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**From Mundane to Remarkable Consumption:
The Transformation of Bottled Water**

– Master Thesis –

Handed in by: Alina Sofonova, Petya Valcheva

Supervisor: Jon Bertilsson

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ABSTRACT

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Authors: Alina Sofonova, Petya Valcheva

Advisor: Jon Bertilsson

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Thesis purpose: The purpose of the study is to investigate how the consumption of bulk commodities has transformed from mundane to remarkable and to reveal how people, events, meanings and ideas from the past have affected this change in consumers' attitude. The paper aims to understand how mundane products have become a center of consumer interest and provide theoretical explanation of the phenomenon. The study focuses on bottled water as a viable example of such change and pursues gaining insight into how the transition develops, who the main actors involved in this process are and how similar transition might be catalyzed for other product categories associated with mundane consumption.

Methodology: The research takes interpretive epistemology and constructionist ontology as philosophical stance. Qualitative research is chosen in accordance with the aim to study consumer behavior and interpret people's ideas and actions, and a longitudinal design is used to track the transformation of interest. The particular qualitative methods employed are: historiography, as it allows tracking of events and behavior in time; comparative case study, since it allows revealing similar patterns in companies' practices in triggering changes in consumer behavior; and netnography, which gives an opportunity to gain inside view on consumers' attitudes and thoughts about bottled water. The data collection is comprised of gathering and selecting documents and consumer interactions relevant to the study. Data analysis strategies such as hermeneutics, semiotics and literary criticism are then used to interpret and link the collected data to the research purpose and answer the research question.

Theoretical perspective: The study relates the research question to Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) since the paradigm offers an integral view on consumption in its cultural context and explores consumer behavior in relation to society and social values and meanings. An important part of CCT is cultural branding, which helps to understand how a brand acquires special place in consumer culture. It is complemented by the concept of consumer-brand relationships that reveals the different stages and ways consumers perceive brands, the types of relationships and the parties involved. Connected to this is also the theory on

involvement that provides insights into the depth of consumers' attachment to brands and what consumer behavior corresponds to the different levels of involvement. Since the research aims at tracking the change from mundane to remarkable consumption, theory on low-involvement commodities and high-involvement practices like brand communities and rituals is reviewed in order to reveal the situation before and after an interest in a brand has been fostered. Finally, the concepts of cultural capital, taste and connoisseurship are discussed to understand how people distinguish their consumption behavior among mass-production and "decommoditize" some products by raising the symbolic value of brands over the materialistic one.

Empirical data: The research is based on the collection and interpretation of relevant documents that can be classified into two groups: primary sources (original documents: ads, videos, magazine pictures) and secondary sources (produced by people who were not eyewitnesses of the event: articles, books, internet publications), that are then used in a historical and case study analysis. This data is complemented by empirical material gathered in online communities in the form of consumers' interactions around the consumption object.

Conclusion: Based on historiographic research of documents, case study of two particular bottled water companies and netnographic study of consumer communities, six mechanisms that transform consumption from mundane to remarkable are discovered - mythification, extension of brand functions, endorsement, etiquettization, reflection and cultivation. They are summarized in a model to visually present how they are employed by companies, influencers and consumers to successfully change a product into a highly involving, symbolic cultural artifact, and influenced by trends, technology and socio-cultural tensions. The study contributes to the existing theory on a number of levels: to cultural branding by showing how it can be used for low-involvement trivial products to be turned into cultural icons, to brand involvement by providing an alternative way how engagement can be increased and sacralization triggered, and to bottled water literature by taking a different, neutral stance and further developing ideas like Wilk's (2006) of the product as cultural commodity. The paper practically contributes to marketing and branding by developing a universal model that can be employed by other bulk commodities as well and that can guide marketers' strategies in order to build strong culturally relevant brands with iconic characteristics and highly engaging properties.

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1. Introduction

In this chapter we introduce our area of interest – bulk commodities consumption and marketing, arguing that there is need for more research in the field. We formulate our research question as studying the transformation of consumption of bulk commodities, and more specifically bottled water, from mundane to remarkable, being interested in how this change occurs, what factors drive it and who participates in it. The chapter continues with a literature review on the topics relevant to our question – Consumer Culture Theory, cultural branding, brand relationships, involvement and its change from low to high, connoisseurship and taste, the example of coffee and a short overview of what has been written on bottled water so far. We conclude the section by stating our research purpose - how people, events, meanings and ideas have provoked a consumption transformation, and by discussing the theoretical and practical contributions our study will make in order for researchers and society to gain understanding of the phenomenon and for bulk commodity companies to better execute their marketing.

1.1. Background

We all get passionate about certain products, whether it is a car, a mobile phone, cosmetics, or simply the coffee we get from the café around the corner. They bring us such value and compelling experience that we make them an inseparable part of our lives. Words like “love”, “partner”, “best friend” are used to indicate our strong feelings about those products and our readiness to impersonate and form a relationship with them. It is no wonder then that companies are making great efforts to attain such status for their brands and there are a few examples of products that have already successfully captured and managed to retain consumers’ affection – iPhone, Harley Davidson, Coca Cola, Starbucks. Those products receive not only people’s attention but they are also the subject of a lot of marketing research that attempts to find out what it is that makes such goods stand out in the crowd and become consumption icons (Holt, 2004; Thompson and Arsel, 2004; Schembri, 2008; Cova and Pace, 2006; Wilk, 2006; Fournier, 1998; Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001). However, most of these articles address commodities that are highly involving and durable, not purchased every day. Consumers approach buying such products carefully because they will have them in their lives for a long time or because those products carry powerful expressive meanings and people need to be sure they are “born for each other”. On the other hand, goods purchased on a daily basis, like bulk commodities, have been generally underresearched since they are usually perceived as mundane, not being able to evoke strong consumer interest.

Traditionally, bulk commodities like bottled water, sugar, salt and rice belong to fast-moving consumer goods – products that are sold quickly and at a relatively low cost, and have been characterized by low level of consumer involvement (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). Their nature makes it hard for companies to reach out and create emotional bonds between the product and its consumer and firms mainly concentrate their efforts on point-of-purchase marketing (using packages, layouts and special displays, locations, in-store promotions and special price offers) to attract attention with the hope that their products will be at least more visible than the competition’s.

Consumers do not perceive such products as worth their attention and affection. They do not possess the necessary symbolic value that serves customers to express themselves and to resource their identity projects (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). Bulk commodities are generally considered to be routine and necessary goods for everyday use and not special and exiting. Moreover, those goods do not require much time for purchase decision-making (Kassarjian and Kassarjian, 1979) and the choice of product and brand is associated with low level of risk (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985), which creates low involvement.

However, the changes in society and culture and growing consumer demand for more symbolic resources and goods that will better differentiate people and structure their life projects have opened space for more identity brands (Holt, 2004). The development of media and the emergence of the digital environment have created new possibilities to increase the involvement of customers in their mundane consumption and have provided corporations with new channels and new tools to reach customers and create loyalty even for such ordinary products like coffee and bottled water which are already successfully using these new opportunities. For example, Tchibo coffee have their own Facebook page with more than 100 000 and Perrier water - with 70 000 fans, they can directly communicate with. Other commodities like sugar and salt are not that active on the Internet yet or are just starting to engage their customers into more close relationships.

Consumers have subsequently changed their perception of bulk commodities and begun using them as identification tools and means for community participation in the pursuit of sense of belonging. The social groups on the Internet have turned some of the mundane products into iconic goods (Holt, 2004) with rituals (Rook, 1985; McCracken, 1986) around their consumption as well as means of identification for the groups. Consumers do not buy a product simply to satisfy the need to consume anymore but in a quest for the positive experience connected to the brand.

The different bulk commodities are at various stages of “sacralization” (Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry, 1989). Coffee’s consumption, for example, has already been turned into remarkable with brand communities, rituals and symbolic associations attributed to the different products in the category and a significant amount of research exploring the subject, and more specifically the case of Starbucks (Thompson and Arsel, 2004). Other commodities like sugar, salt and oil and just beginning to receive attention from consumers and the change has not yet occurred entirely. Researchers have not studied those products and there is very little information on what is happening with their consumption from a theoretical perspective. Bottled water, on the other hand, has already passed through the transformation from mundane to remarkable and there is evidence of the more and more important role it is playing in consumer culture reflected in its consumption groups and brand communities, ritualistic activities and connoisseurship (Wilk, 2006; Hawkins, 2009; Plotkin, 2004; Gleick, 2004). It has already been recognized as a form of cultural consumption (Wilk, 2006) that is used as an expressive resource, being constantly present in consumers’ lives (Hawkins, 2009).

1.2. Research question

Having discovered all the above, we have become interested in investigating how bulk commodities consumption has turned from mundane to remarkable – how and why this transformation occurs, who is

involved in it and who influences it, how consumer interest is ignited and developed. We have decided to focus our research on the consumption of bottled water because we believe that such transformation has already happened but the process has not yet been properly studied. We aim at discovering patterns and tools that have been used for the establishment of bottled water as an exceptional product and generalizing them in a model so they can be utilized from the other bulk commodity categories such as salt and sugar that are still considered low involvement goods.

1.3. Literature review

Consumer behavior has been the focus of numerous marketing studies that aim at explaining consumption phenomena and understanding what drives people in their choice of brand and their engagement to it. Various theories have been invented to look at its particularities from different perspectives. One of them is the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) paradigm, which offers a view on brands and products in their socio-cultural context (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Consumer culture is a system of commercial objects and meanings that people use to make sense of the world around them and to determine their place in society (Kozinetz, 2001). The brands and products have an important role in this system since they provide the materials for consumers' identity projects (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). The brand, perceived by the customer to be an enhanced identifiable product or service that has unique values which specifically match their needs (Chernatony and McDonald, 2003) is also recognized to carry specific meanings that correlate to the cultural values of the time and that can be used as resources for identity building and structuring society (McCracken, 1986).

The paradigm offers a view on consumer practices and a way to explain how consumers that are deeply interested in a particular brand act. CCT stresses on the experiential, aesthetic, and ritualistic nature of consumer behavior (Arnould and Thompson, 2005) that result in different acts. People become interested in the experience they get from consuming a brand and subsequently create rituals to convey the importance of their connection with the brand (Rook, 1985; McCracken, 1986) and communities that use those rituals and together with shared activities and values provide a sense of belonging to the consumers and a "place" where they can express themselves and relate to like-minded people (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Thompson and Arsel 2004; Cova and Pace, 2006; Pires, Stanton, and Rita 2006). The consumer wants to participate more actively in the product and brand construction process, too, and practices like co-creation emerge to answer this desire (O'Hern and Rindfleisch, 2008; Muniz and Schau, 2011). CCT also discusses how the media affects consumer behavior and how people make sense of the messages and meanings delivered to them (McCracken, 1986; Mick and Buhl, 1992).

A major topic in the sphere of CCT is cultural branding. The concept is developed by Holt (2004), who suggests that this is the way a brand can become powerful enough to evoke commitment and interest. According to him, brands should follow the socio-historical patterns and provide relevant meanings and identity resources to consumers. Their equity lies in the cultural and identity value they are able to offer. If their essence is based on cultural symbols and they use "identity myths", brands can transform into "iconic" and receive special place in consumer culture. The "identity myth", described by Holt (2004), is a reference to an imaginary or marginal place that carries the potential to solve the current tensions in society

and give consumers new life direction. Those myths are reflected in the brand, which becomes their material embodiment and connects to them through its visible attributes like package, label, name, etc. Thus, the brand is able to provide symbolic instruments for consumers to create a new identity, one that better fits their lives. Holt (2004) gives an example of a mundane beverage, Snapple, which was turned into an iconic brand by applying the principles of cultural branding. It started as just another small family business but soon its founders saw the potential and created the myth of the “anti-corporate amateur” to answer the growing tensions and anxiety about the overpowering capitalist businesses. It did not only weave certain symbolic meanings into the product, but also connected the brand to culturally relevant “celebrities” that gave additional weight to its image and united consumers in the Snapple community which provided a space for sharing beliefs and aspirations. The product became an expression of how people thought about the world and themselves. As soon as the myth was removed, the brand “withered” and died.

The above example serves to illustrate that not only the brand’s efforts are important for its success in engaging people, but also how consumers relate to the product and how they perceive it. Thus, in order to be able to successfully track consumers’ attitudes towards brands and any transformations that occur in these attitudes, it is important to study the concept of consumer-brand relationships. Brands are often personified (Davies and Chun, 2003; Fournier, 1998) and treated as partners. Subsequently, consumer-brand relations closely mimic those between people and carry the same attributes – interdependence between the partners, contribution from both sides and benefits for both sides (Fournier, 1998). Relationships are not static and develop over time, influenced by the partners themselves and other external factors (Fournier, 1998; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). They do not only go through different stages, but also have different intensity, that classifies them as voluntary versus imposed, positive versus negative, intense versus superficial, enduring versus short-term, public versus private, formal versus informal, and symmetric versus asymmetric (Fournier, 1998). Furthermore, relationships are influenced by third parties like the close circle of family and friends, the communities consumers are part of and opinion leaders and lead users (Belk, 1988; Ekström, 2010; von Hippel, 1986; Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001). Last but not least, the person’s taste and preferences play an important part in choosing their “partner” for a meaningful consumer-brand relationship and turning a mundane activity as shopping of an ordinary product like bottled water into a highly emotional event that is driven by attachment and devotion.

Over decades researches have developed numerous concepts such as involvement, commitment, loyalty and engagement, which, apart from relationship theories, explain consumers’ stable and continuing preferences and choices toward specific products and brands (Havitz and Mannell, 2005). These constructs reflect the personal relevance or importance of a product category to the buyer and, therefore, they significantly affect consumers’ cognitive and behavioral responses, including memory, attention, processing, search, adoption, and opinion leadership (Higie and Feick, 1989; Laaksonen, 1994 cited in Coulter, Price and Feick, 2003) Two-side participation in value creation of a brand leads to greater customer satisfaction that results in repeated purchases, word-of mouth recommendation, profit, increased market share and return on investment (Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric and Ilic, 2011).

The concept of involvement has received the biggest attention among researchers during the last decades. It has been linked to various consumer behaviors and used to segment products into low- and high-involvement classes which can then be targeted with different promotional strategies (Michaelidou and

Dibb, 2008). Laurent and Kapferer's (1985) assigned different levels of involvement to different product categories and indexed the goods accordingly. Zaichkowsky (1985) produced another important piece of work in which she developed a semantic differential scale in order to measure the construct. Those efforts resulted in better understanding of consumers' attitude towards different product categories and development of different approaches to their promotion. However, those studies also led to considering products with low indexes as trivial and uninvolved in terms of relevance to the consumers and their purchase decision-making. It was generally accepted that commodities could not provide higher involvement than their category would suggest and, consequently, in order for a marketing strategy to be effective, it needed to concentrate on in-store promotion (McWilliam, 1997).

There has been a considerable change in attitude towards the concept of involvement during the last years. Bloch (2009) points that numerous external and internal stimuli such as product assets or facilitation of social interaction around brands may influence the level of consumer interest to specific product; thus, involvement is defined as a dynamic phenomenon that can be increased over time. He studied conditions that might change customers' attitude towards four product categories (cars, photography, jazz, fashion) that differed in terms of their costs, target audience and tangibility among online enthusiast groups. The main findings of his research were that enduring involvement emerges due to socialization and influences relevant to each product class (by parents, peers, colleagues) and can be increased by product design, tractability (product accessories, applications that stimulate different experiences), switching costs, disposable variables (referring to lower risk of using) and consumer role demand. Coulter, Price and Feick (2003) studied the development of brand involvement and commitment with cosmetics among women in Central Europe as those economies underwent a transition to capitalism and argued that both life theme and projects, combined with external circumstances such as political and cultural discourses, cultural intermediaries (media and press), and social influences, collectively influence product involvement. According to Celsi, Rose, and Leigh (1993), who studied the motivations of skydivers for seeking high-risk activities, the initial drivers for product trial include mass-media impact that glorifies risk-taking experiences, interpersonal influence (curiosity, shared experience with friends) and reliance on technological evolution. The reasons to continue include self-improvement and the creation of a new self-identity.

Gathering of enthusiasts around a consumption object and forming social communities that share a passion for a product is another efficient approach to increase brand involvement (Bloch, 2009). The global use of internet has enabled people to get together in groups, regardless of time and location, where they "actively seek and exchange information about prices, quality, manufacturers, retailers, company ethics, company history, product history, and other consumption-related characteristics" (Kozinetz, 1999; 253). In brand-centered subcultures consumers search for activities and interpersonal relationships that give a meaning to their life (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995). They share common beliefs and values, use specific jargons and participate in symbolic rituals in order to acquire the symbolic brand meaning for the construction of self-identity and collective social identity (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995). In our era of collaborative consumption, people do not express themselves through specific clothes or food any more, they state who they are by the communities they join (Brokaw, 2011). Traditionally, studies on brand communities have been focused on high-involvement products such as motorcycles, cars, and dresses that can provide higher value to customers in terms of their symbolic meaning and personal relevance to buyer (Cova and Pace,

2006). The topic has been complemented by Cova and Pace (2006) by providing insight on consumer behavior towards mass-marketed convenience products like Nutella within such communities. Their study confirms that the existence of brand communities has direct impact on the development of commitment to the brand. However, they emphasize the importance of consumer experiences in value co-creation of brand meaning and do not really help understand how consumers become increasingly connected and involved with a product category or a particular brand.

An attempt to examine how profane can be turned to sacred has been made by Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989). The authors point out that everything can be potentially sacralized by catalyzing experience of consumers thought rituals, pilgrimage, quintessence, gift-giving, collecting, inheritance and external sanction. Individuals transfer sacred status to objects that are value-expressive and this process gives a purpose to their lives. This intimate relationship between consumers and the consumed object creates enduring involvement and loyalty.

The development of commitment to low-involvement products has also received some attention in the literature. Coupland (2005) argues that behavioral patterns, supported by external situational forces such as price reduction, coupons, and advertising, play a significant role in initiating and sustaining product involvement. Therefore, marketers' task is to induce a brand trial and then encourage repeated purchases until they evolve to unconscious habit. McWilliam (1997) states that point-of-purchase stimuli work best in order to increase product involvement. He suggests focusing on the efficient distribution, merchandizing and point-of-purchase promotional strategies. In light of this, it can be assumed that consumers can become involved with products and continually purchase them without acknowledging loyalty. Therefore, previous findings on involvement can be used only as a component of the research how mundane commodities can be turned into remarkable brands, since they provide a useful insight what kind of external and internal stimuli provoke consumers' interest in the product, but they do not explain entirely the phenomenon how the transformation from trivial to exceptional occurs.

Last but not least, a possible explanation of turning mundane into remarkable are connoisseurship practices that refer to the social phenomenon of consumers, concerned with the taste of products (coffee, chocolate, water), placing aesthetic preferences in the center of their interest. They know highly nuanced facts about specific products and even develop own jargon reflecting symbolic 'meanings' obscure to others (Manzo, 2010). Whereas the traditional sociological perspective views the terms 'taste' and 'connoisseurship' as social structural phenomena (Bourdieu, 1984), the research focus now is on individual's experiences: consumers use their aesthetic preferences as opposition to the consumption of mass-produced goods. Knowledge of the details hidden to other consumers allows them to earn desirable social positions and distinguish themselves from others (Holt, 1998). That can be achieved by conspicuous consumption as well (Veblen, 1998), which also requires profound knowledge in the subtleties in goods' signifying power. Veblen (1998) argues that people consume certain products in a conspicuous "wasteful" way to express their wealth and high social status. Those practices are often imitated by the lower classes that aspire to attain a higher place in the social hierarchy, a process known as the "trickle-down theory" (Simmel, 1957).

When considering bulk commodities, coffee is a good example of a product that has gone through the transformation from mundane to remarkable consumption. It is of particular value to this research to review the literature on coffee since it is a bulk commodity like bottled water and has received a fair amount of

academic interest. Ekström (2010) argues that coffee has gone through two transformations. While it had been considered as a luxurious, “pleasure giving” product in the outset of its consumption, it lost this status and became “habitually consumed and routinely purchased daily necessity”. Ekström (2010) claims that the change in marketing efforts – from reminding advertising, price manipulation and special offers and product sampling (techniques used for low-involvement consumer goods), to tactics that increased the involvement in the product like making it an “experiential product” and creating special varieties, appliances and accessories, is what made coffee’s consumption emblematic. The author suggests that in order to avoid a product to become a subject of basic or obligatory consumption, it is up to marketers to turn it into a stimulating, bringing sign value to the customer good. Thompson and Arsel (2004) also recognize the major role of companies in triggering the transformation. They claim that the appearance of Starbucks shaped the market as we know it today and initiated the emergence of coffee as an iconic symbol. According to them, the corporation creates a “servicescape” that facilitates particular experiences and social interactions. However, the authors also recognize the role of the consumer in making the product a special commodity. “Brandscapes” – “consumers’ active constructions of personal meanings and lifestyle orientations from the symbolic resources provided by an array of brands” (Sherry, 1998, cited in Thompson and Arsel, 2004), are created to help incorporate the brand in the consumers’ lives and give it a special place in consumer culture. It is the constant exchange of perceptions and meaning interpretations and use between companies and consumers that create value and shape the attitude towards the product (Thompson, Rindfleisch and Arsel, 2006).

Another example of a bulk commodity that has undergone a transformation from mundane to remarkable consumption, and which we are interested in studying, is bottled water. Being a product that people need in order to survive, water is at the same time easily accessible at a very low price (Wilk, 2006; Chura, 2003). This has made the marketing of bottled water and igniting consumer interest challenging for the industry. It has mainly relied on people’s fear of the unknown and risky in the face of the municipal tap water systems and has positioned bottled water as a pure product, coming straight from nature (Plotkin, 2004; Wilk, 2006). This opposition, however, together with the characteristics of water, has provoked anti-consumption campaigns and resistance that have so far been the main focus of most of the research in the field (Gleick, 2004; Hawkins, 2009; Wilk, 2006). At the same time, bottled water has transcended into a product associated with status, taste and healthy lifestyle (Hawkins, 2009; Wilk, 2006). Its consumption has been ever increasing and has resulted in ritualistic practices (Plotkin, 2004) and its use as a symbolic resource carrying cultural meanings for identity building (Wilk, 2006) – all signs of high-involvement brand-consumer relationships.

Unlike coffee, bottled water has been under-researched. With most of the studies focused on the controversial nature of bottled water and the opposition it ignites in consumers, only briefly acknowledging that there is a positive change of attitude and increased interest towards the product, research still fails to show what motivates people to change their consumption habits and embrace a mundane commodity like water for their life projects and social positioning and how such a commodity achieves a significant place in culture.

The above literature review has provided us with concepts that could serve as mechanisms for a transformation of bottled water from mundane to remarkable. Practices like cultural branding, building personal relationships with brands, creating high involvement, ritualization and connoisseurship build

powerful, symbolically rich brands and evoke strong bond between them and consumers. The example of coffee shows how these mechanisms work in practice. However, no historiography analysis has been performed to study the transformation from the beginning and no attempt has been made to connect the different mechanisms and see how they relate to each other and who influences and participates in them. We intend to historically trace the bottled water market development, and together with studying the attitudes that have formed in consumers' minds towards the commodity, to build a holistic picture of its transformation, placing and linking the different engagement mechanisms and parties that take part in them in their historical, social and cultural context.

1.4. Research purpose and contribution

Taking into account the gap in the literature that we have identified above concerning the transformation of consumers' perception of bottled water and the transition of its consumption from mundane to remarkable, the purpose of our study is to investigate and reveal how people, events, meanings and ideas from the past have provoked this change. We aim to understand how a bulk commodity like bottled water has become a center of consumers' interest and provide theoretical explanation of the phenomenon. We pursue gaining insight into how such change develops, who the main actors involved in this process are and how similar transition might be catalyzed for other product categories associated with mundane consumption.

This paper aims to theoretically and practically contribute to the subject by providing insights on how to turn commodities into exceptional brands that trigger remarkable consumption, based on the example of bottled water which has already successfully moved from the low- to high-involvement class and has acquired a special place in consumer culture. Gaining a better understanding of how and why mundane products evolve into remarkable brands will benefit researchers and practitioners in a wide range of areas including promotional strategies, advertising effectiveness, relationship building, repeated purchasing, as well as implementing various better suited price strategies and increasing profit and return on investment. By revealing why consumers develop interest in a product category like bottled water, we believe that we will facilitate researchers and marketers in developing strategies to stimulate similar transitions for other classes of goods.

For a lot of bulk commodity companies the purchase decision is still mainly influenced by in-store stimuli and they do not use any other communication tools to advertise their products. Moreover, customers do not yet consider bulk commodities as efficient tools for self-expression. Although research on low-involvement products and particularly consumers' relationships with these products has received some attention, brand managers have gotten relatively little guidance regarding the development of consumers' enthusiasm towards such goods. On the contrary, they have been advised to turn repeated purchasing of bulk commodities into unconscious habit supported by external stimuli such as price reduction, advertising etc., without encouraging consumers to think about the nature of this unrecognized loyalty. Therefore, we are convinced that practitioners that deal with products and brands that have been primary defined as 'difficult' and 'low-involving' could benefit from examples of the ones that have already managed to engage their customers.

Furthermore, we believe that this research will theoretically contribute to the topic by providing insights on why and how consumers develop interest in products they have previously considered rather boring and uninvolved. By combining such theoretical concepts as cultural branding, relationship structuring, involvement and cultivation of self, our study aims at creating an integral picture of the current practices people employ in their consumption and sense-making of the world around them and how culture and society influence and get influenced by those. Since we, as consumers, are involved in this transition, it will help us better understand how a change in our preferences has deeper repercussions on the way we perceive things and on the way culture develops and changes. The research will illuminate conditions and factors that influence changes in product perception and determine participants involved in the process (consumers, companies, third parties). We believe that a theoretical explanation of the phenomenon how mundane consumption becomes remarkable has long-term implications for consumer spending and behavior in relation to new product categories and brands and we will try to show this in the following research.

2. Theory

In this section we aim to relate our research question to Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) since the paradigm offers an integral view on consumption in its cultural context and explores consumer behavior in relation to society and social values and meanings. An important part of CCT is cultural branding, which helps us understand how a brand acquires special place in consumer culture. It is complemented by the concept of consumer-brand relationships that reveals the different stages and ways consumers perceive brands, the types of relationships and the parties involved. Connected to this is also the theory on involvement that provides insights into the depth of consumers' attachment to brands and what consumer behavior corresponds to the different levels of involvement. Since we aim at tracking the change from mundane to remarkable consumption, we review theory on low-involvement commodities and high-involvement practices like brand communities and rituals, that reveal the situation before and after an interest in a brand has been fostered. Finally, we discuss the concepts of cultural capital, taste and connoisseurship that significantly influence consumers' perception of brands.

2.1. Consumer Culture Theory

The Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) paradigm is a widely used theory departure stance that enables the investigation of consumer behavior in its context. It has four major topics as defined by Arnould and Thompson (2005) – consumer identity projects, marketplace cultures, socio-historical patterning of consumption and mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretive strategies. Since they encompass the topics we are interested in researching – cultural branding, relationships with brands, and involvement and its different expressions, all put in the context of culture and society, we will focus on reviewing CCT and its subtopics and will further discuss the ones relevant for our research in the following subchapters.

Consumer behavior has always been of interest to marketers. In order to be successful in their businesses, companies need to understand how their customers think and behave and what drives their purchasing decisions. Two major paradigms have emerged to address these needs, looking at consumer behavior from different angles – the Behavioral Decision theory (BDT) and the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). While BDT adopts a positivistic approach and uses quantitative methods to test theory on which economic and psychological factors affect consumers, CCT takes an interpretive stance and qualitatively studies the social and anthropological dimensions of consumerism (Ekström, 2010). We have decided to adopt the Consumer Culture Theory paradigm for our research since the problem we address is not well studied yet and we aim at building theory that will better explain the phenomena in its cultural context.

