures. Therefore, an informed and comprehensive approach to using single or multiple place cues is required when developing branding strategies.

The use of place cues in packaging for brand positioning: A Case Study

Brand image cues, including origin cues, can be communicated to consumers through a number of channels such as advertising, the Internet, social media and packaging/labelling. This section will consider how place cues can be created through brand packaging. Packaging is one of the most important and salient communication vehicles and plays a significant role in consumers' brand image perceptions and buying decisions (Clement 2007; Rundh 2009; Silayoi and Speece 2007). It ensures communication with a wide consumer audience: consumers are almost inevitably reachable via packaging, whether whilst shopping for

themselves or others or whilst consuming what was bought by others for them (gift-giving and socialising). Often packaging can be the first point of communication between the brand and consumer. Therefore, a coherent use of packaging in combination with other brand positioning tools enhances the success of companies' marketing efforts.

The following case study illustrates how single and multiple place cues can be used in packaging design to reflect brands' associations with places and cultures. The key categories of cues used in packaging that affect consumer perceptions elaboration of information are brand name, visual representation (i.e., colour, images and other design elements), language (including writing styles) and textual information clearly visible on package or label (Mikhailitchenko et al. 2009; Zhang et al. 2003; Branthwaite 2002; Alashban et al. 2002; Mueller et al. 2001). We analysed packaging place cues and brand positioning approaches of the market leaders across two food product categories (chocolate and juice) in Russia. With Western markets saturating, the attractiveness of emerging markets for international companies increases: Russia is one of the largest emerging markets with a 5.53% forecast GDP growth rate for 2011 (Datamonitor 2008). Russia's consumer base is diverse and multi-culturally aware: at least 15 ethnic groups co-reside in this country (Curtis 1996). Since the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia has opened its borders to international trade and joined the global market economy, providing, scope for foreign and global cultures to interact with Russia's population through media, trade and travel.

We selected the ten strongest brands in chocolate and juice categories from portfolios of companies with the largest market shares in Russia (Business Analytica 2008, 2005; Euromonitor International 2009a, 2009b) and conducted a critical visual analysis (Schroeder 2006) of their pack images. Our analysis included the following categories: images and design elements of brand packaging; language, alphabetical and lexical-semantic (writing styles) features of brand name. When analyzing brand packaging design elements we focused on packaging form and images and distinguished between 'traditional' and 'sophisticated' design categories. In the early stages of economic growth in 1990s, Western brands were regarded by consumers as 'glamorous' and symbolizing affluence and much-desired belongingness to the modern global world (Batra et al. 2000; Cunliffe 1995; De Abreu-Filho

et al. 2003). When Russia opened its markets to free trade, local manufacturers produced products in similar-looking standardized packaging: for example, juice was first sold in large 3-litre glass jars and later in rectangular boxes; traditional boxes of chocolate assortment were of rectangular form (Kozina 2007; Pavlov 2008; Plastinin 2006; Semenikhin 2008). Sophisticated design elements of packaging (such as a prism form of the box), added extras (such as screw-top or ‘Westernised’ images) enabled brands to associate themselves with Western consumption practices. When analyzing brand names, we distinguished between those in English, those in another foreign language and those in Russian. Global culture is defined to be highly associated with the West: the US is seen as one of the countries that contribute most to the development of global culture with the conventional use of English as the dominant communication in the global community (Alden et al. 2006, Kearney 1995). Therefore, brand names in English, if no other association was given on packaging to a specific country (such as a flag, or emphasis on the products’ origin, for example ‘finest Belgian chocolate’), were categorised as associated with Global culture. In contrast, foreign non-English and Russian brand names were categorized as those providing a cue to a particular foreign culture or local culture respectively. Also, as a considerable proportion of Russian brand name features were represented in Russian handwriting styles, we identified these names as providing a lexical-semantic association with Russian culture (Zhang et al. 2003). To contextualize companies’ strategic approach to brands’ positioning, we also analyzed positioning concepts of focal brands as reported by brand manufacturing companies and Russian marketing and advertising agencies (Adme.Ru 2006, 2007, 2009; Advertology.Ru 2005, 2006, 2009; Boxside Brands and Package 2007-2008a, 2007-2008b; Consumer Superbrands Russia 2007; Forbes Russia 2009; Pavlov 2008; Plastinin 2006; Rybak 2004; Slad&Co 2009; UniPack.Ru 2008; Zerkalo Reklamy, 2004). Summary results are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

