PARADOX RESOLUTION THEORY IN BUILDING EFFECTIVE BRAND POWER

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the application of concepts from the study of power in the social sciences to the field of brand marketing. In particular the study applies the paradigm of paradox resolution of hard and soft power. The paper builds on the psycho-analytics of Freud and Jung and on the psychology literature to develop a model of consumer paradox resolution. The research examines how do consumers process and resolve implicit only, implicit-explicit, and explicit paradoxes and the roles archetypes play in these issues. The research indicates the value to brands of paradox resolution theory and the solution of the paradox through archetypal attachment.

Keywords**:** Brand, paradox resolution, power, paradigm

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Introduction

Substantial behavioral shifts are observable in the macro and micro marketing environments (Schultz, Block, & Viswanathan, 2014). Brand preference is seen to be eroding and "and most brands ... face a high risk of 'commoditization'" (Schultz et. al., 2014, p. 408). Brand hegemony, therefore, is under threat. Shareholder-value-based brand strategies are identified as a means for building brand equity among stakeholders (Doyle, 2001). This study builds on psycho-analytics and psychology research and recent research (Lloyd & Woodside, 2013) to develop paradox resolution theory and strategies for resolution in respect of the building of implicit/soft brand power to support and strengthen explicit/hard brand power.

Literature Review

Hard and soft power

In the sense prescribed by foreign policy, power is the ability to effect desired outcomes and, if necessary, to change the behavior of others to make this happen (Nye, 2002). While military force still plays a role in international politics geo-economics, while not replacing geopolitics, has become more important than in the past. Military and economic power are examples of hard power, "command power that can be used to induce others to change their positions" (Nye, 2002, p. 8). Hard power in brand marketing is expressed by terms like marketing warfare (Ries & Trout, 1997) and the battle for the consumers mind (Ries & Trout, 2000). If hard power arises from attributes, soft power arises from values and is expressed in culture and relationships (Védrine, 2001); power that inspires " the dreams and desires of others, thanks to the mastery of global images through film and television …" (p. 3).

Band power and power brands

Paradox and paradox resolution

The paper here applies paradox resolution theory (Poole & Van den Ven, 1989 as the central method for deepening understanding and for working with contradictions and oppositions faced by brands. The word "paradox" derives from the Greek *para* (beyond) and *doxa* (belief): a paradox is literally a contention or set of contentions that are beyond belief. Logical and rhetorical paradoxes occur (Rescher, 2001). "The former type is a communicative predicament - a conflict of what is asserted, accepted or believed. The latter type is a rhetorical trope - an anomalous juxtaposition of incongruous ideas for the sake of striking exposition or unexpected insight" (Rescher, 2001, p. 4). In everyday discourse a paradox is a judgement or opinion that is contrary to general opinion or common sense. A paradox in this sense would be "an obviously anomalous contention that someone seriously propounds despite its conflict with what is generally regarded as true" (Rescher, 2001, p. 6).

According to Poole and Van den Ven (1989) the increasing tensions, oppositions, and contradictions between theories create conceptual difficulties. Thus social organizations are continuously changing and emergent (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Pfeffer, 1982; Weick, 1979). The presence of such a negative element may be what Poole and Van den Ven (1989) have in mind when they call for the consideration of a set of theory-building strategies that helps researchers take advantage of theoretical tensions. Such tensions are paradoxes relating to social theory, and four different modes of working with paradoxes are distinguished: accept the paradox and use it constructively; clarify levels of analysis; temporally separate the two levels; introduce new terms to resolve the paradox (Poole & van de Ven, 1989, p. 562).

Paradigms

The paradigm is not a twentieth-century invention and meaning a framework of concepts, results, and procedures within which subsequent work is structured (Kuhn, 1970).

The term derives from the Latin *paradigma* meaning pattern or example. Gill (Himmelfarb, 2004) used the word in the sense of the archetype, exemplar and idea according to which all things were made. Socrates defended the ideas of Plato by representing them as paradigms (Jowett, 2001). The working definition of paradigm used in the paper here is as a central organizing idea that guides problem definition in a given context. The specific context in which the term is employed is in brand marketing and the development of brand power.

