LUND UNIVERSITY
School of Economics and Management

Brand Dynamics

Understanding luxury through heritage and authenticity

by

Davide La Rocca

May 2019

Master's Programme in International Marketing & Brand Management

Supervisor: Mats Urde
Examiner: Veronika Tarnovskaya

Abstract

Title: Brand Dynamics. Understanding luxury through heritage and authenticity

Date of the Seminar: 3rd June 2019

Course: BUSN39. Degree project in global marketing

Author: Davide La Rocca

Supervisor: Mats Urde

Keywords: brand dynamics, luxury, brand authenticity, brand heritage, brand management

Thesis purpose: To combine the concepts of brand authenticity and brand heritage in order to generate a new theoretical understanding of luxury brands from a dynamic perspective.

Methodology: Conceptual research with empirical basis supported by theory and case studies. The case studies are supported with a triangulation of observations and qualitative interviews.

Theoretical perspective: The aim of this research is to explore and broaden the concept of luxury brands, while identifying their different dynamic facets. In this regard, the concepts of luxury, brand authenticity and brand heritage are functioning as three theoretical pillars in order to develop a new dynamic framework.

Empirical data: The empirical data consists of six different case studies mostly supported by secondary data in terms of articles, journals, catalogues, social media profiles and corporate materials. The case studies are integrated with observations towards the social media activity, the corporate websites and the physical stores. All the material is supported by semi-structured interviews, as a background in order to cover partially missing points of information.

Conclusion: The concept of brand authenticity is redefined, while the notion of brand heritage is expanded and put in context. Luxury is also re-framed and redefined through the identification of four new luxury categories, along with four non-luxury ones. All these elements eventually find a place in the new framework called 'The Wheel of Brand Dynamics', that will provide an overview of the dynamics of branding, and the positioning, in which heritage plays a role for recovering brands while authenticity stimulates brand's growth. The model is embodying an internal and external perspective of branding in which the surge and the decline of luxury brands will be depicted more extensively.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to my supervisor and Professor Mats Urde, for his guidance and outstanding expertise. In Latin, the word teaching means "*insignare*", which refers to the act of leaving a mark. In this perspective, teaching goes beyond the mere transmission of knowledge. His lessons have left a mark on me, not only as a student, but most importantly as a person.

I want to thank my family, for their immense love and support, and Marietta Martaki for the amazing time spent together this year. Furthermore, I want to thank the respondents of this research, whom cooperation was a significant value for this study. I also want to thank Cecilia Finell for her help and contribute.

Lastly, I want to thank Don Draper, even though he is "only" a fictional character. Sometimes imaginary friends can be closer than they seem, as he inspired me during this research.

"Success comes from standing out, not fitting in"

- *Don Draper.*

Davide La Rocca

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

1 Introduction

The first chapter starts with providing a background to the concept of luxury brands, as well as brand heritage and brand authenticity as essential elements in strategic brand management. This is followed by describing the aim, purpose and contribution of the research, including a presentation of the research gap of the current scholarly world. Lastly, the chapter ends with the outline of the thesis.

1.1 Background and problematization

History shows that the concept of luxury goes centuries back in time, whereby luxury represented “the appanage of the ruling classes” (Kapferer, 1997, p. 253) and as such played a significant role in classifying the society. Our modern scenario is no exception, as luxury brands are said to represent another world that is permeated with a sense of magic. The uniqueness largely builds upon the scarcity, selective distribution, extraordinary quality, craftsmanship, long history, exclusive purchase experiences and extremely high prices (Kapferer, 1997). These elements are the very reason that the cult of luxury brands are able to produce the highest level of intangible added value to customers (Kapferer, 2012b) and researchers even claim these brands to be so special, that they crave a distinct type of management and customer understanding (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012).

However, our society is constantly undergoing changes, which entails all brands (both luxury and non-luxury) somehow adapting to these changes and thus adjusting their strategies accordingly. For example, as more brands continually arise, our contemporary society places us in an attention economy and as a consequence, the supply of brands is often much greater than the actual demand (Kapferer, 2012b). Hence, competition is rapidly growing and brands find themselves competing against each other to grasp customer attention. On the other hand, we currently live in the era of Web 2.0, whereby the Internet, including social media, is thriving. This implies the fact that all brands are equally striving to reach visibility in platforms that are privately controlled by the big four (Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple). As a consequence of digitalization, the new generations (mostly Generation X and Z, also called ‘digital natives’) who grow up or are born in this era, require brands to rethink their strategies, as these generations also are becoming the biggest customer base for brands to serve (Jain, Vatsa and Jagani, 2014). Overall, the marketplace has become more homogenous as brands are seen copying and imitating each other in order to please the customers, and therefore the challenge of being unique increases (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). This has resulted in a strong identity that allows a brand to stand out to be essential (Kapferer, 2012b). In order to do so, it is important for the leaders and the managers, to be constantly inspired by a 'why', or a reason capable of driving motivation and inspiration across all stakeholders, internally and externally (Sinek, 2009).

As a result of our contemporary society during the last couple of decades, we have witnessed interesting events, both intentional and unintentional, as well as successful and unsuccessful, to occur among brands. More specifically, we have seen that luxury and non-luxury brands today are more similar to each other than ever before, which has resulted in the line that used to separate them from one another to obscure. One example that I recently came across is the purchasing of a luxurious Montblanc pen. Previously, it was an exclusive in-store experience similar to a ritual, whereby the sales assistant would describe the characteristics of the pen, its history, and the technique of writing (Urde, 2019). In a similar manner, Bernard Arnault, the CEO of the luxury conglomerate LVMH, points out that luxury is largely about an extraordinary retail experience (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012b). However, with the possibility of purchasing the pen online today, the unique purchase experience and service is lost, making the luxurious pen become more average and lose part of its magic, at least in my view. Although digitalization also is a necessary aspect for traditional luxury brands to consider, it is much about the strategy in itself, as it has the power to decide whether or not the magic is maintained (Bug and Haussmann, 2017). Another interesting event that caught my attention was the paid advertisements by Louis Vuitton on Instagram. In this moment, a brand that we used to view as luxury and therefore special, had now become much more ordinary as we can see mass produced and cheap brands like H&M pursue the exact same advertisement strategy. Hence, the opportunity to "swipe up and view" the newest collection generated the feeling of mass advertisements and lost magic. The challenge now is to define the right strategies for luxury brands to be superior and unique, while adapting to the new change, since most of the academic literature about luxury does not take into account the recent metamorphosis introduced by the new technologies and the internet (Liu, Burns and Hou, 2013). Furthermore, during the last 15 years we have seen various collections between luxury and non-luxury brands. Examples of these collaborations are Karl Lagerfeld, Balmain and Versace designing clothes for H&M (Harper's Bazaar, online, 2019), as well as Louis Vuitton designing furniture for IKEA (Cederlund, online, 2019), to name a few.

The fact that the difference between luxury and non-luxury has weakened is a challenge that needs to be addressed with high degree of awareness and expertise (Kapferer, 2015). As the reality is changing, these luxury brands that are known for expressing tradition and nostalgia, suddenly find themselves in a modern society. This also implies that brand management needs to be addressed with a dynamic approach, since our society is constantly involved in a process of construction and deconstruction (Giddens, 1996). The change of society has to meet the timelessness of which luxury is made of. In fact, the magic feeling that luxury brands have established is largely constructed through their long history and heritage (Beverland, 2004; Bug and Hausmann, 2017; Fionda and Moore, 2008; Kapferer, 1998; 2012b; Kapferer and Bastien, 2012; Okonkwo, 2007). Although some scholars have demonstrated that the heritage of luxury brands contributes to their authenticity (Beverland, 2005; 2006; Fionda and Moore, 2008), we know that heritage might not be enough, because brands need to re-invent themselves and express their vision in order to reach new customers. Simmel (2012) was referring to the "blasé person" as a metropolitan individual who is not capable of being surprised anymore, due to the vast offering presented by modernity. In this perspective, brand authenticity is a key element capable of making a difference. Being authentic is what makes the brand stand out in the crowd, especially because consumers are simultaneously on the search for authentic brands (Fine, 2003; Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). Therefore, I see a brand's heritage and authenticity as powerful tools that can bring true leverage for luxury brands in a changing society, as they both have the ability to maintain the magic touch that luxury brands are known for and hence, contribute to them remaining relevant on a market that is becoming more homogenous day by day.

1.2 Research aim and purpose

Previous research has largely focused on the concept of luxury itself, the attributes of creating luxury brands, their management and the consumption of these brands (Beverland, 2004; Fionda and Moore, 2008; Kapferer, 1997; 1998; 2012a; 2012b; Kapferer and Bastien, 2012; Okonkwo, 2007, Phau and Prendergast, 2000). Furthermore, a few have explored luxury brands in the context of digitalization, including the internet and social medias (Bug and Haussmann, 2017; Cervellon and Coudriet, 2013). Although previous research has partly highlighted the concepts of heritage and authenticity in the context of luxury (Beverland, 2004; 2005; 2006; Boccardi, Ciappei, Zollo and Laudano, 2016; Kapferer, 1998; 2012b; Kapferer and Bastien, 2012; Okonkwo, 2007; Urde, Balmer and Greyser, 2007), it is challenging to find studies that comprehensively combine all the three elements. Furthermore, earlier scholars also refrain from exploring luxury brands in a dynamic manner by taking into account societal changes or other events that describe the dynamics of brands. Therefore, I believe I have found an interesting angle to explore for my thesis.

As described in the background, luxury brands represent another world and therefore also require distinct management in order to maintain their distance to non-luxury brands. However, luxury brands simultaneously face challenges which have led to the line between luxury and non-luxury to sometimes obscure. Therefore, from a dynamic point of view, a brand's heritage is a tool for making a brand's past relevant for today and tomorrow, and thus bring leverage (Urde, Balmer and Greyser, 2007), whereas brand authenticity is important to continuously appeal to the customer and stand out from the crowd, and thus remain relevant in a changing society (Fine, 2003; Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). In other words, both concepts contribute to the maintenance of the magic that luxury brands are said to have.

With this in mind, the aim of my thesis is to explore and broaden the concept of luxury brands, while identifying their different dynamic facets. The purpose of this conceptual study is therefore to provide a comprehensive overview of luxury brands by taking into account the dynamics of heritage and authenticity as two separate concepts, in order to generate a better understanding of how those elements can play a crucial role for luxury brands and their existence.

The following research questions will assist in reaching the aim of my research:

RQ 1: How do heritage and authenticity define the motion of brands?

RQ 2: What role do heritage and authenticity play in the existence of luxury brands?

1.3 Research Contributions

This research has both theoretical contributions and managerial implications. Concerning the theoretical contributions, I extend the current literature of strategic brand management. More specifically, I amplify the current literature concerning luxury brands, brand heritage and brand authenticity by linking and exploring the three concepts in a new and original way. This involves a re-interpretation of the notions of brand heritage and brand authenticity by adopting a perspective that is taking into account the overall relation between the three elements, in order to fit the aim of a framework capable of being suitable for all the types of brands. More specifically, the concept of brand authenticity is being re-interpreted in order to reach a broader meaning, as it becomes applicable to both young and old brands, while keeping a contrast with heritage. Moreover, as the framework is intended to picture the dynamicity of brands, eight new categories of brands are identified, along with the relation that is intervening between them, thanks to the shifts in brand authenticity and brand heritage. Meanwhile, luxury is also re-framed, as four of the previously mentioned categories are falling into the luxury area. This brings to a four-dimensional way of intending luxury, according to the framework, in which different attributes are highlighted for shaping their meaning. Furthermore, the elements of heritage and authenticity are identified for a double effect, as heritage is allowing the brands to recover, while authenticity is stimulating the brands to grow.

From a managerial perspective, my study is relevant as it provides managers with a comprehensive overview of how heritage and authenticity can play a significant role in their branding strategy, given the current societal challenges. Indeed, both brand authenticity and brand heritage are said to be the two key components for the future of branding, in order to reach the ability to stand out. The wheel of brand dynamics shows how different amounts of heritage and/or authenticity can lead to a different positioning strategy. In this perspective, the model highlights the importance of a coherent management, in order to be aligned with the consumer perspective, as the framework is containing both an internal and external circle. This type of duality is reflected in the subjectivity of authenticity, heritage and luxury, that are the three pillars entitled of sustaining the value of the brand.

1.4 Research delimitations

As this model is the first of its kind and therefore unique, I have chosen to focus on building a solid foundation for it to start with. Therefore, I acknowledge that the model refrains from defining some of its aspects in a detailed manner. First of all, the inner relations between the inside (brand perspective) and the outside (customer perspective) are not properly explored, as this research is only describing the visual distinction between the two. Furthermore, as this research is focused on luxury, I am aware that the non-luxury categories are not analyzed with the right amount of attention, as the group of non-luxury brands is too wide and articulated to be able of finding space in this dissertation. Another aspect of the model that has not been examined is related to its measurability. Since the research, following its inductive approach, is establishing the theoretical structure for the framework, there is currently no investigation regarding the quantitative aspect. A measurable research would possibly be able to determine what is the amount of authenticity and/or heritage that can justify a shift within the wheel.

1.5 Research limitations

This study is defining and conceptualizing the relations between brand authenticity, brand heritage and luxury adopting brand management as a starting point. As this is a conceptual research, many limitations related to this type of study are occurring. First of all, the concepts of brand authenticity and luxury in particular, are highly influenced by the subjective perceptions of the individuals. This means that defying their meaning in a unique manner, is practically impossible, especially when perceiving from a relativist perspective. Another limitation that has to be taken into consideration is related to the theoretical core of this thesis, since the framework is not currently measurable. The lack of quantitative basis can affect the awareness related to the impact of the concepts involved in the model. This is why there has not been a proper exploration for the inside and outside perspective, as this relation would be better understood with the support of a quantitative study.

Concerning the methodology, since it is almost entirely based on secondary data, there may be some limitations to take into account, as the choice of the data is eventually depending on what the researcher has selected, rather than external factors generated by the primary data. In this regard, the choice of the case studies may also encounter some limitations, since most of the companies selected are involved in the fashion business, with the exception of Alpine Cars and Pabst Blue Ribbon. Moreover, from a geographical perspective, the companies selected for the case studies are exclusively based in Europe and North-America, meaning that the Asian, Australian and African market are left out, in case there would be substantial differences in the business between various continents. The case studies have not only been composed of secondary data, in order to increase the validity through a triangulation of methods, as observations and some semi-structured interviews have been adopted. However, it is important to keep in mind that qualitative interviews are not exempt from criticism, as many authors are arguing that the respondents may be influenced by other factors during their feedback, while the researcher is playing an important role in the data interpretation (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). During my interviews I have been laddering up and down, in order to reduce the risks of altering the data and/or obtaining superficial answers. In any case the qualitative interviews have been marginal in relation to this study, since they were mostly used as a background tool for covering some small missing aspects of information.

To conclude, I also believe that the fact that this research is pioneer in combining the concepts of authenticity, heritage and luxury, can be interpreted as an important limitation, due to the fact that similar empirical studies are missing. Furthermore, it has to be considered that the three elements of heritage, authenticity and luxury, - that are constituting the pillars of this research - have been re-interpreted in a new way. Although this new interpretation has been made through the aggregation of already-existing data, coming from previous studies, the whole conceptual structure needs to be tested following this new comprehensive angle of study.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

This study is divided into seven main chapters. The structure of the thesis follows the research questions and research purpose previously mentioned, in order to develop the new framework, along with the re-contextualization of authenticity, heritage and luxury.

Chapter 1: Presents an introduction of the research and a background of the topics while providing the study's purpose, problem formulations, and research questions as well as presents the practical and theoretical importance of the research.

Chapter 2: Outlines the methodological considerations, including the research design, the philosophical underpinnings, the strategy and the structure of the methods adopted.

Chapter 3: Provides a literature review focusing on brand authenticity, brand heritage and luxury.

Chapter 4: Introduces the case companies Marimekko, Levi's, Alpine Cars, Pabst Blue Ribbon, H&M and Louis Vuitton, along with an overview of the corporate history and the event observed.

Chapter 5: Initiate the main findings, with a three step process that illustrates the theoretical framework; the four categories of luxury are subsequently outlined with the support of the case studies.

Chapter 6: The framework is discussed in its findings, while some new aspects of interpretation are presented. The theoretical connotation of the model is further expanded through an inside and outside perspective of branding.

Chapter 7: The study presents its conclusions, by revisiting the research purposes, the aim and objective, in light of the main findings. Lastly, the theoretical contributions and the managerial implications are exposed.

2 Methodology

In this chapter I start by introducing my research philosophy, strategy and design. This is followed by a presentation of how the cases, the empirical material and the respondents have been collected, along with a theoretical excursus related to the observations and qualitative interviews. Lastly, I explain how the data was structured and what have been the main drives of analysis in order to reach a more objective and cohesive result, through a triangulation of different methods and approaches that are defining the purpose of this study.

2.1 Research philosophy

According to Justesen and Mik-Meyer (2010), it is crucial for researchers to first reflect on their own philosophical assumptions and hence understand their own position. I have taken this advice, and therefore this section will explain my perspective, as I believe that having a clear vision on how I perceive the world is the basis to build new ideas and concepts. When speaking about a researcher's philosophical point of view, it is relevant to discuss terms such as 'ontology' and 'epistemology' in order to build a coherent and robust research (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). As explained by Guba and Lincoln (1994), ontology concerns answering the question "What is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it?", whereas epistemology craves an answer to the question "What is the nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known?" (p. 108). Defining these points, is of key importance for me, because my research is strongly based on a conceptual basis, and the aim is devoted towards a new theory generation.

As stressed by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015), there are four positions within ontology; these are realism, internal realism, relativism, and nominalism. As explained by the authors, realism entails believing that there is one single truth, and that facts exist and can be declared. Internal realism entails believing that a truth exists although it is obscure, while facts are concrete but not directly accessible. On the other hand, relativism means that the researcher believes many truths exist and that facts depend on observer's perspective. Lastly, nominalism is described as if there is no truth and humans are the creators of facts. As I see it, things are not black and white, and I acknowledge that the shoe might not always fit perfectly. However, when viewing the four ontological perspectives, I realized that I place myself as relativist, because I believe that the truth can always be influenced by different factors, as it may change according to the ways we decide to think. As a Nietzsche scholar, my mind recalls his assumption concerning epistemological philosophy, as he simply believed that the truth is that the truth changes (Nietzsche, 1967). This attitude is inevitable when considering that the world, as a social phenomenon, is constantly involved in a process of construction and deconstruction (Cohen, 1989; Giddens, 1996). However, despite my personal beliefs, this view is also fitting the purposes of this thesis. Indeed, the nature of what I am studying is implying a different perspective, as I am aiming to reinvent the concepts of luxury, heritage and authenticity from several new and different angles. This type of context is implying a high degree of social constructionism, as part of a category of approaches that Habermas (1970) has referred to as 'interpretive methods'. When linking it to my own study, perceiving the world as something involved in a constant process of change is exactly matching the way I perceive brands, since they are dynamic and constantly able to reinvent their position inside the framework. This type of relativism, becomes essential when going at the core of my concepts; for example, it is not crystal clear for me what luxury truly is, from an absolute perspective. As pointed out in the literature review, luxury has been a challenge for scholars to define in a way that would be globally accepted. This means that what is luxury for one person, might not be luxury for another, despite the many attributes that several scholars have agreed upon. I am also aware of the impact subjectivity can have on authenticity. Although there are several attributes that researchers have declared to create authenticity, individuals will always have a subjective mindset capable of generate unpredictable feedbacks. Thus, as also explained in the literature review, brands claiming to be authentic might not be authentic in the eyes of the consumers. Due to the subjectivity of such concepts, I cannot help but agree with the fact that many truths might exist. However, as a great amount of scholars have explored these concepts, and in fact have concluded that certain attributes contribute to each concept, I also refrain from stressing that no truth exists. Hence, I do not place myself as nominalist. The subjectivity of these concepts in combination with the varying attributes that have been concluded by researchers, has led to me to refrain from believing that there is only one single truth. As such, I am not realist either. On the other hand, the internal realist perspective might not be too far away from my standpoint as it claims the truth to be obscure. However, I do not believe that the truth is unique and independent from the observer. I am aware of the social influence on reality, since the reality perceived is the reality that is communicated (Giddens and Sutton, 2017). In this sense, my positions are not marking an absolute unique truth, for what is concerning authenticity, luxury, heritage or the whole vision between the three, since I am aware that my findings have been generated by a previously unexplored context of analysis, thus combining different elements together. As the progress of science is taking place by generating new theory and discarding some of the old one (Weber, 1946), I am not claiming to release a timeless monumental truth, but rather doing the best I can do with the present, and as Weber (1946) poetically said, "meeting the demand of the day, in human relations, as well as in our vocation" (p. 394) for what it concerns the mission of my research.

When talking about epistemology, which is "how we know what we know", Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) point out that there are different viewpoints, namely 'positivism' and 'social constructionism'. They stress the former to be a phenomenon where the social world has an external existence and thus, objective methods can be used to measure its properties. The latter is described as a phenomenon where reality is neither external nor objective. It is rather something that is socially constructed and hence, meaning is created as a result of people interacting with each other on a daily basis. As such, the authors separate the two by stating that social constructionism is more about understanding the difference among people and that we all have different experiences, rather than searching for laws and external events that are causing certain behavior. At this stage, it is essential to understand that the answer to the ontological question will guide the answer to the epistemological question (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, my ontological standpoint will be position myself towards being social constructionist, because I am focusing towards an interpretative dimension in which people, rather than objective external factors, are generating many aspects of the 'societal reality' (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015, p.70). By following this perspective, it is in my ambition to explore and understand the different facets and experiences, rather than seeking for external causes and fundamental laws to explain behavior. However, as stressed by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015), social constructionism can be further divided into constructionism and strong constructionism, whereby the former is suitable with a relativist ontological standpoint and the latter with a nominalist ontological viewpoint. By these means, I see myself as a constructionist rather than a strong constructionist, for several reasons that are connected with my methodological choices explained in the following paragraphs.

Once the ontological and epistemological questions have been answered, Guba and Lincoln (1994) stress that the methodological question remains. It has the purpose of answering "How can the inquirer (would-be knower) go about finding out whatever he or she believes can be known?" (p. 108). Again, the authors highlight that the answer to this question is guided by the previous answers and thus, not any methodology should be possible for us to choose. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) have listed the methodological implications of the different epistemologies, in order to make a clear structure of the most coherent epistemologies and ontologies for each method.

ONTOLOGY →	**Realism**	**Internal realism**	**Relativism**	**Nominalism**
Epistemology →	Strong Positivism	Positivism	Constructionism	Strong constructionism
Methodology →	Discovery Hypothesis Experiments	Exposure Proportions Large surveys	Convergence Questions Cases	Invention Critiques Reflexivity
Methods & Techniques →	Numbers and facts Verification / falsification Confirmation of theories	Mainly numbers with some words Correlation and regression Theory-testing and generation	Mainly words with some numbers Triangulation and comparison Theory generation	Discourse and experiences Sense-making & understanding New insights and actions

Table 1: Methodological views (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015)

Interestingly enough, I realized that the methodology I have chosen in order to conduct this research, is exactly matching the ontological and epistemological perspective expressed in this chapter. However, epistemologies have their strengths and weaknesses (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). As described by the authors, social constructionism can be very valuable as it entails using multiple sources of data in combination with being good for generating theory. However, the authors also stress that it can be time consuming, as well as challenging to analyze and interpret data. This is largely due to the fact that it depends on the researcher's own viewpoint and previous knowledge, as previously explained about relativists (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). We are aware of the criticism towards relativism, as many positivist scholars have been arguing that relativist research is not objective, as it is based on subjectivity, although many are agreeing on the fact that subjectivity in research is 'de facto' unavoidable (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). My approach is taking into account the different methodological options, while I am highly conscious of the challenges imposed by my relativistic choice of research. In this perspective I argue that my awareness for all these challenges will lead me towards a more coherent and objective result, as it is in my determination to provide a research able to substantially enrich the academic knowledge in the field.

