SELLING THE PAST. THE USE OF HISTORY AS A MARKETING STRATEGY IN SPAIN, 1900-1980[a]

José Antonio Miranda
Felipe Ruiz

Abstract

History can represent an effective marketing resource because it allows to establish an emotional relationship with consumers. This article examines trademark applications in order to show how Spanish companies used the past in their branding strategy during the twentieth century. The paper analyses which historical themes were used the most, over which periods, for what types of products and services and according to which Spanish regions. The study indicates that this commercial use of the past was closely linked to the spread of Spanish nationalism. Brands try to connect emotionally with consumers by evoking historical national myths and, therefore, their use increased during the periods of nationalist exaltation.

1. Introduction

If we define a brand "as a name, term, symbol, or design (or combination of these) use by a firm to identify its goods or services and differentiate them from the competition" (Da Silva & Duguid, 2010, p. 1), the origin of brands can be traced back to antiquity and to urban societies that developed in the Bronze Age (Bastos & Levy, 2012; Moore & Reid, 2008). In Europe, "maker's marks" were widespread in the Middle Ages, but since the early Modern Era they began to lose effectiveness as a means of conveying information on products and other alternative mechanisms emerged in some industries. During this process, the role of craftsmen in defining product quality diminished in favour of that of merchant-entrepreneurs (Chapman, 1992). This led to the first modern brands in the eighteenth century to achieve some form of institutional recognition (Belfanti, 2018). However, nationwide legal protection of the distinctive formal elements of brands as intellectual property would not be implemented until the middle of the nineteenth century (Duguid, Da Silva, & Mercer, 2010, p. 9; Sáiz & Fernández, 2009, pp. 7–8). It would be from that moment onwards, and especially since the beginning of the twentieth century, that brands would become increasingly important for companies' competition strategies.

Nevertheless, the name, logo and other formal components of brands do not only constitute objective market elements to identify and differentiate products or services. They also represent a means of associating a product (or service) with given places, periods or people, thus providing an identity, acting as indicators of quality and origin, and attributing values to it (Pike, 2013). Brands, therefore, have both, denotation and connotation effects. They confer a meaning that goes beyond the product´s practical utility. They establish an emotional connection with consumers and can influence price and sales as much as the product's characteristics themselves or even more (Bastos & Levy, 2012, p. 349).

One way of giving meaning to brands and, thus, adding value to the goods or services they are identified with, is to include historical references in them, using names or images of historical figures or events. Since the main objective when choosing a brand is to make the product more attractive to consumers, companies are likely to seek historical references that convey positive associations. Therefore, a choice of brand will be strongly conditioned by the ideological, cultural, and political context of the market in which the brand is sold. As this context may evolve over time, the meaning and value of historical associations and their use in brands can also vary.

Sometimes brands use historical references to inspire nostalgia, thus generating a positive emotional approach between the product or service and its potential consumers (Cui, 2015). Some authors showed that nostalgia increases consumption while others found that when companies increase historical nostalgia in their commercial messages, consumers' emotional relationships significantly increase because of their positive disposition towards the brand (Lasaleta, Sedikides, & Vohs, 2014; Marchegiani & Phau, 2010). This nostalgia may be personal or collective. Personal nostalgia stems from life's cycles: a past is illustrated that can be remembered on an individual basis. Collective nostalgia usually results from a change of epoch that was precipitated by historical events (Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Davis, 1979; Holak & Havlena, 1992; Stern, 1992). Both are closely connected and are widely used in marketing strategies (Brown, 2013). The past is also used as a source of market value through the brand heritage, which resorts to the symbolism and core values consolidated by a brand over time to reinforce the competitive advantage of this brand (Balmer, Greyser, & Urde, 2007; Khamis, 2016; Merlo & Perugini, 2015).

Another way of using history to achieve greater emotional connections with consumers, increasing trust and appreciation of the goods or services, is to link brands with figures and events that have reached a mythical status. They need to be well known by the whole population and associated with very positive characteristics and values. This connection can be made through the name of the brand, that is, using the name of historical figures or facts which give the brand a pre-existing meaning for the consumer, even before knowing what the product or service consists in. The connection can also be achieved through graphical depictions.

Although the development of brands has been a topic traditionally little studied in Business History (Duguid, da Silva & Mercier, 2010, p. 17)[1], there has been considerable progress in research on the subject since the beginning of the 21st century (Da Silva & Duguid, 2010 and 2012; Sáiz and Castro, 2018; Castro and Sáiz, 2020). In Spain, the works of Sáiz and Fernández have been fundamental (Sáiz & Fernández, 2009 and 2012). They examined the evolution of registered trademarks in Spain as well as the characteristics of brands and companies that applied for them in the Catalan region, mainly between 1850 to 1905. The use of trademarks was also investigated in various sectors, such as olive oil, wine, tobacco, knitwear, cigarette paper, and guns (Fernández, 2010; Gálvez, 2005; Goñi, 2018; Gutiérrez, 2014; Llonch-Casanovas, 2012; Ramon-Muñoz, 2020).

So far, the historical study of brands has not focused on how national history has been used in branding strategies, although there are excellent analyses of the use by companies of their own history as a marketing resource (Khamis, 2016; Merlo & Perugini, 2015). Some works have also shown how the launching of Italian fashion on the international scene was bolstered by its association with the historical myth of the Renaissance. In the early 1950s, the idea that Italian fashion represented some sort of continuity with Renaissance art spread thanks to initiatives such as those developed by Giovanni Battista Giorgini in Florence. In this way, calling on history became a powerful

means of commercial promotion and an element of cultural legitimization that would allow Italian fashion to successfully compete with the prestige of French haute couture (Belfanti, 2015b; Pinchera & Rinallo, 2020)[2].

The aim of this article is to discover whether anything similar occurred in Spain, whether companies included the country's past as a component of their marketing strategies, incorporating it into their trademarks, by analysing both the names and the images that were registered as intellectual property. The objective is to know which historical figures and events were exploited commercially the most during the twentieth century; in what sectors and for what type of products; how this use of history evolved over time; and whether it was also used as a strategy to penetrate foreign markets.

