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# Political Leaders As Archetypal Brands

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**Abstract**:

**Purpose:** The purpose of this paper is to explore political leaders as archetypal brands. Moreover, this study aims to add knowledge to the concept of archetypes in political brand communication.

**Methodology:** This study combines qualitative and quantitative research. Therefore, three cases of different political leaders (Donald Trump, Angela Merkel & Volodymyr Zelensky) are being examined. Secondary data was collected, by doing a literature review in order to explore the archetype for each political leader. Primary data was created by conducting a questionnaire where the perception of the sample about different archetypes relating to the presented cases was asked.

**Findings:** The paper found out that the model of Mark and Pearson (2015) about archetypes in branding can be applied to political leaders. Furthermore, we found out that the brand core framework of Urde (2016) is compatible with Mark and Pearson's (2015) framework of archetypes. Next to that, we determined suitable archetypes for each of our introduced cases, according to our used methodology. This showed that different political leaders can have the same archetypes, but for different reasons.

**Original/value:** The paper is the first of its kind to combine a concept of archetypes with an established theoretical framework in rhetoric.

**Keywords:** Brand personality, Archetypes, Rhetoric, Political Brand Communication, Brand Core Framework

**Paper type:** Research paper

## Introduction

In the last twenty years, branding theory has become more important in shaping and managing politicians, political parties, and governments (Moufahim, 2022). According to Moufahim, a political brand is "a combination of signs, symbols, a name and design used to communicate the values, vision, and personality of a political entity" according to Moufahim (2022, p. 2). The concept of political branding can be seen as a strategic way of using consumer branding when building a political image (Nielsen, 2016). Furthermore, Moufahim (2022, p. 2) states that such political brands can be seen as a "cluster of impressions, associations, and images held by the public towards such entity" - in our case political leaders.

While exploring political branding, we came across the importance of differentiating among other political brands in a competitive environment (French & Smith). This raised the question if there is a model that assists in determining suitable clusters for specific political leaders, depending on their brand personality. To answer that question, we came across the book of Mark and Pearson (2015), where the idea of building successful brands through the assistance of archetypes is introduced. There are different models for archetypes, but the decision was made to explore this model

since no one has put it in context to political leaders, as far as we know. According to Carl Gustav Jung (1954, p. 77), archetypes can be seen as a part of the "collective unconscious, deeply embedded personality patterns that resonate within us, and serve to organize and give direction to human thought and action". Previous research has already shown that brand archetypes can be seen as elements of brand personality (Mirzaee & George, 2016; Mark & Pearson, 2001) in a commercial context.

In this paper, we want to explore archetypes further and therefore we will investigate if political leaders can be seen as archetypal brands. The broader aim of this paper is to add knowledge to the concept of archetypes in branding and political brand communication. The paper is structured as follows; first we will explain the connection of brand personality to the model of archetypes, introduced by Mark & Pearson (2015). We will investigate what role rhetoric has in discussions about assigning archetypes to political leaders. Hereby, we will present the brand core framework from Urde (2016), in order to see the commonalities and differences with the model of archetypes. Thereafter, the choice of research design will be presented followed by three case studies of Donald Trump, Angela Merkel and Volodymyr Zelensky. Furthermore, the case studies are analyzed with support from the theory and primary research. Finally, we will discuss and present the conclusion as well as managerial implications and suggestions for future research.

## Theoretical framework

### Brand Personality

In order to understand political leaders as a brand, it is necessary to delve into brand personality. Brand personality is used in today's competitive market to distinguish a brand from its competitors and to make it more appealing to the desired customer group (Kapferer, 2012). According to Aaker, brand personality can be defined as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker, 1997, p. 347). The phenomenon was conceptualized by Aaker (1997) through the framework of the dimensions of brand personality, which further describes the personality traits of brands based on customers' perceptions. According to the brand personality framework, brands consist of five distinct personality dimensions (Aaker, 1997). Aaker's framework has been successful in many studies, however, it has limitations when it comes to international contexts in different industries (Escobar-Farfán et al. 2016).

The political leader of a party has historically, always been the salient point evaluated in a political party (Needham & Smith, 2015; Pich & Dean, 2015). The idea of political branding and being able to differentiate among other political parties has lately emerged, which has led to an interest in political parties as brands (French & Smith, 2010; Pich, Dean, & Punjaisri, 2014; Smith, 2009). In Jain et al (2018) study about brand personality elements of political leaders, it is highlighted that a clear political brand personality is crucial in order to succeed.
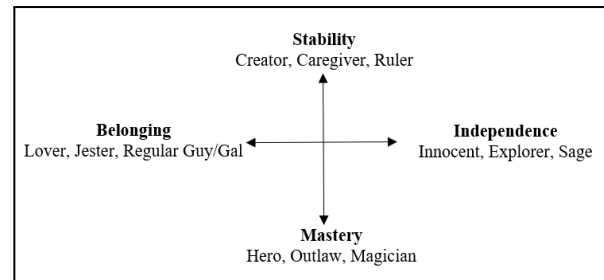
### Archetypes