2.2 Research strategy

2.2.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative and quantitative represent two of the most known and widely used strategies and can either be used alone or in combination with one another (Justesen and Mik-Meyer, 2010). Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) state that a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in order to gather a variety of perspectives. They refer to it as triangulation.

However, following my previously described ontology and epistemology, in combination with the purpose of my thesis, I believe that a qualitative study is the most suitable option for this research. In fact, researchers also claim an ontological and epistemological view is to be preferred with a qualitative study (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). More specifically, as I see myself as a pioneer by combining the three concepts of luxury, heritage and authenticity, thus by generating a new conceptual framework, I believe it is necessary to pursuit a qualitative study.

To my understanding, the three concepts combined have not been much explored, which results in a fundamental and solid base to be lacking. As such, I believe that a quantitative study is not appropriate for me, as it often entails testing theories that are already established, by formulating hypothesis or propositions based on many concrete facts, followed by experiments or large surveys, and thus including mainly numbers as well as correlations or verifications (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). My study takes another standpoint as it has the aim to combine the concepts of authenticity and heritage in order to generate a new theoretical understanding of luxury brands from a dynamic perspective, which in turn represents less a concrete and solid field of research. A qualitative research strategy is thus preferred, as it entails starting with questions, using cases and mainly words, and thus generate new theories or insights (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015).

2.2.2 Inductive approach

Thomas, (2006) states that qualitative research is often associated with an inductive approach, as opposed to the deductive approach that is theory-driven and testing-oriented. The inductive approach entails starting with observations generated by detailed readings of raw data in order to derive patterns or models through the interpretations of the researchers (Thomas, 2006). My research was initially generated by the observations on the academic literature related to luxury, and through my interpretations I understood that there was a need to formulate a new theory capable of taking into account the demands of relevance and the challenges imposed by the current scenario. My considerations allowed me to identify heritage and authenticity as the two key components of branding, able to provide an understanding of the different strategic positions of the brands inside a framework. My approach is by definition inductive, as I started with observations on data and literature, in order to generate new theory, with a polyhedral perspective as I am interested in the context by which different events are taking place. Lastly, Thomas (2006) explains that qualitative researchers are prone to adopt an inductive approach in order to stimulate research findings built up from data observations, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies.

2.3 Research design

As the aim of my thesis is to get a greater understanding of a phenomenon at the crossroad of three already researched concepts, namely luxury, heritage and authenticity, I believe a case study research is suitable for me. In fact, case studies allow researchers to explore a phenomenon which is more complicated, dynamic or even blurry, when the context is important (Gummersson, 2005). Furthermore, as described by Harrison, Birks, Franklin and Mills (2017), case study research is a qualitative approach wherein researchers can explore one or several cases over time and therefore allows researchers to get in-depth data by using multiple information sources. These include for example interviews, documents, observations, reports, or even audiovisual material. The flexibility of case study research is also what help researchers evaluate and explain a certain phenomenon, and thereby generate new theory (Harrison, Birks, Franklin and Mills, 2017). The authors further argue that case study research is an excellent way of understanding real life situations. This is exactly the key reason behind our choice of adopting case studies, in order to counterbalance and integrate the conceptual and theoretical structure of my thesis. I believe that case studies are the most effective way to support my aim of demonstrating the real-life applicability or my new conceptual framework. Moreover, case studies are suitable for answering research questions that ask ‘how’ and ‘why’ (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2014) that are at the basis of the new theory generation. Although Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) state that case studies derive from a more positivist viewpoint, which normally is considered to be more quantitative, Yin (1981) argues that case studies allow researchers to use either qualitative or quantitative evidence.

In my view, all this correlates with my thesis. This is because I am looking at already known concepts but aim to combine them, and as such, my thesis immediately becomes more complex. On the other hand, this specific combination of the three concepts is to my understanding almost non-existent, and therefore I believe a case study research is helpful in order to gain a greater understanding of the given phenomenon. Thus, combining the concepts creates the opportunity to generate new theory. As Flyvbjerg (2006) clearly illustrated, although many scholars may think that case study research is 'less scientific' than general and theoretical knowledge, there is a strong need of the context-dependent knowledge offered by case study research in order to connect to our context-dependent reality. It is important to mention that case study research can study one case more in-depth, or a small number of cases (Stake, 1995), although I am opting for more than one case, as I have more than one context of research to illustrate and I am aiming at getting a broader perspective for my thesis. Yin (2014) illustrated that multiple case studies are generating a more solid base for theory building, while a single case study is usually opted in order to highlight the existence of a single circumstance in detail. Of course, as Flyvbjerg (2006) explained, it is not possible to fully generalize on the exclusive basis of some case studies, although when being aware of the limitations, it is possible to generate a substantial degree of innovation, due to the possibility of identifying singularities through case studies. The author (p.226) further states that 'more discoveries have arisen from intense observation than from statistics applied to large groups'. Nevertheless, Flyvbjerg (2006) also acknowledges that the narrative essence of case studies is in itself fitting the purposes of theory building within the context of a qualitative research. However, in order to make my research more solid, and to provide a holistic overview of all the phenomena connected to the framework, I decided to adopt a triangulation of methods. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) refers to 'triangulation' in order to indicate the combination of different research methods built around the same social phenomena, or when combining different sources of data. It is commonly used in order to gain a more complete understanding of the whole. The authors further explain that type of approach is in line with a relativist point of view, as triangulation starts from the assumption that there may be different realities, and hence it is in the duty of the researcher to obtain multiple perspectives on the same topic. For what it concerns this thesis, I decided to combine different data sources, following my relativist stance on the research philosophy. Although the core of this methodology is tailored around the case studies, I engaged in observations and qualitative interviews, in order to integrate all the missing aspects, and to obtain a more holistic research.

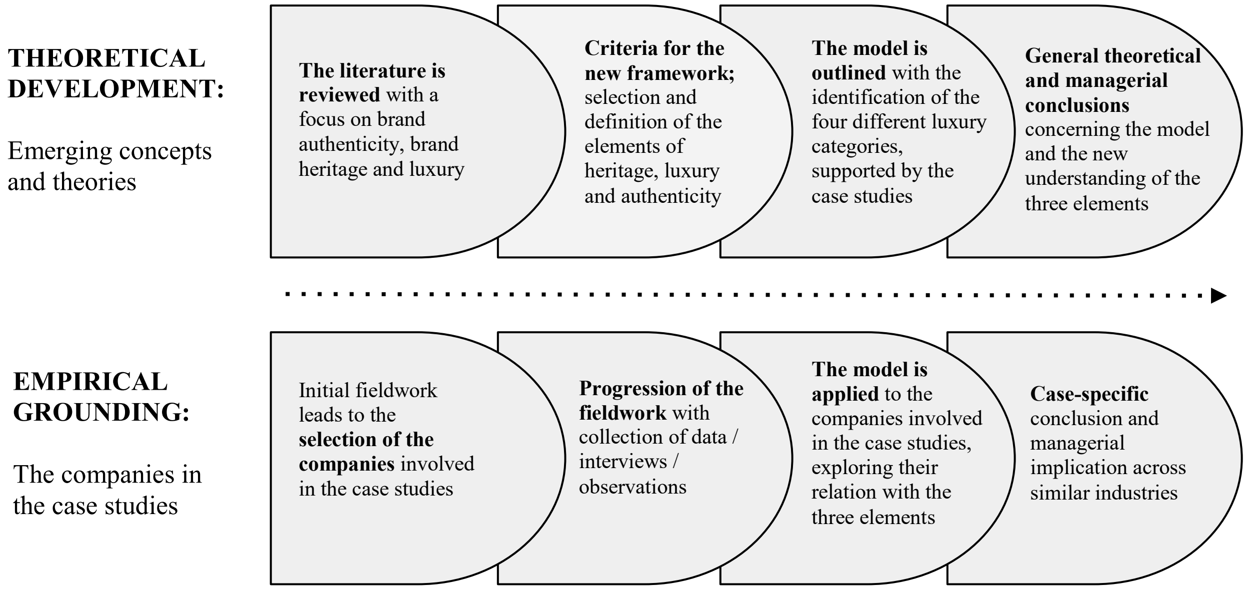

Figure 1: Methodological flowchart

When structuring this research, I decided to work on two layers, both theoretical and empirical, as illustrated in the figure 2 above. The analysis process has been structured in four main phases, which starts the initial review of the empirical material, along with the initial fieldwork related to the case studies. The analysis continues with the selection and definition of the criteria, while all the data collected through the fieldwork is being aggregated and observed. During 'Phase 3', the model is outlined in all its facets and further applied to the case studies in object. Lastly, this thesis will present the general theoretical and managerial conclusion, alongside the case specific conclusions and the managerial implication across different industries.

2.4 Sampling

2.4.1 Sampling of cases

Case study research has received some criticism, especially concerning the process of sampling. According to Siggelkow (2007), the criticism often includes statements such as the sample being too small, which makes case study research non-representative, or that the sample is biased. However, the author stresses that case study research in fact can be very efficient. As he points out, even a single case can be very powerful if it is a "talking pig". As an example, he mentions a company that is doing significantly better or worse than others. Furthermore, choosing a particular organization because it is special can be extremely valuable, as it has ability to allow a researcher to gain unique insights that other organizations cannot.

However, since the aim of my thesis is to develop new theory by combining three already known concepts that have not been combined before, I felt that multiple cases is more suitable in order to build a rich empirical ground. (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). As heritage, authenticity and luxury represent the concepts that my thesis is built upon, the selection of cases entailed searching for companies that have strong indications of having attributes of those concepts. It was however not necessary for all companies having all three and thus, one or two concepts were enough to be suitable as a case. The criteria for each concept (heritage, authenticity, and luxury) were defined with the help of previous literature, such as academic journals and books. As such, I used what Marshall (1996) refers to as theoretical sampling. Except the criteria of choosing the cases based on heritage, authenticity and luxury, I wanted bigger and well-known brands to ensure finding as much information as possible. Furthermore, I used inspiration from previous courses and academic journals, wherein these concepts have been discussed and examples of such companies have been presented.

The cases I decided to choose are Louis Vuitton, Pabst Blue Ribbon, Marimekko, Alpine Cars, and Levi´s. When choosing these cases I wasn't driven by a geographical or strategical criteria, except for the fact that I opted for companies that are well established and considered to be relevant within their market area, with a high degree of popularity and reputation. I made this choice in order to extend the possibility of generalizability for my argumentations, while counting on a higher chance for the reader to relate with the context of my cases. Every company was selected in order to represent a different angle of analysis within the notions of heritage, authenticity and luxury. Louis Vuitton represents for me the most widely known luxury brand and the spearhead of LVMH, the largest luxury conglomerate in the world (namely Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy) (Kapferer & Bastien, 2012), with a good mix of heritage and authenticity and, as discussed in the following sections, a brand with a difficult position in order to attract the youngest consumers (especially online) while maintaining its status of strong luxury brand. Marimekko on the other side represents a fresher and niche example of a brand that was not initially conceived as a luxury brand, but in many of his aspects is shifting its image towards a more prestigious position. Marimekko is also a great example of a brand with a strong authenticity that with the time has transformed into heritage. Levi's, instead, as the most iconic denim brand today, has managed to reorient itself across many positions in order to meet its rightful audience while being true to its core. Alpine Cars, is an historical French car manufacturer that is representing a totally different aspect of my framework, as it has recently being relaunched in 2017 by the Renault Group, with a formula strongly based on its heritage. Pabst Blue Ribbon, on the other hand, has been selected because of its recent strategic choices of expansion in new markets, as it has been positioned in the high luxury segment in China, despite its low-end market position in the U.S.

All these cases are responding to my need of establishing an argumentation that is capable of intending the world of branding from a dynamic perspective, rather than a mere theoretical and static list of notions. This has been possible, because these cases have been able to offer me a clear picture of how luxury and non-luxury brands are able to change within the three elements of luxury, authenticity and heritage. To conclude, because of their correlation with luxury and/or authenticity and heritage, all these cases served as an effective starting point in order to observe different phenomenon under the new lens of my framework.

2.4.2 Sampling of respondents

Through my sampling of respondents, I decided to proceed in a way that would support in first place my material connected to the case studies, since I decided that case studies would have been my primary type of data. As Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) illustrated, the sampling process of a qualitative research is way less influenced by the possibility of occurring in biases or interferences, because a quantitative research in its aim has the representativeness and the objectivity in first place. In my situation, I sampled different type of respondents according to the needs of each case, in order to cover some missing information that would have been relevant for my purpose; therefore not all the cases have been supported by interviews. Since my aim of sampling the respondents has been different according to the support needed for each single case, I didn't developed a unique and coherent sampling strategy, in order to follow the flexibility of structure adopted in my argumentations. In this perspective I also included among the respondents, some different type of stakeholders, such as the external advertising agency of Louis Vuitton and Marimekko, as I was interested in accessing deep knowledge about their online marketing strategy. Other types of respondents that have been formally external to the companies selected in my case studies include some academics and branding experts, such as Michael Beverland and Mats Urde for their expertise in the fields of authenticity and heritage. For this last type of sampling, I was driven by the aim of including credible and relevant experts able to provide valuable information to me.

<table>
<tr><th>Company
&
Category</th><th>Louis Vuitton</th><th>Marimekko</th><th>Alpine Cars</th><th>Pabst Blue Ribbon</th><th>Levi´s</th></tr>
<tr><td>Research</td><td>External advertising agency</td><td>External advertising agency</td><td>Olivier Rouxel, PR officer at Alpine</td><td>Case Study from BUSN35 LUSEM course</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Observation</td><td>Copenhagen store
Tokyo store</td><td>Malmö store
Tokyo store</td><td rowspan="2">Instagram campaigns & official website</td><td rowspan="2">Instagram digital strategy & official website</td><td>Tokyo stores
Malmö store</td></tr>
<tr><td>Instagram campaigns & official website</td><td>Instagram campaigns & official website</td><td>Instagram campaigns & official website</td></tr>
</table>

***Table 2**: Sample overview*

2.5 Data collection

As previously mentioned, case study research often entail using multiple sources of information in order to be able to build a wider argumentative scenario (Harrison, Birks, Franklin and Mills, 2017). Furthermore, it is always suitable in management research to use multiple information sources, rather than relying on a single approach (Denzin, 2017; Yin, 2014). On the other hand, using different sources of data is perceived to be an effective strategy in order to establish credibility (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Yin, 2014). Therefore I proceed in adopting several sources of data, in order to reach a more holistic and comprehensive overview related to the three elements of luxury, heritage and authenticity combined together. Since I am aiming at building a new theory, it is also a good idea to adopt multiple sources (Eisenhardt, 1989). In specific, I wanted to explore the establishment of this framework not only from a managerial perspective, but also from an external point of view, as I included different types of stakeholders in my sources. The external and internal perspective of a company has also been supported by in-store observations and analysis related to promotional material, mostly online through social media. In this perspective, I can say that secondary data has been adopted as my primary source, while observations and interviews as a secondary source. This polyhydric formula has been necessary since this research is a pioneer in itself, due to the fact that luxury has not been properly explored under the lenses of heritage and authenticity, in combination with each other. Therefore, it was not possible to find all the right amount of sources from the academic literature, since luxury, heritage and authenticity have mostly been studied as individual concepts. I also believe that analyzing these concepts from an individual point of view is indeed affecting the meaning of the concept in itself, since the lack of a bigger perspective may lead to a lack of articulation in its meaning.

2.5.1 Secondary data

Secondary data can be used as a compliment or addition to primary data, and comes in many shapes, such as advertisements, books, blogs, newspaper articles, company, archival data and government reports (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). This type of secondary data also entails that the researcher did not intervene in their creation (Bowen, 2009). When using secondary data, a researcher should also be aware that it has some weaknesses that require caution. Firstly, the data might not necessarily be helpful for the given research and secondly, the data must always be critically evaluated in terms of credibility (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). However, the method of secondary data also comes with its many benefits. First of all, they can be valuable when information concerning a specific company, product, customer or market is needed (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015). Furthermore, this method saves the researcher both time and effort, which becomes crucial in contexts where time is highly limited. In fact, Bowen (2009) point out that this method is about data selection, rather than data collection. Secondary data sources often entail high quality, especially when the information is published by the company itself. The use of secondary data also allows the researcher to investigate a phenomenon through an historical lens, which might not be possible when collecting primary data. Lastly, our contemporary and modern society generates the possibility to collect a rich set of secondary data through the use of the Internet and its search engines (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson, 2015).

For my thesis, several shapes of secondary data was collected and used. As a main foundation for my research, I adopted an extensive and deep review of academic journals and books to get a comprehensive overview of what had been said about luxury, heritage, and authenticity. These journals are presented in the literature review and represent a solid base for my conceptual framework. Academic journals were also used for the methodological chapter in combination with our course book for Business Management Research. In order to collect these academic journals, I used the public database provided by Lund University, as well as articles that were a part of previous course literature throughout our Master's programme.

Furthermore, in order to collect data for each company, I used their official websites as a main source. This was a great way of gathering rich data that enabled me to understand whether or not they are positioned towards heritage and/or authenticity, within the luxury or non-luxury context. For example, by visiting Louis Vuitton's official website, it did not take long to understand that it indeed is a heritage brand. Here I could read the whole history of the brand and how it works to protect its heritage. In a similar manner, Urde, Balmer and Greyser (2007) were able to understand that Patek Philippe is a heritage brand in their research. A similar discourse goes for Marimekko, in which the website and the social media activity allowed me to identify many of the elements that are making the brand authentic. Additionally, I used newspaper articles to support the collected data from the websites. Many of these articles contained useful statements from the CEOs, which I found to be valuable for our research. In order to gather even more data, I followed all companies on their social media profiles, with the purpose of getting more insights as well as very up-to-date information. This included advertisements (both organic and paid), Q&A's (questions and answers) between customers and the company, and further understanding of the companies and their identity. Additionally, my student colleagues inspired me with one of their case studies, and therefore allowed me to gather even more data.

2.5.2 Observations

Since case study research often aims to combine different type of sources (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson 2015), I proceeded in conducting observations, in order to integrate some aspects of my research. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) explained that there are four types of observations that a researcher can adopt in order to conduct observational research, named complete observer, observer-as-participant, participant-as-observer and complete participant. For the purposes of my study, I only conducted observations as a complete observer, which means that the researcher is maintaining a distance to the object and context, in order to avoid being recognized as a researcher and all direct engagements (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson 2015). This choice is motivated by the fact that the phenomena I needed to observe, did not require my participation as a researcher, as I focused on the social media engagement, of the brands selected for the case study research, plus some in-store visits. Regarding the in-store visits, I had the opportunity to combine different locations permeated with deeply different cultures. More specifically, I visited the Louis Vuitton stores in Copenhagen and Tokyo, the Levi's store in Malmö and Tokyo - along with some third party boutiques selling Levi´s products in Tokyo - and the Marimekko stores in Copenhagen and Tokyo. My visits in store were pursued as a normal customer interested in the brand, as I did not disclosed my status of researcher. Although Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) are claiming that complete observations are not providing in-depth data, as it would occur in the role of a complete participant, they also acknowledge the fact that as a complete observer it is possible to obtain accurate pictures of why things are happening in a certain way, in relation to the place observed. In line with what the authors further stated, I conducted complete observations without asking people for accounts of their own actions, in order to not compromise the criteria of detachment. Following my qualitative inductive approach, my observations did not include concepts like frequency and causal relationships, as they are usually related with quantitative observation strategies (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Therefore my observations have been dealing with understanding and reasoning, which is in line with a qualitative research strategy (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson 2015).

2.5.3 Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews are a reliable tool when it comes to collect and understand the respondent's point of view, including both what their opinion s and why they are keeping this type of position (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson 2015). Moreover, qualitative interviews are providing to the interviewers to go more in-depth, since the interviewee has the possibility to elaborate on the answers (Kvale, 1994). Therefore, as Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2015) wrote, the aim of a qualitative interview has to do with the objective of capturing the meaning and the interpretation of a phenomenon, by keeping into account the relation to the respondent's worldview. The authors further acknowledge that it is important that the conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee does not become superficial, in order to achieve the objective the complete overview of the context, together with the objective of research.

There are two main types of qualitative interviews, semi-structured and unstructured. Bell and Bryman (2018) explained that in the case of unstructured interviews, single questions can sometimes be asked and the flow of the conversation follows a flexible direction towards the final picture of the interview, in order to keep a more explorative approach. The authors further specified that this type of approach is in contrast with the semi-structured interviews in which there is a topic guide, together with a set of questions that are defining the relation between the interviewer and the interviewee. In any case, as Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson (2015) specified, a qualitative interview is not completely rigid, for what it concerns the set of questions. In this perspective, a qualitative research process includes the possibility to deviate from the interview guide and ask follow-up questions, while the quantitative process does not allow any type of deviation, since the standardization and replication can be jeopardized (Bell and Bryman, 2018). Therefore, as qualitative interviews are characterized as more flexible, I chose to adopt a semi-structured approach, while still having the freedom to elaborate unintended questions upon which was desirable for these topics. The adaptable process of interview allowed the possibility to take different directions based upon the fields in which the respondents were more knowledgeable, along with what they considered to be relevant. In perspective, in order to generate rich and precise information from the interviewees, I formulated laddering up and down questions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). More in specific, laddering was necessary in order to obtain more than just descriptive answers, since I aimed at gathering more precise examples on the topics that were relevant for this research. My interviews were done in remote, mostly via email or via telephone because of the advantages associated with flexibility, speed and lower cost (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Each interview over the phone had a duration of approximately 20 minutes, including the interview guide in which I explained the scopes of my research, and why I chose that specific company. Every interview was structured in a total different way, depending to the case study in object, since my research was exclusively oriented at integrating some missing data for my case study research. I did not hide the scope of my research because the fact that the respondents would have been influenced by this information would have not altered the information I was looking for. This was possible because my qualitative interviews were mostly oriented at gathering information correlated to my cases, rather than free opinions and behaviors. Therefore informing the interviewees about my research allowed me to obtain more precise and deep responses, in line with the information I needed to collect in order to create a cohesive overview for the case studies.

Following the advices of Bell and Bryman (2018), the interviews were recorded so that the respondent would have not be distracted by me taking notes. All the recordings did not needed to be translated and were transcribed after the interviews, to increase the reliability and to facilitate the discussion and analysis. Regarding the interviews done by email, I am aware of the effects generated by asynchronicity, as described by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson (2015), as email conversations are not occurring in real time like a telephone call. The authors explained that asynchronous interviews are increasing the ability for the respondents to control their answers, since they have more time in order to elaborate and formulate each sentence. Although the authors further acknowledge that asynchronicity can have several advantages, again, I find these advantages connected to the way the research has been designed around the case studies. More specifically, my need for key aspects and/or information related to the company of each case study aligned with the advantage of obtaining exact replies for my questions through the email correspondence. For my qualitative interviews, I avoided using focus groups as it was not needed for my informative purposes, and moreover, I do not find focus groups as a reliable method, since there is a high risk that respondents ends up answering alike, according to what it is considered to be acceptable within the norms of the group (Byers and Wilcox, 1991). Concerning the respondents for the qualitative interviews, I had a call with the Copenhagen offices at Patriksson Group that is related to the online campaigns for Marimekko and Louis Vuitton. Moreover, I had an email correspondence with Olivier Rouxel, communication officer at Alpine Cars, and some academics such as Michael P. Beverland and Mats Urde, because they are the leading experts respectively within the field of brand authenticity and brand heritage. I covered the theoretical areas that I believe needed to be expanded and deepened, as the aim of this research is to formulate new theory, within the field of heritage, authenticity and luxury brands.