The case study demonstrates the use of single or multiple cultural cues in brand packaging to create brand image integrated in different cultural contexts. Some brands are associated with a single culture (e.g. Russia: Dobryi, Rossiya; German: Ritter Sport); some are associated with two cultures (e.g. Russian and Ukrainian: Sadochok; Global and Japanese: Caprice); and some integrate multiple cultural cues (more than 2) in their image (e.g. Global, French and Russian: Comilfo). Whilst earlier research on COBO-based brand positioning notes that by communicating multiple cultural identities negative brand attitudes are created, as “too much

breadth...may confuse consumers” (Alden et al. 1999, p.84), the analysed brands are successful players on the Russian market. Furthermore, 10 of the analyzed brands (Babaevsky; Fruktovyi Sad; Ya; Tonus; J7; SladCo; Dobryi; Moya Semya; Rossiya – Shedraya Dusha; Lyubimyi Sad) have been named by analysts amongst the 50 top-rated brands (Forbes Russia, 2008) and the 40 strongest brands in Russia (BusinessWeek Russia, 2005). Although undoubtedly a number of strategic factors contribute to the success of all analyzed brands, the multiplicity of cultural cues may be an important factor that creates positive brand attitudes since some consumers may be developing multi-cultural belongingness and are seeking to proclaim it through brand consumption.

Case Study questions:

1. Consider the names and visual cues of the brands discussed in the case study. What place stereotypes (i.e., cognitive, conative and affective) do each of these brands evoke?
2. Using the brands discussed in case study as examples, discuss how language and writing style cues can be used to create multiple place cues.
3. Identify three multinational brands and consider how these brands use cultural cues in brand communications to create ‘global’ COBO-based brand image? Can multinational brands from emerging markets create ‘global’ image using similar branding strategies?
4. Cayla and Arnould (2008) note increasing cultural symbolism of brands and suggest that consumers use brands as “*a specific symbolic form of talking about and seeing the world*” (p.87). What symbolic values could consumers derive from brands incorporating multiple cultural cues in their image?

Table 2. Findings of brand packaging analysis of chocolate brands in Russia

Brand name/ Sub-brand name	Brand/ sub-brand name meaning/ translation	Brand/ sub-brand name writing	Visual cues	Cultures represented in visual brand image	Owner company (local and global brand owner)	Company share, 2008 % retail value
Alpen Gold/ Composition	Gold of Alps/ Composition	Alpen Gold/ Composition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. German brand name and association with Alps mountains reflected in image of mountains incorporated in the brand logo. 2. Sophisticated and original packaging design. 3. 'Western' sub-brand name, no language/visual association with a particular foreign culture. 	Integrated cues to Global/Western and Foreign (German-Austrian) culture.	Kraft Foods	5.4
A.Korkunov/ Morelia	First letter of name and surname of Andrei Korkunov, Russian businessman and company founder / name of a city in Mexico (sub-brand name)	A.Коркунов A.Korkunov/ Morelia (brand name appears on different packages both in Latin and Cyrillic writing)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Russian brand name (both Cyrillic and Latin alphabet writings used). 2. Packaging designed to appear "familiar and instilling pride for preservation of wholesome traditions...and the drive to produce chocolate that is competitive on the world market" (www.super-brands.ru). 3. Spanish sub-brand name in Latin writing. 	Integrated cues to Local (Russian), Global/Western and Foreign (Spanish) cultures.	Mars Inc	14.6
Rossiya – shedraya dusha/ Collectsiya	Russia – generous soul/ Collection	Россия – щедрая душа/ Коллекция	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Russian brand name (country name used as element of brand name). 2. This is the brand from the very heart of Russia** (www.rossiashokolad.ru). It is inspired by and communicates the warmth and generosity of Russian soul (www.boxide- 	Local (Russian) culture	Rossiya CO OAO, owned by Nestle SA	12.4

