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## **BRAND ARCHETYPES AS ILLUSTRATED BY A KRAKOW SCHOOL OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

### **Introduction**

The modern consumer has become very demanding. This means that brands cannot pursue a strategy based only on price competition. Today's customers focus primarily on those aspects of a product that allow them to identify with it. Emotions are an important element in the modern purchasing process; they help the customer make the final decision when there is too much choice. The consumer's choice of a particular product or service is influenced by the values that the brand represents through its history and the activities in which it participates<sup>1</sup>.

Brands that want to maintain their market position must make sure that communication with the potential customer is consistent and reliable. The organization must convey its identity, which will help the interested parties identify with it or the product itself. That need has been systematized thanks to archetypes that occur in marketing.<sup>2</sup> They are a kind of a symbolic language that allows brands to tell a story and build emotional relationships with recipients.<sup>3</sup> With the help of archetypes, brands can compete with other offers on the market thanks to consumers' subconscious identification with the advertised products or services.

The aim of the article is to analyze the issues related to archetypes and discuss their application in marketing as well as to present the results of own research concerning brand archetypes on the example of The School of Banking and Management (WSZiB). The research examined how the respondents perceive their college, which allowed the authors to analyze its data and match the appropriate brand archetype to the entity under examination by interpreting the responses in the survey.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Kotarbiński, *Marka 5.0*, Wydawnictwo PWN, Warszawa 2021, pp. 84-85.

<sup>2</sup> M. Mark, C.S. Pearson, *The Hero and The Outlaw*, McGraw-Hill Education, Europe 2001, pp. 7-10.

<sup>3</sup> C. G. Jung, *Archetypy i symbole pisma wybrane*, Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, Warszawa 1981, pp. 182-187.

## 1. Theory of archetypes and their types in marketing

The general theory of archetypes was developed at the beginning of the 20th century by the Swiss psychiatrist, psychologist, and scientist Carl Gustaf Jung. In his publication, he wrote that “the concept of archetype (...) derived from repeated observations such as the fact that myths and fairy tales of world literature contain precisely defined motifs that appear always and everywhere. Moreover, the same motifs are found in the fantasies, dreams, and delusions of modern humans. These typical images and relations are referred to as archetypal representations(...).<sup>4</sup> This statement allows for defining the archetype as the original model (Gr. *arche* – beginning, *typos* – type, model), a universal set of features and well-known patterns responsible for the description of characters, events, or phenomena. They are advanced elements of the collective unconscious. They constitute universal, archaic patterns that humans are able to recognize in their surrounding and respond to them appropriately.<sup>5</sup>

Over time, C.G. Jung’s theory evolved and found application in management and marketing, mainly due to many years of research on archetypes conducted by Margaret Mark and Carol S. Pearson. According to the theory of M. Mark and C.S. Pearson, there are twelve types of archetypes that can be used to anthropomorphize or give human characteristics to a brand and its products. This procedure leads to the creation of a strong and coherent brand identity considering the values and ideas that the brand wants to communicate to target groups. Each archetype represents a defined set of features, values and behaviors that help create an emotional bond between the brand and the consumer in a marketing strategy.<sup>6</sup>

In their research, M. Mark and C.S. Pearson also concluded that each person, when striving to fulfill their own needs, is guided by specific motivations for actions, which can be presented in two intersecting axes<sup>7</sup> (see Figure 1.).