2.6 Data analysis

2.6.1 Structure of empirical results

The main key value when concerning the structure of results, is to treat the information and the data in a manner that is as objective as possible, in order to avoid preconceptions of every kind. This aspect is of primary importance, since the aim of this research is to develop a new framework as a result of the analysis, instead of applying one from the beginning (Glaser and Strauss, 2017). Nevertheless, I felt the need to integrate the conceptual basis of the model with a practical connotation through case study research, in order to exemplify all the aspects. Indeed, as said above, when building new theory, case studies are very suitable in order to generate a rich empirical background (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Adopting a qualitative research based on a triangulation of different methods, implies that I am involved in a process of narration, throughout the analysis. Although a qualitative research does not reject subjectivity (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015), trustworthiness and authenticity are fundamental in order to achieve a good research (Bell and Bryman, 2018).

2.6.2 Analyzing qualitative data

Dealing with qualitative data involves following a non-linear and flexible structure of data collection, analysis and theory construction, in line with the preferences of the researcher (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). In this regard, in order to reach a more cohesive structure, I decided to overlap the two steps of data analysis and interpretation. According to Eisenhardt (1989) analyzing the data represents the essence of generating theory from case studies, although it has to be taken into account that it is the most challenging and difficult process to achieve. In this perspective, it is crucial to convince the reader that professional work has constantly been at the core of the research, rather than biased subjectivity (Kvale, 1994). In order to do so, it is important to analyze the data in case studies in two ways; from one side using within-case analysis, while on the other side using cross-case pattern. Eisenhardt (1989) explains that a within-case study analysis involves write-ups of case studies in a separate way for each site, in order to become familiar with each case as a unique and stand-alone entity, while handling the volume of data in a more organized way. Through this strategy, it is easier to find the unique patterns before a researcher acts in order to generalize patterns across cases. On the other side, the author further explains that cross-case analysis is important in order to force the researchers to go beyond the surfaces, by using different lenses, rather than being influenced by the initial impressions. On this note, Eisenhardt (1989) explained that there are three type of 'lenses' that a researcher can adopt when analyzing the data. The first is to focus on dimensions/categories while looking for within-group similarities related to intergroup differences. For example, during the analysis presented in this thesis, I identified dimensions with the help of themes and/or metaphors, in order to frame the phenomena of interest, connected to the framework. A second type of lens, consist of selecting cases among with others in order to list the differences and the similarities, in order to generate theory out of the juxtaposition (Eisenhardt, 1989). This type of approach was also used in this analysis, when comparing the online strategy of Louis Vuitton vs Chanel. The third strategy suggested by

Eisenhardt (1989) contemplates the idea of dividing the data by data source, however I adopted this strategy only when proceeding with the initial sorting of the data, in order to have another perspective of categorization, even though this last ‘lens’ has been more marginal during my analysis. In any case, all these approaches are helpful when considering the fact that people are poor processors of information (Eisenhardt, 1989), as their ability to understand the world is limited, due to the fact that the human brain is mostly working through intuition, rather than adopting an analytical thinking, and this leads the bad habit of jumping towards conclusions before having processed the proper amount of information (Kahneman et al., 1982).

Another objective of the data analysis, especially when dealing with a lot of sources built around three different elements of study, was the systematic reduction of the empirical material through the organization and structuration of the analysis. This type of structure has been achieved through the identification of relevant themes. In this case, identifying themes was an activity motivated by the different stances included in the framework, and therefore the themes have been actively part of the process of articulating each aspect. Ryan and Bernard (2003), explained that there are different strategies that a researcher can adopt when identifying themes. One of these strategies includes identifying themes and subthemes in order to create a reasonable structure. Another action is to reduce the themes into a feasible amount, following a hierarchical order related to the relevance of the research question. And lastly, when dealing with themes, it is very effective to link the themes to each other in order to generate new theory out of their comparison (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). I have been taking these advices during the formulation of my analysis in order to obtain a more reliable and understandable flow of analysis. In any case, I only decided to include themes that were in line with the research question, in order to control the length of this thesis, while providing an articulated analysis capable of cover the entire model.

2.7 Reliability and Validity

In order to analyze the limits and criteria for business and management research Bell and Bryman (2018), indicate three main evaluation criteria, which are replication, reliability and validity. These are useful since there is no research methodology or strategy that is impeccable. But as far as it concerns qualitative research, where the measurement aspect is deficient, these three criteria are debated. In this perspective, Guba and Lincoln (1994) indicate instead trustworthiness and authenticity as qualitative research criteria. Therefore, I will use these last two criteria to analyze the flaws of the study.

The authors explained that there are four corresponding set of criteria for trustworthiness, which are ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’ and ‘confirmability’. In quantitative research, these four criteria have all the same importance. The first criterion is credibility which is affiliated to internal validity in quantitative research and it relates on the wealth of data and data analysis and conclusions to see whether or not the study is accurate. Credibility also has the most techniques available to establish it, compared to the other three aspects of trustworthiness. One of the most important techniques is triangulation, which has been used to verify the results of my findings. In many ways, credibility is established by itself, when the researcher is following a clear set of methods in a professional way.

As for transferability, which corresponds to external validity in quantitative research (Bell and Bryman, 2018), it is the criterion which demonstrates how the qualitative researcher applies the study's findings to other contexts and settings, like similar situations, similar populations and cases. In my thesis, since the aim is to establish a new set of theory concerning the three element of authenticity, heritage and luxury, I applied a high amount of empirical data, mostly from academic literature and case studies data, in order to demonstrate how the conceptual theory can translate into the practical scenario of reality. To my understanding, integrating theory with empirical facts is a clear strategy in order to prove the transferability of a research.

Dependability is a method qualitative researchers use to demonstrate that the findings are consistent. Qualitative researchers describe the exact methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation in detail. This is for other researcher who want to replicate the study, in order for them to have enough information from the research report to do so and therefore achieve the same results. Although, it is important to keep in mind that in qualitative research, it is impossible to replicate the exact study, as opposed to the quantitative methods that are requiring the exact replicability (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). In any case, both the process and the findings of the research need to be consistent (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). As this study is relying on interviews, observations and empirical data documentation, I made sure to apply every part of the procedure expressed in this methodology.

The last criterion is confirmability or trustworthiness, which refers to objectivity in quantitative research, for which a neutral research interpretation is needed. Thus a complete general objectivity is nearly impossible to acquire, especially within qualitative methods. Nevertheless, my aim is to make sure that the findings speak for themselves, and are not based on bias, personal motivations and assumptions of the researchers (Bell and Bryman, 2018). Of course, nothing is perfect, as for instance the few interviews I conducted were held over the phone or via email, which are implying a less direct way of communication. Another criticism that some may arise is the way the academic literature is sorted, as it usually follows the aims contained in the research question. A same type of perspective might arise regarding the choice of the case studies. But each case study does not carry a meaning of universalism, but rather demonstrating the possibility of applying the framework into different real contexts.

As stated above the other criteria besides trustworthiness is authenticity. It ensures that the research includes fairness with different point of views (Bell and Bryman, 2018). When perceiving authenticity, this thesis is benefitting from a wide triangulation of methods that are implying a polyhedral approach of analysis. This means that, in line with the relativist inductive approach of research, this study has been perceiving every truth as a possibility to coexist with many others truths, according to the perspective of understanding.

3 Literature review

This chapter explains the concepts of luxury brands, brand heritage and brand authenticity more in-depth. Different views and perspectives established through previous research, are presented in order to provide a holistic overview of the topics. Each of the three elements, is presented in a structured manner, in order to cover both the internal and external facets, along with the different spheres of meaning.

3.1 Luxury brands

The word 'luxury' derives from the Latin language, whereby 'lux' means 'light' and hence, the characteristics of luxury is often linked with something fancy, glowing, and glittering. Therefore, luxury most often entails something visible and recognizable to make people wearing luxury become noticeable (Kapferer, 1997). Additionally, 'lux' can be interpreted as 'luxus', which means 'inclination' or 'deviation'. In this perspective, luxury represents a radical shift from the natural way of life, towards the excess that luxury represents (Zecchi, 2015). On the other hand, 'luxatio' means 'distance' and thus, luxury also represents something distant, which is not available and meant for all (Kapferer, 2012b). Overall, luxury has always been a representation of a perfect and separate world, giving people a deep sense of pleasure while simultaneously sending an external message of where in the societal hierarchy the person stands (Kapferer, 2012b). In fact, the concept of luxury has been present throughout history, it represented power and wealth among the dominant class. According to Kapferer (1997), that is the aim of luxury, as it is meant to make people stand out from the ordinary. Today, the modern conception has evolved from the initial origins, as the prestige of luxury is finding its roots in the sophistication of the individual taste, rather than exclusively relying on the rarity of the object in itself (Kapferer, 2015). Therefore luxury can assume two different connotations, from one side the light of beauty and dream, while on the other side the excess as a deviation from what the human being originally is (Zecchi, 2015).

Even though the overall concept of luxury is rather clear, the academic world still lacks a proper definition of luxury that is globally accepted, which in turn makes it problematic to define luxury brands (Kapferer, 1998; Kapferer & Bastien, 2012; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004; Yeoman, 2011). This is largely due to the fact that luxury is said to be influenced by a high degree of subjectivity, therefore, what is considered to be luxury for one person, might not be luxury for another (Kapferer, 1997; Kapferer and Laurent, 2016). However, from an economic perspective, what seems to have the highest price/quality relationship is said to be luxury. Thus, luxury brands are those that "have constantly been able to justify a high price, i.e. significantly higher than the price of products with comparable tangible functions" (McKinsey report, 1990 in Kapferer, 1997, p. 252) However, some claim this perspective is too narrow and refrains from capturing any emotional aspects (Kapferer, 1997). Perhaps a better overview is provided when understanding the difference between the contemporary notion of luxury and the historical meaning. Historically speaking, luxury was much about extraordinary craftsmanship without an official label on it, as well as distinguishing between social classes. In contemporary contexts, the concept of luxury has been further developed and today it is difficult to imagine luxury without branding (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). According to Kapferer and Bastien (2012, p. 141), "luxury objects are objects of luxury brands", with the only exception of diamonds that can be perceived as luxury due to their size and purity, despite the absence of a brand. Furthermore, marketing and branding research discuss luxury brands as those that crave a distinct management and customer understanding (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012), while simultaneously reflecting the 'rarity principle' that entails creating and maintaining the image of being rare and special (Kapferer, 2012a). However, luxury brands are not comparable to each other and thus, Chanel is not Saint Laurent. They are more than simply objects, they provide good taste which is reflected through their internal programme, way of life and culture. Hence, luxury brands are not customer oriented, but rather a promotion of their own standards. At the same time, they are able to provide a sense of extra pleasure on symbolical level (Kapferer, 1997). In other words, luxury brands are about elevation as they make people feel elevated. Thus, people buying luxury goods feel as if they are placed higher in the society than others as they hope the magic and aura established by the creator of the brand is transmitting to themselves. By those means, they feel as if they are part of the community that the creator has built (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). From a purely philosophical perspective, the intensity of meaning embodied into luxury can be compared to the notion of 'why' drawn by Sinek (2009), in which leaders and organizations are inspired by a strong and noble reason. Kapferer and Bastien (2012) emphasized the fact that luxury is capable of going beyond the simple definitions, as luxury is never comparative. In this perspective, luxury is also driven by a strong ideal, capable of resembling the 'raison d'etre' behind every product.

3.1.1 Attributes of luxury brands

Despite some unclarity concerning the definition of luxury brands, scholars have still highlighted some elements and characteristics typical for these brands. Okonkwo (2007) propose ten core elements: innovation and uniqueness, superior quality, exclusive production, a heritage of extraordinary craftsmanship, disciplined distribution, strong brand identity, global reputation, premium and high prices, high visibility, and emotional appeal. Phau and Prendergast (2000) arrived to a very similar conclusion and conclude that there are four key attributes of luxury brands: a recognized and clear brand identity, superior quality, brand awareness and exclusivity. In a similar manner, Beverland (2004) highlights six elements, which are: "product integrity, value driven emergence, culture, history, marketing, and endorsements" (p. 453). Furthermore, Fionda and Moore (2008) identified nine elements that contribute to the creation of luxury brands: a clear brand identity, marketing communications, product integrity, design signature, premium price, exclusivity, heritage, environment and service, and culture. Overall, luxury brands are largely characterized by the sense of magic that is created through aspects such as devotion to and adoration of their heritage and history, as well as demonstrating the ability to survive even after the death of their founders (Kapferer, 2012b). Furthermore, they put much emphasis on the fact that luxury brands have the tendency of making the retail experience into a point where the sense of an aura is transmitted from creator to consumer, thus creating an experience similar to a ritual (Kapferer, 2012b; Sinha, 2011; Cervellon and Coudriet, 2013).

When acknowledging the previously mentioned studies, it is clear that researchers agree on the attributes that luxury brands consist of. It is through these attributes that luxury brands produce the highest level of the intangible added value to their customers (Kapferer, 2012b).

3.1.2 Managing luxury brands

According to Kapferer and Bastien (2012) luxury brands pursuit a distinct way of management. The authors listed a set of rules called the ‘anti-laws of marketing’ in which they explain all the aspects that are setting luxury apart when it comes to management. For example, luxury brands see the need to protect customers from non-customers, meaning they create distance whereby entrance barriers are put up for those who are not wanted to enter. This rule goes against the marketing for ordinary brands that are usually aiming at including as many customers as possible. This exclusivity can also be reflected in the extremely high prices and selective distribution that luxury brands offer (Kapferer, 1997). In fact, the average price must continuously increase as the middle class also constantly gets richer (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). By these means, luxury will remain being distant and thus represent a dream for many. Furthermore, in order for luxury brands to create the image of being rare, distant and glowing, they must create the desire to own luxury among all, while only being bought by a few. In this sense, another aspect of luxury marketing highlighted by the Kapferer and Bastien (2012) is that advertisement is not meant for selling, but rather communicating the spirit of the brand. This strategy is coherent with the fact that brand awareness must be greater than the actual offering, thus making the supply smaller than the demand (Kapferer, 1997). A part of the strategy is actually to communicate to the ones who are not the real target, in order to make luxury brands recognized by non-owners as well (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). Kapferer (1997) also claims that if a luxury brand no longer protects its niche customers, it will become democratized as it will be accessible to more people. Hence, the luxury brand loses its magic and glow. Furthermore, in their book about luxury brands, Kapferer and Bastien (2012) emphasize the importance for these brands to keep full control of the entire value chain, otherwise the true quality that luxury entails, cannot be offered. The authors also highlight that it is important to keep distribution under control, making the retail experience unique and exclusive. By these means, luxury brands can develop personal relationships and offer one-on-one experiences for customers, making them feel exclusive and as if they were VIP. In fact, the whole retail experience is a large part of luxury brands, whereby the purchase experience represents an event similar to a ritual (Sinha, 2011; Cervellon and Coudriet, 2013). Kapferer and Bastien (2012) even clam that to issue licenses is a big no as it would mean losing control and increasing the risk of consumers having a bad experience with the brand. Additionally, the authors point out that luxury brands do not advertise to sell more, they rather advertise to communicate a dream. Lastly, they mention that delocalizing production is not an option, as luxury represents the local culture and is thus its ambassador.

3.1.3 Differentiating between luxury and non-luxury brands

What separates luxury brands from non-luxury brands is the sense of magic (Kapferer, 2012b). However, what is truly said to be luxury has shown to have different meanings. Some refer to luxury as a means of a high priced item, whereby the price is much higher than the physical attributes of the item actually represent and are worth. Furthermore, many people talk about luxury and premium, as if they were interchangeable. However, according to Kapferer (2012b) this is a mistake because luxury is special and requires an understanding of its function and role in our society. This means that there has to be a clear distinction between premium and luxury brands, as premium brands are involved in a mass production that also contemplates the attention to comparisons and specification of the products, whereas luxury is highly exclusive and never comparative to other products (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). However, this view may be perceived as too conservative for other scholars. For example, as Vigneron and Johnson (2004) state, a Cadillac and a Rolls-Royce can both be part of the luxury segment within the automotive industry, although most of the consumers would agree to say that a Rolls-Royce is more “luxurious” than a Cadillac. These types of comparisons are very tricky, since the degree of luxuriousness is also highly dependent on the context in which luxury is placed, along with the people involved (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). Even water or some other types of natural goods can be perceived as luxury, given the right conditions (Kemp, 1998), while the same brand can be perceived as luxury and non-luxury at the same time. This is depending on the sectors in which a particular brand is operating, such as Rolls-Royce, a celebrated luxury brand that is not perceived to be luxury within the aviation industry for the engines production (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). Among the many variables to understand where luxury takes place, Kapferer and Bastien (2012) suggests that there are two dimensions: the luxury for oneself and the luxury for the others, in which the first is mostly related to the hedonistic ambitions, and the second is defined by the social expectations and the desire of reaching a higher level of social stratification. These two dimensions can be accountable in defining the intentional aspects that separate luxury from non-luxury. Following this perspective, other scholars propose a model with three dimensions based on functionalism, experientialism and symbolic interactionism (Vickers and Renand, 2003). These three dimensions are outlined from the conviction that the most prominent value that is defining the luxury brands is psychological, while the consumption is highly defined by a distinctive mix of social and individual cues (Vickers and Renand, 2003; Christodoulides and Michaelidou, 2009).

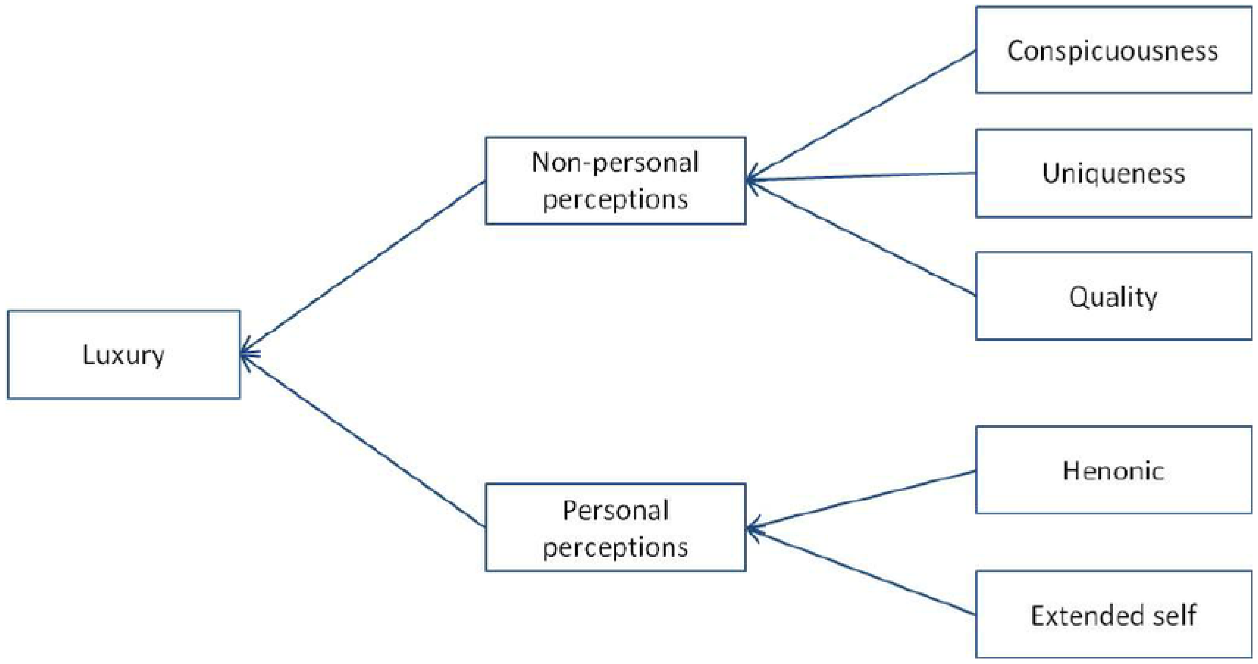

Figure 2: *Framework of Luxury Brand (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004, p. 488)*

By taking into account these psychological and subjective variables, Vigneron and Johnson (2004) have developed the Brand Luxury Index (BLI) based on three non-personal perceptions and two personal perceptions. The three non-personal are 'Conspicuousness' (expressing people's status), 'Uniqueness' (expressing people's individuality) and 'Quality' (expressing the prestige of the product). The two personal perceptions that are 'Hedonic' (personal pleasure) and 'extended self' (self-identification with the brand). Through these five elements, consumers are developing their reasons to perceive a product as luxury or non-luxury. As Vigneron and Johnson (2004) further state, all brands can ultimately be distinguished in this dichotomy, between luxury and non-luxury.

3.2 Brand heritage

To start with, Balmer (2013) who is a well-known author within the field of corporate brands, describes 'heritage' by referring to Heathcote (2011) and Macdonald (2006). According to them, the word 'heritage' originates from the French language and means to 'inherit', and is inevitably associated with continuity and persistency matters. In the same article, Balmer himself, mentions heritage to be "a historically-rooted construct" (2013, p. 302), but still very much a contemporary concern. Balmer, Greyser and Urde (2006) also highlight heritage as a vital part of corporate brands in their article about the Swedish Monarchy. The concept of brand heritage was further explored by Urde, Balmer and Greyser (2007). In their article, they define it as "a dimension of a brand's identity found in its track record, longevity, core values, use of symbols and particularly in an organizational belief that its history is important" (p. 4). In a similar manner although slightly redefined, Hakala, Lätti and Sandberg (2011) refer to brand heritage as "a composite concept incorporating the history of the brand in numbers of years of operation and the power of the brand story over time, as well as the consistency and continuity of the core values, the product brands and the visual symbols" (p. 454). Interestingly, there is often the case of confusion concerning the term 'heritage' and that it would be substitutable with the term 'history'. However, while history represents the past, heritage rather represents a construct that makes the past relevant for contemporary situations. Hakala, Lätti and Sandberg (2011) claim that all brands have a history, whereas Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) continue with the statement that only some of those brands have a heritage, and even fewer brands actually use their heritage as a valuable part of the corporate brand. Hence, the heritage remains hidden for those who do not use it. Furthermore, as Cooper, Merrilees and Miller (2015) point out, brands that strategically make the decision to allot their history to their identity and thus use their heritage, is what the authors refer to as heritage brands, while the ones who do not are referred to historical brands. The concept of heritage brands will be further explained later on.

3.2.1 The value of brand heritage

Other researchers such as Aaker (1996; 2004) and Keller (1993) refer to heritage as an essential value driver and leverage for a brand, as well as an important tool for building a brand's identity. Urde, Balmer and Greyser (2007) further argue for several reasons why companies with a heritage should emphasize on it. First of all, a brand's heritage is an excellent tool for differentiation and offers great possibility to establish a unique positioning, which in turn can result in a competitive advantage. Thus, enabling the brand to demand higher prices and maintaining loyalty among those customers who value the brand's heritage. Second of all, heritage serves a dimension of making the brand credible and authentic, thus stand out in the eyes of the consumers. Thirdly, a brand's heritage can play a crucial role in building relationships with a variety of stakeholders. This involves anything from internal pride of being a part of the brand and attracting employees in recruitment, to receiving support during hard times when the company is struggling. At large, the authors point out the value of emphasizing on heritage as brand's heritage is difficult for competitors to copy, thus allowing the brand to be unique. Furthermore, Wiedmann, Hennings, Schmidt and Wuestefeld (2011a) emphasize the value of brand heritage as it is crucial in terms of consumer behavior and brand perception. According to their study, consumers find it less risky to buy products from the given brands, as they are seen to be more credible and perceived to represent traditional values, which is perceived to be important during times of uncertainty and financial instability. Thus, the construct of brand heritage serves as a comfort and security for consumers. Additionally, Wiedmann, Hennings, Schmidt and Wuestefeld (2011b) point out that those brands who have made the strategic decision to actively use their heritage, also witness consumers being less price sensitive, as well as more willing to recommend and buy the products of the given brand.