CCT focuses on consumer culture and its influence on consumption. Consumer culture is defined by Kozinets (2001:68) as the “interconnected system of commercially produced images, texts, and objects that particular groups use – through the construction of overlapping and even conflicting practices, identities, and meanings – to make collective sense of their environments and to orient their members' experiences and lives”. The marketed product does not serve only to satisfy needs but is also infused with symbolic value and meanings that are used by consumers to identify their personal and social positions (Arnould and

Thompson, 2005). Brands and the consumption of certain goods structure the way people's place in the social system is recognized (Holt, 2002). Product's perception is based on its participation in consumer culture and the value does not reside in the product itself anymore but is shifted to the brand and the symbolic resources it offers to consumers (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). It is the meanings and identity building potential of goods that consumers consider when making a purchase and not just using the substance (Douglas and Isherwood, 1980). Brands play such an important part in people's lives that consumers often become attached to them and develop strong feelings (Thompson and Arsel, 2004). These relationships can go even further into a symbiotic bond of co-creation of brand meaning (Mohammed et al., 2002 cited in Stuart and Jones, 2004) where brands deliver symbolic resources to their customers and the consumers themselves transfer their values and cultural views to the brand in order to better adapt it to their needs (McCracken, 1986). CCT also discusses the ritualistic dimensions of consumption – consumers invent specific practices in order to transfer the meaning of the product to their lives and use ritual artifacts that communicate the symbolic meanings and ritual script to structure the use of products (Rook, 1985). Another important topic in CCT that is connected to the ritualistic dimensions of consumer behavior is subcultures and brand communities. They unite consumers with the same interests and identity aspirations. Being part of a brand community means sharing common traditions, rituals, consciousness and moral responsibility (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). In this way a person becomes integrated in a social group and develops a sense of belonging, a phenomenon that will be further addressed in a following part.

2.2. Cultural branding

Studying the concept of cultural branding is a way to acquire understanding how mundane commodities are transferred into iconic brands that supply more efficient symbolic instruments for consumers to create a new identity which better fits their lives. It also avails what issues we need to pay attention to when we explore this transition. Thus, we intend to use it as a part of the foundation we base our study on.

Cultural branding (Holt, 2004) is a part of Consumer Culture Theory. It draws on cultural symbols and meanings created in society, using them to infuse brands with resources that consumers can use for their identity construction. Holt suggests this new brand-building paradigm, which is in contrast to the previously existing branding practices “mind-share”, emotional and viral branding. The “mind-share” theory, conceptualized by Reis and Trout (2000 cited in Holt, 2004) and used as the base in traditional marketing, suggests that brand positioning should focus on one product benefit targeted at specific consumer segment and is based on abstract associations. It is considered by Holt (2004) as too simplified and unable to respond to changing consumer values. Moreover, “mind-share” branding is controlled mainly by the organizations and lacks personal experiences in the creation of brand meaning. The extension of mind sharing branding, emotional branding, conceptualized by Gobe (2001), departs from abstract associations by stressing on brand personality and creating close connection with customers. Since it is related to the emotional experience of consumption, it has to be aligned with consumers' explicitly expressed desires at specific times and appeal to their sensory senses. Viral branding takes the ideas of emotional branding and focusing on consumers to a new level by suggesting that consumers have the strongest influence on the creation of brands. The Internet provides the channels for customers to communicate and adapt brand meanings to their needs and the brand control shifts from corporations to

trendsetters. In order to be successful in viral branding, the brand needs to be interactive and sharable, to participate in consumer discussions and continuously capture attention.

In contrast to these theories, cultural branding assumes that the social interactions needed for successful brand strategies are based on culture and cultural norms. Brands are built in specific socio-cultural frameworks and their characteristics need to be taken into account. To explain how this is done, Holt (2004) introduces the concept of identity brands which are used for self-expression by transferring meanings from product to consumer. They need to address consumer desires and anxieties shared by vast cultural groups in order to successfully manage shifts in consumption and historical changes in societies that usually cause the appearance of those anxieties. A more powerful tool than one-feature positioning or emotional appealing which accomplishes that is the identity myth. It is used to create new purposes in consumers' lives that resolve the anxiety. The myth has to fit the historical context and provide a way to adapt to society shifts. Consumers connect their real life to the myth through consuming a part of it - the product, in a ritualistic consumption that refers to the symbolic meaningful activities repeated by customers over period of time in a defined sequence (Rook, 1985).

Myths are expressed in the brand attributes such as package, name and label and through marketing communications like advertising and slogans. They are based on a populist world – an imaginary or marginal world that differs from everyday life and reality, and that is driven by beliefs rather than pragmatic interests. It provides an answer to consumers' anxieties and makes them desire to bring those values in their lives. The brand's strength depends on how well a brand uses the identity myth and to what extent consumers identify with it. By incorporating myths into their strategy, brands become symbols, the material expression of the myth and form strong emotional connections with consumers. As a result brands become so meaningful for consumers and form such deep connection with culture (Holt, 2003) that they gain iconic status.

In order to create iconic brands by using identity myths, companies need to pass through a number of stages. First, they have to understand the national set of values that are often built around ideas of personal success and accomplishments. Second, companies have to understand the contradiction between existing ideology and consumer's real life and use this tension for myth construction. Third, they have to build populist worlds that connect people's experience to those myths through consumption.

There are three participants defined by Holt (2004) that are involved in the creation of iconic brands. The "insiders" are parts of the myth world that authenticate the brand and legitimate its icon status. The "followers" do not belong to populist worlds but are loyal to the brand and completely share its values. The "feeders" are passive recipients of the brand's values, using them to construct own identities.

2.3. Relationships with brands

It is important to not only study brand creation, but also how brands are perceived and acted upon by customers. That is achieved by examining an important aspect of consumer behavior - the relationship a person forms with a brand. Viewed through the Consumer Culture Theory paradigm, brand relationships are considered to operate in a cultural and social context and to provide and organize meanings in people's

lives (Fournier, 1998). We have decided to explore the relationship issues in the present research, because we believe that determining the type of relationship with a product/brand and its nature will help us better understand the change occurring in consumers' attitude towards the product/brand and will give us insights into how such changes occur and what influences them.

Davies and Chun (2003) argue that in order to be able to form a relationship with a brand, it should be treated as a person. Once it is personalized, consumers can relate to it and develop different types of intimacy, in the same way as how they relate to other people (Fournier, 1998). Brands can be treated as friends and relied upon. Consumers can decide to become even more deeply "involved with the brand" (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985) and take the relationship to the next level, where they invest more emotions, efforts and time and form a greater attachment. The further the relationship goes, the more dependent the customers are on the product and the more they tie their life projects to the chosen brand. Products can then be defined as low- and high-involvement depending on the degree of involvement of consumers – a topic that will be further discussed in the following subchapter.

Davies and Chun (2003) see marketing as the process that facilitates relationship formation into long-term commitments. It aims at creating loyalty and trustworthiness with the brand so that consumers will view it as their lifelong partner. If the customer is unwilling or hesitant to go into a relationship, a brand can ease the process by seducing him/her – enticing the consumer into an exchange and smoothing the resistance (Deighton and Grayson, 1995).

A relationship formed between a consumer and a brand should have all the characteristics of a person-to-person bond – it should involve reciprocal exchange, a purpose, be multidimensional and process-like (Fournier, 1998). Furthermore, according to Fournier (1998), the brand is set in a psychological, socio-cultural and relational context. It assists people in their identity-building activities by helping them resolve existential tensions, providing materials for life projects and roles, and participating actively in their daily lives. The brand also serves as a means of connection to other people and creation of social networks, as well as a base for the creation of other relationships that will set the individual's place in society.

Since relationships are a sequence of continuous exchange (Fournier, 1998), they evolve and change shape and intensity. They pass through different stages – initiation, growth, maintenance, deterioration, dissolution (Levinger, 1983 cited in Fournier, 1998) that are determined by the duration of the relationship, the frequency of exchange, the exclusivity and the source of initiation (Fournier, 1998). Fournier (1998) classifies seven dimensions of relationships – voluntary versus imposed, positive versus negative, intense versus superficial, enduring versus short-term, public versus private, formal versus informal, and symmetric versus asymmetric, that are used to characterize the exchanges in order to arrange them in different categories that closely follow the ones existent between humans. Furthermore, a brand-consumer relationship is built on different levels of love and passion, connection, interdependence between the partners, commitment and intimacy and partner quality - the degree to which a person can count on the brand to carry out what it promises (Fournier, 1998). All these dimensions serve to determine the relationship stability and strength (Fournier, 1998; Nobre, Becker and Brito, 2010).

As all human relationships, the brand-consumer one is also influenced by other people. As Belk (1988:147) claims, "relationships with objects are never two-way (person-thing), but always three-way (person-thing-

person)”, where other people influence the way a product/brand is perceived and treated. Such third parties like the intimate circle of family and friends, peers and colleagues (Ekström, 2010) are potent factors in steering preferences and involvement with brands. Lead users (von Hippel, 1986) are another powerful source that shapes needs and preferences and develops strong relationships with brands, later copied by the rest of the consumers. Last but not least, the most passionate and intimate relationships with brands are formed in the various forms of social communities and more specifically online and offline brand communities (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001; Cova and Pace, 2006; Kozinetz 1999; Schouten and McAlexander 1995; Thompson and Arsel 2004; Pires, Stanton, and Rita 2006).

2.4. Product involvement

Product involvement is one of the strongest concepts in marketing literature that illustrates a degree of mental connection between a consumer and a stimulus object, such as a product, brand, advertisement, task, or idea (Michaelidou, 2008). That is why we became interested of how involvement could be developed in relation to such trivial and unexciting commodity as bottled water. We examined the literature on low and high-involvement products and then complemented the topic by integrating other concepts in the theory that could help to change the product involvement from low to high.

The concept of involvement became a center of interest during the late 70s-80s after Houston and Rothschild (1978) published their milestone work suggesting subdivision of involvement into three types: situational, enduring, and response involvement. Situational involvement is viewed as a temporary concern with a stimulus object, usually a purchase decision of particular product. Once decision is made, an individual becomes uninvolved with this “situation”. Enduring involvement is a long-term phenomenon that represents consumer attachment with a specific product (perceived as self-related and relevant to personal interests, needs or values) through constant information search and brand commitment. Response involvement is characterized by consumers’ behavior reflecting information search and decision making processes, for examples sensitivity to price stimuli and attention to details (Leavitt et al., 1981). Later studies suggested the reclassification of involvement into cognitive-based, individual-stated and response-based (Laaksonen (1994). However, this subdivision is to a large extent a reflection of the first one, made by Houston and Rothschild (1978).

Over the past decades the concept of involvement has been linked to different consumer behaviors and marketing constructs and researched in multiple contexts such as advertising involvement (Zaichkowsky, 1985), product involvement (Bloch, 1981; Brisoux and Chéron, 1990; Michaelidou and Dibb, 2006), personal involvement (Zaichkowsky, 1985), purchasing involvement (Slama and Tashchian, 1985), brand involvement (Kirmani et al., 1999) task involvement (Tyebjee, 1979), etc.

While researchers agree on the importance of a distinction between low- and high-involvement products/brands/advertising and implementing different marketing strategies for each, the measurement of involvement has not been commonly unified due to its complexity. It evolves from a one-dimension construct (Hupfer and Gardner, 1971; Traylor and Joseph, 1984; Vaughn, 1980; Zaichkowsky, 1985) to a multidimensional one (Bloch, 1981; Rothschild, 1984; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). Two important pieces of work have been produced as an attempt to measure involvement at the same time: Zaichkowsky’s study

(1985) that has developed a semantic differential scale to measure involvement; and Laurent and Kapferer's article (1985) in which the authors suggest five dimensions of involvement - pleasure, importance, sign, risk importance and risk probability.

According to Michaelidou (2008) the biggest efforts have been made to measure enduring product involvement. Common dimensions that can be derived from these studies include importance (Jensen et al., 1989; Lastovicka and Gardner, 1979), pleasure (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985) interest (Van Trijp et al., 1995; Michaelidou and Dibb, 2006), sign value or self expression (Higie and Feick, 1988; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985; Roger and Schneider, 1993), and perceived risk (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). These studies have been used for distinguishing low- and high-involvement products more precisely and separating them in distinctive groups that can be targeted with different promotion strategies.

2.4.1. Low involvement

Measurement approaches affirm that consumers are traditionally less involved with some product categories than others in terms of their meaning, perceived risk, personal relevance to the buyer etc. For example, instant coffee, breakfast cereals, mouthwashes, and oil tend to evoke lower levels of involvement than products like dresses, televisions, washing machines and automobiles (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Low involvement commodities are easily accessible, relatively inexpensive, replaceable and too mundane to be viewed by customers as part of their extended selves (Belk, 1988). These products belong mostly to fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), that are characterized by frequent purchase and quick and unconscious buying decision making (McWilliam, 1997). Consumer attitude towards them lacks some important facets of relationships such as love, self-connectedness, commitment and intimacy (Fournier, 1998).

Many researchers approach low-involvement products skeptically - they agree that there are "difficult" product categories in terms of branding and promotion, requiring a different marketing approach. McWilliams (1997) argues that the difference in involvement occurs on the level of product category rather than on the brand level. Thus, he suggests concentrating marketing efforts on the efficient distribution, merchandizing and point-of-purchase promotional strategies. Coupland (2005) points that challenges in the branding of those products start from physical attributes of the brands, since some oils, grains, and baking goods are repackaged by consumers and placed into familiar bottles and jars as a habit or they are hidden on the shelves immediately after purchase. Those practices lead to brands becoming a part of the household system, 'invisible' to customers. 'Invisibility' strategies, defined by Coupland (2005) include: (1) crypsis (the brand becomes a part of the household environment), (2) mimicry (the brand looks similar to other brands), and (3) schooling (the brand is lost in the amount of similar brands). The purchasing of such brands is considered an unconscious habit, repeated automatically. Despite the fact that customers see or think very little about those specific brands, they generate inadvertent or unrecognized loyalties to brands which are continually purchased without acknowledging this loyalty. Ekström (2010) complements previous studies about the habitual nature of consumers' relationship with low-involvement products by pointing that people mostly rely on external stimuli and learned behavioral patterns in their purchasing. Thus, marketing efforts such as reminder advertising, price inductions and product trial should be carried

out by companies in order to strengthen those patterns. He also proposes a number of relevant promotional tools like point-of-purchase incentives, guerilla marketing and intensive word-of mouth. In summary, authors agree that establishing of brand commitment to these brands occurs on behavioral level and the task of brand managers is to support this unconscious attachment.

2.4.2. Developing high involvement: through the lenses of ritualistic consumption, sacralization of objects, brand communities and usage of brands as an identification tool.

In contrast to the findings presented above, Bloch (2009) argues that involvement is a dynamic phenomenon that cannot be treated as high versus low. The same product class can be both low- and high-involving for different customers at the same time, depending on various factors such as social influence (parents, peers), product design and stage of relationship with a product (study, experimentation, reward). He suggests that consumers can forge high involvement with a product category over a period of time but the process has not received much research attention so far. Therefore, we aim to link the concept of involvement to other well-known concepts such as ritualistic consumption (Rook, 1985), sacralization (Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry 1989), usage of brands as identification tools (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998), and brand communities (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Kozinetz, 1999; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995) and to use this theory for an explanation how brand involvement evolves from low to high. We intend to provide examples which indicate that it is possible to increase involvement by engineering additional stimuli into the brand, i.e. enhancing symbolic meaning, strengthening customer-brand relationships and co-creating brand-meaning through consumers' experiences, therefore, these concepts can be used for our investigation how a trivial commodity like bottled water evolves into a remarkable consumption object.

Another important theme is the consideration of brands as providing symbolic meanings for the construction of self-identity and collective social identity (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). Through possession of certain objects consumers build their desired image that helps them categorize themselves in society (Belk, 1988). Individuals' choices are driven by the symbolical significance of specific products encoded in hidden meanings that are revealed during consumption. However, the same product can provide various meanings for different people. The symbolic meaning of a product can be delivered to customers through the lived (real) and mediated experiences formed by mass-media communications. The first alternative is much more powerful in terms of customer involvement because it refers to direct relationship with a brand (purchasing, usage). Nonetheless, mediated experience has greater potential in terms of providing symbolic resources to customers. The mediated process includes a two-way rotation of meanings between consumers and brands: symbols are derived from culture and engineered into a brand and then they are received and interpreted by customers (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). Brands need to capture the symbolic significance of a product for customers and facilitate the involvement with the product through personal and social rituals related to product consumption.

Ritualistic consumption refers to highly involving behavior that expresses symbolic meanings and tends to be repeated over time (Rook, 1985). It provides information about the consumer's actual mental and physical behavior and conveys the individual's acceptance of social status, sexual identity, etc. Everyday

rituals highlight many aspects of consumption such as choosing, buying and using specific products. Learning how consumers ritualize their life and make the consumption of a specific product a part of these rituals can provide an understanding how to transfer symbolic meaning to 'trivial' uninvolved products and turn them into ritual artifacts.

Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989) reveal processes by which mundane consumption becomes and remains sacralized - turned into something significant, powerful and self-transcending. Sacredness is tightly connected to our research question of how mundane objects become remarkable, therefore, we intend to use this theory for explaining how bottled water consumption has become symbolically rich and meaningful. The authors point that the concept of sacralization is very close to the involvement construct, because consumers, highly involved with their products, e.g. car owners, often treat their object of possession as sacred. Other examples of sacred things include art objects, collections, sport or movie stars, flags, etc. However, sacredness, in contrast to involvement, is not restricted to the material object. According to the authors, times, places, intangible things (family recipes, secrets, songs, etc.), people, and experiences may also be considered as extraordinary if they involve more than just means to satisfying everyday needs. Nevertheless, not all consumers who express high product involvement regard their consumption as sacred. Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989) provide an example of people who watch TV every day - they are highly involved but they do not treat TV as a sacred object. Therefore, authors define processes by which consumption can become not only high-involving, but also sacred. They consider sacredness as an investment process during which objects catalyze consumer experiences through rituals, pilgrimage, quintessence, gift-giving, collecting and inheritance. As a result, consumption becomes a vehicle of transcendent experience and gives a purpose to peoples' life.

A presence of common rituals, ceremonies, and exegesis, based on consumption as an attempt to resist everyday routine, can also be found in numerous studies of brand communities (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001; Kozinetz, 1999; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995; Thompson and Arsel, 2004; Pires, Stanton, and Rita, 2006). In brand communities a consumption object appears to be the kernel of consumer interaction and a main socializing tool (Shembri, 2009). Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) extract the main characteristics of brand communities: 1) consciousness of kind (the members of a community realize that they belong to a social group based on a branded, mass produced commodity for a reason); 2) presence of traditions and rituals and shared brand stories; 3) sense of moral responsibility (sense of duty to the community as a whole), assisting in the use of the brand, etc. All these characteristics mentioned above demand a lot of time and efforts from consumers, thus indicating that members become highly involved with a brand.

The emergence of brand communities has led to consumers not perceiving brands as intellectual property anymore, but rather as common property (Cova and Pace, 2006). They do not only receive symbolic messages and interpret them according to their personal life experiences (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998) but they also directly participate in the creation of brand meaning through sharing brand stories, rituals etc. This phenomenon is defined as brand co-creation - a merging of the company's branding strategy and the personalized unique experience of customers who use the company's product. John Czepiel (1990) is one of the first researchers to assume that customers' satisfaction is related to their direct participation in the creation of a brand. Therefore, companies have to change their focus from the product to a value-creating system (Normann and Ramirez, 1993). Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2000, 2004) support this idea and suggest a new term - "value co-creation", according to which the most demanding consumers become active

participants in the creation of brand value. Since the 2000s companies have recognized the concept of co-creation as high-involvement and beneficial phenomenon that provides their customers with an opportunity to create their own experiences, for example, by designing products such as T-shirts (Threadless), personal playlists, shoes and even furniture.

2.5. Cultural Capital and Cultivation

Another theoretical construct connected to consumption choices that is important to be studied for the purpose of our research refers to the sociological concept of “cultural capital”. It helps us understand how people try to distinguish their consumption behavior among mass-production and “decommoditize” some products by raising the symbolic value of brands over the materialistic one.

Cultural capital is defined as non-materialistic assets, owned by individuals, such as education, intellect, aesthetic preferences, taste, etc., first presented in the book of Pierre Bourdieu, “Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste” (1978). Cultural capital includes: 1) cultivated dispositions (linguistic facility, self-presentation, aesthetic sense), 2) material objects that require special knowledge to understand them, and 3) institutionalized recognition, such as national ranking system (Bourdieu, 1986). The author argues that everyday consumer preferences in food, interior decor, clothing, popular culture, hobbies and sport can be correlated with different kinds of capital, owned by individuals: economic, cultural, social (family, network) and symbolic (status, position, awards). Furthermore, he believes that the social origin, rather than economic capital, defines taste and aesthetic preferences because consumption habits, gained in early age, remain stable over time.

Other researchers argue that the intensive production of mass-culture goods has blurred the boundaries between the consumption patterns of the different social classes and it is very difficult to infer status from consumption objects today; therefore, Bourdieu’s theory is not applicable for modern capitalistic societies (Baudrillard, 1981; Lyotard, 1984 and Jameson, 1991 cited in Holt, 1998). Taking into account those arguments, Holt (1998) has reframed Bourdieu’s study from high to mass culture and has focused on consumption practices instead of on consumption objects. He conducted new research in order to find out if the social position influences consumption choices in the United States. The main findings suggest that despite the fact that representatives of low and high cultural capital (*LCCs* and *HCCs*) often consume the same mass produced goods and services, their taste and consumption practices differ significantly in terms of motives for purchasing, making sense of meanings of products and their usage for self-expression. Basing his ideas on empirical data, Holt (1998:8) defines six dimension of taste that vary significantly between LCC and HCC classes: “material versus formal aesthetics, referential versus critical appreciation, materialism versus idealism, local versus cosmopolitan taste, consumer subjectivity as local identity versus individuality, and leisure as self actualization versus autotelic sociality”. While LCCs value material features such as quality and durability of goods, HCCs take those for granted; they care more about the symbolic meaning of products and the potential to use goods for construction of self-identity. While LLCs consider some products exotic, HCCs approach their purchasing as usual practice. Consumers also tend to interpret things differently according to their CC: LCCs see things directly, while HCCs refer to implicitly expressed meanings.

In materialistic societies, where monetary assets are the key indicator of status, consumers with prevalence of economical over cultural capital tend to express themselves through materialistic consumption (latest models of goods, newest collection of dresses, etc.). People with lower income strive to gain the same status by copying those consumption patterns – a phenomenon that is known as the “trickle-down theory” (Simmel, 1954). HCCs try to distinguish themselves from these tendencies and create self-identity through authenticity and connoisseurship. Authenticity refers to the avoidance of consumption of mass-produced goods and the search for unique personal experiences (ignoring supermarkets, popular holiday destinations, etc). Connoisseurship is another HCC practice to ‘decommoditize’ mass-culture products and employs “highly nuanced often idiosyncratic approach to understand, evaluate, and appreciate consumption objects” (Holt, 1998:15). The second practice is especially interesting for our research because it deals with turning mass products into exceptional ones (instead of avoiding them) and we investigate it further in the following section.

2.6. Taste, aesthetic consumption and connoisseurship

Representatives of HCC often try to distinguish themselves from mass production and develop own sets of tastes that highlight the importance of symbolical over material values. They construct distinctive tastes in categories, emphasizing and illuminating product features ignored by other customers or combining different products according to personal preferences. As a result, individuals can express personal style even in situations when consumption of mass products becomes unavoidable. Such practices of turning commodities into personal and meaningful objects are to a large extent correlated to the topic of our research how mundane becomes remarkable; therefore our theoretical framework includes extended discussion of such concepts as taste, aesthetics and connoisseurship below.

In social science, taste is understood as a system of dispositions (lasting, acquired schemes of perception, thought and action mostly in the form of innate features), cultivated by individuals in response to objective conditions in a broad range of cultural products (Kwon, 2007). In contrast to the literal definition of taste as the physical ability to distinguish sweet, sour, salty, and bitter substances, sociologists refer to the common acceptance of attractiveness. Nowadays, with the market providing countless alternatives for consumers’ choices, taste plays a crucial role in the individual’s decision making. Because taste is a subjective attitude to objective things, consumers’ everyday preferences, trivial and significant, reflect their standards and values and, therefore, serve as a part of their extended-self (Kwon, 2007). According to Gronow (1997), who studied taste formation, consumers’ preferences are formed both in early age and during life through exposure to visual images and cultural symbols. John (1999 cited in Kwon, 2007) suggests that childhood consumer experiences have a direct impact on later consumption. Taste can be explicit only in interaction with others because the symbolic meaning of the preferred objects arises in comparison with alternative choices (Stone, 1962 cited in Kwon, 2007). Bourdieu (1984) notes that the individual’s cultivated dispositions are always observable. Constant public performance of those dispositions, for example consumption of objects that are symbolically different for others, defines social space and status position of individuals (Holt, 1998).

In the seventeenth century the widely debated concept of taste evolved into the term of aesthetics, “the study of the feelings, concepts, and judgements arising from our appreciation of the arts or of the wider class of objects considered moving, or beautiful, or sublime” (Blackburn, 1994 cited in Chartes, 2006:236). In consumer research, not only art works, but also ordinary goods are connected with aesthetic consumption (e.g. elegant package and original design). While some products have aesthetic functions as their primary purpose (music, food), others may include only some aesthetic features - the shape of the bottle, etc., (Venkatesh and Meamber, 2008).

The literature on the topic recognizes two main approaches to aesthetics: judgment-oriented and experience-oriented (Fenner 2003). The judgment-oriented approach refers to aesthetics as a meaningful method of judgment about objects (Hume, 1757 and Kant, 1790 cited in Fenner, 2003). The experience-oriented approach, widely used nowadays, places the observer’s individual experience through his or her senses in the center of attention as the basis for such judgment (Fenner, 2003). In particular, Venkatesh and Meamber (2008) claim that there is no such thing as universal taste or universal aesthetic preferences, but that those significantly vary according to life experiences and serve to foster the constitution of consumers’ identities. In light of this, the traditional idea of aesthetics, appreciating an object for its own sake (Kant’s term of ‘desinterest’, 1791), has little response in modern marketing. In contrast, the symbolic meaning of an aesthetic object serves as a part of the consumer’s extended self and is often used as a marketing tool to stimulate responses in others (Chartes, 2006). Featherstone (1991) talks about the “aestheticisation of everyday life”, evident in advertising, products borrowing ideas from high art, wide reproduction of famous paintings and blurred boundaries between “life” and “art”.

Consumers who own high culture capital and are able to recognize the primary symbolic meaning of the objects try to distinguish themselves from this mass production through connoisseurship. Connoisseurship (from French *connoistre* - “to be acquainted with”) refers to an individual’s great knowledge and ability to judge art or other objects in matters of taste (Grosvenor, 2012). The term involves a highly nuanced approach to understanding, evaluating, and appreciating a consumption object, recognizing its symbolic meaning and distinguishing it among other alternatives (Holt, 1998). According to Holt (1998) people with high culture capital tend to develop connoisseur interest for at least one product category. It can be home interior, clothes, tableware, etc. Connoisseurship practices allows consumers to develop distinctive tastes and express themselves through this detailed knowledge even for an object that is itself mass-produced and widely consumed. Originally considered in Bourdieu’s framework of influence of social position on aesthetic preferences, the concept of connoisseurship has gained new meaning with the appearance of collaborative communities. Current consumers’ acquisition of taste is based on their experience, shared with other members of the community, rather than on social origin; therefore, knowledge of a consumption object can be developed and accumulated over time, not only obtained in early childhood (Manzo, 2010). In our opinion, such connoisseurship practices of consumers gathering in groups, developing special jargon, meanings and judgment of taste, can play an important role in awakening interest to new product categories. Modern connoisseurs, equipped by nuanced knowledge of a product and unlimited technological possibilities, can become early initiators of the process of turning mundane to remarkable from the consumers’ side, since companies themselves appear to be hardly able to create enthusiasm about a bulk commodity like bottled water.