2. Brands with historical references in twentieth century Spain

Spain was one of the first countries to establish a modern national trademark registry aimed at combatting counterfeiting and to protect intellectual property rights. This type of registration was established in Spain as early as 1850, while it would have to wait until 1857 in France, 1870 in the United States, and 1875 in the United Kingdom (Duguid, da Silva & Mercier, 2010, p. 21). The number of registered trademarks in Spain grew slowly until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, rapidly increasing thereafter, and from 1960 onwards the number of trademarks reached a higher proportion in relation to the population than in any other country in Europe (Sáiz & Fernández, 2012, pp. 243–245).

This study centres on trademark applications made by residents in Spain and published in the Official Bulletin of Industrial Property. All applications included in a sample covering a selection of 12 different years have been reviewed. This sample tries to be representative of the range of historical (economic, social and political) junctures that the country underwent from the beginning of the twentieth century until 1980. These years corresponded to: 1900, 1915, 1925, 1935, 1937, 1940, 1946, 1950, 1960, 1970, and 1980. The year 1900 was chosen to reflect Spain's situation after the loss of its last colonies in America. The period represented by these years is explained in Table 1.

We have reviewed a total of 117,735 trademarks applied for by residents in Spain, distributed per year as shown in Table 2. Within this sample, 1,758 trademarks contained historical references in their name or in their illustrations. This accounts for approximately 1.5% of the total, a small proportion, but which deserves to be taken into consideration. An indicator of the importance of historical references in brands is the fact that religious references, in a Catholic country such as Spain, where religion was traditionally present in all facets of social life, added up to only 751, a much smaller amount.

The presence of historical references in brands was considerably uneven over time. Their use was more intense in the first third of the twentieth century and immediately after the Civil War. As shown in Table 2, the tendency was for historical references to decrease in relative terms throughout the first third of the century, reaching its lowest point during the Civil War, rapidly increasing again in the immediate post-war period to recede again as from the 1950s. However, in absolute terms, the number of references to history grew until Primo de Rivera's Dictatorship, receded during the Second Republic and virtually disappeared during the Civil War. After the war,

these references strongly grew, fell once more in the 1950s, but again moderately increased in the last years of Franco's dictatorship while they stagnated at the beginning of the transition to democracy.

Table 1. *Years of the sample and period of the history of Spain represented*

Years	Historical period represented
1900	Spain's situation after the loss of its last colonies in America. Stage of stabilization of the Restoration regime and emergence of regional nationalisms
1915	Stage of instability in the context of the First World War. Process of failed evolution from a liberal oligarchic regime to a democratic system
1925	Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. Attempt to substitute the constitutional monarchy for an authoritarian system, and reinforcement of Spanish nationalism. Economic modernization period.
1935	Second Republic. Establishment of a democratic system in a context of economic crisis
1937	Civil War. Revolutionary process and socialization of many companies
1940	Fascist stage of the Franco regime, with a fully autarchic system and strong influence of Germany and Italy
1946	Stage of almost absolute isolation of the Franco regime and severe economic difficulties after the defeat of the Axis countries in World War II. Decrease in the political influence of Falange and strengthening of Catholic political groups
1950	Diplomatic approximation of the Franco regime to the USA and countries of Western Europe. Start of an economic recovery process
1960	End of the autarky and beginning of a progressive economic liberalization
1970	Phase of rapid economic growth and social change, with a notable expansion of consumption capacity
1980	End of the dictatorship and early years of the democratic political system. Slowdown in economic growth

Table 2. *Trademarks applications in Spain, 1900-80*

Years	Resident	Non-resident	Total number	Residents With historical references No.	%	With religious references No.	%
1900	-	-	696	40	5.7	14	2.0
1915	1,838	31	1,869	81	4.4	36	2.0
1925	4,209	125	4,334	138	3.3	60	1.4
1935	5,261	169	5,431	123	2.3	44	0.8
1937	400	32	432	3	0.8	1	0.3
1940	6,483	51	6,534	133	2.1	44	0.7
1946	19,412	1,888	21,300	424	2.2	208	1.1
1950	10,523	1,197	11,720	162	1.5	85	0.8
1960	15,537	1,726	17,263	189	1.2	77	0.5
1970	24,140	2,828	26,968	253	1.0	118	0.5
1980	29,932	3,798	33,730	252	0.8	78	0.3
Total	117,735	11,845	129,581	1,758	1.5	751	0.6

Source: Official Bulletins of Industrial Property and WIPO Statistics Database.

Most trademarks contained a historical reference in their name, though a number of them also chose graphical illustrations, especially until the middle of the twentieth century. Brand names can have a big impact on product competitiveness and therefore constitute an important component of companies' marketing strategy. They have received considerable attention from researchers, mainly on how they influence consumer attitudes and brand recall (Chen & Paliwoda, 2004; Wänke, Herrmann, & Schaffner, 2007). The brand names collected in our database presented features that were compatible with those usually recommended by marketing experts: short and easy to recognize, pronounce, and remember. The use of names relating to history aimed at making them easier to remember and endowing them with positive connotations (courage, heroism, strength, patriotism…).

Brands used a wide range of historical themes, but some of them were especially frequent. The predominating references were based on historical figures and events that traditionally have served as national myths. References to the Middle Ages, the sixteenth century Empire, the discovery of America and Roman Hispania abounded. The most frequent forms of reference were heraldic coats of arms. In the sample under study, we found 531 trademarks that included this form of historical reference, excluding coats of arms relating to locations or merely decorative ones that did not resemble real heraldic shields. They accounted for almost a third of all the historical references. Their distribution over time followed the same trends previously described for the overall trademarks with historical references. They were used mostly by wine and spirit brands to transmit the idea of a long history that maintained traditional manufacturing, linking the products to the nobility and thus to quality. As a whole, more than 70% of the brands in the coats of arms sample belonged to this sector.

Leaving aside trademarks with coats of arms, trademarks referring to the Middle Ages represented more than a quarter of the total number of brands with historical references in the years 1900, 1915, 1946, 1950, and 1980. Those linked to the 16th century Empire and the conquest of America also exceeded this number in 1900, 1915, 1925, 1935, 1940, and in 1946. References to Roman Hispania and Classical Antiquity, meanwhile, reached this share in 1925, 1935, 1937, 1960, and 1970. In contrast, there were very few references to Spain's Muslim past despite the fact that Al-Andalus lasted for almost eight centuries. References to the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries were scarce as well, except for allusions to foreign historical figures in 1970 and 1980 (Table 3). Worthy of note among the Spanish figures referred to in the brands, were the kings, military figures, and conquistadors, while there were very few references to writers and artists. The only writers to have a significant presence were from the Golden Age (Cervantes, Quevedo, Góngora, Calderón de la Barca ...).