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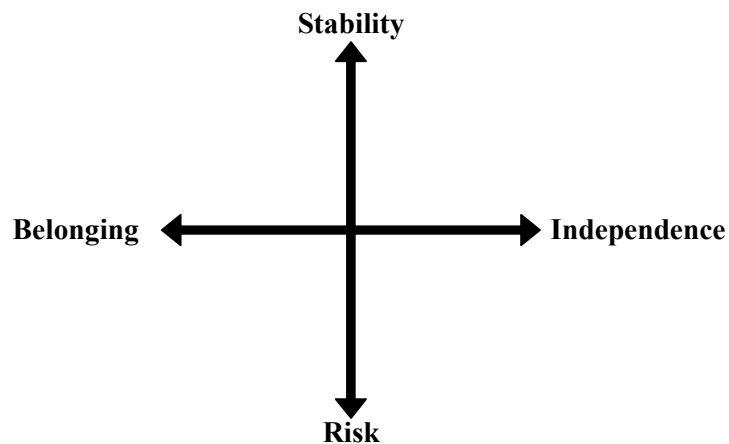
<sup>4</sup> C. G. Jung, *Das Gewissen in psychologischer Sicht*. W: Das Gewissen. Studien aus dem C.G. Jung-Institut, Zürich 1958, p. 199n

<sup>5</sup>M. Hajdas, *Audyty kreatywnej komunikacji marketingowej w oparciu o archetypy marki* [in:] K. Mazurek-Łopacińska, M. Sobocińska (ed.), *Badania Marketingowe w zarządzaniu przedsiębiorstwem*, Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu 2011, No. 237, p. 307; [https://greenparrot.pl/blog/archetypy-marki/?gad\\_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwouexBhAuEiwAtW\\_Zx8ZpoqpLwPcQ7lCt-i4mGo5ZEBUJMn116EtCLli0VlqQWF6dPHp7BoCpa8QAvD\\_BwE](https://greenparrot.pl/blog/archetypy-marki/?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwouexBhAuEiwAtW_Zx8ZpoqpLwPcQ7lCt-i4mGo5ZEBUJMn116EtCLli0VlqQWF6dPHp7BoCpa8QAvD_BwE) (accessed: 18.05.2024); <http://annakazusek.pl/archetypy-marki/> (accessed: 18.05.2024).

<sup>6</sup> A. Cieślak, Ł. Skowron, *Postrzeganie archetypów marki w opinii różnych grup docelowych klientów*, „Zarządzanie i Marketing” 2016, No. 3, p. 373.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem.

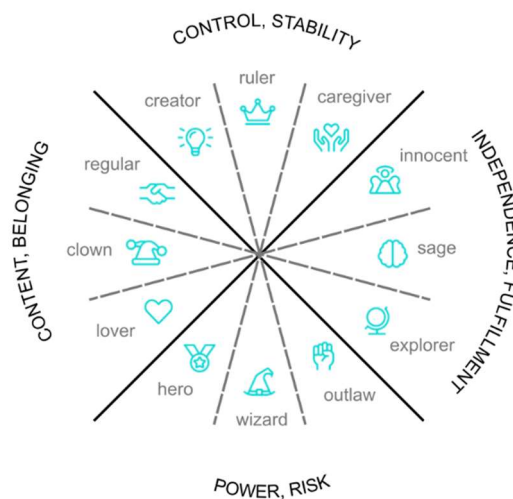
Figure 1. Axes of the four main motivations of brand archetypes



Source: Authors 'own research.

The horizontal axis is the choice between belonging to a group versus self-realization and individualism. The vertical axis is the decision between risk and change versus stability and status quo. Each of the needs is represented by three archetypes.<sup>8</sup> The division of archetypes by action motifs is given in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Archetype wheel



Source: <https://ks.pl/blog/archetypy-marki> (accessed: 18.05.2024).

There are an infinite number of Jungian archetypes because they are combinations of character traits and attitudes commonly found among people; they can combine with each other and create new ones, for example the father and mother archetypes create the parent archetype.

<sup>8</sup> <http://annakazusek.pl/archetypy-marki/> (accessed: 18.05.2024).

