

JYVÄSKYLÄ UNIVERSITY

Author William Hurley	
Title Culture, branding and national identity in the era of globalization: A study of beer brands in the Finnish market	
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<p>Abstract</p> <p>Branding and marketing encompass some of the core elements of intercultural communication. Brands are derived from the existing cultural capital and the interaction that brands have with consumers in the marketing and consumption process involves an exchange of meaning and messages and therefore constitutes a form of communication in itself. Due to the economic imperative behind brand development, it is necessary that the brand react to changes in fashion, but also to changes in culture, in order to be competitive in the market place. However, this is not a one-way process as brands and products themselves influence trends and cultural shifts.</p> <p>The objective of this thesis was to analyze brands in a specific industry (brewing) that are available in a specific market place (Finland) in order to gain an insight into the nature of brand identity and its development in the era of globalization through the prism of existing concepts in the field of intercultural communication, within a broader context related to intercultural communication, globalization, identity, marketing and branding.</p> <p>At first glance, there appears to be an apparent dichotomy related to branding specifically derived from national cultural values and branding with an altogether more international and cosmopolitan character. However, this analysis illuminates an underlying relationship across the spectrum of brands between brands and national cultures of their countries of origin, albeit with certain specific deviations. There was also an apparent cultural dichotomy, whereby the overtly national brands espoused values that were related more with the traditional, pre-industrial values while the overtly international brands were related strongly with modern values that characterize post-industrial societies. The key finding here is that regardless whether brands purport to be cosmopolitan or national, the influence of their national cultural backgrounds abide beneath the veneer of the global and international. However, the veneer of the global and international represents an affirmation that a deterritorialized, global, cosmopolitan identity derived from across the international cultural spectrum, but principally derived from the 'Western lifestyle' and embodied in the profile of 'Modern</p>	

man' as outlined, is proliferating wherever the global economic system penetrates. In the era of globalization, it would appear that it is no longer sufficient for intercultural communication to focus on national or ethnically based cultural value systems. The impact of globalization and the supra national is an essential consideration in examining shifts and patterns in the field of globalization.

Keywords Culture, Identity, Globalization, Branding

Location Jyväskylä University

"We stand helpless before the global challenges the world faces, because our civilization has essentially globalized only the surface of our lives" Vaclav Havel

Table of contents

List of tables

Table 1: Dimensions and attributes of ethnic groups	24
Table 2: Perspectives on identity and communication page	25
Table 3: Maslow's hierarchy of needs	42
Table 4: Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's assumptions about a society's interactions with the environment	57
Table 5: 9 key developments relating to the globalization phenomenon	63
Table 6: Considerations for companies operating in an international marketplace	64
Table 7: Characteristic for effective participation in modern society	68
Table 8: 4 features of contemporary societies in the developed world	69
Table 9: Triandis' profiles of Modern and Traditional man	78
Table 10: Hofstede's dimensions of culture	79
Table 11: Explicit national cultural references	92
Table 12: National orientations for Hofstede's dimensions of culture	93
Table 13: Individualism/collectivism	94
Table 14: Masculinity/femininity	97
Table 15: Uncertainty avoidance	100
Table 16: Power distance	103
Table 17: Cultural references/symbols contained in website sample (F1,F2,F3)	113
Table 17b:G1	114
Table 17c:N1,D1	115
***Insert page numbers, tables and figures	

1. Introduction	6
<i>1.1 Motivation for the study.</i>	6
<i>1.2 Background of the study.</i>	9
<i>1.3 Approach to the study.</i>	18
2. Identity	20
<i>2.1 Defining identity.</i>	20
<i>2.2 Identity development.</i>	22
<i>2.3 Cultural identity.</i>	27
<i>2.4 National/ethnic identity.</i>	29
3. Branding, marketing and the production process	35
<i>3.1 The economic identity of the product as defined by the processes of branding, marketing and consumption.</i>	35
<i>3.2 Marketing.</i>	38
<i>3.3 The consumer.</i>	40
<i>3.4 The product.</i>	44
<i>3.5 Branding.</i>	46
4. Culture	51
<i>4.1 Defining culture.</i>	52
<i>4.2 The functions of culture.</i>	56
<i>4.3 Culture and how it relates to communication.</i>	60
<i>4.4 The phenomenon of globalization.</i>	62
<i>4.5 Culture in the era of globalization.</i>	67

5. Methodology	72
5.1 <i>Qualitative content analysis.</i>	72
5.2 <i>Research questions.</i>	80
5.3 <i>Data collection and analysis procedures.</i>	83
5.4 <i>Final methodology.</i>	87
6. Analysis	91
7. Discussion	123
7.1 <i>Identity.</i>	124
7.2 <i>Brands, Marketing and the consumption process in the global economy.</i>	127
7.3 <i>Culture, business and communication in a globalizing world.</i>	129
7.4 <i>Cultural dimensions at a national level.</i>	134
8. Conclusion	153
9. Bibliography	158

1. Introduction.

1.1 Motivation for the study

Having been born and raised in Ireland and having met many people who have a certain image of Ireland, speaking from personal experiences, a pint of black stout is strongly associated with the country, sometimes in a positive light (evoking convivial bars and traditional Irish music) but sometimes also in a negative light (excessive alcohol consumption). Irish stout and whiskey are sold around the world, and are considered flagship products of Ireland, not only economically but also culturally, due to the fact that they have become synonymous with Irish national identity. Typically in Ireland we are accustomed in our pubs and bars to being presented at the counter with taps of traditional Irish stout, ale and cider and then typically a few other multinational lager brands. In Finland however it was noticeable that typically there is primarily a limited selection of indigenous Finnish brands from which to choose from, and the multinational lager brands were less visible than in Ireland. However, increasingly there are more and more foreign brands visible on shelves in Finnish stores and in Finnish bars. This brought to mind issues ranging from intercultural communication to commerce to identity. After having my curiosity pricked by this noticeable feature of Finnish daily life, the next step was to examine the underlying factors behind this subtle yet tangibly evident phenomenon.

An initial inquiry into the reasons behind this phenomenon brought to the fore issues relating to globalization, specifically the economic policy of domestic protectionism that had resulted in a traditionally protected and closed domestic market in certain sectors. An initial assumption that was somewhat naïve on my part was the notion that somehow Finns were bucking the international trend and ‘buying Finnish’ for their own consumption and were resisting of their own accord the multinational or foreign brands, which have proliferated throughout the developed, industrialized world. This raised the question as to whether or not the Finns were particularly nationalistic as regards their consumption patterns, and was there perhaps an underlying conscious resistance to globalization at play here. As the concept developed, another issue of more pertinence to intercultural communication arose. This issue was related to product branding and what

branding says about cultural values both nationally and internationally. The main motivation of the thesis was not to examine the economic phenomenon of more liberal world trade agreements, and how they are reflected in the brands people consume, but to examine the phenomenon of globalization and to what extent, if any, cultural identities and values are influenced by this process, while also examining the extent to which national origins influence the development of brands. Through analyzing brands in terms of what aspects of existing, national and ethnic cultural identity they incorporate in their own brand identity. Conversely there was also the analysis of the brands in order to examine how international, cosmopolitan brands reinforce the tendencies of globalization to shape and reshape the cultural identities of millions across the globe based on the emergence of a transnational, cosmopolitan, global cultural identity that can exist anywhere and is therefore not rooted to a particular ethnic or national, culture but derived from a multitude of ethnic cultural identities and values according to the expediencies of the modern, globalized world economy. However, in order to accurately examine cultural trends, it is essential to examine the economic imperatives encompassing issues such as international trade and the changing character of economic systems across the world, in order to understand in a more comprehensive manner, why globalization follows a certain pattern. Globalization and the processes that define it, such as the liberalizing of trade agreements accompanied by an increasingly borderless global economy, is also a phenomenon that relates to the shaping and connecting of cultures as is implied by the notion of a borderless world, and the erosion of a notion of what is foreign or alien, and what is not.

The nexus between globalization, the national and world economies and cultural values that is central to this study is the brand. While the concept of the brand is explored in greater detail later on, the brand concept can be surmised as being a composite of values (including cultural values), identity and of course the tangible entity that is constituted by the product itself, which is subsequently sold according to a monetary market value.

A preliminary definition for branding refers to a process or a mode of communicating a value-laden message about a particular good or service to a consuming public that ultimately has a finite range of alternatives from which to choose within the framework

of the limits or borders being provided in the marketplace itself. In order to compete on the market, brands must therefore be responsive to market demands and pressures in order to maintain their competitive advantages and customer base, and this implies an awareness of cultural values and changes in trends and tendencies that influence consumption on the part of the seller (marketing).

Taking the Finnish alcoholic beverage market, specifically the beer market, can provide an insight into how a modern, Western European country that is becoming increasingly integrated into the EU and the broader world economy is influenced and experiences change of economic, social and cultural nature as a result of shifts in the global economic system. Globalization in this context is very much a phenomenon of the developed world, due to the fact that it is the developed industrialized world that has been penetrated by the capitalist system. Beer and brewing, as in most European countries, has a long-standing tradition within Finland and is also thoroughly integrated into the capitalist, industrial mode of production and operates in accordance with the imperatives of the capitalist market place. In comparison with other economic sectors, such as the high technology sector, which Finland is internationally renowned for, brewing is an industry that is deeply rooted in the social and cultural fabric of Finland. The cornerstone of Finnish literature and Finnish linguistic identity, the Kalevala, is one such source where references to brewing can be located. You won't however, find references to mobile phones or developments in nano-technology in any of the verses. Although Finland has become world renowned as a country that produces high technology goods due to the success in particular of a Finnish mobile telecommunications company, there isn't the same overt and explicit reference to a sense of 'Finnishness' as there is with a beer brand named after a region that has defined the Finnish nation, as depicted in its coat of arms. Finnish national iconography predominates in other Finnish beer brands also, including allusions to the environment of Lapland and the wildlife and wilderness of the Finnish forests. However as these traditional, or at any rate domestic, brands are increasingly being exposed to competition both from abroad and from domestic competitors in the form of supermarket own-brand products and smaller so-called microbrewery niche

market products, the issue arises regarding what changes can be observed currently in the market and does this relate to the bigger picture of the process of globalization.

1.2 Background of the study

Traditionally, the Finnish brewing industry, like Finland's economy in general, was constricted by its unique geographical location as a peripheral nation within Europe, with a harsh climate in the far north of the European continent, but also at a juncture between east and west, specifically between Sweden and Russia. **Lehtonen (1999)** has outlined 3 distinctive features of Finland that shaped the Finnish nation. These are its northern location, agrarian past and Lutheran belief system. Coming from this background, Finland has forged a self sufficient, self-reliant economy and somewhat closed economy for both political and geographical expediencies. However, accession to the EU has resulted in an opening of Finland's borders, while Finland's economic prosperity has been strongly linked to the fortunes of a global telecommunications giant, which in turn derives its earnings from the global economy more so than from its domestic market (it ranks among the top 5 companies worldwide in the mobile telecommunications sector). As with other nations that are becoming increasingly integrated into the global economic system, Finland has undergone rapid changes as a result of more exposure to the international market place through its membership of the EU, but also because of the process of globalization itself. The Finnish government itself has recognized a need to brand even the country itself in order to enhance the country's image and promote the country in the global marketplace. The brand provides a snapshot of the values espoused for commercial purposes by an entity seeking to sell a product, in the case of the national entity of Finland, to attract investment and to market Finnish goods internationally, in the case of commercial breweries, to attract the beer drinking public. **Winter (2009)** examined the country of Finland as a brand, with the aim of examining what constitutes the brand of Finland from a tourism perspective. This provided an interesting reference point, while also bearing in mind that the level of a brand's attraction varies from sector to sector and there was therefore a limited topic crossover. The primary point of interest garnered from this thesis was the link between national identity and the notion of

branding and marketing a national culture by employing cultural traits identifiably belonging to a specific national culture in order to attract consumers. **(Cited in Usunier,1988:180) Zaichowsky and Soo** looked at consumer involvement in 15 countries with 8 potentially global products (including beer). They revealed that the level of consumer globalization varies depending on the product/service category considered, indicating that the trend is not therefore universal. For instance **Blois (2000)** points out that inter EU industry trade is located mostly in sectors such as food and beverages, thus giving a strong indication that the brewing sector is one such sector where their trade is increasingly international in character. Following on from this in the same vein **Woods et al. (1985) (cited in Usunier 1988:181)** have contested that the age of universal marketing has not yet arrived, so therefore there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to marketing products on the world market indicating that national/regional/cultural differences abide in terms of consumption patterns and preferences.

The process of globalization nonetheless, implies that human activity is being played out increasingly on a global stage as opposed to being conducted in a restricted locality, where the world becomes a contiguous, unitary entity, where dividing lines have become blurred **Scholte (cited in Baylis and Smith, 2007)**, and therefore the implication is that there is a universality to this development that overrides pre-existing cultural differences and propagates a world where one can feel at home in any location due to the presence of universal, deterritorialized points of reference. However as national, ethnic and religious distinctions still characterize different corners of the globe, there exists a sharp contrast whereby it would appear that while there is an impetus in the trend towards generating a global and universal economy and society, the 'local' remains and the world is can in no way be described as being culturally and ethnically homogenous. **Harold Clark (1987) (cited in Usunier, 1988:132)** states that consumers are not yet, or may not ever be 'global' themselves, and that national and cultural variance remains quite significant. This is reflected in consumption patterns, as consumers do not yet generally buy 'global' brands and products. They don't necessarily care whether a particular brand is available elsewhere or not and therefore are not yet fully involved in following trends on an international basis. Consumers have their own individual preferences and values,

however as can be seen on the shop shelves in Ireland and Finland, there seem to be increasing similarities in terms of increasing commonalities and similarities amongst consumers in different countries than was previously the case, which also indicate processes that occur above the level of ordinary consumers and therefore shape the outlook, tastes and perspectives of these consumers.

The link between culture and branding has been established in previous studies ranging from the tourism sector to the marketing of Finnish mobile phones in the Asian marketplace. A point that has been reiterated in these works is that brands and cultures have certain features in common. Brands, like cultures, are based on a combination of meanings, symbols and products/artefacts on the surface. In addition to the product or service that is available for consumption, brands provide codified messages to the consumer in order to entice the consumer to make a purchase and in order to make this an attractive consumption option for consumer. Underlying the visually perceptible aspects of brands are aspects such as values, perspectives and ideals, which are the underlying factors that shape the more tangible and visible aspects of the brands, as is the case with culture in terms of the subjective and objective components of culture. Icons and symbols serve a function to societies as guiding points, and act in the function of exemplary symbols that people accept as shorthand to represent important ideas and values. Although brands have a primarily economic identity and are thus bound to economic imperatives, they also have a cultural identity. In the present day however, the cultural and the economic are more and more intertwined due to their connections to the capitalist market place **Hagen (2000)**. This can be seen for example in tourism, where cultural particularities become sought after products with an economic value to both the tourist and to the local economy, to give one example. As human beings living in social collectivities, we still produce or generate cultural activities but this occurs now in the context and within the limitations of the dominant economic system in the industrialized world, and the undisputed dominant economic paradigm that drives the world economy is capitalism. In the European context, the main motor for economic development, trade and the opening up of markets is the European Union due to its status as a trading bloc comprised of the bulk of European states without internal tariff barriers and a monetary

union. The creation of the Single European Market has resulted in the progressive elimination of barriers to trade between members of the association, facilitating increased international trade, particularly between member states within the Union.

As a member of the EU and the European monetary union (the Eurozone area), Finland and its population of approximately 5 million inhabitants is now a constituent part of this internal European market, which is constituted in real terms by a market of 500 million citizens. It is therefore subject to trends and developments that occur within the European Union, and perhaps to some extent given its relatively small population, it is subject to economic policies that are determined in the larger states of the Union, such as France, Germany and the UK by dint of the fact that they are the dominant economic powers in the Union, but of more pertinence to this study, it is subject to the penetration of its domestic market by foreign goods and services. Within the context of a borderless Europe, **Blois (2000)** has identified what he calls a 'European consumer', which arises as a result of a change in values, as result of a process of evolution that is driven by increasing economic, political and social integration within the EU. While he acknowledges that the EU is a diverse marketplace, he has identified certain values at a macro or aggregate level that operate on a Europe wide basis. At a pan-European level, European consumers have shifted from materialistic to post materialistic values, and from ownership to quality of life, establishing the existence of a European consumer in a European market. Such a hypothesis suggests that there now exists a consumer that can be identified as 'European', therefore the citizens of the EU are becoming increasingly homogenous according to this hypothesis, and can be categorized by supranational and supra-ethnic denominations. The EU, through the creation of a single market of 500 million people, has also facilitated processes that relate and feed into globalisation. The internal economic area of the EU facilitates an acceleration in the volume of goods and services transacted internationally due to the reduction in barriers to trade within the EU, including of course the beverage sector which in itself has a long-standing tradition of being regionally/nationally based. As the **Brewers of Europe** website outlines, the brewing sector operated largely on a regional or national basis throughout the post war period. There was a crossover between the cultural and the legal in relation to this. The

prime example of the legal complications being the German *Rheinheitsgebot*, which stipulates that beer must be manufactured according to certain requirements in order to maintain a certain standard, albeit a standard exclusively applying to the German market and therefore culturally bound by the norms and standards there, but which prevented access to the German market prior to an EU ruling relating to legal barriers to entry. This is a concrete example of how the EU legal framework removes barriers to trade between member nations. More recently there have been cases involving a relatively new member of the European community, the Czech Republic. According to **Roger Protz (www.beer-pages.com)**, as international companies bring their methods to other countries, they cause controversy by infringing on cultural norms such as was the case in the Czech Republic where there has been an influx of international brewers. This has caused friction amongst competitors regarding issues such as undermining the traditional Czech brewers, raising the issues of tradition clashing with a drive towards homogenisation and greater efficiency facilitating ease of access to markets. The single European market also provided the basis for increased agglomeration across Europe within the brewing industry. The **Brewers of Europe** mentions the emergence of global conglomerates in this period such as major brewers in Belgium, Denmark, and Holland, which have since expanded their operations into Finland, taking over what were previously the largest Finnish owned brewing entities. **Blois (2000)** relates this to the effects of increased global competition. In this instance he is discussing the effects of increased global competition and not just the European Union, but the principal underlines what has been outlined by the Brewers of Europe. That is there seems to be a trend whereby firms that have traditionally served the domestic market come under pressure from foreign competitors as has been the case in Finland, with some leading companies being purchased by international competitors, leading to an increased agglomeration of companies internationally and therefore the market panorama is dominated worldwide by a few major players. The economic weight of the brewing industry in Europe is indicated in the **Brewers of Europe** website (**www.brewersofeurope.org**). According to their website (the data was taken in the year 2010), the brewing sector in Europe contributes 8.5 billion Euro to national governments in excise duties, while it employs 140,000 people directly and 4 million indirectly 5 of the 6 largest brewers in the world are European, while

Europe accounts for 60% of global beer exports and 30% of beer production. Within this sector, the single European market has therefore facilitated agglomerative patterns accounting for the rise of such larger corporate entities emanating from the EU: “The development of the single European market has provided the platform for an increase in concentrative activity both at national and EU level” (**Blois 2000:90**). Shifting the focus to the more specific case of the Finland, it has been shown that as has been the case elsewhere in the EU, the Finnish and Nordic food and beverage markets have been operating on a national basis, owing to tariffs, transport costs, and consumer preference for national products, while the sale and marketing of alcohol is regulated (**Nordic food markets report, 2005, www.kilpailuvirasto.fi**). Moving away from the legal and regulatory boundaries, there are culturally bound preferences, which create divergences in local tastes. This factor has been related specifically to the brewing sector by (**Usunier, 2005**), as he points out beer is one of the products that is subject to differences in national tastes. Differences in preferences relate to aspects such as being more or less bitter, foamy, bubbly, sugary and alcoholic amongst other taste attributes. One of the major brewers in the world mentions on its website that they tailor their products and marketing policies in accordance with local preferences (www.heineken.com), something that would be examined in the course of the study, as the brand in question features in the data. As has been illustrated earlier, the creation of the European single market has changed this situation, and the situation in the Nordic countries reflects this, whereby after the opening up of the markets there has been a recorded increase in imports (**Nordic food markets report, 2005**). Finnish based and Finnish owned companies have traditionally dominated the Finnish brewing industry. However, the largest of these and the owners of the highest selling Finnish brands internationally and domestically have now been purchased by Dutch and Danish based international brewing giants, with the exception of one of the main Finnish brewers, which remain in Finnish ownership. According to **Blois (2000)**, the brands that have been the focus of major takeover bids are the ones that perform strongly and may enjoy a dominant position in their respective domestic markets, which gives an indication of the underlying motivations behind these takeover trends. That is to say, the strong and dominant brands in a national market become subject to bigger players on a global scale, who can use these strong brands to

gain a foothold in a particular market. However in addition to these larger brewers, there are smaller brewers (typically micro-breweries) which are represented by the small brewers federation of Finland, which includes in its membership ranks thriving breweries based in Pori and Tampere (**Markinnointi ja mainiota edition 2/10**). These smaller breweries are undertaking partnerships with the larger breweries in marketing their products to a niche market. The chief brewer of one of Finland's largest breweries has succinctly surmised the division that exists within the market for beer.

“In Finland there are two kinds of beer drinkers, taste tester (limited editions) and the regular sauna one” (**Kimmo Jääskeläinen, 2002, www.allaboutbeer.com**).

Small brewers have specific legal requirements so as to distinguish them as separate from larger breweries. The main requirement being that they can produce 10 million litres of beer maximum (**Markinnointi ja mainiota ed.2/10**). Both the large and small producers have their roots in the brewing traditions of Finland and Europe. Finland is outside the so called ‘beer belt’ of countries that have strong brewing traditions (**Julie J. Bradford, 2002: www.allaboutbeer.com**). This beer belt includes countries like Belgium, Germany and the Czech Republic in central Europe, south of which lies the ‘wine belt’ and north and east of which lays the ‘vodka belt’, where Finland is located. However in spite of Finland's location in the other beverage belt zone, beer has traditionally held a place in Finnish economic and cultural life. **Julie J. Bradford (2002)** has pointed to a set of factors that mitigate against the notion the Finland doesn't have a brewing history. It is home to the oldest brewery in the Baltic region, while 400 lines of the centrepiece of Finnish literary culture, the *Kalevala* are devoted to brewing. *Sahti* beer is a testament to the deep-rooted tradition of brewing in Finland. Along with Belgian lambics, the brewing method of *Sahti* is the oldest method of brewing still in production today. So while Finland might not be considered part of the ‘beer belt’ of Europe, there is evidence of a deep rooted culture of brewing, and in terms of consumption there is also evidence of an affinity for beer as Finland consumes 80 litres of beer per capita per annum, which, to put it in perspective, is lower than Denmark (96 litres), but higher than neighbouring Norway and Sweden (50 and 55 litres respectively), and significantly higher than France for

example (36 litres) (**Nordic food market report, 2005**). This is evidential proof of the deep-rooted and strongly felt cultural and economic significance of brewing.

In a global environment of increasing cultural homogenization, globalized patterns of consumption, and a blurring of the lines of identity, this study will aim to examine the cultural shifts and patterns by examining a specific industry steeped in tradition yet clearly subject to the forces of globalization. This is to be conducted through a research into brands and brand values, and comparing and contrasting these brands in terms of how they relate to their national origins. Globalization is the leitmotif of our age and the process of globalization is sometimes presented as an entirely new phenomenon. There has however been global trade and movement of people since time immemorial from the times of the Roman Empire to the Tatar and Viking conquests of swathes of Europe and the discovery and colonization of the ‘New World’. So what distinguishes the modern phenomenon of globalisation from previous forms of international trade and development? According to **Scholte (1996)** the globalization process is characterized by ‘deterritorialization’ whereby developments in communications and communication technology mean that human activity is ever more removed from a specific territory. International and transnational exchanges can occur instantaneously without the territorial barriers and obstacles that existed prior to the development of electronic communication technology. There is also a view that ‘globalization’ is not a meeting and combination of different cultures, but is determined by the cultural dominance of certain nations, hence the vociferous anti-Globalisation and anti-Capitalist movements and protests that have become synonymous with events such as world trade meetings or attacks on well known fast food chains, which are associated with American cultural and economic imperialism. **Usunier** outlines an example of this overriding concern in the globalization process using the world trade organization. He states that:

“GATT represents the view of liberal/individualist/utilitarian England and the Anglo Saxon world” (**Usunier, 2005:190**).

While this perspective relates to the world economy in its entirety, **Blois** provides a perspective on the development of globalization within the context of the EU’s industry and services sector. According to **Blois (2000)**, in the last two decades of the 20th century,

most of the world's economies experienced acceleration in the pace of economic change. While there was also a convergence of forces that led to rapid interdependence between countries, causing structural shifts to occur within these same nations. This interdependence between countries is facilitated particularly by a supranational organization such as the European Union, which removes barriers to trade in pursuit of a single market. The globalisation process could be said to be driven and to drive both cultural and economic changes. However, within the context of this thesis, the cultural implications of globalisation are of more pertinence to the research than the economic implications, nonetheless the link between the two is an essential consideration. The economic side is dependent also to an extent on cultural acceptance of shifts, if people are resistant in buying into a globalized market then the economic imperative that would drive globalisation wouldn't exist in all likelihood, or would be diminished at any rate. As stated above the process has the appearance of a protagonist for change on the one hand, and a subject to change on the other. **Blois (2000)** describes the process of globalization as self-perpetuating or self-reinforcing, which would confirm the fact that it drives and is driven by its own evolving dynamics. The bottom line of this process is that countries become more interdependent worldwide, and the volume of goods and services transacted internationally accelerates. This increase and openness has knock on effects on patterns of ownership as firms that were exclusively serving the domestic market, or even exporting also, but primarily serving the domestic market, become globalized multinationals or subject to ownership by such entities. As these firms become increasingly international in their business dealings, there is a requirement to market their products to culturally diverse marketplaces and therefore their marketing strategies must take into consideration intercultural matters that may have an impact on the success of their strategies.

In the current era, the nexus between commerce and human cultural activities and norms is subject to change and development, which is occurring at a faster pace than ever before in history. Is humanity heading towards the creation of a virtuous circle of increased cooperation and prosperity based on a greater mutual understanding, mutually beneficial development, and the removal of misunderstandings that engender suspicion and malice amongst people? Or does this period of 'globalisation' threaten the diversity and richness

of human activity as manifested in the form of cultural diversity and placing humanity within a cultural straightjacket and limiting human potential to certain criteria based on an expediency of the economic system? There are also issues of suitability raised, is a universal way of life sustainable and even well suited to the different and diverse inhabitants of the world? Looking to the future, the unprecedented developments that are occurring now need also to be examined in order to gain an insight into the future shape that the world will take, culturally, socially and economically. Such a broad spectrum cannot be reduced to the content of a thesis, however certain facets can indeed be explored as has been attempted in this thesis. The focus will be firmly on the cultural relationships that exist between brands and their countries of origin, and to what extent the processes of globalisation are reflected in how these brands market their products. In order to accomplish this, the parameters were defined by a set of dimensions related to the field of intercultural communications. The dimensions used for the purpose of this research were **Hofstede's** dimensions of culture and Triandis' profiles of modern and traditional man.

1.3 Approach to the study

As the thesis framework evolved from the original curiosity that initiated a specific line of inquiry, the framework for the methodology evolved also. The best research questions were not self evident from the beginning, but needed to be teased out, with an eye on current developments while also seeking to relate the topic to the field of intercultural communication. My original idea for the data collection was that the data would be explicitly related to different beer brands, for example, advertising materials, packaging and also interviews of the general public in locations such as supermarkets or *Alko* stores. However in order to focus my enquiry, the source of data was limited to brand websites. In total, six brands were chosen for the purpose of the research (3 from Finland, 1 from Germany, 1 from the Netherlands that was also the flagship brand of a multinational that had purchased one of the Finnish brands, and 1 from Denmark, which was similarly the flagship brand of a multinational that had purchased one of the Finnish brands). The next issue related to how the websites would be analysed. The central dynamic of this research was the relationship between national cultural identity, branding and the process of globalization. **Hofstede's** dimensions of culture and **Triandis'** profile of both modern

and traditional man were chosen as the theoretical foundation for the analysis as the combination of both allowed the data to be analysed in such a way that links to national cultural values could be scrutinized against **Hofstede's** findings, while the profiles of modern and traditional man related specifically to the contrast between pre-industrial and post-industrial values, the latter of which is related to the logic behind capitalism and the phenomenon of globalization. In finalizing the research questions it was necessary therefore that the central aim was to generate questions that would examine the relationship between national cultural values, globalization and branding, in such a way that the findings of the data analysis could be linked to the theoretical background regarding the areas of culture and identity, globalization, marketing and branding.

The research questions are as follows:

1a/ What are the relationships between national cultural backgrounds and the brands as can be deduced from the websites?

1b/What is the relationship between the national backgrounds of each of the brands country of origin and Hofstede's dimensions of culture?

2/ What is the relationship between the brand websites and their respective national backgrounds?

3/ What is the relationship between Triandis' profiles of Modern/Traditional man relate to the brand websites?

4/ What is relationship between the brand websites, their national backgrounds and both Hofstede and Triandis' dimensions?

2 Identity.

2.1 Defining identity

This chapter will focus specifically on different sources and concepts of identity relating to culture, nationality, and the artifacts or symbols that transmit and embody identity. Identity in the form of brand identity is employed in the brewing industry. Products and brands are becoming increasingly relevant to issues of personal identity and through symbols and values provided by brands, an identity is formed and transmitted with which the consumer can identify, this gives an indicator of formative cultural developmental processes that shape a society, nation or a culture. Core symbols (cultural values) inform about fundamental beliefs and the central concepts that define a particular identity (**Martin and Nakayama, 2007**). These symbols act as a sort of glue that binds together identity communities in time, as **Crosby and Leoussi** have outlined, regarding specifically to the symbols of ethnosymbolism:

“Underlines the continuity between pre-modern and modern forms of social cohesion, without overlooking changes brought about by modernity” (**Crosby and Leoussi, 2007:21**).

Thus iterating that symbols can maintain the integrity of identity communities by providing reference points or touchstones for their identities. Languages and myths provide other key sources of identity and are particularly associated with the formation of nation states. Taking present day Europe as an example, many nation states are distinguished from each other by their own national languages, and as is the case for both Finland and Ireland, a nationally oriented mythology. Language, according to **Cameron**, provides a:

‘Testimony of their cultural heritage’ (**Cameron, 1999:4**).

Myths allude to the how a group’s identity was forged in the distant past. Therefore symbols, language and myth are all intrinsically linked in forming identity whether it relates to national, cultural or indeed brand identity, as brands employ the above components in communicating their message to the consumer. The main difference

between the identities of brands and nations perhaps, is that brand identities aren't the result of organic human development, but are parasitical by nature. In order to be successful, brands fabricate identity myths, which have the effect of addressing contradictions in societies, potentially damaging tears in the nation's cultural fabric (**Holt, 2004**). The brands essentially feed off the host societies, and strive to produce a myth, which can allay the fears of consumers, or provide them with a sort of spiritual comfort or reassurance. **Hobsbawm** crystallizes the relationship between economy and one of the above factors, language, when he stated that:

'National vernacular language is tied to economic, technological, political developments' (**Hobsbawm, 1990:190**).

Thus the economic system and the system of production is very much tied into developments within the sphere of culture and identity as it exerts and has always exerted an influence on the very language people speak. Economic developments and technological developments are inextricably linked to the progress of societies and nations. The technological developments that have progressed rapidly recently, in terms of the timeline of human development in the industrial world have provided the dynamic force of modern development. As **Baylis and Smith** have outlined, old ideas of time and space seem to be collapsing as they are undermined by the speed of modern communications and the media (**Baylis and Smith, 2001:9**). The knock on effect of these developments is that our world becomes increasingly international, intercultural and indeed multicultural in character as different cultural groups with their associated identities are being brought into contact with each other as commerce and travel are conducted on a more international basis than ever before. In order to quantify the effects of this process, it is necessary to identify components of identity. 3 universal aspects of identity present in all individuals have been identified, these being individual identity, familial identity and spiritual identity, (**Alan Roland, cited in Thomas and Nakayama, 1988**). These are related to cultural groups, stating that cultural groups usually emphasize one or two of these and downplay the other. So that while one could be Irish, Catholic and have a certain political affiliation, they would not necessarily attribute the same importance to each of these categories, and there may be a hierarchy of attachment to these identity groups. Identity however is not a fixed entity, and is subject to change and

development. The pace of change in the modern world, for the reasons of rapid development already mentioned, also serves to undermine identity and accelerate changes within identity. Two broad issues related to identity in the context of the modern world have been identified by **Preston (Preston, 1997)**. These issues relate to how identity in the modern world is unstable by nature, and the system within which identity is created is ambiguous, owing to the fact that members of identity groups are more internationally mobile and come into contact with other groups. This is the flipside of the positive aspects of experiencing different cultures on a more frequent and widespread basis, and how it can lead to a disintegration, or erosion of one's sense of self. **Baylis and Smith (Baylis and Smith, 2001)** describe the 'post modern' individual as having a 'fractured self with multiple and fluctuating senses of being and belonging (for instance in terms of nationality, gender, race, sexuality)'. This is a clear indication that the most consistent feature of our identities is that they are inconsistent and transient. From the perspective of global markets, this would seem to present an opportunity to global companies. If identities are in a state of flux and much more influenced by external identity groups, then there is the potential of the development of a global consumer with global tastes. On the other hand, there is a potential for using a specific identity as a shield from other identity groups to keep the 'others' out. In fact the presence of anti-globalisation activists throughout the world suggests a reaction to the undermining of specific identity groups by increased cross-border, cross-cultural interaction. So while there is the potential for economic development and deriving benefits through exchanges between different identity groups, there is also a volatile and hostile reaction to the undermining of identities in a rapidly changing and more open world.