Brand archetypes can be seen as part of the brand personality, which has been proven by various authors before (Mirzaee & George, 2016; Mark & Pearson, 2001). According to Mark and Pearson (2015, p. 43) "Archetypes are the 'software' of the psyche". They can be forms and images of collective nature which consist of myths from all over the world, but at the same time as individual products of unconscious origin (C. G. Jung 1921, 1933) Archetypes can assist "in understanding how brands and companies gain and lose meaning, attention, value, and share of market in

these hectic times" (Mark & Pearson, 2015, p. 8). With the usage of archetypes, a spiritual and mystical identity for brands can be created, which helps to establish a deeper and more significant connection with consumers regarding their unconscious aspirations (Siraj & Kumari, 2011). Durate et al. (2018, p. 145) state that "archetypes mediate between products and customer motivations, providing an intangible experience of meaning". These definitions can also be put in a political context: for instance that a political leader is perceived as a certain archetype who is meditating between the public, potential voters, and other stakeholders to give his brand personality a certain label. Furthermore, an archetypal approach to brand personality can be used by marketing managers in order to understand a brand and what it stands for (Mirzaee & George, 2016; Mark & Pearson, 2001).

According to The Keller (2013), the human brain likes and tends to work with categories to organize objects and associate images with one another. Mark and Pearson (2015, p. 43) also commented on the brands that are associated with these archetypes "will feel right and comfortable to the people who express them and lend meaning to their lives". Besides, based on Young & Rubicam's (2003) analysis, it is discovered that a brand's strong association with an archetype makes a significant difference as brand differentiation which directly affects its asset value.

Mark and Pearson (2015) have put the model of Carl Jung's twelve archetypes in a branding context. They have put the twelve archetypes into four dimensions (Figure 1): *Stability, Independence, Mastery* and *Belonging*.



**Figure 1:** Dimensions of Brand Archetypes Source: Mark and Pearson (2001); Duarate et al (2018)

*Independence (Innocent, Explorer, Sage)*

The *Indepence* level includes the archetypes *Innocent*, *Explorer* and *Sage*. Individuals that can be associated with these archetypes emphasize their self over others and autonomy over belonging (Mark & Pearson, 2015). Their common ground is that they relate to the pursuit of happiness, mostly dealing with the fear of being trapped and feeling inner emptiness (Durate et al. 2018).

| Archetype | Core desire | Goal | Fear | Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Innocent | to experience paradise | to be happy | doing something wrong or bad that will provoke punishment | do things right |
| Explorer | the freedom to find out who you are through exploring the world | to experience a better, more authentic, fulfilling life | getting tapped, conforming, inner emptiness, nonbeing | journey, seek out experience new things, escape from entrapment and boredom |
| Sage | the discovery of truth | to use intelligence and analysis to understand the world | being dumped, misled, ignorance | seek out information and knowledge, become self-reflective and understand thinking processes |

**Table 1:** Independence Level of Archetypes Source: Mark and Pearson (2015, pp. 61-62; 79; 96)

*Mastery (Hero, Outlaw, Magician)*

The *Hero*, *Outlaw* and the *Magician* are the archetypes that are categorized in the *Mastery* level. They are all associated with change and being fearless and powerful political leaders who can provide structure.

Furthermore, these archetypes have the ability to raise challenges, take risks, break rules, and transform existing structures (Mark & Pearson, 2015).

| Archetype | Core desire | Goal | Fear | Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hero | prove one's worth through courageous and difficult action | exert master in a way that improves the world | weakness, vulnerability, "wimping out" | become as strong, competent, and powerful as you are capable of being |
| Outlaw | revenge or revolution | to destroy what is not working (for the Outlaw of the society) | being powerless, trivialized, inconsequential | disrupt, destroy, or shock |
| Magician | knowledge of the fundamental laws of how the world or universe works | make dreams come true | unanticipated negative consequences | develop vision and live it |

**Table 2:** Mastery Level of Archetypes
Source: Mark and Pearson (2015 pp. 113; 130; 147)

*Belonging (Regular Guy/Gal, Lover, Jester)*

The *Belonging* dimension covers the archetypes *Regular Guy/Gal*, *Lover* and *Jester*. These archetypes describe the people's desire to connect, interact and belong. They are very concerned about what other people think about them (Mark & Pearson, 2015). However, to these are persons, people can mostly relate to, because they represent the ordinary (Mark and Pearson, 2015), in our case the political leader.

| Archetype | Core desire | Goal | Fear | Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regular Guy/Gal | connection with others | to belong, fit in | standing out, seeming to put on airs, and being exiled or rejected as a result | develop ordinary solid virtues, the common touch, blend in |
| Lover | attain intimacy and experience sensual pleasure | being in a relationship with people, the work, the experiences, the surroundings they love | being alone, a wallflower, unwanted, unloved | become more and more attractive-physically, emotionally, and in every other way |
| Jester | to live in the moment with full enjoyment | to have a great time and lighten up the world | boredom or being boring | play, makes jokes, be funny |

