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The metaphysical quality that gives
the BP *Helios* visual identity mark
its sway.



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**Certificate of
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Originality**

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

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Signature of Student

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Abstract

The Metaphysical quality that gives the BP *Helios* visual identity marks its sway.

This thesis analyses the reasons why BP's visual identity mark (VIM), known as the *Helios*, was immediately accepted into the global marketplace following its launch in 2000. At the end of the millennium the merger between BP (UK) and Amoco (US) gave BP the opportunity to reposition itself in the petroleum category.

The work is constructed by explicating the objectives of BP's rebranding, through discussions with the *Helios*'s design team leader, Courtney Reeser (from brand strategists, Landor Associates), addressing both client's and designer's criteria through analysing the aesthetic and branding strategies aimed at the internal and external audiences (viewers/users). BP undertook a new direction towards environmental consciousness and the resulting *Helios* reinforced the new 'Green' ideology of BP with an authentic declaration for change.

In parallel with the above, another aspect of this thesis examines the connections between elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols and contemporary VIMs, in particular the BP *Helios*, to establish a continuity of intent, application, and influence upon the viewer/user and further advances the understanding for the BP *Helios*'s success. Engaging areas of expertise not traditionally utilized within visual communication, such as sociology, archaeology, theology, and folklore assist in building an appreciation of the continuity and effectiveness of the use of elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols within a contemporary context is gained. The *Helios* possesses similar visual qualities to the Solar Cross, an elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol. Within these archetypal symbols lies a metaphysical quality Jung referred to as numinosity. This metaphysical quality within a symbol enables that symbol (VIM) to exercise influence over the individual's and the group's sense of identity and can act as a galvanizing and motivating force.

The BP *Helios* was rapidly and readily accepted into the global market indicating that the relationship between an elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol and the VIM generated an immediate a sense of trust and reassurance within the viewer/user. This thesis contributes to the discourse on how VIMs exerts influence over the viewer/user no matter what level of sophistication their society has attained. It aims to offer visual communicators and graphic designers in particular, a more complete understanding of the BP *Helios*.

Chapter 1 Introduction:

This thesis seeks to explore and explain the success of the BP (beyond petroleum) *Helios* visual identity mark (VIM) (Fig. 1). The argument proposes that because the *Helios* is based on the Solar Cross (Fig. 2), an elemental, nature-inspired archetypal symbol, the BP *Helios* had immediate impact in the marketplace upon its launch in 2000. Furthermore the BP rebranding is built on communicating a connection with nature and the environment. The use of the Solar Cross as the basis for the *Helios* demonstrates the equity possessed by elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols and the subsequent effect the use of these symbols has on the viewer/user.

Helios – the Greek word for the sun – was the name given to BP’s new VIM. The new visual and corporate identity of BP encompassed four key attributes: ‘Green’, Performance, Energy and Innovation, as defined by the then BP chairman, Lord John Browne, in 1999. The *Helios* VIM flagged the start of a design solution and visual communication strategy that reflected the shift by BP from a petroleum company to an energy corporation using a ‘Green’ approach, reconnecting the consumer to nature.



Figure 1



Figure 2

‘Green’, Performance, Energy and Innovation were the main drivers for the design brief (Reeser 2010, pers. comm., 3 February). BP briefed leading international brand strategists Landor Associates (UK and US) to develop and deliver a creative strategy aligning BP with nature and the environment.

The elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol, the Solar Cross, represented the sun and was the vehicle by which early societal groups made a connection with the forces of nature. The Solar Cross has a numinous quality due to its ongoing use as a sacred symbol employed to communicate with nature deities. Numinosity gives an object or a mark a spiritual or emotional force that can be perceived by an individual or a group (Jung, 1978). Therefore, based on this observation, the dissertation will argue that numinosity is the metaphysical quality that exerts an influence over the viewer/user because it creates a sense of trust, reassurance and continuity. Consequently I will thus propose that the appropriation of the Solar Cross as the design base for the *Helios* gave the VIM its sway. The argument that the *Helios* possesses a numinous quality is supported by briefly examining of other VIMs that are similarly visually informed by the Solar Cross.

The theories of Carl Jung and Emile Durkheim are used as a lens through which the process of the *Helios*’ design and its subsequent application is analysed. Both theorists have well-established views on archetypal symbolism, numinosity and group identity, which they address from different philosophical perspectives. Jung claimed that without numinosity the observer experiences no emotional connection to the observed. For him, numinosity (as exhibited in the Solar Cross) was an alteration of consciousness involving an experience of spiritual power (Dallett, 1998).

In Durkheim’s theoretical work, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1964), he asserted that the ‘science’ of sociology could justifiably describe religious and economic activity as ‘social fact’ which includes the values, cultural norms, and social structures that are external to the individual: “*Sacred realities thus represent real*

existence while profane or mundane realities are in some ultimate non-existence” (1964).

The implementation of VIMs in societal contexts has occurred since ancient times. While ancient visual identity strategies were unrefined by contemporary standards, they were effective and influential in achieving cohesion in the larger social formation (Holland, 2006; Fox, 1988). The dynamics of group identity played a key role in the emergence of VIMs in the guise of elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols. This thesis contends that there has been a continuity in the application of VIMs based on the elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol, the Solar Cross in visual communication.

The communicative effectiveness of the *Helios* simultaneously draws upon the historical symbolic equity of the Solar Cross as well as the immediate contemporary relevance to the environmental ‘Green’ movement. Both factors connect the viewer/user to nature. The argument, that the effectiveness of the BP *Helios* translated to commercial success, will be supported by an exploration of how VIMs have been continually used to define individual and group identity. Design historians Sasson and Gaur wrote:

The present connects the past with the future – knowing about the past provides a basis from which we can plan. Signs, symbols and icons have been part of the collective subconscious of the human race since earliest times (1997:9).

This research is not a semiotic discussion of symbols as proposed by de Saussure and Peirce, rather, the argument will rest on defining the emotional triggers that give VIMs their sway.

The term ‘visual identity mark’ (VIM) is used in this research in place of the range of contemporary descriptors for brand identity symbols – logos, logotypes, trade marks, and brand marks. The term VIM describes ancient marks without relying on contemporary terminology. ‘Viewer/user’ will refer to the diverse audiences that have contact with or are engaged in some way with the *Helios* and VIMs in general. ‘Viewer’ will define individuals and groups who see a VIM and are not necessarily a customer or consumer of the organisation that the VIM represents. ‘User’ will refer to individuals and groups who directly engage and invest in the organisation that the VIM represents. These terms have been used because they best describe commercial and non-commercial discussions in the thesis. ‘Viewer/user’ will also apply to ancient visual communication strategies, where terms such as consumer and customer do not apply.

This thesis has two main objectives:

Objective 1: To examine the use and value of the *Helios* by:

- (i) offering a time line of BP’s history to contextualise the implementation of the *Helios*,

- (ii) analysing the key attribute: 'Green', as intended in Lord John Browne's vision,
- (iii) analysing the design elements and aesthetics of the *Helios*,
- (iv) examining the brand equity in the BP identity and the shift from the earlier *Shield* VIM and the change to the *Helios*, and
- (v) discussing the development and rollout of BP's visual identity program to both internal and external viewers/users.

Objective 2: To gain an understanding of the numinous quality in the *Helios* by:

- (i) reflecting on the writing of anthropologists, sociologists, archaeologists and theologians in relation to individual and group identity and dynamics,
- (ii) identifying the numinous quality underpinning the *Helios* by analysing the underlying archetypal symbol: the Solar Cross,
- (iii) developing an effective argument as a means to prove its contemporary relevance, and
- (iv) briefly exploring other VIMs based on the Solar Cross.

The thesis is developed over six chapters, which are interlaced with discussion and analysis of the *Helios* working as the foundation of the overall work.

Chapter Two presents an overview of BP's history and its origins. In the 1920s BP sought brand recognition through its first ventures into visual communication and developing its public profile via its original VIM the *Shield*. In over eighty years BP has become a major corporation in the petroleum and energy markets.

Chapter Three investigates the change of BP from being purely a British company known as BP (British Petroleum) to an organisation with a global outlook and recognised as a global corporation known as BP (beyond petroleum) in 2000. This chapter analyses the invention of the *Helios* by examining the development of the design solutions that reflected BP's shift to a 'Green' strategy. "*The Helios was invented in response to BP's recognition of the demands at the close of the millennium and a desire for success in the energy category. The Helios represents all forms of energy*" (Tadano, 2008).

A brief discussion of the growth and origins of the 'Green' movement in this chapter goes to support the engagement of 'Green' by BP as a key attribute and represented by the *Helios*. The 'Green' philosophy became a unique point of difference for BP within the petroleum category. 'Green' is also discussed as a marketing tool through the practice of 'greenwashing'. Consequently a sentiment of cynicism was levelled at BP on the launch of the *Helios*, questioning whether a petroleum company could ever really be an 'eco warrior' (Solman, 2008).

The chapter provides a detailed breakdown of the design elements and aesthetics employed in the *Helios* through a dissection of shape, colour and typography. The *Helios* possessed a dynamic visual quality that was more meaningful to the contemporary market than the *Shield* VIM.

A semi-structured one-on-one interview with the *Helios* design director Courtney Reeser, current managing director of Landor Associates, (San Francisco) provides insight into several aspects of the project. A questionnaire of twenty questions was exchanged via email. Questions focussed primarily on the design issues concerned with the aesthetic/design considerations and details of the strategy of the BP rebranding.

A second semi-structured one-on-one interview with Mike Staniford, current executive creative director of Landor Associates (Asia Pacific), addressed the effects the *Helios* had on growth in BP's market share as a direct result of the rebranding. Staniford provided unpublished internal documentation measuring marketplace effectiveness of the BP *Helios* by using the Landor *Brand Driver Platform*. The platform is a tool developed by Landor that defines the Brand Promise and Brand Image of a corporation and how the VIM and its visual identity program will be rolled out to its viewer/user.

Chapter Four examines the elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol, the Solar Cross to establish a contextual relevance and relationship to the *Helios*. The investigation aims to build an understanding of the metaphysical quality referred to by Jung as the numinous.

Addressing the emergence and use of elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols and in particular the Solar Cross in burgeoning visual communication, the chapter considers how these symbols contributed to a sense of individual and group identity through a connection with nature deities. The practice of using archetypal symbols as VIMs in relation to ancient rites and rituals invest in the VIM a sense of the numinous, the sacred and institutions. An institution can be defined as a long-established and fundamental part of human interaction within a society, associated with its customs, laws and spiritual behaviour (Oxford Concise Dictionary, 1979).

This chapter goes beyond simply an investigation and analysis of ancient archetypal symbols, which has been addressed by design historians such as Sassons and Gaur (1970). It addresses the development and use of archetypal symbols as sacred devices used by societal groups and will assist in establishing a contextual relevance of the Solar Cross to the *Helios*.

On the basis of Jung's philosophy, it is reasonable to assert:

“that archetypes are pieces of life itself – images that are integrally connected to the living individual by the bridge of the emotion. That is why it is impossible to give an arbitrary (or universal) explained in the manner indicated by the whole life-situation of the particular individual to whom it relates” (1978:87).

It was Jung who explored archetypal symbols and their subsequent numinous qualities in *Man and his Symbols* (1978). A symbol can evolve into an object in its own right and, as Jung claimed, any form of communication such as a word or an image became symbolic *“when it implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning”* (1978:79).

Symbols will surface in response to a specific social situation, often serving the purpose of galvanising group coherence. *“Although created to fulfil ephemeral needs, great works of graphic design often become memorable cultural icons representing the times and places of their origins”* (Heller, 2004:34).

The chapter aims to assist in defining the intangible trigger that gives visual identity marks their persuasive effect within the global marketplace.

Chapter Five explores group identity and group dynamics, recognising that groups are the viewers/users of VIMs. Organisations and corporations capitalise on group dynamics. Jung supported the view that social cohesion is, in part, a product of the use of VIMs. BP wished to reach groups that were the established internal and external viewer/users, future investors and future users, the media and opinion formers.

A carefully orchestrated campaign of visual and verbal communication, engaging the VIM at its heart, is referred to as a ‘brand identity program’ (Wheeler and Olins). It exposes and informs the viewers/users of the philosophy of an organisation that a VIM represents. For BP the brand identity program used a branding strategy technique called ‘association’ (Filene, 1938). The brand identity program of a corporation results in a VIM becoming a cultural symbol, where the meaning of the VIM is created through its exposure to the viewer/user. The *Helios*’s visual base design was informed by an archetypal (‘natural’) symbol branded onto the multinational corporation BP, and subsequently became a cultural symbol, through repetitive application of the *Helios*. With the brand identity program of the *Helios*, its multifarious touch points, a consistent and convincing communication of reassurance and validation is delivered to the viewer/user. This strategy is reinforced by Wheeler when commenting on the power of a comprehensive brand identity program: *“A memorable message grows with repetition, taking on a life of its own”* (Wheeler, 2009:26).

The brand identity program for BP had to reassure the corporation’s traditional internal and external viewer/user that the already-established core attributes of Performance, Innovation and Energy still existed. The addition of the new ‘Green’ attribute was intended to reassure BP of a future in the ‘new economy’ and extend BP’s market share globally.

Communicating reassurance via VIMs is a long-standing practice. Ancient rollout techniques were remarkably similar to contemporary visual communication strategies in their intention. Bronze Age Persian emperor Darius I invented coinage as a device used to disseminate the numinous power of his symbol The Archer throughout his extensive empire and beyond (Holland, 2006). Fourth-century Roman emperor Constantine used the Labarum symbol to unify his army, which constituted of Pagan and Christian soldiers (Fox, 1988).

The chapter analyses BP’s marketing strategies and the follow-up statistics to demonstrate the success of the *Helios* VIM to both BP’s internal and external groups.

The advantage of having a memorable logo is obvious. Memorability breeds familiarity, which in turn establishes a comfort level, building a sense of trust. In cases where money is involved, increased sales are a by-product of strong branding, and a memorable logo is a key factor in a strong brand presence (Gernsheimer, 2008:26–27).

Chapter Six, the conclusion, draws the various aspects of the argument together and consolidates it in relation to the metaphysical quality that gives the BP *Helios* its sway. By focussing on the *Helios* an understanding of the continuity and effective use of the Solar Cross, an elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol within a contemporary context is constructed. There is an analysis and discussion concerning the *Helios* through the stages of its development: from briefing to the eventual brand identity program implementation into the marketplace.

Visual communicators and graphic designers will benefit from this research, which provides a perspective on the function and influence exacted by the *Helios* and other VIMs based on the Solar Cross.

Chapter 2: BP Time line

This chapter presents an overview of BP's history: its origins, its first venture into visual communication, the evolution of its public profile, and its growth in the energy, petroleum, and motoring markets. It aims to assist in building an understanding of why BP's *Helios* VIM was successful upon its launch in 2000.

2.1 The Early 20th Century: The original founder of BP was William Knox D'Arcy, who had a background in Australia as an explorer of wealth in the late 19th-century Victorian gold fields. In 1901, D'Arcy relocated to the Middle East and was granted a licence by the Persian (modern-day Iran) government to explore for oil. In May 1908, after years of unsuccessful exploration, oil was finally discovered in commercial quantities at Masjed Soleiman in the Asmari Mountains of Southern Persia (Kopp and Dover 2004:1). The discovery led to a sequence of business dealings that would see D'Arcy needing to sell a majority of his rights to the Burmah Oil Company due to the protracted exploration process. The Burmah Oil Company had been founded in Glasgow, Scotland in 1886 by David Sime Cargill to develop oil fields in the Indian subcontinent. In 1909 the Anglo Persian Oil Company (APOC) was founded out of D'Arcy's license incorporated as a subsidiary of Burmah Oil Company (Ferrier, 2000:15). The new enterprise constructed a pipeline across Persia to Abadan, where a refinery was built and became operational from 1913.

During this period, rival companies such as the Russian General Oil Company, Royal Dutch Shell, Standard Oil of Ohio, and the Partnership of Nobel Brothers had already established themselves as key suppliers to industrial markets, holding 86% of all share capital and controlling 60% of global oil production (Kopp and Dover, 2004:2). Although APOC had ample oil, by 1914 it was unable to find buyers, bringing the company close to bankruptcy.

Sir Charles Greenway, one of the founding directors of APOC, recognised the potentiality of the burgeoning oil business and formed a connection with a contemporary politician, Winston Churchill. It was Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, who delivering an impressive speech in the British parliament championing a shift from coal to new oil-fuelled technology for the British Navy. Churchill convinced the parliament of the need to secure a dedicated oil supply for Britain. As a consequence of Churchill's speech in 1914, the British Navy became APOC's first major customer, investing two million pounds in the company (news.bbc.uk., 2012). The British government's association with the company first known as the APOC – later as the Anglo Iran Oil Company (AIOC) and after 1954 as British Petroleum (BP) – continued until 1987.

APOC's association with the name 'British Petroleum' was unexpected. Originally the name 'British Petroleum' was owned by the German organisation, Europäische Union. The organisation operated a subsidiary branch named 'British Petroleum' in Britain, which functioned as its UK-based marketing organisation, complete with inventory (Kopp and Dover, 2004:2). Because Germany was Britain's enemy during the First World War (1914–18), all German business concerns in Britain were seized by the Public Trustee of the British Government (Ferrier, 2000:217). The subsidiary branch

'British Petroleum' was seized and then sold on to APOC in 1917. The acquisition brought to APOC the British Petroleum name and its assets, which included an inventory of 520 depots, 535 railway tank wagons, 1102 road vehicles, 4 barges, and 650 horses. This purchase and the introduction of a new management style by Greenway – referred to as a 'vertical integration' – meant that BP would be "*absolutely self-contained*", and triggered a growth in APOC's oil business around the world, particularly in Europe (Kopp & Dover, 2004:2).

The concept of petrol stations dates from about 1905 in the US. In their original form, the stations dispensed petrol to motorists via a simple mechanical device using skinny, single-handed pumps, usually found in the front of general stores or automotive repair garages. More formal, purpose-built petrol stations were introduced in 1912 by Standard Oil of Indiana (Amoco) in Minneapolis (Ferrier, 2000:412). In 1920, BP were selling their petrol in two-gallon cans in the UK at garages, hardware stores, blacksmiths, and pharmacies, since service stations did not exist at this time in Britain: "*But the sheer number of new cars on the streets meant that approach had become unworkable*" (bp.com, 2010).



Figure 3: The 1920 BP VIM designed by A.R.Saunders

A key element in establishing an influential market presence and identity was, and still is, the development of a memorable and effective VIM. In 1920, it was through a competition among BP employees that the design of the first BP VIM was selected and implemented (bp.com, 2012). The winner was an A.R. Saunders, who worked in the purchasing department, with a design based on the bold boxy-shaped capitals B and P letters emphasised with sharply shaped serifs (Fig. 3). At the time, the design was described as having "*wings on their edges*". The capital letters were framed by inverted commas. There was no set colour for the original BP VIM usage, so it would be seen against various background colours. The eventual unique colour-combination of green and yellow was an innovation of BP's French operations three years later, and was adopted by the Swiss shortly after (bp.com, 2012).