Paradox resolution theory (PRT)

Nye (2002) sees the rapid reduction in the cost of information technologies as a source of a change in the nature of government and sovereignty, an increase in the role of non-state participants and enhancing the importance of soft power: "Politics then becomes a contest of competitive credibility" (Nye, 2002, p. 68). The following is worthy of quotation in full:

> The countries that are likely to gain soft power in an information age are (1) those whose dominant culture and ideas are closer to prevailing global norms (which now emphasize liberalism, pluralism, and autonomy), (2) those with the most access to multiple channels of communication and thus more influence over how issues are framed, and (3) those whose credibility is enhanced by their domestic and international performance. These dimensions of power in an information age suggest the growing importance of soft power in the mix of power resources, and a strong advantage … (Nye, 2002, p. 69).

An information revolution (Blattberg, Glazer, & Little, 1994) may, in brand marketing, be changing the nature of brand sovereignty and control, and the importance of soft power. The soft power of brands becomes more important as network effects (Katz & Shapiro, 1994; Parker & Van Alstyne, 2005) and the interdependence of knowledge

networks, and thereby of brand-consumer relationships, foster situations whereby a brand becomes more valuable once many other people also use it. PRT includes tenets describing, explaining, resolving, predicting, and controlling conflicting emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and/or behaviors whereby psychological tensions arise implicitly and/or explicitly in the individual or between members of a group or between groups.

T1: paradoxes surface frequently only partially as somewhat unknown felt tensions.

T2: some solutions to paradoxes are not absolute - some paradoxes arise again and again.

T3 Change to a new permanent reality occurs frequently with macro explicit paradoxes.

A paradigm of PRT is necessary that includes identifying principal property spaces of paradoxes--a 3X2X2X2 cross-tab consisting of: implicit, explicit, and partially implicit-explicit; infrequent (one-time) versus reoccurring; macro-micro (major-minor); public versus private solution enactments. Thus, 24 cells. Identify an example for each of the 24 cells.

PRT includes both macro and micro tenets on the surfacing, processes, and conclusions to paradoxes (inconsistencies); PRT recognizes that such paradox resolution is central to the contributions of Freud, Heider, Brehm, Skinner, and Jung. PRT tenets include the following propositions.

Central to Freud's (1958, 1974) theory, the conflict between the super ego and id is a lifelong paradox that is managed (because the conflict is reoccurring, not resolved) by psychological and behavioral processes of the ego. Freud (1958, 1974) advances the association between conflict and paradox. He shows paradox resolution occurring through the development of a reality principle (Freud, 1958, 1964; Rieff, 1979). The ego seeks reality: resolution, through life experiences, of the paradoxical relationship between the instinctual needs of the id and the societal demands represented by the super ego; a resolution that is in a

continuous state of flux (Freud, 1974, p. 76). Social demands for a too-consistent fit between personal attitudes and actual behavior may be overly swingeing (Dubin, 1959).

Central to Heider's (1958) theory, psychological imbalances surface frequently in individuals among felt oppositions of emotions-beliefs which are only partially understood by the individual while they seek means to gain a new state of balance. The issue of whether individuals justify their actions based on their interests and values or on reasons they see outside of themselves represents a basic dimension of individual sense-making (Heider, 1958). Heider (1958) argues that individuals try to identify the imbalances that underlie observed behavior and do this by attributing behavior to either external (situational) or internal (dispositional) causes (Malle, 2004). Surfaced imbalances are seen by Heider (1958) to be central to an agent's consideration on his motives: "The underlying causes of events, especially the motives of other persons, are the invariances of the environment that are relevant to [the perceiver]; they give meaning to what he experiences" (Heider, 1958, pp. 30). Heider's (1958) theoretical position suggests the proposition that man perceives behavior as being caused (Hastorf, Schnieder, & Polefka, 1970). "The causal locus [according to Heider] can be either in the perceiver or in the environment" (Hastorf, Schnieder, & Polefka, 1970, p. 63). Environmental and personal factors are two general classes of force that enter in to the production of action (Ross & Fletcher, 1985). Heider (1985) identifies a paradox central to human behavior by empahsizing the distinction between personal and situational behavior.

Central to Brehm's (1989) psychological reactance theory, is a sense a loss by individuals of personal freedom implicitly and/or explicitly when considering the beliefs and behaviors advocated by authority figures (e.g., parents, groups, society). Yet paradoxically, motivation increases to match the effort required to respond to such losses (Brehm & Self, 1989). In consideration of potential motivation, "whatever factors affect the effort one is willing to make to satisfy a motive are in fact the determinants of the magnitude of

motivation" (Brehm & Self, 1989, p. 110). Brehm and Self (1989) draw on three sources of evidence: psysiological data (cardiovascular reactivity), behavioral affects and subjective appraisals to suggest that motivational arrousal occurs only to the extent that the required instrumental behavior is difficult, "within one's capacity, and is justified my the magnitude of potential motivation" (Brehm & Self, 1989, p. 111). Furthermore, the greater "the potential motivation, the greater is the amount of energy that a person will be willing to mobilize" (Brehm & Self, 1989, p. 111).

