BRANDING THE NATION

The Global Business of National Identity

MELISSA ARONCZYK

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"What sort of a country is this," said the one to the other, "that is unknown to all the world, and in which Nature has everywhere so different an appearance to what she has in ours? Possibly this is that part of the globe where everything is right, for there must certainly be some such place."

—Voltaire, *Candide*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Depending on how you look at it, this book has taken me ten years, fifteen years, or my entire lifetime to write.

Ten years ago, I met the three people who initially helped me conceive this project and who first gave me the confidence and conviction to write about it: Craig Calhoun, Richard Sennett, and Aurora Wallace. Aurora has represented that figure that every writer needs: a true believer and fan since the very beginning. Her friendship and support, both intellectual and emotional, have been limitless. Richard Sennett has been a great inspiration to many. I am not the first to recognize his uncanny ability to put his finger on the pulse of a social and cultural issue of as-yet unrecognized importance, then to write profoundly about it just as the rest of us are waking to its centrality. His imaginative and provocative style has provided an overture for many generative conversations. Beyond his "day job" as sociologist, Richard's musical passions provided a different kind of inspiration, rekindling my interest in the musical studies I thought I had left behind. Craig Calhoun, as anyone who has encountered him knows, is simply an exceptional individual. It is not merely his seeming ability to be in all places at all times, nor even his encyclopedic habits of mind and troves of insight, but also his innate generosity of time and spirit and his commitment to people far beyond the scope of their projects. I could not be more fortunate, nor could I wield enough superlatives, to acknowledge such mentors.

Fifteen years ago, I began what I thought would be a long career in advertising. In high school I devoured books like David Ogilvy's *Ogilvy on Advertising*, Wally Olins's *The Corporate Personality*, and James Webb Young's *How to Become an Advertising Man* as I pictured my fabulous life in the promotional industries. A few years later, I got my big chance, landing a job in a Montreal ad agency. To those who taught me the craft and the concepts, and who let me find my own interpretation of what it meant to be "creative," I am immensely grateful: Yves Desharnais, Gilles DuSablon, Jennifer Goddard, Marc-André Rivard, and especially Sophie Massé. I hope they know that devoting my career to critical research and writing about promotion

instead of doing it from the trenches is not a slight but in fact a tribute to their work and to my ongoing fascination with this magical and troubling world.

Long before my entrée into advertising, I wanted to be a writer. But I especially wanted to be a writer who had something to say. It is in this sense that I see the trajectory of my life as leading up to this book. And it is in this regard that no number of pages would contain the acknowledgments I would need to make to recognize and honor all the people who helped me get here. A necessarily abridged list follows.

During my time at New York University, many scholars provided wise counsel at critical moments. Stephen Duncombe, Ted Magder, Sue Murray, Marita Sturken, Mildred Schwartz, and Helga Tawil-Souri all offered valuable research and writing perspectives. The NYLON Culture and Politics workshop at NYU gave me that all-important combination of support, critique, and friendship that (as I now stress to my own graduate students) is critical to balance the solitary stages of academic research. Special thanks are owed to Claudio Benzecry, Ashley Mears, Erin O'Connor, and Marion Wrenn, who provided extra help at key moments. Thanks, too, to Noah McClain for the idea for the book cover.

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Introduction

THERE MUST CERTAINLY BE SOME SUCH PLACE

In July 2011, two months after Syrian president Bashar al-Assad sent tanks into urban centers to crack down on demonstrators against his regime, but before the country's descent into sectarian violence, a series of billboards appeared across the city of Damascus. Each billboard featured a brightly colored outline of an upraised hand against a white background, accompanied by the words "I'm for Syria" in Arabic. The billboards were the brainchild of Ammar Alani and Rami Omran, Syrian advertisers who had shelled out four thousand dollars to pay for them. In many ways the project was just like the branding campaigns they usually worked on for products such as cereal or home mortgages. "The only difference now is that the customer, if you like, is society. The brand is Syria and it needs promoting," they said in an interview with the American media organization National Public Radio.[1] The campaign was meant to bring Syrians together, to promote democratic debate and civic engagement, to counter the polarizing effects of the political situation, and to encourage regime and revolutionaries alike to think differently about what it meant to be Syrian.

About a year earlier, and about three thousand miles due north, Iceland's government launched a media campaign called Inspired by Iceland.[2] Developed by the branding consultancy The Brooklyn Brothers, this campaign was cast as a desperate attempt to improve the country's image in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, when it came to light that Icelanders had accumulated debts worth 850 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP).[3] Using Icelanders as the "stars" of the campaign was seen as a way to raise domestic spirits.[4] It also helped the campaign's goal: to attract more positive international attention by focusing on the country's quirky culture rather than its financial and political reforms.[5] In one video, viewed

thousands of times on YouTube and Vimeo, the tiny nation's white-haired president, Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, invites viewers to visit his home so that he and his wife Dorrit can "give you delicious pancakes with cream and sugar, a traditional Icelandic delicacy." Similar invitations follow from the mayor of Reykjavik, who stands awkwardly with his fingers clasped in front of him proffering Icelandic sushi, and from the federal minister of industry, energy, and tourism, who appears in the video sitting on wet rocks at the edge of the sea, encouraging viewers to join her for a foot bath in a geothermic pool at Seltjarnarnes.[6]

On the other side of the globe, as the first waves of the financial crisis roiled news headlines, a seventy-two-page report entitled "Positioning Mauritius in the World" landed on the desks of the Brand Mauritius steering committee. The wealthy African country, dubbed the "Mauritian Miracle" by the World Bank for its open trade policies, low barriers to international investment, and political stability, would largely escape the effects of the economic meltdown.[7] The report—a glossy book filled with photographs of flowers, beaches, mountains, and trees—outlined the rationale and strategy for the Mauritian brand identity. Despite the country's status as a center for international banking and finance; its well-developed infrastructure befitting a premier luxury tourism destination; and a history of consensus-making among diverse cultural, business, and political interests, the report cautioned against complacency:

> We live in a highly competitive world which means we need to fight harder for visitors, investment and business opportunities. We have to stand out and play to our strengths. We must not lose sight of what makes Mauritius authentic and unique. We must be clear about who and what we are. Developing a country brand strategy and identity for Mauritius touches every one of us. We all have an important role to play in the economic, social and cultural success of our nation. This book has been produced to help everyone in Mauritius understand what makes it so special and how we can use that knowledge to our advantage. By concentrating on our particular qualities, we will give ourselves an advantage in this highly competitive world. We will stand out—improving our image and helping our economy whilst retaining our essential character.[8]

These three countries—Syria, Iceland, and Mauritius—span three continents and as many different polities, histories, and cultural realities. They are united by their commitment to success amid the common pressures and possibilities of a globalized and competitive world, and by their apparent desire to be recognized and valued in this world under the sign of the brand. These countries are not alone. In the last ten years, national governments

of at least forty countries around the world have sought the expert counsel of international consultants and strategists to help them brand their jurisdiction.[9] Using the tools, techniques, and expertise of commercial branding is seen as a way to help a nation articulate a more coherent and cohesive national identity, to animate the spirit of its citizens in the service of national priorities, and to maintain loyalty to the territory within its borders. In short, the goal of nation branding is to make the nation *matter* in a world where borders and boundaries appear increasingly obsolete. But what, exactly, is a brand? How did branding become the favored genre, technique, and value form of national collective identity-making? And with what consequences for our understanding and experience of national belonging?

This book is about how nation branding became a worldwide phenomenon and a professional transnational practice. But it is about much more than this. It is about how nation branding has become a solution to perceived contemporary problems affecting the space of the nation-state: problems of economic development, democratic communication, and especially national visibility and legitimacy amid the multiple global flows of late modernity. In this book I chart the political, cultural, and economic rationales by which the nation has been made to matter in a twenty-first-century context of global integration.

Although I use recent examples throughout the book to illustrate the contemporary impact of the phenomenon, the story of its emergence spans a longer time frame. The seeds of nation branding sprout shortly after the Second World War, when corporate and state leaders begin to think about the space of the nation as a valuable resource in the growing competition for global investment, trade, and tourism. Seen as resources—that is, as potential sources of economic value—national culture and territory gradually become thought of as marketable and monetizable entities.[10] Like other profitable assets, these entities need to be managed. Unlike other kinds of resources, however, national culture and territorial attachments (both symbolic and material) require a particular kind of knowledge and a particular set of tactics in order to be managed on terms acceptable to their stakeholders. *Branding the Nation* examines these shifts of knowledge and practice, providing a portrait of the ways that national self-understanding has been reoriented by the experts and expertise of corporate brand strategy.

It would be possible to start the prehistory of nation branding even earlier. We could see the phenomenon as rooted in the long-standing relationship between the nation-state and the corporation, the two dominant social institutions of the last three centuries. The economics of loyalty produced between national governments and the major international trading companies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—such as the East

India Company, the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Russia Company—made both national and commercial activity integral to the making of patriotic sentiment.[11] Another piece of nation branding's prehistory could be located in late nineteenth-century forms of national display. World fairs and international exhibitions drew massive crowds to witness the staging of national culture. Through artistic renderings, buildings, performances, and other material and symbolic representations, visitors could experience the nation at once as a bounded collection of unfamiliar goods and peoples and as one among many similar units in a system of international classification.[12]

I recognize the relevance of these legacies to the contemporary context. Yet there remain aspects of the current phenomenon of nation branding that are qualitatively different from these earlier forms of national imagining and need to be addressed as such. Nation branding represents a transformation of business in the articulation of national identity. Attending to this transformation is necessary to understand what role the nation has come to occupy in our time. The primary argument in this book is that nation branding reveals how the social, political, and cultural discourse constitutive of the nation has been harnessed in new ways, with important consequences for both our concept of the nation and our ideals of national citizenship.

When I began the research for this book in 2003, public presentations of my work were met with considerable astonishment. The notion that anyone would dedicate time and effort to "brand" a nation was immediately interpreted as either laughable and impossible, or manipulative and propagandistic. In all cases, "nation branding" was dismissed; it was hardly to be taken seriously as a political or economic phenomenon, let alone a matter for sociological investigation. Less than ten years later, the idea that individuals, organizations, institutions, and even territorial places can have a "brand"—and indeed should devote a large part of their time and resources toward developing and managing that brand—is a commonplace assumption in both academic literature and mainstream accounts.[13] The ways in which branding has exceeded its original home in business and corporate management is part of the story I tell here; in the normalization of its usage we can also see the normalization of the values and assumptions associated with it.

In researching and writing this book, I interviewed many different groups of people who were all engaged at some level in determining whether and how to brand their jurisdiction: government representatives and bureaucrats, corporate executives and communication strategists, journalists, policymakers, and academics.[14] I interviewed nearly one hundred people

and collected thousands of pages of documents detailing the results of their work: trade and development plans, corporate and national investment reports, national vision statements, news and feature stories in the mainstream press, policy papers, brand books, conference proceedings, promotional resources, and advertising campaign briefs. From this material I developed a portrait of the field and an analysis of branding efforts in twelve countries: Botswana, Canada, Chile, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Jamaica, Libya, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and Uganda.

Throughout this process, I observed shifts in resource allocation within public institutions, modifications to cultural policy, and most tellingly, new ways of thinking and talking about what the nation was *for* in the contemporary era. What became clear to me was that those who determine what constitutes legitimate culture and national identity have changed dramatically. The knowledge identified as vital to maintain the nation now comes not from national governments, not from historical or social legacies, and not from civic sources of leadership, but from branding and marketing experts. These experts' particular expertise, tools and techniques apparently give them the license to determine what values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs are superior to others, and allow them to see their role as one of helping their national clients adopt these superior frames and shed unfavorable ones. Part of my story is about these new cultural experts and how their ideas have become so dominant.

There is a second component to my story, however, that appears as a kind of counterpart to the first. Nation branding also maintains and perpetuates the nation as a container of distinct identities and loyalties, and as a project for sovereignty and self-determination. Because this second component appears so antithetical to the first, it is worth taking the time to tell another narrative of how this project came to be.

BACKGROUND

The real story behind this book began a little over ten years ago, when the Montreal office of the international advertising agency McCann Erickson was hired by the government of Quebec to create a tourism campaign for the American market. As the "creative" assigned to develop the campaign, my job was to help the provincial government tourism board convince American travelers to spend their then-valuable vacation dollars in Quebec.[15] Along with the usual information detailing budget, media buy, and deadlines, the client's brief contained a curious injunction: *Do not refer to Canada*. Throughout the campaign—whether in radio spots and TV commercials or

Figure 0.1:
A view along Saint-Paul Street, Montreal, 2000. According to the Ministry of Tourism, this photograph had to be modified before it could be used in the tourism campaign. Photographer: Linda Turgeon.
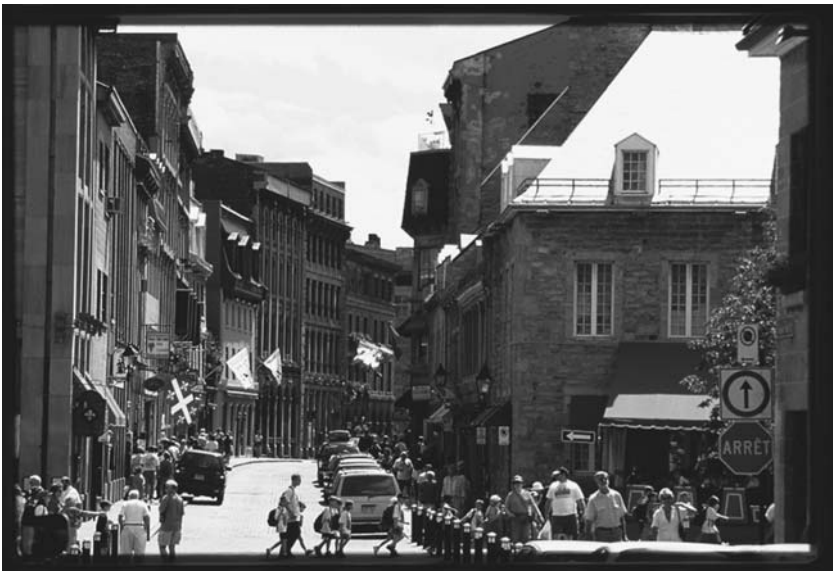
Figure 0.2:
The photograph after modification. The Canadian flag in the image has been replaced by the provincial flag of Quebec.

on websites, print ads, and billboards—we were not permitted to use the word *Canada*. Indeed, this edict was not limited to the use of the word itself but extended to all symbols for which Canada was the referent, a restriction that quickly devolved into moments of profound parody as we found ourselves airbrushing red maple leaves out of trees in photographs of nature scenes and digitally removing tiny Canadian flags waved by bystanders in street scenes of crowds at a festival. One final instruction from the tourism board made the terms of this project clear. Rather than refer to Quebec as a province, we were to call Quebec a "land," a "territory," or—most tellingly—a "nation."

The tourism office's explanation for such injunctions had been straightforward. As a form of government communication, the message had to toe the line of its political mandate. The nationalist Parti Québécois was the party in power. Given its ideological stance toward its federal parent, Canadian symbology in Quebec's landscape was out of the question. Despite this official explanation, however, I was deeply puzzled by the logic behind it. What was the point of going to such lengths to promote this powerful vision of alterity, if no one within Canada was expected to see it? It was a semiotic gesture stripped twice of its political connotations: first, by the now-invisible digital manipulations of image and text, and second, by the foreign context of its reception, since the subtleties of such transformations would likely be lost on a non-Canadian audience.

A second, related question: Why use tourism as a vehicle for collective identity-making? If I had learned anything as a copywriter, it was that tourism narratives were more of a literary genre than a factual one, taken seriously only by those who actually entertained a notion of traveling to the place being advertised; and even then it seemed patently obvious that the range of experiences presented did not correspond to the lived realities of any particular place but rather to a common set of categories that, according to extensive market research, attracted the most tourism dollars. Shopping, fine dining, heritage sites, festivals, resorts and hotels, never-completely-off-the-beaten-track adventures: these are the commodities and spectacles that form the bread and butter of most countries' tourism revenue.

A third question, one that would eventually form the backbone of this study: "Why advertising?" What was to be gained from expressing the symbolic forms and specific content of national will through a medium of communication that most of us take great pains to consciously avoid or, when we cannot avoid it, are generally skeptical of? Though I enjoyed my work and devoted considerable time and effort to its craft, I strongly suspected that no one would afford tourism ads the same degree of scrutiny and

contemplation that I had applied in conceiving them. Yet the owners of the campaign, the government ministry responsible for its budget and production, clearly did. Indeed, their actions suggested considerable investment in the campaign's rhetorical and visual strategies.

These questions formed the seeds of my research at New York University, and they pursued me as I traveled from New York to Washington, DC, to Ottawa, to London, to Berlin, to Warsaw, and beyond, into an ongoing series of conversations with proponents, practitioners, and critics of the emerging field of nation branding. In each place and with each conversation, I came to understand the reasoning behind the phenomenon, the problems it was designed to solve, and the terms of its success or failure. Many of the people I spoke with will likely disagree with the portraits I provide here. While there was some consensus as to the goals and methods of the practice, my respondents were deeply divided as to its conceptual scope, institutional reach, and overall effectiveness. For me these divides speak to the particular object of their attention, the national form, and their implicit yet strongly held beliefs about what the nation represents in the individual and collective vernacular. It was a challenge for many to explain what the nation is and does for us as members of such a collective. In my view, it is in this very struggle that the nation is continually constituted as a form of identification, a symbol for loyalty and belonging, and a container of rights and responsibilities. My interviews are therefore not merely sources of information but sites of analysis and examination, dynamic instances of the national imaginary at work in both formal settings and in our everyday lives.

CONCEPTUAL BOUNDARIES

As I note above, the concept of the brand has escaped its corporate origins and now stands for an indeterminate range of political and cultural meanings. While its expansion as metaphor and metric can be taken as a clue to current patterns of thinking about identity, space, and value, it also serves to blunt the term's force as an independent variable and to mask its different roles in multiple distinct processes. Since one of the tasks of this book is to make visible the mechanisms of this expansiveness, I owe it to the reader to be clear about the boundaries I have erected in order to frame this study.

First, nation branding takes its cues from—but is not the same as—product branding. Many critics of the phenomenon have taken issue with it on this basis, arguing that its actors slap a logo and slogan on national

symbols and institutions and market them as one would a bar of soap, turning bases of national recognition into essentialized and homogenized commodity goods.[16] While there is undoubtedly some of this at play, to rest with an interpretation of this phenomenon as the commodification of the nation leaves out an account of how it is that it also, however paradoxically, maintains and perpetuates the nation as container of distinct identities and loyalties, and as project for sovereignty and self-determination.

This perspective emerged during the early stages of my research, when interviews with brand managers and business leaders revealed that the explanations offered for the social value of brands—such as community, authenticity, distinction, and recognition—were aligned with those often used to justify nationalist goals. Both national elites and business elites express their objectives in terms of ongoing attempts to mobilize diverse peoples with diverse backgrounds into collective units in order to foster material and symbolic loyalties. More strikingly still, they use similar tropes, frames, and assumptions to do so. One of the tasks of this book is to explain how and why this syncretism of perspectives emerged. Of course, I am not suggesting that the social cohesion of brand users is the same as that engendered by national institutions and obligations. To paraphrase Benedict Anderson's definition of the nation, no one is willing to die for market-generated space.[17] My aim here is rather to explain how nationalism—as discourse, as project, and as form of evaluation—has been both extended and transformed by the phenomenon of nation branding. In the multiple conversations about why nation branding is adopted and what purposes it is meant to serve, the national imaginary is created and re-created beyond the profit incentive. Recognizing these threads of conversation is part of the story.

Second, I distinguish nation branding from the branding of political parties, campaigns, or politicians (what is sometimes called "leader branding"). The use of corporate strategy to make and market distinct political values, individuals, and objectives has been fascinatingly treated in at least two important sources: Eleonora Pasotti's *Political Branding in Cities* and Rachel Boynton's documentary film, *Our Brand Is Crisis*.[18] In the context of increasingly extreme image management tactics among political groups and increased corporate spending on political campaigns in the United States (brought forward by the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling), this topic deserves ongoing critical attention.[19] *Branding the Nation* focuses on a different set of loyalties. This book is about territorial attachments and the ways that these are made and remade through ideational and material means. By making use of geographically and politically disparate examples of nation branding, I highlight how enduring cultural symbols of national

identification are brought into play in ways that are not reducible to the particular self-serving objectives of a given political party or leader. Rather than revealing itself as a strategy of the political left or the political right, nation branding entails the creation of a kind of center, a cosmopolitan center that retains an image of what it means to be nationally competitive and nationally effective *for* globalization. For this reason the polemics of domestic politics are only relevant to the extent that they mirror larger and more global tendencies that are distinctly nonpartisan.[20]

A third distinction I make in this book is between nation branding and branding at other spatial scales. Perspectives on whether there is a difference between urban, regional, national, and supranational branding vary depending on the interlocutor. Place-branding consultants, in an effort to collect potential clients into their ambit, tend to argue that there is little distinction to be made. To them the process is qualitatively the same, even if the scale is not. More critical perspectives have attended to specific cases of place branding in action, bringing out elements that demonstrate affinities among branding programs at different scales without expressly articulating relationships between them.[21] Others consider the increasingly amorphous character of the boundaries dividing urban agglomerations from their national or even global settings. Neil Brenner's influential work on state-spaces exemplifies this perspective.[22] The functions of the state, in Brenner's view, are now contained within a multitude of territorial spaces, from the metropolitan to the regional. Urban spaces engage in an approach to urban policy (*Standortpolitik*, or locational policy) in which both national and local elites recognize the importance of cities as attractors for global finance capital, and pursue strategies including branding "to enhance place-specific socioeconomic assets within their territories."[23] Such theories see the role of the nation-state in global affairs mitigated as a result of increasing authority in non-national spaces.

I take a very different perspective. In this book I stubbornly insist on the preeminence of the national and its particularity in a branding framework. It is not that the nation is a better or more enlightened space. Rather, it is that the nation is still the container for rights and claims that are not yet possible at other levels of organization. In this capacity, the origins, objectives, and desired outcomes of nation branding are not the same. Nation branding is promoted as a way to resolve old antagonisms and forms of power. It reorients attention toward cultural identities as forms of distinction rather than toward political or military might. Studying nation branding as distinct from urban or regional branding helps to reveal deep-seated tensions over phenomena that are at issue in these sites specifically, such

as multicultural policy or social democracy or the conditions of citizenship. It is in studying the national that we can expose the convictions of the global in these arenas.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

Branding the Nation uses a number of devices to explore the ways and means by which nation branding is justified and applied in a wide variety of national settings. The next chapter provides theoretical ground on which to recognize nation branding as an extension of contemporary views on nationalism and national identity. It also shows how our thinking about the nation has been reorganized by distinct understandings of globalization and neoliberalization. As monolithic, business-based conceptions of globalization and neoliberalism have come to dominate public institutions and forms of governance, national identity has been mobilized as a competitive resource to narrate distinction and difference in global settings. In this context, the brand emerges as a way to manage and control this resource and create distinction and difference. To account for this rise, the chapter charts the progress of corporate brand management as it is incrementally applied to national values and identity.

Chapter two describes the political, economic, and cultural conditions through which the business of nation branding congealed. Starting with Spain's tourism efforts after the demise of its dictatorial regime and moving to contemporary efforts in Europe and the United States, the chapter explores the evolution of nation branding as a way for national leaders to rethink the contours of national identity in the context of increasing global integration and media penetration. One focus in this chapter is on the impact of postwar corporate management and organizational and marketing techniques on international diplomacy and domestic policy, from hard-power legacies to soft-power paradigms. Key to the development of this practice was the loose alliance and common orientation of what I call a transnational promotional class (TPC), a group of diverse actors devoted to maintaining the legitimacy of the national form for a range of profit-generating purposes.

Chapter three is devoted to an analysis of the particular strategies and forms of knowledge generation that members of the TPC deploy in order to do their work. This chapter presents the results of interviews conducted with nation-branding consultants, academics, and firms over a four-year period from 2007 to 2011. In some cases I interviewed consultants two or even three times, to follow up on client relations and branding exercises in

progress. I also wanted to see to what extent nation-branding consultants felt the sting of the financial crisis, and to what degree it had affected their work. This interview material is woven throughout the other chapters of the book and augmented by interviews with additional actors and inter-locutors. These actors include representatives from think tanks and re-search centers, tourism organizations, media editors, marketing profes-sors, federal and regional investment and trade commissioners, diplomatic and consular representatives, deputy ministers, and public relations man-agers. These interviews help me to show how certain assumptions about national belonging structure the decisions made over how and why to brand. That the bulk of nation-branding consultancies are based in Britain is not a coincidence; the expert knowledge and knowledge experts of these firms strongly reflect a deep-rooted and ongoing paternalism, as well as a very particular idea of the terms and conditions of "global nationalism."[24]

Chapters four and five are devoted to two extended primary case stud-ies, one in Poland and one in Canada. Each of these cases has much to teach us about what nation branding is thought to do and what it actually does. Though Poland's story is not presented here as a comparative case to that of Canada, there are nevertheless some telling parallels. Like Canada, Poland's relationship to the geopolitical centers of world power is freighted with both symbolic and political-economic implications. Both countries seek to mitigate their neighbors' power and influence while admitting the overt economic and security benefits that accrue from their relationships. Both countries also deal with issues of continental integration—Poland as a member of the European Union (since 2004), OECD (since 1996), and NATO (since 1999); and Canada as a NAFTA partner. The two countries are further connected by environmental and territorial concerns, most re-cently in land and sea claims in the Arctic Circle.[25] These cases serve as em-pirical reminders that the strategic discourses of globalization and neolib-eralism are never as monolithic as they are sometimes made to appear.

In Canada, the specter of globalization casts a long shadow over the con-ditions of recognition of the nation and the state. What Charles Taylor refers to as the "unstable and constantly evolving amalgamation that we call Canada" is characterized by ongoing and unresolved tension over issues of identity and citizenship in the national discourse.[26] This tension is a re-current feature of policy debates that seek to establish a working definition of culture to incorporate divergent ideas and ideals of what it means to be Canadian. International relations scholar Jennifer Welsh calls Canada a "model citizen" for the rest of the world, a successful liberal democracy with the responsibility to represent its distinctiveness on the global stage. "Even if we haven't always been able to articulate who we are," Welsh

explains, "we have prided ourselves on being able to articulate what we believe in."[27] Yet this continued inability to articulate "who we are" underlines the contingency of Canadian identity. The efforts to brand Canada render cultural contingency into liability, as various actors compete to redefine Canada as an investment-friendly destination. In this chapter I show how the concept of "diversity," long seen as a defining characteristic of the national state, is reframed in political discourse from an asset to a liability within the context of the drive to be competitive on the global stage.

Poland's story reflects a different set of concerns over cultural distinction. In December 2003, the Polish Ministry of Commerce, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, retained the services of a British branding firm to create a new Polish national identity on the eve of the country's accession to the European Union. Polish participants saw the creation of a "brand" identity as part of its drive toward economic, political, and cultural "normalcy" after 1989. But they also saw it as a continuation of a project begun long before: to return to their rightful place in Europe, to reclaim their history and cultural memory, to reassert their national spirit in the face of the multiple antagonisms that had plagued their centuries-long history. These mythopoetic tropes infusing Poland's national narrative were tightly bound up with the branding project, and the use of a British firm to facilitate this project would prove to be intensely problematic, as revealed by the consultants' perceptions of Poland's weaknesses and how they expected the country to overcome them.

Chapter six examines the exercises carried out under the rubric of nation branding in nine additional sites on four continents. The selection of countries is not meant to be exhaustive, but it is meant to be illustrative. It covers a range of geographical settings, political-economic systems, and cultural dimensions of identity in the spirit of demonstrating the global reach of the phenomenon. Through an examination of the visual and textual tropes brought to bear in these brands, I develop a typology that reveals the epistemic framework within which nation branding strategies are deployed. Contrary to the "level playing field" promised by global capitalism, the typology demonstrates how the logics that underpin the practice maintain and reinforce historical inequalities and reify paternalist and neocolonial assumptions.

In recent years there has been much critical and popular commentary about the increasingly central role of brands in everyday life. Some of this work has investigated how the process of branding transforms national allegiance, structures of belief, and the sense of belonging. Less attention has been paid to studying how the nation—as a discourse of *identity and*

allegiance, as a political and social project of *spatial representation*, and as a producer of *value and values*—has been altered by its conception as a brand. This book comes as a contribution to the ongoing and vital conversation about what the nation is *for* in the contemporary era, in terms of both the impact of corporate thinking on national space—on the conditions and opportunities of national citizenship—and the importance of the cultural frame for claims of diversity, security, and expression. A central aim is to show how the phenomenon of nation branding expresses the contradictions within this conversation. Nation branding maintains, extends, and promotes the nation, but the elements it reinforces place it into frameworks of insecurity and what I would characterize as misplaced isomorphism—that is, what happens when governments insist on having a brand because their neighbors do rather than because it is a good use of resources.

We must not conclude from such practices that "we need to think ourselves beyond the nation," however.[28] While I agree that it is necessary to name the crises of the nation-state, and even to conceive of postnational social forms, I maintain that these do not suppose a transcendence of the nation. Rather, such crises, alternatives, and cohabitants can serve to widen the political spaces for recognition, equality, and legitimacy, while preserving the specific dignities and protections of a distinctly national frame. I think there is a future for the nation. My hope is that the reader will find this position not to be a nostalgic one, but a statement of conviction reinforced by the evidence contained in these pages.

Nation and Brand: Keywords for the Twenty-First Century

In the vast literature on nationalism and national identity, scholars have tried to understand the complex and varied means by which nations become aware of themselves. If all forms of community are bound up with questions of identity, legitimacy, and recognition, the formation of national boundaries—and the making of national citizens within them—raises a unique set of debates. Is the nation a conscious construction, a modern exercise in social engineering devised by elites, intellectuals, and political leaders; or is it better seen as a palimpsest of older forms of social and cultural existence, which can only be uncovered through archaeological investigation and a view to the *longue durée*? Or is it something else altogether?

Though historians and social scientists continue to disagree on the origins and terms of national consciousness, they seem to have converged on the question of consciousness itself. Before the nation can exist, that is, it has to be imagined. And insofar as it does exist, it is one of the central forms of imagining of our age. Despite repeated calls and many plausible reasons for its demise, the nation remains a dominant form of political, economic, and cultural organization.

This book investigates a particular form of national consciousness that has emerged in recent years, one that tells us a great deal about the perceived function of the nation in a twenty-first-century context. This form is called nation branding, the creation and communication of national identity using tools, techniques, and expertise from the world of corporate brand management. With its attendant congeries of self-styled nation branding consultants; quasi-academic journals, textbooks, and conferences; and proprietary methods to measure, rank, and market its effectiveness, this phenomenon has grown from a curiosity to a perceived necessity in

countries throughout the world.[1] Its rationales and strategies have been adopted in countries with emerging market economies and established capitalist economies alike, and with vastly different geopolitical and historical legacies: in these pages I provide portraits of branding efforts in Botswana, Canada, Chile, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Jamaica, Libya, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and Uganda.

Nation branding can be provisionally defined as the result of the interpenetration of commercial and public sector interests to communicate national priorities among domestic and international populations for a variety of interrelated purposes. At one level, it is a conscious strategy of capital (re)generation, combining public and private sector resources to generate fiscal advantage. As such, its aim is to help the nation-state successfully compete for international capital in areas such as tourism, foreign direct investment, import–export trade, higher education, and skilled labor.

A second dimension of the practice is to convey an image of legitimacy and authority in diplomatic arenas, to earn state leaders and other national elites a seat at the table in multilateral decisions or membership in transnational institutions or organizations. In this capacity, it can be used for both proactive and reactive purposes: to repair reputations damaged by political and economic legacies, to dodge unfavorable international attention in the aftermath of unpopular domestic decisions, or to control and manage impressions in the context of unforeseen or uncontrollable events.

Third, the phenomenon serves a recursive function. By modeling national distinctions internationally, national leaders hope to generate positive foreign public opinion that will "boomerang" back home, fostering both domestic consensus or approbation of their actions as well as pride and patriotism within the nation's borders.[2] This helps to explain another appeal of this process: its professed ability to render the stakes and claims of nationalism less antagonistic or chauvinistic than its previous incarnations.[3] Nation branding is defined as a form of "soft" power, in contrast to the "hard" power of military or economic assets. Softer than sticks, less coercive than carrots, the public articulation by national leaders of a conscious strategy that draws on their jurisdiction's territorial, cultural, and commercial specificity promises to yield greater results than the narrower conception of traditional power resources.[4] Such a strategy also appeals to statecrafters as better suited to the "public" or "popular" diplomacy requirements of nation-states in the contemporary context. The unprecedented expansion and decentralization of information systems means that national interests are now broadcast to audiences at large, complicating or overriding the narrowcasting of traditional state-to-state diplomacy.[5] In its

ability to marry tropes of heritage and modernization, domestic and for-eign concerns, and market and moral ideologies in the projection of na-tional identity, a nation's brand is meant to offer a version of nationalism rooted in the unifying spirit of benign commercial "interests" rather than in the potential divisions of political "passions."[6]

As a communications strategy, nation branding promises to generate in-ternational awareness of a national client, using proven marketing tech-niques to break through the clutter of a saturated and fragmented global media environment. To carry influence or curry favor, national representa-tives must find a way to make their jurisdiction visible in the competitive attention economy of media consumption. Nation branding conveys to the world that the nation is not only visible but also well regarded in interna-tional circles. Moreover, as an intensely visual practice, the nation's brand image itself—its logos, slogans, typefaces, and symbols—is well suited to the global vernacular of modern media. It is the quintessential national shorthand for today's hyberbolic global information context.

But what actually *happens* to the nation when it is reconfigured as a brand? What happens to the form and content of national identity when policy centers and world summits hold round-table discussions on how to brand and market countries of the Middle East, Africa, and Europe? When Chile's president inaugurates a public–private foundation to coordinate the activities of the country's public institutions, on the paid advice of a brand-ing consultant? Or when Germany shifts its image from a federation of Länder to the Land of Ideas, its flag hanging not in front of parliament but over the shapely figure of Claudia Schiffer?

This book offers a detailed examination of the role of nation branding in the representation of national identity. If the phenomenon lies at the inter-section of politics, the economy, and culture, the task at hand is to identify *what kind of politics* and *what kind of economy*, for *what kind of culture*? What is the constellation of conditions that have fostered the growth of nation branding as a viable political, economic, and cultural strategy?

The most central, and determining, condition is that of globalization. I am referring less to processes of globalization as causal agents of national change than to the power of globalization as a set of ideas and discourses used to justify national change. I treat globalization as a "leading element," in Raymond Williams' sense of an organizing principle used to describe and interpret society, through which all other activity is determined. A nuanced understanding of globalization requires us to investigate not only the impact of material realities on policy and social structure but also the ways in which *ideas* of globalization become institutionalized and normalized, since policymakers and governments enact decisions informed equally by

Figure 1.1:
Land of Ideas nation-branding campaign for Germany. Posters on display at Grand Central Station, New York City, July 2006. Source: Land of Ideas. Photographer of the original images: Peter Lindbergh.

Figure 1.2:
Consultants at the May 2006 World Economic Forum on the Middle East in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, explain the concept of "Rebranding the Middle East" to participants. Top: David Brain, President and CEO of Edelman (UK), the largest public relations firm in the world. Bottom: Farid Chehab, Chairman and COO of the advertising agency Leo Burnett for the Middle East region. Source: The World Economic Forum.
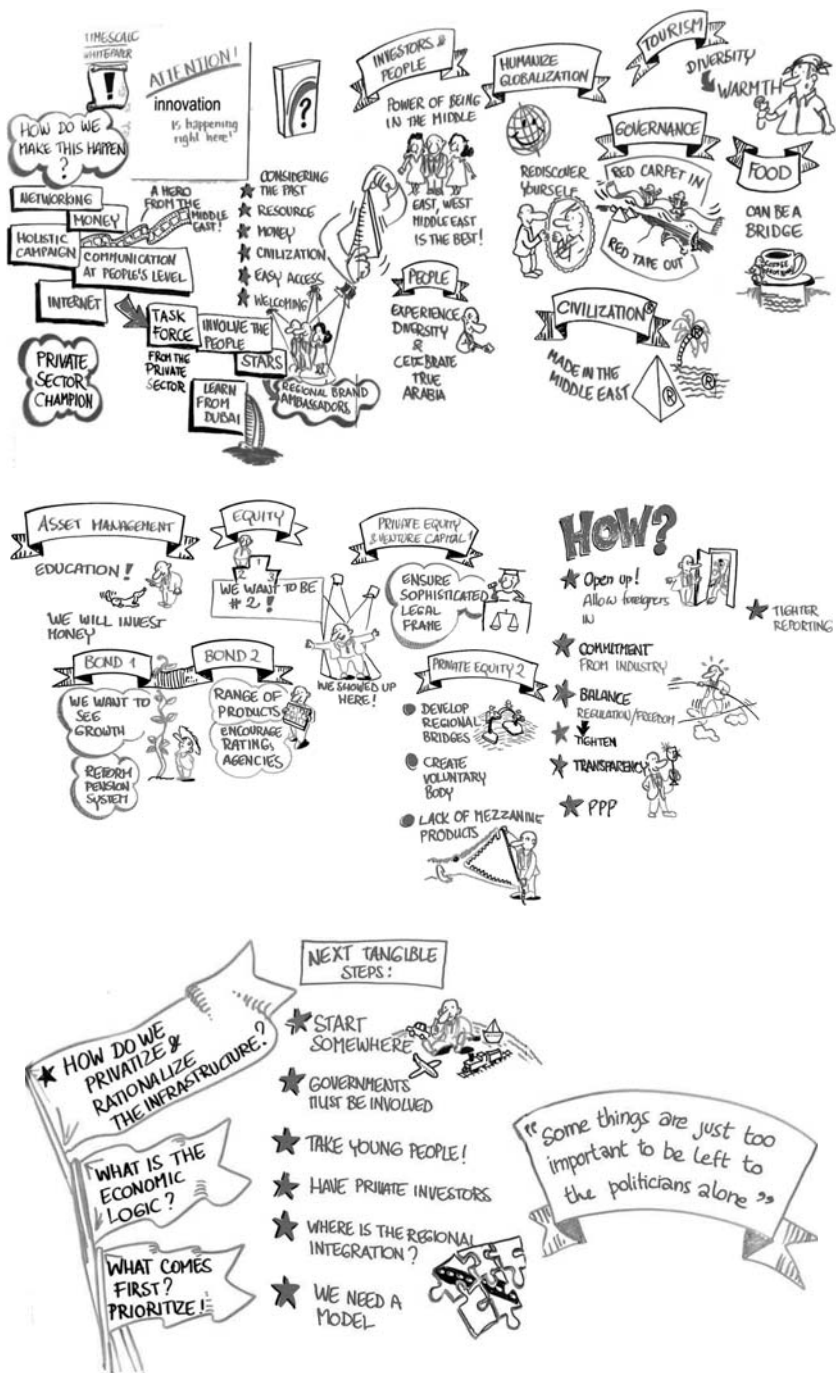
Figure 1.3:
"Hypertiles," graphic summaries of the discussion at the "Rebranding the Middle East" session of the World Economic Forum. Source: The World Economic Forum.

Figure 1.4:
Nation-branding advisor Simon Anholt with Chile's former president Michelle Bachelet. Courtesy of Simon Anholt.

empirical and ideational factors.[7] I follow Colin Hay and Ben Rosamond in the belief that "to identify discourses of globalization is . . . to point to the existence of structured sets of ideas, often in the form of implicit and sedimented assumptions, upon which actors might draw in formulating strategy and, indeed, in legitimating strategy pursued for quite distinct ends."[8]

As a flexible idiom with a variety of shorthands, globalization is wielded by a wide range of actors, appealed to by turns as threat or opportunity, and almost always presented as imperative, endemic, and inexorable. It is rarely something that anyone has directly caused; rather it is seen as exogenous to the party and therefore beyond direct control, except by providing justification for reactive measures. Globalization has come to be constructed, not as an "essentially contested term" with indeterminate and contingent

outcomes through time and space, but as a monolithic shadow cast over all sites and futures.[9] This shadow is made up of a single-minded vision of international participation and exchange, one which privileges elite agency, isomorphic infrastructural design of both economies and polities, and metrological (as opposed to cultural/historical) forms of knowledge.

In the realm of national governance, the leading element of globalization is especially apparent. Nation branding is a well-timed expression of what Leslie Sklair calls "global nationalism"—the conviction by national governments that the future of the nation consists of finding a "lucrative role" to play within a globally integrated economic system. Under the rubric of global nationalism, national identity is acknowledged more in terms of its fitness for capital attraction than for its cohesive or collegial properties; that is, cohesiveness and belonging are seen to follow from the nation's fitness for capital attraction, as state policies and corporate practices are mutually configured to favor economic growth as the engine of citizens' well-being.

When globalization is presented as an economic problem, it seems to warrant the adoption of an economic solution. The current version of this solution is most often called neoliberalism—the second leading element of this story. The conceptual apparatus of neoliberalism blends utopic visions of property ownership with individual freedoms, positing these as the "central values of civilization."[10] These precepts are embedded in the enforcement of three economic practices: liberalization, including market competition and export-dominated production; privatization, both in terms of the shifting of public services into the private sector and in terms of industry deregulation; and stabilization, by the adoption of anti-inflationary policies and the use of convertible currency.[11] Further, these technocratic measures are advocated as solutions to cultural and political problems, presented as the sole and necessary response to the inexorable forces of globalization. In this context, the state becomes involved in a kind of balancing act. It must reinforce its authority by reducing tax and regulatory structures to enforce the freedom of the market, using the "civilizing" appeals to freedom to generate consensus; yet it must cede authority in other realms of governance in order to allow the market to function without fetters. The adoption of public–private partnerships is one concrete example of this balancing act, by which businesses and corporations "not only collaborate intimately with state actors but even acquire a strong role in writing legislation, determining public policies, and setting regulatory frameworks (which are mainly advantageous to themselves)."[12] Moreover, the state's advocacy of freedom of the market does not appear to translate into similar acceptance of other forms of organization, especially those—like social movements and labor unions—which resist infrastructural decisions founded

on capital accumulation. This is why the idea of "flexibility"—of policy, of discourse, and of techniques—is a central tenet of neoliberal frames: the connotative fields of reference on which these ideas play out can be modified depending on the desired outcome.[13]

These two leading elements, globalization and neoliberalism, organize our current thinking about the nation in distinct yet familiar ways. Representations of the nation through time have revealed intimate connections between commerce and culture, between morals and the market, and between national and global ecumenes.[14] Yet there are aspects of these connections that are qualitatively new and need to be addressed as such. If indeed nation branding represents a transformation of business in the articulation of national identity, what is this transformation? Recent critiques have tried to account for what makes nation branding a "new and improved" form of national expression, pointing to the nation's thorough commercialization, corporatization, or commodification.[15] I am interested not only in these various facets; I want to demonstrate the articulation between them and the very meaning of nation-ness itself. The extension of the lexicon, techniques, and metrics of the brand to concepts of national territory, practices of national governance, and reflexive understandings of collective identity represent a new way of thinking about national identity.

To provide a perspective on this transformation, we need to understand the terms of the brand and its evolution over the past three decades. How did the idea of the brand become such a dominant medium, metaphor, and metric in the national imaginary? The seeds of the transformation grow out of a renewed relationship of mutual dependence between the nation and the private corporation. I tell this story in many layers throughout the book, but it is important to paint it in broad brushstrokes here to give a sense of the intricate intertwining of national imaginary and corporate strategy in the contemporary setting.

THINKING THROUGH THE BRAND: RATIONALITY AND ENCHANTMENT

The 1970s and 1980s witnessed massive changes to the scale and scope of the corporate firm. Key to the success of the globalizing corporation was its owners' and shareholders' ability to locate and account for new sources of economic value based in the concept of intangible assets. In earlier decades, the value of corporations lay primarily in their tangible assets: land, buildings, manufacturing materials, and financial assets such as receivables and

investments (stock in trade). While corporate managers and shareholders had already been well aware of the importance of intangible assets, including brands, technological innovations, and patents, the value of a corporation "on the books" was determined largely by its material manifestations.

In the 1980s, a series of mergers and acquisitions shook the corporate world. In the process, it became dramatically apparent that the corporate buyer gained considerably more than the acquired company's land and buildings; it also acquired the company's reputation and brands, contained in the notion of "goodwill." From the perspective of accounting, business goodwill was then a "broad concept" that included the notion of corporate reputation, the particular skills of workers, and the value of brands; yet goodwill became "visible" to accountants only when a business entity was sold.[16] Following the merger process, however, corporate owners wished to continue to capitalize on the reputation and brands of the acquired entity. Existing accountancy practices did not seem to match the desire of the globalizing corporation to rely on intangible assets as ongoing measures of corporate value.

The problem would become even more pronounced amid the decline of financial indicators as reliable sources of value starting in the early 1990s. As global reorganizations persisted and accountancy scandals captured news headlines, it became increasingly apparent that earnings data were no longer adequate prognoses of future worth. As crises at companies like AOL Time Warner, WorldCom, and Enron made clear, traditional valuation schemes such as annual reports, share options, and employee bonuses were portraits of past performance, not reliable indicators of future potential. Corporate executives sought additional devices that would inspire trust and confidence among their shareholders, investors, and consumers.

The device of reputation as a productive engine of economic value was dramatically rethought due to its instability in the aftermath of these corporate shakeups. A company's brand or identity was clearly a prime source of value for the firm. The issue lay in finding ways to both manage and account for this brand value. How could diverse features of corporate activity be seen as part of the market value of the firm? The company's relationships with its employees and stakeholders, its philanthropic activities and charitable contributions, the corner office's vision and leadership capabilities, the emotional appeal of its products and services—all of these were now considered to contribute to the corporation's bottom line.

In the context of this generalized value crisis, corporate executives found themselves with a unique opportunity. With accountancy itself increasingly engaged in debates over valuation, corporate leaders experimented with alternative methodologies to assess value.[17] Focusing on alternative

ways to value the identity of the corporation opened up an entirely new set of possibilities for corporate managers. Using methods that would include heterogeneous qualitative factors like consumer loyalty, philanthropy, or environmental practices, corporate executives essentially rethought the notion of value itself. Brand value could become "social" value—that is, value based in the perception of its various appellants: consumers, investors, shareholders, and the general public.[18] The process of valuation became cyclical, involved in a dynamic and flexible relationship with social life. While corporate brand identity sought to derive value from its "social" characteristics, it simultaneously sought—as Michael Power puts it—to "bring the outside in," to use social discourse, media treatments, and cultural relevance as sources of economic value.[19]

A second dimension of this transformation in valuation techniques was a shift in expertise. Part of the politics of brand accounting involved rethinking who was allowed to decide what was valuable.[20] By expanding the notion of what constituted intangible assets, corporate leaders effectively displaced those actors—accountants, financial auditors, and other third-party accreditors—who formerly maintained a monopoly over asset recognition in corporate settings. Those engaged in the recognition of brand value were as often as not engaged in a process of creation of brand value, as they deployed alternative forms of valuation to assess, measure, and track an organization's performance.[21] Such creative accounting practices can be understood as part of the overall shift of brand management to occupy such a central role in corporate affairs.

It is here that we can see the rise of brand consultancies devoted specifically to making and managing valuation schemes for corporations.[22] Branding firms developed alternative valuation metrics—sometimes internal, and often proprietary—for corporate firms. Reputational benchmarking and rankings systems were used to perform audits of corporate identity by determining their value according to the perceptions held of their financial stability, innovative capacity, and distinct personality by investors, consumers, and stakeholders. This served to resituate accounting within the domain of evolving business orientations toward intangible assets: they established value less as a measure of objective or "quantitative" assessment and more as a relational condition of competitive positioning in the rankings. The reputational rankings served an additional function. By establishing best practices and optimal criteria to which corporations should aspire, brand strategists perpetuated their expertise as both evaluators of intangible assets *and* as critical advisors on how to acquire such intangible assets and thereby rise in the rankings. In the process, audit itself was transformed from a regulatory to a marketing

feature—as part of the "value-added" of brand consultancies. Just as brand consultants operate to make visible hitherto invisible forms of value, a central task of this book is to make visible the often "invisible" forms of value creation and expertise of these actors in the creation and perpetuation of the national form.

Here we can also see how the brand was manipulated to contribute to the future health and well-being of the firm. The brand became a kind of "boundary object," a strategic device wielded by different actors for a range of different ends, whose borders shifted to accommodate the circumstance.[23] It offered the rational assessments necessary for corporations to anchor the value of intangible assets of brand and reputation in market terms, as well as the emotional value of connecting brands to "real" social relations and feelings, "enchanting" its various interlocutors.[24]

THE EXPRESSIVE ORGANIZATION

Brand management was rapidly adopted not only as a valuation device but also as an organizational device within the corporate firm. Using brand strategy to standardize employee behavior and output was not an entirely new idea at this time. As a classic 1969 marketing text put it, "everything about an organization talks," from its physical facilities to its employee attitudes to its stationery, and therefore should be managed with an eye to consumer perception.[25] But for the globalizing corporation of the 1980s and 1990s, this idea took on additional meaning. For if the initial problems of the globalizing corporation were technical and managerial, it soon became apparent to corporate owners that they needed to find ways to maintain the integrity of their corporate "culture" even as they diversified production and expanded their territorial purview.

