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Marketscapes. Market between Culture and Globalization

Abstract

What happens to market communication theory (MCT) when it embraces a global business world? MCT's applications of the 'global' turn out to serve "as a magnifier" for modernity, when we discuss MCT and its conceptions of the market from the perspective of emergent and dynamic cultural theory. We critically discuss the conception of the market, the relation between communication and market and how globalization is integrated into the field. We then interface selected approaches to MCT with cultural approaches to globalization. Finally, we explore and suggest new ways of bringing together market, culture, communication and the global. In the course of these critical discussions, we develop the elements of an alternative conception of the global market as marketscapes. Furthermore, we point to several consequences of our findings for MCT. MCT has to deal with a global market as a concept, that is a way of perceiving and thinking stakeholder activities in a 'translocal', post-national and multidirectional perspective. We conclude by pointing out areas for future MC research.

1. MCT meets the 'global': An introduction

Since "[m]arketing communication theory has been seriously undertheorized for decades" (Muñiz/O'Guinn 2005: 63), you might even question whether marketing communication theory is a discipline in its own right. Generally, marketing communication is based on a simple, essentialist notion of 'market' and draws eclectically on marketing theory and communication theory. MCT literature either stays within an economic, social science-based paradigm that draws largely on marketing literature (Hollensen 2001, Schweiger/Schrattenecker 2001, Vergossen 2004), or it stays within a communication theory and a humanity-

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based paradigm (Kimmel 2005, Usunier/Lee 2005, De Pelsmacker et al. 2007). These simplified understandings of 'market' are transferred to the 'global market' by simple addition of territorial entities. For reasons pointed out below, we find this problematic, since MCT's conceptualizations of the global market do not capture many of the complexities of a changing globalizing world.

The aim of this article is to develop an alternative approach to the understanding of 'the global market' we find in contemporary MCT. We do that by engaging in interdisciplinary work, bringing together the two different expertises of the authors. Additionally, we are investigating the prevalent understanding of markets, market communication and global market communication in MCT. We find that these understandings mostly may be characterized as essentialist, territorial, binary, static, universal, predictable and therefore controllable approaches based on thinking associated with modernity. As such, they do not match a post-modern and globalizing world.

This article is a theoretical and conceptual paper. We therefore do not systematically investigate empirical data. Instead, we critically review and discuss MCT literature. Based on our findings, we argue for the need to rethink and re-conceptualize the global market in a dynamic, emergent and process-oriented perspective. We bring together cultural theory (Baumann 1999, Søderberg/Holden 2002) and theory of globalization (Appadurai 1990, Scholte 2000, Appadurai 2003, Rantanen 2006). Globalization in public and corporate discourse is a buzzword. Globalization "is a much discussed yet poorly defined concept" (Bestor 2003). In research, globalization is a highly contested concept (G. Thompson in the same issue). Our definition of globalization is made with reference to Hannerz (1996)[1] and Appadurai (1990, 2003). Neither Hannerz nor Appadurai consider globalization a condition; rather, they take an emergent process-oriented approach to globalization defined as globalizing processes.We apply theories of globalizing processes to the field of MCT (Hollensen 2001, Ottesen 2001, Vergossen 2004, Kimmel 2005, Lee/Carter 2005, De Pelsmaker et al. 2007, Kotler et al. 2008). We advocate for a more post-modern, non-essentialist, dynamic and

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1   We want to emphasize that Hannerz's conception of the "cultural market place" is not the same as the concept of "marketscapes" which we develop here.

complex understanding of a global market than is proposed by main-
stream MC literature, namely an understanding of global markets as
'marketscapes'.

We proceed in the following way: In the next section, we discuss
MCT's notions of market, the dynamics of market communication and
the redundant understandings of globalization and its unsatisfactory ap-
plication on market communication. Then we present process-oriented
understandings of globalization. Subsequently, we re-conceptualize the
notion of the market. After discussing existing applications of the term
'marketscapes', we develop the elements of an alternative conception
of the global market. In order to better capture the complexities of a
globalizing world, we sketch the elements of marketscapes. Finally, we
conclude and point towards the needs for further research.

1.1. 'Market communication' or 'marketing communication'?

Before we proceed further with our argumentation, we would like to
briefly discuss a terminological issue because it may have implica-
tions for our line of argument. The term "market communication" im-
plies that the company is communicating with or within its market(s).
In that respect you might expect a terminological difference between
"market communication" on the one hand, and "marketing communi-
cation" on the other hand. However, the two terms seem to be used in-
terchangeably. Eiberg et al. (2008), for instance, refer consistently to
(integrated) market communication, at the same time referring to lit-
erature that almost exclusively speaks of "marketing communication".
Similarly, in the English version of his book on "Markedskommuni-
kasjon" (1992, 1997), Ottesen (2001), who may be regarded the origi-
nator of the term "market communication" at least in a Scandinavian
context, refers to "Marketing Communication Management". Moreo-
ver, Vergossen (2004: 19) states explicitly that the German terms "Mar-
keting-Kommunikation" and "Markt-Kommunikation" are synonyms.
With the exception of Torp (2008a), the difference between the two
terms is rarely discussed. One possible reason might be that "market-
ing" is the gerundival form of "to market", whereas in Scandinavia and
Germany the verbal derivation is not that obvious: In those speech ar-
eas, marketing would rather be seen as a subject, a research area, a dis-

cipline, or an organisational entity (a department). It is important, how-
ever, to point out that (integrated) marketing communication certainly
does not cover a homogenous area where consensus is prevailing. On
the contrary: Marketing communication covers a wide range of under-
standings, traditions and uses (see Torp 2008b). Nevertheless, we will
use the terms "market communication" and "marketing communica-
tion" as synonyms in this paper.

2. What is a 'market' in MCT?[2]

In order to question the notion of the global market emerging in recent
MCT, we first take a brief look at the conception of market itself.

Many publications in the field of marketing communication tend
to follow the market(ing) part of the field rather than the communica-
tion part (see the above mentioned social science paradigm). That goes
particularly for widespread standard textbooks like Hollensen (2001),
Schweiger/Schrattenecker (2001), Nieschlag et al. (2002), Vergossen
(2004), De Pelsmacker et al. (2007), Kotler et al. (2008), Kotler (2009),
Meffert et al. (2009). The definitions and conceptions of a market are
rarely discussed – 'market' is applied in self-explanatory ways and
treated as a given fact. That heavily impacts the notions of communica-
tion to be found in the above mentioned literature.

MCT's conventional notions of 'market' share the following five fea-
tures: a) the thereness of markets, b) the market as place, c) the organi-
zation of market in terms of binary relations, d) markets as static enti-
ties, and e) the predictability and controllability of market communica-
tion. We now discuss each of these features in that order.