By 1921 the petrol station had arrived in Britain and Europe. APOC – now known by its public name BP (British Petroleum) – put 69 single-handed skinny shaped petrol pumps into operation around the UK and Europe during this period. The business of selling petrol to the fast-growing pool of motorists prompted another vital step in BP's development, with the creation of a prominent visual identity for increased visibility in the market place.



Figure 4

Initially the BP petrol pumps were decorated with a Union Jack, with the company's VIM placed in the centre of it (Fig. 4) and the petrol trucks bright red. From 1921 to 1925, there was almost a 1000 percent increase of BP petrol pumps in use, which brought the number to 6000. The 1930s brought a marked increase in the purchase and use of motor vehicles and competition become increasingly visible as oil companies battled for a share of the motor market. In 1935, Persia became known as Iran, so the Anglo Persian Oil Company (APOC) changed its name to



Figure 5: The BP Shield VIM had evolved by the end of World War II.

the Anglo Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). The company was known publicly as British Petroleum, and to make matters more complex, AIOC had been a subsidiary of Burmah Oil Company since 1909. For simplicity, the corporation will be referred to as BP exclusively in the remainder of this chapter.

2.2 Mid 20th Century: In 1939 Britain entered the Second World War, which led to petrol rationing. “Brands were suspended.

All petrol was ‘pooled’. Churchill called on the Anglo Iranian Oil

Company, who made and supplied BP fuels to give every thing they could to the war cause...” (Bamberg, 2009:212). By the end of the Second World War, BP’s VIM – consisting of the original boxy-shaped capitals B and P letters emphasised with sharply shaped serifs – was surrounded by an outline shape of a shield (Fig. 5). In 1946 the Shield VIM experienced an evolutionary change: the shield became a solid green with an outline in a solid yellow. The inverted commas were removed. (Fig. 6)

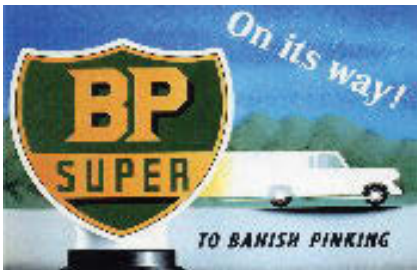


Figure 6: The BP Shield VIM 1952

In the 1950s, BP was directly affected by the political and economic upheavals that resulted from the Middle East crisis. From 1951 all oil production facilities within Iran were nationalised, and the tumultuous Iranian politics during this period found angry mobs attacking the BP operations, causing workers to evacuate and the refinery to shut its doors. It was impossible

for BP to not “change dramatically” (Kopp and Dover, 2004:2). Iranian oil production resumed in 1954, with a business climate that was far removed from the one BP had engaged with before 1951. BP’s monopoly in the Middle East through its association with the Burmah Oil Company since the early 20th century was no longer the case, with the introduction of other oil companies in the region. AIOC experienced another name change and finally became officially known as British Petroleum in 1954 (Fig. 7).



Figure 7: The final name change for British Petroleum 1954

The 1960s saw BP’s business diversify into three complimentary areas. Firstly, their traditional area of exploration saw the discovery of major oil and gas fields in the English Channel in 1965, and after many years of exploration a major oil field was discovered on the Alaskan North Slope, in 1969. Secondly, BP focussed on upgrading the quality and range of petroleum products and services available in constantly improving petrol stations which culminated in 1967 “when BP unveiled the world’s first all-plastic service station in England ... It arrives in pre-fabricated sections and opens for business 6 days later” (bp.com, 2009). Thirdly, BP took the initiative of becoming involved with environmental issues, including “studying the air pollution occurring in Reading, England and worked to develop cleaner chimneys, including the their own extremely large ones located at BP oil and gas refineries” (bp.com, 2009).

The 1970s saw BP build the Trans Alaska Pipeline, which was the largest engineering project in US history. The pipeline transported crude oil over 1932 kilometres from the Alaskan North Slope, to a refinery at Valdez, Alaska. BP needed distribution points and refining infrastructure in the US, but could not trade its oil in that country unless it had interests in an American oil company. As a result, BP purchased an initial 25% share of the Standard Oil Company of Ohio (SOHIO), with the share percentage increasing to 55% by 1978 (Kopp & Dover, 2004:3). SOHIO had built and run service stations in the US since 1913 and had the refinery capacity suitable for BP's requirements for refining the crude oil from the Alaskan Northern Slope. This deal proved successful for both companies.

The continuing turbulent Middle East politics included the rise of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to international prominence, as its member countries took control of their domestic petroleum industries and set the pricing of crude oil on world markets. *"On two occasions, oil prices rose steeply in a volatile market, triggered by the Arab oil embargo in 1973 and the outbreak of the Iranian Revolution in 1979"* (opec.org, 2012). These events saw BP maintain a strong focus on continued fuel exploration with a significant oil field discovery at the Forties Field, under the North Sea off the Scottish coast. Due to the Iranian revolution in 1979, BP's relationship with Iran came to an end. BP responded to the industry's uncertainty by redirecting its attention to new avenues of business, which were referred to within BP as 'downstreaming'. This involved developing and marketing a diverse range of new products derivative from petroleum such as chemicals, plastics, detergents, minerals and even cosmetics and cold meats. There was also an increasing emphasis on retailing at the consumer end of the market at the petrol station.

The 'downstreaming' approach became increasingly significant in the business strategy of BP in the 1980s (Kopp and Dover, 2004). As a result, the BP subsidiary BP Oil International (BPOI) was formed. This new division had a separate identity from the mainstream BP, as it addressed the needs of the profitable 'downstream' business of refining and retailing. BPOI became increasingly focussed on all aspects of marketing, which encapsulated product selection and development, branding, advertising, sales promotion, customer service, and retail merchandising. The new direction indicated a shift from regarding the viewer/user as a faceless customer to an entity with whom BP sought to build an ongoing and a lasting one-to-one relationship.

2.3 The late 20th Century: In the 1980s, BP's decision for diversification was necessary. In 1983, BP Shipping transported a mere half a million tonnes of crude oil from the middle-east, as compared to 140 million tonnes less than 10 years before (bp.com, 2010). Diversification was also pursued into alternative energy sources, including coal – an irony, given that it was the British Navy's shift from coal to oil that gave BP one of its first major shareholders and customers. The company also looked at alternative energy sources, including gas and, interestingly, solar power. The direction was a precursor to Lord John Browne's 2000 vision for the future of BP and his directive that the future of BP lay in alternative, environmentally friendly energy sources as a smart long-term business decision.

The 1980s became the era of the brand, as discussed in Naomi Klein's book *No Logo* (2000). There was a concrete effort to study and develop a solid understanding of 'downstream' marketing on all fronts. Downstream results were indicated by an improved retail margin, which nearly doubled, even though pump prices were falling. BPOI accounted for 37% and 46% of total company operating profits and turnover, respectively (Kopp & Dover, 2004:3).

This strategy of focussing and building 'downstream' was visionary, as the traditional 'upstream' profits in exploration, transportation and crude oil refinement fell in the 1980s due to OPEC issues. As the OPEC website indicates:

After reaching record levels early in the 1980s, prices began to weaken, before crashing in 1986, responding to a big oil glut and consumer shift away from this hydrocarbon. OPEC's share of the smaller oil market fell heavily and its total petroleum revenue dropped below a third of earlier peaks...towards the end of the decade OPEC's share of newly growing world output began to recover (opec.org, 2012).

'Downstream' activities would eventually inform and influence the design and strategy of the *Helios* VIM. As Courtney Reeser, managing director of Landor Associates (San Francisco) and lead designer of the BP rebranding noted: "*We (Landor) convinced them (BP) that they should create a 'go to market' brand as most of the brand visibility was at the retail level*" (Reeser interview 2010).

BPOI engaged major marketing strategist, Roy Croft through the 1970s, 1980s and into the 1990s. In a lecture delivered by Croft in 1985 to the Dutch Advertising Association, *Using advertising to build and exploit a strong corporate image*, he stated:

... it is fair to conclude that advertising can be extremely effective in building a strong corporate image, and that given consistency and continuity over time, the image can be exploited to great effect in marketing activities, even though the benefits are not always easy to identify and quantify. And that, I hold, could and would be equally true of a campaign created for an international, as well as a national stage (Croft, quoted by Kopp & Dover, 2004:3).

Croft's recommendations for considering global branding and communications in his approach for BPOI rested on several foundations. Firstly, his background prior to BPOI was as an account director for several large American advertising agencies. He understood that brand image could have a powerful effect on product differentiation. He felt that a strong brand image might urge consumers to buy petrol because of attributes other than price and/or location that until this new direction had been the primary criteria driving purchasing habits and choices. Croft had evidence of the increasing brand power developed by BP demonstrated through the experience of FINA, a petrol company brought by BP in 1980. After the FINA service stations were repainted to the yellow and green of BP and the rebranding was applied, there was a 10% increase in turnover sales (Kopp & Dover, 2004). As Kopp & Dover note:



Figure 8

Croft was impressed by arguments made by Harvard Business School's Theodore Levin and BP's corporate advertising agency, GLOBALCOM, that consumer needs and tastes across the world were becoming more homogeneous. MacDonalds and Coca Cola had been successful in this assumption, but the convergence of needs and lifestyles is not applicable to all businesses (2004:5).



Figure 9

By October 1987, British prime minister Margaret Thatcher's policy of privatisation prompted the UK government's sell-off of its remaining shares in BP. Complicated business dealings and the possibility of politically undesirable share buys and takeovers led BP to negotiate with the government in 1988 to acquire Britoil, which was formed in 1975 as a nationalised body to maintain adequate oil supply levels. It became Britoil in 1982, with shares issued on the London Stock Exchange in 1982 and 1985 (*Competition Commission Report 1988:10*), and the remaining publicly traded shares of Standard Oil of Ohio in the UK.



Figure 10

June 1992 saw chairman and chief executive Robert Horton ousted from the position due to disastrous business decisions resulting in BP incurring its first loss since 1914 and the share price, falling from its high point in 1991 of 357 pence to a low of 184 pence (Croft, Kopp and Dover, 2004:2). Lord Ashburton, previously a non-executive director, became the chairman and David Simon, took on the role of chief executive. It was Simon who declared that BP's primary goal lay in creating value for the shareholders: *"All other aims – finding more oil or gas, getting it safely and profitably to the market, serving customers more effectively, protecting the environment – either lead to that central goal or, in the end, are impossible without it,"* (Croft, Kopp and Dover 2004:2).



Figure 11



Figure 12

2.4 The end of the 20th Century: In 1995, Lord John Browne was appointed CEO of BP. Browne was responsible for four major acquisitions and mergers; BP and Amoco (Fig. 8) (formerly Standard Oil of Indiana) joined to form BP Amoco in December 1998, which eventually became BP Amoco p.l.c (Fig. 9) in 1999 and then BP p.l.c in 2000. Then ARCO, BP's key competitor on the North Slope of Alaska, joined the BP portfolio. Solarex, a leading solar-energy company joined the corporation's holdings. And Castrol's motor oils and Aral's distinctive European operation would also joined the group after 2000 (Figs. 10–12). *"In 2001, the company formally renamed itself as BP plc and adopted the tagline "beyond petroleum", which remains in use today"* (bp.com, 2011).

An overview of the transition of BP to bp ("beyond petroleum") through the 20th century discussed in this chapter allows a clearer understanding of why the impact of the *Helios* was revolutionary in the petroleum category. The following chapter, *The invention of the Helios*, addresses the various facets and considerations of BP's brief to Landor Associates and the subsequent design rationale and visual solution.

Chapter 3 : The invention of the *Helios*

In the 1990s, the impending new millennium triggered a desire by several global oil companies to change their visual identity. Shell, ExxonMobile, and BP all addressed the look of their VIMs in 1999. The merger between British Petroleum and the US company Amoco gave BP the opportunity to reposition itself in the petroleum category. The existing BP *Shield* VIM and Amoco's VIM each had brand equity in their individual markets; however, BP needed a VIM better suited to its global outlook and to the new BP philosophy encompassing 'Green', Performance, Energy and Innovation. The result, in 2000, was the *Helios* VIM.



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

Until 1999 "BP" had been an acronym for British Petroleum. The merger with Amoco created conflict within the existing customer base due to their respective national identities. Subsequent concerns surfaced about potential resistance among US consumers with the introduction of a combined identity (Fig. 13). Furthermore, BP's other mergers and acquisitions during the 1980s and 1990s – which included the absorption of Arco (Fig. 14) and solar energy company Solarex (Fig.1 5) – were creating a splintered identity. Concerns about consumer confusion had been a recurring issue within BP's management for the past several decades. Anthony Leeche, a member of the BP marketing team in the 1990s and 2000s stated that "*We needed to come up with a vision for BP that was global*" (Solman, 2008:1). Browne was concerned that BP would always be seen as a British rather than a global brand because of its existing visual identity and the brand equity of the *Shield*. A genuine global brand is more than a ubiquitous presence. It is commonly understood and can cut through cultures and geographies. A global brand and the effectiveness of its visual identity mark was confirmed by Cowin and Matusitz when they discussed a VIM's ability to influence and generate loyalty within the marketplace :

A logo that is well designed becomes a visual shortcut for the meanings associated with it, and hence influences its viewers (consumers) to receive the brand message with its emotional effects, bringing about extreme loyalty to the brand. They attribute emotion to not only the company, but to the consumers as well (Bird 1992 in Cowin & Matusitz, 2011:24).

The task of addressing the amalgamation of BP and Amoco into a single brand was realised by the marketing department of BP, led by Lee Edwards and Courtney Reeser from Landor Associates. As Reeser (2010, pers.comm., 3 February) confirmed: "*The initial object was to create a corporate brand for the BP/Amoco brand ... We convinced them to only use BP as the brand as it was a more believable global brand.*" Keller developed the following list, which indicates the competitive edge organisations can gain by becoming a global brand: "*Economies of scale in production and distribution; lower marketing costs; power and scope; consistency in brand image; ability to leverage ideas quickly and efficiently; and uniformity of marketing practices*" (2003).

3.1 The Strategy and Equity of BP's visual identity: A piece of visual communication, such as the VIM, has an influential quality referred to as 'brand equity'. Brand equity is the measurable value in the associations a viewer/user makes with an organisation or corporation. A VIM is a conduit of the brand equity that triggers an emotional response



Figure 16

to a brand in the viewer/consumer. Brand equity is defined by a viewer's/user's past experiences as well as the message communicated by the organisation through its advertising and marketing. Indeed, VIMs are the trigger belief in brand equity. Their presence on all the visual material associated with the organisation is a continual reminder of the organisation's philosophy or brand promise. As Cowin and Matusitz wrote:

The logo must exist by itself and trigger, in the consumers' minds, the whole host of emotions and images that the company represents – emotions and images that the company may have taken years to ascertain as the basis of its corporate identity (2011:23).



Figure 17: Shows the steady evolution of the Shell VIM from 1900 to Loewry's 1999 version

In graphic design, when a client moves radically from their existing VIM and engages a completely new visual aesthetic – such as BP's move from the *Shield* to the *Helios*, (Fig. 16) – the redesign is referred to as a 'revolutionary design'. The term 'revolutionary' is appropriate to describe this practice, since it means "involving or causing a complete or dramatic change" (Collins English Dictionary, 1986). Conversely, an evolutionary design solution refers to an existing VIM having only minor amendments applied in the aim to contemporise it, as was undertaken in the 1999 redesign of the Shell VIM by Raymond Loewry (Fig. 17). "VIM improvement [can] take a long time and is "evolutionary" in nature" (Cowin & Matusitz, 2011:21). Brand equity can be a transmitter as well as a builder of reassurance and trust for a viewer/user. The sway VIMs have to connect a viewer/user to an organisation gives VIMs a capacity to build a sense of personal identity in an individual. In the automotive category, for instance, drivers of Mercedes Benz cars (Fig. 18) have brand belief or brand faith in the prestige, quality and excellence that the company has built as brand equity over the 20th century (Olins, 2008).

Due to the increasing pressures and the plethora of consumer choices in the contemporary world, and the sense of constant change, viewers/users are searching for continuity and a belief in an institution and therefore trust. The corporate VIM, Cowin and Matusitz claim, "is a means of building trust with the customer" (Cowin & Matusitz, 201:23). According to Alina Wheeler, a recognised brand design practitioner and theorist, "Brands are messengers of trust...Durability is achieved through a commitment to the equity of a central idea over time, and the capacity to transcend change" (2009:26). Viewers/users understand that VIMs supply them with this sense of reassurance. Brand equity in a VIM is both abstract and tangible; it is the influence brand equity exerts on the viewer/user that affects the choices made in the marketplace translating directly to growth in market share, increased profits, and recognition in brand strength. Olins thus argues that:

Corporate strategy is the best that most corporations can do to harmonize their long-term goals with all the more immediate issues – whether large or small – that keep on cropping up in their day-to-day lives... It affects every action the company takes. It makes an affect not only what products the company makes and how much profit it makes on them. But how those products affect what the customer feel about the company. Corporate identity tells the world – whether



Figure 18

actively or by default – just what the corporate strategy is (1994:145).



Figure 19: The 20th century VIM for BP

Brand equity has positive or negative implications for both the viewer/user and an organisation's market share. As Hoek & Gendal observe, "*Brand equity research recognises the goodwill trademarks (VIMs) develop and the value that brands hold independently of products*" (2010: 318). VIMs can engage the viewer/user to 'connect with' or to 'reject' an organisation based on its relevance to the viewer/user. The BP *Shield* had been the corporation's primary identifier for its internal and external viewer/users for more than 80 years. Through a comprehensive brand audit measuring the brand equity possessed by BP's long established *Shield* VIM (Fig. 19), Landor Associates deemed the *Shield* held negative equity. In Landor's opinion, it was visually static and imperialistic in its symbolism: "*We removed the shield device as it was deemed to be too heraldic. Additionally, the company name was changed to BP plc., and the lower case letterforms were less formal*" (Reeser 2010, pers.comm., 3 February).

Over this period internal and external viewers/users related and experience the brand equity of the *Shield* differently. Internal viewers/users include employees, the board, shareholders, and suppliers. External viewers/users are day-to-day customers, the general public, potential customers, the media, opinion formers, government, regulatory bodies, and competitors.

3.2_The Brief: In 1999 Browne was primarily focussed on establishing a point of difference from the rest of the petroleum category. A key aim was achieved by creating an association between BP and the 'Green' movement, which could easily be read as an oxymoron. Browne's directive to Landor Associates was to focus on the notion of going 'Green' (Reeser 2010). The other attributes – Performance, Energy and Innovation – were already embedded in the BP charter. According to Reeser,

Browne felt that green was an idea whose time had come and he was intent on making BP a socially responsible company. Additionally he saw this idea as an important point of differentiation (2010, pers.comm., 3 February).