**Table 3:** Belonging Level of Archetypes
Source: Mark and Pearson (2015, p. 169-170; 183; 201)

*Stability (Caregiver, Creator, Ruler)*

The archetypes *Caregiver*, *Creator* and *Ruler* form the *Stability* level (Mark & Pearson, 2015). All these three archetypes represent the aim to organize everything and to support individuals in feeling more secure (Durate et al. 2018). Nowadays, the desire for control and stability is facing special challenges, since the pace of contemporary living is forcing society to deal with new situations every day (Mark and Pearson, 2015).

| Archetype | Core desire | Goal | Fear | Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caregiver | protect people from harm | to help others | selfishness, ingratitude | do things for others |
| Creator | create something of enduring value | give form to a vision | having a mediocre vision or execution | create culture, express own vision |
| Ruler | control | create a prosperous, successful family, company, or community | exert leadership | chaos, being overthrown |

**Table 4:** Stability Level of Archetypes
Source: Mark and Pearson (2015, pp. 214; 231-232; 249)

*Rhetoric*

From Ancient Greek until now, rhetoric's played a massive role in professions, especially for politicians (Miller, 1990). There is an organic link between archetypes and rhetoric, where two approaches complement each other, hence, it makes it possible to understand the brand core and identity (Charteris-Black, 2011). Whereas archetypes are observed as a universal symbol by virtue of their far-reaching extent beyond time and cultures, rhetors call for archetypes to complete their metaphorical work successfully (Heath, 2013). Practicing archetypes enlightens the rhetorical preferences and practices of a culture (Leichty, 2013). According to Chesebro et al. (1990), an archetype assists people to depict experiences and helps with storytelling.

Rhetoric is the art of speaking or writing "intended to be effective and influence people" (Cambridge University Press,

n.d.). Rhetoric, as a notion, first appeared in Aristotle's writings. Aristotle explains the concept of rhetoric as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion which he also defines as a mixture of the science of logic and the ethical part of politics (Aristoteles & Barlett, 2019).

The structured core of Aristotle's rhetoric book (2019) suggests that there are three means of persuasion. Persuasion derives either through the speaker's character and reputation (Ethos), the emotional state of the audience (Pathos), or the argument itself (Logos) (Rapp, n.d.). An identical topic, the core of a brand, might be seen from different perspectives (Urde, 2016). From the Ethos viewpoint, the speaker picks arguments that display and express the character of the speaker, with the aim of gaining the listener's trust (Beqiri, 2018). With regard to Pathos, the speaker chooses arguments that will mix up emotions in the audience (Urde, 2016). In terms of the Logos viewpoint, the speaker chooses arguments that appeal to the mind and increase understanding (Urde, 2016).

Not only to strengthen their brand core values but also in order to communicate effectively, politicians need to include these three stages of persuasion. Martin (2013) provides significant insights into how politics, media, and rhetoric have a mutual interaction in today's digital society. Politicians apply rhetoric in policy debates, to unite the public during domestic emergencies, and to differentiate themselves from other politicians (Hatzisavvidou, 2022). Most presidents are able to use their rhetorical power and create a favorable image in citizens' perspectives by connecting them straightforwardly (Ceaser et al. 1981).
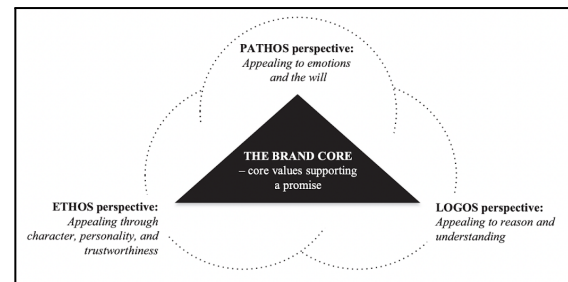


**Figure 2:** The brand core framework (Urde, 2016)

The brand core framework includes core values and promises that form a single entity that catches the eye of an audience by "being understood, interpreted and communicated from different perspectives over time" (Urde, 2016, p. 31). Therefore, promises and values are the crucial factors of the suggested framework encircled by the three rhetorical perspectives as it is seen in Figure 2. The core values affect the essence of the promise and vice versa. Consequently, Ethos, Pathos, and Logos perspectives open a new window into the brand core as an entity and totality (Urde, 2016).

While archetypes are forms and images of individual products of unconscious origin, rhetoric is the key step to building a strong brand core, and its core values support its promise (Scott, 2020). Political leaders, for instance, can be perceived as a certain archetype by the public and voters. Even though political leaders can have certain archetypes and labels that society draws on them, using rhetoric as a persuasive tool could influence the public's perception of them (Beqiri, 2018).

## Methodology

This study adopts a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, focusing on primary and secondary research. The primary research is collected from a survey and the secondary research is collected from different books, articles and news articles. Both the qualitative and quantitative approaches have been chosen for a comprehensive insight into the subject.

The foundation of this paper is based on a literature review of the phenomena of brand personality, archetypes, as well as rhetoric as a link between them.