2.2 Identity development

While we live in an increasingly individualistic era, identities, including individual identity, do not exist by the volition of the individual in their own right, but are created and constructed in relation to the environment that the individual is socialized into and lives in. According to **Lehtonen**, individual identities are built and shaped in relation to the social belongings of an individual (**Lehtonen, 2005**). These include belongings to ethnic, national or religious communities for example. However these belongings are subject to fluctuation and change, and are therefore not considered as being permanent.

The circumstances of modern life and the development of post-industrial societies have given rise to an insecurity of modern self-hood (**Preston, 1997**). The pace of change, increased movement of people, and the increasing intercultural interaction provides the context for more transient and foot loose forms of self-identity. As **Erikson** puts it; ‘Our identities are self-created, formed through identity conflicts and crises, through identity confusion and diffusion’. (**Erikson cited in Martin and Fukuyama, 2007:155**)

This process, accelerated by the modern age, would appear to take its toll on a psychological level, as the bedrock of our identities becomes subject to changes. Occasionally a time out (moratorium) is needed in the process. Identity in the modern/post modern era is thus created in spurts, with some events providing insights into who we are, and long periods when we may not think much about it. The modern, increasingly globalized world provides the context for this process and may accelerate the process itself due to factors such as technology, increased travel and increased international commercial activity. Globalization evokes strong responses in people, from genuine fears that it is an undemocratic process, undermining human rights, to more positive notions that it promotes prosperity while increasing global peace and harmony. **Baylis and Smith** describe globalization as:

‘A process of increasing interconnectedness between societies such that events in one part of the world more and more have effects on peoples and societies far away. Societies are affected more and more extensively and deeply by events elsewhere’ (**Baylis and Smith, 2001:7**).

While this allows people to be more foot loose and have more freedom in their lives, it also poses the problem of the transience and dynamism of identities and the insecurities that arise as a result. From an individual perspective, how do we become members of certain identity groups that we come into contact with and not with others? The central issue here is how the individual self relates to different identity groups. **Lehtonen** maintains that in relation to emotional attachment to groups, people identify with certain values, beliefs, symbols and moral norms, which in turn blurs the lines of identity, and

explains somewhat why people don't fit exactly into identity categories (**Lehtonen and Petkove, 2005**). However, even though individual identities might not fit perfectly into identity groups, there is still a sense of belonging to certain groups. Identities at an aggregate, group level, serve a variety of purposes. Identities may serve a cohesive purpose in order to reinforce a national allegiance for example, to assist in fostering national cohesion, or to promote specific group interests and survival within a society. This form of identity can be in terms of national identity, ethnic identity or it could relate to religious communities, even followers of sports teams. Focusing the issue of national and ethnic identity, which is the primary concern of the research, these two formers are often mistakenly believed to be one and the same. Ethnic identity therefore cannot be considered a synonym for national identity, and is, for instance, considered by **Valk and Karu (cited in Lauritsin, 1997)** to be a specific multidimensional form of social identity. Theorists have attempted to identify component dimensions of ethnic identity. Certain dimensions are considered to be universal features common to all ethnic identities, and **Phinneys'** universal dimensions of ethnic identity are given as a model, of which there are four: 1) Self identification as a group member. 2) A sense of belonging to an ethnic group. 3) Attitudes towards one's group. 4) Ethnic identity formation. While **Bouchet (1995)** has listed 6 attributes of ethnic community 1) Collective proper name 2) Myth of common ancestry 3) Shared historical memories 4) One or more differentiating elements of common culture (language) 5) Association with specific homeland 6) A sense of solidarity (**cited in Usunier, 2005**).

Table 1: Dimensions and attributes of ethnic groups

	Phinney's universal dimensions of ethnic identity	Bouchet's attributes of ethnic community
1	Self identification as a group member	Collective proper name
2	A sense of belonging to an	Myth of common ancestry

	ethnic group	
3	Attitudes towards ones group	Shared historical memories
4	Ethnic identity formation	One or more differentiating element(s) of common culture
5		Association with a specific homeland
6		A sense of solidarity

The notion of identity as a myth generated by communities is central to the above attributes or features. Myths provide a unifying narrative for the nations or ethnic groups in order to promote ordered societies with a perceived unity of purpose. As **Holt** has noted and as has been mentioned prior in relation to branding, identity myths are useful fabrications that can paper over or conceal otherwise damaging tears in the cultural fabric of the nation (**Holt, 2004**). Taking a more general perspective on identity, there have been certain features of identity development and not only specific group identities identified by theorists. **Martin and Nakayama** provide three interrelated perspectives on identity and communication. The table provides a range of perspectives on how identity formation with three different emphases, on the self, on communication with others or the social and finally on the socio-political role.

Table 2: Perspectives on identity and communication (Martin and Nakayama, 2007:155)

Social science	Interpretive	Critical
Identity created by self (by relating to groups.)	Identity formed through communication with others.	Identity shaped through social, historical forces.
Emphasizes individual, familial and spiritual (cross-cultural perspective).	Emphasizes avowal ascribed dimensions.	Emphasizing contexts and resisting ascribed identity.

This table provides a framework in which identity and communication can be examined. In the context of this research, national and cultural identity will be taken into account in terms of how the symbols communicated by brands reflect characteristics of national and cultural identities, and also to other forms of cultural identity. One of the central points of the interpretative perspective, which forms a key nexus between brand identity and national/ethnic/cultural identities, is the idea that our identities are expressed communicatively in core symbols, labels and norms (**Martin and Nakayama, 2007**).

Another issue, relating with labels, and associated with identity in this context that overlaps with intercultural communication is the issue of stereotypes, and how they function in this context. Although the notion of a stereotype conjures up a negative, lazy and prejudiced image, stereotyping has positive as well as negative functions. Stereotyping can provide a readily available image of a given social group, usually based on rough, and often negative generalizations. They provide a descriptive or evaluative individual or self-concept. A positive, but nonetheless mistaken and misleading feature of stereotypes, that they can generate a 'halo effect' applied to countries, whereby a country and its people may be lauded for their positive traits and ignoring the potential negatives (**Petkova and Lehtonen, 2005**). The benefits, or the positives, of stereotypes have been outlined by **Gannon**, who has outlined 4 characteristics, which are needed in order for a stereotype to be considered positive or helpful. These are that stereotypes are 'descriptive rather than evaluative, the first best guess, based on data and observation and subject to change when new info merits it' (**Gannon cited in Adler 2000:36**). This shows that at least some basic knowledge of any other culture derived from a stereotype, may be of benefit in grasping tenets and norms of other cultures. Nonetheless, it remains the case that stereotypes amount to a set of attributes agreed on as typical of the group, but conforming actually very little to actual behaviours of group members or the facts. Although stereotypes may not be necessarily malicious or derogatory, they are the result of inferior judgmental processes, that can distort the real picture of out-group behavior, exaggerating inter group differences. They can also have to effect of misleading or misleading people, as they are relatively simple rigid cognitions of social groups that function to blind individual to neutral and informed judgment (**Petkova and Lehtonen, 2005**). An obvious trait of stereotyping is prejudice. Prejudice can be described as a

feature of stereotyping, as prejudice also indicates that preconceived generalizations are held about a group or group member. **Breslin (1999)** has identified four functions of prejudice. The first function is utilitarian, which means that prejudice may lead to reward. The second function is ego defensive, whereby people don't want to believe certain things about themselves. The third function is value expressive, which serves to reinforce certain aspects of life that are highly valued. The final function is a knowledge function, which serves to provide order to structure and organize their world in a way that makes sense to them (**Breslin cited in Martin and Nakayama, 2007**). This again relates to the symbolic nature of branding, and how brands take into consideration these functions. Thus stereotypes are not entirely negative and can provide us with reference points that may in fact smoothen our understanding of cultures that we are not well acquainted with. However, ultimately they are misleading and unreliable, and therefore not to be taken as facts.

2.3 Cultural identity

Cultural identities are derived from and formed within cultural groups be they national, ethnic, religious or otherwise. **Lehtonen** has provided a model for cultural identity composed of 3 elements (**Lehtonen and Petkova, 2005**):

- 1/ Elements of national culture typical of a given cultural group, e.g. food, clothes, houses, tools.
- 2/ Elements of spiritual/mental culture of the community (symbols, traditions, customs, values).
- 3/ Spatial/temporal elements (religion/nationhood).

From this definition there is an indication that cultural identity is located in a specific location in time and space, and is subject to institutional influences like religion and national/state institutions. In addition to this, cultural identity is also influenced by factors such as ethnicity, which doesn't necessarily have a state infrastructure behind it.

Missing from these elements is any reference to the development, or the emergence, of a global culture and the impact this has on cultural identities. **Baylis and Smith (2001)** insist on the existence of a global culture and they base this assertion on aspects of the

developed world such as how modern urban environments derive there look from Hollywood for instance, while also stating that a global polity and a cosmopolitan culture is emerging. They iterate that this development is underpinned on the one hand by advancements in modern communications, which have effectively collapsed time and space, and on the under hand by the economic imperative to earn money in order to partake in the consumerist process.

That is not to say that globalization has had the effect of eradicating cultural identities and replaced them entirely with a single homogenous cultural identity. Cultural identities have deep roots, which provide the core, essential features that give particular groups their distinctive identity, providing a 'higher existential essence' (Lehtonen, 2005). These cultural groups are now faced with an economic system that is becoming more pervasive in all facets of life as the world becomes a more industrialized and urban space. Cultural heritage may therefore clash with the protagonists of economic development, such as large corporations, companies and other business interests. As Hagen states:

'Playing with corporate property is not the same as playing with a given cultural heritage'.

In addition to this, the longevity and resilience of various cultural groups suggests that while globalization is a force in influencing the formation of and reformation of cultural identities, nonetheless cultural identities possess deep roots into the distant past and would therefore not be so easily shifted or changed. But they are dynamic and are subject to a continuous process involving comparison, affirmation and negation (Hagen, 2000:88). There is an apparent dominance at certain times, whereby certain cultures dominate over others, resulting in changes and developments. A good example of how such change occurs in relation to how identities evolve due to pressures exerted from without, such as globalization, is the language used by a group. Language has been described as a 'cultural artifact' (Hobsbawm, 1990) and therefore is a store of cultural identity. The British Empire left English as the predominant language in many of its former colonies, including the USA, which has been at the forefront, and indeed the driving force of global and international trade for the last century. In terms of shifts in cultural identity, the language used indicates the influences that have been exerted on

groups. From a personal perspective, in Ireland there have been efforts to restore Gaelic as a spoken language, however with the proliferation of mass media not only from the UK but also from the US and Australia, the position of English as the language of communication has been reinforced if anything. In terms of brands and communicating a message to a market, it begs the question how does the language of globalization, English, indicate trends in relation to shifts in cultural patterns.

Marxist theory provides another, much more economically oriented or strictly speaking materialist perspective. Although it relates more specifically to nationalism, there is also a relevance to the issue of cultural identity. That is 'globalization' or the proliferation of capitalism on an international scale, is the progressive force that:

'Sweeps away the divisions between petty, introverted communities, dragging them into a world market governed by world wide imperatives' (Crick, 2004:25).

According to this argument identities of cultural groups are not taken into consideration and the only, or at least the overriding consideration, is the material well being of people, and the advancement of technology and human development. This perspective would seem to be scathing of ethnic and national communities, as the argument presented is that such considerations and manifestations essentially fly in the face of human advancement and development. There is the assertion that communities who resist assimilation into the 'modern' and 'advanced' civilizations are dismissed as 'backward', 'pre-modern', 'provincial' and 'barbarian' (Crick, 2004). While the economic imperatives are undoubtedly an essential element in the running and driving of the cultural motor, should cultural identities be dismissed as merely an obstacle to the pursuit of greater material well being and progress? Cultural identities may also mean as much to people as material well being, as the rebirth of languages and customs of subdued ethnic groups are testament to, as well as the outright rejection of the Soviet system, which subdued ethnic identity and cultures in the name of progress, under the banner of a form of internationalist communism.

2.4 National/ethnic identity

National identities are very much associated with the principles of nationalism, and are formed in within the framework of a national conscience. **Cameron** provides the nationalist imperative stating that:

“The ultimate objective of nationalist movements is to make nation and state coextensive” (**Cameron, 1999:7**).

This underlines the fact that national identity is a more overtly political form of identity than its kin, ethnic identity. The identity of an ethnic group relates more strongly to commonalities amongst a community, such as customs and language, whereas national identities are formed based on political principles more so and may supersede ethnic differences. The nation has also been held to have a primarily political meaning by **Hobsbawm**, as it is the political expression of a community:

“Whose collective sovereignty constituted them a state which was their political expression” (**Hobsbawm, 1990:19**).

This overt reference to political expression, and not a cultural expression constitutes the key difference between ethnic and national. To take the example that is personally most familiar, Irish nationalism could not claim to represent the longing for self-determination of a single ethnic group. The island has been inhabited and ruled by waves of immigration (as has Finland) by different ethnic groups including the Vikings, the Celts, the Normans and the Anglo-Norman British. So national identity has been a culmination of the combination of these overlapping cultural groups with an acute political edge to it, while the fundamental basis that underlies this is the unique territorial situation as an island. **Cameron** encapsulates the centrality of a congruous and unified geographical entity, as well as the nation being a culmination of human movement, as opposed to the ethnic focus on the group’s roots and origins, in the following:

“A large collectivity, which inhabits its own discrete territory and possesses its own highly distinctive personality”... and should therefore “be given the freedom to choose its own level of self government” (**Cameron, 1999:12**).

While national identity has similarities with ethnic identity, ethnic and national identities

are not synonymous. National identity is contiguous with a nominal nation state while ethnic groups may operate within states dominated by another ethnic groups, or the result of waves of influence from different ethnic groups, or may indeed for part of an overtly multiethnic state such as the United States or the former Yugoslavia. The above shows how the concepts of nationality and ethnicity differ, but what how can ethnicity and nationality be defined in their own right? **Smith** has defined the ethnic unit, attributing to it the following features: 1) an ethnic unit is a population whose members believe that in some sense they share common descent and 2) a common cultural heritage or tradition that are so regarded by others (**Smith, 1986**). This can readily be compared with **Hobsbawm's** criteria for a nation, these being:

“Its historic association with a current state or one with a fairly lengthy and recent past, existence of long established cultural elite with a written national literary and administrative vernacular and finally, a proven capacity for conquest as Darwinian proof of evolutionary success” (**Hobsbawm, 1990:37**).

The similarities therefore between ethnic and national identities pertain to both believing in a common descent stretching into the distant past, embodied in the cultural artifacts of culture under the auspices of a common cultural elite. The purpose of these identities is to provide a unifying force for societies and to provide cohesion and a focal point for people to identify with in terms of the values held. Referring again to **Holt's** notion that identity myths are man made fabrications, and that their purpose is to “stitch back together otherwise damaging tears in the cultural fabric of the nation” (**Holt, 2004**). This is of course particularly important regarding nations, as the nation state is and has been the predominant vehicle for human development of the last century, being endowed with a legal, monetary, fiscal and cultural character. National identities are rooted in specific regional and geographical settings, but are ultimately social constructs, a case in point being Europe its which is not a geographically contiguous zone but an intellectually constructed entity, according to **Gellner**, nationalism:

“Invents nations where they don't exist”(cited in **Yoshino, 1999:10**).

Reinforcing the notion that identities and national identities are socially constructed, **Gellner** also illustrates the historical circumstances that facilitated nationalism. The

industrialization of societies had led to an erosion of traditional social structures of kinship and community, and therefore in order to create and maintain social cohesion, a shared culture was necessitated and, according to **Gellner**, this led to the rise of nationalism. This explains the rise of the nation state as the dominant form of governance across the world, overtaking the empires and kingdoms of previous centuries. Reiterating this reflection on nationalism, **Baylis and Smith** describe nationalism as:

“A response to the breakdown of old forms of community, which were underpinned by religious and/or dynastic rule and a rural way of life while the ‘ethnie’ that form the basis of modern nationalities are derived from the pre-modern, pre-nationalist age” (**Baylis and Smith, 2001:451**).

This definition of nationalism shows how ethnicity is perhaps the starting point for nationalism, and nationalist movements incorporate ethnicity into their outlook in order to provide historical continuity and integrity. However, in the context of a globalizing world, nationalism is having the opposite effect to what **Gellner’s** nation states in some ways sought to achieve. Nationalism and the economic trends of the day, such as increasing international mobility of the capital and labour, would seem to be effectively in opposition to one another. The prerogatives of global capitalism would appear to undermine the structure of societies within nation states, which had been underlined by a national state mechanism. The aura around nation states, and the mystique of the nation have perhaps more to do with conscious myth making and less to do with the organic development of ancient tribes. **Lehtonen** also alludes to the idea that nationalism is very much artificial by nature. Similarly to what has been outlined by **Gellner**, he states that from the mid twentieth century, some researchers perceived nations as being a social construction based on a myth of common origin (**Lehtonen, 2005**). These myths perhaps served to legitimise the nation state in an historical continuum, and presented nations and sometimes ethnicities as the result of conscious and deliberate social engineering. (**Hobsbawn, 1990**). Such theory presents the nation states as being the result of manipulative and cynical processes, however the other side of national movements and nationalism, is that they either resulted in or promoted increased democratisation and empowerment of people through the vehicle of an awakening of feelings for ones origins and ones homeland. **Gellner**, for instance has associated the rise of nationalism and the

creation and consolidation of nation states with three phases, those being the enlightenment, the French revolution and the German idea of 'volk' which holds that peoples are divided into separate groups (**cited in Baylis and Smith, 2001**). The nationalism that arose from these different philosophical developments leads to more democratic societies, a sense of heritage and pride in ones culture, the liberation of communities dominated by imperial powers. But nationalism also leads to inter-ethnic hostility, a sense of superiority and chauvinism about ones nationality and the division amongst peoples. The process of globalization seems to threaten the fundamentals of national identities as the above are undermined by global economic developments. At the institutional level, the level of the nation-states, nations operate currently within an international community, and not in a unilateral manner, as was previously the case. Organizations such as the EU, the UN, NATO and the IMF can attest to this, as nations act increasingly under the aegis of supranational organisation. Accompanying the development of these multinational political/economical organizations is the development of the multinational businesses, who can generate greater revenues and therefore have more financial clout and muscle on the international state than some nation states. The supranational, umbrella groups, such as the EU, are a development on rather than a break from nation states, as they operate according to one of the fundamental tenets of nationalism for example, that is the principle of self-determination expressed in the political form of the nation. The difference is that in the face of the global economy, nations have less power individually, and therefore join international groupings in order to achieve self-determination. The EU itself pertains to a notion of a pan-European identity, so is itself a nation of nations. **Falkheimer and Jänsson (2006)** use the example of the concept of 'Fortress Europe' (a term coined by the Nazi's as '*Festung Europa*') to illustrate how regions are not based in some objective reality but are part of a symbolic struggle in which space is produced and ultimately dominated by the authority of political and economic power, again placing an firm emphasis on material expediencies and the realpolitik of political power rather than the commonalities and shared values that of the region. But national identities are not however mere political expediencies, or fabrications designed to legitimise elite control. They are also expressions of communities that share values and a system of symbols unique to them. According to

Smith (cited in Kossaku Yoshino 1999), one has to look for special qualities and durability of an ethnic group in the nature of their myths and symbols, memories and values. That is to say that there is enduring evidence of the ethnic groups in an historic continuum. Myths and symbols are present in the artifacts of culture, as is the case of the brewing industry, where the artefacts of the brands are found in the form of advertising, promotional material and the products. The final aspect of national identity that is essential in order to define the identity is the aspect of borders. The ‘Fortress Europe’ conjures up the image of an entity, Europe, contained behind the fortress walls, which act as the border. Borders, operating at a cultural level in addition to the physical level, are involved in a reinforcing process whereby they promote cultural differences through blocking off one from the other, and these arising cultural differences in turn galvanize borders with others. The borders created serve the purpose of fostering stability within the borders of the community. Identities can be considered systems of meaning, whereby, according to **Falkheimer and Jänsson (2006)**, they have their own dynamics and structural inertia that oppose sudden cultural change and create cultural continuity in the form of traditions, symbolic patterns, and in the case of geographical and regional entities, the historical lore of the land. These boundaries are underlined by ancestral myths which are taught through the formal education system under the auspices of elite control, serving a dual purpose of cultural transmission and social control (**Yoshino, 1999**).

National identity is where the cultural meets the political, combining to form a powerful and intriguing social motif. It serves to foster stability, to endow on its constituent communities values that promote the group’s survival and prosperity and to maintain the heritage, autonomy and traditions of the group. But it may also lead to insularity, fear and hatred of others and stifle development. In the global world of increased movement of people and increased interaction amongst people from different parts of the world, its relevance is also coming into question.

3 Brands, marketing and the consumption process.

3.1 The economic identity of the product as defined by the processes of branding, marketing and consumption

The economic identity of the brand is of interest to this thesis mostly in how it relates to culture and communication. In the context of beer brands, a prime example of the importance of branding and culture was explained by the director of a Finnish company that had made investments in the Baltic region (**Olvi HS 18/10/2010**).

In that instance, a company director claimed that buying the brand mark was a must when moving into the new market, as they have represented part of the local culture for a long time. There was also a recent moving of production of one brand to a new location as part of a restructuring. The brand in question had strong ties to the area, as is indicated by the name, which brought into question the effects of the relocation. This move of production encapsulated the controversial nature of globalization, whereby the bigger companies move in, and in attempt to gain efficiencies, there is the uprooting of an industry, with all the consequences for a locality that this entails. **Usunier** has shown how markets have been globalized to facilitate this shift. It relates primarily to demand, tastes, preferences and price mindedness, and how these become increasingly universal in the globalizing environment. The process explains aspects of the move by international companies to enter the Finnish marketplace. Within the context of global industry, products and services tend to become more standardized as the industry moves towards a worldwide scale (**Usunier, 2005**). The removal of artificial trade barriers (non tariff, regulations), which according to **Usunier** is the stated aim of liberalization, means that those insiders within a market are then exposed to new entrants. Specifically in the food and beverages sector cultural barriers to entry may provide the domestic companies with protection from new competitors. These barriers relate to issues like tastes and traditions. Taking a stark example, when selling meat to predominantly Muslim markets, there may be an

insistence on Halal butchering, a regulatory barrier, or even taking the beer example, there may be the more arbitrary barrier of taste.

This is the economic context in which the brand is sold. The areas of brands and marketing are closely related, as they link into the same process of selling a product to the consumer. Branding and marketing's goals are fundamentally the same as the seller aims to communicate a message to the consumer in order to entice them to purchase their products, by associating benefits, values and other positive attributes with the product. The purpose of branding can be explained using **De Chernatony's** brand triangle of promised experience, emotional values and functional values (**De Chernatony, 2001**). The brand provides consumers with an indication of what to expect from a given product in terms of the product's functional and emotional features. **De Chernatony** states that brands tend to be based around products more than services, particularly around fast moving consumer goods, such as beverages and food. The goods or the products are the focus of both branding and marketing. **Assael** defines products as tangible entities that are produced by a manufacturer, then purchased and then consumed (**Assael, 2004**). Brands are then brought to public awareness by the marketing efforts of the producers. The result is marketing communication whereby potential consumers of the product are actively sought out by producers, who try to entice the public by outlining the benefits of the product. **Blois** provides a classification of the components of the marketing communication process. These are the source, the communication object, the message, the media, the receivers and feedback (**Blois, 2000**). The communication object relates to what the message is about, the message is the communicated idea encoded by the source, translated into symbols to be understood by the audience. Different forms of media then carry the message to the audience, who are the receivers, while feedback results from research. The marketing process therefore, mediates the relationship between the consumer and the brand. For instance, market research provides those that are responsible for creating the brand with information about the consumers they are selling their products to. **Hall's** model of encoding/decoding also relates to how the marketing communication process works by exploring the symbolic content communicated. The model is based on the political systems meaning of **Parkin (cited in Hagen, 2000)**. According to **Hagen (2000)**, **Hall's** model is an attempt to theorize the role of ideology in

textual production under certain social, economic, historical conditions. The brands therefore tend to be dynamic in nature, as they need to change in accordance with changes in consumer profiles in order to remain competitive. To give a concrete example of this we can take the EU consumer as a prime example of how customer's preferences change. **Blois** has identified an EU consumer with certain identifiable traits. Firstly he indicates that there has been a shift from materialistic to post materialistic values, whereby people seek more openness in government and protecting freedom of speech, in addition to the material well being that has accrued in affluent Western societies. The fact that quality of life issues are more important reflects the increased importance of branding, as people seek in brands a reflection of their own personal values and aspirations, which go beyond necessity and basic commodities. Within the EU however, **Blois** acknowledges diversity amongst consumer expectations at a macro and a micro level. The macro level relates to consumers expectations in the development of a nation in terms of its economic growth, inflation and unemployment, while the micro level relates to households income, job security and savings. Therefore, different patterns of consumption that relate to consumer confidence can be explained by these variables indicating that economics has precedence over culture in this case where the bottom line and the price is the immediate concern of the consumer. The marketing and branding process is not solely based strictly speaking on the economical, and does however also have a cultural element to it. According to **De Chernatony (2001)** internal brand management is increasingly becoming cultural management. This is explained in terms of success and the cohesiveness of the brand message. As he also points out that there is a positive relationship between brand success and a brand having its own cultural framework that espouses or has enshrined particular core values. This process whereby culture is an element of the brand and is part of the production process can be related to **Hagen's** political economy of communication as outlined previously in this section, which explains how the modes of cultural production and consumption have developed within capitalistic societies. There is therefore an economic imperative in the relationship between branding, communication and cultural aspects, that economic imperative being that the seller finds a market for their product. **Hagen** further elaborates on the development leading to the political economy model. From the perspective of the

production system, people moved into waged work, increasingly purchasing things they used to make themselves, and there was a resultant disembedding of skills, where people were no longer self-sufficient, and purchased from the market. The purchasing situation evolved from haggling for a price with a seller as determined by visible tangible qualities, whereby goods were evaluated by the customer and the shopkeeper in sales conversation, to a situation of mass consumption and production where the haggling process has been replaced, as department stores changed the social arrangement by imposing fixed prices with no obligation on the customer to buy. In an era of mass production and consumption the consumer is increasingly presented with brands from which to choose based on their personal preferences. Therefore the brand must make an appeal to consumer's values and emotions in order to entice the consumer.

3.2 Marketing

Marketing relates to how the seller of a product endeavours to entice a potential consumer to purchase their product. **Assael (2004)** has outlined what he terms a basic philosophy for successful marketing which involves defining consumer needs, identifying consumer segments that have these needs, position new products or reposition existing products to meet needs, develop marketing strategies to communicate and deliver product benefits. They are then evaluated for effectiveness and shouldn't deceive or mislead consumers. **Usunier** provides a definition of marketing, which has an intercultural significance. According to **Usunier**, marketing is an exchange of meanings between the marketer and the target audience; therefore there is a strong emphasis on communication in this process. **McCracken** elaborates on the consumer perspective of marketing:

“We may see consumer goods as the vehicles of cultural meanings, consumers themselves as more or less sophisticated choosers and users of these cultural meanings”

(McCracken 1991:5)

So when a consumer is buying a good, cultural considerations are factored into their ultimate decision. The exchange isn't therefore solely monetary, but also cultural.

Within the marketing communication process **Blois** has identified what he terms a hierarchy of communication effects, which is comprised of 4 phases.

Blois's Hierarchy of communication effects (Blois, 2000:273)

Phase 1: Awareness: First objective of any marketing communication campaign is to ensure adequate awareness levels amongst the target audience.

Phase 2: Comprehension: Becomes challenging in the case of complex or technologically advanced products or services.

Phase 3: Evaluation: Consumers decide.

Phase 4: Action: Consumer either purchases or doesn't.

As illustrated in phase 2, it is important that the consumer understands the brand message in order for them to consider purchasing the brand. Although this particular model mentions technology as a potential stumbling block, cultural differences may also be beyond the comprehension of the consumer if they're not familiar with the cultural background of the brand in question. So from this perspective, marketing becomes subject to cultural differences. Some considerations before marketing a product might relate to an aversion to marketing advertising itself. For example, **Usunier (2005)** has identified what he describes as the 'Publiphobia' of Northern Europe and France, illustrated in concrete terms by the fact that comparative advertising forbidden in some countries e.g. France. A lack of sensitivity to issues of cultural differences in such advertising sceptical markets could therefore impact negatively on the sale of a particular product. There are endless examples of brands that flop when sold into market that is culturally different to the brands domestic market. A classic example in this regard that of an American manufactured car, called the 'Nova', whose sales in Latin America suffered because of the fact that in Spanish 'Nova' translates as 'no go'. The relationship between marketing and culture is very much to the fore in the area of advertising. Advertising, being based on language and communication, is a very culturally bound element in the context of the marketing mix. **Usunier** has identified six basic steps in advertising:

(Usunier, 2005:404)

1/Isolate communication problem to be solved: Brand awareness, image, and increase sales, differentiated from rival brands, take points of market share from the competition.

2/Identify relevant target population.

3/Define marketing communication objective in terms of influencing target population.

4/Select the advertising themes and a creative strategy.

5/Design a media plan.

6/Implement and maintain the advertising campaign.

This outlines the operation of advertising as a component of marketing. The challenge, or the ‘problem’ to be ‘solved’, is that of establishing what needs to be done in order for the message to be well received by the target audience. With the opening up of the global economy, marketing is faced with the challenge of selling its product to a broader base of population. Cultural considerations may have been avoidable when selling something exclusively to people from a homogenous cultural milieu. However, with less protection from external forces and an evermore-liberal world trade scenario, businesses must take cultural considerations into account, not only to expand, but also to survive in the global economy. Just as globalization may potentially generate greater revenues for companies, it also presents the challenge of increased competition and the challenge of selling a product to different cultures whose sensitivities may have to be accommodated by the seller. The counter argument to this is that the processes involved with trade liberalization will in turn lead to a homogenisation of culture internationally, where the dominant force of Western lead capitalism penetrates cultures on a worldwide scale, by which marketing strategies will be more universal and less specific.

3.3 The consumer

A consumer can be defined as any individual who consumes a good or service which they obtain more often than not through the purchasing process for their own usage. The modern day consumer of countries and societies that enjoy prosperity and a ‘Western’ lifestyle in the industrialized world has consumption opportunities that are greater than ever before. Due to the forces of globalization, the consumer can seek out goods and services through different media from across the world. Developments in the economic system have lead to generating greater disposable incomes in the prosperous, developed

world, while also reducing the production costs through the development of more efficient technology and the use of low cost labour locations in the developing world. The net effect has been the development of the so-called 'consumerist' societies of the developed world, where relatively low cost, mass produced goods are widely affordable, and those who preside over economies (governments, economic agencies) encourage consumer spending and the consumption process in order to promote economic growth. Therefore, consumer spending in the modern day economy is an important contributor to economic growth. At the communication level, by purchasing and consuming a product, the consumer is to some extent buying into the meanings that are stored in the product brand, as well as the specific characteristics of the product. Consumers buy into the meanings that are attached to the products themselves, while marketers communicate these meanings through branding and advertising of their products. This combination of economy and communication is described by **Hagen (2000)** as a mix between relations between meanings and (interpretative) consumer activity, and use and exchange values (political economy). Therefore, there is the added dimension of the political economy in the marketing process, whereby consumers may have certain ideological considerations when making a purchase. For instance, a practicing Muslim will be likely to consider Muslim teachings before consuming alcohol, or a practicing Jew might be insistent that the food they consume is kosher. At a less tangible level, if a brand communicates a message that is unappealing and off putting to someone with a certain world view, than this may discourage them from purchasing the product even if the product has other characteristics and attributes desired by the consumer. Therefore the marketer of a product needs to take into account what kind of meanings the consumer is seeking out. Many of these meanings are culture based, and shared by a particular social group. **Usunier** provides an example of the way that different emphases are placed on different roles when dealing with markets that differ culturally, for example emotions are emphasized in Japanese marketing/ while the object, person or design is emphasized in Italy. The religious examples might be well known, as they are more explicit. However, the latter example from Italy and Japan shows that there maybe altogether more subtle aspects that may impact on how well received a product is, if it does not take into consideration differences between the seller and who they are trying to sell to. Although

this provides evidence of culturally bound needs or consumer demands, **Maslow's** hierarchy of needs provides a universal indicator of what people desire in general and also from their consumption experience.