3. Method

In this chapter we explain our choice of methodology. We argue that our theoretical framework and the nature of our research question have shaped our selection of interpretive epistemology and constructionist ontology as our research philosophy. A logical choice of research strategy, following these decisions and our aim to study consumer behavior, is qualitative research since it collects data in form of words to interpret people's ideas and actions, and a longitudinal design to track the transformation we are interested in. The qualitative methods we have chosen to use are historiography as it allows the time tracking of events and behavior, case study that will enable us to study and compare companies' practices in triggering changes in consumer behavior, and netnography – giving us the opportunity to gain inside view on consumers' attitudes and thoughts about bottled water. We proceed with a detailed description how we have collected our data and present our data analysis strategies, hermeneutics, semiotics and literary criticism, used to interpret and link the collected data to our research purpose and answer the research question. We conclude the chapter with a description of the restrictions the methods we have chosen to employ pose.

3.1. Research philosophy

Methodology is a crucial part of every research since it shapes how the study will be carried out, how data will be collected and interpreted. It is important to first determine the philosophical stance from which the study departs because it facilitates further decisions on the methodology and clarifies which research design to adopt (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2008). As we have already discussed above, we have chosen the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) paradigm as our theoretical departure, since we are interested in discovering how a transformation in consumption occurs in social and cultural context. CCT aims at “combining grounded observations and recordings of market-mediated and mediating practices with social theorization” (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011:382) in order to study consumer behavior connected to the environment in which it occurs. The paradigm also assumes that consumers are empowered reflexive subjects that choose between market opportunities and reflect critically over their decisions and the market messages (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011). Taking into account these considerations, we have decided to adopt interpretivism as our epistemological position. Our choice is a result not only of the fact that this philosophical stance has been the one predominantly used in CCT research (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011) but we have also decided to use it for our study because of the nature of interpretivism itself – a philosophy that seeks to reveal and understand what meaning people put in social actions and to interpret how these meanings construct reality (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Askegaard and Linnet, 2011). The interpretive position strives to go deeper than its opposing philosophy – positivism, and not only explain human behavior and the forces that drive it, but also understand it and study the actions that it is comprised of (Bryman and Bell, 2011). We adopt a phenomenological focus within interpretivism since it is used to reveal how people make sense of the world and how they apply and invent meanings during their consumption practices (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Askegaard and Linnet, 2011). Our aim matches the goal of phenomenology to gain access to people's perceptions and interpret their social world and actions in the way they perceive them.

Our choice of interpretive epistemology corresponds to our decision to adopt a constructionist ontological position. Constructionism treats social phenomena and their meanings as constantly being produced and revised by social interactions (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Reality is not external and objective, but socially constructed and given meaning by people with their thoughts and feelings (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2008). The constructionist ontological stance focuses on how people make sense of the world and how they share their experiences with others (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2008). We pursue the same goal in our research – to discover how the meanings attached to a product and the social interactions it fosters are perceived by people and how these perceptions change and evoke different attitude and behavior. We believe that by using constructionism and interpretivism we will be able to methodologically develop the subject we are interested in and deliver profound scientific explanation of the transition from mundane to remarkable consumption of bulk commodities.

3.2. Research strategy

In order to be able to decide upon a research strategy, we need to take into consideration our research question and the object of study it brings up. We are interested in tracing the shift from mundane to remarkable consumption of bottled water which defines our object of study as the transformation in consumer behaviour. Thus, the data we need to collect should be in the form of words and behaviour because that is how consumers usually express their attitude towards a product and the meanings they derive from and invest in it (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011; Arnould and Thompson, 2005).

The research strategy that corresponds to these considerations is qualitative research. This type of research is used to collect data mainly in form of words (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2008) about behavior, experiences and/or feelings of respondents in their own terms and context (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). Qualitative research uses predominantly inductive approach to study the ways people create and interpret their social reality, departing from empirical material to construct new theories about the researched phenomena (Bryman and Bell, 2011). What makes it our logical choice is not only its nature that corresponds best to the purpose and object of our research, but also its association with interpretive epistemology and constructionist ontology, which we have chosen as our philosophical departure (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Furthermore, it relates to our theoretical point of view since Consumer Culture Theory uses predominantly qualitative methods, like ethnography, observation, netnography, interviews, document studies etc, to study consumer behavior and practices (Schembri, 2008; Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001; Cova and Pace, 2006; Fournier, 1998; Karababa and Ger, 2011).

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), there are a number of considerations connected to using qualitative research that we try to follow in order to get rich and trustworthy data. First, it needs to look at the social world it is researching through the eyes of its inhabitants, i.e. interpret what is observed from the point of view of the people studied. We aim to accomplish this by exploring bottled water consumption through consumer-narrated stories and shared experience. Second, it should be very detailed and descriptive and we try to fulfill this in order to be able to place the behavior observed in its socio-cultural context so that we can get a holistic picture of the research problem. Third, there is an emphasis on the process as social life cannot be addressed as a static picture. Our research object, the transformation of consumption, is also a

process itself and we try to trace it in time as it undergoes changes. Fourth, qualitative research should be flexible and not very structured and we follow this rule since we do not want to limit our perspective and thus miss on important aspects of the problem. Last but not least, the concepts and theory used should be grounded in the data and we accomplish this by reviewing our theoretical chapter after the data collection in order to be sure that we have a relevant theoretical framework.

Another important issue of the research strategy is the choice of research design because it “provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman and Bell, 2011:40) and specifies the procedures needed for collecting the necessary data (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). We have decided to adopt longitudinal design, since it is used to map changes (Bryman and Bell, 2011), providing series of pictures to show those changes and an in-depth view of the research problem (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). It fits our research purpose to accurately track the transformation of bottled water consumption from mundane to remarkable and examine the changes in consumer behavior that characterize this change (Bryman and Bell, 2011). However, this type of design can be problematic in terms of representativeness since some of the respondents observed may not be present during the whole time period we are interested in studying (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). We attempt to alleviate this issue by using a careful triangulation of methods that will provide more than one source of data and an opportunity to cross-check the information we get from different sources and achieve higher credibility of our results and findings (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

3.3. Research method

The purpose of our study to fill the gap in literature concerning the transformation of bottled water and to provide a theoretical explanation how mundane commodities become remarkable to a large extent determines the choice of our research method. First of all, we pursue a pure kind of research that refers to theoretical development of knowledge for its own sake, rather than making an attempt to solve specific problem (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2008); second, we aim to understand how events, behavior and meanings from the past have provoked a change in consumer’s attitude to bottled water; third, we seek not only to find out an explanation how things have developed, but also to understand the phenomenon in order to implement this knowledge in the future. All of the above considerations, supported by arguments concerning the philosophical position of research we have presented above, have led us to the decision to adopt qualitative methods that will allow us to examine events in the past and we believe that the best method to do so is historical research or historiography.

Historiography enables obtaining data from records and accounts that reflects events and behavior that have happened in the past not only by recovering those events, but rather by searching for a theoretical explanation of the phenomenon in interest (Jonhson and Christen, 2003). By tying separate facts about bottled water consumption together and applying critical view on these facts from different perspectives (sociological, psychological), historical research provides us with opportunity for broader and more precise understanding of people’s behavior than it would be possible in a time-frame limited to the present. We would not be able to make viable conclusions about the particular phenomenon we are interested in without understanding the circumstances under which consumer behavior has developed and the participants that have been involved in this change (Berg, 2007).

The choice of one particular method is not, however, a ready recipe for understanding such complex and nuanced phenomenon as the change in consumer's behavior over time. Therefore, in order to find a reliable answer to our research question, we have decided to apply a historiography as a base for our research and complement it by case study and netnography.

We believe that case study, the detailed and intensive analysis of particular cases, is a good method to study phenomena that include longitudinal elements (Bryman and Bell, 2007). By focusing on several successful brands and recovering the changes they have underwent over time, we aim to discover some patterns that have led to companies' success in the bottled water industry. We intend to apply intensive approach of collecting data on the subject, produced by companies (advertising, publication), media (articles, programs) and consumers (blogs, communities) to gain a holistic view on how and why the transformation of bottled water has occurred in each case: what was similar and what was different. Those patterns, in turn, will allow us to make conclusions about factors that have influenced the change in consumers' attitude towards bottled water. The nature of case study does not contradict with the nature of the historical method: both of them seek to answer the questions "how" and "why" (Berg, 2007) and both of them are generally used to produce theory by "investigating events and fact" on the subject (Berg, 2007:285).

We have also chosen netnography to conduct a part of our research because we recognize the important role Internet and social networks play in people's lives and consumption experiences (Kozinets, 1999; Deighton and Kornfeld, 2009; Cova and Pace, 2006; Muniz and Shau, 2011) and the necessity to use those online communities as a data source for market research in order to better understand consumer's behavior (Kozinets, 2002; Pires, Stanton, Rita, 2006). The appearance of Web 2.0 has enabled people to not only put behind geographical restrictions, but also to gather around common interests and communicate about their consumption experiences (Kozinets, 1999; Yan, 2011), which facilitates our finding communities that are interested in bottled water products and gathering rich data about their practices. It is also particularly viable means of gathering information since it allows a continuous access to a certain online environment with informants that can provide rigorous information on social phenomena (Kozinets, 2002) and, in addition, those communities have a history of posts that enable us to trace the transformation of consumers' perceptions and patterns of consumption we are interested in, perfectly aligning with the longitudinal design we have adopted.

Having discussed our choice of methodology, we will present the advantages and limitations of each of three chosen methods in the following parts.

3.3.1. Historical method in consumer research

We have chosen to apply a historical method to our study, because in consumer research it is used for investigating volatile consumer phenomena such as sudden changes in people's behavior, increasing interest to new product or category, unpredictable response to company marketing efforts, etc. (Smith and Lux, 1993). Shifts in peoples' preferences towards products and brands may occur very quickly and dramatically, or consumers may resist changes provided by the government or companies. Historiography provides the opportunity to understand the patterns of such changes in the context of place, situation and time in which the change occurs, from a theoretical point of view (Fullerton, 1987).

The main stages of our research include the ones generally used by the historical method: developing approach and framework for data collection, data gathering, evaluation of validity and reliability of the data, interpretation and conclusions (SAGE Encyclopedia, n.d.) The main restriction of our research is that we cannot generate raw data, since this process occurs only through the records of what has already happened (Brian and Monieson, 1990). We intend to base our historical analysis on the stages, suggested by Smith and Lux (1993): 1) investigation (identifying facts that show the change), (2) synthesis (bringing all the facts together in a reasonable and coherent narrative), and (3) interpretation (producing findings on research question and making sense of them).

The choice of the historical research method offers significant advantages for our study because, first of all, it allows investigating events that have already occurred and, second, it is inexpensive and, thus, accessible to students (Smith and Lux, 1993). The main disadvantages of the method refer to internal and external validity (Berg, 2007). External limitations are mainly concerned with trustworthiness of source material (authorship, reputation of the source, relevance to research framework). Internal criticism, on the other hand, is concerned with subjective interpretation of documents, since the researchers decode and interpret data according to their own understanding of the phenomena, through the lenses of their education, cultural environment and time and thus, the primary meaning of the document can be distorted.

In order to create a holistic picture of bottled water consumption we researched the literature on the culture and history of the bottled water industry. We critically examined and evaluated documents, consciously eliminating those without clear authorship and giving an advantage to scientific articles, books and respected newspaper publications. After revealing one or another cause for the transformation of bottled water consumption we always related the issue to primarily sources in order to check its reliability. The documents we used include books, scientific articles, online newspaper publications, vintage and modern ads, videos, magazine pictures that contain images of bottled water, and comments in brand communities. These data sources can be classified into two groups: primary sources (original documents related to the direct outcome of an event or experience: ads, videos, magazine pictures) and secondary sources (produced by people who were not eyewitnesses of the event: articles, books, internet publications). Due to inability to find sufficient number of old ads and pictures in local libraries and archives we focused our search on online sources. We selectively chose intermediaries with clear authorship that contained good-quality images of ads scanned from original sources and also date and place of their publication. Taking into account the great search opportunities, provided by Internet, we were overloaded by the high number of available documents. Therefore, we have taken two important steps in our research in order to alleviate this issue. First of all, we consciously eliminate all documents that contain the same symbolical message, e.g. different prints of the same advertising campaign, and that do not contribute further to our research, and, second, we focus on case study of two big bottled water brands. Including the case study method in our research provides additional advantages and limitations to our method which are discussed further in our method chapter below.

3.3.2. Case study

In order to trace the changes in the development of remarkable brands and identify motives that made them special, we have decided to focus our research on two particular brands by building their full genealogy from their emergence until today. This following section aims to explain how case study is employed to achieve that and how it contributes to our research and what kind of limitation we have to consider when applying this method.

According to Stake (1995), case study is concerned with the complex and specific nature of the case in question. It involves the study of specific organization, event, location or person (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Yin (1994) defined three appropriate designs for case studies: exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. The explanatory technique is widely used for conducting causal studies, and therefore, we believe it is the most suitable to our research (Berg, 2007). The case study method does not necessarily refer to the investigation of one single case - multiple case study design, also known as collective case studies, cross-case studies, or comparative case studies, provides broader opportunities for making conclusions and generalizing results. Yin (1994) suggests a pattern-matching technique to examine plurality of influences. It allows comparing findings from each of the cases and developing theoretical reflection, based on the observation what is unique and what is common across cases (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Moreover, case study often includes longitudinal element facilitating researchers that are concerned how a situation changes over time (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Yin (1994) has named it longitudinal case study design. All these considerations serve to show that there is no universal design suitable for all research - each particular case should consider the appropriateness of each design for answering the research question and, thereby, the final solution can combine elements of various designs. Taking into account all the above, we have decided to employ longitudinal multiple case study design for our research. We intend to focus on several successful brands of bottled water and to try to discover similar patterns in changing peoples' attitude to this product category over time across the cases.

A recognized benefit of case study lies in its ability to "open the way for discoveries" (Berg, 2007:294). Despite this obvious scientific value, two critical points should be addressed: feasibility to use information beyond one particular case and subjective judgments of researcher. The main critical argument of case study from the positivists' side is that the method has weak external validity, meaning that the researcher is unable to generalize results derived from one single case (Yin, 2002). Therefore, Yin (2002) suggests using number of procedures before data collection (concerning choice of unit of analysis, link between data and research question, interpretation) that allow reaching acceptable degree of validity. Constructionists, in contrast, emphasize the advantage of case study to draw a broad picture of the researched phenomenon and argue that validity is of secondary importance (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2008). In contrast to Yin's ideas, Stake (2006) points out that the researcher should choose cases on the basis of their unique features and ability to generate rich data, rather than strive for representativeness. Concerning objectivity, any qualitative research is viewed as problematic, not only the case study method (Berg, 2007). Researchers have to articulate all procedures and thereby provide opportunity to replicate the study by other researchers if the findings are questionable (Berg, 2007).

In our analysis we focused on the case study of two bottled water brands: Perrier and Evian. These brands were chosen because of their rich history and sufficient available documents. Taking into account a number

of ads, commercials, and articles devoted to the brands (produced by media, customers and companies) we were able to build coherent story that explains a changing in peoples' attitude towards these bottled waters. At the moment Perrier and Evian have tens of thousand of fans in their brand communities, which indicates that these brands are already perceived as exceptional ones positively confirming that a transformation from mundane to remarkable has already occurred in consumer's mind. Being aware that an analysis of Perrier and Evian brands is not entirely representative of the whole bottled water industry, we used their genealogy as an illustration of the concepts developed on the basis of our historical research. By linking together motives discovered in Perrier and Evian documents to socio-cultural historical changes we have created an illustrative holistic picture of bottled water consumption.

3.3.3. Netnography

We have decided to complement the above mentioned two methods with netnography. Kozinets (2002:2) conceptualizes netnography as “a new qualitative research methodology that adapts ethnographic research techniques to the study of cultures and communities emerging through computer-mediated communications”. It is used to collect and analyze public online information in order to study consumer groups using the internet as their communication platform (Kozinets, 2002). Kozinets (2002:6) argues that it is important for the researcher to be able to distinguish the information as “primarily social or primarily informational, and...primarily on-topic or primarily off-topic” in order to be able to extract what is valuable to the research (the informational, on-topic). It also facilitates researchers if they classify the participants in online communities, with one possible categorization of “tourists” (with superficial interest and lacking social ties to the community), “minglers” (no deep interest but with strong ties), “devotees” (high interest but weak ties) and “insiders” (strong social and personal ties to the group), (Kozinets, 1999), that will provide research data with different quality and intensity.

Netnography as a method is considered to be less expensive, simpler and faster compared to the majority of other qualitative research methods, as well as less obtrusive and providing voluminous easily accessible data (Kozinets, 2002). However, it has some limitations – it focuses particularly on online communities and the data collected may not be suited for generalization for broader consumer population; it requests considerable interpretive skills on behalf of the researcher and does not provide good informant identification tools (Kozinets, 2002). The use of netnography for studying online communities has also arisen a debate on ethical considerations and more specifically on the issues of confidentiality, privacy, use of others' stories and materials, and informed consent (Eysenbach and Till, 2001; Kozinets, 2002). Kozinets (2002) proposes a protocol that should be employed in order to solve those issues and that we have tried to follow in our research – disclosing researcher's presence, assuring informants that their identity will not be revealed, gathering feedback on the question and attaining consent to use the information gathered during the study.

When executing the method, we followed the procedures for doing a netnographic research, suggested by Kozinets (2002). The first step was to find a community suitable for our research purpose. Since we had already selected two companies as our case study objects – Perrier and Evian, two of the most emblematic brands on the bottled water market, we looked for places where we could find a lot of consumer interaction

on topics connected to those products. We used key words like “Perrier/Evian community”, “I love Perrier/Evian”, “Perrier/Evian fans” etc. which we typed in search engines such as Google, Yahoo Search, and Bing. We also checked the biggest world social network, Facebook, where most of the companies have official or fan pages and groups. There were some scattered groups and fan forums with a limited number of members across the Internet but the biggest groups with most interaction were situated on Facebook. We used the criteria for choosing an online community, developed by Kozinets (2002), to pick the groups that best fitted our research purpose. For Perrier we found a Facebook group, “Perrier”, created by the company, that had almost 80 000 members (towards 22 April 2012) that had some opinion about and connection to the brand since they had voluntarily joined the community, regular posting (at least 2-3 discussions per week), rich descriptive data and good number of interactions between the members (around 5 member comments per discussion), which best suited our netnographic study. For Evian there were three main Facebook groups – “Evian Belgium”, “Evian Canada” and “Evian-Water” (informal international group) respectively with around 22 000, 21 000 and 3500 members each (towards 02 May 2012), neither of which perfectly suited our research aim in terms of number of postings, rich data and interactions between members, which led us to the decision to use data collected from all three of them to have a better view on consumers’ attitude towards the brand.

Having chosen the communities to study we got acquainted with them. Perrier’s community was created on 25 November 2009. Since it was a page initiated by the company, most of the discussions were triggered by remarks, questions and information shared by Perrier, which were then picked up by members who used them to express their attitude towards the brand. A few members were more active than the rest but in general there was a great variety in the people participating in the conversations, due to the large number of group members, allowing us to gain a wide view on consumer experience with Perrier. During the first months most of the posts and comments were in French with occasional complaints from English speaking members that they did not understand what was being said; then, in 2010, there started to appear posts both in French and English until, in the end of 2010 the posts switched entirely to English with rare comments in French.

Evian’s groups were newer. Two of them, “Evian Canada” and “Evian Belgium”, were initiated by the company - created almost at the same time in the end of 2011 (“Evian Belgium” – 11 December 2011, “Evian Canada” – 18 December 2011). The third community we studied, “Evian-Water”, is an informal group launched a year earlier than the official ones, on 26 January 2010, by brand enthusiasts. Since “Evian Belgium” and “Evian Canada” were locally created, in French-speaking countries, many posts were in French with some exceptions. “Evian-Water” consists of posts in English. The first two groups gave us some insights on our study question, but the last group was the most interesting one for our research, because despite its small size, it was characterized by an interactive atmosphere with members sharing opinions and initiating debates on their own. It seemed that they felt freer to express opinions there, because they did not just respond to the company’s initiatives by ‘liking’ or commenting company’s posts, but started discussions themselves. We focused on the similar patterns discovered in the behavior of the members of these three communities in order to generalize results and obtain trustworthy data.

3.4. Data collection

After having chosen the methods we use in our research, the next step is to describe how we collect the data, taking into consideration our research question and available resources (Devers and Frankel, 2000). Since our purpose is to reveal how a transformation in consumer behavior occurs and we have limited time and resources to accomplish this, we have decided to focus our data gathering primarily on online sources, since the Internet offers a easy access to vast amounts of information and documents, with a lot of offline data uploaded, and access to a large number of consumers, all of which require less time to reach, gather and process than offline sources (Bryman and Bell, 2011). We also have to take into consideration that the data collection method and the nature of the data depend on the purpose of the research, the context in which it is conducted and the sensitivity of the subject (Gibbs et al., 2007). We have chosen to use qualitative research strategy and thus we need data that has a qualitative nature with the purpose to produce evidence for the studied experience (Polkinghorne, 2005), being careful to stop the gathering process when data saturation has been reached, i.e. when “the data being collected has become repetitive and no new issues are emerging” (Gibbs et al., 2007:542). We intend to analyze the gathered evidence in order to produce a holistic description of the experience, illustrating our findings with excerpts from the data, in line with Polkinghorne’s (2005) view on qualitative research data collection.

Since we have decided to apply more than one method to collect the data, we believe that this triangulation allows us to better capture the contradictions and complexity of data (Prasad, 1993, cited in Bryman and Bell, 2011) than if we used only one method. Studying all aspects of the transformation of consumption we are interested in and gathering data from different sources will give us access to different levels of reality (Bryman and Bell, 2011) and to different possible explanations of the phenomenon.

We aim at gathering data that is “sufficiently rich to bring refinement and clarity to understanding an experience” (Polkinghorne, 2005:140). Our main data sources are documents connected to companies’ marketing, media coverage of events and consumer behavior, as well as words – accounts and conversations of consumers concerning bottled water and its consumption. Thus, we have carried out the following selection of data sources.

For the general overview of the object of our study, bottled water, we used search engines to find relevant articles and books that would help us better understand how the industry has emerged and become successful. We gathered texts that relate to water in mythology and religion and researched the main sources like Greek mythology, the Bible, the Coran and Hindu and Buddhist holy scripts. Next we collected articles that discussed the emergence of the bottled water industry and its development. We recognized two major books that were relevant to our topic – “Bottlemania: Big Business, Local Springs, and the Battle over America’s Drinking Water” (Royte, 2008) and “Fine Waters: A Connoisseur's Guide to the World's Most Distinctive Bottled Waters” (Mascha, 2006) that we used as main references, cross-checking the information gathered by the authors with our own research. There were also two blogs that contained information on bottled water from consumer’s perspective that we used and which were particularly valuable for tracing connoisseurship practices – www.finewaters.com, which is maintained by the author of one of the above mentioned books – Mascha, and www.waterconnoisseur.tumblr.com - written by Boris Khaykin, a passionate water connoisseur with education in hydrology.

Having gained an overview on the studied object and having chosen two companies as our case study subjects that we were to focus our research on (explained in the Case Study part above), we proceeded with gathering images of advertising and marketing strategies that would help us historically trace the marketing developments and consumer focus in the bottled water industry. We collected over 300 documents from the time period 1901-2011, mainly from websites that specialized in advertising archiving and creative blogs. Over 100 of them were bottled water ads. We decided to focus on 120 documents. 72 of those were ads, excluding the ones that repeated the same ideas since they would not contribute further to the research. Included in this number, we picked 29 Perrier ads that stretched in a time period of 1920-2010, collected from advertising achieves (Vintage Ad Browser, Coloribus, Advertolog, Ads of the World) and a blog (Creative Boys Club), as well as the official corporate website that has its own historical advertising gallery. These ads were then used to serve as a document foundation for the brand case study. In the description of Evian genealogy we used such documents as vintage and modern ads, official commercials, old Evian labels, pictures of Evian bottles from different years and pictures in magazines that contained an image of the brand. 17 selected ads (included in the 72 ads that we chose to study) dated from 1901 to 2012 were collected from three main sources: ads collecting sites (Vintage Ad Browser, Ad Classix, Ads of the World), ads trade sites (e-Bay, PrintFinders) and image storing sites (Flickr). 20 pictures that describe the evolution of Evian bottles and 11 pictures of vintage and modern Evian labels were retrieved from the official corporate Facebook groups “Evian-Belgium” and “Evian-Canada”. We have also included 3 commercials from the official Evian channel on YouTube and some other pictures related to the brand. We also collected 149 unofficial documents that contain images of Evian and Perrier, produced by media without the intervention of the brands. They mostly represent pictures of celebrities/politicians carrying a bottle of Evian/Perrier in their hands. Apart from that, we also examined a number of scientific and newspaper articles for the Evian and Perrier case studies. The full list of advertising documents with the images and descriptions of each can be found in Appendixes.

The next stage of the data collection was to gather consumer insights by using netnography. According to Kozinets (2002), when it comes to netnography, two important types of information are collected – the data that is copied directly from the communications of the community and the data that the researcher gathers based on his/her observations of the community, the interactions, members and meaning. Such data is easy to obtain and voluminous and the researcher needs to carefully consider which information he/she really needs, based on relevance to research question and resource limitations. We gathered 15 pages of consumer interactions from the “Perrier” Facebook community with more than 200 comments and 5 pages of consumer interaction from the “Evian” Facebook communities with 36 comments from “Evian-Water”, 14 comments from “Evian-Canada”, 9 comments from “Evian-Belgium”. We focused on informational, on-topic messages (Kozinets, 2002) and reduced the number of messages we used for analysis by classifying them into different categories (e.g. passion, rituals, disapproval) and leaving only the most informative and signifying ones.

Having collected the data described above, we classified and organized it in tables and documents and prepared it for the following analysis.

3.5. Data analysis: hermeneutics, semiotics, literary criticism

Once data is collected, we need to define the process through which we interpret it and gain knowledge. In order to conduct accurate and well-structured analysis we have taken the procedures suggested by Smith and Lux (1993) that include investigation, synthesis and interpretation as a basis for historical analysis, and then used as a last step reflective methodology that touches upon a number of different interpretive techniques (Alvesson, 2005). On the first stage our main critical task was to distinguish mere facts about specific products or brands from those leading to a causal explanation of the transformation of bottled water. According to Carr (1961), a fact cannot be defined as historical unless it contributes to the construction of causal explanation and the removal of one fact from the analysis breaks the coherent narrative. One historical fact can combine several mere facts and, therefore, all irrelevant facts should be removed from the analysis on this stage. During the synthesis stage we combined all the historical facts together in a coherent exposition that fits in one narrative. In order to reach trustworthiness we relied on diverse data sources and discussed deep cultural and contextual trigger causes for the transformation of peoples' attitude to bottled water and the actors' conscious and unconscious motives that facilitated the occurrence of this change (Smith and Lux, 1993). On the last stage we aimed to answer how causal narrative fits our research question. The reflective approach used here implies that the empirical data is already the result of an interpretation. Therefore, we analyzed documents critically, taking into account linguistic, social, political and theoretical elements that influenced authors' perspectives, and also included critical self-exploration (consideration of the same elements with respect to researcher) (Alvesson, 2005).

Throughout the analysis, we employed different interpretive stances such as hermeneutics, semiotics and literary criticism, that provided us with different levels of understanding of the phenomenon we are interested in. In order to make sense of what a particular document (any textual, visual, or audio information) might have meant at the time it was produced we referred to Arnold and Fischer's (1994) and Thompson's (1994, 1997) articles that are good examples of the use of hermeneutic philosophy in consumer research. According to Arnold and Fischer (1994:58), hermeneutics emphasizes that all understanding is linguistic and consumer experience is "filtered, encoded, and communicated in dialogue" through language and, consequently, it can be extracted from documents and interpreted by researchers. Hermeneutics, as a reflection method, stresses on the importance of understanding that both researcher and author participate in the interpretation process and their backgrounds and the cultural context should be taken into account (Karababa and Ger, 2011). As a result, "understanding occurs through a fusion of horizons, which is a dialectic between the pre-understandings of the research process, the interpretive framework and the sources of information" (Koch, 1995:835). The main theme in hermeneutic philosophy, the "Hermeneutic circle", is that meaning of a part can only be understood if it is related to the whole, and vice versa (Alvesson, 2005) Therefore, our interpretations of printed and digital materials and community discourse were accomplished in accordance with the hermeneutical circle of understanding: at the first stage we read the documents to gain a sense of the whole and then we looked for the implicit consumption meaning conveyed by the text. On the second stage we looked for patterns across different documents (Thompson, 1997).