2.1.1. The thereness of markets

The classic, ontological idea of a market forms the base of a simplistic
understanding of the market: Market is a priori assumed to be an exist-
ing local or geographical entity, a place where demand and supply meet.
MCT's essentialist notion of a market presupposes the marketers' op-

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2   An early version of our critical discussion of MCT has been presented as a double
blind peer reviewed paper at the conference *4th International Research Days on Market-
ing Communications* at Aarhus School of Business, Aarhus University, in March 2009
(Rittenhofer/Nielsen 2009).

tions to choose from a vast mass of groups to be made targets for both a marketing strategy and for MC (Majaro 1993: 42-61; Lee/Carter 2005: 108). This notion of a market is applied to any subcategory of a market, ie. the notion of a local, saturated, monopolistic, competitive and even a "grey" (Rugimbana/Keating 2003: 132; Kotler 2000: 384-385) or a "black" market (Arnould et al. 2004: 517). Consequently, MCT relies on the 'thereness" of markets, consumers, a company or an industry, and a "thereness" of communication. This, however, deflects our attention "from how meaning actually is locally and situatedly assembled" (Ryen 2001: 347) and also leads to a simplistic understanding of market communication: Markets are just "there" to be communicated with.[3]

2.1.2. The market as place

The very fundamental understanding of a market stems from the origins of trade, where man exchanged goods in physical marketplaces. The majority of MC theorists seem to have kept this understanding until today. However, due to the increase of services (as opposed to goods) and the subsequent increasing relevance of advances in communication technologies, a marketplace today may very often rather be seen as a metaphor for the physical meeting place of demand and supply. However, it is important to adhere that, both in the original sense and in its metaphorical transfer, it has always made good sense to divide, distinguish, name, and construe markets from a territorial point of view. From this understanding follows that markets are understood as being identical with either entire or parts of national territories.[4] Therefore, very many concepts of global markets adopt and enlarge a territorial perspective.

2.1.3. The binary structure of market relations

Furthermore, markets are often conceptualized in terms of binary structures, particularly in terms of supply-demand or buyer-seller (e.g.

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3   Another way of looking at it is to choose the perspective of one of the four Ps of the marketing-mix (Kotler 2000), namely place (= distribution). This P is also per definition inseparably bound up with the dimension of space. From both points of view, marketing communication necessarily becomes simplistic, static and tied to the local dimension.

4   The understanding of markets as national may be considered as contribution to and preservation of the imaginative national communities (Anderson 1991); in this regard, it might be discussed if MCT engages in "banal nationalism" (Billig 2006).

Ottesen 2001). This is a reductive understanding of market mechanism, since they are seen as one-directional instead of multi-directional, and since they imagine fixed units of distinct communities, such as "buyers", "sellers" or "producers". Moreover, any exchange is conceptualized in terms of binary hierarchical relations (dichotomies), even if, as Kotler (2000: 9) points out, the hierarchies shift with the direction of the exchange of either communication, goods, services, money or information: Market exchange directed towards industry puts markets in the hierarchical top of the exchange, while any reversed exchanges create a symbolic order where industry is on top of the action. Symbolic orders create power relations and signify the part on the top of the hierarchy to be the one in charge, in control, the one who takes initiative.

Even if the markets are differentiated, i.e. in resource, manufacturer, consumer, government or intermediary markets (Kotler 2000: 9), or into segments such as lifestyle (Arnould et al. 2004: 190) or family structure (Müller/Gelbrich 2004: 495), the binaries are not revoked. Although Freeman (1984) acknowledged the importance not only of buyers, sellers, and shareholders, but also of stakeholders such as employees, NGOs, neighbours, etc. (e.g. Schultz Jørgensen 2008), this approach only adds further to the conceptions of markets in terms of binary relations, with the company as its self-evident centre.

For the conception of global markets, it is important to note that the thus increased complexity of markets in MCT does neither acknowledge diversity, multi-directionality, nor unpredictability. Moreover, the conception of markets in terms of binary relations within markets is paralleled in the notion of global markets as binary relations between territorial entities, for instance between continental markets (e.g. Asian or European markets).

2.1.4. The market as a static entity

In MCT, markets tend to be construed as **static** rather than dynamic entities. The possibility that markets emerge, change or vanish, is neither made a theme, nor is it discussed.[5] Markets are reduced to "exchange"

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5 Obviously, emerging markets are a well-known phenomenon in marketing literature (Hollensen 2001: 299), although the prevalent perspective on emerging markets is that of national economies (Bekaert/Harvey 2003). But we hold on to our claim that the very notion of a market is a point of departure that does not include in its concept the

(Bagozzi 1975: 32), to transactions between markets on the one hand, or between markets and industry or government on the other hand. This comprises automatisms and fixed structures, and it excludes diverse forms of interaction and relations.

2.1.5. The predictability of market communication

Communication of and between market players is assumed to be dichotomous, directional, intentional, and partially predictable, and what is predictable in principle is also controllable. Also, MCT does a priori presume which activities are considered market and communication activities and which are not. Therefore, MCT can develop prescriptive models for proper and effective communication. In other words: MCT can develop prescriptive strategic recommendations for MC which are conditioned by the community membership of the communicator and the target group, respectively.

2.2. The prescriptive cultural perspective of MCT

In modern thought, market – as part of the economy – has been perceived of as a separate sphere of society and as both separate from culture and without cultural elements (Koslowski 1989). We take a postmodern position and look at markets as human made, and in that capacity market has cultural components, as well as consists of processes and activities, rather than being a condition or a fixed entity. We discuss this core notion of a market from a cultural perspective. In our critical discussion of MCT's most general notion of the market we apply Søderberg/Holden's (2002) definition of the two major conceptualizations of culture. On the one hand, there is an essentialist and static understanding of culture, and on the other hand a process-oriented and dynamic concept of culture. Correspondingly, we also apply Baumann's (1999) differentiation between the 'having' and the 'making' of culture. The most general notion of markets has a number of parallels to the essentialist and static concept of culture. Just as it is the case with the static category of culture, markets are also seen as relatively stable, homogeneous, internally consistent systems of sellers and buyers.

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dynamics of emerging, changing or vanishing.

You may construe markets as consisting of two communities: the community of sellers, and the community of buyers. Both communities are assumed to be stable and homogeneous themselves (at least that goes for market segments: the whole idea of segmenting is to create market segments that are homogeneous, see e.g. De Pelsmaker et al. (2007: 119). Sellers and buyers are seen as exclusively belonging to either one of these communities. Both communities are separated by clear and stable boundaries.[6] The members of these communities are either reduced to the selling or to the buying of certain products or services. We apply Baumann's' (1999) conception of the 'having' and the 'making' of culture and characterize markets by either "having" a consumer's or a seller's "culture". However, in order to have a culture, culture has to be made (Baumann 1999).

Markets are seen as "having" both communities. At the same time, market belongs to these communities. Market is what they share and have in common, something that fills in the gap between the boundaries of either community. The communities of sellers and buyers have an "onion-skin relationship" with the "parent large culture" (Holliday 1999: 239) of the market.

This notion of the market tends to entail blindness as regards, for instance, variation in conduct and motivation for selling and buying, diversity, member's belonging to both communities or to diverse communities, and power relations or members belonging to more than one market. Moreover, market players do not behave in exclusively rational or predictable ways.[7] Traditionalist modern approaches to consumer behavior are challenged by "postmodern perspectives, which seek to comprehend the deeply felt beliefs, emotions and meanings inherent in

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6 It is conceded that critical approaches like those of Christensen and Cheney (2000) discuss and problematize the fact that there are no clear-cut boundaries between internal (which in our context might be equivalent to the sellers) and external (which in our context might be equivalent to the buyers) audiences of corporate communication, which also comprises market communication. But those approaches are still in conflict with the mainstream conceptions.