The establishment of a connection between BP, nature, and the environment was a new strategy and needed to be communicated in the new visual identity. Reeser described Browne's key attributes of 'Green', Performance, Energy and Innovation as "*very significant as this was the most unique and ownable idea*" (2010, pers.comm., 3 February). Hence, BP's 'Green' marketing strategy, the subsequent *Helios*, and the "beyond petroleum" slogan were developed by building on the equity of the environmental movement.

The basis of the brief to Landor Associates was to use 'Green' to promote the notion of 'Innovation' and reinforce the more traditional claims of 'Performance'. Landor's response was to engage an understanding of how the new 'Green' strategy would capture the attention and imagination of the viewer/user and increase BP's credibility in the marketplace. Landor reiterated to BP that 'downstreaming' was a major component of BP's overall revenue (Kopp & Dover, 2004). The retailing arm of BP was

clearly the most consistently profitable and had been since the 1980s, Reeser commented on the initial stage of the project, noting that "...we (Landor) convinced them [BP] that they should create a 'go to market' brand as most of the brand visibility was at the retail level" (2010, pers.comm., 3 February).



Figure 20: The Shield VIM evolutionary design maintaining continuity in the use of the unique colour combination of green and yellow.

How can a long-established petrol company present itself as an eco warrior? An understanding of BP's unexpected marketing strategy can be attained through the observations of Christensen (1999) and reinforced by Olins: "*In a society characterised by an absence of traditional forms of community organisations are important sources of identification and their symbols have become important signifiers of belongingness*" (1989: 297).

3.3 Building the *Helios* colours: According to Johannes Itten "*Colors are forces, radiant energies that affect us positively and negatively whether we are aware of it or not*" (1973:16). The BP brand had built a presence in the marketplace using green and yellow as a memorable colour combination. Green and yellow have been maintained as a constant feature in BP's visual Identity program (Fig. 20) since it first appeared in BP's French operations in 1923 (bp.com, 2012). The original strategic intent for the selection and implementation of the colours was to evoke a sense of Spring (bp.com, 2011). A demonstration of the colour combination assisting in building an association between nature and the burgeoning BP can be seen with the painting of the early BP trucks and petrol pumps the colour green to blend into the countryside (bp.com, 2012). Therefore, the colours held a significant equity for BP.

From information supplied through interviewing Reeser in 2010, it appears that both BP and Landor regarded the original colours of green and yellow, as holding positive brand equity and that these colours were consistent with the new philosophy of the corporation. "*Colour becomes a mnemonic device*" (2009:52) was noted by branding designer and authority on branding and its practice, Alina Wheeler, when she commented on the influence of colour in relation to brand equity.

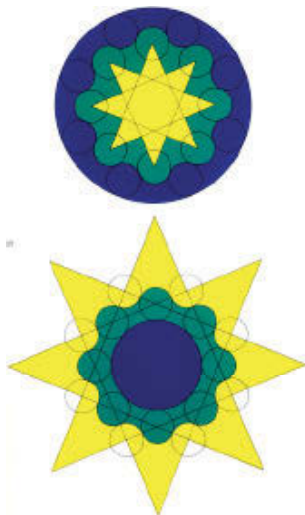


Figure 21; Yellow equates the triangle, blue equates the circle. A theory of Kandinsky and developed by Gerstner

The direct response from Reeser when questioned concerning BPs corporate colours was that "*our recommendation was to leverage the existing equities of the BP green and yellow. This was a unique color palette in a category dominated by red and blue*" (Reeser 2010, pers.comm., 3 February). The identity of Amoco, with its red and blue VIM, was not relevant to the new BP. There was more brand equity and therefore brand value invested in the unique colour combination of green and yellow. As Riley commented: "*Colours arrive charged with so much emotional and symbolic weight that they tend to overburden the thin barrier of demarcation between the viewer/user and the projected image*" (1995:317).

When engaging the theories of colour psychology and graphic symbolism, the relevance of the relationship the new BP VIM, both its shape and its colours, and BP's 'Green' global philosophy and marketing strategy becomes apparent (Gage, 2100; Gerstner, 1986; Riley, 1995). "*Each individual color has its own character which distinguishes*

it from every other colour ... The same applies, with other parameters, to forms. The form is the body of the colour, the colour is the soul of the form." (Gerstner in Cantz, 2001:186-187) (Fig. 21).

Colours play an important role in the viewer/user's emotional and psychological response or decoding, and trigger an emotional response and evoke a brand association within the viewer/user. As Hoek & Gendall noted: "*Over the last decade, several companies have registered colours as trademarks [VIMs] after demonstrating that a particular colour has become so consistently linked with a specific brand that it has acquired secondary meaning*" (2010: 317). Companies such as Cadbury's purple (NZ), Tiffany's turquoise (US) and BP's green (UK) have been successful in registering their brand colour. To register a colour as a part of a corporation's visual identity, evidence must be produced concerning the length of time the colour has been used by the corporation, the extent of the corporation's visual communication that has engaged the colour, and if there is use of the particular colour by competitors (Hoek & Gendall, 2010: 317). Distinctive colours are chosen carefully to build brand awareness and express differentiation and authenticity. The influence colour exerts over the viewer was acknowledged by Kandinsky when he commented on his research concerning colour that "*Generally speaking, colour is a power which directly influences the soul*" (Kandinsky in Riley, 1995:142).

3.3.I Yellow: Yellow is often termed by many authorities as the 'mind colour', and is thought by some to simulate the intellect. Jung's writings on color symbolism cover a broad range of topics,..."*to the near-universal sovereignty of the color gold, sunlight, value, ...[gold] expresses the apex of spirituality, and intuition*" (Riley, 1995: 307). The association with the Sun and therefore divinity is ever-present regardless of experience. Jung observed that yellow was representational of the flash of intuition that humanity can experience. It is associated with cheer, gaiety and fun (Sharpe, 1974). Yellow is the most reflective colour and appears to advance (Schaie & Heiss, 1964). Shades of golden yellow carry the promise of a positive future. In antiquity, golden yellow was attributed to Mithras in Persia and Apollo in Greece. It is the colour of the ancient gods (Cumont, 1911). Yellow affects us physically by stimulating mental processes, stimulating the nervous system, activating memory and encouraging communication. Yellow has been shown to promote the assimilation of new ideas related to intellectual (Kandinsky in Riley, 1995) and expressive pursuits (Oliver, 2007). Yellow is a stimulant which engender expansive and forceful behavior (Elliot & Maier, 2007). Chang and Lin found that "*in a branding context, participants equated yellow in a brand with joy, brightness, and warmth*" (Chang & Lin in Cowin & Matusitz, 2011:29). Yellow is the first colour the eye registers when scanning the landscape. (c.f. Itten, 1963; Gerstner, 1986; Gage, 2011; Smith, 2012).

3.3.II Green: Green has been used to symbolise nature and its embodied attributes since ancient times. Adjectives associated with the colour are: secure, comfortable, calm, peaceful (Murray & Deabler, 1957), and young and fresh (Hofstatter & Lubbert, 1958). Green denotes adaptability (Besant & Leadbeater 1901, in Gage, 2011). As green appears throughout the natural world, it is perceived as pervasive (Kandinsky in

Riley, 1995). Ecological supporters adopted green to represent their movement.

Absolute green is the most restful color, lacking any undertone of joy, grief, or passion. On exhausted men this restfulness has a beneficial effect, but after a time it becomes tedious (Kandinsky in Smith, 2012).

The observation that bright yellow-green creates the impression of the contemporary, and the whimsical is drawn from the work of Leatrice Eiseman, a recognised colour specialist and consultant to Pantone Inc. (Smith, 2012). Green is the colour of hope, of strength, of longevity. Green is the colour of the awakening of life (c.f. Itten, 1963; Gerstner, 1986; Cage, 2011; Smith, 2012). Lewandowski (2009) stated that McDonalds changed its traditional background colour of red to hunter green in Europe in its initiative to show a more eco-friendly illustration (Cowin & Matusitz, 2011:30).

3.4 Being 'Green': Currently the term 'Green' implies an association with the lifestyle and political agendas that promote a responsibility and concern towards the environment. The 'Green' movement and its 'environmentally responsible' message, although not universally embraced, was acknowledged by Browne in a 1997 speech he delivered to Stanford University, in which he suggested that "*in all likelihood climate change was caused by the burning of fossil fuels*" (Browne, in Lucas 2007:4). Consequently, an appreciation by Browne that there needed to be a shift in energy consumption indicated to the global market place BP's recognition for change through "*growth, opportunity, volatility and challenge...That view of the world in which we're operating sets the context for our strategy*" (Browne 1997). Therefore it is essential to review the growth of the 'Green' movement and how association with the 'Green' movement became a part of marketing strategists' palette of promotional tools.

In 1949 the publishing of *A Sandy County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold brought the notion of moral respect for the environment into the mainstream. Issues concerning water and air pollution were reinforced with the formation of socially conscience groups such as the Sierra Club, whose members included David Brower, Ansel Adams, and Nancy Newhall, some of the greatest landscape photographers of the 20th century. Their imagery brought a conscious awareness of the environment to popular culture in the 1950s and 60s. The environmental movement began to build momentum in the 1960s.



Figure 22

Rachel Carson's 1962 publication *Silent Spring* influenced the eventual formation of the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) in the US in 1970. The subsequent building of public interest in the environment during this period saw the inaugural 'Earth Day' (Fig. 22) held on the 22 April 1970 (thegreenlifeonline.org, 2009), which was the initiative of US senator, Gaylord Nelson. More than 20 million people participated in the first year. It has grown to be observed annually on 22 April by more than 500 million people and national governments in 175 countries. Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth were both established in 1972, and James Lovelock's book *A new look at life on Earth* (1979) proposed that all life on Earth could be seen as a single living organism. These were all manifestations of a general increase in cultural awareness of the environment.

The growing popularity of the 'Green' movement during this period motivated a diverse

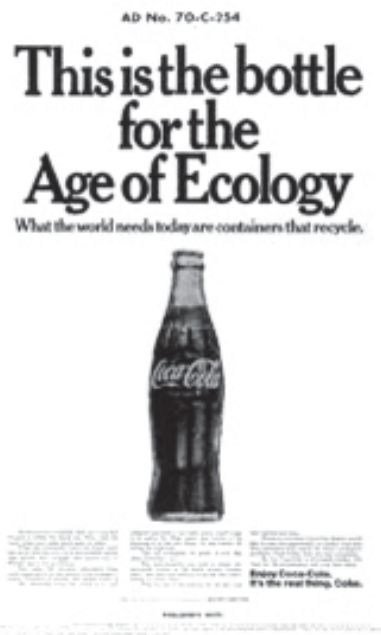


Figure 23: An example of 'greenwashing' advertising with a press advertisement for Coca Cola promoting its famous bottle as a part of the 'age of ecology'.

range of companies in the US to create a new 'Green' image promoted through advertising. However, and from a decidedly negative perspective, this new advertising 'eco' trend was eventually referred to with a degree of cynicism as 'greenwashing'. The term 'greenwashing' and the link between the environment and marketing strategy was brought to the public's attention through Jay Westervelt's (1986) essay focussing on the irony of money or time being spent advertising an organisation's perceived environmental conscience, rather than the actual improving or implementing of sound environmental practices within the company. "The meaning has been usurped, and it's not really about making the planet greener anymore," he said. Westerveld says that greenwashing has only gotten worse since he coined the phrase." (Westervelt in Motavalli:2011).

This trend was engaged by the placing of a 'Green' spin on the products and services of multinationals, and can be seen in Figure 23 in the promotion by Coca Cola of their famous bottle

as 'eco' friendly. When consumers felt they were a part of the 'Green' movement it gave advertisers an avenue to create a point of difference from their competitors, regardless of whether their claims were true. In 1972 a former Madison Ave advertising executive, Jerry Mander, christened this promotional tool 'ecopornography'. An article written by Mander entitled *Ecopornography: One Year and Nearly a Billion Dollars Later, Advertising Owns Ecology* addressed the comprehensive application of greenwashing to a plethora of companies, products, and services. The article documented "How the oil, chemical, automobile and other industries are co-opting environmental imagery and messages through expensive marketing campaigns" (Mander in Black, 2008:147).

Dupont announced a change in the design and structure of their tankers, which would hopefully prevent oil spills and engage imagery in television commercials showing applauding seals with uplifting classical music as the sound track. (Motavalli:2011). In 1985 another major US oil company, Chevron Corporation, launched its own 'greenwashing' advertising campaign known as Chevron's 'People Do':

The longest-running, most infamous greenwash campaign in history [Chevron's 'People Do']. Print and television ads, portraying Chevron and its employees saving endangered species and engaging in other eco-friendly acts (thegreenlifeonline.org, 2009).

Chevron's greenwashing strategy resulted in a 10% sales spike among the established customers of the company who had been exposed to the print and electronic advertising campaign. As Berger and Corbin found in their 1992 study of consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour "green consumers' behavior could be influenced by their consumer perceived effectiveness (i.e., attitude) towards the protection of the environment" (Berger & Corbin in Bui, 2005: 21). There was also a measurable

perception amongst customers that Chevron was “*the oil company consumers trust most to protect the environment*” (thegreenlifeonline.org, 2009). This ‘greenwashing’ strategy of Chevron’s distracted the general consumer population from its other activities such as “*the company’s oil drilling, links to hundreds of Superfund sites, and major financial support for “wise use” anti-environmental organizations.*” (Motavalli:2011).

A range of studies in the 1990s revealed that certain demographics were more open to purchasing environmentally responsible products, and were willing to be associated with corporations that were seen as environmentally responsible and empathetic (Arbutnot 1977; Schwartz and Miller 1991; Newell and Green 1997 in Bui, 2005: 24). These studies also found that the majority of consumers were concerned with the expense associated with environmentally responsible products and furthermore, there existed a cynicism towards the authenticity of the manufactures’ claims: “*So far, many studies have shown a considerable difference between intention and actual behavior*” (Laroche, Toffoli, and Muller 1996 in Bui, 2005: 25). This cynicism was confirmed through a study published in the Journal of Public Policy and Marketing (*American Marketing Association*) which found that 58% of environmental advertisements had at least one deceptive claim (Peattie & Crane, 2005: 357-370).

Greenwashing became a standard part of the marketer’s palette of persuasive tools. In 1998 the US Federal Trade Commission created the ‘Green Guidelines’, which defined terms used in environmental marketing and in 1999 the term greenwashing, first coined in 1986 by Westerveld, officially became part of the English language.

Notwithstanding the above discussion concerning cynicism of greenwashing, BP’s brief to create a ‘Green’ future for the corporation in the marketplace was believed to be genuine by many of the strategists associated with BP at the time. It was cited by Olins as a corporate rebranding that set a standard and style that was brave at the time and that others have copied (2004). “*BP CEO, Lord John Browne genuinely wanted the company to change*” (Lucas, 2007:4). It was a polarising issue amongst environmental and anti corporate groups such as CorpWatch, which grudgingly admitted “*that BP had become a world leader in solar energy production ... through the acquisition of Solarex*” (Solman, 2008:1).



Figure 24



Figure 25

3.5 The New BP VIM, the *Helios*: During 2000, BP’s marketing team, led by Lee Edwards, worked with Landor to develop a focussed range of VIM design options. Landor presented BP with two final designs concepts, which according to Reeser were “*arrived at quickly and explored in more detail*” (2010, pers.comm., 3 February). One was known as the Performance Formation (Fig. 24) and the other the *Helios* (Fig. 25). The two solutions each capitalised on different aspects of the four key attributes: Performance, Energy, Innovation and Green. Innovation and Performance were addressed in the Performance Formation VIM by using arrow-based forms, and ‘Green’ and Energy were addressed in the *Helios* with its symbol drawing a direct reference from the sun. The Performance Formation was a creative response by Landor and a departure from the core of the ‘Green’ brief as proposed by Brown.

BP's public name also needed to be changed because there was negative brand equity in the name 'British Petroleum'. A new name "beyond petroleum" was devised in 2000 by David Fowler, creative director at Ogilvy and Mather, to generate a more accessible sense of BP's new philosophy in the marketplace and a vision of BP's future as a global corporation.

Landor's creative response concerning VIM recognition was focussed on a primary symbol with the B and P letterforms playing a secondary, supporting role for both final designs. Landor made the conscious decision to move the focus away from the traditional letterforms of the uppercase B and P and towards the *Helios* symbol itself. As Reeser noted, when developing the VIM, "We felt, at Landor, there was an opportunity to have a symbol dominant program because of the immense scale of global exposure that the BP brand has" (2010, pers.comm., 3 February). When engaging lower-case letters, the message can be decoded by the viewer/user as informal and more egalitarian. As Reeser explains, "*the lowercase letterforms were less formal*" (2010, pers.comm., 3 February). The selection of Univers, a roman weight mono stroke sans serif typeface, set up a notion of an organisation, he said, that wanted to speak one-to-one with the viewer/user as opposed to having a patronising visual intent.



Figure 26



Figure 27



Figure 28

Beginning in the 21st century, a trend surfaced where the role of letterforms has become secondary to the primary symbol (shape) in a VIM. As discussed by Wheeler in relation to the brain's capacity to respond and retain shapes before written words:

Through repeated exposure, symbols become so recognisable that companies such as Nike, Apple and Target have actually dropped the logotype from their corporate signatures in national advertising. ID designers are in the business of managing and distinctive visual form. Understanding the sequence of visual perception and cognition provides valuable insight into what will work best (Wheeler, 2009: 52).

VIMs are increasingly relying on a primary symbol for their communication. Leading and ubiquitous corporations such as Nike (Fig. 26), McDonalds (Fig. 27), and Apple (Fig. 28) VIMs demonstrate the way letterforms are disappearing from the contemporary VIM's construction and language.

The de-emphasising of letterforms can also be understood in the context of corporate globalisation, where the use of Roman character letterforms appear in non-English literate cultures and therefore are not effective or relevant communication tools. Due to the ubiquitous application and exposure of VIMs, it has become unnecessary to have letterforms in a constant relationship to a primary symbol. A viewer/user sees the primary symbol of a VIM and they subconsciously decode the name. "*A good abstraction captures the essence of a company's qualities in the most simple, concentrated aesthetic form*" (Lippincott & Margulies, 2004:12).



Figure 29

3.6 The Performance Formation: The Performance Formation, Figure 29, is the first of the two design concepts presented by Landor to the BP marketing team. The main

creative driver had been defined by two of Browne's key attributes, Performance and Innovation. This design supported BP's culture of progressive thinking and innovation. The Performance Formation VIM consisted of the new pared down lowercase BP letterforms and a cluster of graphic arrow-inspired shapes. The design focussed on performance and speed. The use of an arrow symbol, which has been engaged by visual communicators since the early part of the 20th century in the marketplace, generated a sense of the streamlined and dynamic. It emphasised a forward movement.

The arrow symbol used in the Performance Formation VIM is an elemental nature-inspired archetypal visual device echoing the lightning bolt, which has a symbolic link to the sun's rays. Landor drew directly from literal links to performance and direction. Based on information supplied from focus-group research conducted by Landor, six out of ten consumers preferred Performance Formation to the *Helios* (Landor, 2009). They felt that the Performance Formation VIM strongly communicated the Innovation message. It was distinct and communicated direction, movement and efficiency. However, the Performance Formation VIM failed to address Browne's focus on 'Green', suggesting the need for considerable information, advertising, and promotional material to strengthen communication about BP and its 'Green' philosophy. Notwithstanding the results of this market research, as Reeser commented, that while the Performance Formation VIM had been favoured by the focus groups because *"it looked like a petroleum company, it was a design concept outcome that Browne wanted most specifically to avoid"* (Reeser 2010, pers.comm., 3 February).