Table 3: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs:
1/ Physiological (food, water, shelter)
2/ Safety (protection, security, stability)
3/ Social (affection, friendship, acceptance)
4/ Ego (prestige, success, self esteem)
5/ Self-actualisation (self-fulfillment)

(Cited in Keegan and Schlegelmilch, 2001:90)

This model exhibits a hierarchy that could be described as being in line with the evolution of mankind, as 1 to 5 represent a progression from the essential needs to more evolved and refined needs, which aren't fundamental to the human physiological needs as food and water are. Therefore, the seller of the product must make an appeal to potential consumers according to one of these 5 components. According to **Assael (2004)**, marketers appeal to these consumer needs through: 1/ sex appeal 2/ safety messages 3/ associating group acceptance with product 4/ associating success with product 5/ showing travel, education, cultural pursuits. Once a successful appeal has been made to consumers, the sellers of the product will logically then seek to retain the consumer, as a loyal customer. Marketers also aim to generate brand loyalty in order to develop a customer base, as **Blois** states in regard to brand loyalty:

“A brand that inspires loyalty represents a likely income stream for the future, (essential requirement of an asset).” **(Blois, 2000:484)**

Usunier has identified what he terms consumer ethnocentrism and patriotism factors which influence the consumer, denoting that consumers may have a preference for 'national' products, while at the same time he highlights how global forces and internationalization have impacted on the consumer, in creating what he terms 'ethnic

consumption', whereby the fact that something is foreign, and therefore exotic, there is an added appeal to it (**Usunier, 2005**). On the one hand as people migrate internationally this leads to new consumption opportunities and introduces consumers to consumption opportunities outside of their ethnic communities. On the other hand there may also be an attachment to domestically produced products for a variety of reasons. Finnish consumers, for example, deem Finnish products to be better in most attributes, which indicate that they have a self-perception of being a nation that delivers high quality goods and maintains high standards. In Finland, as in Ireland, I have noticed a mark on a variety of products indicating that it's been produced in Finland, which is an appeal to the consumer to buy local. These campaigns not only relate to the quality as mentioned in the example of the Finnish consumers, but also to remind consumers that by purchasing this product they maintain employment and localities in the country.

The final point related to the consumer and consumer loyalty is the concept of involvement. Consumers experience an involvement with their product to a greater or lesser extent depending on various factors. Involvement relates to how attached the consumer becomes to a particular brand or product, and this depends on numerous factors, such as how the brand performs in the eyes of the consumer, or how the brand meets the needs of the consumer. **Assael (2004)** has identified 2 types of involvement, those being situational and enduring. Situational is something that happens in specific situations, while enduring is continuous and of a more permanent nature. **Assael's** model of complex decision making steps illustrates how consumer's become involved with a product through cognitive processes.

Assael's model of complex decision making steps:

- 1) Need arousal
- 2) Consumer info processing
- 3) Brand evaluation
- 4) Purchase
- 5) Post purchase.

These steps operate in a cyclical manner. Post purchase evaluation determines whether the consumer is satisfied with a product or not, and if they'll return to that product in the future.

The term consumer in this context encompasses a multi faceted profile of the individual.

One of the main characteristics that distinguish the modern, westernized consumer is their international or global awareness. The consumer therefore is more receptive to products from around the globe than perhaps ever before due to both increased cultural awareness and increased international trade. Nonetheless they may still feel rooted to a nation or a culture and may also have a preference to purchase goods and services produced in their locality or country, therefore producers need to tailor their marketing strategies to incorporate cultural or national sensibilities.

When a consumer buys into the consumption process, they are fulfilling their own personal needs and desires in the process. They reach a point when they are not only meeting the basic human needs such as nutrition and shelter, but they are also showing who they are, what their values are, and how they identify themselves.

3.4 The product

The focal point of the marketer/branding agency and the consumer is the product itself. According to **Czinkota (1993)**, the product is at the core of the company's operations and is a cluster of value satisfactions. The success of the product depends on its quality and how well a firm differentiates the product from its competitors. Characteristics of the product include the following:

1/Product Constituents, 2/Branding, 3/Packaging, 4/Appearance, 5/Product use, 6/Method of operation, 7/Quality, 8/Service, 9/Country of origin effects. (**Czinkota, 1993:307**)

In addition to this, the product is also the starting point of a company's marketing activities (**Blois, 2000**). The product therefore is the physical embodiment of the brand and therefore is intended to act as a store of the values of the brand.

In order to be competitive and to attract consumers, products need to show the consumer how their product is different and indeed better, than that of a competitor. **Czinkota** maintains that the core product of a brand maybe the same or similar to competitors, but with some tangible augmented features to achieve product differentiation. The products relationship with the market and with its own brand is illustrated by **Hagen (2000)**, according to whom contemporary commodities are caught up in a triangular field of

forces that generates increasingly complex relations between exchange-value (profits), use values (everyday acts of consumption) and sign values (meanings and identities). However the term ‘commodities’ is a contentious one in current market conditions, whereby all products are differentiated from each other to some extent. As **Levitt** states: “ There are no commodities... all goods/services are differentiable” (**cited in Czinkota, 1993:300**).

Therefore usage of the word commodity is restricted to areas like the trading of oil and precious metals on the world market and not applicable regarding consumer goods. Although goods and services maybe differentiated, ultimately they belong to one product category or another, and therefore the product category is also is also another variable in this mix. **Zaichowsky and Soo (1988)** looked at consumer involvement in 15 countries with 8 potentially global products (including beer). This showed that the level of consumer globalization is different according to which product/service category is considered. The example of beer was used to illustrate how markets may be segmented internationally. **Usunier (2005)** highlighted that a typical feature how different brands in their segments are viewed from country to country. Brands which are ‘foreign’ are invariably viewed as premium segment products, e.g. a French beer brand, sold in France as ordinary segment beer but elsewhere as a premium product. However, due to travel people are asking is it justified to pay higher prices at home, when they see that its sold at a cheaper price in its home country, having taken logistics and taxation differentials into account. Another perspective is **Marx’s** theory of social transformation, which claims that this cosmopolitan market place is the result of a top down, directed process.

Marx on social transformation:

“The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country... All old established national industries are or have been destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work off indigenous raw materials, but raw materials drawn from the remotest zones; Industries whose products are consumed not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe.... National one sidedness and narrow mindedness becomes more and more

impossible, and from numerous and more impossible, and from numerous local literatures, there arises a world literature.” (Baylis and Smith, 2001:220).

This pithy analysis provides a key insight into how production and the products we consume have been fundamentally changed by the process of globalization. Although this absolutist, top down notion is contentious as it suggests an inordinate amount of control and manipulation, the points made do seem to reflect many of the trends in the modern world, whereby there is an opening up of borders, but also a vast outsourcing of manufacturing to low cost locations.

The production system within capitalism has developed an international character, while the national would seem to be increasingly displaced by other forms of socio-political organizations, which maybe supranational or sub national (regional/local). In addition to this the production system, in the context of consumer driven societies, must produce to meet market demands on a competitive basis, whereby the needs of the consumers are subjective rather than objective. Products are therefore differentiated to some extent from those of competitors, and there are no entirely generic commodities. Products may also be sold in a segmented fashion so that they may benefit in other countries from a premium product image whereas in their home country they do not enjoy such a status.

3.5 Branding

The final component of this section is branding. The brand can be considered as an extension of the product as the brand develops around the product and provides the canvas on which the brand is painted onto. **Hankinson and Cowking (cited in Blois, 2000)** define a brand as a product or service made distinctive by its positioning relative to the competition and by its personality in the context of the target market, indicating that differentiation of the product from competitors is central. Meanwhile according to **Appelbaum-Halliburton**, a brand is an economic shortcut, means of communication between consumers and market, while surveys show that branded markets/products make greater profits (cited in **Zhenyi Li, 2001**). In addition to this, **De Chernatony** describes brands as being one of 3 types of assets that provide sources of earning, the others being tangible assets and intangible assets. They blend functional, performance values with

emotional values. A successful brand is considered by **De Chernatony and McDonald (2003)** to be an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique, sustainable added values, which match their needs most closely. Brands therefore enhance and frame the economic value of a product, while also, a strong brand can help to build corporate image making it easier to launch new brands and to gain acceptance by distributors and consumers (**Blois, 2000**). Another issue related to the strength of the brand is nationality. **Usunier (2005)** has noted that most national brands are related to a specific national linguistic context, and that in Europe around 99% of all brands are still national, if not purely local in their appeal, and have certain features that identify them as national brands, which are discussed further below. The brand also has functional aspects to it apart from aspects of identification. **Blois (2000)** identifies the value of brands and brand names in their own right, and not based on how successful they are economically. He states that the brand name makes it easier for the seller to process orders and track down problems, while also the brand name and trademark provide legal protection of unique product features, which competitors would otherwise like to copy. Other benefits it bestows on the seller include giving the seller opportunity to attract a loyal and profitable set of customers, who will associate the brand with high performance or certain benefits, as well as giving sellers some protection from competition and greater control in planning their marketing programmes. It also helps the seller to segment the markets they are selling to, so that they can aim their product at specific market subgroups seeking certain benefits from using a product. **De Chernatony (2001)** describes the above aspects as being derived from the input perspective of the brand, whereby the brand is a logo, a legal instrument, a company, shorthand, a risk reducer, positions the product, has a personality, a cluster of values, a vision, adds value, and has an identity. While from the output perspective, the brand has an image, a relationship with the public and is an evolving entity. (**De Chernatony, 2001:11**) uses **Davidson's** model of the branding iceberg to provide a complete picture of the brand. The iceberg represents the brand firstly because there are the visible aspects of the brand (the logo and the name) and then there are aspects underneath the surface, which account for the main body of the brand (the values, intellect and culture). Although the consumer only sees the logo and the name of the

brand, it is the underlying aspects that trigger an appeal to the consumer, and this relates to psychological traits of the consumer. According to **Assael (2004)**, the consumer is subject to a level of involvement with the brand and also the consumer evaluates the brand based on the values of the brand and the benefits the consumer seeks from utilizing the brand. The relationship is sequential according to **Assael** whereby beliefs are formed about brands that influence attitudes towards the brand, which then influence an intention to either buy or not to buy. These stages involved in the process of making a purchasing decision related to the brand, can be identified as thinking and beliefs about the brand, feelings and evaluation of the brand, and finally actions, which means whether or not the brand is purchased. **Assael** maintains that the evaluation by the consumer should be guided by expectations about which brand will give the most satisfaction based on the benefits they seek. These benefits are prioritized in the consumer's mind and are related to brand characteristics. There is also a link between brands and the nationality of the brands in terms of the brands image. According to **Usunier**, national images are diffused by the products origin and by its brand name. He makes 5 points in this regard:

1/Images of imported products may be in opposition to national products, or image of national vs. international products.

2/National images of generic products, e.g. perfume and France.

3/National image of manufacturing company.

4/Image diffused by brand name.

5/Image of made in label.

(Usunier, 2005:278)

The above points illustrate the relationship between a brand and its country of origin. A domestically produced brand may enjoy an advantage over a foreign product based on a desire to support the domestic economy for example. The second point shows how a product category may have an association with a particular country, other examples could be Germany and beer or Russia and vodka, to name a couple. The third point places the emphasis the strength of the brand's company, which becomes synonymous with a positive image of that company. The fourth point relates to how the brands name itself

can evoke images of a particular country, linguistic reasons seem the most obvious example. While the final point refers to the association of the country with high quality production, the 'Made in Italy' example is one that springs to mind. The strong social role or significance that brands can have, specifically in the brewing sector was exemplified in an American case provided by **Holt (2004)**. He identified beer brands as cultural brands that perform the function of generating identity myths, which are selling points as they reassure the consumer's identity. Certain brands can go beyond being well known, to becoming part of the social iconography of a society, and **Holt** gives criteria for the attainment of iconic status. First and foremost they need to have a strong identity myth that addresses acute contradictions in a society, they perform as cultural activists as they encourage people to think differently about themselves, secondly they rely on breakthrough performances rather than consistent communications. They become tremendously desirable as a result of a few masterful performances rather than a bevy of constant communiqués. There is a resulting halo effect bestowed on these iconic brands. **Holt** claims that this effect is derived from the fact that the identities of the consumers use the brand to cement their identities. Holt's basic building blocks of myth markets provide a nexus between branding, national ideology and culture. In the context of myth markets, **Holt** maintains national ideologies and nations need a moral consensus to function, stating that citizens must identify with the nation accept its institutions and work towards its betterment. Ideas that are conveyed by the myths are usually constructed around ideas of individual success and manhood. This is Holt's perspective and is clearly ethno-centric as it assumes that these ideas form the basis of myth construction, it seems to be culturally bound to an American male outlook. This outlook is however the perspective of the nation that drives globalization and is therefore more significant in this context than it would otherwise be as a national perspective. Within the context of identities, tensions arise between the idyllic notions that ideologies purport to provide and individual experience, producing intense desires and anxieties. He claims that the distance between model and everyday life acts as a cultural engine, and from these contradictions, myth markets arise in order to fill the vacuum. This might even raise the idea that perhaps globalization fills the void left by the failures of real life experiences to meet the expectations laid down by nationalist and political ideologies. The essential

point here is that brands derive much of their power or sway over the consumer from their ability to exploit tensions or identity issues that arise in societies.

Although the focus of this section is more on the economic aspects of branding, products and the consumption process, there is a clear indication that in addition to an economic value, branding has a social value, a psychological value and has a strong and tangible connection to issues of national identity.

4 Culture, business and communication in a globalizing world.

Another challenge presented by this thesis was how the areas of marketing, beer branding and culture/intercultural communication relate to each other in the context of the globalized world economy.

As has been mentioned earlier, the category of cultural branding illustrates the explicit link between culture, communication and business. The relationship is symbiotic to an extent also, as brands not only feed off culture but also act as cultural agents in their own right, influencing cultural trends and developments. According to **Haslett (cited in Guirdham, 1989)** culture and communication are acquired simultaneously. Culture is a shared consensual way of life, which is only possible by way of communication. Human interaction is conducted in a cultural milieu that constrains the form and nature of communication. Therefore culture and communication are intrinsically linked, as culture provides a context for communication.

Communication as manifested in branding represents a form of literal cultural communication. The ability of the consumers to understand this is mediated by different factors, such as the location of the brand in time and space and the background knowledge shared between those selling the brand, and the consumer. The situational aspect represents the cultural matrix wherein the brand is embedded, just as the consumer is also embedded (**Falkheimer and Jänsson, 2006**). Brands transmit culturally laden messages to the consuming public, so the brand not only indicates the cultural background of the brand and how it has been influenced by different cultures, it also indicates the level of cultural awareness and understanding of the consuming public.

This issue is becoming increasingly relevant given the large scale cross pollination of cultures in an increasingly borderless world. The idea of think global, act local has developed as something of a mantra for international business, and the processes of globalisation are potentially leading to the emergence of a global polity and a cosmopolitan culture, which is however limited to the developed world, which has been fully penetrated by the capitalist system of production (**Baylis and Smith, 2001**). Even though this is increasingly the case as the forces of industrialization and technology become increasingly universal and the homogenizing effect on culture that that entails,

there are counter tendencies that arise, for instance due to nationalist sentiment. Nationalism according to **Hobsbawm** arose primarily out of a necessity to create a sense of community after the social upheaval and dislocation caused by the industrial revolution. Therefore having provided a community based on a shared history and a social solidarity revolving around the nation state, globalization presents an alienation of the national community and threatens the national community, which is perhaps the reason for antagonism and hostility towards the 'global'. In terms of how this could relate to branding, examples can potentially be garnered from an examination of the usage of ethnosymbolism as ethnosymbolism corresponds directly with brand symbolism. According to **Leoussi and Crosby** ethnosymbolism pertains to: "persisting features in the formation and continuity of national identities are myths, memories, values, traditions and symbols" (**Leoussi and Crosby, 2007:21**). These constituent elements of national identity resonate strongly with members of this ethnic identity group, but also with non-members who are attracted, for whatever reason, to the ethnosymbolic features.

It therefore provides tangible motivational for why national, ethnic or cultural identities are employed in branding. The link between nationality and brand identity has been established in a wide range of products such as Polish vodka and Swiss chocolate whereby the identity of the brand reflects the national and cultural roots of the product and is subsequently used as a selling point for the brand, and **Rothehacher** has explicitly referred to one French based multinational corporation which only buys brands with strong cultural roots (**Rothehacher, 2004**).

Culture and communication are in the process of being revolutionized by the processes of globalization, with the concept of open borders that that entails, and modernity, with all the technological advancements and changes in values are tied up in it. By examining the artefacts of a culture in flux, the changes can be examined, in this instance the examination can be conducted through the medium of the brand websites.

4.1 Defining culture

Culture is how and why we do things, and contributes significantly not only to how we perceive ourselves but also as to how we perceive others and how we interact with the world. While belonging to a cultural group doesn't deny our own unique personal characteristics, without culture we would be unable to function in our respective societies. **Hofstede (2001)** considered human programming to occur on three levels, the individual, the collective and the universal. On the collective level, at an early age people undergo the process of 'enculturation' whereby the individual learns or acquires their own culture, or the culture they are born into, in order to become a fully functioning member of a cultural community (**Bertilsson, 2009**) and it involves our education, as well as our upbringing at home and within the community, which allows us to become active, functional members of our respective societies. Culture is a composite encompassing many different facets of human activity, which explains the large breadth of definitions provided for culture. Culture operates at different levels, amongst different groups, such as ethnicities, nationalities, organizations and religious communities. **Baylis and Smith** outlined that there exists the necessity to generate a culture wherever there is a community of people, in order to allow for functioning at the collective level:

“Wherever human beings form communities, a culture comes into existence”

(Baylis and Smith, 2001:456).

Cultures develop and evolve over time and do not remain stagnant, and are therefore inherently dynamic by nature. An imperative behind forming communities is the survival imperative. That explains in part why cultural communities are formed in specific geographical locations, or in specific organizations. It is to safeguard the survival of the members and to promote their prosperity. According to **Triandis**:

“Culture is a shared meaning system found among those who speak a particular language/dialect, during a specific historic period, and in a definable geographic region”

(Cited in Gannon, 2008:20).

This clearly illustrates that cultures are specific to a particular time in a particular location, and may endure, change or indeed succumb to other cultures. Factors including the experience and challenges that cultural communities have faced, its geographical

location and the resources that it has had at its disposition are critical in this regard (**Gannon, 2008**). Culture has been subdivided into different categories. One of the main subdivisions made in the field of ICC has been the division of culture into subjective and objective culture as has been differentiated by **Bennett**, even though both are intrinsically linked and not separate. **Gannon** has illustrated the link between the institutions of culture and the actors in a society by stating that:

“Institutions such as courts of law, police systems, government systems, education systems provide the framework in which the dynamics of life occur both at work and outside of it” (**Gannon, 2008:180**).

In addition to the above institutions **Hobsbawm (2001)** maintains that one of the fundamental aspects of a culture, the vernacular language, is linked to and influenced by economic, technological and political developments, which of course has implications for the rest of the cultural community and its development. For instance, the languages of Europe and South America are evidence of the legacy of the Roman Empire. Aside from language, **Hofstede (2001)** also traced the reasons for Latin countries being high on his dimension of power distance, all the way back to Roman times. Industrialization and the ensuing period of modernity have also had far reaching impacts on culture in terms of how we live our lives. According to the **Journal of Intercultural Communication (2008)** culture, in the context of intercultural communication, doesn't refer to art or literature, but to a shared set of attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour, that is the subjective culture. However, art or literature, as the artifacts of culture inevitably reflects the attitude, beliefs, values and behavior of a certain culture, while **Bennett (1998)** distinguishes the psychological features, or the subjective culture, from the institutions of culture. The institutions are products of the psychological mindset that produces them, so therefore there is a mutually exclusive relationship between them.

A recurring theme in terms of defining culture is that culture is a system of meaning composed of symbols, traditions, values representing the distinctive achievements of a cultural group that are also passed from generation to generation, they are also dynamic in nature (**Kroeber and Kluckholm, cited in Lehtonen, 1999**). There arises a contradictory element here that relates to the clash of tradition and dynamism within

culture. **Czinkota (1988)** has also included this in his definition of culture, which describes culture as:

“An integrated system of learned behavior patterns that are distinguishing. The characteristics of the members of any given society are inherently conservative, in order to foster continuity” (**Czinkota, 1988:152**).

Although this seems like a contradiction within culture, that is to say how can dynamism and conservatism co-exist, they are actually complementary in their relationship. **Bennett (1988)** has identified a function of culture in terms of defending group interests, which is at the core of the goals of intercultural communication. That is how culture ‘hides more than it reveals’, which he illustrates by comparing it to an iceberg. This suggests how culture has a defensive function. It serves to defend the group it belongs to, and ensure their survival and prosperity, as well as enhance understanding between group members. Culture serves to catalogue the achievements of a given group also. **Kroeber and Kluckhohn** outlined in the following that:

“Culture consists of patterns and is transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values” (**Cited in Baldwin, 2006:8**).

An understanding of culture therefore gives us an insight into how and why communities operate as they do, and what differentiates one culture from another (**Baylis and Smith, 2001**). Culture scales and dimensions, such as those developed by **Hofstede**, allow for the attributes of cultures to be plotted on a map from which comparisons and contrasts can be drawn. Culture is communication in the sense therefore that it emits a message that is either understood or not understood by a receiver. If the receiver isn’t able to decipher the coded message, they are therefore deterred from the content of the message or maybe even can’t process or consume the message. In this sense culture can be compared to a branded product that may or may not be consumed, depending on the whether it is well received or not. **Bourdieu** has defined consumption (in terms of the communication process) as an act of deciphering, decoding, presupposing knowledgeable, practical and explicit mastery of a cipher or code (**Cited in Bertilsson, 2009**). This definition can be

applied to understanding a cultural message as it is fundamentally about understanding a message in terms of the cryptic elements of culture.

4.2 The function of culture

Having examined the various attempts to define culture above, the next step is to examine how culture functions. This section is about how the components of culture function and why. As indicated above, one of the core functions of culture is to ensure survival of a particular community and to promote the group's prosperity. Taking a look at the global economy, Americans can point to the economic and military success of their youthful nation, and its exponential rise to primacy in economic and military as being brought about by the tenets and values of American culture. Using **Hofstede's** research of cultural dimensions, the American way is characterized by individualism, low power distance and a focus on getting results sooner rather than later. However, the American way of life is conversely held up as a bad example according to other cultural groups. The USA, or the 'West' (Europe and the USA), is perceived as being arrogant, irresponsibly individualistic and sexually permissive in other parts of the world, while liberal capitalism, the spawn of the West is seen as exploitative and morally bankrupt (**Baylis and Smith, 2001**). Of course it is not only the Americans who regard their culture as being the root of success, the rise of the Asian economies has been seen as representing a cultural affirmation (**Baylis and Smith, 2001**), attributing this success to the virtues of Asian philosophy, such as Confucianism. There is a sharp contrast between Asian and American values, hence the inherent suspicion and antagonism. This cultural affirmation could be seen as a victory for the values of collectivistic societies and long-term orientation. While this notion oversimplifies economic success, it renders the idea of how cultures function in concrete terms (as embedded in the global economy) and can be perceived to be in competition for superiority at times (an inherent trait of culture, given the survival imperative). Culture, as analysed from a Marxist perspective, is intrinsically linked to the economic/productive system. This perspective focuses also on the power relations in culture, as something that is produced and that has an economic value (**Baldwin, 2006**). While this perspective provides an interesting alternative viewpoint and

analysis to other theories relating to culture, its overt political nature seems to over emphasize, or provide a very narrow focus, whereby the central notion is of exploitation of the populace by an elite, which exercises hegemony over the production of culture. Rather than culture being manufactured by an elite on a contingency basis in order to perpetuate the dominant economic system, namely capitalism in its current form, a more reasonable assessment could be drawn from **Smith's** impression of ethnicity and its cultural constructs whereby he states that:

“It can be abused and manipulated, but not created by elite groups within society”

(cited in **Leoussi and Crosby, 2007:17**).

So while culture may or may not serve a certain function in serving the needs of certain powerful groups in a society, it is hardly the case, or at least more a matter of political debate, as to whether culture is a deliberately created artifice used as a tool for mass social engineering. **Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck** provide a background for the functional aspects of culture:

Table 4 Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's assumptions about a society's interactions with the environment

Limited number of common human problems for which all people at all times must find solutions.
Limited no. of alternatives for dealing with these problems.
All these alternatives are present in a society at all times, but some are preferred to others.
Each society has a dominant profile/value orientation, also having numerous variations alternative profiles.
In both the dominant and variations there is a rank order preference for alternatives.

(Cited in **Englis, 1994:40**)

This outlines the background for the development of a culture. It makes a fundamental point in determining how cultural groups are formed. Culture, in this context, relates to

how societies address the problems they face and the developments that occur as cultures evolve. Culture has evolved as the circumstances of societies have evolved in order to deal with the events that arise in a way that safeguards the interests of the cultural community. The industrial revolution, marked a watershed in human history a shift in the population from rural to urban changed the character of human habitat whereby people were freed from subsistence living due to the development of industrial technology, but were no longer in a position to grow their own food, for example. This change from a rural to an urban, modernizing society brought about, according to **Gellner**, a need for a scientific, 'high' culture with a standardized language of communication to promote modernization and both technological and economic development (**Leoussi and Crosby, 2007**). This exemplifies the functionality of culture in usage. This functionality can be seen at a political level primarily in the form of modern nation states, which amount to a political expression of cultural similarity (**Thomas, 2008**). That is not say that a nation and a cultural group are mutually exclusive however, and within a nation's borders there exist other cultures and subcultures, such as ethnic and religious minorities. Nonetheless, **Hofstede (2001)** has maintained that nations constitute congruent cultural units due to the fact that national institutions such as governments, education institutes and economic activity are conducted under the auspices of a nation, while they are also endowed with one or a few national languages and share a specific geographical location. All of these factors contribute to the congruency of the nation and provides a cultural base that strengthens the social fabric of the nation. Culture in its application and use is shared, learned, organized and systematic (**Thomas, 2008**). The organization, learning and systemization of culture are conducted under the supervision, guidance and authority of institutions, while it is shared amongst the members of cultural groups. Although culture can't stand still and must evolve or die, it tends to resist change and foster continuity (**Czinkota, 1993**). This process that repeats itself means that culture is inherently conservative, as it favors the reinforcement of existing cultural norms and values, as well as the reinforcement of the institutions themselves, in so far as it benefits the cultural community. The effect of this process of reinforcement is the creation of distinctive cultures, with their own distinct systems of meaning, artefacts, symbols and customs. Globalization and the emergence of a global economy and an accompanying, increasingly

homogenous globalized culture in the brewing industry crystallized the issue of how developments in the world economy can have an impact on cultural norms. The forces involved in this process and the issues related to this process will be discussed separately.

Having established that mankind develops specific cultural groups in facing certain challenges **Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck** provided a framework for confronting these problems and this provides a foundation or a point of departure for the values indices within intercultural communication from **Trompenaars** to **Schwartz** to **Hofstede**. The framework is as follows:

- Relationships to nature; Need or duty to control or master nature (Domination), to submit to nature (Subjugation) or to work together with nature to maintain harmony.
- Beliefs about human nature; People are good or evil, or a mix.
- Relationships between people; First and foremost oneself and ones immediate family, for one's own group that is defined in different ways (collateral) or for ones groups that are arranged in a rigid hierarchy (hierarchical).
- Nature of human activity; People should concentrate on living for the moment (being), striving for goals (achieving), reflecting (thinking).
- Conception of space; Physical space we use is private, public or a mixture.
- Time orientation; Make decisions with respect to traditions or events in the past, present, future.

Each of the above present a polarized range of alternatives that culture addresses, such as good and evil or flat and hierarchical relationships. Some of the theorists of intercultural communication have identified polarized scales such as universalism/particularism (**Trompenaars**), egalitarianism (**Schwartz**), masculinity/femininity (**Hofstede**), providing indices exhibiting the scale on which cultures operate, and this is essentially how cultures deal with the issues presented by above. For the purpose of this research, 4 of **Hofstede's** cultural dimensions are used in determining the relationships websites to both the dimensions and to their countries of origin, while **Triandis'** profile of the modern man is also incorporated in order to determine the influence of globalization on culture.

4.3 Culture and how it relates to communication

Communication is inextricably linked to culture and is subject to cultural influences as communication that occurs between people from different cultures may lead to some misunderstandings or no real mutual understanding at all. A basic definition of communication is that it involves the transmission and exchange of information (**Merriam Webster**), while **Czinkota** describes communication as:

“Establishing a commonness between sender and receiver”

(Czinkota, 1993:360).

The communication process involves receivers, emitters, the coding and decoding of information employing symbols, signs, languages and behaviors as vehicles for ideas. The above section provides indices that can locate cultures on a wide spectrum of values and allows for comparison of how different cultures communicate.

In terms of the core topic of this thesis, the brand emits a message aimed at the consuming public. As the target of the communication, it is in the company’s interests that the consumer understands the brand message. According to **Baudrillard**:

“Real effect of consumption has been to herald the passage from use value to sign value”

(cited in Tomlinson, 1990:20).

This is indicative of how the consumer does not only consume the product but the cultural meaning that goes with it. So the brands therefore communicate a message within a cultural framework and according to cultural values that exert an influence over the brand. The communication of a brand involves information being encoded in the brand for decoding by the consumer who then decides whether or not to purchase the brand. In terms of the cultural element of this communication process, the consumers will have their own composite yet individual cultural identity, while the brand seeks to tap into cultural capital in selling its product. Brands maybe produced and sold within a national territory or a locality for example or sold elsewhere, as an export. In the first instance, communication maybe facilitated by a common national or local culture, whereas in the second instance, communication maybe hampered by misunderstandings, lack of cultural knowledge or conflicting cultural dynamics. In the context of Western culture, the various forms of communication are purported to be geared towards social control and

the maintenance of existing ideological and epistemological structures (**McPhail, cited in the Journal of ICC, 2008**). This reiterates the inherently conservative nature of culture in promoting the reinforcement of its own structures. According to **Lauristiin** cultures are:

“Equipped with socialization processes, social norms and structures” (**Lauristiin, 1997:157**).

This cultural matrix provides the context within which communication occurs internally within a cultural group.

When there is an intercultural scenario, the context is disrupted and therefore peoples understanding maybe impinged by the fact that the message is communicated in such a way that it is outside of their frame of reference. The **Journal of Intercultural communication** attributes this break down to an excess of cultural noise that distorts communications. However, communication, like culture, is dynamic in nature. This is tied to the fact that culture is a ‘learned behavior’ as opposed to something innate, therefore it ‘should be possible for members of one culture to learn and develop the art of communication of another culture’ (**Journal of ICC, 2008**). Cultural dynamism isn’t a one-way process however, as agents of culture influence each other, much the same as occurs in the sphere of branding. The receiver of the message is also not only the object of the marketing message, but is also subjected to the influence of the message, as the brand can exert an influence over them and shape to an extent their affiliation groups. The brands, or more accurately those who market them, therefore have an input into the customer’s perceptions and even their identities, just as the brand seeks to meet the needs of the consumer. **Tomlinson** states that:

“Our personal identity is created out of elements created by others and marketed aggressively and seductively” (**Tomlinson, 1990:13**).

So the communication process not only involves interaction and understanding, but also involves the exertion of influence on the part of both sender and receiver in a mutually reinforcing process.

Cultural considerations and sensitivities are an imperative in order to ensure that the message of a brand is conveyed with clarity, but also in a way that is appealing to the

consumer, even to the extent that it exerts an influence on their perception if they feel that the brand offers them values or a lifestyle that appeals to them. One of the key factors relating to the extent to which tastes are formed is the process of globalization, which is increasing the exerting an influence over both producer/buyer and seller/consumer, due to the greater international crossovers, culturally and economically, arising from this process.