We cannot be certain which of these brands with historical references were used in foreign markets; we can, however, approach the use of history in marketing outside Spain based on trademarks that used foreign languages in their slogans, that expressly indicated that the product was for export, or that represent products mainly destined for the foreign market, such as oranges. Not many brands with these characteristics contained allusions to history. They corresponded mainly to 1940 and 1950. In those years, we found a large number of brands with references to the history of importing countries and they mostly used these countries' national myths (such as the Flemish political leaders of the fourteenth century, Jacob Van Artevelde and Jan Breydel; Roland, the vanquisher of the Muslims in Roncesvalles; the French King Henry IV; Joan of Arc; King Albert of Belgium or the Swedish King Gustav Adolf). Furthermore, brands with references to the colonization of America also stood out, as well as others alluding to

ancient history. Nevertheless, in contrast to the total number of brands with historical references, the brands that used Spanish figures from the Middle Ages and the Empire were less abundant. Therefore, the use of history in the branding strategy of Spanish companies was essentially directed to the Spanish market. In foreign markets, use of history was less frequent and largely based on the historical myths proper to the consumer country.

Table 3. *Distribution of trademarks with historical references by themes (percentages)*

Years	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	Total
1900	46.7	6.7	6.7	26.7	0.0	6.7	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	100
1915	26.5	28.6	16.3	18.4	0.0	6.1	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	100
1925	21.5	17.7	29.1	10.1	2.5	0.0	0.0	5.1	0.0	13.9	100
1935	19.1	16.0	35.1	17.0	3.2	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	8.5	100
1937	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100
1940	15.1	33.3	20.4	18.3	4.3	0.0	0.0	1.1	5.4	2.2	100
1946	24.3	17.4	23.9	10.4	1.7	1.7	0.9	8.3	1.7	9.6	100
1950	26.8	12.5	25.9	6.3	1.8	1.8	0.9	4.5	6.3	13.4	100
1960	14.3	9.5	44.9	4.8	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	6.8	15.6	100
1970	17.3	7.1	26.5	16.3	3.1	0.0	0.5	5.1	18.4	5.6	100
1980	27.3	8.4	13.6	6.5	2.6	0.0	2.6	6.5	18.2	14.3	100

A: Middle Ages B: Spanish Empire. C: Roman Hispania and classical antiquity. D: Conquest of America. E: Intellectuals and artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. F: Royalty and politicians of the Crown of Aragon in the Middle Ages and the Modern Age. G: Al-Andalus. H: Spanish characters and events of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I: Foreign historical characters. J: Others.

Source: Official Bulletins of Industrial Property.

3. Historical brands and nationalism

Most brands that used historical elements referred to the myths and symbols of the Spanish nation: Viriathus, Hispania, the *Reconquista*, El Cid, the Catholic Monarchs, Columbus, the Empire, Charles V, Philip II, etc. In fact, an obvious relationship was found between the use of history in commercial brands and the intensity of nationalist sentiment of Spanish society at each stage. The largest proportion of historical brands was found in the years of greatest nationalist exaltation in Spanish society.

National identity is a social and cultural construction, a historical process under constant evolution, in which collective rituals and symbolic practices play a major role (Anderson, 1991; Hobsbawm, 1983). As in other countries, the use of history in Spain was intensely exploited to create nationalist sentiment, based on versions of the past, supported by myths and historical symbols, that provided a national identity. Spain became a nation-state in the nineteenth century and this was also when Spanish nationalism emerged. The 1812 Constitution had already proclaimed national sovereignty and although the reinstatement of the monarch Fernando VII would stall the construction of the liberal State over two decades, this construction would continue as from 1833, attempting to imitate the French model of a centralized and uniform State. Meanwhile, a national conscience was being cultivated, mainly supported by history (Aizpuru, 2001). For some authors, Spanish society's nationalizing process was weak

during the nineteenth century, because the State's penetration of Spanish society was also weak. This was due on the one hand to the ruling elite´s lack of political will; on the other, it was a consequence of the State's scarce economic resources (Álvarez Junco, 2001; De Riquer, 1994; Esteban & Morales, 2004). Other authors, however, consider that Spain was already a fully formed nation by the nineteenth century and that the State's insufficient nationalizing initiatives were compensated by other ways of building and disseminating national identity, such as the press, literature, theatre or painting (Archilés, 2007; Fusi, 2000).

In any case, despite the State's weakness and regardless of the degree of its social penetration, the concept of Spanish nation was consolidated by the nineteenth century and was not questioned at political levels. There was a consensus among the main political currents on the existence of a Spanish nation whose origins went far back in time, although the defining features of that nation varied according to different ideologies. Initially, it was the Liberals who fostered Spanish nationalism. They developed a nationalist historiography, referring to the existence of Spaniards since Antiquity and they included historical myths that would later become established. However, as of the last third of the nineteenth century, nationalism of a conservative nature emerged; mixing Catholicism and nationalism, it gave rise to a new sort of nationalist historiography. According to this historiography, the best moments in Spanish history were under the Spanish Empire, with Charles V and Philip II, whose splendour had withered due to a succession of incapable kings and their imitation of enlightenment models.

The beginning of the twentieth century was met with a period of intense Spanish nationalism, promoted by both left and right political wings. This process was a response to the crisis generated by the loss of the last colonies in 1898, at a time when the masses were already participating in political life, and where nationalist political movements emerging both in Catalonia and the Basque provinces were challenging Spanish nationalism. The spread of Spanish nationalism was strongly supported by educational institutions, as they transmitted the nation's myths and symbols to the young.

This context of an intensely developing fully nationalist popular culture accounts for the fairly high proportion of trademark applications to include historical references in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The allusions to history in 1900 trademarks mainly related to the nationalist myths that historiography had coined in the nineteenth century, such as Queen Isabella the Catholic, Christopher Columbus, Don Pelayo, the Cid or Philip II. These five figures alone accounted for 60% of historical references in trademark applications that year (excluding the coats of arms). In 1915, while Spanish rulers attempted to turn the country into a colonial power in North Africa, references to the Empire, Columbus and the discovery of America, the Cid and Don Pelayo again represented 60% of applications for trademarks with historical contents. However, we also found some trademarks in both years that related to myths of Valencian regionalist sentiment and Catalan nationalism, such as King Jaime I and Pau Claris, the President of the Regional Government of Catalonia during the 1640 uprising.