Central to Skinner's (1971) proposals is that paradoxes are resolvable and undesirable behaviors, and are controllable via behavioral technology (Skinner, 1971). Skinner (1971) based his arguments on the triangulation of results of experimental analysis of behavior and explanations sought in the interaction between research in genetic endowment and personal history; the physical and social environments in which people live. Personal, interpersonal and research paradoxes can be solved through a systems approach to research and applications whereby solutions are generated by combining findings from widely different specializations (Varela, 1977). Social technology has solved problems with organizational and technical paradoxes by "integrating what has already been discovered, without thereby sacrificing the much needed further research …" (Varela, 1977, p. 914).

Central to Jung's contributions, archetypes are primal forces that drive behavior implicitly to accomplish goals that the individual often is unaware of possessing; thus, explicit own behavior frequently raises the paradoxical question, "why am I doing this action?" In contrast to Freud, Jung (1968) identifies a more historically sourced, unconscious process whose content is of unknown origin and of mythological character and constitutes a pattern peculiar to mankind in general: this Jung calls the collective unconscious (Jung, 1968). The patterns of the collective unconscious Jung calls archetypes. Archetypes are universal, primitive and elemental mental forms; they are symbolic expressions of psychic

dramas that become accessible to human consciousness by way of projection; "their images are intended to attract, to convince, and overpower" (Jung, 1940, p. 57). An archetype is a sign that may function as a symbol of transformation. For Jung, symbols act as transformers capable of raising the unconscious material to the level of conscious awareness. Jung believes that individual and social behavior and thought can be influenced, quite powerfully at times, by archetypal patterns (Jung, 1973, 1976, 1991). For Jung the archetype is akin to the pattern of behaviour in biology (Jung, 1991, p. 100).

McClelland, Clark, Roby, & Atkinson (1948) observe further that implicit motives generally sustain spontaneous behavioral trends over time because of the pleasure derived from the activity itself, whereas the self-attributed motives predict immediate responses to structured situations because of the social incentives present in structuring the situation. Implicit motives are based on innate types of affective arousal and are more primitive than the elaborate system of explicit goals, desires, and commitments that are characteristic of self-attributed behavior (McClelland, Clark, Roby, & Atkinson, 1949). Hence the relevance of Jungian archetypes as a means for the interpretation of implicit motives.

Consideration of the theory of individuation (Jung, 1940, 1968) provides insight into how people make sense of archetypes in everyday experiences. An archetype, for example an archetypal journey, may satisfy a powerful need for identification with the totality of the personality; with the self. Such a journey serves as a psychological and a spiritual healing process (Jung, 1968). The process of individuation may be similar to the humanistic process of self-actualization (Maslow, 1943, 2013).

Dual Processing Theory

Research on the metaphoric dimensions of the brand builds from dual processing research which recognizes two different modes of mental processing: System 1 and System 2 processes (Hulten, 2011; Kahneman, 2011; Petrova & Cialdini, 2007). System 1 thinking

operates automatically, quickly, effortlessly and with no sense of control (Kahneman, 2011). System 1 processes include unconscious thinking: holistic, evolutionary old, associative and parallel, shared with animals, domain-specific, independent of general intelligence, and independent of working memory (Evans, 2008).

System 2 thinking allocates attention to effortful mental activities; its operations are associated with the subjective experience of agency, choice, and concentration (Kahneman, 2011, p. 21). System 2 processes include conscious thinking: analytic, evolutionary new, rule-based, uniquely human, domain general, linked to general intelligence, and limited by working memory capacity (Evans, 2008).

Building the soft power of brands

Metaphoric and anthropomorphic dimension of a brand

All behavioural manifestations of the human being are revealing and expressive of his personality (Rapaport, 1942). Anthropomorphisms are possible contexts of consumer–brand relationships (Aaker & Fournier, 1995; Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997). Consumers embrace brands with strong, positive personalities because of a natural human tendency to anthropomorphise non-human objects (Freling, Crosno, & Henard, 2010). The tendency for consumers to perceive brands as actual human beings has significant implications in the area of branding. It is suggested that the theory of anthropomorphism explains how the self-concept and brand image congruity may influence the inference process of brand anthropo-morphization (Puzakova, Kwak, & Rocereto, 2009).