4.4The phenomenon of globalization

Globalization is not an entirely new and unprecedented phenomenon. As far back as the ancient world, there were forms of global trade and interaction to varying extents. However, globalization as we know it has occurred in the aftermath of industrialization and is therefore a phenomenon specific to the industrial, modern era. According to the logic of the capitalist mode of production, accompanied by the rapid development of communications and transport technology, thus diminishing distances between people across the world in time and space. **Scholte (2001)** describes globalblization as having 6 different components:

Internationalization: An intensification of cross-border interactions and interdependence between countries.

Liberalization: A process of removing government-imposed restrictions on movements between countries in order to create an 'open' and 'integrated' world economy.

Universalization: The spread of various objects and experiences to people at all corners of the world.

Westernization: The growth of a global 'Americanized' way of life, a form of 'cultural imperialism'.

Deterritorialization: A shift in geography whereby territorial places, territorial distances and territorial borders lose some of their previously over-riding influence.

(Scholte, 2001:14)

The above identifies how political, technological and cultural developments are all intertwined in the process of globalization. Each of these components has the effect of opening up the world economy, and indeed opening up societies to the outside world. However, the phenomenon is very much perceived as being driven by the Industrialized West, dominated by an American way of life, which leads to people acquiring increasingly similar tastes and outlooks emanating originally from the West. This process is encapsulated by the proliferation of hamburger restaurants wherever globalization penetrates, while the culture industry is dominated by films from Hollywood and a pop music industry that is very much derived from the popular culture of major American cities. The changes are also expedited by technological developments, which erode the effect of time and space, and allow for communications across borders on an unprecedented scale. While the above points identify the current trends, **Baylis and Smith** have outlined 9 key developments relating to the globalization phenomenon, which give an insight into how the above trends have come about:

Table 5: 9 key developments relating to the globalization phenomenon

1. Theory of modernization: Industrialization brings into existence a whole new set of contacts between societies, changes the political, economic, social processes of pre-modern world. Industrialization alters nature of the state, widening its responsibilities and weakening its control over outcomes. Result is old power politics model of international relations becomes outmoded.
2. Rostow 1960: Economic growth follows a pattern in all economies as they go through industrialization. Clear pattern as all economies follow as they adapt capitalist policies.
3. Economic interdependence, transnational actors leads to cobweb model of world politics
4. Marshall McLuhan (global village) electronic communication effects: Time and space become compressed to such an extent that everything loses its traditional identity => Old grouping of political, economic, social organization don't work anymore.
5. John Barton (1972) emergence of 'world society' most important patterns in world politics were created by trade, communications, language, ideology etc. along with focus on political relations between states.

6. World order models project (WOMP) think tank interested in global government.
7. International society.
8. Fukuyama (1992) 'end of history' the power of economic market is resulting in liberal democracy replacing all other types of government.
9. 'Liberal peace theory' liberal democracies don't fight each other.

(Baylis and Smith, 2001:7/8)

The above illustrates how the modern world is characterized by increasingly powerful transnational business and the power of the marketplace. The political landscape in the developed world is dominated by liberal democracy, which the authors have related to a positive correlation between the development of the capitalist market economy and this particular form of government. This is the theoretical backdrop to the economic and political foundation of the globalization phenomenon. What this means for businesses operating in this environment is that they are faced with the need to reassess their sales and marketing strategies as they no longer operate in a safe, protected domestic market environment. As **Czinkota** points out that in the past marketing managers could avoid issues of cross-cultural marketing by focusing on the domestic market. However, nowadays there is no choice but to face international competition on a growing basis. Processes of internationalization and globalization have also impacted on how companies develop their products. **Czinkota** indicates that as companies try to expand international sales, they attempt to adapt their products accordingly. While in the EU's single market, products are being harmonized. **Usunier (2005)** has described the globalization of markets. This process entails on the demand side that tastes, preferences and price mindedness are becoming increasingly universal, while on the supply side products and services tend to become more standardized and competition within industries reaches a worldwide scale as opposed to a domestic scale as has traditionally often been the case due to tariffs and differences in taste. **Czinkota** provides a four-point table showing the main considerations companies need to take into account when operating in an international marketplace:

Table 6: Considerations for companies operating in an international marketplace

International Markets:
1/Selling the products in the international market place.
2/Modifying products for foreign markets.
3/Designing new products for foreign markets.
4/Incorporating all differences into one product design and introducing a global product.

(Czinkota, 1988:302/303)

As the above table illustrates in point number 4 in particular, the producer faced with an international market, ultimately wants to create a product that can be sold across the globe. The challenge here is to overcome all the differences that exist across cultures, and therefore the rise of some form of an increasingly homogenous globalized culture would eliminate or diminish culturally based barriers to trade. However, aside from the cultural, there are legal aspects that exist as barriers to standardization. For example, taking one of the stated aims of the European single market was to eliminate trade barriers in order to stimulate international trade, albeit specifically within the EU zone and not indiscriminately across the globe. These barriers referred to in the creation of the single European market, were strictly speaking legal or monetarily quantifiable in nature, while barriers to standardization that cannot be accounted for in a legal framework relate to cultural differences, which act as invisible barriers, such as national differences in consumer preferences and tastes. The benefits to the producers and sellers of being able to standardize a product across markets include both better marketing performances and a lower marketing cost. In spite of the measures that have been taken, local or national brands still retain a strong appeal to the public in their localities. As **Wilsher (1992)** points out, in Europe the vast majority of brands are still national if not purely local in their appeal, and he relates this to the background of a specific linguistic environment, whereby the shared linguistic background of the product and domestic consumer, is an asset in trying to sell the product.

A noticeable trend within globalisation is that there is a dichotomy of the global on one hand and the national/local on the other. As associations such as the EU, the BRIC and the African Union can attest to, there is the development of regional or economic associations that are umbrella groups for the nation states. While there is also the emergence of localities that promote their economic interests and development in a way

that they enjoy increased autonomy from the nation state. **Sparks (2007)** illustrates with concrete examples how there are certain 'regional' poles within the world economy such as the Paris basin, Tokyo-Osaka and Emilia-Romagna. These regional poles, although they are subject to the laws and fiscal measures of nation states, develop their economies with a certain degree of autonomy as economic zones in the global economy. Also the term 'Regionalization', rather than globalization reflects cultural similarities facilitating emerging economic blocs such as the EU. In fact, one of the most controversial issues in Europe at the moment is the candidacy of Turkey for EU membership, with many arguing that as a Muslim country it would be incompatible with the predominantly Christian EU. However, economic blocs have also arisen entirely as a result of political expediency, nominally the BRICS block, which draws together the culturally disparate nations of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. While the power of nation states might be eroded and nation states become less homogenous, other entities emerge such as regional entities based on certain commonalities (such as the EU), and entities based on mutual economic interest which may be culturally disparate (such as the BRICS association of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Discussions about globalization therefore need to take the above into consideration to avoid the temptation of presenting an either/or situation as regards the global economy and the role of the nation state in the present era. The reality as reflected above, has more nuances than a black and white situation. Aside from political and commercial considerations, the role of technological advancements is also central to the process of globalization. The collapse of time and space due to technological advancements has opened up the world economically, socially, politically and culturally. No longer is it possible to exist, at least in the industrialised world, in isolation and protected from developments taking place elsewhere. A crisis triggered in a far-flung reach of the world can have an almost instantaneous impact on the lives of people at the opposite end of the world. Trends and ideas emanating from one place can be transmitted and adopted overnight somewhere else. Globalisation also means that a company can move to a more profitable location as quickly as they set up in the current one, particularly in light industries such as internet help-desks for example, and governments, nations and citizens are subjected to the whims of a global system, rather than being able to determine their own paths and protect their

interests behind the flag of a nation state. There are clearly many issues that remain uncertain regarding the phenomenon of globalisation, are people's fears justified and who benefits from these processes. In the context of this research, the focus is on brands and to what extent they reflect these processes.

4.5 Culture in the era of globalization

Globalization is the much-mooted leitmotif of the modern age, however there aren't strict parameters that can categorically define the phenomenon. It is however very much linked to the notion that the predominant economic system underlined by capitalism is the driving force behind an increasingly homogenous international society. **Sparks** suggests a definition of globalization by stating that:

“If globalization means anything, it means the incorporation of societies into a capitalist modernity, with all the implications of the latter-economic, social, political and cultural”

(Sparks, 2007:126).

This iterates the centrality of the economic system as the motor of globalization, which in turn affects the social, political and cultural spheres. This process of so-called Globalisation, whatever the effects it has will be, is an unavoidable reality of the modern age. Culture has also been subject to the forces of globalisation in the form of an unprecedented level of intercultural penetration, and the term ‘*McWorld*’ has been coined to describe the creation of a more homogenous trans-national, or supranational, culture **(Baylis and Smith, 2001)**. In the sphere of areas such as intercultural communication and branding, globalisation is part of a process that's leading to borderless communication, while the collapse of time and space due to technological developments allows for this communication to occur instantaneously. Therefore marketing communication is not only required to be responsive to changes in culture pattern and ever increasing intercultural penetration, but it also has to keep pace with changes that are accelerated by the proliferation of technology that facilitates instantaneous, borderless communication. The possible effect of this on communications is that it's leading to a convergence of cultures and the creation of a new hybrid globalised culture. The globalization process is linked to

the economic development of mankind, and that in turn relates to how people interact with each other. A table has been designed showing what traits are required in order to participate effectively in modern society. People must possess core psychological characteristics.

Table 7: Characteristic for effective participation in modern society (Kahl, 1968)

Pre-industrial life: Game against forces of nature.
Industrial life: Game against fabricated nature.
Post-industrial (services): Game between people (Bell 1973).
Interacting with people and symbols: A growing emphasis on self-expression, autonomous decision making.

(Cited in Thomas, 2008:37)

This model illustrates the post-industrial situation of the western world in particular and how the service economy has become increasingly central to mankind's economic activity. Arising from this is a culture, which spans the globe. **Baylis and Smith** have identified features of this emerging global culture, which are as follows:

- 1/ The intensification of cross border interactions and interdependence between countries.
- 2/ Removal of government imposed restrictions on movements between countries in order to create 'open' 'integrated' world economy.
- 3/ Spread of various objects and experiences to people from all corners of the world (mentions cultural imperialism).
- 4/ Very much associated with the US.
- 5/ Shift in geography whereby territorial places, territorial distances, territorial borders lose some of their previously overriding influence.

(Baylis and Smith, 2001:14).

Global economic ties and trade, underlined by the possibilities for instantaneous communication are some of the driving forces behind this process. The significance of symbols and signs has grown within the global economic system, as generating

universally appealing and decipherable codes becomes an economic imperative for brands. Therefore the interaction between consumers and symbols has come to the fore within this context. **Baudrillard** claims that the shift from usage value to symbolic value has arisen as a result of 20th century mass consumerism and the consumption process (**Tomlinson, 1990**). The post-modern, post-industrial reality of the developed world has led to a fundamental shift in value orientations whereby the material goals of societies in less prosperous times are increasingly replaced with expressive (psychological) goals (**Hofstede, 2001**), which is indicative of the marketing of brands as symbolic, value laden entities. This is a universal feature of the prosperous, developed world, and an indication of how a cultural commonality may be arising in the form of a homogenous, global culture. **Jenny Cook-Gumperz** has provided 4 features of contemporary societies in the developed world:

Table 8: 4 features of contemporary societies in the developed world

-Contemporary Western society. Societies becoming multicultural, pluralistic.
-Multiculturalism: A permanent condition of contemporary life.
-Work becoming pleasurable exercise, not painful expenditure of labour/energy.
-New personal experiences and possibilities come with risk, anxiety and uncertainty.

(Cited in **Di Luzio, 2001:117**)

As societies become more multicultural, there is an inevitable increase in the influence cultures exert on each other. This process facilitates or promotes a global convergence in terms of generating a homogenous transnational culture as societies become more pluralistic and multicultural through immigration and also through more internationalized economic activity. An area that this change is reflected in is advertising, as people may move from a narrow, parochial focus, to a more international, multicultural perspective. Due to the influence exerted by international capitalism on the way people live has been crystallized in **Thomas's** profile of the modern person:

“Sense of personal efficacy, low social integration with relatives, egalitarian attitude, openness to innovation and change, gender equality, high achievement motivation, independence or self reliance, active participation in social organizations,

tolerance/respect for others, cognitive/behavioural flexibility, strong future orientation, empathetic capacity, a high need for information, risk taking, secular, urban preference, individualistic, psychological differentiation, a nonlocal orientation.” (Thomas, 2008:37)

If this is the case across the cultural spectrum of the developed world at least, then this profile provides an indication of values in marketing at the cultural values and indeed brand values level. This profile also indicates how people have been influenced psychologically by processes of urbanization, democratization, the increased access to education, the decline of organized religion in the West and greater tolerance for other ethnic/cultural/religious groups within the societies of nation states. This also serves to reiterate the point that this leads to the emergence of cultural norms that are universal in character internationally, across regions that have experienced to a greater or lesser extent the aforementioned processes in contemporary society. This apparent emerging global culture seems to be determined by values that are more secular in character, safeguarding personal freedoms and well-being, rather than with spirituality and religious/political belief systems, which dominated previously and would have been the hall marks of traditional, pre-industrial societies. **Leoussi and Crosby** have noted the moral and spiritual vacuum that a culture based on predominantly materialist values can lead to. As they see it:

“Modern materialist society seems to lack the cohesiveness and value systems that so many of the people of the world crave” (**Leoussi and Crosby, 2007:39**).

The combination of new forms of economic activity, increasing cross border migrations and the internationalization of economic activity, and the resulting emergence of similar psychological traits across the Western world culminating in the profile of the ‘modern person’ are evidence of forces of globalization. Thus the net effect of these processes is the development of an increasingly integrated, supranational, globalised culture, specifically within developed societies and modeled on the lifestyles emanating from the Anglo-Saxon-European world. As **Thomas** suggests the processes of globalization has a homogenizing effect on culture. He has identified three crucial factors in this regard:

-Nations not static, they develop education, occupational diversity, and urban intensification.

- Convergence towards common society where ideological differences cease to exist.
- As wealth increases so do post-materialistic values.

(Thomas, 2008:36)

The effect of processes associated with globalization on culture is a homogenizing one, insofar as nation states follow similar patterns of development. In the era of the emerging 'one world economy', to borrow a phrase from Barack Obama, having a homogenization of culture is advantageous to economic expansion and penetration throughout the global economy. The focal point of the process is economic as it is the forces of economics and trade that acts as the engine of globalization. There is an ensuing impact on culture resulting from this process also, according to **Gannon**: "The world globalizes and interactions across cultures become more frequent, they influence one another, and as a result symbolic meanings tend to change" (**Gannon, 2008:89**).

Due particularly to technological advancements, this era is particularly prone to interactions between cultures and the interpenetration of cultures. The process of globalization is therefore influencing, shaping and raising questions about cultural values, while the economic imperatives of the modern age are driving the engine of globalization forward.

5. Methodology.

5.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

In this study qualitative content analysis was used, as it appeared optimal for the analysis of advertising materials. The qualitative content analysis method seems like the optimal method for analysing advertising materials. According to **Kohlbacher (2006)** qualitative content analysis method is appropriate when the communicative content of the topic is the most important aspect of the research. While **Krippendorff** has described content analysis as:

“No longer relating to solely the meaning of messages’ but also to the ‘process involved in analysing data as symbolic entities” (**Krippendorff, 1980:10**).

The empirical focus of this analysis is websites and the messages they convey, in order to promote their respective brands. **Silverman (2006)** maintains that when conducting an analysis that pertains to images that the social processes involved in image production and reception are necessary to provide a context for their accurate and comprehensive analysis. The theoretical framework of this research provides the social, cultural and economic background to the images that constitute the data of this research. Krippendorff mentions another advantage relevant to this research in using content analysis explicitly when he states that:

“Data in content analysis typically stem from complex symbolic forms in an indigenous language such as advertising” (**Krippendorff, 1980:53**).

The possibility of generating categories as the research progresses has also been cited as another benefit of this particular method of research according to **Hsieh and Shannon (2005)** that is pertinent to this particular study as the aim was to develop a broad framework initially and then to develop more clearly defined categories based on the way in which the data could be related to the theoretical framework, while taking into consideration the research questions. They describe this particular option as inductive category development. Qualitative content analysis, according to **Frey, Botan and Kreps (2000)**, is concerned primarily with the meanings associated with messages as opposed to the frequency with which a message occurs, which relates to quantitative methodology, while the explicit goal of the research is to describe and count the characteristics of messages that are embedded in texts, both public and mediated. In opting for qualitative analysis, it is an indication that the sort of questions to be asked, and the perspective from

which a topic is studied relates to analysing the meaning of the data rather than the frequency with which something appears in the data. **Hammersley's** concept of qualitative research provides a guideline of how the qualitative method exhibits preferences and advantages for and over conditions, methods and aims (**Silverman, 2006**). In qualitative research everyday contexts are favoured over experimental conditions, data collection sources can be many and the process is unstructured. There is also an overt preference for meanings rather than behaviour, and the hypothesis is generated from an inductive process, which favours progressive knowledge building. All of the above were suitable criteria for this research. The form of the qualitative research on this occasion is content analysis and this is defined by **Krippendorff (1980)** as a research technique that is used to make replicable and valid inferences from data to, rather than from, their context. These definitions are complementary as one relates to the nature of the data, while the other states that the results are inferred to the context from the data. **Krippendorff's** framework for a content analysis researcher provides key aspects of this particular research process. Elements of case study research were also useful in the context of this research.

Krippendorff's framework for a content analysis research:

- Data as communicated to the analyst.
- Context of the data.
- How analysts knowledge partitions his reality.
- Target of a content analysis.
- Inference as the basic intellectual task.
- Validity as ultimate criteria of success

(Krippendorff, 1980:26)

This framework shows that the central intellectual task of the researcher in this instance is to make inferences from the data. This task of inference involves a process whereby the knowledge that the analyst has about how the data related to the context is 'consumed' leading to an amelioration of the knowledge **Krippendorff (1980)**. In order to make this database of knowledge manageable and easier to process, it is worthwhile if not

absolutely necessary to employ a process of codification for the data used. **Hsieh and Shannon (2005)** refer the codification process specifically to content analysis, whereby they state that it is necessary to organize large quantities of text into various content categories, which are derived from the texts that are being analysed. The next step is to identify what sorts of sources are acceptable for the purpose of research. One example that provides possible sources for data derivation and establishing what sources are suitable for analysis has been given in the case of case study research. According to **Yin** there are six sources of evidence available for the purpose of case study research, which are as follows:

1/ Documentation 2/ Archival records 3/ Interviews 4/Direct Observations 5/Participant observation 6/Physical artefacts. (**Yin, 2011:10**).

However as interviews are deemed essential by **Yin** for case study research, using a full case study approach for this research was ruled out. Although an insight from employees of companies would have benefited and enhanced the thesis, it became apparent that the companies relevant for this research were not interested in participating. Therefore interviews weren't possible. From the above 6 sources, 3 were deemed appropriate to this research, those being documentation, archival records and physical artefacts. This narrowed the focus of potential to documentary data garnered from the print media, and the packaging samples of the goods in question. In addition to this, the guidelines for textual analysis are also worth consideration as it is a method that can be used to describe and interpret the characteristics of a visual or recorded message, such as the messages contained in advertising, while the method can also be used to describe what is the nature of communication and assist in showing how communication is related to other variables (**Frey, Botan and Kreps, 2001**). The texts in consideration for this research are primarily texts composed of images, or even more accurately they are signs. By defining these images as signs, it provides a more comprehensive and accurate image of what these images are. Signs, according to **Silverman**, have 4 characteristics. These characteristics are:

1/ Signs bring together a concept and an image.

2/ Signs are not autonomous entities. They derive their meaning only from the place within an articulated system. What constitutes a linguistic sign is nothing but its difference from other signs.

3/ The linguistic sign is arbitrary or unmotivated. This means that the sign 'has no natural connection with the signified' (**Saussure**, 1974). Different languages simply use different terms for concepts and can generate own concepts. Languages may have own generated concepts, as in when difficulties arrive in translating.

4/ Signs can be put together through two main paths. First, combinational possibilities, e.g. Religious orders. **Saussure** calls these syntagmatic relations. Second, there are contrastive properties, e.g. saying yes or no. **Saussure** calls these paradigmatic opposites.

(Silverman, 2006:72)

The above characteristics are heavily oriented towards linguistics and do not perhaps relate primarily to the issue of culture and branding. However, the link between concept and image, the derivation of meaning from context (the articulated system), and the process whereby signs are endowed with meaning are essential aspects of this topic. Therefore its necessary to have a method of analysis that doesn't merely analyse the images, but takes into consideration the context and the values and concepts that the image is laden with. For this reason the method of rhetorical criticism is also taken into consideration in the framework of the whole method as it has qualities that are applicable to the qualitative content analysis method of research. The purposes of rhetorical criticism as have been identified by **Frey, Botan and Kreps (2001)** have characteristics that are of particular relevance to an analysis of advertising methods. These 5 purposes are as follows:

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- 1) Sheds light on the purposes of a persuasive message. Can be used to understand historical, social, cultural contexts, explain how contexts affect and are affected by persuasive messages.
 - 2) Can be used to evaluate contemporary society, providing a form of social criticism, e.g. critiquing stereotypical representations in the media.

- 3) Contributes to theory building by showing how theories apply to the practice of persuasive discourse.
- 4) Serves a pedagogical function by teaching people something about how persuasion works and what constitutes effective/ineffective persuasion.

(Frey, Botan and Kreps, 2001:225).

An advertising message could be considered the definition of a persuasive message, as its purpose is explicitly to entice potential consumers to purchase a specific product. The rhetorical criticism process also relates to theory building, which is relevant to the theoretical framework of this thesis due to the persuasive message in question. An important consideration in this regard relates to the meaning of the message.

Krippendorff states that:

“Messages don’t have single meanings to be unwrapped and meanings need not be shared’ **(Krippendorff, 1980:22).**

Therefore, there is a certain ambiguity inherent in the analytical process. An essential consideration within the research process relates to the issue of the validity of the research. **Silverman (2006)** claims that the main issue regarding validity/reliability is that it relates to how the research in question can be both intellectually challenging, while also being rigorous and critical. **Frey, Botan and Kreps (2001)** have identified a dichotomy within the concept of validity. This dichotomy divides validity into internal and external validity. Internal validity relates to the accuracy of the conclusions drawn from a particular research study and the measurement, procedure and data analysis reliability/validity. The external validity of the research relates to the possibility of the findings from a particular research study to be generalized and relates to sampling procedures and whether or not the research may be replicated. **Krippendorff (1980)** associates internal validity with reliability while maintaining that external validity assesses the degree to which the findings of the thesis are representative of the actual phenomena to which the context of the data is related. In this case the context was established in the extensive literature review.

Dimensions of culture identified for analysis purposes:

Having established the broad framework for the research process above, the final step was to provide a narrow and more specific framework for conducting the analysis. One possibility as outlined by **Krippendorff** was that of generating categories by the process of inductive category development, however this was ruled out in favor of utilizing theoretical models that are derived from core models of intercultural communication. The models that were used were **Hofstede's** dimensions of culture and **Triandis'** profiles of modern and traditional man. The selection of both of these models was aimed at addressing the central aims of the thesis, which relate to the influence that national cultural values exert over the content of advertising in a specific sector at an international level, the relationship between the development of cultural values and the processes of globalization and identifying the cultural values that characterize these brands. The choice of a two pronged approach incorporating both **Hofstede's** and **Triandis'** dimensions was determined by the need to identify the link between the dynamics of globalization and cultural values that define national cultural identities. **Hofstede's** dimensions provide an insight into national cultural values and provide a measure of culture that gives reliable indicators of the cultural values that define specific national cultures. Analysis according to these dimensions could garner the extent of the influence that national culture exerts over the brand values as deduced from the websites, however **Hofstede's** dimensions would not be able to address the influence globalization has on the values and how globalization and the forces of modernity influence cultural developments due to the fact that the information provided is rigidly nation specific. **Triandis'** dual profile of modern and traditional man provides a contrast between pre-industrial and post-industrial values. These values appear to correspond with the logic that is driving global capitalism and the phenomenon of globalization according to the theory surrounding globalization outlined in the relevant section above. Therefore, by using **Triandis'** contrasting dimensions an insight could be gained as to how the values of modernity and therefore of globalization relate to the values of traditional societies. The comparison between the findings related to the national specific values of **Hofstede** and those related to **Triandis'** model is crucial in seeking to address the aims of this

research and therefore these dimensions complement each other and provide the basis for the analysis. The dimensions of each are as follows:

Table 9: Triandis' profiles of Modern and Traditional man (Cited in Hofstede, 2001:211)

<u>Modern Man</u>	<u>Traditional Man</u>
Open to new experiences	He has narrow in-groups.
Relatively independent of parental authority	Looks at the world with suspicion
Concerned with time, planning, willing to defer gratification.	He believes that good is limited and one obtains a share of it by chance or pleasing the gods.
He feels that man can be master over nature that he controls the reinforcements he receives from his environment.	He identifies with his parents and receives direction from them.
He believes in determinism and science.	He considers planning a waste of time, and does not defer gratification.
He has a wide cosmopolitan perspective.	He feels at the mercy of obscure environmental factors, and is prone to mysticism.
He uses broad in-groups,	He sees interpersonal relationships as an end, rarely as means to an end.
He competes with standards of excellence, and he is optimistic in controlling his environment.	He does not believe that he can control his environment but rather sees himself under the influence of external, mystical powers.

Table 10: Hofstede's dimensions of culture (geert-hofstede.com/national-culture)

Power Distance

Power distance is the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above. It suggests that the followers as much as by the leaders endorse a society's level of inequality. Power and inequality, of course, are extremely fundamental facts of any society and anybody with some international experience will be aware that "all

societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others".

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. It indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, surprising and different from usual. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures, and on the philosophical and religious level by a belief in absolute Truth: "there can only be one Truth and we have it". People in uncertainty avoiding countries are also more emotional, and motivated by inner nervous energy. The opposite type, uncertainty accepting cultures, are more tolerant of opinions different from what they are used to; they try to have as few rules as possible, and on the philosophical and religious level they are relativist and allow many currents to flow side by side. People within these cultures are more phlegmatic and contemplative, and not expected by their environment to express emotions.

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Masculinity

Masculinity versus its opposite, femininity refers to the distribution of emotional roles between the genders, which is another fundamental issue for any society to which a range of solutions are found. The IBM studies revealed that (a) women's values differ less among societies than men's values; (b) men's values from one country to another contain a dimension from very assertive and competitive and maximally different from women's values on the one side, to modest and caring and similar to women's values on the other. The assertive pole has been called masculine and the modest, caring pole feminine. The women in feminine countries have the same modest, caring values as the men; in the masculine countries they are more assertive and more competitive, but not as much as the men, so that these countries show a gap between men's values and women's values.

5.2 Research Questions

We are living in an increasingly borderless world in many different ways. Distances in time and space have collapsed due to technological advancements and the development of instantaneous mediated communication, the result of which has been an era of unprecedented international trade, and greater awareness (particularly in the industrialized developed world) on a mass scale of other cultures, as well as a hunger to buy into the experience of other cultures through the consumption of national and international brands. The flip side of these sweeping changes is a fear and confusion relating to a loss of identity and a suspicion as regards what not only the changes but the pace with which change is occurring, which feeds into a tendency to seek refuge and security in the national or regional culture. This can be witnessed in movements such as anti-globalization protests that often combine regional identities as providing a sharp contrast to what is perceived as a derivative culture (predominantly derived from American or Western cultural reference as propagated and referred to in cinema, pop music and any other popular cultural form that is produced primarily in the USA) that serves as a cultural vehicle for the financial power of multinational corporations, which the protestors oppose. This is the context in which the research questions have been formulated. The questions pertain to advertising of beer available in the Finnish market, based on a sample of brands that are both Finnish and international. The aim of the questions is to establish what these brands say about how the globalization process relates to consumer values in a modern European nation. The themes present in the material can be related to the theoretical framework of this thesis.

1a/ What are the relationships between national cultural backgrounds and the brands as can be deduced from the websites?

1b/What is the relationship between the national backgrounds of each of the brands country of origin and Hofstede's dimensions of culture?

As an opening question this question seeks to establish to what extent an indication of the national backgrounds of the brands first of all is present in the websites and identifying the national background of the products, and second of all how do each of these national backgrounds relate to **Hofstede's** dimensions of culture. This question therefore lays the

marker or the groundwork for the other questions to follow on from by establishing the extent to which there is a tangible influence exerted on the websites by the respective national cultural backgrounds by examining and categorizing the explicit references made to national cultural backgrounds in terms of cultural references/symbols/artifacts that are present in the websites. So the focus here is very much on the obvious and explicit side of culture, or what **Milton Bennett** referred to as ‘objective culture’, as this provides a clear indicator as to whether or not there is significant attachment to the national identity and national culture of the brands home countries. In addition to the relationship between the national backgrounds and the brands, the second part of this question also seeks to examine the relationship between the national backgrounds and **Hofstede’s** dimensions of culture by providing a concise table whereby the way each country relates to the dimensions is clearly visible and also provides an idea of what similarities and differences exist between the countries of origin of the brands, but also to have an idea of how each of the national backgrounds relate to the dimensions in order to provide a foundation for the follow up questions.

2/ What is the relationship between the brand websites and their respective national backgrounds?

Moving on from the broad perspective of the first question, this question examines the websites in terms of how each of them relate to **Hofstede’s** dimensions of culture. The approach takes each dimension and first looks at how each of the websites relate to a particular dimension. The findings from each website are to be presented in an appendix to the thesis, categorized under each particular dimension in order to assist in comparing and contrasting how they relate to each when answering the questions. Having presented the findings, the next step regarding each dimension is to examine the relationship between the websites and their respective national cultural backgrounds by making inferences from the data that has been presented in the tables and the results of **Hofstede’s** surveys regarding the orientation of each of the national cultures. Therefore, in the process of answering this question, the foundation that was outlined in answering the first question is built upon. In answering this question the aim wasn’t to provide an end in itself but to build on the first question towards forming the final conclusion. In

terms of the overall conclusion this answer therefore sought to contribute to the knowledge building process, specifically in this case by introducing the dimensions of culture and analyzing the websites according to these dimensions, which follows logically on to questions 3 and 4.

3/ What is the relationship between Triandis' profiles of Modern/Traditional man relate to the brand websites?

The emphasis in this question shifts from national culture to the issue of modernity vis-à-vis tradition. **Triandis'** model (as outlined in the previous section) provides a contrast between values of traditional societies and values of modern, industrial/post-industrial societies. The aim of this question is to deduce to what extent the websites are orientated towards, or have corresponding values with the profiles of the modern man or traditional man. So while the previous questions focused on the status quo in terms of cultural values at a national level, this question focuses on the dynamism of cultural values and to what extent the shift from the traditional to the modern is reflected in the content of the websites in terms of how the websites relate to **Triandis'** model. As has been alluded to previously in the methodology section, the incorporation of two models into the analysis framework is aimed at enhancing the findings of the research. Therefore this question seeks to complement the previous questions by adding another dimension to the analysis that provides another perspective. By conducting an analysis according to **Triandis'** model here and comparing the findings here to the findings according to **Hofstede's** model, the dynamism of culture can be explored, which wouldn't be possible were the findings to rely solely on **Hofstede's** dimensions as **Hofstede's** findings relate exclusively to national cultures at a fixed period in time and it doesn't give any insight into the dynamics of globalization as Triandis' model does in providing sets of values that existed prior to and after the advent of industrialization and therefore provides a reference point for the trajectory of the development of values in relation to traditional and modern societies, which in turn complements the analysis of **Hofstede** that is based on static values for countries at the present time.

4/ What is relationship between the brand websites, their national backgrounds and both Hofstede and Triandis' dimensions?

The fourth and final question, while not providing an outright conclusion in itself, does provide somewhat of a culmination as it seeks to address the central dynamic in this thesis, globalization and its impact on cultural identity, in order to provide a comprehensive answer, which in turn can assist in generating an overall conclusion based on a combination or synthesis of these answers and the broader context that underlines these developments. The reason that the answer to this question cannot be considered to be an overall conclusion is that it focuses exclusively on the website analysis, while the ultimate conclusion will seek to relate the analysis to the theoretical background that has been established previously in the literature review section. Therefore while this question seeks to provide a conclusion in terms of the analysis conducted, it relates specifically to the website analysis and doesn't incorporate the body of literature and theory that has been established in the previous sections. The aim here is to provide evidence for the eventual conclusion of the research.

