

# Globalization of Markets and Global Consumers' Paradox

## Глобализација тржишта и парадокс глобалних потрошача

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**Abstract:** Global companies in the process of globalization create global consumers. Different countries, companies and persons react differently to globalization. Consumers often behave paradoxically in the process of globalization. On one hand, consumers are against globalization. On the other hand, consumers worldwide (especially younger, richer and more urban compared to others) accept popular, Western products and life style. The "roots" of global consumers' paradox are cultural - values of national culture, global - external impact of global companies and individual - mindset of consumers.

**Keywords:** global culture, national culture, globalization of markets, global consumers, global consumers' paradox.

**Сажетак:** Глобалне компаније у процесу глобализације тржишта стварају глобалне потрошаче. Различите земље, компаније и појединци различито реагују на глобализацију. Потрошачи се у процесу глобализације често парадоксално понашају. На једној страни, потрошачи су против глобализације. На другој страни, потрошачи (посебно млађи, богатији и урбанији у односу на друге) прихватају популарне западне производе и стил живота. „Корени“ парадокса глобалних потрошача јесу култура – вредности националне културе, глобални – екстерни утицаји глобалних компанија, те индивидуални – ментални склоп потрошача.

**Кључне речи:** глобална култура, национална култура, глобализација тржишта, глобални потрошачи, парадокс глобалних потрошача.

## Introduction

Global consumers' paradox in the process of globalization of markets is in the focus of this paper. At the very beginning, as well as Sheth (1986), we could post a question – are there global markets or global competition? Sheth indicates that „we often mistake global competition for global markets“ and „that true global mass marketing is possible only if worldwide needs and resources are homogeneous“ (Sheth, 1986, p. 11). Global companies as global competitors, in the process of globalization of markets, are trying to create global markets. Global companies based on global brands, integrated

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marketing communications (IMC) and marketing channels create the image of better – “in” products. That furthermore influences the homogenising of consumers’ wants in the world and creating global consumers. The second part is about incentive forces and criticisms of globalization of markets. Some consumers accept global brands more quickly; therefore global market and consumers are in the focus of the third part. Consumers may have negative attitudes towards globalization, but at the same time by their activities, they support and encourage (un)consciously the process of globalization. Regardless of negative attitudes towards globalization, some consumers behave quite the opposite in the process of decision making about purchasing and spending, i.e. they purchase and use global brands when they can (when they have purchasing power and under condition that products are available to them). Consumers seem not to be conscious that they decide – by purchasing and using products, about the survival of all companies on the market – both domestic (national and local) and global. In the fourth part, the causes of consumers’ paradox are analyzed. The fifth part is conclusive.

## 1. The globalization of markets

In his article “The globalization of markets”, Levitt (1983) has emphasized that global market for uniform products and services is being created. Globalization of markets is influenced by: technology, communications, transport and travel. Companies should be selling standardised consumer products. It enables lower costs, the growth of sales volume and profit. “Companies must learn to operate as if the world were one large market – ignoring superficial regional and national differences” (Levitt, 1983, p.92).

Robertson (1987, p.38) defined globalization as the “crystallization of the world as a single place”. Globalization involves “the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole” (Robertson, 1992, p.8).

One of the opportunities of globalization is the growth of global consumer segments (Alden, Steenkamp and Batra, 2004). Speaking about globalization, authors indicate that differences between markets are disappearing, that convergence of consumers’ wants and the creation of similar markets occur. Reddy and Vyas (2004) speak about the unification of culture, living norms, and work ethic that are becoming homogeneous because of globalization. Levitt (1983, p.92) considers that the technology as a powerful force drives the world toward a converging commonality.

Although Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote *The Communist Manifesto* 1848, the following sentences, as Zwigle (1999) noticed, correspond to the current environment: ... “Modern industry has established the world market.... All old-established national industries.... are dislodged by new industries whose ... products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place the old wants ... we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes”.