7 Again, although the idea of the exclusively rational consumer has been abandoned some time ago (Kroeber-Riel/Weinberg 1996) and has been replaced by much more differentiated views on consumer behaviour and consumer decision-making (Arnould et al. 2004), the acknowledgment of non-rational consumption patterns has not made MCT reconceptualize the notion of the market.

the rituals, myths and symbols of consumer behavior" (Brown/Turley 1997: i).

Modern thinking in binaries and hierarchies and clear two-point directions impacts on contemporary MCT for reasons outlined above. We find that slightly astonishing, since postmodernism had a growing influence on science since the 1980's. In 1997, Brown explicitly expresses the expectation that the change in attitude towards science in general would have "significant implications for the nature, scope and overall objectives of marketing scholarship" (Brown 1997). Due to postmodern influences, "a whole new conception of marketing science, a whole new area of marketing understanding" was to emerge; from that, one would be able to define a decidedly "postmodern marketing condition" (Brown 1997).

2.3. Real world challenges to conventional MCT

Two cases illustrate that MCT's conventional notion of market as a relation of sellers and buyers – commodities filling in the space between – has additional shortcomings.

First, this notion of the market does not take into account the possibility that a market exists even if there are no buyers; and that goods which do not exist may be sold to buyers who do not exist. The recent case of Danish software company *IT Factory* illustrates that "market" works as a concept and as such as a way of perceiving, interpreting and signifying real world activities. Between 2004 and 2008, the company increased its turnover from 43 million to 2 billion Danish kroner – an increase entirely based on fake bills. CEO Stein Bagger sold, for instance, IT-devices for half a million kroner to a foreign company (owned by himself) and then signed a leasing contract with *Danske Bank*; the bank bought the devices and hired them out to *IT Factory* (*Weekendavisen* no 10, book section, March 2009: 2).

A Danish weekly reinvents the well-known parlour game *Monopoly* in order to illustrate the CEO's activities (*Weekendavisen* no 07, February 2009: 14). Examples of the *Monopoly* player's task are "Sell your IT-devices/your portfolio/your real estate for twice of what it's worth"; "Your leasing scam is uncovered and you send a Hell's Angel to assault the bastard – play the dice once again."; "The bank grants a loan on the security of fake invoices". CEO Stein Bagger invented buyers, reve-

nues turned out to be fictional. Centred on the company, a fictional market was created where there were neither customers, commodities nor revenues. However, it is not the fraud which is the point here; rather, it is the fact that the business world signified, accepted and dealt with all activities as real market activities. They perceived and interpreted these activities and signified them as market activities, acted on their perception and thus created a market.

Second, MCT's notion of the market does not consider the possibility that goods may be sold, which do not exist in the real world. Cyberspace has recently been pointed out as "the next marketing frontier" (Venkatesh et al. 1997). The internet is basically a tool for the worldwide sale of physical (i.e. consumer goods bought on the internet, for instance *e-bay* or *Amazon.com*) products. But there are examples of CEOs, enterprises, and products which only exist in virtual worlds. Commodities – houses, furniture – are sold for real world money. An example is the virtual company *Accident Design*, owned by virtual *Sophie Zu* in *Second Life* (Mosbech 2006). Activities like these may be conducted from any inhabited spot on earth, given the availability and access to technology. They are not confined to national borders, and they converge virtual, physical, and cultural space; where localized, they may be signified and thus understood as market.

Examples like these illustrate the hyperreal qualities of market. We use Chakrabarty's (2000: 27) expression and state that both concepts of market as either place or space refer to "figures of imagination". These examples made it clear to us that market, instead of as territorial unity and place, should rather be treated as a concept, a cultural device applied to make sense of and signify context-related activities. Both cases support our point that in conceptualizing global markets, the focus has to be moved: from the 'having' of given entities such as sellers, buyers and goods, to the 'doings' and the interplay of activities. In the following, we further develop the thought that this interplay creates formations which, depending on context and situation, may locally be perceived and interpreted as global markets. Both examples illustrate that sense making practices not only bring markets into being, but that they also affect choices of and decision making in private industry.

We want to sum up so far. If MCT is to deal with a globalizing business world, different perspectives are needed. We therefore suggest that

we conceive of market as a concept, just as proponents of the social constructionist view like e.g. Pires/Stanton (2005) do, and not as an ontological phenomenon, . As a concept, "market" does not denote a physical entity located at a certain place. Rather, market denotes a way of thinking and perceiving. The question, then, is: what is it that can be thought and perceived as a global market? Finally, MCT does not integrate a social constructionist perspective[8] on market segments: 1) MCT operates almost exclusively with static categories of markets and their players. 2) MCT only considers the existence, the being of markets and its players.

2.4. The notion of the 'global market' in MCT

Generally, we want to adhere to the assumption that in MCT, "global" or "globalization" are applied in self-explanatory ways. We point to three major problems in MCT's use of the global market: the global market is nothing but a change of scale; the size of the global market is not reflected; the use applies redundant understandings of globalization.

2.4.1. The global market is a change of scale

Within the field of MCT, the definition of a global market is nothing else but a change of scale. As pointed out above, markets have territorial boundaries typically understood as national markets. A global market is the addition of market relations across national or continental boundaries, e.g. a global market for banking. There are advocates (following Levitt 1983) of the thesis that the convergence of national markets – previously relatively closed or limited markets like "the Ger-

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8 The need to develop a social constructionist conception of the market and its impact on MCT becomes more evident considering the fact that there already exist discussions on "the *social* [original emphasis] nature of markets and market economies. Market economies are socially constructed institutions that facilitate the production, exchange and consumption of goods and services. They are of course just one of the several ways in which economic activity can be organised, such as through feudalism, slavery, caste systems and centrally planned economies" (Suneja 2000: 1). And even though hypermodern views like those of Lipovetsky (2005) and Roberts/Armitage (2006: 561-562) may represent dynamic and social constructionist perspectives, they still seem to some degree to build on traditional views.

man Market", "the American Market" – are developing into larger entities (regional markets like the Asian, the European market, see Majaro 1993: 53-61; Hollensen 2001: 189; see also the idea of a "multi-country marketing program" Hennessey 2005: 86) and in the last consequence into one big global market. This convergence of markets is seen as due to several factors such as technological change, information technologies, travel, tourism, migration, and last but not least the growth of multinational corporations (Levitt 1983; Quelch/Deshpande 2004: 3-5). The convergence of national markets into a global market increases the complexities of the exchange of physical goods and non physical services, money, resources, and taxes.

However, as is the national market, this global market is still seen from a geographical point of view. This would allow for national markets to be perceived of as segments of a global market. Most importantly, the simple expansion of conventional market definitions to embrace a larger and larger territory does not fit contemporary global realities were the nation state no longer necessarily is a major player. Our point becomes even more evident if you consider the fact that "[i]n a world of 200 countries, fifty-one of the largest one hundred economies are corporations rather than nation-states" (Quelch/Deshpande 2004: 4). The understanding of MC as industry exchange with a global market obviously needs a serious revision. In general, multinationals "communicate with one voice, not just by using English as the lingua franca of global business but by sharing a common language of management and financial practices, cultivated over the past century by the leading American business schools" (Quelch/Deshpande 2004: 5).