The aim of this paper is to get in-depth information on chosen cases in order to test an already existing theoretical framework. Moreover, three case studies of politicians were adopted to investigate the subject more deeply. These politicians were chosen since they are some of the most famous eminent in the world and because their personalities and brands as politicians differ from each other. A multi-case study design has been conducted to create a deeper understanding of similarities and differences between the cases (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Stake, 1995). Further, Zainal (2007) argues that multiple case methods can explain the complexity of real life situations.

The quantitative part of this research included a questionnaire. For this, 104 participants from different demographic backgrounds were asked to answer a questionnaire of 15 questions. With that, the publics' perceptions on different political leaders in terms of archetypes was to be determined. Similar to the study of Duarate et al (2018), we decided to assign three words for each archetype, based on Mark and Pearson (2015) interpretation of the different archetypes. This was made to represent the attributes for each of the theoretical concepts, in order to reduce measurement errors and for getting a better concept estimation (Hair et al, 2009).

| Dimension | Archetypes | Words |
|---|---|---|
| Independence | Innocent | Goodness, trusting, naive |
| | Explorer | Freedom, restlessness, alienation |
| | Sage | credibility, wisdom, desire to find the truth |
| Mastery | Hero | courage, ruthlessness, competence |
| | Outlaw | rebell, shocking, revolutionary |
| | Magician | visionary, miraculous, make dreams come true |
| Belonging | Regular Guy/Gal | ordinary, fit in, humanitarian |
| | Lover | emotional, intimacy, empathy |
| | Jester | enjoyment, entertainer, humor |
| Stability | Caregiver | protective, care, supportive |
| | Creator | creative, innovative, inspiring |
| | Ruler | order, authority, control |

**Table 5:** Archetypes related words Source: Adapted Mark and Pearson (2015); Duarate et al. (2018)

## Cases examples and analysis

In this study, three political leaders will be analyzed as case studies in order to explore political leaders as archetypal brands. In order to support which archetype these politicians can be assigned to, we have also chosen to take a look at their rhetoric. Not every leader is on service at the time of writing. Accordingly, these leaders will be described based on their perception of their presidential times. The leaders we have chosen are, respectively, *Angela Merkel, Donald Trump,* and *Volodymyr Zelensky.* The choice of the political leaders was made consciously since they all are different in their brand personality, their rhetoric, and their way of approaching the audience.

### Donald Trump

Donald John Trump is an American politician who served the United States of America for five years (Duignan, 2022).

He was the 45th president of the United States and was preceded by Barack Obama in 2017 (The White House, n.d.). Before his political career, Donald Trump took over his father's real estate business and expanded into the construction business (Sommerlad, 2018). After winning the United States presidential elections in 2016 as a nominee of the Republican Party against Hillary Clinton, he became the first U.S. president without prior knowledge of government service and military experience (Crockett, 2017).

When looking at Trump's communication as a political leader, he has made himself known for preposterous statements and nonsense (Chernenko, 2019). The list of people and companies he has insulted on Twitter is long (Lee & Quealy, 2019). Moreover, Trump's humorously jargon and off-the-cuff behavior have shocked political commentators, e.g. when he allowed people to touch his hair to see if it was real (Campbell, 2015). The mentioned examples indicate that Trump can be seen as the archetype *Jester*, which reflects a person with the strategy of making jokes, being funny, and playing around (Mark & Pearson, 2015). According to Mark and Pearson (2015), *Jester* is an archetype that creates an identity for the brand and helps people to have a good time.

Furthermore, Trump's shocking statements, unpredictable behavior, and impulsive reactions have led to the mass media picking up and contributing to his popularity (Аеліта, 2018). His shocking and rebellious style as a controversial politician has been described in the mass media and this can refer to the archetype *Outlaw*, who is described as the rebellious, revolutionary who likes to shock his audience (Аеліта, 2018; Mark & Pearson, 2015). Trump always declared himself as the outsider in his election (Allen & Gallagher, 2022), which supports these attributes of the *Outlaw*.

To comprehend Trump's persuasive skills better, we can analyze his address to the Joint Session of Congress as an example. A well-applied logical appeal (Logos) holds strong arguments and proof to justify a distinct relationship between him and the audience. In a speech Trump claims that "every American child deserves a brighter future" (Laughing, 2017). As the Logos perspective appeals to reasoning and understanding (Urde, 2016), the evidence must be presented in order to support the claim. Accordingly, he uses some facts and statistics about Obamacare which makes a logical connection between the claim and the evidence explaining the total cost of Obamacare has increased by double and triple digits and in Arizona it went up 116 percent last year only (Laughing, 2017). At the time of the speech, the media was not covering much about Obamacare and this rebellious speech was a shock for American society (Sanger-Katz, 2017). This unpredictable and revolutionary behavior points out his *Outlaw* archetype in the public's view. Trump is also known for his powerful strategy of targeting emotions (Pathos). In one of his famous tweets, he tweeted "It's freezing in New York - where the hell is global warming?" (Cheung, 2020). While global warming is a topic that is globally discussed, his comments on this subject were unprecedented, and making jokes about serious problems makes people identify Trump as a funny character who could be associated with the *Jester* archetype described by Mark and Pearson (2015). His examples appealed to many types of emotions. In the same speech (Joint Session of Congress), Trump asks all citizens to embrace the Renewal of the American Spirit (Laughing, 2017). The *Outlaw* archetype represents those whose desire is to change the world and make dreams come true (Duarate et al. 2018). Trump's brave attitude shows that he is capable of facing new challenges, taking risks, and breaking the rules with no-holds-barred (Mark & Pearson, 2015) . Hence, people could clearly associate Trump with the archetype *Outlaw*.