			clients.ru . 3. Russian sub-brand name in traditional Russian handwriting style.			
SladCo/ Vechernii Romans	Double meaning of brand name: Slad Company and Sweet/ Evening romance	СладКо/ Вечерний романс	1. Russian brand name in traditional Russian handwriting style. 2. Modern packaging design with elements of aristocratic 'empire' style. Verses of such famous Russian poets as A.Pushkin, M.Lermontov, S.Esenin, and others are quoted on the pack, emphasising adherence with traditions (SladCo, 2009; www.sostav.ru). 3. Russian sub-brand name	Local (Russian) culture	SladCo OAO, owned by Orkla Group, Norway	4.7
Roshen/ Zolotoye assorti	No meaning (brand name)/ Gold selection	Roshen/ Золотое Ассорти	1. 'Western' brand name, no language/visual association with a particular foreign culture. 2. Russian sub-brand name in Cyrillic writing. 3. Brand concept: Roshen is a true Ukrainian chocolate brand expanding into the Western markets (Zerkalo Reklamy, 2004).	Integrated cues to Global/Western and Local (Russian) cultures.	Roshen Kondyterskaya a Korporaciya, Ukraine	1.2
Babaevsky/ Originalnyi	From Babayevo (an area)/ Original	Бабаевский/ Оригинальный	1. Russian brand name. 2. 'Soviet'-style packaging design evoking nostalgic associations with high-quality Soviet chocolate (Semenikhin, 2008). 3. Russian sub-brand name incorporating traditional Russian handwriting style of the Cyrillic capital letter "Б".	Local (Russian) culture.	Ob'yedinennye Konditery, Russia	16.1
Comilfo	Comme il faut (French) – properly; as it should be Brand name is	Комильфо	1. French brand name written in Cyrillic and spelt in Russian. 2. Sophisticated and modern packaging design, using Belgium postcard representing association with unique technologies of Belgian chocolatiers. (Advertology.Ru, 2006). 3. Emphasis on 'Western-style' product: visuals of	Integrated cues to Foreign (French and Belgian), Local (Russian) and Global/Western	Ruzanna OJSC, owned by Nestle SA	12.9

	written in Cyrillic and is spelt as it sounds in Russian		sophisticated premium chocolate selection different from chocolates in selection boxes traditional for Russian consumers (Advertology.Ru, 2006).	cultures.		
Ritter Sport	No meaning	Ritter Sport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. German brand name. 2. Globally-standardised packaging and design. 	Integrated cues to Foreign (German) and Global/Western cultures.	Ritter GmbH & Co	0.6
Nestle Classic	Nestle Classic	Nestle Classic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emphasis on globally-recognised brand name element (large Nestle) in brand name with 'Western' element incorporated (Classic), no language/visual association with a particular foreign culture. 2. Message in Russian 'Сама нежность' ('Tenderness itself') in Russian handwriting style. 3. Sophisticated packaging design. 	Integrated cues to Global/Western and Local (Russian) culture.	Nestle Russia OOO, Nestle SA	3.0
Rafaello	No meaning	Rafaello	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Italian brand name. 2. Globally-standardised sophisticated packaging design. 	Integrated cues to Foreign (Italian) and Global/Western cultures.	Ferrero Group, Italy	3.6

Table 3. Summary of brand packaging analysis of juice brands in Russia

Brand name	Brand name meaning/ translation	Brand name writing	Visual cues	Cultures represented in visual brand image	Owner company (local and global brand owner)	Company share, 2008 % off-trade value
Ya	Me	Я	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Russian brand name and brand name writing communicating an individual-centred image. 2. Sophisticated packaging and design. 	Integrated cues to Global/Western and Local (Russian) cultures.	Lebedyansky JSC, owned by Pepsi Co Inc	25.4
Dobryi	Kind, Good	Добрый	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Russian brand name in an old-fashioned print style of brand name writing. 2. Brand communicates a “caring, kind and friendly Russian product” message (Advertology.Ru, 2005). 3. Traditional packaging and design. 	Local (Russian) culture.	Multon ZAO, owned by Coca-Cola Hellenic Bottling Co SA	17.9
Fruktovyi Sad	Fruit Garden	Фруктовый Сад	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Russian brand name and Russian handwriting style of the word ‘Sad’ (‘Garden’). 2. Elements of brand packing design (image of fruit tree, brand logo) communicate “garden of childhood” message and symbolize family values (AdMe.Ru, 2009). 3. Traditional packaging and design. 	Local (Russian) culture	Lebedyansky JSC, owned by Pepsi Co Inc	25.4
Moya Semya	My Family	Моя Семья	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Russian brand name with elements (word ‘Semya’, i.e. ‘Family’) in Russian handwriting. The name “<i>speaks for itself</i>” (AdMe.ru, 2007) and communicates the value of family. 2. Traditional 'local' packaging and design. 	Local (Russian) culture	Nidan Holding Ltd owned by Lion Capital LLP, UK	12.8

