Fashion collaboration with art and contemporary culture:  
*Prada Foundation as a case study.*

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ABSTRACT

During the last decades fashion has strengthened its relationship with art. Always more and more often, top luxury brands open flagship stores designed in collaboration with archistars or fund culture becoming the new patrons of art. Furthermore, fashion brands also establish foundations where art can be exhibited and promoted. This is the case of Prada Foundation in Milan (Italy), which opened in 2015 thanks to the passion for contemporary arts and culture of two collectors, namely Miuccia Prada and her husband Patrizio Bertelli. This research aims to understand which motivations are underpinning the establishment of a fashion foundation, focusing on the case study of Prada Foundation. The topic was investigated though semi-structured interviews with visitors of Prada Foundation in order to answer the following research question: how does the audience evaluate the activity of a fashion brand’s art foundation such as Prada Foundation in Milan?. The research is based on two main concepts that also represent the theoretical framework: artification and legitimation. On the one hand, the artification process introduced by Shapiro and Heinich (2012) explains how new practices or objects can be transformed into art. On the other hand, the legitimation process introduced by Baumann (2007) explains how these practices or objects obtain recognition as art. The theory by Baumann about legitimation was leading for the collection of data since the interview guides were based on the three groups that Baumann presents as the factors fostering the legitimation process: opportunity space, resources and framing. Moreover, this structure was also used for the thematic analysis of the collected data. This case study shows how the cultural activity of the foundation can bring benefits to the brand in shaping people’s view of the fashion brand as patron of contemporary art. More specifically, respondents recognised Prada fashion brand as producer and promoter of culture not only for the presence of the cultural foundation, but also for the production of its products that share certain values that can be found also in contemporary art: creativity, innovation, novelty, paradigm breaking and emotional connection with the product. In spite of the fact that Prada fashion brand is perceived as the patron of Italian Heritage, fashion is not recognised as an art expression.

KEYWORDS: Prada Foundation, fashion, contemporary art, artification process, legitimation process.
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After many months of research and intense writing I finally achieved this important goal that also represents the conclusion – at this stage of my life – of my university career. I am glad that I had the opportunity to finish it with this research project that is based on two of my biggest passions: fashion and art. However, this important achievement would not have been possible without the support and collaboration of many people.

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Despite its importance, this thesis represents only a part of the challenging experience I lived in the last year since I started this Master programme in Art, Culture and Society at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Being a foreign student abroad can be sometimes difficult. However, I was fortunate because I met amazing people who became my friends and a sort of Dutch family. They were a great resource for me because we spent time together sharing our expectations, dreams, goals and problems. Among these, I would like to really thank my friends Gaia and Zoe who were really my family here in The Netherlands. I am also grateful to my friend Elena, with whom I was used to realise all the stress practicing sport activities every single day. Of course, I also thank all my friends in Italy who supported me and shared my happiness for all the goals I achieved during this academic year, even from distance. My gratitude also goes to Mrs Augie, my English teacher who followed all my university career during the last years.

Last but absolutely not least, I would like to express my infinite gratitude and love for my family. My mum, dad and brother always sustained and supported me. They encouraged me to always do my best and to never give up. I also thank them for all the time they spent to listen to my worries about the outcome of this research. I would have never been able to live such a great and successful experience without them.
The case of fashion collaboration with other sectors and fields is becoming a widespread phenomenon. We only need to consider the examples of the famous bags designed by artists like Takashi Murakami and Jeff Koons for Louis Vuitton. Other examples are related to the museums opened by fashion designers in order to celebrate their activity and history, as the case of Musée Yves Saint Laurent in Paris (France) demonstrates. Fashion designers seem to be more and more interested in art and culture. For this reason, they do not only collaborate with art to create new fashion products that can generate a new business and attract a new range of customers. Rather, some of the most important fashion brands worldwide, are demonstrating a relevant effort in trying to promote and sustain contemporary art and culture in general, establishing new institutions bringing the brand’s name: fashion foundations.

Thanks to their economic and social power, fashion foundations are one of the several types of cultural institutions which represent a suitable place to host contemporary art that nowadays often request huge spaces and huge monetary capitals for its realization. In fact, the contemporary art practice has changed considerably in the last decades. Artists are more often interested in creating work of art of huge dimensions, involving considerable economic support. For these reasons they have to be supported by patrons who have a relevant economic power and social influence such as fashion foundations.

An example of fashion foundation is the Italian Prada Foundation established in 1993 as a result of the interest and involvement of Miuccia Prada and her husband Patrizio Bertelli in contemporary art and culture. Miuccia and Patrizio in fact, are two among the most famous contemporary art collectors of our days worldwide (www.artnews.com). Since its origin, Prada Foundation has been involved in the development of art exhibitions along with the participation in co-producing site-specific artistic projects as well as projects related to cinema, photography, design and architecture. The foundation started its activity in 1993 and during the years it improved its organisation and an important turning point arrived in 2015 when the new venue in Milan (Largo Isarco), the native place of brand Prada, was inaugurated. This event was preceded in 2011 by the opening of a venue also in Venice in Cà Corner della Regina.

In this research I will investigate the relationship between art and fashion, focusing on fashion foundations taking as a case study Prada Foundation in Milan, Italy. The study is a qualitative research based on semi-structured interviews with visitors of the foundation. For this reason, I addressed the following research question: how does the audience evaluate the activity of a fashion brand’s art foundation such as Prada Foundation in Milan? The topic will be investigated also answering to these sub-questions: which are the symbolic spill-overs that the cultural activity brings to the fashion brand? which are the side effects that the
image of the fashion brand brings to the cultural activity? and finally how opening a foundation reflects on the reputation and legitimation of contemporary art and Prada fashion brand?.

In order to answer the research question and sub-questions introduced above, I will use the theory of legitimation process (Baumann, 2007) and artification (Shapiro & Heinich, 2012) as main concept underpinning the investigation. These two theories also represent the theoretical framework. Moreover, the main components of the legitimation process – opportunity space, resources and framing – also represent the cornerstones on which the methodology of the research is based, as it is explained in the second section of the thesis about the methodology and operationalization. These concepts were also leading in the process of analysis of the collected data, as presented in the third section of the thesis. Finally, in the last chapter – the conclusion – I will try to give an answer to all the research questions as well as shed a light on the positive aspects of this research and the limitations.
In order to explain the phenomenon of collaboration between fashion and art, with specific focus on fashion foundations (Prada Foundation), I will use the theories of artification (Shapiro & Heinich, 2012) and legitimation (Baumann, 2007) as main concepts underpinning this research. This choice is also due to the fact that there is scarce academic literature about the topic, except for studies that explain the case of collaboration between fashion and art mostly from an economic or marketing-oriented point of view (Kim, Ko, Lee, Mattila & Hoon Kim, 2014; Jang, 2006; Radón, 2012; Stewart & Marcketti, 2012). On the contrary, the aim of this research is to try to bring to the surface the deep motivations grounding this relationship. These two theories, artification and legitimation, explain how a practice can become art and then recognized by the audience as official art. The two processes work on different levels: artification occurs when something, for instance a practice, is established as art. In order to be accomplished, artification is accompanied by the process of legitimation that allows this new practice to obtain recognition as art expression. I will explain the two processes in detail in the following sections.

Contemporary art and fashion have obtained different levels of artification and legitimation. On the one hand, contemporary art is considered as art, however its legitimation process is still going on. As a matter of fact, artists, critics and aestheticians – namely the internal audience – already recognize the practice as art, however they are trying to define criteria in order to classify the different kinds of contemporary art practice and also create new aesthetic categories. This work of categorization is helpful not only for academic goals or for a mere speculation, but also because it is the mean through which the general audience can approach contemporary art, understand it and eventually appreciate it. On the other hand, fashion seems to have reached lower levels of artification and legitimation. In spite of the fact that both contemporary art and fashion share some values and features like creativity, innovation, novelty, paradigm breaking and emotional connection with the product, fashion is not able to obtain recognition as art. Probably, the main reason of this difficulty is related to the consistent presence of artisanship within fashion production as well as the merchandise with use value on an industrial scale in order to gain profit.