The assumption that linguistics are crucial for understanding information is shared by other researchers that studied consumer phenomena with the help of language and sign interpretive approaches such as semiotics (Mick, 1986) and literary criticism (Stern, 1989) - philosophies that we also relied on. Semiotics, the

science of signs and sign-using behavior (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.), allowed us to interpret consumer's attitude to bottled water from a historical perspective using documents such as printed advertising, packaging, labels, logos etc (Bell, 2010). Derived from the Saussurean school of thought, semiotics philosophy states that the signs are a form of language and do not exist in isolation but are linked by certain laws, namely codes, into coherent narratives. Consequently, signs should not be interpreted separately, but as a part of the whole system (Mick, 1986). We considered this approach tightly related to our research since consumer behavior is deeply integrated in a system of signs. In particular, Douglas and Isherwood (1979) pointed that necessary function of consumption is to make sense for individuals' life rather than solely satisfy primary consumers' needs for food or clothes. Every time individuals read a magazine or visit the supermarket, they interact with signs and make sense of their experience (Bell, 2010). Therefore, most of our collected documents are advertising materials, since we adopted Sherry's (1985) idea that those are a cultural document that allow describing the world, serving as a rich source of symbols and metaphors. Taking into account all the above, the signs derived from our data were linked into coherent messages and interpreted through analysis of codes within the culture (Ogilvie and Mizerski, 2011).

Since we analyzed advertising, we referred to literary criticism as an additional way for understanding psychological relationships between author (company), reader (consumer) and text (advertising). Analysis of the literary aspects of advertising texts provided helpful insight into consumers' attitude towards bottled water because ads simultaneously reflect and influence peoples' behavior (Stern, 1989). Consumer culture ideology (values, lifestyle, and examples to follow), reflecting the perception of the reader, is encoded in messages and, therefore, ads serve not only as a source of information about products from company's perspective, but also contain historical themes that contribute to our causal explanation of bottled water transformation (Stern, 1989). Moreover, literary criticism assumes that the reader is an active participant in meaning creation, because people interpret messages according to their experience. Thereby, an advertising process represents a two-way rotation of meanings between consumers and company: "codes" are derived from culture and engineered in ads and then they are received and interpreted by customers (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). Our task was to identify and unlock these meanings by searching for literary patterns and recurrent themes in social and historical contexts and interpret them to build knowledge that fits our research purpose.

To conclude, throughout the analysis, we tried to fully understand what was being said in documents between lines and extract symbolic meanings likely to be significant to each participant. We paid increased attention to patterns and similarities in people's attitude towards bottled water repeating across our cases.

3.6. Restrictions

In this section we discuss the limitations and restrictions of the methodology, as a compilation of different methods we have chosen to apply. The main concern of our study refers to its low external validity. Due to inability to find sufficient empirical data in local libraries and archives we had to focus our research on online sources. As a result we had to rely on third party information concerning year of publication of some documents presented in our study. We had to check various sources and authors in order to ensure that the provided information is trustworthy.

Moreover, we realize that a case study of the Evian and Perrier brands may not be representative for the whole bottled water industry. First of all, they are both classified as mineral waters while there are other brands on the market that offer different kinds of water (spring, rain, purified). Consequently, consumers could have developed special attitude towards different kinds of water, not brands. Second, Evian and Perrier both occupy the high-priced category. They are both positioned as exceptional and high-end products in contrast to many other “simple” brands. Third, these brands have rich history and their heritage is already an advantage that sets them apart from their competitors. As a result, we recognize that consumers’ attitude may significantly vary from one bottled brand to another and thus it would be a mistake to generalize findings based solely on the case study.

There is also a concern with internal validity. Even though we found many available documents in French that could complement Evian’s and Perrier’s genealogy (because France is the country of origin of the brands), we consciously excluded the majority of them from our research in order to avoid misinterpretation. However, we could not eliminate some of them that served as important historical facts. We used Google Translate to examine those and we are aware that this could lead to distortion of the primary meaning, since it is an imperfect translation tool. Taking into account all the above presented limitations, we used case study mainly as illustrative and supportive part of our historical analysis.

The weakness of our netnographic research is choosing communities which were started by the companies. However, we aim at investigating what consumers say about brands since that information might reveal details on what makes bottled water consumption special, and at gathering rich data that would reveal consumer attitudes and behavior (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011). That is why we decided to perform netnography on the available communities, since there was enough interaction on them and the discussions, even if most of them were initiated by the companies themselves, provided enough data be able to gather insights on how consumers perceive their favourite brand of water and what makes it special to them. We do have in mind the above mentioned weakness and carefully note it as a limitation of our research.

4. THE BOTTLED WATER INDUSTRY

In this chapter we present the object of our study – bottled water, and how its industry has emerged, developed and transformed into the world's fastest growing beverage business with emblematic products that have changed consumers' perception of water as such. We first discuss the general role of water in history and culture in order to put our research in a broad context and to show influences on people's attitude to the product we study. The chapter continues with an account of the history of the bottled water industry that bounds the changes occurring in it to the socio-historical context, as well as of the characteristics of its marketing and branding reflected in the documents of ads we have collected. Last but not least, we discuss the historical and cultural factors that influence the consumption of the product – the emergence of plastic and its use in the industry, the changes in consumers' lifestyles, the movement for health and wellness, the “packaging phenomenon”, the significance of the entrance of beverage giants in the industry and the use of bottled water for self-expression.

4.1. Water in history and culture

People's perception of water and its place in culture emphasize the importance of water for the human kind and reflect how people consider it – as a source of life, purity, health and strength. Positive attitude towards water consumption has been deeply rooted in the human mindset during centuries and has been expressed through religious beliefs, myths, rituals and the preoccupation of humans with the supply of water and its cleanliness.

Being an important ingredient of life, water has always had a special place in society and culture. People have attributed great significance and built a complex system of meanings around it (Tvedt and Oestigaard, 2006). It brings both life – it accounts for 60% of the human body and is “the first necessity of life” (Hawkins, 2009), and death – through water-borne diseases and flooding (Tvedt and Oestigaard, 2006). It has historically determined the rise of civilizations since it was a prerequisite for the establishment of a settlement to be built near drinking water (Royte, 2008). It is also an important part of social interaction since it is an inseparable part of human activities from everyday practices to special religious occasions and festivals (Tvedt and Oestigaard, 2006).

People have recognized the significance of water and have interwoven it in culture and beliefs since ancient times as a symbol of fertility, purification and rebirth (Dougan, 2003). It appears in a significant number of myths and legends. Water has been personified in the form of gods – Poseidon in Greek mythology, Neptune in Roman, Veles in Slavic, which represent water's power and importance to people and serve as a connection to nature and its uncontrollable force. It has also been present in stories about mythological water creatures like Kraken, Nessie, Selkies, Sirens, etc, that depict water as almighty substance that gives birth to and sustains such miraculous beings. It is usually associated with the creation of the world – water is the only thing present before life emerges from it and it is the ultimate force used to erase life (in the form of floods), according to Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Water's purifying and transforming nature is evident in the religious rituals of Christianity - baptism using water to achieve spiritual rebirth, as well as the use of “holy water” in most rites; Hindu immersion in the holy river Gang to purify and free oneself from sin and the general belief that all water is sacred; Muslim cleansing before prayer. Water also appears

as an important magical substance in a lot of tales – life-giving water is a recurring theme in Slavic folk tales and fairy tales like the Grimm Brothers’ “The Water of Life”, where water is depicted as capable of sustaining life, giving supernatural power and reviving the dead.

The cultural and religious aspects of water have coexisted with the more practical ones of securing water to sustain life. People have recognized the importance of having clean drinking water and good sanitation since as far back as 2500 BCE (Checkley and Checkley, 2008). The failure to provide those, especially in European cities in medieval times, led to health epidemics and mass death (Checkley and Checkley, 2008). In the 1800s people acquired knowledge about the water contaminants with the help of Dr. John Snow’s work that revealed water as the source of cholera and Louis Pasteur’s “germ theory” that acknowledged water as a possible medium for the transfer of microbes and bacteria (EPA, 2000). Society’s growing concern and fear led to the invention of drinking water standards and the use of chlorination since the beginning of the twentieth century as a means to secure clean water (EPA, 2000). However, studies in the 1970s raised the question of the safety of chlorination and its potential harmful effects to the people and the environment (Boardman, 2003) and that affected the consumption of tap water and facilitated the emergence and quick success of the bottled water industry.

4.2. The development of the bottled water industry

Water has always been considered a human right (Wilk, 2006) and its commoditification and the emergence of the bottled water industry have been a subject of a number of discussions with most of the literature focusing on presenting the business, narrating its emergence and criticizing the water marketing and consumption. Tracing the phenomenon of spring water consumption from its appearance until present days will help us better understand how a transformation from mundane to remarkable has occurred.

The interest in spring and mineral water can be dated back to the Stone Age with springs, streams and spas having religious significance and being associated with life, purification and fertility (Mascha, 2006). With the rise of Christianity the focus moved from religion and the gods associated with water to health and the natural healing powers of the springs (Mascha, 2006). It became particularly popular to “take the waters” – to go to mineral springs to drink or bathe in the waters, among rich people in eighteenth century Europe, resulting in the appearance of “water hospitals” and spas at particular spots that mark the place of today’s sources of famous brands like Perrier, Evian, San Pellegrino, etc. (Mascha, 2006; Hawkins, 2009). Mascha (2006) provides a detailed account of the rise of water as a commodity. According to him, water that was believed to have healing powers used to be distributed around Europe as a luxury drink since Roman times only against a shipping fee. However, the owners of the springs realized that they could sell the water for distant use and started packaging it in stone and porcelain jars in the eighteenth century, which were later replaced by glass bottles with the emergence of glass as the main material for containers in the eighteenth century (Hawkins, 2009). This allowed the wider distribution of spring water but it was still considered the drink of the wealthy (Hawkins, 2009). Another important milestone in bottled water history was the invention of artificial carbonation in the late seventeenth century that allowed other waters to emerge as competitors of the naturally carbonated ones like Vichy Catalan, Wattwiller and Perrier (Mascha, 2006).

According to Mascha (2006) the first commercial exploitation of water sources was performed by the French with the king authorizing water from the Evian spring to be sold in 1826, which was then followed by the Perrier water in 1863 when Napoleon III sold the rights to its utilization. The example of France was soon followed by England in 1851 with Malvern and Italy in 1899 with San Pellegrino, which soon became exported throughout the whole world. America was also not far behind with Native Americans bathing in mineral water for physical, spiritual and social health even before the European settlers arrived and with water from American springs being sold as curative as early as the late eighteenth century.

The bottling of mineral water peaked in the late nineteenth century when “soda water” started to gain popularity as a curative luxury drink for the wealthy, sustaining this status till the middle of the twentieth century. Advertisements from that time promote bottled water mainly as “table water” – the best thing to accompany foods and drinks, stressing on its origin in order to link it to famous sources and position it as exclusive.



White Rock, 1946 (Vintage Ad Browser, 2012)

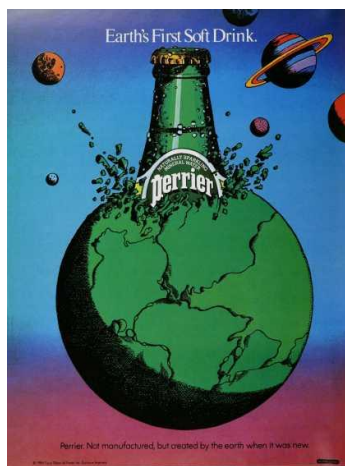
However, in the 1950s natural bottled water started gaining back its market share with marketing campaigns of leading brands like Evian expanding the target groups and achieved a rapid growth in the 1990s with the change of bottle from glass to plastic, successfully managing to undergo a transformation from a niche-market to a widely-spread daily consumed commodity that could be easily and cheaply transported anywhere (Hawkins, 2009).

Nowadays, the bottled water industry is the fastest growing global beverage market (Hawkins, 2009) and consists of around three thousand brands from all around the globe with a new brand emerging every day (Mascha, 2006). For a little over ten years the global consumption of bottled water has more than doubled – from 21 billion gallons in 1997 to 53.5 gallons in 2009 (Rodwan, 2002; 2009). United States are the biggest consumer with 8.4 billion gallons per year, followed by Mexico with 6.8, China with 5.8 and Brazil with 4.2 (Rodwan, 2009). Americans drink 27.6 gallons per capita according to a 2009 study (compared to 14.1 in 1997), (Rodwan, 2002; 2009), and it is believed that Perrier largely contributed to the popularization of

bottled water on the American market in 1970s (Mascha, 2006). The two biggest companies on the bottled water market are the French Groupe Danone, owning brands like Evian and Volvic, and Nestle, with Perrier, San Pellegrino, Poland Springs, etc. Coca-Cola and Pepsi's own brands are also gaining market share fast.

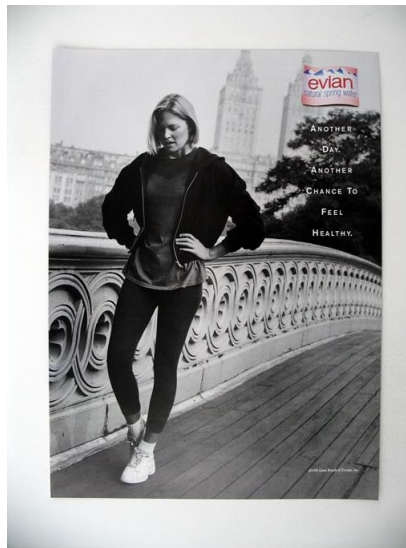
Bottled waters can be finely differentiated in different categories according to their way of production - processed municipal water and natural bottled water; the source – spring, artesian, well, rain, glacier, iceberg, lake/stream/reservoir, deep sea; composition; total dissolved solids; hardness; pH factor; carbonation; virginity; vintage (Mascha, 2006). Mascha (2006) in his book on water connoisseurship further divides waters into still, effervescent, light, classic and bold and proposes etiquette of rules and rituals for drinking bottled water – from matching water with food, drinking temperature, ice, stemware, caps and storage, to decanting and water tasting. There is an ever increasing number of all kinds of water - diet, vitamin, nicotine, caffeine, aspirin, for pets, for athletes, for teenagers, for kids, for special occasions like sports events and weddings and even personalized ones with the person's or corporation's name (Wilk, 2006).

There are certain specifics about the marketing and branding of bottled water. It has been transformed “from mundane and abundant...into exotic” (Wilk, 2006:305) and people have been persuaded to pay a high price for a commodity they do not really need and can get anywhere (Wilk, 2006; Chura, 2003). Its significance is not its drinking properties anymore but its image as natural, pure, vital and healthy (Hawkins, 2009). It is widely marketed as an opposition to tap water (Wilk, 2006) and is differentiated as “healthier, safer or more convenient” (Hawkins, 2009:187). Whereas drinking tap water is considered risky since people feel that they cannot be sure if the water they get is clean and where exactly it comes from, bottled water is delivered straight from the source and technology has purified it (Plotkin, 2004; Wilk, 2006). Purity is a major marketing theme that is used as one of the main advantages of bottled water and reflected in its advertising, even in the transparency of the bottle itself. Furthermore, water is the link that connects people to nature through its consumption – a claim that is mediated through the label images of mountains and springs and through the blue color (Wilk, 2006). An example of this is Perrier's 1980 ad that shows the brand's distinctive bottle springing out of the Earth, blending in color with the planet and thus creating an association that the brand's water is part of nature.



Perrier, 1980 (Vintage Ad Browser, 2012)

Bottled water is also positioned as a means for achieving a healthier lifestyle and medical expertise is drawn upon to confirm those claims (Hawkins, 2009). This advertising theme addresses the 1970s and 1980s movement for health and uses the image of water as something pure and natural and its status as a life necessity to position bottled water as the better alternative for soda drinks and a product the consumption of which is necessary for the well-being. A 1989 Evian ad illustrates this by linking the water to exercising and stressing its health-related orientation with the slogan – “Another day, another chance to feel healthy”.



Evian, 1989 (ebay, 2012)

The different bottled waters are associated with the geographical locations they come from and the quality and properties of those locations are transferred to the waters and reflected in the certificates and scientific indications on the labels (Wilk, 2006). Such brands as Perrier and Vichy have acquired prestigious attributes from their original sources and the history connected to those. That has even led to their transformation into generic goods that signify status (Wilk, 2006). With the increasing number of bottled waters on the market, it has also become possible to differentiate the generic bulk commodity that used to be unbranded (Wilk, 2006) by its quality and price characteristics into different market segments from mass-market to premium brands.

However, bottled water advertising has expanded and includes relating the product not only to its origins anymore, but also to current popular culture and to social interests like the concern for healthy lifestyle, the growing individualism and the desire for exclusivity and authenticity. The marketing is manipulating time and space distance and branding waters as exotic (coming from icebergs or far-off locations like Fiji) or historical (containing materials from the distant past). With the more and more different types of water appearing companies are able to segment consumers into finer gender and age target groups and products are developed to meet their specific requirements. There are even rituals created around the serving of bottled water and a whole system of linking waters to particular foods (Plotkin, 2004) that strengthen its exclusivity and special place in consumer culture. Bottled water is used as an expression of what consumers aspire to be – like the 2011 Smart Water campaign that portrays the water as a way of life, connecting it with a cultural icon, further increasing its symbolic value.



Smart Water, 2011 (Candy Cotoure, 2012)

The consumption of bottled water is a type of cultural consumption that is shaped by taste, status and health claims (Wilk, 2006; Hawkins, 2009). Due to the controversial characteristics of bottled water, its consumer is often portrayed in the literature as ignorant, preoccupied with tap water risks and easily succumbing to the seduction of “organic” water (Hawkins, 2009). The taste is apparently not the main motivation for consumption since people cannot really tell it apart from tap water at blind tests (Wilk, 2006).

Due to the product characteristics of bottled water as both a public good and a private commodity (Gleick, 2004) the industry has received a lot of criticism. There is a vast amount of opposition against bottled water companies with various consumer campaigns and resistance movements.



Tapping anti-bottled water campaign, 2008 (Ads of the World, 2012)

The industry is depicted as representing “all that is wrong with global corporations and their ruthless exploitation of natural resources and gullible consumers” (Hawkins, 2009:183). As it has already been discussed above, bottled water is a main human right and commercializing it is seen as unethical. Such issues as the lack of strict quality regulations, misleading labeling, overexploitation of underground water, pollution with plastic waste and the need for recycling are problematized (Gleick, 2004; Hawkins, 2009;

Wilk, 2006) and the critics play on consumer's guilt in their attempt to restore the image of tap water and remind people of the fact that it is publicly available to everyone at prices much lower than what corporations charge for virtually the same water (Hawkins, 2009). This trend is evident in the increased number of anti-water campaign pictures like the ones made by Tapenning, which stress on bottled water industry's polluting and distorting reality practices.

4.3. How and why people started to consume bottled water

The overview on the bottled water industry acknowledges that only few decades ago the product was a niche market commodity targeting mainly wealthy people while today bottled water represents a huge industry with hundreds of different brands and kinds (spring, rain, iceberg). It can be found everywhere: in supermarkets, cafes, gyms, cinemas, petrol stations, etc. In light of the growing pressure regarding bottled water environmental credentials, some consumers and journalists tend to attribute the bottled water success to a special trick deftly applied by marketers (Forsyth, 2010). However, the appearance of a business worth billions and such a rich symbolical product happily embraced by consumers cannot be just a result of a marketing trick. Having carefully examined the industry, we have revealed a number of facts that we believe have played a significant role in the shaping of bottled water as we know it today.

4.3.1. Disruptive innovation: the use of plastic within the industry

According to Christensen (2001) disruptive innovation helps to create a new market and value proposition destroying the existing ones by displacing an earlier technology. The same happened with the bottled water industry in the end of the 20th century when plastic replaced glass. In the late 60s bottled water producers started to use vinyl polychlorure (PVC) which was then progressively replaced with polyethylene terephthalate (PET) in the 80s, due to the better quality of the latter (Ferrier, 2001). Plastic bottles became incredibly popular with both consumers and manufacturers due to low cost and light weight nature. From companies' perspective the main advantages included electric insulation, low cost, transparency, elasticity and combustibility. From consumers' perspective the main benefits were low cost and portability: since plastic bottles are light and resealable, people can easily carry them to public places where food and drinks are not usually allowed, such as mass transport, classrooms, libraries, museums, conferences, etc (Ferrier, 2001; Miller, 2006). As a result the use of plastic bottles has created new value to customers: first of all, water is not perceived as an exclusive drink for the wealthy people any more, and second, portability has become a key recipe for the popularization of bottled water.

4.3.2. Change in consumer lifestyle

The entering of women on the labor market, the decreasing wages and increasing expectations from corporations' side have led to changing people's lifestyle within the last decades (Pollan, 2010). Combining paid jobs with raising children and domestic tasks caused people to experience significant time pressure. The European Working Conditions Observation (2006) reports that irregular working hours, taking work

home, working in the evening or on the weekend has become typical for the lifestyle of many occupational groups (managers, professionals, self-employed people). Moens (2006), a sociologist at the Free University of Brussels, mentions that “to be busy” and “to have no time” is a norm nowadays, many people tend to be more ambitious and overload their daily schedule.

Under time pressure, convenient products such as ready meals or bottled water have become bestsellers. People eat and drink on the go much more than they did before. The American journalist Michael Pollan (2008) mentioned that 19% of US snacks and drinks are consumed in the car. People have stopped buying water as such - they buy a convenient package that allows satisfying their needs without waste of time (Forsyth, 2010). Having the bottle of water on a desk, next to the computer and the telephone has become a new form of ritual and people have changed their habits from filling a glass with tap water to the faster alternative of bottled water.

4.3.3. Movement for health and wellness

The last few decades have been characterized by growing health and wellness trends that have had a huge impact on the popularization of bottled water as a healthy alternative to sugar soda drinks from companies’, media’s and consumers’ perspectives. These trends appeared as a result of a number of food journalistic publications and food safety scandals (starting in the 80s) related to American food politics, processed food and public health that “opened the eyes” of citizens about the nature of the food they consume (Schlosser, 2001; Nestle, 2003; Pollan, 2008).

In the early 1970s United States faced a food crisis - product prices were incomparable to low salaries. Therefore, on the request of President Nixon, the Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz switched political focus from the traditional supporting of farmers to massive production of few commodities such as corn and soy at as low price as possible. The problem was that prices decreased only for products made from corn and soy (processed food, sweetened beverages, feedlot meat); prices of natural food have been constantly increasing since the 80s. The crisis was avoided, but the decisions made led to deterioration of public health, childhood obesity and even distorted perception of American culture (Pollan, 2010).

In the late 80s a number of food safety scandals (Mad cow disease in England, 1986; death of three children in Washington, 1993, etc.) awoke public concern about the unhealthy lifestyle (Pollan, 2010) and this anxiety constantly grew during the following years. The issue was addressed in the national bestseller “Fast Food Nation” by Eric Schlosser (2001) and the film made on it. Later the books “Food Politics” (2003) by Marion Nestle and “In defense of food” (2008) by Michael Pollan explained the phenomenon of the embrace of fast food from political, social and cultural perspectives. Once people became aware of their unhealthy lifestyle, they started to invest more time in choosing the right diet and exercising.

The famous bottled water producer Evian recognized this wellness trend and started marketing bottled water as the ultimate beauty and health product (Forsyth, 2010). From the analysis of collected printed Evian ads it can be clearly seen that the brand gradually switched its main message from conveying the prestige and naturalness of the water to an image of it as the beautiful person’s drink (see Appendix 1). New ads contained pictures of beautiful athletic people with great bodies, doing various sport activities.

Charles Fishman, author of “The Big Thirst” (2011), giving an interview to BBC stated: “It was a way of saying if you want to be fit, if you want to be healthy, if you want to be attractive, drink Evian - and by drinking Evian you will be those things”. According to Forsyth (2010), this marketing campaign led to Evian’s doubled sales from 50 billion to more than 100 billion liters a year between 1990 and 2000. Other bottled water producers followed the successful example: public health messages against obesity that promised perceived health benefits from bottled water consumption resulted in US sales of bottled water soaring from \$115 million to \$4 billion from 1990 to 1997 (Royte, 2008).

Health concerns have also provoked a number of myths devoted to water and water consumption. The most famous of them refers to “We need to consume not less than 8 glasses of water each day”. All health-devoted sites encourage us to drink more water – an example of this is Wateraid’s (2012) claim:

Increasing your daily intake of water helps keep your skin looking vibrant and younger, aids digestion, improves your concentration and helps to remove toxins from your body.

However, researchers (Valtin, 2002; Papai, 2002, McCartney; 2011) interested in the origin of this statement, failed to find scientific explanation why we need to consume this amount of water each day. According to Valtin (2002) the closest reference can be found in the book of the nutritionist Fredrick J. Stare (1974):

How much water each day? This is usually well regulated by various physiological mechanisms, but for the average adult, somewhere around 6 to 8 glasses per 24 hours and this can be in the form of coffee, tea, milk, soft drinks, beer, etc. Fruits and vegetables are also good sources of water.

Another possible source of origin of the “8 glasses” myth, stated by Papai (2002), lies in this paragraph of the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council (1945):

A suitable allowance of water for adults is 2.5 liters daily in most instances. An ordinary standard for diverse persons is 1 milliliter for each calorie of food. Most of this quantity is contained in prepared foods.

The author suggests that the quote was not published completely and the recommendation has been interpreted incorrectly. Thereby, studies based on examining old literature and consultation with nutritionists showed that there is no rigorous proof that we need to consume up to two liters of water per day (Valtin, 2002). In contrast, they state that the human organism is efficient in regulating its own water intake (Dillner, 2011). Studies proved that fruits, coffee, tea, and soft drinks should be certainly counted in the daily fluid intake (Valtin, 2002). A number of newspapers: Sunday Telegraph (2001), The Guardians (2011), Los Angeles Times (2000; 2011), and Men's Health Watch (2000) also questioned the “8 glasses” rule and published articles disproving this statement. However, they have not been apparently acknowledged: once the myth was born, people, companies and media adapted it to their needs. Therefore, the link between bottled water consumption and personal wellness became a trigger for success of the bottled water industry.

4.3.4. Packaging of everything: hygiene and sterility, demand for convenience, personalization

The appearance of the giant supermarkets and self-service, consumer demand for individualization and convenience, the increase of hygiene standards, the invention of plastic, as well as marketing issues have led to massive packaging (even over-packaging) of products over the last decades. Package functions have gradually extended from simple physical and barrier protection (barrier from oxygen, water vapor, dust) to more advanced tasks such as portion division, communication with customers (labeling, instructions), in-store advertising, etc. (Bix, 2003). Massive “packaging” of water has also been influenced by this trend. The bottle is not only a container for water, it is a multifunctional instrument that allows satisfying various people’s needs such as demand for cleanness and sterility, for convenience, for individualization, etc.

Consumers nowadays are obsessed with personal hygiene and sterility. They do not wish anybody to touch their products before purchase (Royte, 2008). Supermarkets pack everything, every separate cucumber - something that the previous generation has not witnessed. Consequently, bottled water also provides this desirable sterility to customers (Howard, 2006). It is considered purer, because it is packaged immediately after collection at its source, hence, it avoids contamination from the water supply system and chlorination treatment (Miller, 2006). Many consumers refuse to drink tap water because they believe that it comes through old and rusting pipes that are of health concern (Miller, 2006). The water brand Fiji successfully exploits this subliminal germophobia with its slogan “Untouched by Man” (Royte, 2008).