Nevertheless, in marketing communication, there are twelve basic archetypes. The qualities of each of them are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Characteristics of archetypes occurring in marketing**

Group	Archetype	Features	Communication	Goal	Colours related to the archetype	Examples
Stability	creator	creative, original, innovative	inspiring, visionary, original	create something significant	violet, blue, golden	LEGO, Adobe, YouTube
	ruler	authoritarian, responsible, organized	formal, serious, organized	keep order and control, remove chaos	golden, yellow, dark blue, red	Rolex, Mercedes-Benz, Microsoft
	caregiver	caring, generous, unselfish	empathic, warm, supporting	care for others, help them	white, pink, blue	Johnson & Johnson, Pampers, WWF
Risk	hero	courage, determination, power	motivating, full of energy, engaging	change the world for the better, show courage	black, metallic gray, blue, yellow	Nike, Adidas, BMW
	magician	visionary approach, mysteriousness, charismatic	inspiring, spiritual, idealistic	transform and change, create reality	red, black, violet	Apple, Disney, Nintendo
	outlaw	anarchist, independent, changing the rules	provocative, unconventional, provocative	break away from the standards, revolution, create new order	purple, dark red, black	Harley-Davidson, Virgin, Diesel
Belonging	lover	romantic, seductive, harmonious	sensual, emotional, full of feeling	inspire to love, create harmony	pink, blue, red	Chanel, Victoria's Secret, Raffaello
	jester	funny, spontaneous, playful	humorous, clear mischievous	bring joy, fun and freedom	orange, yellow	Old Spice, M&M's, Skittles
	regular guy	simple, friendly, supportive	calm, authentic, unpretentious	belong and make contacts	brown, beige, green	IKEA, Allegro, eBay
Independence	innocent	young, moral, pure	optimistic, inclusive, honest	strive to be good, loyalty, security	white, pastel colors, yellow	Dove, Coca-Cola, Nestlé
	sage	analytical, objective, prudent	specialist, informative, advisory	search for truth, gather knowledge understand the world	blue, white, grey	Google, Encyklopedia Britannica, BBC
	explorer	independent, brave, curious about the world	enthusiastic, energetic, encouraging to adventure	discover the new, adventures, freedom in individualism	green, brown, blue	Jeep, National Geographic, The North Face

Source: Authors' own research based on: M. Mark, C.S. Pearson, *The Hero and The Outlaw*, McGraw-Hill Education, Europe 2001, pp. 49-244 <https://agencjakuznia.pl/12-archetypow-marki-czym-jest-archetyp-marki-przyklady/> (accessed 18.05.2024).

Each archetype appearing in marketing communication has particular features which, when adequately applied, lead to the development of a coherent and reliable brand image. Moreover, they support brand positioning on the market and improve communication with consumers.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> <https://ks.pl/blog/archetypy-marki> (accessed: 18.05.2024).

## 2. Application of archetypes in marketing

The development of a brand image is a long-term process. The way consumers perceive a brand is influenced by numerous factors. They include the name, logo, colors, and language used in communication, slogans, and the appearance of people in product advertisements. Skillful matching of these elements makes the consumer identify with a given brand, its products, values, and communication. In principle, archetypes are a "bridge" that connects consumer motivations with what the brand offers them. In many cases, brands decide to apply one of the twelve basic archetypes used in marketing communication, considering the characteristics of the product, its physical features and the values conveyed to the target group by the brand.<sup>10</sup>

Brand archetypes are mainly used to create the character of the brand and its individual voice on the market. They gain these features by cyclically repeating information that contains the elements of a particular archetype. Effective assimilation in the consumer's unconscious, conscious and sometimes even superconscious<sup>11</sup> of particular characteristics of a product or service that are based on the archetype chosen by the brand, can consistently attach the recipient to the brand or strengthen the brand's position on the market. This effect is due to the anchoring of consistent message elements in the human mind, which is programmed to absorb all kinds of stories.<sup>12</sup>

Archetypes help personify a brand. Every archetype has its own set of personality traits, values, and meanings creating images and relationships. These traits and values refer to human fundamental needs and motivations. Brand archetypes are an effective and practical tool to create brand personality as they are a library of universal patterns, behaviors, and attitudes that the brand shapes and develops. They are not only the path that determines the directions of the brand activities but also help create a message and indicate the tone and language of communication that the brand uses in internal and external communication. Each of the archetypes in the marketing strategy uses different key words, narrative tone of communication and it formulates sentences in different ways.<sup>13</sup>

Choosing a particular brand archetype is an important decision that helps define the target group and, above all, determine the style and method of communication. Common mistakes that are made when using archetypes in brand strategy should be mentioned here. One of them

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<sup>10</sup> <https://marczak.me/archetyp-marki/> (accessed: 18.05.2024).