1. THE ARTIFICATION PROCESS

In their article about artification, Shapiro and Heinich (2012) explain how painting and sculpture became art. As a matter of fact, until the Renaissance these two practices – that nowadays we define and recognise as art expressions - were considered as manual activities on an inferior level than liberal arts like philosophy or literature. During the Renaissance, painting and sculpture began a process of elevation from artisanal activities to liberal arts, thanks to the activity of patronage of many Italian princes who called these ‘artisans’ to work in their courts. Therefore, a process of artification of painting and sculpture was triggered, until these two practices gradually gained recognition (Shapiro & Heinich, 2012).
A step back is necessary in order to understand how the process of artification is defined by explaining which are the main constitutes of this process (Shapiro & Heinich, 2012). To begin with, the practice has to be displaced from its original context of production. This is a sort of prerequisite for the practice to be institutionalized. Coming back to the first example, painting and sculpture gradually moved from the master’s workshop, to the princes’ courts and later in studios. Another instance could be related to the film production. Film moved from fairs to cinemas and a critical attention on them also started. Furthermore, another important factor is renaming, when a practice changes its name, such in the case of the term imagiers that was then transformed into artistes. When a practice is renamed, it means that its institutional status has changed. The change of the institutional status can be also fostered by a recategorization of the practice that can be also helpful to obtain legal consolidation, for instance the setting of the rules related to the authors rights. Then, artification is also favoured by the individualization of labour and by an institutional and organizational change. It is mentioned above how painters gradually moved from the courts of the patrons to individual studios called ateliers during Romanticism era. Moreover, the rise of literature or studies about the practice also improve the discourse reinforcement known as intellectualization, for instance the presence of history and critic of art at the university, or courses about cinema for the film industry.

1.2 LEVELS OF ARTIFICATION

The process of artification can reach different levels depending on the intrinsic characteristics of the practice and the context. There are four main levels: durable, ongoing, partial and unobtainable (Shapiro & Heinich, 2012). Durable artification is what we define as art, for instance painting and sculpture, that are two practices well established as art. Ongoing artification means that the practice is under the process of becoming art, or it has already accomplished this status, and it is trying to obtain recognition (legitimation), for examples art brut and readymade. Then, there is the level of partial artification, explicable by the case of architecture, when the process is in progress but it cannot reach an accomplishment because there are some features and conditions related to the practice that obstacle its conclusion. This is the case of several craft practices that remain constantly in between the status of art and artisanship. Finally, there are some practices that will never be elevated to the status of art because there are some obstacles to the artification process – like problems of mobilization of the work to another location, or an excessive presence of craftsmanship - as in the case of gardening and perfumery (Shapiro & Heinich, 2012).

If we apply the model already presented to fashion, we could be able to understand its level of artification. Firstly, fashion designers are commonly considered as artists because they are creative, eclectic and have an eccentric image. This feature emerges more when thinking about the difference between haute couture and pret-a-porter. In this case, the renaming of the two practices also highlights the difference between them. On the one side, haute couture refers to the production of clothes that are unique and usually tailored for a
specific person and these dresses are the expression of concepts, ideas and creativity. On the other side, pret-a-porter refers to a mass production of clothes that can be worn by everybody, and have a use value. This process of renaming has an impact also on the categorization of these different kinds of fashion, in fact we could define haute couture as high-brow fashion and pret-a-porter as low-brow fashion. Furthermore, fashion has reached a certain level of displacement because it is not only related to designers’ studios, in fact runways are often held in public spaces, like museums, creating a sort of contamination and interaction between the fashion products and the artworks exhibited or the surrounding space itself. An example is Dolce & Gabbana fashion show held in April 2018 in the Soumaya Museum in Mexico City, where the models walked on the catwalk surrounded by precious artworks (www.vogue.it). Prada itself presented the fall/winter 2018-19 woman collection in the new tower – projected by Rem Koolhaas’s studio OMA - of its foundation during the last ‘Milanese’ Fashion Week (February 2018) (www.vogue.it). Moreover, regarding intellectualization, fashion has become an independent subject in many schools and universities not only for its practical side of the creation of clothes (that takes place in fashion academies), but also for its symbolic value. For this reason, today we can attend university courses about, to mention two examples, history of fashion or sociology of fashion. Finally, in spite of the fact that nowadays designers have increased the number of collaboration with artists, the individualisation of labour is still present. As a matter of fact, these collaborations are between a fashion designer and a famous artist, hence what is important is still the individual genius, talent and reputation of each of them. Since the case of collaboration between fashion and art is the focus of this research, I will come back to this point later. For all the reasons explained above, it could be affirmed that fashion has obtained a partial level of artification. In fact, on the one hand, there is the craft related to the material production of the clothes as well as its commercial side of merchandise. On the other hand, there is the artistic side related to the creativity of the designer who might be considered as an artist.

As well as fashion, also contemporary art has not obtained yet a durable level of artification. As a matter of fact, it is continuously looking for any kind of certification, for instance critical and aesthetical recognition. Despite that, contemporary art is in an advanced level of artification in respect to fashion. This means that the practice is generally considered as official art. However, there is a lively debate among academics, since contemporary art presents a variety of practices and expressions that create problems of classification within certain categories. The latter element, should not be only considered as negative because scholars are not sure about the status of some practices or artefacts. The debate also represents the discourse reinforcement that Shapiro and Heinich (2012) define as intellectualization and thus, contribute to the artification process. The constant debate and attention of aestheticians and critics on the contemporary art practice means that it is already considered as art, otherwise they would not spend so much effort in trying to define and categorize the practice in order to make it more understandable and accessible to the people within the art world and the general audience.
To sum up, following the categories created by Heinich and Shapiro, it can be said that both fashion and contemporary art have obtained a partial level of artification. At the same time, I would also highlight that there are some differences between the two. On the one hand, fashion is partially ‘artified’ because it has two components: the craft related to the actual realization of the clothes or accessories, also on large scale for the merchandise that do not allow it to reach the certification as art, then there is the art or creativity related to the process of creation that are elements fostering the artification process. Probably fashion will go on struggling for this certification as art forever. On the other hand, contemporary art is partially ‘artified’ because the process is in the ‘ongoing’ category, according to the groups – durable, partial, ongoing, unattainable - identified by Shapiro and Heinich (2012). To explain the point in other words, contemporary art is produced in the present days, for this reason the artification process is still in progress.

THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN FASHION AND ART

In their article Shapiro and Heinich (2012) identify the individualization of labour as one of the main components of the artification process. This means that activities that were collective at the beginning, gradually became solitary, as in the case of painters that left the master’s workshop or in the case of breakdance choreographers who firstly worked in group and nowadays they individually create their choreographies (Shapiro & Heinich, 2012). In the case of fashion and contemporary art, it is possible to observe the opposite situation. Instead of working on their own in fact, fashion designers and artists frequently do collaborations with other people. The spring/summer 2018 Prada’s women collection was inspired by the art world of comics strips, for this reason Miuccia Prada collaborated with eight artists (Brigid Elva, Joëlle Jones, Stellar Leuna, Giuliana Maldini, Natsume Ono, Emma Ríos, Trina Robbins e Fiona Staples) (www.vogue.it). However, it is also important to underline that even if fashion designers and contemporary artists have strengthened their relationship, at the same time they choose each other basing on specific and individual features, like name and reputation. Therefore, the individual talent is more important than the common practice.

The case of collaboration between fashion and art is not a recent event. However, nowadays these collaborations are characterized by long term and repetitive projects, whereas in the past were mostly characterized by one-time collaborations. This phenomenon started to receive more attention when Adidas launched a new casual clothing brand in 2000 with the collaboration of the Japanese fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto. Other famous collaborations have followed: Puma with Alexander McQueen, Louis Vuitton with Takashi Murakami and Jeff Koons and many others (Jang, 2006). In these cases, the fashion industry works with another field, setting a collaboration inter-business in order to produce new fashion products (shoes, bags, scarfs etc.) characterized by differentiation, uniqueness and rarity because they are the result of the work of famous artists, but at the same time the result of the collaboration remain inter-business in the field of the fashion industry. Recently many fashion brands have spread these concepts of collaborations inter-field
producing products that are not within the fashion world anymore, but are included in the cultural industry. This is the case of fashion foundations that sustain and promote the work of contemporary artists, who needs more and more financial support in order to create their artworks, as explained above (Coates, 2008; Jang, 2006).

2. CHASING FOR RECOGNITION

As I already introduced at the beginning, artification is the process occurring when a practice moves from non-art to art status. During this process another mechanism is triggered in order to favour the accomplishment of artification: legitimation. In this second step, the practice that did not gain a complete classification as art, starts to chase for recognition that is obtained reaching a certain level of consensus among people. The sociologist Shyon Baumann largely studied this process in different fields, film production and gastronomy among others (Baumann, 2002, 2017). Moreover, he explained the legitimation process identifying three groups of factors that facilitate it: opportunity space, resources and framing.