The last years have also been characterized by growing demand for convenience. Customers have no interest in washing purchased bottles to be reused. In the best case people put bottles into the recycling containers; however, in many developing countries consumers do not do even that, because the government does not educate their citizens to take responsibility for waste of resources. The thought that it is normal to drink soda or eat yogurt “on the go” and then just throw the package away got deeply rooted in consumers’ mind-set in the seventies and eighties (Royte, 2008). The current generation does not even remember the time of pitchers on the table - it is growing up in a world of single-use things.

Our society has been more and more preoccupied with personalization and the shift from common to individual in both the online and offline environment for years. All industries (travel, clothing, auto, banking) are implementing personalized communication preferences for consumers and beginning to personalize products and services (Gangialosi, 2011). By collecting consumers’ data companies determine precisely what kind of product YOU want and what kind of water you will consider as YOUR water (Personal.com, 2012). Like iPhones and clothes, bottled water has become private and individual. Current consumers do not find it exciting to use common things, they like having their hands on a personal cup, personal package of cookies or a personal water bottle.

4.3.5. Beverage giants coming into the game

The first bottled water companies such as Evian and Perrier have been representing a niche market for wealthy people for long years. They have never dealt with sales volumes comparable to Pepsi’s or Coca-Cola’s. But once consumers became interested in bottled water, the situation changed dramatically, because beverage giants decided to enter the market. In 1970 Evian was acquired by the French Multinational

Corporation BSN Group (Danone Group today). In 1992 Perrier was bought by Nestle and joined their vast portfolio of 70 worldwide brands. In 1994 Pepsi introduced its own brand Aquafina to the market. In 1999 the Coca-Cola Company introduced Dasani water. Since these soda giants already had a well-established infrastructure of plants, suppliers, and distribution channels and a long history of cooperation with those stakeholders, it was easy to push the new product in large retail channels and numerous vending machines in cinemas, theatres, schools, stadiums and other public places. Bottled water became accessible to consumers everywhere (Royte, 2008). Moreover, beverage giants invested millions of dollars in bottled water advertising, for example, \$158 millions were spent by the Coca-cola Company in 2005 and \$20 million by Pepsi in 2006 only in United States (Royte, 2008).

The Nestle Company decided to go even further and produced CD-training for waiters 'Pour on the tips' targeting the HoReCa (hotels, restaurants, cafes) sector. The CD described obvious monetary benefits of switching from tab to bottled water serving, rituals and advices how to serve the bottled water and psychological tactics such as identifying the lead buyers and asking them if they would like a couple of more bottles (to which customers reportedly usually say "yes"). Restaurants were also advised to serve unknown exported bottled water brands to make it more difficult to identify real price and thus charge more. Those pieces of advice transformed water consumption from being a trivial issue into the subject of connoisseurship practices and rituals (Marsha, 2006).

4.3.6. Demand for self-expression

Another factor that contributed to the transformation of bottled water consumption into remarkable is the fact that the companies in the industry have successfully recognized consumers' usage of brands as resources for identity projects and have loaded the brands with symbolic meanings that are then acquired through consumption of the products and used as tools for personal identification (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). Moreover, brands have been employed in the structuring of the social system, being identifiers of the status and class of the people consuming them (Holt, 2002). Nowadays, it is of great importance which product is acquired, since its consumption carries certain cultural meanings, and what guides purchase decisions is not the brand itself but the meaning it brings to consumers' life (Fournier, 1998 cited in Schembri, 2009).

The bottled water industry takes advantage of this trend by transforming bottled water drinking into a cultural consumption that is driven by status competition among other things (Wilk, 2006). Consuming a particular brand "signifies" and serves as a social resource – for example ordering imported water conveys class (Royte, 2008). According to Wilk (2006) social distinctions have been widely used for selling bottled water and are now facilitated by the ever increasing assortment of products that allows finer price and quality discrimination. Water is distinguished into brands for males and females and for different age groups like children and teens.

The companies do not only indicate their target groups but also carefully create rich history and cultural life around their products that give each brand a special place in the socio-cultural reality and even a mythical nature, allowing consumers not only to use its symbolic value, but also to collaborate in the creation of this identity myth, together with other parties like the media (Wilk, 2006). For example, Perrier associates itself

with such major historical figures like Hanibal, Ceasar and Napoleon, and with the early consumption of bottled water at spas that carried prestige and signified high status and class (Wilk, 2006). The brand has been perceived as “a form of lifestyle consumption, a trendy fad and a marker of popular sophistication” (Hawkins, 2009:185). Its 2010 advertising campaign featuring Dita von Teese in the “Perrier mansion” represents well the brand’s aspirations to position itself as exclusive and to create certain associations in the minds of the consumers, that successfully secure it a place of an ultimate expression artifact.

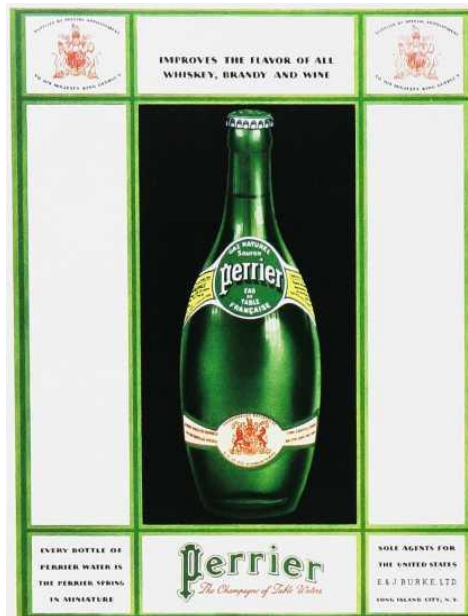
5. GENEALOGY OF THE BRANDS – empirical case studies through historical analysis and netnography

In this chapter we present our case study – the research on the Perrier and Evian brands which we have performed through historical analysis and netnography. We shape the data we have collected about the brands in the form of genealogy that traces Perrier's and Evian's historical, marketing and consumption development from their emergence until present days, linking information we have found in the form of documents like articles and pictures of ads, to consumers' interaction in brand groups, thus creating a holistic picture of the two companies' emergence as cultural icons.

5.1. PERRIER – “A celebration in your mouth”

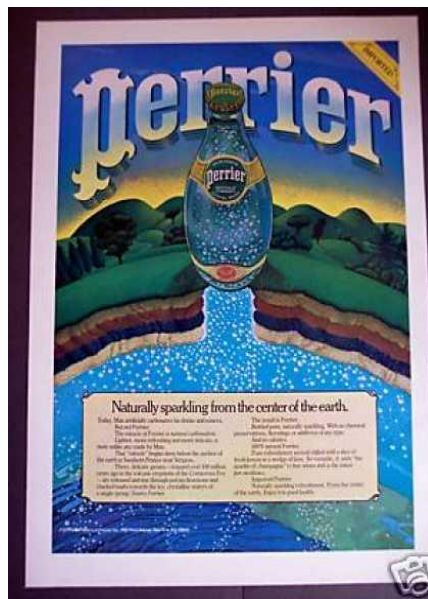
Perrier is one of the most emblematic bottled water brands on the market. It has been marketed as classy, high-status bottled water and its success is to a large extent due to the story around the product – an important attribute for the appreciation of bottled water since its taste does not play such a significant role in consumer preferences (Royte, 2008). The company has carefully crafted a corporate history that gives their water a rich past and a refined status. According to their website, the origins of the Perrier spring go back to as far as 120 million years ago when rainwater met volcanic gas and resulted in the carbonated spring “Les Bouillens” (“Boiling Waters”(fr.)). It claims associations with Hannibal, who stopped at the spring with his army on the way to Rome in 218 BCE, and with Caesar who gave the land to his soldiers and they built prototypes of the modern spas at the spring. It was not until the reign of Napoleon III that “Les Bouillens” gained official status of a mineral-water spring announced by the emperor himself.

In the end of the nineteenth century a French physician by the name of Louis-Eugene Perrier bought it and succeeded in bottling the fuzzy water, which was then discovered by the English lord St John Harmsworth who acquired it from the French and gave it its present name, Perrier, and the iconic shape of the bottle that resembles Indian exercise clubs. The new owner recognized a decreasing popularity of spas and an increasing interest in carbonated drinks in England (Royte, 2008) and repositioned the water to the English market, targeting the British army in the Indies and the other colonies and succeeding in entering even the Buckingham Palace. In 1908 Perrier won the “Grand Prize for Mineral Water Sale of the Year” for having sold five million bottles in England. The company slogan – “The Champagne of Table Waters” originates from that time (Royte, 2008) and was heavily used in the first published advertising campaigns in 1920s to position it as the premium bottled water, hinting at its French origin as well and trying to establish its name as generic for the industry. Ads from 1920s promote Perrier as the perfect table companion to food and drinks and stress on its origins both in terms of geography – France and the famous spring, and in terms of its natural carbonation – a product that comes directly from nature in a pure state. The ads always feature the slogan “The Champagne of Table Water” and show the peculiar form of the bottle in order to build a certain image and associations in consumers' minds.



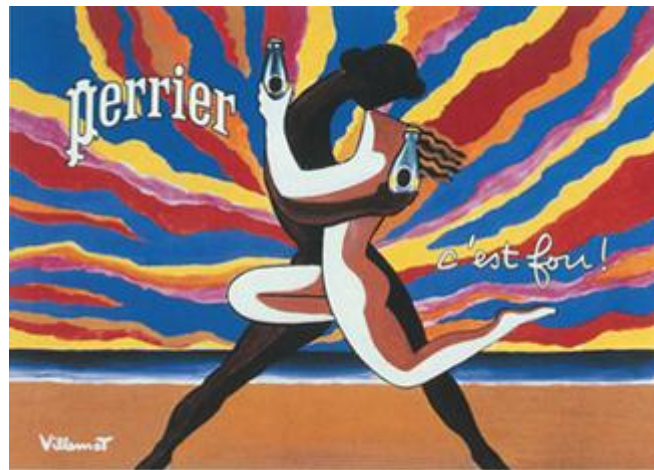
Perrier, 1920. The Champagne of Table Water (Vintage Ad Browser, 2012)

By 1933 it regained its popularity in France which resulted in only half of the production of nineteen million bottles per year being exported outside the country (Royte, 2008), and in 1947 was sold to a French broker, who modernized and expanded the factory increasing the production five times to 150 million bottles per year, and initiated heavy advertising. He was also the one to start heavily exporting to America in 1976, targeting urban professionals and linking the product to health, succeeding in reaching sales of 300 million bottles per year and occupying 80% of the bottled water market by 1988. During those years the brand continued to emphasize the origins and natural character of the product in its advertising – its 1979’s “Naturally sparkling from the center of the Earth” ad and in 1980’s “Earth’s first soft drink” reminded consumers of the ancient legacy of Perrier – “Not manufactured but created by earth when it was new”.



Perrier, 1979 (Vintage Ad Browser, 2012)

Furthermore, published advertisements from the 70s and 80s reduced the text used to verbally describe the merits of the water and started employing expressive pictures and colors to grab the attention of the target groups. The main aim of the marketing was still to position it as high-status exclusive water through associations with expensive jewellery and classy appearance in 1970s. However, Perrier's marketers started using other themes as well. The brand initiates the "C'est fou" ("It is crazy" (fr.)) series of ads that were artistically constructed with a lot of bright colors to imply that Perrier is a lifestyle, a way to look at life (1976's ad of a woman with Perrier bottles instead of glasses), the perfect companion for every occasion (1980's romantic meeting, 1981's party, or 1983's hi-life gathering). The marketing campaigns also picked up topical art themes – for example the 1983's series of ads look like Andy Warhol paintings.



Perrier, 1980. "It is crazy" (fr) campaign (Perrier, 2012)

Perrier is believed to be the brand that led to the success of the bottled water industry in America (Royte, 2008). The significance of the American market was emphasized by the company's practice to launch new products first there and then at the home French market, reflected in the 1982 ad campaign that shows the new flavoured waters as "children" of the original one.



Perrier, 1982. Perrier's new flavours (Perrier, 2012)

In 1990 Perrier claimed to be the leading mineral water brand in the world but underwent a major crisis when a laboratory discovered high levels of Benzene in bottles. However, the company recognized this period as a challenge and by an adept crisis management and a swift recall of all bottles worldwide succeeded in not only surviving the crisis but also strengthening the brand image. In 1992 Perrier was bought by Nestle and joined their vast portfolio of 70 worldwide brands. Nowadays, Perrier is present in 150 countries, being one of the most exported beverages (50% of the sales are executed outside France), sharing this status with the famous French wine, and selling almost 1 billion bottles per year.

Present time ad campaigns promote the brand using cultural symbols like the current street slang (2001 ads depicting the life of a Perrier family of bottles), popular activities (2002's image of Spin-the-bottle game with a Perrier bottle in the center of it), and cultural icons like Elton John and Bob Marley (2002-2003's pictures of them on T-shirt creating an illusion that they are the ones ordering or drinking Perrier). The brand has also developed a number of associations with famous people – not only with the “T-shirt” ads but also by more direct liaisons with celebrities like the 2010 campaign with Dita von Teese.



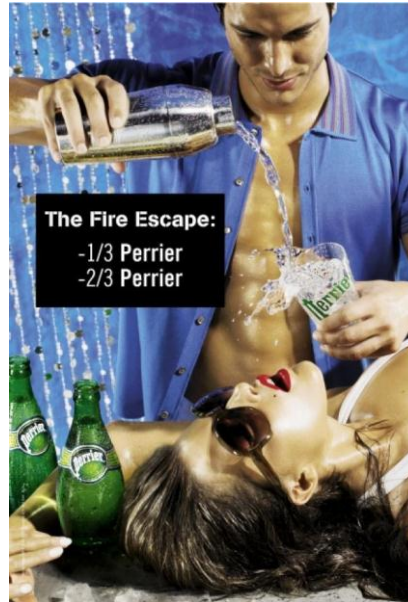
Perrier, 2002. “Celebrity T-shirts” campaign, 2002 (Coloribus, 2012)

Perrier's exclusivity is conveyed through ads that emphasize its unique, luxurious nature. In a 2002 ad the brand plays with the V.I.P. sign substituting the P with a D to stand for “Very Important Drink”. The 2007-2008 ad series showing Perrier in dangerous circumstances or shocking images (for example a girl pouring water from the brand's bottle in the bath tub while drying her hair with a hair drier or a guy with a bottle in his underpants) and replacing the brand name on the logo with words like “Riskier” and “Manlier” entertain the idea that Perrier makes its consumers go to the edge, live interestingly.



Perrier, 2007 (Advertolog, 2012)

In order to keep its bold and fashionable status, Perrier often uses sex themes in its ads. From the 1980s art pictures of twisted bodies, though 2002's sexually loaded ad of a guy tied in a bed, 2006's campaign with half-naked wet people in sexy poses making Perrier "recipes" for drinks that consist only of Perrier, to all the current ads that play with the sensual, the company has followed the maxim that sex sells and has proven it true.



Perrier "Recipe" campaign, 2006 (Coloribus, 2012)

Last but not least, a major advertising theme that occurs in Perrier's marketing since 90s is the image of the water as the ultimate refreshment. It is reflected in the ads from 1995 ("The art of refreshment"), 2007 (a picture depicting a guy at the beach drinking Perrier with a winter hat), and 2009-2010 (images in burnt colors where everything is melting and the people look parched; only Perrier bottles appear unaffected and cool, providing the ultimate refreshment).



Perrier, 2010. "Melting" campaign (Creative Boys Club, 2012)

According to the company's own description, presently, Perrier's brand aims at developing bold, "offbeat" image which is at the same time elegant. Its marketing strategy includes connecting to the big names in art.

Perrier positions itself as the fashionable choice, with unique taste, bubbly and providing ultimate refreshment. All these aspirations are evident in the ad campaigns that the company has undertaken from 1995 till present times. The company often uses bold unconventional images to provoke its consumers and to emphasize its special strength in managing to expertly play with the current trends.

Perrier consumers have been steadily growing in numbers and are generally enthusiastic about the brand. They openly state their liking of the brand and express passionate attitude to the product on online communities like the corporate page on Facebook that has more or less turned into a brand community. The word “love” appears most next to Perrier, showing people’s affection and the personal relationship they form with Perrier. Other phrases that emphasize the deep feelings and engagement the product triggers describe it as the best and most favourite one.

Richard (“Perrier”, 2009):

too good to be true

Sara (“Perrier”, 2010):

nothing compares to Perrier

Alice (“Perrier”, 2011):

It's the most delightful bubbly water beverage in the world

It has become an inseparable part of consumers’ lives and they acknowledge this fact by stating that they have become addicted to it, that they cannot live without it and it defines who they are.

Alice (“Perrier”, 2011)

If I could only drink one beverage for the rest of my life, I would choose Perrier

Sean (“Perrier”, 2011):

I am a Perrier

Another recurrent theme in consumers’ descriptions of why Perrier is so special to them is the idea about its refreshing nature. They claim that it is the best drink for a hot summer, the ultimate refreshment. One of the members even professionally recommends Perrier, thus legitimating its fresh nature.

George (“Perrier”, 2010):

...I LOVE Perrier, especially on a hot day. So refreshing!

Jane (“Perrier”, 2010):

Go Fresh...Always...lovely PeRRieR!!

The taste of the bottled water seems to be somewhat important – consumers continuously state that it is delicious and tasty, but there are much more reasons that drive its consumption and add many more layers to the brand, which even customers recognize and acknowledge by stating that it is far from simple water.

Jenifer (“Perrier”, 2010):

Never thought that water could be so...interesting

Laura (“Perrier”, 2011):

It feels like a celebration in my mouth!

For consumers it is also important what the product signifies and thus what symbolic resources it can give them. In the case of Perrier, people recognize that it is a brand that conveys high quality, coolness, sophistication and charm.

Stephanie (“Perrier”, 2011):

it doesn't get any sexier than mineral water!

It is also important how it makes them feel. A common word to show the feelings Perrier brings out is “happiness” – it not only evokes the feeling in people that drink it but the water itself is believed to possess this characteristic.

John (“Perrier”, 2009):

it is water with much happy in it

It is the perfect product for when a person is “on the go” – whether they are just moving from a point to point in a city or travelling longer distances. Consumers feel that they can trust Perrier to deliver what it promises and to be the exact same product they enjoy drinking anywhere around the world.

Faith (“Perrier”, 2010):

whenever on the road, I keep Perrier with me always!

Ashley (“Perrier”, 2011):

i'm SO glad Perrier is the same in Paris as it is in California! Everything else is different than at home

The bottled water is also consumers’ “best friend” in staying healthy and fit. It is perceived to be the perfect replacement for soft drinks, providing a more healthy way to stay hydrated and fighting obesity problems. Consumers claim that it has helped them lose weight and are grateful that it has also facilitated them in quitting drinking soda, which they make sound as a serious health “crime”.

Rose (“Perrier”, 2011):

I have lost 60lb since I started drinking Perrier in stead of soda...I really appreciate you Perrier

Perrier’s importance and success can be seen in the nature of its alleged consumption as well. Consumers write that it is their preferred choice. They consume it constantly - everyday, anytime, in various locations and situations (e.g. after work, in the office, after dinner, after exercising, while having a conversation, etc.), irrelevant of the weather conditions or other restrictions. Consumers even tell “horror tales” of when they could not buy their beloved drink.

Jeff (“Perrier”, 2010):

I always say "Perrier please!"

Robert (“Perrier”, 2010):

It's -3 F in Chicago this morning, still enjoyed my Perrier, fresh n crisp, hot or cold

Some of the members' accounts of the product consumption sound like rituals with set rules and ways to drink the water. People discuss artifacts they can use in their consumption of Perrier and ask for advice on objects they can apply to express their connection to the brand. Some consumers have a certain "recipe" for Perrier – accompanying it with specific supplements. Others have a set routine, in which the water is essential part. Yet others create a certain atmosphere in order to best enjoy their favourite bubbly drink. One of the members even invented a name for the way they drink Perrier.

Martin ("Perrier", 2010):

at brunch with 3 mint teabags

Frank ("Perrier", 2011):

Every nite, as my bed time drink, is Perrier time!!

Emma ("Perrier", 2011):

like to sip Parrier and listen to Mozart after a long day in the Big Top

Roger ("Perrier", 2011):

im drinking an ice cold bottle of perrier the american way

Consumers cherish the memory of the first time they tried Perrier – they vividly recollect the place and the people they shared it with, usually people close to them – families and friends, thus revealing the significance they put in the initiation of its consumption. For a lot of them it is important to signify that they are faithful to it and have been consuming it for a long time. They eagerly share stories about their experiences with the brand with other members of the community that trigger sense of togetherness.

Tom ("Perrier", 2010):

I shared it with my first wife...she's gone...but Perrier is still here!

Mona ("Perrier", 2011):

I am an avid Perrier drinker, I have it in my fridge at all times

However, there are also negative reactions to Perrier that are a result of people having negative experience with it, not being satisfied or impressed by it or just not liking the product in general (due to its taste or not being healthy, referring to its carbonated nature). Some consumers that drink other brands as well confess and recognize themselves as "traitors". There is even one consumer that constantly raises the questions of sustainability and the potential harmful effects of the bottle water industry, demanding response from Perrier officials.

People respond differently to the marketing efforts of Perrier. For some of them it is incomprehensible, they cannot see the connections of the campaign to the product, think that the company is overdoing it or do not approve of the associations the brand uses. There are consumers who are even severely disappointed and proclaim their withdrawal from the loyal Perrier drinkers. Others embrace the company communications with enthusiasm praising the company's professionalism, the "coolness" of the ideas and admitting that seeing the ads makes them want Perrier. People consider the advertising messages so well composed that they powerfully draw them to the water. Some of these loyalists even step in to correct and help the consumers that do not get the meanings or propose how the company could do even better in

promoting their products. Perrier's appearing in media provokes discussions among the members and heated debates on the subject – for example the worry that Perrier does not meet regulations or that the water is being associated with particular famous people that consumers approve/disapprove of.

Michael (“Perrier”, 2010):

The new campaign "all words ending in "ier" is BRILLIANT

Henry (“Perrier”, 2011):

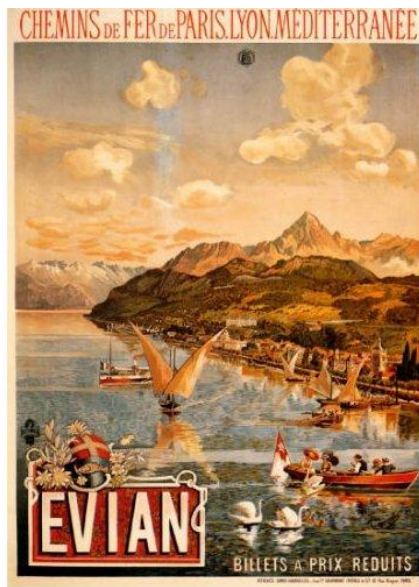
ACTUALLY is making me want a bottle of perrier. i never drink the stuff, but right onw i just really want some

What can be seen from the interaction in the group is that people are not indifferent to the brand – they either show positive or negative attitude. The taste, associations and advertising evoke strong reactions that result in either consumers turning into enthusiastic fans or withdrawing from consumption of Perrier.

5.2. EVIAN – “Pure like a baby”

Evian is one of the most recognizable brands of bottled water coming from France and sourced from several springs near Évian-les-Bains, to the south of Lake Geneva (Marscha, 2006). Evian is classified as a mineral water and, according to the official website, it acquired its distinctive taste as a result of 15-years filtration by subterranean aquifer and picking up minerals from glacial sand. The Marquis de Lessert discovered the source in 1879 (Evian, 2012) but the official start of the company can be traced to 1829 when Charles Felix, the Duke of Savoy Region, got a permission to bottle water from the springs and launched Société des Eaux Minérales (a mineral water company) (Dana, 2010).

In 1878 the French Academy of Medicine recognized the benefits of Evian mineral water consumption and Évian-les-Bains became the most popular thermal destination in France welcoming many famous guests (Evian, 2012). The huge advertising campaign of P.L.M. Railway Company, designed by the master of the classic French travel posters H. Tanconville and printed in stone-lithography in 1901, featured the beautiful landscape of the Evian resort and Geneva Lake and advertised more a travel destination, than the water itself. The logo of the campaign is “Ticket with discount” (*fr.*). Thus, the first large contribution to the popularization of Evian brand was made by a third party.



P.L.M. Railway Company, 1910. Evian Resort (eBay, 2012)

In 1908 the Evian Company teamed up with the glass factory Souchon-Neuvesel and modernized the bottling of water, using large jugs (Dana, 2010). At the same time, the first bottled water ads, targeted to wealthy customers, appeared. Posters, dated 1910 and signed by an artist F. Fabiano, showed a bottle of mineral water walking with a king's crown and cape along a table with well-dressed people sitting beside it. At the same time, the slogan, “Summer in Evian. Season from 15 May till 15 of October” (*fr.*), still promotes the resort, not the bottled water as such. That is why this ad may be considered as confusing to customers: its symbolical message differs from the linguistic one. In our study, the main idea of this advertising was interpreted as presenting Evian as high-end water for wealthy people, available to customers at the Evian resort. This theme remained stable during next two decades.



Evian, 1910. Summer in Evian (*fr.*) (Vintage Ad Browser, 2012)

In 1935 Evian decided to extend its target group and started to produce water for babies. Evian posters described the product as “water for feeding bottles” that allowed drinking without boiling due to bacteria-free purity (Evian, 2012). Evian ads, produced for this campaign, contained a picture of a baby with a huge bottle with pacifier in the foreground. It is not clearly seen if milk or water is in the bottle due to its white

color; thus, the ad can be interpreted as presenting water that is considered as healthy for babies as milk. The main message on the ads is “Water for little ones” (*fr.*).

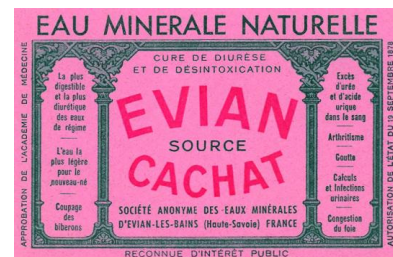


Evian, 1935. Water for little ones (*fr.*) (Evian, 2012)

Evian advertising and style remained conservative until 1970, when the company was acquired by the French Multinational Corporation BSN Group (Danone Group today) with 100% control of the brand. The design of the bottle (traditional pink label without additional images) also remained the same tolerating slight changes in 1930, 1951, 1965, 1967, and 1968. Evian water was traditionally sold in glass bottles until the first PVC bottle was introduced in 1969 (replaced with PET bottles in 1982) (Dana, 2010; Evian-Canada).

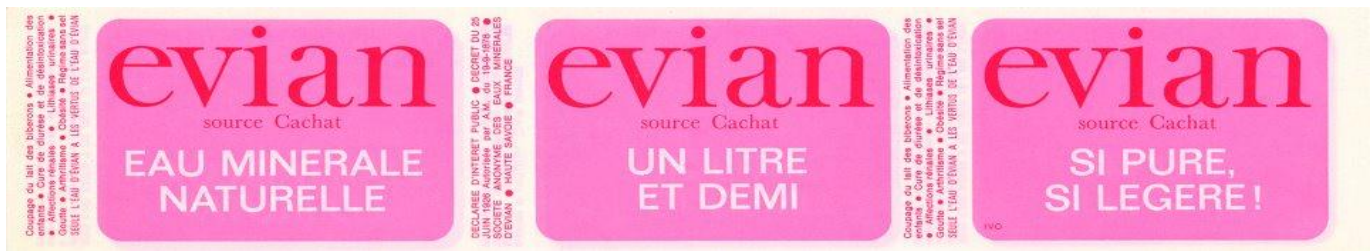


Evian Label, 1890-1900 (Evian-Canada, 2011)



Evian label, 1951(Evian-Canada, 2011)

The acquisition by the Danone Group pushed the company to a new level of marketing activity. In 1978 Evian Natural Spring water was first introduced commercially in the United States, in a little known Miami restaurant called “The Forge”. It quickly gained popularity as a luxury and expensive bottled water served in high-end restaurants and hotels (Gaines, 2010). The design of the bottle was also changed - The French Alps, where Evian natural spring water comes from, became an icon on its labels in 1981 and have remained there until present times. They symbolize the pureness and naturalness of the water.