Increasingly, corporate managerial training manuals and business books began to stress the "emotional and symbolic expressiveness" of everyday work within the firm, rooted in the attitudes and behaviors of its employees. As one text put it, "the behavior that supports a corporate reputation or brand needs to be more deeply rooted, it needs to rest in the organization's identity. Employees must feel the message they are sending with their behavior, not just go through the motions."[26]

By articulating the corporate identity in terms of the attitudes and behaviors of their employees, CEOs of globalizing firms could address a number of issues. First, the identity offered a unique form of discipline. Translating employee tasks, no matter how mundane, into ways to "live the brand" gave managers a way to resolve the tensions between the controlling

and communicative functions of the firm, between hard and soft forms of management, and between rational and symbolic approaches to organizational efficiency. Enjoining employees to live the brand also became a way to measure the extent of their loyalty. No longer simply workers, they were now "stakeholders," "ambassadors," and "champions" of the firm.[27] The brand became a totalizing form of organization. It incorporated strategy, marketing, accounting, and behavior into a holistic framework where each dimension was considered to have direct effects on the others. In the context of corporate expansion across geographical territory, the need to maintain a distinct and bounded communicative strategy was even more imperative. The more coherent and coordinated the activities on the inside, the more the corporation could maintain its apparent stability as a cohesive cultural form on the outside.

The question remains: how did these multiple insights get applied to national spaces? Marketing folklore, aided by overenthusiastic nation-branding supporters (and hardly denied by self-styled nation-branding consultants, who enjoy the prestige of being associated with a hot industry in development), tends to locate the origins of the nation-branding phenomenon in one charismatic figure by the name of Simon Anholt, an advertising copywriter turned national government advisor to the British Parliament as well as some forty other countries over the last twelve years.[28] While there is no doubt that Anholt's prolific output and activity have made a crucial contribution to the development of the practice, I take a more critical stance, recognizing that origin narratives, particularly those that attribute major transformations to single authorship and unique design, are themselves frequently part of the fictionalization (and "factualization")[29] of economic and cultural transformations.

Anholt's "discovery" of nation branding should instead be situated in ongoing theoretical and practical considerations of the role of the nation in late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century geopolitical and economic contexts. In other words, in order to understand how nation branding emerged as a thinkable and observable phenomenon, we need to understand how different thinkers have tried to account over time for the phenomenon of nationhood itself.

THINKING THROUGH THE NATION

If there is one common point made among the vast numbers of studies of nations and nationalism, it is that defining and analyzing the concepts that structure them is an always partial and elusive prospect. The notions of

nation, nationality, and nationalism are more often seen as uncomfortable anomalies for theory rather than as lenses to sharpen our view. Despite the ongoing legitimacy of the nation in social and political thought and practice, nationalism is still viewed as pathology instead of cure.[30]

One set of debates that reveals the depths of this pathology is rooted in discussions of origin. Are nations and nationalism primordial or provisional? Part of a universal state of ancient origin or self-conscious creation and re-creation? Some theorists of nationalism see it as a natural and universal phenomenon, in which "the 'nations' are there, in the very nature of things, only waiting to be 'awakened' (a favorite nationalist expression and image) from their regrettable slumber, by the nationalist 'awakener.'"[31] Others have characterized the nation as a "historic deposit," formed by layers of knowledge embedded in the strata of earlier social formations.

At the other end of the spectrum are those theorists who see the nation as the product of invention, imagination, and ongoing reconstruction. These theorists are careful to point out that their view is not meant to suggest that the nation is merely a product of the imagination; the distinction is not "real" versus "imagined." Rather the distinction is between understanding the nation as an organic, inherited, and materialist entity or taking it as a functionalist and subjective one: as an ongoing project of making and remaking by a variety of different actors with different intentions at given moments in time and space. This is what Ernest Renan means by his famous characterization of the nation as a daily plebiscite—the production and reproduction of the nation through common discourse and practice, with the aim of establishing common recollections and understandings.

No matter in which camp we locate ourselves, whether we prefer the theory of nation as a product of social engineering or as historic deposit, each rests on four architectural pillars of praxis: rhetoric, image, symbol, and ritual. But if both camps rest on the same foundational pillars, this causes the axis of debate to shift. Rather than trying to locate nationalism along a spectrum of ideas from ancient to invented, we might better understand the terms of the debate by framing nationalism as a *strategy* for nation building that can present itself as either ancient or invented to advance certain ends: systems of belief, political goals of self-determination or legitimacy, or economic incentives.

By "strategy" I do not mean that nationalism is nothing more than puppetry or propaganda. To call nationalism a strategy is not to discount the attachments, loyalties, and affiliations of those who act in the name of the nation. Rather, it is to point to a shift in conceptualization. Instead of "What is national identity?" we ought to ask "What does it mean to claim to have a national identity?"[32] What does it mean to see oneself as having a

national identity, as being proud to be Polish, or Ghanaian, or Canadian? Such questions refer us immediately to context. We cannot universally ask what it means to see oneself as having an identity without also asking about the particular situation in which the asker finds herself and the particular circumstances that have led her to ask the question. This, I believe, is what is meant by Rogers Brubaker's characterization of the nation as a practical category and Craig Calhoun's injunction of the nation as a discursive formation.[33] The issue is what we do with the nation in a given context.

Perhaps the signal context of national articulation in our time is the year 1991, when the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall heralded unprecedented transformations of the national form. Perhaps not coincidentally, 1991 was also the year of publication of the second edition of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, one of the most enduring and most referenced texts in the recent history of nationalist thought. In his second edition, Anderson adds a chapter entitled "Memory and Forgetting." "Supposing antiquity were the necessary consequence of novelty?" he asks as a provocative prelude to the chapter. Anderson eloquently shows the intricate relationship of temporal continuity to contemporary national cultural coherence. But he also shows that to call one's collective self new, or old, requires situating one's nation not only in relation to its own teleology and genealogy but also in relation to surrounding nations. Like the identity of the person, the self-conscious identity of the nation is a fundamentally relational project. Ideas such as "modern," "progressive," or "backward" can only exist in relation to the perceived modernity, progressiveness, and backwardness of others.

If this seems like an obvious point, it is nevertheless well masked in nationalist projects, which frequently call for the reclaiming of a unique, distinctive, and inimitable national self that draws on its internal histories and memories alone for sources of pride and patriotism. Anderson's observations imply that to construct the biography of the nation is to consider the range of strategies by which certain events become "ours" (and therefore "real") and others become "theirs"—the products of impositions and interventions (and therefore "false"). This reminds us why Renan famously defined the nation in terms of forgetting and even historical error—because the nation can never be the product of a singular and indigenously conceived narrative but is rather a composite of the tortuous, contingent, and indeterminate trajectories of collective memory and forgetting both within the nation *and by other nations*.[34] It is the trajectories of its own and of other nations that create and re-create a national identity. Another way to understand this debate is to study the different claims that have been made

situating nations as producers of nationalism versus those that see nationalism as productive of nations. Does nationalism make the nation, or is it the other way around? Do nationalists use the principle of shared traits and consciousness (what Daniel Segal and Richard Handler call "similitude") to articulate the terms of national community, or can these shared traits and consciousness, these "common denominators," already exist in some objective sense and therefore require an active spirit to ignite and empower them?[35]

Overcoming this debate requires that we recognize that both sides are invested in the practical dimensions of national consciousness. How do the social acts of exchange and reciprocity in everyday life work to articulate and rearticulate national borders and boundaries? Such a conception overcomes the too-easy distinction between so-called subjectivist and materialist conceptions of the nation. It recognizes that both subjective and material factors are constantly at play in making the nation, idealist consciousness and physical structure are mutually reinforcing, and conflict and heterogeneity are not challenges to the national form but rather constitutive elements.[36]

Seeing the nation as a practical category, in Brubaker's terms, or as a discursive formation in Calhoun's, allows us to account for the contingent and processual making and remaking of the nation in both subjectivist and materialist ways.[37] It also allows us to recognize the way in which the nation, like the brand, is a boundary object—a category of discourse and practice deployed for a range of ends, whose scale and scope mutates to accommodate the claims being made in the name of those ends. The contest is one of legitimacy; and it is here that branding—a way to narrate the distinctive qualities and measurable quantities of a corporation—started to be considered the most legitimate way to make the nation matter in a global context.

INTEGRATING NATION AND BRAND

Nation branding is justified among state actors and national elites as a necessary corrective to the threatened erosion of national structures—both institutional structures and what Raymond Williams calls "structures of feeling"—in a global arena of political, economic, and cultural exchange. With globalization characterized as a "space of flows" in which products and policies, ideas and images, and capital in all its forms circulate unbound, national borders increasingly appeared as outdated and unnecessary stoppages.[38] At the same time, the increasing strength of alliances at

the sub-, supra-, and transnational levels—and widening networks of migration, mobility, and media—contributed to further undermine claims to autonomy by the territorial state. In this context, the legitimacy of national governments and other national public institutions as purveyors and protectors of the cultural specificity of nationhood was at stake. National leaders sought ways to rearticulate their importance in global networks.

Corporate branding, a process of assigning unique identification by consciously highlighting certain meanings and myths while eliding others, was rationalized as a means to promote a distinctive national identity while encouraging the economic benefits necessary to compete in a globalized world. Seeing national culture and identity as resources for global capital growth led national leaders to increasingly seek global expertise to help them excavate this precious resource. As I describe above, brand management techniques had been put to use to generate qualities by interacting with the social and absorbing those characteristics into the brand. At the same time, corporate reputation indices and other competitive rankings of performance were being tinkered with and perfected as part of the general shift of the recognition of the value of assets from accountants and other third-party verifiers to brand managers and marketers, who found ways to account for the soft qualities of capital instead of merely the hard ones. In this context, it was branding expertise that was seen as the right expertise for national public institutions.

Adopting a brand therefore allowed national leaders to entrench the perception that the best way to renew their population's interest in their identity was through renewing the use of *identity* as part of the national *interest*. Culture as resource "trades," as George Yúdice puts it, on the "currency of diversity."[39] In order to market culture for distinct economic ends, it was necessary to articulate the special and unique difference of the national client. Competing for scarce resources means that a nation must present what makes it so distinctive that its various interlocutors—investors, students, tourists, and so on—want to visit that nation rather than another. But this making and marketing of diversity is a fundamentally flawed project, one that celebrates difference only insofar as it corresponds to patterns of consumption. This is what Elizabeth Povinelli calls the "cunning of recognition," a fantasy of diversity in which the only kind of diversity that matters is one that is defanged for purposes of global trade. When the politics of culture intersects the culture of capital, we encounter "convulsive competition purged of real conflict, social difference without social consequences."[40] Although this feat of de-diversification is apparent in all the cases I examine, in chapter four I pay special attention

to the cunning of recognition in the "de-multiculturalization" of Canada via the discipline of the brand.

Indeed, the particular characteristics of nation branding I have identified above—the rendering of national culture as an auditable form, its reorientation as source of either market opportunity or risk, and the defanging of diversity in the process—are applicable to all the cases I describe in this book. I use each case as an example of a different feature of the phenomenon; but as we shall see, the process of branding, along with expectations of its effects, are remarkably similar. Such a homogenized approach is partly attributable, as I have explained, to the similar reactions from many corners to the specter of globalization and the market-oriented expectations of neoliberal economics and so-called New Public Management practices. It is also attributable to the global spread of corporate management practices. One of the reasons that nation branding appears as a coherent and analyzable set of practices is what Nigel Thrift calls "cultural circuits of capitalism"—the transnational traffic of business and management expertise made possible by the rise of multinational corporate forms.[41]

A second, related reason that branding appears as a coherent system is that despite the prevalence of the idea of nation branding in dozens of locales around the world, the stable of nation branding "experts" is surprisingly small. This profession is tightly bounded; while conditions of entry are low, the predominance of Simon Anholt's methods and metrics has meant that nearly all other contenders to the field have either adopted his methods or had to articulate highly similar methods in direct opposition to them, resulting in a strong isomorphism of theory and approach within the practice.

Before we can dive into an account of how nation branding consultants imagine their role and their practice, however, we need to have a better grasp on the ideas and conditions that led to the very imagining of nation branding itself. The next chapter gives us a postwar history of the idea of competitiveness and how it became embedded in national policy and practice. Competitiveness is a key index of globalization discourse and a profoundly powerful motivator for change. As an inherently relational concept, it highlights the deep-seated anxieties about national decision-makers' abilities to measure up to their counterparts. Initially conceived as a form of discipline for corporate firms, competitiveness is extended through a particular series of events to the space of the nation. By tracing the transfer of firm-centered strategy, expertise, and valuation devices to the space of the nation, we can see how national referents—citizen, culture, loyalty— become competitive entities in themselves. The particular actors and institutions whose trajectories I follow, from Michael Porter to the World

Economic Forum (WEF), to the World Bank, to Ernst & Young, are relevant because they emerge as central institutions and sources of transnational knowledge in the nation-branding strategies as well. As we shall see in later chapters, Porter's consulting firm, the Monitor Group, was a key player in later rebranding exercises. The WEF also hosted branding workshops and seminars. Both institutions' proprietary valuation and benchmarking tools, such as the infamous Porter Diamond and the WEF's competitiveness indices, would subsequently be incorporated into nation-branding methods as well.

The story begins in the United States, whose particular regulatory shifts affected firm behavior and strategy. By chapter three, as we will see, the scene of the action has moved to Britain. In part, as I suggest above, this is because of the charismatic pull and client reach of well-established consultants such as Simon Anholt and Wally Olins, and the subsequent rise of local competitors for the same kinds of clients. But it also has to do with the proximity, both geographical and historical, of Britain to many of the client countries it initially worked with. As chapter four illustrates in detail, one of the motivating influences for client countries in Europe and Africa to initiate nation-branding exercises is to convey to the world that they are "normal" and that they "work." In other words, they have escaped the confines of history and are ready to be perceived as modern democratic nations. That their postcolonial potential does not embrace alternative modernities and modalities but rather a single, teleological model of late-stage capitalist development is part of the story I tell here. In order for these nations to imagine themselves as unique, different, and globally competitive, they had first to be reimagined as if they were all the same.

The New and Improved Nation:
How Culture Became Competitive

IMAGINATIVE DYNAMICS

Although private interests have been involved since the nineteenth century in projects to market and promote the nation, from boosterism to corporate public relations campaigns to tourism initiatives,[1] the emergence of a particular phenomenon called nation branding is linked to concrete structural changes in the political and economic dynamics of the nation as well as changes in the perceived role of the nation in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

The case of Spain provides an illustrative example of these changes. Spain is considered the original success story of nation branding, and until recently, most countries contemplating the process looked to Spain as proof that it works.[2] In the late 1970s, the democratization and decentralization of the country's institutions were part of Spain's efforts to raise its population's standard of living and create new ties with the rest of Europe following the demise of General Francisco Franco's regime. Aside from the major changes in political structure, the next twenty-five years saw revolutions in the areas of cultural production (the Bilbao museum, the films of Pedro Almodovár, the fashion of Agatha Ruiz de la Prada), architecture (Santiago Calatrava's Telefónica communications tower, the Velodrome by Esteve Bonell and Francesc Rius, the Agbar skyscraper), economy (the revitalization of cities through increased spending by the public and private sectors on infrastructure and institutional and tourist advertising, the privatization and transnationalization of Spanish multinational companies), and international attractions (the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, the 1982 FIFA World Cup of soccer, the 1992 International Expo

Figure 2.1:
Spanish Tourism Institute "Sol de Miró" logo. © Tourspain.

in Seville).[3] Accompanying these changes was a national promotional program, initiated in the early 1980s, which stamped virtually all of the country's innovations with a colorful, widely distributed logo.

The logo and the impact it came to have on the international imagination are widely considered to have been instrumental in the "repositioning" of the country. Once an impoverished and isolated nation emerging from dictatorship, the country now put forward an image of an effective democracy and a cultural and cosmopolitan destination. Indeed, the logo was seen to symbolize Spain's entry into modernity.

At the same time, another logo inspired by Joan Miró was being adopted for a different modernization project in Spain: the revitalization and expansion of the Barcelona-based savings bank (*caja de pensiones*), La Caixa. Since the bank's inauguration in 1904, La Caixa had served a dual role: as financial repository for the pensions of residents of the region of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, and as a pillar of social security, assisting the welfare of the community through contributions to education, programs for seniors, and patronage of Catalonian cultural production. In this latter role it arguably served a cultural function as well, reflecting the distinctive identity of Catalans.[4] This cultural function was especially important in light of the region's ongoing claims for recognition as a historic "nation," having enjoyed the autonomy of separate laws and institutions in the 1700s.

Under the Franco regime, the banking system in Spain was informally called one of the "powers that be" (*poderes facticos*), along with the Church

and the military, because of its strict and largely secretive regulatory and bureaucratic systems.[5] But critical structural changes in the late 1970s and 1980s radically changed the topography of the financial sector. Large commercial banks lobbied for looser banking regulations and encouraged formerly banned foreign acquisitions and mergers. The country's admission among the member states of the European Union in 1986, its growing reliance on exports and foreign direct investment (FDI), and the liberalization of its stock market in 1988 further altered financial regulatory structures.

In the context of this newly expanded economic playing field, the bank sought to widen both its market and its geographical and cultural purview. It engaged the services of the American corporate identity consultancy, Landor Associates, to create a visual logo that would consolidate and convey the bank's modern objectives. The consultants searched for a symbol that would incorporate a variety of lines of resonance. The logo had to simultaneously represent regional identity for domestic consumption while conveying national and international sophistication to the rest of Spain and to potential foreign clients. Landor settled on artist Joan Miró as the ideal symbolic personage to design the logo. As the chief executive of Landor Associates, Claude Alverson, explained:

> The choice of maestro Joan Miró fulfills many of the prerequisites of La Caixa: born in Catalonia, a resident of the Balearic Islands and a world-famous artist, Miró has the unique ability to communicate effectively with all of the possible market segments of La Caixa and its main clientele in Spain and abroad.[6]

In the political context of 1980s Spain, achieving this simultaneous representation of local and global was deemed critical. The centralized authority structures that had been the hallmark of Franco's rule were undone with the country's 1978 constitution, which symmetrically devolved political power into seventeen regions known as "autonomous communities." This devolution satisfied the sovereignty demands of some of these communities; others—notably Galicia, Catalonia, and the Basque region—continued to call for further autonomy. As a pillar of Catalonian pride and self-sufficiency, the bank's brand needed to strike a balance between recognizing the importance of this national patriotic sentiment and presenting an image of a unified Spain to its foreign interlocutors, who might hesitate to truck with a country whose political landscape appeared unstable.

Miró himself was a rather ambivalent Spaniard, having achieved artistic fame only by leaving his native land, and the logo that was eventually adopted from one of Miró's artworks was not exactly what the consultants had wished for.[7] But all this was beside the point. The symbolic effect of a

Figure 2.2:
The symbol of "La Caixa" created by Joan Miró in 1980. The consultants had wanted an eight-pointed star, to represent the new range of communities they wanted to do business with; but Miró provided a template for a five-pointed star. They could not very well ask him to change his artistic rendering. Courtesy of Caixa d'Estalvis i Pensions de Barcelona.

logo designed by a world-famous Catalan was perceived as an integrative device, uniting key target populations. Perhaps more important still was the other kind of integration represented by the logo: the harnessing of finance to society and culture.

It is the institutional and symbolic similarity of these two logos by Miró that is at the heart of the phenomenon of nation branding. The "logoifica-tion" of both the bank and the nation, and its attendant structural changes, have come to be seen as an inexorable response to the changing role of the nation in an increasingly globalized context. As I described in the previous chapter, nation branding is promoted as a corrective measure to the de-cline of legitimacy of national structures in a context of globalizing flows. As traditional sources of national power, identity, and autonomy break down, political leaders, economic actors, and national citizens seek alter-native ways to articulate cultural specificity and political-economic sover-eignty. The use of a brand—a metonymic or metaphoric image designed to evoke particular attitudes, behaviors, and values in particular categories of international exchange—is intended to accomplish two seemingly irrec-oncilable objectives: to convey and promote the essential and territorial characteristics of a given national identity while signaling the state's read-iness to comply with the globally footloose needs of transnational corpo-rate capital. Indeed, part of the success of the nation brand is its ability to overcome the tensions inherent in these politics of identity.

The critical issue at stake in the isomorphism of these two examples is the perceived convergence of interest and form between the private industrial corporation and the nation-state. This chapter looks at how the state has been transformed into a corporatized and entrepreneurialized institution, in the context of injunctions that the state become competitive in the global market.[8] As state theorists have shown, the interpenetration of such an instrumental economic imperative with national state governance has had important consequences for its moral and material architecture. Philip Cerny characterizes the shift as one from a welfare state to a "competition state"—where various forms of social welfare provision are now seen as "counterproductive" to national prosperity.[9] Tore Fougner addresses the implications of reframing the state as an institutional unit of productivity, showing how the notion of international competitiveness shifted from the realm of the corporate firm into the domain of the state, so that competitiveness became not a problem of management but a problem of governance.[10] If one of the aims of this chapter is to consider the transformation of the state, a second and more pertinent aim is to consider the impact of such logics on the nation. In the context of a competition state, the hyphen linking state to nation is seen as a particular kind of problem. If the expansion of firm-centered strategy to the space of the state creates a new role for state leadership, it also establishes a new set of coordinates for national identity. To fully understand the impact of bringing the state under the umbrella of the market, we must look at how the market cast its shadow across the nation form as well.

To do so, this chapter traces the work of a group of experts who propose to "improve" the nation's culture and identity by bringing it into alignment with the exigencies of global "realities." I call this group a transnational promotional class (TPC). This is not a self-consciously constituted movement but rather a loosely allied group of actors and institutions that share a common goal: to advocate for the continued relevance of the nation-state in a twenty-first-century context of global change. My use of the term *transnational promotional class* draws substantially on Leslie Sklair's idea of a transnational capitalist class (TCC). Indeed, my use of a different term to describe the experts involved in nation branding has less to do with a difference between the two classes in terms of their professional positions (which are overlapping, if not isomorphic) or their perspectives on the central role of corporate knowledge and techniques in contexts of globalization (which are essentially identical), than with the ways in which the TPC constitutes the object of its attention—the nation—as well as the ways in which these actors legitimate their actions in focusing on this object of attention. Put another way, by using the term *promotional*, I wish to highlight

the discursive strategies and rationales this class employs in working on the nation, and to demonstrate how these strategies and rationales serve to simultaneously perpetuate and transform the nation form.[11]

In Sklair's formulation, the TCC is devoted above all to advancing a vision of the world as a thoroughly globalized entity with "a unity of economic interests, political organizations, and cultural and ideological formations."[12] This unity is achieved because its core members "own and control the major means of production, distribution and exchange through their ownership and control of money and other forms of capital [political, organizational, cultural, knowledge]."[13] The TCC "seeks to exert economic control in the workplace, political control in domestic and international politics, and culture-ideology control in everyday life through specific forms of global competitive and consumerist rhetoric and practice."[14] It is made up of four fractions: a "corporate fraction," which consists of "those who own and control the major corporations";[15] a "state fraction," made up of "globalizing bureaucrats and politicians" who "accept and propagate the necessity for the permanent expansion of the global capitalist system";[16] a "technical fraction" of "globalizing professionals"—"lawyers, management consultants, and legions of other business service providers in private practice; statutory bodies; and knowledge institutions (research centers, universities, business colleges)";[17] and a "consumerist fraction," composed of "globalizing merchants and media" who circulate and reinforce the "global vision" of consumerism advocated by globalizing corporations.[18] To the extent that the state plays a role in the aims and objectives of the TCC it is as a resource to help grease the wheels of corporate interests and remove all fetters to the "natural" market forces of trade. The concept of the nation, the other side of the hyphen, is almost entirely absent from the globalizing work of the TCC. At most, the nation functions as an adjective to qualify corporate structures and industries—German engineering, Italian leather, and so on.

The TPC, by contrast, is heavily invested in the cultural dimensions of the nation. As I explore in this chapter, the promotion of national culture and identity as not only germane to, but actually responsible for, the nation-state's ability to perpetuate its legitimacy is the raison d'être of this class formation.[19]

There is a second distinction between the TCC and the TPC that is crucial to my analysis. It lies in the way the TPC situates itself within the networks of global production and exchange. While the TCC is made up of owners, controllers, and producers whose capital assets go unquestioned, the members of the TPC seek a decentered and less hierarchical position. Constituting their role as one of circulation, mediation, communication, promotion, and calculation, these actors seek to place themselves at a remove.

A detailed review of the output of this class reveals a marked preference by this group to present themselves as calculators, conduits, facilitators, guides, intermediaries, managers, middlemen, promoters, strategists, or shepherds—in short, as anything but responsible for the political impact of their work.

For the project of branding the nation, this class includes transnational economic institutions and national government departments devoted to investment and tourism promotion; marketing and management academics at international business schools and affiliated think tanks; and multinational consultancies operating in a range of capacities, from strategic communications to location and tax advisory, to marketing, advertising, and branding strategy. This group participates in branding the culture, so to speak: establishing rationalized and instrumentalized frameworks of legitimacy within which to situate a new and improved version of national culture.

As I make clear elsewhere in the book, this process did not occur in a single direction from brand to national culture. It took place in the other direction as well—a curious process of osmosis. As the rational and monetizable frames of branding and marketing came to be applied to national culture, the concept of the brand became more cultural, built up as a platform of personal, emotional, and devotional characteristics to which individuals could relate and identify. Theories of national consciousness started to appear in management literature. Texts on how to create efficiencies in corporate culture began to focus on tropes of loyalty, allegiance, and belonging, with the nation held up as the idealized model for corporations to emulate. It is via this permeability of brand and culture that the imaginative dynamics of nation branding emerged.

How these imaginative dynamics came to pass is a story of several facets and dimensions. To fully understand the emergence of nation branding as a conceptual and practical phenomenon requires that we dig deeper into the contradictions underlying the ways that such transitions have been implicated and transformed at the level of national culture. While branding the nation is seen by some as a necessary solution to inevitable global problems, the task at hand is to question whether these problems were in fact so clearly or inevitably determined.

THE SPATIAL FIX

In the increasingly integrated economic world system of the postwar period, the movement of capital from place to place has perhaps best been described as impatient. In the context of the decline of the Fordist

model of industrialization, replaced by so-called postindustrial forms of production, companies began to adopt infrastructural strategies of both vertical disintegration—outsourcing and downsizing—and flexible accumulation—seeking capital from a variety of different sources. Critical geographers, sociologists, and economists began to note that postwar capital was beset by "short-termism" and managerial "myopia" with respect to financial investment.[20] Different explanations were offered to account for this new kind of movement. Some pointed to the increasingly prevalent practice of companies to subcontract and outsource labor to wherever it was cheapest in favor of a more streamlined and efficient corporate model.[21] Others charted the shift of the locus of capital from the workplace to alternative sites of experience: to leisure, to new models of consumption, or to the entrepreneurial qualities of the self.

Only a year after the end of the Second World War, the sociologist C. Wright Mills had begun to place his finger on the pulse of this latter transformation. For Mills, major changes in the ways corporate structures operated had started to have dire consequences for the conception of the individual as well as his relations with others. Though competition had arguably always been part of the spirit of enterprise, what Mills observed was that as companies consolidated power and resources while divesting themselves of industrial labor, there occurred a shift of the site in which competition took place. The new white-collar worker devoted more and more of her time to competing—not out there, in the market, but on the inside, by cultivating a "competitive personality."[22] Mills's insights about the competitive personality would inform subsequent investigations by his colleagues. A few years later, sociologist David Riesman described the "other-directedness" of the contemporary self in *The Lonely Crowd*. This book also focused on the transformation "from morality to morale," identifying the modern individual as one who looks not to her own moral compass for direction but rather seeks the constant approval of others.[23] And in *Man for Himself*, Riesman's professor Erich Fromm also took up the idea of competitive identity, classifying a particular type of character orientation as the "marketing orientation." The marketing orientation was a modern construct, where "the economic function of the market in modern society" is "not only analogous to this character orientation but . . . the basis and the main condition for its development in modern man."[24]

Riesman, too, saw an explicit connection between the other-directed personality and changes in the economy. In the context of mass production, where goods became essentially indistinguishable, and the bureaucratic corporation, where individuals and their tasks became essentially indistinguishable, both tended toward an unhealthy concern with what

Freud had called "the narcissism of small differences."[25] "It might be observed that there exists in the production of personality the same sort of product differentiation that is characteristic of monopolistic competition generally," Riesman noted.[26] Whether it was cigarettes and automobiles, or personal qualities and character, the current corporate structures had toned down real distinctions in each category into barely modulated shades of gray. This meant that small differences were highlighted and emphasized to mask the fact that there was little to go on to tell them apart. As Riesman pointed out, these small differences were "sufficient, however, *in connection with advertising*, to take the product out of direct price competition with otherwise similar competing products."[27]

It was in the context of these structural and economic changes in the nature of competition that similar debates emerged over the implications for territorial space. With such radical deterritorialization and dematerialization of capital, and the related streamlining, downsizing, and outsourcing of corporate bureaucracies, how could countries, cities, or regions assert their individual character and differentiate themselves from others in order to continue to attract the financial investments required for the population to prosper? A partial response came from a somewhat contradictory realization: the ability of capital to flow freely in space depends crucially on the production of spaces to accommodate it. In other words, "the ability of both capital and labor power to move at short order and low cost from place to place depends upon the creation of fixed, secure, and largely immobile social and physical infrastructures."[28] David Harvey calls this the "spatial fix" of capital, a crucial element of the geopolitics of capitalism.

The challenge for national governments, then, was to find ways to harness this flexible and mobile capital and affix it to their jurisdiction. The traditional way of accomplishing this was to accrue national value (and value*s*, as we shall see) through a reliance on the shareholder profits of large national corporations. Yet changes in political and legal infrastructure after the war, especially in the later decades of the 1970s and early 1980s, threw the relationship of corporation to nation into question. In the United States, the unhinging of corporate success and national prosperity came to the fore in the 1980s. Robert Reich, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1988, made this unhinging explicit in an article entitled, "Corporation and Nation." As he explains, the old dictum, "What's good for General Motors is good for America," can be traced back to an event in the early 1950s, when the president of General Motors, Charles Erwin Wilson, was being confirmed as Eisenhower's nominee as the secretary of defense. When asked whether his dual role would occasion a conflict of interest,

Wilson replied, "I cannot conceive of one because for years I thought what was good for our country was good for General Motors, and vice versa. The difference did not exist."[29] Though this remark was criticized for its arrogance, "in fact it simply expressed principles already codified in American law and policy: the corporation existed for its shareholders, and as they prospered, so would the nation."[30] But in the context of "new economic realities," Reich explained, these principles were now in decline. Foreign acquisition of American companies, deterritorialization of production operations, and an undue commitment to shareholder profits had inverted the dictum. Reich emphasized that national prosperity ought no longer to depend on corporate growth. "This is not because these corporations are irresponsible or unpatriotic," he explained, "but because their widening global opportunities for making profits—and shareholders' mounting demands that they exploit such opportunities—are coming to have no direct or unique bearing on the nation's continued growth." He concluded with a dictum of his own:

> The growing divergence between corporation and nation is part of a larger quandary. As our economy becomes so entwined with the world's that the nation's borders lose their commercial significance, Americans need to understand and recognize the subtle ways in which our citizens are connected to one another— not through the corporations we own but through the skills and knowledge we absorb. Without this understanding we cannot expect to elicit the sacrifices required to gain greater skills and knowledge. Corporations are no longer the building blocks of the U.S. economy; our citizens are.[31]

In 1990, the publication of a book on economic policy offered one interpretation—though not the one Reich envisaged—of how citizens could connect to one another through their skills and knowledge. Titled *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, this 850-page tome drew on examples from ten "important trading nations"—the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Sweden, Singapore, Denmark, and Korea—to promote a new conception of national prosperity.[32] It proposed that the ideal infrastructure in which to elaborate strategies for national profit was not the corporation but the entire nation. Its author, Harvard University business professor Michael Porter, was substantially influenced by the free market competitiveness policies of the Reagan administration. Indeed Porter, who had been writing about competitive strategies for corporations since the late 1970s, was motivated to expand his analysis to the nation as a whole after serving on President Reagan's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness.[33]

In order to theorize the nation as a holistic site of competitive advantage, Porter proposed two conceptual shifts. The first was to replace the bearings of previously dominant understandings of international trade. Classical economic theories of trade were premised on the Ricardian notion of comparative or relative advantage among nations. If a nation's natural resources were more abundant, or its labor wages lower than those of its counterparts, it was logically considered to have a comparative trading advantage. Elaborations on this theory, such as the "factors" model of production developed in the 1920s by the Swedish economists Heckscher and Ohlin, maintained that territorially specific factors of production such as geography, natural resources, labor, and physical capital determined a nation's comparative advantage.[34] The role of government in this model was to act decisively to adjust national economic policy in such a way that it would improve its country's comparative advantage in factor costs, either by reducing interest rates, maintaining low wages, devaluing currencies, or providing export financing for its most productive elements.[35]

At the close of the twentieth century, Porter asserted, such factors were rapidly becoming irrelevant. For one thing, many industrialized countries now shared similar factor endowments, eliminating the possibility of comparative advantage. And the factor model did not account for economies of scale or major differences between nations in terms of products or production processes and technologies. Moreover, the territorial specificity of such traditional factors as labor and capital no longer held. The rise of knowledge-intensive over manufacturing work and the growing emphasis on specialized intellectual skills and know-how, combined with the potential mobility of these skills via new transport and communication technologies, meant that corporations no longer recognized themselves in a factor-based explanation. In the new globalized context of production and trade, the adage, "What's good for GM is good for America," simply did not carry much weight.

The solution, Porter believed, was to see national production not through the lens of comparison but through the lens of competition. More and more companies could produce similar goods; the value of capital had shifted from physical to intellectual and financial sources; and labor was no longer bound by national borders. There was therefore no long-term advantage to be gained by maintaining low product prices (since eventually imitators would continue to produce more cheaply) or low labor wages (since this would drive skilled employees elsewhere). Rather, national firms should strategically focus on the production of goods and technological processes that no one else had. They should emphasize the benefits of segmented (niche) markets and apply specialized marketing techniques. Drawing on

economist Joseph Schumpeter's famous theory of "creative destruction"—whereby new goods, markets, and processes required constant innovation in order to survive—Porter proposed that the key to national advantage lay in the ongoing creation of national difference. A corporation could develop a competitive edge by identifying, and then exploiting, markets and industries where there was a wider gap between the value of the product and the "value-added" of the production and marketing process. Finally, instead of relying solely on the factor conditions of national productivity, the nation should emphasize the "demand conditions" for national productivity in order to attract increased investments from foreign sources.[36]

The second step Porter proposed was to expand the object of competition itself. Here Porter drew on his substantial background in corporate strategy development, inspired by the work of his predecessors Kenneth Andrews and Roland C. Christensen at Harvard's business school as well as colleagues Peter Drucker, Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., and Igor Ansoff. These figures had contributed to advancing a dominant theory of corporate strategy: that the external environment in which firms functioned contributed as much to conditions of productivity as did the internal dynamics of the firm. A company's managerial, financial, functional, or organizational capability—its "distinctive competences"—needed to "fit" with its industrial context if it was to develop and maintain a competitive advantage.[37] Porter's insight in *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* was to expand this idea to the nation as a whole. If the locus of economic productivity was set in entire national industries, it was the space of the entire nation that constituted the external environment. From this logic it followed that the focus of national policy should be not on creating regulations to shape the actions of firms but on adjusting the terms of the national environment to fit the requirements of its key industries.

What Porter was suggesting, in essence, was that the instrumentalist rules governing economic institutions—to maximize efficiency and increase productivity—could be transferred from the firm to the nation-state as a whole. In this model, the role of national government changed. In a competitive global trade environment, the government's job should be to remove all impediments to industry growth—including those of government intervention itself. "Government's essential task at the innovation-driven stage is to create an environment in which firms are and continue to be innovative and dynamic," Porter wrote. "Its role must shift from actor and decision-maker to facilitator, signaler, and prodder."[38] By reimagining the state as facilitator of industry instead of leader of populations, Porter—at the forefront of a rapidly expanding class of business and academic thinkers—also imagined a new relationship between business and

the state. In his formulation, states were not subjects of governance but *objects of management*, and as such, required the expertise and knowledge of management thinkers to function effectively. With competitiveness as the primary virtue, a virtue that governments had not previously considered in their active portfolios, the suggestion was that a new kind of knowledge and expertise was required for state administration, one that came from the worlds of marketing and management.[39]

Concerns about the new relationship of nation and corporation after the mid-1980s can be seen in the context of differing perspectives on the role of the nation amid new patterns of global economic exchange and trade. With the enormous international political and cultural shifts of the era came calls for celebration of a post-ideological—even post-historical—world. Globalization was situated as a progressive response to the former world order of antagonistic nationalisms and identitarian enclaves. Proponents of economic integration tended to argue that nationalism belonged to a prior stage of economic growth, and as such was contingent upon the perpetuation of that stage. If what was good for global capital circulation was no longer good for the nation, perhaps this meant that the nation had outlived its usefulness and was now properly on the wane. And if government's primary role was now simply to foster better business, what good were national boundaries?

The intensity of this viewpoint was opposed with far less intensity from dissenting ranks—in particular, those for whom nationalisms represented more than a barrier to the free movement of economic goods. Many quiet voices of contestation (quiet due to lack of representation rather than lack of vociferousness) came from those who stood to benefit the least from open borders and footloose capital. Even those who did not subscribe to the thesis of globalization as a trenchant form of American imperialism worried about the diminished protections to cultural and political autonomy (their own and that of others), the dislocations of mobility and migration, and the global circulation of unwanted effluvia—from people to pandemics—under the sign of global possibility.

Anticipating, or perhaps responding to, these fears, Porter stressed that the adoption of free-market strategies did not pose a liability for the nation. Instead, he argued, open markets and flexible labor combined with lean government spending could bolster rather than diminish the relevance of the nation. "Some resist open international competition out of a desire to preserve national identity," Porter wrote. "Instead of submerging national character, however, the removal of protectionism and other distortions to free and open international competition will arguably make national character more decisive."[40] Indeed, "national differences in character and

culture, far from being threatened by global competition, prove integral to success in it."[41]

What Porter was suggesting represented a fundamental transformation. He saw the continued role that national consciousness could play in this new economic paradigm: as a form of added value, as part of the demand conditions he had identified—indeed, as a key locational differentiator. Maintaining the nation was important because of the potential it held to increase prosperity for firms. In part this was due to what business and management call the "country of origin effect"—the stereotypes, metaphors, and structuring fictions that are associated with the goods and services produced in a given country, such as "Swiss = quality" or "German = engineering."[42] Not only did these effects matter for the increased productivity and differentiation of industries; so did the overall national setting in which these industries operated. In order for the nation-state to become truly competitive, the role of national culture had to shift from an external constraint to a competitive dimension of national productivity. In other words, *it was culture that had to become competitive* if the nation was to remain viable in the global marketplace.

To achieve this it was not only the governance of the state that had to change. The other side of the hyphen—those sentiments, forms of belief, values, and attitudes that made up the collective spirit of national consciousness—had to be modified as well. The new consciousness needed to convey the essentialist dimensions and internal equilibrium of a homogenized national space. Here was where the TPC could advance its particular forms of knowledge and expertise. To help populations reimagine the boundaries of the nation as a competitive and marketable entity, three specific ideas were put into place. First, emphasis was placed on so-called cultural dimensions of competitiveness, articulated in terms of "attractiveness"; second, published reports and articles stressed the parallels between industrial marketing and national governance; and third, a distinction was made between the "reality" of a national setting and the "image" made of it by foreign investors—with the expertise of the TPC standing ready to close this image-reality gap.

THE SOFTER SIDE OF COMPETITIVENESS

Although Porter was one of the most prolific and well-regarded strategists in the cause, he was not the first to consider the role of national character in fostering international competitiveness. Since 1971, a Swiss organization then known as the European Management Forum had been

quietly considering the same thing. This organization was founded on a simple idea: that the modern commercial enterprise was the fulcrum of national economic prosperity and that all other sectors of society should be mobilized to contribute to enhancing such prosperity. The organization's founder, the German industrialist and management policy professor Klaus Schwab, had conceived of the Forum as a platform for business leaders to interact with these different sectors of society and communicate this ongoing mission. In keeping with his vision of the relationship between corporation and society, he called these different sectors "stakeholders" (*die Interessenten*) and defined them in the loosest possible way to ensure their all-encompassing character. A stakeholder could be a creditor or customer
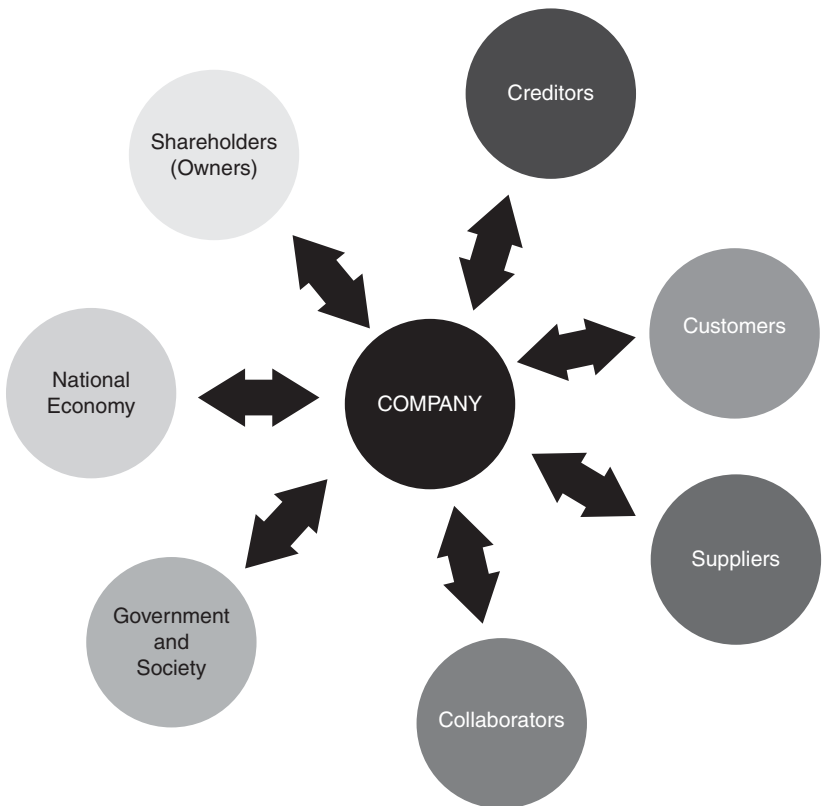

Figure 2.3:
The "stakeholder" model of the World Economic Forum developed by the organization's founder, Klaus Schwab, in his book *Moderne Unternehmensführung im Maschinenbau (Modern Enterprise Management in Mechanical Engineering [Frankfurt, 1971])*. Reprinted in *The World Economic Forum: A Partner in Shaping History. The First 40 Years, 1971–2010* (Switzerland: World Economic Forum, 2009), 7. © World Economic Forum.

of the firm; but such categories as government, national economy, or even society were considered to function as stakeholders as well.

From the organization's inception, the challenge it set itself was both practical and epistemological: to find ways to collect certain kinds of information from all of these stakeholders and combine them into a single warehouse of classifiable data. By assembling and cataloging this knowledge, it could develop techniques, strategies, and technologies that would allow corporate managers to influence these groups. In this way its vision of the company as the central node within a network of interested parties, and of competitiveness as the basic principle of motion throughout this network, would be accomplished.

It was in this context that the European Management Forum published its first annual Global Competitiveness Report in 1979. From the outset, the report sought to define its version of competitiveness, highlighting the importance of a definition that encompassed social, political, and cultural considerations:

> Traditionally, competitiveness is defined mainly in terms of the cost of production and productivity. However, we know today that many other elements come into play: the internal dynamism of a country, its socio-political consensus, the quality of its human resources, its commercial spirit, the manner in which it prepares for the future, etc.[43]

To achieve its wide-ranging objectives, the report employed a combination of what it called "quantifiable elements"—international statistical indicators of national economic prosperity such as GDP and balance of trade—with "subjective" elements such as opinion polls conducted with business leaders and other "economic and social specialists" about their willingness to trade and invest with certain countries.[44] The countries were then ranked according to these two sets of data. The guiding logic was that this combination of quantitative and qualitative data would provide a total view of the nation from both a domestic and an international perspective and that this information would in turn allow managers to influence actors in both domestic and international environments.

By the late 1980s, the European Management Forum, in accordance with its expansionary objectives, had been renamed the World Economic Forum, and the Global Competitiveness Reports (GCRs) had become a benchmarking tool for countries all over the world. The intense media attention that each year's publication received, as well as the mentions increasingly made of the reports in state policy documents across widening international terrain, served to reinforce the reports' legitimacy and impact.

Just as the Forum's new name signaled an expansion of its territorial purview, a revised nomenclature for the qualitative information it collected suggested a more expansive perspective as well. Rather than referring simply to opinion polls as measures of subjective value, the GCR began to emphasize something broader, called "the softer side of competitiveness," as an important factor in the calculation of overall national prosperity. As the introduction to the 1992 report outlines, "the easily measurable hard facts affecting the performance of a country—such as GDP, growth, balance of trade, and inflation—must be taken in perspective with less easily measurable softer facts—such as motivation, education, attitudes and values." The report called these "cultural impacts on competitiveness" and explained that they needed to be accounted for. This was a new kind of challenge for the Forum since, as later reports cautioned, such forces "are often the result of tradition, history, or value systems. They are so deeply rooted in the 'modus operandi' of a country that, in most cases, they are not clearly stated or defined. They are 'given' and part of the national characteristics of a country." As new elements of competitiveness, however, these cultural forces needed to be uprooted and made visible.[45]

The report elaborated a way to account for and measure these cultural forces. It was possible to extract and analyze this intangible value on the basis of "attractiveness." Attractiveness referred to the likelihood of certain individuals to invest in or trade with a particular place on the basis of their perceptions of the locale. If the cultural criteria identified by the report were conducive to competitiveness, this was considered attractive to investors. But if cultural traits reflected noncompetitive behaviors or attitudes, this was a problem. The new GCRs of the 1990s purported to capture the degree of attractiveness of a place along such perceptual lines and translate this into specific metrics of economic value.[46]

To drive its point home, the report referred to Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Just as Weber had found a correlation between cultural beliefs and economic institutions, so did the report connect values and competitiveness:

> The softer side of competitiveness revolves around the relationship between competitiveness and values. It has been demonstrated in the past that having a set of collective values based on hard work, as found in Confucian or Calvinistic societies, is more conducive to competitiveness than following individual values as some other societies do. In looking back over the years, it is evident that values tend to evolve as countries reach different stages of their economic and cultural development.[47]

Weber had indeed analyzed the relationship between culture and economic development in his classic study. But the GCR turned Weber on his head. Weber's aim was to understand how the principles of economic growth had become naturalized and eventually inscribed into the logic of modern-day institutions, in order to understand how cultures had constructed such rationality as reality. It was not to establish any principles of cause and effect.[48] Moreover, if Weber had devoted much of his life's work to examining the emergence of the spirit of modern Western capitalism, it was to conclude that this spirit operated according to an increasingly destructive "ideal type" of profit at the expense of alternatives. For the writers of this competitiveness report, however, Weber's conclusion led to the idea that cultural impacts on competitiveness evolved over time.[49] Countries start out dedicated to more "collective values" such as hard work; as they "develop," they adopt other, more "individual" values such as self-achievement, which are more conducive to competitiveness.[50]

In the hands of the World Economic Forum's GCRs, competitiveness became a natural evolutionary process, one which individuals, firms, and nations ignored at their peril:

> Competitiveness has become to economics what gravity is to physics: one [of] the fundamental forces which underlie the major events that shape our World [sic]. Like gravity, it is a force that one can not escape. It affects equally companies that need to grow, individuals who want to preserve their jobs, and, of course, nations that wish to sustain and increase their standard of living. Understanding how competitiveness works is necessary for all.[51]

The comparison of economics to physics—of a natural science to a social one—is central to the argument I am making here. The turn to rankings and benchmarks as sources of national success and as motivations for not only economic but also social and cultural policy has a number of important implications. By representing competitiveness as a method, applicable to all spaces and times via immutable laws, history and society are removed from the equation. By representing competitiveness as a single well-trodden and tested path, the possibility of alternative trajectories is eliminated as well. The "methodological territorialism" of competitiveness indicators allows for certain features to be made measurable and others to be eviscerated.[52] A pivotal aspect of this transformation is the naturalization, normalization, and ultimately moralization of competitiveness as a national objective. Yet as critical accounts in a variety of settings have shown, there is nothing natural or self-evident about competitiveness.[53] Rather, we must see the production of WEF reports and related activities—the conferences,

workshops, symposia, and media attention that follow, as well as the emergence of nation branding as an international phenomenon—as performatives, constituting the competitiveness they aim to measure.[54] This performative effect has had a critical impact on the discursive and practical reorganization of the national imaginary.

To be clear, I am not suggesting that competition was not previously an objective of the nation-state. It can be argued that all nations are inherently competitive, insofar as they engage in the multiple practices of economic, political, and cultural exchange that characterize a world system of nation-states. As members of this world system, nations are both comparable and competitive along certain dimensions. Liah Greenfeld has suggested that the nationalist ethos is predicated on competition: the motivation of national actors to join their sense of self and dignity to the category of the nation is fostered by a sense of prestige, which is a "relative good." Nations compete on the basis of cultural, political, military, and economic prestige, and strive to be better than other nations at these things.[55] But competition is not the same as competitiveness, and the configuring of nation-ness as competitive in and of itself is a different story. If, as Arjun Appadurai suggests, the future of patriotism lies in evaluating "the discourses that are contained within the hyphen that links nation to state," the passage of the ethos of competitiveness from state to nation via the hyphen postulates a new future for the nation as a source of patriotic belonging.[56]

One way to take the measure of the new future of the nation is to look at how FDI has been construed as the basis of national attractiveness. With the decline in development financing from the international banking sector following the debt crisis of the 1970s as well as the entry of new players to the competitive arena (countries seeking export-oriented investment instead of relying on domestic markets or natural resources), both industrialized and developing countries searched for novel ways to attract foreign funds. And while programs existed to attract foreign investment directly based on cost-benefit pricing through incentives and various economic and political policy adjustments, some suggested that these programs needed to be bolstered by more "indirect" strategies that would increase the country's competitive advantage.