3.2.2 Attributes for defining heritage brands

In the article by Balmer, Greyser and Urde (2006), the authors introduce the concept of corporate heritage brands and note four aspects that are specific for them. According to the authors, heritage brands include all time frames; the past, the present and the future; they represent a stable point of reference in a changing context; they are constantly linked to a place; and they bring value by developing positive emotions among the public. Furthermore, the article ‘Corporate brands with a heritage’ by Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) also takes the time to clarify elements of heritage brands. First of all, the authors claim that it is relevant to distinguish between a heritage brand and a brand with a heritage. According to them, an example of the former is Patek Philippe, while Tag Heuer represents the latter type of brand. The authors define a heritage brand as “one with a positioning and a value proposition based on its heritage” (p. 5). In this case, Patek Philippe is referred to as a heritage brand as its brand identity and positioning is largely highlighted by its history, thus using it as a key component. On the other hand, this is not the case for Tag Heuer, as it strategically refrains from emphasizing its heritage as a part of its brand identity. With this in mind, Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) emphasize how heritage brands represent a distinctive branding category. First of all, they are “distinct in that they are about both history and history in the making” (p. 7). This means that heritage brands not only are embodying history in a static sense of past, but they are using history in order to write the future. Furthermore, the authors describe that heritage brands are defined with the help of their own criteria, while also requiring a certain approach for adequate management.

The criteria for defining heritage brands is explained by using what Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) refer to as a brand’s ‘heritage quotient’ (HQ), which consists of five elements; track record, longevity, core values, use of symbols and history being important to the corporate identity. These elements represent the level of heritage that exist or that can be activated in a brand. Let us briefly describe each element as discussed by the authors. Firstly, a company’s track record concerns the performance, thus proof, of the company’s ability to deliver value to all stakeholders (both customers and non-customers) over a longer period of time. This includes a company living up to its promises and values over time, such as Volvo always representing safety. Secondly, longevity regards the actual time that the company has been active and having the “family name on the door” is a good example of it. However, as highlighted in the article, longevity also “reflects a consistent demonstration of other heritage elements” (p. 10), hence newer and younger brands can also qualify as being heritage brands despite operating for a short time only. Thirdly, a company’s core values that have been guiding its choices and behavior can also represent a part of the valuable heritage. This in turn, can be externally communicated as the brand promise, while representing the mindset internally. Fourthly, using symbols in communication can represent another aspect of heritage brands. These symbols can be expressed in terms of logos, patterns and certain looks, such as the Burberry print. These symbols can in turn evolve into representing a standalone identity due to their deeper meaning. In the article, the authors mention the Olympic circles as an example of this case. Fifthly, the last element includes history as an important part of the identity as it influences how they currently operate, as well as their future choices. The authors once again discuss Patek Philippe as a good example, whereby the brand constantly communicates its operation “since 1839” and additionally uses its heritage as a vital part of its advertising and website. However, as noted by

Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007), all elements do not necessarily have to reflect in the brand to the same extent. The more elements that are present, the higher the heritage quotient also is. It is worth noting that most companies do not fulfill all five elements of the HQ and therefore heritage might not be meaningful concerning every element. Although, it is still possible for them to be classified as heritage brands.

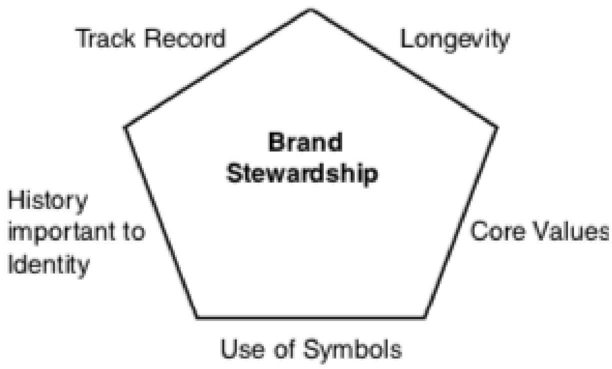

Figure 3: Dimensions of brand heritage (Urde, Greyser and Balmer, 2007, p. 9)

Although much emphasis so far has been on the study by Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007), I would also like to highlight other studies that have investigated heritage as a vital part of brands. For example, Boccardi, Ciappei, Zollo and Laudano (2016) point out that some brands are characterized by a high level of heritage through elements such as brand museums, high quality values, and honorable traditions. In their article, the luxury brand Gucci is an example of this kind. Although they refrain from directly referring to brands as heritage brands, we see no reason why their example of Gucci, would not classify as a heritage brands. Furthermore, while Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) distinguish between 'track record', 'importance of history' and 'core values' as elements of the HQ, Hakala, Lätti and Sandberg (2011) claim that the element of track record overlaps with the elements of history and core values. Furthermore, they prefer to use the terms consistency and continuity, instead of longevity like Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) do. As such, Hakala, Lätti and Sandberg (2011) propose brand heritage to consist of four elements; history (number of years of operation and the power of brand story over time), core values and symbols (consistency and continuity over the years), and product brands (taking into account brand heritage on a product level as well, meaning product brands then and now). However, these elements are still largely similar to the previously discussed heritage quotient by Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007).

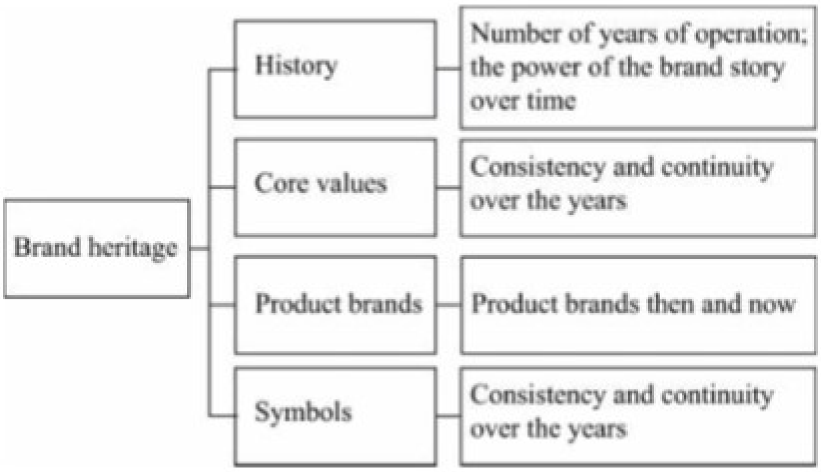

Figure 4: Dimensions of brand heritage #2 (Hakala, Lätti and Sandberg, 2011, p. 450)

3.2.3 Managing brand heritage

After defining the elements of a heritage brand, it is necessary to discuss how the heritage can be made into a leverage for the brand. According to Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007), managing a brand's heritage involves three areas: uncover, activate, and nurture. In order to uncover the heritage, the authors recommend for brands to explore their own track record. This is because they see it as the most valuable element of brand heritage, as it highlights the company's ability to deliver value to its customers over time. To be put in their own words: "We advise a company looking for heritage to examine its origins, articulated statements and long-held agreed-upon values. It should also try to find what customers have appreciated about the company over the years." (p. 13).

After uncovering the heritage, it is up to the company to activate if it wants to. According to Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007), the main tools for activating the heritage involves the history itself, communication and product design. Furthermore, Dion and Mazzalovo (2016) studied the concept of reviving "sleeping beauties" (brands with sustain potential value and brand equity, but that are no longer active on the market) by emphasizing the brand's heritage. In other words, the authors argue that forgotten brands with a heritage have the possibility to come back to life, thus transforming the brand into a heritage brand. This goes hand in hand with the so called activation of a brand's heritage that Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) explain in their study. Dion and Mazzalovo (2016) conclude that there are three strategies for awakening a sleeping beauty: 'retro-branding', 'brand copying' and 'brand revitalization', whereby the first strategy emphasizes the heritage as a core component of the value proposition, unlike the other two. Overall, when reviving a sleeping brand by drawing on the heritage, the authors point out the necessity of focusing on symbolic and esthetic aspects of the brand in a similar manner like Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007). This includes dimensions such as the original place and location, people associated with the brand's past, product features or historical events.

However, after uncovering and activating, it is crucial for a heritage brand to protect the heritage. Therefore, what Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) refer to as 'brand stewardship', becomes inevitable. As they see it, mismanaging the heritage can lead to an exploitation of the brand identity, as the heritage often entails decades-old core values that represent an integral part of the brand. Thus, they present four keys to managing a heritage brand. These include responsibility, long-term continuity, maintaining trust and adaptability to remain relevant over time. Cooper, Merrilees and Miller (2015) also study the management of heritage brands. They propose a framework including the four elements: brand essence, brand continuity, brand protection and brand renewal. According to the authors, brand heritage is a vital component of brand essence, whereby the heritage often represents inherited knowledge and expertise, as well as a major component of a brand's identity. Therefore, these are the tools for remaining relevant on the market. As for brand continuity, the authors highlight the importance for heritage brands to be consistent concerning areas such as quality and communication, as well as taking care of factors that must be legally protected. Furthermore, they emphasize consistency of a brand's core values is essential for the aspect of longevity. Concerning brand protection, the authors emphasize the overall necessity of protecting the brand's heritage equivalently to Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007). Lastly, the element of brand renewal captures the importance of heritage brands to constantly aim for improvement in order to ensure their longevity. However, Cooper, Merrilees and Miller (2015) also point out that heritage brands should refrain from making any radical changes to not exploit the heritage.

On the other hand, Dion and Borraz (2015) explore the concept of heritage stores in the context of heritage brands, and how these heritage stores can protect and nurture the heritage of luxury brands by creating the sense of sacredness. More specifically, the study highlights heritage as an essential component of luxury brands and how their historic stores that they call 'heritage stores' play a crucial role in managing the brand heritage. The authors define heritage stores as "locations that lie at the heart of a brand's identity and history" (p. 82), in other words, the place of origin. As an example, Dion and Borraz (2015) mention Dior's heritage store on Avenue Montaigne in Paris as this is where Christian Dior himself was, where the most extravagant and unique clothing pieces are found and where the first fashion show was held. All things contributing to making the store into a mythical location.

To summarize the previous literature on brand heritage that has been discussed so far, I would like to emphasize that it is an active choice to activate the brand heritage, if the brand possesses one in the first place. Hence, the importance of realizing the difference between heritage brands and brands with a heritage. Furthermore, it is also crucial to carefully nurture and manage the heritage if it becomes activated. Otherwise, the brand risks harming its own brand identity. Overall, there are certain elements that indicate whether or not the brand is (or has the possibility to become) a heritage brand. These elements include track record (ability to constantly deliver value to stakeholders), longevity (number of active years), core values, the importance of history (communicating number of years of operation, emphasizing heritage on the website or as a part of advertisement, honoring old traditions, or having brand museums and so forth), and the use of symbols. These elements are represented in the heritage quotient by Urde, Greyser and Balmer (2007) and will be largely used in this thesis further on.

3.3 Brand authenticity

The word ‘authentic’ derives from the Latin and Greek words ‘authenticus’ and ‘athentikos’, and means trustworthy and complies to something original, rather than representing something false or an imitation of something (Cappannelli & Cappannelli, 2004). Authenticity is often linked with something being sincere and original, and people tend to crave for authentic experiences, whether it concerns one’s own individuality, the purchasing of goods, or one’s spare time activities (Fine, 2003). As today’s consumers constantly are searching for authentic experiences and brands (Fritz, Schoenmueller and Bruhn, 2017) and today’s marketplace continuously becomes more homogenous (Arnould and Price, 2000; Beverland and Farelly, 2010), authenticity has been an interesting concept for marketing scholars to explore. Researchers even argue that authenticity has grown to be a crucial element of a brand’s identity, as all brand owners and managers want to establish strong brands (Aaker, 1996). In fact, “the search for authenticity is one of the cornerstones of contemporary marketing” (Brown et al., 2003, p. 21), and for some brands the claim of being authentic is fundamental (Alexander, 2009). More specifically, within the marketing and branding research, authenticity has largely been built on the study by Grayson and Martinec (2004), which highlights two types of authenticity: indexical (distinguishing the real thing from copies) and iconic (consumers’ beliefs about how a brand should look). However, when it comes to brand authenticity as such, Beverland (2005; 2006) is one of the most well-known authors, who explored authenticity as an attribute of an object by highlighting certain elements contributing to authenticity. At large, brand authenticity is often associated with desirable aspects of brands as it entails them being perceived as more genuine and real (Alexander, 2009), as well as more sincere, credible, unique, and withstand high integrity than non-authentic brands (Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland and Farrelly, 2014; Morhart et al., 2015).

3.3.1 The value of brand authenticity

Brand authenticity is undoubtedly an important facet for brands, considering today’s market that requires the need to stand out in order to survive on the competitive market, where the supply of brands often is greater than the consumer demand. According to some of the most widely known brand specialists, authenticity is a crucial element for establishing and maintaining successful brands (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1993). Thus, brand authenticity comes with its many benefits and previous scholars indicate how it offers both brand-based and consumer-based value (Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland and Farrelly, 2014). More specifically, “authentic brands deliver the highest consumer- and brand-derived value compared to less authentic brands” (p. 1215).

Authenticity enables brands to set themselves apart from more commercialized brands, consequently establishing differentiation in the minds of the consumers (Beverland 2005; Beverland and Farelly, 2010). In fact, authenticity is said to be one of the main components of shaping a brand’s unique identity, which in turn is crucial in order to build successful brands (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1993). Fritz, Schoenmueller and Bruhn (2017) also point out the importance of authenticity for marketers, as perceived brand authenticity among consumers has many positive consequences for the brand, such as increased brand loyalty with stronger emotional bonds between brand and consumer, as well as consumers' greater tolerance for and acceptance of bad experiences with the brands. Consumers' purchase intentions and their willingness to pay a higher price, as well as a positive impact on brand trust and credibility are among other benefits (Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland and Farrelly, 2014). Overall, brand authenticity can have a positive influence on corporate reputation and performance as it allows brands to obtain an exclusive position in the minds and hearts of the consumers, which in turn is hard for competitors to imitate (Napoli, Dickinson-Delaporte and Beverland, 2016). Thus, perceived brand authenticity tends to display brands as genuine and good-hearted actors that are not only driven by profit.

3.3.2 Attributes for defining authentic brands

As previously mentioned, Beverland (2005; 2006) is without a doubt one of the most recognized researchers within the field of brand authenticity. In his studies he explored luxury wine brands and highlighted certain attributes that contribute to the creation of authenticity. In the former study, Beverland explains that a sincere story is crucial for authenticity. A sincere story is created by emphasizing elements concerning production, craftsmanship and location. Simultaneously, establishing a sincere story requires refraining from engaging in modern marketing activities. In the latter study, Beverland (2006) explores authenticity among luxury wines in a commercial setting. He pinpoints on six attributes that are possible elements of creating authenticity. These are: "heritage and pedigree, stylistic consistency, quality commitments, relationship to place, method of production, and downplaying commercial considerations" (p. 253). Let me further explain what Beverland describes about each attribute. The attribute 'heritage and pedigree' entails brands using their history as a part of their branding strategy. The second attribute, 'stylistic consistency', involves the fact that brands should not evolve their products too fast, especially not if it is to simply please customer needs or following what is fashionable. 'Quality commitments', which is the third attribute, involves elements that justify the higher prices, such as luxury wines using their own grapes, careful selection of the grapes and the time the wine is cellared. Regarding the attribute of 'relationship to place', brands should emphasize their place of origin. Furthermore, the fifth attribute, which is 'method of production', entails know-how, skills, ingredient transparency and the fact that the wine in this case is produced in small batches, rather than being mass-produced. Lastly, the sixth attribute that is 'downplaying commercial considerations', involves brands refraining from engaging in what is considered to be modern marketing activities. Hence, not pursuing promotion to the mass audience.

The academic world has also witnessed other scholars exploring brand authenticity. For example, Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland and Farrelly (2014) studied authenticity from a consumer perspective and concluded that three factors are significant for brand authenticity: sincerity, heritage, and quality commitment. However, according to the study, these are not only drivers of brand authenticity from a consumer perspective, but also from an organizational perspective. In this case, heritage refers to the brand's connection to its history and past, sincerity involves the brand's ability to remain true to its values and identity, and quality commitment entails brands having high quality standards. Furthermore, Alexander (2009) explored the creation and maintenance of brand auras in the context of mass-market products such as beer from a management perspective. In his analysis, the validity of Beverland's six authenticity attributes are evaluated, whereby the results conclude with highlighting three of the six attributes as being more compelling than the rest. These were: downplaying commercial motives, relationship to place, and stylistic consistency. On the other hand, Boccardi, Ciappei, Zollo and Laudano (2016) explored authenticity among luxury fashion brands by connecting heritage and mythopoesis. The study argues that the level of authenticity results from the tension between the attributes heritage and mythopoesis. Furthermore, Guèvremont (2018) investigated authenticity in the context of a young brand. Even though a brand's history and past previously have been significantly linked to the creation of authenticity, this study finds that longevity is not necessarily part of the crucial elements to create brand authenticity. Thus, new brands can also be seen as authentic. On the other hand, brand transparency and brand proximity were shown to be of crucial importance. These in turn, are significantly related to the sincerity that the previously mentioned studies suggest to create brand authenticity. Additionally, Fritz, Shoenmueller and Bruhn (2017) studied the antecedents, formation, and consequences of authenticity among a wide range of brands across various industries, such as Birkenstock, Google, Lufthansa, Apple, Aldi, H&M, McDonald's and so forth. The research highlights brand authenticity to be closely related to the brand's past. Moreover, a brand's virtuousness, the employees representing the brand and their passion, as well as the self-identification with the brand among consumers were shown to contribute to brand authenticity. The authors also state that a brand's ability to remain consistent and true to itself, is strongly contributing to brand authenticity. I believe this is actively linked to sincerity, which has been highlighted previously. This also strengthens the statement by Urde (2019), who claims that authenticity can also be captured by truly believing in yourself and what you do.

3.3.3 Managing brand authenticity

The previously highlighted literature concerning authenticity, indicates that the concept of brand authenticity is an active choice for brands to emphasize on, or at least to aim for. As Beverland (2006) pointed out, authenticity is created through six possible elements (heritage, consistent style and design, quality commitments, production method, relation to place, and devaluing commercial considerations). Thus, these elements indicate that brand authenticity can be activated, just like brand heritage can be activated (as previously discussed). In other words, all brands have the opportunity to choose for themselves if they emphasize their history, if they want to maintain their style and design, how they want to produce their items, how they market and promote their products, and so forth.

However, brands that are considered to be authentic, must also manage to maintain this status. According to Beverland and Luxton (2005), the key to constantly maintain the image of being authentic, is for brands to engage in a decoupling strategy that entails being rooted in the past while simultaneously remaining relevant for contemporary contexts. Or as Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland and Farrelly (2014) state, "firms must act sincerely, be committed to providing enduring high quality products and services that are reflective of a brand's heritage, without deviating substantially from the core attributes on which the brand was initially built" (p. 1096).

Napoli, Dickinson-Delaporte and Beverland (2016) even argue that there are four different management strategies depending on the level of authenticity and generated consumer value. According to the authors, a germination strategy is relevant when the authenticity level is low and authenticity is mainly created by being perceived as a sincere brand that acts with love for the product. In this case, the strategy entails forming a strong emotional bond with customers and thus gain their trust. When the brand possesses a moderate level of authenticity by committing to quality and emphasizing on its heritage, the authors recommend a cultivation strategy, which includes the brand highlighting skills and expertise, as well as employing traditional and honored production methods. Brands with an aura of authenticity are mainly driven by sincerity together with quality commitments. In this case, the authors mention a consolidation strategy that brings together authenticity attributes that brands have direct control of, and thus ensure these are stuck to. Lastly, Napoli, Dickinson-Delaporte and Beverland (2016) discuss the scenario when authenticity is at the highest level, wherein quality commitments, a strong heritage and sincerity are all three in place. At this point, the authors highlight a preservation strategy that continuously works to deliver constant value to the consumers.

To conclude this part about brand authenticity, I would like to emphasize that the authors largely agree on the attributes that contribute in creating authenticity. The most common elements were sincerity (including relationship to place, production method, downplaying commercial motives, remaining true to oneself), history and heritage, quality commitments and stylistic consistency. As these elements are within control of the brand itself, it can be stated that authenticity can be consciously strived for or activated. However, just like a brand's heritage, authenticity is also necessary to nurture and brands should therefore constantly aim at being perceived as authentic, and thus stay relevant and unique on the market.

4 Empirical Results

In order to provide a clear overview of the research, each company will be shortly presented, along with a general corporate history, and an overview of the company alignment with the elements of authenticity, heritage and luxury. This section serves as a preface for the presentation of the four luxury categories revealed in the conceptual framework. On this note, each company has been selected in order to highlight the motion of the brands, as all these companies have been shifting within their market position, in order to approach the boundaries of luxury in different ways.

4.1 Louis Vuitton

When it comes to luxury, Louis Vuitton is one of the most popular and recognizable brands. As stated on Louis Vuitton's official website, the story started in the year 1837, when Louis Vuitton moved to Paris to start his apprenticeship for Monsieur Maréchal at his atelier. Louis worked there as an artisan for 17 years before he opened his own workshop in 1854. As such, Louis Vuitton was established as a company. According to the history, his true craftsmanship skills and expertise would quickly lead to an expansion of his operations and some decades later, when his son Georges had inherited the company, Louis Vuitton already had more than 200 employees (Louis Vuitton, n.d.-a., online). Today, Louis Vuitton is the most valuable luxury brand with almost 10 billion USD revenues, under the division of LVMH, the largest luxury conglomerate (Forbes, 2018, Online). Other brands under the umbrella of LVMH include, among many others, Chanel, Christian Dior, Fendi and Bulgari. Louis Vuitton is constantly introducing new collections and partnerships with artists and other brands, such as the one with Supreme in 2017 (Louis Vuitton, 2017, online). As a luxury brand, Louis Vuitton is pursuing the strategy they refer to as an "exclusive distribution network", whereby their goods can only be purchased in Louis Vuitton's own stores, which are staffed by Louis Vuitton, or on their own official website. According to Louis Vuitton, this is a part of the strategy to protect the brand (Louis Vuitton, n.d.-c.). As a result, their distribution network entails exclusive flagship stores all over the world, across the most important and visited cities (Louis Vuitton, n.d.-g.).

4.2 Pabst Blue Ribbon

Pabst Blue Ribbon is an American lager beer established in 1844 and located in Los Angeles. It is a very well recognized brand in U.S. especially due to its cultural status, as it is very popular among the hipster subculture, following the collaborations with Vans, O'Neill and Santa Cruz Skateboards (Pabst, n.d., online). Pabst Brewing Company is among the oldest beer companies in the U.S and it is the representative brand of the largest American owned brewery with over 30 beers in their portfolio (Pabst, n.d., online). Pabst Blue Ribbon is positioned in the low-cost area of the market, by being easily affordable and reachable in the supermarkets. Despite its long tradition as a cheap and inexpensive beer, in 2012 the company decided to expand its presence into the Chinese market by launching the Pabst Blue Ribbon 1844, a highly luxury beer selling for 44 USD a bottle. The beer is said to have a different recipe than the original American version, while the production method is celebrating a fermentation in wooden barrels, like the premium spirits. The packaging is totally different from the traditional aluminum can that American customers are used to find in the supermarkets, as it truly resembles a luxury product. The bottle retails in the 75ml format (similar to the Champagne bottles), and shows a golden cap in contrast with the minimal dark glass, with a strong accent on the "1844", in order to highlight the old tradition, with a label on the back of the product suggesting to serve the beer in champagne flutes. This strong reposition strategy towards the Chinese market has been helped by the fact that many Chinese consumers didn't know the brand before, and its previous connotations in America (Grushka, 2014, Online). Moreover, the Chinese market has been presenting concrete opportunities of expansion in the alcoholic beverages market (Nelson, 2011, Online).