5.3 Data Collection procedures

This section covers how and what type of material was collected as data. Because of the nature of qualitative content analysis, the data needed was to be rich in symbolism and laden with meaning from which conclusions could be inferred within a clear frame of reference. Internet websites were chosen as the appropriate source for the collection of data. The reasons for the selection of the Internet websites as the source of data was that there was the unitary nature of a website. The source of the evidence for the research would therefore be validated by the fact that each website can be considered a unit and therefore there are no oversights, as would be the case if the source of evidence was derived from other advertising materials such as those in the print and televised media and sponsorships. The first step in establishing where to look on the Internet was to find out what the main brands and companies were. The background knowledge to this area was confirmed by the results of a search for the leading beer manufacturers and distributors in Finland. There were 3 companies, which enjoyed between them the

majority market share, two of which have in the last 10 years been taken over by global multinationals while the other remains a Finnish run business. The 2 companies that have been taken over provided a snapshot of trends within global business. Having been taken over by multinational entities, they have brand portfolios that include their Finnish brands, the flagship brands of the 'parent' company, and brands from other countries, which have been acquired by the company. In contrast with this, the Finnish owned company has only its own products and seemed to emphasize its 'Finnishness', which was certainly food for thought in the context of this topic. The websites of each of the companies provided an array of both Finnish and international brands which had the potential to form the basis of the data. This form of data collection narrows the focus of potential sources by excluding smaller scale brewers and microbreweries, however this was justified by a few factors. Firstly, the sector of brewing is divided in two sectors. According to an article from the website www.yle.fi, the larger brewers cater for the broader, mass consumption sector based on a standardized lager product, while the microbreweries cater for the specialty sector, where products are highly differentiated from one brand to the next in terms of the particular type of beer in question, therefore they are not standard pilsner lagers but differentiated types of beer. This illustrates that there is a market division between microbreweries and larger brewers and they don't directly compete with each other. It became apparent that the multinational companies were focused on the production of predominantly lager beers on a for a specific, mass consumption sector of the market, while the small scale companies, who serve what has been termed the craft beer market (reference), which is a niche market involving smaller scale production. While taking the market, as a whole, would undoubtedly have potential for providing more depth in the findings, it became apparent that the workload could become unmanageable and pose problems from an analysis point of view and would also be combining separate issues. Therefore, as a point of departure, it was deemed that either one section of the market or the other would be used. The phenomenon of globalization in this industry was directly evident in the case of the large-scale breweries as these were the objects of consolidation/purchase, while the division in the market between large scale and small-scale producers was reflected in the distribution of microbrewery brands in partnership with the multinational or at any large, mainstream

brewers. The larger, mainstream breweries collaborate with microbreweries by providing the smaller breweries with greater distribution networks on a commercial basis. In order to narrow the focus sufficiently it was necessary to provide criteria for narrowing the sample focus. The issue arose whereby the brand websites weren't restricted to a single product i.e. a pilsner lager, which would mean that the products of each would be equivalent across the sample. However the legitimacy of the sample could be proven on the basis of the 3 companies market share in the Finnish market, which accounted for the majority of the market, while the rest of the market was highly divided amongst the other competitors in the market. These websites would provide the 3 most significant Finnish brands in terms of market share. As has been mentioned, the 2 of the parent companies in question were purchased by foreign multinationals and the websites of these company's flagship brands would provide two more websites for analysis. In order to provide further depth to the sample it was decided to include an additional brand website that would be selected from the import brand portfolios of the Finnish companies. The only condition was that the brand question would be required to be foreign in origin.

The next step was to conduct a preliminary analysis of the parent company's websites. The websites of the 3 Finnish companies in question provided the brand portfolios of each company. These portfolios contained the brand name, the brand logo and a synopsis of the brand's values. There were English and Finnish versions of the website, and the English version was opted for in order to give a guide. The reason for this was that the English versions seemed as comprehensive as the Finnish versions, therefore could be considered to be equivalent. However, for the analysis itself, the brand's Finnish language websites were used as some of the brand's websites were exclusively in Finnish, while in the cases of the websites for which there was an English language alternative, the Finnish website was deemed more suitable due to the fact that it was significantly more content rich, and therefore had more potential than the English language versions, so the Finnish language website versions were analyzed. Returning to the brand selection, the fact that there was a synopsis of the brand message accompanying the brand gave an invaluable insight into the meaning and the symbolic significance that goes with the brand. This gave an opportunity to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the brands as the pictures and images are accompanied by

descriptions from the company itself. In order to formalize the approach to the sampling system required here, it was necessary to identify the best sampling technique. The most suitable approach to this was deemed to be the non-random purposive sampling approach as outlined by **Frey, Boten and Kreps (2001)**. This approach focuses on establishing criteria for the data, which ensure that the data obtained will be valid and equivalent for the purpose of the research. Each of the websites was presented in a similar format with a list of branded products with accompanying images and product descriptions. Previously, advertising obtained from newspapers and pictures of billboards, to give two examples, was considered as a potential source for data collection. However, in terms of having an ample sample, the brand synopses presented on the websites provide more uniform characteristics than advertising samples would have due to the fact they were contained in a well-defined unit, a website. Advertising garnered from newspapers or from billboards taken as photos, would mean that there would be a distinct possibility of overlooking sources in the collection process. The websites provide explicit messages devised by the companies, which undoubtedly forms the basis of any advertising campaign or promotion, and each of the websites can be analyzed in such a way that there is no time lag between the sources that might undermine the reliability of the sources due to changes in trends or discrepancies in the data due to a time lag. This means that each of the websites is the most up to date source, at a specific period in time, across the board. Therefore the sources for the data collection, initially, were to be located within 3 websites, and would be constituted by the brand information available in the companies' section of beer brand portfolios.

Individual brand websites were also analyzed with the exception of one brand, which didn't have a website devoted to its main brand but instead had the company's website. The next issue was to establish the procedure for the website analysis. The approach to what would be analyzed required careful consideration in order to ensure the validity of the analysis. The procedure developed included a text specific analysis, analysis of the images, analysis of specific sections that had equivalents across the scope of analysis, especially in all the websites examined. It was ultimately decided that the content of the websites would be analyzed thoroughly and the websites would be analyzed in their entirety, although in the websites where the content was proportionally greater than in

other websites, sections would be prioritized in terms of relevance to specific dimensions and omitted when of less relevance.

5.4 Finalized Methodology

The method used in the main analysis incorporated elements from different methodological frameworks including primarily qualitative content analysis and also case study and rhetorical criticism. This way the research methods could be tailor made in order to create a specific set of research techniques that were well suited to the analysis of brand websites, while the criteria for analysis (the measures by which the data was analyzed) were established after the framework for the analysis was finalized. Qualitative content analysis was principally used in analyzing data as symbolic entities, in this case through the medium of the ‘Dimension analysis’ of the complex symbolic forms that constitute brand websites. The categorization of the data in the analysis was based first taking each website and analyzing them on an individual basis and subdividing each into sections for each of **Hofstede’s** 4 dimensions of culture and **Triandis’s** profiles of modern and traditional man. The websites were given a code relating to their national origin. The German brand website was G1, the Dutch N1, the Danish D1 and the Finnish websites F1, 2 and 3. The Finnish websites were given the numerical order on an arbitrary basis and the numbers didn’t have any significance other than for tagging purposes. The aim of the research questions was to establish the meanings of the content of the websites, rather than the frequency with which messages appeared, indicating that the approach taken was qualitative and not quantitative. However the frequency of similarities in the websites would in itself give an indicator as to the meaning at an aggregate level thus assisting in answering the research questions. The frequency of similarities and recurring wasn’t accounted for formally, but the fact that there was evidence of recurring themes was mentioned in order to provide evidence in answering the questions. Another criterion indicating that QCA was well suited to this research was that the data source was an everyday source (publicly accessible websites), and not the product of designed experimental conditions specific to this research. The preference is

also for meanings rather than behavior and the knowledge building process is progressive and based on making inferences from the data to the broader context, which in this case was facilitated by the dimensions of culture, which assisted in relating the data to the context of national culture and to modernity in the sense of the reality of life in the developed world as shaped by the forces of capitalism/globalization. As has been indicated above by **Krippendorff**, inference is the result of a process whereby the analyst 'consumes' the data in relation to the context providing conclusions, which has the effect of knowledge building. Given that the websites had the specific purpose of promoting their respective brands, and ultimately seeking to persuade the consuming public to purchase their brands, the method of rhetorical criticism was also used. The rhetorical criticism method, as has been outlined above, relates specifically to the analysis of the persuasive message, which lies at the heart of advertising, however it primarily examines contextual factors (in this case national culture, globalization), and contributes to theory building by exploring the relationship between theory (in this case theory relating to culture, national identity, globalization and branding) and the persuasive discourse employed in the data (in this case the websites), which ultimately is the main aim of this research. Therefore the rhetorical criticism method is a consideration for this research although this method isn't incorporated in its entirety. As has been outlined, elements have been incorporated in this research from the qualitative content analysis method, the case study research method and the rhetorical criticism method. The combination of these methods with the data source chosen and the theoretical dimensions incorporated in order to provide the analysis criteria has resulted in finalized analysis method entitled the 'Cultural Dimension analysis'. This method involved taking all 6 websites holistically and analyzing the content in detail according to **Hofstede's** 4 dimensions of culture (Masculinity/Femininity, Individualism/Collectivism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance) and analyzing the websites in terms of how they relate both to the cultural dimensions and to the cultural values of their respective national backgrounds according to **Hofstede's** findings, while also analyzing the data according to **Triandis'** profiles of Modern/Traditional man, which was used due to its examination of the impact industrialization/capitalism/modernity has had on cultural values, which compares the

values that pre-existed modernity with the values of modern societies. The final brand was a German brand chosen purposefully from the portfolio of the Finnish companies, which provided a list of international brands that are distributed in Finland under their umbrella. This brand was chosen purposefully as it provided an interesting counterpoint to the exclusively domestic websites and the highly internationalized websites of the Danish and Dutch based multinationals, which provided another perspective from which to gain insights from a third perspective, that of a brand with a clear national identity in a foreign country. Although some websites were much more content rich than others, the websites were all taken in their entirety in order to ensure the validity of the sample. In the analysis itself however, some sections were omitted from the analysis for some dimensions, so there was a prioritization of some sections over others based on their perceived relevance to specific dimensions in order to streamline the analysis. All of the sections however featured in the analysis at some point (i.e. Wherever they were of most relevance to a particular dimension). Following on from all of these considerations, the website analysis was deemed to be the optimal analysis procedure for the following reasons:

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1. Website analysis could be conducted within a specific timeframe therefore the sites would be up-to-date within a certain, specified period. Each brand website could be analyzed in full, therefore there wouldn't be any discrepancies in terms of time lapses. This does not mean that the level of content would be equivalent, or they had to be directly compared and contrasted, but that the websites could be analyzed equivalently in their entirety (insofar as is relevant). This would diminish, if not eliminate any overviews or biases that might arise from the sampling of advertising/marketing material, which couldn't be obtained in a reliable manner without oversights, as the websites constitute individual clearly defined units.
 2. The websites would be the exclusive source of data and other sources such as interviews or surveys would not be used. The customer/producer surveys and interviews would be a legitimate and indeed complimentary research method,

however there were two problems in this regard. The relevant employees in the breweries, specifically the marketing departments, weren't accessible, and were therefore ruled out, while there wasn't a satisfactory method identified for the customer survey research. Questionnaires in super markets were considered but they were ultimately deemed to be impractical and potentially unreliable if the sample wasn't representative of the population.

3. The websites offered equivalent sources, rich in content, the parameters of the source being exclusively the brand website (and not the company site/other links), meant that the sources were concise and the material was almost all relevant across the board.

6 Analysis.

Having completed the data collection, the next step was to use the website analysis in order to answer the research questions. Therefore this section will seek to take the findings of the website analysis and use them to answer the questions.

1a/ What are the relationships between national cultural backgrounds and the brands as can be deduced from the websites?

This question sought to examine to what extent the national background was seen to influence the composition of the website. While this is visibly evident in terms of explicit cultural references, there are also implicit influences that national cultures may or may not exert over the content and layout of the website.

The following table presents the national cultural symbols and references that were explicitly visible on the websites:

Table 11: Explicit national cultural references

	Explicit national cultural references
F1	Summer cottage, campfire, national language, bear imagery (connoting masculine strength), sauna building, tree felling, hunting, fishing
F2	Lapland region, northern lights, lake/fishing, campfire, national language.
N1	The brewery itself as a national landmark.
D1	The little mermaid, the brewery itself as a national landmark.
F3	National language, Finnish summer landscape (lake/forest setting), fishing.
G1	Alpine setting, German script (<i>Fraktur</i>), Historical figures, some national language, religious heritage.

There is clear evidence here that some brands incorporated the national culture of their websites more visibly than others, nominally the Finnish brands and the German brands. The Finnish brands were sold exclusively on the Finnish domestic market, while the Dutch and Danish brands clearly had a more international perspective and had little if no explicit references to the national culture of their countries of origin, so they could be seen to be distancing themselves from their national backgrounds. The German brand had a visibly more international perspective (orientated towards the world market, English language website). However, it retained a definite German/Bavarian identity, as shown in the above table.

1b/What is the relationship between the national backgrounds of each of the brands country of origin and Hofstede’s dimensions of culture?

The next step was to examine how the cultural dimensions of **Hofstede** were related to the websites. At a national level, the countries exhibited similarities in terms of how they relate to these dimensions. The following table shows just how close the countries are culturally according to **Hofstede’s** findings. As can be seen from the table, there are few areas where countries have entirely different cultural orientations, and the tendency is for countries to have similar, if not identical orientations, with exception of Denmark (Uncertainty avoidance) and Germany (Masculinity). This table exhibits the relationship between the countries in question and **Hofstede’s** dimensions of culture, while the extent to which these relationships manifested themselves in the brand websites was addressed in the next question.

Table 12: National orientations for Hofstede’s dimensions of culture

Individualism/ Collectivism	-					Ger	Fin Den	Neth		+
Masculinity/ Femininity	Den Neth	Fin			Ger					
Uncertainty Avoidance		Den			Fin Neth	Ger				

	<p>personal manner. However, in another section the emphasis is on being part of an in-group or social system and the website is addressing an in-group. Caters for both individual and collective requirements. The main advertising campaign depicts a scenario where ties to others are depicted as being loose and transient. The main protagonist is an independent agent pursuing independent goals. However dualistic approach whereby there are guests from collectivistic cultures, and the brand's product unites the group. The advertising campaign related to football subsumes individual identity into that of the group, where team goals override individual goals. Overall impression is of a dualistic approach, which includes both collectivist and individualistic orientations, but rather than merging them together, the website accommodates both side by side. Apparently there is no evidence of a positive relationship with the individualist orientation, as the website appears to feature both orientations at various points in the website. However, an endorsement of individualism seems to underlie the website.</p>
D1	<p>Brewery's success tied into the ambition and success of founding father and son. Personal differences lead to split in the brewery. Taking care of oneself/immediate family first, while motto indicated working hard for the greater good indicating a somewhat collectivist sentiment. Personal pronoun 'you' used appealing to individual, while team sport section emphasizes collective achievement. Individual expression in the context of some greater sporting community also evident among fans. Same for Astronaut ad, an individualist presentation of 'mankind's' achievement where self-orientation is emphasized. Mountaineer ad however focuses on collectivist approach, as the goal is for the benefit of the group. Print ads unilaterally individualist, focus on personal achievement and initiative. Overall individualist orientation mitigated against by the placing of the individual and individual achievement in a collectivist context.</p>
F3	<p>The relationship between the website and this dimension appeared to be similar to that of the other Finnish websites, whereby leisure time involves pastimes in the natural environment such as spending time at a summer cottage and fishing, hunting etc. However, while this may seem collectivistic, as these pastimes are customs across the nation, the activities in question are themselves individualistic in orientation. Brewery embedded in the heart of rural Finland itself. Other aspects of an individualistic orientation included differentiation from others whereby you afford yourself a competitive edge over rivals. Beer names evoke the collectivity of the Finnish nation as they refer to Finnish cultural artifacts. Individual prowess within the broader community is a characteristic.</p>
G1	<p>Sense of personal freedom evoked by the natural environment, the Alps, which is quintessentially Bavarian. Freedom from crowded urban environment. Long-standing tradition of private enterprise in evidence. Focus on the brewery as an individual in the context of an industry. Mitigated by identifying with the institutions of traditional society. Mix of promoting characteristics that are unique to the particular brand and give the brand an individual character, while also emphasizing belonging to the Bavarian</p>

community of brewers.

The Finnish websites had a tangibly positive relationship with their national cultural orientations. What each of the Finnish websites demonstrated was that the relationship to the dimension of individualism/collectivism involves identification at a collective level of certain national pastimes that appear to be universal to each of the three websites. However, the websites demonstrate an individualist orientation in terms of the nature of these pastimes and how leisure time is spent. All three depict rural settings and express the desire to have personal autonomy away from the hustle and bustle of an urban environment. Personal autonomy, space and individualist pursuits that require skill and endeavor (fishing and hunting) are central to the websites, as is the freedom evoking natural environment. Each of the Finnish websites demonstrated ties with their national culture, and would seem to correspond with a positive orientation for individualism with some mitigating factors on the collectivist side. This would be broadly in line with the orientation of Finnish society, which appears as being moderately individualist in its orientation. The Dutch brand's website had no clear-cut evidence of a relationship between the national orientation of the Netherlands and the orientation of the website. The website appeared to incorporate both the collectivist and the individualist side by side or in separate sections, while the individual identity of the brand was emphasized above all else. So while it was clear that the brand was the product of a more individualist culture, there were no direct links between the national culture of the Netherlands and the website itself. This was also the case in the Danish website, whereby both orientations seem to be catered for in different sections, while there is very little evidence of a link to the national culture of Denmark, the only evidence being in the history section, which exhibits the influence self-orientation and patriarchy had on the trajectory of the brewery. So there was little evidence of a direct link between national culture and the website. Finally, the German website was rich in tangible evidence of national, and particularly regional cultural influence. There was a strong link with collectivism whereby the institutions of Bavarian society are emphasized and associated with the brand. However within this context, the brand operates autonomously and the individual identity and character of the brands product is to the fore.

The next dimension to be examined was the dimension of masculinity/femininity.

Table 14: Masculinity/femininity

	Masculinity/Femininity
F1	Masculinity/Femininity: According to Hofstede's survey, Finnish society is moderately feminine. Although the focus of the website is on pursuits carried out by a male protagonist, there are underlying indicators of the moderate feminine orientation of Finnish society. These are an emphasis of quality of life, the centrality of maintaining the environment, acceptance of failure as being a mere setback.
F2	No reference to gender here, gender neutral, emphasis on quality of life, however this dominant feminine orientation is mitigated against by the presence of an appeal to prestige (ego-gratification). Moderately feminine in orientation reflecting the relationship that Finnish society has with the dimension.
N1	Health and quality of life enhancement promoted, while gender balance and fostering good relationships between people is also promoted in the sections of the website. The advertising section however provides a sharp contrast with this section. The male dominated scenario, where women are objectified for their beauty and play a secondary role to the macho males, suggests a man's world where men assert themselves and seek mastery and dominance. There is also an irony to this section that has to be taken into account, as the characters are to some extent caricatures of alpha male posturing, and behind the posturing good relationships and socializing are fostered. The football advertising provides yet another take on masculinity. Although this is a male dominated environment, without any females present, the scenario is an ironic and lighthearted take on the masculine values of sport such as assertiveness, competition and the will to dominate. There is no adversary present and the scenario is aimed at fostering good relations, while football and beer are presented as quality of life enhancing entities, so the take here is somewhat feminine. This also reflects the approach in the other football related section. The overall approach is moderately feminine and does relate with the orientation of the Netherlands to the extent that it is also feminine, although there's no clear evidence to suggest that they are linked.
D1	Quality of life orientation emphasized, focus on fostering relationships between people and the more caring side of sport rather than the winning/achievement side. The orientation appears to be more masculine in the advertising section however (male protagonists, ego-orientation). However, although the subject matter (football, scaling a mountain, space exploration) is of a masculine nature, the take on it is decidedly feminine for 2 out of the 3 sections (the space exploration being more masculine in orientation). The relationship with this dimension again is ambiguous, and doesn't entirely reflect the orientation of Danish society, which is firmly feminine. There is a tangibly more masculine than feminine orientation in

	some sections than others and vice-versa.
F3	Again the way this dimension relates to the website is tied in with the Finnish way of life, so there is a clear and direct link here between the 2. A well-preserved natural environment is central to the website, as is quality of life and enjoying leisure time rather than focusing on personal performance. Modest setting, devoid of status symbols. Some of the packaging however, has more masculine features such as aggression/assertiveness (double-goat) and prestige (coat of arms/awards). Other products are packaged and associated with Finnish cultural reference points and have connotations of quality of life enhancement by association, such as Finnish sauna beer. The stories section provides a contrast of different orientations to the different extents for each of the stories, which are all based in a quintessentially Finnish forested Lakeland.
G1	Gender division evident in the logo. The history section shows evidence of a patriarchal structure in place throughout the brewery's history providing an indication of the social organization in German/Bavarian society, and the crucial role that it has perhaps played, as indicated by the role it plays here. Focus on technical attributes and their high performance. Focus on powerful, dominant male rulers and figures who influenced or were connected in some way with the development of the brewery depicted, this depiction of power has masculine connotations. Feminine indicators such as quality of life enhancement properties, reflected in description of the product, but also in the inclusion of the picturesque Alpine landscape. Bravado shown (worldwide reach of the brand shown, Bavarians are the best Weiss beer brewers). Bavarian heritage and tradition combined with a competitive outlook.

The Finnish brands focus was predominantly on issues relating to quality of life in terms of an emphasis on enjoying leisure time and the natural environment and an emphasis on modesty rather than showiness, failure wasn't deemed to be a disaster, but was humorously portrayed as a setback. This was mitigated against by some traits of a masculine orientation, like performance related games and some symbols of assertiveness, and males performing in gender specific tasks. Overall the orientation exhibited in the website appeared to correspond with the orientation of Finnish society in a demonstrative fashion with direct links between the traits of the dimensions and the traits of the websites, and there was a commonality running through all the Finnish websites in terms of how the relationships were demonstrated. The websites had a perceptively more masculine orientation than the Finnish national average, however this could be attributed to the predominantly male consumption of beer, and therefore the assumption can be made that this was orientated more towards a male consumer base.

This must be taken into consideration as a mitigating circumstance, which would account for a more masculine orientation (in F1 in particular) than the national orientation would suggest. N1, from the strongly feminine orientated Netherlands had strong indicators of a feminine orientation (quality of life enhancement, gender equality). Although there were instances of apparent masculine scenarios (in the advertising and promotional section), these turned out to be parodies of machismo in the way they were depicted. However, women were very much in the role of enhancing the scenery with their beauty and nothing else, a masculine characteristic. Although there weren't direct links to Dutch national culture, the website had strong indicators of a feminine orientation, corresponding with the national trend in the Netherlands. Denmark has the same orientation as the Netherlands regarding this dimension, and is therefore strongly feminine in its orientation. Much like N1, this website has little direct links with the national culture of its country of origin. The section providing an explicit link between Danish culture and the brand was the history section, which had a surprisingly high emphasis on patriarchy, considering that Denmark is a low masculinity society, suggesting a discrepancy between modern Denmark and traditional Danish society? However the concern for enhancing quality of life amongst the owners did hint at feminine orientation. Other than that there were no direct links to Danish national culture. As regards the rest of the site, there were some sections where the orientation seemed more masculine, but overall the treatment of the subject matter used in the ads (sport, mountaineering) has a decidedly feminine orientation, reflecting the national tendency. The final website to be examined was G1 from Germany. Out of the 4 national cultures examined, Germany had by far the most masculine orientation comparatively speaking (albeit a moderate masculine orientation in terms of **Hofstede's** scale). There is a clear influence of German/Bavarian culture on the content of the site. In terms of this dimension, there was evidence of link between the more masculine orientation of German society and the content of the website. The history section was characterized by a patriarchal structure to the business and the presence of dominant male historical figures (noble rulers). The logo itself depicts a monk drinking, suggesting that this product is the preserve of males, while also being a reference to the culture of the region. An appreciation for natural beauty and quality of life mitigates against the masculine

orientation, which is evidence to suggest that the orientation of the website reflects the orientation of German society as being moderately, rather than highly, masculine. The overall conclusion that can be drawn from this section is that there is a clear relationship between the dimensions of masculinity/femininity and national culture. However this isn't explicitly demonstrated in the websites of the multinational brands, but the influence of national cultural orientations is reflected implicitly. It is also apparent that the multinationals have taken both masculine and feminine orientations into consideration and have applied these orientations in different sections of their websites, particularly in advertising.

Table 15: Uncertainty avoidance

	Uncertainty avoidance
F1	Uncertainty avoidance: Marginally positive orientation for uncertainty avoidance reflected in terms of the emphasis on maintaining traditions, however also accepting of innovations (incorporation of international dishes in traditional setting). There is an acceptance of law and order, however if the law is broken, it's not applied in a heavy-handed manner.
F2	Uncertainty avoidance: Indication of openness to innovation, while also retaining traditional elements. Strong example of uncertainty avoidance in terms of 'beer school' section, where there is a 'correct' procedure for pouring and a 'right' way to taste beer. There are indicators present of being moderately uncertainty avoidant, which seem to reflect the trend in Finnish society.
N1	Highly structured and organized format, yet not dictating to the visitor, with the emphasis more on providing advise in a neutral, matter of fact manner. Provides rituals to promote healthy consumption, yet these are innovative and original in nature. The companies brewing processes characterized by standard procedures and maintaining a standardized product, yet in tandem with innovation. Throughout the football and advertising sections there is also evidence of this approach, whereby a structured situation is provided however the action that takes place is of an improvised and innovative nature. There is a uniform pattern throughout the website as regards this dimension, which is absent regarding the other dimensions for this website. The fact that the pattern reflects the historical development of the brewery itself, and seems to therefore form part of the brewery's core values would therefore indicate that it is linked to the national culture of the Netherlands, which would be supported by the fact that the Netherlands is a marginally uncertainty avoidant society and this would reflect the manifestation of both orientations, in parts separate, and elsewhere in the site, in unison.
D1	Evidence of open-ended as opposed to structured learning (uncertainty avoidant) in the history section. Firm emphasis also however on uniform

	standards and consistency in the product, which is an indicator of uncertainty avoidance. The football section has a highly organized, structured format, however the content is very diverse in terms of the perspectives provided and the only binding factor that relates the content is football. The video clip advertising section was mixed. The astronaut situation was strong on uncertainty avoidance while the mountaineer clip was a light-hearted parody of uncertainty avoidance. The overall impression of the website was that of a clearly structured outline and framework, while the content within this structure often parodied or sought out the lighter side of real life events in a playful manner, also in a way that showed innovative and open thinking in the way that the original themes are played with. Little apparent connection between the websites content and the orientation of Danish society.
F3	Conservative/traditional orientation in terms of the scenery, focus on the preservation of Finnish culture, maintaining old certainties. While there's evidence of innovation and openness in the products, the product names relate to Finnish cultural artifacts and references reiterating this sense of a conservative, reassuring outlook. The humour used in the story section seemed to suggest that uncertainty avoidance would be necessary for the humour to work, and the humour was very much identifiable as Finnish.
G1	Conservatism, evidence of national/regional heritage (Alps suggesting continuity and reassurance). Logical layout. Religious image (one truth). Shift in modern times, to a more innovative and less uncertainty avoidant approach. Innovation evident in the application of technology however, the underlying goal is control the process and improve/maintain the production standard. Strict adherence to Bavarian brewing law, and repeated mention of laws, decrees and controls of the system. 'Correct' pouring instructions.

At the level of national cultures, Danish society was strongly uncertainty accepting while Finland and the Netherlands were marginally uncertainty avoidant. Germany was the most uncertainty avoidant, slightly more uncertainty avoidant than Finland and the Netherlands. All three Finnish websites had the thread of preserving national heritage and fostering continuity running through them, indicators of an uncertainty avoidant orientation. Other indicators towards being uncertainty avoidant include evidence of following correct procedures being emphasized (in F1, when the correct procedures aren't followed, it has negative consequences). What mitigates against the overall uncertainty avoidant outlook is the presence of a perceptible openness to innovation, although this was not as strongly emphasized as in D1 or N1. Moving onto N1 and its relationship with its country of origin, there is no demonstrative link between N1 and the Netherlands, due to the international character of the website and the absence of references to Dutch culture and Dutch cultural artifacts. However the website did seem to

reflect the ambivalent Dutch orientation towards uncertainty avoidance. On the one hand the website was organized in a neat and logical fashion, whereby sections are clearly defined in terms of their content. The website emphasizes rituals and standards regarding the production and consumption of its product, however it doesn't dictate to the consumer and there is evidence of improvised behaviour and innovation throughout the website. So although there's no real direct links to the culture of the Netherlands, the orientation of the website would seem to correspond with the orientation of Dutch society as having characteristics of both uncertainty avoidance and uncertainty acceptance in evidence. Again, the Danish origin multinational had few explicit references to its country of origin. According to **Hofstede's** findings, Denmark differed significantly from the other countries looked at here, whereby Denmark has a very low reading for uncertainty avoidance and can therefore be seen to be uncertainty accepting in its orientation. There appeared to be little apparent relevance between the websites content and the orientation of Danish society according to the findings of **Hofstede**. The website strongly mirrored the website of N1 in terms of its structure (Clearly organized, similar subject matter and approach to it). The final website was G1 from Germany. Germany was the most uncertainty avoidant of the 4 countries according to **Hofstede's** findings. There is a clear and explicit link between Bavarian/German culture and this website in terms of the cultural references depicted throughout the website (the Alpine scenery, the monk and the title on the logo, the references to historical rulers in the region, the use of traditional German script). One feature that the website has in common with its Finnish counterpart, is the presence of depictions of the region's natural environment, a defining feature of the region. In the case of Finland, it's the landscape of Lapland and the forest/lake environment, while the German website depicts the Bavarian Alps. These features evoke a sense of reassurance, features that have been part of the Finnish and Bavarian landscapes for centuries if not millennia, and therefore there is a sense of certainty about them. Hence, their inclusion in the websites suggests that their respective societies value the certainty and reassurance they provide. Another characteristic of uncertainty avoidance that is evident here is that of a conservative outlook. The brand's name and logo are of an apparent conservative orientation, relating to the region's Christian and monastic heritage and the issue of a single truth, in this Christianity, which is associated

with an uncertainty avoidant outlook. The use of traditional German script and the reiteration of a strict adherence to the regional purity law illustrate a respect for order and heritage, while also being explicitly linked to German national culture. What mitigates against this strong uncertainty avoidant orientation is the emphasis on innovation in technology and an openness to expanding the markets for the product, both features of the brewery in its modern form and indicative of modern German society. This therefore reflects the national trend as being moderately uncertainty avoidant, and there is also an explicit link present between the national culture and the content of the website.

Table 16: Power distance

	Power distance
F1	The tone of the website, addressing the visitor as a peer in a colloquial manner in terms of the language used, reflects Hofstede's findings that Finland is a low power distance culture. Informal, low-key setting (summer cottage), no status symbols. Officialdom also low key (inspector), no deference shown.
F2	No evidence of 'status symbols'. Universal appeal of nature, modesty, mitigated against by the 'exclusive limited edition' beer, however this too can be purchased by anyone. Emphasis on the product as quality of life enhancing (pause to be enjoyed) rather than on status affirmation. Overall indicates a low power distance orientation, in line with that of Finnish society according to Hofstede .
N1	The website's tone is informal and addresses the visitor as a peer would, advising the visitor but leaving any decision to be made at their discretion. Hierarchies are non-existent or de-emphasized, as is the case when regular fans get to meet celebrity, VIP former players. The brand seeks to engage with the consumer in a light-hearted manner. Evidence of cultural adaptation in the example of South Korea however, where there is evidence of power distance. The ambassadorial reception event, which in itself has connotations of high power distance, appears to be lampooned in its depiction here, reflecting a low power distance value orientation, where power sharing is promoted. The adaptation to local cultural norms is in evidence in the football tour of the world, where the participants are treated like dignitaries in Thailand, and there is a tangible power distance between the hosts, who are somewhat fawning, and the visitors who are bestowed a certain prestige by the hosts. The football advertising campaign focuses on sport as enjoyment, without the power struggle and hierarchy of financial worth, prestige and categorization associated with professional football. The overall orientation for power distance is low, in line with the orientation of the Netherlands according to Hofstede's survey, although there is no direct link provided here between norms in Dutch society and the website itself.