MARKETING A COUNTRY

One study in particular made these indirect strategies explicit. The report *Marketing a Country: Promotion as a Tool for Attracting Foreign Investment*, first appeared in 1990 (with a second edition published in 2001). Written

by American business professors Louis T. Wells, Jr. and Alvin G. Wint, with funding from the World Bank Research Program as well as the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) (both affiliates of the World Bank), the report began by noting the urgency for many countries to attract FDI in a rapidly globalizing environment. The report advocated the creation of national investment promotion agencies (IPAs) under the auspices of the country's government. Becoming a more attractive space for foreign investment was not simply a matter of having the right policies or incentives; it was also a matter of representing the country's offerings in a particular way to appeal to these potential investors. In short, the report emphasized that the way to raise FDI levels was to focus on strategies that would improve the *image* of the nation-state. And who better to work on image than the image experts themselves—the marketing departments of corporate firms, who for decades had been developing and honing tools and techniques for the image projections of the corporate world? In a programmatic statement, the authors point out:

> The new competitive foreign investment environment has prompted analogies between competition among governments for foreign investment and competition among firms for market share. Given the similarities in the nature of the competition, it is not surprising that countries are adopting marketing strategies that parallel those of private companies. Some of the findings of research on company marketing programs can thus benefit countries that are trying to attract investment.[57]

Drawing on research and interviews conducted between 1985 and 1987 with ten government-sponsored promotional investment agencies in a range of countries (from Britain and Canada to Singapore and Thailand) the study correlated these agencies' image-building techniques with their success in attracting FDI. There was undeniably a positive correlation.

IPAs were not new at this time. Many of the agencies studied in the report had been set up by government organs in the 1960s and 1970s, with some, such as Ireland's, created even earlier (1949).[58] But most of them had functioned until then entirely under the auspices of the government, and this, for the report writers, was a problem. The authors admitted that investment promotion in the service of the public sector required close contact with government, since funding as well as the bureaucratic functions of screening and negotiating foreign requests for investment and issuing approvals and permits came from government apparatuses. But the
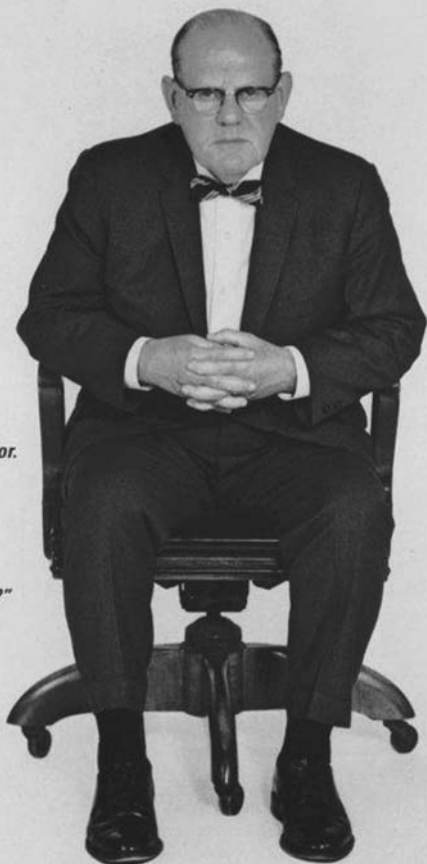
Figure 2.4:
McGraw-Hill print advertisement, 1958. Wells and Wint referred to this ad in their report, noting that: "Country and investment can readily be substituted for company and product in this advertisement, and it provides an illustration in support of the investment promotion strategy that calls for, under certain assumptions, a focus on image building to precede a focus on investment generation" (*Marketing a Country*, 14). © The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. No redistribution or reproduction without the permission of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

specific marketing tasks that would ultimately build the image of the territory were not natural to the public sector:

> . . . investment promotion is significantly different from traditional government processes such as directing, controlling, and regulating, creating and administering laws, exercising authority, operating as a custodian, and so forth. Investment promotion is, in fact, more like activities typical of the private sector, particularly marketing. It requires a continuous liaison with the private sector; the flexibility to respond speedily to investors' needs, adjust to changing market conditions, and acquire scarce management skills; and the autonomy to generate and implement investment promotion strategies that are consistent throughout a long period. Conventional government organizations are typically not very good at these tasks.[59]

The lack of expertise of government and diplomatic personnel in marketing matters, coupled with the lower budgets (not to mention salaries and incentives) of the public sector, made government-led promotional exercises at best a partial and passive enterprise. The report recommended an intermediate approach that would marry the benefits of private sector expertise with the legitimacy of public sector structures. By creating quasi-governmental agencies, also known as public-private partnerships, governments stood a much better chance of developing a successful image for their nation.[60]

The founding of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA) in 1995 served to codify and entrench these practices. Not surprisingly, WAIPA's Consultative Committee was made up of members from many of the organizations that had advocated the turn to investment promotion strategies in the first place: FIAS, the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), ProInvest, the OECD, UNCTAD, and UNIDO.[61] As of 2008, the association's members were represented across 156 countries and included not only standard IPAs but also representatives of chambers of commerce, industrial parks, free economic zones, and other spaces dedicated to promoting themselves as sites for foreign investment. Annual conferences, as well as regular workshops, study tours, mailings, and training programs, further embedded the principles of industrial marketing into governmental agendas.

REPRESENTATIONS AND REALITIES

Attractiveness became a key indicator of competitiveness in subsequent policy initiatives. This was particularly evident in the European Union (EU). The Lisbon Strategy, conceived in 2000 to make the EU "the most

competitive economy in the world," adopted a renewed set of objectives in 2005 that included making the EU "a more attractive place to invest and work." This included removing administrative obstacles to cross-border trade, encouraging entrepreneurship, and instituting a "reduction in state aid that distorts competition."[62]

Consultancies working in related industries saw the value of the conclusions drawn by such initiatives for the furtherance of their own work and adopted their vocabulary and ideology accordingly. Ernst & Young, a multinational tax, investment, and location advisory consultancy, developed its version of attractiveness surveys in 2002 to measure the difference between actual FDI flows and the perception of the investment climate of a country or region. To ensure that these reports circulated, and to advertise their wares, Ernst & Young helped to create a foundation and an annual World Investment Conference in Europe. The foundation and the conference were defined in their promotional literature as having "one overriding goal—a more attractive, more competitive Europe." "With globalization gaining ground, foreign direct investment and, by the same token, attractiveness have become priorities for governments and regional authorities. Today these are critical criteria for economic vitality and competitiveness at both macroeconomic and microeconomic levels."[63]

The conferences have been extremely well attended. Representatives from corporations, as well as public and private sector agencies devoted to investment promotion and regional development, sit in on sessions with titles like "Attractiveness on the Move" and "European Attractiveness Criteria," and attend themed breakfasts on further dimensions of attractiveness and competitiveness presented by Ernst & Young staff. The CNBC television network broadcasts on-site interviews live, has its reporters moderate events, and creates special reports on regions and countries.

An intriguing aspect of the Ernst & Young reports is the way they formulate their attractiveness results. Like the GCRs, these reports make use of both established statistical indicators of national economic performance and interviews with business and investment leaders. Displaying both sets of data in single tables, the reports refer to the statistical information on actual FDI amounts as "actual attractiveness" or "reality," and to the results of the opinion polls as "perceived attractiveness" or "image."

The postulation of a gap between reality and image both created a new problem and opened the door to a new kind of expertise required to fix it. The problem, as we have seen, was set up as one of aligning culture with the exigencies of competitiveness. By suggesting that culture followed an evolutionary model, in which the most advanced cultures demonstrated values of individualism and entrepreneurialism while less developed cultures

Drawing powers: perception and reality

Top image countries versus their actual attractiveness
(Country selection based on perceived attractiveness)

	Perceived attractiveness
	FDI inflows
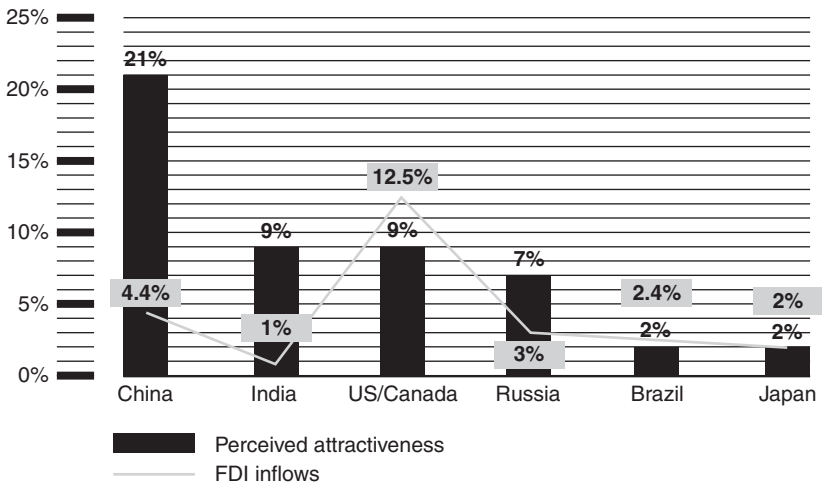
Source: *Ernst & Young's 2008 European attractiveness survey; UNCTAD inward FDI statistics 2006 and estimates 2007.*

Figure 2.5:
An Open World: Ernst & Young's 2008 European Attractiveness Survey, 10. © Ernst & Young.

focused on orienting to the conditions of demand, marketing and man-
agement experts established country rankings and other ordering systems
to locate countries in terms of their evolutionary path. The expertise also
served to combine and relate heterogeneous dimensions of culture, while
simultaneously providing internal calibrations of this culture via these
measurements and rankings.

The gap itself was presented in terms of a temporal distinction. The sug-
gestion was that in an information- and knowledge-based economy, where
intangible rather than tangible assets are the basis of capital and economic
growth, the knowledge of something called "reality" had to be balanced
with the knowledge of "perception." In the world of investment, particu-
larly foreign investment, in which the perception of non-domestic entrants
to the market is all-important, the difference between reality and image
was presented as the difference between the current situation and a po-
tential future value that may or may not accrue depending on the kinds of
investments made.[64] In the process, the terms "investment," "perception,"
"image," "culture," and "future" came to be associated. Celia Lury and Liz
Moor describe this as a "topological culture," in which there is a constant

Countries	Image		Reality		Advantage*
	Ranking image	Image 2006 (%)	Ranking reality of FDI	Market share 2005 (%)	
Germany	1	17.9%	3	5.9%	IMAGE
Poland	2	15.0%	4	5.9%	IMAGE
United Kingdom	3	11.0%	1	18.2%	REALITY
Czech Republic	4	8.3%	7	3.8%	IMAGE
France	5	7.2%	2	17.5%	REALITY
Spain	6	6.4%	6	4.8%	REALITY = IMAGE
Russia	7	5.5%	9	3.6%	IMAGE
Hungary	8	5.2%	7	3.8%	REALITY
Netherlands	9	2.9%	13	2.7%	IMAGE
Romania	10	2.5%	12	2.8%	IMAGE
Ireland	11	2.3%	15	2.2%	IMAGE
Italy	12	2.3%	18	1.6%	IMAGE
Belgium	13	2.1%	4	5.9%	REALITY
Switzerland	14	2.0%	11	3.0%	REALITY
Denmark	15	1.7%	17	1.8%	IMAGE

* The advantage was established by comparing the image/reality ranking of each country

Figure 2.6:
Ernst & Young European Attractiveness Survey 2006: Globalization Act II: Team Europe Defends Its Goals, 29. In this chart, "image" refers to surveys/interviews with business leaders (perceived attractiveness). "Reality" refers to FDI investments tracked since 1997 (real attractiveness). The survey purports to measure both. © Ernst & Young.

"projection of a space of future possibility against which the present is discounted."[65]

The gap appears as not only a temporal distinction but a spatial one as well. The marketing and management knowledge applied here to align image and reality can be likened to the development of maps, surveys, and other forms of calculation designed to contain national spaces and populations. Though these are intended to produce more accurate knowledge of the world, the signal achievement of these forms of calculation has not been to make spatial representation more accurate in accounting for a given reality but rather to solidify the divide between reality and the representations made of it.[66]

It was in this temporal and spatial gap that a TPC found its footing. By applying "hard" factors of control, measurement, and rationality on "soft," "immeasurable" features, they could act as harbingers of the kind of identity, strategy, and management that nations supposedly need to close this perception/reality divide. In this sense branding is a thoroughly innovative practice: rather than simply mediate or measure value, as marketing people will tell you they are doing, branding actually creates value by producing a form of knowledge that it requires for its own continuation. It requires that the economy be structured on the basis of particular versions of identity, authenticity, and recognition so it can structure its own function as a necessary response to these problems of identity, authenticity, and recognition.

In articulating the idea of national culture as globally competitive, the actors in this play engaged in a thought process that intentionally conceived of political, cultural, and economic spheres as separate. This is what Mitchell calls a "state effect," whereby "the state appears as an abstraction in relation to the concreteness of the social, a sphere of representation in relation to the reality of the economic, and a subjective ideality in relation to the objectness of the material world."[67] Firm managers—and eventually marketers, as we shall see—believed that to make the nation competitive they would have to create it in their image: a competitive, internally coherent economic space whose inhabitants were devoted to maintaining and extending a spirit of competitiveness and who, moreover, could affix their sense of identity to this new kind of economic space. By reimagining the nation as a site of competitiveness, these actors sought to create what Karin Knorr-Cetina calls an "epistemic culture," a bounded space in which certain kinds of knowledge attain validity and others are moved to the margins.[68]

To demonstrate what I mean, consider the original code of ethics of the WEF. This code is valuable to illustrate my argument, especially because of

the WEF's founding principle that it operates independently of policy pre-scriptions or political orientation:

> The purpose of professional management is to serve clients, shareholders, work-ers and employees, as well as societies, and to harmonize the different interests of the stakeholders.
>
> The management has to serve its clients. It has to satisfy its clients' needs and give them the best value. Competition among companies is the usual and ac-cepted way of ensuring that clients receive the best value choice. The manage-ment's aim is to translate new ideas and technological progress into commercial products and services.
>
> The management has to serve society. It must assume the role of a trustee of the material universe for future generations. It has to use the immaterial and mate-rial resources at its disposal in an optimal way. It has to continuously expand the frontiers of knowledge in management and technology. It has to guarantee that its enterprise pays appropriate taxes to the community in order to allow the community to fulfill its objectives. The management also has to make its own knowledge and experience available to the community.[69]

It is clear that a political agenda is at work, and yet the actors in these forums deny it. Why? Because to the business and managerial class, the kinds of knowledge created in these realms is held to be outside of political and cultural considerations. It is a strategically sound technique of manage-ment to imagine the nation-state as a discrete economic entity, rather than a political or cultural one. Conceived as an economic problem (a problem of marketing and management), these actors could be seen as experts of-fering purely economic (marketing- and management-oriented) solutions.

For these experts, making national culture competitive meant consti-tuting culture as an economic problem, one that could be rendered via ec-onomic solutions. To become competitive, culture needed to become *cal-culable*; it needed to be targeted as a discrete sphere of activity that could be measured and evaluated according to specific criteria. This would mean both articulating a narrow set of values to which all nations should aspire, values that were considered more conducive to economic prosperity than others; and it would mean applying specific metrics of evaluation to na-tions, in which the nation's capacity to achieve these standards and prac-tices was determined and ranked—competitively—against that of other nations. Finally, it would mean constructing the nation as an entity that was ultimately responsible for its own development. As the next chapter explores, the affixing of identity to this version of national space was vi-tally important. It was not merely about inspiring a sense of belonging; it

was also about underscoring who had the responsibility for such belonging. If the nation could "own" attributes of competitiveness, it could be responsible for its economic success or failure. By imagining the nation as a bounded territorial space, the work of transnational actors would not be seen as an inherent part of national activity but simply as a means to "facilitate" the nation's drive toward competitiveness.

Indeed, that these agencies were themselves part of the culture they proposed to work on was not part of their paradigm. By constructing the nation as a separate entity, similar to a firm, they could apply the kind of knowledge that would mold it into the open, flexible, capital-generating entity it needed to become. If culture had to be part of the mix, so be it. They would work on culture as well. The image of the nation thus created was a product of social constructivism, of "imagined community," but it was imagined by a community that saw itself as outside the realm of imagination.

Figure 3.1:
Garry Trudeau's fictional country of Greater Berzerkistan, in which public relations consultants reposition the pariah state as a stable international trading partner. DOONESBURY © (2007, 2008) G. B. Trudeau. Reprinted with permission of UNIVERSAL UCLICK. All rights reserved.

Living the Brand:
The Identity Strategies of
Nation-Branding Consultants

Lithuania.com was officially launched on November 5. A high-res banner—Democracy Pays Handsome Dividends—unfurled to the accompaniment of sixteen joyful bars of the "Dance of the Coachmen and Grooms" in *Petrushka*. Side by side, in a rich blue graphical space below the banner, were a black-and-white **Before** picture ("Socialist Vilnius") of shell-scarred façades and shattered lindens on the Gedimino Prospektas and a luscious color **After** photograph ("Free-Market Vilnius") of a honey-lit harborside development of boutiques and bistros. (The development was actually in Denmark.) For a week Chip and Gitanas had stayed up late drinking beer and composing the other pages, which promised investors . . . according to the level of financial commitment,

Pro rata mineral rights and logging rights to all national parklands!

Appointment of selected local magistrates and judges!

Fifty-percent discount on selected rentals of Lithuanian national troops and armaments on a sign-up basis, except during wartime!

Etc., etc.!

—Jonathan Franzen, *The Corrections*

As a brutally ironic portrayal of characters and situations at their worst, *The Corrections* is a testament to Franzen's ability to imagine the idiosyncrasies of modern life in the extreme. The above passage describes a scene in which Chip Lambert, a disgraced academic turned failed screenwriter, and Gitanas Misevicius, a Lithuanian "governmental entrepreneur," create a promotional website to lure Western investors to the debtor nation, allowing Lithuania to bypass the waiting lists necessary for assistance from

the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.[1] By contributing to the market liberalization of Lithuania, the website promises, investors will be handsomely rewarded, not only with various stakes in the country's territory and resources but also with the distinct sense of pride that comes with helping lift a country out of its backward, pre-market state to become a successful player in the global marketplace. Raymond Williams has described the "structure of feeling" that literature can reveal: by enacting the conflicts that arise "between the ethic and the experience," fiction's protagonists demonstrate the interplay of social relations, moral positions, and established institutions that constitute the lived culture of their time.[2] Though Franzen is celebrated for his inventiveness, perhaps the real talent of this novelist was his ability to conjure a cultural phenomenon that is not nearly as far-fetched as he might have intended.[3]

As we have seen in earlier chapters, "nation branding" as a concept and practice has captured the attention—and financial resources—of national governments in countries with established capitalist economies and emerging market economies alike. In the past few years, countries with such diverse political programs as Poland, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Botswana have jumped on the brandwagon, engaging the profit-based marketing techniques of private enterprise to create and communicate a particular version of national identity. A comprehensive nation-branding strategy is seen by its proponents as a public good, uniting municipal, regional, and national interests in the increasingly competitive quest to attract international legitimacy, foster and maintain domestic loyalty, and reap the financial rewards on offer in the trade-liberalized global marketplace.[4]

This situation raises a particular concern. If a public good is by definition an object of democracy, encouraging collective participation from its citizens and procuring just and equitable rewards for the benefit of all, what happens when this public good falls under the authority of private branding and advertising agents? Drawing on a series of in-depth interviews with consultants and researchers from advertising and branding firms, this chapter focuses on the discursive assumptions of and practical implications inherent to the craft of nation branding. Through this analysis, I develop two propositions: first, that by employing the symbolic resources and resonance of nationalist discourse which perpetuate the nation-state as a necessary frame of identity, allegiance, and affiliation, nation branding maintains and extends the nation as a legitimate entity in the context of globalized modernity. However, it does not do so without occasioning a distinct transformation. This is the basis of my second proposition: that the ideologies and practices by which nation branding operates alter the cultural context in which national identity is articulated and understood.

By transposing authority from elected government officials to advertising and branding professionals, by replacing accountability with facilitation, and by fitting discussions of the nation into categories that privilege a particular kind of collective representation over diverse expression, nation branding affects the moral basis of national citizenship.

Through a portrait of the discursive and practical techniques at play in this process, I address the ways in which nation branding promotes a particular organization of power, knowledge, and exchange in the articulation of collective identity. This is not merely a tale of the ongoing and thorough commodification of culture, nor of the subsumption of social relations into a series of market interactions. Though both of those effects are undeniably part of the picture, it is problematic both analytically and practically to take those component parts for an instrumental whole. As this account intends to show, culture—as category, discourse, and reproductive practice—continues to matter for the ways in which value, meaning, and self-understanding are made.

CHARACTERIZING THE FIELD

In the spring of 2007, I traveled to London, England, chosen as a strategic site of analysis for its sheer concentration of nation-branding consultancies. Interviewees were initially selected on the basis of three criteria: (1) mainstream media coverage (interviews, quotes, or references) positioning the consultant as an authoritative voice in the arena of place-based branding; (2) the maintenance of a professional public website that described their work as place-branding, whether as a sole practice or as one among other branding initiatives (e.g., fast-moving consumer goods branding); and (3) self-identification as a consultant of place branding or reasonable equivalent, such as country branding, nation branding, or national-brand capital development.[5]

The backgrounds of these professionals varied, although their prior experience was limited almost exclusively to business-based fields. Most had training in advertising or graphic design; some had worked in urban, regional, or national economic development in the private sector; still others had emerged from academic institutions with MBAs or business/management PhDs. Despite the somewhat limited size of this respondent pool and the circumscribed range of their background experience, however, there did not appear to be limitations to the geographic range and diversity of their clients.[6] Consultants surveyed claimed to have either advised or developed place-brand strategies for national, regional, and

Figure 3.2:
Location of nation-branding consultants (top) and location of client countries (bottom), 2007–2012.

municipal governments in countries on both sides of the equator and in both hemispheres.[7]

As with much research that takes place among elite respondents in urban centers, there is considerable irony to describing the interview process as fieldwork. The "natural" environment of branding and marketing executives is one of private clubs and lounges, corner tables in fine restaurants, or

massive office boardrooms flanking ultra-designed reception areas—with ultra-designed receptionists to populate them. Interviews lasted between one and three hours, depending on the goodwill of the participants. Often, the consultants I met insisted on paying for lunch or drinks consumed during the interview. At first this caused some discomfort, as I feared it would compromise my relationship with not only my interviewees but also my home university's ethics review board. Finally it became clear that this was part of the logic of the field; it was simply how this population did business, and thus a normal state of affairs.

My interviews had a dual purpose. The first goal was to learn more about the terminology, techniques, and strategies employed by nation-branding consultants: How do these consultants define their practice? What steps are involved in the creation and communication of a nation brand? How do they conceive of their role in the process? The second goal was to establish the determinants of success of the practice: What constitutes an effective nation brand? How is this brand maintained over time? And how do consultants account for the instances—if any—of resistance or failure?

ALWAYS ALREADY BRANDS: CONDITIONS OF THE PRACTICE

One finding of these interviews was the highly circumscribed nature of this field of practice. When asked to provide a working definition of nation branding, consultants took considerable pains to explain what nation branding was *not*: it is not "destination" branding or tourism marketing initiatives; it is not an "image makeover," nor an advertising campaign or a marketing strategy; and it is most emphatically *not* a mere logo and slogan. All of these things are part and parcel of the totality of the nation brand, but they are not in themselves constitutive.

> Nation branding is a very long-term thing and it involves a very comprehensive strategy bringing in all the players' governments whether it's city governments, national governments, tourism authorities, inward investment, outward—any force, including private companies, who help to define the way all those billions of people out there, in particular the several millions who really, really matter, view your place.

> Brand strategies are not like advertising campaigns, like say on CNN. You don't put a brand out to the world just for the 20-second, 15-second ad on CNN for 6 months—so that's XYZ saying come to my country . . . it has to be brought alive through actions that are "on brand."

Given the defensive posture these consultants take relative to their work, very few outfits are deemed to be actually doing nation branding. It is therefore not surprising that among the few who lay claim to the territory, there is a high degree of recognition, a considerable measure of pride, and a certain—albeit grudgingly conferred—mutual respect. When prompted to recommend other consultants I could speak with, they referred only to one another; indeed, not a single potential interlocutor in London was mentioned who was not already on my interview list.[8]

Despite arriving armed with a working knowledge of the practice from secondary sources and prior first-hand experience, my initial question— "How do you create a brand?"—required rethinking in the field, as I was immediately upbraided for my presumption. According to these consultants, nations are *already* de facto brands, regularly projecting their assets, attributes, and liabilities to a public at large, whether intentionally or not. Indeed, nation branding is perceived as a rhetorical and functional equivalent to national identity. As Wally Olins, founder of the brand consultancy Wolff Olins, writes:

> Interestingly, there is nothing particularly novel about the concept of branding the nation. Only the word "brand" is new. National image, national identity, national reputation are all words traditionally used in this arena and they don't seem to provoke the same visceral hostility as the word "brand." Although the technologies are new and infinitely more powerful and pervasive than ever before, and the word "brand" is also new, the concepts which it encompasses are as old as the nation itself.[9]

Presuming the primordial existence of the nation-state as an "always already" category of kinship and recognition, branders see their work as skillful manipulation rather than creation or invention.[10] For this reason they offer their expertise not as makers or producers of a nation brand but merely as facilitators who apply the tools and techniques of their trade to help nations meet the requirements of the contemporary context. It is a process of uncovering, not generating, value. Yet this process is seen as a necessary one, for even if nations are already de facto brands, there is still much work to be done by the consultant in league with his or her national client to shape, mold, and orient (or re-orient) the image of the nation for its purpose.

Generally speaking, there are four distinct steps involved in the preparation of a nation brand: evaluation, training, identification, and implementation/communication (considered as a single step for reasons I will discuss shortly). The following sections examine each of these in turn, to evaluate their discursive assumptions and practical implications.

Evaluation: Measuring and Ranking National Value(s)

The first step in a branding process is one of evaluation. What are the current perceptions of the nation by domestic and foreign audiences, and which elements of the extant national identity require particular scrutiny? Here a variety of research methodologies are employed to collect and harness diverse perceptions. The most common of these are public opinion interviews or surveys.[11] One popular and widely emulated survey, called the Nation Brands Index (NBI), polls (as of 2012) over twenty thousand individuals in fifty countries on a yearly basis, ranking countries according to respondents' perceptions of the country's tourism, governance, exports, culture, heritage, people, investment, and immigration.[12] Some reports are periodically available for free online, a cherished technique of the savvy marketer. I was able to download the Q4 2006 report, for example, at no charge. This data, described by the index's inventor Simon Anholt as "a unique barometer of global opinion," is now regularly used by governments to gain support for policy, spending, and trade decisions.[13]

Using the system of public opinion as an evaluative tool has a long history in the advertising industry. The historian T. J. Lears has described the multiple functions of public opinion research for early twentieth-century advertising agents. Steeped in the "Barnumesque entrepreneurship" of their nineteenth-century predecessors, new generations of advertisers were keen to lend their trade a measure of respect.[14] Turning to the seeming rationality and value-neutrality of public opinion allowed them to shift the epistemological basis of advertising from hucksterism to truth-telling.[15] The double hermeneutic is clear: by couching the motives of profit in a scientistic discourse of rationality, advertisers attempted not only to legitimate their findings but also to validate their craft.

The desire to measure the public opinion of nations by their counterparts has its own historical trajectory, though the reasons for this desire vary according to the conditions of such measurement. One example may prove illustrative. In 1953, Princeton social scientists Hadley Cantril and William Buchanan published the findings of a four-year study under the title, *How Nations See Each Other: A Study in Public Opinion.* Prepared under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the study surveyed thousands of individuals in Australia, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Mexico, and the United States with the aim of identifying "sources of tensions" among nations.[16] In the aftermath of the Second World War, international perception of national character was deemed a consideration of paramount importance: "The individual's assumptions concerning the nature of the

world, of which ideas concerning men and nations and war and peace are fragments, form the intellectual framework within which he considers proposals for change." The study is designed not to elicit "real" reasons for the individual's view of certain nations, the authors explain, but rather "to get at his rationalization and assumptions," in particular those which supported actions in wartime that in other times and places would be unthinkable.[17]

In the NBI, the perception of character is also a consideration of paramount importance, but with a critical distinction: national character matters primarily in terms of its fitness for market exchange. As the 2006 report summarizes:

> The nation brand is a clear and simple measure of a country's "license to trade" in the global marketplace, and the acceptability of its people, hospitality, culture, policies, products and services to the rest of the world . . . the only sort of government that can afford to ignore the impact of its national reputation is one which has no interest in participating in the global community, and no desire for its economy, its culture or its citizens to benefit from the rich influences and opportunities that the rest of the world offers them.[18]

By conflating public opinion research with marketing research, the NBI also seeks to elide differences between the individual as citizen and as consumer. A rationale for this conflation is contained in a consultant's observation: "One of the reasons I believe the construct of the nation will continue to matter is because consumers want it." A second, more instrumental reason is simply that consultants need to maintain a steady stream of clients. Observing the poor scores of South Korea in the 2005 NBI, Anholt speculates that respondents described the South Korean government as "dangerous," "sinister," "unstable," and "unpredictable" because they had trouble distinguishing between North and South Korea. Rather than seeing this as a point of concern for either the legitimacy of responses or the quality of the survey, Anholt concludes that this represents "a major image problem" for South Korea—one that requires, presumably, the attention of a nation-branding consultant.[19]

As we saw in chapter two, competitiveness indices also make use of public opinion surveys to compile their rankings. The Institute of Management Development's World Competitiveness Yearbooks (WCY) and the World Economic Forum's GCRs rank and measure countries according to a combination of international statistical indicators of national economic prosperity, collected from sources like the World Trade Organization and the Economist Intelligence Unit, as well as the "executive opinion" surveys

of business climate and attitudes toward investment and trade. The statistics and surveys were considered to account for "hard" and "soft" factors, respectively, providing an integral view of national advantage. For his index, Anholt borrowed liberally from the concepts in these competitiveness reports to develop its own measurement paradigm. Like the GCRs and WCYs, the NBI employs a hierarchical ranking system, articulating a single apex toward which all nations in the survey were intended to competitively strive. Also like these competitiveness reports, the index articulates what it calls quantitative and qualitative indices to develop its rankings. There is, however, a crucial distinction in the way the NBI constitutes its data. Rather than draw from established statistical economic indicators (the "hard" factors), the NBI uses surveys as the basis of *both* quantitative and qualitative measurements. In other words, international opinion (the "soft" factor) forms the sole input to the rankings.
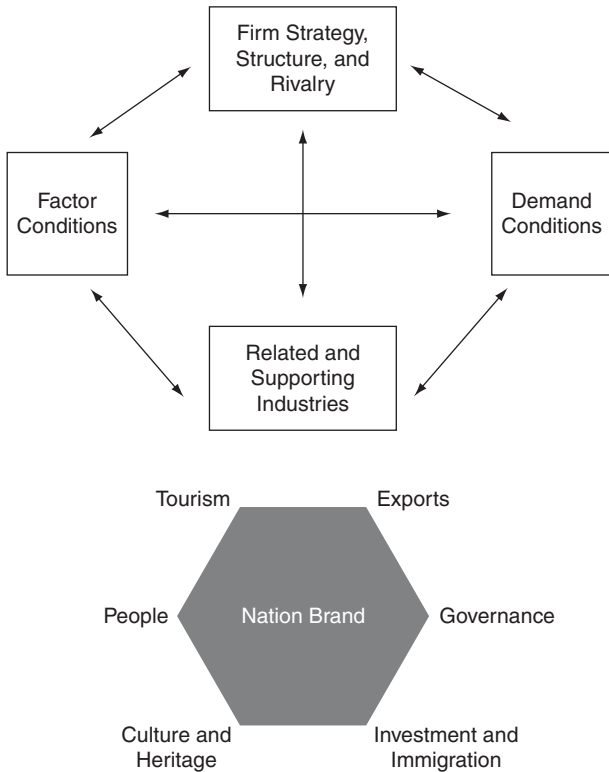
Figure 3.3:
Top: Michael Porter's "Diamond," indicating the "determinants of national advantage." Adapted from Michael Porter, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* (Free Press, 1990), 72. © Michael Porter 1990. Bottom: Simon Anholt's Nation Brand Hexagon. Each point is meant to represent "'natural' channels of national behavior and national communication." © Simon Anholt, 2000.
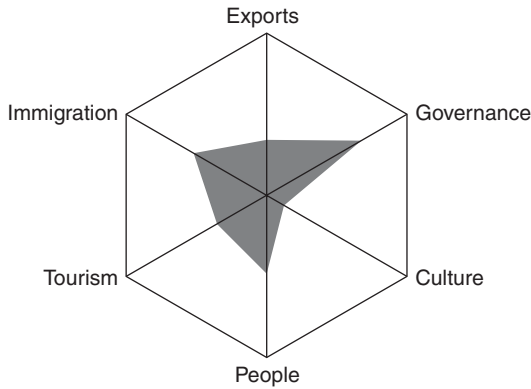
"How the World Sees Iceland"

Figure 3.4:
Visualizing the Competitive Identity. A sample of the Nation Brand Hexagon analysis as applied to Iceland, 2007. © Simon Anholt.

By sidelining the hard factors and placing the soft ones at the center, the NBI offers its multiple audiences a different kind of integrative viewpoint. Rather than evaluating national productive potential according to a range of variables, with culture as one among several inputs to a nation's international competitiveness, the NBI focuses *exclusively* on culture as the causal variable, suggesting that evaluations of the national identity form the core of all other infrastructures. To put it another way: while Michael Porter and the WEF promoted the competitive *advantage* of nations, the NBI and its peers promote the competitive *identity* of nations.[20] The index therefore professes to account for, measure, and rank a nation's identity as the dominant source of national value. Using similar ranking styles and forms of visualization helped to create a sense of continuity between the different reports. The authority and legitimacy of the competitiveness reports could be transferred to the NBI.

Training: How to Get a Better Pearl

Once an evaluative portrait has been made, a working party is convened by the branding consultancy from among private and public sector stakeholders to assist in the selection, implementation, and stewardship of the brand vision for the nation. Private sector involvement is key, as one interviewee observed: "One of the reasons New Zealand was successful is that it was started by the private sector and was funded by it, right at the beginning."

One consultant wanted not only involvement on the part of his national client's private sector but full oversight of the nation brand:

> They [national clients] could have gone for a new government department. They could have decided to bring the private sector inside government. But we kept saying to them, "No. If you curtail those natural commercial instincts and their ability to work with the flexibility that the private sector gives you then I don't think you'll get the kind of management you're looking for." And we need to almost put a bit of sand in the oyster to get a better pearl. And that'll be that unit—it will come with private sector values, and it will worry away at the public sector, saying, "Why are you doing it in that daft silly way."

Just as "getting a better pearl" in marine life requires the delicate cultivation of the oyster over a long period of time, so the brand initiative is a protracted process in political life, requiring careful management and control. This explains why branding cannot fall within the purview of government or the public sector alone, according to the consultants; election periods in office do not correspond to the long-term horizon of the nation brand. It also explains why consultants advocate "training" or "education" to invest stakeholders with the techniques of national brand stewardship. One consultant calls his work "teaching." Assembling the chosen brand representatives ("the head of state and/or the head of government . . . the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Culture and Tourism and Education and two or three CEOs of important internationally prominent companies and some sort of representative of civil society—religious leader, famous sporting star, somebody who's got their finger on the pulse of the population and is respected by them"), the consultant endeavors to

> teach them how to look at the problem and how to resolve it, placing the responsibility to do something about it firmly in their hands. I mean there's a bit of coaching them through the process of developing the strategy and I'm usually doing the research for them . . . and sometimes I do that thing where you come up with the idea and pretend that they did . . . And the governments I was doing it with said to me, "This is such a luxury, being able to do this. It doesn't matter whether it's a brand or whatever you want to call it; the fact of the matter is we never get an opportunity, as a cabinet, to sit down with the private sector and civil society in a room and talk strategically and long term."

Again, the work here is to facilitate, since the extended temporal horizon ("a 15- to 20-year timeline") prevents the involvement of the consultant at all stages of the branding process. Indeed, inherent in the

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- **Paul Bannister**
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- **Kofi Amoo-Gottfried**
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  President, Advertising Association of Ghana
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Figure 3.5:
A form of training: the Nation Branding Masterclass in Africa, September 28, 2008.

professionalization of consultancy is the absence of long-term oversight or accountability, accompanied by the maintenance of "social distance" by consultants from their clients.[21] Consultants expect a considerable degree of loyalty by their clients to the brand project ("You can't just walk away from it"), since they themselves envision their role in terms of months rather than years. They do not see themselves as responsible for either the maintenance of the brand initiatives or the success of the effort, a feature of nation branding that was directly demonstrated to me

when I attempted to regain contact with a consultant to follow up on his work in an African country. Two months after our interview, in which he described his extensive involvement with the country's steering committee and national branding process, he had embarked on a new career (in a related field), and would not reply to my emails.

Identifying the "Core Idea": Essential Elements

The third step in a nation-branding project is to develop a "brand essence," also called a "core idea," accompanied by a brand strategy or vision that will animate this idea. *Essence* is a particularly apt term, since the process of brand identity development is one of essentialism—"a reduction of the diversity in a population to some single criterion held to constitute its defining 'essence' and most crucial character."[22] Determining the brand essence is perhaps the most complicated element of any branding process, as its effectiveness is determined by its ability to negotiate four spheres of identification: standardization, difference, rationality, and emotionality. As a point of *differentiation*, the brand essence must distinguish its object from its counterparts to allow it to emerge from a cluttered and competitive environment. Yet the identity cannot be so unique as to be outside the calculus of exchange; if its ultimate aim is to help its object circulate as a viable commodity in the marketplace, it must remain rooted in a relational context of functional similarity or *standardization*. Moreover, the brand must simultaneously elicit *emotional* attachment, to "humanize the brand"—that is, inspire loyalty from its users—and be justifiable on a *rational* level, as the core of a strategy designed to generate political and economic capital.

If the interplay of these four factors constitutes the effective logic of branding in the corporate world, the politics of identity in the national realm are qualitatively similar in character—if not in execution. The rhetoric of national consciousness is inherently one of integration, seeking unifying and universalizing tropes to join its members in a common framework of a single "public." It is also one of distinction, a rhetoric of boundaries mobilized to establish who belongs and who does not.[23] There is also a parallel to be drawn in terms of the mutual benefit of exchange. As Calhoun reminds, the discourse of nations emerged in the context of the rapid expansion of the scale and scope of capitalist markets; national discourse replaced—or rather, enfolded—that of smaller localities in order to accommodate the geopolitical context of international exchange. Nations that

did not fit into the newly established categories—of trade, administrative or military organization, or other institutional structures—could not hope to become viable players in the emerging international system.[24]

It is perhaps for this reason that two of the more common tropes of nation brand strategies are *normalcy* and *peacefulness*, intrinsic elements for national viability:

> Poland is normal. There's a metro in Warsaw that works, there are buildings going up all the time (including one by Norman Foster) and both local and international chain retailers are filling up shopping areas. The bottom line is that while still a work in progress, Poland is becoming more and more normal, practically by the minute.[25]

> We were helping Macedonia prepare its case for joining the EU and so why they need to join—all the things they can take subsidies for. You know, we argued . . . what we can do. And we will be the peacemaker of the Balkans. And we will think about setting up an international peace study center and we will train diplomats; we'll do all the other economic development things as well, but this is the thing we'll be known for. We'll basically have this as a core component of our identity and now for the brand of Macedonia, in the international world where people come to think of it, they'll think, oh, that's the place that makes peace. For the Balkans.

In the context of forms of identity that challenge the validity of national boundaries—whether supranational, transnational, or subnational—and that mobilize fear, distrust, or simply lack of familiarity, the presence of national structures that appear to ensure normalcy or peaceability are given a much heartier welcome.

"Living the Brand": Communication as Implementation

Regardless of the makeup of stakeholders or the qualities of the core idea, the primary responsibility for the success of the nation brand lies with individuals: the nation's citizens, members of the diaspora, or even noncitizens in distant locations who may find cause to engage with the nation and therefore wish to have a stake in its success. For national citizens in particular, the key function is to "live the brand"—that is, to perform attitudes and behaviors that are compatible with the brand strategy. By "immersing" themselves in the brand identity, as one consultant put it, citizens carry "the microbes of the brand" and "infect" those with whom they come into contact. This role is described variously as a brand ambassador,

brand champion, brand exemplar, or brand carrier. One consultant described the rationale for living the brand in this way:

> We've seen enough product advertising to know that what we actually remember more are human beings, and the service they give us and the stories they have to tell, rather than the pictures of beds in hotels, cars that are made, jewelry, necklaces, landscapes . . . so brand exemplars will be used both within the country and out of sight, to tell the story about the place. We'll over the years create tens of thousands of these people who exemplify the brand in action, the values of that bit of the brand.

As the consultants I interviewed continually took pains to remind me, the nation brand may be augmented and made visible through its logos, slogans, and promotional campaigns, but these are not effective forms of communication without the wholehearted participation of its representatives. Nation branding is at its core a concerted and comprehensive strategy by national citizens of all strata of society to assimilate and communicate this new national identity on an ongoing basis. Some consultants noted the similarity of this effort to the strategies of private corporations, which incite their employees to model "on brand" behavior in the workplace—though with one crucial distinction: "The final thing is to inspire people, and they have to deliver the brand, and you can't rule a population the way in which you can rule your employees."

The need to inspire such allegiance and affiliation in the brand identity reveals a critical dimension of the practice: as a form of communication, the media of the message are effectively the citizens themselves. This is embedded in the attendant terminology. The communications and marketing strategies that underpin the brand are often referred to as "hymn sheets" or "song sheets," which, as the terms imply, are intended to harmonize and unify the communications for the nation brand among the diverse members of the population. Typically hymn sheets are collected in a "brand book" to convey the principles of the brand essence, its core ideas, and its vision or strategy. The brand book is reproduced on a mass scale and distributed among citizens through a variety of channels.

Note that "creation" as an action has re-entered the dialogue. Although consultants do not see their role vis-à-vis the *brand* as one of creation, they do see their work as a necessary creation of *subject positions* relative to the nation brand, since "we've found in our experience that when you're translating a brand into communication, if you allow people to interpret it for themselves, the brand gets completely distorted in people's understanding."

REFLECTIONS ON NATIONAL (BRAND) IDENTITY

While a private corporation may inspire its employees to "live the brand" with a standards manual and the promise of a paycheck, it is unclear how a national government could incite those under its purview to do the same. Yet the idea that each individual bears the responsibility of integrating specific attitudes and behaviors that reflect national allegiance is a common trope in the mobilization rhetoric of nationalist strategies. Calhoun has described how,

> as a way of conceptualizing political communities, nationalist rhetoric stresses, among other tropes, an understanding of the individual as directly and immediately related to the nation, so that national identity is experienced and recognized as *personally embodied* and not the contingent result of membership in intermediate groups.[26]

If the rhetoric of nation branding echoes that of nationalist discourse in this regard, it also commits the same fallacy of omission or subjugation. Both perpetuate understandings of the nation as an integral, homogeneous unit, with boundaries not easily permeated by alternative visions of either membership or autonomy. This has implications for the conception and practice of public life, since "where nationalism or any other cultural formation represses difference . . . it intrinsically undermines the capacity of a public sphere to carry forward a rational-critical democratic discourse."[27]

At the outset of this chapter, I discussed the conception of nation branding by its proponents as a public good, that is, a unification of interests in the pursuit of common capital. But as Calhoun's discussion of nationalism and difference shows, a public good that presumes the existence of a single public ignores the infinite pluralities, conflicts, and potentials for resistance that characterize the realities of public life. Conceiving of a single public also ignores the creative and evolving potential of publics in space and in time. While nation branding pays lip service to public participation and the diversity of opinions, its reliance on a "core idea" to represent a national population comes at the cost of recognizing internal differentiation, resistance, or conflict. But indeed, this is the very point. Branding's work is to erase the prominence of those attributes which might compromise the legitimacy of the nation-state in a market democracy. These attributes are called "hygiene factors" in the business: obstacles such as "investment red tape," "poor infrastructure," and "corruption." The effects of the conscious selectivity of the core idea are not lost on the clients who commission and pay for it. Branding appears as a benign form of national consciousness, because elements that are not benign are not permissible within a nation

branding framework. Though consultants appeared generally aware of "real" historical, geopolitical, and cultural differences among the nations they were called upon to brand (in fact, they displayed considerable historical and cultural knowledge of the territories with which they worked), these were only taken as points of differentiation if conceived as part of the brand vision, strategy, or execution. In other words, for qualitative differences of place to be considered legitimate values, they must be deemed to confer "value added."

While nation branding appears to some as an exclusively external or surface strategy—a means to project a competitive image at large to attract international favor, whether in terms of cultural or economic capital—the exhortation to "live the brand" reveals something vital about the practice. This in turn reveals a critical dimension of the constitution of national identity. Identity is never only *externally* (internationally) determined—whether through international opinion, supranational policy, or mediated representation—or *internally* (domestically) generated—whether through social engineering by elites or the collective will of citizens. Rather than setting these up as antagonistic or incommensurable entities, we might more productively view these as dialectically related, as mutually constitutive parts of a whole. National identity is contingent and relational, mobilized to center the collective self in relationship to an ever-shifting other. But there is also the crucial dimension of self-determination, whereby individuals may establish shared horizons of significance within a collectivity. As Charles Taylor has argued, there is a "fundamentally *dialogical* character" to self-determination; our own ideas of who we are derive from our capacity for mutual exchange in order to arrive at common understanding, or at least, a common understanding of differences as they are produced and reproduced in modern societies.[28] To properly understand what nation branding—or any other attempt to create and communicate issues of identity—achieves, we must take into account both the external motivations of identity projection and the claims made for internal, collective self-identification.

This is not an apologia for nation branding as a form of national identity. Nation branding may well function as a "public good" in an instrumentalist and economic sense, where non-rivalrous and non-exclusionary use of the good by its citizens requires the regulatory arm of government to coordinate the provision of that good in the marketplace.[29] But this position does not map well onto ideas of the collective good in terms of our moral and ethical responsibilities and relationships to our territorial allegiances. Taylor makes this distinction in his discussion of the conflicts of modernity in terms of identity, arguing that such instrumental visions of the public good enable an "atomist outlook" which erodes citizens' relationships with their public and political institutions:

> Atomism has so befogged our awareness of the connection between the act and consequence in society that the same people who by their mobile and growth-oriented way of life have greatly increased the tasks of the public sector are the loudest to protest paying their share of the costs of fulfilling them. The hegemony of this outlook in our politics, further entrenched by irresponsible bureaucracy, also represents a standing threat to our ecological well-being.[30]

The form of recognition that nation branding offers may promote "wealth" in finance-capital- and attention- or knowledge- or experience-intensive economies, but this awareness must be accompanied by an understanding of what other forms of collective wealth—self-realization, non-instrumental forms of community, mutual respect—may be lost in the process.

CONCLUSION: THE ETHIC AND THE EXPERIENCE

Even with the identification of a brand identity and the codification of a brand strategy, there remains a gap—to echo Williams—between the ethic and the experience. The field of nation branding is still in its infancy. Very few nation-states are deemed to have successfully implemented a coherent and functional brand and recorded measurable results from branding initiatives. When probed about the sometimes lengthy lists of client locations featured on their websites or in publications, consultants explained that they may have "done work" or "advised" in these locations, but that the work had not culminated in the successful implementation of a nation brand on their terms. In some cases, they had completed an initial stage of nation brand research for their client, but the brand implementation had not gone forward, either for lack of client funds or, in some cases, because of the unstable political climate of the region. As one interviewee noted, "Lebanon has blanket negative coverage right now." Said another:

> . . . the nation [of Israel] is behind this defensive wall, and they've got to come out of that and think long-term—and long-term planning in Israel is about two years. So they've got to come to terms with these issues, but I think if they can, national brand strategy could offer them a way of thinking about what's Israel's future offer to the world.

The legitimacy of these justifications notwithstanding, I think it is possible to identify some underlying reasons that might explain the lack of fit between the brand identity and national identity "on the ground." Ironically, these insights became clear to me when I came across an industry document describing a consultancy's branding work in the Øresund region, a narrow

passageway between Denmark and Sweden. Describing the critical differ-
ence between branding a product and branding a place, the authors observe
that "you don't have to ask the beans in the can how they feel about the
label."[31] This sentence contains the moral dilemma at stake in the branding
process; unlike the work of mapping a branded image onto a product, the
mapping of a nation brand onto its recipients is obviously subject to a range
of responses.

One telling response came from a British consultant who had helped de-
velop some of the mechanisms of evaluation for the NBI. As our interview
drew to a close, I asked him which places in the world might *not* make good
brands. Would Britain, his home territory, be a good brand candidate?

> No. It's got too much baggage, historically. If it could just wipe the slate clean
> now, maybe that would be different, but it can't . . . it is complex stuff and a big
> economy, does all sorts of different things, a lot of which are not very, not very
> innovative, traditional clothes and hunting and fishing and stuff. It's a night-
> mare for anyone trying to reinvent the country.

What is revealed in this thinking is the recognition of what branding
cannot do: account for the plurality of voices, legacies, and competing vi-
sions of the nation-state. It also reveals a distinct, historically imperialistic
tendency among British consultants to presume that their clients in
Eastern European, African, and North American locales have cleaner slates
and less baggage to carry. That we now call this form of authority soft
power instead of the methods of hard power that marked earlier forms of
domination does not diminish its hegemonic intent.

Examples like these, I suggest, are less interesting as demonstrations of
the success or failure of nation-branding strategies than as an indication
that the nation continues to matter as a framework for claims to legitimacy,
recognition, and rights in the contemporary context. It also serves to under-
score how branding consultants and their clients miss crucial ways in which
national consciousness is produced and conveyed. The considerable gap be-
tween the representation of social life and the lived experience of those rep-
resented is central to an analysis of culture. Yet nation branding does do real
work, as evidenced by the shifts this practice has effected on national policy
and fund allocation. Rather than dismiss branding as merely gold-plating or
profit centered—though it is incontrovertibly both of these—we might con-
sider the ubiquity of this discourse as a form of distinction, its expansion
into realms where the politics of identity loom large, and the ongoing effects
the practice can have on our person and on our cultural consciousness.