4.3 Levi's

Levi's, although not classified as "luxury", is standing as the most iconic and famous denim brand. Levi's was founded in 1853 by German immigrant Levi Strauss (Levi Strauss & Co, n.d.-a., Online). The brand became iconic, as an American symbol. Each pair of denim is carrying the details that are characterizing its strong recognizability. The red tab on the backside of the denim, the motive on the back pockets, the logo on the back label (that has not changed since its birth) and the buttons; not to mention the relaunch of products that have become iconic parts of the brand, such as the trucker jacket and the 501. Levi's has been a recognizable brand throughout the modern history, as it has been worn by actors, Nobel prizes and scientists like Albert Einstein (Levi Strauss & Co, 2018, online). However, Levi's is a relevant case study because it shows how a strong market leader company can face a big decline, and how the crisis can be solved with a cohesive renovation. The crisis of Levi's started in the 90s, when several denim brands started to reach the global market, not only in the high fashion sector, but also in the low-cost segment, thanks to the more competitive production costs in Asia; in this period Levi's was operating without a clear marketing strategy, as it was expanding into several new targets without being consistent to its roots; moreover, some scandals related to the manufacturing processes started to emerge. The company closed 11 plants in four states and laid off nearly 6400 employees, while moving the entire production from the U.S. to South-East Asia. Sales went down by 40% in the next 8 years and the company accumulated a massive amount of debt (Palmieri, 2017; Beeketing, n.d., Online).

Everything changed in 2011 when Chip Bergh (28 years' experience as brand manager at P&G) was named CEO of the company. The brand invested a considerable amount of money in order to revamp its heritage while focusing on innovation and sustainability (Bergh, 2018). "We've got scale, heritage, authenticity, awareness and global reach, but you need to have agility, focus, innovation and optimism", the CEO said (Beeketing, n.d., Online). The new flow of inspiration lead to the campaign "Live in Levi's" in 2014, celebrating the cultural relevance of the brand, while featuring the most prominent celebrities of our time. Meanwhile, the high management staff was changed, in order to renew the spirit of the company (Bergh, 2018). At the same time, the "innovation lab" where all the new collections were designed and planned, was transferred from Turkey to the San Francisco's HQ, in order to have a more integrated strategy. A lot of emphasis has been put into the retail stores in order to make Levi's a leading Omni channel retailer, with a sort of "boutique experience" while offering the customization for many denim products, in order to reach a more exclusive-oriented target (Bergh, 2018). At the same time, many important stores started to hold events such as concerts and workshops to expand the cultural and social relevance of the brand. Moreover, Levi's managed to expand its reach into the luxury sector, as it introduced the "Levi's made and crafted" collection, offering the highest quality and the best manufacture process in a sensibly higher price range.

4.4 H&M

H&M is a worldwide synonymous of fast fashion. The first store opened in Sweden back in 1947, with the goal of proposing frequently updated and affordable clothes for everybody (H&M, n.d.-a., Online). After many years of expansion, it was during the 90s that the brand became truly international, following collaborations with the most famous fashion models, alias 'the big six': Elle Macpherson, Cindy Crawford, Naomi Campbell, Claudia Schiffer, Christy Turlington and Linda Evangelista (H&M, n.d.-b., Online). After expanding with many stores in Europe, America and Asia, in 2004 H&M introduced its first collaborations with various luxury brands, which started to take place on a yearly basis, in order to create limited edition collections designed by the creative director at the given luxury brand. The first brand to collaborate with H&M was Karl Lagerfeld, followed by Stella McCartney, Roberto Cavalli, Jimmy Choo, Lanvin, Versace, Marni, Maison Martin Margiela, Isabel Marant, Alexander Wang, Balmain, Kenzo and Moschino among others (H&M, n.d.-c, Online). As one of the most iconic designers the luxury fashion industry has witnessed, the late Karl Lagerfeld, who is known for his design of the iconic Chanel bag, made the decision to collaborate with H&M. By these means, he made luxury more accessible, which turned out to be a success, resulting in the collection selling out almost immediately. The collaboration between the luxury brand Karl Lagerfeld and the mass produced, cheap brand H&M, included a limited collection of clothes designed by Karl himself. The collection included t-shirts priced at 19.90 USD and a sequin jacket priced at 129 USD, among other garments that were sold at a cost representing only a fraction of what his designer clothes usually cost. The first collaboration with Karl Lagerfeld boosted H&M's sales, that globally increased by 24 percent. According to a spokesperson at H&M, a boost like this was something that the brand had never witnessed throughout its existence (The Guardian, 2004, Online).

4.5 Marimekko

The Finnish design house Marimekko is known for its colorful and unique prints that have represented the brand from the start. Marimekko's uniqueness is well-known as it has stuck to its original mission throughout time. Still today, Marimekko offers the same prints that it did already in the 1960's. Some of those prints have even become iconic and represent the symbolic prints that most people associate Marimekko with. For example, the 'tasaraita' print (even stripe), that meant "equal stripes for equal rights" and the 'unikko' print (the rebel flower), that can even be found among the tableware at Finnair flights.

Marimekko has managed to become a brand that many today perceive as luxury. First of all, Marimekko was founded at a time when Finland was still quite poor after all the wars the country had suffered from. The original mission back then, but which is still a part of Marimekko's identity, was to create colorful and happy fabrics that would bring joy to the people (Marimekko, n.d.-a., online). In addition to unique prints, Marimekko was much about offering clothes that allow people to move freely in them, which resulted in loose-fitting designs. Thus, one of the most striking moves was the launch of the "Jokapoika" shirt (every boy) in the 1950s. The same path was continued when Marimekko in 1960s launched their previously mentioned "tasaraita" collection that is still a part of their collection today. The unique styles with colorful prints and a loose fit, made Marimekko into an authentic brand from the start and resulted in a quick expansion overseas. It did not take long until Jacqueline Kennedy was seen wearing Marimekko on the cover of Sports Illustrated in 1960, after purchasing seven dresses (Marimekko, n.d.-b., online). This obviously contributed to international awareness, and simultaneously gave Marimekko a more exclusive image. With time, Marimekko became more recognized internationally and today most of its revenues come from Finland and the Asia-Pacific region where Marimekko has established a true sense of luxury.

The example of Marimekko shows how a brand with an unique and original design that makes it authentic, together with the activation of heritage can build a strong foundation for a brand to become luxury, even though that might not have been the plan from the start. Marimekko is a brand that has never changed its style and therefore it is so easily recognizable. Furthermore, Marimekko has always remained true to its original place, which is Helsinki. On top of that, it has never stopped emphasizing its history and thus, its heritage has and always will be essential.

Although Marimekko's prices are not as high as Louis Vuitton, Chanel and so forth, Marimekko can still be considered as luxury due for example to its recognizable style and original prints, and its exclusive in-store experience.

4.6 Alpine Cars

Alpine is the quintessential example of a brand that comes back through its heritage after a long period of absence, like a phoenix that emerges from the ashes. Alpine Cars is a French manufacturer of racing and sports cars established in 1955. The brand has a very solid history, well known for its lightweight cars that have achieved many victories throughout all the most important competitions (Le Mans and Sebring for example). Recognizable from the color blue that became a symbol of the brand itself. During its whole history, the brand has often been collaborating with Renault, until it was bought by it in 1973. Alpine faced a strong growth during the seventies, and the Alpine A110 (a model released during those years) became iconic. Success isn't forever though, and the brand started its decline in the second half of the 80s until the production ceased in 1995. After 22 years of absence the brand has been relaunched in 2017 by Renault with a new model, the Alpine A110.

The name of the new car is recalling the name of the most iconic car of the brand, the Alpine A110 of the 70s, which has been able to triumph in all the most important competitions. The aspect that needs to be highlighted is that Alpine has been completely focused on heritage in order to make sure that the relaunch would have been a success. This strategy is reinforced by the fact that during the absence of the brand, many fans and motor-passionate folks have been longing for the brand to come back. This high expectation created a higher awareness of the historical connotation of the brand, as Alpine is part of the heritage of France in its sports achievements.

5 The wheel framework

The framework is explained step by step starting with the identification of heritage, authenticity and luxury as the three key factors for the categorization of brands. Afterwards, through a constant support of the case studies, the research leads to the identification of eight brand categories, evenly divided between luxury and non-luxury. Eventually, once the categories are established, the model is revealed and discussed in its dynamism.

5.1 Heritage and authenticity are the key

As mentioned in the background, we have witnessed societal change and thereby seen brands adjusting and adapting. In this perspective, brand management can be framed as a process of constant mutation geared towards the changes happening in the global scenario. When combining this with the literature review, heritage and authenticity are shown to be valuable elements and therefore represent true leverage for brands. Hence, I agree with Urde, Balmer and Greyser (2007) who claim that heritage is an opportunity to uncover true value as it is hard for competitors to copy and therefore represents a competitive advantage. Furthermore, they claim that "there is no contradiction between using and expressing one's heritage and having the company be (and be seen as) up to date, cutting edge, high tech and modern" (p. 11). On the other hand, I believe that authenticity is one of the most important elements for brands as the marketplace has become so homogenous (Beverland and Farelly, 2010) and consumers constantly seek for authentic brands (Fine, 2003). Furthermore, authenticity can be vital in order to keep the brand relevant and unique in a constantly changing society (Napoli, Dickinson-Delaporte and Beverland, 2016; Athwal and Harris, 2018). Nowadays brands need to stand out, as everybody is interacting in the same few platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook and Amazon, in order to achieve visibility and authority. This type of global competition is oriented towards new types of consumers, sparring from the millennial generation to the generation Z, that are showing to be more informed and hard to please. Being able to deliver a meaning capable of going beyond the sense of the product in itself, is a challenging task that requires a high degree of expertise and awareness, from a brand perspective. For all these reasons, I decided to use authenticity and heritage as the two key elements of the developed framework, because they represent the exact formula that is able to address the challenges of branding for today and tomorrow. By these means, I was inspired to view brands in a manner that firstly categorizes them according to heritage and authenticity. Therefore, I propose the first step in the development of this conceptual model.

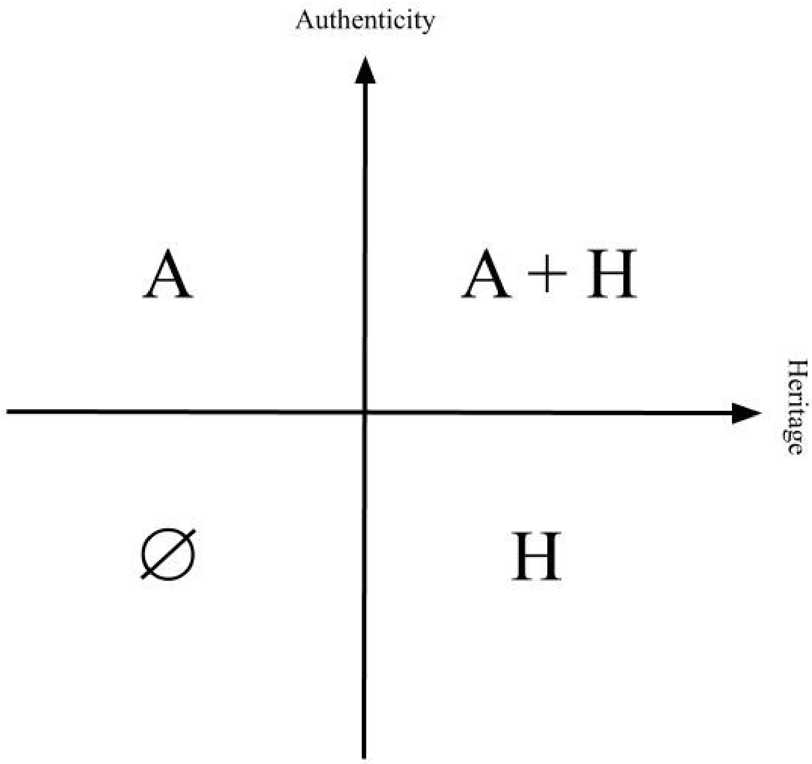

Figure 5: Categorizing brands according to heritage and authenticity

As portrayed in the model, heritage represents the horizontal axis, whereas authenticity represents the vertical axis. Thus, the first step of the model is able to identify four types of brands according to the level of heritage and authenticity that is activated: authentic brands (A), heritage brands (H), authentic and heritage brands (A+H), and finally brands lacking both elements (∅). An important factor to keep in mind is that this categorization is drawn upon the strategic activation of a certain element, rather than its absolute presence or absence. Indeed when it comes to understanding the categories, the analysis is based on perception, rather than strict numbers and factors.

From a philosophical perspective, I chose to position heritage on the horizontal axis as I was recalling a similitude of the timeline. Indeed heritage can resemble the flow of time, since it is defined by its past that becomes relevant for the present, towards the future (Urde, Balmer and Greyser, 2007). Similarly, authenticity has been placed in the vertical axis, due to its intangible nature able to convey the depths and the peaks of the brand. This type of reflection recalls the Cartesian system, as the opposition of two different elements that are colliding in order to define the space of existence. When Raffaello painted the world renowned School of Athens, he depicted Plato with the hand indicating the sky and Aristotle with the hand down towards the horizon, as two different approaches of human thought. This type of contrast is what inspired me, when perceiving the intrinsic contradictions of luxury put into context with heritage and authenticity.

To define the brands according to the elements heritage and authenticity, I would like to draw on the attributes that researchers in our literature review have proposed, although I will first aggregate the different academic views in order to reconstruct the elements concerning heritage, authenticity and luxury. This process is vital especially when it comes to authenticity, since there are many different opinions and perspectives in what makes a brand authentic.

Firstly, heritage brands are defined with the help of the heritage quotient consisting of the five following elements: track record, longevity, core values, use of symbols and importance of history (Urde, Balmer and Greyser, 2007). However, I believe these elements are quite flexible and thus, attributes such as brand museums and honorable traditions (Boccardi, Ciappei, Zollo and Laudano, 2016), as well as heritage stores (Dion and Borraz, 2016) can be included under the umbrella of 'history being important' (Urde, Balmer and Greyser, 2007). Furthermore, I would like to emphasize that not all attributes must be simultaneously present in order for brands to be classified as heritage brands (Urde, Balmer and Greyser, 2007), which in turn makes the model more flexible.

Concerning the attributes for being classified as an authentic brand, the challenge is to find the complete context of meaning, since authenticity is a metaphysical and immaterial concept to define. I would like to highlight Beverland (2006) as one of the first and most relevant contributors. In his study, he concludes with six attributes that create authenticity: "heritage and pedigree, stylistic consistency, quality commitments, relationship to place, method of production, and downplaying commercial considerations" (p. 253). However, in my research I perceive heritage as a standalone element capable of drawing a contrast with authenticity. During my email conversations with Professor M. Beverland, he explained me that his perspective of research perceives heritage as a necessary part of authenticity. I can totally understand this standpoint, since he perceives authenticity as a single element of study, able to gather the historical facets of meaning related to heritage, especially as he often applied authenticity to the premium segment, during the field research on the luxury wine brands (Beverland, 2004; 2005; 2006). Furthermore, other researchers, such as Napoli et al. (2014) seem to agree on the fact that authenticity is including heritage. However, given the right circumstances, even a new micro-brewery may be perceived as an authentic brand (Urde, 2019).

Meanwhile, academics like Bruhn et al. (2012) and Mohart et al. (2015), instead, identified 'continuity' as an element that replaces heritage, in order to represent the brand's historicity. Although the wording can differ, the meaning is still very similar. But the real point that everybody has been missing, is that brand authenticity is not an exclusive appanage of well established brands. Indeed, a recent research of Guèvremont (2018) demonstrated that also young brands can activate brand authenticity in the attempt of increasing their relevance and attractiveness, without any element of historicity. She identified three new attributes called 'brand virtuousness' (communicating moral and ethical principles), 'brand transparency' (being open and sharing emotions, imperfections, doubts and mistakes) and 'brand proximity' (being close to consumers).

As previously stated in the research philosophy, I believe that there is no single truth, but rather many pieces of different truths. Therefore I decided to assemble my own interpretation of brand authenticity by taking into account all the previous opinions, in order to achieve a more elastic and wider perspective. I decided to include the conceptualization of Guèvremont (2018), even though her perspective on young brands needed to be integrated with the awareness on strong established brands. This is why ‘brand virtuousness’ was integrated with ‘downplaying commercial motives’ and ‘quality commitments’ (Beverland 2006), while ‘brand transparency’ was integrated with ‘methods of production’, ‘relationship to place’ and ‘credibility’ (Beverland, 2006; Bruhn et al., 2012). After ‘brand proximity’, I completed the list with ‘originality’ (Bruhn et al. 2012) and ‘stylistic consistency’ (Beverland, 2006), as I felt that those two elements are playing an important part in defining brand authenticity.

BRAND AUTHENTICITY	BRAND HERITAGE
Brand Virtuousness ⤷ *including:* - Downplaying commercial motives - Quality commitments	**Track record**
Brand Transparency ⤷ *including:* - Methods of production - Relationship to place - Credibility	**Longevity**
Brand Proximity	**Core Values**
Originality	**Use of Symbols**
Stylistic Consistency	**Importance of History** ⤷ *including:* - Brand Museums - Honorable Traditions - Heritage Stores

Table 3: Elements of brand authenticity & brand heritage

The table above presents five elements for heritage and five elements for authenticity. I would once again like to point out that not all elements have to be fulfilled, which means that brands can still be classified as authentic by fitting with fewer attributes. Since my research is focusing on the dynamic aspect of brands, and how they become what they are, all the elements can shift, increment and sum to each other, during the time that the brand is active. I acknowledge that some attributes may be “blended”. For instance, ‘core values’ in heritage can recall ‘brand virtuousness’ in authenticity; or ‘use of symbols in heritage can be similar to ‘stylistic consistency’ in authenticity’. Thus, a brand that is classified as a heritage brand that is lacking authenticity, does not mean that the brand has no authenticity in it, due to the fact that heritage and authenticity can be interconnected, although they represent two different sides of the coin. In this perspective, a key idea that is able to tie all these concepts together is the conception of ‘why’ illustrated by Simon Sinek (2009). Even though, as reported in the literature review, he was referring to the inspirational activity of the organization and its leaders, in my perspective the concept of ‘why’ is important in conveying the values of heritage and authenticity. When a consumer perceives a brand as more authentic or with more heritage, it’s because the brand is communicating a reason. In other words, a brand driven by a ‘why’ is a brand that is capable of being a more intense carrier of heritage and/or authenticity.

To conclude the first part of the model, I choose to include both corporate and product brands, even though Urde, Gresyer and Balmer (2007), for example, are focusing on corporate brands when exploring the concept of brand heritage. In my view, I see no need to draw the line between those two and thus, I choose to include both type of brands to make the model more flexible and comprehensive.

5.2 Putting the elements into a context

Even though heritage and authenticity are the two key elements for characterizing the brands, not all the authentic and/or heritage brands are equal. Therefore, since the model aspires to include all the brands while maximizing accuracy, there is a necessity to draw a line capable of identifying two further categories: luxury brands and non-luxury brands. Vigneron and Johnson (2004), recognized that ultimately brands are divided into these two categories, as an absolute mark between what is meant to be ordinary, and what is meant to be extraordinary. However, as stated in the background, we have witnessed the line between luxury and non-luxury brands to be obscure and difficult to define. With this in mind, I propose the second step in the development of my conceptual model.

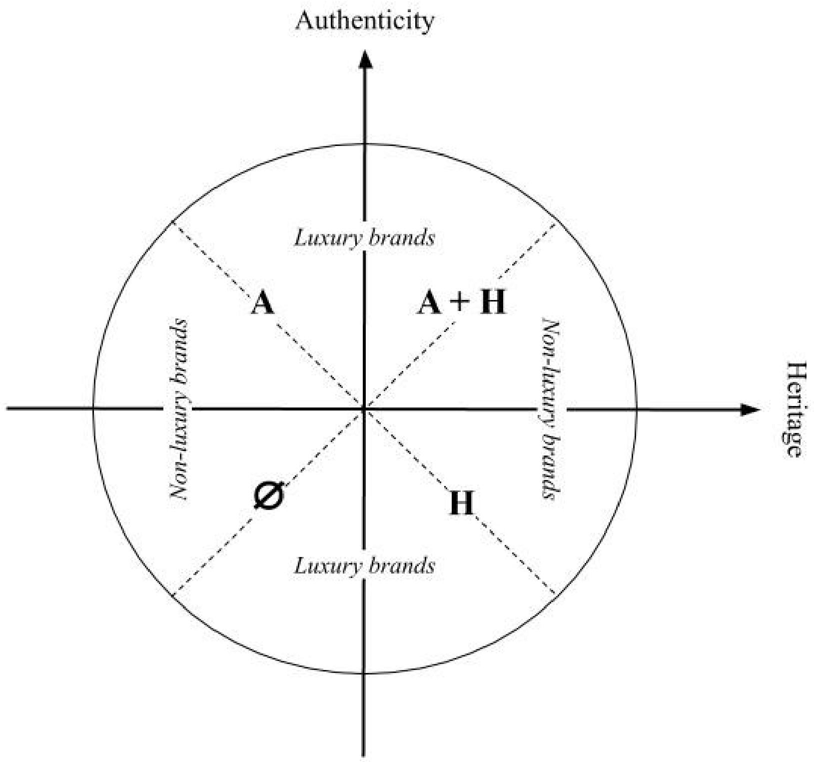

Figure 6: The line between luxury and non-luxury

As shown at this stage, the model has further developed into differentiating between eight types of brands. Not only are brands categorized according to the elements heritage and authenticity, they are now further divided according to whether they are luxury or not. The literature review suggests that the line between luxury and non-luxury is not clear, since the concept of luxury has not be defined uniquely. On the other hand, there is a strong awareness regarding the fact that luxury needs a different type of management. On this note, Kapferer and Bastien (2012) listed the 'anti-laws of marketing' in order to illustrate those aspects in which luxury is being managed in a different direction from normal brands. Therefore, if luxury is different on the way it is managed internally, sparring from initial production to final distribution, it is also different in the way consumers are perceiving it. In this regard, I believe it is significant to recall the brand luxury index (BLI) outlined by Vigneron and Johnson (2004), as it contributes in clarifying the line between luxury and non-luxury, for the purposes of this framework. The authors identified five dimensions that are shaping the perception of luxury. These are 'perceived conspicuousness' (related to social representation), 'perceived uniqueness' (scarcity and rarity as an added value), 'perceived extended-self' (symbolic meaning and identity self-reflection), 'perceived hedonism' (sensory gratification for the self) and 'perceived quality' (for those who seek quality and leadership attributes). All these five dimensions are ultimately shaping the consumer experience, and are the underlying motivations behind the intangible value of luxury. Following these five dimensions, I believe that the line between luxury brands and non-luxury brands can be highly justified, although there is a big degree of subjectivity when it comes to the definition of what is luxury and what is not.

Nevertheless, by following the first step in which four types of brands are defined by the two elements of heritage and authenticity, and the second step in which brands are further classified as luxury vs. non-luxury, I was able to identify eight different categories of brands. Each one of these categories is implying a different strategy of management and a different theoretical approach. With the aim of setting up the right context of study, the eight categories have been placed within the wheel framework, as they are finding a position in relation to the elements of heritage, authenticity and luxury.

5.3 Unlocking the wheel

In the final stage of developing the model, the different types of brands provoked me to put labels on them. Furthermore, the model is now highlighting the fact that brands are acknowledged from a dynamic viewpoint, as during the research, I have realized several times that brands make different strategic decisions throughout their existence. Sometimes these actions are intentional and sometimes not. This means that the framework, which I called 'the wheel of brand dynamics', is implying the possibility for brands to rotate across different categories. The main purpose is to display the motion of brands and how certain events (caused by internal or external forces) can contribute to a shift among the different categories of brands, implying a different type of equilibrium between authenticity, heritage and luxury. I would also like to point out that movements can take place in both directions, depending on the event itself.

In order to prove better the implications of this research and to support the conceptual argumentation of this framework, I decided to illustrate the eight brand categories through the case studies previously mentioned. Each section will provide a clear practical example of the company positioned in a certain category of the model, before reaching the final version of the framework, containing all the information achieved through these steps.