Nico Biotime		Nico Biotime	<p>1. ‘Western’ brand name, no language/visual association with a particular foreign culture.</p> <p>2. Brand name and elements of packaging design emphasize health benefits of the brand, i.e. name association with time for living and “5-a-day” message in the right bottom corner (Unipack.Ru, 2008).</p> <p>3. Sophisticated packaging and design.</p>	Global/Western culture.	Multon ZAO, owned by Coca-Cola Hellenic Bottling Co SA	17.9
Lyubimyi Sad	Favorite Garden	Любимый Сад	<p>1. Russian brand name in Russian handwriting style.</p> <p>2. Brand communicates value of caring for loved ones and friends (www.boxside-brands.ru).</p> <p>3. Traditional packaging and design.</p>	Local (Russian) culture.	Wimm-Bill-Dann Produkty Pitaniya OAO	12.0
J7	No meaning	J7	<p>1. ‘Western’ brand name, no language/visual association with a particular foreign culture.</p> <p>2. Brand communicates “Premium Russian product made to Western standards” message (Plastinin, 2006).</p> <p>3. Sophisticated packaging and design.</p>	Global/Western culture.	Wimm-Bill-Dann Produkty Pitaniya OAO	12.0
Tonus	Vitality	Тонус	<p>1. Russian brand name.</p> <p>2. The brand communicates ‘health benefit from juice’ message (Rybak, 2004).</p> <p>3. Sophisticated packaging.</p>	Integrated cues to Global and Local (Russian) cultures.	Lebedyansky JSC, owned by Pepsi Co Inc	25.4
Da!	Yes!	Да!	<p>1. Russian brand name in traditional Russian handwriting style.</p> <p>2. Traditional packaging design.</p>	Local (Russian) culture.	Nidan Holding Ltd owned by Lion Capital LLP, UK	12.8
Rich	No translation	Rich	<p>1. ‘Western’ brand name symbolizing wealth, no</p>	Global culture.	Multon ZAO, owned by Coca-Cola Hellenic	17.9

	required		language/visual association with a particular foreign culture. 2. Sophisticated packaging and design.		Bottling Co SA	
Caprice	No translation required	Caprice	1. 'Western' brand name. 2. Visual cue to Japanese culture: brand name writing and packaging design associated with Japanese origami (AdMe.ru, 2006). 3. Sophisticated packaging and design.	Integrated cues to Global and Foreign (Japanese) cultures.	Nidan Holding Ltd owned by Lion Capital LLP, UK	12.8
Sadochok	Little Garden in Ukrainian	Садочок	1. Ukrainian brand name communicating a language geographical association with Ukraine (Drinks+, 2003). 2. Traditional packaging and design similar to those brands positioned as Local (Russian).	Integrated cues to Foreign (Ukrainian) and Local (Russian) cultures.	Sandora LLC, jointly owned by Pepsi Co Inc and PepsiAmericas	N/A*

*Sandora's market share is not identified in market reports. Sadochok juice was included to illustrate other 'non-Western' foreign brands' positioning.

Business and social implications of place associations' use in brand positioning

Adopting different approaches to place associations for brand positioning has its benefits for businesses and for social policy-makers. For businesses, use of single or multiple place/cultural cues allows the creation of brand images that appeal to different consumer target groups by segmenting consumers on the basis of favourable or unfavourable perceptions of places and cultures. Single place or culture associations utilize favourable perceptions of a place or culture as a leader in a particular product category and/or appeal to those consumers maintaining strong beliefs in the importance of supporting local economy and preserving local traditions and ways of life or, on the contrary, aspiring to be associated with either particular foreign or global community. Using multiple place cues enables the integration of favourable perceptions of a particular place as a trusted manufacturer with the overall 'global' image of the brand to enhance company's multinational status in consumers' view and to appeal to those consumers who have multicultural affective preferences. Differing place association strategies in brand positioning allow multinational companies to make their global or foreign brands' image more relevant to the local context of a particular marketplace. In a similar manner, local brands' can appeal to progressive consumers who concerned with their country's development and advancement by integrating sophisticated 'globally-relevant' elements in their image to signal compliance with the high lifestyle norms set by leading multinational brands.

From a wider social perspective place associations can be also used strategically by policy makers to enhance integration of new ethnic migrants with their new societies and promote multiculturalism and community cohesion, to develop sense of national belonging and to enhance countries' competitive positioning in the international marketplace. As countries' populations all over the world become more heterogeneous multiculturalism can be promoted by encouraging development of products and brands that are relevant to 'multi-local' lifestyles and traditions. Showcasing countries' technological and business accomplishments in manufacturing and new product development enhances country's overall image, therefore advancing competitiveness of countries' products and brands on international markets and instilling sense of national pride in countries' populations.

Issues for further discussion

1. Given the increased inter-penetration of many cultures in societies can cultures maintain their authentic characteristics?
2. Can brands as symbols of places or cultures have a transforming influence on the overall place associations of the consumers, or is a positive place association prerequisite for positive product evaluation? Can a consumption experience be regarded as a cultural experience?
3. Can a sense of societal unity and national pride be promoted using brand building strategies in multi-cultural societies with large numbers of distinct ethnic and/or cultural groups?
4. What branding strategy recommendations for the producers can be introduced by the policy makers to enhance the overall country image as an advanced and trustworthy manufacturing place?
5. Did the global economic crisis have impact on consumers' place associations and place-based product evaluations?

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