*Angela Merkel*

Angela Dorothea Merkel is a former German politician who served her country as the first female chancellor of Germany (Petrikowski, n.d.). Before her political career, she was a research scientist in quantum chemistry until 1989 (Miller, 2020). Her political career began in pursuit of the revolutions of 1989 (Time, 2022). In the time of her administration as chancellor, Merkel was regularly attributed to the terms "Chancellor of the free world", and "*de facto* leader of the EU" (Time, 2022.). She was succeeded by Olaf Scholz in December 2021 and the vicennial period of her career in German politics has ended (Guardian News and Media, 2021).

According to Timoshenkova (2021, p. 120) Angela Merkel can be seen as "a modest and open leader, willing to compromise and firmly and on her feet". These attributes match the archetype Mark and Pearson (2015) defined as a *Regular Guy/Gal*, a person that wants to fit in and represents the ordinary. Merkel's role within the German government and the broader political process was rather unobtrusively described (Helms & Esch, 2017). This aura of normalcy around her has provided people with a sense of knowing her as a person, which works well in an egalitarian state such as Germany (Esch, 2017). Her avoidance of public discussion, both of sensitive topics and those with conflict potential (Timoshenkova, 2021), support this archetype as well since one of the greatest fears of those people is to stand out and might even be rejected (Mark and Pearson, 2015).

Mark and Pearson (2015) state that the *Caregiver* is an archetype whose greatest fear is to seem selfish. Merkel has always left her personal authority out of her political projects (Timoshenkova, 2021). This strategy of "asymmetric demobilization" (Schumacher, 2006, p. 71) and pragmatism even turned out to be one of her assets against the opposition (Timoshenkova, 2021). Furthermore, this archetype desires to protect people from harm and is seeking to help others (Mark and Pearson, 2015). When the refugee crisis occurred in 2015 in Europe, she promised to keep the borders open for refugees, while for example the Hungarian government was arresting refugees and building razor-wire fences (Mushaben, 2017). This action matches the archetype *Caregiver*.

Next to that, the archetype *Sage* can be assigned to her, since she has always focused on a meditating leadership style (Helms and Esch, 2017). According to Mark and Pearson (2015), this archetype has a strong desire for objectivity and wants to discover the truth. Due to her skills as an instinctive consensus-seeker, she was eligible to meet the political requirements as a leader in a compound party democracy (Helms and Esch, 2017). However, a trap these people face is that they deal with a topic for too long and never act (Mark and Pearson, 2015). This could also be seen in the legislation period of Merkel, after she became the chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, she avoided talking publicly about her attitude towards the topic of migration for a long time (Timoshenkova, 2021). According to Mark and Pearson (2015), the archetype *Sage* is gifted with wisdom and intelligence. When the pandemic arose, she handled the crisis with "outward calm, as well as scientific" (Timoshenkova, 2023, p. 120).

During the analysis of Merkel's rhetorical utilization, it could be observed that she uses three perspectives complementarily. The archetypes assigned to her are supported via the brand core framework: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos perspectives. Despite her reactive and unsophisticated political rhetoric, she is seen as a persuasive and effective communicator (Helms and Esch, 2017). This self-contained political rhetoric matches

the archetype *Regular Guy/Gal* (Mark & Pearson, 2015). Merkel's speech in the Bundestag on September 30, 2020, is notable for her rhetorical approach (Timoshenkova, 2022). Not only did she include empathy and emotions combined with pragmatism in her speech, but in terms of her understanding of politics, she suggested new strategies for the German people to follow (Timoshenkova, 2022). This basic desire for connection with others (Duarate et al. 2018), leads to people linking Merkel to the *Caregiver* archetype. In her way of addressing the population during the pandemic crisis, we believe Angela Merkel supports her ideas with Ethos and Logos approaches by transparently sharing what the government is doing. According to Mark and Pearson (2015), using intelligence and analysis to understand the world with knowledge are attributes of the *Sage* archetype. Based upon this example, it could be indicated that without appealing to emotions and the will, with other words the pathos perspective, leaders could be associated with the archetype *Sage* (Mark & Pearson, 2015).