2.4.2. The understandings of globalization are redundant

MCT operates with 'redundant understandings of globalization' (Scholte 2000: 44-46). In MCT, the complexities of the global market are not due to globalization, but to liberalization, internationalization, westernization and universalization. The generalizing features of the notion of market exchange, as discussed, lead to the universalization of the notion. Those features suggest that market generally may be applied to the entire inhabited world. From that it is a small step to perceive 'market' as 'global'. As Scholte (2000) points out, it is quite common to misread universalization as globalization. However, MCT needs to deal with the

fact that there is no uniform or universal kind of market economy in the world, and markets do not everywhere and at all times work in a similar fashion" (Suneja 2002: 2). Neither is there a unique nor a universal concept of the market (Depeyre/Dumez 2008: 226-227).[9] Even worldwide marketed and distributed products such as Coca Cola or McDonald's hamburgers do neither meet nor create homogeneous markets; one reason are diverse consumption contexts (Djursaa/Kragh 1998). What the actions of buying and consuming actually communicate differs according to situation and context. The distribution of standardized products does not impact cultural divergences on the macro level (Lewis 2003). MCT's attempt to simply enlarge apparently well-known categories such as "market" might be read as a pattern for orientation in a complex world and thus as an attempt to make the distant, unfamiliar and unpredictable seem familiar and controllable.

2.5. Implications for MCT

MCT makes the original model of the market place and its specific types of transactions appear universal, since they do neither consider the impact of various contexts nor the interplay of situation and context. The conception of the global market in MCT may be characterized as modernity enlarged. This has several implications for a reconceptualization of the global market: One, we are not to operate with general understandings of markets in order to conceptualize the global quality of a market. Two, when outlining a global market, no concept of market may be universalized. Three, neither may the European/Western concept of MC be assumed to be universal and applied 'globally': Not only do different areas of the world have different understandings of globalization (Lewis 2003: 226); also, as Suneja (2000: 2) points out, the "way in which markets and market economies work in different parts of the world displays systematic and quite profound variation." This is demonstrated in a disturbing manner by Amy Chua (2003) in 'World on Fire'; the export of market democracy tips the balance in many regions of the world "towards disintegration and strife".

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9   "There is no unique concept of market, but different language games defining markets"(Depeyre/Dumez 2008: 226).

Moreover, MCT's conception of the global markets simply puts the conception of the market as binaries, as discussed above, at large.[10] The impact of binaries on the conception of the global market is illustrated by the following quote on the relation between firms and globalization: "Firms […] are more than just benefactors of this trend [i.e. globalization, the authors]; they are also facilitators of it. By offering the same basic product worldwide, they help to create the global market" (Hill 2007: 7). Here, not globalization, but rather liberalization is applied; a market, meaning sellers and buyers of a certain product, is expanded within free trade agreements.

We consider our findings to be problematic. One reason is that this way MCT is not able to capture what globalization actually is about: "post-national" formations of cultural flows (Appadurai 1990) (the recent financial crisis might serve as an example of a post-national formation) and multidirectional relations and interactions. Instead of using the terminology "processes", Appadurai (1990) and Hannerz (1996) apply the term "flows". Appadurai speaks of "cultural flows", such as flows of people, but also of the flows of technologies, financial capital, information and images. Hannerz (1996) speaks of the flows of meanings and meaningful forms. We apply Appadurai (1990: 6; also quoted in Venkatesh et al. 1997: 316) and argue that conceptions of the global market in contemporary MCT is put at the service of "production fetishism", since it implies that any MC is in control within the territorial boundaries of even its respective "global market". Moreover, Cold War bipolar ways of thinking relationships of nations or areas of the world do not apply any longer (Huntington 1996, 2002). Furthermore, the belief in "[l]ocal control, national productivity and territorial sovereignty", which might be implied in MCT's enlargement of modern conventional conceptions of the market, is an illusion which masks "translocal capital, transnational earnings flows, global management and often faraway workers" (Appadurai 1990: 6). Even if markets appear to be local or national, they are globalizing. For this reason, the distinction between 'market' and 'global market' is redundant. Consequently, our

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10 "Modernity at large" is the title of a book published by Appadurai in 1996. The title expresses the effect of human practices, our formulation 'put at large' attempts to highlight and put focus on the doings themselves.

concept of 'marketscape' applies to any market, as any market is a global market.

So far, we conclude that MCT simply enlarges conventional notions of the market in order to deal with "the global". The 'global market' is added to the single national markets, just as market exchanges across national or continental boundaries are enlarged. The 'global market' in MCT, as compared to the 'market' in MCT, is nothing but a change of scale. A question which cannot be answered, but which nevertheless is a logical question to ask from that is, how many markets does MCT need in order to be able to speak of a global market? According to our findings, this question is not addressed in MCT. Moreover, MCT does not acknowledge that globalization is not restricted to the relations between markets; rather, globalization also exists within markets. Globalization is borderless. The cases of *IT Factory* and *Second Life* discussed above further support our point: In the conceptualization of global markets, the focus has to be moved from the 'having' markets and other given entities (such as sellers, buyers and goods). In the light of post-modernity[11] and a globalizing world, we advocate for the need of MCT to focus much stronger on the doings, processes and interplay of activities. As we discuss beneath, these activities create formations which, depending on context and situation, may be localized in a transworld space[12] and be perceived and interpreted as global markets. In the following, we will develop this argument further and outline an alternative understanding of the global market as marketscapes.

2.6. "To market" instead of "the market"

Based on the critical review of the above mentioned notions of market and market communication, we use Chakrabarty's (2000: 27) expression and conceptualize both, market as place and market as space, as "hyperreal". The term 'hyperreal market' does not refer to entities which are to be mapped on earth or on the internet; rather, both concepts refer to "figures of imagination". We advocate for MCT to fo-

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11   Although postmodernism has "evoked considerable debate and discussion in the field of marketing […] only little of this debate is reflected in the subfield of marketing communications" (Firat/Christensen 2005: 215).

12   By transworld space, Beck (2000) refers to the world treated as one single space undivided by territorial units and borders.

cus on activities and processes and thus on the "making" of markets. Market communication then would imply that communicative activities (such as meaning creating) both, create and shape markets.

In the light of globalization, MCT is in need of a dynamic and process-oriented understanding of markets as being created, shaped and re-shaped by human activities, among other things communicating activities. "Market communication" then would imply that markets are created, transformed and reshaped by the cultural activities of conceptualizing and meaning creating, by communicative activities, by social activities, such as producing or buying or consuming products and services, and by material activities, such as the production of goods. We also advocate for activities considered relevant not to be limited to marketers or other players prescribed as self-evident members in the conventional notion of markets. Additionally, activities are neither to be seen as determined by the community memberships of the players nor as a function of the market. Rather, we suggest that the market is seen as an effect of the interplay of these activities.

What would the possible impact of these suggestions be for MCT? If we accept that the differentiation between local/national and global markets has to be abandoned in favour of marketscapes, we also have to accept that it is post-national activities that form the overall causality and perspective on market and market-orientation. Subsequently, MC is to be reversed. In that case, what in conventional MCT is accepted as the starting point for MC has to be rethought: demands, structures, the given and static characteristics of the a priori conception of the market as consisting of predefined segments and target groups. It then is the dynamic and emergent perspective that points to the creation of global markets. This may be a radical view, but it illustrates the reversed causality.

All human activities do have communicative aspects, since they are ascribed meanings depending on situation and context. Not all activities create markets, but it is only by looking at the situated and context-related effect of perception and interpretation of formations of their interplay as 'market' – if not only one understanding is applied, these patterns allow for the recognition of various market advantages – we can decide which activities actually create markets. This points towards the need to develop an emergent, dynamic and post-national understanding

of MC as one out of diverse activities creating formations which – depending on context and situation – may be signified as markets.