Some countries, companies and persons are for globalization, whereas others are against it. Critics speak about globalization as "Westernization", "Cocacolonization", "McDonaldization", "Disneyfication", etc, and these processes lead to one big "McWorld". "One school of thought sees globalization as a homogenizing process, an economic and cultural assault led by the American juggernauts of Cocacolonization and McDonaldization" (Chakravorty, 2003, p.361). Zwigle (1999) speaks that "a sort of cultural cloning" will result from "the "cultural assault" of McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Disney, Nike, MTV, and the English language itself. Western – often equated with American – influences will flatten every cultural crease, producing, one big "McWorld". Numerous elements of global culture affect local culture. Western nations as economically advanced are often perceived to be the representatives of global culture. The spread of global brands, like McDonald, and their global advertising campaign, have led to the fear of a coming "Mcworld" (Lin and Ke, 2010, p. 638).

Reddy and Vyas (2004) state that the critics of McDonaldization and Cocacolonization are directed to U.S. domination in relation to other countries in the field of consumer goods. In research of cultural power of brands, Holt (2006, p.355) has shown that "brands act as parasites riding the coat-tails of other more powerful cultural forms, but then use their market power to proselytize these ideological revisions. Through ubiquity and repetition, brands transform emergent culture into dominant norms". Cowen (2003, p.17) poses the question: Does globalization kill ethos and diversity? – taking into account that basketball, Nike, McDonalds, and Madonna are now available almost everywhere in the world, so that "the world is becoming one big shopping mall, causing non-Western cultures (and perhaps Western culture as well) to falter in their artistic creativity."

The power of global companies and brands are additionally shown by data on ranking of the world's most valuable brands. The best global brand for years was Coca-Cola. The value of brand Coca-Cola in 2011 was 71,861 million dollars. Coca-Cola, which is in the first place, is followed by: 2. IBM (69,905\$m), 3. Microsoft (59,087\$m), 4. Google (55,317\$m), 5. GE (42,808\$m), 6. McDonalds (35,593\$m), 7. Intel (35,217\$m), 8. Apple (33,492\$m), 9. Disney (29,018\$m), 10. Hewlett-Packard (28,479\$m) etc. (Interbrand, 2011). "With 50 brands on the Top list and a total brand value of US \$ 797,754 million, North America dominates the ranking. Germany with 10 brands on list and a total brand value of US \$ 108,431 comes in second. Each year, however, new regions/countries gain steam" (Interbrand, 2011, 16). All ten leading brands in the group of the world's most valuable brands were from the U.S.A. Now, the best global brand is Apple. The value of brand Apple in 2014 is 118,863 million dollars. Apple is followed by: 2. Google (107,439\$m), 3. Coca-Cola (81,563\$m), 4. IBM (72,244\$m), 5. Microsoft (61,154\$m), 6. GE (45,480\$m), 7. Samsung (45,462\$m), 8. Toyota (42,392\$m), 9. McDonalds (42,254\$m), 10. Mercedes-Benz (34,338\$m) etc. (Interbrand, 2014). On the list of world's top 100 brands, 54 brands are from the United States. Ranking of countries by the number of brands (which are on the list of the world's most valuable brands) is as follows: United States (54 brands),

Germany (10), Japan (7), France (6), United Kingdom (5), Netherlands (3), Italy (2), Spain (2), Sweden (2), Switzerland (2), Canada (1), China (1), Finland (1), Mexico (1) etc. (Interbrand, 2014). It is one of the reasons why globalization is, by many people, called Americanization. Based on data, the conclusion may be derived, as Quelch (2003, p.22) also stated, that “increasingly, it seemed that globalization was actually Americanization.” Bird and Stevens (2003) point out that on the basis of the McDonalidization theory and attitudes that cultural influence flows primarily from the United States to the rest of the world, the conclusion is derived that the emergent global culture is simply the exportation of the U.S. culture to the rest of the world.