## Volodymyr Zelensky

Volodymyr Oleksandrovych Zelensky is an Ukrainian politician currently serving as the sixth president of Ukrainian since 2019 (Ray, 2022). Before his political career, he was a comedian and an actor (Ray, 2022). After his party Servant of the People won the legislative election, he started to interact in dialogue with Russian President Vladimir Putin (Lapin, 2021). However, his government encountered an intensified response by Russia and later on, he was confronted with a still ongoing full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 (Krauss, 2022).

Since Russia invaded the borders of Ukraine on February the 24th this year, Zelensky became a hero of his country due to his refusal of leaving Ukraine, as well as he turned down an offer of getting evacuated from the capital (Utrikespolitiska Institutet, 2022; Leonhardt, 2022). All over the world, there have been reports of Zelensky's heroic efforts as a war hero, and his unlikely path from a comedian and normal person to a wartime president (The Washington Post, 2022). Zelensky's heroic efforts during the ongoing war have allowed him to be categorized as the archetype *Hero*. According to Mark & Pearson (2015), this archetype is associated with courage, ruthlessness and competence, which also goes in line with what the media have reported about Zelensky.

Even though Zelensky had been tributed as *Hero*, he is also seen and described as the ordinary guy who made it to the president of Ukraine. An example of this is in Zelensky's video communication to the people, where he switched from his former uniform to a regular cotton t-shirt (Friedman, 2022). Further he is described as "The Man in the Olive Green Tee" (Friedman, 2022). The mentioned example can refer to the archetype of the *Regular Guy/Gal* which is associated with a regular person and someone who wants to fit in (Mark & Pearson, 2015). Further, this archetype's core desire is to connect with others and the main goal is to develop ordinary solid virtues in order to establish the feeling of belonging (Mark & Pearson, 2015).

Moreover, he can be associated with the archetype *Caregiver*. In order to achieve his vision of Ukraine, he is making sure that all ministries work together within his country (Mitchell, n.d.). These parental feelings of protectiveness of his country can be assigned to this archetype according to Mark and Pearson (2015). By staying in Ukraine and not abandoning his country without a leader (Miller, 2022) he is showing that he is willing to protect his people from harm, which is another core desire of the *Caregiver* (Mark & Pearson, 2015).

Zelensky's usage of rhetoric is worth mentioning. The Ukrainian President's live streamed speech "I Call for You to Do More" addresses the US Congress, in which he explains the situation and calls on the US to take action to support his citizens against Russian invasion (Turner, 2022). President Zelensky uses credible and logical arguments to deliver an emotional speech that shows how Ukrainians continue to suffer from the current conflict (Turner, 2022). In this speech, Zelensky mentions that Russia attacks Kyiv with missiles every day (Turner, 2022). The given information on the speech appeals to reasoning, understanding and trustworthiness scopes of Ethos and Logos perspectives. According to Mark and Pearson (2015), people who are attributed with the *Hero* archetype desire to prove their own value through courageous and tough action. With his statement, Zelensky applies credible and significant information and makes his speech reasonable, that makes him to be attributed with the *Hero* archetype in public's perception. In the same speech, Zelensky requests help from other countries, as well as humanitarian groups, to declare the Ukrainian sky to a no-fly zone in order to protect Ukrainians. He repeatedly underlines that he needs to protect the citizens of Ukraine (Turner, 2022). By applying Logos and Pathos perspectives in his speech, he draws an image of the *Caregiver* archetype that is associated with caring, protection, and trusting labels according to Mark and Pearson (2015). Zelensky's comedian background helps people to attribute him with the *Regular Guy/Gal* archetype, which was defined by Mark and Pearson (2015). Zelensky says that "Ukrainians continue to lose their social and political values because of the daunting war by Russia" (Turner, 2022). This narrative appeals to emotions and invokes the sense of sympathy (Pathos). With presenting an emotional speech to substantiate the need for immediate help from the US, he evokes the sympathy of the international community (Turner, 2022). By applying plentiful emotional, logical, and true statements in his speech (Beqiri, 2019), it is displayed that Zelensky uses rhetoric as a persuasive tool that could influence and display why public's identify Zelensky as a *Hero*, *Regular Guy,* and *Caregiver*.

*Results questionnaire*

In order to support the literature review and the assumptions we have made based on secondary research, an online questionnaire has been conducted. For Trump, we observed that the archetypes *Outlaw* and *Jester* could be assigned to him. The results from the questionnaire showed that 75% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed for Trump being characterized as the archetype of an *Outlaw.* Moreover, 62.5% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed on Trump as the archetype *Jester.* On the other hand, it is possible to see that participants did not associate Trump with the *Innocent* since 91.3% either disagreed or strongly disagreed on the associations of this archetype.