3.   Towards a new understanding of the global market

Hannerz (1996: 102) points out that globalization is "an organization of diversity". Since diversity is often understood in terms of binary differences, we rather speak of multiplicity. Based on an emergent and dynamic understanding of culture, we define globalization as a concept that – depending of situation and context – denotes a way of thinking and perceiving multiplicity: the "interaction of cultural meanings, economic processes, and social structural forms, along multiple dimensions, in diverse juxtapositions of local places, in accelerating time" (Bestor 2003: 318). Multiplicity, however, cannot be reduced to the binary structuring of fixed units of MCT thought.

In order for MCT to conceptualize a global market, not only the understanding of fixed and static boundaries is to be abandoned, but also the notion of the thereness of markets, as understood in terms of place and national boundaries. In the following, we continue our ongoing discussion of how the "complexity of the current global economy" (Appadurai 1990: 2) might be reflected in a reconceptualization of MCT's 'global market' – in terms of any market – as marketscapes. In the course of this discussion, we develop the elements of the concept of marketscapes.

3.1. What is this name called "Marketscape"?

First, we investigate whether the term preexists in literature. We found out that we did not invent the term itself. Moreover, the term transcends fields and disciplines. However, as the discussion of existing applications of the term 'marketscape' is going to reveal, 'marketscape' does not yet exist in the sense that we apply it. We have to emphasize that our definition and application of the concept of 'marketscapes' is our original contribution to the field. In this paragraph, we present and discuss our findings.

A check with Google Scholar for the period 1995–2008 (accessed 12.11.2008) first of all reveals the triumphal expression of the suffix "-scape". This suffix is added to macro-scale built environments such

as kitchens or tables; as such, they "shape" food choice and intake "through widely dispersed international food systems". These -scapes "must be represented indirectly through mental and physical maps or other images" (Sobal/Wansink 2007). This is a territorial understanding of production and distribution activities which in interrelation with physical environments shape consumption activities.

Spelled "market scape", the term emerges in a guide to computing literature (Rogerson-Revell 2005). Spelled "marketscape", the term denotes a variety of meanings, like a company name "Marketscape Ltd" (Business Information Review, 1997–2001); a platform developed at the California Institute of Technology; software, such as a "trading program" or "trading interface"; a "multi-agent system" spelled "Market-Scape" which simulates a real world consumer market as well as models economic scenarios as for instance recessions.[13]

"Marketscape" is also used in publications on e-business which explicitly see the internet as a "mainstream business tool" required to be combined with marketing competencies. The term "global marketscape" is used synonymously with "cyberspace"; the term indicates that cyberspace "has changed our conventional notions of time and space and human exchange".[14] This internet created space is perceived as globalization itself. As discussed above, Kotler (2000: 9) points out that virtual markets create a market space. Electronic conceptions of both the global market and globalization are perceived as electronically created place and as such as conditions which impact and determine human exchange. Internet related place is interpreted as market-"space" which becomes a function of the internet. Online MC seems to become a function of an electronic marketspace, a specialized style for communicating on the internet; at least this seems to be the unacknowledged assumption in manuals on online-marketing (e.g. Gay et al. 2007).

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13 "MarketScape" was originally designed by the Department of Development Sociology and the Food and Agriculture Program at Cornell University to aid farmers and producer organizations in marketing products directly to consumers in New York State. It has been expanded to serve food security and to map census tract data and point locations for retail outlets, food processing facilities, hospitals, schools, and other potential customers. In addition, demographic information of consumers interested in locally grown, organic, and other types of produce was obtained from the Empire State Poll (Magri et al. 2006, see also Bossaerts et al. 2002).

14   Venkatesh (1997: 23), as quoted in Dahlèn et al. (2000).

As we will discuss below, marketspace, however, differs from market as scape. Market as scape demands a rethinking of the relation between market, space and place. With reference to Appadurai, we state that space is not synonymous with "-scape".

The Internet is presented as both marketscape and as a tool for effective exchanges between business and consumer. At the same time, these exchanges are seen as a function of the internet: "The internet has created a new set of rules in many ways with greater transparency, cost efficiencies, more consumer power and choice, changing strategic alliances and new partnerships." (Scribner 2003: 638). The Charter Institute of Marketing puts this quite explicitly: "the internet will impact upon all players in the value chain" in that it will "reach out to other parts of domestic markets and even go global" in "an ever increasing multi-channel marketing world".[15]

In many of our findings, the term "marketscape" is nothing more than a passing choice of words. Either the term is not defined at all, or it is not applied systematically. The term "marketscape" emerges as an accidental choice of term applied to denominate peoples' reflections on everyday life in the former GDR in the light of unification (Scribner 2003: 638). The term "marketscape" is part of a smart headline: "Overview of the new marketscape"; however, the term is not defined and not used in the text to follow (Gay et al. 2007: 2). This is another example of 'space' and 'scape' being used synonymously, since the publication deals with the "internet's impact on traditional marketing functions and practices".

Marketscape is also utilized in compound nouns. None of the relevant links found in Google apply to Appadurai's definition of the "scape" or refers to his work. Take for instance the compound noun "retail marketscape".[16] Apparently, it refers to "three fundamental forces" "significant to retail strategy development" and which affect industry competitors: more knowledgeable and therefore empowered consumers and competitive differentiation, made possible by the third factor

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15 [online]. http://books.google.com/books?lr=&id=iP60Huf0c8UC&dq=marketsca pe&ots=CmfEPdcFJD&pg=PA1&lpg=PA1&sig=ACfU3U3jk6ToUVlMPUN7b4_lG- 0bPO3yqw&q=marketscape#PPA5,M1

16 The IBM Institute for Business Value [online]. http://prozoom.ch/iab/iab.nsf/img/ a/$file/a.pdf

"technological tipping points" of the growing availability and adoption of technology. Basically, a retail marketscape comes down to the growing impact of the internet on retail industry.

Another compound name is 'agricultural marketscape' (Lyson/Green 1999). It can both be local and global. The marketscape denotes the flow of agricultural products from their sources to their consumer markets. Agricultural and food systems are perceived as an area's either entirely "local or both local and "global" "marketscape" . This is a geographical understanding of space as marketscape which can be both sustainable and developed ((Lyson/Green 1999: 134, 143, 146). It assumes the "thereness" of markets and maps the geographical landscape of production and consumption, understood as the basic exchange between on the one hand local and global producers and on the other hand local consumers of agricultural products (Lyson/Green 1999: 134). Moreover, the agricultural marketscape consists of reciprocal binary relations.

The term marketscape also emerges as related to a physical environment; here our Google findings become more interesting for our reconceptualization of the globalizing market as 'scape'. The contributions in "The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating culture" (2003) not only refer to Appaduari's work, but also contain one of his contributions (Appadurai 2003). In a case study on global seafood trade, Th. C. Bestor 2003 deals with "markets and places". He argues (p. 303) that due to globalization, the market and urban place are reconnected in spatially discontinuous urban hierarchies. This reconnection both creates and coordinates complex multiple flows of commodities, culture (images, orientation), capital (economic flows) and people across national, societal and cultural borders. However, in our reading, Bestor makes globalization the undefined and self-evident driving force of the marketscape, a condition, rather than something created by localized actions.