The power the implicit

Woodside (2008) places considerable value on examining implicit and explicit beliefs, attitudes, decision processes, and behavior toward products and brands. Figure 1 provides a simple visualization of the way implicit and explicit communications may work with consumers. The archetype that a story depicts should match with the intended customer's archetypal, mostly, or entirely unconscious yearnings (Woodside, et al., 2008). It is possible

that, as a symbolic representation of archetypal forms comprising the memory pool of the collective unconscious (Jung, 1969), activation by a brand of an archetype may be seen at its deepest level to provide access to those unconscious collective contents (Semetsky, 2006).

The brand engagement process as a contributor to soft brand power

Higgins and Scholar (2009) provide a perspective on engagement which has relevance to the consumer-brand, advertising communications orientation of this study. Higgins and Scholar (2009, p. 100) propose that strength of engagement contributes to value intensity which is "a motivational force of attraction to or repulsion from something." If the goal pursuit activity is embedded in highly motivating, implicit (narrative) messaging, then the advertising message may be more effective in generating value intensity.

The concept of engagement is a current focus in the advertising research literature (Calder & Malthouse, 2008; Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009; Elms, 2007; Wang, 2006). Calder and Malthouse (2008) identify two forms of engagement. Firstly, engagement occurs with the advertising medium which is the journalistic or entertainment content of a medium which provides a context for the advertisement and which may affect reactions to the ad (Calder and Malthouse, 2008). Secondly, engagement occurs with the advertised brand (Calder and Malthouse, 2008). Calder and Malthouse (2008) see engagement as a sense of involvement; of being connected to something. Engagement comes from experiencing something; experiencing, for example, media content and media context (Calder et al., 2009). The researchers identify two types of engagement with respect to online media: personal (stimulation and inspiration; social facilitation; temporal; self-esteem and civic mindedness; intrinsic enjoyment) and social-interactive (utilitarian; participation and sociating; community).

In contrast to liking, an hedonic experience, engagement is a motivational experience (Ewing, 2009). Engagement is a second source of experience that: "involves the experience

of a motivational force to make something happen … or not happen …" (Higgins, 2006, p. 441). Yet people cannot control their autonomic systems and screen out advertising. If the autonomic system indicates a potentially relevant advertising event then the viewer pays conscious attention to it (Adaval & Wyer, 1998). Neuroscience research supports the view that anything which generates an emotional response will capture attention and be memorable (Page & Raymond, 2006). This paper uses the following working definition of engagement: a participant's emotionally motivating experience of interaction with a brand and with its advertising.

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION AND PROPOSITIONS

The psychoanalytic perspective and the theory of transference

The theoretical grounding of this study rests in the value of the implicit content of brand communications in the building of brand equity. This perspective follows from the research literature in relation to the influence of unconscious thinking on behavior (Hofstede, 2003; Jung, 1969; Wegner, 2002; Woodside, 2008); the relevance of transference to brand communications and its importance to high-involvement social and brand enactments (Freud, 1964; Megehee & Woodside, 2010); the importance of social identity as a driver of consumer-brand drama enactment (Bourdieu, 1984; Riesman, Glazer, & Reuel, 1963); the power of metaphoric, or archetypal, dimensions of the brand in marketing communications (Batra, 2002; Coulter, Zaltman, & Coulter, 2001; Fournier & Alvarez, 2012; Zaltman, 1996, 2003; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995).

The psychoanalytical perspective has been applied to the analysis of marketing communications. In an analysis of shopping behavior (Bennett, 2005), the introduction of Freudian concepts into marketing behavior arises from a new interest in motivational research. The motivational research conducted by Dichter is a reaction to an overly-rationalistic approach to marketing communications whereby shopping is viewed as a form of

money therapy, or enjoyment by spending (Dichter, 1960, 1979). This Freudian orientation is extended later into the consideration of the area of marketing (Bowlby, 1993).