When it comes to Merkel, the literature review indicated she could be viewed as the archetypes *Regular Guy/Gal, Caregiver* and *Sage*. The results from the questionnaire pointed out that 71.2% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed on categorizing Merkel as *Caregiver.* Moreover, 64.4% agreed or strongly agreed on the archetype of *Sage* and 66.3% received and either agreed or strongly agreed on viewing Merkel as the *Regular Guy/Gal.*

According to the literature review, Zelensky could be categorized as the archetypes of *Hero, Regular Guy/Gal,* and *Caregiver.* The participants from the questionnaire agreed on viewing Zelensky as the archetype *Hero,* 71.2% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed. When it comes to the *Caregiver,*

74% agreed or strongly agreed of perceiving him as this archetype. Furthermore, 55.7% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed on Zelensky as the archetype of *Lover*. Lastly, the archetype of *Regular Guy/Gal* was also an archetype the participants related to Zelensky, 52.8% either agreed or strongly disagreed.

Within this survey, it could be seen that the archetype *Ruler* scores very high among all three case examples. A majority of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed on their view of the leaders as *Rulers*. We assume, this is due to the fact, that all those leaders are actually the representatives of the governance in each country.

## Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to explore political leaders as archetypes. Both our secondary and primary research showed which archetypes are the most suitable ones for each introduced political leader according to the model of Mark and Pearson (2015).

The results of the questionnaire showed that the participants' perceptions of the politicians support our literature review. The questionnaire proved the perception of the different leaders and determined the archetypes which correlated with the leader. Therefore, we can conclude that the archetypes *Outlaw* and *Jester* could be assigned to Trump. Merkel can be associated with the archetypes *Caregiver*, *Sage,* and *Regular Guy/Gal*. Lastly, Zelensky can be assigned the archetypes *Hero, Regular Guy/Gal,* and *Caregiver.* Interesting to see here is also that Merkel and Zelensky both are assigned to the *Caregiver* and *Regular Guy/Gal*. Even though these two personalities differ, people would assign them the similar archetypes, but for different reasons. Another interesting insight from the survey is that people also have a clear opinion on

which archetype they would not assign to a specific leader, as seen with the example of Trump not being the *Innocent*.

In accordance with previous research, archetypes can establish a deeper connection with consumers and create an intangible experience of meaning (Siraj & Kumari, 2011; Durate et al. 2018). Therefore, identifying the different archetypes can be a positioning opportunity for political leaders in the competitive political context. For example, Zelensky knowing that he is being perceived as *Hero*, can assist him in developing a clear position in people's minds and he can use this position in order to pursue his goals. This can be supported by Jain et al. (2018) statement, that a clear political brand personality is necessary for political leaders in today's society in order to succeed.

In the research, we decided to apply the brand core framework (Urde, 2016) as a second step in order to identify the archetypes in a political context. There we could see that the brand core framework by Urde (2016) was an applicable and helpful tool in order to determine the archetype according to Mark and Pearson (2015). This supports what Charteris-Black (2011) demonstrated, that rhetoric can be a complementary precise tool to understand the brand core and identity. With that said, we want to argue that rhetoric is linked to archetypes and supports assigning specific archetypes to political leaders. The combination of the two concepts of archetypes and rhetoric helps to create and explore the brand core and identity. Political leaders may influence people with the help of rhetoric, which would also lend assistance to him/her in forming the core of their personal brand. Furthermore, throughout the analysis, we understood that if political leaders utilize three rhetorical perspectives complementarity, it can support assigning archetypes to political leaders. Framing archetypes in the public's perception can

help political leaders to build an identity. As seen in examples in the analysis of the political leaders, using three rhetorical perspectives can strengthen an archetypal attribution and help to distribute leaders with different labels.

## Theoretical and managerial implications

The concept of archetypes in branding has been discussed before in literature. However, the study adds new knowledge about archetypal brands in the context of political leaders. First, our group has concluded that Mark and Pearson's (2015) framework about archetypes can be applied in a political context. Then it was found out that the brand core framework of Urde (2016) is a compatible model to further explore archetypes.

Political leaders can use this knowledge to make strategic decisions regarding their usage of rhetoric in relation to the archetype they want to represent. The survey shows different perspectives on how certain rhetorical aspects support specific archetypes. This could also be an interesting insight for managers in general, on how to use rhetoric in order to support the role they have within an organization.

## Limitations and future research

This paper has potential limitations. The empirical results reported in this paper must be interpreted with consideration, and a couple of limitations shall be kept in mind. First of all, the variance of the survey needs to be taken into consideration, since people might not understand every archetype and its attributes. In regard to this, it is hard to estimate if the survey reached out to the people who have an interest in politics and/or know the selected political leaders. Another potential limitation is the lack of time to conduct a survey. This could also lead to insufficient sample size for statistical measurements. Concerning this

issue, it is essential to have an adequate sample size. The larger the sample group, the more accurate the results would be, as it is more coherent when generalizing the results of the survey from sample to population. People who filled out the questionnaire might also provide dishonest answers. Despite this fact, using anonymous surveys minimizes the possibility of collecting untruthful answers but of course, it obviously does not vanish thoroughly.

After conducting the research, it could be seen that different political leaders can have the same archetypes. This shows some limitations of the model of Mark and Pearson (2015). However, the model can still be used as a helpful tool to be used for categorization of political leaders. In order to distinguish the personalities even more, further research on the model would need to be done. This presents a rather difficult task because of the complexity of humans.