Ritzer joined critics in 1993 with the book: “The McDonalidization of Society”. Ritzer does not criticize McDonald’s restaurant chain per se, but the process of McDonalidization. The basis of process of McDonalidization is the process of rationalization (Jermier, 1995). Ritzer states: “McDonalidization is, first, a process, or a formal system of procedures. Second, the process of McDonalidization has four defining qualities: efficiency (best possible means defined in terms of speed and effortlessness), calculability (emphasis on things that can be quantified and the use of quantity in place of quality-bigger is better), predictability (standardization of product or service across time and space-no surprises), and external control of employees and customers through impersonal, semi-automated technologies” (Jermier, 1995, p.92). Ritzer further emphasises that everyday life is McDonalidized (Jermier, 1995, p.92), so that the process of McDonalidization does not refer only to fast-food industry, but also to education, medicine, the criminal justice system, news broadcasting, reading material, entertainment, sports, etc.; and affects not only the USA society, but also it affects many other cultures around the world (Jermier, 1995). McDonalidization is „metaphor for standardizing forces in the wider society” (Taylor and Lyon, 1995, p. 64). Global brands, such as Coca Cola, McDonald's, or Nike, can be seen either as icons of a globalized lifestyle or as symbols of cultural homogenization that threaten local competition (Riefler, 2012, p.25, according to Ritzer; Thompson & Arsel).

Tourists requiring authentic Moscow have complained that the main street Arbat is no longer recognisable with the new architecture that was influenced by Pizza Hut, McDonald's, Benetton and the others. Capitalism, global transportation, communications, advertising, marketing and transnational cosmopolitanism break down the barriers between national cultures and national economies. The main participants are transnational corporations (TNCs) that identify and use opportunities on the global marketplace. In an increasingly interconnected world capitalist system, companies from affluent countries (especially from Europe, America and Japan) have the greatest impact on determining what will be produced and consumed. With the globalization of markets, many less developed countries and countries in transition are considered as emerging markets for transnational corporations (Ger, 1999).

Moeller (2006, p.24) poses the question: Globalization or a birth of nationalism? And points out that “from 1945 until today, a combination of economic globalization and political internationalization has been the dominant characteristic of our time”. The

success of global brands, and especially U.S. brands, has influenced “a growing resentment of perceived American cultural imperialism“ and a backlash against U.S. brands, particularly in Western Europe and the Muslim world” (Quelch, 2003, p.22). Apart from the protest against globalization and mentioned processes of Cocacolonization and McDonaldization, a particular threat for companies is presented in diverse forms of consumers' protests. Tosun and Yuksel (2009) mention the consumer boycotts in Turkey against all goods perceived as American during the Iraq war, whereas a new form of protest in the last few years is: anti-Coca-Colas. Nowadays, in digital environment - internet and mobile telephones allow fast communications, networking and numerous other activities conducted by a large number of different social media users.

Zwige (1999) points out that criticism is not directed towards all products from the West, so that critics of Western culture blast Coke and Hollywood but not organ transplants and computers.

The struggle between global convergence and local divergence, Friedman (Ittersum and Wong, 2010, p.107) picturesquely describes as a struggle between Lexus and olive tree. “It struck me then that the Lexus and the olive tree were actually pretty good symbols of this post-Cold War era. Half the world seemed to be emerging from the Cold War intent on building a better Lexus, dedicated to modernizing, streamlining and privatizing their economies in order to thrive in the system of globalization. And half the world-sometimes half the same country, sometimes half the same person-was still caught up in the fight over who owns which olive tree.” (Friedman, 1999, p.27). Lexus is the symbol of global convergence, and the key advantage refers to economic benefits. Olive tree is the symbol of preservation of local culture divergence. Finding a balance between the economic benefits of promoting global convergence and the cultural benefits of preserving local divergence represents the struggle posed by Friedman's metaphor, which exists in every country and every citizen around the globe (Ittersum and Wong, 2010, p.117).

By purchasing global and/or local products/services consumers contribute to a great extent to the process of global convergence and/or local divergence. Responses of consumers are the most important for the success of companies on the market. That is, consumers (un)consciously directly decide about the survival of companies by making decisions on purchasing products of certain companies. Companies, by global or local orientation, also, contribute to the process of global convergence or local divergence. A logical question is continually being imposed – what are the benefits for consumers and companies, i.e. what suits them better - global convergence or local divergence.