In psychotherapy a patient tends to transfer on to the therapist relationships experienced at other stages in life. Such transference can be intense. Forgotten and repressed experiences of childhood are reproduced during the work of analysis in dreams and reactions, particularly in those occurring in transference (Freud, 1964). Freud describes transference in an early paper on psychoanalysis (Freud, 1901) when a colleague became the object of the erotic feelings of his patient, feelings that referred not to the colleague himself but rather to a fantasy figure. In this sense the analyst becomes a *tabula rasa* on whom the patient projects her feelings. Freud later views transference as an attempt to restore an earlier state of things, what he calls the "compulsion to repeat" (Freud, 1964). Transference theory provides insight into how a person's past relationships may influence perceptions of a new person or object they meet (Woodside, 2008). Transference theory expands from a person's storytelling to a nonconscious, social information-processing system or the adaptive unconscious (Wilson, 2002).

RQ$_1$: How do consumers process and resolve implicit only, implicit-explicit, and explicit paradoxes; what roles do archetypes play in these six issues? RQ$_2$: What is the relevance of psychoanalytic insights for brand communications? RQ$_3$: How does archetypal activation contribute to consumer involvement and engagement with brand advertising? RQ$_4$: What is the value of archetypes for brand communications effectiveness?

Case study background

Soft power comes from owning a strong linking powerfully with a desirable archetype.

Versace and the Siren archetype.

NYC's Big Apple and the story of Adam and Eve and the individuating/independence for parental authority archetype.

Apple's embrace of the apple as symbolizing the fountainhead of knowledge that enables individuating.

Paris and true romance of Roman and Juliet and H Bogart and Bergen love experienced even if only for a few weeks; resolving the conflict/paradox between love and virtue.