Figure 30

3.7 The *Helios*: The *Helios* VIM, seen in Figure 30, was defined by Browne's key attributes of 'Green' and Energy. The visual messages conveyed by the *Helios* VIM were 'Green', solar, nature and innovation. As Reeser commented on Landor's design motivation:

Green' was seen as the most differentiated idea and allowed us to create a more powerful and meaningful symbol. Obviously, our first objective was to try to embody as many of the BP brand attributes as possible. We felt the biggest opportunity was to leverage imagery that suggested 'Green' and Energy (2010).

The *Helios* is a stylised vector graphic, easily interpreted as a yellow sun conveying the sense of a sunflower in the viewer's/user's mind. Similar to the arrow, the visual, graphic language engaged in the *Helios* is linked to the elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols, the circle and the Solar Cross. The *Helios* exhibits radiant energy that is generated by centripetal and centrifugal energies found within the solar cross. (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996:174)

In the same focus-group market research supplied by Landor, four out of ten consumers preferred the *Helios* to the Performance Formation (Landor, 2009). They felt that the *Helios* strongly communicated environmental messages, that it was distinct, and that the symbol itself allowed for a broad range of interpretations with such meanings as 'sun', 'flowers', 'energy' and 'growth'. The *Helios* failed to communicate

In brand equity

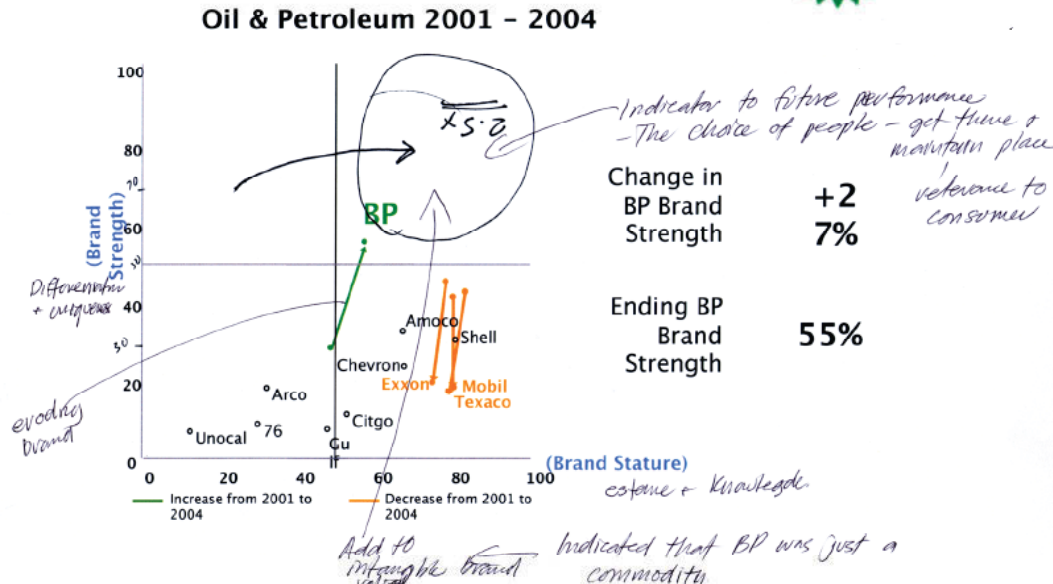


Figure 31: A brand equity chart indicating BP's Brand Strength and Brand Stature within the petroleum category between 2001 and 2004, Landor Associates

the other established attributes, with considerable advertising and information material being required to communicate BP commitment to Innovation and Performance. Browne made the final VIM selection. As Reeser reported, "Ultimately, Browne had the courage to stand behind his beliefs and select the *Helios*... In the end, he was true to his word. He really didn't want to look like the [rest of the petroleum] category" (2010, pers.comm., 3 February).

3.8 Statistics of the *Helios* success: In 2001, after the launch of the *Helios* VIM and the comprehensive rollout of its visual identity program, the downstream revenues generated at BP 'connect' retail stores, connected to BP petrol stations, increased by 23% worldwide (Roth, 2008:7). The impact of the rebranding and the embracing of the four key attributes within the corporation resulted significantly on the intangible asset value of BP. Figure 31 demonstrates the increase in BP's 'brand strength' in the oil and petroleum category grew in measurable equity; this equity is defined by the market's perception of differentiation and uniqueness, from appropriate 30% in 2001 to 50 – 60% in 2004 (Landor, 2009). This upward movement in brand equity added to the corporation's intangible brand value. During the same period BP experienced a moved in 'brand stature' from 48% to 55% by 2004. 'Brand stature' is defined as the esteem and knowledge of BP in the market place perception (Landor, 2009).

3.9 Conclusion: The fin de siècle saw petroleum companies move toward a modernisation of their VIMs for the new millennium. The 1999 merger between Amoco and BP (then, British Petroleum) had created a huge multinational corporation with an increasingly global outlook. Browne's vision for the new company towards a 'Greener' future was being laid out in BP's key attributes for coming decades.

“BP”



Figure 32

The design brief for the *Helios* had a simple undertone to promote BP as ‘Green’. What came out of Browne’s brief was a consolidation of BP brands, building on the equity the BP brand had developed throughout the 20th century. BP moved from being known as BP (British Petroleum) to bp (“beyond petroleum”) to align with its global outlook and ‘Greener’ future. This significant shift had to be handled with the utmost understanding of maintaining relevance to its established viewer/users while encouraging and engaging new viewer/users on a global scale.

A true brand represents a consistent set of associations and attributes that are recognisable to a relevant target audience of sufficient size and quality to sustain a viable, growing business. A global brand must do this on a marco scale, delivering a reliable core promise while remaining relevant to diverse audiences. (Roth, 2008:2)

Throughout the design process, strategic consideration for the new VIM was undertaken to rebrand BP as a corporation connected to nature. The final design concepts were rooted in elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols: a lighting bolt, the circle, the Solar Cross, the sunflower, and ultimately, the sun. When launched in 2000, the *Helios* VIM sat immediately and comfortably into the psyche of the marketplace. The *Helios* capitalised on a viewer’s/user’s recognition due to its resemblance to an elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol, the Solar Cross. The *Helios*, had and has its own value in terms of pre-established equity. This value was generated from a combination of the unique long-standing colour combination of green and yellow and the shape of the *Helios* (Fig. 32), which was based on the Solar Cross and its variations. Thus the *Helios*, from its inception, was invested with the notion of trust and reassurance for the viewer/user.

The discussion concerning significant aspects of the *Helios* design development and the visual strategy behind it foregrounds the vital chapter 4, *The Archetypal Helios*. This will address the notion of the numinous found within: firstly, the elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols, and secondly, the *Helios* and other contemporary VIMs that are informed visually by natural symbols such as the Solar Cross.

Chapter 4 : The Archetypal *Helios*

The focus of this chapter will be an examination of the elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol, the Solar Cross (Fig. 33), to establish a contextual relevance and relationship to the *Helios*. This investigation will assist in understanding the metaphysical or numinous quality, found within the *Helios* as well as other well-established VIMs cited later in this chapter. Partly based on Carl Jung's clarification of the metaphysical quality he referred to as numinosity, this chapter aims to assist in defining the intangible trigger that gives visual identity marks their persuasive effect within the global marketplace.



Figure 33



Figure 34



Figure 35

The evolution of BP from a petrol supplier to an energy corporation is reflected in the four key attributes that inspired a creative strategy resulting in the inventive *Helios*. The final two design concepts, the Performance Formation (Fig. 34) and the *Helios* (Fig. 35), presented to BP, were based on elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols. An archetype is defined as “a recurrent symbol or motif in literature, art, or mythology” (Random House Dictionary, 2012). The thesis seeks to demonstrate that the use of archetypal symbolism in the *Helios* has a fundamental influence over the viewer/user. Archetypal symbols transmit a numinous quality and ultimately a sense of the sacred and the institutional within a mutable world.

The *Helios* straddles the boundary between Carl Jung's definitions of symbols which are ‘natural’ and ‘cultural’ (Jung 1978:83). The ‘natural’ (archetypal) symbol is the response of the psyche reflecting the ‘internal truth’. The ‘cultural’ symbol is a representation of the ‘external truth’ and is actively created by and for use by an organisation or corporation:

Such cultural symbols nevertheless retain much of their original numinosity or ‘spell’. One is aware that they can evoke a deep emotional response in some individuals, and this psychic charge makes them function in much the same way as prejudices (Clark, 2008).

The *Helios* is informed by a ‘natural’ symbol, the Solar Cross, which represents the radiance of the sun and the cosmology of the heavens. The *Helios* became a ‘cultural’ symbol through its role as BP's VIM relating the corporation to environmental consciousness. In both respects the *Helios* conveys a deep spiritual quality tapping into a deeper symbolic language in the human species relating back to nature.

A further contention proposed in this chapter is that the longevity and purpose of ancient VIMs, such as the Solar Cross, evolved out of a ritualised need for group identity and were the vehicle to promote primary belief systems. As David Fontana suggests:

The deities and their associated symbols actually emerge from, and are given form within, our own psychological lives, but they address the unconscious at such profound level that they appear to come from some spiritual source outside ourselves. They are, according to Jung, embodiment of mankind's ‘natural religious function’, an aspect of the psyche that must be developed to ensure psychic health and stability (1993: 26).

The *Helios* VIM capitalised on the equity generated by elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols and therefore facilitated the immediate relationship viewers/users already had to the Solar Cross.

4.1 The Emergence of Symbols: Max Muller, the German philologist and one of the founders of studies in comparative religion, expressed the view that when human beings first encountered the 'Infinite' and named intangible objects such as the Sun, Moon and stars, or semi-tangible phenomena, such as mountains, rivers, seas and trees, a dialogue between individuals, elemental deities and other individuals in a group was established (Muller, 1863).

Bronze Age (3,000 -1,500 BCE) Aryan cultures inhabited the Anatolian region, the areas of modern Northern Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. It is in this region that the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires emerged and key ancient religions evolved. It is in these cults and religions that the repeated uses of a VIM were first found (Dallet,1998). Archaeological evidence suggests families and households in the Anatolian Region were primarily economically independent during the Neolithic period, (6,000-3,000 BCE), although excavations of Neolithic settlements in Central Europe between 4,800-4,600 BCE have revealed the building of monumental structures and sophisticated constructions such as causeway enclosures, burial mounds and stonehenges (bbc.co.uk, 2012). These enterprises required time and a considerable amount of organised labour to build, indicating societies became increasingly stable and geographically established. The attempt to organise and placate the mutable societies during this period contributed to a developing sense of institution, signalling the beginnings of a basic hierarchical social system larger and more complex than was previously required in earlier societies (Smedley,1998).

Originally, symbols were an individual's expression of an experience in the natural world (Dallett, 1998). With the development of social organisation in human groups, a formalised language of symbols emerged. The early roots of the practice of VIM application emerged through the repeated engagement of symbols on ancient monumental structures, as well as on every day and sacred objects. Archetypal symbols occurred in all cultures and at all times and as Jung wrote: "*They held significance as a spiritual and mystical import*" (1978: 88). Although uncomplicated in their visual construction, archetypal symbols contained a complexity of meaning representing 'other worldliness' for the viewer/user. Thus, VIM usage conveyed a sacred quality.

As societies grew more stable and trade and commerce evolved, examples of visual identity in the form of individual's VIMs began to be engaged. VIMs were used for the branding of livestock by nomadic herdsmen and settled cattle breeders alike, and on manufactured goods such as pottery. The ownership of livestock was established with the use of a simple VIM branded onto the animal and a manufacturer's VIM (seal) used on pottery established the identity of the maker and the quality and guarantee of the product. Societies with an economy depending on slave labour often used similar branding (VIM) devices. In *The History of Graphic Design*, design historian Phillip B.

Meggs addressed several aspects of this ancient tradition, noting in respect of “Mesopotamian visual identification” that “two natural by-products of the rise of village culture were the ownership of property and the specialization of trades or crafts. Both made visual identification necessary” (2005: 9).

In a similar vein, Sasson and Gaur note that “Iconic marks can also establish the value, or the authorship, of a particular product i.e. examples are the pottery marks from ancient Egypt: the marks of masons from the ancients...” (1997: 22-24)

Archetypal symbols had multiple functions within a society, including by bonding a group, as well as creating the symbolic visualisation of nature and elemental nature-inspired deities. Ancient societies had a great desire to identify a cosmology that clarified their place within the natural physical world and the abstract supernatural world inhabited by their gods. Consequently, a VIM and the sense of collective belonging it triggers is:

Filled with a sense of the presence of divinity (holy); appealing to the higher emotions or the aesthetic sense (spiritual) ... Therefore, after an object or mark has acquired, or been given an emotional or spiritual force, it has gained numinous qualities, sublimely perceived by the individual or group
(Fontana & Firim, 2003: 83).

When a group adopted a VIM it became a vehicle of identification. VIMs have the ability to communicate that there is a common bond between members of the group. VIMs allow groups to differentiate themselves from other groups. Building on the observations of Meggs (2005), historian Albertine Gaur (1997) deliberated on the ancient purpose of symbols as VIMs: “This branding or marking (tattooing) can also be voluntary whenever an individual wishes to demonstrate his or her complete identification with a particular group or mode of worship” (Sasson & Gaur, 1997: 22).

H.R.E. Davidson, an expert in Neolithic and Celtic Bronze Age societies in Northern Europe, asserts that the Solar Cross was one of the earliest known symbols. As one of a number of elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols, the Solar Cross was employed as a vehicle that facilitated the union between the individual, the societies in which they lived, and the elemental deities that were worshipped (Davidson, 1969). From its pre Bronze Age roots the meaning and use of the Solar Cross changed as societal groups became more organised. A genuine belief existed that there was an ability for humans to negotiate directly with elemental deities (Clark, 2008). Subsequently the dialogue between humans and omnipresent unseen forces had the power to affect and assist in alleviating the ongoing fearful concerns the future of the group. These concerns included invasion, famine, and defeat in war.

Eventually the Solar Cross was utilised with skillful and sophisticated management, by the hierarchy of chieftains and or shamans, to manipulate the societies in which the symbol was employed. The use of the symbol empowered a chieftain or shaman with a degree of authority due to its perceived connections with the sacred world. The



application of the Solar Cross was as much to do with political gain as the attainment of spiritual ideals. The following quote by A.H.Armstrong reinforces the ancient social strategy:



And even those who did not believe in this sort of divine visitation would inherit from the more skeptical side of the early thought of Greece and Rome, a conviction that proper religious observance, whatever that was thought to be, was central and essential to the maintenance of the whole fabric of culture and society (Armstrong, 1984).



Figure 36

The cosmos-inspired Solar Cross (the circle, and the cross) is, as Jung asserted, a result of the unconscious contents within the human psyche and its archetypal energies (1978: 83). Therefore a constant thread of sun worship and solar deities ran through most religions and cults of the ancient world. The worship of the Sun dominated the great civilizations of antiquity in the guise of gods and heroes: Atum and Osiris (Egypt), Baal and Mithras (Mesopotamia), Helios and Apollo (Greece) – “embodying the powers of creation and the sources of light and life represented by the Sun” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996:950). The term ‘My Sun’ was used as an address to the earthly version of the gods in the form of royalty throughout the ancient world. The Sun embodied the powers of creation and because it was the source of light for humanity, it was believed to be the source of life. The *Helios* has a direct relationship to the Solar Cross (Fig. 36) and its meaning. It is the intention of both the *Helios* and the Solar Cross to establish a connection to nature via the sun and its radiance.

4.2 Numinosity: In primitive societies a sense of separation from the cosmos simply did not exist (Dallett, 1998). All aspects of the natural world – animate and inanimate objects, spaces and places – were deemed sacred. The reactions and effects of the natural world upon the human psyche or behaviour were key to the work of Rudolf Otto, the German theologian, philosopher, and historian of religion, in his *The Idea of the Holy* (1917) which discussed the existence of a metaphysical quality he referred to as the ‘numinous’. Otto believed that we are related to the Transcendent, not just through morality, the beautiful and the sublime, but through a sense of “*the holy and the sacred*” (1917). As a result, this theory proposed that a layering of phenomena that was more visceral than rational occurred within inanimate marks, objects, spaces and places.

The noun ‘Numinous’, originally coined by Otto, has a different meaning from its root word. The 17th century derivation of the term is from the Latin word ‘Numen’ which is defined as:

a spiritual force or influence that is often identified with a natural place, phenomenon or object. The term may also be based on the Indo-European root neu-, from which the similar Greek term, neuma, arose. ‘Numen’ is further derived from the verbs ‘adnuere’ (agree with a nod of the head) and ‘abnuere’ (refuse with a nod of the head)’. The term, therefore, has encoded within its linguistic past, a duality of meaning (Eliade, 1987).

In concurrence with Otto, Jung believed the numinous was non-physical and celestial in nature, a fundamentally religious experience. Carl Jung's examination of the human psyche and the effects the natural world exerted on it was addressed in his theory of the 'archetype'. According to Jung, archetypal symbols are the embodiment of mankind's 'natural religious function', an aspect of the psyche that must be developed to ensure psychic health and stability (Fontana, 1993: 26). Jung saw archetypal symbolism as innate human imagery that existed in the psyche and wrote on the involvement of the numinous within archetypes. As Morriessy observed:

If you want to know what is numinous to you, consider what you find fascinating, compelling, thrilling mysterious, horrifying, gripping, tremendous, terrifying, dreadful, or awesome. Think about the things with which you are preoccupied in spite of yourself (2002).

Emile Durkheim saw archetypal symbols as the sum of the symbols and VIMs society is exposed to through repetition which contributed to building a sense of familiarity and trust in the viewer/user (2001). The way archetypal symbols were used repetitively equated to a sense of continuity, reflecting the natural elements, the very thing the archetypal symbols were representing. Durkheim also acknowledged through his writing the existence of the sacred and the profane within symbolism and VIMs: *"Thus...the sacred and the profane is parallel to the social dichotomy between the common life of the community and the private life of the individual"* (Durkheim in Cosman & Cladis, 2001: xxii).

Without a sense of the numinous, Jung claimed, the observer experiences no emotional connection to the observed. For him, numinosity (as exhibited in the Solar Cross) was an alteration of consciousness involving an experience of spiritual power. Numinosity takes on a mysterious esoteric quality. Hence the influence of the metaphysical quality of the numinous becomes apparent when its intangible effects are physically manifested through the viewer's/user's responses to elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols in the ancient world, and subsequently VIMs in the contemporary world. Numinosity is the metaphysical quality in a VIM that enables the VIM to exercise influence over the viewer/user. The employment of an elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols, such as the Solar Cross and the *Helios*, as the basis for a VIM design facilitates the VIM's immediate recognition and acceptance by the viewer/user. The numinous is the metaphysical quality that gives the *Helios* its sway.