Concerning consumers' responses, firstly they may support local divergence in order to preserve their cultural identity and to support the local economy. However, secondly, they may support globalization because it contributes to the availability of foreign products and brands that would otherwise not have been available at affordable

prices. Thirdly, one of the consumers' responses may best be labelled as “cherry-picking” behaviour of consumers (Ittersum and Wong, 2010, p.108). Authors (Ittersum and Wong, 2010, p.108) propose that such responses can best be understood by integrating insights from both positions and by acknowledging the cultural and economic consequences associated with each perspective. More specifically, they propose that consumers make purposeful tradeoffs between the cultural and economic consequences of preserving local divergence and promoting global convergence by cherry-picking between mass produced global products and authentic local cultural products. This trade-off between cultural and economic considerations is influenced by national cultural values (Ittersum and Wong, 2010).

As for companies, small local companies often cannot compete with global companies (with quality and affordable prices of global brands), so that they are against globalization. However, on the other hand, domestic market potential is often small to large companies and they have opportunities to compete on global market, so that the globalization of business activities is logical continuation of successful operating on domestic market.

## **2. Global market and global consumers**

A logical question follows – who are global consumers? The question may also be differently formulated from the aspect of companies – which consumers can be influenced by global companies? That is – which consumers purchase and use products of global companies?

The word “creation” is crucial (Keegan and Green, 2011). A number of global markets by their nature do not exist - they must be created by marketing activities. For example, no one has the need for soft drinks, but today, in some countries, the consumption of soft drinks exceeds water consumption per capita. Marketing led to this change in behaviour, so the soft drinks industry is global. The needs and wants of consumers worldwide are increasingly converged.

Opportunities for globalization depend on the market and product category. Considerably bigger opportunities for creating global markets are on business markets compared to consumer markets. Specificities of business market (such as for example, acquiring products and services used in the production of other products and services, that are sold to final consumers and/or business buyers; much larger, fewer buyers compared to final consumers etc.) enable that business buyers may be significant global consumers. On the other hand, consumer markets (final consumers) are considerably bigger challenge for creating global markets. On consumer markets, there are big differences in the potential for globalization. Opportunities for globalization of consumer markets depend on characteristics and factors of consumer behaviour (e.g. geographic, demographic, economic and psychographic characteristics, and especially age, education, income and purchasing power, culture); as well as product category.

Big opportunities for creating global brands and consumers lie in two significant markets - in business-to-business (B2B) and luxury goods markets (Quelch, 1999). Quelch (1999, p. 2) considers that global consumers or as he calls them "cross-border segments" are younger, more educated, richer and more urban than the rest of the population. Consumer behaviour may be more similar between New York and Tokyo than between Tokyo and Hokkaido. The further one goes from the international urban centres; the less likely is that the convergence will be found.

In the marketing literature youth segment (under various names such as the 'teen segment', the 'Gen X' culture', 'baby busters', 'the MTV Generation' etc.) is the prototypical example of a global segment (Kjeldgaard, 2002). A large number of teenagers in the world make a significant market. More than 1.2 billion people, between the ages of 15 and 24 years in 2010 - those the United Nations (2010, p. 95) refers to as "youth" or "young people". Young people make up almost a fifth (17.6%) of the world's population.

Many teenagers have time and money to spend, so they represent powerful engines of merging global cultures (Zwingle, 1999). Communications over MTV programming, Internet and other channels, homogenise teen preferences and attitudes. The expansion of these communications has created greater similarity between teens in different nations than between teens and older persons in their same country (Anderson and Hee, 1998; Parker, Hermans and Schaefer, 2004). From Los Angeles to Tokyo, the teenagers share amazing similarities in taste, language and attitude. Teens almost everywhere also buy a great variety of goods, in particular branded products - common gallery of products - e.g., Reebok sports shoes, Procter & Gamble's Cover Girl make-up etc (Wee, 1999). Young people all over the world have uniform consumption habits - in clothing, music tastes, and media (Kjeldgaard, 2002). The concept of universal global teen values is significant, because marketers in all industries offers the opportunity to achieve scale economies through standardized product offerings and common marketing messages around the world (Parker, Hermans and Schaefer, 2004).