<sup>11</sup> Z. Freud, *Poza zasadą przyjemności*, PWN, Warszawa 1975, p. 91.

<sup>12</sup> <https://marczak.me/archetyp-marki/> (accessed: 18.05.2024).

<sup>13</sup> <http://annakazusek.pl/archetypy-marki/> (accessed: 18.05.2024).

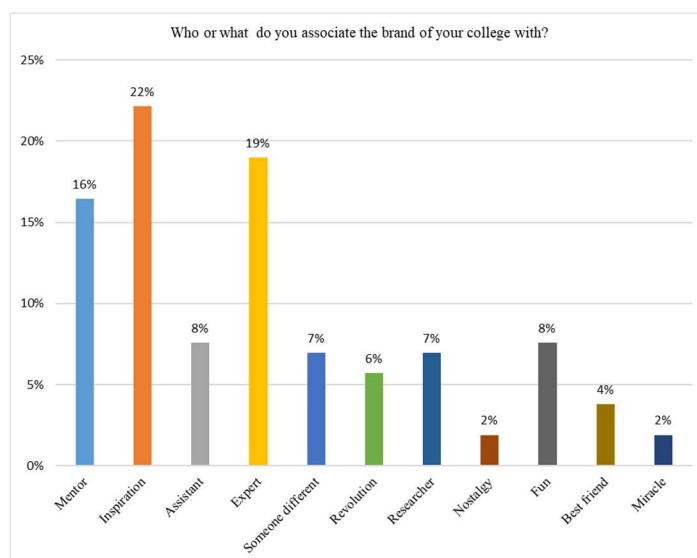
is the constant change of the nature of the archetype, which mixes different communication options. Such changes lead to the change of the entire strategy of presenting the company, which may cause difficulties in reception. Another mistake is the false assumption that consumers have the same brand knowledge as people within the organization. The choice of a specific brand archetype and the method of its communication with the consumer must be consistent and, above all, give answers to the questions: *What is the brand like?* and *What is characteristic about the specific brand*<sup>14</sup>

### 3. Methodology and results of the research

The aim of the research was to assign an archetype to The School of Banking and Management in Krakow. The research material was collected by means of a survey conducted on a group of 158 respondents who were closely related to the college. The questionnaire consisted of 8 questions in which each answer constituted an element belonging to a particular archetype.

The respondents were asked with whom or what they associate the WSZiB brand. The most frequent answer was *inspiration* (22%), in second place was *expert* (19% of respondents). The WSZiB brand was least often associated with a *miracle* and *nostalgia* (2%), (see Graph 1.).

**Graph 1. Respondents' replies to the question: Who or what do you associate your college's brand with?**



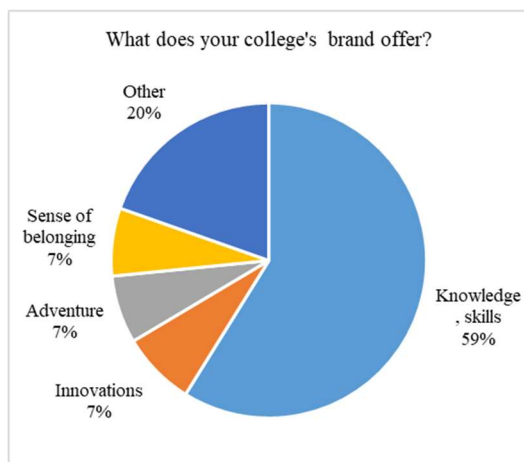
Source: Authors' own research.