In an atmosphere of intense nationalism, companies, by evoking historical myths, sought to create an attractive brand image that would give their products personality and convey emotions to the consumer. However, the use of historical myths in brands also fuelled the process of nationalization by contributing to disseminating these myths and subtly reaffirming popular national conscience. Therefore, brands with historical references were another

of the manifestations of so-called 'banal nationalism', that is, of a set of daily practices that unconsciously strengthen a country's national identity (Billing, 1995).

Following the 1923 coup d'état, General Miguel Primo de Rivera's dictatorship set in motion a broader nationalization program and applied it more thoroughly than in the previous decades (Moreno, 2007, p. 22). Since its inception, the regime had the obvious purpose of transmitting a Spanish authoritarian and Catholic national identity to the whole population, blending elements of nineteenth century traditionalism with ideas from new trends of the European far right. Ultimately, the dictatorship fell short of dedicating sufficient resources to achieve its objectives of extensive nationalization of the Spanish society; even its educational policy ended up generating a contrary effect to that sought, mainly in Catalonia. Nonetheless, a substantial increase in the number of trademarks with historical references were found in 1925 compared to that in previous years, and this seems clearly related to this new nationalist surge. In 1925, no trademark was found relating to Catalan myths, though abundant brands were found with coats of arms, or that incorporated the word 'Empire' in their name, or that referred to Roman Hispania.

Mainly in relative terms, references to history diminished notably in 1935 trademark applications compared to those of 1925. There was also a slight change in their thematical composition: the proportion of references dedicated to Antiquity and the discovery of America increased, while those related to the Middle Ages and the Empire decreased. Again, this evolution was in tune with the political situation and the approach to nationalism at the time. During the Second Republic, the establishment of a parliamentary democracy was accompanied by attempts to encourage republican patriotism, based on a democratic vision of the Spanish nation, recovering the old liberal ideology of creating a "civic nation" as a community of citizens united in their shared abidance of a general law (Roldán, 2015). Therefore, although republican patriotic discourse did not reject the historical past or national symbols, it insisted more on the defence of a democratic political system.

The political, social, and cultural context of the Second Republic led to a drop in the use of historical references, but it was the Civil War that radically altered the use of history as a marketing instrument. In 1937, due to war and the social revolution, only 400 trademark applications were registered by residents in Spain and, of these, only 2 referred to history. Moreover, these references were far from reflecting the dominant nationalist narrative described above. Although it has been pointed out that both the Republican side and the rebel army resorted to patriotic exaltation against the enemy and the Republic appealed again to traditional national myths of heroism and defence against the invader (Núñez, 2007), patriotism was not at the heart of ideological discourse in a land that was experiencing an authentic social revolution. It was simply one more element, along with others such as freedom and social justice. It was clear anyway that at the time commercial brands did not use these myths in their branding strategy, probably because the revolutionary process completely altered the way most companies were managed.

After the war, Franco's regime generated a new wave of radical nationalism, based on traditionalist and conservative principles inherited from the nineteenth century, which were initially interwoven with fascist propositions. The Spanish nation was considered a historical entity with essential features that had been attacked during the Second Republic and that needed to be re-established. For this, a national re-education effort was undertaken, which discarded leftist and separatist ideas. A biased version of history was used to support the regime's authority, its state model and its proposition for the nation. The historical evolution was rewritten to create a story

that legitimized the military uprising that led to the civil war in 1936, and that presented the dictator as a crucial historical figure, with a role similar to that played in the past by myths such as El Cid or Philip II. Nevertheless, the Dictatorship was adapting its ideology to the international juncture in order to ensure its own survival. In the first years of the Dictatorship, when a State model highly akin to fascism was adopted, the nationalist program was mainly adjusted to the dictates of the Falange, which aspired to reviving the Spanish Empire's past international prominence. Subsequently, after the Axis powers' gradual military retreat in World War II and especially following their defeat, a nationalism-Catholicism model was adopted, which established Catholicism as a fundamental characteristic of Spanish identity. Following the example of other European fascisms, the Dictatorship resorted extensively to the organization of mass nationalist ceremonies and commemorations. It also used radio, television, and cinema to disseminate its ideology (Michonneau & Núñez, 2014).

The exacerbation of nationalist feelings re-launched the use of historical references in brands. Out of all the years in our sample, the year with the greatest number of applications for these types of trademarks was 1946, with more than 400. In relative terms, however, due to a strong increase in the overall number of trademark applications since the mid-40s, the levels found at the beginning of the century were not recovered, though the situation was similar to that of the beginning of the 1930s. The themes approached remained the same, since Franco regime's nationalist policy took up the myths and symbols of Spanish nationalism used in the previous decades, although they were revised and filled with new meanings, mainly to legitimize the regime. The Reconquista, the political unification under the Catholic Monarchs and the era of the Empire were presented as the greatest milestones in national history. These were the themes that, along with Roman Hispania, again prevailed in the brands that used historical references. In 1940, when the Falangists were politically dominant and the cult of imperial Spain was omnipresent, allusions to the Empire constituted the major theme in historical trademark applications. Subsequently, coinciding with the loss of influence of the Falange in favour of Catholic factions, the percentage of brands that alluded to the Empire dwindled in relative terms, while that of those linked to Ancient Spain and the medieval period increased.

From the 1950s onwards, as Franco's dictatorship consolidated itself as a conservative regime, nationalist discourse lost its intensity, and history was less exploited to support political legitimacy. This controlled cooling of nationalist fervour was reflected in the use of history in companies' branding strategies: the percentage of brands with historical references continued to fall throughout the rest of Franco's era. This trend continued after Franco's death, during the transition to democracy, because Spanish nationalism was associated with the Dictatorship and thus weakened national sentiment, especially among leftist political forces. Traditional historical myths no longer transmitted a clearly positive message (Roldán, 2015).