Figure 37: The primordial dot found at the junction of the horizontal and vertical lines of the Solar Cross

4.3 The Solar Cross: The Solar Cross (Fig. 37) represents the four elements. As a world centre and a cosmic axis, with its four cardinal points it can be mapped to fourfold systems: the four directions – North, South, East, West; the four seasons; the four winds; the four elements (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 248-257).

The centre of the Solar Cross is seen as a coordinate. The primordial dot (Fig. 37) is found at the intersection of its horizontal and vertical lines and these directional lines are interpreted as representing the male and the female energies, the celestial and



Figure 38: The Wheel of the Year

the terrestrial, the centrifugal and the centripetal among many other sets of polarities (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 248-257). According to *The Dictionary of Symbols*: “The dot and the circle are the only geometric shapes without division and alike at all points” (Chetwynd, 1993: 195). There is a persistent reference to the circle representing the Godhead - god is a circle; the symbolic centre is everywhere and its circumference is nowhere.



Figure 39: Swastika

As a radiant symbol, the Solar Cross and its subsequent variations - ‘the wheel of the year’ and the ‘swastika’ (Fig. 38 - 39) possess a centre point where opposites meet. Therefore the connotation of the sacred and the profane, the group and the individual, the organisation and the viewer/user coexist simultaneously. The *Helios*, based on a Solar Cross, possesses these energies that coexist and energies resonate with the viewer/user. The employment of the Solar Cross in the Bayer and BMW VIMs (Fig. 40 - 41) is clearly evident. It is used as a kinetic visual device and allows a duality of the qualities of innovation and reliability to be communicated simultaneously.



Figure 40



Figure 41

The circle is found when the equilateral cross turns; therefore the cross lies within the circle shape (de Champeaux & Dom Sterckx in Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996:248). As the circle is perceived as a reflection of nature, so too is the Solar Cross. It has equally been associated with the sun and the forces of nature and is a result of humanity’s observation of the movement of the heavens, the daily journey of the Sun and the cycle of life. H.P. Blavatsky (1977) believed that it was the empty circle that encapsulated the ultimate essence of existence and in the chapter entitled *The Process of Individuation* found within Jung’s *Man and his Symbols*, Von Franz explains that “the circle (the sphere) as the symbol of the self – it’s the ultimate wholeness” (1978: 266).



Figure 42

Anthropologist Davidson referred to the significance of the symbol of the circle, which she referred to as the ‘wheel’ (Fig. 42): “The turning wheel, as I see it, became a kind of shorthand sign for all that the High God represented” (Davidson & Gelling, 1969). Jung (1978) himself wrote in relation to this visual theme that “The wheel may lead our thoughts towards the concept of the ‘divine’ sun, but at this point reason must submit it incompetence. Man is unable to define a ‘divine’ being...” (1978: 266).

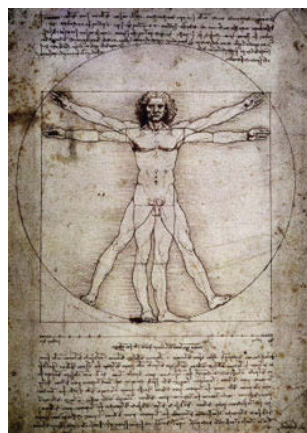


Figure 43

Paul Diel, writing on the theme of the circle [as the boundary of the cross], suggest that “the sun and its rays, which were once symbols of fecundation have become symbols of enlightenment” (1980:36-37). During the Renaissance a circle was considered the perfect shape as the perception that the image of humanity could be found within the symbol of the circle was reinforced through da Vinci’s *Vitruvian Man* (Fig. 43) that is based on human geometry. Chetwynd observed that “Because all symbols are a product of the psyche, very often the results in pattern symbolism may be profitably referred back direct to man” (1993: 320). He continues by suggesting that the meaning of harmony, protection and homogeneity are found within the circle, as the circle represents the idea that the “symbol [circle] equates a sense of unity”. Furthermore he credits the circle’s symbolism, noting



Figure 44.1



Figure 44.3



Figure 44.4



Figure 44.5



Figure 45



Figure 46



Figure 47



Figure 48:
The Labarum symbol
which was relevant
to both pagans and
Christians of 4 C.E.

that it is “the principle and force for harmony between the different parts of the psyche, of society and of the cosmos” (1993: 320).

Neolithic (6,000 – 3,000 BCE) in origin, the Solar Cross was one of the first non-pictorial images to appear at the start of the Bronze Age. In the Scandinavian and Northern Europe cultures, the Solar Cross was also known as Odin’s Cross or Odin’s Wheel. It represented the chief god of the Norse pantheon, who was the god of art, culture, warfare and the dead. It also appeared in the religious art of Asia, North America, Europe and India. There are several variants of this archetypal symbol. Each has its own name and has evolved in separate areas of Europe at different times. Other forms of the Solar Cross are:

1. With the arms of the cross asymmetrically extended beyond the perimeter of the circle. Christians, extended the lower arm in the manner of the Latin Cross, and adopted this variation. This version is became known as the Celtic Cross (Fig. 44.1).
2. With a solid disk.
3. With six or eight arms known as ‘A Wheel of the Year’ (Fig. 44.3).
4. With two or three concentric circles. It is known as a Cross of Atlantis. This possibly may not be a genuine Solar Cross variation (Fig. 44.4).
5. With the circle broken on one side of each arm. This form most resembles a Swastika and is sometimes called a ‘Sun Wheel Swastika’. Like an original swastika, this symbol can be either Sunwise, right facing or Widdershins, left facing (Fig. 44.5)

(de Champeaux & Dom Sterckx in Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996:956-957).

4.4 The energy within the Solar Cross: VIMs such as the *Helios*, which are based on the Solar Cross, capitalise on the radiant energy that is generated by the centripetal and centrifugal energies found within the symbol. Centrifugal energies move or tend to move away from a center. Conversely centripetal energies move or tend to move toward a center. The centre of these VIMs is where the energy of its message is most concentrated (Chetwyn, 1993:72). The nature-based symbolism and the use of the Solar Cross in the *Helios* can also be seen in VIMs for established and recognised organisations and corporations such as The San Francisco Opera (Fig. 45), Chrysler Corporation (Fig. 46) and Seed Media (Fig. 47).

The radiating energies of the Solar Cross can also be found in the ancient Labarum symbol (Fig. 48), employed by Roman Emperor Constantine in the 4th century CE as a VIM used during his reign (Lane Fox, 1988). Standardisation was one of the main concerns and aims of Constantine’s reign and the utilisation of a singular symbol (a VIM) galvanise and unify Constantine’s army which was composed of both of pagan and Christian troops. The Labarum possessed positive association for both sects within the Roman army (Lane Fox, 1988).

The Labarum symbol had been associated with the ancient pagan deities, Chronos and Mithras, therefore the pagan soldiers of Constantine’s army would have felt an immediate connection to the numinous qualities held within the symbol. So too the



Figure 49

Christian soldiers of the army would have been drawn to the numinous association of the Labarum, as the symbol was associated with the new deity known as Christ. The numinous qualities of the symbol would have evoked a sense of protection, loyalty and a definition of 'us' for both sects within Constantine's army.

The Labarum was used in numerous visual variations on coins struck throughout Constantine's reign and for the remainder of the 4th century CE (Lane Fox, 1988). *"The sign [the Labarum] became the imperial standard"*

(Eusebius of Caesarea 263 – 339 CE) and was guarded by the Praepositi Laberorum, a group of fifty soldiers of the imperial guard, distinguished for bravery and piety (Lane Fox, 1988). The appearance of the Labarum on coins (Fig. 49) led some scholars to the conclusion that the Labarum was intended as a Christian symbol exclusively, but Constantine was using both pagan and Christian symbolism to create a connection with the populous (Barnes, 1981).

4.5 The *Helios* Aspect: The expression 'to make one's mark' implies a statement of presence. In Resser's own words, when asked whether a conscious decision was made to have the BP's brand awareness driven primarily by a symbol, he explained *"We felt there was an opportunity to have a symbol dominant program because of the immense scale of global exposure"* (2010, pers.comm., 3 February). Furthermore when Resser (2010, pers.comm., 3 February) was asked whether the arrow device in the *Performance Formation* [and the circle and Solar Cross for the *Helios*] had a relationship to nature inspired archetypal symbols, the answer was: *"no"*.

The idea to engage the environment, for the company's branding was a powerfully strategic decision for BP. Enquires into the creative development and the significance of establishing a clear connection between the natural world and BP via a VIM, promoted a short response from Resser: *"Very significant as this was the most unique and ownable [sic] idea"* (2010, pers.comm., 3 February). While he claims that no investigation of any archetypal symbols and their relationship to nature was engaged in during the development of the *Helios*, he did comment that the design team did *"look at a variety of ways"* to represent the VIM design concept, including exploring the word 'helios' and for the *Helios* design concept engaging a circular motif as the basis for the visual design direction. Reeser (2010, pers.comm., 3 February) suggested that there was a strong association of the sunflower's reaction to the sun and its movement across the sky. The creative driver was the use of the radiant solar-based symbol as the key visual device.

4.6 The Sunflower: *"In Helios, the sunflower and the notion of heliotropism is engaged"* (Reeser 2010, pers.comm., 3 February). The definition of heliotropism explains that at sunrise the faces of most sunflowers are turned towards the east and over the course of the day they follow the sun from east to west, while at night they return to an eastward orientation. Heliotropism is a combination of two Greek words: Helio for sun and the tropo for turn (*Random House Dictionary*, 2012).

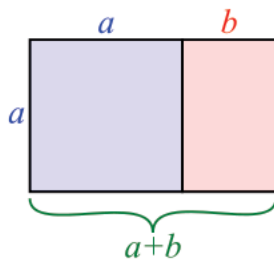


Figure 50: The Golden Ratio formula of 1:1.61803399

Zeising asserts that the sunflower is a primary example of Phi which is the ratio of 1:1.61803399 (Fig. 50) and is a definitive measure of perfect proportion in the natural world (Zeising in Padovan, 1999: 306). Referred to also as the Golden Ratio, the Golden Rectangle, and the Golden Section, this mathematical formula dates to the 5th century BCE with usage by Phidias who was the architect of the Acropolis, and is also associated with Leonardo Fibonacci who articulated the formula in a numerical series in his *Liber Abaci*. Zeising in 1854, after observing examples from nature, including skeletons, fossilised sea-life and the geometry of crystals, wrote of the proportions:

contained the ground-principle of all formative striving for beauty and completeness in the realms of both nature and art, and which permeates, as a paramount spiritual ideal, all structures, forms and proportions, whether cosmic or individual, organic or inorganic, acoustic or optical; which finds its fullest realization, however, in the human form (Zeising in Padovan, 1999:306).



Figure 51

4.7 The Arrow / Fulgur: The *Performance Formation VIM* (Fig. 51) was based on an arrow symbol. The arrow, derived from the visual representation of lightning bolts, is used as an alternative to the sunray. The arrow device ensured a solar inference, in Landor's alternative VIM, while focussing primarily on the 'Performance' attribute of the brief. An explanation of the significance and meaning for the arrow symbol found in *The Penguin Dictionary of Symbols* (1996) expands on this connection with nature, noting that:

It is also the beam of light which illuminates an enclosed space because an opening has been made for it. It can be a ray of sunlight, itself a fructifying element, with the power of bringing images into focus (Virel in Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 195).

Davidson (1965) wrote that the sense of vulnerability experienced by early societies would have been palpable. In the Celtic Bronze Age, lightning bolts bore the same significance as the Latin *fulgur* (a lightning flash), but it would seem that thunder itself, in the cosmic order, displayed in the wrath of the elements above all other natural aberrations. Davidson suggests that the Celts of this period had a rooted fear that the sky would fall upon their heads and the Irish called upon sky, earth and sea as chief witnesses of their oaths. Hence there was a belief in a direct human responsibility for the unleashing of thunder and thunderbolts, considered a method of punishment inflicted on the guilty by the all-powerful gods. *"It is not surprising then that thunder is visualised, in lands where storms are frequent, as the manifestation of divine power and symbolized accordingly in the ancient world"* (1965:8).

Davidson's passage directly goes to the validity of the creative direction by Landor, in employing the lightning-bolt-inspired *Performance Formation VIM* (Fig. 51), as the alternative VIM for BP. Durkheim and Muller also wrote of this projection of sacred and spiritual upon natural phenomena such as lightning, wind and the stars. As Durkheim observed, *"lightning eventually became a personified entity, a spiritual being"* (2001: xvii).



Figure 52

The use of the arrow as a symbol for VIMs has had continuous employment throughout the practice of visual identity. It was skillfully utilised by of the Bronze Age Persian Emperor Darius I as the central element of his VIM 'the Archer' (Fig. 52) which was imprinted onto his prototypical coinage. The coinage with his self-image as 'the Archer' enabled Darius I and his influence to reach even the furthest regions of his dominion:

The king himself is represented with a bow in his hand symbolising not just his usefulness on the battlefield, but his qualities of balance and control – qualities central to the ideal of kingship as framed by Darius. And as if to deploy this symbol as a political logo, Darius had the image of himself as an archer stamped on small pieces of metal. This was a stroke of genius. For the first time, ever, a leader was represented upon a coin. Small, portable, and distinctive, this medium for self-promotion reached parts of his empire as no other method could (Spivey, 2005:174-176).



Figure 53



Figure 54

Figures 53, 54 and 55 demonstrate a contemporary use of the arrow symbol employed in the VIMs. These VIMs generate a notion of movement and efficiency for established and recognised corporations Citroen Cars (Fig. 53), FedEx (Fig. 54) and Dunlop Sport (Fig. 55) whose brand image and promise is based on a sense of speed and performance. *"Broadly speaking, the arrow is the universal symbol of outrunning convention; mental anticipation of the acquisition of benefits presently out of reach"* (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996:45).



Figure 55

4.8 Rites and Rituals: Rites and rituals included the usage of elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols. Rituals marked and acknowledged the rites of passage and/or ruptures that occurred within the life of the group or individual. Ritual practices ranged from the physical actions of animal sacrifice, individuals retreating to seclusion, dancing, singing and music making.

Rituals marked the agricultural cycle and the movements of heavenly bodies in the night sky and consequently, this connection to the sacred and the 'other worldly', ultimately provided a basis for the politics of empire.



Figure 56:
Archetypal symbols
adorn initiates of a
passage of rites.
Image taken by
Victor Turner in
Zambia with
the Ndembu tribe.

[Arnold] Van Gennep relates the rites of passage, all the transitions that humans go through in their lives, to the tangible world around us. Specially to the natural world that surrounds us. In conclusion he links them to the celestial bodies and the great rhythm of the universe (Westerveld, 2010:10).

Embedded in rites and rituals were literal representations of nature in the form of wall paintings, figurines and masks, as well as elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols. Through the application of elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols, such as the Solar Cross and the circle, which were often used as VIMs, on to sacred objects involved in rites and rituals, the VIMs were perceived as symbols of liminality giving them a numinous quality. A photograph taken by Victor

Turner during his work (anthropology) in Zambia, Figure 56, demonstrates the pivotal use of elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols in rituals.

The concept of liminality was first developed by anthropologist Arnold van Gennep in the early 20th century and further developed by Victor Turner in the mid 20th century. The contemporary usage of the term liminal has broadened to describe political and cultural change as well as rituals (Thomassen, in Westvelder, 2010:51).

Aniela Jaffa wrote of liminality and the numinous quality of elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbols, that were connected to the early rites and rituals, implying that “*Anima Mundi* existed within these symbols” (Jaffa, 1978:261). *Anima Mundi* (World Soul) is the intrinsic connection between all living things on the planet. It relates to the

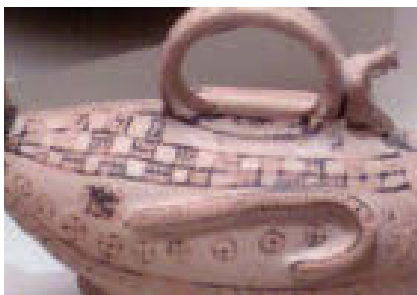


Figure 57:

world in much the same way as the human soul is connected to the human body: “that is the attribution of a living soul to plants, inanimate objects, and natural phenomena” (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1997). The idea originated with Plato and was an important component of most Neoplatonic systems:

Therefore, we may consequently state that: this world is indeed a living being endowed with a soul and intelligence ... a single visible living entity containing all other living entities, which by their nature are all related (Plato, *Timaeus*, 29/30; 4th century BCE).

Examples of sacred objects decorated with the elemental nature-inspired archetypal VIM, the Solar Cross, from the Bronze Age are seen in the Minoan Bronze age proto-geometric clay oil burner (Fig. 57) and the Bronze Age ceremonial bowl (Fig. 58).



Figure 58: shows the usage of the Solar Cross on a an everyday and ritual object respectively.

These realised objects, born out of a need to be connected to nature, possess a numinous quality that allows the sense of the divine to inhabit within the observed. As Jung wrote:

They are, at the same time, both images and emotions. One can speak of an archetype only when these two aspects are simultaneous. When there is merely the image, then there is simply a word-picture of little consequence. But by being charged with emotion [because of its connection to the natural world] the image gains numinosity (or psychic energy); it becomes dynamic, and consequences of some must flow from it... (1978: 87).

By contrast Durkheim has a rational view and believes the numinous to be a product of social requirements supported by specific ritual:

The view that people cannot adequately account for their beliefs and actions because most of the people, most of the time are unaware of the social webs that surround them. Hence even if a peoples' religious experience is not imaginary, its hidden source, Durkheim held, is none other that collective,

human forces of which believers are unaware (Durkheim in Cosman, Cladis, 2001: xxii).

The statement that: “...symbols are concerned with the interrelationship of mind and matter” (Chetwynd, 1993: 322) could explain why there exists a deeply ingrained unconscious connection between humanity and graphic style symbols. And consequently, why the use of these symbols are closely linked to assisting in the generation of a sense of identity for both the individual and the group, in context of the ancient and contemporary periods (Davidson, 1969).

4.9 Conclusion: The *Helios* integrated effectively into the global marketplace due to its strong visual resemblance to the Solar Cross, an elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol. Early archetypal symbols emerged as an individual’s visual expression of the natural world and evolved into VIMs employed by entire groups to define collective identity. Archetypal symbols emerged in burgeoning societies as a visual articulation of the elements and the astral bodies, resulting in a dialogue between the forces of nature (often realised as deities), the individual and the members of a group.

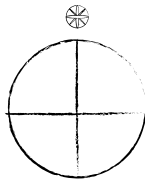


Figure 59

VIMs based on the Solar Cross have existed since before the Bronze Age, as seen in the Bronze Age Assyrian deity Ashur’s VIM (Fig. 59), and like contemporary VIMs triggered a sense of trust and belonging to an institution in the viewer/user. These VIMs conveyed a numinous quality driven from their origins inspired in nature. The repeated application and use of a VIM also referenced and reflected the reliable and repetitive cycles of nature.