While doing this paper we developed a new research analysis process as there was little or no prior research about political leaders and perceiving them as archetypal brands with the assistance of rhetoric. In this case, this limitation could be seen as an opportunity to determine literature gaps and demonstrate a further advancement in the area of study. Further research could base our study as a building block and explore which archetypes are crucial for a political leader to have, in order to be perceived as a well-liked person wholly by the public view. In this paper, we included political leaders from countries with democratic governance. In conjunction with this, examining political leaders from countries with different political systems, authoritarian regimes, for instance, could bring in new points of view. Moreover, examining demographics could be helpful to draw conclusions while conducting the survey. If the archetypes tend to change based on the country or the culture where participants are from may further develop our research. The influence and perception

differences could be analyzed with a large-scale survey. Next to that, the frameworks in the literature review may be applied to investigating archetypes in other areas and not only for political leaders. Additionally, this paper has investigated the relationship between archetypes and the brand core framework. This can be of relevance for future research within the area of archetypal brands to explore further, as well as to apply it in other contexts.

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## Appendix

Questionnaire results

Survey data spreadsheet (104 responses).

| ID | Startzeit | Fertigstellungszeit | E-Mail | Name | What is your gender? | What is your age? | What is your nationality | Donald Trump | Angela Merkel | Volodymyr Zelenskyy | Donald Trump2 | Angela Merkel2 | Volodymyr Zelenskyy2 | Donald Trump3 | Angela Merkel3 | Volodymyr Zelenskyy3 | Donald Trump4 | Angela Merkel4 | Volodymyr Zelenskyy4 | Donald Trump5 | Angela Merkel5 | Volodymyr Zelenskyy5 | Donald Trump6 | Angela Merkel6 | Volodymyr Zelenskyy6 | Donald Trump7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

*(Detailed per-respondent response cells are present for 104 rows but are too small to transcribe reliably.)*

**Demographic totals**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Total | Woman | 49 |
| 104 | Man | 54 |
| | under 18 | 1 |
| | 18-24 | 66 |
| | 25-34 | 24 |
| | 35-44 | 2 |
| | 45-54 | 5 |
| | over 55 | 6 |

**Summary statistics by archetype**

| Total | Innocent | | Explorer | | | Sage | | | Hero | | | Outlaw | | | Magician | | | Regular Guy/Gal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Strongly Disagree | 67 | 8 | 7 | 25 | 15 | 4 | 64 | 5 | 5 | 55 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 31 | 2 | 30 | 11 | 8 | 59 |
| 2 Disagree | 28 | 26 | 27 | 22 | 21 | 19 | 30 | 12 | 14 | 28 | 21 | 10 | 9 | 39 | 23 | 32 | 35 | 19 | 35 |
| 3 Neutral | 5 | 36 | 40 | 21 | 36 | 26 | 4 | 20 | 47 | 12 | 31 | 16 | 15 | 28 | 33 | 21 | 41 | 40 | 7 |
| 4 Agree | 2 | 30 | 27 | 31 | 30 | 45 | 2 | 45 | 30 | 6 | 36 | 43 | 38 | 5 | 18 | 18 | 16 | 30 | 3 |
| 5 Strongly agree | 2 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 4 | 22 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 31 | 40 | 1 | 13 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 0 |
| Average Voting | 1,5 | 2,96 | 2,92 | 2,7 | 2,84 | 3,37 | 1,58 | 3,64 | 3,21 | 1,79 | 3,11 | 3,84 | 4,01 | 2,1 | 3,31 | 2,35 | 2,63 | 3,09 | 1,56 |
| | Disagree | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Disagree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Agree | Disagree | Neutral | Disagree | Neutral | Neutral | Disagree |
| Highest | 2,96 | Angela Merkel | | 3,37 | Volodymyr Zelenskyy | | 3,64 | Angela Merkel | | 3,84 | Volodymyr Zelenskyy | | 4,01 | Donald Trump | | 3,09 | Volodymyr Zelenskyy | | 3,63 |
| Lowest | 1,5 | Donald Trump | | 2,7 | Donald Trump | | 1,58 | Donald Trump | | 1,79 | Donald Trump | | 2,1 | Angela Merkel | | 2,35 | Donald Trump | | 1,56 |
| Delta | 1,46 | | | 0,67 | | | 2,06 | | | 2,05 | | | 1,91 | | | 0,74 | | | 2,07 |

| | Woman | 49 |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | | |
| **104** | Man | 54 |
| | under 18 | 1 |
| | 18-24 | 66 |
| | 25-34 | 24 |
| | 35-44 | 2 |
| | 45-54 | 5 |
| | over 55 | 6 |

Angela Merkel 3,39
Donald Trump 1,62
1,77

Volodymyr Zelenskyy 3,54
Donald Trump 2,13
1,41

Donald Trump 3,79
Angela Merkel 1,59
2,2

Volodymyr Zelenskyy 3,21
Donald Trump 2,38
0,83

Volodymyr Zelenskyy 3,84
Donald Trump 3,39
0,45