Creative Tension, Normal Nation: Branding National Identity in Poland

We brought into the new times many of the animating values from our years of social resistance: pluralism, tolerance, civic freedom, as well as a conviction that the market is the best regulator of economy—not only the most effective regulator, but also perhaps the most just. Yet the market does not possess a heart and thus it needed to be corrected . . .

More and more people became rich; some opened private enterprises, restaurants, hotels, and commercial banks; others became merchants and lawyers. But the number of the jobless and the homeless, the defeated and the frustrated, also grew. There was not enough bread for some, and so it appeared that circuses might be necessary.

—Adam Michnik, "What Europe Means for Poland"

THE SOUL OF THE NATION

On the afternoon of June 6, 2002, a singular individual of 71, sporting a bowtie and round black "Mr. Magoo" glasses, stood at a podium before a small crowd assembled in the Quotation Room of Warsaw's newly reopened Stock Exchange.[1] In the audience were members of the Polish Office of the Committee for European Integration;[2] the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market;[3] the Unia i Polska, a Polish pro-European Union think tank; and an assortment of Polish business executives, including representatives from the office of patent attorneys Dreszer, Grenda & Partners. The conference was titled "Brands for an Integrated Market" (*Marki na miarę Wspólnego Rynku*), the theme was Poland's image in the world, and the speaker was acclaimed British branding and design consultant Wally Olins.

Olins has been a central figure in the arena of international design and corporate branding for nearly four decades.[4] Founding partner in 1965 of Wolff Olins, a corporate brand consultancy that had grown to include offices in Barcelona, London, New York, San Francisco, and Tokyo, Olins sold his stake in 1997 and started Saffron, which bills itself as "an independent consulting firm working for countries, companies, and other enterprises on branding and identity issues."[5] In 1989 he published what would eventually become a landmark text in the annals of private enterprise, *Corporate Identity*.[6] Unlike most prior works on management theory, which privileged an instrumentalist logic of efficiency and utility as levers of corporate success, *Corporate Identity* suggested that the key to corporate competitiveness was to foster a sense of loyalty, commitment, and pride.

On the first page, the book's message is made clear:

> Purpose and belonging are the two facets of identity.
>
> Every organization is unique, and the identity must spring from the organization's own roots, its personality, its strengths and its weaknesses.
>
> This is as true of the modern global corporation as it has been of any other institution in history, from the Christian church to the nation-state.
>
> The identity of the corporation must be so clear that it becomes the yardstick against which its products, behaviour and actions are measured.
>
> This means that the identity cannot simply be a slogan, a collection of phrases: it must be visible, tangible and all-embracing.
>
> Everything that the organization does must be an affirmation of its identity.[7]

An Oxford-trained historian, Olins drew on his education to elaborate in *Corporate Identity* some of the ways that the modern corporation can learn important lessons from prior articulations of nationhood. The Confederate States of America, for example, produced a constitution, a flag, and a declaration of independence, followed "within an extraordinarily short time" by a capital city, a senate, a house of representatives, an army, and a navy. Such institutional and legal embodiments were reinforced by symbolic and semiotic ones: the Blue and the Gray, the "stars and bars," the whistled Dixie. *Corporate Identity* also recounted the 1877 staging of a Durbar in colonial India. Referring to Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's classic volume on nationalism, *The Invention of Tradition*, Olins described the symbols and ceremonies by which the British Empire asserted its power over its subjects: uniforms, coats of arms, and a new title for Queen

Victoria (*Kaiser-I-Hind*, the Empress of India). "The analogy with the re-birth and rededication of some of our modern corporations is remark-able," Olins observed.[8] To conclude, he wrote, "no nation and no century has been immune from inventing traditions" to communicate its political, economic, and cultural transformations.[9] From revolutionary France to Germany and Italy, from Pakistan to Israel, and from Bangladesh to Zimbabwe, new realities required new means of expression:

> When Rhodesia became Zimbabwe and Salisbury became Harare, the symbolism was clear. Robert Mugabe and his colleagues were inventing new traditions in order to create a new country. Mugabe, in common with every other leader of every new regime in every new country, knew intuitively what businessmen and industrialists sometimes find hard to accept or to understand: that people need to belong, they need to know where they stand, they need their loyalties under-lined and emphasized, and they desperately need—we all desperately need—the magic of symbolism.[10]

If *Corporate Identity* signaled a fundamental shift in the model of the modern corporation—from Weberian rationality to a "sentimental com-munity" of organic subjects—the shift signaled by the Warsaw Stock Ex-change (WSE) meeting in 2002 was that the roles had been reversed. The purpose of the WSE conference was to suggest that nation-states ought to take a page from the manuals and style guides of private enterprise and learn to inspire loyalty, belonging, and leadership from the structures of corporate affiliation. In effect, the argument was that the concept of a brand, a proven toolkit to create and manage value(s) in the modern corpo-ration, ought now to be applied toward the considerably less coherent and cohesive identities of the modern nation. Just as the brand had become the soul of the modern corporation, so could it restore the soul to the modern nation.[11] In the context of Poland—given the unprecedented transforma-tions it had experienced in a twenty-year period and its new standing as NATO member, EU partner, and global player—a brand would offer the country the "magic of symbolism" needed to communicate these realities and transformations to the world. The need for such a project in Poland was seen as particularly acute, for it was not the country's business leaders and industrialists who found such attitudes hard to accept, but rather state governments and national citizens, whose recent experience in the practice of loyalty and belonging was grossly inadequate preparation for the brave new world ahead. Although that conference marked the first time Olins had visited the country, it was not to be the last. In December 2003, the

Polish chamber of commerce, in collaboration with the ministry of foreign affairs, retained the services of Saffron consultants to create Poland's national brand identity.

This chapter is about the invention of this brand new identity: the means by which it was created and communicated, the ends it was meant to attain, and the ways in which it was interpreted within the political and cultural spheres of contemporary Polish society. Through this portrait, my aim is to advance three general claims about the phenomenon. The first claim, which I have been promoting throughout this study, is that the discourses and practices of nation branding are intended to reshape the nation in such a way that it adheres to and advances a particular vision of globalization. This vision, as we have seen, presents globalization as inevitable and inexorable; it privileges elite (and often foreign) agency, isomorphic institutional design, and metrological (as opposed to cultural/historical) forms of knowledge. It has particular resonance in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe because it is tied up with the logic of transition, narrowly defined. At one level, then, we can see how discussions of national identity in contemporary Poland have been circumscribed by the logic of global exchange, the import of expertise, and the quantification of creativity in the context of transition.

My second claim, a dialectical bracket to the first, is that nation branding achieves its efficacy by employing long-embedded tropes of nation-ness in Poland, appealing to aspects of collective will, direct membership, cultural specificity, and patriotic sentiment (among other themes) to create an image of the Polish nation that reinforces its claims to history and to cultural memory. This project is particularly resonant in the case of Poland, where the spirit of the nation is seen to have persisted despite multiple antagonisms over a thousand-year history, and where issues of patriotism and its aftereffects are central to current discussions of national consciousness. It is this skillful rhetorical interplay of national past and global future that has allowed the phenomenon of nation branding to achieve a conceptual and empirical foothold in Poland.

The third claim is that nation branding has the power to eliminate alternative national imaginaries. In the latter half of the chapter I examine the mechanisms underlying the competing social logics at work in Poland's post-communist society and show how certain logics become legitimate and others ineffectual. Nation branding is clearly not the sole system to employ embedded historical tropes of collective consciousness; it is not the sole system to project these into a possible future; and it is not the sole system to succeed in congealing certain forms of national mythology and

disabling others. The uniqueness of nation branding is its ability to present its particular form as technological, and its content as apolitical and universal. By analyzing Poland's nation-branding campaign in the context of contested interpretations of symbolic representatives, I show how visions of alternative national selfhood were denied.

It is surely a coincidence that *Corporate Identity* was first published in 1989, the year that "real existing socialism" was laid bare and communism collapsed in Poland. But in the subsequent transformation of the ideological and material structures of Eastern Europe over the next two decades, there is little coincidence to be found in the ways in which this transformation has been represented to its audiences, both domestic and foreign. Olins's entrance into the Polish mindset may be seen as a late stage of an embedded set of discourses and practices that have structured the making of Polish society after 1989, globally defined as transition. "Transition," in political-economic terms and certain geographic spaces, refers to the shift from a centrally planned to a market economy, and from nondemocratic to democratic (pluralistic) governance.[12] Yet as many scholars have noted, the term's easy application masks a number of ideological presumptions. For one, it presumes the poverty of one system and the productivity of another. Transition culture "assumes that publics emerge from communist rule damaged, and need to be educated in the values of capitalism and democracy."[13] Second, though one might expect any process of change to be characterized in its different aspects by complexity, variation, deviance or even dysfunction, transition's logic tends to channel change into a teleological notion of (forward) progress with a finite endpoint and well-defined and attainable goals. This emphasis on progress and productivity is further reinforced by the work of transnational organizations, political scientists, and economists, who focus on the causes and conditions of transition and the legacy of its effects rather than questioning the inner workings of its logic. In Poland, this particular perception of transition has remained dominant, despite considerable evidence that in 1989, a variety of alternative transitions seemed to recommend themselves.[14]

The seeming dynamism and necessity of transition occludes not only political and economic alternatives but temporal ones as well. In transition logic, biography, history, and memory are regularly reconfigured either as prehistories of the present or as dusty debris of the past. In other words, the idea of transition sets up past and future as antagonistic opposites, with the role of the present devoted to deemphasizing the particulars of lived (Eastern) experience in favor of the brave new world of (Western) promise. Where there are references to past structures and cultures, these derive not from distance in time but distance in space, since the tradition

on which transition relies "tends to draw more on capitalist experiences from across the world than it does on any nation's socialist past."[15] In this process, nations are less anchored to their own prior articulations than they are to other contemporary nations, as "tokens of a global type"[16]; vertical (that is, historic and geographic) particularity is eclipsed by horizontal (ahistorical and deterritorialized) similarity.[17]

Poland, as transition's "grand experiment," has since 1989 functioned in political and economic discourse as the token, with the type variously identified over the last two decades as Bolivia,[18] Spain,[19] or Ireland.[20] These countries had "caught up" with the program; "integrated" with their neighbors; most importantly, they had become "normal." It was to this that Poland was to aspire: the three themes of *normalcy*, *integration*, and a "*return to Europe*" were presented as the central goals for Poland after four decades in the shackles of communism and the shadow of the East. These themes had already existed in the Polish "soul," as Michnik reminds:

> What was Europe for people like me and my friends in Poland before 1989? Europe meant freedom, normalcy, economic rationality. Europe was the West, to which we naturally belonged, even if we were forcibly exiled from it by Soviet dictate. Europe was a light on the western horizon, a hope that our country, too, might one day become free.[21]

This is how history and memory were filtered through the economy: in Poland's initial context of transition, these three themes were stressed in strictly economic terms. The methods of "shock therapy"—or, as the reforms aptly came to be known, "blueprint capitalism"—were presented in Poland (as in other postsocialist countries) as apolitical and asocial, as *technology* rather than philosophy.[22] Presenting the reforms in this way allowed them to appear scientific, rather than hegemonic; capitalism-as-technology was therefore promoted as the rigorously tested and proven method that Poland could adopt to improve its situation in the immediate aftermath of 1989. This is part of what Timothy Mitchell (after Aidan Foster Carter) calls the "homoficence" of capitalism, a term which suggests that

> whatever the local variation, at some level capitalism always does the same thing, or has the same effect. The sameness supplies the theme that enables the narrative to move forward. It provides a logic that becomes the source of historical movement and the motor of social transformations.[23]

With economic change as the source and motor, all other forms of transition—political, cultural, social—are presumed to follow from it. Nina

Bandelj, writing about configurations of structure, power, and culture in postsocialist countries, makes a similar observation, noting that part of the fiction of transition is to present socialism as ideological, social and political and capitalism as purely economic.[24]

In a series of lectures delivered at the London School of Economics in 1990, Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs amply demonstrated transition's logic as he outlined the architecture of Poland's reforms:

> *Poland's goal is to be like the states of the European Community.* Although there are many submodels within Western Europe, with distinct versions of the modern welfare state, the Western European economies share a common core of capitalist institutions. It is that common core that should be the aim of the Eastern European reforms. The finer points of choosing between different submodels—the Scandinavian social welfare state, Thatcherism, the German social market—can be put off until later, once the core institutions are firmly in place.[25]

The point of capitalism-as-technology is also to establish a particular structure of authority: it becomes a matter of course to rely on expert advice and engineering from the West, as the seat of the techniques—and patents— for the system's operation. Overall, this monolithic perspective appears incontrovertible and unshakable in its logic and application. Capitalism is "necessary" for all transition countries, its identity is modular and transportable, and its implementation requires primarily following the models of those who have adopted it before. In Poland, this logic was further reinforced by the idea that the country was "starting from scratch," that post-1989 Poland constituted a sort of tabula rasa on which a new system could be easily overlaid.[26] Of course, this image was far from accurate. Rather, the transition in Poland "gave rise to a bricolage of multiple social logics,"[27] where past remnants and present realities intersected in nuanced and complex ways, giving rise to entirely new interpretations.

One way to examine these logics is to note that the themes of integration, normalcy, and return are not exclusively economic, as indeed they never have been. Neither are they of recent vintage: the crude binaries inherent in the East-West divide have long formed part of the design of Poland's conceptual map. In the contemporary context they are particularly evident, not surprisingly, in the ongoing issues surrounding Poland's membership in the EU, where claims to normalcy, integration, and return sit uneasily alongside discussions of patriotism and self-determination.

A longer view might take into account the recognition that conceptions of collective identity are never only internally generated and maintained but are also the product of contingent and contextual factors beyond the

community's borders. Theories of the nation, whether as plebiscite, as imagined community, or as archaeological entity, all contain within them the notion—though it is not always made explicit—that its composition relies on both endogenous and exogenous determinants. Nations are defined not only in relation and distinction *to* other nations but *by* the material and ideological visions of other nations of greater and lesser proximity. When Anderson says that "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined," he must also be referring to the imaginings of others, whose imprints—however smudged—form part of the community's self-understanding.[28]

If Edward Said's *Orientalism* is the paradigmatic reference here, the conception of East and West on the European continent further demonstrates the defining work of outside imaginings. Larry Wolff has shown how Europe's division into East and West stems not from the countries' geographical situation but from the work of intellectual and cultural history. In the eighteenth century, the West "invented" the East as its necessary Other, claiming the Enlightenment and its neologisms of civilization and cosmopolitanism, while cloaking the East in the dark shrouds of barbarism and backwardness.[29] Even Rousseau's 1772 treatise, which conferred upon Poland a patriotic heart that would survive all cartographic indecencies, could not stand up to Western Europe's mental maps.[30]

This, I suggest, is how the work of nation branding in Poland needs to be seen: as an assignment of identity lodged in a deep-seated and ongoing paternalism. (That the bulk of European nation-branding consultancies are based in Britain, as we saw in chapter three, is likely not a coincidence.) A close examination of this phenomenon demonstrates in broad strokes how the West's classification of the East continues to dominate processes of nation-making in Poland. Yet to remain with this analysis would be to miss crucial ways in which politics and culture intersect in everyday life. The mythopoetic tropes that infuse the national narrative are part of the cultural signifiers of the country, and as such their meaning is polysemic, dynamic, and contingent. My method here is therefore to examine the ways in which these themes "from abroad"—normalcy, integration, and return—allow for the formation of the multiple social logics animating the identity of the Polish nation.

With this discussion setting the stage, we now return to the protagonists of the play, to observe this structuring logic at work in Poland's nation-branding endeavors. As we will see, the story does not follow as smooth a course as its governing logic might appear to suggest. As with all carefully crafted structures, whether material or symbolic, their implementation is often far less monolithic than their blueprints appear.

BRANDING POLAND

As I describe in chapter three, the creation of a national brand identity is a four-phase affair, consisting of research/evaluation (diagnosis of "strengths" and "weaknesses" of existing national perceptions—both domestic and foreign—relative to the nation's position in an international framework), training/education (propagation of the concept and purpose of nation branding to national citizens), identification (development of a "core idea," or value-based concept, which distills the political, economic, and cultural interests of the country into a single but mutable proposition), and implementation/communication (widespread dissemination of the core idea as a defining and differentiating characterization of national identity). This last step is critical, for in its ideal form, the new national identity serves not only as the basis for coordinated promotional messages to foreign publics—ad campaigns, public relations efforts, and the like—but also as the guiding philosophy behind discourse and practice within the country's political, cultural, and civic spheres.

Thus, once a "working party" had been assembled—putatively consisting of a variety of parties from different sectors, but in fact consisting exclusively of Saffron staff and chamber of commerce (*Krajowa Izba Godspodarcza* [KIG]) employees[31]—the consultants began to collect information about the country. Within Poland they engaged the services of young Poles to help them recruit interview candidates, conduct focus groups, and translate or interpret conversations and documents.[32] Interviews and focus groups were repeated in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Brussels, Spain, and the United States to gain foreign perspectives. If some of the local participants were skeptical of the need for a "brand" strategy to communicate national identity, there was little doubt as to the relevance of the exercise. A new image of Poland was deemed essential if the country was to attract capital and promote investment. It was also considered necessary to overcome the unfortunate and persistent stereotypes of foreign perception. As one local participant commented:

> There was always this example of the horse-drawn cart in the foreign media.[33] And anyone who would start talking about branding, why we need this, would basically pick up a copy of *Die Welt* or the *Financial Times*, anything, and just show it and say, "This is how we are perceived in Western Europe, we need to change this." The other image we are fighting with is the image we have in Germany, which is basically that we are car stealers, beggars and lousy wall painters.[34]

More serious charges were also raised in the European Parliament and for-eign media, such as the perception of Poles as anti-Semitic, xenophobic, and antidemocratic. But there was more at stake, participants felt, in the nature of this project. It was not only important for the promotion of eco-nomic growth, but also—perhaps especially—for a renewed sense of the collective self.

> The upheavals that we have had, the fights that we have had with foreigners, occupations, all of these struggling things were done in the name of independ-ence, or in the name of Poland. So the sense of patriotism is very strong here. And I think that if Poland is to develop, if Poland is to modernize, if Poland is not to be a very funny country in Europe when you have twin brothers in charge, but a state like Ireland right now, then you have to think about the concept of modern patriotism, which is not about fighting with someone who wants to kill you, invade you; the concept of new patriotism is how to work for the good of yourself, your friends, your family, and your country. This is something that we are lacking very strongly . . . [A brand] can help. Because certainly it will evoke a discussion of who we are as a nation today. If you are thinking about a brand . . . this is one of the most important decisions you are making when creating a company . . . it's the essence of the company as such. With the branding of coun-tries, it's the same. Obviously you would be using this logo for different pur-poses, but still the meanings that are in the symbols are there. So it's maybe a good way to start discussion and talks about who we are and who we want to be in the future.

> In Poland there's a feeling of a national inferiority complex. And this is very strong for different reasons—historical, communism, and this and that. It's a very long conversation, but basically what it boils down to—and this is pretty widespread, I tend to think—is that we're underestimated, and it's very, very strong . . . This is what Olins would talk about. He would say [the nation brand] is also about changing our image internally, so it's not only about outside but also about looking inside—and I think this was an important part of the project.

Poland's core image deficit, articulated by both consultant and client, was that it did not (yet) project normalcy, defined in transition's terms:

> This is a point that cannot be made too strongly. Poland is normal. There's a metro in Warsaw that works, there are buildings going up all the time (including one by Norman Foster), and both local and international chain retailers are filling up shopping areas. The bottom line is that while still a work in progress, Poland is becoming more and more normal, practically by the minute.[35]

> Very often the CEO of a company is coming to Poland for the first time and he comes to Warsaw and Krakow and is surprised that there is such potential, how the city looks, how attractive it is . . . so immediately after they come to Poland and visit, it is easier to start business talks with them because they've seen that this is a normal European country.[36]

To achieve such normalcy, it was critical to assess what the consultants called "hygiene factors"—bureaucracy, corruption, poor infrastructure, or other obstacles to investment.[37] Once these hygiene factors had been identified and eliminated, Poland's new and improved image could properly emerge. Hygiene is a familiar trope in the project of modernity and a structuring element of the East-West divide.[38] In the modernizing projects of the nineteenth century, cleanliness replaced godliness as the means to the sanctified self.[39] In the modernizing projects of the twenty-first, the object has changed, but the rhetorical frame has not: the possibility of betterment now resides in the nation-state and its subjects.

That Olins's agency was based outside Poland was not seen as a liability for the project. On the contrary, management by outsiders was deemed crucial to its success.[40] Saffron's expertise was valued by the Polish participants for its claims to both the authority of objectivity and the legitimacy of technical know-how:

> I think maybe it was a good idea, somebody who has some distance, who is a professional, who has done that for other countries. Maybe he will see things we don't see.

> I don't think that anyone from Poland could do it, not because they were not able to, intellectually, but because nobody would ever listen to them. We have this saying [in Poland] that it's the most difficult thing to be a prophet in your own country. I don't think there is a persona or an organization or a group of people that would be strong enough to have this authoritative voice in this discussion.

Moreover, having foreign expertise meant that "you don't get too emotional. You have to abandon certain emotions if you are doing such work. And I don't think that any Pole would be able to do this."

To perpetuate its grips on technical knowledge, the Saffron group prepared charts, figures, and graphs that reinforced the need for a national image that would align perception and reality:

Perception gap graph

	Left		Right
Distance	Far		Close
Corruption	High		Low
Infrastructure	Old		Modern
Economy	Regulated		Free market
Political system	Authoritarian		Parliamentary
Growth	Slow		Fast
Bureaucracy	High		Low
Size	Small		Large
Environment	Polluted		Pristine

✱ The reality in Poland
● The perception of Poland
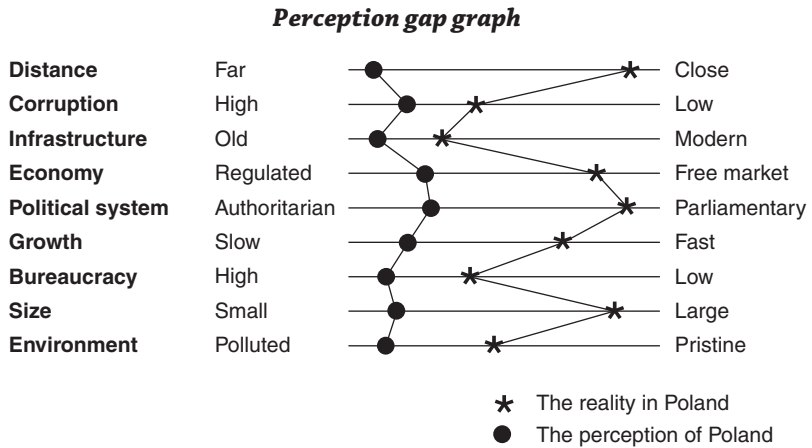
Figure 4.1:
Saffron's Perception Gap Graph, used to illustrate the divergence between Poland's "reality" and its foreign perceptions. Source: *A Brand for Poland*, 57. © Saffron Consultants.

The figure of Olins himself was considered part of the mantel of expertise[41]:

> The coach of the Polish national [soccer] team is this famous national Dutch coach. His name is Leo Beenhakker. And he's acquired this huge celebrity status because he's a very good coach who's Dutch and he's come here to Poland to help us do something. And I have a feeling, I mean, the analogy isn't all that good, but I have the feeling that there's this attitude toward Olins that it's this real amazing world class specialist who's coming to help us. You know—this is sort of a vague Polish sentiment—he was really almost quite saintly.

Whether as celebrity or saint (or perhaps a little of both), the notoriety bestowed upon Olins and his team would serve him well in the next stage of the project: promoting and publicizing the concept of nation branding in order to garner acceptance in the public sphere. For if Poles were to assimilate and internalize the techniques of the brand, they first had to be apprised of its distinctive vernacular.

As part of the national education, Saffron embarked on a campaign of self-promotion. Olins gave interviews and wrote articles for a wide range of Polish news and business media.[42] This was part of the training of Polish citizens: the multiple publications ensured that Poles had access to the concept of nation branding in their own language. Other initiatives contributed to "educating" the public in the concept of nation branding in Poland.

The Danish embassy held a conference called "Building the Polish Brand in Europe" in Warsaw on May 27, 2003,[43] attended by some two hundred representatives of Polish companies and businesses with a stake in attracting foreign capital.

Polish institutions also contributed to the "brand education" of their people. The Institute for Polish Brand (*Instytut Marki Polskiej* [IMP]) had been organizing conferences, seminars, and meetings on the concept and phenomenon of brands and branding since 1994, as well as publishing a series of reports and books and translating American and British branding and marketing tomes into Polish. Part of the IMP's mission, as they saw it, was to "prepare the ground atmosphere, the climate" for the new realities of capitalist institutions. Another task, central to the first, was to promote the idea that "brand culture" was a defining feature of Poland's heritage:

> In the nineteenth century brand culture in Poland was very sophisticated. Capitalist culture was very advanced . . . [the most advanced] of the human cultures is brand culture. It is about the attitude towards authority, to heritage, to identity . . . Now Polish national identity is very complicated, very martyrological, and not prepared for normal times. So this is also the problem: to distill from our identity those parts which are useful in this stage of history. It is not necessary to fight now, with Germans, with Russians; it is necessary to fight on the market, to be competitive.[44]

After months of research, the Saffron team developed four potential core ideas for Poland's brand—ideas that, if carried forward, would serve to coordinate Poland's institutional and public communication in the four "vectors": tourism, FDI, export, and public diplomacy.[45] It is worth examining each of these core ideas in some detail, not only for what they reveal about the motivations of the branding experts but also for the reactions of the Polish clients.

Janus

> Poland faces the West and the East (specifically Russia) and is at ease with the cultures and societies of both. Poland knows eastern and western mentalities and cultures, scientific achievements and, above all, soul. As one of the few countries in the West to occupy this position, it seems that Poland's natural role is to act as a bridge between these two worlds, and to capitalize on its understanding of the post communist psyche and the Eastern European construct.[46]

This "Janus" position was deemed by the consultants to present Poland "as a mature, civilized and confident country," as well as a gateway for

Western investors toward the East, in part due to its "political clout both in Brussels and Russia."[47] This attempt to "bridge" East and West, even if only in commercial terms, was met with incredulity by the Polish clients. In the immediate context, the recently ratified Schengen Treaty (the commercial treaty permitting free exchange of goods between Poland and the Ukraine) meant little more than days-long lines at the border. In a somewhat expanded perspective, we might look to Poland's military role in the communist era. Indeed, Poland's role had been as a "strategic linchpin of Eastern Europe," but in radically particular circumstances, as "the Soviet Army's main bridge to the Warsaw Pact front line in Germany."[48] In the narratives of Polish-Soviet relations under communist rule, "Germany alone was Poland's eternal enemy; NATO was on the brink of attacking the Warsaw Pact; Poland's only safety lay in her unshakable alliance with the benevolent and invincible Soviet Union."[49] Though the picture is undeniably different today, with Poland's NATO and EU memberships an uncontestable fact, Poland's geopolitical anatomy precludes any new self-imagining—by itself or by others—with Janus's face.

Indywidualizm

Poland is a boisterous, unique, individualistic country. Poles are neither bland nor boring. They make their presence felt. Poles always have a point of view. That's why Poland is such a great country for the arts, culture, sports, the creative world, tourism and above all for business. Poles are natural entrepreneurs. Overall, Poland is just different.[50]

Saffron's report states that "a country full of talented individuals with an entrepreneurial spirit is attractive for any foreign company wanting to invest in Poland."[51] The appeal to foreign capital was equally apparent in the third core idea:

Work in Progress

The opportunities that are emerging in the new Poland are practically endless. In tourism some of the last and largest great forests of Europe, with unique fauna; in brand export, pure foods traditionally and lovingly nurtured in ways the rest of Europe has forgotten; and in FDI, it's the new European Union's last big opportunity for major investment.[52]

The insistence on FDI as a key motivation for Poland's nation brand (and for nation branding in general) bears some examination. In a comprehensive study of the embedding of FDI in eleven postsocialist countries, Bandelj describes the arguments promoting FDI in the 1980s after the Washington

Consensus.[53] The Washington Consensus, and the neoliberal motivations it subsequently engendered, was formulated in spite of at least ten years' worth of extensive empirical research, primarily by prominent sociologists, demonstrating the multiple negative impacts of FDI: uneven development, weakened labor unions, wage inequality, reduced job training, and a generalized reduction in regulatory protections.[54] Current research has borne out these findings, yet the expectations of growth through FDI remain a dominant motivation for countries seeking to improve their economic situation. In Poland, FDI is widely seen as a panacea. Newspaper articles regularly cite figures and statistics with giddy excitement.[55] Poland's foreign investment agency, PAIiIZ (*Polska Agencja Informacji i Inwestycji Zagranicznych*), promotes the country as "Po-Land of Opportunities," promising potential clients multiple tax incentives and exemptions.

Despite the FDI angle, however, the clients were still dissatisfied with the propositions. Indywidualizm was not unique enough, and Work in Progress just did not sound aspirational. The final concept, however, piqued the clients' interest:

Polarity

Poland is a very individualistic country that draws its personality and strength from a multiplicity of apparently opposing characteristics. Poland is part of the West and also understands the East. Polish people are irrepressibly romantic and also down to earth. The Polish character is ambitious and also unassuming. This polarity at the heart of Poland engenders a restlessness that's never satisfied with the present and a boisterousness that's always stimulating and often creative . . . Sometimes for ill, but lately almost entirely for good, this polarity animates all aspects of Polish life, and is the source of the continuous—and sometimes rackingly discontinuous—resurgence of the Polish nation.[56]

What the consultants especially liked about this last idea was that it did not deny characteristics of Poles that were "true"—Poland was hard to get along with, at times. But the relevance of Polarity to Poland's foreign audiences was a source of concern: how would this translate into an appealing message for investors, political figures, and visitors? The answer came a couple of months later in an email from the consultants to the clients: the new national identity for Poland would be lodged in the core idea of "creative tension."

Creative tension was held to encapsulate the duality in Polish life, with the added benefit of intrigue and promise. Creative tension explained "why Poland produces so many entrepreneurs, artists, and sportspeople." It accounted for "why Poland is constantly changing and evolving"; it suggested

that it could "contribut[e] its vitality and creativity to the world." "One reason this core idea is strong," exhorted the consultants, "is that it doesn't (as many country brands do) merely put forth a promise. It also explains, it teaches, it helps people understand Poland."[57]

For the Polish participants, the idea hit like a bolt of lightning. Parallels were drawn with Poland's heroic figures (Lech Wałęsa), with Poland's attitudes toward authority, with momentous historical events (independence in 1918, uprising in 1944, Solidarity mobilizations in 1970, '76, '81, and '89), with its *antemurale* position on religion and the centrality of the church to Polish selfhood. It was "aspirational" enough to contain the positive aspects of Polish promise, and explanatory enough to earn the merit of "realism." It was seen as a "philosophy" of Poland's existence, one that suggested Poles' "natural" inclination to contrariness. "In this contrariness," one participant explained, "is the driver of Polish soul."

Almost immediately, however, a problem surfaced with the new core idea: it was virtually untranslatable into Polish. In Polish, "tension" is "*napięcie*" (creative tension = *twórcze napięcie*), a word that evokes inability to relax, to rest, or to be constructive. It is interesting to note how this problem was resolved. Rather than seeing this as an indication that the branding consultants were ill equipped to understand Polish culture or society, let alone the language, the Polish project managers decided that it was a question of educating and informing the public about how to employ this phrase. In this way the issue became a problem of Poles' limited understanding of the brand core idea—and, by extension, the commercial and cultural sphere in which it was to operate. After much discussion, it was decided that the best translation of "creative tension" was "*twórcza przekora*," which roughly translates as "creative contrariness." *Twórcza przekora* would be used to explain the concept to Poles who were less familiar with the project, while "creative tension" would be used for those who were better versed in the nation-branding vernacular.[58] The core idea had a further effect: by identifying tension and opposition as a defining feature of Polish identity, all subsequent opposition to it was taken as demonstrative of the wisdom and veracity of the idea.

One more point must be made regarding this approach. Though creative tension was presented as a national identity, this rhetoric of inclusion was countered by a barely veiled politics of exclusion—in particular, of those in the older generation. Elder Poles were presented in the branding material as hopelessly backward, even as dangerous obstacles to the new image that Poland wished to portray. Capitalism requires an identity if it is to carry influence; the identity in this case was young, not old.[59] Economic explanations alone were not sufficient to complete the shift in postsocialist

Figure 4.2:
The Older Generation/The Younger Generation. Slides from a presentation by Saffron Consultants in Budapest, Hungary, November 28, 2006, describing the firm's work in Poland. Courtesy of Saffron Consultants. Photographer: Jane Wentworth.

countries from plan to market. There needed also to be a cultural shift, a psychological grounding in the new ways. Branding, by virtue of its "newness," left out those who were not familiar with its strictures. This is especially crucial in a postsocialist culture, given that Poland's older generation is unlikely to have been appellated as consumers prior to 1989.[60] The nation-brand efforts characterized the younger generation as the "market economy generation," with all the benefits that accrue to market membership; the older generation, with an "inherently pessimistic vision of reality," could have their opinions about the brand dismissed outright.[61]

THE POSTER, THE KITE, AND THE EAGLE: COUNTERIMAGES

There are few versions of Poland's self-determining narrative that do not cite 1989 as a cardinal point of national consciousness, of "collective effervescence," in Durkheim's terms.[62] Of course, this was partly because of its import not only in Poland's own history but also across Europe and indeed the rest of the world. Seen retrospectively from the present, 1989 is also the moment at which shock therapy and blueprint capitalism were adopted, swiftly and totally, as imperatives of Poland's future. There were others, however, who saw 1989—and especially the events leading up to it—as leading down an entirely different path. While the "switchmen" setting history's course down this track saw the demise of the *nomenklatura* (the bureaucracy in Poland's centrally planned economy) as an opportunity to leap into capitalist-style market reforms and instill a new kind of authority, other possibilities existed for Poland's "normal" future. In what follows, I offer a portrait of alternative national imaginaries that drew a different picture for Poland than the blueprint of Western capitalism. I highlight these particular alternative visions because of what they can tell us about the role nation branding has come to play in rearticulating the nation. Nation branding is a symbol system rooted in the vocabulary of commercial promotion; yet there existed alternative visions in Poland that were dreamed in this very same language and grammar. These visions competed for legitimacy using the same symbolic systems as their dominant counterparts; but although they could dream in the colors of the same political purpose, they could not, upon waking, emancipate the fragments of the past for the construction of their future.

Of all the themes and ideas raised through discussion and observation during my time in Poland, the one that surfaced most frequently was the centrality—and longevity—of monuments to the sense of Polishness. This

monumentality, so to speak, is demonstrated not only in the hundreds of statues and reliquaries that mark the nation's events and heroes but also in its architecture, film, literature, and language—in the semiological and symbological bases of the nation. Monuments are part of the country's most elementary grammar, as the first lesson in a beginner's Polish grammar book intones:

Co to jest? To jest pomnik.	What is this? This is a monument.
Kto to jest? To jest Kopernik.	Who is this? This is Copernicus.
To jest pomnik Kopernika.	This is a monument to Copernicus.
Kto to? To Chopin.	Who's this? It's Chopin.
Czyj to pomnik?	Whose monument is this?
To pomnik Chopina.	This is a monument to Chopin.[63]

Even at a distance of three centuries one from the other, Copernicus and Chopin retain the essential qualities of romance and reason whose dichotomies mark Poland's enduring identity throughout its "thousand-year" history. If these, among many other Polish icons to whom homage is regularly paid—Mickiewicz (Poland's national poet), Piłsudski, Krakowski, Kamiński, on up to Wałęsa, Wajda, Wojtyła, Kieślowski—represent only those values from the best and strongest branches of the Polish genealogy, they also serve as concrete mnemonic devices to recall the country's philosophical and intellectual legacy.[64] It has been suggested that the source of this attachment to monuments as documents lies in the moments between the nation's republics, when there was no independent Poland to be found on the world's map. In the absence of geographic coordinates, the "society that has lost its country so many times"[65] has sought recognition in its symbolic geographies. One could even argue that the tropes of normalcy, integration, and European return emanate from as far back as the time of the partitions, and perhaps even earlier.

In the postwar context, the importance of semiological tools in the conveyance of legitimacy cannot be overstated. "Actually existing Socialism" was a far cry from its philosophical undercurrents.[66] The central planning of the Communist Party bureaucracy was by all accounts a disaster, marked by sluggish production at best and dominated by dishonest practices. In the early 1970s, party leaders, failing to rally citizens through politics, tried to unite them through consumption, subsidizing food staples and consumer goods by heavily importing and borrowing from the West.[67] This increase in quality of life for Poles was short-lived: Poland's hard-currency debt increased by 3,000 percent over the course of the 1970s.[68]

In 1976, trying to match its currency to the prices on the world market, the Polish bureaucracy raised food prices, which led to strikes by workers. The response by the authorities was swift and brutal. A worker, Jacek Kuroń, initiated the creation of KOR (Committee for the Defense of Workers) to chart abuses and offer worker support. This moment signaled the official frame to stirrings of dissent and resistance to the party leadership that had been afoot for some time. These stirrings were energized when, on October 16, 1978, Karol Wojtyła was elected to the papacy, the first Pole to hold this office. His extreme views—some called them messianic[69]—did far more to unite Polish workers than the Communist Party had done. Pope John Paul II had succeeded in shifting the terms of the Catholic Church "from compromise to resistance" and creating a new sense of national pride bound up with Catholicism.[70]

If these acts represented fissures in the armor of the Communist Party, these rifts widened considerably on July 1, 1980, when the party tried again to raise the price of food. What began as workers' strikes turned over weeks into a massive protest, centered at a shipyard in Gdańsk. The workers' movement came to be known as Solidarity (*Solidarność*), after the newsletter they had been printing in the shipyard. The movement was not merely a sign of labor unrest but immediately took on much greater symbolic and practical implications:

> . . . in its larger cultural dimension, which included the aspirations of both workers and the intelligentsia (both lay Catholic and secular), Solidarity also represented a "new nation" founded upon principles rooted in the country's non-communist ethos and past, however idealized. The goal of these cultural aspirations was to reclaim "the true Poland" from the crude distortions of party historians and cultural hacks, as well as from the lurid moral and venal corruption of the prevailing order.[71]

Solidarity was also termed *odnowa*—renewal. It was not just a moment of consciousness but "a school for citizenship,"[72] in which the notion of an autonomous civil society, articulated years earlier by Adam Michnik, could actually come to exist through the will and drive of the Polish people.

The establishment of legitimacy and authority by Solidarity during that crucial time and after—when the party fought back, declaring martial law from 1981 to 1983 and sending the movement underground—was as much a function of its symbolic and emblematic weight as of its practical activities. As Jan Kubik writes,

> such signs of defiance as the cross, the crowned White Eagle, and the Gdańsk monument . . . emerged as multivocal (national, religious, and civic) symbols— pivotal points of the rejuvenated public domain. As emblems they served as

badges of identity and signs of separation; as symbols they functioned as meaning-generating engines of the "non-Communist/socialist" counterhegemonic discourse.[73]

If the national imaginary of Solidarity provided a "charter for action,"[74] the visual manifestation of this charter was the Solidarity logo. Designed by Jerzy Janiszewski in the Gdańsk shipyard in August 1980, it circulated in mass quantity and variety above ground, and continued to circulate even after the party went underground. Its font, described as "disobedient," was meant to symbolize the Polish people leaning against one another, made strong by numbers and unity.[75]

On November 10, 1980, Solidarity "became the first officially registered independent trade union in a Communist country, with an estimated ten million members."[76] Lech Wałęsa was elected its president. Meanwhile, KOR continued its mission of "practicing society"—this meant not addressing overtly political issues but rather steadily forming ties with the Catholic Church, building social movements and trade unions, and advocating "self-management."[77] These ties became ever more crucial throughout the 1980s, as the party bureaucracy began to sink under the weight of its debt (it was banned from borrowing when it instituted martial law). When, in February 1989, round-table talks were convened between Solidarity and Communist Party leaders, it seemed that the work of the trade union association had not been for nothing. Nine months later, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, the course of history had changed.[78]

In 2002, Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs hired a Polish advertising agency to create a new symbolic face for its national persona. The symbol was to be part of a larger cultural diplomacy effort by the state, to include Polish years abroad, cultural exchanges, and so on as part of its new status as a EU member. The agency's choice of a red-and-white toy kite as Poland's metonymic mark of identification puzzled some observers.[79] But to its creators, it was a direct descendant of Solidarity's

Figure 4.3:
The Solidarity logo. © Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy (NSZZ) "Solidarność." Reproduced with permission of NSZZ "Solidarność."

goals. An animated loop on the ministry of foreign affairs website tried to educate visitors to the site about the message the logo was meant to convey.[80]

As one of its creators explained:

> So the idea was, okay, take Solidarity, and we transform this protesting group of people with a flag into a positive, maybe even a dancing group of young people, with a kite. So it's still people, but those people are not fighting anymore . . . You could use this kite philosophy to start changing the view of how the young generation sees themselves.

Another, commenting on the response he received following the publication of an article in the *Financial Times* about the new logo, said:

> After this article, many businessmen working in the U.S., Canada, Europe, were phoning us to thank us that we made this. All these people were saying . . . that they feel for the first time in their lives that Poland is like a country, like a nation, that the government does something for them, to empower them.

An observer agreed with the positive interpretation:

> To me it combines at least two things. It combines the Solidarity tradition—so the tradition of fighting for independence, but also fighting for independence in a very positive sense and a very progressive sense. It was a nonviolent concept. And the concept of social movements. Plus I guess that the symbol of the Polish kite, instead of the flag, it deprives the symbol of its pathos. It makes things more light, it makes it optimistic, it makes it really fly. And it's a very fresh beginning of the new era in Poland.

All agreed, when asked about the effectiveness of the publicity campaign, that "the logo is good because it allows us to talk about Poland."

This version of events did not sit well with the British firm; nor did it appeal to some Polish citizens who felt that Solidarity was not the right image for a future-looking nation. Some argued that the weak Solidarity government from 1997 to 2001 had tarnished the image somewhat. But the problem that surfaced appeared to be larger than that of domestic government endorsement. The issue was rather that the kite—perhaps like the image of the counter-society that Solidarity evoked—simply did not establish a reference system that would overtake the now-dominant one—*even using the language and grammar of the now-dominant discourse*. It was not the frame but rather its *content* that was not recognized or taken seriously by

Figure 4.4:
Frames of the animation that appears on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland, http://publikacje.poland.gov.pl/files/animlogo1.html.

The Polish Air Force colours - white-and-red, like the emblem and flag, insignia of Poland the Nation and the State.

Political symbol for a liberated modern nation: the disintegration of Communism.

Name inscribed in Polish: who we are and what we are. We belong to Europe, we have our own language, we use the Latin alphabet.. We are ourselves.

Figure 4.4:
(Continued)

foreign governments. It would not do to endorse a message that—even coded—harkened back to the social movements of Solidarity, to this kind of collective effervescence. Rather, the logic of transition and the continued adoption of market methods had to prevail. The legitimacy of the social myths adopted by nation-branding consultants is the legitimacy which deprives individuals and collectivities of alternatives; it is less the effective organization of a progressive image and more "the nonorganization of an effective counterimage" that is at stake here.[81] The social space these mythmakers occupy, and the categories of knowledge they use within it, serve to normalize and naturalize their methods. The myths they rally to their cause evoke civilization, community, and unity; but the quality of these terms is restricted to the frameworks in which they are created.

Six years after its inception, the kite—and the animation which explains its meaning—is still available on the ministry of foreign affairs website, for anyone who wishes to take the time to learn about it. It would not be enough, however, to master its grammar. One would also have to read the other pages of the website, which list the billions of dollars of FDI into Poland, feature interviews with federal government officials touting Polish citizens' "pro-consumption" attitudes, and offer descriptions of the country's political and economic stability.[82] In June 2011, Wally Olins gave a talk at the 2nd Innovative Economy Congress in Warsaw (*Kongres Innowacyjnej Gospodarki*).[83] His presentation was the last one of the two-day event, following speeches and panel presentations by banking representatives, economists, and business consultants. There was good news and bad news, he informed the audience. Poland was recognized for its economic strength, its consumer orientation, and its normalcy. But there was still work to be done. More investment, more ambition, more risk-taking were still needed for Poland to continue to rise. Poland's national brand, Creative Tension, would help them get there.[84]

From Bland to Brand:
Transforming Canadian Culture

WHAT IT MEANT TO BE CANADIAN

Multiculturalism, the standard buzzword to describe (and also obscure) the nature of a multi-immigrant society, might not be enough; might even prove to be a temporary phenomenon preceding the amalgamation of immigrants into a larger, but different whole. Nevertheless, it seemed a safe bet that the demography of the twentieth century harboured within itself a recalibration of the nature of Canada, if not an outright modification of what it meant to be Canadian.

—Robert Bothwell, *The Penguin History of Canada*

This paragraph concludes Robert Bothwell's *Penguin History of Canada,* published in 2006 and described by its publisher as "an expansive portrait of a dynamic and complex country." Written in the past tense, as is the privilege of the historian, this statement seems offered as an epitaph, relegating multiculturalism to the closed chapter of the twentieth century. Indeed these words portend a future in which diversity is no longer a central descriptor of Canadian society.

This would be a startling transformation. The concept of diversity is a structuring aspect of the Canadian national self. It is its primary source of pride, embedded at once in its policies of cultural rights and recognition, its principles of political liberalism, and its practices of civility and tolerance. Whether wielded as buzzword or erected as architecture of belonging,[1] multiculturalism and its cognates form the pillars of the contemporary Canadian nation.

For some, however, diversity has become Canada's burden. As stories of diversity's failure mount in the international community, counted in terms

of segregation, radicalism, and illiberalism, so do judgments of its value as a form of acceptable national difference.[2] Though critiques of Canada's version of diversity have long existed, ranging from revanchist assertions of containing Canadian diversity within its state borders to condemnations of Canadian diversity as a form of isolationism, current crises have incurred renewed calls for limits to diversity in both policy and practice.[3]

Bothwell does not need to resolve his provocation. More likely, he will document the transformations of the opening decades of the twenty-first century after they have taken place. But those who are part of the transformations in the present cannot wait until they have passed to attempt to make sense of them. For Canadians, the future of diversity and its relationship to national identity is a central and unsettling question.

One important source of this unsettlement is the conflict engendered by the drive to achieve national recognition at both domestic and international levels. If making diverse subjects visible requires ongoing efforts in domestic policy and practice, this emphasis on visibility at home is seen to contrast with the ability to be visible abroad. In other words, to accommodate diversity domestically is to limit the nation's ability to project a cohesive and coherent image internationally.

This, at least, is how the problem of diversity is framed in the optic of the nation as brand. As we have seen in earlier chapters, the purpose of nation branding is to promote a nation's core values in such a way that it appears more attractive than its peers. In order for a territory to competitively attract global capital in all its forms, it should narrate the terms of its difference from its competitors. Yet this difference must reside within globally acceptable zones of recognition, whether this recognition is attained for economic, political, or cultural exchange. As such, it offers a promise of minimal risk and maximum reward to those global actors who choose to recognize it. If the future of the nation-state is predicated on its ability to tell the world a simple story, this story is one in which ideals of diversity must be reflected as sources of stability, mutual benefit, and economic growth as much as—or in some cases, instead of—social or cultural accommodation.

This chapter explores the heart of this conflict by examining one way in which the notion of diversity in Canada has been taken up, managed, and manipulated for the purposes of global visibility. To tell this tale, I borrow Povinelli's notion of the "cunning of recognition," which she uses to account for the paradoxes attending the so-called liberal multiculturalism of Australia. In her telling, the concept of multiculturalism sits on ideological, affective, and practical bearings that narrate the fashioning of an authentic Aboriginal self. This self responds to no real standards of

everyday existence, however, but to an interpretation of difference rooted in impossible understandings of tradition and authenticity. The difference that indigenous subjects are called upon to perform is one in which the reasoned ideals of the recognition of diversity are displaced by a "fantasy" of liberal capitalist society, where competition precludes conflict and contestation, and the recognition of social difference comes without social consequences of opposition.[4] This is the cunning of recognition— the "intercalation of the politics of culture with the culture of capital." Povinelli asks, "What is the nation recognizing, capital commodifying, and the court trying to save from the breach of history when difference is recognized?"[5]

I ask similar questions about the pillars of diversity upholding the Canadian frame. What, exactly, happens when difference is determined by the framework of the brand? How does branding interact with existing patterns of political and cultural behavior to occasion the recognition of national selves? There are both obvious and more subtle ways to answer this question, just as there are obvious and more subtle ways of understanding the terms of difference itself. The obvious answer—that is, the one I have most often heard advanced as truth in my interviews with government officials, foreign policy commentators, and branding experts—is that the version of difference that gets performed for international consumption does not impinge upon the "real" version that exists in domestic life. In this conception there are two versions of recognition, international and local, that operate in separate spheres. One sphere allows for the projection of image in the service of interests; the other nurtures a more deeply felt, authentic, and immutable identity. One is representation, and one is reality.

This assumption is both troubling and long-standing. It is troubling because it suggests that international relations operate in a regularly disingenuous register, employing a cast of (cynical) characters who would act differently if the spotlight of international judgment were not on them. Moreover, this perspective retains the problematic distinction we examined in chapter two: the ongoing production of a gap between something called representation and something else called reality, a gap into which certain kinds of specialized and expert knowledge can be inserted. This narrative is a regular feature of promotional discourse that advocates promoted values as separate from real values. It is a perspective that normalizes global participation as a form of instrumental activity while claiming to preserve and extend domestic bases of authentic self-understanding and community affiliation. In this narrative, an increasingly rationalized stance toward social relations is required to function in an increasingly competitive, zero-sum advantage world. In the modern context of the

global marketplace, a version of national identity and values must be performed, but it is a performance that nevertheless maintains a core of "authentic" identity and values. As we shall see, these assumptions do not bear up in their practical manifestations.