The users of symbols were afforded a certain status within a group. The use of symbols by a chieftain or shaman became a way in which their authority could be established (Davidson, 1969). Nature symbols were employed by authority figures within societal groups to gain or maintain power for either financial or political profit as well as sustain group coherency for cultural survival. Symbol employment and VIM creation was a vehicle through which a direct connection was made between the group and nature deities.

Obviously, every mark has symbolic overtones as it evokes an instantaneous association with a specific company or product (or institution).

As we use the term here, however, a symbol is characterised by its ability to communicate through abstract configuration rather, than literal picture or letterform...Actually, a good abstraction captures the essence of a company’s qualities in the most simple, concentrated aesthetic form...
(Lippincott and Margulies, 2004: 12).

The equity found in sun symbolism conveys a sense of trust and reassurance and consequently provided a springboard for BP’s *Helios* to gain an acceptance in the global marketplace, and also an acceptance of BP’s new ‘Green’ philosophy. This chapter addressed the power of the ‘natural’ symbol, the following chapter, *Engaging*

the viewer/user, addresses the 'cultural' symbol and its relationship with the viewer/user. The VIM is validated when it is viewed by the viewer/user.

Chapter 5 : Engaging the viewer/ user.

The numinous *Helios* provided BP and its visual communication strategy, which included a brand identity program, a spring board for the viewer/user to comfortably embrace the notion that a petrol corporation could become an ‘eco warrior’. The *Helios* possessed an equity that the viewer/user could immediately recognise and relate to. Engaging the viewer/user of a VIM and building a sense of both individual and group loyalty is at the heart of a brand identity program. Landor Associates and Ogilvy and



Figure 60

Mather, in considering the broad range of viewers/users for the *Helios* and the new globally-oriented BP, developed what for them was considered the most appropriate visual and verbal language to engage the viewer/user. Therefore the brand identity program developed by Landor Associates and seen in Figure 60 and the “beyond petroleum” advertising campaign created by David Fowler at Ogilvy and Mather, capitalised on and reinforced the new ‘Green’ ideology of bp with an authentic declaration for change. “The strong

collaboration among Ogilvy and Mather, Landor and BP helped create communications that were direct extensions of the BP brand” (Roth, 2008: 18).

In the 1990s, prior to Browne’s unexpected redefinition of BP, Roy Croft argued that BP needed to develop a more effective visual communication strategy that would guarantee a strong presence in the marketplace. The strategy needed to address three considerations within the brand identity program, which were identified as:

- 1] *The media budget, which is defined as ‘share of voice’;*
- 2] *‘Brand awareness’, which is defined as the ‘share of mind’;*
- and 3] *The outcome of the application of the previous two aspects would be an increase of ‘share of market’*
(Croft, Kopp, & Dover, revised 09.12.2004).

BP’s visual communication strategy had to directly resonate with each sub-group that existed within the internal and external viewer/user groups of BP in order “to build awareness and extend customer loyalty” (Wheeler 2009: 6). The definition and recognition of groups creates a means by which a contemporary visual communication strategy of a major rebranding can reassure existing markets while establishing new markets (cf. Lippincott & Margulies, 2004, Olins, 2004, Wheeler, 2009). Many of the aspects concerning group identity discussed in this chapter are directly relevant to the *Helios* brand identity program.

Jung and Durkheim agreed, that when a group adopted a symbol/emblem, the symbol acquired ‘spell binding powers’ and possessed an ability to trigger a sense of identity within group members. “without the totem the clan could not exist, because the totem provides members of the clan with their name, that is, their identity and hence unity” (Durkheim in Cosman & Cladis, 2001: xviii). Similarly to the cohesive quality of Jung’s

allegorist symbol or Durkheim's totem, a contemporary VIM often serves the purpose of galvanising and reinforcing group coherence.

5.1 Group Identity _ an explanation: A true group exhibits some degree of social cohesion and is more than a simple collection or aggregate of individuals, such as a group of people waiting in a queue (DeBoard, 1990). Characteristics shared by members of a group may include interests, values, ethnic or social background and kinship ties. DeBoard (1990) thus proposes that a group is recognised as such when a member defines him/herself as a member; when she/he is defined by others within the group as being a member; that the group has a model to conform to, with an object to achieve; and that there is a collective perception of the group's identity. Key facets of a group's particular sense of identity are therefore "*purpose, belonging and fundamental survival*" (DeBoard, 1990:14).

By contrast Cartwright and Zander suggest that other aspects besides purpose, belonging and survival are necessary to group identity. Group members identify with one another as a result of having set up the same model-object or ideal in a common moral and behavioural code, thus having a collective perception of their identity. If these activities do not occur within the basic function of the group, Cartwright and Zander claim that the group will cease to exist (Cartwright and Zander in Turniansky and Hare, 1998: 87-88). According to Hare (1998), the key defining characteristic of a group is thus social interaction and social change.

Theories about the dynamics of groups first emerged in the mid 19th century in the works of Tarde (1890 & 1898), le Bon (1897), and Durkheim (1893 & 1895), and in the early 20th century by Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. Observations relating to groups have circulated since ancient times but it was not until the mid 20th century, with the emergence of theories concerning 'group dynamics', that what motivates 'group identity' was consciously identified.

Psychologist Kurt Lewin, one of the modern pioneers of social, organisational and applied psychology, coined the term 'group dynamics' in 1947 *Frontier in Group Dynamics* to describe the way groups and individuals act and react to changing circumstances. The concept of group dynamics is the fundamental understanding of the skills and division of labour of the members of a group used effectively to achieve an end goal. Therefore, a group is more than a simple or random group of individuals gathered in one place for any number of disparate reasons.

'Collective unconscious' is a term of analytical psychology, coined by Jung in his *The Psychology of the Unconscious* (1912). Jung's definition of the collective unconscious is that which collects and organises the personal experiences of an individual in a similar way with each member of a group. He defines the personal unconscious as that which is a reservoir of experiences, unique to each individual (1912). Conversely, Durkheim's theory of 'collective conscience' (1893) "*refers to the shared beliefs and moral attitudes that operate as a unifying force within society*" (Jary & Jary, 2005: 93). His theory describes a group as a collection of individual members whose personal identity

merges with the other members. The theoretical underpinning of group dynamics and brand loyalty is reinforced through the work of contemporary author and social commentator, Naomi Klein in *No Logo* (2000). Her political analyses and critique of corporate globalisation, observations of branding and its effect and contribution to the contemporary individual's identity, is summed up in her claim that the 'brand', 'branding' and 'brand equity' have become increasingly important components of culture and the economy, now being described as "*cultural accessories and personal philosophies*" (Klein, 2000: 9).

Concerning brand identity, Olins confirms the pivotal role branding plays in respect of a viewer/user: brands, he suggests, "*represent clarity, reassurance, consistency, status and membership everything that enables human beings to help define themselves. Brand represent identity*" (2003: 27). It is feasible that qualities described by Olins in relation to a viewer's/user's use of a brand could be seen in the needs or desires of a group member looking for consistency, status and reassurance in an uncertain world.

5.2 Development of the BP brand promise and brand image: The brand image and brand promise of an organisation is encoded within the brand identity program. The program aims to announce, inform and motivate the viewer/user about a new organisation or the rebranding of an established organisation. When embarking upon the exacting task of replacing an established corporation's VIM, its brand identity and its resulting long-standing brand equity within the market place, aspects such as brand image, brand promise (a statement of relevant differentiation) and brand beliefs, must be addressed within its aesthetic encoding (Olins, 2004: 172).

The brand beliefs of BP were represented in four key attributes, three of which had existed as a part of BP's personality since 1987 with the development of a brand image program by BP's American advertising agency, W.B. Doner (Kopp & Dover, 2004). These beliefs were defined by Landor during the formulation of the *Helios* brand image program as:

1. Progressive - broadening the way we do business; 2. Innovative - delivering break through solutions; 3. Performance - setting world class standards; [and the new attribute of Browne's], 4. 'Green' - sustainability and market leadership (Roth, 2002:5).



Figure 61: The Shield VIM and the Helios VIM encoded visually with different messages about BP and its sense of identity

Figure 61 showing the Shield and the *Helios*, clearly demonstrates the differences in BP's past and future brand image. The two VIMs communicate the contrast between the past brand image and brand promise and the future brand image and brand promise, not only from an aesthetic point of view but also from the perception of the *Helios* driven by the strategic key attributes of 'Green', Performance, Progressive and Innovation. BP's brand promise evolved from the stable reliance on empire to "*A new approach from a new company. We will be a magnet for people who want to change the world. With new ideas, delivering a performance standard that challenges the world's best companies*" (Roth, 2008:3).

The *Helios* was the most public visual manifestation of Browne's vision and thus drove the brand image. It was required to embody the 'core idea' appropriate to the organisation's personality (Landor, 2002 & Lippincott & Margulies, 2004: 11). "At the core of BP's brand promise," Landor thus noted, "was a commitment to human progress". The brand promise is the emotional connection a viewer/user has to a VIM. David Haigh, CEO of Brand Finance is quoted as saying in relation to the definition of brand and branding that "Brands use distinctive imagery, languages, and associations to encourage customers to identify with the brand" (Wheeler 2009: 2). The brand image and brand promise, embodied by the *Helios* VIM and the "beyond petroleum" slogan, thus became "a mantra that championed both a vision and a promise for its future" (Roth, 2008: 4).

The brand identity program needed to make the new brand image and brand promise accessible to both the internal and external viewer/user groups. An effective brand identity program aims to 'cut through' the crowded visual communication landscape and resonate with viewers/users. Therefore it is essential firstly to define who are and who will become the organisation's viewer/user. Internal viewers/users include employees, the executive board, shareholders and suppliers. External viewers/users are day-to-day customers, the general public, potential customers, potential investors, government bodies, the media, opinion formers, regulatory bodies and competitors (cf. Wheeler, 2009 & Olins, 1989, 2004).

The change to BP's VIM, had the potential to be an assault on established viewer/user loyalty. The meaningfulness of a VIM and its ability to trigger an emotional response from the viewer/user becomes apparent in vocal responses from the public after BP changed from the Shield to the *Helios*:

BP? Now what does that stand for these day? A little while ago I would have said that it stood for quality, value, substance and BRITISH! It suggests a company which encompasses all that is good and great about our country, a conservative and bold forthright company with perhaps one of the most recognised corporate logos in the world. So what does such an empire of the British Business world go and do? Remove everything that it stands for by removing the logo! Have you gone mad? Yes become more green and friendly, etc, etc, but replace the logo? Do I see Shell doing this? Er, no. And at least BP's logo was green in the first place -- does that not suggest that it's a green company? I think it does! ...What's wrong with what you had and being true to your business and history! BP = BRITISH PETROLEUM not Boring People!
 Danny Sherwood, Economics Student, University of Birmingham
 (www.brandchannel.com October 5, 2002)

5.3 The Formula of the *Helios* Brand Identity Program and "beyond petroleum': Landor Associates developed a valuable analytical tool that they refer to as a Brand Driver platform (Fig. 62). It was used to assist in formulating and realising an effective brand identity program for BP and the *Helios* (Roth, 2008). The Brand Driver Platform defines a specific brand's positioning in the market place. It addresses the organisation's

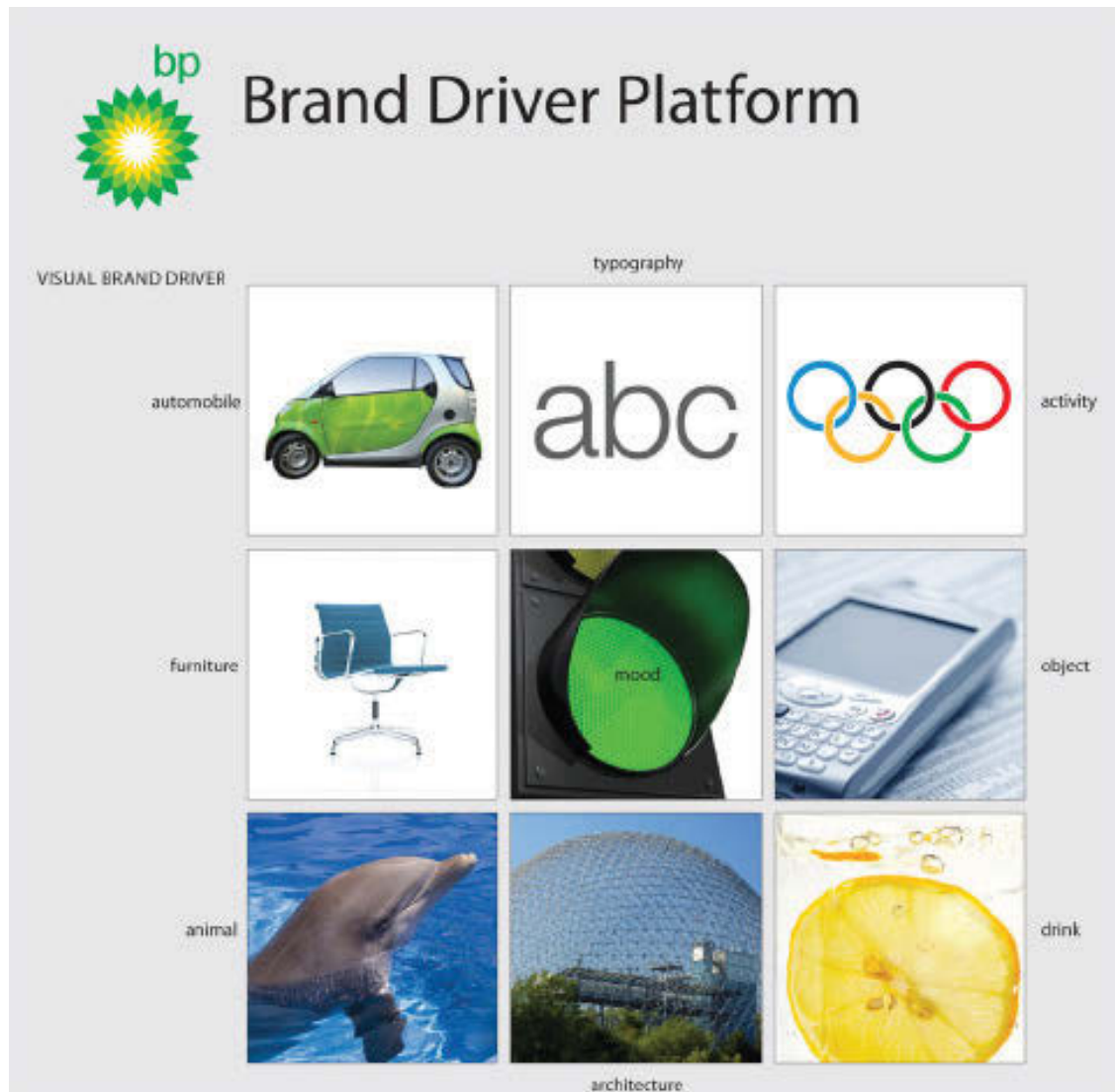


Figure 62: Landor's Brand Driver Platform

present brand identity and its future brand image. It consists of a core idea, articulated by a verbal brand driver ("beyond petroleum") and a brand promise; a personality expressed by the brand beliefs – Performance, Innovative, Progressive and 'Green'; and a visual brand driver, which is a metaphorical set of images, developed by the client, and the creative team of Landor, to create a visual bridge between the brand core idea and the brand identity. (Roth, 2008:5).

The overall process of defining the Brand Driver Platform is divided into four aspects that are integral to the final creative and strategic outcomes. The first aspect is Brand Promise referred to as a Statement of Relevant Differentiation. It involves an analysis of brand definition focusing on the written and verbal language that will assist in defining what are the 'reasons to believe' in the corporation and its declared philosophy. The Statement of Relevant Differentiation also defines the value this declaration brings to the corporation's viewer/user. The brand promise of BP, developed by Landor, was consistent and cohesive and aimed to respond to what the market needed. Lord Brown

delivered a series of inspiring speeches that acknowledged the concerns of the BP consumer and consumers of energy in general. As a part of the overall rollout of BP's core idea , the speeches promoted BP's new philosophy from 1997 through to 2000, generating interest within the media and opinion formers:

Giving up the illusion that you can predict the future is a liberating moment. All you can do is give yourself the capacity to respond to the only certainty in life - which is uncertainty. The creation of that capacity is the purpose of strategy. Our strategy starts from the view of the world in which we are participants (Browne, 2000).

The defining of 'reasons to believe' has been a long-standing practice of organisations and corporations when discussing the strong connections VIMs generate in relation to

brand image. This indicates that contemporary branding and its reliance on group identity goes to building a corporate ideology. Klein points out that branding is not the sole preserve of modern, capitalist nations, dedicated to the profit motive (2000). Modern China and Russia, while rapidly adopting a more capitalist approach, are still committed to the promotion of their ideology through numerous forms of branding. Both countries during the early stages of their developing ideology, branded everyday products from soap and cigarettes to candles with the important nationalist VIM. Each application of the 'Hammer and Sickle' symbol (Fig. 63) was intended to spread and reinforce the messages of comradeship, achievement and effort. The application of branding in relation to a nation's doctrines is the tool of the propagandist.



Figure 63; The USSR VIM, the Hammer and Sickle utilised in posters promoting the Russian space achievements

The second aspect contributing to the overall process of defining Landor's Brand Driver Platform is referred to as the Visual Brand Driver (Fig. 62). It is concerned with the visual language engaged within a visual identity program. This aspect develops a collection of images that represents nine categories that assist in building a comprehensive picture of the brand's personality. The categories are furniture, automobile, typography, activity, mood, object, drink, architecture and animal. When defining the brand and its core idea, a comparable simile from each category to the brand is selected. In this way the visual sense of brand identity is formed. This assists in defining and refining the brand's positioning to multiple groups of viewers/users. Some of the similes Landor choose for the *Helios* visual brand driver were: animal = dolphin; automobile = Smart car; and activity = the Olympics (Roth, 2008:5).

The third aspect of this process is referred to as the Verbal Brand Driver. This definition is in the form of a succinct, verbal summation of the corporation's philosophy and aims developed by a team of designers and marketing strategists. As Roth notes, "The verbal articulation serves as the bases for inspiring visual imagery and design" (2008: 13). In finding the correct verbal summation of a brand, an appropriate visual and verbal language can be refined. The Verbal Brand Driver will enable a brand to cut through the surrounding communication of competitors and connect in an authentic manner with the viewer/user, and in this case both established and potential viewer/

users of BP. The language Landor engaged to define BP, and the *Helios* was Transparency, Flexible, and Inclusive (Landor, 2009). A visual demonstration of this aspect in action is seen in the shift from the use of capital letterforms for the iconic BP to the use of the lower case letterforms of b and p and the associated implications of a less imperialistic and more accessible corporation.

The fourth and final aspect of this process is referred to as Brand Belief. This aspect defines the essence of the corporation and how the brand identity program of the corporation would subsequently rollout into the market place and to its viewers/users. The definition of the Brand Belief will remain unmodified for an extended duration (Roth 2008). For the BP brief Landor assembled the four key attributes that drove the program: 'Green', Performance, Innovation, and Progressive. The brand promise of BP, developed by Landor, was thus consistent and cohesive.