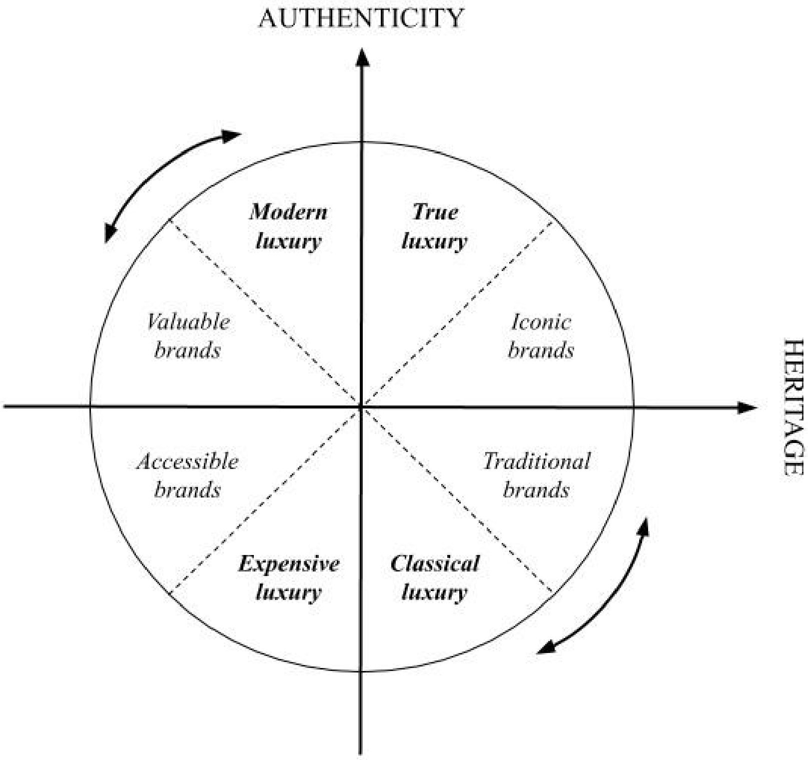

Figure 7: The Wheel of Brand Dynamics

Before analyzing the case studies, along with each category, I want to briefly explain the concept and phrasing behind each label, by starting with the four types of luxury brands. Firstly, the category called ‘true luxury’, can refer to what some researchers like to call ‘HAL’ brands (Urde, 2017). These brands are the ones that are combining heritage, authenticity and luxury, in order to reach the peak of branding value. It can represent the quintessence of a true luxury brand, fulfilled with magic and aura, as Kapferer and Bastien (2012) were often referring. The category called ‘classical luxury’, is a version of luxury more root-oriented, as it is representing the luxury brands that are establishing their strategic value around their heritage. This can often be the case of luxury wine brands and/or brands that are highlighting the traditional craftsmanship through the small boutiques. On the other hand, the category of ‘modern luxury’ is defined by the strong inclination towards creativity and experimental innovation. In this regard, a modern luxury brand is often perceived as more fresh and innovative, driven by the talent and inspiration of their creator. Last but not least, ‘expensive luxury’ refers to all the luxury products whose value is mostly defined by their price. Kapferer and Bastien (2012) largely explained that a strong luxury product has to be defined by its intangible values, rather than its retail price. However, I noticed the existence of many luxury brands that are developing a value, merely based upon rarity and excess, in order to communicate a product that is desirable only because it requires a high amount of wealth (Zecchi, 2015).

Following the same logic, the framework also shows four different non-luxury categories named ‘accessible brands’, ‘valuable brands’, ‘iconic brands’ and ‘traditional brands’. The ‘accessible brands’ are both lacking in heritage and authenticity, therefore representing the common mass-produced products that are strategically relying on their accessibility. It is the case of brands that are not strongly investing in their branding activity, and/or brands that are not commonly considered to be esteemed. On the other side of the coin, there is the category ‘valuable brands’ which in turn represents the products whose attractiveness is highly influenced by the name of the brand. This is the case of companies that in many different ways are keeping a high brand activity, while curating the communication in a consistent manner. This leads to highly recognizable brands that are often synonym of innovation, creativity and trust. The category named ‘traditional brands’ is representing the area of the framework in which only heritage is emphasized. This aspect leads to brands that are rooted to the past and driven by the old dogmas, representing products that are classical in their own original way, without following the trends of the present. To conclude, ‘iconic brands’ are the non-luxury products most recognized and regarded. In other words, they take the best from the valuable brands and the traditional brands at the same time, as they have a high history, and the capability of being innovative at the same time.

As said in the steps before, each category does not imply an absolute level of heritage and/or authenticity, but rather an inclination towards a certain aspect that entails a different strategy of management. Therefore, every movement in the model is representing a different strategic approach pursued by the brand. At the same time, the wheel framework shows the inner relations between heritage, authenticity and luxury, as each shift is the result of an equilibrium between three elements that are able to cover every type of brand. As this research is focusing on luxury brands, each luxury category will be further explained with the support of the case studies.

5.4 Categories of luxury brands

5.4.1 Modern luxury

The modern luxury category may imply a paradox, if we adopt a conservative view in which a luxury brand must always have a long history, in order to be called so. But as luxury has changed over the last decades, we can see many different examples of luxury brands that are not emphasizing their history but rather their fresh, unique, innovative and creative approach. Also Kapferer and Bastien (2012, p. 60) actually realized that there is a distinction between traditional luxury brands and modern luxury brands. As far as this research concerns and the case studies in object, I believe that the category of modern luxury includes Marimekko and H&M, given the right circumstances. First of all, I am aware that H&M is notoriously not a luxury brand, as I would place H&M in the category of ‘accessible brands’. I would not choose the ‘valuable brands’ category, simply because the brand is not actually a valuable asset emphasized on their clothes, as their design is not showing the logo, in favor of a more minimal and/or creative approach. However, many special collaborations have raised the level of the brand in some rare occasions, in a way that H&M could have been shifting to the ‘modern luxury' spot. It all started with Karl Lagerfeld in 2004, the designer of the iconic Chanel bag. He started a collaboration with H&M in order to make luxury more accessible to everyone. This initiative resulted in a big success, as the collection went sold out after a few days. Afterwards, many other luxury brands have been joining this yearly tradition, such as Kenzo, Roberto Cavalli, Jimmy Choo, Lanvin, Versace, Marni, Maison Martin Margiela, Isabel Marant, Alexander Wang, Balmain, Moschino and others (H&M, n.d.-c, Online). In all the cases, the collections went sold out after a few hours, while some customers have been reselling the items even with a price 25 times higher than their original value (The Sun, 2016, Online).

I believe these collaborations can be viewed from two perspectives; the luxury brand and H&M. From the luxury brand's point of view, the luxury items become accessible and more available to a greater amount of people. Although these collections are kept as limited editions, the clothes are still priced low, making them affordable to customers who normally cannot afford to buy these type of luxury goods. Thus, these collaborations entail luxury brands going against their traditional strategy that includes representing another world that justifies their extremely high prices. At the other end of the spectrum, these collaborations have the ability to make brands like H&M more authentic, as they suddenly offer a limited edition collection created by world famous designers of luxury goods.

H&M represents a brand which is neither authentic nor has activated its heritage. However, in times when collaborating with luxury brand designers, the authenticity is transferred from the luxury brand to H&M. As a result, I see H&M moving towards becoming a more authentic brand that offers limited edition collections with a unique style, created by luxury brands. Thus, I see H&M offering some kind of rare and exclusive "affordable luxury". However, as these collaborations are only once a year and sold in a short period of time, I don't think it changes the whole foundation of H&M at large. It is rather a shift lasting for a moment. On the other hand, luxury brands are going against their traditional nature by suddenly offering "affordable luxury". Hence, I do not believe that a part of their magic is lost as a result because, once again, this type of initiative happens only temporarily and for a very few number of items available. In exchange, the luxury brand gets a lot of hype and visibility across all media, which is important to maintain the brand highly desirable. Indeed, Kapferer and Bastien (2012) explained that it is important that a luxury brand can be known and recognized also by those who are not part of their customers.

On the other hand, Marimekko represents a very different case. The brand is very much known for the style of their printings and for their cultural connection to Finland. There is no doubt that Marimekko is an authentic brand, not only because their unique prints are original, but also because they are the result of a strong stylistic consistency, as some of their most famous prints have been originally launched in the 60s, such as the 'tasaraita' print and the 'unikko' print (Marimekko, n.d.-b., online). Furthermore, Marimekko has a clear relationship to its original place, which in this case is Helsinki. Not only are the headquarters still placed there, it is also the place where the textile printing factory is located. Relationship to place, stylistic consistency and production method are part of the elements that contribute to authenticity, according to the table above, following the research from Beverland.

However, the reason I believe Marimekko is an excellent case for this framework, is the way Marimekko managed to become a brand that many today perceive as luxury. Although it was founded in the post WWII where Finland was very poor, Marimekko rapidly became internationally famous and recognized. The brand has also a respectable history, as many international figures have been wearing Marimekko, such as Jacqueline Kennedy during the 60s (Marimekko, n.d.-b., online). Today, the revenues of the brand are not only coming from the domestic market in Finland, but also especially from the Asia-Pacific region. Nevertheless, the peculiar aspect of Marimekko is that it has been able to establish a real sense of luxury within the Asia-Pacific region, particularly in Japan. According to their own numbers dating at 31.12.2018, Marimekko has 153 stores in total and the majority of these (70 stores) are located in the Asia-Pacific (Marimekko, n.d.-c., online). Recently, Marimekko has also been investing in several of their flagship stores around the world and as stated by the CEO, Tiina Alahuhta-Kasko: "The flagship stores play a central role as the most prominent embodiment of our brand in the world." (Marimekko, n.d.-b., online). I have been doing observations in two different Marimekko stores, respectively located in Malmö and Tokyo. Although in both of these stores I found the same type of atmosphere, very similar to a boutique experience, I noticed a more intense feeling of exclusivity inside the Japanese store, as the location and the exposition of the products felt more sophisticated. Regarding the clientele, I noticed the same type and amount of visitors, even though I have been told by the staff that several Asian tourists are stopping by the store in Malmö when visiting the city. This type of connection, especially with Japanese tourists, might be explained by the fact that the brand has also been inspired by the Japanese culture, as many of its designers were also coming from Japan (Wood, 2017, Online). Although the brand has a solid history and a strong stylistic consistency, I decided to place Marimekko in the 'modern luxury' category, because I noticed that brand authenticity is the element that is mostly activated, not only in relation to the attributes of brand authenticity in itself, but also for the overall perception of the brand, as something modern, creative and young.

The example of Marimekko shows how a brand with a unique and original design that makes it authentic, can develop a strong foundation for a brand to become luxury, even though that might not have been the plan from the start. Marimekko is a brand that never completely changed its style and therefore it is so easily recognizable. Furthermore, Marimekko has always remained true to its original place, which is Helsinki, where all the printings are made, since they are adopting a transparent method of production. On top of that, the brand has also developed a strong and cohesive history, even though that may not result in a clear heritage strategy, since Marimekko is communicated as something fresh and modern, rather than classical. Marimekko is an example of the fact that being a 'modern luxury' brand does not necessarily imply the total lack of history, but rather a different strategic approach. Although Marimekko's prices are not as high as Louis Vuitton, Chanel and so forth, Marimekko can still be considered as luxury due for example to its recognizable style and original prints and its exclusive in-store experience, along with the strong desirability for the brand by Asian customers among others. Marimekko is also an example of a brand that has been able to stay relevant through adapting and updating, as a true fashion brand that is able to innovate its image. The brand is also very close to their consumers, especially through their Instagram communication strategy, in which details of the productions are shared and feedbacks from customers are collected. Carroll and Swaminathan (2000), wrote that the interaction between consumers and brands is a central aspect in what makes a brand staying authentic. This is also why Marimekko is the case of a brand that is strongly emphasizing authenticity and at the same time, it has been able to develop a sense of luxury among its consumers, despite its roots.

5.4.2 Classical luxury

When it comes to classical luxury, the attributes for branding are mostly defined within the heritage aspect. Indeed, the facets of longevity, track record, importance of history and core values are permeated in the philosophy of a brand capable of being labeled as ‘classical luxury’. For this category, I decided to include two different companies: Levi’s and Alpine Cars. Both these brands have demonstrated how relying on a successful past can be the foundation for a strong brand identity.

Since its foundation in San Francisco in 1853, Levi’s has been the most representative brand of blue jeans, thanks to the massive worldwide adoption. Indeed, throughout the years, the brand became an American symbol in itself. Even though I clearly recognized that Levi’s is not a luxury brand, there are some interesting aspects to consider, in order to understand how Levi’s can be understood as luxury in certain circumstances. First of all, normally Levi’s is placed in the category of ‘iconic brands’, since it is a brand that presents a perfect mix of heritage and authenticity. Of course, the history is well known to the masses, not to mention the cultural relevance and the status of American symbol throughout the years. In the last decade, Levi’s has been able to reinvent itself thanks to a big attention to innovation and creativity. The brand has a clear relationship to place, along with longevity, track record, originality, importance of history and stylistic consistency. However, after the crisis started in the 90s, Levi’s decided to move its production to Asia in order to reduce costs. But at the same time, in 1996 Levi’s launched the Vintage Collection.

The Levi’s Vintage Collection includes garments that are exclusively made in the U.S.A. with the designs that are accurately the same as the ones from the pasts. Currently, it is possible to find the editions from the 50s, the 70s and so on. The difference with the normal Levi’s jeans consists in a price that is sensibly higher. During my observations in Tokyo I noticed that the retail price for a pair of jeans within the vintage collection is around 350 USD, while the normal Levi’s jeans are retailing at 90 USD. The difference in terms of prices is not only justified by the higher quality of the materials, but also by the exclusivity of a design that is re-edited from the past, in a limited number of items. Indeed, I have been able to find these jeans only in the most niche and underground fashion boutiques around Tokyo. This type of strategy pursued by Levi’s does not come just by coincidence, as different scholars have recommended for brands that are struggling, to consider the idea of going back to the roots and identify with what made them special and successful in the first place (Aaker, 2004; Dion and Mazzalovo, 2016). Another perfect example of that is the recreation of the original Menlo Cossack leather jacket worn by Albert Einstein. The Levi’s Vintage Clothing team was able to meticulously reproduce all the details of the garment worn by the famous physicist, including the smell of his burley pipe tobacco, after having won his jacket at an auction in London (Levi Strauss & co, 2018, online). This unique jacket has been hitting the retail stores for 1200 USD in a limited edition of 500 pieces, in order to celebrate the relation between Einstein and the brand. For all these reasons I believe that Levi’s is a brand that in certain situations can truly afford the power of becoming a luxury brand, thanks to its unique and strong heritage. For all the other situations in which heritage is not strongly emphasized in the same way, Levi’s is for sure a non-luxury iconic brand, due to its formula of heritage and authenticity that makes it able to stand out among all the other competitors. The key idea is to sell something more than just a pair of jeans, since buying Levi’s means buying a piece of pop culture and history.

As far as it concerns Alpine Cars, heritage has been able to play a crucial part during one of the most delicate phases that a brand can ever encounter. Alpine Cars was founded in 1955 and since its beginnings, it has been representing the French symbol of motorsport and racing cars. Today Alpine Cars is the proof of how a brand is able to come back after a long period of absence, by investing on its heritage. Indeed, after a shutdown of production in 1995, Renault decided to launch a new model in 2017, by calling it in the same way of the most successful Alpine car ever: the A110. The brand has been emphasizing the heritage in every part of its communication. During my conversation with Olivier Rouxel, communication officer at Alpine, I learned how the rebirth of Alpine is in line with the very first alpine model. The design as a modern interpretation of the Berlinette, along with a philosophy that remains unchanged: lightness, agility and dynamic driving experience is what has been defining Alpine as a brand since its inception. The current version of the Alpine Cars website is highlighting the history of the brand in the homepage, while the menu is offering a "heritage" page completely dedicated to the aspects that made the brand iconic in its past and how the new Alpine A110 is incarnating the philosophies that have been shaping its success. However, this case also shows us that heritage does not imply a complete passivism towards the present, since the new car is at the same time a very powerful example of technology and innovation applied to the automotive industry. As said earlier, heritage is implying the ability of taking the past and making it relevant for the present, in a way that the brand is still able to be relevant today.

Alpine is important in this analysis in order to prove how heritage can be used as a primary strategic asset, in a totally distinct way than authenticity, with the purpose of resurrecting a brand from the ashes. Dion and Mazzalovo (2016), spoke about the importance of heritage when reviving brands that are not active anymore, the so called 'sleeping beauties'. The success of its strategy is highly influenced by the brand magic and how the nostalgia is influencing people in their life choices. Interestingly enough, when I asked to Olivier Rouxel whether Alpine should be approached as a luxury brand, he replied that Alpine is essentially a sports brand positioned in the 'premium sport' segment. From his perspective, this statement is very understandable, since Alpine is positioned in a different segment when compared to a Ferrari or Lamborghini. However, by following his words, the fact that Alpine is a premium sport brand makes it already in a distinct position, when compared to the average car automakers, as it is oriented towards a selected range of clients. Therefore, in this perspective, Alpine Cars is also a luxury brand because of its unique character and purpose. The retail price of an Alpine A110 is at around 58 thousands euros, which is higher than the average cost of a car, but at the same time lower than a high-luxury car manufacturers previously mentioned. Nevertheless, the brand has a very close relation with their customers, as I have realized through their online marketing strategy. Indeed Alpine is organizing several events and competitions in order to gather the car owners and create a sense of community around the brand. The owners are also invited in sharing the pictures of their car on the official Instagram page. Interestingly enough, they not only advertise the new car, but in many pictures it is possible to see the old models produced by Alpine during the past, as a marking point of its heritage.

In the famous TV show about advertising called Mad Men, Don Draper, the main character playing a marketing director at an advertising agency, referred to nostalgia as a very powerful and deep wound, able to create and establish a strong relation between the product and the customer. Perhaps the case of Levi's and Alpine is indeed proving where an effective heritage branding can lead to, especially within the dialectics of luxury.

5.4.3 True luxury

A category called ‘true luxury’ represents the most complete manifestation of the concept of luxury, as it includes both heritage and authenticity at the same time. Nevertheless, perceiving this category as ‘true luxury’ does not absolutely mean that all the other luxury categories are fake luxury, because the difference here is simply related to the overall essence of the brand. For what it concerns the ‘true luxury’ label, I decided to provide the example of Louis Vuitton, that is perhaps the most widely recognized luxury brand. Both heritage and authenticity are activated as they are shaping the strategy of the most valuable luxury brand of all (Forbes, 2018, Online). Starting with history, the brand is actively communicating its roots. Indeed, one of Louis Vuitton’s first ateliers, located in Asnières, is today open for visitors willing to explore the rare and celebrated items that shaped the history of the brand. Today this site represents the true heart and soul of Louis Vuitton, where visitors can take part of the magic world that has been active for over 160 years (Louis Vuitton, n.d.-b.). As such, the importance of history is further explained on the website by LVMH: “The soul of travel since 1854… Born of an initiatory exploration, the House founded by Louis Vuitton remains deeply immersed in its founder’s spirit of freedom and conquest.” (LVMH, n.d.).

When it comes to authenticity, Louis Vuitton is synonym of true craftsmanship with a focus on details that shapes its reputation on quality commitment. As the CEO, Michael Burke once said: “The trunk is an object of design. It’s the reason why something that was invented in the 19th century is still relevant today, it’s because it has strong design. Design is what makes something last. Fashion comes and goes; design is something much more enduring.” (Tauer, 2018). Nevertheless, the production of one leather bag requires 250 operations on average. Furthermore, Louis Vuitton has 12 workshops in France and each of those leather goods are marked with the stitching “Louis Vuitton Paris - made in France”, in order to remark the strong ‘relationship to place’ that is helping in shaping the brand authenticity. When it comes to stylistic consistency, Louis Vuitton is highly recognizable through its iconic canvases such as “the Monogram” and “the Damier”. These classical brown canvases have been produced and used for over a century, and are still a part of contemporary collections (Louis Vuitton, n.d.-a. and LVMH, n.d.). For example, the official website offers the possibility to view and shop the “iconic handbags”, including bags with the famous canvases (Louis Vuitton, n.d.-d.).

However, an aspect that caught my attention was that Louis Vuitton is advertising its luxury goods and newest collection in a very similar manner as non-luxury brands like, for example, H&M. Indeed, I have noticed several paid advertisements on social media channels such as Instagram and Facebook, whereby one click would result in the customers finding themselves on the web store in order to select and buy the products. I find this situation very concerning, as from what I have learned from Kapferer and Bastien (2012), luxury brands need to pursue an opposite strategy from non-luxury/ordinary brands. This is motivated by the fact that luxury brands need to preserve their unique ‘magic’, and everything that makes them distinct from everything else. Therefore, with the possibility to “swipe up and shop” or “click to shop”, I see Louis Vuitton’s magic and thus authenticity, getting lost. To advertise and market like any ordinary brand in such a way, is what Kapferer once recommended for luxury brands not to do. The result is that the products suddenly become more accessible and comparative in a way that luxury brands are not supposed to be. For example, unlike Louis Vuitton, Chanel (which is also part of the LVMH Group) is adopting a different type of online strategy.

When visiting the website and viewing their classical and iconic bag collections, I can notice a difference between the two brands. As for Louis Vuitton, the user finds himself straight away to see the collection in the traditional format of a web shop, including the images of the bags and their prices. As for Chanel, the user is first exposed to a story, including the one regarding the late creator Karl Lagerfeld, followed by information about the design and its details, as well as the know-how of the company. Only after all this, the user will find the bag collection, including the images of the bags and their prices. In my point of view, Chanel has managed to bring the magic from the physical retail store, to their website, by providing the same information and storytelling as a salesperson normally would give to the customer who visits their store. On the other hand, Louis Vuitton gives the impression of a more commercialized brand where a part of the magic is lost.

However, when it comes to the physical stores, Louis Vuitton is clearly transmitting a true sense of luxury and exclusivity. I had the opportunity to verify myself, both in the stores of Tokyo and Copenhagen. The modern and fresh image that is transmitted through the Instagram activity, is highly integrated with a prestigious sense of heritage and classicism inside the stores. The physical retail aspect is highly important, since Louis Vuitton is pursuing the strategy they refer to as an "exclusive distribution network". This means that every product can only be purchased in Louis Vuitton's own stores, which are staffed by Louis Vuitton, or in the official website. According to Louis Vuitton, this is a part of the strategy to protect the brand (Louis Vuitton, n.d.-c.). As a result, their distribution network entails exclusive flagship stores all over the world (Louis Vuitton, n.d.-g.).

With this being said, I believe Louis Vuitton represents an example of a true luxury brand that in the attempt of adapting to the internet and social media environment, is risking to lose part of its authenticity. Thus, this would imply that Louis Vuitton is losing its position as a true luxury brand, at least for a certain target of customers who are perceiving Louis Vuitton mostly through the internet. On the other hand, Chanel represents another true luxury brand, although it has managed to keep a strong sense of authenticity, even throughout the digitalization. In other words, as Channel represents a true luxury brand that has kept its integrity in a modern society, Louis Vuitton on the other hand, is finding itself in a more uncertain position. However, as Napoli, Dickinson-Delaporte and Beverland (2016) explained, authenticity is not a fixed phenomenon, but rather a continuum able to continuously transform as the context changes. Therefore, as nothing is completely absolute, I perceive Louis Vuitton as a true luxury brand, despite the digital strategy. This is because the brand is able to reinvent itself, as it became the biggest luxury brand in the field, while including most of the attributes of heritage and authenticity. A true luxury brand is a brand with the highest levels of intangible value, built around every single aspect. The aura surrounding every aspect of the products, is shaping the attractiveness and the extraordinary ambitions of each customers. As branding is not a static phenomenon, but rather a dynamic one, the challenge for a true luxury brand will always be the ability to stay at the top of the mountain, without risking to fall apart. Louis Vuitton is an excellent example of a brand that is dealing with multiple challenges, given the status of biggest luxury brand in the market. Therefore, it is always interesting to observe how the brand is constantly adapting and changing.