<sup>14</sup> <https://marczak.me/archetyp-marki/> (accessed: 18.05.2024).

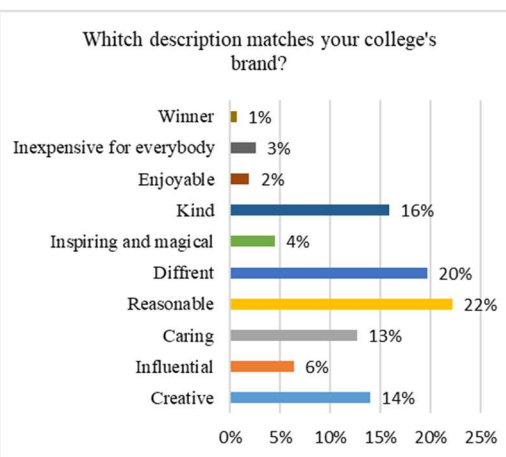
When asked what the WSZiB brand offers, the majority of respondents answered that the college offers primarily knowledge and skills (59%). None of the respondents indicated that it offers intimacy (see Graph 2.).

When asked what term best describes the WSZiB brand, most respondents indicated that it is *reasonable* (22%) but many also indicated that it is *diverse* (20%). The least frequent answer was that it is a *winner* (1%) and none of the respondents described it as *passionate* and *loving* (Graph 3.).

**Graph 1. Respondents' replies to the question:**  
*What does your college's brand offer?*



**Graph 3. Respondents' replies to the question:**  
*Which description matches your college's brand?*



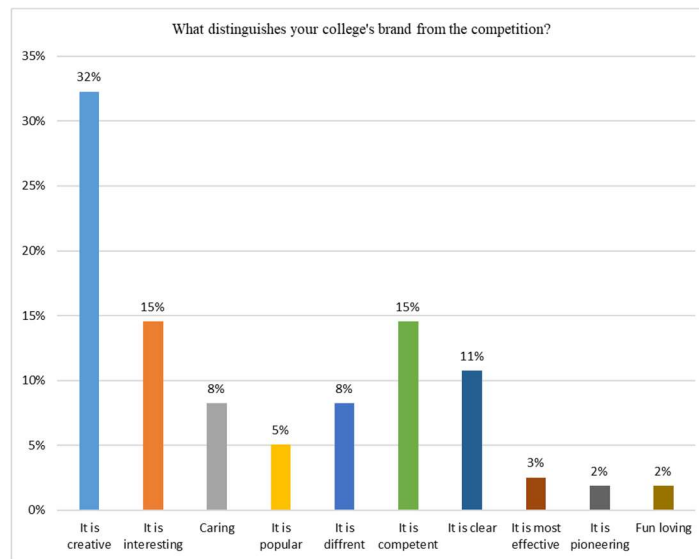
Source: Authors' own research.

In questions where there was a choice between two replies, the respondents indicated that the college is closer to social values (59%) than personal values and it is characterized by stability and predictability (75%) rather than passion and risk.

When asked what color the respondents associate most with the WSZiB brand, a vast majority indicated blue (85%), most likely due to the color of the WSZiB logo.

It is interesting to note, that despite the fact that when asked about the description of the WSZiB brand, only 14% of respondents indicated that the college is creative, most respondents, when asked what distinguishes the WSZiB brand from its competitors, answered that the brand of their college is creative (34%). On the other hand, only 2% of respondents answered that WSZiB is a pioneer and the same number indicated that it loves fun (see Graph 4.).