The process of legitimation occurs when an activity – or a social movement - is repositioned institutionally and intellectually. In other words, legitimation takes place when a practice is accepted as valid and when the production is redefined from entertainment or commerce or experimentation to culture (Baumann, 2007). In the case of fashion, for instance, the commercial side is one of the relevant features, because fashion production has also the goal of making profit. Fashion articles in fact, independently form their quality and exclusiveness of the item and the creativity aspect behind their creation, are produced on an industrial scale in order to gain a profit. On the contrary, in contemporary art, the creation of an artwork is related to the creativity and expression needs of the artist and the commercial side related to the sale of the artwork is not one among the reasons of the creation. Artworks are sold, however they are not produced on a large scale to gain profit, but are unique and without a use value. A work of art in fact, is bought because of its intrinsic qualities related to its symbolic and aesthetic values. Fashion items as well have these symbolic and aesthetic values and can also be status and identity markers, but they also have a use value that is not present in artworks. Nevertheless, the scale of production and the aim for profit are two discriminatory features between fashion and art.

According to Baumann (2007), the legitimation process is composed by three factors: opportunity space, resources and framing. I will explain each of them in the following sections, with a general explanation based on literature and then how I applied each group to the case study of Prada Foundation.

2.1 OPPORTUNITY SPACE

When we want to understand how a practice – and more generally speaking a social movement – obtains legitimation as art, we should take into consideration the surrounding context, also called political
environment, in which this process occurred. To explain it in other words, there are certain external conditions that may affect the accomplishment of the recognition of the practice as art. Di Maggio (1992, in Baumann, 2007) identifies some of these exogenous factors: “the existence of competitors, commercial substitutes, or publics and patrons of new wealth” (Baumann, 2007, p. 52). Peterson (1972, in Baumann 2007), for instance, illustrates the case of jazz music: the production of this music genre was strongly characterised by African American professionals and also the audience that was connected or part of this ethnic group. Jazz music did not receive great recognition since the discriminatory and persecutory attitudes against black people decreased. Hence, in this case the improvement of black people situation in the American society represents an external condition that favoured jazz recognition.

In the specific case of this research about the relationship between fashion and art, I identified some external factors that could affect the likelihood of legitimation: the entrance fee, the accessibility by public transport, the surrounding neighbourhood and the fact that the foundation is a private institution only funded by the fashion brand. Another external factor that do not depend on the foundation itself but on the ‘context’ that could favour the legitimization of fashion – and of a fashion foundation - is related to the present condition of contemporary art (this element was not investigated in this research, even though it sometimes emerged in few interviews). As a matter of fact, the contemporary art practice today often produces projects on large scale that are also characterised by a great realization complexity, hence artists need large financial contribution that public institutions cannot afford. For this reason, the role of private investors and patrons, like fashion brands, is increased (Coates, 2008). One of the first examples of private patronage for the funding of contemporary art projects is the case of the Wrapped Coast – One Million Square Feet by Christo and Jeanne-Claude in 1969 in Australia (Little Bay, Sydney). This artwork was funded by the entrepreneur and art patron John Kaldor, who afterwards set up his own business of promotion of contemporary art known as Kaldor Art Projects (Coates, 2008).

2.2 RESOURCES

The second group of elements able to influence the accomplishment of the legitimation process is named resources. Resources represents the opposite case than the one already explained, in fact resources are about the internal factors. Resources “can be tangible or intangible; they can take the form of money, labour, knowledge, experience, network connections and institutionalized relationships, prestige and status, physical equipment or assets, informal traditions, organizational forms, emotional energy, and leadership” (Baumann, 2007, p. 55). Nevertheless, having tangible or intangible resources it is not enough because they have to be mobilized in order to produce a result. Here is an explanatory example. An artist has a ‘pool of resource’ (term introduced by Eleanor Lyon in 1974, [Becker, 1982]) available to him. This pool is composed by material resources such as all the tools he needs to create the artwork (oil paint tubes, brushes, etc.) and
intangible resources like his creativity and network. The artist’s ability will be useful to create the work of art whereas the network will be essential to exhibit the artwork, make critics talk and write about it, make the gallerists sell it at a high price.

If we apply this model to a fashion foundation, we could identify as physical resources the economic assets of the foundation (namely the fact that it is private) and the architecture of the venue. These two elements represent an advantage for the foundation in terms of major opportunities to fund contemporary art and offer a space to exhibit it. Furthermore, the economic assets and the architecture have also side-effects on the image of the institution, thus becoming intangible resources.

2.3 FRAMING

The last facilitator of the legitimation process is framing. Baumann attributes a great importance to the role of ideas since they contribute to build the structure within the art practice or social movement takes place. This framework is useful to make the subject of legitimation process comprehensible, accessible, valid and therefore also acceptable and desirable (Baumann, 2007). In the study about film legitimation (2002), Baumann explains how the American film industry increased recognition between 1935 and 1970 thanks to the work of critics. His research based on the analysis of the content of the critical statements on the film advertisements, shows the influence of marketing and communication strategies in the process of replacement of a product – in this case film production in the US – in the society and the improvement of its status and purpose. Baumann shows the way in which the film industry increased its position in the cultural hierarchy of the United States elevating its status to ‘film literature’ (Baumann, 2002).

Framing could be defined as the process of convincing the audience about the validity of the practice and how to derive the correct interpretation and understanding its meanings and values. This process is based on ideologies that contain ideas and values that make the frame more appealing to the public (Oliver & Johnston, 2000 in Baumann, 2007). In this process of frame building, a role is played by aestheticians, critics and dealers. In Art Worlds, Becker (1982) explains the topic in this way. Aestheticians contribute to construct the categories (mostly on a philosophical level) that then help to classify a cultural or artistic practice within certain boundaries, for instance between art versus non-art or good art versus bad art. These categories have to be coherent and defensible in order to fix the values and rules that therefore regularize the practice. Once the aesthetic system is built, it is used as a tool by the critics who discuss the day to day events related to the art world and give judgements about the artworks or art practice influencing their reputation. Finally, there are the dealers whose role is to make the artworks appealing and appreciable for the public who then could develop an interest for the object and buy it. Aestheticians and critics based their work on writing, for this reason Ferguson (2004, in Johnston & Baumann, 2007) states that all the cultural fields are textually constructed. The study about omnivorousness in gourmet food writing (Johnston & Baumann, 2007) is an
example on how some foods were legitimated as high-status cultural signals thanks to the role of gastronomy critics.

Therefore, framing process is essential in order to reach a consensus among people about the validity and legitimacy of the practice. The arguments, theories, and all the speculations about the practice are in fact the basic elements favouring the creation of consensus among the ‘external audience’, namely the general audience, and the ‘internal audience’ composed by the inner members of the art world, such as art historians, critics, journalists, gallerist, aestheticians, producers, patrons (Baumann, 2007; Becker, 1982). When talking about how exceptional artists reach fame, Neurath explained this process of recognition similarly to Baumann and Becker, defining it as ‘four successive circles’, composed by peer recognition, critical recognition, patronage by dealers and collectors, and public acclaim (Bowness, 1989, p. 11). The firsts three types of recognition relate to the internal audience. Therefore, in order to obtain recognition and success the artist should be first recognise by other artists, contemporaries to him, and afterwards he should receive the attention of critics, gallerists and dealers. Finally, the artist will receive public acclaim.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION

The case of collaboration between fashion and contemporary art is interesting for all the reasons explained above related to the artification and legitimation process. This research has the goal to investigate and bring to the surface the connections underpinning this relationship, taking as a focus, the cultural institutions established by fashion brands, known as fashion foundations. More precisely, the research will focus on a single case study represented by Prada Foundation in Milan, Italy. For this reason, I address the following research question: how the audience evaluate the activity of a fashion brand’s art foundation such as Prada Foundation in Milan? Moreover, I also elaborated some sub-research questions: which are the symbolic spill-overs that the cultural activity brings to the fashion brand? which are the side effects that the image of the fashion brand brings to the cultural activity? And finally: how opening a foundation reflects on the reputation and legitimation of contemporary art and Prada fashion brand?

Before starting with the collection and analysis of the data, I developed some expectations that will be confirmed or refused along the discussion.