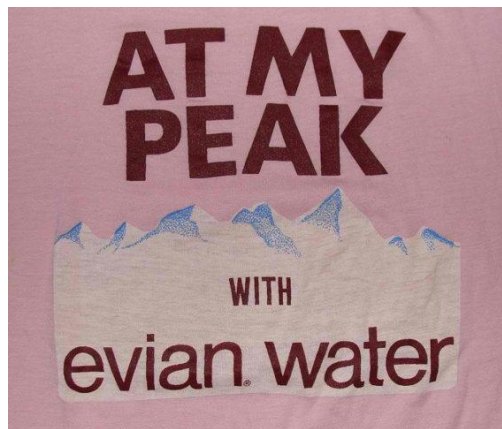


Evian Label, 1971 (Evian-Canada, 2011)



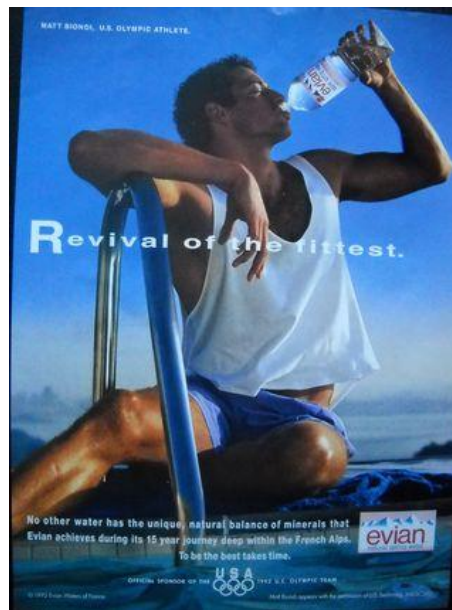
Evian Label, 1981 (Evian-Canada, 2011)

A new campaign, positioning Evian as health and beauty product, got into the common stream of the movement for health and wellness in the late 80s and this marketing decision became crucial for the success of the brand (Forsyth, 2010). According to Fishman (2011) Evian ads featured good-looking people in great shape, exercising or just relaxing after working out, in sporty tight clothes. The main message was “Another day, another chance to feel healthy”. The following picture illustrates a print on Evian T-shirts, widely distributed among consumers during promotional activities in the 80s.



Evian, 80s. Evian Vintage T-Shirt (Etsy, 2012)

Evian also became the official sponsor of USA Olympic Team and started to use images of sport heroes drinking bottled water. The ad shown below contains the image of the Olympic swimmer Matt Biondi who won five gold medals for the USA at the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul. The slogan “Revival of the Fittest” also linked the bottled water to sport.



Evian, 1992. Evian Magazine Ad, 1992 (eBay, 2012)

During the 90s Evian ads with ripping muscles and glistening skin were supplemented by more temperate images of children, pregnant women and retirees, appealing to these consumer groups. “Mommy, can I have a drink of water?” magazine advertising slogans were used, followed by explanation of the benefits of Evian water consumption. Additional emphasis was put on the importance of consumption of not less than 8 glasses of water per day (Millman, 1993). However, the main message remained the same “If you want to be a healthy person, drink Evian”.



Evian, 1993 (Vintage Ad Browser, 2012)

In such way, the connection between bottled water and health determined the company’s success - between 1990 and 2000 Evian’s sales increased twice from 50 to 100 billion liters a year.

Media also played an important role in the establishment of Evian as an iconic brand during this period. In 1991, Madonna appeared in the famous sexual scene in the film “Truth or Dare” where she fellated a bottle of Evian using it as a love object (Royte, 2008).



Miramax, 1991. Evian Bottle Scene. “Truth or Dare” (AbsoluteMadonna, 2012)

During the following years star magazines featured photos of Hilary Swank, Courteney Cox Arquette and Paris Hilton with a bottle of Evian on their tables. The narrator of the popular VH1 show "The Fabulous Life", devoted to the biography of Cameron Diaz, mentioned that she likes to wash her face three times a day with Evian water (Segal, 2005). Very soon, Evian become portrayed as high-priced and prestigious water affiliated with high-profile celebrities (Gaines, 2010). The bottle of Evian could be spotted on beauty pages of glamour magazines, on paparazzi photos, being carried by famous actors and singers. It became the number one classy and trendy accessory (Royte, 2008).



High-profile celebrities Jennifer Lopez, Paris Hilton and Jack Nicholson with a bottle of Evian on their table (Coolspotters, 2012)

In 1999 the Baby Ballet named “45 seconds of pure happiness”, a viral video created by the French advertising agency Euro RSCG BETC, became a real sensation not only in France, but in the US, UK, Germany, Belgium, etc. (Evian, 2012; YouTube, 2008). Despite the great idea and impressive effects, some audiences found this commercial controversial, because it featured nude babies (in order to show purity and naturalness of the water). In response to massive complaints Evian had to withdraw the campaign.



Evian, 1999. Water Baby Ballet TV, Official Commercial (Youtube, 2008)

In 2001, Evian launched an organic skincare line Evian Affinity. The most popular item of this line was face spray and it is the only one that has remained on the market today (Gaines, 2010). In 2008, Evian extended its portfolio by a new product “Evian Les Petits’s”, targeted to 4- to 10-year old children. It contained the same Evian water but in a smaller bottle with kid-friendly graphics and design. The real target was the moms - they were constantly reminded that their kids needed to consume not less than one liter of water per day (Kingston, 2008).

New wave of recognition came 10 years after Baby Ballet with the campaign “Live Young”. Evian Roller Babies earned a place on the pages of the Guinness World Records as the most viewed online video (received more than 100 million views). The video won top honors from Time magazine as the best TV commercial of 2009 and recognition on TBS’s Funniest Commercials of the Year (O’Leary, 2010). Evian efficiently delivered its brand attributes of health, youth and purity into consumers’ mindset through the remarkable video (O’Leary, 2010).



Evian, 2009. Water Roller Babies, Official Commercial (Youtube, 2010)

Evian's latest TV commercial, continuing the “Live young” theme used a very simple instrument - a T-shirt with images of the babies on it that is an easy and funny way demonstrate an idea that water makes you younger (Shaw, 2011; YouTube, 2011). Animated movements of the babies’ bodies on the T-shirts deliver humor and create fantastic, hard-to-resist video (Shaw, 2011). In contrast to the previous video, where consumers found it difficult to connect to the brand, this video contains adult presence and delivers clear

value proposition - “You feel young with Evian” (Shaw, 2011). There is currently a campaign going on the Internet, which allows consumers to extend the idea by bringing their own experience to the brand, creating the world’s longest music video (Shaw, 2011).



Evian, 2011. “Live Young” Campaign (Evian-Belgium, 2011)

During the last years Evian marketers launched a tradition to team up with haute-couture designers such as Christian Lacroix, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Issay Miyake, Paul Smith, and Maurice Ajanaku, who turned the Evian bottle into an art object. Premium bottles are sold at a special price via Internet or serve as prizes for winners of Evian promotional activities.



Evian Haute-Couture Bottles (WordPress, 2012)

According to the company's own description (Evian, 2012), source of origin, naturalness and purity are the main benefits of Evian water. The company uses mainly blue and white colors that traditionally symbolize cleanness and purity in combination with the corporate pink color. The water is described by such phrases as "from the heart of the Alps", "planet's most precious treasure", "natural filter developed", "a miracle of nature", "water is life", "uniquely balanced". The images used show the Alps and happy healthy people. Evian emphasizes on its care about the environment by publishing information about the Water Protection Institute launched by Evian in 2007 and its agenda (Evian, 2012). The company also owns a thermal resort and spa, the Evian Royal Resort, in France (Gaines, 2010).

Despite Evian water being mainly distributed in seven countries: United States, France, Belgium, Germany, Canada, Singapore and Japan (Gaines, 2010), the biggest brand communities exist in Belgium (21900 members, 11 December 2012), Canada (20754 members, 18 December 11) and Switzerland (8088 members, 29 November 2011) which are all countries with French speaking population. The vast majority of posts are published in French. It seems that the product's source of origin and the shared language between brand and fans are factors somehow important to brand enthusiasts. These groups appeared almost at the same time as a result of official initiative of the Evian brand and quickly gained popularity. Besides, there are some international groups, held in English and characterized by absence of moderator. They represent the most interesting findings because enthusiasts freely express their opinion towards the brand there.

The most popular theme in consumers' descriptions of why Evian is special to them is the taste of the product. They express both positive (mainly) and negative (rarely) attitude towards the taste of Evian. Some members vouch for other brands of bottled or tap water.

Donna ("Evian-Water", 2012):

This is the only bottled water that isn't nasty! ...I've tasted everything from metal to something like cleaning stuff in bottled water and this was my fave until my Walmart started only selling them individually to get a higher profit :(Now I really can't afford it.

Stephanie ("Evian-Water", 2012):

I am drinking evian right this minute...I LOVE EVIAN water...WHOOHOOO! The taste is so smooth going down...YUM!

Michael ("Evian-Water", 2012):

I don't understand it, but your water "tastes" the best to me...Not all h20 is alike;)

Sara ("Evian-Water", 2012):

Evian tastes gross. The best refreshing water is Fiji or Frantelle. Since having my daughter I can tell the difference in water. We did a home trial

Margaret ("Evian-Water", 2012):

I'm not an Evian fan... It always leaves a mineral taste in my mouth. I stay away from it all and stay with our filtered water cooler...

In general, water enthusiasts seem to be proud of their skills to distinguish different brands of water. When one of the members provoked a discussion whether others could tell the difference between Evian water, Mount Franklin water, home brand and tap water, people unanimously responded that all waters taste differently and, thus, can be easily recognized.

Andrian (“Evian-Water”, 2012):

My family thinks I am weird because I can tell the differences with water to, that just made me fussy with what water I drink now.

Carol (“Evian-Water”, 2012):

I've been able to taste the difference between brands of stuff since I was young - my mum tells me I would only want Peters ice cream and knew straight away when it wasn't! Apparently we have the same skills aha

Mari-Ann (“Evian-Water”, 2012):

Gold Coast tap water is the grossest water ever, Brisbane water doesn't taste as nice as Ipswich, and now I only drink filtered rain water. Yes, there is a difference, even when it's cold

Members of the community seem to be very emotional and passionate about their favorite brand. They are incredibly loyal and publicly proclaim and promote their choice.

Rebecca (“Evian-Canada”, 2011):

I can't live without u, u are the most essential part of my life.

Kim (“Evian-Canada”, 2012):

I just did one of those voting things and the vote was on which bottles water is the very best and Evian and four others were the choices and had to tell you in all the voting I have done, this was the first after i voted i saw the poll results said 100% answered same as me and said Evian water is the best, i have NEVER seen 100% before so for that you should be very proud of ur accomplishments!!!

Some members state different reasons of why this brand has become exceptional for them. In some cases the consumption is tightly related to personal themes and life projects. Other members built a relationship with the brand because of its connection to loved ones.

Evian (“Evian-Water”, 2011):

Twenty one years ago my mother decided to name her only baby girl Evian after the most glamorous, delicate, pure and crystalline water of all. Proud to be as good as my favourite drink!

Thomas (“Evian-Canada”, 2012):

I drink Ur water because along time ago I had a very special person stolen from me and she always drank Ur water so I drink it at times like right now when I think back on all the times she drank Ur water and I wonder where is(name of the girl) and what are YOU doing right now . GOD BLESS U ALL !

Evian enthusiasts truly believe that their favorite water is a recipe for health, wellness and beauty. According to their comments, consumption of Evian makes them feel better, because it possesses energizing and hydrating features.

Eric (“Evian-Water”, 2011):

Evian water is my fuel...

Ruben (“Evian-Belgium”, 2011):

1,5 L Evian a day keeps the doctor away

Lucy (“Evian-Canada”, 2012):

There is ALWAYS water beside me, plus 6 bottles in the fridge, and more in my coldroom.... I add a splash of lemon juice to mine though to prevent water retention and reduce swelling

Posts confirm that celebrities’ preferences towards Evian have direct impact on the choice of the brand. Members describe when and how they saw a celebrity with Evian and in what way the water was consumed.

Anna (“Evian –Water”, 2012):

I was at a grocery store in town called Save-On-Foods. A very famous pair was in front of me in the line. It was Elvis Costello and Diana Krall. (Diana Krall is from my town.) All they were buying was 1L Evian. They must have had about 25 or 30 of them on the belt. One fell over and somehow ended up in my groceries. I bought it and paid for it - and have kept it ever since!

Jenny (“Evian –Water”, 2012):

I saw that some celebs freeze fruit into there Evian water bottles like strawberry slices and kiwi yummy!

Environmental issues seem to be less important for community members, at least it is not definitely the key factor for the choice of the brand. Rare posts, calling to consume less bottled water and to switch to tap, remain ignored by Evian enthusiasts or cause a negative reaction. There are even the opposite reactions - when Evian launched a new bottle, that contained less plastic, people responded negatively.

Martin (“Evian-Belgium”, 2011):

Why are those bottles so soft now? For production economy? (fr.)

Evian – Belgium Moderator (“Evian-Belgium”, 2011):

We try to bring water "organic" Evian, as the least polluting way possible: 70% of our volume is in the process, it promotes the recycled plastic and is studied ergonomics for less weight ... what makes us 38% less impact than the previous bottle! (fr.)

Martin (“Evian-Belgium”, 2011):

Many recycled plastics are more manageable. This bottle is an ergonomically less convenient. The plastic is extremely soft, grip the outside of the grip is poor (fr.)

Yet another big recurrent theme is consumers’ sincere and positive response to the current advertising campaign “Live Young” where the company used a very simple advertising instrument, a T-shirt with

image of babies on it. The huge number of community members wonders where they can get a baby T-shirt or just expresses very positive attitude towards the company's advertising activities.

Members of the Evian brand communities are very active: they either provoke discussions themselves on the group wall or respond to company activities by "liking" or commenting posts. They share stories and recipes related to the brand and do not hesitate to raise acute issues if they believe that company's activities do not respond to consumers' interest. Generally, consumers illustrate a sincere enthusiasm towards the brand and publicly express their feelings.

6. DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses our findings, based on the information presented in the previous two chapters, The Bottled Water Industry and The Genealogy of the Brands, connected to the theoretical constructs we have chosen to apply. We reveal six main mechanisms that drive the transformation from mundane to remarkable consumption – mythification, extension of brand functions, endorsement, etiquettization, reflection and cultivation, and place them in a transformation model that illustrates our view on the process. The mechanisms are linked to each other, affected by external forces like trends, technology and socio-cultural tensions, and driven by three main participants – companies, influencers and consumers.

6.1. An ultimate recipe for health and beauty - Transformation through Mythification

The bottled water industry is a good example of how certain brands become special to people through mythification, connecting individuals' life to myths - imaginary worlds desirable to customers (Holt, 2004). Built on people's anxieties and desires, typical for a specific socio-cultural framework, myths appear to be a powerful instrument of turning trivial commodity as water into an object of worship. It should be mentioned that water has always been an important part of myths and legends, being a symbol of life, fertility, purification and rebirth. However, in the end of the 20th century, characterized by common anxieties concerning pollution, urbanization, and unhealthy lifestyle, the symbolic meaning of water reached a new level of significance. Water appears to be a magic fluid that helps overcome obesity, prevent cancer and heart diseases, clear up skin, provide energy and maintain health and general well-being. By incorporating those myths in brand attributes such as package, slogan, and advertising, pioneers of the bottled water industry (Perrier, Evian) have become meaningful material expressions of those myths to customers.

Many consumers believe that their bottled water (coming from spring, mountain or lake) has the magical qualities to make them feel better mentally, physically and emotionally: "1,5 L Evian a day keeps the doctor away" (Ruben, "Evian-Belgium, 2011), "Evian is my fuel" (Eric, "Evian-Water", 2011), "I had the 2pm slump, just drunk a load and feel much better!" (Laura, "Evian-Water" 2012). Consumption of bottled water has become an important health practice, such as going to the gym or eating muesli. Even though the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has stated that bottled water is not safer or does not contain greater nutritive value than tap water (it may only contain some minerals as fluoride, calcium, magnesium but so does tap water), the common trend for "healthy" and "natural" things has turned customers' preferences in favor of "pure and natural" bottled water brands.

In the 80s (the midst of the movement for health and well-being), Perrier brand emphasized the origins and natural character of the product in its advertising - the "Naturally sparkling from the center of the Earth" ad and "Earth's first soft drink". The Evian label, containing an image of the French Alps, stayed unchanged for over 30 years. Evian's description on the official website contains phrases like "from the heart of the Alps", "a miracle of nature", "water is life" and so on. So do many other brands. The French food giant Danone, owning Volvic, Evian and Badoit, launched the organization Hydration for Health in 2007, which actually supports the myth that links bottled water to wellness. The company annually sponsors conferences devoted to the importance of water consumption for consumer's health (McCartney, 2011).

Even those brands that sell water taken from municipal water supply systems and then filter it in a plant provide special value to the customer by successfully linking their product to the health myths about “8 glasses” of water. In 2006 Pepsi launched the advertising campaign “Drink more water” for its brand Aquafina. Its motto on the Pepsi official website said:

“The more you drink the better you feel. It makes your body happy. Drink more water!”

Nestle has done the same for its brand “Nestle Pure Life” with its campaign “Better habits for a better life,” encouraging moms to get their families to drink more water (AdWorld, 2010). Interestingly, this myth provides an opportunity to feel passionate not only about high-priced brands of mineral or spring water, but it also makes ordinary brands special for people who cannot afford the more expensive ones and gives them special status in customers’ minds, because their intensive consumption (in contrast to just “mere” consumption) also provides benefits. It keeps body hydrated, makes skin vibrant looking, removes toxins.

Respected doctors confirm that it is very important to stay appropriately hydrated, especially in early and old age, particularly by drinking water (Chan, 2011). However there is the question if water is the ultimate recipe of health and beauty. The eternal human desire to be young and attractive develops special attachment to water brands promising those benefits. According to Ferrier (2001) the bottled water manufacturers openly admit that they benefit from labeling beverages such as diet soda and water as healthy products, but, nevertheless, the myth has made the industry stronger than ever.

6.2. Larger than water - Transformation through extension of brand functions

Bottled water is one of the products that have surpassed their primary functions – to satisfy a human need. It has successfully been transformed into a fashion accessory, a “label” for the person that carries it, a reflection of what consumers aspire to be. Companies have taken this everyday commodity and turned it into a remarkable product.

For a long time bottled water was considered as exactly what it claimed to be – still or sparkling liquid with a certain origin and taste. First it was consumed because it was believed to have curing powers (Mascha, 2006) and when it became largely commoditized, its marketers counted mostly on its origin, taste and functionality to attract consumers (see Appendix 1). This technique did sell more water but it failed to create loyal customers and to position water as something special that could be differentiated from the rest of the soft drinks that were also gaining popularity. There were more and more different bottled waters appearing on the market that claimed more exotic places of origin, more exceptional taste and a better fit as a table companion.

What propelled bottled water consumption into its remarkable state nowadays was the realization that bottled water could be more than what the label said – water. It has been transformed into much more – nowadays a bottle of water is a lifestyle and consumers express this with phrases like “I am a Perrier” (Sean, “Perrier”, 2011). It caters to the identity needs of the individual and provides the symbolic resources they need in order to signify their life aspirations and social roles (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). It is a token of a certain lifestyle and status (Wilk, 2006; Royte, 2008). Drinking a certain bottled water that

presents itself as “the fashionable choice” (Perrier, 2012), claims that it helps the consumer “live young” (Evian, 2012) or is put in the hands of particularly handsome and healthy-looking people, automatically transfers these alleged qualities to the person that is consuming it and enables him/her to publicly show that by drinking the product. It has become customary for people to carry the bottle everywhere with them and have it at a close reach so that they always have a visual proof of what they aspire to be that can be detected and deciphered by others – just like writing and sticking a label that announces what the person who wears it is like.

Bottled water companies have successfully recognized the consumer need for products that are symbolically rich enough to serve their identity projects and facilitate it by creating unique brands that can be easily distinguished by their bottles, colors or labels. The bottle of water has been turned into an accessory with the help of designers that transformed the product into a state-of-art object (see Appendix 3). It is now not only easily distinguishable but also aesthetically appealing, which adds up to its value as a conspicuous identifying mark. Not only are there numerous different varieties of water that cater to all kinds of people and their specific needs, but a person can nowadays get their own personalized bottle that will have their name on it (Wilk, 2006) and provide unique differentiation.

Bottled water has been turned into the ultimate solution to human needs – it has foregone its basic function to quench thirst and entered the realm of higher necessities of belonging, esteem and self-actualization (Maslow, 1954) to engage its consumers in a highly-involving intense relationship that results in passionate feelings toward the product and attachment, expressed with words like “love” (Stephanie, “Evian-Water”, 2012), “too good to be true” (Richard, “Perrier”, 2009), and pledging allegiance to the brand (Jeff, “Perrier”, 2010; Mona, “Perrier”, 2011; Rebecca, “Evian-Canada”, 2011). It is consumers’ partner in life – being there for them all the time, everywhere, reflecting or providing means of reflection of how they see themselves and more importantly – how they want others to see them.

6.3. Third party role - Transformation through Endorsement

Influencers endorse brands in one way or another. They bestow special attributes upon a simple commodity that it may have lacked otherwise and influence the image of a brand. Acceptance of a brand by well-recognized icons or authorities makes a brand outstanding compared to others and substantially affects consumer’s purchasing decisions.

In popular culture, an endorsement of a few can affect the thinking of many. Some people, media or organizations with influence significantly shape the customer's preferences without consciously pursuing such a purpose. (Brown and Hayes, 2008). Once Madonna starred in her famous sexual scene with a bottle of Evian in “Truth or Dare” (1991), Christina Aguilera drank Evian in front of a stadium of fans and high-profile models such as Megan Fox and Alessandra Ambrossio publicly admitted that Perrier reduces appetite and makes their skin smooth, consumptions of certain brand of bottled water became a trendy theme. We have discovered three notable groups of influencers that gave the bottled water industry its remarkable status: cultural icons, media and the hospitality industry.

Cultural icons such as movie stars, singers, and political leaders often roam beyond their immediate domain to offer social advice. Documents, linking high-profile celebrities to Evian or Perrier brands, confirm that cultural icons have a direct impact on identification of and shaping trends. Lady Gaga, Jenifer Lopez, Madonna, and Britney Spears systematically appear in gossip columns with their favorite bottled water. Teenager icons Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, and Tom Felton ('Harry Potter'), Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart ('Eclipse') consciously or unconsciously provide an example to their peers by keeping a bottle of Evian in their hands. Jean-Paul Gaultier and Christian Lacroix endorse the brand by designing haute-couture limited editions of Evian bottles. The photo of Barak Obama's speech with a bottle of Perrier standing on the table in front of him is published in leading newspapers and business journals. Members of "Evian" and "Perrier" brand communities openly discuss celebrities, their favorite brands of bottled water and way of consuming the product (Anna "Evian-Water", 2012; Jenny, "Evian-Water", 2012) Cultural icons appear to be a trusted third party and opinion leaders that exercise influence that is out of proportion.

Media is the second powerful influencer that affects the transformation of customers' attitude towards bottled water. The symbolic meaning of brands, going beyond simple water consumption, is delivered to the customers in TV-programs, articles, advertising, and viral videos through mass-media communication (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). Once cultural icons have endorsed certain brands, those products land in online and offline magazines. Evian brand was canonized by Gotham magazine in the 'IN' column; then it was described as "the haute water of choice" by Hampton magazine and very soon appeared on the beauty pages of "Heat" near the picture of Gwyneth Paltrow (Segal, 2005), to name just a few examples of how media participation facilitated the fast spread of the idea of bottled water "coolness" around the world. However, efficient mediated process arises only around "hot" social issues whether it is fashion, politics or health. It always involves two-way rotation of meaning between consumers and brands: themes, appearing in the media always reflect people's desires and anxieties (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). The Nestle Pure Life campaign, featuring the TV Spanish commentator Cristina Saralegui, raised the topic of the importance of water in preventing health problems like diabetes and obesity (AdWeek, 2010). The following TV commercial featured a mother in supermarket weighing the choice between bottled water and a sweet carbonated drink, finally picking the water (AdWeek, 2010). Taking into account various social and cultural themes, interesting to customers, media endorsement contributes a lot to the process of the transformation of bottled water and brings a new value to brands.

The hospitality industry is the third noticeable influencer that substantially affects the transformation of people's attitude towards bottled water. It include such third parties as hotels, restaurants, cruise lines, theme parks, etc. First of all, they popularize bottled water as such because they offer it instead of tap water. Second, they fully support the image of uniqueness and exclusivity of some brands of bottled water, because it is incredibly profitable for the industry. Waiters are trained how to encourage customers' ordering high-priced brands and how to serve it afterwards to turn the process of consuming into exciting experience. As a result, water stops being a simple commodity and becomes a special product.

6.4. Water rules - Transformation through Etiquettization

Nowadays the consumption of bottled water has turned into a ceremony. It has its own rules and rituals that involve the people drinking it in deep sense-making activities. Bottled water has become a part of new religion – always there during daily work, exercise and relaxation. A person cannot just enjoy a glass of water by simply pouring and drinking it anymore – elaborate rules on when, where and how water should be consumed have appeared. This new water etiquette dictates what temperature to use when serving and consuming water, how to prepare the ice for it, the glasses that should be used, how to recognize a high-end product by its package and cap, how to store the water, how to conduct a water tasting, etc. (Mascha, 2006). While before bottled water was a mere ritual artifact that communicated the higher symbolic power of different beliefs, it has nowadays turned into a new religion with its own consumption etiquette. It has departed from being a part of daily rituals like dining and indulging in alcohol consumption (see Appendix 1) and become a meaningful participant in people's lives on its own.

Bottled water has achieved a status of a culturally-iconic product through etiquettization, which includes the creation of an etiquette for its consumption and its ritualization. Third parties have played an important part in this process by creating scripts and presenting artifacts (Rook, 1985) for consumers to use, like special ways to drink the water, recipes with it, accessories that make drinking a glass of water look like a special ritual performed by an educated audience. The media constantly shows bottled water on conferences, in the gym, consumed in specific ways in movies and shows. The cultural icons incorporate it in their routines giving it new expressive symbolism. The hospitality industry adopts bottled water etiquette and turns it into status consumption not only boosting their own business but also affecting people's decisions and views on the product. Restaurants and hotels pick up suggestions from companies like Nestle how to serve bottled water to make it look special and capture people's attention and admiration and effectively bring this etiquette to consumers, who readily adopt this guidance and incorporate it into rituals to show the special place their favourite water has in their lives. The new rules include combinations and specific ways of drinking bottled water, places and times to enjoy a bottle of the sparkling or still liquid, people to share it with, creating all four elements that are necessary for the emergence of an activity as a ritual (Rook, 1985). The activity is connected to affection and pleasure and is easy to share with others; thus, the etiquette creates a common devoted conscience that resembles the religious societies sharing their ways of worshiping a religious guide. A mundane activity like staying hydrated and more specifically consuming bottled water has achieved a ritualistic status (Frank, "Perrier", 2011). It is the thing you always bring to the gym, a customary "participant" on conferences, and the thing that always gets packed in a travelling bag and consumers hardly ever realize that they have acquired these customs from imitating what they are shown and what they have read about in the media or seen in a movie.

6.5. Emotions in a Bottle - Transformation through Reflection

Brands become remarkable if they reflect consumer's attitude towards certain ideas, people, places, and events that possess a certain level of significance for customers. People develop special relationships with brands of bottled water through mental connections between personal sensations, ideas, or memories and

brand consumption. Even such a trivial product as a bottle of water can be exceptional if it develops deep emotions, touching upon personal life experience related to the product.