The eternal love story

Research method

Analysis

Discussion

Contribution to the theory of branding

Contribution to paradox resolution theory

Research implications for advancing theory—planned and unplanned strategy

implementation

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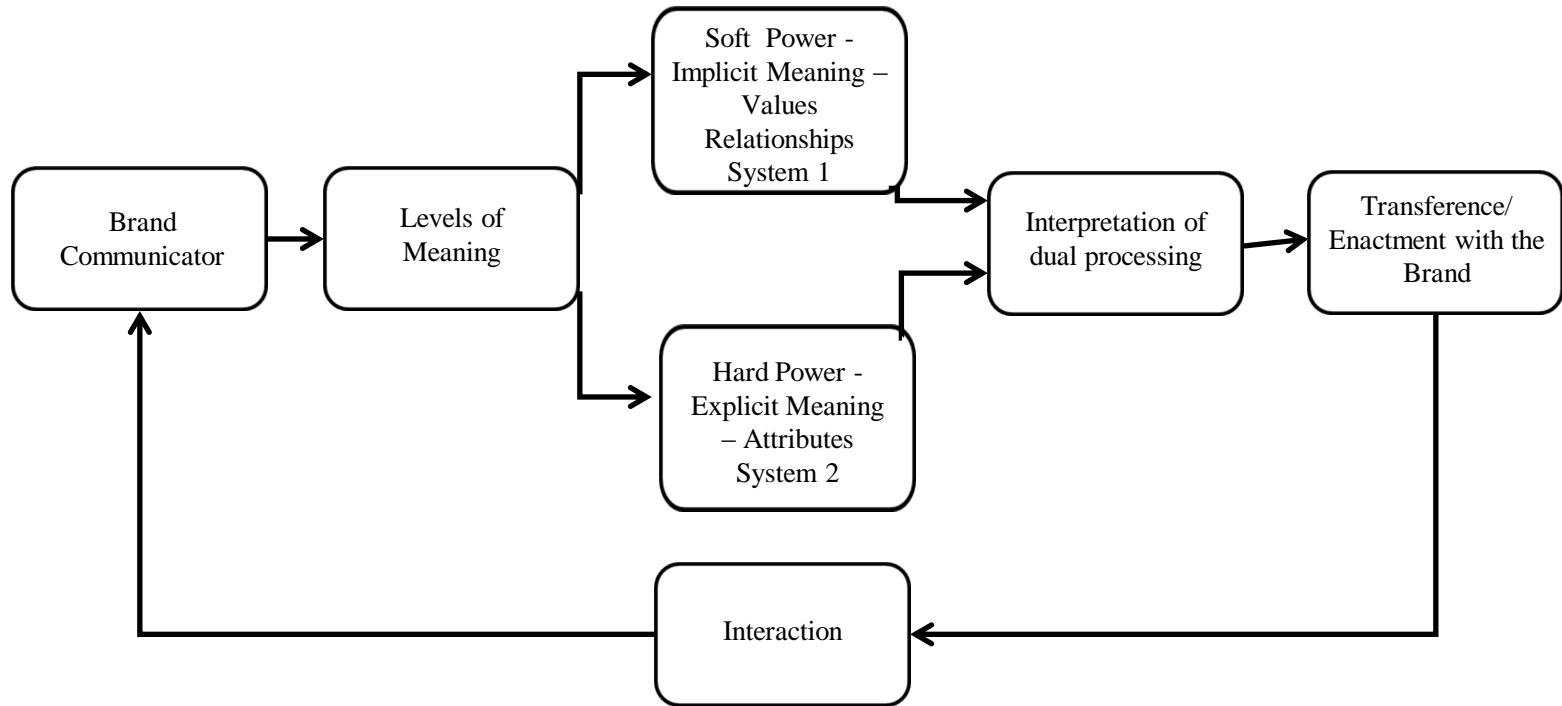
Figure 1
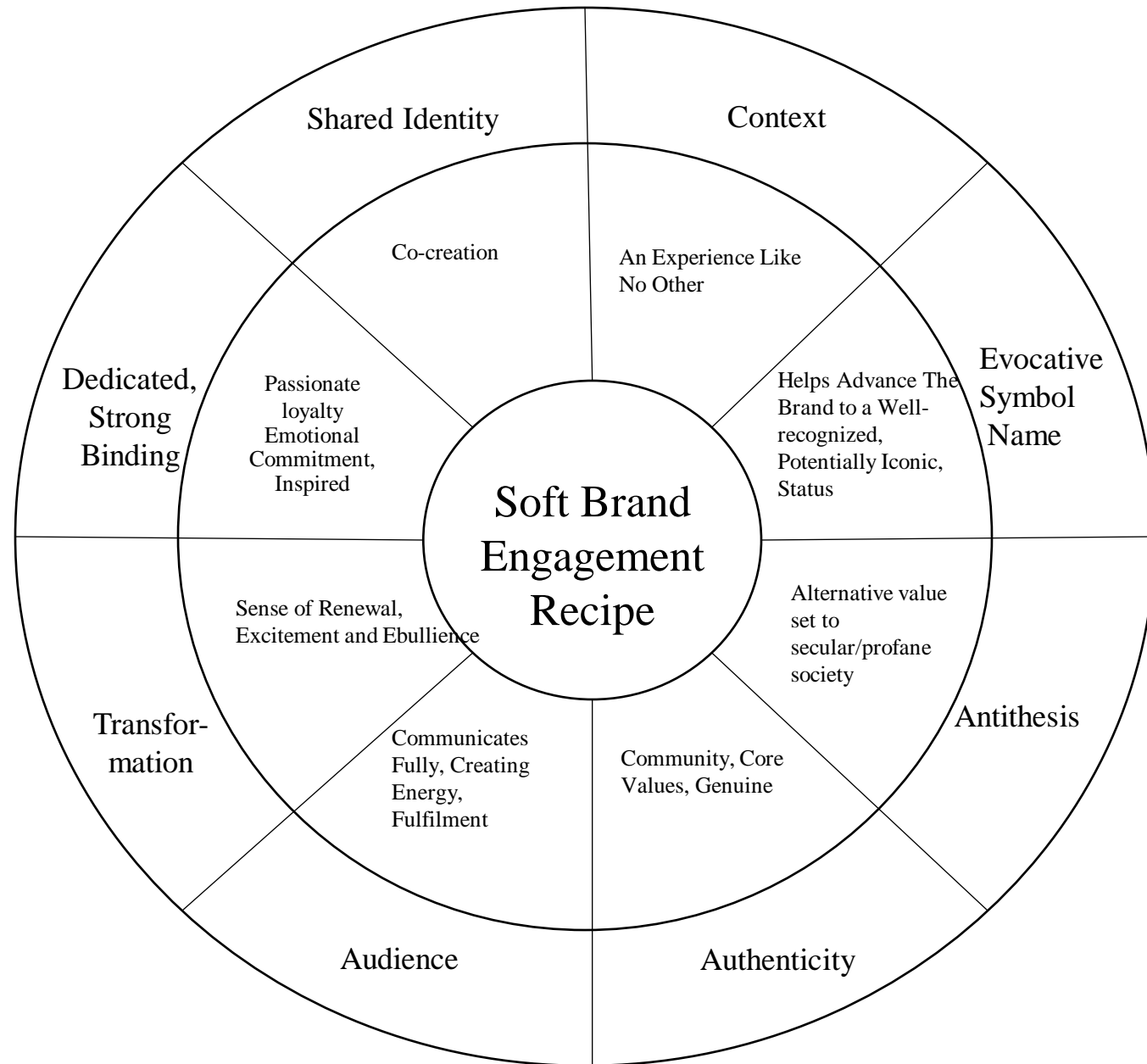**Dual – Soft/hard - System 1 and 2 – Processing Model of Brand Communication**