On the other hand, it is stated that youth cultures do not represent such significant subcultures anymore, because of at least for two reasons. In the first place, the notion of being young has come to encompass not only the "empirically young" but also the "culturally young". Secondly, when the young accept new trends and styles, then other subcultures - e.g., 'trendspotters' - accept the same, too (Kjeldgaard, 2002).

The global elite is represented by the group of the richest and most powerful people in the world. Economist (2013) defines today's global elite as those "with enough brains, money or influence to affect the lives of large numbers of others". According to Rothkopf (Seth, 2008), "the defining, distinguishing feature of these individuals is power that on an ongoing basis touches millions of lives. They are the few who have accrued immense influence by virtue of talent, work, fortune or a combination of all three." Members include heads of state, CEOs of the world's largest companies, media barons, billionaires actively involved in their investments, private

equity investors, hedge fund managers, technology entrepreneurs, oil potentates, top military commanders, a select few religious leaders, terrorist leaders and master criminals, and a handful of renowned writers, scientists, and artists. In all, just over 6,000 people have been identified – about one in a million (Rothkopf, 2008). The following stands out: first, owners and top managers of transnational corporations and banks (whose capital exceeds far the wealth of many countries in the world), second, political elite (leaders of G-7 group, and managers of supranational organizations such as IMF, World Bank, *United Nations Security Council*, NATO) and third, intellectual elite, such as Trilateral Commission or the Economic Forum, which occupy less striking, but not irrelevant position (Pecujlic, 2003). They gather at the annual World Economic Forum in Davos (Switzerland) traditionally held at the end of January. In the book *Superclass – The Global Power Elite and the World They are Making* Rothkopf (2008) observes that "a global elite has emerged over the past several decades that has vastly more power than any other group on the planet."

For companies, global elite is represented by homogenous group of the rich and powerful, who have money for purchasing and using luxurious products. "There are rich consumers, few in number, but disproportionate in the gigantic slice of income and consumption they take" (Freeland, 2011, p45). They are becoming a trans-global community of peers who have more in common with one another than with their countrymen back home. Whether they maintain primary residences in New York or Hong Kong, Moscow or Mumbai, today's super-rich are increasingly a nation unto themselves (Freeland, 2011, 46). The global elite usually send children to boarding schools abroad.

The acceptance of global brands also depends on product category. In product categories that are culture-bound – like food prepared at home, variations in cultural and national taste are bigger. On the other hand, with product categories that are not culture-bound – like personal computers, the opportunities for convergence of values and the creation of global consumers are bigger (Quelch, 1999).

"The global market at the beginning of the 21st century can be said to be highly heterogeneous and fragmented in many aspects relevant to marketing decision-making" (Grubor, 2012, p.120). The following global market segments are therefore being pointed out as significant: business buyers (B2B market), global elite and global teens (consumer markets).

### **3. Global consumers' paradox**

Global consumers' paradox means: consumers are against globalization; and consumers purchase and use global brands (Figure 1). By purchasing global brands, global consumers contribute to homogenisation of market.