Hypothesis n. 1: the cultural activity can bring benefits to the fashion brands in terms of image and visibility.
Hypothesis n. 2: the fashion brand can bring benefits to the cultural foundation in terms of funding, visibility, attractiveness, network.
Hypothesis n. 3: the involvement of the fashion brand in contemporary art is a means to increase fashion recognition and legitimation as art expression.
METHODOLOGY

This is an explanatory research (Yin, 1994) based on the case study of Prada Foundation in Milan. As I already introduced in the previous chapter, a qualitative research analysis based on semi-structured interviews was conducted (Bernard, 2011). As a matter of fact, interviewing is a methodology that allows the researcher great flexibility to investigate complicated topics as others’ people opinions and thoughts about a specific issue. In this specific case, I was interested in understanding how the audience may perceive the activity of a contemporary art foundation that comes from an Italian well-known fashion brand. Besides, I also wanted to investigate on a deeper level if there are and which are the side effects that the cultural activity might bring to the fashion brand and the possible spill-overs the fashion brand might bring to the cultural activity of its art foundation. For this reason, I chose to conduct my research by interviewing a group of people who have visited Prada Foundation in Milan, and who have in common the interest for contemporary art but coming from different university backgrounds and doing different professions. During the interviews I used an interview guide in order to ensure that all the points of investigation would have been covered (Bernard, 2011).

1. OPERATIONALIZATION

Baumann’s theory about the process of legitimation of new cultural expressions was applied in this research to the fashion field. His theory focuses on new cultural expressions – to make an example the researcher has recently focus on ‘food legitimation’ (Johnston & Baumann, 2007; Baumann, Szabo & Johnston, 2017) - whereas in this specific case I adapted the model of artistic legitimation in order to understand if a fashion brand can obtain legitimation through its activity in the cultural field (Baumann, 2007). For this reason, the interview guide was structured based on the three groups of factors that Baumann identifies as essential for a cultural production to have in order to be institutionally and intellectually repositioned in the society in order to gain recognition by a general public (Zelditch, 2001 in Baumann, 2007). These three groups of factors are: opportunity space, resources and framing. This structure has been maintained also in the process of analysis of the collected data. In the research I used two types of interview guides that kept the same structure and almost all the same topics, with the difference that they were done for two types of interviewees. The first interview guide was done for people working at Prada Foundation in the managerial and organizational departments. The second one was only for the audience of Prada Foundation.

THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

The interview guide allowed me to conduct the interviews with great flexibility because the interviewees seemed to feel at ease with the questions and free to give their opinions. However, at the same time it was an instrument to ensure that all the essential points of research were covered (Bernard, 2011). Moreover, the sequence of questions was made in order to start with questions related to the person’s tastes and personal experience to make the interviewee feel at ease with the researcher, passing to more elaborated
questions that created a sort of basement for answering the following points that, in certain cases, required a moment of reflection because the questions required more elaborated answers. An example is represented by the questions about the possible connections, similarities and differences, between the image of Prada and the image of Prada Foundation. All the interviews with the audience were conducted within the end of March 2018 and the beginning of May 2018. The interviews lasted forty minutes on average and were all made by video call (using Skype, WhatsApp and Facebook). The only interview done personally was the first one, conducted the 29th of March 2018 with two representatives of the managerial and organizational department of Prada Foundation and this interview was the longest (one hour and twenty minutes).

All the interviews were recorded and then transcribed. Academic literature widely discusses about the transcription issue and the variety of methodologies based on the accuracy (Powers, 2005). In this specific research the transcript of the interviews was done by using a medium level of notation deepness, in the sense that the mere words told by both the interviewee and the interviewer were transcribed, without being very specific about the non-verbal elements and the inaudible information (Powers, 2005). Of course, the speech was not modified in the transcript. Both the process of interviewing and the transcription were facilitated by the fact that all the interviews were held in Italian, the mother tongue of all the interviewees and the researcher. Besides, an English summary of all the interviews was done.

Generally speaking both interview guides were structured as follow. In the introduction there were general questions aimed to make the interviewee comfortable and gain information about his or her interest in art and fashion and their visiting experience at Prada Foundation. The introduction section was followed by other three parts that corresponds to Baumann’s groups of factors facilitating the legitimation process: framing, opportunity space and resources.

FRAMING

In the first section about ‘framing’, I tried to get the interviewee’s symbolic image of Prada Foundation and Prada as a fashion brand, asking an opinion about the foundation as a cultural institution, a definition of its role, a comparison with other cultural institutions and finally an opinion of taste about Prada’s products.

In spite of the fact that Baumann (2007) identifies the academic discourse and the critical attention an essential element for the framing construction, I did not focus on these elements. The reason is related to the fact that the aim of this research is to understand how the audience perceive a fashion foundation and its connection to fashion and art. Therefore, the frame is essentially intended as the ideas people have about Prada Foundation and its role, as well as the idea they have about the fashion brand Prada, or the connections between the style of the architecture and the image of the two institutions, the foundation and the brand.

OPPORTUNITY SPACE

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In the second section, ‘opportunity space’, I tried to highlight the main facilitators for the art foundation, such as the entrance fee, the presence of facilities and services inside the venue of the foundation, the accessibility by public transport, the neighbourhood in which the foundation is located. These questions were formulated in order to understand how relevant these features and factors were according to the visitors’ experience. These facilitators can be divided into two groups: internal and external factors.

The internal factors that could affect the likelihood of legitimation are: entrance fee, accessibility by public transport, surrounding neighbourhood and the fact that the foundation is a private institution only funded by the fashion brand. The entrance fee is an element that can help to classify the foundation as a museum. As a matter of fact, if the entrance fee to the foundation is the same or similar to the one of other important museums, consequently the foundation could be considered as an important museum too. As well as the entrance fee, also the accessibility by public transport is usually guaranteed for the important museums of the city. Moreover, the surrounding neighbourhood can be relevant in the sense that the presence of the foundation is contributing to the process of rehabilitation and improvement of the surrounding area, giving a contribution to the wellness of the city by providing a space for leisure. In the present days museums do not have the only function of collecting and preserve artefacts, but also of contributing to the advancement of the society through the education of the public and the offer of leisure experiences also thanks to the architecture of the venue (Stephen, 2001). For this reason, if the foundation has also this role, it can be compared to official museums. When talking about ‘official museums’ I refer to the definition of ICOM – the International Council of Museums - adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna (Austria) in 2007 saying: “A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment” (http://icom.museum/).

RESOURCES

In the last group of questions ‘resources’, I went a little bit deeper asking opinions about similarities and differences about the image of the foundation and the image of the brand, concluding with questions about the architecture of the venue of the foundation in Milan. The interview guide was concluded with two more questions about the possible side effects, in the audience opinion, an art foundation can give to the fashion brand and vice versa.

I identified as physical resources the economic assets of the foundation and the architecture of the venue of Prada Foundation in Milan (Largo Isarco). The former element, as already explained previously, could give the institution the possibility to promote a large quantity of contemporary art projects that maybe a public institution, with less monetary support, would not be able to afford. The latter element, the architecture, can be a resource on two levels. On the one side it is a physical space, projected in order to offer big and versatile
rooms where artists can exhibit their artworks or build their project adjusting the spaces to their needs. Besides, the architecture also offers a public space – because visitors can have free access to the foundation and have to pay the ticket only for visiting the exhibition – where people can enjoy their free time. In this way, the foundation also offers a venue where a variety of social experiences and events can be held. William Rubin, art museum curator, defines the modern cultural institutions as ‘pleasure places’, namely the museums are not only places for art preservation anymore, but also spaces where people can live the public space (Stephen, 2001). On the other side, the architecture also has a symbolic value related to its connections with the prestige of the architect and with the image of the foundation or the fashion brand, that can also be considered as intangible resources.

On the contrary, the non-physical resources are the image of Prada Foundation, the image of Prada as a fashion brand, the reputation of the architect that projected the foundation, Miuccia Prada’s creativity, experience and network, and finally the willingness of the people to buy Prada and to visit the foundation. The image of the foundation and of the fashion brand represent intangible resources because they could affect the process of attracting the audience or the artists, and facilitate the process of borrowing artworks. Miuccia Prada’s creativity, experience and network could improve the opportunity of the foundation to collaborate with famous artists from different fields, or could affect the presentation and the setting of the exhibitions. Moreover, the presence of a foundation established by a brand could also improve people willingness to buy the products of the brand, and, on the other way around, the audience could be more attracted to visit the foundation because of its prestigious name related to a fashion brand.