D1	Throughout the website there is evidence of a low power distance orientation, characterized by a universal, democratic outlook where people are free to act on their own initiatives and become successful in their own right, as reflected in the owners story. There was also a clear concern for universal welfare, as shown in the owners wish to make the brewery an aesthetically pleasing work environment. There is also evidence of de-emphasizing power distance and status differences that may exist between people, exemplified in the football section. This would seem to clearly reflect the situation in Danish society, which has a low power distance orientation according to Hofstede's findings .
F3	Emphasis on the universal appreciation of the natural environment (in Finland) irrespective of power distance indices such as status, power and wealth. The tone of the language reiterated a sense of a low power distance orientation, as it is colloquial and straightforward. The stories indicate a democratic/meritocratic orientation also, with an overriding sense of community, suggestive of daily life in small town Finland. Very much tied in with the national culture of Finland.
G1	Historical evidence of high power distance, which outlines how the rulers shaped the development of the brewery. Clear shift in the 19 th -20 th century evident to a more democratic, low power distance orientation, leading up to the present day. Language used is that of a peer, seemingly flat power distance relationship. Open about its production process and engaging. Emphasis on vigorous competition, however on a level playing field. Alpine environment depicted, open to all.

All of the countries have a low power distance orientation, as can be seen from the table. 3 of the countries have a moderately low power distance orientation, while Denmark has a very low orientation. As has been the case throughout this section, there was common thread running through all the Finnish websites, due to the fact that they chose similar themes for their websites (nature related). There were explicit links between the orientation of the websites as regards this dimension, and the national culture of Finland. These links were based on the central themes of the websites, which were similar across all 3 websites as has been outlined here previously. The settings or locations for each of the websites related to the rural landscape of Finland encompassing some central reference points of Finnish culture (Northern lights, sauna, summer cottage, lake/forest landscape), and these were all locations firmly rooted in the natural world. The settings were, while being very aesthetically rich and pleasing, essentially low key and without connotations of status or exclusivity. They could be assumed to being universal in their appeal to people, so there was an absence of status indicators that would denote a high

power distance orientation. Each of the websites addressed the visitor in an informal manner, in the manner that a peer would address a peer, with use of colloquial and familiar expressions throughout each of the websites. So therefore, because the content of the websites was explicitly related to Finnish national culture, there is a demonstrative and a discernable link between the low power distance orientation of both Finnish society and these websites. N1 has very little in the way of a direct link with Dutch national culture, however there is one feature that distinguishes N1 from the other websites. That is that there is evidence of cultural adaptation on the part of the brand, the example being the Korean limousine taxi initiative as outlined in the analysis section. Although there was a correlation between the orientation of Dutch society and the N1 website, whereby they both had a low power distance orientation, there was no explicit link between the website and Dutch national culture. The traits that would indicate a low power distance orientation include informal colloquial language being used throughout, the lampooning of formal, high power distance events and the de-emphasis of status (in the case of the VIP footballers). However, the website shows that the brand is sensitive to cultural differences and can adapt itself accordingly, rather than imposing a low power distance orientation on other cultures. D1 from Denmark is the other brand that is the flagship brand for a multinational and the website layout reflects the international perspective of N1, whereby there are very few explicit links between the website and Danish national culture. There is also a correspondence between N1 and D1, as they both reflect the low power distance orientations of their countries of origin. D1 also uses a section devoted to football as a vehicle for promoting the de-emphasis of power distance between VIP footballers and the fans, and also by presenting the stories of ordinary fans in a democratic fashion. There was one explicit link between the website and the national culture of Denmark, albeit a subtle one and one which relates primarily to the brewery. The brewer was able to progress, with his own initiative and without any apparent barriers, to develop a successful business, whilst the concern for the welfare of people expressed in the owners wish to make the brewery easy on the eye, as well as his willingness to patronize arts and science for the benefit of his fellow Danes, suggest an inherently democratic and inclusive mentality. So while there is an overall indication of a low power distance orientation, there are also explicit examples, which reflect the

influence of Danish society on the brands and how this process is reinforced. G1 from Germany, as has been outlined was the only foreign brand where there were clear and explicit links between the website and the culture of the country (more specifically in this case the region) of origin. Although the sections of the site relating to the modern period correspond to the moderately low power distance orientation of modern German society, there does appear to have been a major shift, according to the history section. This depiction of a high power distance orientation, albeit in other periods in history, is particular to this site and is absent in all the other websites. There are echoes of the Finnish websites, as the natural landscape is incorporated as a central theme to the website. As was the case in the Finnish websites, the natural environment (in the case the Bavarian Alps) is something that can be universally appreciated and is open to all, while the brand also focuses on promoting itself in the context of open and fair competition, so there is a sense of a democratic outlook, where vigorous and fair competition are central. This is linked explicitly to the regional/national culture in the context of the *Weissbier* market, this sense of fairness is also reflected in the fact that the brewing law is applicable universally and there is a sense that is enforced in a sort of peerage where the imperative is to maintain standards. So while competition and success are strongly emphasized, this is in the context of a low power distance environment based on fairness and openness, underlined by a democratic spirit of universality.

3/ What is the relationship between Triandis' profiles of Modern/Traditional man relate to the brand websites?

Triandis' profiling, where he provides an insight into the contrast between the world views and value orientations of an outlook based on tradition and a more conservative outlook, perhaps based on the perspective of pre-industrial societies, and an outlook shaped by the development of industrial and post-industrial society and modernity, provides a measure for the extent to which globalization influences the development of cultural norms. It goes beyond the dimensions of **Hofstede** in this regard, but it is also complementary. The above section relating to **Hofstede's** dimension was country specific but also provided an insight into the extent that national culture exerts an influence explicitly and implicitly over the value orientations of the websites. **Triandis'** profile

isn't country specific and relates to the central dynamic of change in the world at the moment associated with the process of globalization and modernization. The overall conclusion, which will look at the findings in their totality will be the subject of the next question, while the focus here will exclusively relate to the findings regarding **Triandis'** dimension.

Taking a look at the Finnish brands first. There was a common thread running through all three of the Finnish brand websites, this being that the themes of the websites were all related to the national culture of Finland, and even more specifically related to the Finnish countryside and natural landscape. This therefore created an impression that the orientation in all three was towards the profile of traditional man, due to the almost reverential focus on the natural world (traditional man being prone to mysticism), the apparent prevalence of a narrow in-group (ethnic Finns), the identification with ones ancestors (the family heirloom of the summer cottage, the quintessentially Finnish landscapes). The central themes therefore indicated an orientation towards the profile of traditional man, and also one, which was explicitly tied up with Finnish national culture. On closer inspection the orientations had more nuances than the first impressions suggested. F1 had a more cosmopolitan perspective than first thought as it presented a cosmopolitan array of snacks, albeit in the rustic, rural setting that pervades the website. The section focusing on a male character however did bear more traits of the traditional man (Traditional pursuits, little planning or regard for standards of excellence) than those of the modern man. F2 was altogether more modern in its content, even though the imagery in the website depicts the Northern lights and fishing, which evoke a more traditional image. The subject matter of the website didn't correspond with the imagery, and attributes of the profile of the modern man were perceptible (emphasis on scientifically based qualities of products, standards of excellence and openness to new, innovative ideas, such as the organic beer). So the content of F2 was split between imagery associated with the profile of traditional man (mystical northern lights, camp fire, fishing) and subject matter that reflects traits of the modern man. In terms of imagery F3 corresponded with the other Finnish sites, with its focus on national, cultural heritage. Within the site there was an apparent combination, whereby the outward imagery of the products corresponded with traditional man (power of nature, heritage,

tradition depicted in references to Sauna, firewood), there was an underlying emphasis on traits of the modern man. The product differentiation and descriptions had little to do with the imagery of the logos/names and a lot to do with scientifically based differentiation. The perspective here was narrow and definitely not cosmopolitan as the focus was on ethnic Finnish symbols. The other 3 websites belonged to brand's whose countries of origin were, similarly to Finland, all modern, Northern European EU member states. An immediate contrast between the Finnish websites and the D1 and N1 in particular can be detected on accession to their respective websites. There is no immediate indication whatsoever of the national origins of these brands, so in this sense both of the brands can be seen to identify themselves beyond their national origins.

In both D1 and N1 the evidence of their national origins is limited to their history (D1) or tour (N1) sections. The history section of D1 is firmly rooted in Denmark and provides explicit evidence of the profile of the modern man having a long standing in Danish society as indicated by the trajectory of the brewery's founder, which is characterized by an openness to new experience, independence from parental authority, a belief in science and determinism and also a cosmopolitan perspective. Some artifacts pertaining to Danish national culture are mentioned (the little mermaid statue, a national museum), however they are only mentioned in the context of being commissioned by the brand itself, so there is a firm focus on the role the brand has played as an agent in developing or patronizing culture in Denmark rather than the role Danish culture has played in shaping the brand/company. The website of N1 is even less linked to its national origins than the website of D1 and reference to the national origins is limited to the location of the brand's chief brewery and museum in Amsterdam. There is therefore no tangible evidence of a link between Dutch national culture and the website of N1, there is even a clear indication from the outset that the website seeks to promote the brand as being international as indicated by the slogan 'open your world', which strongly indicates a cosmopolitan perspective. Aside from the issue of national culture, there is a clear correlation between the multinational websites and the profile of the modern man.

Both N1 and D1 have sections devoted to their breweries and brewing processes, and in each of these sections the focus is firmly on how they promote and maintain standards of excellence through scientific methods. In addition to this, the tour of the N1 brewery

section shows evidence of having a cosmopolitan orientation, in terms of the visible composition of the groups of visitors, which is clearly multi-ethnic, while there is also evidence of technological innovations made by the company. In terms of an orientation towards nature, both websites focus solely on man's ability to master the reinforcements he receives from nature. Both websites have a section devoted to football. N1's website focuses on the Champions league, while D1 focuses on an internationally renowned English team and accounts from fans around the world. Both websites therefore use the same sport, which attracts a very cosmopolitan following and both websites have an international outlook, with no orientation evident towards the brands' countries of origin. The choice of professional football reflects values of the modern man, such as competing with standards of excellence, the sport, teams and competitions involved at the level shown have been strongly influenced by the processes of globalization and are very international and cosmopolitan in their outlooks. Even though the team in question in D1 is identifiable with a particular city, the perspective is clearly cosmopolitan as indicated by the international composition of the team, while the other sections relating to football in both websites are unambiguously cosmopolitan. The emphasis in both websites is also tongue in cheek as regards the high performance aspects of the sport, and actually focuses on the more fun side of the game, whereby fans enjoy the experience and the entertainment side of the sport. However, the prestige of the sport is intrinsically linked to the profile of the modern man and not the traditional man, so its inclusion in both sides is an affirmation of the values of the modern man. Both websites provide a section devoted to their then current advertising campaigns. D1 focuses on achievements of modern man (scaling of Mt. Everest, the first moon landing), while N1 focuses on an event and the role that the modern man plays in this event (an ambassadorial reception). D1's approach is more serious and reflects values of the modern man in both the billboard and video versions of the moon-landing ads, while this approach is evident in the billboard version of the Mt. Everest ad, but not in the video version. The video version's approach is more tongue in cheek and parodies the real life event, but doesn't however suggest an endorsement of the values of traditional man due to the fact that it is a humoristic take. The website of N1 has additional evidence of the values of modern man in its content. Responsible drinking is promoted, with an entire section of the website devoted to this

purpose. The focus here is on informing the consumer so that they can take potential health effects into consideration and make a decision based on this knowledge. This scientifically based, considered approach correlates more positively with the modern man than with the more fatalistic attitude of the traditional man. The other trait that distinguishes N1 from D1 is that of the prevalence of imagery, which denotes a cosmopolitan perspective, whereby the groups depicted are clearly of a multi-ethnic composition. So there is even stronger evidence of the traits of the modern man in N1 than D1, although it is clear that they both reflect largely the profile of the modern man. They seem somewhat detached from their national origins as N1 in particular places a firm emphasis on defining itself as being international and of the world, rather than being national. D1 refers to its roots, but its modern day incarnation doesn't seem to have any explicit links to the national culture of Denmark. The remaining website was that of the German brand G1. Although this was an international website, as N1 and D1 were, they seemed to have more in common with the domestically orientated Finnish websites in terms of evidence of national culture, than with the other internationally orientated websites. References to German national culture include the usage of the *Deutscher Schrift/Fraktur* script (traditional German font), the Alpine scenery (characteristic of Bavaria), the Franciscan monk (associated with Munich) and the references to the Bavarian nobility. So there is a clear appreciation here of the national/regional heritage and the brand clearly seeks to embrace its regional/national identity and incorporate it into the brand's own identity. As has been established here, there is clear and explicit evidence of references to the national/regional cultural origins of the brand. The next step is to establish the orientation of the website in terms of the profiles of modern/traditional man. Although the brand points out that it is now distributed on a worldwide basis, the website appears to be hemmed in by the Bavarian Alps as the location never shifts from Germany/Bavaria, throughout the website, so there is a clear indication of a narrow perspective, whereby the brand prides itself on its origins and doesn't seek to distance itself from them as was the case with the other 2 international websites. The attitude to nature is ambiguous also in terms of how it relates to the profiles. As with the other 2 international websites, there is evidence of an emphasis on man's mastery over the reinforcements he receives from nature, which is documented in the section devoted to

the brewing process, which outlines how the brand has utilized the high quality ingredients provided in the region in such a way as to obtain a high quality end product, thus exhibiting mastery over the process. However, the main theme of the website is the appreciation of the unfettered natural beauty of the Bavarian region. The way nature is presented in this imagery has more to do with the profile of traditional man than that of modern man. The natural world is seen as being sacred, and as having an air of mysticism to it, above the mastery of mankind. There is also a sense of the *'heimat'*, the German term that means homeland, ancestral home and habitat (approximately). This isn't just the location that the brand happens to be produced in, this Alpine region has a personality and an identity that stretches back in time, and the brand's identity is intrinsically wrapped up in this. There is a shift in evidence here also as the brand's history indicates how its modernized with the times, moving from operating under the monopoly imposed on the brewing industry by the ruling nobility to operating as an autonomous entity, whose focus is on adapting technological and scientific innovations into the production process in order to gain a competitive advantage over rival producers. The brand has also become more outward looking as shown by its recent and rapid distribution expansion across the world, an indication of an increasingly cosmopolitan perspective. This particular website is unique amongst the websites in terms of how it relates to the profiles of modern/traditional man. The brand has a strong sense of its cultural heritage, and the brand has been shaped by the direction received from its ancestors. In focusing exclusively on the regional and national culture of the Germany/Bavaria, it is clear that the perspective of the brand is a narrow one and not a cosmopolitan one, in line with the profile of the traditional man. Nature is portrayed as being something sacred and something that is intrinsically linked with the brand identity itself, as was the case with the Finnish brands. However in spite of this focus on tradition, heritage and the unique landscape of the region and how the brand identifies itself with this, there is also clear indicators of the profile of the modern man. The expansion of the brand to becoming a globally recognized brand indicates an increasingly cosmopolitan perspective, while the brand illustrates in detail how the product is the result of the reinforcements mankind receives from nature, as well as outlining the scientific processes that are involved in the brewing process. So there is a clear identification with the profile of the modern man in

terms of how control can be exercised over the natural world through scientific processes. So this website combines aspects of the profile of the traditional man, which are tied into the brands sense of heritage and its regional identity, with aspects of the profile of the modern man, which relate to the production process, the competitive nature of the business and the increasingly international, cosmopolitan orientation of the brand.

4/ What is relationship between the brand websites, their national backgrounds and both Hofstede and Triandis' dimensions?

The answer to this question is based solely on the analyses of the websites. The theoretical background is not incorporated here, a more comprehensive view look at the relationship between globalization and the content of the websites will be presented in the conclusion section, incorporating theoretical perspectives on globalization with results of the analysis as outlined here in answering this question.

There was a clear dichotomy evident on the websites, whereby the emphasis in the websites of the flagship brands of the multinational was on the international and the global, while the emphasis of the Finnish brands and the German brand was on the domestic and the national. This assertion is backed up by the fact that there were explicit references to Finnish and German national culture, as documented earlier in the analysis, while this wasn't the case for the flagship brands of the Dutch and Danish based multinationals.

All three of the Finnish brand websites were pervaded by Finnish national culture. The websites were all in the Finnish language, and incorporated colloquial, familiar expressions that weren't immediately comprehensible to non-native Finnish speakers, in this instance at least. The cultural references made in each of the three websites related to Finnish national culture and included the following: All three of the websites exclusively in Finnish, colloquial/familiar Finnish language expressions used, Lapland, Forest/*Mökki* life, Lakeland (Fishing), Campfire, Snowstorm/Firewood/Sauna/Bear in product names, Northern lights, Finnish outdoor pursuits (Fishing/Hunting/*Mökki* building). The individual websites contained the following cultural references and symbols:

Table 17a: Cultural references and symbols contained in website sample

F1	Website revolves around the theme of summer cottage life in the forest. Rural heritage of Finland, often a family heirloom, escape from urban modernity, cosmopolitan/open to new things perspective alluded to in the snacks section, radio plays section provided three scenarios presenting a light hearted take on the stereotypical Finnish male. In relation to the profile of the modern/traditional man, the values espoused by the man reflected the values of the traditional man (Planning unnecessary, follow instincts, standards of excellence not an imperative, suggestion of being subject to external forces) although the results were negative so it may not necessarily be presenting an affirmation of these values.
F2	Lapland theme, traditionally life emphasized with log cabin and campfire. Rooted in heritage and place, However values of modern man espoused, beer school and new organic beer, scientific properties of the beer, blind tasting evidence as being the best, correlate with modern man. Contrast between outward imagery and the content (on closer inspection). Retention of Finnish traditions and heritage, while promoting a modern approach to their products.
F3	Theme of rural Finland particularly the lake/forest landscape also barley fields, orientated towards a specific in-group (ethnic Finns). Evokes Finland's agrarian past, Identification with ancestors, Reverential, (not domineering) attitude towards nature (presented in an unspoilt state, emphasis on natural beauty). Elsewhere in website (products section) scientific precision emphasized. Product characteristics presented in scientific detail, deterministic approach. Product names and labels connote the perspective of traditional man (coat of arms, animals, sauna, firewood), however product descriptions tend to focus on scientific characteristics of the products (Sauna experience evokes sense of tradition and heritage). Fish tales section, tongue in cheek, mixed outlook. Setting is the heart of traditional rural Finland; values espoused conflicting, narrow perspective-highly competitive approach.

The only deviation from this pattern was the presence of dishes of a non-Finnish origin in the 'snacks' section of one of the websites, so for the most part the websites focused on

traditional Finnish pursuits and cultural references and retained a perspective defined by its Finnishness, and suggested a traditionalist perspective as opposed to a modern perspective. The German brand was slightly less exclusively based on its national cultural background, while nonetheless retaining a strong focus on its national/regional origins. The following explicit traits were noticed on the site:

Table 17b: G1

G1	English language, ‘German script’ font, Reference to the brands Bavarian brewing tradition dating back to the 14 th century, Bavarian Alpine scenery depicted, strong focus on regional brewing heritage and traditions, International availability of the brand.
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As can be seen in the above snapshot, the brand is using its national/regional cultural heritage as a selling point in an international arena. The website’s language is English (although the font used is ‘German script’) and the website provides a map of the world indicating the extent to which the brand has penetrated the international market. So here the brand is very much intertwined with its cultural origins and the traditions and heritage of its home region while being outward looking in terms of selling itself on the world market.

There was a noticeable change in terms of the cultural references and perspectives of the other 2 brands (The flagship brands of the Dutch and Danish multinationals). Although their approaches and perspectives are different from the rest in terms of how they relate to their national cultural backgrounds, they share a lot in common with each other (in terms of the tangible cultural references in evidence on the respective websites):

Table 17c:N1,D1

N1	In English, Embassy reception, Professional football (champions league advertising campaign and taking groups of fans from diverse national backgrounds to exotic locations to watch the final), National background of the brand limited to one section (product history), Dubai rugby tournament (International ex-pat
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	community), Strong emphasis on responsible alcohol consumption.
D1	In English, Mount Everest, Moon landing, Professional football, World map showing brand penetration across the globe, National background of the brand limited to one section (product history).

In both cases, references to the national cultural backgrounds of the brands are limited to the history sections as the brands point out their origins. However, unlike in the previous websites the national origins of the brand and references to national culture do not pervade the website. As can be seen from the above details, there are clear similarities between the two websites. Both websites (international) are in English and both websites have a section devoted to professional football based on the international/global appeal of the game (Cosmopolitan teams, trips around the world, supporters from around the globe depicted in the sections). Their advertising campaigns did not deal with the same subject, but did relate to themes that were universally renowned or of a cosmopolitan international nature. **N1** chose the theme of a reception in an embassy attended by a host of international dignitaries and therefore an ostensibly cosmopolitan event, while **D1** chose the themes of the first moon landing and the first scaling of Mt. Everest, achievements that have a universal renown as being achievements of mankind as a whole. So therefore, even before analysing the websites according to the criteria of **Triandis**, there was an apparent disparity between the approaches of the international brands (cosmopolitan perspective, little reference to national cultural backgrounds) and the approach of the German and Finnish brands (emphasis on national/regional heritage and tradition that pervades the websites).

Having established a general impression above of the websites relationships with their national culture and their worldview, the next step is to examine the results of the thesis dimension analysis based on **Triandis**' profiles of modern and traditional man. The Finnish brand websites appeared outwardly to have the orientation of traditional man

whereby narrow in-groups (the ethnic Finnish community), heritage, identification with one's ancestors, a fatalistic/mystic outlook on life all appeared to emanate from the cultural references contained in the website. However, on closer inspection, the Finnish websites (overall) weren't as strongly orientated towards the profile of the traditional man as was firstly assumed to be the case. In each of the websites, the themes upon which the websites were based had a common thread running through them. They all revolved around rural Finland and a rural idyll based on summer cottage life, the natural beauty of the lake and forest unspoilt by human activity, and the uniquely Finnish beauty of Lapland characterized by the Northern Lights and other more generically Finnish aspects such as campfires, snowstorms and lakeside vistas. In addition to this, the attitudes espoused by the Finnish male protagonist in one of the websites were firmly in tune with the profile of the traditional man. The activities that were engaged in were traditional Finnish rural pursuits such as renovating the summer cottage and hunting in the forest, while the approach of the protagonist also correlated positively with the profile of the traditional man as planning was shunned in favour of following instinct, standards of excellence weren't adhered to as personal prowess and know-how was favoured (standards as imposed by the authorities were viewed with contempt). Therefore there was a certain defiance of modernity and the traditional lifestyle was presented as a desirable escape from the stress of modern, urban environments, which are totally absent. Product names in all three of the brand websites had connotations of tradition. The product names included 'coat of arms', 'sauna beer', 'bear', 'firewood', 'Lapland', 'snowstorm' each of which indicates a traditional outlook of a narrow in-group, nominally the Finnish ethnic group. However, there was also traits of modern man present in the website content relating specifically to the product characteristics. So while the labelling and the product names connoted the profile of the traditional man, the product descriptions were addressing modern man, outlining the scientific properties of the products and the processes involved in their production implicitly indicating that the prospective consumers would have an understanding or a desire to understand the processes involved correlating with the profile of the modern man. The websites therefore incorporated the symbols and the cultural artefacts and references of traditional man in the labelling of their products, yet the product descriptions were addressing the

modern man. The cultural heritage and the traditions of Finland are retained therefore in the brand identity. The websites appear to be tapping into the values of traditional Finnish man and offering the modern Finn an escape from the hectic pace of modern life by offering respite in the form of the profile of traditional man.

So overall, the websites are very much rooted in the national cultural identity of Finland and relate their products exclusively to the traditions and heritage of Finland. On the other hand in terms of the **Triandis'** profile, the websites are offering the values of traditional Finnish life and the rural idyll of *Mökki* (Finnish summer cottage), Sauna, Forest/Lake pursuits and Lapland in the form of the brand identity and message.

According to the culture references and symbols compiled earlier in this answer, the German brand seemed to be somewhere between the Finnish brands and the Danish and Dutch multinational brands. The website was pervaded by German/Bavarian cultural references, and the national/regional identity was emphasized as being one of the brands strengths, as its heritage and traditions reinforced the brands credentials and assured the consumer of the brands high standards and quality. However, unlike the Finnish brands this website is overtly aimed at international consumers and not the domestic consumers (as indicated by the use of the English language and the section on the website devoted to the brands international scope in terms of its market penetration). There is also a contrast with the Dutch and Danish sites as the brand emphasizes its national/regional identity and its heritage rather than taking the approach of presenting itself as a globalized, international brand that is somewhat deterritorialized in terms of its identity, deemphasizing and not incorporating the national cultural backgrounds of the brands into the websites.

In terms of **Triandis'** profile of modern/traditional man, the website of **G1** was pervaded by the theme of a strong Bavarian/German identity, and the Bavarian heritage of the company is outlined as being crucial in the development of the brand over centuries. On closer inspection there was a clear crossover between the profile of the modern man and the profile of the traditional man. The traits of traditional man that were evident included a narrow in-group where the points of reference are restricted to the world of the Germany and more particularly the Bavarian Alps, Catholic monastic traditions and the

princely rulers of Bavaria. The centrality of the unspoiled natural beauty of the Alps indicates a somewhat reverential attitude towards nature, which correlates with traditional man's trait of mysticism. The brand logo and name allude to the long-standing Catholic, monastic traditions of the region and therefore places value on the heritage and traditions of the region. Patriarchy has a central role in the historical development of the brand both through the business being handed down from generation to generation and the dominant and influential role played by the ruling nobles of Bavaria who controlled the brewing industry. The final characteristic of the profile of the traditional man that was apparent in the website was that of being suspicious of the world as indicated by the focus on the region of origin, the heimat, of the brand (Bavaria) but also on the fact that the brand retains strict adherence to the long standing German purity law, implying a degree of suspicion of developments outside of Germany in the intervening period of hundreds of years from when the law came into being and the present day. The traits of the profile of the modern man that are discernable in the website include an emphasis on science and determinism as indicated by the virtual tour of the brewing facility, which provides an insight into the technical and scientific processes involved in the brewery. This implies that the tour will appeal to 'modern man', someone who has an appreciation for science and determinism, hence its inclusion. Another noticeable trait is that of having a concern for planning and a willingness to defer gratification in order to achieve an optimal result. This was indicated as being part of an historical shift, when the brewery took the step to move the production facility from its city centre base to the suburbs of Munich and thus taking a step into modernity with the values of planning and deferring gratification. This trait is exhibited elsewhere in the site in the best pouring instructions section. The inclusion of this section implies an appreciation for best practice rather than taking a more straight forward, simplistic approach as traditional man might. The relationship that the website of G1 has with **Triandis'** dimension is epitomised by the screensaver section of the website, which is very much ambivalent in relation to **Triandis'** dimension throughout the website. In this particular instance, the presence of the screensaver is indicative of embracing modernity and providing the modern, technologically engaged consumer with a brand based download. However on the other hand, the content of the downloads appears to be rooted in the traditional as indicated by the presence of the friar

as well as the picturesque Alpine scenery. The Bavarian regional and German national heritage are central to this website. These particular cultural in-groups remain the focus throughout the website, although the brand has evidently embarked on a campaign to sell on a worldwide basis, the Bavarian/German identity has been retained as being central to the brand's identity, rather than internationalizing the brand. In retaining the traditions and the identity of the brand's *heimat*, the brand is exhibiting the trait of traditional man of having narrow in-groups while also looking at the outside world with suspicion. The safe and reassuring presence of the Alps provide a self-contained environment within which the website and indeed the brand is situated. So although its distribution has gone worldwide, there is the sense that its identity belongs in the confines of Bavaria. As regards attitudes to science, technology and the natural world, the website altogether ambivalent as traits of modern man and traditional man appear together. Standards of excellence in the brewing process, mastery over the reinforcements provided by the environment, all traits of modern man, are intrinsically linked to the brewing processes employed by the brewery and displayed on the website. Yet a certain reverential attitude towards nature is retained in the way the natural beauty of Bavaria is depicted. It appears as untamed by mankind and something that should be respected by humanity. This suggests that while the brand has incorporated traits of the modern man as it has developed historically in terms of scientific advancement, a competitive approach and a focus on achieving high standards, it none the less retains the traits of traditional man, which are very much tied up in the brand's regional and national identity.

The Dutch and Danish brands differed quite significantly from the Finnish and indeed the German brands in terms of their relationships with their national backgrounds and with the profiles of modern and traditional man. As can be seen from the above table showing the primary references (cultural and international) from the websites, both websites have taken a distance from their respective national cultural backgrounds in favour of a more global, international approach. In both cases the references to the brand's national backgrounds are limited to the history section, as though their mention is just a detail of geography.

In terms of their relationship with **Triandis'** profiles of modern and traditional man, both websites have similar relationships with **Triandis'** profiles due to the fact that both

websites have similar overall characteristics. The historical development of **D1** is centred on the life story of the brewery's founding father and correlates positively with the profile of the modern man. The founding father's path to success was characterized by an openness to new experiences, independence of parental authority and a cosmopolitan perspective as he left his parental home to embark on establishing his brewing enterprise, enhancing his craft in Germany along the way. The founder's stated aim was to improve standards and quality within the brewing industry, indicating the trait of modern man whereby he competes with standards of excellence and has a firm belief in science and determinism. This emphasis on science and determinism is reiterated in a section devoted to scientific developments achieved in the laboratories of **D1** primarily the development of a pure strain of yeast and the pH scale, as is mastery of the environment. There is a sharp contrast between the representations of nature in the website for **D1** and the websites of the Finnish brands and the German brand. Whereas in the latter, the natural environment was presented in such a way that the emphasis was on the natural beauty of the environment and any evidence of mankind's interference with the natural world related to enhancing the natural world rather than seeking to dominate it or exert mastery over it. The natural world was something to be appreciated and respected, in accordance with the values of traditional man. However the focus in the website of **D1** is firmly on mastery over the environment and control over the reinforcements received from nature. The imagery in the website contains only cultivated, scientifically monitored fields as opposed to the lakes, forests and mountains in the Finnish and German websites. The mastery of the natural environment is central to the themes in **D1**'s advertising section also, which are the scaling of Mt. Everest and the first moon landing, both representing apex achievements in terms of man's mastery over nature. In selecting these particular events, the brand is making a statement that affirms the values of the profile of the modern man. The final segment of **D1** related to professional football, a theme that was also incorporated in the website of **N1**. It doesn't appear to be simply a coincidence that professional football was the sport of choice in both websites. Professional football is the most international and globalized of games as it attracts a large following worldwide and modern day teams are composed of players not just from the clubs locality but from all over the world. The choice of sport in itself would indicate modern man's cosmopolitan

perspective, while closer analysis of **D1** confirms this indication. The team chosen is an English team, however with the benefit tacit knowledge, the team in question has a worldwide fan base and therefore has a broad appeal rather than an appeal to a narrow in-group, confirming the indication that the perspective is cosmopolitan and not narrow. In addition to this, the team in question has a strong record of achievement in English and European competition, so the brands association with this particular club is a reinforcement of the values of modern man to compete with standards of excellence. So rather than making an association between the brand and a Danish team, emphasizing an attachment to its national origins, the brand has chosen a foreign team and thus prioritized competing with standards of excellence over national identity. The other subsection devoted to football deemphasizes the competitive element and focuses on the international community of supporters, whereby it is clear that the perspective is cosmopolitan and the brand is seeking to make a connection between the brand and supporters across the world. The overall outlook is therefore strongly orientated towards the profile of the modern man throughout the website of **D1**, while there is a very minor relationship between the brand and its national origins, as the brand portrays itself as a global, international brand rather than emphasizing its national origins. **N1** provides an emphatic indication of a cosmopolitan perspective and openness to new experiences on entrance to the website with the caption 'open your world' greeting the visitor to the website. The various sections of the websites provide different traits but from the same profile, that of the modern man. The sections dedicated to the brewing process focus on the standards of excellence and the scientific determinism of the brand. The brand places itself in a continuum of scientific progressions made including Louis Pasteur's discovery of air-borne brewing yeast and the quality control processes employed by the brewery. One specific aspect of the website that distinguishes it from that of **D1** is the aspect of promoting responsible alcohol consumption, a consideration more closely related to the scientific, performance minded modern man than to the more fatalistic approach of the traditional man. The promotional activities conducted by the brand take place in multicultural, international settings across the world, and the snapshots presented of these events depict young, multi-ethnic, sophisticated audiences, correlating positively with the profile of modern man also in terms of a cosmopolitan perspective and having broad in-

groups where interpersonal relationships can be of a more transient nature and ties aren't as strong as they might be with traditional man. The cosmopolitan perspective is maintained and promoted throughout the website. In the museum tour (which takes place at the site of the original brewery in the Netherlands) rather than looking at the heritage of the brewery in its original location, the perspective is very much cosmopolitan as Japanese characters can be made out, an interactive map/menu displays a bowl of Borscht with the Kremlin in the background, while Hong Kong, London and New York are all mentioned as the tour concludes. This cosmopolitan perspective is also central to the brand's advertising campaign, which is based on a diplomatic reception held in what appears to be an embassy. The ad follows a male protagonist as he negotiates the cultural pitfalls of an ambassadorial reception. Such an event inevitably brings together a host of different nationalities. Although the nationalities of the other guests are clear (Russian, Chinese etc.) the national identity of the male protagonist, who is the focus of the ad and therefore can be assumed to embody the brand for the purpose of the ad is not clear and he appears as nationless. In addition to this he demonstrates intercultural competence as he negotiates his way through the event and interacts with the various guests. He is also presented as being desirable or attractive to the females present at the event. He therefore demonstrates himself to be open to new experiences, not being tied to narrow in-groups (and thus having a cosmopolitan perspective) while also demonstrating competence in such occasions and therefore an ability to compete with standards of excellence. The other guests provide a contrast to this, whereby they seem to represent the more insular, conservative and suspicious world of the traditional man, and are presented as being more aggressive and less attractive characters than the suave and likeable protagonist. There appears to be a strong endorsement of the profile of the modern man here at the expense of traditional man and the brand appears to be identified as modern man, but also as a means of reconciling the traditional with the modern. As has been mentioned in relation to **D1**, professional football was also the sport of choice for **N1** in its website. The fact that it was chosen for **D1** also, which also appeared to have a very global and modern outlook, seems to confirm the notion that football was chosen due to the international nature of the game, its global appeal and its commercial appeal also as it is not so much a sport as it is a global industry. **N1** didn't focus on a single club or a cross-section of

supporters as **D1**, but rather on the European club competition the 'Champion's league', in the first instance focusing on the fans and the players and in the second instance focusing on a fictional advertising campaign. The 'Champion's league' section devoted to fans and players exhibits the trait of a cosmopolitan perspective as it brings fans from around the world together to bring them to exotic locations to watch the final. Secondly, the tournament itself connotes competing with standards of excellence. The advertising section related to the 'Champion's league' was more ambiguous but provided further indicators of the traits of the modern man. The campaign follows a multiethnic group of male friends watching the Champion's league in a living room. The advertising itself is an ironic take on the values of modern man, but doesn't correlate with the values of traditional man. They are seen to imitate the stars as they line up in mock formation and get beer for each other as though it was a competitive sport. It therefore appears as a relief from the high pressure reality faced by modern man, but not a retreat into the profile of traditional man (with the exception of a stereotypical representation of a black African man kissing a lucky charm in a display of the mysticism of traditional man).