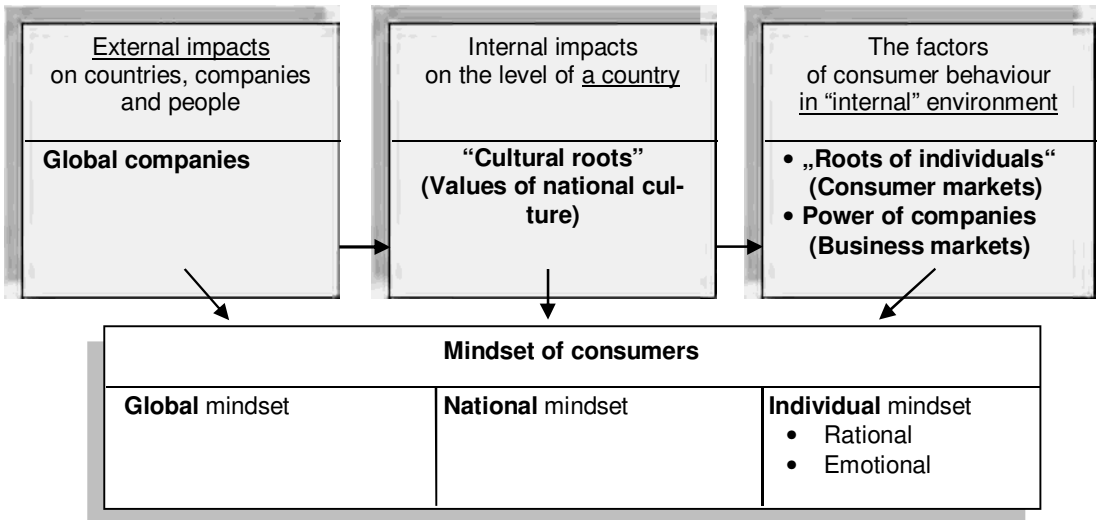


Figure 1. Global consumers' paradox



Certainly, all consumers do not behave paradoxically. Logical question follows – which are key causes of paradoxical behaviour of the group of consumers (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. “Roots” of consumers' paradox in the process of globalization



In the first place, global companies are operating based on global brands, IMC, with the support of the media, and especially social media (e.g., social networks, etc.), marketing channels etc. The goal of global companies is global mindset of consumers – the orientation of consumers towards purchasing global brands. Global companies try to make influence on countries, companies and people in the world as a whole. Their influence depends on numerous factors. As Hofstede (2006, p.14) says, the communication is defined by the receiver, not by the sender. That further means, that global companies can convey messages to customers through IMC, and whether and how they will be perceived depends on customers.

Secondly, on country's level “cultural roots” - values of national culture have great influence. In research of cultural differences, Hofstede's dimensions of national culture (power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term versus short-term orientation) may be used (Mooij and Hofstede, 2002).

In some countries (e.g. China), “national, cultural roots” are “exceptionally deep”, i.e. citizens are oriented towards values of national culture. Cultural roots and inheritance are the basis of national mindset of consumers. Hofstede and Bond (1988,p.6), as well as other authors point out „that specific nations have specific cultural traits that are rather sticky and difficult to change in any basic fashion, although they can often be modified.” In China, cultural roots lead towards economic growth, based on the Confucius connection. “Confucianism is not a religion but a set of pragmatic rules for daily life, derived from what Confucius saw as the lessons of Chinese history” (Hofstede and Bond, 1988, p.6).

Singh (2012) states: During the course of India’s modernization, perspectives such as structural-functionalism and historical materialism have been critically viewed in terms of their relevance for knowing India’s ground reality. Today, it is realized that there is no uniform pattern of modernization, rather the idea of “multiple modernities” has gained currency in contemporary India.

Muslim countries are characterised by the strength and longevity of Islamic culture. The question: Does globalization represent cultural imperialism? – the question can also be posted as – Can Islamic cultures, more than a thousand years old, be threatened by a hamburger and a Coke? The very Islamic culture leads to negative answer in Muslim countries (Quelch, 2002). Then, when Carlos Salinas was asked: "How are you going to defend your culture if you integrate economically with the United States?" His reply was that the Aztec culture was here a long, long time before anyone ever thought of the United States, and that he was sure Mexicans would be perfectly capable of sustaining their cultural distinctiveness (Quelch, 2002).

As well as in China, especial advantage of Muslim countries is population. Over 2.1 billion or about 23% of the world population are Muslims. But, the Muslim world is not homogeneous; there is as much diversity within Islam as there is within Christianity (Quelch, 2002).