The assumption is long-standing because the presumption of such a gap between image and identity is part of a persistent narrative about the nature of identity in a modern moral outlook. This narrative fails on two counts. It fails to recognize the very constitution of identity via relational and dialogical means, and it fails to understand the ways in which image and identity are two sides of the same cultural coin. Collective understandings about a national identity and the forms of representation of that identity are combined with the public culture that enables the promotion of aspects of that national identity; these are all part of a nation's cultural "toolkit"—the story that narrates who a nation is to itself and to the world.[6]

The task of this chapter is to look for a more subtle set of responses to the questions raised by the transformation of difference amid contemporary assumptions and perceived exigencies of global participation. To do this, I examine the attempts by Canadian elites and policymakers to develop a national brand identity to attract international recognition. In particular, I focus on activities conducted by the federal Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) in conjunction with market research and public opinion polling firms. As we shall see, the various fragmented and inconclusive efforts to retool Canadian culture as a brand form a portrait of the intemperate anxiety evoked by the struggle of national leaders to understand the terms and conditions of global membership.

At stake in this story is how diversity is undone, rethought, and reassembled by the logic of the brand. The conflict over diversity's various orders of meaning at the level of national culture emerges from the ways in which diversity has been retooled at the level of the state. The rise of the so-called competition state, as we have seen, limits policy options by rearticulating government priorities while undermining the efficacy of existing policies. These government priorities include making provisions for Canadians to deploy the skills and technologies putatively required to "survive" and "expand" in a global marketplace.[7] At the same time, the concept of diversity *itself* is reframed as a competitive category. Diversity becomes not a principle to be upheld but a product to be managed, as it forms the point of sale for international consumers, investors, and tourists. The symbolic equipment of diversity is remade into a "fun, food and festivals" version of aestheticized difference, contained in a focus on heritage, enterprise, and "creative" activities.[8] In the case of Canada, it appears that diversity is not merely a commodity but more likely a potential liability, a risky element

that must be made less risky in order for the Canadian state to achieve the recognition it desires.

In order to develop a portrait of the cunning of recognition brought about by the logic of the brand, it is important to first establish a portrait of the multiple contexts in which diversity became a defining statement of Canadian identity in the first place.

FANTASIES OF DIVERSITY

What is diversity in Canada? A clue is provided in the Canadian government's study guide for those preparing to become Canadian citizens. Would-be Canadians are informed that they are the latest in a line of "four hundred years" of settlers and immigrants who have contributed to Canadian diversity.[9] Canada's history is often told as a Whiggish march toward the ultimate achievement of unity in diversity. This mythology structures multiple dimensions of Canadian self-understanding. The country's politics, philosophy, cultural aspirations, and varied geography all mirror "the recognition of the diversity of Canadians as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society."[10] The polyvalence of the term in use is seen to mirror the pluralist visions of its subjects.

Even the seeming challenges of diversity are recognized as inherent to Canada. Claims that the nation is "unknown," "unnatural," or "unfinished" are taken as points of pride, sources of difference inherent in the Canadian self.[11] Canadian identity, explains an introductory textbook on Canadian government, is the paradigmatic postmodern identity, suffused with the tensions of "elusiveness" and indeterminacy.[12] This indeterminacy, too, is taken as an indication of unique and authentic Canadianness. As Rosemary Coombe writes, "the original 'lack' (of meaning) that underpins the identity 'Canadian' is the source and site for hegemonic articulations. Canada, a nation anxiously aware of its lack of essential identity, is potentially the first radical democratic polity, due to its openness to the articulations of a diversity of subject-positions that might be encompassed as Canadian."[13]

Yet as the cultural theorist Homi Bhabha has explained, the "nature" of diversity comes with a fundamental paradox. The exercise of diversity is always also an exercise of containment. Unity in diversity: this definition of culture is for Bhabha a sign of the "fading" of culture, the point at which we observe "the alienation between the transformational myth of culture as a language of universality and social generalization, and its tropic function as a repeated 'translation' of incommensurable levels of living and meaning."[14] The "work of the word" to both colonize and represent difference forms the

beating heart of Canadianness.[15] As Richard Day writes, "the reality of Canadian diversity is symbiotically dependent on [a] fantasy of unity—without it, diversity simply could not exist, and certainly could not be a problem."[16]

Its first-order meaning indexes Canada as a multicultural nation. Canada professes special attachment to the term, as it claims the distinction of being the first country in the world to adopt a policy of "official multiculturalism." In October 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau claimed that the state's recognition of cultural diversity would help to inspire confidence in what it meant to be Canadian: "National unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one's own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes, and assumptions. A vigorous policy of multiculturalism will help create this initial confidence."[17]

At the outset, this statement, along with the "vigorous" policy that followed in 1988,[18] was understood by some as a form of symbolic violence. Indeed, the calls for confidence in being Canadian were mired in debates over which forms of recognition should be granted to the country's French-speaking population.[19] "As a federal policy, multiculturalism is sometimes seen as a device to deny French-speaking minorities their full recognition, or even to reduce the importance of the French fact in Canada to that of an outsized ethnic minority."[20] Here was a form of unity in diversity: by recognizing all cultures as equal, the policy assimilated the claims of French-speaking Canadians into a totalizing portrait of sameness, a strategic means of adopting the forest for the trees.

Despite this initial context of diversity-as-unity, multiculturalism was retrospectively linked in the popular and political imagination to a series of historical events. Canada's commitment to cultural diversity is located variously in its aboriginal roots,[21] its colonial settlements,[22] its patterns of immigration.[23] In these accounts the country is seen to have built its history on the recognition of the importance of diverse cultural coexistence. Multiculturalism is not merely assigned retrospectively but also progressively—taken as cause of contemporary political initiatives. It is the "chicken and egg" version of policy making. A number of significant laws and policies are identified as crucial to forming the institutions that uphold the Canadian model of multiculturalism. In addition to Trudeau's 1971 statement and the 1988 Multiculturalism Act that followed, the Canadian Human Rights Act (1977) "supports multiculturalism by granting rights to individuals"[24] and prohibiting discriminatory practices on the basis of various forms of cultural difference; the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) is known to have "recognized Canada's

multicultural heritage"; and the Employment Equity Act (1986/1995) stressed the "accommodation of differences."[25]

This aspect of cultural diversity helps to inform a second meaning of the term in the Canadian context. This is the diversity expressed in Canada's "liberalism," understood both as politics and as philosophy. As politics, the term indexes the federal structure of the state, in which provinces, regions, and territories retain jurisdiction over certain legal and cultural rights. As philosophy, Canadian liberalism refers to its adherence to a participatory model of liberalism as opposed to a rights-based or procedural model. The difference is over the role of the state in the conception of citizen welfare. A participatory model entails reliance on the state, while a procedural model "demands that the state be neutral with regard to different conceptions of the good life that its citizens must espouse."[26] Canada's participatory model is one in which the common good has been envisioned as an object of public policy.

A third meaning of diversity in Canada is of civility and its byproducts of tolerance, politeness, deference, and modesty. Such byproducts are found in the figure of the mounted police rather than the cowboy.[27] Tolerance is Canadians' "extempore performance,"[28] the seeming freedom of expression that diversity somehow engenders. If abroad tolerance is a matter of concern and contradiction—a confrontation of the conscience and of legislation[29]—in Canada the notion of tolerance extends to the stereotypes cultivated by Canadians—the helpful friend, the peaceful broker, the middle power, America's northern yokel.

In these articulations, diversity is viewed not as construction or retrospective attribution but indeed as a fact of Canadian life, as the explanatory variable by which all other facets of Canadian society acquire meaning.[30] "We now have not only a cultural mosaic," claims the author of a thirty-year longitudinal study on Canadian values and attitudes, "but any number of additional mosaics in virtually every sphere of life—a family mosaic, a sexual orientation mosaic, a moral mosaic, a religious mosaic."[31] In effect, diversity is seen to cause confidence, cooperation, and a stronger sense of identity: "Societies that have dynamic and diverse cultures will evolve toward greater tolerance and respect for human rights, the individual, and the diversity of ideas, thereby increasing a willingness to cooperate. Heritage activities thus increase a net willingness to cooperate through the creation of stronger group identities and confidence."[32] Taken as both cause and effect, Canada's diversity is the ineluctable and authentic marker of its essential difference. "Our endless—mostly fruitless—search for a single, shared vision of what it means to be a Canuck has been supplanted by a growing sense that this country's greatest strength is its diversity of opinions, beliefs, and lifestyles."[33]

BRANDING CANADA

The project of branding Canada—that is, reinterpreting its various claims to diversity through the logic and ethics of business priorities—was not a project at all. Instead, the transformation involved a series of disjointed, fragmentary, and abortive initiatives from a number of corners. Within the federal government, various efforts were put into motion. Some federal departments commissioned public opinion research to assess foreign perceptions of Canadian identity, using the findings to gain support and legitimacy for specific marketing initiatives. Others invited Canadian and international branding consultants and specialists to conduct independent assessments of Canada's brand potential, and to meet with government bureaucrats to present rationales and methods for the adoption of branding strategies. Within the Canadian business sector, different actors prepared reports, organized public events, spoke at international conferences, and made bold claims in the media emphasizing the necessity of branding the nation. Nonprofit organizations and media outlets also participated in the task.

Despite the fragmented nature of these affairs, each attempt contained the seeds of accommodation of branding as a normal and necessary source of recognition at both the domestic and international levels. And each attempt reflected a more or less unified pattern in its progress, following along the four stages of creative destruction we encountered in earlier chapters: *research/evaluation*, during which "strengths" and "weaknesses" of the national culture are diagnosed according to national and international perceptions; *training/education*, in which the notion of the brand as an identity strategy is conveyed and made meaningful to national citizens; *identification*: the development of a "core idea," or value-based concept, which distills the political, economic and cultural interests of the country into a single but mutable proposition; and *implementation/communication*, where the core idea is advanced as a defining and differentiating characteristic of national identity via multiple channels. Let us look at each stage in turn.

Research and Evaluation: Canada, a Land of Mediocrity

"Canada a Land of Mediocrity, Conference Board Says." Prominently displayed on the front page of the *Globe and Mail,* Canada's national newspaper, in June 2007, this headline conveyed in no uncertain terms the importance of this statement to the Canadian community. The accompanying

article summarized the findings of an annual report on Canada's socioeconomic status prepared by the Conference Board of Canada, a "not-for-profit Canadian organization that takes a business-like approach to its operations." Entitled "How Canada Performs: A Report Card on Canada," the report benchmarked Canada's productivity against that of sixteen other advanced countries across six broadly defined spheres: economy, innovation, environment, education/skills, health, and society. The report's findings drew on social and economic development indicators from the OECD, United Nations, and World Bank; competitiveness data supplied by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD); world investment reports from UNCTAD; and the expertise of its in-house economists and public policy commentators.[34] The report also listed twenty-six "How Canada Performs Investors," corporations that "provided financial, leadership, and knowledge support" to the report.

Canada, as may be inferred from the *Globe and Mail*'s headline, came up short. Its score on innovation, in particular, was abysmal. According to the report card system elaborated in the study, Canada earned a punishing "D"—significantly below average on, among other things, its capacity to generate "value-added" in producing new products and services.[35] A crucial shift, these reports concluded, needed to take place in the country's ability to attract FDI. By lowering taxes on capital investment, removing barriers to foreign ownership, and liberalizing trade in services, Canada could become more competitive and attractive to the international community.

Another shift was required, however, before Canada could be seen as a competitive nation. It was not merely a matter of modifying policy ideas and arrangements to favor investment and value-added strategies; a modification of the Canadian *mindset* was equally essential. As the Conference Board's report observed:

> Anecdotal evidence from many sectors suggests that Canadians are generally complacent and unwilling to take risks. Our culture is unwilling to accept the failures that are built into an environment that genuinely supports risk-taking. Nor are we wholly comfortable with differentiation, success and excellence. This culture holds Canada back in entrepreneurial and technological innovation. It holds us back in the development of new approaches and new technologies to protect the environment. It also holds us back in innovating in our health-care system, in experimenting in our educational system, and in social innovation. It is this culture that must change, and change quickly.[36]

The Conference Board was not the only organization to highlight Canada's cultural ambivalence toward investment as part of the problem of Canadian

mediocrity. Others expressed similar convictions. A research study conducted at around the same time by Ipsos Reid, a Canadian market research firm, revealed:

> The Canadian business environment may not be solely responsible for the lack of aggressive outreach efforts to attract foreign investment. Recent public opinion research conducted in light of a recent flurry of Canadian corporations being sold or put up for sale illustrates that the Canadian public may need to be educated about the value of foreign investment in the Canadian economy.[37]

The "recent public opinion research" in question, also conducted by Ipsos Reid, found that more than half of Canadians surveyed believed that "foreign ownership is definitely a problem in Canada."[38]

A third report, commissioned by DFAIT in 2006, was designed to "assess the strengths of Canada's offer as a holistic destination" for investment. Studying both hard factors such as labor costs and technology infrastructure along with soft factors of national image, the British consultancy conducting the research concluded that a key problem was Canada's "invisibility" on the international stage. "At the root of this visibility problem," the report writers observed, "is a persistent perception that Canada is rather middle-of-the-road: *'It's very vanilla'* said one interviewee. In a competitive market full of dynamic and expressive locations, Canada's positioning is failing to make it stand out."[39] It was thus assessed as mediocre not only in its capacity to innovate but also in its capacity to attract. On the international stage, Canada was simply invisible.

This failing, and its connection to aspects of Canadian culture, was made abundantly clear in a series of four white papers produced by the Canadian arm of the multinational branding agency, Interbrand. Entitled *Branding in Canada*, the four reports addressed the problem of "the lack of Canadian presence" in its annual rankings of the world's most valuable brands.[40] Like the other reports, these highlighted the limitations of Canadian business infrastructure, notably its overdependence on primary resource extraction and tangible commodities and its underinvestment in product research and development. A further impetus for this series of reports was to emphasize the importance to Canadians of developing their own brands: indeed, "Canadian companies appear altogether complacent, almost indifferent to the risk and reward of brand development and management."[41]

Seeking explanations for why Canadian leaders have tended to lack an "intangible asset mindset," Interbrand hit on what they saw as key

problems. In a section of the report called, "Canadian Differentiation: An Oxymoron?", the authors look to root causes:

> . . . talking about Canada and Canadian companies achieving leadership in branding demands a look at the very fabric of the country. From a historical perspective, we are born of many cultures and influences. Our British roots and our American proximity have produced an interesting dominant hybrid with liberal doses of almost every culture, religion and language available.[42]

These "liberal doses" of different cultures, religions, and languages, combined with the country's colonial bases of foreign authority and control, were understood in the report to have fostered a lack of competitive spirit in Canadians' outlook. It was not merely Canada's cultural history but also its political history that formed a source of the problem:

> When has Canada ever conquered another country? We are a country that's never had a revolution, never had a civil war . . . unfortunately marketing is all about scrapping it out—for market share, for share of mind and share of wallet. That means being aggressive day in and day out. And that just doesn't appear to be in our character.[43]

The problem of international invisibility was not limited to the formative years of the Canadian nation but rather extended to current models of deliberation and debate:

> We continue to deliberate over the best model for the country. A federalist-led country versus provincialism. Left of centre politics versus the right. We struggle with the Aboriginal and French situations (all the while playing both up to attract tourists). And we are now faced with reduced say in what happens in the world as our economic, military, and foreign policy stances are becoming irrelevant in a rapidly changing world.[44]

Finally, a third factor was identified that contributed to the tenets of Canadian mediocrity:

> Canadians are known to be polite—it is the national personality. It is inherent in our culture: we are not chest-thumpers like our neighbours to the south. This is perhaps to the detriment of how we brand our corporations, products and services. Successful brands are impassioned; they aspire and inspire. So if humility is one of our strengths in national personality it is a weakness in the realm of branding.[45]

What emerged from these convictions was a portrait of the liability of Canadian diversity. Whether interpreted in terms of pluralism, liberalism, or civility, diversity as a source of international recognition in the market-place became a problem to be overcome. Subsequent news stories, publications, and my own interviews with business elites and government employ-ees confirmed Interbrand's diagnosis. In the arena of global competition, Canada was simply too civil:

> *Advertiser*: "Our genetic niceness, combined with a reluctance to brag and promote, has become a very serious national liability."[46]
>
> *Journalist*: "Some say we're too nice and middle-of-the-road to put our imprint on anything and duke it out for world domination."[47]
>
> *Deputy Minister for International Trade:* "We don't want to promote ourselves as 'nice.' How do we get with the other images?"[48]
>
> *Ipsos Reid Poll*: "Canada is perceived as being a prosperous, stable, G-8 country. A nice country, populated with nice people. But . . . these attitudes are not top-of-mind for investors seeking their next location, and nor is Canada."[49]

Too pluralist:

> *Conference Board of Canada Report:* "Canada has to shop much more seriously for immigrants—and particular kinds of immigrants."[50]

And too liberal:

> *Interbrand*: "Canada itself, and what it means to be Canadian, are widely debated, but any agreement there might be remains largely unarticulated."[51]
>
> *Entrepreneur*: "One of our biggest problems is that [Canada's] consultation is 100 per cent inclusive . . . we need to play up the winners."[52]
>
> *Conference Board of Canada Report*: "[Canada] can no longer be all things to all people."[53]

An interesting feature of this condemnation of Canadian diversity was that its narrative employed remarkably similar references to that *celebrating* Canadian diversity in other accounts. Like the retrospective assignment of diversity as a positive development in the country's official history, diversity-as-liability was positioned in the same way by those who supported the branding

projects. Some cited Canada's traditional position in international governance as a middle power as the source of concern. Others followed Interbrand's lead, invoking the country's more distant past as a settler colony as the origin of the country's lack of competitiveness. Still others asserted that the problem lay in Canada's ongoing invisibility in the shadow of the United States. In a country whose primordial identity is often predicated on identifying itself by means of distance from the other, this accusation struck a painful chord.

The new symbolic vocabulary needed to rally the population around the benefits of the brand—not only in terms of the production of commercial brands but also in the reconfiguration of the country itself. It was only in this way that Canada would be able to escape its mantel of invisibility:

> Canadians have a big problem with image. But we need to get over this—and fast— because it's already compromising our competitiveness and the situation is only going to get worse as the brand image of Canada continues to fade in the global marketplace. The trouble is, Canadians just don't seem to understand or appreciate the value of brands. We too readily dismiss advertising and promotion, the practice that is responsible for creating image and brand value—or just about any activity related to marketing and selling, for that matter—as unimportant and insignificant.[54]

It was not in the ongoing incarnations of Canadian diversity that this could be accomplished. Rather, the task lay in applying what Interbrand called the "discipline of differentiation"—the tools, techniques, and expertise of brand management as a form of difference-making.

Training and Education: The Discipline of Differentiation

In order to inculcate new beliefs, behaviors, and value systems oriented around the benefit of brands, a program of training and education was strongly advised. Interbrand completed its report on Canada by creating a "brand agenda," a "call to action" to government, business, entrepreneurs, academics, students, and consumers designed to "enable Canada to give rise to brands that position themselves for success domestically and internationally. In turn, those brands will help define the country itself by communicating Canadian uniqueness and value."[55] Its six-step agenda outlined reduced protectionism and government subsidies in favor of "strategic alignment" with Canadian business leaders, as well as increased aggressiveness in business goal-setting and marketing.

But it is the changes it advocated in Canadian culture that are of more lasting significance: increased training of Canadians in the business of

branding, not only within companies but in post-secondary institutions to overcome Canada's "follower" mentality. This view was echoed in my interviews:

> What is it culturally about our foreign ministry that prevents us from thinking about public communication and promotion and marketing? . . . In the U.S. you can do PR as a bona fide university degree. In Canada, PR is a skills course that you'll take at a community college. It hasn't even traversed the college-university divide. At a university level, where you draw your FSOs [foreign service officers], you're not even getting exposed to PR as a discipline.

The solution was framed as developing more entrepreneurial attitudes and embracing risk, unorthodoxy, and maverick behavior. Perhaps most importantly, more concerted attention had to be directed to defining the essence of what it meant to be Canadian:

> Historically, Canada has invested in branding, but from a tourism perspective. Less has been spent holistically defining Canada as a brand: who we are and what we stand for . . . Canada and Canadian enterprise are brands whether deliberately created or by default. The only decision is, will we choose to manage them proactively and strategically or will we let the market define who and what we are as a nation and what our brands represent?

To the degree that "recognition represents the nexus of perception and reality" in the brand paradigm, Interbrand advocated strategies of recognition embedded in values that were emotional, adaptable, and unique. Crucially, they must also be measurable—in particular via brand valuation metrics. This, as Povinelli reminds, is "how late liberal ideology works through the passions of recognition, tries to develop its worth without subjecting itself to the throes of contestation and opposition."[56] But the greatest problem was Canadians' misrecognition of the importance of brands: not only the potential of product brands as a global shorthand of recognition, but also of the potential of branding as a form of identity-making for the population; a way to reignite Canadian pride and forge new, more modern, and more realistic sources of unity.

Identification: Creative. Competitive. Canadian.

Applying the discipline of differentiation meant rethinking Canadian identity, attitudes, and values along more competitive lines, focusing on "the

Canadian attributes that create differentiation," such as "socially respon-
sible business practices, understated marketing, the double-edged sword of
humbleness, and a desire to be fun and friendly."[57] This was what it meant,
the report insisted, to be "truly Canadian."

Indeed, according to Simon Anholt, the key was to consider how the
benefits of corporate social responsibility could be applied to countries. In
a report provided to DFAIT on Canada's image, Anholt suggested that the
problem of Canada's lack of recognition was its lack of consensus:

> Unlike most other countries . . . Canada's challenge isn't building its reputation,
> but working out how to leverage it efficiently and effectively for sustainable,
> long-term increases in trade, tourism, cultural relations and political and social
> influence. It's a nice problem to have (and one which perhaps of all other coun-
> tries only Switzerland and Australia really share), but it requires a level of con-
> sensual national strategic vision, and a level of coordination between cities and
> provinces, between the public and private sectors and civil society, and between
> the various branches of government, which at the moment are probably not in
> place . . . attaining this level of management within a federal system is never
> easy, but the benefits would certainly outweigh the difficulties.[58]

Advocating corporate social responsibility for countries brings up the idea of
the nonpolitical as a model of consensus.[59] By establishing branding as the
discipline of differentiation rather than the more contentious disciplines of
democratic deliberation or respect for pluralism, the suggestion being made
by Anholt and others is that relying on commercial frames to rally the
national population is a more peaceful, nonantagonistic way to recognize
diversity—as Albert Hirschman puts it, a taming of humanity's unruly polit-
ical "passions" by reflective and calculative economic "interests."[60]

The Canadian government appeared to take these matters to heart. The
Invest in Canada arm of the DFAIT embarked on a Global Visibility Strategy:
a project designed to create a "stronger brand positioning of Canada inter-
nationally."[61] Part of the strategy involved assembling representatives from
three levels of government—federal, provincial, territorial—to meet for
their first annual marketing/branding meeting in June 2007 in an effort to
harmonize strategies. A second initiative involved the participation by
Invest in Canada in "global events" such as the World Business Forum in
New York City, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) activities, and
the Olympics. A third was a project of "earned media outreach," which con-
sisted of three mutually reinforcing tactics: "journalist familiarization
tours," or junkets, during which international journalists were invited to
Canada on the implicit condition that they write favorable articles for their

local press upon their return; Invest in Canada's database of articles featuring "success stories" about Canadian businesses ready for publication in foreign media; and an "e-marketing campaign" with Google AdWords, Youtube videos, and podcasts.

A fourth initiative was the development of promotional campaigns designed to narrate the new terms of Canadian identity in international settings. The advertising agency Ogilvy was chosen to create ad campaigns based around the findings of the *Looking toward Canada* report that the polling firm Ipsos Reid had developed in 2007, as well as the results of the Anholt NBI study of Q4 2005. Ogilvy identified its business problem as follows:

> Canada is an undifferentiated, invisible, challenger brand. Canada has no cohesive brand image nor message, there are large gaps between perception and reality, Canada has modest resources and a fragmented approach, Canada competes with the U.S.—world's most attractive FDI market, emerging IPAs [investment promotion agencies] are cluttering the marketplace and lastly competitors are increasing resources and increasing sophistication.[62]

Ogilvy's goal was to make Canada compelling. It was a challenge. The tag line developed for the campaigns was "Creative. Competitive. Canada." This conveyed dynamism without conflict, differentiation without too much attention to diversity, and recognition without contestation or opposition.

The cracks in the armor were apparent at a presentation I attended in 2009. Representatives of the Invest in Canada Bureau showed university students and faculty some of the results of their research and concepts for Canada's new brand. One advertising concept, developed by Ogilvy, positioned Canada as a scrappy underdog. Bureau staff played a test video that offered a strategic narrative of Canada's past, collecting unrelated moments in the country's history (former status as a British colony, military contributions to the world wars, invention of the zipper) into a strategic narrative of quiet yet tenacious Canadian ingenuity. Invest in Canada loved the video, but it had not done well in testing. As one deputy minister put it, "When Ogilvy came back with the results they said, we [Canada] are a lot of things but we're not any one thing." Internal divides over the Ogilvy creative material stalled the efforts. The tag line went unused save for a mention on the cover of the department's flagship publication, a report containing testimonials and success stories about Canadian investment.

The report contents featured Canadian diversity, but in none of the senses in which it was historically understood. The report expressed diversity in terms of the country's nature versus culture, competitiveness versus stability. Canadians may be diverse in culture and language, the report said, but

unified in their drive to work hard. The problems identified in the various evaluations of Canada—R&D, value-added, training and education in business skills—were presented as core advantages in the report. "Changing the image of a country is a big task, but it can be done," one representative told the students. "Ireland did it. Japan . . . what's the recipe? If you have it, call us!"

This presentation and subsequent interviews confirmed a critical point: that as government officials and bureaucrats were increasingly exhorted to act like a business, it became clear that few of them knew exactly what this meant. Nor were they convinced that it was the most effective or useful strategy to pursue. This uncertainty opened the door wider to the expertise of branding and marketing consultants, who furthered the conception that governments were unskilled players on the contemporary playing field of global capital. One branding consultant, speaking at a conference hosted by Canada 2020 (an Ottawa-based think tank), perpetuated the notion of the Canadian government as marginal participants to the enterprise: "I was very hard on the politicians. Get them out of the damn picture. But I've come to the conclusion that politics and politicians can play a role. I've defined them as facilitators."

Communication and Implementation: Disabling Diversity

At the same time, other changes were taking place to rearticulate the terms of Canadian culture. While Invest in Canada formed the seat of the international trade side of DFAIT, the foreign affairs side was involved in various public diplomacy projects to project Canadian culture abroad. In 1995, the Canadian government's foreign policy statement, *Canada in the World*, emphasized "the promotion of Canadian culture and values" as the third "pillar" of foreign policy after prosperity [and employment] and security. The benefits of promoting Canadian culture abroad were understood in both domestic and international terms: the promotion of Canadian culture abroad was seen as a way to maintain "social cohesion" at home, fostering "attachment and belonging to Canada."[63]

This philosophy was put into practice via various activities managed by DFAIT under the heading of a public diplomacy program established in 1998. From 2000 to 2005, the reasonable sum of $8 million per year was allocated for broad-based public diplomacy activities, distributed among bureaus and divisions within Canada as well as at consular posts abroad. The central mandate was "raising Canada's profile" in the international sphere. Funding was provided to arts and cultural initiatives as well as academic programs that were deemed to respond to this broad mandate.

In this way, financial and logistical support was offered to film festivals, commemorative celebrations, and book fairs, as well as academic conferences, scholarship awards, and international student exchange programs. In the spirit of such soft power initiatives, these funded individuals were seen as ambassadors of Canadian culture who, by dint of their talent, international outlook, and embodiment of culture in action, would convey Canada's core values to the world.

In 2005, a formal report evaluating the program deemed it a success. The report highlighted the increased scale and scope of cultural promotion, greater visibility among its international target groups (parliamentarians, journalists, civil society groups), and a more robust recognition of Canadian diversity and distinction. These findings reinforced the notion that Canada's attempts to promote its culture internationally via this program had fostered strong feelings of national cohesion and pride.[64]

In the same year the Canadian government issued a new international policy statement, *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World.* Reflecting the world events that took place in the intervening years between the publication of the prior statement in 1995, the 2005 statement identified a vitally different set of priorities, including safety and security, greater emphasis on North American "partnerships," greater economic competitiveness, and multilateral decision-making on issues of international concern. The terminology used in the new policy reflected another difference. The 1995 statement was a "foreign policy" statement, while the 2005 statement was an "international policy" statement. The change is meant to underline its broadened application to both domestic and foreign audiences in response to what the authors of the document saw as "the growing interdependence of domestic and international interests and the corresponding need to address this issue in developing and promoting foreign policy," as well as "the increasing number of federal departments and agencies that are becoming active internationally, which emphasizes the need for this department to lead and coordinate overall Canadian approaches to international relations, acting as a central agency to build policy coherence; the necessity for clearly targeted and highly focused messaging in order to garner attention in an international environment targeted by 24-hour electronic communications; and the need to build international influence through dialogue, profile raising, and the expansion of networks of opinion leaders and decision makers in key countries."[65]

The report also presented strategies for a "new diplomacy." This version of international communication focused not on "raising our profile" but on "advancing our interests," and it was oriented not around social cohesion but around *results*, interpreted as indices of efficacy that could be tangibly

measured and monitored. In other words, the new policy was a strategy of control and risk management, a containment of diversity.

The new watchword of Canada's international relations was *alignment*. This meant that all forms of cultural support and promotion by Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs had to align with the newly codified international priorities. If in principle the notion of alignment involved a more strategic sharing of resources to model the core attributes of Canadian culture, in practice the word stood for a series of disabling moves. One was to repatriate public diplomacy funds into central institutions (rather than distributing them among consular posts). A second was to severely reduce the number of personnel in the service of cultural promotion. At the Canadian Consulate in New York, for instance, the number of personnel responsible for the cultural mandate was reduced from four to one in the three-year period from 2005 to 2008. The lone remaining cultural officer was put in charge of all nine cultural portfolios—film, television, dance, radio, publishing, sports, music, visual arts, and theater. A new position was created and given the title of communications and public affairs officer; the role of this staff member was to focus on promoting the activities of the *consulate* rather than those of Canadian citizens.[66]

A third, lasting impact of the new priorities was to restrict funding to narrowly defined interpretations of culture. To the extent that culture could function as a tool for advancing Canadian interests, it was acceptable. But if its sole function was to foster understanding, cohesion, or good mutual feeling between nations, culture in its various articulations was not deemed a fundable project. As one former consular employee explained,

> Before, [Canadian fiction writer] Michael Ondaatje would have a great fiction book out, we'd promote it. But now . . . you have to have an event that relates to the priorities. If there were a book published on Afghanistan, or a lecture about border security, that would get attention [via government funding].

So at the same time as what it meant to be Canadian was being rethought, the forms and forums of expression of this meaning were being dramatically reduced.

CONCLUSION

Differentiation along the lines that appear to be required has simply not been working in the Canadian frame. Cultural and political diversity cannot be made synonymous or even copacetic with differentiation in a branding

sense. Yet these two terms, *diversity* and *differentiation*, are presented as both/and rather than either/or. In the attempt to define the attributes of this "new and improved" Canadian identity, in the process of articulating the terms of difference along globally acceptable lines, determinate visions of the good citizen and of good governance have emerged, visions that exclude the moral and social legitimacy of others. Who resides in the culture of complacency, and who is part of the enterprise culture aligned with global demand? Anholt calls this the "paradox of sovereignty." In an essay provided to members of the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs in advance of a competitive identity master class he hosted there in 2010, Anholt writes of the problem faced by national governments:

> The fundamental problem of sovereignty is that national leaders, assuming they care about public opinion at all, care most about the opinions of their own populations . . . and when their national interest is at odds with the national interest of other states, governments will invariably focus on pleasing their electorate at the expense of pleasing foreign populations.[67]

Like philosopher J. L. Mackie's paradox of sovereignty—Can a legal sovereign make a law that then restricts its own power to legislate?[68]—Anholt's paradox asks about the seat of authority and the range of control in the making of sovereignty. In Anholt's version, the moral overtones are clear. No nation can operate without a license of international public approval:

> One way and another, it seems that governments find international public approval ever more worth their while to value, to seek, and to retain; and the mechanism of shared values and reciprocal esteem appears to function better with each decade that passes. Just as in the corporate sphere, earning and maintaining a good reputation is becoming the cost of entry into the marketplace; survival outside that marketplace is no longer an option.[69]

In the cunning of recognition Povinelli describes, subjects are made to overcome their personally held senses of obligation and enact instead the conditions of recognition required by dominant others. In the process, both subject and society are placed at risk. To brand the nation is at once to create and contain that risk, to set up diversity as potential liability, and to reframe the codes of moral sensibility. It is a high price to pay for the favors of global perception.

Trading Spaces: The World Tour

The images, metaphors, and rhetorical turns from which nationalist ideologies are built are essentially devices, cultural devices designed to render one or another aspect of the broad process of collective self-redefinition explicit, to cast essentialist pride or epochalist hope into specific symbolic forms . . .

—Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*

In the literature on nationalism and national identity, several studies have pondered the relationship of nationalism to economic growth. One of the most well known is Liah Greenfeld's work, which argues that "the factor responsible for the reorientation of economic activity toward growth is nationalism."[1] Drawing on empirical studies of the emergence of capitalism across four national settings—France, Germany, Japan, and America—Greenfeld concludes that it is nationalism—that is, the existence within national territorial boundaries of a distinct social consciousness with an image of a collective membership based on equality and committed to sovereignty—which formed the spirit of capitalism.

This argument itself drew on the notion contained in Max Weber's classic work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, that the particular norms and values attached to the pursuit of profit could be explained by aspects of seventeenth-century Calvinist doctrine, which adhered to the idea of a "calling" and the embrace of entrepreneurial tendencies. Calvinism, by "suppl[ying] the moral energy and drive of the capitalist entrepreneur," contained within it the ethic ('spirit') of modern economy.[2] Despite multiple criticisms of this work and its methods, Weber's ideas set in motion a hundred years of debate over the role of culture in economic development. The questions animating this debate have turned around whether a distinct set of motivations, behaviors, ethical

standards, and cultural values need to be in place before a society can achieve economic growth.

Nation branding represents a curious inversion of this belief. If for a century it was believed that nationalism formed the spirit of capitalism, nation branding appears to advocate that it is now capitalism that forms the spirit of nationalism. In order for nations to survive and thrive, in order for them to maintain the fertile social consciousness that gives rise to conditions of belief and belonging, the presumption is that they must embrace the capitalist principles of competitiveness, growth, and profit.

One of the most vocal proponents of this view is Simon Anholt. I introduced Anholt in chapter three as the guru of the nation-branding movement. In its invocation of a quasi-religious following, the term *guru* is not an overstatement.[3] For Anholt, nations need to develop a "competitive identity," a form of national consciousness that is oriented not to the conditions of equality or sovereignty but to those of global capital demand. "Governments are beginning to wake up to the fact that cities, countries and regions all need a new way of looking at identity, strategy, development, competitiveness and purpose if they are to survive and prosper in a very new world order," he writes. "Big changes in the social and political fabric of modern society make the more 'public-oriented' approach of Competitive Identity a necessity. This is not a question of governments 'playing to the gallery' or a strategy for legitimizing state propaganda, just a growing acknowledgement of the influence of global public opinion and market forces on international affairs."[4]

In this chapter, I consider the implications of these claims against profiles of nation-branding projects and programs in nine countries on five continents. My aim, in part, is to document some of the ways in which nations have been branded—that is, to explore some of the processes and practices by which the metaphor of brand has been applied to transformations in national policy and practice in the drive to respond to perceived global capitalist exigencies.

In developing this portrait I also wish to draw out some of the assumptions that guide the practice of nation branding more generally, in order to reveal facets of its underlying and problematic logic. Three facets of this logic are given attention here. The first is that nation branding is presented as a form of progress; the second, that nation branding is designed to render national identity more "useful" by reorienting its cultural and social bases to fit the parameters of global demand; and the third premise is that nation branding is a purely economic consideration, detached from political interests.

This set of premises emerges from the history of marketing itself. If a foundational point about economics is that it involves the study of the

exchange of wealth, marketing—as distinct from economics—understands itself largely as a system of exchange of desires. It organizes relationships between producer and consumer to achieve a satisfaction of wants. Marketing is at root a system of motivations. Another animating feature of marketing, one that courses through its hundreds of textbooks and salvos, is that it is a catalyst for economic development, a form of economic progress that indexes by its existence a drive toward modernization. As source of both motivation and modernization, marketing is advanced as a *mindset*—a set of attitudes and beliefs or a way of life that is not only a harbinger of growth but also a universally recognized indicator of growth in all times and places, independent of local political powers or programs.

The nine cases I examine here—Chile, Jamaica, Germany, Sweden, Estonia, Botswana, Uganda, Libya, and Georgia—were chosen, to quote Eleonora Pasotti, "not because they prove the theory right but rather because of their theory-generating ability."[5] The cases differ vastly in their geoeconomic landscape, historical legacy, and sociocultural demographics. The point is to derive lessons from each as to the reach and influence of nation branding as a generalized global phenomenon. As such, each case provides a different facet of the phenomenon to demonstrate its complexity and multilayered effects. This is not to say that the other cases do not share these facets. I describe intellectual property issues in Jamaica and the influence of world sporting events in Germany as part of the phenomenon, but this does not mean that intellectual property issues are unique to Jamaica or that the effects of hosting international sporting events are only visible in Germany. In drawing out different aspects of what is described as a single phenomenon, my aim is to show how national representation, like national identity, is not a monolithic concept or an empirically coherent set of practices, but an indeterminate and ongoing process that is negotiated differently in different spaces. As I suggested in chapter two, nation branding is part of a delicate exercise in knowledge transfer by various experts and organizations who are part of what I am calling a transnational promotional class (TPC). Yet these cases are not born of TPC initiatives alone; they are made effective by the activities of state leaders who interact with these transnational authorities in efforts to gain the advantages that can accrue to them by meeting so-called global requirements. Some of the identity campaigns I present here are initiated as a final stage of competitiveness programs, designed as public relations efforts to communicate changes made via structural adjustments and reforms. In other cases, the campaigns are part and parcel of these reforms, conceived as a kind of cultural adjustment to accompany institutional and policy change.

Table 6.1. TRAITS OF UNBRANDED VERSUS BRANDED NATIONS

The Culture of Unbranded Nations	The Culture of Branded Nations
Backward (-looking)	Progressive
Old	Young
Political	Neutral
Antagonistic (radical)	Friendly
Divisive	Peaceful
Invisible	Visible
Abnormal	Normal
Untrustworthy	Authentic
Traditional	Transforming (market-friendly)
Lazy	Innovative (entrepreneurial)

In performing this demonstration I wish to make another observation: while the indeterminacy and variability of national identity is recognized by the TPC, which emphasizes the "unique" and "authentic" elements of national character that must prevail in any nation-branding paradigm, the TPC and their clients fundamentally misrecognize the extent to which the so-called global concepts they seek to apply are *themselves* indeterminate and variable. It is therefore not merely the understanding of what constitutes national culture that changes across space and time, but also concepts like global competitiveness and transactions like foreign direct investment.[6] To make this observation I am drawing on ideas advanced in sociological studies of economic practices that have contested the dominant views of market forces as natural, inevitable, and inexorable. Rather than seeing economic processes as "disembedded" from political, social, and cultural influences, sociological accounts of economic transactions recognize the messy and contingent aspects inherent to economic processes.[7]

To elaborate each case, I use interviews with actors engaged in the branding initiatives and trace the model nation-brand development process introduced in chapter three (research/evaluation, training/education, identification, and implementation/communication). In this regard, the cases are similar. I focus on the core values that each brand identity is meant to bring out. My aim, however, is not to establish direct comparisons among these cases; they are meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. I use these cases to construct a typology of the kinds of values that are seen as most beneficial. Despite claims to authenticity and uniqueness contained in the initiatives and used as justifications for the project, the analysis reveals a continuum of values that bring the nations into evolutionary

alignment. Despite the presumption that nation-branding efforts are merely economic, postpolitical, or postmodern, nations are repositioned in branding discourses according to a decidedly political pattern. The hierarchy prompted by nation-branding discourses determines a system of values that privileges certain traits as more evolved than others, with those nations at the bottom of the rungs desiring to move upward along a unilinear modernist path.

BOTSWANA: TRANQUILITY, HOMEGROWN, WORKS WELL

In April 2005, two consulting firms won a bid for tenders put out by the Botswana Export Development & Investment Authority (BEDIA) to develop a brand for the country.[8] Placebrands, a consultancy based in the United Kingdom and Holland, and Kaiser Associates Economic Development Practice, an American firm with an office in South Africa, were charged with developing "a comprehensive brand strategy and implementation plan for Botswana" that would improve the status of the country's "exports, investment, tourism, foreign relations and local citizen identity."[9]

The consultants began a series of visits to the country in February 2006. Their initial step was to create and incorporate a Botswana "brand partnership": a public–private organization that would oversee and chair the brand development initiative. Members in the brand partnership consisted of chief executives from key industries (representatives from Debswana, the De Beers diamond mining enterprise in Botswana; the Botswana Development Corporation; the Botswana Tourism Board; the Vision 2016 Council Secretariat; and the advertising agency Ogilvy); national government representatives from the Ministries of Trade and Industry, Foreign Affairs, and International Cooperation; and high-level representatives from the financial sector (the governor of the Bank of Botswana, members of the International Financial Services Center). This group was itself to be overseen by a "multi-stakeholder Brand Development Team"—a group of approximately fifty representatives from national and parastatal organizations, academia, the corporate sector, and civil society. The president of the country, Festus Mogae, acted as the brand's honorary chair.[10]

Once the public–private infrastructure of oversight was established, the consultancies' next step was to conduct a "situational analysis" of the current perceptions of national identity through interviews with representatives from the brand partnership. At the same time, the consultants ran a "masterclass," a two-day workshop for the members of the branding teams

to establish the logic and rationale for the brand development. Once the analysis was complete, the consultants worked to develop a "brand vision" that would express the core values of the country to both domestic and international audiences; these values, in turn, would be used to develop the marketing strategy.

The brand vision that was developed consisted of three discrete but interrelated "strands": concepts that would work to combine Botswana's industry and economy with key facets of its identity. Although the value concepts had to be "real"—that is, rooted in existing practices within Botswana's communities—there also had to be an element of projection, a strategic "prospect" or future outlook that the country could strive to become. As one of the consultants explained to me:

> It's very unusual, once you've chosen the brand strategy, that there aren't already bits of it happening in a country . . . on a rough scale between nought and 100, it would be unusual if there wasn't sort of 30% of activity [that was already on brand].

The brand values selected were "home-grown," "works well," and "tranquility." These values were made tangible in a colorful seventy-page brand book. The brand book was not intended for international distribution—it was not, the consultant insisted, "the kind of fantasy island stuff that tourism boards indulge in." Rather, the book was for domestic audiences, meant "to inform the population at large about the brand":

> We're talking about printing tens of thousands of them, it's not a small print run. And this will be used by teachers in schools, it will go to kids to take the brand book home to their families, projects will be run round about it, and it'll go into companies . . . and the challenge is in a way to the individual and the organization and the institution: how can we become more "on brand"?

As we have seen in earlier chapters, to be "on brand," according to corporate marketing wisdom, is to align the features of the brand with all of its forms of expression in a coherent and systematic way, through various methods of institutionalization and socialization by those organizations and actors who will use the brand. In the case of the nation, being on brand means that citizens must absorb, inculcate, and embody the habits of belief advanced by branding narratives.[11] As the brand book indicated,

> When you think about it, everything you do and say becomes a *brand choice* for Botswana. In order to support and bring the Brand to life, before you say, think

or do something ask yourself "Is this *on-brand* and am I contributing to Brand Botswana?" If you are not, think about ways in which you can live, work, enjoy leisure activities and express yourself in a way that is in line with the Brand themes.[12]

Each of the three brand themes was articulated in the brand book in the form of various narratives, polyphonic interpretations of how "tranquility," "home-grown," and "works well" could be brought to life. "Tranquility," for instance, could refer to the country's "wide-open spaces" and "immaculate wildernesses," as well as to citizens' friendliness, politeness, and civility—traits that were deemed part of Botswana's "national character." "Home-grown," too, could refer to the kindness and charity of its people, exemplified in aspects of the country's cultural heritage (the brand book refers to the country's "Botho" and "Therisanyo"—Tswana words that encapsulate a broad spirit of courtesy and discipline and a legacy of democratic dialogue); it could also refer to the country's arable land and farming, a major source of the country's GDP before the incursion of the diamond trade. "Works well" was elaborated in terms of the government's ongoing commitment to public education; the country's high literacy rate; and its modern infrastructure, services, and utilities.

The photographs accompanying the text further reinforced the semiotic potential of the brand tropes. Indigenous peoples were featured participating in various "traditional" activities (weaving cloth, drinking tea, sitting in a circle on the ground) or dressed in uniforms representing various professional occupations (medical staff, police force, airline personnel, diamond processing workers, national football team) interspersed with unpeopled images of crops, plants, and wildlife.

Each of the three core values carried additional dimensions of interpretation, dimensions that were not contained within the brand book; these were designed for communication to foreign audiences rather than domestic ones. "Home-grown," for example, as one consultant explained to me, "is actually about taking local talent and local resource and making more of it than we're currently doing." In this regard, "home-grown" referred primarily to the activities of Debswana within the country.

Initially called the De Beers Botswana Mining Company Limited, the company was renamed Debswana in 1992, the name underscoring an increasingly intimate link between the company and the country: it is now co-owned by De Beers and the government of Botswana. The country's Jwaneng mine, where Debswana operates, is Africa's richest diamond mine; Debswana is Botswana's largest private employer. In 2000, 40 percent of government revenues in Botswana were attributed to diamond sales.[13]

The brand communications were therefore partly intended to advertise the developments Debswana was undertaking within the country, including a tax-free industrial park port in Gabarone, the nation's capital, to attract other companies involved in the diamond mining supply chain.

"Tranquility," on the other hand, had important connections to tourism. In the mid-2000s, the primary tourism market in Botswana consisted of wealthy European visitors on desert safaris, accompanied by locals who chauffeur and cook for them. The aim here was to increase this market, attracting more tourists through a communications strategy that promoted the peace and quiet of the Kalahari Desert.

"Works well" was, as my respondent put it, "basically a statement to say that this is the African country that *does* work." The brand book made mention of the country's "modern buildings, up-to-date telecommunications technology, current aircrafts and good road and rail transport systems."[14] Low personal and corporate taxes and duty-free access to American, European, and African markets were emphasized in the communications. It was also a matter of corresponding to international standards of production and technical and managerial skills. This, the consultant explained, was what foreign audiences would look for:

> These people [foreign investors] have a choice—they can go anywhere in the world, and once they satisfy those ethics of property, profitability, what are they going to choose from? They're going to choose from places that have their act together, they're going to choose from places that know who they are and what they want to be, they're going to choose from places that have a purpose . . . It's part of our work. We're helping the key stakeholders define the future purpose of the place—and the purpose is defined in terms of the value offered to consumers.

CHILE: "NO ONE CAN PICTURE A CHILEAN"

> Part of the problem with Chile's image is that no one can picture a Chilean. Everybody thinks they know how an American, a Frenchman, an Italian, an Australian looks, behaves and talks, but the Chileans are a blank. So one of our objectives in the coming years is to ensure that more famous faces come from Chile.[15]

This statement sat at the heart of Simon Anholt's work with *Proyecto Chile—Imagen País* (Chile National Image Project), part of a "new institutional framework" put into place by Chile's president Michelle Bachelet in December 2007 to coordinate commercial, cultural, and political exchange related to Chile's identity in the world.[16] The mandate of the public–private

organization was to oversee the activities and communication strategies of multiple state institutions: ProChile, Chile's trade and export promotion agency; Dirac, the cultural affairs office (both under the auspices of the minister of foreign affairs); Sernatur, the national tourism office; and the Foreign Investment Committee, a committee made up of the ministers of economy, finance, foreign relations, and planning, as well as the president of the central bank.[17] Additionally, the new organization would coordinate and host regional and national seminars on the promotion of national image and identity.[18]

One such seminar, *Comunicación de Imagen País. Desafíos en un Nuevo Contexto* ("Communicating Country Image: Challenges in a New Context"), held on April 21, 2009, at the Espacio Riesco conference center in Santiago, featured Simon Anholt as one of the day's six expert speakers. Anholt's starting premise for his work in the country, a premise he continued to articulate in speeches and presentations both within and outside Chile, was that Chileans were "invisible." The lack of global awareness of Chilean identity, Anholt insisted, was a barrier to the country's development. More problematic still was Chileans' "silence," their *chaqueteo*, manifested in what Anholt described in his speech that day as "the innate inability you have to promote yourselves":

> Now, I'm not saying you have to stop being Chilean, of course, and I'm not saying, still less, that you need to become American. That would be a terrible tragedy; it would also be impossible. But there is a technique there, of presentation, which you all have to learn . . . What we are talking about here is closing the gap between the perception and the reality. Because it's very wide. The reason it's very wide is because you are very silent. Because you are very silent, you need to learn to make a noise. The way you will learn to make a noise is to recognize your talent by not pushing it down and by displaying it worldwide in areas that are relevant to global public opinion.[19]

The image project was therefore organized around the task of overcoming such silence and invisibility. Two conceptual tools from Anholt's nation-branding arsenal were mobilized to assist in this task. The first was the notion of "competitive identity," an idea Anholt had elaborated in detail in his book of that title. The basic premise of competitive identity was that national self-understanding needed to correlate with the perceptions foreigners had of the nation. In order for countries to successfully compete for global attention, they needed to demonstrate their ability to matter to a broadly defined range of global capital interests. National identity was a prime resource in this endeavor. By creating a competitive identity for
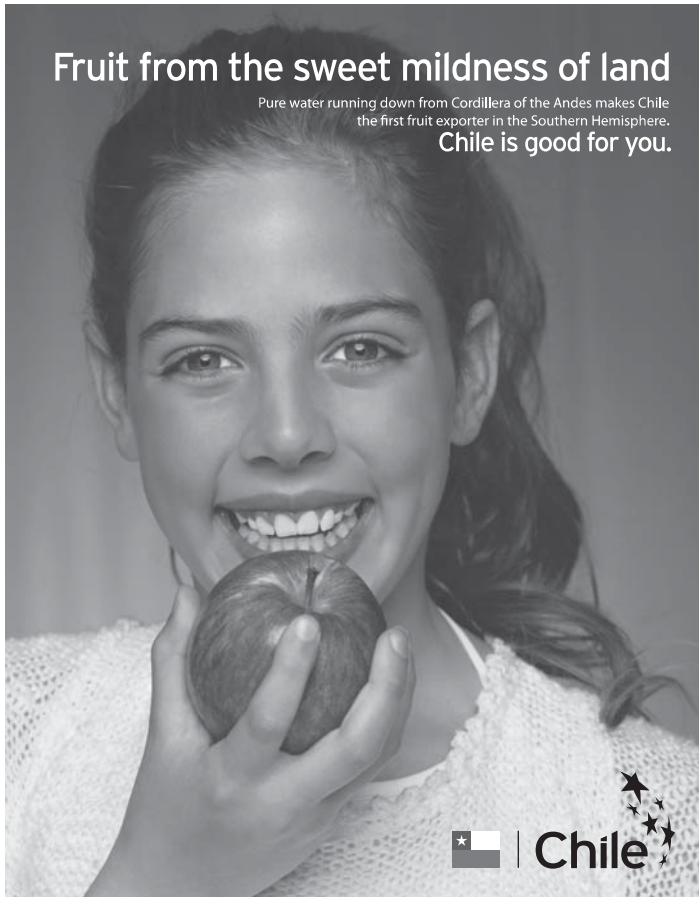
Figure 6.1:
An ad from the 2010 campaign Chile Hace Bien, overseen by the Fundación Imagen de Chile.
© Fundación Imagen de Chile.