The last area of application of the brand promise via the brand identity program was the advertising campaign "beyond petroleum" developed by David Fowler, Creative Director of the BP account at Ogilvy & Mather in 2000. An understanding of the viewer/user is implicated in the Brand Belief aspect such that the beliefs "*should resonate with employees and guide interactions with customers*" (Roth 2008:4). The usage of the brand promise and brand belief is critical in suggesting a unified, singular social experience, for both the internal and external viewer/user; what Cerulo describes as "*a single canvas against which social actors constructed a sense of self*" (1997:395). The BP viewer/user had to be intrigued and engaged by the new 'Green' philosophy of BP and "beyond petroleum". The brand promise of "beyond petroleum" and the connection to nature via the *Helios* was designed to resonate in the viewers'/users' daily lives. As Browne was quoted in the *Chicago Business Journal* (3.04.2000) in relation to his commitment to the brand promise: "*It is about the identity of the company and the values that underpin everything that you do and every relationship that you have*" (Browne, 2000).

A demonstration of how brand belief is projected effectively and persuasively in the marketplace can be seen through Nike Sports Wear. In the 21st century to be seen wearing the VIM of Nike increases or establishes a sense of credibility directly linked to the company. The brand belief of Nike allows an individual to feel as if they belong to a group, sharing desirable attributes while wearing a piece of Nike apparel with its ubiquitous swoosh. Olins confirms this observation, noting that "*A young athlete in the US wears Nike running shoes, both because he thinks they will help him perform better and because they are a fashion statement. Their purpose is both functional and symbolic*" (2007:17).

5.4 The Communication Strategy of the *Helios*: The implementation (rollout) of the brand identity program for BP drew heavily from the propaganda techniques 'Association', 'Ad Nauseam' and 'Slogan'. Edward Bernays, who cofounded the Institute of Propaganda Analysis in 1937, first defined these propaganda techniques in the 1928 publication *Propaganda*. The 'Association' strategy projects the positive or negative qualities (praise or blame) of a person, entity, object or value (an individual,

group, organization, nation, patriotism) to another to make the second more acceptable or to discredit it. It attempts to evoke an emotional response in the target audience and therefore create identification with the recognised organisation or corporation. Often highly visual in its communication strategy, employing ‘cultural symbols’ (VIMs) which are superimposed or placed in close proximity to appropriate visual imagery or collateral (Bernays, 1928). Consequently VIMs become associated with the brand promise of the organisation or corporation. Thus the imagery engaged by BP and branded with the *Helios* VIM, evoked the brand promise of an alternative approach in the petroleum category by diversifying into sustainable energy. ‘Ad Nauseam’ is a technique which engages an idea, especially a simple slogan, “beyond petroleum” or a strong visual in the form of a ‘cultural symbol’, the *Helios*, repeated enough times, so it can be taken as the truth (Bernays, 1928).

The combination of ‘Association’, ‘Ad Nauseam’ and ‘Slogan’ techniques were the base for the communication strategy of the BP brand identity program rollout. The rollout utilised a multi-sensorial approach, with a wide range of communication ‘touch points’ that aimed to generate information, excitement and enthusiasm for the *Helios* VIM and the core idea of “beyond petroleum”. Wheeler defines a ‘touch point’ as the occasion when a viewer/user is exposed to an organisation’s brand image and brand promise. It can be in the form of either a visual or an audio message (Wheeler, 2009). Touch points are either ‘experiential’ or ‘sensory’ in nature (Lippincott & Margules, 2004:60) and ‘experiential’ impressions can be the result of ‘sensory’ touch points.



Figure 64:
Information brochure
printed on a substrate
impregnated with
seeds.

BP’s brand identity program was a collection of ‘sensory’ touch points which included: all aspects of print communication; press advertisements (for the external viewer/user), brochures (Fig 64) and newsletters (for the internal viewer/user), stationary systems, and posters (both billboards and bus shelters); electronic media: television commercials, cinema commercials, websites, and social media; information graphics, branded environmental design (Fig. 64 - 65), packaging, livery of vehicles and uniforms (Fig 66 - 67). All aspects of the brand identity program and the advertising campaign were effectively encoded with the brand promise and brand image. “Corporate strategy affects corporate structure and corporate culture, and inevitably corporate identity” (Olins, 1994:145).

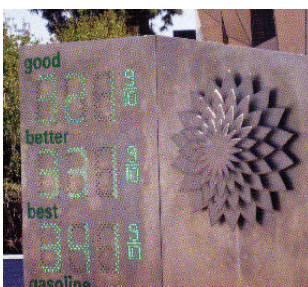


Figure 65: Concept
petrol station called
Helios House in
LA complete with
recycled materials.

A viewer’s/user’s reaction to a VIM is influenced by all the brand’s communications. In turn, a viewer’s/user’s reaction to the brand’s communications is influenced by its VIM (Lippincott & Margulies, 2004: 33). Olins claims that the VIM of a corporation, such as the *Helios*, is a pivotal touch point of the brand identity program and consequently when viewed has the capacity to trigger the same emotive response for the viewer as a national flag or a religious symbol : “They encapsulate and make vivid a collective sense of belonging and purpose” (1994:145).



Figure 66: Signage and environmental graphics utilising the *Helios* in petrol stations



Figure 67: Tankers with the *Helios*



Figure 68: BP customer personnel dressed in uniforms that reinforce the brand promise utilising the *Helios* VIM and effectively

The delivery of BP's new 'Green' philosophy and brand identity program began with a 'brand loyalty rollout' to the internal viewer/user. BP's strategy to launch the brand identity program to the internal viewer/user prior to the external viewer / user was to ensure that the brand promise "beyond petroleum", and the brand beliefs, would be delivered authentically into the marketplace via the important 'touch point', the employee/customer personnel. Commenting on this strategy, Stanford suggested that "*Corporations usually don't understand the importance of brand loyalty rollout*" (2010).

5.5 The Viewer/user: With the invention of the *Helios*, its brand identity program, and the advertising campaign promoting "beyond petroleum", the BP marketing division created a position within the organisation referred to as a Brand Champion. It was the role of the Brand Champion to generate ownership of the new identity, the brand promise and the brand beliefs. More than 1400 Brand Champions were trained in 19 countries over the initial two months following the launch in July 2000 (Landor, 2010:30). The Brand Champions implemented the brand loyalty rollout through presentations to demonstrate how the brand promise and brand belief, "beyond petroleum", would be engaged within all aspects of the brand identity program for the internal viewer/user.

As Roth explained, "*This strategy ensured that BP's new philosophy was embraced by the employees*" (2008: 6). The brand loyalty rollout for BP internal viewers/users was supported with a specifically created movie called *Future Box* (10 minutes) which was screened during the brand loyalty rollout road show which was held in BP 'Brand spaces' (Landor, 2009).

The 'Brand spaces' were mobile vehicles, designed to display all aspects of the brand identity program. These included the new petrol station, now called 'connect', and the comprehensive environmental graphics; the branding on BP retail products; and livery, which included transportation vehicles seen in Figure 67 and uniforms in Figure 68.

The Brand Champion program was designed so that the internal viewers/users were galvanised into a group that would live the BP brand promise and adopt the BP brand beliefs. There was a conscious strategy to inform and mold the customer personnel of BP so as to become 'experiential' touch points generating 'experiential' impressions for the external viewer/users. 'Experiential' impressions are formed from personal experience with an organisation and are the most powerful and long-lasting. The experiences can be first hand via the interaction a viewer/user has with 'customer personnel' of the organisation or company and/or a product or service of the organisation or company. 'Experiential' impressions are also formed by second or third-

hand experiences of another person in the form of 'word of mouth' communication and are as equally as powerful in effecting a viewer/user's attitude towards an organisation or company (Lippincott & Margulies, 2004: 60).

BP emphasised individual accountability through "performance" contracts signed by each employee outlining to supervisors what will be accomplished during any given year. *"Performance contracts then cascade up the management chain...generally to inject responsibility and measurable deliverable benefiting the corporation and a whole"* (Healy and Griffin 2004:7).

The internal viewer/user, at all levels within the corporation, could access a two hundred page reputation manual which outlined a series of *"value-adding tools and stakeholder leveraging tactics"*: one-on-one meetings, speeches, media briefings and releases, scholarships, community meetings, exhibition booths, publications, websites, and sponsorships (Healy & Griffin, 2004: 7).

The overall brand loyalty rollout guaranteed that employees, suppliers and shareholders, wherever they lived and worked, whatever their social, cultural or religious background, could identify with the whole enterprise. As Olins explains, the strategy *"addresses the diversity of ethnic, religious and cultural background"* (1994:9). Prior to the 2000 rebranding program and introduction of the *Helios*, BP did not measure employee engagement with the existing Shield (Landor, 2009). After the implementation of the *Helios* brand identity program, however, the increase in the internal viewer's/user's awareness and appreciation of BP's new 'Green' philosophy allowed, effectively and persuasively, one-on-one communication to occur with BP's external viewer/user, the customer. The brand promise and brand belief would be applied to the internal viewer's/user's daily jobs, wherever that might be around the world and when they served the corporation and its customers. As Healy and Griffin explain:

BP wanted to help mold a one-culture company - get employees thinking less in terms of the heritage (BP was recently formed from a combination of British Petroleum, ARCO, Amoco, Castrol) and more in terms of the new company (2004: 5).

The brand loyalty rollout was considered to have been highly effective within Landor Associates (Staniford, 2009). By April 2001, BP measured the effectiveness of the brand promise and brand engagement within its internal viewers/users, and found that 97% of all BP internal viewers/users were aware of the new identity and its brand beliefs (Landor, 2009).

Consequently, after BP's brand loyalty rollout and a follow-up brand engagement program conducted by Landor Associates (from November 2001 through to June 2002), there was an increase of 41% in the internal viewer's/user's understanding of how to apply the brand promise and brand beliefs to their job responsibilities which is seen in Figure 69 (Landor, 2009). The new internal viewer's/user's behaviour resulted in an improved financial performance for BP in 'downstreaming' revenues. There was also

In employee measures BP brand metrics immediately post-launch

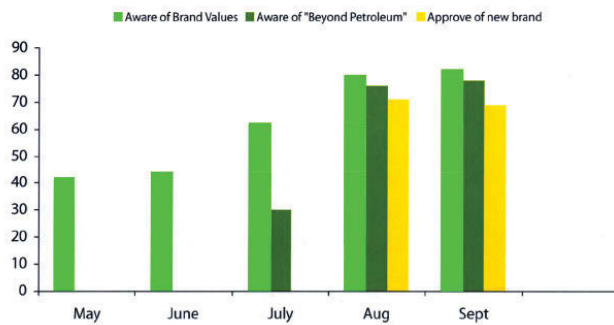


Figure 69

explains, "By 2005, BP reported serving over 13 million customers per day. Profits were exceptional – at \$91.3 billion in 2005 – and have enabled BP to fund new initiatives to drive its business" (2008: 7).

Addressing the external viewers/users, the brand promise combined with the brand belief of "beyond petroleum" and the *Helios* brand identity program would place a focus on the forward thinking, unique and distinctive aspects of the corporation. In addition to the communication collateral of 'sensory touch points' to the external viewer/user, the communication strategy integrated the core idea of 'Green' through the innovative advertising campaign of Ogilvy and Mather, the personal appearances of Lord Browne (Watkins et al. 2001 in Healy & Griffin, 2004: 5).

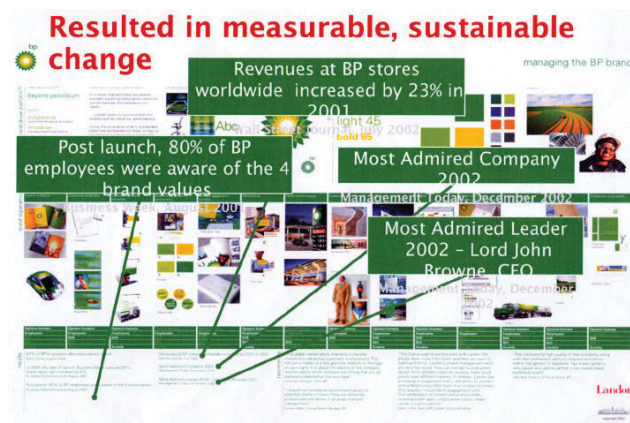


Figure 70

improved brands in terms of brand equity (31.10.2005). Within the first two years of the *Helios* brand identity program rollout, awareness amongst opinion formers increased by 15 - 20% (Fig. 70), with significant changes in those who thought that BP produced cleaner fuels, was an environmental leader, was reinventing the energy business, was a good company to invest in and a growing company with high value (Reputation Survey Data 2002, in Healy & Griffin, 2004: 9)

BP's brand assets, including its intangible assets such as the *Helios* brand and "beyond petroleum", were found to have increased by more than \$7 billion between 2001 and

a correlated drop during the same period in request for guidance on applying brand to the job, from November 2001 through to June 2002 by 13% (Landor, 2009).

There was a discernible slow down in staff turnover that could be attributed to brand engagement with the internal viewers/users. The post launch period of the *Helios* saw an overall rapid and impressive brand engagement by approximately 80% of internal viewers/users worldwide which at the time was approximately 150,000 by 2002 (Landor 2009). As Roth further

After the launch of the *Helios* VIM and the comprehensive brand identity program, the downstream revenues generated at BP 'connect' retail stores, which are a part of BP petrol stations, increased by 23% world wide in 2001 (*The Wall Street Journal*, July 2002). The impact of the rebranding and the embracing of the four key attributes within the corporation resulted significantly on the intangible asset value of BP. *Fortune Magazine* consistently ranked BP a 'Most Admired Company' and one of the ten most



Figure 71: Indicates the above category performance of BP

2005 by utilising Stern Stewart's Economic Value Added (EVA) analysis (*Fortune Magazine*, 2005) (Fig. 71). EVA analysis measures a company's financial performance based on the residual wealth calculated by deducting cost of capital from its operating profit (adjusted for taxes on a cash basis) (Tebogo, 2011).

5.VI Conclusion: BP's new global outlook aimed to reach potential customers well in excess of the 11 million existing customers they had in 2000. "Driven largely by its traditional physical asset base to using knowledge and innovation to create future value [in] beyond petroleum" (Roth, 2008: 4). The brand image was to communicate the collective consciousness of the 'Green' philosophy that existed at the end of the millennium. As Davidson (1968) suggests, nature triggers a degree of fear within the human psyche. A fear that has exerted an influence on the relationship between human groups and the elements of nature since ancient times when groups feared the capriciousness of the elements. Ironically it was a reversed fear of what humanity was doing to nature that triggered the 'Green' movement.

Separating from the retail campaign for its products such as petrol stations, BP's corporate campaign tactility positions it as the energy company that's more honest with consumers than other oil companies and one that tries to reconcile their need for fuel with their fear of polluting (Solman, 2008:1).

For a visual communication strategy and brand identity program to be effective, group identity and its dynamics and motivators must be understood, as Roth suggests it "shapes a brand through communications and the interaction with customers" (2008: 20). The drivers of group membership are linked to motivators such as purpose, belonging and survival and these provide stable elements for human cohesion that bind individuals together (DeBoard, 1990). The use of VIMs when representing an institution, creates a sense of trust and reassurance. The work of Jung and Durkheim address the ability VIMs have to influence a group. This theory is further re-enforced by contemporary branding strategists such as Wheeler (2009) and Olins (2004).

It was essential for BP to create a strong association with both of its internal and external audiences, ensuring that the brand belief of "beyond petroleum" would be embraced as an ideology. It was also essential that the *Helios* was acknowledged as the signature of BP.

Paul Rand commented on the importance of the VIM's role in the marketplace, advocating that "It should as closely as possible embody in the simplest form the essential characteristics of the institution being advertised...it serves to glorify the merchandise" (Rand, 2008: 154).

Due to BP's visual communication strategy a duality of numinosity within the *Helios* resulted. The repeated and consistent implementation of the *Helios* throughout the brand identity program enhanced of the existing numinosity of the 'natural symbol' and generated a second aspect of the numinous with the *Helios* becoming a 'cultural' symbol. As Landor indicated in their *The Essential Branding from the big Book of Marketing*: "*The Helios became an external representation of the brand idea and a powerful internal symbol*" (McGraw, 2010:33)

Chapter 6: Conclusion

BP's *Helios* broke the accepted trend for a VIM in the petroleum category. The visual cues that viewers/users had come to expect from VIMs in this category did not exist in the *Helios*. Landor Associates, a global brand strategists designed the *Helios* and its brand identity program in 2000.

This thesis demonstrates that the BP *Helios* has a metaphysical quality. The metaphysical quality transmitted to the viewer/user by the VIM is referred to as numinosity, a concept first discussed by Otto in his *The Idea of Holy* (1917). Jung and Durkheim further developed the concept of numinosity, asserting that when a symbol (archetypal) holds a natural (sacred) and a cultural (profane) value simultaneously, it becomes numinous. Therefore the *Helios*, which has an archetypal symbol as its base, transmits a duality in its subliminal meaning to the viewer/user.



The viewer/user relates to a natural symbol (archetypal symbols) in a manner that reveals the VIM to have a deeper spiritual and/or sacred value. Cultural symbols (contemporary VIMs) gain a numinous quality through their repeated and ubiquitous exposure in the market place and therefore establish a sense of continuity reflecting the recurring cycles of nature. This thesis goes to explain the way the natural symbolism in the *Helios* is based on the Solar Cross, an elemental nature-inspired archetypal symbol. The BP *Helios*, while a natural symbol, is employed as a cultural symbol to represent a corporation that moved from operating solely in the petroleum category towards representing other forms of energy in the energy sector.

Early natural symbols emerged as an individual's visual expression of the natural world and evolved into cultural VIMs when the symbols began to be used to define collective identity by entire groups. Cultural VIMs based on the Solar Cross have existed since before the Bronze Age and the reoccurring engagement of the Solar Cross by ancient societies to represent nature-worshipping cults goes to affirm the practice of the use of VIMs as both a natural and a cultural symbol simultaneously. Early groups used these symbols in everyday and sacred situations. The continual employment of VIMs using the Solar Cross has been engaged since the development of early societal groups with the same strategic intent to influence viewers/users for political gain, maintenance of power, creating, and maintaining group coherence for profit and/or survival. The discussion of archetypal symbols is significant to augment the argument in this thesis as it goes to demonstrate the ongoing usage of the Solar Cross in VIM design. For BP, the Solar Cross supplied the *Helios* with an established equity.