Value systems of consumers not only have “deep roots” and are slowly modified, but they also differ by countries and regions. In the process of globalization and convergence, global companies also face heavily changeable values and different values by countries. For example, in the “new Europe” with a single currency, international marketers want consumers to behave similarly - eat the same food, wear jeans and cross-trainers, and watch the same television programs. Nevertheless, there are large differences among the value systems of consumers in different European countries, value systems that are strongly rooted in history and appear to be very resistant to change. There are large consumption differences among countries that are stable over time or countries are actually diverging (Mooij and Hofstede, 2002, p.62).

National mindset of consumers means the orientation towards purchasing domestic (national and local) products/services and brands. National culture affects national mindset of consumers, but also their mindset is being affected by companies that encourage ethnocentrism of consumers (purchasing domestic products/services and brands).

Finally, global companies influence a consumer as an individual; a consumer lives and works in a certain country with a certain national culture that also affects and directs behaviour. Numerous factors in internal environment affect a consumer. This refers both to final consumers and to business buyers (business market). Key factors of consumer behaviour are: cultural (subcultures, social class), social (family, reference groups, roles and status), economic (income, purchasing power), personal (age, life-cycle stage, occupation, personality and self-concept, lifestyle), psychological (motivation, perception and learning). Key factors of organisation buying behaviour are: environmental (politic, economic, social, technological, legal, natural), organizational (objectives, policies, procedures, structure and systems of purchasing), group-interpersonal (interests, authority and status of participants in buying centers) and individual (age, education, income, job position and personality of buyer).

Individual mindset is the result of complementary action of the factors of consumer behaviour mentioned above. Individual mindset is affected both by global companies and national culture. A consumer may be emotionally oriented towards purchasing global brands because he wants to show that he is the “citizen of the world” – cosmopolitan; or he is guided by rational criteria and perceives that global brands are better. On the other hand, a consumer may be emotionally oriented towards purchasing domestic brands, because he wants to contribute to preserving domestic culture and economy and/or, based on rational criteria he makes decision on purchasing domestic brands, because he perceives them to be better.

“Some people are undoubtedly more open minded to new ideas and feel less threatened by ideas that are different from theirs.” (Hofstede, 2006, p.14). Richer, younger, more educated and more urban consumers are more open for new ideas, products/services.

Global companies have global convergence wants of consumers as their goal, so this is why they promote global brands. Countries, as their goal, have preserving “cultural roots” - values of national culture, so that even campaigns are conducted, oriented towards promotion of domestic products. As it has already been said, “cultural roots” are so deep in some countries, that additional campaigns are not even necessary. Every individual has his own “roots” (“family background”) which shape up his behaviour. Paradoxical behaviour of consumers may be the result of numerous impacts on them - globally, nationally and in internal environment. Consumers may be against globalization, i.e. for preserving domestic roots and values, but still to purchase global brands and vice versa. Consumers may be against globalization, but to purchase and use some global brands if they perceive that they are better, when they want to try a new product, if they can afford global brands – they have sufficient purchasing power and brands are available to them.

## Conclusion

„People may love or hate transnational companies, but they can't ignore them“ (Holt, Quelch, Taylor, 2004, 70). Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Nike, Benetton, Nestle and numerous other companies are present almost everywhere in the world. Global companies affect wants of global consumers for global brands. Global companies are oriented to younger, more educated, richer and more urban citizens. First and foremost, by purchasing global brands, consumers provide the survival of global companies. Secondly, satisfied global consumers are the best media for global brands. The conclusion follows that global consumers are (un)consciously co-actors in the process of globalization.

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## Резиме

Global consumers' paradox means: some consumers are against globalization; but consumers purchase and use global brands. Global companies are only initiators of globalization, and global consumers are co-actors in the process of globalization of market. Consumers bring themselves in paradoxical situation by their behaviour. On one hand, some consumers are against globalization. On the other hand, by purchasing global brands, consumers actively, but probably unconsciously participate in the process of globalization.