4. The characteristics of historical brands

To perform a more in-depth analysis of how brands used history, we selected four of the most recurring historical references in the years of our sample and we built a database of all trademark applications that used such references over the 1900-80 period. The selected references were: the term "Hispania" (the name given by the Romans to the Iberian Peninsula), that represented the seventh part of the marks with historical references (without considering the heraldic shields) in 1915 and more than 8% in 1940; the character of El Cid (the nickname of Rodrigo

Díaz, an eleventh century military leader mythologized as a hero of the *Reconquista*), which provided more than 10% of the brands with historical references in 1915 and almost 6% in 1946; the figure of Christopher Columbus and other historical references linked to the discovery of America, with more than 9% of the historical brands in 1940 and more than 10% in 1970; and the words "Empire" and "Imperial", with about half of these brands in 1900, more than 14% in 1915 and 36% in 1940.

The term Hispania in trademarks is an obvious reference to Spain´s Ancient History. The term had been used since the nineteenth century to establish the existence of a common history from time immemorial, as well as to highlight shared features of the inhabitants of the Spanish land and, consequently, of the Spanish nation. In reality, this romantic form of nationalism, where the origins of national identity were traced back to the peoples who had faced Roman domination, spread throughout much of Europe as from the mid-nineteenth century. In Spain, the national leaders and events linked to the resistance to Rome became national myths. In the first third of the twentieth century, Spanish archaeologists confirmed the existence of that original Hispanic identity and its continuity over time, in some cases tracing it back to Iberian culture and in others to the Celtic invasions from Europe. This identity would be characterized by heroism, austerity and a spirit of independence. At the beginning of Franco's dictatorship, the influence of the Falangists and their connections to Italian fascism also led to extolling the Roman Empire and, above all, Hispanic contributions, based on figures such as Seneca, the philosopher, or the emperors Trajan and Adriano (Ruiz, Sánchez, & Bellón, 2003).

The term Hispania appeared in 393 brand names applied for between 1900 and 1980. The evolution of its use (Figure 1) is very similar to the one shown in Table 2 for all trademarks with historical references, with the same relative peaks in the first decades of the twentieth century and the first years of Francoism, except that the maximum of the series was not reached at the beginning of the century, but during the First World War. The term was used both in consumer good brands (42.3%) and capital goods brands (40.3%), though little in service brands (17.3%). Goods generally predominated over services in all trademark applications during the period under study, but the high proportion of capital goods brands is exceptional, since consumer goods were those that depended most heavily on brands to build their competitive advantage (Da Silva and Duguid, 2010, p. 2). Table 4 shows the results of a contingency table analysing the relationship between brands and different activity sectors. Pearson's chi-square is 194.3, indicating a strong association between brands and certain sectors. In the case of brands using the term Hispania, the analysis confirmed a strong association with the metal/mechanical sector, a feature probably linked to the idea of strength and efficiency stemming from connections with the Roman Empire.

Regarding geographical distribution, companies that applied for these types of trademarks were concentrated in Barcelona, Madrid, and, to a lesser extent, in the Basque Country. We lacked general data on the geographical origin of the trademark applications during the period under study, but the work of Saiz and Fernández allowed us to approach it (Saiz and Fernández, 2009, p. 35 and p. 38). According to these authors, in the first quarter of the twentieth century, Catalonia concentrated more than a third of all registered trademarks, but its share in this group dropped in the following years, and represented less than 20% in the mid-40s. Concerning other regions, only data for the second half of the nineteenth century is provided. According to this data, the Valencian Community comes after Catalonia and stands out with about 16% of all applications between 1850 and 1905, followed by

Andalusia (11, 3%) and Madrid (with about 10%). Compared to these data, the companies that used Hispania in their brands showed an average concentration adjusted to Catalonia's average, though it was particularly high in the Basque Country and Madrid (Table 5).

Figure 1. *Trademark applications with references to Hispania, El Cid, Columbus-Discovery of America and Empire, 1900-80. Ratio per thousand applications*
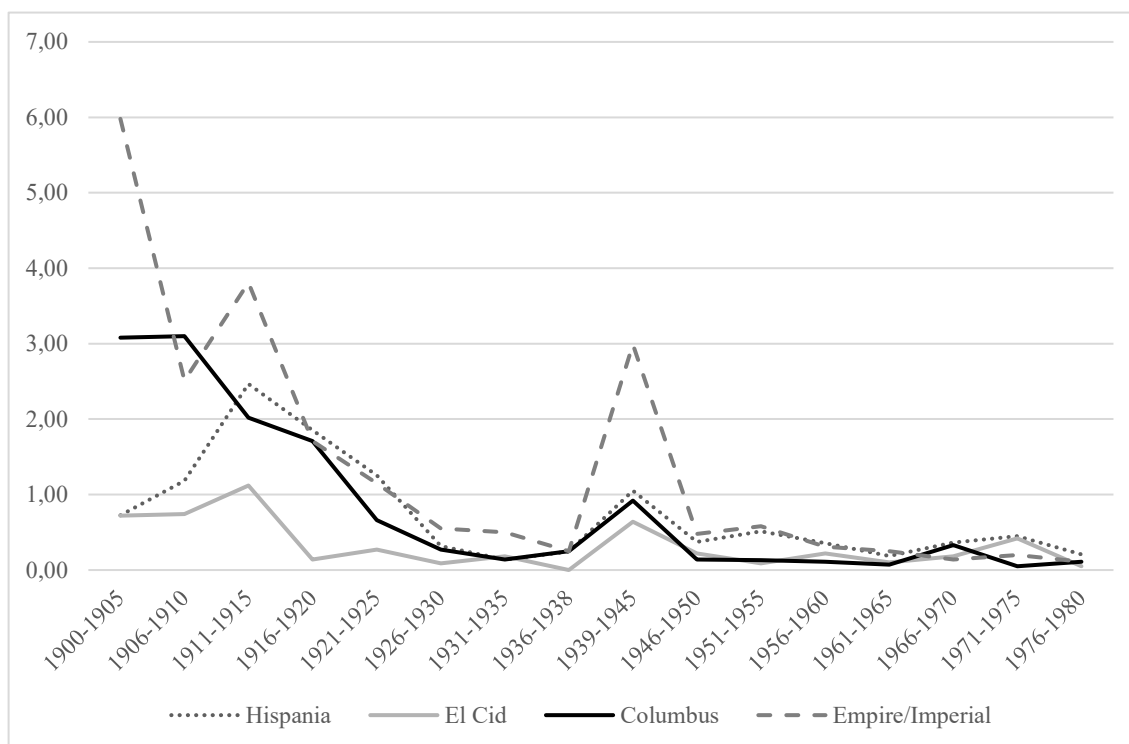
Source: Official Bulletins of Industrial Property.