BP, which initially stood for 'British Petroleum', was a provider of fuels in the form of oil and petroleum, for the British Navy in 1914. The company grew into a brand supplying petrol to a global market, in particular, to British and European motorists. The turbulent politics of the Middle East in 1970s and 1980s, including the Iranian revolution and the formation of OPEC, created a backdrop for a long term strategic shift into the financial advantages of 'downstreaming' revenues and the direction of 'Green'. CEO Lord John Browne's vision for the future of BP that went "beyond petroleum" resulted in the invention of BP's *Helios* VIM. The *Helios* represented the strategic redirection of a newly formed corporation that came out of a series of acquisitions and mergers by BP in the

1990s, including: Amoco, Arco, Castrol Oil and the solar energy producer Solarex. A perception in the market of a fragmented organisation was a result of the mergers and acquisitions, as the two dominant companies (BP and Amoco) each had established identities within the petroleum category. BP's new global outlook and 'Green' philosophy required brand redefinition resulting in the *Helios* VIM which encompassed the brand beliefs of Performance, Energy, Innovation, and 'Green'.

The growth of the burgeoning environmental movement gained momentum in the 1960s and by the end of the millennium had become a significant consideration in social, political and financial economies on a local and global level. The 'Green' ideal was the main driver for the design brief. The key strategic consideration for the rebranding was to establish an immediate association between BP and nature. Although environmentalism was a valid movement with far reaching economic effects within global financial systems, cynicisms toward BP as a petroleum company turned 'Green' had roots in the practice of 'greenwashing'. The strategic shift towards 'Green' of BP on all accounts appears to have been genuine.

The resulting *Helios* became an emblematic representation of an evolving awareness amongst the collective consciousness of viewers/users. Durkheim asserted that collective consciousness is when a shared belief operates as a unifying force in society and for BP the unifying force was the innate fear triggered by nature in humans (environmentalism). The equity found in sun symbolism conveyed a sense of trust and reassurance. This equity provided a springboard for BP's *Helios* gaining acceptance in the global marketplace for the corporation's new 'Green' philosophy. Jung and Durkheim contended that when a group adopted a natural symbol as a cultural symbol (VIM), it triggers a sense of identity with 'spellbinding powers'. For BP the *Helios* as a cultural symbol, represented the corporation as a champion for environmental consciousness and alternative energies.

Effective contemporary visual communication strategies are developed by understanding the psychology of group dynamics and the accurate identification of groups of viewers/users within the marketplace. Visual and corporate identity rollouts, rebranding programs and advertising campaigns are designed to reassure existing markets while aiming to establish new markets. Landor Associates considered the broad range of viewers/users within the global marketplace when developing the revolutionary *Helios*. The international advertising consultant Ogilvy and Mather further developed the BP brand by creating the motivating brand belief "beyond petroleum" in 2000. The BP rebranding communication strategy relied upon principles of communication and persuasion, which evolved out of propaganda techniques 'Association', 'Ad Nauseam' and 'Slogan'. The visual communication strategy for the *Helios*, employed a repetitive and ubiquitous rollout reflecting the reliable and repetitive cycles of nature, while the brand belief "beyond petroleum" reinforced BP's new 'Green' philosophy. The rebranding had a measurable effect upon the tangible and intangible brand value of BP. Within three years of launch there was an increase in brand strength defined by the market's perception of differentiation and uniqueness by 100%, downstream revenue in BP Connect petrol stations increased by 23% and

engagement of the brand by internal viewers/users and how to apply the brand promise and brand beliefs to job responsibility increased by 41%.

Numinosity gives the *Helios* 'spiritual qualities'. The *Helios* as a natural (archetypal) symbol has a sacred quality built on nature and resonates immediately with a viewer/user. The *Helios* became a cultural symbol through the visual identity rollout designed by Landor Associates. The *Helios* transmits a duality in meaning by conveying the 'Green' message as a cultural symbol and its metaphysical numinous quality as a natural symbol. Although operating from two distinct perspectives, archetypal symbolism and contemporary 'Greenness' both relate to nature.

Appendix 1: Glossary

Abstract: An ideal, a term, or visual rendering that is a result of analysing, distilling and articulating the essence of a situation, a philosophy or a material object in a non-representational visual form.

* Separated from matter, practice, or particular examples; not concrete ; -noun (denoting quality or state); the abstract, ideal or theoretical way of regarding things. 2. Idealistic, not practical: abstruse; (Art etc) free from representational qualities (- expressionism, ACTION painting). 1.

* Having an intellectual and affective artistic content that depends solely on intrinsic form rather than on narrative content or pictorial representation: abstract painting and sculpture. 2.

* To withdraw by expression, distillation, or other mechanical or chemical process; as, to extract an essence. Cf. Abstract, v.t., 6. 3.

1. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

2. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language, fourth edition, 2006, Houghton Mifflin Company.

3. Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary, 1996, 1998, MICRA, Inc.

Ad Nauseam: An idea, especially a simple slogan or a strong visual in the form of a symbol or other imagery, repeated enough times, so it may be taken as the truth.

Anima: Jung's term for the feminine part of a man's personality. Often contrasted with animus.

The part of the psyche that is directed inward, and is in touch with the subconscious. Often contrasted with animus. ORIGIN 1920s: from Latin, literally 'mind, soul.'

Animus: Psychology Jung's term for the masculine part of a woman's personality. Often contrasted with anima. ORIGIN early 19th cent.: from Latin, 'spirit, mind.'

Archetype: A pattern of thought, or symbolic and pervasive imagery that is inherited from the past collective experience of a culture and is present in the individual unconscious.

* Original model, prototype; typical specimen; (Psych.) primordial mental image inherited by all; recurrent symbol or motif; so -AL, archety'pical. 1.

* the original pattern or model from which all things of the same kind are copied or on which they are based: a model or first form; prototype. 2.

* In Jungian psychology, an inherited pattern of thought or symbolic imagery derived from the past collective experience and present in the individual unconscious. 3.

1. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

2. Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2006, Random House, Inc.

3. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language, fourth edition, 2006, Houghton Mifflin Company

Association Propaganda Technique: The 'Association' strategy projects the positive qualities of a person, entity, object or value (an individual, group, organization, nation) . It attempts to evoke an emotional response in the target audience and therefore create identification with the recognised organisations or corporations. Often highly visual in its communication strategy, with the employment of 'cultural symbols' (VIMs) which are superimposed over other associated visual imagery. Consequently these 'cultural symbols' become recognised as the marks of particular brand identities.

Brand Belief: This defines the essence of the corporation and how the visual identity program of the corporation would rollout subsequently to the market place and its audience. The specific definition within *Brand Belief* concerning the specific brand, will remain as is for an extended duration. Again, audience focus is implicated in this aspect.

Brand Equity: The power of a brand – through successful creation of a positive image – to shift demand and change customer behaviour.

Brand Identity: The visible elements that can be used to identify a brand (name, logotype, symbol, product configuration, service offering, packaging).

Brand Image: The complete bundle of thoughts a customer has in their mind about a company, product, or service developed through communications and experience, including the distinguishing “human characteristics of a brand personality (e.g. warm and friendly, or strong and reliable).

Brand Promise: A statement of the enduring, relevant, and distinctive benefits customers associate with a product, service or company.

Brand Statue: The esteem and knowledge of a company in the market place perception (Landor Associates 2009).

Brand Strategy: Long term plan for the brand including a determination of key audiences and a understanding of what those audiences need to know about the brand and experience.

Chi Rho: This name is an abbreviation of the name CHRIST. Using the Greek alphabet and the first two letters of the name CHRIST: CH = X and the RHO = P.

Collective unconscious: is a term of analytical psychology, coined by Carl Jung. Jung distinguished the collective unconscious from the personal unconscious, in that the personal unconscious is a personal reservoir of experience unique to each individual, while the collective unconscious collects and organizes those personal experiences in a similar way with each member of a particular species.

Communication Audit: A formal examination of an organization’s visual and verbal communications practices.

Communications Plan: A company’s communication goals and objectives, and the messages and vehicles that will be used to meet them.

Complex: An intricate or complicated association or assemblage of related things, parts, units, etc.

* Complete whole; (Psych) related to the group. Repressed ideas etc. causing abnormal behaviour or mental state; Consisting of parts, compositive; complicated; (Gram., of sentence) 1.

* Psychology: a system of interrelated, emotion-charged ideas, feelings, memories, and impulses that is usually repressed and that gives rise to abnormal or pathological behavior; composed of many interconnected parts; compound; composite: a complex highway system; Characterized by a very complicated or involved arrangement of parts, units, etc.: complex machinery; So complicated or intricate as to be hard to understand or deal with: a complex problem; An intricate or complicated association or assemblage of related things, parts, units, etc.: the entire complex of our educational system; an apartment complex; A collection of simplexes having specified properties. 2..

1. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

2. Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2009, Random House, Inc.

Corporate Identity: The visible elements (name, logotypes, symbols, signage, offices and buildings, both administrative and manufacturing, advertising, livery, packaging, stationary system) which can be used to identify a company.

Corporate Identity Program: A complete system of visual communication designed and executed to deliver a perceived philosophy of a corporation or institution to both internal and external audiences. The visible elements to consider in the mix, can be a name, a visual identity mark in the form of a logotype, and or symbol, signage, retail outlets, administrative and manufacturing buildings, advertising in multiple medium, livery, packaging, and stationary system.

* The visual elements (name, logotypes, symbols, signs, offices, factories, advertising, trucks, packaging, letterhead, business cards, etc.) which can be used to identify a company.¹

1. Lippincott, G & Margulies, W 2004, *SENSE*, Rockport Publishers Inc, Massachusetts

Corporate Image: The perception that people have of a company, based on a combination of various communications and personal experiences.

Corporate Mission: Defines why the organization exists, its core values and intent, and serves to unite organisational behaviour.

Cosmology: The branch of philosophy dealing with the origin and general structure of the universe, with its parts, elements, and laws, and esp. with such of its characteristics as space, time, causality, and freedom.

* The branch of astronomy that deals with the general structure and evolution of the universe. 1.

* The study of the physical universe considered as a totality of phenomena in time and space; The astrophysical study of the history, structure, and constituent dynamics of the universe; A specific theory or model of this structure and these dynamics. 2.

1. Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2006, Random House, Inc.

2. The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, fourth edition, 2006, Houghton Mifflin Company.

Decoding = Viewing= Reading: to translate (data or a message) from a code into the original language or form; to extract meaning from (spoken or written symbols).¹

1. Dictionary.com Unabridged Based on the Random House Dictionary, 2009, © Random House, Inc.

Economic Value Added (EVA): A measure of a company's financial performance based on the residual wealth calculated by deducting cost of capital from its operating profit (adjusted for taxes on a cash basis). (Also referred to as "economic profit"). The formula for calculating EVA is as follows: = Net Operating Profit After Taxes (NOPAT) - (Capital * Cost of Capital).

Encoding = Creating = Writing: verb (used with object), to convert (a message, information, etc.) into code.

Image Attributes: Help define the tone, manner, personality, and style of a brand, often the differentiating factor between similar products and services.

Image Criteria: The desired "personality" attributes of a company, product, or service that guide name and design development.

Institution: A long time established and fundamental part of human interaction within a society associated with its customs, laws and spiritual behavior. It can be in the guise of a person, object, practice or fixture.

* Instituting; establishment (of person) in cure of souls. 2. Established law, custom, or practice; (colloq., of person etc.) familiar object. 1.

* An organization, establishment, foundation, society, or the like, devoted to the promotion of a particular cause or program, esp. one of a public, educational, or charitable character. 2.

1. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

2. Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2006, Random House, Inc.

Liber Abaci (Book of Calculation): Written by Leonardo Pisano (who was also known as Leonardo Fibonacci) in 1202, introduced the Hindu numerals 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 to Europe.

Liminal: Of or relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process. It is the quality of ambiguity or disorientation that occurs in the middle stage of rituals, when participants no longer hold their pre-ritual or pre-liminal status but have not yet begun the transition to the status they will hold when the ritual is complete. During a ritual's liminal stage, participants "stand at the threshold" between their previous way of structuring their identity, time, or community, and a new way, which the ritual establishes.

* another term for threshold See also liminal 1.

1. Collins English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition 2009, William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd.

HarperCollins Publishers, UK

Logotype: A unique grouping of letterforms that represents a brand. IBM, and Coca Cola feature logotypes as the primary element of their visual identity mark.

* A unique group of letterforms that represent the corporate brand. IBM, Nuveen, and GAP feature logotypes as their primary form of identity. 1.

1. Lippincott, G & Margulies, W 2004, *SENSE*, Rockport Publishers Inc, Massachusetts

Manifest: Clear, evident, and tangible visuals of an idea or concept, which are free from ambiguity, and are obvious for the viewer to understand.

* Show plainly to eye or mind; be evidence of, prove; display, evince, (quality, feeling) by one's acts etc.; (of thing) reveal itself; record in a manifest. 1.

* Clear, obvious, to eye or mind; hence -ly2 adv. (ME, f. OF manifeste or f.L manifestus (manus hand, *festus struck). 2.

1. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

2. Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2006, Random House, Inc.

Message: The information (facts, strengths, culture/style, and future direction) that is most relevant to priority audiences and serve as major content points for all communications.

Numinosity: Also understood as the 'wholly other', arousing feelings of loyalty, duty and honour. In its original meaning it spoke of belief in deities, the sacred, the holy and the transcendent, as '*the intense feeling of unknowingly knowing that there is something that cannot be seen*'. The concept of the numinous is central to the work of the German theologian Rudolf Otto in 1917, and subsequently Carl Gustav Jung. Otto first coined the word 'NUMINOUS' derived from the Latin word 'numen' which is associated with the meanings 'command' and 'divine majesty'.

*Associated with the concept of spiritual elevation, the sublime, and otherworldly. In more contemporary times it

is not necessarily an exclusively religious idea as it is important to separate the numinous from the supernatural. (Christopher Hitchens) 1.

* Of a numen; spiritual; indicating presence of divinity; awe-inspiring. (f. L numen + -ous) 2.

* Of, pertaining to, or like a numen; spiritual or supernatural. 2. Surpassing comprehension or understanding; mysterious; that element in artistic expression that remains numinous. 3. Arousing one's elevated feelings of duty, honour, loyalty, etc. : a benevolent and numinous paternity. 3.

* Spiritually elevated; sublime. 4.

1. The Four Horseman. Discussions with Richard Dawkins: Episode One 30.07.2007

2. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

3. Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2006, Random House, Inc.

4. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language, Fourth Edition, 2006, Houghton Mifflin Company.

Positioning Statement: Provides the underlying platform for communications, reflecting the company's/brand's value proposition.

Profane: Could be considered of a coarse or vulgar nature. Due to its lack of a connection to the sacred, it is associated with the temporal, and that which is of this life and this world.

* Not belonging to what is sacred or biblical (profane history, literature, writer); not initiated into religious rites or any esoteric knowledge; (of rites etc.) heathen. 2. Irreverent, blasphemous 1.

* Common or vulgar 2.

* Syn: Secular; temporal; worldly; unsanctified; unhallowed; unholy; irreligious; irreverent; ungodly; wicked; godless; impious. 3.

1. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

2. Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2006, Random House, Inc.

3. Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary, 1996, 1998 MICRA, Inc.

Propaganda: Information, ideas, and rumours sown into a society's psyche via visual and verbal formats to advance the vested interest of particular group, movement, institution or nation.

* Association or organised scheme for propagation of a doctrine or practice; (usu. Derog.) doctrines, information, etc., thus propagated. 1.

1. The Oxford Concise Dictionary New Edition sixth edition, 1979

Sensory: There is however one area in which a company can exert an effective influence on the kind of corporate image it has. This is the area of sensory impressions – 85% of a person's awareness of things around them comes to them through their eyes. People tend to put stock in things they can see. 1.

1. Lippincott, G & Margulies, W 2004, *SENSE*, Rockport Publishers Inc, Massachusetts

Statement of Relevant Differentiation: It involves an analysis of brand definition focusing on the written and verbal language that will assist in defining what are the 'reasons to believe' in the corporation and its declared philosophy. It also defines the value this declaration brings to the corporation's audience. It is an exercise in responding to what the market needs.

Symbol: Non typographic element of an abstract or representational nature. Apple, Nike, BP feature graphic symbols as an important element/form of their identity.

Sacred: Set apart from the profane and the common and reserved for exclusive use in association with and dedication to divinity, and thus believed to be holy.

* Consecrated or held especially acceptable to a deity, dedicated or reserved or appropriated to some person or purpose; made holy by religious association, hallowed; - book, writings, (embodying laws etc. of a religion); Sacred COLLEGE; Sacred Heart, the heart of Jesus as object of devotion; - number (associated with religious symbolism, e.g. 7); Sacred (=Holy) Writ; (as specific epithet of animal IBIS, monkey, beetle) 2. Safeguarded or required by religion or reverence or tradition, indefeasible, inviolable, sacrosanct 1.

* entitled to veneration or religious respect by association with divinity or divine things; holy 2.

1. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

2. Random House Unabridged Dictionary, Random House, Inc. 2006

Slogan: A brief, striking phrase that may include labelling and stereotyping. Although slogans may be enlisted to support reasoned ideas, in practice they tend to act only as emotional appeal. Opponents of the United State's invasion and occupation of Iraq use the slogan 'blood for oil' to suggest that the invasion and its human losses was done to access Iraq's oil riches (which is an oversimplification of a complex event).

Symbol: Non-typographic element of an abstract or representational nature. Apple, Nike, and BP feature graphic symbols as an important, if not the primary element of their visual identity mark.

* Things regraded by general consent as naturally typifying or representing or recalling something (esp. an idea or quality) by possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or thought (white, thunderbolt, the cross, are symbols of purity, courage, Zeus, Christianity) * Mark or character taken as the conventional sign of some object or idea or process e.g. the astronomical signs for the planets, the letters standing for chemical elements, musical notation, the mathematical signs for addition and infinity, the asterisk. 1.

* A non-typographic elements of an abstract or representational nature. Texaco, Apple, and Continental Airlines feature graphic symbols as an important form of their identity. 2.

1. Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1997, Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK

2. Lippincott, G & Margulies, W 2004, *SENSE*, Rockport Publishers Inc, Massachusetts

Touch Point: The subsequent visual identity rollout program consists of the touch points that are engaged to include all aspects of print: press advertisements, brochures and newsletters, stationary system, posters (both billboards and bus shelters); electronic media: TVC, cinema, web, social media; as well as signage, location design, packaging, livery of vehicles, transportation, and uniforms.

Verbal Brand Driver: This definition is in the form of a succinct, verbal summation of the corporation's philosophy and aims developed by a team of designers and marketing strategists. The verbal articulation serves as the bases for *inspiring visual imagery and design* (Roth, 2008).

Visual Brand Driver: It is concerned with the visual language engaged within a visual identity program. This aspect develops a collection of images that represents nine different areas relevant and necessary to building a comprehensive picture of the brand's personality. Again this assists in defining and refining the '*brand's positioning to multiple audiences.*'

Visual Communications System: A planned method of identification including the use of a company's name, logotype, colour palette, and secondary typography; a company's graphic 'look and feel', applied to a wide cross section of media to create a cohesive brand presence.

Visual Identity Mark: A visual mark that is the core visual identification for a company, corporation or institution, either government or religious or non-profit organization such as a charity. It can come in the form of a logotype or a symbol.

Visual Identity Program: A planned method of identification including the use of a company's name, logotype, colour palette, and secondary typography; a company's graphic 'look and feel', applied to a wide cross section of media to create a cohesive brand presence.

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