2. SAMPLE

This research focuses on the case study of Prada Foundation, more specifically the venue located in the city of Milan, Italy. The choice is due to different reasons. To begin with, Miuccia Prada is one among the most important international collectors of art and her fashion brand is one of the most well-known all over the world. Miuccia Prada’s passion for art can be observed in her activity as art collector as well as the fashion brand collaboration with artists and architects for the production of innovative stores that combine original and outstanding architecture and design features, such as ‘Prada’s Transformer’, in Seoul, designed by Rem Koolhaas’s OMA firm in 2009 (www.nytimes.com) or the installation ‘Prada Marfa’ (2003) situated along the road from Roswell in New Mexico, to Marfa in Texas (www.vogue.com). Another reason why Prada Foundation was a relevant case study is because it has a certain role in Italy for the promotion of contemporary culture and its venue represents a point of attraction for both people interested in contemporary art and common visitors, Italian or foreigners, who are attracted by the prestige of this institution. Finally, I also selected Prada Foundation for more pragmatic reasons: as the foundation is situated in Italy, it was easier for me to conduct my research because I speak Italian and this element was an advantage because it gave me the opportunity to
have access to a great number of oral and written information (interviews, articles, legal documents). Moreover, this case study focuses on the foundation venue in Milan, the city where I lived for many years. This feature poses me in an advantaged position because I already have a quite deep view about the cultural offer and activity of the foundation, its centrality in the cultural offer of the city of Milan, its location in a non-central neighbourhood and its accessibility by public transport, just to name some.

In the previous section, it has been explained already that two different kinds of interview guides were used. For this reason, I would like to distinguish the sample in two main groups: the group of the ‘people working at Prada Foundation’ and the group of the ‘general audience’. The former sample was composed by representatives of the managerial and curatorial departments of the institution, one for each department. Prada Foundation itself provided me with the people who were available for an interview also in respect to how my investigation was presented to them, namely as a research about the relationship between fashion and art.

On the contrary, the group called ‘the general audience’, is composed by a variety of people -18 respondents- all sharing the feature that they visited Prada Foundation at least one time. Besides, all the interviewees share an interest in art and culture in general, the majority of them have also a deep interest in contemporary art expressions and are highly educated (Bachelor or Master’s degrees). This sample was generated by first using the generic purposive sampling strategy and in a second time using the snowball sampling strategy (Bryman, 2012). As a matter of fact, I firstly selected the sample applying only one criteria, namely people who have visited Prada Foundation. In this way I got the purposive sample. Thanks to my previous studies in art history at the university of Milan and three years of life experience in that city, I could contact all people I knew who had visited the foundation or who might have visited the foundation. In this way, I was able to collect a certain number of people to interview. Furthermore, after all the interviews, I asked each interviewee for help and give me one or more contacts of people who could have been available to take part in my research. This second strategy, known as snowball sampling strategy, allowed me to contact also people who I did not know, with different backgrounds and tastes than the people I first contacted, who basically shared with me the typology of bachelor studies. The choice to use two different sampling strategies, generic purposive and snowball sampling, is due to the simple reason that my goal was to reach people who had attended Prada foundation (purpose) and that were differentiated in age, backgrounds, interests and occupation, in order to be more representative (Bryman, 2012).

The ‘general audience’ group is composed by 18 respondents aged between 20 and 60. Within this sample there are 10 females and 8 males. These people share the fact that they visited Prada Foundation at least one time, and the majority of them live in Milan (13 out of 18), whereas the others live in different cities of the north of Italy (3 in towns in the province of Milan and 2 in Turin). The latter feature could be relevant because people living in Milan, where the foundation is located, resulted to have a more complete idea about
the side effects that the presence of this cultural institution brought to the entire city during the years and, more specifically to the surrounded neighbourhood, since its establishment. This element allowed me to grasp a deeper understanding of people’s general perception of Prada Foundation activity as a philanthropic institution. Moreover, people living in Milan had a clearer view about the side-effects that the foundation is bringing to the cultural environment of the city. The sample is composed by a variety of people, all of them having a university education – Bachelor of Master - with different occupations: plenty of them are university students (2 in philosophy, 1 in art history, 1 in scenography, 3 in economics of art, 1 in architecture, 1 in musicology), other are workers both in the cultural field or other fields (a ballet dancer, a teacher, a fashion designer, a theatre director, an engineer, a housewife, an art critic, a gallerist and a freelancer in marketing). The sample was composed randomly using the snowball sampling strategy, as explained above.

3. THEMATIC ANALYSIS

The data set of this research has been analysed using the thematic analysis. This is a relevant method used in qualitative research, especially for researchers who are at the firsts stages of their careers (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). In spite of the fact that there is not a large amount of literature about thematic analysis able to guide precisely the researcher in his study, this methodology has also many benefits that made me choose it (Bryman, 2012). Thematic analysis allows great flexibility because the approach can be modified for the needs of different studies. Moreover, it is a good methodology when the researcher has to analyse the points of view and opinions of many participants – in this case of a variety of interviewees– allowing to highlight similarities, difference and recurrent themes (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). Besides, it is also helpful when analysing large data sets. Thematic analysis has also some drawbacks. The most relevant one is the flexibility that could lead to inconsistency and a lack of coherence and cohesion (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). In the specific case of this research this disadvantage was avoided thanks to the application of Baumann’s legitimation theory to the process of creation and analysis of the data set.

In this analysis I follow the steps highlighted by Nowell, Norris, White & Moules in their article (2017) about how to get trustworthiness in thematic analysis. Their model is well explained and all the different phases of the data analysis are made clear. For this reason, these six points will guide me: familiarizing with the data (1), coding process (2), searching for themes (3), reviewing themes (4), defining themes (5), producing the report (6) (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017).

Familiarizing with the data (1)

In this first step, I familiarized with my data reading all the interview transcripts more than once. Furthermore, the more interviews I did, the more I became confident with the interview guide and I also increased my ability to guide the interview avoiding influencing the answer of my respondents. Besides, after
having done each interview I soon passed to the transcription and started to highlight the striking information or the recurrent themes.

**Coding process (2)**

In this second step, bringing to the generation of theory after the data collection, I followed the coding strategies explain by academics about the different levels of coding (Boeje, 2010; Bryman, 2012; Saldaña, 2012). I used different levels of coding, starting from a generation of specific labels, moving to more general and broad codes that often grouped similar labels that sometimes where transformed in sub-codes. To begin with, all the transcripts were ‘open coded’ in order to identify the main concepts, categories and themes and identify the repetitive ones. This first categorization of data was followed by the ‘axial coding’, the process in which the first amount of codes was reduced to specific categories and connections among them were highlighted. Finally, the core messages were identified during the ‘selective coding’ process.

**Searching for themes (3)**

As well as thematic analysis, also the term theme does not have a precise definition. As Bryman (2012, p. 580) writes, a theme can be ‘a category identified by the analyst through his/her data’, it can be related to the research focus or based on the research question, or it can be seen as a tool that ‘provides the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of his or her data’. In this research I will refer to themes as the three main groups, framing, opportunity space and resources, retrieved by Baumann’s theory (2007) on which this study is based. For this reason, the steps Rewing themes (4) and Defining themes (5) explained in the academic literature (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017) are not applicable here. However, if the three main themes remained unchanged, the codes and sub-codes were constantly reviewed and defined until the end of the collection of data and also during the analysis in order to avoid any bias of the data.

**Producing the report (6)**

Last but not least, I wrote the report (analysis) with all the data divided in themes, codes and sub-codes. The findings were reported, compared, analysed and discussed with a constant connection with the academic literature.
In this section I will analyse all the data collected through the interviews, dividing the findings in three main groups that are retrieved from Baumann’s theory: framing, opportunity space and resources. In order to explain the findings many quotes retrieved from the interviews will be used. Due to the fact that all the interviews were held in Italian language, the quotes are translated carefully in English trying to keep the sentences as much similar as possible. The original version of all the quotes is reported right after the English sentence into brackets.

1. OPPORTUNITY SPACE

In this first group of codes called ‘opportunity space’, I asked the interviewees questions about the exogenous factors contributing to the process of a cultural institution to gain recognition. I identified six main factors playing a role in the process of legitimation, and that also correspond to the codes: role of money, social capital, the entrance fee to the foundation, the presence of facilities within the foundation, the accessibility by public transport and the neighbourhood in which Prada Foundation is located.

Table 1: Overview of codes and sub-codes for the group Opportunity Space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROLE OF MONEY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL CAPITAL</td>
<td>Freedom of choice, Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELEVANCE OF THE ENTRANCE FEE</td>
<td>Entrance to another exhibition space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESENCE OF FACILITIES WITHIN THE FOUNDATION</td>
<td>Bookshop, Improvement of the atmosphere, Neutral positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEIGHBOURHOOD</td>
<td>Critics, Hope for rehabilitation, Gentrification?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.1 ROLE OF MONEY

To begin with, the first element that can be considered as an opportunity space, is the fact that Prada Foundation is a private institution, therefore it might have easier access to money and other resources. For this reason, I asked the interviewees to tell me, in their opinion, which are the differences between a private and public cultural institution. Almost all, 17 out of 18 respondents immediately answered me that the difference is in the presence of money in a private one and the absence of money in the public one. Afterwards, the interviewees elaborated the answer a bit and highlighted also some other differences, for instance that the abundance of money gives the private institution more freedom to realize cultural projects of any kind. In this way, they explained how the monetary power can become a social resource – that is the second code of this group - that can be seen in the freedom of choice and the development of a network.