There are also applications of the term marketscape in relation to brands in retail. By "marketscape theming" is referred to the customization of construction templates for local tastes. Flagship brands, then, are "marketscape themed flagships". The "total packaging of a product ends not with a thing itself, nor its container, but continues to include its position in a store, the entire store environment, the mail, district, city, nation, and in cyberspace. Successful themed retailers will localize, localize, localize their location, location, location" (Kozinets et al. 2002).

A marketscape is here a space created by positioning a product in both territorial and virtual locations. It is not, however, about globalizing cultural flows or the localizing of these flows.

Different from the understanding of marketscape which we sketch here, Sherry (2000: 330) applies the term 'marketscape' to denote place.' Marketscape' is one out of four typologies of marketplace in two dimensions and defined as "a cultural, physical marketplace most commonly explored in our literatures". Another typology is 'cyberscape', defined as a "cultural, ethereal marketplace" of the electronic media, and 'mindscape', which is not reduced to virtual reality, but defined as "a natural, ethereal marketplace about which our literatures are relatively silent…. The enlightened cultivation of inner space, and in particular the recovery of the geomantic axis of the marketplace, is essential to any hope of sustainable development in the new millennium." In contrast to Zukin (1991), Sherry (2000: 330) defines 'landscape' not as a cultural product, but as "a natural, physical marketplace".

3.2. An emergent cultural perspective: globalizing markets

Above, we pointed to the both essentialist, descriptive and functionalist understanding of markets in MCT in order to discuss the shortcomings of existing conceptualizations of the global market. We did that by applying the essentialist understanding of culture to the discussion of market in MCT.

In order to develop a conception of the globalizing market as scape, we now apply the emergent, dynamic and process-oriented understanding of culture. In order to come up with a definition of the globalizing market, we apply Søderberg and Holden's definition of culture (see above) in a de-territorialized way. In the following, we take "an emergent, dynamic approach" to the conceptualization of the globalizing market as made up of "cultural flows" (Appadurai 1990) and "'based on shared or partly shared patterns of meaning and interpretation'" (Søderberg/Holden 2002: 112). Clusters of these patterns may be found at various localizations and cross well known interpretations of boundaries as those of self-evident territorial units to which they are neither limited to nor derive from. In the global economy, place may no longer be conceptualized as homogeneous "territorial units" (Scholte 2000: 46). Territorial units are for example towns ("people in Copenhagen"),

countries ("the Americans"), religions ("the Muslim world") and continents ("the Africans"). With regard to MCT, we may add markets to Scholte's list of territorial units. Culture, globalization and markets do not denote a physical or material world; rather, we define them as concepts. As concepts, the use of market, globalization and culture denotes ways of thinking and perceiving. This definition is crucial in our conceptualization of globalizing markets as marketscapes where we apply an emergent and dynamic approach to market. This implies that the modern understanding of market as place is replaced by a postmodern understanding of market as ongoing processes and as such as the localization of activities in a transworld space.

3.3. Globalizing processes and market: the concept of '- scape'

The above arguments point in our view to the need for MCT to re-conceptualize the understanding of the "global" quality of the thereness of markets and its players as well as to conceptualize markets as created and shaped by multidirectional activities, expanding and contracting in a transworld space. We apply Appadurai's conception of global cultural flows creating '-scapes' and define globalizing markets as marketscapes.[17] Marketscapes disconnect market and territory or place; rather, they create locality. We perceive transworld cultural flows as marketscape. In order to provide a better understanding of our argumentation, we briefly explain the relation between the concept of landscape and the concept of "-scape.

3.3.1. Landscapes of economy and culture

The suffix '-scape' originates from 'landscape'. According to Zukin (1991), "landscapes" is the major cultural product of our time. Sharon Zukin (1991) develops the term "landscapes of power" where she distinguishes between a geographical understanding of landscape and a concept of landscape; while the first one is a spot to be pointed out on

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17 However, we want to point out that we find a slight contradiction of terms in Appadurai's terminology, where on the one hand he applies the term 'global' indicating a condition, and on the other hand invents a terminology of "scapes" to conceptualize its opposite which is unidirectional and unpredictable and ever altering processes.

a map, the second one is a tool of cultural analysis. The term denotes physical surroundings in a geographical meaning, "but it also refers to an ensemble of material and social practices and their symbolic representation" (Zukin 1991: 16). "A landscape mediates, both symbolically and materially, between the socio-spatial differentiation of capital implied by market and the socio-spatial homogeneity of labor suggested by place" (Zukin 1991: 19). Even though Zukin rethinks the relation between market and place, she does not abandon the concept of nation and national territory. Zukin defines with Martin Heidegger national landscapes as "a series of unbound spaces where mass production and mass consumption reproduce standardized, quasi-global culture" (Zukin 1991: 20).

Appadurai (1990) developed the concept of landscape further and identified five scapes of global cultural flows. By "global cultural flows" Appadurai (Rantanen 2006: 9) means something both post-national and bigger than "transnational flows" (Hannerz 1996). One might speak of the flow of lifestyle ads on the net or of commercials on satellite TV. Technologies are here a tool, which allows for 'spot markets' (Angell 1996). In a process-oriented approach, a person in the trans-world space spots a product and buys it which makes her/him engaged in this particular activity; both activities make him a stakeholder at this very moment, but only this one time, and only for the duration of the time that he is engaged in these activities. No stakeholders are entities, rather, they are humans defined by relational activities which, whenever performed, contribute to the global cultural flows. People are involved in more than one cultural pattern; meanings and interpretations occur everywhere and anytime and are therefore unpredictable, multiple and multidirectional.

Cultural flows are not to be understood in terms of binaries; rather, cultural flows are multidirectional: "Cultural flows do not necessarily map directly on to economic and political relationships, which means that the flow of cultural traffic can often be in many directions simultaneously" (Parkin/Featherstone, quoted in Holliday 1999: 244). Cultural flows thicken into scapes. Scapes identify non-geographical, non-territorial and post-national global landscapes. They can clearly be identified; however, they cannot be pointed out on a map and have neither borders nor boundaries.

Combined social, cultural and material flows have spatial conse-
quences. They consist of actions and processes which, when localized
in a transworld space, create emergent and dynamic marketscapes. This
has consequences for the characteristics of information communicated
into the world. We agree with Bestor (2003: 316) who argues that "mar-
kets are formed around flows of information": "to the extent that mar-
ket information is couched in the terms of cultural particularism, for-
eign producers who are willing to accept essentialist discourse as the
way to understand others are put at a disadvantage… [it] serves nicely
to obscure both the productive and the cultural processes evolved in the
trade". As globalization is not to be understood as "replication of uni-
formity" (Hannerz 1996: 102), information communicated in simplistic
and universalizing terms is not suited to create marketscapes.

We conceptualize marketscapes as emerging communities of action.
Like Appadurai's '-scapes', so are marketscapes dimensions of cultur-
al flows; they are created by the interplay of human activities, includ-
ing the activity of localization. As all '-scapes', marketscapes are able
to both expand and contract. It offers an alternative to the expansion-
ism and 'progressism' of the 'growth culture" which Koslowski (1989)
identifies as characteristic of modern conceptions of economy. The fo-
cus is on processes of human activities, not on a condition. The locali-
zations of actions and processes on various spots within a transworld
space change all the time, some vanish, some come into being, and
therefore marketscapes are contracting and expanding all the time.