Chile based on products, services, and values that corresponded to global demand, and by successfully promoting and marketing these features, the country could increase its development and well-being.

The second conceptual tool deployed to improve Chile's character was Anholt's proprietary Nation Brands Index (NBI). As we saw in chapter three, the NBI is an international public opinion survey designed to benchmark and rank countries across six domains of national status: exports, governance, culture/heritage, people, tourism, and investment/immigration. The NBI serves to construct a model of best practices, shoring up those national values, attitudes, and beliefs that are more conducive to a successful competitive identity and thereby to positive global recognition.[20] Ostensibly,

the NBI was intended to monitor, measure, and rank Chile's progress in creating a new national image. But a key trait of Anholt's NBI, and of such indices in general, is their ability not only to identify the conditions of recognition but in fact to construct them, creating an imaginative endpoint of ideal recognition, an "attractor" toward which all countries must strive but can never ultimately attain.[21] In creating an image of Chile that corresponded to the model of success in the NBI, Anholt and the image project leaders could organize the actions Proyecto Chile would undertake in an effort to improve the country's international standing.[22]

The groundwork for these concepts was laid in a series of regional seminars. Throughout 2008 and 2009, the project's executive director, Juan Gabriel Valdés, embarked on a national tour, giving talks in Atacama, Tarapacá, Los Rios, Magallanes, Valparaíso, Coquimbo, and Bio-Bio. Each talk was titled "The Role of the Region of _____ (current location on the tour) in the Construction of Chile's Competitive Identity." The talk was meant to inspire citizens to "picture" themselves in the world, to imagine ways to translate their diverse interests and backgrounds into a cohesive image for promotion abroad. As he explained to the crowd gathered at the regional seminar in Valparaíso,

> We are working together to design a strategy that works along two lines that are quite basic. First, we need to find out who we really are, what story we want to tell, because we would have trouble convincing a foreigner of a story that we did not create ourselves . . . So what we want to do is tell the story we want to tell, which has to be essentially a story that we believe, in which we have faith. We know that we are creating a story for everyone because, as the mayor said so well, this is a task of all Chileans, here there are no differences, or sectors, or political views, what we seek is precisely a national task. So the first thing is, what is this story of ours? What is it that gives us our identity? Understand that by doing this exercise, this first question is internal, because nobody cares about our identity. We thought of ourselves rather than of the people around us. But the truth is that we now have to consider the second point, which is how can we make this story interest those who do not know us? Why do we have to interest them? To answer this question we have to know what the world wants, what the world needs today, what problems people identify that affect their lives and the lives of their children and how Chile has things to give these people and that can mean something important to them.[23]

These seminars served a dual role, promoting both the concept of nation branding as a legitimate and necessary strategy for Chileans and the rationality of the image project itself. Another function of these seminars was to introduce Simon Anholt and his particular expertise to Chile. The

NBI had proved essential to recognizing Chileans' invisibility, Anholt told the Valparaíso audience:

> Like some countries you have a very strong reputation within your region, you are respected within South America. But go beyond this immediate region and Chile is virtually unknown. We know this, because we tested it. We spoke to many thousands of people, all over the world, and unless they are very expert, geographers, academics, businesspeople, diplomats . . . if they're none of those things they really don't know anything about Chile.[24]

Two aspects of the project in particular were designed to overcome Chile's invisibility. The first was to eliminate the country's past. Chile's modern identity must be oriented, rather, toward the future. As Valdés explained,

> A country that wants to construct an image of itself in the contemporary world, in the world we live in now, cannot only base it on its history, above all if its history is 200 years old, even if it were 500 years old . . . we cannot make a vision of Chile based on its traditions, on our heritage of national or republican identity. We have to look to a future, we have to decide that we want to do this in order to be considered, because we are people with things to say on topics that interest people in the world.[25]

The second initiative undertaken by the image project leaders was to paint economic growth as divorced from and therefore unaffected by politics. Although the country's president oversaw and funded the project, and several state departments and representatives participated in it, the formation of a public–private institution to manage and coordinate the work of articulating the national identity was intended to dissociate the project from political interests. Rather, the national reputation would be built on indicators of economic prosperity: wine, olives, energy. In this way, it was felt, a common vision could be forged.

History has been elided in Chile many times before, albeit in a very different context and with differing intentions. During the Pinochet regime and after, a distinct lack of public accounts and records emerged, contributing at least in part to the lack of international reprisals that allowed subsequent governments to avoid accountability and conflict.[26] The divorce of economy and polity were also familiar terrain in Chile's recent past. The adoption of "shock therapy" in Chile—massive, pro-business reforms initiated by Milton Friedman and the University of Chicago-trained economists known as the Chicago Boys—were widely seen as responsible for the

country's economic success in the 1970s and 1980s. By disassembling economic reform from political rule, by some accounts, the "freedom" of economic exchange was not seen as antithetical to political repression.[27]

In the context of the nation-branding initiatives, suppressing history and politics was part and parcel of Chile's goal to rise in the NBI rankings. The foundation set up a website to consolidate and publicize its initiatives.[28] The website featured information about the activities of Chile's celebrities, politicians, and other internationally recognized public figures. It also reported on the country's appearance in international media and hosted an image bank, organized by theme, for foreign journalists to use. On the home page of the site, against a backdrop of snow-capped mountains, flash frames scrolled along the top of the screen, highlighting key messages for both Chilean citizens and their global audience:

> One of Chile's primary strengths is its institutional stability, which is relevant in the promotion of public diplomacy.

> All of the unique expressions of Chile's people, lifestyle, and artistic or athletic accomplishments strengthen the Chilean identity.

> The sectors with the greatest innovation and added value, aligned with the highest international standards, lend prestige to Chile.[29]

Chile's brand image was carefully charted in subsequent editions of the NBI and announced periodically on the website. In a recent press release issued by the foundation, Chile's brand value was said to improve, though its ranking—thirty-ninth out of fiftieth—had not changed from the previous year. One explanation for the lack of movement in the rankings was provided in the press release:

> Chile is part of a group of countries that are not characterized by their large economies, political and military power or long-standing cultural histories. These aspects have an influence on the valuation the poll participants award the different countries studied. The countries with the above-mentioned characteristics— which in the main are permanent and structural attributes—tend to coincide with the countries that occupy the top place in the ranking.[30]

ESTONIA: POSITIVELY TRANSFORMING

The Brand Estonia project was undertaken in 2001, when the British consultancy Interbrand won a bid for tenders extended by the national investment promotion agency Enterprise Estonia (a division of the Ministry of

Economic Affairs) to develop and deploy a distinct identity for the country in the international media and marketplace.[31] As the "model pupil" of EU candidate states in 2002—so called because of its rapid adoption of political, technological, and monetary reform—Estonia sought to convey to the world its legitimacy as a European nation and its openness to global capital.[32] Its "coming-out party" was its hosting of the 2002 Eurovision Song Contest, an honor conferred because an Estonian citizen had won the contest the previous year. This was itself a symbolic event, as it was the first time a participant from a former Soviet state had won the contest.[33] Launched in 1956, the Eurovision Song Contest is one of the longest-running television programs in the world. Only countries that are members of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) are allowed to participate in the contest; the potential for the public to conflate EBU membership with EU legitimacy in Estonia during its hosting of the contest was not lost on the country's political and economic elites.[34]

If a primary objective of the branding project was to convey an impression of Estonians as qualified hosts of an international media spectacle, a second and no less critical objective—according to the 137-page *Brand Estonia* report Interbrand produced—was to help Estonia overcome the "accident of history" that had placed the country in the East rather than the West in the minds of its interlocutors.[35] Its twenty-two-year period of independent statehood between the world wars of the twentieth century was seen as its true and natural condition, a condition that neither five decades of Soviet occupation after 1940 nor the related Russification of the country (inflows of thousands of Russian immigrants and the mass execution and deportation of Estonians) could diminish. During the Soviet era, Estonian intellectuals and political elites, particularly those who had succeeded in emigrating from the country before its reoccupation in 1944, persisted in describing the country as a "captive nation" with "Western orientation and values," caught in a temporary limbo that time and justice would restore to its rightful place in the West.[36]

Interbrand was to occupy, therefore, a complex conceptual space in the project of Estonian identity. As a Western multinational corporation, Interbrand's role was to set the small country in the sights of investors, exporters, and tourists across Europe and beyond, attracting the kind of financial and symbolic capital that would legitimate the country's rightful place in the West and solidify its membership applications to NATO and the EU. Yet as the nation's newly engaged cultural representative, Interbrand was required to maintain Estonians' historical self-understanding as a fiercely independent nation and state. The refrain, "Remain Estonians, but become Europeans," created by the radical youth movement *Noor Eesti*

(Young Estonia) in the early twentieth century, was the touchstone for Estonians throughout the century and into the postsocialist era.

Interbrand's first task was to conduct an audit of Estonia's identity. This involved multiple interviews with potential tourists, investors, and importers to Estonia in the United Kingdom, Germany, Finland, Sweden, and Russia. Interviews were also conducted with local citizens, journalists, business leaders, and prominent elites. The audit material was then used to develop a brand essence, "a pure and unifying idea" intended to rally Estonian citizens to its cause and convey a coherent, consistent, and controlled message abroad.[37]

The brand essence selected was "positively transforming," a phrase that straddled both the recovery of a buried past and the adoption of transition reforms:

> Over the past decade, Estonia has proven herself capable of revolutionary, positive and welcome change against all odds. Our success in restoring and reasserting a long-suppressed identity, while simultaneously recreating Estonia as a modern political economy and nation-state has been nothing short of breathtaking.[38]

Interbrand's report went on to explain the ways in which the spirit of "positively transforming" could be articulated in five interlocking narratives. Each narrative told a story about the nature of the Estonian people, a story that at once encapsulated unique and defining dimensions of Estonian identity and that could be modulated for a variety of potential interlocutors. To assist Estonian readers in making the required associations between their sense of identity and the various brand narratives, a series of keywords lined the margins of the report. Both the keywords and the narratives revealed the ways in which Interbrand understood its task, as the following examples demonstrate.

A Fresh Perspective

This narrative was meant to refer to the "surprising" elements of Estonia's culture and landscape—"surprising" in that they did not correspond to Western European standards. It also referred, obliquely, to the demographics of the country. As a country that had undergone the tribulations of Soviet occupation, its population of ethnic Estonians was young. "As a society that is both ancient and modern, we can afford to look at the world and to offer our opinions without the mundane, conformist burden of many larger, longer-established countries."[39] Keywords associated with this narrative included "inexpensive," "no establishment," and "unbureaucratic."

A Radical, Reforming, and Transforming Attitude

Here the entrepreneurial potential of Estonian citizens was at the forefront. To emphasize this narrative was to highlight the country's willingness to take on risk to rapidly adopt market reforms. Comparing Estonia to Ireland, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, Interbrand saw how Estonia could "offer investors one of the freest market economies in Europe—and no corporate income tax on re-invested profits to boot. Further, our resolute fluency with, and rapid adaptation to, the most modern of technologies are yet further examples of how we are set to succeed in the new economy."[40]

A Nordic Temperament and Environment

According to Interbrand's research, Estonian elites framed their European desires as Nordic rather than Baltic, seeing themselves as "both temperamentally and geographically" better suited to Nordic affiliations.[41] "Nordicness" was defined as entailing "innate tendencies toward honesty, transparency, soft-spokenness and reserve"; a "pioneering spirit" in dealings with "often inhospitable" northern European neighbors; and a natural landscape of pure, ageless beauty.[42] Appropriating Nordicness allowed the Estonian participants in the branding initiative to project their history back in space rather than time, to see their ancient roots as anchored in territorial rather than temporal dimensions. "Putting Estonia on the map," as Interbrand put it, was therefore a delicate exercise in spatial manipulation. It meant conceptually annexing the country to Scandinavia, Denmark, and Finland, away from any connection to its Russian past. Estonians did see their connection to Nordic countries through a historic lens, citing their cultural and religious similarities to Finland, Denmark, and Sweden from the sixteenth century. But in the case of the branding project, it was less about recovering history than about forging a productive future.

A Resourceful Self-Starter by Nature

Here the focus was placed on Estonians' education, skills, and motivation as potential members of a global knowledge workforce. Keywords in this section included "pragmatic," "EU front runner," and "survivors." Interbrand offered an example of this narrative to attract exporters:

> Small in scale but high in competitiveness, productivity, and value, Estonia's resolute success in the production of both commodities and branded goods makes it an ideal place from which to source and import everything from lumber and organic foodstuffs to toys and mobile phones.[43]

A European Society

"Despite so much change in so little time, we have not forgotten our roots and our place in the world. The Estonian language and folk culture have survived despite a millennium of foreign occupation, sociolinguistic influence, and outright suppression, as if the society of the past knew that these elements had to be preserved for a future generation that would fully enjoy the freedom to be themselves, by themselves."[44] The keywords in this section were "stable," "safe," and "peaceful."

Figure 6.2:
Interbrand's *Style Guide for Estonia*, 77. © Enterprise Estonia.

These brand narratives were supplemented by a style guide: a multi-component visual design for the country including a distinctive typeface, color palette, image bank—a series of photographs of "real" Estonians "photographed in a direct, confident, and engaging way"—and a logo—Welcome to Estonia—which was seen to contain and convey the brand essence.[45] These design elements and photographs were adopted by the national airline and airports, used within the tourist industry, and printed on T-shirts and car stickers. It was a national feel-good campaign.

GEORGIA: AND THE WINNER IS . . . GEORGIA

The nation-branding initiative in Georgia cannot be understood apart from its particular strategies of reform and the assemblage of transnational financial institutions devoted to managing this reform following the election of Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili in 2003.[46] Saakashvili came to power in the dramatic context of the Rose Revolution, a popular revolt against a corrupt parliamentary election that thrust Saakashvili's opposition party into office. A cornerstone of the new government mandate was massive regulatory and institutional reform. Specific reforms were designed to render the country more attractive to FDI, including the extensive privatization of state-owned enterprises such as transportation and communication infrastructures, agricultural terrain, and energy and gas suppliers.[47]

As important as the reforms themselves were the rankings by transnational organizations that measured the Georgian economy competitively against other national economies. Aided by a five-year, $12.9 million Georgia Business Climate Reform (GBCR) project overseen by USAID,[48] the Georgian government sought to tailor its reforms to microeconomic indicators such as those articulated in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index (EDBI).[49] Rising in those rankings was an explicit objective of the reforms. The ultimate aim was a process of mutual reinforcement: reform initiatives were tailored specifically to EDBI indicators, in the hopes that the global "reputational capital" that would accrue to Georgia by virtue of its ascent in the rankings would accelerate its actual processes of reform.[50]

To further Georgia's reputational capital, the British advertising agency M&C Saatchi was hired by the state-run Georgian National Investment Agency in 2007 to develop and communicate a national brand.[51] One core objective of the brand was to popularize Georgia's ascent in the EDBI, but other messages were to be appended to the brand identity and communicated as well. The dramatic events of the Rose Revolution and after had opened the door to a new vision of the country as a young, modern, and

forward-looking place. The theme of "return" to Europe was also strong, as it had been throughout the South Caucasus in the post-Soviet era. For the Saakashvili government, yoking its appeal as young and modern, along with its reforms in economic growth and competitiveness, to a "return" into the European community was an important goal. Moreover, the brand would help consolidate the attachments between Georgia and the United States over those of Georgia with Russia.[52] Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the brand was to assist in reorienting the bases of nationalism away from the ethno-territorial conflicts that had characterized the South Caucasus region in the post-Soviet era and toward the more peaceful, dispassionate interests of the global market economy. By relocating the bases of nationalism in economic indicators rather than political projects, the new brand identity would, it was hoped, at once redefine national pride and diminish international anxieties over the region's political stability.

The ad campaign used the core value of superiority, expressed in terms of "winning"—ostensibly in global financial rankings but also in terms of heritage, weather, and friendliness. "Protochronism" was a key feature of the ads.[53] The design of the ads, which was replicated on the Invest in Georgia website, featured red and white blocks of color vaguely reminiscent of the current national flag.[54]

Other examples of advertising copy:

> The state of Georgia in the USA: noted for the beauty of its mountains, the wealth of its history and the warmth of its hospitality. The country of Georgia on the Black Sea: noted for the beauty of its mountains, the wealth of its history and the warmth of its hospitality. But if you're looking for the climate that, in most economic surveys, better favours overseas investors, head for the Georgia in the east.

> It isn't just the sunshine and chilled beer that has earned Australia its reputation as a wonderfully relaxed country. When it comes to business, few countries can improve on Australia's lack of bureaucracy and liberal employment laws. But Georgia can. And in case you were wondering, our summers are almost as hot and our beer is just as cold.

> Think wine, think France, yes? Well, the country does have a deep-rooted tradition of viniculture. But over 7,000 years ago which country first saw the possibilities of the humble grape? Not France but Georgia. That—and the fact that Georgia's economy is more deregulated than France's—is something well worth celebrating. Over a bottle of excellent Georgian wine, of course.

In addition to these print advertisements, which appeared in the *Economist*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Financial Times*, M&C Saatchi produced

Figure 6.3:
Print ads for Georgia's "And the Winner Is . . ." campaign, designed by M&C Saatchi.

television commercials for CNBC and Global CNN and organized an "Invest in Georgia Road Show," a series of investment conferences held in Vienna, London, and New York, hosted by the *Economist*, the *Financial Times*, and *Dow Jones/Wall Street Journal* companies, respectively.[55] Representatives of the Georgian government—ministers of economic development, finance, and energy and agriculture—spoke at the events, as did representatives of foreign companies who told success stories of their investment projects in the country. Saakashvili himself was the keynote speaker. The America-Georgia Business Council participated in promoting the event. M&C Saatchi also worked with tourism officials in Georgia to apply similar messages in the country's tourism campaigns.[56] Its sister company, Saatchi & Saatchi, created a tourism campaign, "Georgia. Europe Starts Here." One

The state of Georgia in the USA: noted for the beauty of its mountains, the wealth of its history and the warmth of its hospitality. The country of Georgia on the Black Sea: noted for the beauty of its mountains, the wealth of its history and the warmth of its hospitality. But if you're looking for the climate that, in most economic surveys, better favours overseas investors, head for the Georgia in the east. For more visit www.investingeorgia.org **And the winner is : GEORGIA**

Source: World Bank and International Finance Corporation

GEORGIA
VS
GEORGIA

Figure 6.3:
(Continued)

blogger summarized the campaign: "First, Saatchi & Saatchi 'detached' the country from Asia, where most people believed it was, and second, they placed the accent in the past—not on the current war and conflicts situation in the Caucasus."[57]

GERMANY: THE LAND OF IDEAS

In June 2006, commuters entering Grand Central Station in New York City were met by a series of enormous billboards featuring the German supermodel Claudia Schiffer, naked except for a provocatively draped national flag. Various headlines superposed over the model captured the spirit of

the ads: "Come on Over to My Place"; "Interested in a Serious Relationship?"; "Invest in Germany, Boys!"; and "Date the World's Largest Single Market."[58] Supported by the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, the billboards were part of a massive promotional campaign designed to represent Germany as "The Land of Ideas."

The Land of Ideas national brand identity campaign was initiated by members of the German government to capitalize on the international media coverage of the 2006 World Cup in Berlin. The attention garnered by the tournament was seen to have the potential to achieve multiple goals. Beyond attracting tourism, the Cup was planned as a moment of symbolic recognition in which various political, economic, and cultural objectives could be crystallized. Three objectives were given particular attention: stimulating domestic economic growth and reducing high rates of unemployment; diminishing generalized European animosity toward German federalism and irredentism[59]; and justifying the effects of the "less inhibited, more ruthless" capitalism that had characterized economic and political reform after 1989.[60] In these senses, Germany's nation-branding initiative represents a globalized form of locational politics (*Standortpolitik*), a form of governance "through which national and local political-economic elites are attempting to enhance place-specific socioeconomic assets within their territories."[61] In the nation-branding paradigm, identity becomes one of these socioeconomic assets. Key to the effectiveness of the nation branding campaign was to present German identity as "cosmopolitan," "future-oriented," and "progressive"—in short, as a nonchauvinistic, noncontentious cultural product that could serve to attract foreign capital.

In conjunction with these goals, the campaign was also intended to renew civic discussions about the bases of national belonging. The question of what it means to be German has been dominated by the long shadow of the Second World War, but also by more recent conflicts over integration in the post-unification landscape. Using the combination of sport, branding, and business would, it was felt, help overcome an ongoing "discourse of division" and ignite a more positive spirit associated with German nationalism.[62]

What was this spirit? According to the promotional material on the Land of Ideas website, "People in Germany and around the world say: 'Land of Ideas' suits Germany. We are a land of poets and thinkers, engineers and inventors, and innovative products 'made in Germany.' The term 'idea' aptly describes the strengths of Germany, its people and its powers of innovation."[63]

The origin of the phrase Land of Ideas contains clues to the intentions behind its use as symbolic shorthand for Germany. The phrase was first uttered by federal president Horst Köhler in his inaugural speech of July

2004. The German president is elected by a representative assembly rather than by direct popular vote and is accorded a more "ceremonial" role than that of chancellor. The pretense of political neutrality afforded by this ceremonial position was seen to extend to the impact of the phrase. Köhler was made patron of the Land of Ideas project. His stance also emanated from his prior positions, as president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development from 1998 to 2000 and as director of the International Monetary Fund from 2000 to 2004. By situating discussions of national identity away from contemporary political party conflict and toward the "neutral" sphere of economy, it was hoped that the Land of Ideas brand would have a more unifying effect.

A third feature, the public–private partnership structure of the organization developed to manage the promotional campaign, reinforced the pretense of neutrality. The Land of Ideas steering committee was made up of members of the Federation of German Industries, federal ministers, and representatives from federal media and finance associations. Mike De Vries was hired as the chairman of Marketing für Deutschland, the organization created to design and communicate the Land of Ideas project. Formerly managing director of the unsuccessful Leipzig 2012 Olympic bid committee, he and his staff of sixty operated with a 20-million-Euro budget, 10 million from government and the same amount obtained by licensing the brand name to private commercial sponsors. As he explained, "We are a company which belongs to the economy, which belongs to the government, which has patronship—this is a key instrument for making this acceptable and authentic."

It is important to review the specific tactics employed by the Marketing für Deutschland organization to provide a sense of their totalizing effects.

1. *Fan Club Germany*: A campaign to inspire citizens to become "fans" of Germany by signing up on a website and wearing a yellow bracelet. The campaign was launched on October 3, 2005, Unification Day (a national holiday in Germany), conjoining Land of Ideas with the metaphor of unity and the political promise of unification. Angela Merkel, then opposition party leader of the Christian Democrats, was photographed for the press wearing the yellow bracelet and was cited in the *Financial Times* celebrating the tournament as "a unique chance for Germany to present itself as a welcoming, tolerant and modern country, bursting with ideas."[64] As the chief marketing executive explained to me in an interview, "There should be more in that than just a simple campaign that said we are celebrating soccer. There should be something more in it, a message for the country."

2. *365 Landmarks*: An incentive program sponsored by the Deutsche Bank, in which German citizens nominate projects, locations, or institutions that represent German innovation. Winning entries are awarded daily by representatives of Deutsche Bank. The newspaper *Die Zeit* provided ample coverage of the awards presentations, providing free publicity for the brand and the bank.

3. *Invest in Germany*: The advertising campaign featuring Claudia Schiffer, designed to make an "emotional and infectious appeal" to potential investors.[65] The Invest in Germany campaign coincided with meetings in New York, London, and Tokyo between German business leaders and potential investors and CEOs of financial institutions. The press release for the campaign explains: "Claudia Schiffer's presentation of Germany goes beyond the usual German virtues of quality and thoroughness. She also brings across a likeable and attractive image of her country."

4. *Media Service*: A database of 1,500 articles on positive business developments in the country, written by German journalists from the news agency DPA, organized by sector and by target country.

5. *100 Minds*: Land of Ideas representatives selected one hundred prominent Germans under the age of 40 and promoted them as "100 Minds in the Land of Ideas" in an exhibit at the German Museum of History and in *Bild am Sonntag,* Germany's popular Sunday newspaper.

6. *Friendly Service Campaign*: In preparation for the World Cup itself, friendliness training was imposed in the service sector. The training included English language courses for taxi drivers and police officers, as well as exhortations in the press and handbooks on how to welcome foreign guests.[66]

7. *Walk of Ideas*: A set of six sculptures financed by the Marketing für Deutschland agency, each representing a product of German ingenuity—a giant Bayer aspirin, an Audi, a tower of books, a set of soccer shoes, and three-dimensional representations of a music note and Einstein's theory of relativity—advertising not only past accomplishments, but profitable industries in the global economy.

Each of these projects served to reinforce the message and mandate of the Land of Ideas project: German national identity was now a source of progressive invention and creative ingenuity, and the country was a safe, easy, and friendly location for business investment. The 365 Landmarks event, for example, attracted daily press coverage in national and regional media; at the end of the initiative's first year, the winning landmarks were collected into a travel guidebook to attract tourism to the regions. Having Deutsche Bank representatives participate in some of

the prize-giving ceremonies offered the bank regular photo opportunities and positive coverage in local and national press, furthering the connection of identity to financial health. Other events contributed to "humanizing" finance, Deutsche Bank (a principal sponsor of the initiative) in particular, in a number of ways. Jürgen Fitschen, a member of Deutsche Bank's management board, participated in some of the prize-giving ceremonies and posed for photo opportunities. The yoking of finance to society was also achieved through the sense of patriotism that appeared to surround the initiatives. A primary goal, as the managing director of Marketing für Deutschland explained to me, was to integrate citizens into the initiative, by getting them to think about what it meant to be German:

> It made the people get interested in their own country, in their own identity, to just think about why I'm a fan of my country. For lots of people in Europe this is a normal question . . . but in Germany we had difficulties, a little more distance to our own identity because of our history. And to ask the people, Why are you a fan of your own country—it mobilized them, it motivated them.

The particular narrative of national identity that Land of Ideas was designed to express was manifest in the media coverage of the country both immediately preceding and following the World Cup: Germany was now "friendly," "fun," and "cosmopolitan," its renewed sense of self expressed in a form of "post-political" patriotism, what one reporter in the German media called "partyotism."[67] News stories portrayed Germans frantically waving the tricolor flag, now a neutralized symbol of national expression, during the tournament. The key to the success of the Land of Ideas initiative lay in the reorientation of its past. Removing the antagonistic elements of Germany's cultural and political heritage and replacing them with marketable and monetizable ones was a signal achievement of the brand campaign.

JAMAICA: BOLD AND CREATIVE (ENTREPRENEURS)

"Importantly, for the Government of [Jamaica], a nation branding strategy has the potential to serve as a nexus for the transformation of the nation—its economy and social infrastructure—the psyche and attitudes of its people; the accomplishments of its economy." Such was the conclusion drawn by the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) feasibility study in 2005 on the potential of nation branding to improve Jamaica's

status in world markets.[68] The study was one of several commissioned by the Intellectual Property and Economic Development Division of the WIPO, with the aim of providing "a more effective and realistic assessment, based on empirical evidence, of the linkages between IP [intellectual property] assets and economic development."[69] In the case of Jamaica, such empirical evidence was at least partly manifested in a series of workshops,[70] national strategy documents,[71] and public initiatives throughout the island designed to reinforce the ideological and practical benefits of branding the Jamaican nation. The author of the feasibility study, Simon Anholt, led one of the workshops in the country's capital, Kingston; his influence and the text from the study reappear throughout subsequent initiatives.

The nation-branding project in Jamaica consisted of two central pillars of development. One focused on the propertization of aspects of Jamaican cultural production that offered high added value and low export volume ("niche" products) and which would be readily recognizable by international consumers as properly "Jamaican": reggae music and musicians, sports icons, Blue Mountain coffee and local rum, fashion design and designers, and so on, were to be retrofitted via intellectual property frameworks such as geographical indicators, certification systems, and trademarks.[72] The first pillar of the branding effort was therefore to put these cultural products into the service of creative industry paradigms, turning Jamaicans' "natural" propensity to create and innovate into marketable commodities within internationally trade-friendly sectors. Another perceived benefit of the creative industry approach in Jamaica was to generate economic value in spheres of activity that were more likely to be seen by the international community as apolitical and therefore unproblematic and nonthreatening (and by the domestic community as unifying).[73] This in turn would help to displace the state as the authority in economic development, thereby diminishing political, regulatory, and other obstacles to interfirm trade.[74]

A second, no less vital component of the nation-branding effort was to work on the culture of Jamaicans themselves—to manage and modulate the attitudes, values, and beliefs that were seen as antithetical to the competitiveness of the Jamaican economy:

> There are aspects of Jamaica's culture that are not conducive to innovation and increased productivity. These include inadequate attention to punctuality, declining appreciation and respect for civic rights and responsibilities, and disturbingly low levels of interpersonal and institutional trust. These represent aspects of our social capital that must be corrected to create an authentic and transformational culture and support our process of national development.[75]

Creating and communicating the core values of such an "authentic and transformational culture" was a key focus of the nation-branding initiative.

One manifestation of these objectives is contained in the "repositioning" report for Brand Jamaica, published by the Jamaica Promotions Corporation. Against background photos of urban architecture, highways, a port, and city lights—accented by a color palette of green, black, and yellow (the colors of the national flag)—the text celebrates the "bold spirit" and "creativity" of Brand Jamaica and its "icons"—a cricket player, a musician, and a food services worker.

> The creative and innovative side of the Jamaican people is exemplified by our exotic cuisine, pulsating rhythms, tantalizing designs and indomitable human spirit for which we are internationally renowned. Our business acumen is another side of Jamaica, lesser known, but just as powerful. We are contemporary, globally connected, and possess an entrepreneurial character which has spawned new businesses and innovations in a variety of commercial endeavors. And we are dedicated, hardworking, supportive, educated, and highly skilled, making our workforce efficient and productive.

Emphasizing this "dual nature" of Jamaicans as exotic and entrepreneurial, untamed and efficient, spirited and stable, encapsulated in the amorphous label of creativity, was a central feature of the nation branding effort.[76]

LIBYA: THE NORWAY OF NORTH AFRICA

"My ideal future for Libya in two or three decades' time would be a Norway of North Africa: prosperous, egalitarian and forward-looking," wrote Anthony Giddens in the *Guardian* newspaper on March 9, 2007. This statement reflects the resolutely positive tone of several news stories, opinion pieces, and essays on Libya that appeared in American and British media between 2004 and 2009, countering the historical characterization of the country as a pariah state under the leadership of an errant dictator, Muammar Gaddafi. The favorable media coverage emanated from a public relations project initiated by the Monitor Group, a Boston-based management and strategy consultancy run by Michael Porter and other Harvard University business faculty.

> The project is a sustained, long-term program to enhance international understanding and appreciation of Libya and the contribution it has made and may

continue to make to the region and to the world. It will emphasize the emergence of the new Libya and its ongoing process of change.[77]

By the "new" Libya was meant the country's renewed investment and trade potential as of 2004, when economic sanctions by the United States, the United Nations, and the EU were lifted from the country following the government's moderated positions on terrorism and its renunciation of weapons programs.[78] The main problem Monitor identified at this juncture, and that its multimillion dollar, multi-year program was designed to solve, was that Libya "has suffered from a deficit of positive public relations and adequate contact with a wide range of opinion leaders and contemporary thinkers."[79] By acting as a "conduit" to foster relationships between Libya and the world, Monitor would replace outmoded perceptions of Libya with its modern reality, bringing the nation into alignment with the cultural, political, and economic paths and byways of global capital circulation.

As the projects carried out by the consultancy suggest, however, aligning perception with reality involved a number of interventions beyond public relations strategies. One of the first projects was the preparation, in 2005, of a two-hundred-page National Economic Strategy (NES) to "define a comprehensive and integrated approach to achieving greater and sustained prosperity for Libya."[80] In addition to extensive competitiveness assessments, reform recommendations, and international benchmarking studies for multiple sectors and industries in Libya, the NES included a "vision" for Libya for the year 2019, the fiftieth anniversary of Gaddafi's rise to power. Ten "core aspirations" (egalitarian, democratic, productive, competitive, international, entrepreneurial, skilled, connected, green, regional leader) were listed along with descriptions of a future reality that "if achieved, would transform life for all Libyan citizens and businesses."[81] Using verb tenses anchored in the present to convey a sense of achievement, the vision statement articulated a potential future for the country:

> By the 50th anniversary of its Revolution, Libya has substantially realized its major goals and aspirations. Libya is a respected leader in Africa, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and beyond. While incorporating elements from the successful and rapid development of Singapore, Ireland, Malaysia and other countries, Libya has developed its own unique model. It has a globally competitive economy that has significantly raised the standard of living of the Libyan people, while preserving the values and ideals first defined in the *Green Book* . . . By 2019, Libya has created the conditions for its greatest resource—its people—to flourish. Libyans are developing world-class educational institutions to produce the best workforce in the region, providing the leadership and technical skills for all citizens

to participate responsibly in direct democracy. Libyans are leaders in various fields; heading some of the world's best companies, hosting major international cultural and political events, and preserving and improving the environment— thus creating a unique and prosperous social community for the 21st century.[82]

Key to the ideological effectiveness of this Vision 2019 statement was its ability to conflate the terms of moral and market value. Yoking concepts such as egalitarianism, democracy, a strong work ethic, and heritage protection to economic growth, the consultancy articulated a future "reality" for the country via the adoption of a global competitiveness agenda. By connecting these same concepts to the cultural and political philosophy of Colonel Gaddafi's *Green Book,* the consultancy could achieve the domestic consensus necessary to move forward with the project.

As the initiatives that followed suggest, this vision for Libya reflected to a considerable extent the vision of the consultancy and its particular arsenal of knowledge. As one way to promote Libya's aspirations, for example, Monitor consultants instituted and ran a "leadership program" in Libya starting in 2005. This program encouraged citizens to "live the brand" by teaching them about competitiveness and entrepreneurship. In another initiative, in 2007, Monitor and its Libyan client launched the Libyan Economic Development Board "designed to speed government decision-making and boost private enterprise."[83] Once programs were underway to foster this vision at the domestic level, further initiatives were put into place to manage international perceptions of Libya. One campaign consisted of engaging the services of prominent academics—many of them colleagues of Porter's at Harvard University—as consultants and sending them to Libya to meet with Gaddafi.[84] Upon their return, they were "encouraged" to publish positive articles on Libya in the academic and mainstream press.[85] Other campaigns involved consultants speaking directly, at times on the record, with media outlets to encourage further publication of stories on Libya, as well as reorienting negative news about Libya with the help of public relations affiliates. A third facet of the project was designed to convey positive impressions of the Libyan leader himself. To this end, Monitor's chief executive and cofounder, Mark Fuller, and its senior vice president, Bruce Allyn, drafted a book manuscript to promote Gaddafi's political views.[86] The total cost of the book project, including "subcontractor fees" for additional research visits to Libya by Monitor's network of academics and journalists, was estimated at $2.9 million.

This version of nation branding can be seen partly as "leader" branding, turning Gaddafi into a "more constructive world citizen" and by extension legitimating the work of his son Saif. But it should also be understood as a

way of defanging the seemingly violent monster that was Libya and turning it into a recognizable, globally acceptable, and safe territorial location for investment.[87]

SWEDEN: INNOVATIVE, OPEN, CARING, AUTHENTIC

In 2003, a central online portal for the country was being designed by the Council for the Promotion of Sweden (NSU) to combine the activities of multiple Swedish organizations into a single public face.[88] Along with the restructuring effort, many saw a parallel need for a process of communicative coordination among various entities engaged in promoting diverse sectors of Swedish economy, polity, and culture: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Institute, Invest in Sweden Agency, the Swedish Trade Council, and Visit Sweden. Strong emphasis was placed on what distinctive position Sweden could "own" in the world.

Identifying Sweden's brand involved a lengthy and extensive process of research: workshops, surveys,[89] and questionnaires were conducted within and outside Sweden. The coordinators drew on findings of the World Values Survey to identify the perception of Sweden by foreign audiences. The World Values Survey is an extensive set of longitudinal cross-national surveys of "mass values and attitudes," conducted via the University of Michigan since 1981. It claims to address nearly 90 percent of the world population. The study directly correlates cultural values and attitudes with societal levels of economic development; as societies move from agrarian to industrial societies, they experience a shift from "traditional" values, such as religion, respect for and obedience to authority, and national pride, to "secular-rational" values such as self-expression and individualism. I mention this survey here because it correlates directly to the logic of competitiveness expressed in the Global Competitiveness Reports.

The platform for Brand Sweden was divided into a "core that defines what we are, what we believe and value, and thus what we offer" and a set of narratives "which help us to achieve our desired position in the world's consciousness." The core, or "brand essence," was defined as "progressive."[90] This concept had its roots in a host of Swedish facts and figures: "Stability and peace since 1814," the Swedish author Astrid Lindgren, and Swedish industrial inventions from the Volvo to the Tetrapak. The concept in turn was connected to the four core descriptors that set Sweden apart: "innovative," "open," "caring," and "authentic." Each of the four values formed the basis for multiple narratives. "Innovative," for example, was seen to stand for the country's strength in knowledge-intensive
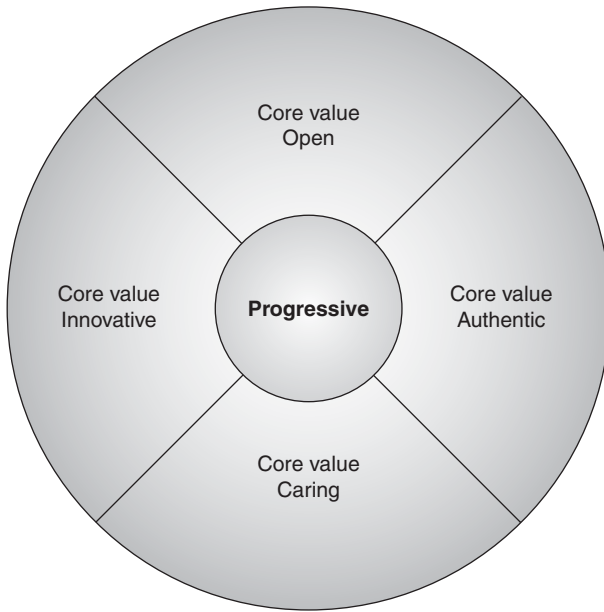
Figure 6.4:
Sweden's core values, shown in *Brand Sweden: The Road to an Updated Image of Sweden Abroad* by the Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad (published by the Swedish Institute). © 2008 The Swedish Institute.

research and industry; the scientific and industrial legacy of Alfred Nobel; Swedish family benefits; and prominence in design, fashion, and pop culture. "Open" could express the country's importance as a test market for new products and services or its "well-traveled" people, while "authentic" could refer to "quality-conscious production/products," to "trustworthy relationships," or to "Western Europe's last wilderness."[91]

The planning documents further emphasized the tonality of the messages ("refreshing but not cold," "not arranged and advertising-like"), the use of particular language conventions (no English words in Swedish texts, use "we" instead of "us/them"), and guidelines for the graphic identity and images (avoid stock photos, use photos that convey a sense of "real people" and "true stories"). The NSU developed a digital image bank to this end.

UGANDA: GIFTED BY NATURE

The Gifted by Nature public–private partnership was set up as part of a larger project of competitiveness undertaken in Uganda by a series of transnational organizations: USAID, the World Bank, and the EU. Strengthening

the Competitiveness of Private Enterprise (SCOPE) is a project operating under the auspices of USAID. SCOPE had two institutional partners: the secretariat of the Medium Term Competitiveness Strategy (MTCS), funded by the EU, and the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), an advocacy organization funded by the World Bank.[92]

When SCOPE arrived in Uganda in 2003, the most immediate and salient goal, according to the project leaders, was to concretize the concept of competitiveness among Ugandans. Despite considerable effort by various donor-funded organizations in previous years, and despite the country's adoption of macroeconomic reforms and strategies of economic liberalization, there remained—as SCOPE put it—"a lack of common understanding among key constituencies of what competitiveness meant and how it could help to develop Uganda."[93] Uganda's "non-competitive culture" was seen as a major liability.[94] "Rather than waiting for the government to 'facilitate,'"[95] SCOPE argued that change in Uganda must come from the private sector. SCOPE began its work by forming "private–private partnerships," using these to leverage additional partnerships with private and public sector actors. The SCOPE participants firmly believed that "the power of private sector solidarity brought about a change in mindset that would have otherwise prevented public sector participation."[96]

One of the "key results" of the SCOPE project was to facilitate development of a national brand. Like the work undertaken to promote competitiveness, promoting the brand involved a series of steps. The first step was to poll "all aspects of Ugandan society"—"people young and old, company executives, NGO workers, activists, students, teachers and public officials . . . to get their insights on their likes and/or dislikes about Uganda, what they felt needed to be changed and how they wanted to be perceived by the rest of the world."[97] SCOPE members also conducted their own assessment (called a competitiveness awareness survey) of "the private and public sectors' strengths, limitations, and needs," so they could adapt "proven competitiveness techniques to fit the Ugandan context."[98] As they put it in the report, "From the beginning, SCOPE *sought to make competitiveness a real and relevant concept to all stakeholders,* and focused on building support for competitiveness from the ground up."[99]

The second step involved training and education. A large part of the work of SCOPE was to promote the adoption of competitive behavior among Ugandan citizens:

> Recognizing that changes in attitude and mindset were critical for Uganda to move forward, activities were designed to raise the profile of competitiveness approaches with key public- and private-sector audiences.[100]

This involved using the Stages to Ugandan Competitiveness tool, along with Michael Porter's competitiveness diamond (see fig. 3.3a). "The project used these charts to help stakeholders' officials visualize competitiveness thinking and relationships."[101] It also involved working with Ugandan leaders to identify a "good mental model" for competitiveness, an eight-point vision statement that advocated attitudinal and ideological change for Ugandans.[102]

These values were equally promoted through the SCOPE website and a quarterly newsletter, "*compete*Uganda!" The newsletter contained information about the awareness survey, national branding, and public–private partnerships, among other related topics. Further initiatives included the creation of a "media cluster" designed to "help [. . .] journalists recognize and understand competitiveness issues."[103] This involved periodic meetings with reporters to describe the competitiveness activities and encourage them to feature stories about them in their outlets, providing additional media coverage. SCOPE added two more projects at this stage: a "competitiveness club" at a well-regarded Ugandan university, Uganda Martyrs University-Nkozi, and a National Competitiveness Workshop in August 2006. "By the workshop's closing, a national commitment to competitiveness as the driver for Uganda's economic development had emerged."[104]

SCOPE then provided what it calls "technical assistance" to private and public sector actors. This included encouraging businesses across different sectors to "'cooperate to compete' to drive expansion and rapid growth." At the national level, SCOPE "worked to strengthen Uganda's policies to create an effective and sustainable framework for business-led economic development."[105]

The third step was the process of brand development, including defining the brand's core values. These values are summarized in their tagline, "Gifted by Nature." The brand is meant to reflect "Uganda's extraordinary natural richness and cultural diversity, as well as the talents and abilities of her people—all bestowed as a gift to the world. Nature is seen as the giver of Uganda's uniqueness—created independent of human violation, yet dependent on human protection to preserve its uniqueness for future generations."[106] The Gifted by Nature Inc. public–private partnership was seen to "represent the types of partnerships that will effectively facilitate Uganda's transformation in the global marketplace."[107]

Launched on CNN Inside Africa in October 2005, the brand's six-month run was intended to build awareness initially and consensus secondarily, as its meaning and potential value were reinforced by the Brand Uganda Committee, SCOPE, and numerous civil society and government organizations. Ultimately, its goal was to present Uganda to the world as ready for

change, as willing to take on the mantel of competitiveness that would allow it to participate in the world market. Michael Fairbanks described his work on competitiveness in Uganda as helping to instill "a sense of urgency" in the country: "A sense of urgency is created when there is a gap between expectation and reality. The expectation is informed and placed in perspective by knowledge of outside events and sense of purpose."[108]

One telling indication of this effect on Ugandan culture had to do with the way the project leaders worked to change Uganda's position in the annual global rankings of national economic performance, conducted via the WEF Global Competitiveness Survey. The project leaders identified a "gap" in the way Uganda's Makerere Institute for Social Research was constituting its information (expectation) and the results on the survey (reality). The project leaders worked to close this gap by changing the methodology and altering the indicators and monitoring system used by MTCS to modify Uganda's rankings in the competitiveness report.

TRADED SPACES

In chapter four, I showed how capitalism requires an identity in order to thrive. This identity is deeply paradoxical: it presents itself as purely economic, indeed as a technology that can be applied without modification across diverse spaces, yet its spirit emerges in its political and cultural inflections. The homoficence of capitalism is that it appears the same everywhere and has everywhere the same effect.[109] To reinforce this homoficence, nation brand narratives elaborate a spectrum of development, portrayed as a unique path that will reveal the nation's true and authentic identity. Far from unique, it is a single, unilinear, and unidirectional path along which all nations are exhorted to travel if they are to attain a successful "competitive identity." Multiple national tributaries lead to the flow of the global brand: divisive discourses, outdated modes of thought, calcified habits of body and mind. In the logic of the brand, these tributaries are all named "accidents of history"—wrong turns countries have taken along the well-trod road to modernity. Positioned as accidents of history rather than legacies of imperial power or other forms of hegemonic rule, national pasts are doubly reframed by the country's elite representatives: they divorce themselves from responsibility for the past while positioning national citizens as responsible for the future. While the "problem" preventing national emancipation is located in wrong turns in the past, the solution is located in reorienting citizen "mindsets" toward the future.

Accidents of History
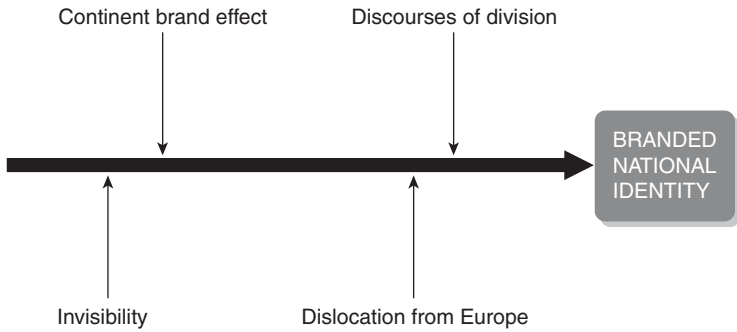
Figure 6.5:
Accidents of history. All paths lead to a branded national future.

The most important aspect of this spectrum of development is its axial emphasis on time. While multiple pasts are represented as a series of accidents of history, the solitary future, meanwhile, has no determinate endpoint but rather extends into an infinitely receding space of possibility and probability. There are a number of reasons for this. First, setting up the progress of nations toward an unattainable endpoint ensures an ongoing need for management consultants to shape their clients' possible futures. The determinants of success can never be fully achieved. One consultant explained, "There is no nation that is satisfied with how it is seen." This knowledge by consultants underscores and animates their activity. Second, consultants' constant iteration of a space of future possibility for their clients allows them to apply the same logic to national values that they do to the mechanics of brand valuation. As we have seen, brands are predicated on future value: the evaluation of their worth relies on their ability to project relationships of loyalty, membership, and pride.

Nation branding also frames time, paradoxically, as a problem of space. The past is made up of crooked and tortuous paths of historical "accidents." But as the national snapshots in this chapter reveal, these are made out to be accidents of geography as much as accidents of history. When Estonia or Poland or Georgia herald their "return" to Europe, when Botswana's and Chile's branding specialists emphasize the country's peaceful governance against the negative "continental effects" of their national neighbors, the problem is set up as one of the need for spatial as much as temporal reorientation.[110] This spatial orientation is toward the West, or more particularly,

toward a singular conception of Western capitalism as a neutral, progressive, and peaceful system.[111]

The use of the brand as the device to contain and translate these principles is not merely due to its convenient availability as a global metaphor for symbolic image power in a twenty-first-century society of the spectacle. It is, rather, due to a brand's ability to act as rational genre, a form of storytelling that can highlight certain meanings and endings while eliding others. In its capacity to absorb elements of cultural significance, everyday experience, and political influence, a brand serves a vital role as the cultural face of economic activity, creating the softer side of rationalized processes of competitiveness and growth. To put it another way, a brand narrates the *values* of *value* in national settings. To brand a nation, in this sense, is to tell a story about the nation that corresponds to desired beliefs about the bases of its specific dignity and unique position in a world system.