5.4.4 Expensive luxury

The last category is called 'expensive luxury' and indicates an area of the framework for luxury brands in which both heritage and authenticity are not activated. This conceptualization may seem a paradox, as it is difficult to imagine a luxury brand/product without heritage and/or authenticity. As such the idea of luxury brand appears to be an ambiguity, and therefore, that is the way it needs to be understood. The most ambiguous aspect of a luxury brand is the price, for many reasons. As one may expect, a luxury product is often carrying a high retail price, due to its extraordinary raison d'etre. However, the price when it comes to luxury, has to be hidden because the amount of money necessary to buy a luxury product is not defining the real value of it. As Kapferer and Bastien (2012, p. 236), 'luxury sets the price, price does not set luxury'.

The idea that a true luxury product does not have to simply rely on the retail price is well-established. However, there are many cases that we can perceive as 'anomalies' in which products are popularly perceived as luxury because of the incredible amount of money necessary to afford them. One clear example of that comes from the brand 'Pabst Blue Ribbon', that is very popular for its affordable and mass-produced beer. Pabst Blue Ribbon is widely available in the U.S. supermarkets as a cheap lager beer, famous among the hipster culture, and characterized by a fresh and young style of branding. Despite this connotation, the company decided to expand into the Chinese market, by completely changing its strategy. Indeed, Pabst Blue Ribbon decided to launch a super luxury beer called Pabst Blue Ribbon 1844, priced at 44 USD per bottle, with a slightly different method of production (Juncker, Torres and Gustafsson, 2019).

The look of the bottle is very sophisticated, in order to resemble a sense of prestige, as the bottle is retailed in the same format of Champagne wine - 75ml with the indication of being served in flutes - while the cap is in a visibly gold color. The purpose of the product like the Pabst Blue Ribbon 1844 is obviously oriented towards the aim of communicating wealth in the first place. Indeed, the reasons for the product to stand out are identified in its prestigious packaging and exclusive retail locations. It's clear that we are in front of a brand that has been able to build a completely new image, permeated with a sense of history (beyond the fact that it can be real or fake) in order to reach a luxury segment. The fact that this product has only been launched in China is explained by several strategic aspects. The Chinese high-end market is growing at a fast pace, while the middle-class is expanding considerably. Moreover in China alcohol is perceived as something premium and this results in a higher willingness to spend more for alcoholic beverages, compared to the rest of the world (Nelson, 2011, Online).

The case of Pabst Blue Ribbon also follows a pattern of brands that have been scaling up when entering the Chinese Market. Coach, a famous leather bag company has been doubling its revenues in less than 10 years, by becoming a luxury brand in China. Another beer brand "Heineken" has been applying premium prices for the Chinese market - although not as extreme as Pabst -, while General Motors has also been capitalizing on the upper-premium segment and has become the best-selling foreign automaker in China. The main concept is to understand how a brand is able to make a rapid maneuver in the wheel model, in order to activate luxury when entering a new market. In this context, the fact that Pabst Blue Ribbon was not previously recognized in China was a key aspect that allowed this strategy to be possible. The ability to target the right segment of customers is essential in order to be able to find a market opportunity, especially when talking about the category of ‘expensive luxury’ products. This is due to the fact that when it comes to the ‘expensive luxury category’, it has to be the brand that has to find its customers, rather than the customers who are finding the brand, like in the case of a ‘true luxury’ one. In the category of ‘expensive luxury’ the key attribute behind the product becomes the price, as it is subtly implying an exclusivity given by the fact that only the customers who are able to afford the products are able to enter the circle. By contrast, it has to be highlighted the fact that when it comes to the other categories of luxury, even though the price is sensibly higher than the average, the products are never perceived as expensive in first place, as their value is justified by the countless of immaterial attributes behind the brand.

6 Discussion

This chapter will review and elaborate the key findings of this study, in particular by expanding the awareness for the framework, while identifying some further elements of analysis. The companies selected for the case studies are positioned all together inside the model in order to summarize the brand dynamics. After a final contemplation of the framework, a double effect of heritage and authenticity is identified, along with an enhanced brand perspective for both the internal and external perception.

After all the steps that have been leading this research in shaping the wheel of brand dynamics to its final form, there are many aspects and details that need to be further discussed. As this framework is being defined by its dynamic structure, I have been perceiving the three concepts of luxury, heritage and authenticity as a continuum in which the three elements can be perceived as activated or not. However, when it comes to outline a framework that is categorizing every type of brand, the challenge is to take into account every possible singularity that may lead to a different outcome. In this sense, there will always be some exemptions, even though the cases selected for this study have been able to prove how the wheel works. Each company has been placed in a different slice of the framework in order to cover every angle.

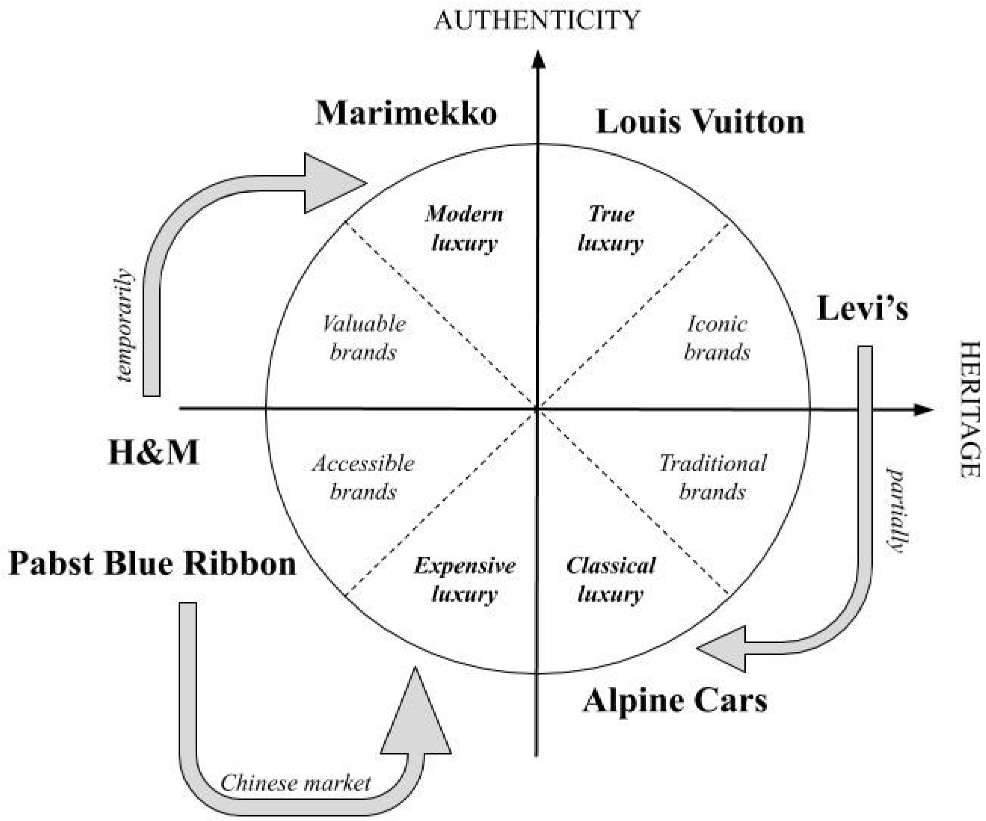

Figure 8: Case studies positioned on the framework

It is possible to see how brands are moving inside the wheel, following different types of events. In the case of Pabst Blue Ribbon, the brand has been able to move from the category of 'accessible brands' to a category of 'expensive luxury' only for what it concerns the Chinese market. Meanwhile, H&M is temporarily able to reach the 'modern luxury' category, thanks to its limited collections developed in partnership with other luxury brands. Levi's, on the other side, as an iconic brand with strong heritage and authenticity, is also able to reach the luxury segment when it comes to emphasizing heritage. Hence, through the vintage collection, Levi's has been capable of entering the 'classical luxury' category and at the same time, the brand has been able to regain its value, after a long crisis in the 90s. Following this logic, there is another aspect of the model that has not been discussed, and it relates to the double effect of heritage and authenticity. Both Marimekko and H&M are the example of brands that have been able to grow until the point of reaching luxury, thanks to the emphasis on brand authenticity, while Levi's and Alpine Cars have been able to recover through the heritage strategy. Therefore, as displayed in the figure beneath, I can affirm that brand authenticity is very suitable when a brand needs to grow and increase value, while brand heritage is the right tool for a brand that needs to recover, in order to regain its original value.

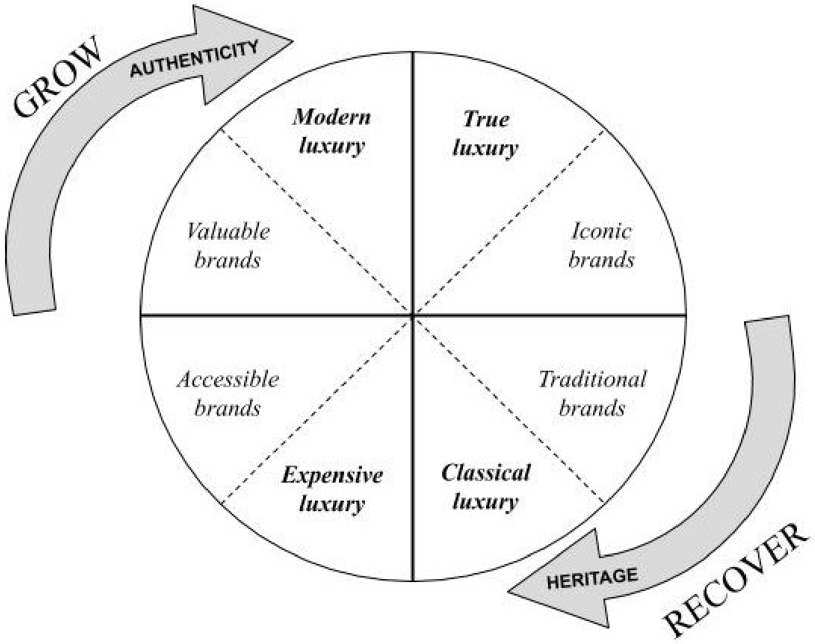

Figure 9: The double effect of Heritage and Authenticity

This double effect of heritage and authenticity, is resembling a symmetrical entanglement that engages the model into a dynamic perspective of branding. All brands can grow and, at the same time, all brands can decline. From a purely conceptual perspective, the model has been created in such a way that it would be possible to imagine a step-by-step shifting at 360 degrees. For instance, starting with a common 'accessible brand', by investing into authenticity, the brand would shift to 'valuable brands' in order to grow. If the brand wants to further increase the value, it can enter into the 'modern luxury' category. After a certain period of time, if the brand has done everything right, there is the possibility that the brand has developed brand heritage, able to allow the brand to be placed into 'true luxury'. Once the peak is reached, if a true luxury brand adopts some wrong choices, the brand can lose its luxury status and enter into the category of 'iconic brands'. If the decline continues, the brand loses its authenticity, because losing the heritage would imply a longer process, and therefore it would reach the position of 'traditional brand'. At this point, the brand can be recovered, through a high investment in brand heritage, and if everything works, it could become luxury again, thus by entering the category of 'classical luxury'. However, since the relaunch of a brand is a very delicate task, especially when it comes to luxury, if the brand fails in its attempt, it will end up becoming a simple 'expensive luxury' brand. This type of reflection is completely theoretical, as it does not imply that a brand should cover each stage of the model. It rather shows that each category can be correlated with one-another, based on the branding strategy and all the events that may occur in the given time-frame.

When perceiving the wheel of brand dynamics as a continuum, in which categories can shift next to each other, I realize that the model has to imply one more step of complexity, in order to reach a more articulated view towards brands. Therefore, in a similar approach of study from that of Urde, Baumgarth and Merrilees (2013), I recognize a double perspective inside the model. Thus, there would be an internal part that is resembling the managerial perspective and an external part that is including the external perspective, such as the consumer viewpoint. This representation is undoubtedly more credible, as all the brands are constantly balancing between the internal and external perspective. However, at the current stage of progress, this framework is not yet measurable. Therefore, in order to really understand the relations between the inside and the outside, more research into the measurability of the wheel needs to be addressed. Especially considering the three different elements of study, it becomes important to define what constitutes the inside and what represents the outside, as heritage, authenticity and luxury are subjected to a high degree of subjectivity. If from one hand the subjectivity concerning the three elements can be perceived as a challenge, on the other hand it contributes in explaining why the dynamism of branding is happening in first place. Since the perception of stakeholders can always change, the motion of the brands becomes a crucial aspect to take into consideration.

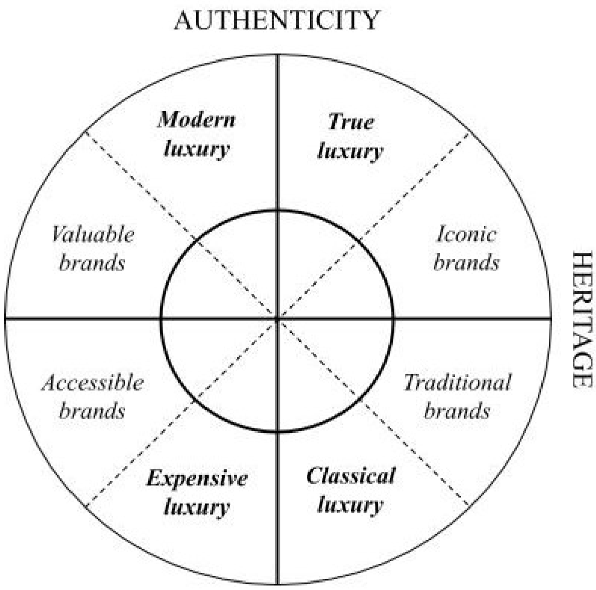

Figure 10: The complete model including internal & external perspective

Adopting heritage, authenticity and luxury in order to perceive brands at 360 degrees has led to the identification of eight categories that together are aiming to classify every type of brand. Furthermore, this study has been redefining the context of these three elements, thus leading to a decipherment of the relations between them and therefore to an emerging dynamic perspective of branding. I am aware that many aspects need to be further investigated, such as the non-luxury categories, the inside and outside perspective, the measurability etc. However, for all the reasons concerning these findings, I believe that this model can be the solid foundation of a much larger approach towards branding.

7 Conclusions

This final chapter will present a summary of the study by revisiting the purpose, the research questions and the aim, in order to learn whether every aspect of the research has been fulfilled successfully. The conclusions will also draw a reflection on the relevance of this study, as the current societal scenario is reviewed in light of its constantly evolving context. Lastly, the theoretical contribution and the managerial implications are unveiled, as a result of this study, in order to present the findings and the key concepts in a structured and detailed approach.

As seen in the first chapter of this study, luxury brands have been witnessing major changes in a society that is getting faster and more complex, following the effects of digitalization. In this spectrum, heritage and authenticity have been identified as the two key elements able to address the challenges, both for luxury and non-luxury brands. This angle of study has been possible as a result of the fact that brands are perceived to be dynamic entities, rather than static elements. The research has shown that brands are subjected to change, according to the consumer's perception, to the management strategy and/or other external factors. These changes are shaped by the different levels of heritage, authenticity and luxury, as these three elements are representing the cornerstones that are embodying the different facets of brands. Heritage represents the flow of time of a brand, throughout its longevity and continuity. Authenticity, on the other hand, represents the virtue of a brand, as it resembles its identity through different facets. Luxury encapsulates the prestige of the brand, in its undefinable value.

All the three elements of study have been re-contextualized with the intention to achieve more elasticity to the meaning of heritage, authenticity and luxury. Because of the fact that brands are perceived as dynamic, the definitions of heritage, authenticity and luxury needed to be more elastic, so as to be suitable to the different scenarios. As everything can change, brands can lose or acquire their connotations. Therefore heritage, authenticity and luxury need to be elements that can be involved in a constant process of mutation. In this regard, a key aspect that has been presented during this study is the expanded notion of 'why' illustrated by Simon Sinek (2009). To fully succeed, brands need to be able to translate the concepts of heritage, authenticity and luxury through a strong key reason that is capable of conveying meaning. That is where the 'why' becomes a key factor in order to inspire and motivate the internal brand's organization and the external consumers' perception. The answer to 'why' is what defines the intensity of meaning for a brand that wants to relate to the elements of heritage, authenticity and luxury.

With this in mind, the purpose of this study has been to provide a comprehensive overview of luxury brands by taking into account the dynamics of heritage and authenticity as two separate concepts, in order to generate a better understanding of how those elements can play a crucial role for luxury brands and their existence. Hence, the two following research questions have been assisting in guiding my research:

RQ 1: How do heritage and authenticity define the motion of brands?

RQ 2: What role do heritage and authenticity play in the existence of luxury brands?

As a result of this study, following a new contextualization of heritage, authenticity and luxury, the framework called 'the wheel of brand dynamics' has been identified. The model is able to show how different balances of heritage, authenticity and luxury can lead to eight different brand categories, respectively four luxury and four non-luxury. The luxury categories have been named on the basis of their main characteristics as 'modern luxury', 'classical luxury', 'true luxury' and 'expensive luxury. Moreover, through the model and with the support of the case studies, it has been possible to identify several connotations related to authenticity and heritage, when applied to luxury brands. The main finding, in this regard is that brand authenticity is the key attribute that allows brands to grow, while brand heritage is the key element in allowing luxury brands to recover in order to regain their value while rediscovering their roots. The dynamic essence of this framework is also to take into account the two different perspectives of a brand, which are the internal and the external one. The internal perspective, resembles the managerial and organizational aspect of a brand, while the external is composed of the perception coming from customers and other stakeholders. The aim of this conceptual study has been to explore and broaden the concept of luxury brands, while identifying their different dynamic facets. In light of the findings, I can confirm that the study has been successfully able to fulfill the aim.

The new framework hereby illustrated, in this conceptual stage, can truly represent the inception of a new way of perceiving not only luxury, but also brands in general, with a systematic and dynamic perspective able to truly enrich the scenario of brand management and marketing at large. I have been thinking about the name of this framework for a long time, and I eventually decided to call it 'the wheel of brand dynamics', due to its rotation and division into different areas. However, I am still seduced by the idea of adopting a metaphorical and poetic name, able to catch the existential essence of branding. I believe that the future research in this direction will be able to provide me with more inspiration on this regard.

7.1 Theoretical contribution

Concerning the theoretical contribution, this study is attaining a new context of meaning for the concepts of heritage, authenticity and luxury, following a dynamic approach towards branding. More specifically, as this perspective of study is unconventional, the research has been leading to a new understanding of the three elements, along with a pioneering context of analysis represented in the new dynamic framework. Hereby it is possible to find a list of the specific theoretical contribution, point by point.

First of all, the concept of **brand authenticity has been redefined,** as it was lacking in elasticity, with the intention of fitting all types of brands. On this note, many studies have been academically perceiving brand authenticity as an element related to aged and established brands (Guèvremont, 2018), due to the fact that attributes like ‘heritage’ (Beverland, 2006; Napoli et al., 2014) and/or ‘continuity’ (Bruhn et al., 2012; Mohart et al., 2015) have been identified as prerequisites for authenticity. Thus to expand the meaning of authenticity, this study has been merging the various viewpoints coming from various research, in order to prove that authenticity is an aspect that is able to be dynamically adapted in different contexts, including young and old brands. To do so, the most recent contribution from Guèvremont (2018) in which young brands are said to be capable of embodying brand authenticity, has been integrated with the initial contribution of Beverland (2006) and with the one from Bruhn et al. (2012). Therefore, the final notion of brand authenticity is listing ‘brand virtuousness’, ‘brand transparency’ and ‘brand proximity’ (Guèvremont, 2018), along with ‘originality’ (Bruhn et al., 2012) and ‘stylistic consistency’ (Beverland, 2006). It is important to note that ‘brand virtuousness’ and ‘brand transparency’ are sub-including other key notions from Beverland (2006) and Bruhn et al. (2012). This aggregated definition of authenticity has led to a larger context of meaning, based on the most frequently recognized attributes among researchers.

Secondly, the notion of **brand heritage has been further expanded** and put into context, with the other two elements of authenticity and luxury. For the concept of brand heritage, the adaptation has been less invasive, due to the fact that brand heritage has been investigated more extensively, with a higher degree of consistency across different academic perspectives. On this note, the heritage quotient identified by Urde, Balmer and Greyser (2007), consisting of the five elements called ‘track record’, ‘longevity’, ‘core values’, ‘use of symbols’ and ‘importance of history’, has been slightly expanded. Attributes such as brand museums and honorable traditions (Boccardi, Ciappei, Zollo and Laudano, 2016), as well as heritage stores (Dion and Borraz, 2016) can be included under the umbrella of ‘history being important’. Another aspect related to heritage is the extension of the concept of brand heritage outside the context of corporate brands. Therefore, though this study, heritage is suitable for both product brands and corporate brands.

Third, **luxury has been restructured,** following an initial identification of the various challenges and contradictions. This study has been able to define four new different categories of luxury brands, along with four new non-luxury ones. The four luxury divisions have been described through the examples of the case studies, in order to identify some of the key concepts that are shaping the essence of each category as such. Each category corresponds to a different equilibrium of the elements of heritage and authenticity, in which different strategic positions are implying different connotations. The four categories are labeled as 'modern luxury', 'classical luxury', 'expensive luxury' and 'true luxury'.

Fourth, the new approach of study has led to the **conception of a new dynamic framework** called 'The Wheel of Dynamic Branding', in which the eight categories are distributed based on the balance between authenticity, heritage and luxury. The aspect that makes the framework as dynamic is the fact that the rotation of the model will generate an overview of the brand mutation. Therefore the model not only resembles the categories from a static point of view, but it also resembles the movements from a dynamic perspective, as the activation and/or suppression of a certain element, will lead the brand to a different category. Overall, the framework in itself can explain the different balances of heritage, authenticity and luxury and its specific definitions.

Fifth, the new model brings to a **double effect of heritage and authenticity** as the two elements are dynamically identified within the framework, from a new perspective. More specifically, this study shows how brand heritage is suitable for allowing brands to recover their position in order to regain their original value and/or revive discontinued brands, while brand authenticity is the right tool for making brands grow and increase their value. The theoretical contribution in this perspective is valuable in exemplifying how brands are changing, following different types of events, since growth and decline can always occur within the mutation in the levels of heritage, authenticity and luxury.

7.2 Managerial implications

From a managerial perspective, this study presents different notions that are able to influence the way luxury brands are perceived. First of all, as the research is animated by the aim of broaden the concept of luxury brands, while identifying their different dynamic facets, the new framework is providing the right tools in this direction. The study has been showing how different levels of heritage, authenticity and luxury can convey a dynamic shift of a brand across different categories. Indeed, the framework has led to the identification of eight different brand categories in which four are luxury and four are non-luxury. Each category is presenting different strategic challenges given by the fact that it is representing a distinct equilibrium between luxury, heritage and authenticity. From a managerial perspective, this type of assessment will provide a useful awareness for the positioning strategy of the brand, in order to reach the desired spot. On the other hand, the framework is also valuable in resembling the dynamic movements of the brand, in order to understand how different events can lead to certain areas of the model. In this perspective an important notion that has emerged through the study is that heritage can recover while authenticity can grow. This means that brand heritage is strategic for established brands that need to regain their value, while authenticity is essential when it comes to make the brand grow, whether it is a new one or an old one. But first, it is important to realize that when talking about heritage and authenticity, this study has been presenting a new and articulated way of defining these concepts.

Heritage has been re-contextualized, while authenticity has been completely re-constructed by aggregating different academic perspectives. When it comes to authenticity, managers are now informed on how to expand applicability towards brands from different market sectors and different age, as both young and old brands integrate brand authenticity in their strategy.