Acknowledging the postmodern transformation of territorial place
into transworld space, Appadurai developed the concept of '-scapes'
(Venkatesh et al. 1997: 315-319). We will introduce the concept of
"-scapes" and discuss its possible impact on MCT below.

3.3.2. Appadurai's five "-scapes"

Scapes are perspectival constructs, inflected by the multiple situated-
ness of diverse actors. They have a "fluid, irregular shape". They are the
building blocks of "imagined worlds", that is "multiple worlds which
are constituted by the historically situated imagination of persons and
groups spread around the globe (Rantanen 2006: 2). These imagined
worlds transgress the "imagined communities" of nations connected to
a respective territory (Anderson 1983, 1991), and they contest and even

subvert the imagined worlds of the "entrepreneurial mentality" that surrounds them (Rantanen 2006: 2). In our above critical discussion of the conception of the global market in MCT we pointed out that this was done by simply putting the static idea of a national market at large. In this case, we may speak of a territorial understanding of the global market in MCT: global market then is an imagined community of sellers and buyers which is linked to a certain territory.

Appadurai (1990) identifies five dimensions of global cultural flows: ethno-, techno-, finance-, media-, and ideoscapes. We give a brief identification of each scape. Ethnoscapes are constituted by the flows of people which are closely linked to the flows of international economic and cultural capital. Technoscapes are generated by flows of new technologies (both generation and movement). Financescapes are shaped by flows of financial capital through institutional arrangements and application of information technology. The mediascapes are created by flows of electronic production and dissemination of information and images of the world. The concept of ideoscapes concatenates of images guided by political and ideological considerations. They are composed of elements of the Enlightenment world view, including master narratives, master terms and keywords which all went through a different diaspora. These elements govern communication between "elites and followings" and give semantic and pragmatic problems: Semantic, because "words and their local equivalents require careful translation from context to context in their global movements; and pragmatic to the extent that the use of these words by political actors and their audiences may be subject to very different sets of contextual conventions that mediate their translation into public policies" (Rantanen 2006: 5).

3.3.3. Localization instead of place or space

Historically, market and place were tightly interwoven. The separation between market and place dates back to the beginning of "modern market society" (Zukin 1991: 5-6).[18] Place is a concept in social theory

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18 In the course of the 18th and 19th century, abstract market forces overpowered "specific forces of attachment identified with place" where a market "was both a literal place and a symbolic threshold, a 'socially constructed space' and 'a culturally inscribed limit that nonetheless involved a crossing of boundaries by long-distance trade and socially marginal traders." The social institutions of

84

and expresses "how a spatially connected group of people mediate the demands of cultural identity, state power, and capital accumulation". There are three understandings of "place". On the level of geographical location, a point on a well-bound map, place refers to territory. Closely related is the idea of specific places as a concentration of people and economic activity. In a broader sense place is a cultural artifact of social conflict and cohesion (Zukin 1991: 12).

The rapid increase of exchange of anything but physical goods is primarily driven by internet-based transactions and interactions. In MCT, a distinction between market place (e.g. vegetable market) and market space – that is virtual markets (the Internet) – has been made (Kotler 2000: 9). However, this implies a broadening of the nature of place. MCT's distinction between market place and market space means a distinction of place as is either physical or virtual, whereas the relation between space and place has been rethought in globalization literature.

Bestor (2008: 303) argues that the relation of markets and place has not to be abandoned; rather, it has to be reconsidered: "[…] market and place are not disconnected through the globalization and economic activity, but that they are reconnected in different ways. The process creates spatially discontinuous urban hierarchies […] At the same time, these re-connections and juxtapositions create continuous economic and informational flows, as well as cultural images and orientations. The cultural processes involved include the imagination of commodities in trade, as items of exchange and consumption, as well as the imagination of the trade partners and the social contexts through which relationships are created, modified or abandoned. Markets and urban places continue as the central nodes in the coordination of complex multiple flows of commodities, culture, capital and people."

Appadurai differs between the thereness and boundaries of place (condition) on the one hand, and the production of locality (process) on the other hand. He defines globalization as processes, namely postnational social formations (1990, 2003) which produce locality. Scapes created by global cultural flows may be defined as the distribution of things which is neither entirely objectively determinable nor an absolute and measureable fact, "but that you could equally have identified

markets and place supported each other (Zukin 1991: 6).

in a certain location some completely other location. [The] "landscape or distribution of these things no longer confirmed to contained geographies of superstructure and infrastructure" (Rantanen 2006: 12, 15).

The production of locality challenges MCT's assumption of the thereness of the market and MC. "People, meanings and meaningful forms which travel fit badly with what have been conventional units of social and cultural thought" (Hannerz 1996: 20). We count "market" and "place" as well as "customer" or "buyer" or "seller" among those conventional units of social and cultural thought. Since human motion results in the emergence of "translocalities" (Appadurai 2003: 338), we suggest that the transworld multidirectional relations created by activities such as producing, buying, selling, consuming, communicating are necessary elements of marketscapes. In order to create markets, the interplay of these activities needs to be localized. Here, the cultural activity of perceiving, interpreting and sense making – based on shared or partly shared patterns, enters the scene.

We suggest a process-oriented redefinition of the concept of market and conceptualize market as practices. As "market" we define situated and context-related patterns of cultural practices (signification and meaning creation), interacting with situated communicative (market communication), social (buying, selling, consuming) and material (producing) practices. Market is a linkage of perceptive and interpretative processes based on shared or partly shared cultural patterns with both communicative, social and material practices.

Sense making processes bring seller, buyer, goods and markets into being, and turn activities into market activities. We suggest a shift of MCT's focus from the conventional understanding of a global market place to the localizations of these activities regardless of which spot on earth they occur. Consequently, we suggest for MCT to redirect focus towards the interplay of activities and practices which in certain contexts and situations create a locality we understand as market: It is not until we identify processes as market that it is invented and comes into existence. Markets are situated and context-related effects of this interplay. The perception and interpretation of these interplays as markets not only creates, but also localizes markets and connects them to various spots in a transworld space.

For the reconceptualization of the global market, a consequence of this is that a differentiation between global and national markets and thus the conceptualization of any market in terms of place has to be abandoned. If MCT is going to embrace the global, we see a point in applying the concept of the creation of translocal markets and consider the impact for a reconceptualization of the global character of markets. We define globalization as translocal processes which denote the localizations of multidirectional post-national processes and activities in a "transworld space" (Beck 2000). By post-national, we refer to processes occurring independently of and at the same time criss-crossing nation states. Globalizing processes extend beyond MCT's boundaries and hierarchies of both dual single markets and inter-market relations. This is where we see a clash between, on the one hand, globalizing processes and MCT's limited geographic-national conception of both market and global market on the other hand. Those processes and activities may impact states and nation states as well as corporate stakeholders.

Our reconceptualization of a market points towards the development of a postmodern MCT which embraces globalizing processes in an alternative way. We use the term globalizing processes since it focuses on activities and signals multiplicity, multiple directions and complexity. We now enter into a discussion of our understanding of globalizing processes.