Only one respondent gave a different point of view, explaining the question in terms of difference in the management of the institution. I consider this opinion relevant because it contributes to observe the point also from another perspective. This opinion comes from a woman who have a long experience in the field of marketing in the fashion industry:

I think that the difference [between a private and public institution] lays mostly in the management, because a private institution is always managed with a managerial concept, that is for sure more entrepreneurial. Whereas, in my opinion, a public institution has a similar logic, but in the end, it isn’t entrepreneurial. So, from my point of view, I’d say that there are these differences, the two have a different incipit, but then I can’t tell you which one is the more efficient. (Penso che la differenza sta sostanzialmente nella gestione, perché un'istituzione a livello privato è sempre gestita con un concetto manageriale, è sicuramente più imprenditoriale cosa che dal mio punto di vista un'istituzione pubblica, sì ha comunque una logica probabilmente verticalizzata manageriale, però sostanzialmente non ha logiche imprenditoriali. Quindi devo dire che sicuramente dal mio punto di vista ci sono, che poi siano più o meno efficaci, non te lo so dire ma sicuramente gli incipit è differente nelle due) (F. Silvia, personal communication, 10 May, 2018).

The representatives of Prada Foundation’s managerial and curatorial department explained that the foundation has the legal structure of a foundation. This feature brings many benefits: the foundation can be completely free to address its corporate purpose and to organize its structure. Besides, the fact that it can have a legal and financial autonomy are characteristics that makes the foundation a form of legal entity adapted to pursue a philanthropic activity.
As explained above, the presence of monetary resources in a private institution can bring to some spill-overs. Among them, the *freedom of choice* and the *network* were two of the main side-effects that emerged from the interviews and represent the sub-codes.

**Freedom of choice**

According to 10 out of 18 interviewees, the presence of money can represent a benefit because it gives the opportunity to organise bigger exhibitions and propose artworks that sometimes could be not very popular. Some respondents, 3 out of 18, said that due to the fact that the private cultural institution has greater monetary resources, it could also afford to organize exhibitions that are not very popular because they do not need to satisfy all the audience tastes but they can also focus on more specific targets. On the contrary, a public cultural institution is perceived as reaching less economic resources, and for this reason it has to propose very popular exhibitions in order to attract as much visitors as possible in order to sell tickets and being able to ensure a wage to the people working in the institution. This 27-year-old woman, former art history student explained this point:

A public museum being just a public institution, deals with the public taste. Hence, we would never have found some of the artists that were exhibited at Prada Foundation in a public museum, because the public museum deals with the taste of the audience. (Un museo pubblico essendo un’istituzione pubblica appunto, fa i conti con il gusto del pubblico. Quindi alcuni degli artisti che sono stati esposti alla fondazione Prada in un museo pubblico non li avremmo trovati, perché il museo pubblico fa i conti appunto con i gusti del pubblico) (A. Silvia, personal communication, 6 May, 2018).

Furthermore, this freedom of choice is also due to the fact that a private institution usually does not have any political constraints to respect, as this male bachelor student in Economic and management for arts, culture and communication explained: “Another additional characteristic that a [private] institution has, is that obviously a public one sometimes has to satisfy certain political interests.” (Un museo pubblico essendo un’istituzione pubblica appunto, fa i conti con il gusto del pubblico) (A. Giacomo, personal communication, 10 April, 2018).

**Network**

An additional point in favour of private institutions, according to some interviewees (4 out of 18), is that a private management of the institution can give it the opportunity to have a broader network. This feature is perceived as central because it could help the museum to contacts more people and hence exhibits more artworks and improve the quality of the cultural proposal. The 23-year-old male philosophy student explained the issue in this way:
I think that Prada Foundation, being a private institution, is facilitated to keep in contact with all those realities of exhibition curators, huge international centres and reception of the artworks, that instead would result more challenging on a public level. (E d’altra parte mi sembra che la Fondazione Prada, essendo per l’appunto privata qualche facilità in più oggi di mettersi in contatto con quelle realtà di curatori di mostre, di grandi centri internazionali e ricezione dell’opera d’arte, che invece a livello statale riesce più difficile) (V. Antonello, personal communication, 7 April, 2018).

This feature will come back later, in the resource group, when talking about the possible benefits a fashion brand could provide to the cultural activity of its foundation.

1.3 RELEVANCE OF THE ENTRANCE FEE

Remaining in the ‘monetary area’ the following question was related to the importance of the entrance fee in the choice to visit Prada Foundation in the respondents’ experience. According to the majority of them, 12 out of 18, this feature was irrelevant not only in the case of Prada Foundation but also when visiting other cultural institutions. As a matter of fact, if they are interested in the cultural offer of the institution they usually do not care about the price of the entrance ticket. However, on average, all the people who expressed this opinion were workers with a wage. This is not a secondary feature because according to the other group of people, mostly composed by students, the entrance fee has a certain relevance. For this reason, when they have to visit any cultural institution, they also take into consideration the price of the ticket and afterwards they take their decision based on some criteria. Some respondents evaluate the relationship between the entrance fee and the quality of the cultural offer (8 out of 18 respondents), whereas others take into consideration also the quantity of artworks exhibits or the dimension of the exhibition (2 respondent).

Nevertheless, these respondents also highlighted the fact that the entrance fee to Prada Foundation is similar to the one of other museums, for this reason it does not have a great relevance in their choice to visit the cultural institution, as this 36-years-old fashion designer explained:

In the end the entrance ticket to exhibitions – now I don’t remember – are about that price. Now I don’t remember how much is it, between 8 and 15 euros I think. So, it seems to me that the prices are more or less the same everywhere. If you want to go to an exhibition or to the cinema, the prices are quite standards, there are no ways to pay less. Maybe there are days in which the entrance fee is reduced…but beyond this, I think they all have more or less the same price. (E d’altra parte mi sembra che la Fondazione Prada, essendo per l’appunto privata qualche facilità in più oggi di mettersi in contatto con quelle realtà di curatori di mostre, di grandi centri internazionali e ricezione dell’opera d’arte, che invece a livello statale riesce più difficile) (C. Francesca, personal communication, 11 April, 2018)
**Entrance to another exhibition space**

Due to the fact that at the moment the ticket to Prada Foundation—at the venue in Largo Isarco, South Milan—also includes the entrance to the other exhibition space called *Osservatorio*, located in the city centre—in Galleria Vittorio Emanuele— I tried to investigate if this element could be seen as a benefit and incentive for the visitors to decide to visit Prada Foundation. Three main points emerged from this question. First of all, many interviewees—16 out of 18—explained that did not know about this opportunity. However, even in case they knew it, they would not have considered this feature as a reason to visit the foundation, but that they would have appreciated it. Secondly, there is a group of respondents (10) who evaluated the entrance to another exhibition space as an incentive to visit something new and discover new art expressions. Finally, the last point that emerged from this question is that some interviewees feel more sceptical about this option, because they have the impression that this is a way that the institution uses to sell a ‘space’ that is not very popular or does not propose a certain exhibition quality. The theatre director said:

I’m not particularly interested in the ‘pay one for two’. Well, it’s a choice...I’m quite impenetrable also to all those ‘smoke and mirrors’ exhibitions that are often organised, so I’m not easily convincible. (Non sono particolarmente interessato al paghi uno prendi due. Cioè, è una scelta ... sono abbastanza impermeabile anche alle mostre specchietto che si fanno spesso, per cui non mi lascia tanto convincere)
(D. Emanuele, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

Besides, other people just pointed out that they do not appreciate combined tickets because they only visit what they are interested to.

1.4 PRESENCE OF FACILITIES WITHIN THE FOUNDATION

Interviewees were also asked to explain if the presence of certain services within the foundation were important to them and why. The focus of the question was on two main facilities: the bookshop and ‘Bar Luce’ a space where people can find the atmosphere of a typical *Milanese Café*, designed by the cinema director Wes Anderson. In this part of the analysis three main sub-codes were identified: the relevance of the *bookshop*, the *improvement of the atmosphere* and the *neutral positions*. Overall, the main feeling that emerged is that the presence of these facilities is taken for granted in museums. Nevertheless, Prada Foundation’s bookshop offers high quality catalogues about the exhibitions and Bar Luce is a non-typical café for a museum because of its special design features that improve and increase the visiting experience.
Some interviewees (5 out of 18) highlighted the importance for them of the presence of the bookshop, because it is a place where they can find useful and interesting catalogues that are appreciable for the quality of the images and the critical comments about the exhibitions. One of the interviewee said:

I find them [the catalogues] very interesting also because they are well done, so there is a critical comment of a certain level and the quality of the prints is high ... all these catalogues are rather rich and well done. (E li trovo [i cataloghi] molto interessanti anche perché sono fatti molto bene, per cui c’è un commento critico di un certo livello e sono stampati molto bene ... questi cataloghi siano tutti piuttosto ricchi e ben fatti) (V. Antonello, personal communication, 7 April, 2018).