Table 4. *Contingency analysis between trademark and activity sector*

Trademarks		A	B	C	D	F	G	H	Total
El Cid	Observed	35	32	34	28	25	25	30	209
	Expected	34.4	30.1	30.1	37.8	25.4	26.1	25.0	
	% tradem.	16,7%	15,3%	16,3%	13,4%	12,0%	12,0%	14,4%	100%
	Ad. residuals	0,1	0,4	0,8	-1,9	-0,1	-0,3	1,1	
Columbus	Observed	63	41	16	48	27	19	38	252
	Expected	41.5	36.3	36.3	45.6	30.6	31.5	30.2	
	% tradem.	25,0%	16,3%	6,3%	19,0%	10,7%	7,5%	15,1%	100%
	Ad. residuals	4,0	0,9	-4,0	0,4	-0,8	-2,6	1,7	
Hispania	Observed	36	11	104	68	39	68	65	391
	Expected	64.4	56.3	56.3	70.7	47.4	48.9	46.9	
	% tradem.	9,2%	2,8%	26,6%	17,4%	10,0%	17,4%	16,6%	100%
	Ad. residuals	-4,6	-7,7	8,1	-0,4	-1,5	3,5	3,3	
Empire	Observed	90	112	42	102	74	58	30	508
	Expected	83.7	73.2	73.2	91.9	61.6	63.5	60.9	
	% tradem.	17,7%	22,0%	8,3%	20,1%	14,6%	11,4%	5,9%	100%
	Ad. residuals	1,0	6,2	-5,0	1,5	2,1	-0,9	-5,3	
Total	Observed	224	196	196	107	67	170	376	1360
	% tradem.	16.5%	14.4%	14.4%	7.9%	4.9%	12.5%	27.6%	100%

A: Food and agricultural products. B: Beverages and tobacco. C: Machinery and metals. D: Chemical products. F: Textile, clothing, leather and footwear. G: Other industries. H: Services.
Pearson's chi-square: 194.3 (significance < 0.001).

Source: Own elaboration from the Official Bulletins of Industrial Property.

Table 5. *Contingency analysis between trademarks and regions*

Trademarks		AND	CAT	CVAL	MAD	PVAS	OTROS	Total
El Cid	Observed	74	26	38	39	6	23	206
	Expected	31.2	65.3	24.2	43.5	14.5	27.3	
	% tradem.	35.9%	12.6%	18.4%	18.9%	2.9%	11.2%	100%
	Ad. residuals	9.1	-6.4	3.3	-0.8	-2.5	-1.0	
Colombus	Observed	36	96	27	41	3	44	247
	Expected	37.4	78.3	29.0	52.2	17.4	32.7	
	% tradem.	14.6%	38.9%	10.9%	16.6%	1.2%	17.8%	100%
	Ad. residuals	-0.3	2.7	-0.4	-1.9	-4.0	2.3	
Hispania	Observed	23	139	24	108	54	33	381
	Expected	57.7	120.8	44.7	80.5	26.8	50.5	
	% tradem.	6.0%	36.5%	6.3%	28.3%	14.2%	8.7%	100%
	Ad. residuals	-5.9	2.4	-3.9	4.1	6.5	-3.1	
Empire	Observed	67	158	66	91	30	75	487
	Expected	73.7	154.5	57.1	102.9	34.3	64.5	
	% tradem.	13.8%	32.4%	13.6%	18.7%	6.2%	15.4%	100%
	Ad. residuals	-1.1	0.4	1.6	-1.7	-1.0	1.8	
Total	Observed	200	419	155	279	93	175	1321
	% tradem.	15.1%	31.7%	11.7%	21.1%	7.0%	13.2%	100%

AND: Andalusia. CAT: Catalonia. CVAL: Valencian Community. MAD: Madrid. PVAS: Basque Country.
Pearson's chi-square: 200.7 (significance < 0.001)

Source: Own elaboration from the Official Bulletins of Industrial Property.

Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, the Cid Campeador, was an eleventh century historical figure, which we would define today as a warlord. He was turned into a literary hero as early as the Middle Ages, and transformed into a national myth at the end of the nineteenth century. The figure underwent nationalist appropriation by both right and left ideological stands. The right praised the character's warrior component as his image of a hero in the Christian reconquest against the Muslims. The left, however, highlighted his law abidance, his independence from the king´s power and his popular character in contrast to a declining aristocracy. Both sides used the El Cid figure as propaganda during the Civil War, agreeing to use him as a symbol of patriotic confrontation against foreign invaders. However, the insurgent side went much further, identifying Franco with El Cid, and as the hero of a new Christian crusade. During the first decades of the Dictatorship, this association between Franco and El Cid would be frequently referred to by the regime´s historians, intellectuals, artists, the media and authorities (Gómez Moreno, 2016; Peña, 2010; Vandebosch, 2007).

The figure of El Cid appeared in 209 brands requested between 1900 and 1980. As in the case of the word Hispania, the use of references to this character was particularly intense until the First World War and in the early years of Francoism, although it experienced a new increase in the last years of the Dictatorship (Figure 1). The brands that used these references were mostly products (only 18.2% were service trademarks), that were highly diverse and their distribution per sectors was less concentrated than in any of the other historical references we analysed. The contingency analysis (Table 4) shows there is no significant relationship between the brands with references to El Cid and a specific sector. There is a strong geographical concentration however, in contrast to other brands with historical references. Andalusia concentrated more than a third of the total, followed by the Valencian Community and Madrid, each of the latter representing about a fifth of them. These three regions accounted for almost 73% of all brands alluding to El Cid. The abundance of these references in Andalusia is due to Jerez wine and liquor

companies, particularly Duff Gordon & Cia, who applied for 45 brands with the name of El Cid between 1942 and 1974. In the Valencian Community, brands abounded for all kinds of products undoubtedly because the historical figure conquered Valencia and created a principality around the city.