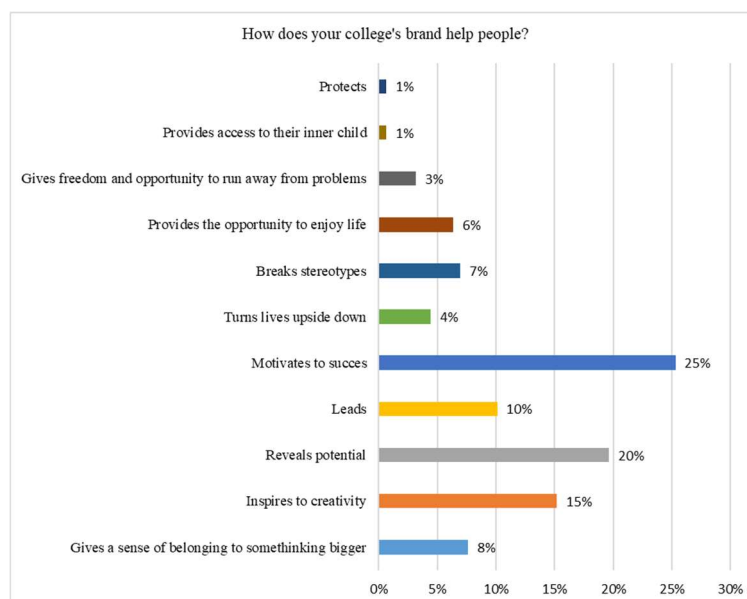
**Graph 2. Respondents' replies to the question: What distinguishes your college's brand from the competition?**



Source: Authors' own research.

Finally, the respondents were asked how WSZiB helps people. The most common answer was that the WSZiB brand motivates to success (27%) and reveals potential (20%). Only 1% of respondents indicated that the brand protects and the same number indicated that it gives them access to their inner child (see Graph 5).

**Graph 5. Respondents' replies to the question: How does your college's brand help people?**



Source: Authors' own research.



After comparing the answers most frequently selected by respondents, i.e., assessing the college's brand as inspiring and being creative as a feature distinctive from other brands, it turned out that according to the majority of respondents, the WSZiB brand has features and communication style that most closely correspond to the Creator archetype. However, it is also worth comparing with other answers that were frequently indicated. When comparing such answers, it turned out that the Sage can also be the archetype of WSZiB.

Only by comparing these two personalities, it can be presumed what the more detailed archetype of the WSZiB brand is. The college adopts the archetype of the Sage, which is associated with the aspects of acquiring knowledge and the attitude of a specialist, as well as with creating its communication as a respected institution. However, the brand's marketing communication is dominated by features that distinguish it from the competition, which increases the share of the Creator archetype in the analyzed case. These features are related to creativity and originality, and the college's narrative seems to be inspiring.

## **Conclusions**

The main task of an archetype is to reflect the character of the brand. It must match the idea that the brand wants to convey to consumers. Is it the Hero like Nike, whose worldwide slogan *Just do it* encourages people to take risks, and its communication conveys values of power and perseverance and inspires achievements and overcoming challenges or is it the Magician like Disney+, which creates a sense of wonder and fulfils the dreams of its consumers through the magic in the content of its services or the graphic design.

Therefore, it can be said that a strong and recognizable brand is a brand with an archetype. Archetypes, due to the advantages they bring, can be a useful tool to build brand identity. They make the brand easier to imagine by recipients as well as people within the organization during the brand creation process. They help develop brand strategy. They suggest what the brand should look like, communicate, and behave.

This work suggests the possibility of brand archetypes to interpenetrate and interfuse with one another in marketing communication. The aim of the article is to draw the reader's attention to the possibility or even necessity of treating the twelve segments of the archetype wheel not as separate parts, but as a specific spectrum that helps both in the creation of a communication strategy and also in its subsequent analysis.

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## Abstract

The aim of the article is to introduce issues related to brand archetypes and discuss their use in marketing. The issues were based on the general theory of archetypes by Carl Gustaf Jung from the early 20th century.

The article also presents the results of the authors' own research on the brand archetypes of the School of Banking and Management in Krakow. The quantitative research examined how respondents perceive the college's brand as internal recipients, which allowed for matching the appropriate brand archetype to the college by interpreting the respondents' responses.

## Key words

Brand archetypes, marketing, brand marketing, brand, psychology in marketing.