Other people, such as this 53-year-old male gallerist explained:

In my opinion all big museums should have a nice bookshop because it is likely that they [the foundation] earn money that could allow the reduction of the entrance fee. (Secondo me tutti i grandi musei devono avere un bel bookshop e magari è con quello che fanno anche i soldi e che magari permette anche di abbassare il costo del biglietto) (P. Giuseppe, personal communication, 9 May, 2018).

Another relevant factor that emerged from the answers of the interviewees (6 out of 18), is the appreciation of the facilities as tools for the improvement of the overall atmosphere. The theatre director perfectly expressed the point:

It is very important [the presence of facilities] because it is connected to the experience of enjoyment of the artworks. Entering a place with an incredible design realised by a cinema director rather than interesting citations, the fact of being taken care, everything prepares you to a sort of experience. (è molto importante perché si riconduce all'esperienza di fruire delle opere. Entrare in un contesto con un design incredibile progettato da un regista, piuttosto che di citazioni interessanti, il fatto di essere accuditi, ti predispone a una sorta di esperienza) (D. Emanuele, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

Moreover, these elements give a certain style to the whole venue that becomes also a facilitator for socialisation as this 23-year-old female master student in economics of art and this dancer stated: “It gives a lot of glamour to everything” (Dà molto glamour a tutto quanto) (M. Maria Serena, personal communication, 28 April, 2018) and “The venue also aims to make people living these spaces and allowing you to enjoy the time with other people” (La location è anche volta ad andare in questi ambienti che ti permettono di stare bene con altre persone) (C. Patrizia, personal communication, 11 April, 2018).
Neutral positions

Other visitors instead, have not given such a great importance to these facilities. As a matter of fact, seven respondents take these services for granted in a cultural institution. On the contrary, other people are more critical about the presence of the bookshop and the café, because they have the reputation to be very expensive, as the architecture student outlined:

These are spaces that I don’t attend frequently, in the sense that I rarely go to the bar and I almost never go to the bookshops, and they are usually well-known – the bookshop more than everything, but both of them – to be very expensive. (Sono in realtà ambienti che non frequento, nel senso che vado molto di rado nei bar e ancora più di rado nei bookshop, e solitamente hanno la fama – soprattutto i bookshop, ma entrambi – di essere molto cari) (P. Andrea, personal communication, 10 April, 2018).

1.5 IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

An important facilitator for a cultural institution is the accessibility by public transport that allows the visitors to easily reach the location. In fact, the location of the cultural institution can affect its likelihood to have a high number of visitors and become popular. For this reason, I asked the respondents how relevant the accessibility by public transport was in their decision to visit Prada Foundation. Some of them did not took into consideration this element because they went there by car or bike, hence the accessibility was not an issue. On the contrary, the majority of the interviewees, 11 out of 18, underlined the fact that the access to the foundation by public transport is not convenient because it is located in a non-central area of the city, south Milan, where there are no other points of interest or relevant reasons to cross that neighbourhood, except the foundation itself. This 36-year-old female fashion designer said:

And that is an area where you go just to go to Prada Foundation, it’s not that I was there by chance and I went to the foundation. That is, the goal is to go there [at Prada Foundation], because it’s a poor area and it is not so central where to go to take a stroll and while you are in the centre you also say ‘oh maybe it’s along the way, ten minutes walking from here, I can go there’ – it is dislocated [a-part from the city]. (È comunque è una zona che se ci vai, ci vai per andare alla Fondazione Prada, non è che passavo di li e sono andata alla fondazione. cioè l’obiettivo è andare lì (Fondazione Prada), perché è in una zona povera e non è così centrale dove vai a passeggire e sei in centro e dici ‘ah magari è lungo la strada, a dieci minuti a piedi, e passo di li’ – è un po’ dislocata a parte ecco) (C. Francesca, personal communication, 11 April, 2018).

Some people (2) also highlighted that the accessibility by public transport can represent an issue especially when the visitor does not have a large amount of time to visit the cultural institution, for this reason the philosophy student said: “If I was tight on time and had to decide which museum visiting during a short
time, I wouldn’t chose to visit Prada Foundation” (Se avessi i minuti contati e dovessi decidere di visitare un museo in pochissimo tempo non sceglierei di visitare la Fondazione Prada) (V. Antonello, personal communication, 7 April, 2018). Besides, one of the respondents also underlined the problem of security at night, explaining that in a huge city like Milan, the presence of facilities like the accessibility by public transport surrounding the cultural institutions in this case, and in general for all public spaces, is essential for security issues.

1.6 NEIGHBOURHOOD

Since the beginning of almost all the interviews, the ‘neighbourhood factor’ emerged and came back later when talking about the accessibility by public transport. All the interviewees were surprised, both negatively and positively, about the choice of locating Prada Foundation in that area of the city. The comment of this 23-year-old musicology student portrays these impressions effectively: “Certainly, for a foundation of that kind, I’d never expected to find it in such a place. At least in Milan, I’d imagined it in a completely different location” (Di certo per una fondazione del genere, mai avrei pensato di trovarla in un luogo simile. Almeno a Milano l’avrei pensata in tutt’altro luogo) (M. Riccardo, personal communication, 21 April, 2018). Under this code, I could identify other sub-codes: *critics*, *hope for rehabilitation* and *gentrification*?. Regarding this point, the two visitors who came from Turin were just critic about the location of the foundation in that area of the city, and they did not express particular thoughts about the possibility that the foundation is fostering a gentrification process nor that its presence its improving the quality of the neighbourhood. On the contrary, respondents living in Milan (13 out of 18) and from the area surrounding the city (3 out of 18), also expressed opinions about the positive effect that the presence of Prada Foundation is bringing to that area.

**Critics**

Five respondents were negatively surprised by the location of Prada Foundation in that neighbourhood. For instance, a 57-year-old housewife criticised the location of the foundation in that suburban area, explaining that in her opinion Prada Foundation was completely out of the surrounding context. Besides, another interviewee stated that there are no other attractions in that area like restaurants, cafes or other cultural institutions such as cinemas or libraries.

**Hope for rehabilitation**

As well as critics, many respondents, 12 out of 18, also underlined that the presence of the foundation in that area could bring benefits to the surrounding neighbourhood in terms of requalification and rehabilitation of an abandoned former industrial area. The 24-year-old male teacher expressed his opinion in this way:
Well, I think that it is one of the worst neighbourhoods in Milan, because it has always been an industrial area, fallen into disuse, in front of a railway yard that it is abandoned at the moment. However, I noticed that behind Prada Foundation, there is an entire complex under construction that it is regenerating in the form of offices that will have a square and a garden in front, and for sure – in view of the projects, if they will start, of rehabilitation of the urban railway yards, Prada Foundation is certainly located in an interesting and strategic point. (Comunque penso uno dei quartieri più brutti di Milano, perché comunque è sempre stata la zona industriale, zona dismessa di fronte ha uno scalo ferroviario abbandonato attualmente. Però ho notato che dietro la Fondazione Prada c’è un intero complesso in costruzione che si sta rigenerando quindi come uffici che avranno una piazza giardino davanti e sicuramente diciamo che in vista dei progetti, se partiranno, di rinnovamento degli scali ferroviari urbani, sicuramente la Fondazione Prada si colloca in un punto - come dire- interessante strategico) (G. Francesco, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

In addition, this girl, a 23-year-old philosophy student, working in that neighbourhood said:

Then, I have perceived the difference between when I had already started to work there in December 2016 and now. I mean, the surrounding area has changed. Before it was a bit abandoned to itself, whereas now I believe they have put something in order because there are less degenerated people around. (Poi ho comunque sentito la differenza rispetto appena avevo iniziato a lavorare là che era Dicembre 2016 rispetto ad adesso. Cioè, comunque l’ambiente lì attorno è un po’ cambiato. Prima era un po’ più abbandonato a se stesso adesso credo che abbiano un po’ comunque li sistemato qualcosa perché c’è meno gente sbandata in giro) (S. Maddalena, personal communication, 28 April, 2018).