Assembling all alternative paths, all other national imaginaries, as accidents of history has two additional consequences. One is to condense and conflate these multiple and variegated "accidents" into a single set of undesirable characteristics.[112] Once the "bad" culture has been created and categorized, it is easier to set up the solution as a single set of "good" methods and expertise. The second consequence is that the accidents are portrayed as problems for which branding is the solution. These are problems aligned with a unitary view of progress, in which "traditional" is made uniform and thereby uniformly opposed to "modern." In this vision of affairs, to be traditional is somehow to be irrational and to look back is to look the wrong way.[113]

This distinction between tradition and modernity can be read as a gap, or what one consultant called "a built-in gulf," between local and foreign understandings: "There seems to be a built-in gulf most of the time between what the locals think will work and what foreigners think will work," the consultant told me. "And the less developed the country is, the more pronounced that problem is." According to this view, the continuum from undeveloped to developed is understood as a transitional process during which local participants gain increasing clarity as to what foreign interests want from them, and adapt their customs and output accordingly. This is not to say that "brand" visions of development are inherently harmful to traditional societies; indeed, some have suggested that aligning traditional beliefs with global images and interests can cement cultural rights.[114] But it is important to recognize that many social transformations required by nation branding may well be unwanted by local populations.

As the cases above demonstrate, there is considerable overlap in the tropes and tactics employed in the nation-branding initiatives. Infrastructural shifts

are nearly identical across territories, advocating the import of private sector wisdom into public sector settings. If the stated purpose of private–public partnerships is to ensure that the newly created identity is embraced and legitimized by key decision-makers at all levels of society, the ultimate purpose of this structure is to ensure buy-in from government decision-makers at the same time as it limits state control over the process. In some regards, this is a matter of continuity across election cycles, but it is also a matter of ensuring greater control by the private sector over state policies, regulation, and other decisions affecting their operations.

The use of training or education is an equally important part of the model, as it helps citizens envision the new cultural "mindset." Brand master classes in Botswana, friendliness training in Germany, competitiveness workshops in Libya and Uganda: these are all just as much a part of reform as the required political and economic regulatory shifts. The use of ceremonial brand ambassadors, from German models to Jamaican cricket players to Eurovision winners, additionally serves multiple purposes. It has the effect of "depoliticizing" the concept, if not the practice, of national governance. It reorients international and domestic attention away from unpopular or problematic reforms and toward sources of entertainment. It highlights—for international investors, tourists, workers, and media— sectors of the economy that were keyed as important growth areas.

It does one more thing as well. Nation branding makes nationalism *popular*, in the sense of "we the people," if not necessarily in the sense of "liked or admired by many." The point of branding the nation is, however paradoxically, to return nationalism into the hands of the people, liberated in this way from the claims and bargains of the nation's elite. By yoking national identity to prosperity, and by identifying this prosperity as the potential contained in the actions of the entrepreneurial and competitive self, the hope is to inspire independent loyalties and affiliations to the nation—just like the loyalty people feel toward the most successful corporate brands. But in the case of the nation, as the examples above reveal, no amount of branding ever seems to be enough. How much prosperity, how much inspiration, how much loyalty will it take to turn a nation into the coherent, peaceful, and unified specter so clearly and yet so distantly visualized?

Figure c.1:
Protesters rally in front of the Caixa bank in Barcelona on May 22, 2012, demonstrating against a financial bailout of the banks in Spain. © Josep Lago/Agence France-Presse/Getty Images.

Conclusion

VARIABLE UTOPIAS

I don't know of any other disciplines which—at their best—so fully explain and allow for the management of human enterprise: this unique marriage of empirical observation with visionary strategy. Marketing and branding combine scientific clarity of thought and rigorous observation of human psychology, culture and society with the more elusive factor of creativity. They combine advanced knowledge management (as is found in the way the better brands are handled in all their complex variants) with sensitive intercultural management (as is found in the way the better brands are communicated worldwide). They form a clear set of universally applicable rules for building successful endeavors. They bring commerce and culture together as a potent force for creating prosperity. They can harness the power of language and images to bring about widespread social change.

—Simon Anholt, *Competitive Identity*

In 2010, I returned to London to meet again with the nation-branding consultants I had interviewed three years earlier. I expected to encounter a very different portrait of the field from the one that had been painted for me a few years earlier. Aftershocks from the global financial crisis of 2008–2009 continued to make themselves felt, upending the foundations of market value. Global advertising industry revenue, after growth of nearly 8 percent in 2007, shrank by 7.3 percent in 2009.[1] The crisis also revealed serious fault lines in the structures of national investment programs. News headlines trumpeted downgrades of sovereign credit ratings in countries across the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East. I expected that my interviews on the future of branding the nation would reflect the somber tone.

In some respects, my expectations were met. One meeting proved especially revealing. My initial encounter with this consultant in 2007 had taken
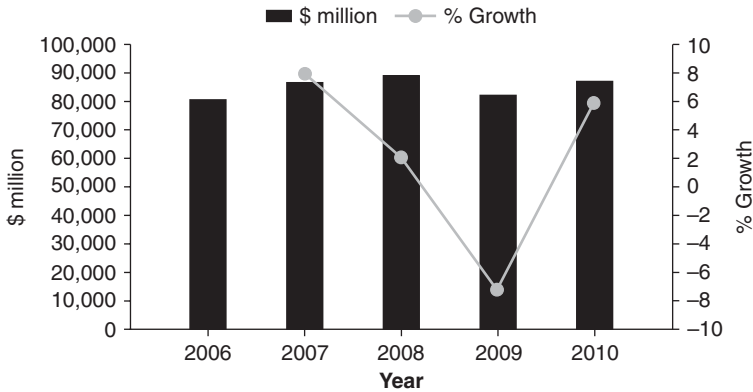
Figure c.2:
Datamonitor industry profile of global advertising, 2011. Source: Datamonitor.

place at the Institute of Directors (IoD) on Pall Mall, a Crown Estate building in the city's West End. This time we met at his new office, a more modest address in central London. The soft leather armchairs, low lights, and whispered service of the IoD had been replaced by a cramped arrangement of identical desks separated by low partitions. We sat in a small boardroom, its glass walls insulating us from the buzz of employees hunched in front of their computer screens.

We began by discussing his career shift. He was no longer in the business of branding nations. He had moved to a company that employed brand strategy as a corollary to real estate developments.[2] His new job entailed working alongside developers to "differentiate" large mixed-use developments or new resorts from their competitors. The move was motivated, he explained, by the absence of work. There simply were not any new national clients looking for branding projects. Requests for proposals, typically found in United Nations journals and the tenders pages of the *Economist*, had dried up. His ongoing work on a large-scale branding project for an African country had been put on indefinite hold—its effects undone, he surmised, by a change in local government. His enthusiasm for the practice had disappeared along with the work. "Ten years ago I was really enthusiastic about it," he told me. "I thought, this is easy peasy. This won't be hard at all. It's so obvious—transfer principles of fast-moving consumer goods to nations." It had proven much harder than he thought.

I anticipated that his narrative would follow the script used by the industry in 1993, another period when financial recession took its toll on the corporate sector. At that time, the effects of the crisis were symptomatized by "Marlboro Friday," the infamous day in April when the Marlboro

cigarette company drastically cut the price of its cigarettes to compete with cut-rate brands. The act was believed to signal a crisis of value across American industry and beyond, as consumers entered a phase of brand "blindness," questioning the value of intangible assets.[3]

Prognoses of the death of branding at that time were, of course, greatly exaggerated. Corporate investment in intangibles did not abate, and brands quickly "bounced back," occupying a renewed pride of place in consumer habits and on corporate balance sheets.[4] But for a moment, it seemed as if the magical center had shifted. Given the world-historical context of my 2010 trip to London, I thought it might shift again.

The consultant's account of the difficulties was not quite the one I had expected. His was not a story of the financial crisis cutting off the oxygen supply to branding consultants' steady flow of willing national clients. It was a tale of deep and lingering misunderstanding by these clients of the potential of brands to powerfully shift the identities of national spaces.[5] In his telling, the long-term benefits of brand strategies were confused with tourism advertising or inward investment marketing efforts, subverted by the vagaries of political campaigns and election cycles, or misrecognized as a mere image makeover. "[Brand strategy is] an intellectually challenging issue for people," he explained. "If your clients are finding it hard to get their heads round what you're offering them then you're going to find it hard to sell consultancy to them."

In one sense, we can understand this defense as part of an ongoing constitution of expertise by brand managers, consultants, and other professionals whose role, as we have seen in earlier chapters, consists largely of competing for legitimacy in the realm of intangible asset recognition. Their focus on making tangible essentially intangible benefits requires regular repetition of the value of this work to various interlocutors.[6] Indeed, the critical feature of this consultant's view is that the underlying epistemology of brands and brand managers—the organizing principles, institutional structures, and bases of value—remains unquestioned. This becomes especially apparent when brands are seen *not* to work. When a nation's brand fails—whether due to budget shortfalls; lack of education; or uneven, partial, or even dysfunctional effects—this is deemed a fault of *application* rather than a fault of *logic*.

In this view, nothing is wrong with the principles or practice of nation branding. The problem lies rather with the national clients, who have misrecognized the visionary and potent ability of brands to achieve prosperity; misapplied the universally applicable rules of brand strategy; or, most problematically, misidentified their jurisdiction's most compelling, essential, and unifying national narrative. These justifications were demonstrated later in

our interview, when the consultant described the outcome of his earlier work in Ireland:

> The collapse of the economy has been the undoing of [the Republic of Ireland's brand strategy], which is an interesting reflection in that brand strategies ought to be strong enough to be able to survive those kinds of volcanic economic upheavals. It doesn't seem to have happened, in part because the spending on marketing the brand and promoting the brand is just not there anymore because it's not affordable. But I also think it's that the Irish have found that what they are telling themselves about themselves is not true, or is no longer true.

Ireland's problem, he surmised, was that it had focused too heavily on its economic profile and not enough on its cultural heritage. Perhaps, he reflected, had Ireland been more attuned to its cultural legacy in its branding narrative, it would have been better placed to "survive" the financial crisis. It was not only Ireland. Other countries and regions in which he had worked, like Scotland, Israel, and Turkey, had not in his estimation been able to contain their cultural differences within their brand.[7]

This consultant's views, like the rest of those I collected during this visit, reflect three dominant social imaginaries that have taken hold in the contemporary setting. One is built around a particular fantasy of recognition in which the bases of legitimacy of national space are predicated on the conditions of transnational finance capital. A second, related framework builds on an elite understanding of processes of neoliberalization as inherently experimental, uneven, and "variegated," an understanding designed to admit economic crisis or market failure as an integral part of long-term political-economic transformation rather than as an exception or aberration requiring redress.[8] The third imaginary relies on the magical qualities attributed to brand management by its practitioners, advocates, and the general public. I want to analyze these social imaginaries to offer answers to the question I posed at the outset of this study: What actually happens to the nation when it is reconfigured as a brand? How shall we think about the question of what the nation is *for* at the outset of the twenty-first century? And with what implications for the form and content of national identity?

THE FANTASY OF RECOGNITION

Theorists of nationalism have conveyed that "idioms of nationhood" emerge from a number of corners and in a variety of registers: from the "felt" nationalisms of communities, classes, and social movements to the "official"

registers of state organization, conscription, and education. Moreover, these idioms are not limited to the internal stirrings and motivations of a given nation but extend, as we have seen, to the nation's interrelations with all manner of others—whether in imitation of them or in opposition to them. The basis of identity resides in this relationality. There is a "fundamentally *dialogical* character" to the way we understand one another and develop common horizons of significance.[9] "No one acquires the languages needed for self-definition on their own. We are introduced to them through exchanges with others who matter to us."[10]

The idiom of nationhood at stake in the phenomenon of nation branding, the "other" who is made to matter for the nation, is the amorphous figure of the "global." Despite the fundamental indeterminacy of that term, despite the coexistence through time of multiple global imaginaries and multiple political, economic, and cultural dimensions, its connotations here have been limited to the field of reference of market imperatives, indexed by the metaphor of the brand.[11]

Thinking globally in this narrow sense has had a series of consequences. One broad shift has been what some call the "spatial turn" in theories of industrial organization. If the spatial turn in cultural theory involved the renewed emphasis on space over time as the axis along which to situate social change, the spatial turn in economic rationality has resulted in a renewed emphasis on space as the site of increasing economic returns.[12] By applying the tools, techniques, and expertise of industrial organization to models of national welfare and international trade, economists and planners sought to embed the logic of the firm in the structure of the state. This "new economic geography" emphasizes competitiveness, entrepreneurialism, and "creativity" (read: creative destruction) as fundamental components of growth and increasing returns. Such locational policies have resulted in a new conception of the nation as a synchronous site rather than a diachronic one, as a homogeneous and fixed entity rather than a heterogeneous, contingent, and evolving set of practices.

When the nation is idealized as a spatial rather than a historical unit, the role of history in eliciting national consciousness changes dramatically. It is true that forgetting is part of becoming and perpetuating the nation, but this kind of forgetting is different. This kind of forgetting involves foregoing certain ethical and moral stances that have underlain the best parts of what it means to be national—the recognition of difference, for example—and adopting stances that favor an unthinking isomorphism and the resultant creation of new forms of exclusion and marginalization. As Appadurai reminds, it is not as simple as appending the idea of the global to space in the same way as we did the modern to time.[13] This is not merely because "for

many societies, modernity is an elsewhere, just as the global is a temporal wave that must be encountered in *their* present."[14] It is also because the elaboration of a rationalized spatial economy *has incorporated within it* the "mega-rhetoric" of modernization.[15] As we have seen, the spirit of competitiveness that is articulated as the basis of national legitimacy is overlaid with a distorted Darwinism, in which some nations are effective for globalization (deregulated, open for business, entrepreneurial) and others are not (backward, radical).

These growth models articulate a trajectory of fixed succession (local → national → global), one that combines stochastic and anachronistic factors to orient nations toward a single endpoint of accomplishment. But it is a vanishing endpoint, one that remains elusive, a distant and variable utopia.[16] A utopia is a relational proposition: it is always articulated in opposition to a set of problems or failures. The utopian national imaginary of the brand is one that recognizes legacies of political difference, sources of cultural diversity, and divergent ethical commitments—but only insofar as these are productive for capital. This is the fantasy of recognition entailed by "global nationalism." It is, in Povinelli's words, "the intercalation of the politics of culture with the culture of capital."[17]

THE SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM

What new ethical conjuncture animates the spirit of nationalism in the complex era of millennial capitalism? At the outset of this book I described how the principles of rationality and enchantment simultaneously exercised in the practice of brand management are crucial to its success.[18] Advertising, since its origins, has laid claims to "magical" effects, and more recent characterizations of the industry have recognized the particular balance between technocratic and innovative acts.[19] Raymond Williams has famously described advertising as "a highly organized and professional system of magical inducements and satisfactions, functionally very similar to magical systems in simpler societies, but rather strangely coexistent with a highly developed scientific technology," a contradiction "of the greatest importance in any analysis of modern capitalist society."[20]

Contra the predictions of Marx and Weber that enchantment would "wither away" with the emergence of ever more rationalized and methodical means of profit-making, many have conceived of the current conjuncture of economy and society as producing new and ever more sophisticated forms of enchantment.[21] These accounts highlight the abstract, speculative forms of value that structure the system of finance capital. The conditions of

finance capital include both "a faith in probability" and a monetary system built on "confidence," which—as John and Jean Comaroff observe—is "a chimera knowable, tautologically, only by its effects."[22]

The reliance on magical thinking within rationalized economic procedures is both "coercive" and "divinatory": it purports to offer insight into the future and also structures the conditions of that future.[23] This premise is brought to light in the valuation strategies for such economic assets, which define value as "the present worth of the benefits of future ownership."[24] Brands are a paradigmatic instance of such faiths and strategies. Brands occupy "a space of future possibility against which the present is discounted."[25] This future space is made by "public opinion"—surveys, focus groups, and other means of taking the pulse of public perception for the purposes of market research and the effects of "creating demand." Public opinion polls and surveys are already a performative genre. Interpreted through the lens of market research, they become even more so, as claims to "democracy" and "market imperatives" can be simultaneously articulated.[26]

Players of the game must invest confidence not only in the methods of the magician but also in the magician herself. Here is another quote from a consultant I interviewed during my second visit to London in 2010:

> I used to wonder why we weren't taken apart in [media] interviews to the extent that I had prepared to answer questions. I think people were seduced in the way they are about marketing and PR. Whereas you go in with your economic development colleagues and the professionals and the members and the councillors and take it apart, reassemble it backside forwards. There is something about the mystique of marketing and branding that they feel unsure about questioning or being overly critical in case they expose their lack of knowledge or ability to think constructively that makes them hold back. As a result probably they don't understand it as much but people have gotten away with stuff. Now it's being questioned but they never really understood it in the first place.

The transnational promotional class forms a particular culture of circulation: an interpretive community that "determine[s] lines of interpretation, found[s] institutions, and set[s] boundaries based principally on [its] own dynamics."[27] Such cultures of circulation "are created and animated by the cultural forms that circulate through them, including—critically—the abstract nature of the forms that underwrite and propel the process of circulation itself."[28] The abstract form of the intangible brand is the ideal cultural form for the economic processes of neoliberalization. Deterritorialized, flexible, and dematerialized, the brand can encompass value in both the moral and the market sense.

The utopian possibilities of national recognition in this culture of circulation are further perpetuated by what Calhoun calls "the class consciousness of frequent travelers."[29] The image of the global envisioned by the elite members of the transnational promotional class is frequently anathema to that held by their national clients, who do not hold the same border-crossing privileges and statuses. It is easier to hold a cosmopolitan outlook if you can actually be part of the vision you articulate.

RULES OF THE GAME

In the consultant's insistence on the inherent logic of branding, even in the context of failure, we recognize some of the constitutive characteristics of neoliberalizing processes. Neoliberalization is best understood by the TPC in terms of what Neil Brenner, Jamie Peck, and Nik Theodore have called its "variegated" character.[30] Neoliberalizing processes are "*systemically* uneven": regulatory failure and market crisis are not exceptions to the general rule of neoliberal tendencies toward a market-oriented, commodified, liberalized, and globally integrated political-economic system, but are rather *constitutive* elements of the process. The effectiveness of neoliberalization lies not in its appearance of monolithic global discipline but in its uneven, experimental, and dysfunctional effects:

> Even if the rules of the game tendentially favour, for example, desocialized, low-tax, short-term and corporate-friendly strategies, the reach of market-disciplinary reform always exceeds its grasp: the encroachment of neoliberalizing modes of governance, regulatory metrics and socioinstitutional practices is *necessarily* contradictory, uneven, impure and incomplete. Moreover, the experimental modes of governance that have proliferated under neoliberalism—as reflected, for example, in OECD best-practice guides, the World Bank's global learning networks or the worldwide diffusion of place-marketing techniques—generally reflect the reality that "market rule" is less concerned with the imposition of a singular regulatory template, and much more about learning by doing (and failing) within an evolving framework of market-oriented reform parameters and strategic objectives.[31]

The experimental, ad-hoc nature of neoliberal regulatory and institutional practices is central to the premise of branding the nation. Indeed, as another consultant I re-interviewed put it:

> When you're doing branding for a country, you're building narratives for places, like other companies will be brought in to build a bridge or design a building.

> And the rules are different, and they're more woolly. But it can also . . . just like a building can fall down or a bridge won't work, the same thing can happen with the narratives and the concepts. If you pick the wrong one then it's not going to work, even if the process works. And that's why, that's one of the reasons it's really hard.

Following these failures, the consultant concluded, "I'm quite interested nowadays in what you might call rapid prototyping or beta testing. Just start doing stuff and then learn from that rather than create a grand strategy on paper and then try to execute it." In this light, failure is not attributable to arrogant consulting schemes, market dominance, or financial crisis. Rather, it is a misapplication by national players of the rules of the game, the rules of probability and future predictions; and an injunction to continue to try to build a better brand to more accurately underpin the conditions of recognition of national identity. Though we have talked about these conditions, we have not yet addressed the question of national identity itself.

CODA: GLOBAL SETTINGS, NATIONAL IMPERATIVES

In both popular and academic discussions over the future of nationhood and national legitimacy at the end of the 1990s, the debate centered on the waning influence of both nation and state amid the boundaryless flights of capital, goods, images, and people. Various instigators of this capital flight were identified: transnational corporations, electronic capital networks, unharnessed flows of cultural production and peoples, the visual empires of global media, the drive toward international legal frameworks—in short, boundaries of "currency, credit and customs."[32] In the process of such de-territorialization, a new set of boundaries was erected—this time conceptual rather than material. These boundaries consisted of a series of binary oppositions—national to global,[33] local beliefs to transnational expertise, and politics to economics—and these tended to be presented as either/or propositions.

Different responses were proposed to overcome this simplistic set of oppositions. Some saw the nation-state itself as a fantasy and nationalism as its own kind of enchantment.[34] These accounts pointed to the always partial and contingent nature of the discourse constituting the nation, or to the ongoing work of the state in "creating" the hyphen that joins state to nation.[35] In these accounts, the nation was best understood as *signifier*, not as signified; as portent of a wide and varied range of projects, claims and evaluations.

Working along these lines, some studies scrutinized the "mass media rituals," "theatrical displays," and "illusions" perpetuated by state or corporate leaders, casting these as "magical means to succeed in the work of hyphen-nation."[36] Unfortunately, these studies tended to create a new set of binaries, limiting the force of their critique by separating "image" from "identity," propaganda from "real" policy, and ideational from material effects.[37] More effective accounts of national diversity drew on empirical studies of national sentiment and self-determination that revealed important geopolitical and geocultural distinctions between nation-states, or that recognized the mutual constitution of nation-states with subnational or transnational entities and regulations rather than in a kind of zero-sum competition with them. These perspectives conduced to a more nuanced view of nationalism as a variable phenomenon rather than a determinate unit, as a "practical category" or "discursive formation."[38]

The aim of this book has been to suggest, somewhat paradoxically, that nation branding can contribute to thinking further about the nation. Both brand consultants and their clients agree that branding narratives fail, though failure is defined differently depending on who is describing it. Failure is more than the trial-and-error approach of institutional experts or the "built-in gulf" of local versus foreign perspectives. The proliferation of failed narratives as a result of nation-branding efforts can highlight the inadequacy of the practice to accomplish *what is still recognized by different publics as an important objective*. Furthermore, it can open up the terrain for public discourse about what the national narrative ought to be. It is hard to make the case for failure as a productive terrain of possibility, especially when—as the above discussion indicates—failure has been integrated into a problematic system. But I still think it can be done. The discourse of nationalism exceeds the structures it is used to create.[39] "On what terrain does the nation find unity?" asks the eminent philosopher Charles Taylor. "Its ground is no longer defined according to a concrete content; instead, it is defined by the fact that everybody is attached to that unity in his or her own fashion, that everybody wants to continue that history and proposes to make that community progress. Unity is what one quarrels over; it is the hub of controversy."[40]

The introduction to this book was framed in terms of global imperatives, for it is the premise of global compulsion that has dominated the transformations of the nation-state. The inversion of the title in this coda underlines a shift in focus from global to national imperatives. There appear to be two broad sets of viewpoints that embrace this inverted perspective, but they take vitally different approaches to it. On the one hand are the advocates for a citizen-centered view of democracy, in which the responsibility for action

and change lies with the individual. In this view, citizen rights serve to balance business obligations in the nation. The bound relationship between capitalism and democracy needs to be severed, or at least unhinged, in order for the public good to become a product of public participation.[41]

The other viewpoint also centers on the citizen and is also devoted to finding a balance between business and government, but in a very different way. This view advocates the increased accountability of the citizen in the context of the retrenchment of state provisions. It transfers the trickle-down logic of the market to the provision of national goods, resituating the exercise of authority from public actors to private, "invisible" hands. To the extent that this attitude seeks to place the state in a more balanced relationship with its citizens, the way this is carried out in practice is that both stand equally to win or lose on the basis of the decisions that take place "out there" in the market.

Paradoxically, it seems that the crux of the problem with these two visions is the overlap between them. As we have seen throughout this study, the politics of reference raise the dangers of hegemonic appropriation of connotative fields. Terms like *citizen*, *public*, and *equality*—never monolithic even in their original conception—now seem subject to such a vast range of interpretations as to be divorced from meaning altogether. Meanwhile, these terms remain pawns on a chessboard, while the two queens—the market and the state—continue to oppose one another as if there were still a real battle to be waged. Yet if there is any immediate positive outcome of the current financial crisis, it is the demonstration of the fallacy that the state and the market are separate entities—and, perhaps, the recognition that some good might come of uniting them.

In this context it is difficult to contemplate what sort of prescription might be best. But I do think part of the problem lies in the modernist schism between the two subject positions of citizen and consumer. As researchers, we did not foresee that maintaining these subjectivities in an analytical relation of mutual antagonism would ultimately prove counterproductive, for it does not reflect or shed light on the reality of the situation. As individuals, we did not realize that the anxiety raised by trying to pick between the two would serve only to reinforce the sense of passivity and atomism in the public sphere that so many now decry. By setting up our choices as public versus private, welfare versus growth, and state versus market, we manage to lock in the instrumentalism of society. And if instrumental visions of the public good enable an "atomist outlook" and "irresponsible bureaucracy" which erode citizens' relationships with their public and political institutions,[42] the refusal by its critics to engage with this vision—except to negate it—has not helped us to find an alternative.

It is in this spirit that this study was written. My aim was to propose that the mundane practices of nation branding do serve to perpetuate the nation form. Why? Because at root they perpetuate a conversation about what the nation is *for* in a global context, and about what it means to be a national citizen amid cosmopolitan conceptualizations. They express the content of the nation in a vernacular that is easily understood by most segments of society, through mediated channels that are accessible to most segments of society. This ubiquity and reach animates conversations from both within and beyond national borders. In its own way, branding ensures a certain accountability, for its value is determined by the conversations that take place around it. There is no question that the form of recognition that nation branding offers is deeply problematic. If nation branding promotes "wealth" in finance-capital-intensive, attention-intensive, and knowledge- or experience-intensive economies, this awareness must be accompanied by an understanding of what other forms of collective wealth may be lost in the process—noninstrumental forms of difference and mutual respect, for example. It occurs to me that the phenomenon of nation branding may well cease to exist—or at least, will not persist in its current incarnation— within a relatively short time, undone by the growing skepticism of its methods and outcomes. One hopes that other, more sensitive interventions will take their place. But the future of the nation is not in jeopardy. Though our traditions may be invented, our memories selective, and our identities formed and reformed by forces and relations we cannot predict, our desire to maintain, communicate, and perpetuate the nation across time and space marks our existence in a form we seem unable to forget.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Qtd. in Amos, "Ads Push for Middle Ground."
2. Inspired by Iceland is part of a broader initiative called Promote Iceland, a public-private partnership between industry and government that promotes business links, foreign direct investment, tourism, and culture. See www.islandsstofa.is/en.
3. For a compelling popular account of the steps leading up to Iceland's financial disaster, see Lewis, "Wall Street on the Tundra."
4. See Zwick, Bonsu, and Darmody, "Putting Consumers to Work," on labor exploitation of "ordinary" people in promotional campaigns.
5. To add to the financial and political meltdown, there was an environmental one as well: the 2010 eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland. Volcanic ash in the skies contributed to major flight disruptions across Europe.
6. "Inspired by Iceland Invitations" by Inspired by Iceland, November 2011, http://vimeo.com/30307012. This video, one of several in the series, was launched in October 2011. The campaign was a far cry from the previous branding initiatives in Iceland, which drew on research conducted by London-based consultant Simon Anholt to promote the country's "competitive identity." It was also seen as spectacularly successful by the branding industry: the Brooklyn Brothers won a Gold Lion in the PR Category at Cannes, the most prestigious industry prize.
7. See Zafar, "Mauritius: An Economic Success Story."
8. Acanchi Consultants, *Positioning Mauritius*, 4.
9. Forty countries is an extremely conservative estimate, based on information that I have been able to verify directly with actors participating in concerted nation-branding initiatives that correspond to my definition of the phenomenon. Looser estimates, particularly in practitioner accounts, are much higher.
10. See Yúdice, *Expediency of Culture*.
11. Linda Colley provides an excellent account of this economics of loyalty in her book, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837*.
12. Mitchell, "World as Exhibition"; Breckenridge, "Aesthetics and Politics."
13. See Aronczyk and Powers, *Blowing up the Brand*.
14. Twenty in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted between spring 2005 and fall 2007 in London, New York, and several cities in Canada with branding consultants and individuals whose work forms part of the nation-branding package, which I understand to include the notions of commercial advertising and marketing, tourism, investment promotion, public diplomacy, and public relations. Approximately twenty informal interviews and participant observation

took place in three distinct sites during the same time period: the *New York Times* Travel Show in New York City, the Sprott School of Business at Carleton University (Ottawa, Canada), and the London International Film and TV Tourism Conference at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA). Ten semi-structured, in-depth interviews were carried out with self-designated place-branding consultants or researchers in London in the spring of 2007. Twenty-two in-depth interviews were conducted in Poland in 2007–2008, and twenty-nine interviews were conducted regarding Canada's brand between 2007–2010. I conducted seventeen additional interviews between fall 2009 and summer 2010 with interlocutors in the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, and Sweden; some of the interviews in this latter group were repeat interviews with consultants I had met in 2007.

15. In 2000, the year I began work on the Tourisme Québec campaign, the US dollar was worth approximately $1.40 in Canadian dollars. At the advertising agency we considered ways to subtly convey this to our American audience. The solution we devised (which, on reflection, was hardly subtle) was to create a flyer that resembled American dollar bills, with the dollar image stretched so that it was longer than a real one. The ad copy exclaimed, "With the US dollar worth 40% more than ours, you get a whole lot more holiday for your money!" The flyer was inserted into the tourism brochures and newspaper inserts so that it peeked out over the top, making it appear as though we had inserted cash into the brochures. This campaign met with considerable success among both the tourism officials and American visitors, who sometimes cited the exchange rate as a major incentive to visit.

16. See, e.g., Rich, "From Those Wonderful Folks" and Girard, "States, Diplomacy."

17. The nation is imagined, in Anderson's definition, as a community of equals, in a fraternal linkage that "makes it possible . . . for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings" (*Imagined Communities*, 7). As for the fraternities created by market-generated space, Anderson observes that "*in themselves,* market-zones, 'natural'-geographic or political administrative, do not create attachments. Who will willingly die for Comecon or the EEC?" (Ibid., 53, emphasis in original).

18. See also Ken Silverstein's report, "Their Men in Washington," in which he documents some of the more problematic public relations efforts to massage foreign leaders' entrée into American politics. Steven Heller's *Iron Fists* identifies nation branding as a descendent of political propaganda, suggesting that "the design and marketing methods used to inculcate doctrine and guarantee consumption are fundamentally similar" (8). A number of important critiques of commercial advertising have identified similarities between political and commercial symbolism: e.g., Michael Schudson's *Advertising* and its discussion of capitalist realism. While nation branding could be considered political propaganda in this sense, calling nation branding propaganda limits the range of analytical frames that can be used to monitor and account for its ideological effects.

19. Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission is the 2010 Supreme Court ruling, which held (5–4) that the government cannot restrict corporate spending on political candidate elections.

20. This perspective is in fact that of my respondents. The strongly held view is that nation branding is not about any government in office. As one of my interviewees explained, "National brands have to be put together by governments and the opposition. Because if it's seen as being entirely political and parochial the brand would change and all that goes with it would change upon there being a new government." The four-year periods of parties in office do not correspond to the goals of nation branding.

21. Greenberg's work on branding New York (2003, 2008, 2010) focuses on the symbolic/material dualism of urban branding, demonstrating the relationship between the global representation of a city's image and its political and economic restructuring. Wherry (2011) considers the cultural codes that affect perceptions of this urban neighborhood and its potential for economic development. Kaneva argues for the ways nation branding "reconstitute[s] nationhood at the level of both ideology and praxis, whereby the meaning and experiential reality of national belonging and national governance are transformed in unprecedented ways" (2011: 4; see also Bolin and Ståhlberg 2010). Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) describe nation branding as the collapse of politics into economics, fostering a corporatized and commodified identity economy. Each of these perspectives documents the ways that place branding programs harness sentiments of local pride with concerns over international recognition and patterns of structural transformation.
22. Brenner, *New State Spaces*.
23. Brenner, "Standortpolitik," 15. See also Brenner, "Glocalization."
24. Global nationalism is a term coined by Leslie Sklair to refer to "the view that the interests of one's nation or nation-state . . . are best served if it can find a lucrative set of roles within the ever-expanding global capitalist system" (*Transnational Capitalist Class*, 137).
25. As climate change fundamentally alters the geography of the Arctic Circle, opening new channels of passage for commodities, technologies, and people, issues of "polar hegemony" come dramatically to the fore. Both Poland and Canada face questions of national sovereignty and identity in the context of these northern struggles.
26. Taylor, *Reconciling the Solitudes*, vii.
27. Welsh, *At Home in the World*, 192.
28. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 158.

CHAPTER 1

1. In addition to the workshops, seminars, and conferences on how to build nation brands hosted by dedicated research organizations, periodic events are organized in local sites by state-run investment promotion agencies (IPAs) and national cultural institutes; transnational and intergovernmental bodies including the World Intellectual Property Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Economic Forum; and media organizations such as *The Economist*, *Washington Post*, and the *Financial Times*. It is worth noting that the steering committees, advisory and editorial boards, membership, and reference points (such as literatures and methods) of these associations overlap considerably. The same individuals appear as keynote speakers, panelists, and audience members at nation-branding events; write for the same nation-branding journals and blogs; and move between positions in the same consultancies, academic institutions, and research centers. This tightly bounded circuit is the basis of its apparent coherence and level of consensus about the benefits of branding the nation.
2. For an exemplar of celebratory rhetoric about nation branding as a wellspring for national pride, see Idris and Arai, *Intellectual Property*, especially chapter 8, "Cultural Heritage, Creativity, and National Pride," 77–96.
3. Van Ham, "Rise of the Brand State."
4. Metzl, "Popular Diplomacy"; Van Ham, "Rise of the Brand State"; De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*; Nye, *Soft Power*.
5. Metzl, "Popular Diplomacy"; Leonard, *Public Diplomacy*; De Gouveia, Fiske, and Plumridge, *European Infopolitik*.

6. Hirschman, *Passions and Interests*.
7. Hay and Rosamond, "Globalization, European Integration."
8. Ibid., 151.
9. Brenner, "Beyond State-Centrism?"
10. Harvey, *Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 13.
11. Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe*, 264–266.
12. Harvey, *Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 77.
13. Ibid., 75–77. This flexibility seems also to be recursively applied to the principles of neoliberalism itself, for as Harvey points out, the utopian goals of neoliberalism have been largely usurped by its political objectives: "Neoliberalization has not been very effective in revitalizing global capital accumulation, but it has succeeded remarkably well in restoring, or in some instances (as in Russia and China) creating, the power of an economic elite. The theoretical utopianism of neoliberal argument has, I conclude, primarily worked as a system of justification and legitimation for whatever needed to be done to achieve this goal (19)."

    I am also inspired in this approach by the insights in the volume *State/Culture*, edited by George Steinmetz.
14. Mitchell, "World as Exhibition"; Breckenridge, "Aesthetics and Politics."
15. See Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*; Bolin and Ståhlberg, "Between Community and Commodity"; Kaneva, ed., *Branding Post-Communist Nations*; Volcic and Andrejevic, "Nation Branding." See also the contributions to Bandelj and Wherry, eds., *Cultural Wealth of Nations*. While Wherry and Bandelj do not reference the phenomenon of nation branding specifically, they do account for similar processes of commodification and commercialization of national cultural heritage.
16. Power, *Organized Uncertainty*, 132.
17. Corporate lore pinpoints the beginning of modern brand valuation in 1988–1989, when, threatened by a hostile takeover by the New Zealand company Goodman Fielder Wattie, the UK food manufacturer Ranks Hovis McDougall (RHM) turned to multinational consultancy Interbrand to help them augment the value of the brands in their portfolio in order to demonstrate that the takeover bid was too low. See Power, "The Politics of Brand Accounting" and Lury, *Brands*.
18. Roland Marchand has extensively documented the early twentieth-century period in the United States, during which large corporations made concerted efforts to augment their moral and social legitimacy. The key distinction here is that the so-called social value of these corporate efforts was rooted in consumer response rather than uniquely in the corporation's own charismatic strategies. See Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul*.
19. Power, *Organized Uncertainty,* especially chapter 5, "Governing Reputations: The Outside Comes In," 128–151. On the topic of social discourse as constitutive of economic value, see also Arvidsson, *Brands: Meaning and Value*.
20. Power, "The Politics of Brand Accounting."
21. Lury and Moor, "Brand Valuation."
22. Moor, *Rise of Brands*.
23. Power, *Organized Uncertainty*, 129. See also Lury, *Brands*, who describes brands as epistemic objects of knowledge, in Knorr-Cetina's terms (see Knorr-Cetina, "Culture in Global Knowledge Societies").
24. The brand also came to be seen as a kind of "flow" device (Lury, *Brands;* Knorr-Cetina, "How Are Global Markets Global?") that could inure the company against risky schemes.
25. Kotler and Levy, "Broadening the Concept of Marketing," 13.

26. I borrow this term to reference Schultz, Hatch, and Larsen, *Expressive Organization*, a signal marketing text heralding the corporation's "cultural turn."
27. See, e.g., McElhaney, *Just Good Business* and Kotabe and Helsen, *Global Marketing Management*.
28. See www.simonanholt.com for an ongoing (if constantly changing) list.
29. Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*.
30. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
31. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 48.
32. This is the question Michael Billig asks in *Banal Nationalism,* 61, to refer to the psychological assumptions and practical habits that individuals use to represent the nation as a category of identity.
33. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*; Calhoun, *Nationalism*.
34. Renan, "What is a Nation?"
35. Segal and Handler, "Cultural Approaches to Nationalism."
36. Segal and Handler make this latter point in "Cultural Approaches to Nationalism."
37. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*; Calhoun, *Nationalism*. We could also look to Katherine Verdery's observation that "the nation" functions "as a kind of master symbol [that] can be seen to have *structuring properties*: discourses concerning it had the capacity to interrupt other discourses and redefine them" (*National Ideology under Socialism*, 12, italics in original).
38. Castells, *Rise of the Network Society*.
39. Yúdice, *Expediency of Culture*, 1.
40. Povinelli, *Cunning of Recognition*, 16.
41. Thrift, *Knowing Capitalism*.

CHAPTER 2

1. Ward, *Selling Places*; Kearns and Philo, eds., *Selling Places*; Shaffer, *See America First*; Hart, *Selling of Canada*. Though the Ward and Hart texts are not scholarly, they do provide some insight into—and images of—nineteenth and early twentieth century boosterism. See Marchand's *Creating the Corporate Soul* for a fascinating and exhaustive treatment of the "industrial statesmanship" of American corporations from the late nineteenth century through to the Second World War.
2. Whether or not Spain actually constitutes a "successful" case of nation branding is debatable, since neither the criteria of success nor the specific degree of effectiveness of the promotional campaign is ever explicitly articulated. Yet among practitioners and their clients, Spain is so often held up as a success story that it has become a largely uncontested origin narrative. See for example Olins, "Branding the Nation," as well as his *On Brand*; Brymer, "Branding a Country"; and Gilmore, "A Country." See also Preston, "Branding Is Cool."
3. Olins, "Branding the Nation."
4. Luna-Garcia, "Just Another Coffee!," 151.
5. Guillén, *Limits of Convergence*, 203.
6. Sanchís, *Biografía de una estrella*, 141.
7. Landor Associates presented La Caixa bank executives with a design conceived in-house, a blue star with eight points, as the logo for the bank's new corporate identity. The colorful, childlike design intentionally emulated Miró's artistic style; the hope was that Miró would simply adopt the existing design. Although he apparently considered the idea, he eventually sketched a five-point star instead, bruising egos at the design firm. Sanchís, *Biografía de una estrella*, 156–165.

8. Sklair, *Transnational Capitalist Class*, especially chapter 5, "World Best Practice, Benchmarking, and National Competitiveness."

9. Cerny, *Changing Architecture of Politics*; Cerny, "Paradoxes of the Competition State."

10. Fougner, "State, International Competitiveness"; Fougner, "Neoliberal Governance of States." Neil Fligstein argues along similar lines, challenging the prevailing wisdom that corporations are driven by market forces. Rather, he writes, it is the state and its policies regarding business that play a key role in structuring the decisions of firms. See Fligstein, *Transformation of Corporate Control*.

11. See also Thrift, *Knowing Capitalism* and Thrift, "State Sovereignty," on the transnational traffic of managerial discourse and practice and how this traffic contributes to a "cultural circuit" of capitalism.

12. Sklair, *Transnational Capitalist Class*, 21.

13. Ibid., 17.

14. Ibid., 19.

15. Ibid., 17.

16. Ibid., 137.

17. Ibid., 139.

18. This last fraction is the least well articulated; as Sklair writes in a footnote to his Chapter 8, where he discusses the culture-ideology of consumerism, he does not directly discuss consumerist elites (merchants and media), but rather looks at the ways the globalizing corporations operate, using Herman and McChesney, *Global Media* and Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness*. My analysis offers an update and expansion of this fraction and its role.

19. In a way, the TPC is the flip side, the "bad other" to the "creative class" as defined by Richard Florida. Both classes celebrate the rise of "creativity" as a fundamental source of economic growth and both recognize the prevalence of "human capital" as a source of value. But while Florida's analysis sees the embodiment of capital as a positive, my analysis suggests the outcome is not so rosy. See Florida, *Rise of the Creative Class*.

20. Harvey, *Condition of Postmodernity,* chapter 17, "Time-Space Compression and the Postmodern Condition"; Sennett, *Culture of the New Capitalism*; Hallsworth, "Short-Termism and Economic Restructuring in Britain"; Laverty, "Economic 'Short-Termism.'"

21. Harvey, *Condition of Postmodernity*.

22. Mills, "Competitive Personality," 270. For two excellent portrayals of an earlier transformation from "character" to "personality" at the turn of the twentieth century, see Sussman, "'Personality'" and Lears, *No Place of Grace*, especially pp. 47–58. I am indebted to Jeff Pooley for bringing these to my attention.

23. This perspective builds on Thorstein Veblen's classic *Theory of the Leisure Class,* which described the uses of "conspicuous leisure" and "conspicuous consumption" as status symbols in social interaction. Riesman, however, wants to describe a somewhat different phenomenon, "one of anxiety rather than pride, of veiled competition rather than openly rivalrous display" (*Lonely Crowd,* 47).

24. Fromm, *Man for Himself*, 67.

25. Qtd. in Riesman, *Lonely Crowd*; see also Sennett, *Culture of the New Capitalism*.

26. Riesman, *Lonely Crowd,* 46.

27. Ibid. (emphasis added). Riesman's observation about the narcissism of small differences in mass market production is sometimes characterized as Sloanism, a production process contrasted to Fordism and derived from former General Motors president Alfred Sloan. Instead of producing a single, specialized model

as did Ford, GM produced a general model that could be modified in small ways to differentiate cars according to year, make, model, and price.

28. Harvey, *Spaces of Capital*, 332.
29. Qtd. in Reich, "Corporation and Nation," 76.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., 81. Three years later, Reich would publish *The Work of Nations*, which solidified these ideas. The bookend to these insights may be found in his recent publication, *Supercapitalism*, which posits that now that we have arrived at twenty-first-century capitalism, citizens are even less connected to each other and to democratic principles than they were in 1992. Reich is the former secretary of labor in the Clinton administration.
32. Porter, *Competitive Advantage of Nations*, 21.
33. Porter's model of competitive advantage has been enormously influential, partly because of his prolific output, but also because of his consultancy work with countries around the world. In 1983, Michael Porter cofounded the consultancy The Monitor Group, which by early 2012 had 1,500 employees in offices in sixteen countries. For nearly thirty years the consultancy offered advisory and "capability-building" services to governments and corporations to promote economic development, building on the methods articulated in *Competitive Advantage of Nations*. In November 2012, Monitor filed for bankruptcy, following a scandal regarding its work in Libya (see chapter six of this volume). The company was subsequently acquired by Deloitte, which continues to offer Porterian strategy consultancy.
34. Porter, *Competitive Advantage of Nations*, 11.
35. Ibid., 12.
36. Porter's emphasis is both on "home" (domestic) demand conditions and on the internationalization of these conditions. See Ibid., 86–100.
37. Montgomery and Porter, eds. *Strategy*, xii.
38. Porter, *Competitive Advantage of Nations*, 672.
39. Theorizing the nation-state as a holistic site of competitive advantage was further developed in subsequent volumes that emerged from schools of advertising, marketing, and business management over the course of the 1990s. See, for example, Kotler, Haider, and Rein, *Marketing Places* and Kotler, Jatusripitak and Maesincee, *Marketing of Nations*. In *Marketing of Nations*, the business professor Philip Kotler wrote in his introduction, "A nation can be thought of as running a business and, as such, can benefit from adopting a strategic market management approach" (ix).
40. Porter, *Competitive Advantage of Nations*, 736.
41. Ibid., 30.
42. A wide swath of marketing literature emphasizes the importance of corporations being able to "rent" ("gain marketing leverage from") the positive associations of "secondary" images, that is, images that relate country, industry, company, and brand. See, e.g., Dowling, *Creating Corporate Reputations* (quotes above are from p. 187 of Dowling's book); Bilkey and Nes, "Country of Origin Effects"; Papadopoulos and Heslop, *Product-Country Images*; Jaffe and Nebenzahl, *National Image and Competitive Advantage*. In *Branding New York*, Miriam Greenberg describes a parallel phenomenon at the urban level that occurred decades earlier, with the emergence of "location consultants" in the 1960s who advised corporations on where to locate their firms and urban and regional officials on how to attract capital.
43. European Management Forum, *Report*, 4.
44. Ibid., 5.
45. See Garelli, ed., *World Competitiveness Yearbook 2000*.

46. Starting in the year 2000, Michael Porter began to collaborate with the World Economic Forum and Klaus Schwab on the development of the reports, bringing his foundational principles of the microdimensions of competitiveness into the report's analytical framework. See, e.g., Porter et al., *Global Competitiveness Report 2000.*

47. World Economic Forum & Institute for Management Development, *World Competitiveness Report 1992*, 6.

48. Liah Greenfeld makes this point in the Introduction to *Spirit of Capitalism*, 1–26.

49. Garelli, ed., *World Competitiveness Yearbook 2000*, 51.

50. The legacy of this kind of thinking is apparent in multiple sites. In his introduction to the book *Culture Matters*, a collection of papers presented at the symposium "Cultural Values and Human Progress Project" organized by Harvard University's Academy for International and Area Studies in 1999, Lawrence E. Harrison, a former USAID official, cited Weber as the intellectual progenitor to contemporary research that "focused on the role of cultural values and attitudes as facilitators of, or obstacles to, progress" (xxi). It is important to note that Michael Porter was one of the presenters at this event and that one of the more popular opinion surveys used in nation-branding initiatives is the World Values Survey, which developed directly out of this symposium. The World Values Survey, presided over by Ronald Inglehart, claims to have conducted representative surveys of the values, beliefs and motivations of societies comprising 90 percent of the world population. The underlying aim of the survey is to demonstrate these cultural effects on economic development and progress.

51. Garelli, ed., *World Competitiveness Report 1997*, 13.

52. An excellent example of this process is found in Schueth, "Assembling International Competitiveness."

53. Fougner, "State, International Competitiveness"; Greenfeld, *Spirit of Capitalism*; Sheppard, "Competition in Space."

54. Fougner, "Neoliberal Governance of States," 319.

55. Greenfeld, *Spirit of Capitalism*, 163.

56. Appadurai, "Patriotism and Its Futures," 412.

57. Wells and Wint, *Marketing a Country*, 4.

58. Some of the agencies in the study had been set up by USAID (Costa Rica) and the World Bank (Malaysia). Ibid., 27–28.

59. Ibid., 55–56.

60. Ibid., 150.

61. UNIDO in 1978 established an Investment Promotion Center in New York, which allowed developing countries to rent space and conduct US promotional activities out of its offices; see Ibid., 36. See also *UNCTAD Series B Report: Survey of Best Practices in Investment Promotion 1997*, which cross-pollinates the idea of investment promotion in developing countries and the turn to image as a precondition for investment.

62. The primary objective outlined at the European Council meeting in Lisbon on March 23–24, 2000 was in fact for the European Union "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" (Lisbon European Council March 23–24, 2000, Presidency Conclusions available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm). In 2005, when analyses suggested that this commitment was not being realized, the objectives were modified to favor renewed efforts at reform and decreased regulation. See Council Recommendation of July 12, 2005, on the broad guidelines for

the economic policies of the Member States and the Community (2005 to 2008), available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L: 2005:205:0028:01:EN:HTML.

63. General information brochure for the World Investment Conference, held at La Baule, France, June 3–5, 2009, 4.

64. Applied research in Europe has sought to measure the gap between image and reality in terms of the goals set by the European Council toward competitiveness and actual progress toward those goals by the European Union. See, e.g., Andriessen and Stam, *Intellectual Capital*.

65. Lury and Moor, "Brand Valuation," 46.

66. Timothy Mitchell has made this observation in his study of the creation of economy as a sphere of social understanding and the "character of calculability" that this creation infuses throughout society. Writing about the use of cadastral surveys in Egypt, for example, Mitchell shows that the practice served not to measure territorial space as it was but "to redistribute forms of knowledge, increasing it in some places and decreasing it in others," so that "the question of accuracy or truth could now be cast as the degree of correspondence between the object-world on one side of this divide and the maps, images, and numbers on the other." See Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 92–93.