3.4. Meaningful forms instead of universal signs

Venkatesh et al. (1997: 316) argue that globalization "uses the instruments of homogenization" – clothes and fashion, music and entertainment, food and aesthetic experiences – "to create heterogenized markets, that is to serve and service the locals with global universal signs, transmitted through cyberspace." A growing proportion of commodities are in themselves nothing but meanings and forms carrying meanings; as Lash and Urry (1994: 4) point out, not material objects, but signs is what is increasingly produced. Logos are often understood this way. Naomi Klein (2000, 2005) claims that logos have a larger potential reach than the apparent lingua franca English: logos are "the closest thing we have to an international language, recognized and understood in more places than English". According to Eriksen (2007: 54), English is not a global language.

By contrast, Hannerz does not speak of the distribution of "universal signs". Acknowledging that signs do not have universal meanings, Hannerz rather speaks of "meaningful forms". He points to flows creating connectivity, such as the mobility of people and of "meanings and meaningful forms" (Hannerz 1996) in a transworld space. If we take the example of the Wegner chair, often referred to as Danish design: This chair is not the result of some genius originating in Danishness and therefore not a function of nationness. It is a modification of an ancient Chinese chair. This chair is a mobile borderless meaningful form which acquires new meanings, here the meaning of a specific national design.

The potential global reach of the internet transmitted signs, however, does not necessarily make them "universal". The internet is not globalization, but one among several technological tools that makes possible the connectivity of people. We deliberately do not apply the term "interconnectedness" (Hannerz 1996: 102); in our understanding, this term implies a condition, and dichotomous relations between preexisting and fixed social or cultural units which, due to globalization, change from a condition of homogeneity to a condition of diversity.

As a tool of globalizing processes, the internet is a means of communication: It is not global, but has a potentially global reach, gives local access, transforms the conditions of receiving and sending and thus of the exchange between sellers and buyers, and "provides new solutions to identity, to predictability, to self-understanding" (Rantanen 2006: 9). For MCT, this implies that e-market communication or virtual means of communication are neither synonymous with globalization nor global market communication.

The implication for MC is that it can communicate meaningful forms, but not control meaning production. Communication is not, as in conventional MCT, "a closed circuit of exchange, where meanings are clearcut, completely comprehensible and guaranteed to arrive on time at the appointed place" (Brown/Turley 1997: 6). Therefore, advertisement is not, as Naomi Klein (2000, 2005: 5) states, a vehicle that conveys meaning to the world. Rather, we might argue with Hannerz (1996: 22-23) that advertisements locally constitute 'areas of meaning creation' termed "habitats of meaning"; advertisements are meaning-

ful forms, with potential transworld reach, locally read as signs and ascribed meanings.

Meaning creation is diverse. Meaning creation is situated, context-related, multidirectional, none-predictable and not controllable; meaning creation processes may be localized; however, they may not be placed in time or place. Meanings given to travelling forms may be localized on various spots on earth. The localization of the perception and interpretation of this installation or picture on several spots on earth create a '-scape'. We understand the transportation of meaning and meaningful forms in communication as intertwined with "cultural flows" (Appadurai 1990). As such, they both contribute to shape marketscapes of varying size and expansion.

Marketscapes come into being through the interaction of communicative, social and material practices with patterns of signifying practices; if localized on various spots in a transworld space, they create the locality we then can denote a global market.

3.5. How do you communicate with marketscapes?

We want to conclude our contribution by taking our own argument seriously and by stressing some implications for future MC and MCT.

If MCT is to survive in postmodern societies and globalizing business worlds, the static category of the market has to be re-conceptualized as a dynamic concept of marketscapes; the doing of market, and interplay of activities creating and (re-)shaping the changing locality of markets. The localization of the above mentioned activities might be a future task for MC. This does not, however, imply that control is given to MC, or that meaning creation is predictable.

Since globalizing processes as well are present in localities, it is to be locally decided - for instance by the cooperation of MNC executives with local representatives – how the objective of MC might be obtained. Meaning can be managed where it emerges. This might explain why the marketing attempt to create a customer group identity called 'global teenager' (Klein 2000: 107-129) so far did not succeed.

The above reconceptualization of the market, and the outline of marketscapes both point towards the need for developing new approaches in MCT. One challenge for future MC research is to approach the question of how to localize marketscapes in a transworld space, and how

to communicate with localized global marketscapes. In order to relate communication and marketscapes, means and forms of communicative activities have to be found which are not confined to a single location or to conventional units of MCT thought, such as nation, gender, ethnicity or any other fixed stakeholder category.

To take the example of company homepages, it is not possible to point to a world map and draw the borders of a marketscape to visualize it in a static picture showing its size and boundaries. If one is to imagine a visualization of marketscapes on a company homepage, it rather might look similar to satellite films of weather formations in a transworld space, frequently updated, monitoring contractions and expansions, a visualization which is partly shared by homepages of other, even competing, companies.

MCT needs to recognize that any communicative activities – including homepages – will impact and change the marketscapes in unpredictable, uncontrollable and unforeseen ways. The extent to which cultural patterns of interpretation and perception are shared or partly shared or where the cultural flows of activities may be localized cannot be predicted. The question is, whether MC can afford only to acknowledge the partly shared meanings and to ignore that it cannot predict where or to what extent they might be shared; and can MC ignore those meanings which are not shared at all? MCT seems to be required to acknowledge the cultural dimensions of markets and to focus on the shared patterns of perception and interpretation, at the same time having the patterns in mind which are only partly or not shared at all. What is more, and if we accept the characteristics of marketscapes sketched above, MCT needs to rethink the concept of stakeholder: Anyone inhabits a marketscape as s/he is engaged in activities which contribute to its creation. Also, MCT has to consider whether pattern recognition should be developed as method and discipline.

As far as our argument is concerned, this points towards the need to consider a reconceptualization of MC. Since marketscapes are multidirectional, the semantic and pragmatic role of Enlightenment communication, which remains unchallenged by Appadurai, does not apply. Due to the interplay with diverse practices, and due to the multiple directions, communication can neither be predictable nor prescriptive. The sketch of marketscapes outlined above also points to the need to con-

sider whether the agents that navigate 'scapes' might be understood in ways different to the idea of Enlightenment communication, that is in ways where communication itself – and its interplay with cultural and social activities – is perceived as creating, maintaining, expanding and diminishing marketscapes.

Today, MC is defined by a company's communication with or within its markets. Marketscapes, however, cannot be perceived of as 'owned' by any company, and it has no boundaries. Moreover, any interplay of activities which depending on situation and context gains certain meanings may create, shape or reshape marketscapes. Since this is not predictable, prescriptive approaches to MC as communication with or within a marketscape seem hardly possible. Neither does a prescriptive approach to communicative activities in a marketscape seem a possibility, since communication is not a function of marketscapes. In addition, communication cannot be planned as directed towards an existing market, since marketscapes are not "just there"; first, formations of activities have to be localized on various spots on earth. MC can contribute to the localization and identification of marketscapes. MC cannot direct communication towards marketscapes. Rather, MCT had to consider how communicative activities may contribute to the creation and (re-) shaping of marketscapes.

MCT needs to relate to structuring processes which are neither planned nor predictable. This means a refocus on flows of activities rather than conventional units of MCT thought. Marketscapes cannot be captured by anthrocentric understandings of MC. It is not predefined homogeneous groups of people, but the interplay of social, communicative, material and cultural activities which create marketscapes. In the face of globalizing processes, and the need to deal with complexities, MCT, Globalization Studies and Cultural Studies have to work hand in hand.

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