The most common example is when the brand reflects certain ideas. Customers choose one or another brand taking into account the picture of who they wish to be – sporty, young and energetic or aestheticians who have impeccable taste. People who purchase a given brand stop being just consumers and turn into devoted members of one community linked by common interest. Another example of why consumers purchase specific brand of water, is because it reflects their feelings towards loved ones/friends/relatives. The brands evoke associations with ex girlfriend that “always drunk Your water” (Thomas, “Evian-Canada”, 2011) or wife who already passed away (Tom, “Perrier”, 2010). Consumers automatically project their relationship to loved ones on their relationship with the brand and as a result the brand becomes special and acquires the same feelings that the consumers felt towards the people they associate it with. To some extent this behavior refers to Belk’s (1988) concept of sacralization, turning profane objects that belonged to loved people into sacred. However, we think that a brand can be turned into something special not only through physical transmission of the product from one person to another (gift-giving, inheritance) but also thorough mental attachment such as memories and associations because bottled water has never been discussed as a gift or object of inheritance in people’s themes. Developing of commitment to the brand through reflection of consumers’ feelings toward places or events is a rarer practice among water enthusiasts, but it also takes place. Community members mention vacations, homeland and other places where they enjoyed certain brand of water and their association of the product with those places and events.

During the application of this mechanism of transformation symbolic value of a brand shifts from the commonly accepted one, based on socio-cultural norms, to individually developed brand meaning. In consequence, the consumer establishes a level of relationship with the brand somewhere in between Fournier’s (1998) “intimacy” and “self-connection”: the brand is strongly connected to life identity projects and reflects a deep level of intimacy that makes it irreplaceable, compared to its competitors. Therefore, brand attachment appears not on the basis of high versus low product involvement, but as result of distortion of the ultimate brand meaning according to the personal life themes.

6.6. Knowing your water - Transformation through Cultivation

Bottled water has long surpassed its original assignation to satisfy thirst and has become the object of aesthetics, an expression of taste and status. Connoisseurship and signifying artifacts have emerged to give a special meaning to its consumption and consumers. People’s desire to differentiate themselves and appear as knowledgeable and sophisticated has given cultural power to bottled water and transformed it into an iconic product.

When people thought about bottled water in the past what crossed their minds was usually that it was exactly what its name stood for – water in a bottle, as simple as that. It could be still or sparkling, coming from France or from the spring next town but it was just water and there were only as many adjectives to describe it – refreshing, fresh, delicious, healthy (see Appendix 1). It could not and did not inspire long talks about flavor or deep and sophisticated knowledge about its characteristics like art and wine. Neither

did it require any expertise on how to drink or serve it – it was just poured into a glass and drunk in order to satisfy a basic need or in the best case – to accompany an elaborate meal.

However, this has dramatically changed during the last decade. With the appearance of more and more different kinds of water on the market with distinguished origin, taste and brand stories and marketing, companies have facilitated a change in the commodity from the simple water of the past to a sophisticated product that is consumed with much care and attention, and the market has begun to resemble quite closely that of wine.

In order to be able to understand the artistic nature of the new water consumption, new kinds of experts have arisen – the water connoisseurs. A connoisseur is a person with great knowledge about the nuances in a certain field, which provides him/her with social recognition and status and distances him/her from the masses (Holt, 1998; Manzo, 2010). The practice of connoisseurship has primarily been associated with art (Melius, 2011), to be later internationally recognized as a term connected to gastronomy and different types of fine food and drinks like wine, beer, tea and coffee (Sheraton, 1982; Manzo, 2010). It has recently been expanded to more products like oil (McGee, 2007) and bottled water (Mascha, 2006). Consumers of bottled water have started to appropriate and express connoisseurship knowledge and practices in order to claim their high cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984; Holt, 1998; Mascha, 2012; Khaykin, 2012). Being able to distinguish a bottle of water from the rest and speak about it with expert terms gives the person the social recognition that they are tasteful, “have an eye” for aesthetics and possess the “right” knowledge to differentiate themselves from the masses.

From an ordinary commodity that was consumed without much thinking in order to keep people alive, water has become subject of connoisseurship practices and rituals. There are annual water tastings, classes that teach how to serve water and combine it with food, water menus in restaurants, advisors that guide the choice of glassware, even “water bars” which offer exotic brands served by professional water sommeliers (Mascha, 2006; Wilk, 2006). The market has become saturated with all varieties of water and new names and terms have been invented to communicate the fine nuances and differences between the different products, such as “bold” that has a detailed explanation to specify exactly what kind of water the term stands for (Mascha, 2006). The contents of the water in terms of elements and bubbles and its characteristics such as hardness and pH factor are as important as the water “story” in distinguishing the brands (Mascha, 2006; Royte, 2006). All these practices and knowledge have made it possible for people to choose the right water for them and for the occasion and elaborately contemplate on their choice, making water sound as the most sophisticated and complex beverage in the world, igniting interest and inspiring more and more consumers to join the group of the “enlightened” (Jenifer, “Perrier”, 2010; Roger, “Perrier”, 2011).

6.7. Model of Transformation of Bottled Water

In order to illustrate the interrelation of the concepts presented above, their sequence in the transformation process, the external forces that influence it, and the different parties that take part in it, we developed the following model (see Figure 1).

The model explains how the transformation of bottled water occurs. There are three main parties involved in the process: companies, consumers and influencers. Influencers are defined as third parties that have an impact on the popularization of brands. They include media, cultural icons (celebrities, politicians, sports stars, etc.) and the hospitality industry (restaurants, lodging, event planning). All participants contribute to certain extend to the changing of society’s attitude towards bottled water consumption.

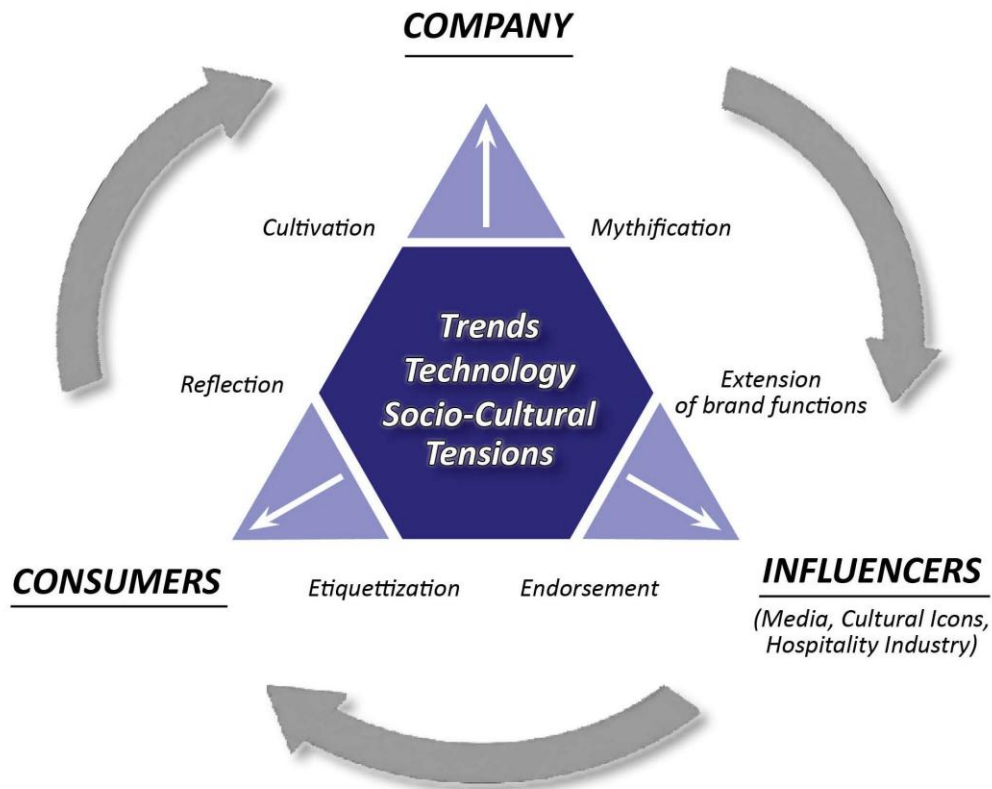


Figure 1. Transformation of Bottled Water

External forces such as trends, technology and socio-cultural tensions are the kernel of this transformation. They equally affect all the parties involved in the process, as well as the mechanisms themselves. The identification of these forces is the primary task in the process of turning a commodity into a remarkable brand, because they represent the main drives of changes. Taking into account the socio-cultural context, companies initiate mythification, linking the brand to a reality desirable to customers. People become interested in the brand because it provides a solution to their anxieties through simple action – the consumption of the product. Once people develop interest in a product as such, the process of transformation reaches another stage – extension of the brand meaning. During this stage primary advantages of the brand (purity, naturalness, and healthiness) are complemented with more purely symbolical ones (representing the brand owner as a person who cares about his/her health). Companies invest a lot of resources to support this process (attractive package, advertising, promotion).

Bottled water starts to be used not only for its safety and purity features but also for self-expression. The next stage, endorsement, is characterized by contribution of third parties in the process of transformation. People, media, and organizations with influence change the perception of certain brands simply by showing or using them. A bottle of water, appearing on the pages of magazines in the hands of well-known people automatically moves to the class of trendy and high-end products. Restaurants and hotels also contribute to the process by offering bottled water to customers instead of tap water and adding new expressive dimensions to its consumption. Influencers not only endorse certain brands, but also push bottled water on the next stage of transformation, etiquettization. They demonstrate how and under what conditions the brand can be used. For example, the illustration of a conference table with bottled water in front of each member on TV leads to further repercussions of this ritualization in consumer life. Carrying bottled water in the hands instead of putting it in a bag is another practice, launched by influencers. The last, most illustrative example is serving bottled water in restaurants with special rules. People have gotten used to this etiquette during last decades and perceive it as a regular custom. Consumers, as the other two participants, participate in all the stages of the transformation of bottled water but they most actively contribute to the process during the next two stages – reflection and cultivation. Reflection involves consumers' developing a special relationship with a brand based on the importance of the symbolical resources provided by the brand according to the personal experience of the consumers. The brand may reflect consumers' attitude towards certain ideas, people and places and, therefore, bring additional symbolic value. It may become special because it is associated with home and parents or because it reminds them about loved ones. Brand attachment appears as a result of the reflection of brand meaning through the lenses of personal themes. The last stage involves consumers' self-expression through cultivation, developing of a nuanced knowledge about water, and connoisseurship. Consumers alienate themselves from the masses by demonstrating high aesthetic preferences and ability to distinguish the different kinds of bottled water and by using this knowledge to gain status as possessing high culture capital.

During the whole transformation process each of the participants develops new initiatives and new attitude towards bottled water consumption. As a result, new themes and anxieties appear. This leads to reconsidering the process of mythification and extension of brand meaning in the new direction. e.g. the use of bottles water as an accessory pushed companies to design high-couture bottles and cooperate with famous designers. That is why our model is presented in the form of a circle that symbolizes a constant rotation of the brand meaning between companies, influencers and companies. The transformation of the brand is a continuous process that follows the changes in culture and society and constantly moves with them to better address the changing context and needs.

7. CONCLUSION

The chapter summarizes our findings that were revealed in the above parts, answers the research question of the study and discusses the contributions of the paper. It specifies how the model of transformation that encompasses the six mechanisms, the drivers and the involved parties corresponds to the purpose of the study and what are its theoretical and practical applications of our research.

Nowadays consumers are overwhelmed with the number of commodities that they can choose from and that constantly demand their attention in all spheres of their lives. Such broad magnitude of options often makes people indifferent, taking goods for granted and habitually consuming them without putting much thought into their purchases. However, there are exceptions that break the apathy and turn into remarkable products and part of culture, deeply involving their consumers. Such product is bottled water and by looking at this bulk commodity that used to be a low-involving, we have discovered six mechanisms that transform consumption from mundane to remarkable. The processes of mythification, extension of brand functions, endorsement, etiquettization, reflection and cultivation are employed by companies, influencers and consumers to successfully change a product into a highly involving, symbolic cultural artifact.

Based on historiographic research of documents, case study of two particular bottled water companies and netnographic study of consumer communities we have built a model that summarizes and visually presents our findings how a transformation from mundane to remarkable consumption occurs. It is a process driven by three parties – companies, influencers and consumers, which work together to put in and take symbolic meanings from a product like bottled water, making it the center of a cultural consumption that goes beyond mere satisfaction of a need into an iconic expression of desires and aspirations. Trends, technological development and socio-cultural tensions trigger such transformation and affect it at every stage. Companies pick up new discoveries and trends and, in attempt to answer consumer demands and anxieties, create myths around the product and extend its brand functions to new symbolic dimensions. The media, cultural icons and relevant industries then step in to popularize the good and establish and show certain rituals around it and thus further influence its consumption. Last but not least, the consumers create special connection with the product by associating it with important for them relationships and ideas, and apply cultivating practices like connoisseurship to distinguish themselves as knowledgeable and skilled experts. What further facilitates the process is consumers' constant search for new ways to express themselves and the establishment of symbolically rich products that they adopt and transfer its signifying value to their lives. The process goes over and over again through the six mechanisms as changes in society and culture occur and demand new values and signifiers.

We believe that we have theoretically and practically contributed to marketing research and branding by building a historical perspective to a subject that has not been widely researched yet – the transformation of bulk commodities. By tracing the change in time and revealing the mechanisms that drive the consumption of bottled water we have composed a new theoretical construct within the Consumer Culture Theory paradigm that brings together separate concepts into a holistic model of the transition. We have combined the ideas of cultural branding, brand relationships, involvement, aesthetics, taste, cultivation and connoisseurship to better explain a phenomenon that has been intensively occurring the last two decades and is attracting the attention of more and more researchers in the field of marketing and consumer insights.

One of the main theoretical contributions of our study is investigation of how Cultural Branding Theory can be implemented by low-involvement classes of goods in order to transform into cultural icons. Our study shows that not only high involvement products but also bulk commodities can invest symbols and meanings created in society into brands, thus, creating resources that consumers can use for their identity construction (Holt, 2004). Since our model is based on socio-historical tensions in society as a core of the transformation, it can serve as a theoretical tool to be used to analyze and understand how trivial goods are turned to remarkable brands in its cultural context.

In contrast to previous research on low-involvement products (McWilliams, 1997; Coupland, 2005; Ekström, 2010) suggesting that consumer attachment to bulk commodities is habitual and marketers have to support this unconscious purchasing behavior with in-store promotion, we introduce alternative view how to increase consumer involvement – by engineering symbolical resources into brands. We believe that conscious consumption that allows consumers to make sense of their life is an essential part of the transformation from mundane to remarkable. Even such trivial commodity like bottled water can become special if it catalyzes consumer experiences through the mechanisms that the research has revealed. Consequently, our study contributes to brand involvement theory by introducing a theoretical tool that can be used to reveal how consumer engagement is strengthened. Its practical implications for branding include the use of the mechanisms, applied to create a strong brand and proven ways to engage consumers and increase their attachment to the brand.

The present study complements Belk's (1988) theory about the sacralization of objects as well. Whereas, Belk suggests that a profane object that belongs or is connected to loved ones can be turned into sacred through physical actions like gift-giving and inheritance, we propose another way of sacralizing based on mental associations and projection of personal relationships into the brand-consumer relation.

Last but not least, our research contributes to the existing theory on bottled water and its marketing and consumption by departing from the usually employed theoretical stance of criticizing the industry and discussing consumer resistance, in order to provide a different, neutral perspective on what has made it so successful and propelled bottled water into the group of iconic products. We see our results as particularly fitting Wilk's (2006) views, further developing his idea of bottled water as a cultural commodity in the light of CCT and adding new dimensions to the image of the product he creates. Our study shows more detailed particular brand qualities that make the product special and unites industry history and facts into a coherent connected process that reveals additional influencers that have contributed to the successful transformation of bottled water. Furthermore, it expands Wilk's view of consumers' attitude towards the product reflected mainly in their resistance, to show other ways consumers relate to the product – by projecting personal relations to the brand and cultivating expertise.

Our model is built on the study of bottled water but we believe that it can be generalized into a universal model of the transformation and applied to the other bulk commodities as well. It is easy to interpret and follow and will provide a good guidance for the exploration of such transition of other everyday consumed goods that have undergone or are currently experiencing a change from mundane to remarkable consumption. It can also be practically used by marketers to adapt their branding strategies better in order to build strong culturally relevant brands with iconic characteristics and highly engaging properties. The

model can even serve as a tool and guideline to trigger the transition for goods like flour and manage their transformation into symbolic products.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The last chapter presents our study's limitations which are mainly preoccupied with the context of research, choice of methods and data collection, and proposes directions for further research that would enrich the findings of the paper and might provide new insights on the subject.

In the present study, we have researched and discussed the transformation process of turning bulk commodities to remarkable brands. We have found rich and substantial empirical data to support our theories and have been able to build a new theoretical model based on it. However, there are some limitations of our study that should be acknowledged. Our research question was quite broad and by narrowing it to investigate the transformation of one product category, we still feel that there are particular areas that can be addressed deeper in certain aspects in future research. We believe that there are substantial differences in the consumption of bottled water in different countries. To a large extent it depends on the natural resources of the country, on the state of municipal water supply systems and on the historical and socio-cultural background. In order to gain richer insights in consumer attitude towards bottled water consumption separate studies of different cultural regions could significantly contribute to the topic since it became obvious from our data that cultural and geographical differences affect the process of transformation.

Furthermore, the selected brands of bottled water represent a quite narrow segment of the bottled water industry and, therefore, consumption practices may differ for brands in other categories (e.g. different price categories, different kinds of water). We are convinced that an investigation of how new low-priced brands of bottled water (particularly purified water) become exceptional would be an interesting direction for future research and might reveal valuable insights that will supplement additionally our research. Moreover, our choice of official Facebook groups in the netnography part may have constrained the investigation of real consumers' attitude towards particular brands of water. Therefore, other methods such as personal or structured interview with members of brand communities can be conducted in order to gain a better understanding of consumers' motives towards bottled water consumption.

We consider as a main disadvantage of our research the fact that we could gather insights on the bottled water transformation phenomenon only from international, open, English written documents. We had to consciously exclude many comments and ads in French in fear of misinterpretation and those could add further theoretical layers to the research.

Finally, our study does not address the recent movement against the use of plastic and the growing pressure on the bottled water industry from the consumer and media perspectives. We did not pursue research of this issue because we believe it is not directly related to our research question, since our data did not unanimously state so, in fact our netnographic study revealed that consumers are not preoccupied with it at all. However, further research of the industry should not ignore this trend since it might turn into a driving force for substantial changes and profoundly influence consumers' attitudes towards the product in the future.

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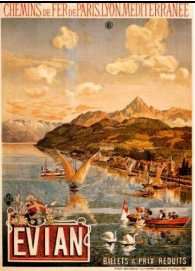



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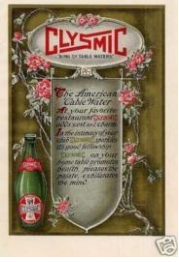

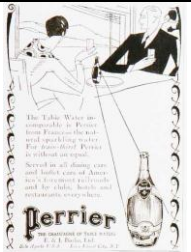
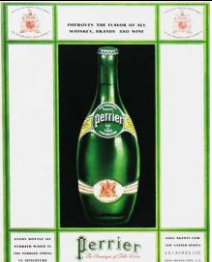
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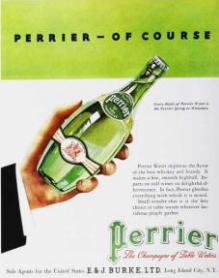



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APPENDIX 1. Evolution of Bottled Water Ads (1901-2012)



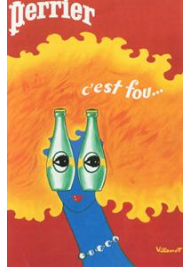

Picture, brand, year	The main message (interpretation)	Linguistic expressions in the ad	Symbolical expressions	Source
 <p>Evian Resort, 1901</p>	<p>Evian as a good place for relaxation and recreation, which can be reached affordably with P.L.M. Railway Company – third-party ads, designed by the master of the classic French travel posters H. Tanconville for P.L.M. and printed in stone-lithography, advertising more a travel destination than water, contributing to popularization of the brand due to huge advertising campaign.</p>	<p>EVIAN. “Tickets with discount”, “Railway of Paris, Lyon, Mediterranean”</p>	<p>Ad features beautiful nature of Evian resort: Geneva Lake, Mountains, and people doing entertaining activities. Relaxing and recreational atmosphere.</p>	<p>Yahoo Shopping http://shopping.yahoo.com/880365742-18x24-inches-evian-by-tanconville/</p>
 <p>Evian Bottled Water, 1910</p>	<p>“Evian is high-end water for wealthy people. It is available to customers at the Evian resort”. Actually the main idea of this ad may be confusing to customer: it symbolical message differ from linguistic one. While the picture presents bottled water as classy product, slogan advertises Evian resort.</p>	<p>“Summer in Evian. Season from 15 May till 15 of October(fr.)”</p>	<p>A bottle of mineral water walking with a king's crown and cape along a table with well-dressed people sitting beside it.</p>	<p>eBay – trade site http://www.ebay.com/itm/1910-F-Fabiano-Litho-AD-Postcard-Evian-Cachat-Water-/230494524531#ht_500wt_969</p>
 <p>Londonberry Bottled Water, 1910</p>	<p>“Londonderry is the best refreshing and healthful drink in any part of your day” Ad encourages reader to drink water as often as possible. Refreshing and healthful qualities are advertised. Table water for everybody.</p>	<p>“Drink it in the morning, at midday and at night. Drink it all day, all times, always drink Londonderry”, “Refreshing and healthful”, “The choice of all who select only the best”</p>	<p>Big picture of water in the foreground and 3 pictures describing peoples activities 'at day, night and midday' behind. Pictures on the left side and message on the right side. The name of the company is clearly seen below the ad.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintage-ads.com/AdDetail.asp?ItemNum=1910-008</p>
 <p>White Rock, 1910</p>	<p>White Rock is the best table bottled water; it is the right water for special occasions; it stands out and people show respect to it by standing up.</p>	<p>“The World’s Best Table Water”</p>	<p>Water bottle on the foreground; people standing up drinking it – solemn look of a ritual; formal clothes - the occasion looks special; waiter with a stack of bottles waiting at the background.</p>	<p>Pinterest http://pinterest.com/pin/15551561182748424/</p>


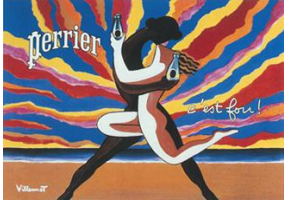
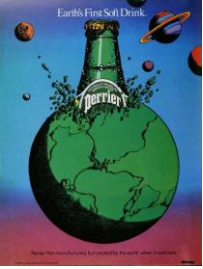

 <p>Clysmic Table Water, 1912</p>	<p>Clysmic is a high-end American table water for every occasion (home, restaurant club)</p>	<p>“King of Table Water”, “The American Table water”, “At your favourite restaurant Clysmic adds zest and charm. In the intimacy of your club Clysmic sparkles it is good fellowship. Clysmic on your home table promotes healths, pleases the palate and exhilarates the mind”</p>	<p>Big red logo on grey the background. Big bottle of water and pink flowers around the message. The message is written in Italic script that makes message more sophisticated.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1910s/2</p>
 <p>Buffalo Lithia Spring Water, 1913</p>	<p>“Mineral water is a good medicine for people who have problem with their health (Efficiency proved by doctors)” Article relies on two well respected doctors who recommend use mineral water to prevent and treat different diseases.</p>	<p>The most effective of mineral waters in Bright's disease, Albuminuria, Renal Calculi, Gout, Reumathism, etc.</p>	<p>Black and white ad, newspaper style, Only message without pictures, scientific style, looks as an respected article in magazine.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1910s</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1920</p>	<p>“Perrier is the high quality product. It is served in all foremost places in America” Introduction of Perrier linking it to its origin; suggesting that it is the best for travel (“train-thirst”); stating that it is served everywhere.</p>	<p>“Perrier - the champagne of table waters”, “The table water incomparable is Perrier from France - the natural sparkling water”, “For train-thirst it is inequal. Served in all dining cars and buffet cars of America's foremost railroads and by clubs, hotels and restaurants everywhere.”</p>	<p>Black and white ad. Sophisticated picture of couple in a train. Both are well dressed (man is in a business suit) and drinking water from glasses. Bottle stay on the table and projected to the foreground.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1920s/7</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1920</p>	<p>Perrier is the perfect companion for drinks – it improves their taste. It is also a natural drink since it comes directly from the original water spring.</p>	<p>“The champagne of table water”; improves the taste of whiskey, brandy and wine; “Every bottle of Perrier water is the Perrier spring in miniature”.</p>	<p>Colored ad. Big bottle of water in the centre of composition, big message and name of the agent(company) in US</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1920s/11</p>

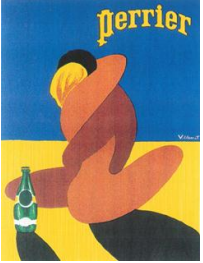


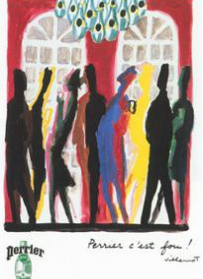

 <p>Perrier, 1920</p>	<p>Perrier is the the top water, obvious choice – no need to ask or wonder. It is the perfect companion for all kinds of drinks.</p>	<p>“The champagne of table waters”; “Perrier – of course”; “Every bottle of Perrier water is the Perrier spring in miniature”; improves the taste of drinks – “glorifies everything with which it is mixed”; “the first choice”.</p>	<p>A hand handing over a Perrier bottle. White background – the green Perrier is standing out. A big sign on a green background – drawing attention.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1920s/14</p>
 <p>Evian water for feeding-bottles, 1935</p>	<p>“Evian is so pure and soft that it is ideally suited for infant formula”. In 1935 Evian decided to extend its target group and started to produce water for babies. Evian posters described the product as “water for feeding-bottles” that allowed drinking without boiling due to bacteria-free purity (Evian, 2012)</p>	<p>“Water for little ones(fr.)”</p>	<p>Ad contains a picture of a baby with a huge bottle with pacifier in the foreground. It is not clearly seen if milk or water is in the bottle due to its white color; thus, water can be easily considered as soft as milk.</p>	<p>Evian Official Web-Site http://www.evian.com/en_INT/94-An-extraordinary-saga-of-health-and-lifestyles</p>
 <p>White Rock Water, 1930s</p>	<p>“White Rock Water is a good highballs mixer”. Actually soda abilities are advertised. White Rock Water is not just water it is soda water, with bubbles. It taste much better than regular water,</p>	<p>“If we could make bubbles like that”, “On the alkaline side. Better for you”</p>	<p>Fishes that are jealous of bubbles near them in the glass. Glass with highballs (likely mixed with White rock water) near the bottle and explanation of the advantages of White Rock Water is presented below the picture.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1930s/14</p>
 <p>Canada Dry Sparkling Water, 1937</p>	<p>Canada Dry Sparkling Water is refreshing drink thanks to high-quality bubbles inside.</p>	<p>“Fresh at the finish!”, “Water with the Champagne sparkle”</p>	<p>black and white ad, animated bottle and glass with sparkling water and splash inside</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1930s/13</p>

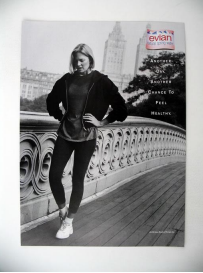



 <p>Bottled Poland Water, 1938</p>	<p>The main message is that it is not safety to drink ANY water; therefore, readers are asked to consume Poland bottled water</p>	<p>“Water, water everywhere - but is it safe to drink?”, “Wherever you go, at home or abroad, you know you're safe when you drink Poland water. One of the purest and most delicious - natural waters known. Properly neutral - neither acid, not alkaline. Sold literally everywhere in sivilised world”, “Approved by the council of foods of the Americal medical association”.</p>	<p>Black and white ad. Bottle on the foreground and ship with palm trees (symbolize travelling) behind.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1930s/4</p>
 <p>White Rock Water, 1941</p>	<p>White Rock Water helps you overcome hangover.</p>	<p>From the mineral springs to you, "I see to it that you enjoy your highballs tonight and feel fit for your work tomorrow". "The protective, natural mineral salts in White Rock combat acidity...make you feel better tomorrow."</p>	<p>There is a smaller picture of Psyche, the barely clothed and carefully arranged trademark fairy, in her standard pose kneeling on the rock labeled White Rock looking into the still waters. There is also a larger picture of her flying, while holding seven bottles of White Rock to her naked chest in protective way.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1940s/13</p>
 <p>Canada Dry Water, 1942</p>	<p>Canada Dry Water is very good mixer for highballs thanks to babbles, produced as result secret “Pin-Point Carbonation” Water tastes good because it is sparkling.</p>	<p>“Sounds as there is a good host around”, “Pin-Point Carbonation – the famous Canada Dry Method of achieving of livelier and longer-lasting zest”, “Buy United States bonds and stamps”</p>	<p>The ad features a man keeping a highball likely mixed with Canada Dry Water. The big bottle of water on the foreground. Ad is male oriented and Canada Dry Water is presented as certain secret ingredient that only members of man club can appreciate properly.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1940s/29</p>
 <p>Canada Dry, 1945</p>	<p>Canada Dry Water is good for making different sodas and sparkling drinks at home</p>	<p>“It is easy to make sodas and sparkling drinks at home!” +3 recipes are listed</p>	<p>Bottle of water and 3 glasses with different drinks near, girl drinking highball from the glass</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1940s/21</p>