The third historical reference analysed, the figure of Christopher Columbus, discoverer of America and symbol of Spanish colonization of the continent, was elevated to the category of idolized historical myth in 1892, during the Fourth Centenary of the Discovery. This mythification was accentuated after the "1898 disaster", that of Spain's loss of its last colonies in America, which led politicians and intellectuals to reclaim the positive aspects of Spain's colonization. To this aim, all the discovery's symbolism was emphasized as it was regarded as an essential factor to shape the Spanish nation (Marcilhacy, 2007). Spanish nationalists tended to consider Latin America as an extension of Spanish national identity and, over the decade following 1910, they advocated an ambitious policy of Spanish projection in America, which was adopted and intensified by the State during Primo de Rivera´s Dictatorship. At the beginning of the 1930s, under the Second Republic, this policy established Spanish and Latin American republics on an equal footing. After the Civil War, however, the dictatorial regime resorted to an extensive manipulation of the history of the discovery and colonization of the New World, to entrench its ideology in the collective mindset. From the 1950 onwards, the cooling of nationalist rhetoric led the regime to curtail its use of history as an instrument of political socialization. Nevertheless, the myth of discovery continued to be present in Spanish society through banal nationalism and its multiple channels, such as the media, literature, art and brands (Marcilhacy, 2014).

The number of trademark applications that included references to Christopher Columbus and the discovery of America amounted to 252 in our sample. Their temporal distribution was particularly similar to that of the trademarks with the name Hispania (Figure 1). Again, goods predominated over services (only 15.1%) and consumer goods over capital goods (82.2% versus 17.8%). Products marketed with these types of brands covered a wide range of sectors, although comparing to the other trademarks analysed, the contingency analysis emphasizes the association with the food sector and a rare presence of these trademarks in the metal/mechanical sector (Table 4). These brands mainly originated from the province of Barcelona, representing over 36% of the total. Catalonia shows the greatest concentration of this type of reference out of all the historical references analysed, followed, at a distance, by Madrid, Andalusia, and the Valencian Community (Table 5).

The historical allusions to appear the most in our trademark sample were the noun "Empire" and the adjective "Imperial". In the first decades of the twentieth century, the loss of the last colonies in America and Asia, together with the setbacks suffered during attempts at colonial expansion in North Africa, fed an authoritarian nationalist current in Spain, based on nostalgia for the old empire. This current was boosted at the end of the Civil War by the regime's Falangist factions which advocated expansion in Africa and the establishment of strong influences in the Latin American republics. However, to adapt to the new international order following the defeat of the Axis in the Second World War, the Dictatorship moderated its discourse, abandoned its most obvious fascist features and reinforced its Catholic identity. From then on, its imperial ambitions were replaced by the exaltation of *Hispanidad*. With the end of Francoism, the use that had been made of national myths led to them being socially

rejected. Only small right-wing groups maintained an idealized nostalgia of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish Empire (Núñez, 2004).

There were 508 brand applications with references to the Empire over the 1900-80 period. The evolution throughout the period under study is again in line with the pattern shared by the group of brands with historical references, except for a much greater predominance during the six years between 1939-45, a period which accumulated 37% of all these brands (Figure 1). Regarding sectors of activity, the contingency analysis highlights a strong association between these brands and the beverage industry as well as their very weak presence in the services and metal/mechanical industries (Table 4). Per region, Catalonia again predominates, but when compared to the other historical brands, there was a stronger than expected relationship in this case with the Valencian Community (Table 5).

It is not easy to measure the effectiveness of historical references in brands to incentivize sales. It is impossible to find information on the sales of so many different brands, companies and products in such a long period. In addition, even if these data were available, they would not be real indicators of the advantage provided by the use of these brands, since many factors influence company sales and it would not be possible to isolate the specific effect of the brands. In this paper, to measure the effectiveness of references to history in brands as a means to increase the attractiveness of the product, we have taken as an indicator the duration in time of trademarks. Since the renewal of the legal validity of trademarks has a cost for companies, it can be reasonably expected that companies will only extend the duration of profitable trademarks and keep the most effective brands in force for longer. Therefore, observing the trademarks used by the same company for similar products, we can deduce that the longest-lasting ones have also been the most effective. On this basis, we have used the database of registered trademarks in Spain between 1850 and 1919, carried out by a team of researchers from the Autonomous University of Madrid, directed by Patricio Sáiz[3], to review all the companies that registered trademarks with any of the most frequent historical references (El Cid, Columbus and the discovery of America, Hispania and Empire) between 1900 and 1919 and select those that also registered other types of trademarks, with the aim of comparing in each company the duration of historical trademarks with the duration of the other trademarks. We found a total of 104 companies that used both trademarks with historical references and other types of trademarks. In this sample, there are companies from a wide variety of sectors, but those dedicated to wine and spirits, textile products and food predominate (Table 6). In almost a third of companies (33 of them), trademarks with historical references were the most durable or as durable as the other most durable trademarks. In addition, in about half of the companies (49) the trademarks with historical references had a duration greater than or equal to the average duration of the rest of the company's trademarks, a duration that exceeded the average duration of those other trademarks more than 25 % in 29 of the cases. Therefore, it is clear that the use of historical references in their brands was effective for many companies. Obviously, each brand had its own trajectory and some brands had more positive results than others. However, the sample analysed indicates that the introduction of references to history in branding was a successful marketing strategy in many cases. The longer duration and, therefore, the probable greater profitability of the brands with historical references appears in companies of very varied sectors, but logically it is more frequent in companies of the most represented sectors in the sample. The percentage of longer-lasting trademarks is slightly lower than the

percentage of companies in the sample in the wine and spirits sector, while the opposite is true for textile and food products. However, it is in the wine and spirits sector that there is a greater proportion, greater than its size in the sample, of historical trademarks with a longer duration than the average of the rest of the company's trademarks (Table 6).

Table 6. *Comparison between the duration of trademarks with historical references and the rest of trademarks**

Companies	Number of companies	Percentage of companies by sectors			
		Wines and spirits	Textile products	Food	Other sectors
Sample	104	34,6	15,4	14,4	35,6
Companies with historical trademarks of duration greater than or equal to the average of the other trademarks	49	32,6	18,4	16,3	32,7
Companies in which the most durable trademark has historical references	33	21,2	21,2	15,2	42,4
Companies with historical trademarks whose duration exceeds the average duration of the other trademarks by more than 25%	29	37,9	13,8	10,3	38

* Sample of companies that used trademarks with historical references and other trademarks registered between 1900 and 1919.

Source: See note 39.