67. Mitchell, "Society, Economy, and the State Effect," 95.

68. Knorr-Cetina, "Culture in Global Knowledge Societies."

69. "Code of Ethics: The Davos Manifesto" in World Economic Forum, *Partner in Shaping History*, 16.

CHAPTER 3

1. Franzen, *Corrections*, 126.

2. Williams, *Long Revolution*, 65.

3. Other excellent examples of "nation branding" in recent works of fiction include the novel *Absurdistan* by Gary Shteyngart and the HBO television series, "Flight of the Conchords."

4. Leonard, *Public Diplomacy*, 9. Leonard is speaking about public diplomacy, but his understanding of this term is as a form of communication that correlates to— and is in fact constituted by—the nation brand: "Public diplomacy is based on the premise that the image and reputation of a country are public goods which can create either an enabling or a disabling environment for individual transactions. Work on particular issues will feed off the general image of the country and reflect back on to it—in both positive and negative directions" (Ibid.).

5. The term *nation branding* is attributed to one individual, Simon Anholt, who claims to have coined it. See Anholt, "Nation-Brands of the 21st Century." While some consultants and popular portrayals use the term indiscriminately, others use alternative terms to distinguish their practice.

6. Ten semi-structured, in-depth interviews were carried out with self-designated place-branding consultants or researchers in London in the spring of 2007. The materials collected during these interviews were corroborated by a series of interview sessions in different locations: twenty-two in-depth interviews were conducted in Poland in 2007–2008; and twenty-nine interviews were conducted in or regarding Canada's brand between 2007–2010. I conducted seventeen additional interviews between fall 2009 and summer 2010 with interlocutors in the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, and Sweden; some of the interviews in this latter group were repeat interviews with consultants I had met in 2007.

7. In terms of method, consultants do not perceive a marked difference between branding at the national level and branding at other spatial scales (city, region, federation). Differences are evinced, however, in terms of the current wave of globalization discourse that challenges the nation-state as a significant locus of cultural identity and political-economic centrality. While the "production of space" (Lefebvre, *Production of Space*) at all scales is part of the expansion of capitalist forms of organization, the production of space at the national level is seen as necessary to stem the nation's potential transcendence. See also Brenner, "Beyond State-Centrism?"

8. Every one of my interviewees insisted that I speak to the same two so-called leaders of the nation-branding movement for an accurate portrait of the field. Most participants either gave me these individuals' contact information or simply contacted them on my behalf, to the point that when I telephoned one of them a few days later, he began the conversation by saying, "You're famous!"

9. Olins, *On Brand*, 152.

10. See Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, 146–161, for a discussion of the primordialist paradigm of nations.

11. Other methods include desk research and focus groups, though these are more often than not counted under the general heading of "public opinion research."

12. In 2007, when interviews were initially conducted, the NBI was affiliated with Global Market Insite, an international marketing research firm headquartered in Bellevue, Washington, which polled over twenty-five thousand individuals in more than thirty-five countries on a quarterly basis. At that time the cost to a country of commissioning the survey ranged from $50,000 (for an annual custom report and quarterly generic updates providing outsiders' overall impressions of the country) to $150,000 for an annual custom report and quarterly custom updates (specific opinions by all countries surveyed of the reputation of the commissioning country according to the six points of the hexagon). As of 2008, the surveys for the NBI are carried out annually by GfK Custom Research North America, a New York-based polling and marketing research group. This version of the survey draws from a pool of twenty thousand individuals in fifty countries and compares client countries to "benchmark nations." Rates for the Anholt-GfK research analyses are similar to the Anholt-GMI analyses, though the current survey team allows clients to further customize the report by selecting specific countries and/or specific variables for in-depth analysis ($8,000 for the first survey country, $4,000 for each additional survey country) ("Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index Provides Incomparable Insights," GfK Custom Research North America, January 2012, promotional brochure).

13. Anholt, *Nation Brands Index Special Report*, 2.

14. Lears, *Fables of Abundance*, 204.

15. Ibid., 206.

16. A number of other national organizations (in Brussels, China, Hungary and Czechoslovakia) were invited to participate in the study, but were unable "for one reason or another" (Buchanan and Cantril, *How Nations See Each Other*, vi).

17. Ibid., 60–61.

18. Anholt, *Nation Brands Index Special Report*, 13.

19. Anholt, *How the World Sees the World*.

20. See Anholt, *Competitive Identity*.

21. Sennett, *Culture of the New Capitalism*, 54–62.

22. Calhoun, *Nationalism*, 18; see also Dzenovska, "Remaking the Nation of Latvia."

23. Calhoun, "Nationalism and Difference," 242.
24. Calhoun, *Nationalism*, 92.
25. Saffron, *Brand for Poland*, 56.
26. Calhoun, "Nationalism and Difference," 243 (emphasis added).
27. Ibid.
28. Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity*, 33.
29. Baker, *Media, Markets and Democracy*.
30. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 505–506.
31. Wollf Olins, "Øresund," 2.

CHAPTER 4

1. The new building housing the Warsaw Stock Exchange (WSE) had opened to much fanfare a year earlier, and its use as a conference venue for such an event was symbolic in itself. The WSE's previous home (from 1991 to 2000) was in the building that for several decades had housed the central committee of the ruling Polish communist party.
2. *Urząd Komitetu Integracji Europejskiej*—UKIE.
3. The OHIM is a European Community office that manages trademarks and designs for the European Union. Once a manufacturer's mark or goods/service mark has been registered with this body, it is deemed protected throughout the European Union. See http://oami.europa.eu.
4. Olins, *Oral History of Wolff Olins*.
5. See the website at www.saffron-consultants.com.
6. Published in five editions between 1989 and 1994 in English, and translated into multiple languages, *Corporate Identity* is held by 975 libraries worldwide (www.worldcat.org). A prior book of Olins's, *Corporate Personality,* was written about a year earlier at the behest of the British Design Council, an organization founded in 1944 "to promote by all practicable means the improvement of design in the products of British industry" (Design Council, "Our History").
7. Olins, *Corporate Identity*, 7.
8. Ibid., 13–17. In the late 1950s Olins managed the Indian division of the Benson advertising agency from its office in Bombay, where, he admits, "many companies, including mine, still had neocolonialist attitudes" (in Schultz and Hatch, "European View," 331).
9. Olins, *Corporate Identity*, 20.
10. Ibid., 23. In Olins's defense of what appears here an indefensible position with regard to the Zimbabwean leader's regime, it must be remembered that in 1988, Mugabe was the recipient of the Africa Prize for Leadership for his development of agricultural policies that boosted food production and controlled infestation. His then nine-year rule was recognized as having significantly bolstered the nation's independence. See Kaufman, "Zimbabwe Leader."
11. Klein, *No Logo*.
12. Mrak, *Globalization*; Imam, *Effect of IMF Structural Adjustment Programs*; Bönker et al., *Postcommunist Transformation*.
13. Kennedy, *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism*, 9.
14. See, for example, Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*. See also the discussion at the end of this chapter.
15. Kennedy, *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism*, 13.
16. Calhoun, *Nationalism*, 94.

17. The aligning of nations as comparable entities is not, of course, merely a product of twentieth-century transitional logic. Gellner's position on nationalism as a manifestation of modern industrialization, as well as Calhoun's observations about the ways in which international rhetoric defines national frames, find purchase here. See Calhoun, *Nationalism* and Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.

18. In 1989, Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs became an advisor to the Polish government, advocating a program of radical economic reforms designed to "jumpstart" market activity. The reforms resembled those implemented in his previous consulting project in Bolivia, which had been heralded by some—though by no means all—as a "miracle." He and his team frequently evoked the Bolivia model in his work in Poland, so often that it became a source of frustration for many. "I would love to see Bolivia," Polish historian Karol Modzelewski commented. "I just don't want to see Bolivia *here*" (in Weschler, "A Grand Experiment," 91). Sixteen years later, David Brooks, writing about the Bolivian election that brought socialist contender Evo Morales to power, suggests that this election confirms that the "standard set of macroeconomic reforms" has not worked—"or, to be precise, they've worked for elites, but not everybody else." Capitalism is not, Brooks writes, the sole forerunner to democracy. See Brooks, "Trade, Oppression, Revenge," 9. For an incredible documentary insight into the marketing campaign conducted by the American political consultancy Greenberg Carville Shrum to promote the Bolivian competitor to Morales, Gonzalez Sancho de Lozada, see the film *Our Brand is Crisis,* directed by Rachel Boynton.

19. See for example Sachs, *Poland's Jump*, 22–26.

20. Poland's prime minister, Donald Tusk, carried his 2007 Civic Platform party campaign to victory on the slogan,"*Polska zasługuje na cud gospodarczy*"—"Poland deserves an economic miracle." The implicit reference was to the recent economic upturn in Ireland (the "Irish Miracle" is a common phrase in the European Union), a country where almost one third of the roughly 1.5 million Poles who emigrated between 2003 and 2007 went to work. Historically, Poles have identified strongly with Ireland, in that both countries are conservative, Catholic, and—until recently—relatively poor.

21. Michnik, "What Europe Means for Poland," 128.

22. For a searing account of the implications of shock therapy as economic treatment, see Klein, *Shock Doctrine*.

23. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 245.

24. Bandelj, *From Communists to Foreign Capitalists*.

25. Sachs, *Poland's Jump,* 5 (emphasis added). Following this logic allows us to see how the goals of market liberalization are frequently conflated with those of political liberalism: in the context of transition, liberalism is less about ensuring stable democratic institutions than it is about "liberating" the mechanisms of the self-regulating market.

26. Stark and Bruszt, "One Way or Multiple Paths," 1130; see also Bandelj, *From Communists to Foreign Capitalists*.

27. Stark and Bruszt, "One Way or Multiple Paths," 1130.

28. Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 6.

29. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*. See also Bassin, "Russia between Europe and Asia" and Sezneva, *Tenacious Place*, chapter 6.

30. I am referring here to Rousseau's *Considerations on the Government of Poland and Its Projected Reformation*, written ten years after he composed the *Social Contract.* According to Wolff, Rousseau's most provocative and penetrating ideas about the

political theory of patriotism and the ideological foundations of modern nationalism were derived from his writings about Poland—possibly because, having never set foot there, he could give freer rein to his imaginings. See Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, chapter 6.

31. The working party members are listed in the brand book with a variety of different titles: Marek Kłoczko, secretary general, Polish Chamber of Commerce; Mirosław Boruc, president, Institute of Polish Brand (a tiny think tank located within the Chamber of Commerce); Jacek Prześlakowski, director, Krajowa Izba Gospodarcza (the Polish translation of Chamber of Commerce) and Biuro Akademii Marek (the Academy of Brands, another tiny unit of the Chamber of Commerce); Wally Olins, chairman, Saffron; Jacob Benbunan, CEO, Saffron; and Shruti Syngal, project manager, Saffron. Despite the variations in the titles, therefore, only two organizations are represented.

32. Interestingly, none of the Polish local participants who were so instrumental in running the project were provided with a copy of the *Brand for Poland* report. Following their involvement, they were cut off from communication.

33. A search for "Poland" and "horse-drawn cart" in major US and world publications (1989–2008) on the Lexis-Nexis database yields 116 returns (English-language only), covering topics from tourism to European Union accession to migration. An admittedly partial selection includes Penny Cook, "It's Poles Apart," *Herald Sun* (Melbourne, Australia), November 24, 1995; Katherine Butler, "Poles Glimpse EU Salvation, Down on the (14th Century) Farm," *The Independent* (London), October 10, 2002; Colin Barraclough, No Title, *Christian Science Monitor*, July 26, 1995; John Lis, "Lifting the Veil on Eastern Europe's Gems," *Ottawa Citizen,* May 8, 1993; Nick Woodsworth, "Infinite Mystery of Poland's Spiritual Heart," *Financial Times* (Travel Supplement), January 22, 2000; "A Country to Run From," *Economist* (U.S. edition), May 13, 2006; Sue Reid, "Angela and her children live in Poland. So why are they and thousands more pocketing £1m a month in child benefits paid by British taxpayers?" *Daily Mail* (London); Karen Lowry Miller, Frank J. Comes, and Peggy Simpson, "Poland: Rising Star of Europe," *Business Week,* December 4, 1995. In these articles, the expression "horse-drawn cart" is used both literally, to describe the rural or peri-urban landscape, and metaphorically, to evoke backwardness, tradition, rurality, or pastness; in one case it was referenced as a "living embodiment of Poland's 19th-century culture" (Diehl, "Visit to a Strange New Poland").

34. An episode of the popular Polish television show Warto Rozmawiać (Worth Talking About, TVP, September 17, 2006) on the image of Poland abroad began by airing a recent commercial for the German electronics store MediaMarkt. The commercial shows three Poles walking toward the exit of the MediaMarkt store, shopping carts laden with goods they have just purchased. Three German store employees look at them suspiciously until the Poles fall into the clerks' arms in a show of friendship before leaving. One of the clerks says, "The Poles are quite likable after all!" Another jibes, "Yeah, and I still have my watch." After a moment the three Germans realize that their pants have disappeared. The "Polish Joke" is alive and well, it seems.

35. Saffron, *Brand for Poland*, 56.

36. Andrzej Zdebski, interview by Iwona Sulik, *Gość Dnia*, "Chcemy wywołać pozytywny impuls związany z Polską" ("Promoting a Positive Image of Poland"), TVP, September 30, 2005.

37. See discussion in chapter three.

38. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*; Sezneva, *Tenacious Place*.
39. Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization."
40. This came as a considerable surprise to me, given some of the opinions I had read in Polish foreign policy reports about the "Marriott Brigades": those Western experts who during the early years of transition would come to Poland, spend the night at the Marriott Hotel in Warsaw dispensing advice from the hotel lobby, then fly out in the morning to the next transition site.
41. One interviewee observed that Olins's sartorial style had even been emulated by some of the Polish clients. One of them cut his hair in a crewcut and started wearing foreign-made suits and owlish round glasses (personal communication, January 2008).
42. Barlik, "Naród to też marka" ("A Nation is Also a Brand" [an interview with Wally Olins]); Pawlicka, "Polskę sprzedam dobrze" ("I Will Sell Poland Well" [an interview with Wally Olins]); Kłoczko, "Marketing globalny nie znosi akcyjności" ("Global Marketing Hates Haphazardness"); Karwowski, "No Logo Land"; Olins, "Niech cały kraj będzie lubiany tak jak Polacy za granicą" ("Let the Whole Country Be Popular, Just as Poles Abroad Are"). Importantly, this latter article was featured in a special section of the paper about patriotism in Poland, which also included a lengthy interview with the historian Norman Davies, opinion pieces by academics and politicians on Polish national identity, and a report on public opinion surveys of Poles and national identity by the Polish Centre for Public Opinion Research [CBOS]. Related articles promoting the brand and/or Olins include: Oktaba, "Marka towaru jako wizerunek kraju" ("Product Brand as Country Image"); Jelonkiewicz, "Export Special: From Poland with Love"; Jelonkiewicz, "The Name Game"; Skiba, "Marka może wiele zdziałać" ("Brands Can Achieve a Lot").
43. The conference was held at the Radisson SAS Hotel in Warsaw. The agenda included, among other events, speeches by the undersecretary in the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy Andrzej Szejna; the president of the Polish Federation of Private Employers, Henryka Bochniarz; as well as head of Polkomtel, S. A. Jarosław Pachowski. See Jelonkiewicz, "The Name Game."
44. One of its publications, the 1999 *Yearbook* [*Rocznik*], features a selection of Polish commercial posters from the 1920s and 1930s, intended to demonstrate Poland's prior history of "capitalist realism."
45. Saffron, *Brand for Poland*, 66–67.
46. Ibid., 69.
47. Ibid., 70.
48. Davies, *Heart of Europe*, 384.
49. Ibid., 322.
50. Saffron, *Brand for Poland*, 71.
51. Ibid., 72.
52. Ibid.
53. The Washington Consensus advocated foreign capital as necessary for a wide range of developments in certain countries that would promote domestic growth, such as skills and knowledge transfer, job creation, and capital accumulation.
54. Bandelj, *From Communists to Foreign Capitalists*, 17. Jagdish Bhagwati has called this kind of capital accumulation "immiserizing growth," in which "an economy could become worse off even though it had grown through accumulating capital or improving productivity" (*In Defense of Globalization*, 55). See also Prasad, *Politics of Free Markets*, for her account of the rise of free market policies and "entrepreneurial politicians" (38); and Eyal, *Origins of Postcommunist Elites*.

55. For one of several examples: Ratajczyk, "FDI Record."
56. Saffron, *Brand for Poland*, 74.
57. Ibid., 88–89.
58. The problem of translation found interesting resolution among the Polish clients. One maintained that since creative tension was an expert diagnosis of the problem, and since "the best diagnoses are in Latin," the fact that creative tension was in English (a descendant of Latin) made perfect sense; as did the fact that it was difficult to understand by most ordinary Poles.
59. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 245.
60. One respondent described how her research on advertising in Poland had revealed that many who had lived through the Communist years thought advertising was a form of communication used only for poor products, since they could not conceive of the need for advertising a quality product. This brings to mind Raymond Williams's suggestion, in reference to advertising, that it is not that we are too material, it is that we are not material enough, for if we were truly materialist we should strive to obtain those products we really needed, and forego the rest. See Williams, "Advertising."
61. Jeremy Hildreth, "An Introduction to Robust Nation Branding (Including a Case Study in Poland)" (PowerPoint presentation by Saffron Consultants delivered at "Country Branding—International Identity and Image" Conference, DEMOS Hungary Foundation, Budapest, November 28, 2006).
62. On collective effervescence and historical events, see Sewell, "Historical Events."
63. Bartnicka et al., *We Learn Polish*, 11–12.
64. I am most grateful to Professor Joanna Kurczewska for this insight.
65. Sierakowski, "Z patriotyzmem problem mają elity" ("Patriotism Poses Problems for Elites"), 6.
66. Judt, *Postwar*.
67. By "West" is meant the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as private bankers. After 1981, Poland's debtors became known as the "Paris Club" (a group of private commercial creditors) and the "London Club" (the "official" creditor nations). See Hunter and Ryan, "Privatization and Transformation in Poland"; see also www.clubdeparis.org.
68. Judt, *Postwar,* 582.
69. Davies, *Heart of Europe.*
70. Judt, *Postwar*, 587–588.
71. Spielman, "Eighteenth Brumaire," 569.
72. Ibid., 568.
73. Kubik, *Power of Symbols*, 194. In reference to the "crowned white eagle": one of the first symbolic acts of Solidarity was to restore the crown to the eagle's head, which had been removed by Communist leaders in all representations of this national symbol.
74. Buchowski, "European Integration," 892.
75. Lewandowski, "Solidarity." For further discussion of the importance of Solidarity logos, see Weschler, "Graphics of Solidarity."
76. Judt, *Postwar*, 588.
77. Ibid.
78. For a very interesting discussion of the Polish round table and its aftereffects, see Kennedy and Porter, *Negotiating Radical Change*.
79. Boxer, "New Poland—No Joke"; Reed, "Rebirth of a Nation."
80. Visit the website at: http://en.poland.gov.pl.

81. Verdery, *National Identity under Socialism*, 10.
82. See http://en.poland.gov.pl. Several pages on the website link to data and articles prepared by the *Financial Times*, such as the Foreign Direct Investment Intelligence Report, where Poland is promoted as one of the "fastest growing European investment destinations" ("FDI Investments," n.p.). Another page links to a special report on Investing in Poland prepared by the *Financial Times,* where deputy prime minister and minister of economy Waldemar Pawlak was quoted as saying that Poles had a "pro-consumption" attitude amidst continued economic growth. See Pawlak, "Poland: A Haven for Investors." See also "FDI Investments."
83. See http://2011.kongresig.pl.
84. Saffron, "A Polish National Brand" (presentation slides from 2nd Innovative Economy Congress, Warsaw, Poland, June 7, 2011).

CHAPTER 5

1. See, for example, Banting, Courchene, and Seidle, "Belonging?"
2. Kymlicka, *Current State*, 12.
3. Important critiques include Fulford, "How We Became a Land of Ghettos" (among other editorials); Bissoondath, *Selling Illusions*; and Gregg, "Identity Crisis."
4. Povinelli, *Cunning of Recognition*, 16.
5. Ibid., 17.
6. Swidler, "Culture in Action." See also Wherry, "Trading Impressions."
7. Skogstad, "Globalization and Public Policy," 813.
8. In *Selling Diversity*, Abu-Laban and Gabriel have provided a strong account of the implications of such "selling" of diversity in public policy.
9. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Discover Canada*.
10. Berry, "Official Multiculturalism," 86.
11. Hutchison, *Unknown Country*; Courtney and Smith, "Transformation of an Unnatural Country," 4; Cohen, *Unfinished Canadian*.
12. Mintz, Dunn, and Tossutti, *Democracy, Diversity*.
13. Coombe, *Cultural Life of Intellectual Properties*, 139.
14. Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 179.
15. Ibid.
16. Day, *Multiculturalism*, 9; see also Mackey, *House of Difference*, 13.
17. Statement to the House by the prime minister, in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (in Parliament of Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 8545).
18. Trudeau's call for state recognition of cultural diversity was formally achieved with the Multiculturalism Act of 1988.
19. Similar concerns erupted over claims to recognition by aboriginal populations. See Day, *Multiculturalism*.
20. Taylor, *Reconciling the Solitudes*, 162.
21. See *Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic*, 87 (qtd in Day, *Multiculturalism*, 4); and *Multiculturalism: Being Canadian*, 3 (qtd. in Day, 6).
22. See Abu Laban and Gabriel, *Selling Diversity*, 38; see also Mackey, *House of Difference*, 13.
23. This despite multiple accounts of Canada's aversion to diversity in its immigration policies and practices during the country's hundred-year period from Confederation in 1867 to the adoption of a point system for immigration in 1967.

During this time Canadian immigration policy emphasized the desire for "preferred groups" of citizens whose racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds mirrored the "purity" of the colonial parent. One manifestation of this policy was made evident when the vast labor needs of Canadian nation-building required the labor of Asian and black American immigrant workers, who were given temporary status as residents, but refused citizenship. As Canada's first prime minister, John A. MacDonald, put it, these laborers' temporary status in Canada ensured "no fear of a permanent degradation of the country by a mongrel race" (qtd. in Abu Laban and Gabriel, *Selling Diversity*, 38).

24. Mintz, Dunn, and Tossutti, *Democracy, Diversity*, 111.
25. Abu-Laban and Gabriel, *Selling Diversity*; and Mintz, Dunn, and Tossutti, *Democracy, Diversity*.
26. Taylor, *Reconciling the Solitudes*, 125.
27. Ibid., 95, though, as Taylor suggests, this is not necessarily a continued sentiment (96).
28. Magris, "The Fair of Tolerance."
29. Ibid.
30. Richard Day notes this as well. See his discussion on the ways in which Canadian diversity is taken as "fact" and how this sets up the "problem of the problem of diversity"; that is, the ways in which the articulation of diversity as a defining fact "conditions the possibilities of life for those who are trying to 'be Canadian'" (*Multiculturalism*, 5).
31. Reginald Bibby, qtd. in Gatehouse, "Divided We Stand," 44.
32. Stanley, "Social Effects of Culture," 12–13.
33. Gatehouse, "Divided We Stand," 44.
34. Additional data used to compile the study is found in Appendix B of the report.
35. This fact had not gone unnoticed before. Other reports evaluating Canada's international performance had highlighted the lack of innovation in Canadian business along with the lack of support for such innovation within the federal government. In one damning account, written by a journalist with the *Financial Times*, Canada's business environment was condemned not only for its ongoing reliance on primary resource extraction rather than value added products, but also for its lack of multinational corporations, internationally "irrelevant" blue chip banks, and inability to bring new inventions to market (Mandel-Campbell, *Why Mexicans Don't Drink Molson*, 50–52). The irony lies in the anxiety such foreign investment potential raises, as media reports simultaneously condemned the "hollowing out" of Canada—the sale to foreign or private equity investors of major Canadian flagship corporations—as a liability for Canadian national identity. In April 2007, ten of the sixty members on the Toronto Stock Exchange had been merged, bought out, or were in talks to do so with foreign buyers or private equity investors, "thereby completely removing some of the country's biggest, most reliable, and most well-known investment assets from the Canadian public landscape" (Parkinson, "Identity Crisis"). In the face of foreign ownership of such national icons as Molson, Fairmont Hotels, Alcan, BCE, Inco, and Falconbridge, a flurry of media reports decried the loss of jobs, skilled labor, and quality of life of Canadians.
36. Conference Board of Canada, *How Canada Performs*, 4.
37. Ipsos Reid, *Looking toward Canada*, 49.
38. Ibid.
39. Communication Group, *Destination Canada*, 9.

40. Swystun, *Branding in Canada*. "Issue 1—Where Are the Great Canadian Brands?" "Issue 2—Differentiating for Greater Performance." "Issue 3—Can Canadian Brands Go Global?" "Issue 4—The Canadian Brand Agenda."
41. Swystun, "Issue 3—Can Canadian Brands Go Global?," 2.
42. Swystun, "Issue 2—Differentiating for Greater Performance," 2.
43. Jeffrey Swystun, qtd. in Mandel-Campbell, *Why Mexicans Don't Drink Molson*, 52.
44. Swystun, "Issue 2—Differentiating for Greater Performance," 2.
45. Ibid.
46. Marchand, "Canadians Have an Image Problem," B2.
47. Mandel-Campbell, *Why Mexicans Don't Drink Molson*, 52.
48. Personal interview with Deputy Minister in Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), Ottawa, Canada, 2009.
49. Ipsos Reid, *Looking toward Canada*, 29.
50. Conference Board of Canada, *How Canada Performs*, 30.
51. Swystun, "Issue 4—The Canadian Brand Agenda."
52. Personal interview with a representative of the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation, Ottawa's Economic Development Corporation, June 2007.
53. Conference Board of Canada, *How Canada Performs*, 4.
54. Marchand, "Canadians Have an Image Problem," B2.
55. Swystun, "Issue 4—The Canadian Brand Agenda."
56. Povinelli, *Cunning of Recognition*, 17.
57. Swystun, "Issue 3—Can Canadian Brands Go Global?," 4.
58. Anholt, *Beyond the Brand*, 8. Citations of this source in this book are from the document distributed to Canadian bureaucrats; a version of the document, with the references to Canada removed, appears in Pike, *Brands and Branding Geographies*, 289–304.
59. Mackey, *House of Difference*, 133.
60. Hirschman, *Passions and Interests*.
61. Ipsos Reid. *Invest in Canada*, 1.
62. Ogilvy, "Creative Roadmap," 1.
63. DFAIT, *Canada in the World*.
64. Office of the Inspector General/Evaluation Division, *Evaluation*. See also Potter, *Branding Canada*, for an insider's view of the past and potential of public diplomacy in Canada. Potter is a strategist in the Communications unit of Canada's federal Department of Foreign Affairs.
65. DFAIT, *Report on Plans and Priorities*, 52.
66. For a recent account of the continued decimation of cultural diplomacy in Canada, see Lalonde and Ferland, "La fin de la diplomatie culturelle?"
67. Anholt, *Beyond the Brand*, 8. Anholt conducted this master class as part of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Federal-Provincial-Territorial Investment Promotion Conference in 2010.
68. Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence."
69. Anholt, *Beyond the Brand*, 9.

CHAPTER 6

1. Greenfeld, *Spirit of Capitalism*, 1. See also Greenfeld, *Nationalism*.
2. Giddens, introduction to Weber, *Protestant Ethic*, xiv.
3. Simon Anholt is a household name in the nation branding industry. His Nation Brands Index and accompanying "hexagon" model of competitive identity are

cited and/or emulated by virtually every other practitioner and commentator in the field. A prolific writer, his ideas find wide dissemination through his popular books, including *Competitive Identity* (2007); *Brand New Justice* (2003), and *Places* (2009), and multiple articles. He is the founding editor of the journal *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* (Palgrave Macmillan), which also acts as a showcase for his work. In 2009 he received the Nobels Colloquia Prize for Leadership on Business and Economic Thinking, further adding to his celebrity.

4. Anholt, *Competitive Identity*, 19.

5. Pasotti, *Political Branding in Cities*, 5. See also Gerring, "What is a Case Study," whom Pasotti also cites.

6. Bandelj, *From Communists to Foreign Capitalists*; Fougner, "State, International Competitiveness"; Fougner, "Neoliberal Governance of States."

7. Polanyi, *Great Transformation*; Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process."

8. BEDIA is a quasi-governmental investment promotion agency. Its main revenue comes in the form of government capital grants and its mandate is established via the Ministry of Trade and Industry, which appoints a board of directors for BEDIA. The amount committed to the Branding Botswana project in 2005–2006 was relatively small—BWP 2,244,401, or just under US $300,000 (BEDIA, *Annual Report 2006*, 47). In subsequent years (2007, 2008) no funds were allocated to Brand Botswana as a capital project, though small amounts of the BEDIA budget were given over to branding as part of general public relations expenses. See BEDIA, *Annual Report 2007*; BEDIA, *Annual Report 2008*.

9. Kaiser Associates, "Trade and Investment Facilitation." Placebrands was a team of two: Malcolm Allan, a British former urban planner, and Sicco van Gelder, a Dutch branding and marketing strategy consultant. The agency was cofounded in 2003 with a third member, Simon Anholt, but he left the company after eighteen months to work independently. However, as he expressed to me in an interview, "the place branding philosophy is about 98 or 99% mine, because I wrote it for them." The American firm Kaiser Associates was founded in 1981 as a corporate strategy consultancy. In 1997–1998, it opened a South African office focused primarily on increasing trade and investment in African countries. Its rationale for its new practice was that "it became clear that the expertise developed in advising many of the world's top companies could make a valuable contribution to the challenges of economic development" (Kaiser Associates, "About Us").

 See also Benson Madisa, Esther Kanaimba, and Loago Raditedu, "Targeting the Brand: Global, Regional or Local?" (paper presented at "Changing Perceptions: National Branding—Implications for Strategy," part of ITC Executive Forum Consultative Cycle 2006; Innovations in Export Strategy, World Intellectual Property Organization, Bucharest, Romania, June 14, 2016, 2006).

10. BEDIA, *Annual Report 2006*.

11. See Aronczyk, "'Living the Brand.'"

12. Botswana Brand Partnership, *Botswana Brand Book*, 69 (italics in original).

13. Swarns, "Free AIDS Care."

14. Botswana Brand Partnership, *Botswana Brand Book*, 57.

15. Anholt, interview on the talk radio show Lo que queda del Día, Radio Cooperativa, Chile, April 23, 2009. English version is reproduced at: Markessinis, "Anholt Recommends."

16. "Quiénes Somos," www.chilevirtualtour.cl/about_us/la_fundacion.swf. English version of this text is available at: http://readingacrossborders.org/supporting-documents/fundacion-imagen-de-chile/. See also the advertising supplement

prepared by the promotional agency United World, "Chile: Spreading the Word around the World," which appeared in *USA Today* on September 16, 2011.

17. The project was eventually absorbed into the *Fundación Imagen de Chile* (Chilean Image Foundation), an organization consolidated in June 2009 to "boost, develop, sponsor, fund, coordinate and promote the competitive identity of our country abroad" (www.chilevirtualtour.cl/about_us/la_fundacion.swf; English version at readingacrossborders.org). For a more comprehensive and detailed account of Chile's image project, see Larraín, "Branding the Chilean Nation."

18. Other events included *Construcción y Proyección de la Imagen País: La Experiencia Comparada* ("Construction and Projection of Country Image: A Case Study Comparison") on July 4, 2008, at the Casa Piedra convention centre in Santiago. This seminar was inaugurated by then-president Michelle Bachelet and featured presentations from Simon Anholt along with speakers involved in tourism, investment promotion, and state communication strategies from South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and Spain.

19. Anholt, "Presupuestos y Requisitos para una Política de Estado en Materia de Promoción del País" (speech given at the conference "Comunicación de Imagen País: Desafíos en un Nuevo Contexto," Espacio Riesco, Santiago, Chile, April 21, 2009).

20. For further exposition of Anholt's views on "deserved reputation" and the issue of silence, see Anholt, "The Media and National Image."

21. Schueth, "Assembling International Competitiveness."

22. Power, *Organized Uncertainty*, 142.

23. Translated from Spanish by the author.

24. Anholt (speech delivered at the conference "El Rol de la Región de Valparaíso en la Construcción de la Identidad Competitiva de Chile," Proyecto Chile—Imagen País seminar, Club Naval, Valparaíso, Chile, March 19, 2009, http://nation-branding.info/2009/04/29/anholt-keynote-on-chile-nation-branding/).

25. Juan Gabriel Valdés, "Proceso de construcción de una nueva imagen para Chile" (speech delivered at the conference "El Rol de la Región de Valparaíso en la Construcción de la Identidad Competitiva de Chile," Proyecto Chile—Imagen País seminar, Club Naval, Valparaíso, Chile, March 19, 2009, my translation). Anholt's speech at the same event contained a similar message: "We ask ourselves where Chile is going, because people aren't interested in your past, unfortunately. I love history; I'm a bit of an amateur historian myself, but the sad part is that your past is only interesting to historians, and historians are not our target audience . . . The people we are interested in are not historians. So there is no point in trying to communicate Chile's past to them."

26. See, e.g., Meade, "Holding the Junta Accountable."

27. Letelier, "Economic 'Freedom'"; see also Klein, *Shock Doctrine*.

28. See http://www.fundacionimagendechile.cl/

29. These frames were removed in 2011 and replaced by image stills and video representing the country's newest marketing campaign, Chile Hace Bien, which translates into both "Chile is Good for You" and "Chile Does Things Well." The change in campaign also likely represents the change in Chilean leadership: the Chilean Image Foundation was inaugurated in 2009 by then-president Michelle Bachelet, while the "Chile Hace Bien" campaign emerged following the election of her successor Sebastián Piñera.

30. "Chile's brand image improves in the 2011 NBI ranking" (press release). www.imagendechile.cl.

31. "Estonian Review."
32. Reforms after 1989, under the tutelage of Estonia's new prime minister Mart Laar, included the creation of a new constitution and legal system, the privatization of state-owned properties, the pegging of the kroon to the Deutschmark (the euro), and the extensive reskilling of citizens to become an "IT country." Sue Jansen writes that Laar was dubbed "Margaret Thatcher's grandson" in the local media ("Designer Nations," 127).
33. Estonia won in 2001, first former USSR country to do so, giving it the right to host the next year's competition.
34. See Bolin and Ståhlberg, "Between Community and Commodity" for further discussion of Estonia's "coming out party" via the Eurovision Song Contest.
35. Interbrand, *Estonia Style Brand Book*, 65.
36. Jansen, "Designer Nations" and Smith, *Estonia*. In this regard, Estonia's nation branding initiatives reflect Katherine Verdery's prescient observation that "national ideologies and the mobilization of national sentiments in the new 'democratic' politics" "will surely be a prominent feature of Eastern Europe in its transition from socialism" (*National Identity under Socialism*, 4).
37. Interbrand, *Estonia Style Brand Book*, 62.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid., 64.
40. Ibid., 70.
41. Ibid., 51.
42. Ibid., 65.
43. Ibid., 70.
44. Ibid., 66.
45. Ibid., 101.
46. Schueth, "Assembling International Competitiveness."
47. "Georgia's Transformation into a Modern Market Democracy," presentation by Head of the State Chancellery Kakha Bendukidze at CATO Institute, Policy Forum, May 13, 2008. According to the executive director of the America-Georgia business council, Mamuka Tsereteli, the most attractive sectors for American investment in Georgia are real estate and construction, finance, tourism, agribusiness and wine, and transit and energy infrastructure (interviewed in *Invest Today,* 4).
48. USAID had been instrumental in the events of the Rose Revolution by shifting funds from the prior government to the populist groups that staged the revolution. Schueth, "Assembling International Competitiveness," 64.
49. The World Bank's Doing Business Project, launched in 2002, seeks to offer "objective," quantitative indicators of microeconomic reform across 183 national economies. Its annual EDBI ranks countries on the basis of ten aspects of business reform. In so doing it "encourages countries to compete towards more efficient regulation; offers measurable benchmarks for reform; and serves as a resource for academics, journalists, private sector researchers and others interested in the business climate of each country" (Doing Business, "About"). For the full report, see Doing Business, *Doing Business in a More Transparent World*.
50. Schueth, "Assembling International Competitiveness."
51. As Dimitri Gulisashvili, then head of the International Relations Department, Georgian National Investment and Export Promotion Agency, wrote in a report, "GNIA's main goals are [the] elaboration [of] investment policy, country branding and systematic search[es] for potential investor[s], informing them about investment opportunities in Georgia and providing comprehensive assistance" ("Georgia," 85).

52. This is another reason why USAID had a vested interest in the reform and branding initiative.
53. Verdery, *National Identity under Socialism*.
54. The flag itself was an important aspect of the symbolic syntax of Saakashvili's government. Once a medieval banner featuring red crosses against a white background, the red-and-white flag became a symbol for Saakashvili's National Movement opposition party. Saakashvili then introduced it as the official national flag after coming to power in 2004. See De Waal, *Caucasus*, especially chapter 7, "Modern Georgia: Rebirth, Rose Revolution, and Conflict."
55. *Invest Today,* 5.
56. Bilanishvili, "Emphasize Good News about Georgia."
57. Ohridska-Olson, "Branding Emerging Destinations."
58. The billboards also appeared in the public transit systems in the financial districts of London (outside Bank Station) and Tokyo.
59. In particular, calming the strain in British–German relations that had been manifest in political exchange and press coverage since the early 1990s (but perhaps especially as of 2005, when relations between Tony Blair and Gerhard Schröder were especially poor).
60. Anderson, "A New Germany?," 12.
61. Brenner, "Standortpolitik," 15.
62. Anderson, "A New Germany?," 24.
63. Germany: Land of Ideas, "Positive Image of Germany."
64. Williamson, "Germans Aim," 19.
65. Gerhard Maier, managing director of Invest in Germany GmbH qtd. in "Invest in Germany—Land of Ideas" (press release, July 1, 2006).
66. Germany's economics minister Michael Glos urged citizens to be less "grumpy" (qtd. in Harding, "Another Country").
67. "The *Financial Times Deutschland* website analyzed 400 English-language newspaper reports during the first six months of 2006 and found that the word 'friendly' appeared in association with Germany relatively late. By June and July . . . the words 'party' and 'pride' topped the list of World Cup adjectives, toppling 'safe' and 'successful'" (Harding, "Perception of Germany," 15). For a sample of international media coverage highlighting Germany's new national character, see: Hugh Williamson, "Germans Aim to Spring a World Cup Surprise: They're Fun," *Financial Times*, May 22, 2006, p. 19; Michael Sontheimer, "How Germans Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Flag," Spiegel Online, June 29, 2006; Roger Boyes, "Whisper It Softly: Germany is Coming Back," the *Times* (London), April 15, 2006; Luke Harding, "Another Country," *Guardian*, May 14, 2006; David Crossland, "From Humorless to Carefree in 30 Days," Spiegel Online, July 10, 2006 and "Germany's New Pitch," *Time International* (Asia), June 12, 2006.
68. Target Growth Competitiveness Committee, "Nation Branding Strategy."
69. See *Report by Jamaica*.
70. World Intellectual Property Organization/Jamaica Intellectual Property Office (WIPO/JIPO) Country Branding Workshop, Kingston, Jamaica, 2004; WIPO Nation Branding Seminar, Kingston, Jamaica, September 2005 (led by Simon Anholt); WIPO Follow-up Workshop on a National Branding Strategy for Jamaica, January 2007; "Transforming the Jamaican Economy to Compete in a Globalized World," Target Growth Competitiveness Committee's Minister's Forum, September 25, 2008; Aid for Trade High-Level Meeting on Mobilizing the Private Sector, May 2009; "Innovation, Demand and Competitiveness in Telecommunications:

The Role of Nation Branding as a Tool of Economic Development, Innovation and Creativity," Caribbean Regional Conference of the International Telecommunications Society, Montego Bay, June 24, 2009.

71. See, for example, Planning Institute of Jamaica, *Jamaica Vision 2030*; *National Export Strategy Jamaica*. Notable also are the lobbying efforts of the "Target Growth Competitiveness Committee," a component of the EU-funded Private Sector Development Programme in Jamaica, to develop government policy coherent with the nation branding strategy.

72. Daley, "Jamaica Takes Control," 133.

73. For example, as the *Jamaica Vision 2030* document explains: "In the Jamaican context, sport has particularly important roles in building unity at the national and community levels, including bridging divisions created by political tribalism" (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 91).

74. It is possible that these aspects of nation branding intensified following the signing of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between CARIFORUM and the European Union in 2007. The EPA liberalized trade between the two regions, ending former preferential and nonreciprocal trade regimes for Jamaica and increasing competition for trade from other countries. For a powerful treatment of the impact of foreign policies and free trade regimes on Jamaica's welfare prior to this time, see the film *Life and Debt*, directed by Stephanie Black.

75. Planning Institute of Jamaica, *Jamaica Vision 2030*, 92.

76. Based on the information presented in Jamaica's National Export Strategy, published by the Ministry of Industry, Investment & Commerce, Jamaica Trade & Invest, and the country's Exporter's Association, although the notion of nation branding is well anchored and its benefits touted, no comprehensive strategy had been formally launched. See *National Export Strategy Jamaica,* available at http://www.jamaicatradeandinvest.org/nes/documents.php.

77. Monitor Group, "Letter to 'Abd Allah al-Sanusi," 1.

78. Although as Craig Calhoun has observed, diplomatic ties were being re-knotted with Britain and the United States earlier than this, as of 1999. See Calhoun, "Libyan Money." For a more expansive story of Libya's international relations, see Vandewalle, *History of Modern Libya*.

79. Monitor Group, "Letter to 'Abd Allah al-Sanusi," 1.

80. Monitor Group and CERA, *National Economic Strategy*, v.

81. Ibid., 15.

82. Ibid.

83. Reed, "Opening of Libya."

84. For an account of how the Monitor Group's project in Libya reveals tensions over the terms of academic engagement in global networks, see Calhoun, "Libyan Money."

85. Examples of such articles include: Anthony Giddens, "The Colonel and His Third Way," *New Statesman*, August 28, 2006; and "My Chat with the Colonel," *Guardian*, March 9, 2007; Benjamin Barber, "U.S. Should Enlist Libya's Help," *Marketplace*, American Public Media, December 11, 2006; and "Gaddafi's Libya: An Ally for America?," *Washington Post*, August 15, 2007; Andrew Moravcsik, "A Rogue Reforms," *Newsweek* (Pacific Edition), July 16, 2007: 24; and "Triumph in Libya for Tough Choices of Soft Power," *Financial Times*, July 30, 2007; Joseph S. Nye Jr., "Tripoli Diarist," *New Republic,* December 10, 2007.

86. Monitor Group Foreign Government Services, *Proposal for Expanding the Dialogue*. Mark Fuller announced his resignation from Monitor in early May 2011, leading

one reporter to speculate that the resignation was connected to the company's admission that it had violated the terms of the U.S. Foreign Agents Registration Act, which required it to disclose its work with Libya to the U.S. Justice Department (Richardson, "Monitor Group"). Monitor filed for bankruptcy protection in November 2012. It was acquired by Deloitte in early 2013.

87. Calhoun, "Libyan Money," 4.
88. See www.sweden.se.
89. Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted a major survey of Sweden's image abroad in 2005; the findings were used to construct the brand platform.
90. "Brand Sweden: Sweden Image Platform," promotional brochure, 4.
91. Ibid., 4.
92. Two consultants working with these firms, Michael Fairbanks and Stace Lindsay, detail their extensive work to change "mindsets" in Uganda in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress,* eds. Samuel Huntington and Lawrence Harrison (chapters 20 and 21, Michael Fairbanks, "Changing the Mind of a Nation: Elements in a Process for Creating Prosperity," 268–281; and Stace Lindsay, "Culture, Mental Models, and National Prosperity," 282–295). See also World Bank, On the Frontier Group, *Improving Competitiveness and Increasing Growth in Uganda*, 2007–2008. Fairbanks and Lindsay are cofounders of On the Frontier (OTF) Group Inc., a business that develops competitiveness strategies for developing nations. From 1991 to 1999, the OTF group was part of the Monitor Group.
93. USAID, *SCOPE*, 1.
94. Ibid., 17.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., 23.
97. Lydia Ochieng-Obbo, "Building Uganda's National Brand—Uganda: Gifted by Nature" (presentation delivered at "Changing Perceptions, National Branding—Implications for Strategy," International Trade Forum and World Intellectual Property Organization, Executive Forum Consultative Cycle 2006: Innovations in Export Strategy, June 14, 2016, 2006, Bucharest, Romania), 2.
98. USAID, *SCOPE*, 3.
99. Ibid. (emphasis added).
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid., 16.
102. Fairbanks, "Changing the Mind of a Nation," 276-277.
103. USAID, *SCOPE*, 16.
104. Ibid., 19.
105. Ibid., 3.
106. Ochieng-Obbo, "Building Uganda's National Brand," 4.
107. USAID, *SCOPE*, 21.
108. Fairbanks, "Changing the Mind of a Nation," 274.
109. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 245. See chapter four.
110. In Africa, Anholt calls this the "continent branding effect," suggesting that the problems at the borders of one African country extend to the perimeter of the continent.
111. Countries that are called invisible, such as Canada or Chile, are part of the story as well. For Chile it may be a continental branding effect, but for Canada, it may also be a lack of competitiveness.
112. Indeed, this is not unique to branding processes but rather a signal trope of many theories of development that privilege economic growth as an index of

progress. The classic statement of this version of modernization is Rostow, *Stages of Economic Growth*.

113. In *The Roots of Radicalism*, Craig Calhoun reminds that "to look backward is not inherently irrational—especially when there is no guarantee that the future amounts to progress—or that what some deem progress will advance the values ordinary people hold dearest" (312).

114. See, e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity Inc.*

CONCLUSION

1. Datamonitor, "Industry Profile," 10.
2. Ironically, the company itself has since been rebranded, after its takeover in 2011 by a multinational commercial real estate organization.
3. Klein, *No Logo*.
4. Ibid.
5. "You have to get over this misunderstanding that it's about the logo and the tagline. After all these years it's still there as an issue. People don't understand it. It's fascinating that it's still the case that you still have to educate politicians about things like this."
6. "Experts do not arrive in a society spontaneously, but are the result of a complex process of institutional development, claims for recognition as experts, and the granting of social recognition by strategic groups" (Gerver and Bensman, "Towards a Sociology of Expertness," 226).
7. Those countries that *were* best able to brand, in his view, were "emerging" nations in Africa and Eastern Europe, those societies which John and Jean Comaroff call "postrevolutionary" ("Millennial Capitalism," 298). "Nation branding is a 'growing up' process," the consultant explained to me. "The emerging nations are, if you like, hoping that this will be a way of them defining what their sort of role and purpose is and what their heritage is."
8. Brenner et al., *State/Space*.
9. Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity*, 33, italics in original.
10. Ibid.
11. Steger, *Rise of the Global Imaginary*.
12. On the spatial turn in social theory, see, e.g., Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*; on the spatial turn in economic theory, see, e.g., Fujita, Krugman, and Venables, *Spatial Economy*; and see the interview with Michael Porter on his work on clusters and the geography of the economy in Snowdon and Stonehouse, "Competitiveness in a Globalized World."
13. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 9.
14. Ibid., emphasis in original.
15. Ibid., 10.
16. The trope of utopia is a common one in nation branding exercises. See, for example, Bruce Mau's conception of "pragmatic utopias" in his branding efforts for Denmark ("Too Perfect"). Miriam Greenberg has described a similar phenomenon in the branding of urban space. The utopian urban imaginary constituted by the brand is "a transparent consumer democracy that is postclass, postrace, and postpolitical party" ("Branding, Crisis and Utopia," 139).
17. Povinelli, *Cunning of Recognition*, 17.
18. "The world is still enchanted . . . I have no truck with accounts of capitalism that insist that capitalism has disenchanted the world. The world of capitalism is

best seen, I think, as one closer to the imaginary of the medieval world of dark superstitions and religious bliss than we fondly choose to believe." (Thrift, *Knowing Capitalism*, 2).

19. See, e.g., Lears, *Fables of Abundance*.
20. Williams, "Advertising," 185.
21. Comaroff and Comaroff, "Millennial Capitalism," 316.
22. Ibid., 310.
23. Appadurai, "The Spirit of Calculation," 8.
24. Keller, *Strategic Brand Management*, 362.
25. Lury and Moor, "Brand Valuation," 46.
26. See, e.g., Law, "Seeing Like a Survey."
27. Lee and LiPuma, "Cultures of Circulation," 192.
28. Ibid.
29. Calhoun, "Class Consciousness."
30. Brenner, Peck and Theodore, "Variegated Neoliberalization."
31. Brenner et al., *State/Space*, 216.
32. Comaroff and Comaroff, "Millennial Capitalism," 320.
33. Or more particularly, nation-state to global economy. See, e.g., Sassen, *Losing Control?*
34. Comaroff and Comaroff, "Millennial Capitalism," 322.
35. Ibid., 323; see also Appadurai, "Patriotism and Its Futures."
36. Comaroff and Comaroff, "Millennial Capitalism," 327.
37. Ibid., 328.
38. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed* and Calhoun, *Nationalism*.
39. In Calhoun's words, "structural factors, from the growth of state power to the globalization of capitalism, may create conditions that nationalist discourse is used to grasp. But use of the discourse of nationalism is partially autonomous from these specific instances and contributing factors, and links otherwise disparate phenomena in significant ways" (*Nationalism*, 21).
40. Taylor, *Reconciling the Solitudes,* 130.
41. See Reich, *Supercapitalism*. That this book is not substantively different from his *Work of Nations* in terms of his view of the relationship between capitalism and democracy suggests that the events of the last fifteen years have not contributed to stronger citizen rights.
42. Taylor, *Sources of the Self.*

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