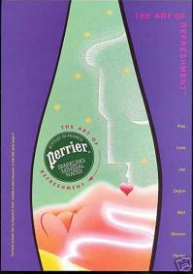




 <p>White rock water, 1946</p>	<p>White Rock Water is good for consumption with alcohol. It prevents hangover.</p>	<p>“Taste the difference tonight”, “Feel the difference tomorrow”</p>	<p>The ad feature a dinner of beautiful and wealthy people in a restaurant. They all are well-dressed and happy. Likely, the restaurant is very expensive. Near there is a picture of a man who is riding a bicycle (reader assumes that it is next morning) He is happy and full of energy.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1940s/31</p>
 <p>Evervess Sparkling Water, 1947</p>	<p>Evervess Sparkling Water is the best water for less price. It is very good mixer for hightballs.</p>	<p>“Makes drinks taste better - costs less”. The headline. referring to the plane owner, says <u>“He pays \$6,000 for his plane...yet only 5 cents for the best sparkling water”</u>.</p>	<p>The ad contain a drawing of three people sitting next to a small yellow airplane parked on a grassy field. Snow on the logo.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1940s/36</p>
 <p>Canada Dry Water Taste Tells, 1953</p>	<p>The taste of Canada Dry is something that really makes a difference.</p>	<p>“Taste tells”, “The life of your drink – The drink of your life”, “Use sparkling with blend ability”, “Makes drinks taste better”</p>	<p>The main focus on the huge glass of drink in the forefront and couple near it. The ad is in the form of dialogue in order to explain to ordinary user advantages of Canada dry water and why buy it. The woman asks man what is blend ability and what is carbonation and man explains</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1950s/12</p>
 <p>Squirt, 1954</p>	<p>Squirt is a best drink to quench your thirst. In contrast to sweet drinks you never have after thirst with squirt</p>	<p>“If sweet drinks leave you thirsty – SWITCH TO SQUIRT”, “Never an after-thirst!”, “Fresh clean taste. As you drink Squirt ... fresh clean taste. After you drink Squirt ... Never after thirst!”</p>	<p>The ad features smiling well-dressed young woman with a glass of water with ice. (Water is consumed from a glass). Another picture is a big bottle of water and happy child near it. The last image of a man with many bottles around. Likely, he can not quench the thirst of sweet water</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1950s/20</p>

 <p>Evian, 1962</p>	<p>Evian water is pure water coming from spring.</p>	<p>“Spring Water. So pure, So light”</p>	<p>Ad contains images of a pigeon and a baby who both symbolize innocence and purity.</p>	<p>Poster Auctioneer – trade image site http://www.poster-auctioneer.com/poster_en/product_details_hop.php?id=6706</p>
 <p>Squirt, 1964</p>	<p>Squirt water is recommended as a mixer for highballs.</p>	<p>“Only 17 more sipping days till Christmas”, “A fresh approach to mixed drinks”, “Squirt treats whiskey, gin and vodka with respect”</p>	<p>The ad is made in green color (likely, it symbolize freshness). It feature a bottle of water and glass with a drink near covered by water halfway.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1960s/39</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1976</p>	<p>Perrier is a way to look at life. It shows you another reality and provides you with a fresh way of seeing everything.</p>	<p>“C’est fou” – French for “It’s crazy”</p>	<p>A drawing of a woman in bright unusual colors, having two Perrier bottles instead of glasses.</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thefpiritofPERRIER.html</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1977</p>	<p>Perrier as precious and expressive enough to be worn as jewellery. It is what will be seen about you, what is important in the look.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>A drawing of a woman wearing Perrier bottles as jewellery and drinking a glass of water; bright colored background; the woman is in black and almost featureless.</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thefpiritofPERRIER.html</p>


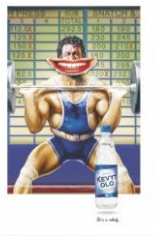


 <p>Perrier Natural from the Centre of Earth, 1979</p>	<p>Perrier is entirely natural – it comes straight from the blue hearth of the earth; it is pure – the water pours directly into the bottle without going through anything else.</p>	<p>“Naturally sparkling from the center of the Earth”</p>	<p>A drawing of the earth layers with water coming out from underground and filling a Perrier bottle.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1970s/3</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1980</p>	<p>Perrier brings people together and colors the world; it is associated with love, spontaneity and passion.</p>	<p>“C’est fou” – French for “It’s crazy”</p>	<p>A drawing of two bodies in an embrace, each holding a Perrier bottle, with a very colorful and unusual sky in the background.</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thespiritofPERRIER.html</p>
 <p>Perrier Created by Earth, 1980s</p>	<p>Perrier is natural – it comes straight from inside the Earth, emerging out of the ground; its greenness relates it to the green planet.</p>	<p>“Earth’s first soft drink”; “Not manufactured but created by the earth when it was new”</p>	<p>A drawing of a green planet Earth with a Perrier bottle springing out of it.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1980s/5</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1981</p>	<p>Perrier is in the center of the party, there is a bottle in every hand – it is the ultimate party accessory; the bodies become undistinguishable but the bottle is always clearly there.</p>	<p>“C’est fou” – French for “It’s crazy”</p>	<p>A drawing of a colorful mix of people that appear as one organism with a lot of hands holding Perrier bottles.</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thespiritofPERRIER.html</p>



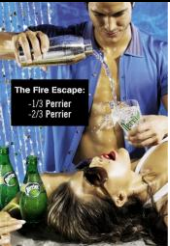


 <p>Perrier, 1981</p>	<p>Perrier is there for you in all circumstances; it draws associations with love and sex – it is the means that get you there.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>A drawing of two twisted bodies and a Perrier bottle next to them.</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thepiritofPERRIER.html</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1981</p>	<p>Perrier takes you where you want on waves of fresh water; it is a means to having fun.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>A drawing of a boat with sales made of Perrier bottles.</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thepiritofPERRIER.html</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1982</p>	<p>Launching of new flavors - the new flavoured waters are shown as “children” of the original one, belonging to the same family and thus possessing the same qualities.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>A drawing of three smaller Perrier bottles with different flavors next to the original one, which is in the shadow.</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thepiritofPERRIER.html</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1983</p>	<p>Perrier is in the heart of the party; lighting up the people having fun.</p>	<p>“C’est fou” – French for “It’s crazy”</p>	<p>A drawing of people at a party with Perrier bottles as the chandelier.</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thepiritofPERRIER.html</p>
 <p>Perrier, 1983</p>	<p>Association with art – Perrier is art.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Perrier bottles drawn in Andy Warhol’s style</p>	<p>Perrier – official corporate website http://www.perrier.com/en/thepiritofPERRIER.html</p>






 <p>Evian, 1989</p>	<p>The main message of Evian that time was 'If you want to be a healthy person, drink Evian'.</p> <p>Evian ads featured absolutely gorgeous people working out or just after working out in their sweaty and skin tight clothes'. The main message links Evian to health.</p>	<p>'Another day, another chance to feel healthy'.</p>	<p>Young attractive woman makes her morning run. She is skinny and looks pretty tired; likely she has been working out hard. Logo of Evian is in the corner. Actually ad does not tell that Evian water makes you healthy, reader is supposed to come up himself with this brilliant idea.</p>	<p>eBay – trade site http://www.ebay.com/itm/1989-Evian-Water/230494524531#ht_500wt_969</p>
 <p>Evian, 1992</p>	<p>Evian brand support all activities connected to sport. It is drink for all who likes sport.</p>	<p>“EVIAN Official sponsor of the 1992 US Olympic Team”</p>	<p>This ad combines together traditional brand emblem of Evian –French Alps and an emblem of Olympic games – five rings.</p>	<p>http://www.delcampe.net/page/item/id,0167410030,language,E.html</p>
 <p>Evian, 1992</p>	<p>Evian is revival drink for people who are doing sport. Do sport, drink Evian</p>	<p>“Revival of the Fittest”</p>	<p>This ad features Olympic swimmer Matt Biondi who five golds for the U.S. at the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul greedily swallowing bottled water.</p>	<p>http://autumnwinds.ecrater.com/p/6011508/evian-water-matt-biondi-magazine</p>
 <p>Evian, 1995</p>	<p>During the 90s Evian ads with ripping muscles and glistening skin were supplemented by more temperate images of children, pregnant women and retirees, appealing to these consumer groups.</p>	<p>“Mommy, can I have a drink of water?”</p>	<p>In this magazine ad reader can see a pregnant woman relaxing on the sun. Text below explains benefits of consumption of Evian water for the health.</p>	<p>eBay – trade site http://www.ebay.com/itm/1989-Evian-water-pregnant-women/230494524531#ht_500wt_969</p>



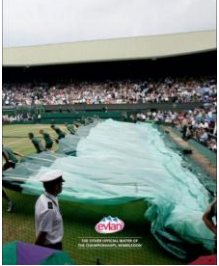
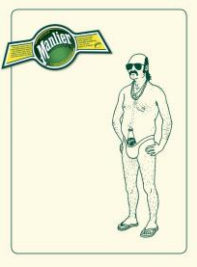
 <p>Perrier, 1995</p>	<p>Perrier is the recipe for love – it brings all its ingredients (the words written beside the bottle) together for a sensation.</p>	<p>“The art of refreshment”; “kiss”, “love”, “joy”, “desire”, “man”, “woman”, “Perrier”</p>	<p>A drawing with a shape like a Perrier bottle with a woman being kissed by an almost invisible man.</p>	<p>Vintage Ad Browser – ad collecting site http://www.vintageadbrowser.com/drinks-ads-1990s/7</p>
 <p>Evian, 2000</p>	<p>A new shape of the bottle is advertised. Evian water is stylish thing (not only a water)</p>	<p>“For those who prefer holes”</p>	<p>The ad contain a picture of women feet in blue socks with a hole. There is a parallel between a picture and a new shape of Evian bottle.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archieve http://www.coloribus.com/adsarchive/prints/evian-mineral-water-socks-3472855/</p>
 <p>Evian, 2001</p>	<p>Evian is good enough for sensitive pregnant women and babies – it is the ultimate pure water that brings you healthiness.</p>	<p>“Goodness for two”</p>	<p>Two pictures - a pregnant belly and a hand holding it and a body of a kid in the same shape with a hand holding it on a pink background.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archieve http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/3471105/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2001</p>	<p>Perrier has its own reality (resembling human) showing the importance of the brand.</p>	<p>Conversation – the text in special font and sounding as if spoken with French accent.</p>	<p>The inside of a fridge with a Perrier bottles family and the postman coming; the green bottled stand out in the picture</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archieve http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/3487955/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2002</p>	<p>Perrier is special; not being able to have it is a way of torture.</p>	<p>“V.I.D. – Very Important Drink”</p>	<p>A guy tied in the bed with a Perrier in one hand and a glass in the other; sexiness of the situation; the guy looking at the bottle with longing.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archieve http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/4219405/</p>






 <p>Perrier, 2002</p>	<p>Perrier is the preferred drink by icons (looks like the Lennons are ordering it). There is no need to specify what they want – they can want only one thing – Perrier.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>A woman (the head not shown) with the Lennons family T-shirt ordering 2 Perriers; the green bottles stand out in the brown-blue background.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/4220355/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2002</p>	<p>Perrier is in the center of the fun and party; it's the means for the fun, integral part of the activities and culture in general.</p>	<p>“in America”</p>	<p>A picture of a party with three people playing "Spin the bottle" with a Perrier; brown colors – only the bottle and the logo stand out in green.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/4386605/</p>
 <p>Evian, 2003</p>	<p>Evian is pure and natural water, it is safe even for babies.</p>	<p>"A mother knows what's best for her young one"</p>	<p>Naked mother with her naked baby on her back on a pink background.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/5442005/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2003</p>	<p>Blending in with "cool" culture, being part of the scenery; “what legends (like Bob Marley) drink” association.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>A guy (the head not shown) with a Bob Marley T-shirt holding a Perrier with a straw as if Bob Marley is drinking it.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/4737555/</p>
 <p>Unicer, 2003</p>	<p>The sex theme - water as bringing out the "basic instinct"; it does not need to be “dressed”.</p>	<p>“Basic instinct”</p>	<p>A bottle with hands trying to peel off its label.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/5079055/</p>






 <p>Grupo Schincariol, 2004</p>	<p>Water - constituting 2/3 of human body, the rest 1/3 is comprised of life experiences and the two are as important.</p>	<p>“2/3 of you”</p>	<p>A shape of human body, 2/3 full of water.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/6670105/</p>
 <p>Olvi, 2004</p>	<p>Water - bringing "Relief" to people that are straining themselves; it makes them smile; sports theme.</p>	<p>“It’s a relief”</p>	<p>A weighlifter with a happy smile collaged on his face</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/5880205/</p>
 <p>Evian, 2005</p>	<p>Evian water is a healthy drink that makes you younger.</p>	<p>“Source of youth”</p>	<p>A picture of a person in water - water is separating half up a man head from half down a baby body.</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/evian/billboard/manbaby-7236155/</p>
 <p>Ferrarelle, 2005</p>	<p>Appealing to the benefits - water is rich of salt (the crystals in the glass).</p>	<p>“Rich in mineral salts”</p>	<p>A glass of water with little crystal shapes inside.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/7454605/</p>

 <p>Propel, 2005</p>	<p>Propel is water for active people, playing sports and moving a lot; the water embraces all your moves and assists you in your activities.</p>	<p>“Your body is made for motion – is your water?” – stating that the water is full of minerals, made to hydrate and for active bodies.</p>	<p>Girl playing volleyball surrounded by water.</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/propel-5403155/print-outdoor/volleyball-7210805/</p>
 <p>Evian, 2006</p>	<p>Evian water is a source of beauty and sexuality. It is natural water from Alps.</p>	<p>“The secret is in the Alps”</p>	<p>A picture of an Alps scenery with a police car and cops and Evian bottles appearing in everything.</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/evian/billboard/cop-8510005/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2006</p>	<p>Using sexy provocative picture and cocktails - Perrier is for having fun. It is the thing people have fun with.</p>	<p>“The Fire Escape” – a recipe made of Perrier (1/3 Perrier, 2/3 Perrier)</p>	<p>A guy pouring water from a shaker into a lying woman’s mouth; blue-brown background – the green bottles stand out.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/8614205/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2006</p>	<p>Perrier - for entertainment and intimacy - bringing people together.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Two people at a bar (no heads) with girl with a Kama Sutra T-shirt holding Perrier bottle and glass; subdued colors – only Perrier bottle standing out in green.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/8727805/</p>
 <p>Saha, 2006</p>	<p>Water and its cleansing power - it detoxicates the heart.</p>	<p>Detoxification; 100% pure</p>	<p>A heart washed with sprays of water.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/8755905/</p>

 <p>Hennez, 2007</p>	<p>Water sustains and brings life.</p>	<p>“The water of life”</p>	<p>Bottle pouring water in a pool - a woman's shape in the drops.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/9993855/</p>
 <p>Ioli, 2007</p>	<p>Water brings delight, refreshment (like an ice-cream).</p>	<p>“relish”</p>	<p>A lollipop/ice-cream made of water.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/9858005/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2007</p>	<p>Perrier – so refreshing and chilling that the person drinking it needs to take precautions against cold even at the beach.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>A guy with a winter hat drinking Perrier at the beach; people bathing in the sea in the background.</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/perrier/print-outdoor/st-tropez-10673905/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2007</p>	<p>Perrier - makes it more exciting, gives you courage/the push.</p>	<p>“Riskier” – substituting “Perrier” in the brand logo</p>	<p>A cartoon of a girl in the shower blowing out her hair.</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/perrier/print-outdoor/riskier-10434355/</p>
 <p>Propel, 2007</p>	<p>Propel targeted at women - keeps you going during shopping; knows best what women need.</p>	<p>“Water for women” – fit for their regime</p>	<p>Bottles shaping a flower form, spreading bubbles.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/10275255/</p>

 <p>Villa del Sur, 2007</p>	<p>The water is compensating for what you didn't naturally get in the first place.</p>	<p>“Nature owed you this” – a discount offer 5 for the price of 4</p>	<p>A picture of an ugly woman with the message below.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/focus/catching-mineral-water-ads/10190905/</p>
 <p>Evian, 2008</p>	<p>Evian water is pure water, “untouched by man”, coming from mountains. It is healthy and natural.</p>	<p>“The Alps, natural source of Evian”; “Natural source of youth”</p>	<p>Picture of a mountain turned upside down and a drop of water falling from it into Evian bottle.</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/evian/print-outdoor/reverse-mountain-poster-12016305/</p>
 <p>Evian, 2008</p>	<p>Evian brand supports all activities connected to sport, because it is drink for people who care about their health.</p>	<p>“The other official water of the championships, Wimbledon”</p>	<p>Picture of people preparing a tennis court</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/evian/print-outdoor/cover-12550005/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2008</p>	<p>Perrier gives you what you desire - makes you manlier.</p>	<p>“Manlier” – substituting “Perrier” in the brand logo</p>	<p>A cartoon of a guy only with underwear and a bottle in it.</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/perrier/print-outdoor/manlier-11359755/</p>

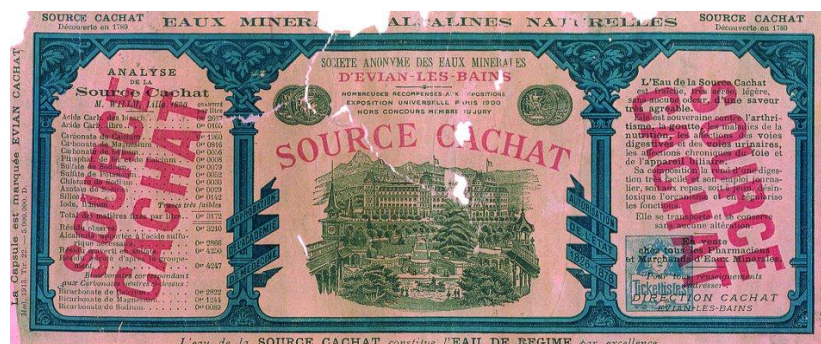
 <p>Tappening, 2008</p>	<p>The bottled water industry is harmful for the environment – it pollutes.</p>	<p>Educating that plastic bottles generate enormous quantities of carbon dioxide</p>	<p>Black and white picture of a brandless bottle with smoke coming out.</p>	<p>Ads of the World – advertising archieve http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/tappeningcom_smoke</p>
 <p>Volvic, 2008</p>	<p>Water as natural - coming from the earth, naturally purified through volcanic rock</p>	<p>“Filtered through volcanic rock with a touch of fruit”</p>	<p>A picture of earth layers and the bottle in the bottom right corner</p>	<p>Ads of the World – advertising archieve http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/volvic_touch_of_fruit_strata</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2009</p>	<p>Perrier – always fresh; life-saving in extreme times; it helps satisfy a vital need.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Everything melting, a parched tennis player on the field, only Perrier is fresh in ice.</p>	<p>Ads of the World – advertising archieve http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/perrier_melt_tennis</p>
 <p>Spa Reine, 2009</p>	<p>Bottled water as sports "accessory" – with it a person is better equipped for sports.</p>	<p>“The purifying water”; better shape for sports</p>	<p>Sport glove holding a bottle.</p>	<p>Ads of the World – advertising archieve http://adsoftheworld.com/media/outdoor/spa_reine_hockey</p>
 <p>Vitasnella, 2009</p>	<p>Water constitutes a big percentage of body mass - with Vitasnella you'll feel comfortable enough to show it.</p>	<p>“You’ll want to wear nothing but your body”</p>	<p>Naked girl on a hanger and a bottle.</p>	<p>Ads of the World – advertising archieve http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/vitasnella_hanger_3</p>

 <p>Dasani, 2010</p>	<p>Bottled water can be a sustainable product - 30% of bottle made of plants, natural origin; bottled water as the flower growing out of leaves - gives impression of something natural, alive, participating in the circle of life.</p>	<p>“Better by design” – plant origin of 30% of the bottle, better recycling</p>	<p>A bottle growing own of leaves.</p>	<p>Admonkey – ad reviewing blog http://admonkey.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/ad_2981.jpg</p>
 <p>Evian, 2010</p>	<p>No matter how old you are. With Evian water you feel younger inside and full of energy.</p>	<p>“Live young”</p>	<p>A picture of Maria Sharapova holding a bottle with a T-shirt with a baby body.</p>	<p>Coloribus – creative advertising archive http://www.coloribus.com/adsarchive/prints/evian-water-shirt-10-14000905/</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2010</p>	<p>Perrier is always fresh, satisfying thirst, even in extreme circumstances.</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>A melting car with a very thirsty looking person reaching out for a Perrier bottle that looks fresh and stands out with its lively green color in the brown background.</p>	<p>Creative Boys Club - blog http://www.creativeboysclub.com/perrier-melting-car</p>
 <p>Perrier, 2010</p>	<p>Perrier is exclusive – it invites the consumer in its own world.</p>	<p>“Welcome to the Perrier Mansion”</p>	<p>A picture of a mansion from the outside.</p>	<p>Advertolog – advertising and commercials archive http://www.advertolog.com/perrier/online/the-perrier-mansion-13970255/</p>
 <p>Smart Water, 2011</p>	<p>Smart - as in clever water, acquiring this status by the way it's made; associations with refinement, the best things in life come after some work on them; connection to Jennifer Aniston - transfer of popularity and image.</p>	<p>“Smart because it’s made that way”; “Smart because life is best distilled”</p>	<p>Jennifer Aniston half lying in a relaxed pose, holding a bottle of Smart.</p>	<p>Candy Cotoure - blog https://encrypted-tbn0.google.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTfsBBOmW2LUBwNBdIZjLQ2tK-jjfViBIS2eYGNHWU Hj1HEINFBFQ</p>

APPENDIX 2. Evian Labels



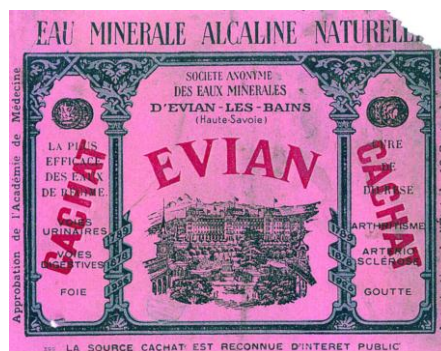
1890-1900



1905 - 1915



1926



1930-1935



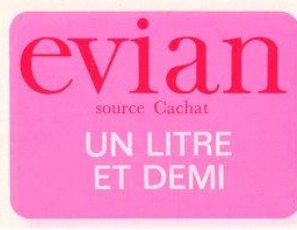
1951

Source: www.facebook.com/evianCanada

APPENDIX 2. Evian Labels



1967



1971



1971



1981



1995



2007

Source: www.facebook.com/evianCanada

APPENDIX 3. Evian Bottles



1992



1993



1994



1995



1996



1997



1999



2000



2001



2002



2003



2004

Sources: www.lovelypackage.com, www.highsnobiety.com, www.bloggant.com, www.tutdesign.ru, www.bevwire.wordpress.com, www.joesbox.me, www.couturiers.ru, www.packagingoftheworld.com.

APPENDIX 3. Evian Bottles



2005



2006



2007



2008



2009



2010



2011



2012

Sources: www.lovelypackage.com, www.highsnobiety.com, www.blogant.com, www.tutdesign.ru, www.bevwire.wordpress.com, www.joesbox.me, www.couturiers.ru.

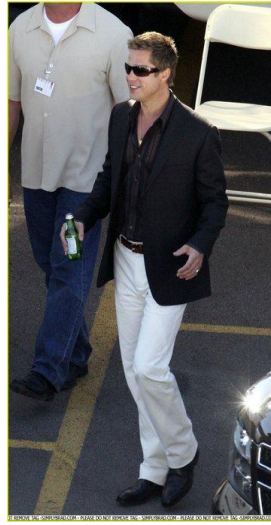
APPENDIX 4a. Perrier and Celebrities (25 documents found in total)



Lady Gaga



Alessandra Ambrosio



Brad Pitt



Megan Fox



Pink



Leighton Meester

LAUREN CONRAD
We take you behind the scenes of this month's cover shoot.

Photo shoot call time: 9 a.m.
 Lauren's actual time of arrival: 9:25 a.m.
 Location: Smashbox Studios, Stage 5, in West Hollywood, California

What she was wearing on arrival: Divine Rights of Denim jeans, Dolce Vita black sandals, Myne white tank with gold polka dots, and a Banana Republic coral bangle

What she brought with her: a bottle of Perrier water

What she brought with her: coffee, fresh-cut fruit, and salad

Tunes played at the shoot: songs by Miley Cyrus, Jesse McCartney, and Metro Station from her iPod

Last text message she got: "Have fun at your shoot today," from her dad

ON THE COVERS
 Lauren Conrad: Photograph, Matt Jones. Creative director, Jacqueline Azria-Pakombo. Hair, Mark Townsend for Mavonom at Magnolia.com. Makeup, Rachel Goodwin at Magnolia.com using Mark Newstand cover (left): See fashion credits above. Subscriber cover (right): Tank, Dallbird, \$48, tee-zone.com; Jeans, Arlo, \$205, shopbop.com; Fedora, Wet Seal, \$11, wetseal.com; Gold necklace with heart locket, Giles & Brother by Philip Crangi, \$713, barneys.com; Gold necklace, Mark by Avon Lauren Conrad Collection, \$22, meetmark.com. This month's cover logo spotick color is: Mark Glow Baby Glow Luxe Hook Up Lip Gloss in Melon Luxe.

Lauren Conrad



Lindsay Lohan

Source: Coolspotters.com

APPENDIX 4b. Evian and Celebrities (124 documents found in total)



Keira Knightley



Kelly Osbourne



Justin Timberlake



Madonna



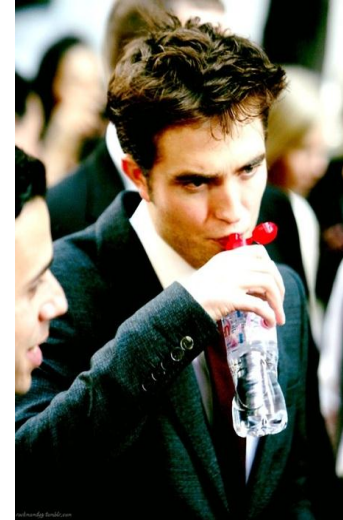
Maria Sharapova



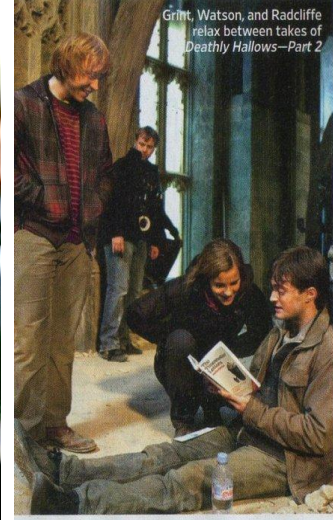
Michelle Obama



Princess Beatrice of York



Robert Pattinson



Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson

Source: www.coolspotters.com