5. Conclusions

Some authors have shown how Italian fashion used the history of the country to promote itself and conquer the international market. Our work aimed at discovering whether the national history was also used by Spanish companies as a marketing tool. To do this, we have examined trademark applications over the period 1900-80. The first conclusion of this analysis is that Spanish companies did make use of the country's past in their branding strategies, referring to figures, events and historical symbols in their brand names, slogans, and/or images. The percentage of brands that established links with history was low throughout the period, and never reached 6% of the total. Nevertheless, the past represented one of the key resources to endow brands with positive associations and connect emotionally with consumers, at least until the middle of the twentieth century. The importance of this use of history can be seen in the fact that, in a country strongly influenced by Catholicism, religious references were much less significant than historical ones in brands over all periods.

The use of the past was not constant over time. Trademark applications using historical references were especially abundant, in relative terms, in the first third of the twentieth century and in the years immediately after the Civil War. The percentage of these trademarks reached their peak in 1900 (5.5% of all trademark applications), and gradually receded, until reaching their lowest number during the civil war before taking off again at the beginning of the post-war period, to then dwindle again, especially from 1950 onwards.

The intensity of the use of history in trademarks over these periods was directly related to the way the past was used. Companies sought to establish an emotional relationship by evoking historical national myths, i.e. figures

such as Viriathus, El Cid, the Catholic Kings or Christopher Columbus, as well as events such as the site of Numantia, the Reconquista, the battle of Lepanto, etc. As a whole, historical references concentrated around the Middle Ages, the 16th century Empire, the colonization of America and Ancient Hispania. These references symbolized the construction of the Spanish nation and, therefore, their use increased during the periods of greatest nationalist exaltation in Spain. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Spain's nationalism was responding to the loss of its last colonies in America and Asia, to the emergence of regional nationalist movements in Catalonia and the Basque Country, and to setbacks in its attempts at colonial expansion in North Africa. The establishment of Franco's Dictatorship after the Civil War again caused nationalism to escalate in the 1940s. This nationalism was at first of a fascist nature; later, as the Allies took over in the World War, the Nationalist-Catholic component was progressively accentuated. The repression of the language and culture of Catalonia, the Basque provinces and other Spanish regions during the two periods of dictatorial regime undoubtedly reduced the presence of references to historical myths linked to these regional cultures.

During the Second Republic, the percentage of brands referring to the past decreased with respect to previous decades and, essentially changed in character: Antiquity and the colonization of America were increasingly alluded to rather than the Middle Ages and the Empire. This was a consequence of the new political and ideological scenario. With the Civil War, the number of trademark applications plunged and those linked to history practically disappeared. Following an era of ultra-nationalism and the extensive use of history for political purposes during the first decade of the Franco's dictatorship, the regime moderated its discourse. This dwindling of nationalist exaltation in society was also felt in the decreasing presence of brands supported by national myths. This downward trend continued during the transition to democracy, since identification of Spanish nationalism with the dictatorship strongly eroded the positive connotations that national myths had bared until then.

Brands alluding to these historical myths tried to pick up and take advantage of dominant culture and ideology. But they were also instrumental in disseminating the dominant ideologies of each era. They were, therefore, a manifestation of so-called "banal nationalism", which contributed in a barely perceptibly way to the consolidation of Spanish national identity.

These trademarks were destined mainly to the internal market. Of the national myths, those most used in export product brands were those linked to the discovery and colonization of America. In most cases, however, historical references were not used in brands directed to foreign countries, and when they were used, they resorted to historic figures proper to those markets or well-known figures belonging to Universal History.

Was the use of historical references in brand names effective at drawing attention and facilitating consumer recall? Studies in this field indicate that names that include commonly used words, with many connotations, like those used in these brands, are especially adapted to regular goods and services, in which consumers' implicit memory is solicited during the purchasing process. In fact, the cases we examined show that these brands were in fact mostly selected for regular consumer goods, such as food and beverages, soaps, perfumes, cosmetics, and textiles. The duration in time of brands can serve as an indicator of their effectiveness. The comparison we have made between brands with historical references and other brands of the same companies shows that the former had many times a

long duration in relative terms, which seems to confirm that historical references were perceived as a useful marketing strategy by many companies, mainly for consumer goods.

The geographical distribution of these brands seemed to generally follow the same pattern that applied to all the brands, with a strong concentration in Catalonia (mainly in Barcelona) and, to a lesser extent, in Madrid, Andalusia, and the Valencian Community. The analysed brands were found to have a greater concentration in Catalonia in the first third of the twentieth century; later, Catalonia´s share diminished, especially in the 1940s. Madrid, however, increased its share of historical brands, especially as of 1950. In Andalusia and the Valencian Community, the highest percentage was reached during the 1940s. This general trend did not apply in all cases. Some historical references were more linked to some regions than to others, either because some historical figures were more rooted in given locations, or because some products were identified with certain myths.

Notes

[1] However, in the 1990s some relevant studies on the development of brands already appeared, such as the works included in the book edited by Jones and Morgan (1994) or the articles of Wilkins (1992) and Higgins and Tweedale (1995). A historiographic review of the research on brands is found in Sáiz and Castro (2018) and in Castro and Sáiz (2020).

[2] Alberto Grandi (2018), on the other hand, has shown how the historical origin of many Italian products has been falsified in marketing strategies.

[3] Sáiz, P.; Llorens, F.; Blázquez, L.; y Cayón, F. (Dirs.): *Base de datos de solicitudes de marcas (España, 1850-1919)*, OEPM-UAM, Madrid, 2007-2017, http://historico.oepm.es.

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Notes on contributors

José Antonio Miranda is a full professor of Economic History at the University of Alicante (Spain). He is specialized in Industrial and Business History and he have published widely on these subjects. His most recent publications are 'Industrial districts and technological innovation in Spain during the first third of the 20th century' [*Revista de Historia Industrial*, 2017, 66, pp. 127-157] and 'The country-of-origin effect and the international expansion of Spanish fashion companies, 1975–2015' [*Business History*; DOI: 10.1080/00076791.2017.1374370).

Felipe Ruiz-Moreno is an associate professor of Marketing at the University of Alicante (Spain). His main areas of expertise are competition, strategic marketing and international marketing with published articles in a variety of journals, like Strategic *Management Journal*, *International Marketing Review* or *Journal of Business Research*. His most recent publication is 'How Strategic Groups Act Competitively Within and Across Markets' [*Managerial and Decision Economics*, 2017, 38-7, pp: 1017-32].

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