Figure 2 Soft Brand Engagement Causal Recipe

Figure 3
Paradox Resolution Property Space Analysis: Process, Frequency, Macro-Micro, Private-Public with Exemplars

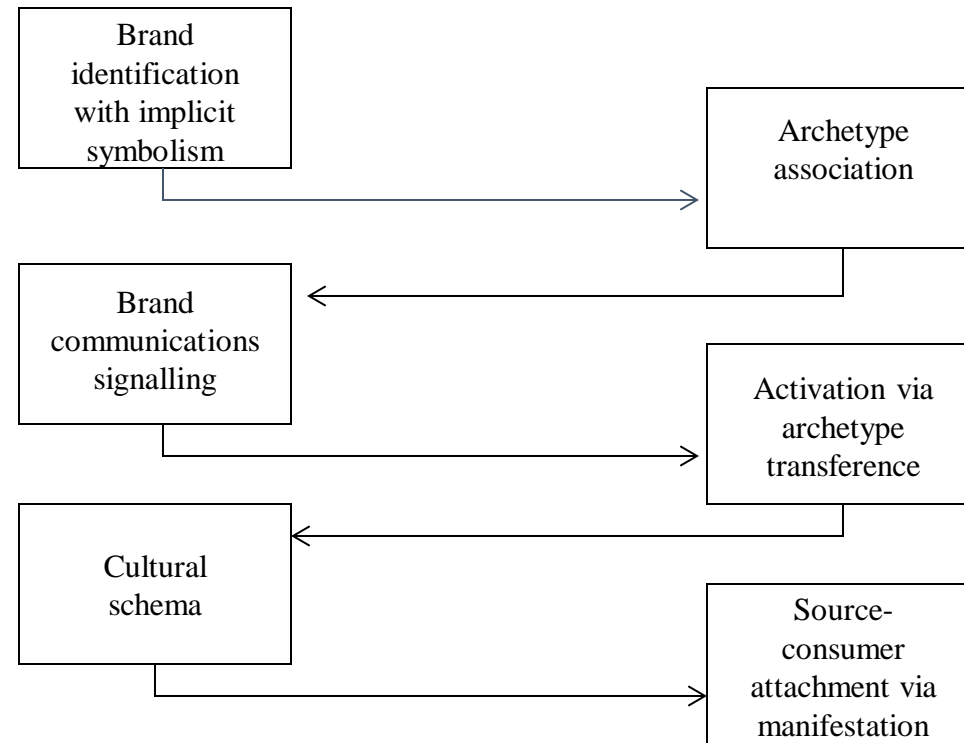| Process	Frequency	Macro•Private	Macro•Public	Micro•Private	Micro•Public
Implicit	**Once**	1 Menstruation startup	2 Severe road rage (e.g., crash, shooting)	3 First-time watching pornographic movie at home	4 Jestering (e.g., snorting pepper in restaurant
Implicit	**Occasional**	5 Wearing costume under everyday street clothes	6 Archetypal rituals 1	7 Visit to adult clothing and toy shop away from home	8 Minor road rage (e.g. "giving finger")
Implicit	**Reoccurring**	9 Archetypal rituals 2	10 Religious practice	11 Briefs v. boxers	12 Wearing Versace
Combine/conflict	**Once**	13 ED medication startup	14 Coming of age rituals	15	16
Combine/conflict	**Occasional**	17 Sexual partner	18	19	20 Body tattoo
Combine/conflict	**Reoccurring**	21 Sexual tourism (hiding fetish in plain sight)	22 Obesity	23	24 Hair coloring
Explicit	**Once**	25	26 University choice	27	28
Explicit	**Occasional**	29	30 Divorce	31 Leisure at home choices	32 Destination away activities
Explicit	**Reoccurring**	33 Drug pill abuse	34 Smoking	35 Voting choice	36 Clothing fashion In developed nations

Figure 3
Soft Brand-Archetype-Engagement Model