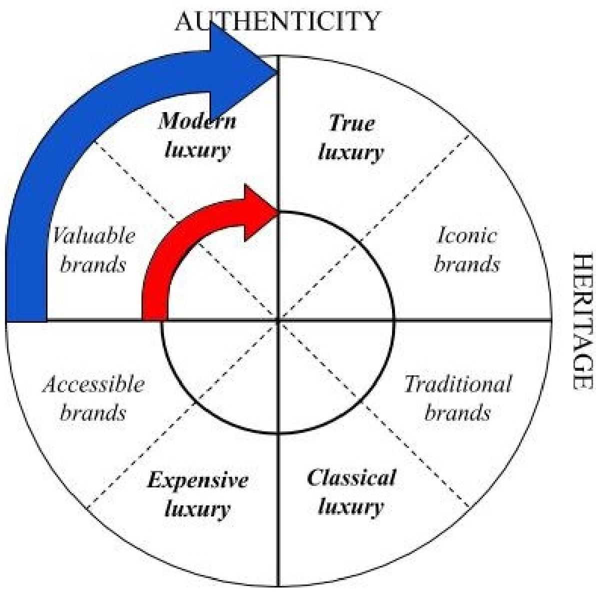

Figure 11: Difference of motion between the internal and the external circle

The dynamic aspect of branding is achieving more importance when considering the fact that in its final form, the framework is presenting an inside and outside perspective. This is essential because it resembles the opposite situations that are shaping the essence of a brand. On the inside, it is possible to find the managerial and organizational perspective, while on the outside there is the consumer perspective. Both these perspectives are defined by the elements of heritage, authenticity and luxury, although the key detail is that the internal part takes less motion in order to shift category, while the external side takes more space in order to turn category. In the figure 11 above, it is possible to see how the red arrow is shorter than the blue one. From a managerial point of view, it means that affecting the consumers' perception of heritage, authenticity and luxury, takes more effort and time than affecting the internal brand perspective. The model at its current stage is purely conceptual, however further research will be able to provide managers with more practical insights such as, how to deal with situations in which there might be a misalignment between the internal and the external perspective or how to affect the consumer perception more rapidly. As this study is focused on the luxury aspect, the four categories and its features, placed in this context of a dynamic framework it represents a big starting point in order to increase awareness for the future challenges of branding. For a quick recap, it is possible to find the managerial implication listed here below:

- Brand management is explored from a dynamic perspective: it allows the manager to get an overview of the challenges of today and how dynamic branding works, by understanding how different levels of the three elements of heritage, authenticity and luxury, are leading to a different strategic position

- Branding perceived from internal and external perspective: the model is implying an internal perspective, from the organizational/leadership point of view, and an external in which consumers and other stakeholders are shaping their perception of the brand

- Redefinition of authenticity: authenticity has been redefined by aggregating the different academic perspectives in order to be suitable for more contexts of branding. This implies that brand authenticity is applicable both for established/large brands and young/small brands. The research also shows that brand authenticity is an excellent tool in order to increase the value of brands and stimulate their growth.

- Heritage re-contextualized and expanded: the attribute named 'importance of history' is further deepened with 'heritage stores', 'honorable traditions' and 'brand museums' while the other four elements 'track record', 'longevity', 'core values', 'use of symbols' are reviewed. The study also highlights the fact that brand heritage is the right tool used by brands in order to recover and regain their value in order to attain their true potential.

- The concept of luxury is widely reviewed both from internal and external perspectives and through the model, four new luxury dimensions (that are implying different strategies) are identified: 'modern luxury', 'true luxury', 'classical luxury' and 'expensive luxury'

- Four non-luxury categories of brands are identified, as a contrast with the luxury ones; these four categories are including all type of brands, according to the different levels of heritage and luxury: 'accessible brands', 'valuable brands', 'iconic brands' and 'traditional brands'.

- The framework provides a clear phenomenological portrait of how brands are facing their expansion & decline, following their motion inside the model. This aspect is important in order to realize how different levels of heritage and authenticity will lead the brand in a different category of perception.

- The double effect of heritage and authenticity implies that heritage is the strategic tool for recovering brands in order to regain the original value, while authenticity is the appropriate strategy in order to stimulate the growth of the brand.

- The elements of heritage, authenticity and luxury have to be conveyed through a key reason able to drive meaning. The concept of ´why´, perceived both internally and externally is what emphasizes the identity, in order to achieve a successful brand strategy.

7.3 Further research

This study opens the door to future research. The dynamic perspective applied to the concepts of heritage, authenticity and luxury can represent an innovative way of approaching brand management. On this note, there are several aspects that need to be further analyzed in order to expand the integrity of this study. Following the innovative approach of research, more empirical data needs to be addressed. First of all, since the three elements of heritage, authenticity and luxury have been re-framed, there is a need for more research in order to ensure the validity and to measure the degree of accuracy for each attribute that is shaping authenticity, heritage and luxury. Although this new interpretation has been made through the aggregation of already-existing data, coming from previous studies, more verifications need to be addressed with the aim of increasing the validity of these concepts, as more resources and time will be available.

Regarding the 'Wheel of Brand Dynamics', further research should be pursued in order to identify more contextual factors, such as a temporal dimension to the analysis and a more precise definition of the borders for each category. For example, it would be important to identify in a phenomenological perspective, how the borders of luxury vs non-luxury, and/or authenticity vs non-authenticity are shifting to one another. Furthermore, as this research has been focusing on the conceptual basis of the framework, it would be significant to integrate a quantitative perspective in order to determine the measurability of each of the three elements, and/or the dynamic aspects related to each shift within the model.

Lastly, it would be relevant to conduct more research towards the internal and external side of the framework. From a conceptual perspective, there would be the need for a more articulated overview on the relations between the internal and external circle. From a quantitative perspective, it would be interesting to measure the perceptions of heritage, authenticity and luxury by collecting the consumers' feedback. Moreover, it would be essential to address some qualitative research on the managerial point of view, not only to see how heritage, authenticity and luxury are managed within the organization, but also to understand the impact that this study can achieve.

Sources

Aaker, D.A. (1996). Building Strong Brands. Free Press, New York, NY.

Aaker, D.A. (2004). Leveraging the corporate brand. California Management Review 46(3), pp. 6-18.

Alexander, N. (2009). Brand authentication: Creating and maintaining brand auras. European Journal of Marketing, 43(3/4), pp. 551-562.

Arnould, E. J. & Price, L. L. (2000). Authenticating acts and authoritative performances. In: The why of consumption: Contemporary perspectives on consumers' motives, goals, and desires. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 140–163.

Athwal, N., & Harris, L. C. (2018). Examining how brand authenticity is established and maintained: the case of the Reverso. Journal of Marketing Management, 34(3-4), pp. 347-369.

Balmer, J. M. T., Greyser, S. and Urde, M. (2006). The Crown as a Corporate Brand: Insights from Monarchies. Journal of Brand Management 14, pp. 137-161.

Balmer. J. M. T. (2013). Corporate heritage, corporate heritage marketing, and total corporate heritage communications: What are they? What of them? Corporate Communications: An International Journal 18(3), pp. 290-326.

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. The qualitative report, 13(4), pp. 544-559.

Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2018). Business research methods. Oxford university press.

Bergh, C. (2018) 'The Ceo of Levi Strauss on Leading an Iconic Brand Back to Growth', Harvard Business Review, 96(4), pp. 33–39.

Beverland, M. (2004). Uncovering "the theories-in-use": Building luxury wine brands. European Journal of Marketing 38(3-4), pp. 446–466.

Beverland, M. (2005). Crafting Brand Authenticity: The Case of Luxury Wines. Journal of Management Studies 42(5), pp. 1003-1029.

Beverland, M. (2006). The 'real thing': Branding authenticity in the luxury wine trade. Journal of Business Research 59, pp. 251-258.

Beverland, M. B. & Farelly, F. J. (2010). The quest for authenticity in consumption: consumers' purposive choice of authentic cues to shape experienced outcomes. Journal of Consumer Research 36(2), pp. 838-856.

Beverland, M., & Luxton, S. (2005). Managing integrated marketing communication (IMC) through strategic decoupling: How luxury wine firms retain brand leadership while appearing to be wedded to the past. Journal of Advertising, 34(4), pp. 103-116.

Boccardi, A., Ciappei, C., Zollo, L. & Laudano, M. (2016). The Role of Heritage and Authenticity in the Value Creation of Fashion Brand. International Business Research 9(7), pp. 135-143.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. Qualitative Research Journal 9(2), pp. 27-40.

Brown, S., Kozinets, R. V. & Sherry, J. F. (2003). Teaching Old Brands New Tricks: Retro Branding and the Revival of Brand Meaning. Journal of Marketing 67, pp. 19-33.

Bruhn, M., Schoenmüller, V., Schäfer, D., & Heinrich, D. (2012). Brand authenticity: Towards a deeper understanding of its conceptualization and measurement. Advances in Consumer Research, p. 40.

Bug, P. & Haussmann, N. (2017). Using Social Media for Luxury Fashion Management. In: Luxury Fashion Retail Management. Singapore: Springer Nature, pp. 121-144.

Byers, P. Y., & Wilcox, J. R. (1991). Focus groups: A qualitative opportunity for researchers. The Journal of Business Communication (1973), 28(1), pp. 63-78.

Cappannelli, G. & Cappannelli, S. C. (2004). Authenticity: Simple strategies for greater meaning and purpose at work and at home. Cincinnati, OH: Emmis Books.

Carroll, G. R., & Swaminathan, A. (2000). Why the microbrewery movement? Organizational dynamics of resource partitioning in the US brewing industry. American journal of sociology, 106(3), pp. 715-762.

Cervellon, M-C. & Coudriet, R. (2013). Brand social power in luxury retail: Manifestations of brand dominance over clients in the store. International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management 41(11-12), pp. 869-884.

Christodoulides, G., Michaelidou, N., & Li, C. H. (2009). Measuring perceived brand luxury: An evaluation of the BLI scale. Journal of Brand Management, 16(5-6),pp. 395-405.

Cohen, I. J. (1989). Structuration theory: Anthony Giddens and the constitution of social life. Macmillan International Higher Education.

Cooper, H., Merrilees, B., & Miller, D. (2015). Corporate heritage brand management: Corporate heritage brands versus contemporary corporate brands. Journal of Brand Management 22(5), pp. 412-430.

Denzin, N. K. (2017). The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods. Routledge.

Dion, D. & Borraz, S. (2015). Managing heritage brands: A study of the sacralization of heritage stores in the luxury industry. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services 22, pp. 77-84.

Dion, D. & Mazzalovo, G. (2016). Reviving sleeping beauty brands by rearticulating brand heritage. Journal of Business Research 69, pp. 5894-5900.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Jackson, P. (2015). Management and Business Research. 5th Ed. London: Sage.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. Academy of management review, 14(4), pp. 532-550.

Eisenhardt, K. M., & Graebner, M. E. (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. Academy of management journal, 50(1), pp. 25-32.

Fine, G. A. (2003). Crafting authenticity: The validation of identity in self-taught art. Theory and Society 32(2), pp. 153–180.

Fionda, A. M. & Moore, C. M. (2008). The anatomy of the luxury fashion brand. Brand Management 16(5-6), pp. 347-363.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. Qualitative inquiry, 12(2), pp. 219-245.

Fritz, K., Schoenmueller, V. & Bruhn, M. (2017). Authenticity in branding – exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity. European Journal of Marketing 51(2), pp. 324-348.

Giddens, A., & Sutton, P. W. (2017). Essential concepts in sociology. John Wiley & Sons.

Giddens, A., Duneier, M., Appelbaum, R. P., & Carr, D. S. (1996). Introduction to sociology. New York, NY: WW Norton.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2017). Discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. Routledge.

Grayson, K. & Martinec, R. (2004). Consumer perceptions of iconicity and indexicality and their influence on assessments of authentic market offerings. Journal of Consumer Research 31(2), pp. 296-312.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Guèvremont, A. (2018). Creating and interpreting brand authenticity: The case of a young brand. Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 17(6), pp. 505-518.

Gummesson, E. (2005). Qualitative research in marketing: Roadmap for a wilderness of complexity and unpredictability. European Journal of Marketing 39(3-4), pp. 309–327.

Habermas, J. (1970) ‘Knowledge and interest’, in D. Emmett and A. Macintyre (eds), Sociological Theory and Philosophical Analysis. London: Macmillan, pp. 36–54.

Hakala, U., Lätti, S., & Sandberg, B. (2011). Operationalising brand heritage and cultural heritage. Journal of Product & Brand Management 20(6), pp. 447–456.

Harrison, H., Birks, M., Franklin, R. & Mills, J. (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. In: Forum: Qualitative Social Research 18(1).

Heathcote, E. (2011). How to build heritage. The Financial Times 8-9, pp. 8.

Jain, V., Vatsa, R. & Jagani, K. (2014). Exploring Generation Z’s Purchase Behavior towards Luxury Apparel: a Conceptual Framework. Romanian Journal of Marketing 2, pp. 18–29.

Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. Educational researcher, 33(7), pp. 14-26.

Juncker S., Torres M. P. & Gustafsson C. S. (2019). How is Pabst Brewing Company Going to Position Themselves in the Chinese Market?. Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master’s Cases. Lund School of Economics and Management.

Justesen, L. & Mik-Meyer, N. (2010). Kvalitativa metoder: Från vetenskapsteori till praktik. Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Kahneman, D., Slovic, S. P., Slovic, P., & Tversky, A. (Eds.). (1982). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. Cambridge university press.

Kapferer, J. N. (2015). Kapferer on luxury: How luxury brands can grow yet remain rare. Kogan Page Publishers.

Kapferer, J.N. (1998). Why are we seduced by luxury brands? Journal of Brand Management, 6(1), pp. 44–49.

Kapferer, J-N. & Bastien, V. (2012). The Luxury Strategy: Break the Rules of Marketing to Build Luxury Brands. Ed: 2nd. London: Kogan Page.

Kapferer, J-N. & Laurent, G. (2016). Where do consumers think luxury begins? A study of perceived minimum price for 21 luxury goods in 7 countries. Journal of Business Research 69, pp. 332-340.

Kapferer, J-N. (1997). Managing Luxury Brands. Journal of Brand Management 4(4), pp. 251-260.

Kapferer, J-N. (2012a). Abundant rarity: The key to luxury growth. Business Horizons 55(5), pp. 453–462.

Kapferer, J-N. (2012b). The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced insights and strategic thinking. Ed: 5th. London: Kogan Page.

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualising, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. Journal of Marketing 57, pp. 1-22.

Kemp, S. (1998). Perceiving luxury and necessity. Journal of Economic Psychology, 19(5), pp. 591-606.

Kvale, S. (1994). Ten Standard Responses to Qualitative research Interviews. Journal of Phenomenological Psychology 25 (2), pp. 147-173.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Liu, X., Burns, A. C., & Hou, Y. (2013). Comparing online and in-store shopping behavior towards luxury goods. International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management, 41(11/12), pp. 885-900.

Macdonald, S. (2006). Undesirable heritage: fascist material culture and historical consciousness in Nuremberg. International Journal of Heritage Studies 12(1), pp. 9-28.

Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. Family practice, 13(6), pp. 522-526.

Morhart, F., Malär, L., Guèvremont, A., Girardin, F., & Grohmann, B. (2015). Brand authenticity: An integrative framework and measurement scale. Journal of Consumer Psychology 25(2), pp. 200–218.

Napoli, J., Dickinson, S. J., Beverland, M. B. & Farrelly, F. (2014). Measuring consumer-based authenticity. Journal of Business Research 67, pp. 1090–1098.

Napoli, J., Dickinson-Delaporte, S. J. & Beverland, M. B. (2016). The brand authenticity continuum: strategic approaches for building value. Journal of Marketing Management 32(13-14), pp. 1201-1229.

Okonkwo, U. (2007). Luxury Fashion Branding. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Palmieri, J. E. (2017) 'Levi's Chip Bergh Reinvents an American Original', WWD: Women's Wear Daily, p. 11.

Phau, I. & Prendergast, G. (2000) Consuming luxury brands: The relevance of the 'Rarity Principle'. Journal of Brand Management 8(2), pp. 122–138.

Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. Field methods, 15(1), pp. 85-109.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). Research methods for business students. Essex. Financial Times/Prentice Hall.

Siggelkow, N. (2007). Persuasion with case studies. Academy of Management Journal 50(1), pp. 20–4.

Simmel, G. (2012). The metropolis and mental life. In The urban sociology reader (pp. 37-45). Routledge.

Sinek, S. (2009). Start with why: How great leaders inspire everyone to take action. Penguin.

Sinha, P. (2011). Luxury Retail: Creating Brand Experience. In: The Journal for Decision Makers 36(1), pp. 85-86.

Stake, R. E. (1995). The art of case study research. Sage.

Stake, R. E. (2006). Multiple case study analysis. New York, NY: Guilford.

Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. American journal of evaluation, 27(2), 237-246.

Urde, M. (2017). Brand Heritage, Luxury and Authenticity. Lecture. Lund University. October 2017.

Urde, M. (2019). Supervision 1. Degree Project in Global Marketing BUSN39, Lund University. 28th March 2019.

Urde, M., & Greyser, S. A. (2016). The corporate brand identity and reputation matrix–The case of the Nobel Prize. Journal of Brand management, 23(1), pp. 89-117.

Urde, M., Baumgarth, C., & Merrilees, B. (2013). Brand orientation and market orientation—from alternatives to synergy. Journal of Business Research, 66(1), pp. 13-20.

Urde, M., Greyser, S. A., & Balmer, J. M. (2007). Corporate brands with a heritage. Journal of Brand Management, 15(1), pp. 4-19.

Vickers, J. S., & Renand, F. (2003). The marketing of luxury goods: an exploratory study–three conceptual dimensions. The marketing review, 3(4), pp. 459-478.

Vigneron, F., & Johnson, L. W. (2004). Measuring perceptions of brand luxury. Journal of brand management 11(6), pp. 484-506.

Weber, M. (1946). Science as a Vocation. In Science and the Quest for Reality (pp. 382-394). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Wiedmann, K. P., Hennings, N., Schmidt, S. & Wuestefeld T. (2011a). Drivers and outcomes of brand heritage: Consumers' perception of heritage brands in the automotive industry. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice 19(2), pp. 205–220.

Wiedmann, K. P., Hennings, N., Schmidt, S. & Wuestefeld T. (2011b). The importance of brand heritage as a key performance driver in marketing management. Journal of Brand Management 19, pp. 182-194.

Yeoman, I. (2011). The changing behaviours of luxury consumption. Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management, 10(1), pp. 47-50.

Yin, R. K. (1981). The Case Study Crisis: Some Answers. Administrative Science Quarterly 26, pp. 58-65.

Yin, R. K. (2014). Case study research: Design and methods. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Zecchi, S. (2015). Il lusso. Edizioni Mondadori.

Online sources

Beeketing (n.d.). Levi's Growth Story - How Levi's came back from the biggest drop in revenue to hit sales record in 2017. [ONLINE] Available at: https://beeketing.com/blog/levis-growth-story/ [Accessed 07 May 2019]

Cederlund, M. (2019). Nu släpps årets trendigaste matta – av IKEA och Louis Vuitton-designer. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.damernasvarld.se/ikea-virgil-abloh-kollektion-inredning/ [Accessed 17 April 2019].

Forbes (2018). Louis Vuitton on the Forbes World's Most Valuable Brands List [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.forbes.com/companies/louis-vuitton/ [Accessed 07 May 2019]

Grushka, K. (2014). Brand Stories: PBR and the $44 Beer Bottle. [ONLINE] Available at: http://www.worksdesigngroup.com/pbr-brand-repositioning/ [Accessed 07 May 2019]

H&M (n.d.-a.). H&M Group | History. [ONLINE] Available at: https://about.hm.com/en/about-us/history.html [Accessed 08 May 2019]

H&M (n.d.-b.). H&M Group | 80' & 90's. [ONLINE] Available at: https://about.hm.com/en/about-us/history/the-90_s.html [Accessed 08 May 2019]

H&M (n.d.-c.). H&M Group | 00's. [ONLINE] Available at: https://about.hm.com/en/about-us/history/the-00_s.html [Accessed 08 May 2019]

Harper's Bazaar. (2018). H&M's best designer collaborations. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.harpersbazaar.com/uk/fashion/fashion-news/news/g23095/hms-best-designer-collaborations [Accessed 18 April 2019]

Levi Strauss & Co. (2018) As Worn by Albert Einstein. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.levistrauss.com/2018/02/20/worn-albert-einstein-levis-vintage-clothing-presents-einsteins-menlo-cossack-jacket/ [Accessed 07 May 2019]

Levi Strauss & Co. (n.d. -a.) Our Values [ONLINE] Available at: http://www.levistrauss.com/who-we-are/company/?ab=aboutusLP_values_031918

Louis Vuitton. (2017). Sfilata Uomo Autunno-Inverno 2017: La collaborazione con Supreme [ONLINE] Available at: https://it.louisvuitton.com/ita-it/articoli/men-fall-winter-2017-show-the-collaboration-with-supreme

Louis Vuitton. (n.d.-a.). A Legendary History. [ONLINE] Available at: https://eu.louisvuitton.com/eng-e1/la-maison/a-legendary-history [Accessed 22 April 2019].

Louis Vuitton. (n.d.-b.). Asnières. [ONLINE] Available at: https://eu.louisvuitton.com/eng-e1/la-maison/asnieres#la-galerie [Accessed 23 April 2019].

Louis Vuitton. (n.d.-c.). Brand Protection. [ONLINE] Available at: https://eu.louisvuitton.com/eng-e1/la-maison/brand-protection# [Accessed 22 April 2019].

Louis Vuitton. (n.d.-d.). Iconic Bags. [ONLINE] Available at: https://en.louisvuitton.com/eng-nl/women/handbags/icons/_/N-1kmh8x3 [Accessed 22 April 2019].

Louis Vuitton. (n.d.-e.). The 2018 Cruise Campaign Collection. [ONLINE] Available at: https://eu.louisvuitton.com/eng-e1/articles/lv-cruise-2018-campaign [Accessed 23 April 2019].

Louis Vuitton. (n.d.-f.). Travel Collection. [ONLINE] Available at: https://en.louisvuitton.com/eng-nl/women/travel/all-collections/_/N-1rhc8wn/to-9 [Accessed 23 April 2019].

Louis Vuitton. (n.d.-g.). Locate a Store. [ONLINE] Available at: https://eu.louisvuitton.com/eng-e1/stores [Accessed 22 April 2019].

Marimekko. (n.d.-a.). Design Philosophy. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.marimekko.com/se_en/the-brand/design/design-philosophy [Accessed 19 May 2019].

Marimekko. (n.d.-b.). Historia. [ONLINE] Available at: https://company.marimekko.com/fi/me-yrityksena/historia/ [Accessed 19 May 2019].

Marimekko. (n.d.-c.). Sales and Stores. [ONLINE] Available at: https://company.marimekko.com/en/investors/business-operations/sales-and-stores/ [Accessed 19 May 2019].

Nelson, C. (2011). Opportunities in China’s Alcoholic Beverage Market. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.chinabusinessreview.com/opportunities-in-chinas-alcoholic-beverage-market/ [Accessed 07 May 2019]

Pabst (n.d.). Historical timeline. [ONLINE] Available at: http://pabst.com/timeline/ [Accessed 7 May 2019]

Tauer, K., (2018) Michael Burke on the Power of Time. [ONLINE] Available at: (https://wwd.com/eye/people/michael-burke-louis-vuitton-design-miami-1202924196/ [Accessed 20 May 2019]

The Guardian (2004). Lagerfeld designs boost H&M sales. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/business/2004/dec/15/money2 [Accessed 8 May 2019]

The Sun (2016). KENZO x H&M clothes already selling on eBay for up to 25 TIMES the price. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2109692/kenzo-x-hm-clothes-already-selling-on-ebay-for-up-to-four-times-the-price/

Wood, J. (2017). Are Finland and Japan obsessed with each other?. [ONLINE] Available at: https://theculturetrip.com/europe/finland/articles/are-finland-and-japan-obsessed-with-each-other/ [Accessed 19 May 2019]