There appears to be a correlation therefore between attachment to national identity and the level to which the brand website exhibits traits of modern and traditional man. As was identified above, the multinational brands (**N1** and **D1**) that acquired and now own 2 of the Finnish brands (**F1** and **F2**), have a clear emphasis on the international, global character of their companies whereby they have clearly distanced themselves from their national origins and the values espoused in the websites correspond strongly with the profile of the modern man. Conversely, the other brands display a stronger attachment to their national origins and a stronger inclination towards the values of traditional man.

7 Discussion.

The topic chosen for this thesis was inspired by a rudimentary observation of daily life in Finland. As a foreigner in Finland, the beer brands of Finland seemed to be laden with cultural references, whose significance was incomprehensible without a familiarity of Finnish ethno-symbolism, but brought to mind the issues of national identity, national culture and globalization. As an industry that is deeply ingrained in the Finnish culture (as its presence in the *Kalevala* testifies to), the brewing industry seemed particularly relevant to an examination of the dynamics of culture in an era of globalization due to the opening up of international trade and the subsequent competitive clash of the global and the local in the form of multinational giants expanding internationally and the threat that this entails for indigenous companies. Finland, as a nation state, is subject to the processes of globalization that are reconfiguring the geo-political map whereby nation states are increasingly subject to external influence economically, but also in terms of cultural penetration. As a member of the European Union, Finland and the other member states have become increasingly open to outside influence and to cultural penetration from abroad. In this instance, the effects of this can be seen in the changing ownership pattern within the Finnish brewing industry. Of the brands that were examined in this thesis, all 6 of the parent companies have internationalized their operations since the enactment of the Single European Act, which eliminated barriers to trade in the European Union. The Finnish brands were in long standing Finnish ownership and focused on the domestic market, while now only one remains independent of the ownership of a foreign multinational. However the focus of this thesis was not on the economic implications of trade liberalization and the changing patterns of ownership nor was it about tastes and varieties of beer, but rather on the implications the processes of globalization are having for intercultural communication as can be garnered from a study of brands. Brands share traits in common with cultures such as logos, symbols and artifacts, and are therefore a good measure of cultural values due to the fact that the functions of brands correspond, or can be identified with those of a given culture, particularly a culture noted for high per capita beer consumption such as Finland, although it is not located in at the heart of Europe's 'beer belt', traditionally the cultural focal point of brewing in Europe encompassing countries such as the Czech Republic, Belgium, Germany, Denmark and

the Netherlands (3 of which are the countries of origin for the non-Finnish brands included in the analysis). The objective therefore was to examine beer brands and their websites in order to gain an insight into identity, culture and the process of globalization.

7.1 Identity

Brands derive their identities from existing cultural identities: Identity communities such as ethnic groups that are bound together by cultural symbols. In the case of the Finnish brands and the German brands, the brands had clearly incorporated the cultural symbols of their respective national identities. Therefore the brands derived their brand identities to a greater or lesser extent from their respective national identities. These contrasted sharply with the identities of D1 and N1 (the multinational brands) as these 2 brands did not appear to incorporate their national identities but projected a cosmopolitan identity, characterized by a distinct lack of the presence of national cultural references. This contrast captured the dynamic relating to identity in the modern era. While the websites for D1 and N1 suggest increased intercultural penetration and a cosmopolitan outlook is becoming an increasing feature of our modern age, the brands where national identity was tangibly evident confirmed another feature of the modern age. That is they show an ability to fulfill a function of tapping into the desire to avoid the undesirable effects of increasing international mobility and intercultural experiences associated with the 'post-modern self', such as a fractured self and confused senses of belonging, and they could do this by providing a coherent and authentic identity, which can serve the consumer as a cultural point of reference. The Finnish and German brands weren't partially, but fully reliant on their national identities in terms of the website content, while the other two brands had almost no direct reference to their own national identities, indicating a dichotomy of the global and the local. The identity of these brands are strongly linked to the national/ethnic social belongings of their country/region of origin. The identity of the brands is uncompromising as it is firmly rooted in the culture, symbols and values of a specific ethnic group, and the brands are placing themselves in the continuum of the national cultural narrative. The other 2 brands, N1 and D1, take a cosmopolitan approach that projects a brand identity that is international, cosmopolitan and multicultural in

character, avoiding any explicit attachment to a specific ethnic group in terms of having an identifiable homeland, evidence of shared historical memories and the usage of a national language (as opposed to the nominally international idiom of English). The approach taken by these brands is to create a unifying narrative (one of the core functions of identity) based on universalities, which the global consumer can relate to. The moon landing in D1 and the embassy reception in N1 can be seen to be performing this function of providing a unifying narrative that transcends national backgrounds. In the case of D1 it draws on the unifying symbolism of the moon landing as being a ‘giant leap for mankind’ and therefore universal to all humanity, while in the case of N1 the brand presents itself seductively as having the ability to transcend cultural differences without any problems, therefore reassuring the consumer and papering over the cracks that appear in intercultural scenarios that arise due to cultural differences. Identity in the case of D1 and N1 is negotiated and reflects the modern globalised environment where individuals can identify with the concept of negotiating and renegotiating ones own identity through interaction and communication in intercultural settings, while identity in the case of the Finnish and German brands is predetermined and ascribed on the basis of nationality and national background. This dichotomy was reflected in the thesis dimension analysis based on **Triandis’** profile of modern and traditional man, whereby D1 and N1 displayed a correlation with the profile of modern man while the Finnish and German brands appeared to be more orientated towards the profile of traditional man. Core symbols of Finnish and Bavarian ethnicity were incorporated in the brands from those regions (Such as Sauna, Northern lights, Summer cottage life, Alpine landscape, religious heritage) while N1 and D1 avoided any such allusions. The content of the Finnish and German websites gave abundant evidence of the 3 different categories of elements of culture, while N1 and D1 didn’t (elements of national specific culture, e.g. houses, clothes, elements of spiritual/mental culture e.g. symbols, traditions, elements that are spatial-temporal e.g. religion/nationhood). This reiterated the distinction in terms of cultural identity between the traditionally orientated, firmly rooted identities of the German and Finnish brands. N1 and D1 however reflected what is emerging in terms of transnational cultural identity. Taking into account that N1 and D1 have acquired 2 of the Finnish brands, there is a clear correlation between the brand identities, the acquisition of the

brands with identities based on national identity by companies, which espouse a global and cosmopolitan perspective, and the Marxist interpretation of national identity referred to in the identity section. According to the Marxist perspective, capitalism and globalization drags communities (such as the national community) into a world market based on the logic of capitalism governed by worldwide imperatives (the material well-being and technological/scientific advancement of mankind), and this progressive drive contrasts with the primitive values of pre-modern, traditional communities. This seems to have a particularly strong resonance with the brands considered when taking into consideration the recent acquisition of the 'traditional' brands (identities derived from national traditions) by the 'modern' multinationals. However, the German and Finnish brands attest to the abiding value of national identity both to members of the identity group and (in the case of the German brand) on an international level where particular aspects of the traditional identity retain their appeal to consumers as they provide authentic traditions from a unique regional territory and ethnic group. So although the latter identities are considered to be 'backward and provincial' from the Marxist perspective, the evidence suggests that they retain a value, both to their community and also in the global market place (authenticity), and it would seem that they are not currently being swept aside by a global, modern culture. The identities of the brands provide clear contrasts between what constitutes the modern, cosmopolitan identity and the identity derived from national/ethnic identities. While the cosmopolitan identity exists in what appears to be a borderless world where diverse ethnic groups appear to melt into one, the national identities are rooted in particular national territories (Germany, Finland) and with the traditions and heritage that come with these territories. Identity is prone to the forces of dominant political and economic powers and as supra-national institutions such as the EU and multinational corporations erode the power of the nation-state, so too perhaps is the strength of the national/ethnic identity also eroded. However, the strengths of national/ethnic identities are evident in the websites analyzed here. In the case of the German brand, retaining traditions and fostering continuity has translated into the brand being able to pride itself on high standards that it claims are unique to the region. In the case of the Finnish brands, the brands place an emphasis on the authenticity of their identities and relate their product to values that have been fostered and developed in the

unique location that Finland occupies and therefore provide reassurance to the Finnish consumer regarding their own national identity and providing them with an identifiable set of values that they can relate to.

7.2 Brands, Marketing and the consumption process in the global economy

Behind the websites and the brands, at a business level, there were conflicting dynamics at play, which represent essential considerations in relation to the subject of culture in a globalizing world. On the one hand multinational companies, and their flagship brands as shown in the analysis, are international in their appeal and seek to expand into markets (such as Finland) as these markets and indeed their respective societies become more cosmopolitan and international in character due to the process of globalization. As a consequence of this process, tastes become more universal at an international level due to increased exposure to other tastes and consumption experiences across international boundaries, and a brand that can be readily identified with the values associated with a modern, capitalist economy (such as the values espoused by **Triandis'** profile of a modern man) can more readily enter the market due to the fact that consumers themselves are subjected to the processes of globalization also and are therefore familiar and indeed embedded in such values. On the other hand, the multinational companies are not only seeking to insert their flagship brands into the market, but they are also buying into the market, as is the case in Finland, by buying indigenous brands. This serves to show that indigenous brands retain a cultural value that translates into an economic value, and the culture specific retains its value vis-à-vis the universal currently. On a cultural level, an exchange of meanings between the consumer and the seller is involved, while on a financial level there is a monetary transaction involved in the brand purchase. However, the process may be irreversibly inclined in favor of the universal, cosmopolitan identities as once the brand is acquired by the global multinational, the identity or authenticity of the brand is immediately compromised as it becomes a deterritorialized entity. F2, which is strongly associated with the Lapland region in the analysis, is no longer produced in the Lapland region (for the first time in its history) in the aftermath of the takeover by N1, so there is a disconnect between the associations of the brand and the territory with

which it is associated insofar as the link between the region and the actual manufacture of the product has been severed. The assumption is that the globalization process is following a singular path towards generating a broadly speaking homogenous global culture underpinned by certain core values that are identifiable with consumers across the globe who share in a lifestyle based on values derived from the logic of Western Capitalism. However, as this analysis shows, the process has more nuances than that as needs of the consumer in terms of their psychological (ego, socialization, self-fulfillment) rather than physiological needs do not strictly adhere to a materialist dominated notion of globalization. The brands are not sold solely to the public on the basis that they provide a certain taste with a certain level of alcohol at a certain price. The Finnish and German brands placed a strong emphasis on traits of their national culture, such as a well-preserved and unique natural environment and national/regional traditions (in the Finnish case traditional rural pursuits such as fishing, hunting and relaxing at a summer cottage and in the German case the long standing brewing traditions of the region.). In the case of the Finnish brands, the websites were directed exclusively towards the Finnish speaking (and therefore domestic) market. The inclusion uniformly across all three of the brand's websites of certain aspects of Finnish culture was clearly designed to resonate with the cultural community to which the brand is affiliated and exclusively marketed to (an assumption based on the websites being in the Finnish language). The German brand on the other hand, was pitching its website to an international consumer audience (the language of the website was English) while retaining the brands traditional German/Bavarian culture in terms of the cultural references in the website's content. So rather than national cultural groups being railroaded over by a form of supranational, globalized culture, the national culture retains its culture specific appeal both within its own national cultural group, but also beyond as the ethnic specific brands possess certain sought after characteristics, such as distinctive, cultural authenticity, that can't be found in a supranational, globalized cultural entity. What the German brand in particular demonstrated was that globalization also represents opportunities for culture specific entities. As the consuming public develops a more cosmopolitan perspective and gains a broader perspective that extends beyond the boundaries of the nation states within which they reside, and knowledge of other cultures grows, they become more amenable to

experiencing what other cultures have to offer. This would contradict the absolutist argument regarding globalization constituted by the Marxist argument, which focuses on how the market is manipulated and consumer needs are created or shaped, rather than catered for, and that the singular, dominant tendency is towards cultural homogenization, while this particular study shows that although there are indications of an arising homogenized culture in the form of certain identifiable commonalities that can be related to regardless of ethnic and national background, there is also a countertendency for cultures to become more clearly defined in contrast with others (due to the fact that exposure to other cultures allows for clearer definition due to the contrasts inherent in diversity) and to flourish as a result of increased international exposure. Although globalization may be the leitmotif of this era, as nationalism was a century previously, the power of the national or ethnic abides. Even today in the era of globalization, Europe remains a patchwork of nations and regions, where 99% of brands are primarily national in their appeal as was mentioned in the brands section.

7.3 Culture, business and communication in a globalizing world

As has been demonstrated in the websites, brands reflect cultural patterns in societies, as one of the central functions of the brand is to address the psychological exigencies of consumers in addition to fulfilling the physiological needs and demands of the consumer. This case study illustrates that established national cultural identities that may have defined the inhabitants of a nation in the past no longer enjoy the same hegemonic hold over their respective societies as they might have done prior to the onset of globalization. However, this is not to say that national identity is necessarily being replaced or marginalized in the process. The exposure to the processes of globalization and to new supranational, transcultural identities associated with this process may also enhance the appeal of unique and authentic national identities in a world where the lines of nationality become ever more blurred. There is also the less tangible influence cultural origins exert on the development of identity, even in the era of globalization. The analyses according to **Hofstede** and **Triandis**' dimensions were used specifically to explore the underlying cultural influences. In terms of objective culture (the more tangible elements of culture,

such as symbols and artifacts), the Finnish brands were characterized predominantly by Finnish cultural references and traits of the Finnish national identity associated with these symbols, rituals and activities. The cultural specificity of an ethnic Finn, defined by marked traits such as the use of the Finnish language, customs and ethnic symbols, as well as the unique geographical location of Finland remains in spite of developments relating to globalization. On a psychological level, the cultural imperatives promoting the survival, prosperity and endurance of the collective/community are written into the cultural code, which is evident in these websites and also has a strong and abiding resonance for an ethnic Finn as attested to by the presence of similar environments and activities in all three websites (escaping to the natural environment or the *mökki*, pursuing activities such as fishing and hunting). The process of globalization brings these culturally specific traits into clearer focus due to greater international exposure and awareness of the 'other' and the uncertainties inherent in a much more open society can be shielded from by a strong and unambiguous national identity, while it also serves the purpose of reinforcing the cultural norms of a society, which remain key factors regarding the ability to function in a particular society. In the case of the German brand, the study illustrated also how national/regional cultural identities can translate into a highly sought after attraction in a brand as a more cosmopolitan and international consumer seeks out authentic and exotic consumption experiences, the availability of which is facilitated by the market liberalizing force of globalization. Aside from the national identity therefore, another form of identity was detected in the study, which can be identified as an emerging, cosmopolitan supranational form of identity that is associated with the proliferation of globalization. One of the fundamental differences between this form of identity and the national identities is that it is deterritorialized or not rooted to one particular geographic location, while the characteristics of this identity can be related to across the globe. This form of identity appears to provide a universal alternative to the nation-specific identity and is characterized as being the result of a homogenization of cultures while at the same time being largely derived from the cultural norms of Western Capitalist societies, and presented as having the ability to overcome cultural differences. The factors that determine the development of such an identity are the central components of globalization that were outlined earlier in the study, those

being the intensification of cross border interactions and interdependencies between countries, liberalization of trade and a more ‘integrated’ world economy, the universalization of daily life experience characterized by the Western way of life and the decline in significance of geographical location as the world is deterritorialized (**Scholte 2001**). In terms of individual identity, this trend corresponds with what **Weber** identified as a shift from the *Gemeinschaft* orientated traditional societies of the past, where roles and status were bound to the collective, to a *Gesellschaft* social organization that is characterized by the atomization of the individual as ties to a collective belonging become less integrated and the contractual nexus becomes the primary link (an economic link) with society at large (**Dale, 2010**). With the benefit of **Triandis’** model, the website analysis exhibited the correlation between the values of modern man and this emerging identity, which are associated with the imperatives of modern day capitalism and the ‘Western’ lifestyle based on consumerism. As the dominant model of economic development (capitalism) proliferates throughout the world, a homogenization of cultural values is therefore necessitated in order to make an increasingly global system function in a more efficient manner without discrepancies between areas that would impact negatively on the functioning of the system, just as nation states developed socially constructed scientific, high cultures characterized by a features such as a common language and a specific national narrative, in order to function, so does the system of global capitalism. The cultural hegemony of capitalism, in terms of the production of mass mediated communication content as being dependant on some form of capital investment, reinforces this process as it can reproduce cultural norms and values for consumption (advertising, music, film etc.), while also reinforcing and redefining cultural norms and values across the globe. This modern, global identity has certain core characteristics that were identifiable as recurring traits in the websites of N1 and D1 and which roughly correspond with **Triandis’** profile of the modern man. The natural environment is something to be dominated and harnessed for the benefit of humanity rather than something sacred that should be revered. The aesthetic appeal of the natural world isn’t included in either of these websites. As interpersonal relationships tend to be more transient, the attitude to others is outwardly unassuming, egalitarian and unsuspecting in nature, while family ties are weaker than was traditionally the case. The

pursuit of individual achievement and advancement, particularly in one's own career, is prioritized over more collectivist values such as group solidarity or harmony, while avowal takes precedence over ascription, as do self-expression and realization, both of which are inherently individualist concepts. These norms and values aren't the result of compromise between cultures, but are predominantly derived from American and European values, so the homogenization process is dominated by the proliferation of a supranational culture that derives its cultural capital from the West (often referred to in the Latin European press as being Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-American culture) at a global level. As **Hofstede's** studies show these values are broadly similar to the cultural profiles of the countries examined in this study, reiterating the fact that the values are derived from the West, a category that the countries of Northern/North Western Europe fit into. The multinationals in question here are both from countries that were traditionally of the Lutheran faith. Although Capitalism and globalization is far from a religious phenomenon today, and is in fact associated with the secularization of society through materialism and technological and scientific advances, the roots of Capitalism are in Protestant Europe (primarily Britain and Germany). **Weber** identified certain characteristics of the Calvinist and Lutheran faiths that became ingrained in the rationale of Capitalist development, labour is in itself a form of worship, enterprise in the economy was considered a calling, while sloth is considered a mortal sin (**Weber, 1958**). Although there is no direct link between the multinational brands international success and the historical roots of capitalism, the fact that both of the multinational companies have their roots in Protestant Europe would suggest that the abiding logic and rationale that determines success within Capitalism is connected to the Protestant 'work ethic'. This inherent conservative nature, whereby a specific rationale determines development in the context of globalization is reflected in today's trends. Multinational brands (in order to succeed) therefore are constituent parts of a process geared towards the reinforcement of the ideological structures and values that underpin the system of global capitalism, while on the marketing side there is a symbiotic process at play whereby a consumer influences and is influenced by the marketing process in a symbiosis, which in turn feeds into this emerging global identity. This process is influenced by the incorporation of more societies into the process and as the forces of globalization penetrate these societies, they

also exert a reciprocal influence on the process as multinational brands expand their briefs and incorporate local influences. Just as national cultures were formed in relation to technological developments, so too is the supranational character of globalization formed in relation to the predominant economic imperatives and technological and scientific developments. The trajectory of economic development leading up to the modern era has been outlined here as taking societies from a pre-industrial, agrarian base that was characterized by man's battle with nature, to the industrial world of fabricated products and manufactured goods and onto the modern, post-industrial world where people engage in games and interaction with symbols and self-expression and 'playing' with scientific and technological advancements. According to **Weber**, the realization of globalization has had the effect of "sweeping away the rubbish of previous epochs" (**Turner, 1992:16**). According to the analysis conducted according to **Triandis'** profile of the modern man, it was apparent that the brands firmly rooted in their national identity referred to the pre-industrial, agrarian era dominated by references to the natural world and traditional pursuits, while the multinational brands' focus was firmly on self expression and negotiating interpersonal interaction, where the nature of the game is to avoid the pitfalls involved in social interaction. This exemplifies the removal of the territory from the modern identity, its an identity that can be felt anywhere in the world regardless of one's origins as it is not rooted to a congruous territorial unit, such as the national identity is. Trends such as transnational migration and societies becoming multicultural as opposed to monocultural necessitates the development of an emerging global identity, so that people can be provided with the touchstone provided by cultural reference points when moving across and negotiating national, cultural divides. Some of the primary characteristics of this identity are embodied in the modern person (such as the profile of the modern man outlined by **Triandis**) and that is someone who lives in an urban area and is very much focused on personal concerns such as personal efficacy, keeping apace with innovations and changes, being motivated by high achievements and driven by a sense of personal independence. Aside from personal concerns, the social attitudes of the modern person are characterized by an egalitarian outlook, which encompasses gender, race, and sexuality primarily but also regarding attitudes to others in general. As can be deduced from these values, this process logically contributes to

diminishing ideological differences as a convergence towards a common society occurs. This is the logical trajectory of Capitalism, as **Weber** would have it, whereby Capitalism destroys “charismatic and traditional authority, clarifying the rational nature of modern systems of authority. In bureaucracy, rationalization produced a system of reliable dependable decision-making for the realization of public goals” while “secularisation had liberated human beings from the magical world of the ancients”(Turner, 2003:16).

Fukuyama famously coined the term ‘the end of history’ to describe the present era, and the end of history would indicate a movement towards a common society. The implication of this term was that the clashes of the past between diverse nations, regions, empires and tribes were after being outmoded by the power of the capitalist market place and the rise of liberal democracy across the world, which ultimately fosters more similarities across nations. The embassy reception scene on the website for N1 provided a snapshot of a stylized template of what a world society could look like, as the brand is portrayed as being a congruent part of this multifaceted process that constitutes globalization, whereby formerly insular and culturally diverse communities are brought into the modern era of the world society by the agent of globalization, N1 and the values of liberal democracy such as openness, equality and democratic participation underline the casual and informal outlook of the protagonist in the ad and it is here that the global identity is best expressed out of all the websites.

7.4 Cultural dimensions at a national level

The analysis of the websites according to **Hofstede’s** dimensions of culture and his findings regarding how national cultures have different orientations relevant to the dimensions, provided a deeper analysis of the websites that went beyond the visual, more tangible features of cultural and national identity that were evident in the websites such as ethnosymbolic markers. Taking note of the presence of national cultural artifacts provided a tangible indicator as to what extent the brand is rooted in its national heritage and origins, while **Triandis’** profile of modern/traditional man was able to examine to what extent the websites were orientated towards the values of modernity and the processes of globalization or to what extent they reflected the values of traditional societies that predated industrialization and the globalization phenomenon. However, **Hofstede’s** dimensions provided a nation specific measure that could examine the brands

based in terms of the brands national backgrounds, based on the relationships established by **Hofstede** between national cultures and **Hofstede's** dimensions. The aim of analyzing the websites in this manner was to examine the influence that the national backgrounds have exerted on the content of the websites and the values espoused by the websites.

Individualism/Collectivism

The websites of the Finnish and German brands were already heavily endowed with tangible national/regional cultural features, while also being firmly rooted in their respective national/regional territories of origin. This was in clear contrast to the footloose and international identities of the websites of **D1** and **N1**, which represented flagship brands of multinational companies that had bought into the Finnish market. The analysis was conducted according to **Hofstede's** dimensions by taking each website and analyzing the relationship between the website, the cultural orientation of the brand's country of origin and the dimensions themselves. Starting with the dimension of individualism, the following patterns were identified. Each of the 3 Finnish websites appeared to reflect **Hofstede's** findings whereby Finland has a marginally positive individualist orientation. While an individualist orientation prevailed, it was a culturally bound manifestation of individualism, strongly linked to Finnish ethnicity and the territorial peculiarity of Finland's unique geography. A common thread running through each of the websites was the concept of rural Finland as providing the individual with an escape from the hustle and bustle and crowded environment constituted by the modern urban landscape. The recurrence of this theme in each of the websites is an indication of how culturally bound this particular theme is, whereby the individualist orientation is deeply rooted in the traditions of Finnish society and related to the unique nature of the Finnish territory (sparsely populated, dominated by lakes and woodlands and the fells of Lapland). Whether it's the summer cottage (F1), the wilderness of Lapland (F2) or the forested Lakeland (F3), the association is made between the brands and theme of the individual recuperating and to affording themselves a well-earned pause for enjoyment, against the backdrop of tranquil surroundings where the individual can enjoy their own privacy in their own personal space. The activities in each of the websites are inherently

individualist by nature, while also being deeply ingrained in Finnish national culture, such as fishing, hunting, working on one's summer cottage. The prowess of the individual, in relation to others also, is a feature throughout the websites, while all the while at an aggregate level there is a collective belonging or attachment to the Finnish ethnic group in each of the websites as illustrated by the recurrence of the same theme in slightly different guises. The German brand, like the Finnish brands, appeared to be strongly rooted in the culture of the country, or more specifically, the Bavarian region (although the site was an international site). In terms of individualism Germany, like Finland, has a moderately individualist orientation according to **Hofstede**. As with the Finnish brands, the website is set in the natural environment of the Bavarian Alps, the *heimat* of *Weissbier*. This connotes an escape from the hustle and bustle from the modern urban world and evokes a sense of freedom. An individualist approach to commerce appears to be deeply rooted in the culture as this particular brand began as a private enterprises around 800 years ago, although business was conducted under the auspices of a pervasive Bavarian, aristocratic and authoritarian state. The trajectory of the brewery as presented on the website, was the trajectory of an individual, however this apparent individualist perspective is mitigated against by the fact that there is also a strong identification with the collective community of *Weissbier* producers in the Bavarian region, and with Bavaria itself. This combination of the personal experience in the context of a greater collective belonging is encapsulated in the brand logo where an individual monk is featured getting personal satisfaction and refreshment from the brand while his attire indicates his belonging to a particular order. The brand identifies proudly with the region and with the community of breweries, however ultimately it is seeking to differentiate itself and laud itself above its rivals, emphasizing its superior methods and ingredients and boasting of the extent of its international market penetration. Therefore, although the Finnish brands and the German brand are coming from cultures with similar orientations regarding this dimension, and although they both seem to reflect the national trends, the way in which the (marginally) individualist orientation manifests itself is different and reflects the historic and geographic differences between the countries. In the Finnish case, individualism was related to concepts such as privacy, having ones own

personal space, partaking in individualist pursuits and having a range of products to choose from under a particular brand according to one's own preference, whereas the website of the German brand also incorporated the appeal of a personal escape to the wilderness and freedom, the focus was none the less on the individual traits that make the brand a preferable choice amongst competitors, whilst remaining rooted in the ethnic/cultural community of Bavaria, as was the case with the Finnish websites. So in both instances, there is a clear identification with a broader in-group in both, indicating that there isn't an outright individualist orientation, as is the case with both national cultural groups. The other 2 websites were distinguished by the fact that their national backgrounds were very much marginal or even negligible in terms of the website content. Both the Netherlands and Denmark are highly individualistic cultures according to **Hofstede**. In the case of D1, national indicators are limited to the brewery's history section, whereby the individualist orientation is reflected in the trajectory of the enterprise's founder. Aside from this, there is a duality to the website. At times self-orientation and personal achievement is accentuated, while at the other times, teamwork and camaraderie are emphasized. However, while individual achievement, and personal reward are central to the website, striving towards improvements in the condition of mankind are also prevalent in the website, and both of these concepts are interlinked. This seems to be the core philosophy of the company and reflects the motto of the company, which states the goal or mission of the company as being the betterment of the nation, and it also indicates perhaps a conscious effort to generate a universal appeal by including both orientations. N1 appeared to have even less of a tangible connection to the brand's country of origin, the Netherlands. The way that the responsible consumption of alcohol was promoted on the website was striking. There was a tangible respect for the individual's right to make a choice based on the information provided, and the approach of the website wasn't didactic, and wasn't dictating to the consumer, but rather informing the consumer about how alcohol can be consumed in such a way that will decrease the negative impact it might have on health. This immediately brought to mind a national trait of Dutch culture that has manifested itself in terms of legalized prostitution and liberal cannabis laws, the attitude of liberalism and allowing individuals to make their

own choices rather than taking a more didactic approach whereby central governing authorities impose legislation and reduce individual discretion in the process. Throughout the website there was a noticeable similarity between N1 and D1, whereby there seemed to be traits of collectivism in some parts and traits of individualism in others, so there was certain duality to the website, more so than in D1, reiterating the point that there maybe a conscious effort being made to generate a universal appeal that transcends differences in value orientation. The brand is very much presented as not being rooted in a national culture and is presented as in fact bridging gaps between cultures and being of a universal character. The duality of the website is epitomized in the contrasting advertising themes based on the Champion's League and on an embassy reception. The Champion's League campaign subsumes the individual into the group, and suggests that self-actualization is dependent on performing a role within the group and group identity is paramount. The other ad features a strongly individualist character that appears only to be a Western, Caucasian male, but without any apparent strong roots that would give a clearer indication of his national/ethnic background. In this instance personal freedom and self-expression/self-orientation are emphasized and presented in stark contrast to the reserved and closed groups that are clearly not from an Anglo-American-European cultural background. The brand, as it is presented, appears to overcome the suspicions of the intercultural situation and is presented as being a progressive force that can be universally appreciated due to its international character.

Masculinity/Femininity

The next dimension was the dimension of Masculinity/Femininity. According to **Hofstede's** findings, Finland can be considered to be a feminine society, whereby one 'works in order to live', and where consensus is sought to avoid conflict and social status is de-emphasized. Both Dutch and Danish societies were also found to be feminine. So each of these societies place more emphasis on issues such as quality of life over more masculine goals such as being competitive, and they seek to promote consensus building and social solidarity rather than being in competition with others. Germany was unique regarding this dimension, as German society is masculine according to **Hofstede's**

findings. Therefore in Germany there is an emphasis on performance and living in order to work, while consensus is shunned in favour of being assertive and status symbols are considered an acceptable expression of social status. In terms of the websites, the Finnish websites overtly had a similar if not identical leitmotif in each of their websites, that of the natural environment, firmly rooted in the distinctively Finnish landscapes and laden with explicit references to Finnish culture. In terms of this dimension, F1 emphasizes the function of the brand to enhance the quality of life of the consumer rather than having connotations of high performance or status. The overall atmosphere is one of relaxation and enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the Finnish countryside and the summer cottage with a refreshing beer. The location is also far removed from the world of materialist/status goals that would characterize a more masculine society, and the rustic simplicity of the location suggests that well being and relaxation, that can be related to universally amongst the Finnish national community is more desirable than the pursuit of more masculine, materialist and status orientated goals. The website does also include masculine traits, such as the man's role in performing tasks such as hunting, maintaining the summer cottage and tree felling, so traditional male roles are reinforced here in terms of gender, however the overriding orientation appears to be feminine in its orientation insofar as quality of life enhancement is emphasized. Although the situation of the F2 website isn't identical, there is nonetheless a strong similarity with F1. Situated in the barren landscape of the fells of Lapland, there is a complete absence of gender in this website. While the protagonist(s) in F1 were male, the protagonist here is the brand itself. The emphasis throughout this website is on the purity of the environment of Lapland and the appreciation of quality of life enhancement, as reiterated by the fishing theme. So again the emphasis was shown to be firmly on quality of life, while there was one mitigating factor of a newly introduced special limited edition brew, which emphasized the prestige element of the product and the fact that the product is a limited edition, prestige having connotations of a masculine orientation due to the competitive element. The final website, F3, was situated in the Finnish Lakeland district that's located roughly in the North-Central part of Finland, in the Kainuu region. The website itself is rooted in the unspoilt forested Lakeland landscape of the breweries locality, so there is immediately a strong indicator of an orientation towards quality of life enhancement and

appreciation of a well preserved natural environment. Explicit reference to gender roles is limited to the stories section, where certain roles, such as master brewer and competitive fisherman are included and are occupied by males. While the overriding theme was quality of life and appreciation of the natural environment, the company's product range (featuring names derived from Finnish culture) had an ambivalent appearance. While some of the products appeared to embody masculine traits such as ego-gratification, strength and aggression (double goat and coat of arms), others evoked feminine traits such as enhanced quality of life, modesty and homeliness, universal appeal of relaxation and a clean environment (Sauna beer, firewood pint, home brew, Christmas brew). So while the website and the brand is clearly characterized by the cultural specificities of Finland and the underlying themes of the website do reflect the national orientation, the product portfolio is more ambiguous and while it partly reflects the feminine orientation of Finnish culture, there is also some products themed on a masculine orientation. The three websites do however appear to reflect Finnish national culture as regards this dimension, whereby there is an emphasis on quality of life enhancement and the appreciation of the Finnish natural environment, with some specific deviations that have been outlined above. Moving onto the Dutch and Danish multinationals, both of these brands countries of origin have a very feminine orientation, considerably more so than the already feminine Finland. As has been noted, in comparison to the Finnish and German websites, the websites of D1 and N1 didn't contain many explicit references to their national cultures of origins, and appeared to both have a cosmopolitan identity that appeared to be footloose and not rooted to any one national or ethnic group. D1 had some content explicitly related to its Danish origins, however this was weak on indicators as it merely charted the rise of the enterprise. There appeared to be a traditional patriarchal structure to the business, however the founder was actively involved in promoting well being in the company's factory through ways such as enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the premises or through patronizing science and the arts in Copenhagen. In terms of the underlying orientation as regards this dimension, there was evidence to suggest that the company's philosophy was indeed influenced, even now, by its Danish origins. The brand is presented as being part of a continuum to improve the quality of life of mankind through scientific and technological development and innovation (the company proudly

admits that it shared the scientific details of how it developed an improved strain of yeast). Even though the brand chose football as a vehicle of promotion, the focus wasn't on the more masculine aspects of sport such as winning, striving to be the best, competing and perhaps boastfully displaying the honours achieved. The focus was on the sociable aspects of the sport, how it brings people together and entertains people, and both men and women were included in the fan's section, indicating an attitude of gender equality. The advertising section appeared to be more masculine as they dealt with the first moon landing and the scaling of Mt. Everest, both historic events defined by masculine traits such as perseverance, competing and striving to be the first. These certainly seemed to be designed to have a universal, international appeal and the overriding orientation was masculine, however bearing in mind the original motto of the brewery relating to the betterment of the nation, there is a fundamental belief in the universal desire of mankind to improve the human condition, although the orientation is definitely masculine here and appears to be beyond the confines of Danish cultural norms. The N1 website had even less of an explicit connection to its country of origin, the Netherlands. The only part of the website that was related to the Netherlands was the museum located in Amsterdam, and as closer inspection revealed, there was no explicit reference to Dutch culture in the museum tour. Dutch society scored very low on this particular dimension, and the next step was to examine how this related to the website. Initial indicators did indeed suggest the brand is the product of a predominantly feminine culture. The responsible consumption of alcohol and the promotion of beer as a quality of life enhancing product was an underlying theme throughout the website, and there was an entire section devoted to the responsible consumption of alcohol. Also, there was no indication of the product being gender exclusive and throughout the website, mixed gender consumption and participation in various activities was in evidence. Although the website was clearly designed to reinforce the brand's cosmopolitan identity, the manner in which it engages with the consuming public indicated an underlying feminine orientation. The brand's museum tour seemed to prioritise fostering good relations with the public and informing/engaging the public about the scientific and technological developments made by the company over more masculine traits like ego gratification and status appeal. The advertising/promotional sections based on the then current advertising campaign

relating to an ambassadorial reception and the UEFA Champion's League tournament were more ambiguous as regards their orientations for this dimension. The embassy ad was set in a male dominated environment, where women had passive roles as escorts for the males. The protagonist is presented with challenging situations throughout the sequence and males dominate the scenarios. Therefore there is an apparent emphasis on ego, accomplishment and status, all indicators of a masculine orientation. The situation however is somewhat comical, and the bizarre nature of the characters seems to serve to remind the visitors that this isn't to be taken seriously and is light hearted. So while it is apparently masculine, the tension created is defused as the situation plays out and the characters seek to foster good relations between people culminating in the protagonist joining the female vocalist on stage to join in with the band. This therefore appears to be a subtle endorsement of a feminine perspective and masculine cultures are subjected to a mild form of ridicule. Similarly, the football section immediately connotes masculinity and the assertive, competitive domain of male, professional sport. However, there is very little of these values in evidence on closer inspection of the section. Hardly any attention is paid to the football itself as mixed gender groups of fans are whisked away to exotic locations to enjoy themselves and foster harmonious relations, so therefore precedence is clearly given to feminine values and considerations. The 'trophy tour' continues in the same vein as players and fans mingle and the focus is very much on promoting good relations rather than the prestige of the players and the trophy. The Champion's league based ad campaign, much like the embassy advertising campaign seems to be a send up of macho, masculine values, which is expressed by the exaggerated behaviour of the characters in the ads. So although it isn't directly affirming a feminine orientation, there is a clear indirect suggestion that enjoyment, enhancing one's own quality of life, and enjoying good relationships with one's peers are more important than being competitive and focusing on success. So therefore there does appear to be a strong indication of an underlying feminine orientation to the brand's philosophy, which although doesn't appear to be directly related to Dutch culture, does reflect the Dutch orientation. For this dimension, the German brand was left until last as German culture deviated from the rest, being a masculine culture. The brand logo differs from the others as it presents us with a gender specific image, a monk enjoying a beer, an image that connotes gender division

and suggests that beer is a man's drink. The backdrop to the website is the Alpine landscape of Bavaria, this aesthetically appealing image conversely has feminine connotations, such as appreciating natural beauty and quality of life enhancement. The history of the company represents a return to masculine dominance as it outlines the patriarchal trajectory of the company and how its fortunes were tied to the power of the ruling Dukes of Bavaria. A tangible contrast between the attitudes to technological and scientific development between this brand and the Danish and Dutch brands is noticeable. G1's attitude to scientific and technological development relates exclusively to how they can generate revenue for the company, and doesn't have the more feminine approach of N1 and D1 who espoused more lofty ambitions such as improving the condition of mankind. The cosmopolitanism of the other two was eschewed in this website for a more masculine bravado whereby the brand presents a map of the world and shows how it has been penetrated by the brand. The N1 brewery tour presented images of smiling visitors and interactive experiences, whereas the G1 tour focuses very much on the functional aspects of the technology, while also drawing attention to the advanced level of technology involved in the brand's processes. The products and raw materials section was perhaps the most feminine in terms of how it characterized the brand's products. The characteristics of the products as a pleasurable, quality of life enhancing product were decidedly feminine, although the prestige of the brand due to its stringent quality controls and highly competitive standards provided more masculine indicators. There was therefore an overall orientation that was decidedly more masculine than the other websites and however mitigated by some feminine characteristics and therefore corresponding somewhat with the national orientation of Germany.

Uncertainty avoidance

In terms of uncertainty avoidance, 3 of the 4 countries here were uncertainty avoidant, with the Netherlands being marginally uncertainty avoidant, Finland more uncertainty avoidant and Germany most uncertainty avoidant, while Denmark stood alone as an uncertainty accepting culture (although the Netherlands and Finland are only marginally uncertainty avoidant). Starting with the Finnish websites, uncertainty avoidance manifests itself in all three of the websites in terms of their strong attachment to Finnish traditions and the unfettered landscape of the Finnish countryside, an aspect that runs

through all three websites. F1 provides a snapshot of typical Finnish outdoor pursuits and while they may be within a specific framework of longstanding Finnish traditions, the way in which they are carried out is quiet laid back with only a passing regard for procedural norms, as ones own way of doing things is pursued. While there is one incident where the narrator has contravened the law and is reprimanded by a government official, the law is upheld, but without any apparent litigation, confrontation or remonstrations of any sort. Whereas in a more uncertainty avoidant culture such a scenario would lead to conflict and/or tension and anxiety, whereas in this instance law and order is implemented but not in a high handed manner, the objectivity of the law and the overriding message that 'rules are rules' is evident. This moderate orientation is also reflected in the innovative inclusion of international cuisine in the traditionally Finnish rustic setting of a log cabin. Again, this would perhaps infringe on certainties and not be acceptable in a more strongly uncertainty avoidant country. This ambiguity was also reflected in F2, which was found to be weak regarding this dimension, and therefore reflecting Finland's almost neutral, yet marginally positive position for this dimension. There was clear evidence of innovation in term's of the company's product range, along with a respect for tradition, the 'beer school' provided a clear indication of a society that appreciates rule bound procedures, as it provides an unambiguous 'correct' method, taking a didactic approach. F3 yet again frames its website in one of the quintessentially Finnish landscapes, the Lakeland of the Kainuu region. The bucolic background that pervades each of the websites suggests a clinging onto old certainties and a strong attachment to the certainty provided by the national territory, or the inherent conservative need for a touchstone that characterizes uncertainty avoidance. However, as was the case with the other 2 websites, this website does also provide indicators of an innovative culture. The ambiguity of the Finnish orientation to uncertainty avoidance is crystallized in the F3 products section, whereby they provide an array of innovative products while attributing names and identities to these products that are identifiable with traditional Finnish cultural artefacts (such as sauna, firewood, coat-of-arms). Therefore they reassure the consumer with deep-rooted traditions, while also providing the consumer with a broad, innovative, modern selection of products. N1 belonged to the even more moderate culture of the Netherlands, which is very close to the midway mark as regards this

particular dimension. The N1 website did not bear any identifiable Dutch cultural artefacts, so there is an initial indication that the brand doesn't attach a great deal of value to tradition and the certainties that tradition provides, however, there is a different dynamic at play here also due to the fact that the brand is consciously promoting an international, cosmopolitan image rather than a nationally rooted one. Due to this ambiguity it isn't clear to what extent Dutch national culture is behind this international/cosmopolitan orientation. Examining the website's content more closely, the responsible alcohol section provides an indicator of a lower threshold for uncertainty avoidance than the Finnish and German websites. While the Finnish and German websites provided an unambiguously 'correct' procedure for pouring the beers, N1 provides a comprehensive and informative section devoted to the responsible consumption of alcohol, however the approach isn't didactic and respects the discretion of the consumer, a more uncertainty accepting approach while still being thoroughly informative. The original and cosmopolitan nature of the responsible alcohol consumption events was innovative yet adhered to a ritualised and framed mode of alcohol consumption, indicating both uncertainty avoidant and acceptant orientations occurring simultaneously. Similarly to the other brands, the museum tour indicates an adherence to rigorous standards, while continuing to be innovative in terms of its scientific and technological development. History and tradition aren't so strongly emphasized, particularly in comparison to G1, and improvement through innovation and development take precedence. This indicates less uncertainty avoidance when compared to the German brand in particular. The brand's story was presented in the form of a slot machine. Although this had strong connotations of uncertainty acceptance, on closer inspection there was a certain logic running through it whereby the slots drew from 3 themes in each of the rows, those being 'science and technology', 'the international nature of the brand' and 'brand packaging', so yet again there appeared to be a combination of both orientations. The then advertising campaign was based on a lavish diplomatic reception held in what appeared to be an ambassador's residence. Such a formal event could ordinarily be categorized as being highly uncertainty avoidant in character, based on formal etiquette and codes of conduct and decorum. Although the guests were in formal attire and the role of women was clearly subservient to men, this

was very much a lighthearted take on the occasion. It even seemed to lampoon the rigidity and formality that characterizes such occasions. The social dexterity and adaptability of the ad's protagonist (who, due to his role, appears to be a vehicle for advertising the brand), while also demonstrating a respect for the etiquette and rules of the occasion denotes that both orientations are present in this section. Although the protagonist is clearly at ease when it comes to situations where there is apparent uncertainty, the other guests clearly appear to be more strongly uncertainty avoidant and uncomfortable when faced with uncertainty avoidant situations, this clearly seems to be an ethno-centric perspective. There is an apparent preference for a less rigidly uncertainty avoidant orientation here, which would correspond with the almost neutral position of the Netherlands, as strongly uncertainty avoidant characteristics are portrayed in a negative light. The final section, related to the UEFA Champions League, again appeared to be ambiguous as regards this dimension. The structure and concept of the 'star final' subsection, whereby fans from across the world are whisked to exotic locations, presents a ritualised experience with a loosely defined itinerary conducted in a casual and informal atmosphere. There seemed therefore to be a clear indication of a correlation with Dutch culture in this instance although, since the website is weak in terms of tangible connections to Dutch national culture, there is a clearly international orientation to the website. The national culture of the country of origin of the other multinational brand, D1 from Denmark, was the only society to be strongly uncertainty acceptant. As with the Dutch multinational, there was very little direct association with the brand's country of origin. The lack of attachment to the traditions and origins of the company and an emphasis on the scientific innovations as well as the sponsorship of creative pursuits, such as patronizing the arts, seem to be an indicator of uncertainty acceptance. The advertising section presents 2 distinct scenarios, which depict the 'moon landing', a pinnacle of human achievement as regards innovative thinking and development. It is perhaps no coincidence that this achievement was the product of another uncertainty accepting culture, that of the USA. The other ad is based around a similar theme, the scaling of Everest, and scant regard is shown for uncertainty avoidance, while the core notion, that of placing an aerial on Mt. Everest for better reception, seems to be an original, innovative notion, even if this is clearly a tongue in cheek take on the actual

event. So although it was difficult in this instance to discern, there does indeed seem to be a correlation between Danish culture and the D1 brand, in terms of their website portfolio. The final brand to be examined was G1, coming from the most uncertainty avoidant culture of the 4, that of Germany. German society is pretty strongly uncertainty avoidant according to **Hofstede**. In terms of the website itself, while this website was internationally orientated (like D1 and N1, unlike F1, 2 and 3) the appearance and content were strongly rooted in the brands homeland (like F1, 2 and 3 and unlike N1 and D1), that being the Alpine German region of Bavaria. This paradoxical situation of being the only internationally orientated website with a strong focus on the national roots of the brand indicates a more conservative perspective and therefore correlates with the national findings of **Hofstede**, conservatism being a safeguard against uncertainties. The choice of logo and brand name (a monk from a long standing Catholic monastic order) reiterates a sense of conservatism, while the strict adherence to the '*Rheinheitsgebot*' or 'purity law', which dates back 5 centuries, suggests conservatism and a preference for sticking to tried and trusted core methods and philosophy. The history section suggests that modernity has brought more uncertainty acceptance, a less rigid and more democratic society and accompanying rapid technological innovation, while traditions are retained at the core of the brands outlook. The 'raw material' section focuses on procedures, describing functions and the minimization of deviation. As has been mentioned when making comparisons with other brands, pouring instructions are provided and these are seen as the only correct way of pouring, a section that wasn't included in either the Dutch or Danish websites, but was included in the more uncertainty avoidant Finnish websites. Even as international brand, G1 was a much later arrival on the scene than D1 or N1, indicating again an inherent conservatism and a reluctance to venture into un-chartered waters. However, now that its enjoyed success, expansion is rapid. The characteristics of retaining an attachment to the Bavarian '*Heimat*', the adherence to long-standing procedures ('*Rheinheitsgebot*'), and the focus on longevity and continuity suggest that the orientation is uncertainty avoidant and therefore reflecting the national orientation of German society.

Power distance

The final of **Hofstede's** dimensions used here was 'power distance' (Long term orientation was omitted as this dimension was specific to Asian cultures and as the countries involved here were all European, it was deemed to be of little relevance). In this instance, each of the countries was found to be characterised by low power distance, to a greater or lesser extent. Germany, the Netherlands and Finland were all moderately low power distance cultures, while Denmark was particularly low. Taking a look at the Finnish websites first, each of the websites was dominated by the rustic scenery of rural Finland. This modest yet picturesque landscape suggested low emphasis on social status and prestige, in favour of a universal appreciation of natural beauty. The rural settings were only embellished with fishing paraphernalia, log cabins or a campfire, generating a familiar, easy going and informal atmosphere that would suggest a low power distance orientation. The language used in the websites is of an informal nature, interspersed with colloquialisms, accessible language that suggests an emphasis on equality and universality. A clear example of the low power distance orientation of Finnish society is given when a state inspector visits the main character in F1's 'radio plays' section and informs him of an irregularity in his building. There is clearly a low power distance here, as the meeting is conducted in a straightforward manner, whereby officialdom is respected but not in an obsequious manner, although the character is displeased at the interference, indicating a preference for personal autonomy. All three brands draw from the natural world in the identity of their brands, if not directly like F1 and F2 (taking a forest animal and the Lapland natural environment respectively) then elsewhere in their brand portfolios (F3 incorporates 'sauna' and 'firewood', for example, in its product portfolio). By choosing the natural world, there is a connotation of universal accessibility as opposed to exclusivity, of being autonomous and not bound in a rigid power structure, and therefore evokes a sense of democratic participation. Therefore in each of the websites a low power distance orientation is tangible. The Netherlands was marginally higher than both Finland and Germany, and therefore had the highest power distance orientation of the 4 countries here. Starting with the responsible consumption of alcohol section, the website for N1 did indeed suggest a low power distance orientation. The visitor is addressed as a peer and the approach taken is to inform the customer about the healthy consumption of alcohol and leaving the choice as to how they will consume very

much at their discretion, there is no sense of a didactic approach here. A house party provides the backdrop for the outlining of these initiatives and this backdrop seems to be purposefully informal and would indicate attributes of a low power distance culture, such as the decentralization of power, independence and a direct and participative form of communication. A unique feature of N1 compared to the other websites however was the way in which the ads were tailored according to the location of the initiative. The starkest example being the tangibly more prestige and status driven initiative of South Korea compared with the informal and informative initiative in Switzerland based on peer engagement. The locality where the initiatives took place was therefore an important consideration when analysing the initiatives in relation to the Dutch orientation as it could distort the analysis. The advertising section did seem to reflect the low power distance orientation of the Netherlands, albeit in an unorthodox manner, whereby the advertising sequence lampoons a formal, high power distance occasion such as an ambassadorial reception. The indication that the event is being lampooned stems from the fact that the main protagonist seems to be an impostor or gatecrasher of some sort as the other guests have a place in the event whereas he just drifts through the event. The bizarre nature of the guests further suggests a lampooning of the event (basketball players, kung fu masters, cowboys). There is a sharp contrast between the easy going, informal and independent protagonist and the austere guests who seem to be at the centre of hierarchical power structures. The protagonist (who acts as the vehicle for the brand) clearly reflects Dutch society's power distance orientation whereby there is an absence of hierarchies and equality and independence are valued and power is decentralized. Therefore although the ad is clearly designed on the premise of being an international product, accessible to all and a force for bringing people from different cultural backgrounds together, there is nonetheless a clear indication that this also serves as an affirmation of the Dutch low power distance orientation. The final section related to a sport that's central to Dutch culture, football (consistently high achievers at international level notwithstanding a lower population than other football powers, such as England, Germany and Italy for example). This section again had evidence of the brand tailoring the events it organizes to local cultures, nominally Iceland, Thailand and South Africa. The advertising sequence related to the UEFA Champion's League competition was the

most relevant subsection regarding this dimension in the football section. The advertising sequence featured a group of friends imitating the emotional states a player participating in the Champion's League might go through, while they themselves watch a game. The same device of lampooning an event as was used in the case of the Embassy reception is incorporated also in this instance. The setting is informal and the prestige, glamour and celebrity aspects of the competition are shunned in favour of a group of friends enjoying themselves, without any visible power hierarchies in evidence and an atmosphere of equality prevails, while individuals nonetheless operate under the auspices of a team structure, reflecting the Netherlands moderate orientation as regards power distance. Slightly below the Netherlands as regards the dimension of power distance was Germany, so as with the Netherlands, Germany could be described as having a moderately low power distance orientation. The website for G1 illustrates clearly that the power distance orientation of Germany has evolved over time to its present state, as it would appear to have had a high power distance orientation in the past, in the period of absolute noble rule. In terms of power distance indicators in the way in which the website communicates, the visitor is addressed as a peer, indicating equality, while the brewery tour indicates a forthcoming, democratic willingness on the part of the brand to divulge information relating to its scientific processes and the technology involved in its brewing processes, and to engage with the consumers in peer like fashion. The brand seeks to elevate itself above its rivals on the basis of meritocratic, competitive advantages that it possesses. The brand's main association is with the Alpine landscape, a setting that evokes freedom from power structures and autonomy, similarly to the Finnish websites in terms of how the natural world is incorporated into the websites. So therefore there would appear to be a correlation with the power distance orientation of German society, moderately low power distance where power is derived on a meritocratic, as is the case here whereby the brand emphasizes the qualities that give it a competitive advantage over its rivals. The Danish power distance orientation was particularly low compared to the others, which seemed somewhat ironic, as it was one of two countries out of the four that retains a bastion of power distance, a monarchy, as part of the social fabric of the country. Drawing from the history section of D1, one noticeable aspect of Danish society was the apparently long-standing social mobility within Denmark. The founder of the

brewery moved to the city, learned the trade of a brewer and set up a successful business in what according to the website was a relatively short period of time, unhindered. The motto of the company is based on the principle of enhancing the common good, (in this, the common good of the nation), something reflected in the Danish attitude to power distance, whereby respect is earned by proving one's expertise. There is also an underlying sentiment of universal inclusion and participation involved in working towards the common good, indicative of a low power distance orientation. Moving away from the direct evidence of the influence of Danish culture over the brand to the rest of the website's content, it was noted that the language used wasn't as colloquial as the Finnish websites. However, this was the case in all three non-Finnish websites, and can therefore be explained by the fact that the language used here was English, which can be considered the de facto international language of the modern era. The Finnish websites were addressed towards members of the Finnish linguistic community, the vast majority of which are embedded in Finnish culture and who are therefore familiar with such colloquial terms as were used. A certain formality is therefore necessary in D1, N1 and G1, as the use of colloquial expressions specific to any one national cultural group could prove problematic in the context of international websites. So while the language seemed formal for a brand from such a low power distance culture, the international nature of the site and necessity to communicate directly and without nuances is likely to explain this situation. As with N1, professional football was used in D1's website as a vehicle for promoting the brand. There would appear to be a strong correlation between the choice of football and Danish culture, as according to **Hofstede**, in Denmark leadership gives way to coaching and acting autonomously, much like the game of football itself. Interestingly the website doesn't present the stars of the English team to which a subsection is devoted, but rather presents the team together with other members of the club's staff in a photograph. This has clear connotations of an egalitarian mindset, a mindset that promotes the decentralization of power and a parity of esteem for members of staff based on their competence, not on their role. This is where D1 was distinguishable from N1, as N1 only incorporated star players in its website. Another feature of D1 website was that the website visitors could get to know a range of ordinary fans of different backgrounds, genders and beliefs, whereas ordinary fans were present but anonymous in N1. This

indicates a very informal approach and indicates an absence of power structures, such as in N1 where the fans remain anonymous and we only recognize the players, who take centre stage. This seems to suggest an empowerment of the fans, correlating with the low Danish power distance orientation. The advertising section was divided into two narratives based on the moon landing and the scaling of Mt. Everest. The astronaut took centre stage in the moon landing ad, and the choice of this ad reflects strongly **Hofstede's** assertion that Dane's count on the experience of team members, while respect is earned by hands on expertise, which would fit in exactly with an undertaking such as the moon landing. The brand is again reiterating the theme of the company motto outlined earlier by associating itself with a moment considered a giant leap for mankind. The Mt. Everest themed ad differs in its approach, although a low power distance approach is tangible. In this instance the theme is turned on its head, as it is a spoof of the real event (premise for scaling Mt. Everest is to achieve better television reception). The 'mountaineers' are presented as actually being just a group of friends looking for better television reception, so it places on emphasis on familiarity and informality.

8 Conclusion.

Having disembarked from a point where the link between the subject and intercultural communications was tenuous, this thesis brought into focus issues of cultural homogenisation, the persistence of national cultural values and the influence of culture in brand identity development, which related to both the subjective and objective levels of culture. The 6 different websites chosen for the analysis were chosen according to criteria that aimed specifically to bring into focus brands where there was evidence of some of the contrasting dynamics that are central to the phenomenon of globalisation in order to examine how this may relate to the development of culture internationally and the role national cultures play in the area of marketing and brand development and in the area of generating a supranational culture that accompanies the phenomenon of globalization. In this case the sample was extracted specifically from brands available on the Finnish beer brand market, however this sample constitutes a sample from an industrialized country that is part of an international trading bloc (the European Union) and therefore is capable of providing insights into the phenomenon internationally. Both politically and economically, the 20th century was dominated by the nation state composed of well defined national territories that operated autonomously on the world stage and where territorial and economic congruence was underlined by the enshrinement of national cultures within nation states that provided the citizenry of countries with the cultural tools for cohesive national development, such as a dominant national language and dominant cultural values derived from the specific traditions and historical developments that shaped the nation and where cultural capital was monopolized by entities such as national broadcasters and national newspapers. However, with the advent of globalization, the pre-eminent position of the nation states are no longer as secure and the powers of individual nations are increasingly superseded by the powers of international organizations (the EU, the IMF, economically powerful international corporations), which have direct repercussions for the cohesive units that are constituted by national and ethnic cultures and the development of cultural identity. As this thesis shows, the national no longer enjoys hegemony over shaping the cultural values of its citizens as international brands and an international economic system increasingly penetrates national boundaries. Self-sufficiency and isolationist economic and social development

has given way to international competition and an integrated worldwide financial and economic system, which can override, threaten or provide opportunities for the national as is illustrated in the examination of these websites.

Regarding **Hofstede's** cultural dimensions and how they relate to national culture, the analysis outlined how these orientations manifest themselves in such a way that is specific to certain nationalities, and how these different orientations define national identities and values when combined. For instance by examining the role of the sauna or of the Finnish wilderness in relation to **Hofstede's** dimensions, a greater understanding of the specific orientation of Finland regarding a certain dimension could be obtained. Therefore, when relating **Hofstede's** dimensions of culture to national cultures, it's important to recognize the specific characteristics or traits that define the orientations of the countries. This means that the way in which the cultural orientation manifests itself is firmly within the context of that country and therefore the orientation is not simply positive or negative, but has a specific way of correlating with the dimension that can then be identified as positive or negative in terms of how it relates to a given dimension. Although some of the brands were clearly identifiable as belonging to a specific national or ethnic cultural group due to their incorporation of ethnosymbolic references, the apparently more cosmopolitan brands were found to correspond with their national cultural value orientations also. Although the more tangible features of objective culture, the ethnosymbolism that pervaded the Finnish sites, was missing from the websites of N1 and D1, there was evidence that these websites remain the product of their native culture in terms of the underlying values and attitudes that are present in the websites. So although the brands may purport to have an international cosmopolitan identity, the analysis of their websites indicates that the values espoused by the brand identity as expressed in the websites are in line with the orientations of their respective countries towards **Hofstede's** dimensions, indicating a latent ethno-centrism and an abiding attachment to their national origins, and thus their brand development, identity and outlook is influenced by their national origins at the level of subjective culture. Although it has to be pointed out that there was clear evidence of tailoring the brand's initiatives to suit specific cultural norms. So therefore the somewhat surprising finding was made that although brand identities may project an identity that is supranational in nature, as they

consciously present an image that is cosmopolitan and international in nature, they may in fact manifest traits of their national cultural origins in other ways. Therefore, according to the findings here, there was no international, homogenized, global identity that could be detected according to the analysis based on **Hofstede's** dimensions. Each of the brands in question ultimately seemed to reflect the cultural orientations of their countries of origins across all 4 dimensions. However, the analysis according to **Triandis'** profiles did reveal that the multinational brands are much closer to the profile of the modern man than the national brands. As it is the multinational brands that are the protagonists in terms of the acquisition of breweries and brands, it could be argued that the profile of the modern man is proliferating and replacing the profile of the traditional man, but also providing an internationally identifiable set of values or attitudes that supersedes national differences and therefore the profile of the modern man provides the commonalities that facilitate for example the advertising campaigns of D1 and N1 internationally. If the processes of globalization are generating a universal identity, then it would seem that what is universal to this identity are the features of the profile of the modern man, that can be related to in all countries penetrated by the forces of international capitalism and globalization. Therefore when a country is highly integrated into the global economic system, the consuming public of the country will be familiar with the values of modern man irrespective of national cultural differences that persist. Therefore the profile of the modern man is supplanting the profile of the traditional man, however it is not necessarily the case at this point in time that it is supplanting national cultural identities and their specific cultural orientations. What would seem to be the case is that national cultural identities abide, however the profile of the modern man does provide certain universal characteristics that are acquired by cultural communities as a result of globalization and becoming part of an international system of consumption and production. This may provide an interesting point of observation for intercultural communications going forward, because once certain commonalities or universalities can be identified that arise as a result of globalization it may facilitate the identification of cultural specific traits that abide, while also identifying what is becoming increasing universal across cultural boundaries. It is misleading therefore to suggest that a national identity is replaced by a global identity. It would seem however that globalization has

provided an international identity characterized by the traits of modern man that has been grafted onto existing national cultural communities and societies that have experienced the forces of modernization, and the ensuing consumerism that accompanies modernization. **Norman Davies** observed a similar dichotomy in relation to culture and civilization. According to **Davies (Davies, 1996:821)**, ‘civilization’ (Christianity, the traditions of the ancient world) was grafted onto ‘culture’ (customs of the daily life of the people) in a top down fashion whereby legal, educational and cultural (in the sense of objective culture) institutions were grafted onto cultural communities characterized by features of subjective culture, such as idiom, idiosyncratic practices and folklore. The rise of nationalism and the nationalisation of the populace extolled the subjective culture of national communities, which is evident in the national brands that were examined here. However, as ‘civilization’ was grafted onto cultural communities previously, there now appears to be a new form of ‘civilization’ being grafted onto the cultural framework. The analysis specifically of D1 and N1 suggest that as the power of the national dwindles and is superseded by the power of global capitalism, the profile of the modern man is similarly being grafted onto the subjective cultural communities that predated formal nationalism and the well from which nationalist movements derived their cultural capital, and were subsequently extolled by the nation states. As the national gives way to the global, there are echoes of another historical epoch that are reflected in this analysis, the epoch of European Imperialism. As the European powers vied for colonial possessions, in the modern era of global capitalism entities such as D1 and N1 vie for market share worldwide in a process whereby the global penetrates and subsumes the national, and whereas the French fought the British with bayonets and warships, the global multinational fights with scientific and technological innovation and development, complemented by the power pull of their brands as propagated by marketing. Lenin who described imperialism as the highest form of capitalism crystallized this argument that relates the process of globalization to the process of imperialism. As imperialism was accompanied by the ‘*mission civilatrice*’ that sought to ‘europeanize’ the colonies in the image of the mother countries (**Davies, 1997:848**), so to do the agents of globalization seek to ‘globalize’ the international consumer. The profile of the modern man embodies the modern consumer. The modern consumer (increasingly cosmopolitan and

deterritorialized as opposed to national and rooted), whether they are living in Helsinki or Hong Kong are amenable to the consumption of D1 and N1 in spite of the cultural nuances that may distinguish them due to the fact that they can relate to the profile of modern man due to the fact that Finland and Hong Kong now find themselves ultimately within the sphere of the global capitalist system and therefore they are embedded in the cultural matrix of globalization that is embodied in the profile of the modern man. Where the sauna and the *mökki* provided cultural reference points for the Finn, D1 and N1 now provide cultural reference points for the modern man across the globe. Given the breadth of the topic of globalisation, this research cannot be considered to be definitive. Instead it has been designed as a contribution to the ongoing debate about globalisation and particularly in how it relates to the field of intercultural communication.

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