**Gentrification?**

According to some respondents, the presence of the foundation in that poor and abandoned neighbourhood is contributing to the rehabilitation of the area, because since its establishment there is a certain movement going around, for instance there are some new buildings under construction and many offices are moving from the city centre to that part of the city because the rental prices are cheaper. For this reason, I elaborated the code gentrification, with question mark. The general impression is that the presence of Prada Foundation started or contributed to trigger a gentrification process. This 21-year-old male student in economics and management for art, culture and communication argued:

Now there are the typical gentrification problems, the prices of the houses are gradually increasing. From the point of view of the liveability of the neighbourhood, I wouldn’t stroll around there because commercial activities aren’t developed yet, there isn’t a great number of bar or places where you can just stop and talk, so you don’t feel very safe. Of course, you can perceive that it is an area in development. Hence, if I was looking for an apartment, I’d stay there, however, I don’t go out there at
(Ora ci sono i classici problemi di gentrificazione, di prezzi delle case che pian piano si iniziano ad alzare insomma. e dal punto di vista della vivibilità del quartiere, io non ci girerei ancora nel senso che appunto – sono strade in cui le attività commerciali non sono ancora molto affermate, non vi è la presenza numerosa di bar o posti dove magari ci si possa fermare anche all’aperto a dialogare, quindi non ci si sente super sicuri. Sicuramente si sente che c’è però un ambiente in evoluzione. Quindi se dovessi cercare casa starei lì, però non ci esco la sera) (A. Giacomo, personal communication, 10 April, 2018).

Furthermore, during the interview with the representatives of the managerial and curatorial department of Prada Foundation, the rehabilitation factor of the neighbourhood emerged naturally without explicitly asking about it. The interviewees explained that the establishment of the foundation in that neighbourhood did not have any strategic goals. Nevertheless, the presence of the cultural institution involuntary incremented and accelerated the process - that started before the establishment of the institution - of relocation of many offices and firms from the city centre, where the rent was too expensive, to this former industrial area where there were many empty spaces. The respondent said:

A number of former industrial spaces that have been transformed into fashionable lofts and new residential complexes, quite elegant, have started to rise up exactly in this area. The same is occurring for commercial activities. As long as Prada Foundation was opened – we moved here almost one year
before the opening of the spaces [2014] – and obviously in terms of nearby services, there was nothing. Instead now, for the reason that there are both the offices and the foundation, commercial activities have increased a little. (Una serie di ex spazi industriali che sono stati trasformati in spazi residenziali di loft, che vanno tanto di moda e nuovi complessi residenziali, anche abbastanza eleganti, hanno iniziato a sorgere proprio in questa zona. Idem per le attività commerciali. Finché non ha aperto Fondazione – noi ci siamo trasferiti qui come uffici quasi un anno prima che aprissero gli spazi [2014] - e ovviamente a livello di servizi in prossimità non c’era assolutamente nulla. Adesso invece sia per il fatto che ci sono gli uffici sia col fatto che ci siamo noi, le attività commerciali sono un pochettino aumentate) (Prada Foundation, personal communication, 29 March, 2018).

1.7 CONCLUSION

To sum up, according to the results of the opportunity space investigation, the foundation could be considered as any other museum for the following reasons. First of all, it has an entrance fee as the majority of the museums, and it also offers reductions for students and elderly people, as well as the entrance to another exhibition space. Moreover, the presence of facilities within the foundation resulted to be something that is taken for granted because according to the respondents all the museums have services like a bookshop or a café. Besides, these elements also offer the visitors to have a leisure experience in the foundation, hence, being entertainment one of a museum’s function, the foundation is considered as an official museum as well. The same mechanism occurs for the discourse related to the neighbourhood in which the foundation is located. As the collected data illustrates, the presence of the foundation in that specific area of Milan, is contributing to the neighbourhood rehabilitation that is also triggering a gentrification process. Therefore, Prada Foundation is contributing to the wellness of the city, offering a public space (because the entrance to the venue is free, the ticket is due only for visiting the exhibitions) where people can spend their leisure time, as well as in museums. Despite that, important museums are usually also well connected with the public transport whereas in the case of Prada Foundation, the accessibility by public transport is a weak point - as the data shows – not in favour of the process of legitimation. Finally, the fact that the foundation is a private institution with a certain monetary availability, positions it as a patron for contemporary artists. Being a promoter of art, the foundation can also be compared to official museums because it is contributing to the civic enlargement through art (Stephen, 2001).

2. RESOURCES

The second group of codes, resources, refers to the tangible and intangible tools that the cultural institution has in order to lead its activity in the promotion of contemporary culture. Under this group I identified the architecture as tangible resource, whereas the willingness to buy Prada and to visit Prada Foundation as intangible resource.
2.1 OUTSTANDING ARCHITECTURE

The venue of Prada Foundation in Milan (Largo Isarco) is characterised by an original and recognizable architecture. As a matter of fact, it was designed by the archistar Rem Koolhaas, whose collaboration with Miuccia Prada - the head of the fashion brand – is a very long and established one (instances are ‘Prada’s Transformer’, in Seoul [www.nytimes.com] or the installation ‘Prada Marfa’, in Texas [www.vogue.com]). The architecture is a tangible resource for the foundation to carry on its activity as a promoter and exhibitor of art. In this specific case, the architecture is not only intended in terms of spaces for the exhibitions, but also as a luxurious and stylish container of artworks. As a matter of fact, the architecture itself could be considered as an artwork and attractive as well as the works of art exhibited inside. From the beginning of the majority of the interviewees was clear that the venue is an outstanding element that surprised all the visitors. The reasons of appreciation of this tangible resource represents the sub-codes: shape of the buildings, use of materials, incorporation of new and old and finally the sub-code attract people that refers to the venue capability to attract the audience.

Shape of the buildings

One of the features of amusement for many visitors was the shape of the buildings and the structure of the foundation. One of the characteristics that some people highlighted is the dialogue between the internal and external spaces of the foundation, because once you enter the institution there is a square surrounded by a variety of buildings. These structures also impressed some interviewees because they differ in style but a certain balance among them is kept. The 23-year-old student in Economic of art expressed his appreciation in the following way: “That is, in my opinion they succeeded in creating an architecture that gives the perception of something cohesive even though the buildings are very different among them” (Cioè, la cosa che secondo me loro sono riusciti a fare bene, è che architettonicamente di dà una percezione di un qualcosa di unito anche...
se poi in realtà le varie parti sono molto diverse) (Z. Giacomo, personal communication, 10 April, 2018).

Moreover, another relevant feature related to the space inside the buildings, is their versatility, in the sense that they can be easily adapted and transformed according to the needs of each exhibition. The musicology student said: “The nice thing is that I went there twice and as the exhibition changes, the spaces change as well, completely. This was a striking element for me” (E la cosa bella è che le due volte che sono andato, cambia la mostra, cambiano totalmente di faccia. E anche questa è una cosa che mi ha colpito) (M. Riccardo, personal communication, 21 April, 2018).

Use of materials

Some interviewees - 4 out of 18 - were also attracted by the use of different and original materials such as glass, iron, gold leaves, wood. Two respondents expressed their amusement for the use of materials, as the 54-year-old engineer, like this:

The choice of wood cobblestones, as I told you before, in my opinion was something -- I was really impressed because I don’t dare to imagine how do they came out with this idea because it’s really something particular and also the aluminium foam is really exceptional, from my point of view it is outstanding. (Proprio anche la scelta dei sampietrini in legno, come le dicevo, è stata una cosa secondo me -- mi aveva veramente impressionato perché non oso immaginare anche la - come possa essere venuta l’idea perché è veramente una cosa molto particolare e poi la schiuma di alluminio è veramente una cosa eccezionale dal punto di vista visivo è spettacolare) (S. Giovanna, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

The theatre director expressed his excitement in this way:

I really like everything. Also the building covered with gold leaves, at the beginning I found it very vulgar, in the end it reminds me a ‘post Baroque action’ able to dialogue perfectly with the architecture of the building at the feet in which there is a massive use of glass that – if I’m not mistaken – wedges in the basement with an extremely pure line. (Mi piace tantissimo tutto. Anche la palazzina rivestita di foglia d’oro che lì per lì trovavo estremamente volgare in realtà mi ricorda un’azione post barocca che dialoga molto bene con l’architettura dell’edificio che sta ai piedi in cui c’è molto vetro e se

Figure 2. Fondazione Prada, Milano. Photo Bas Princen. Courtesy Fondazione Prada. Detail.
Incorporation of new and old

The last element of appreciation of Prada Foundation architecture, is the incorporation between new and old buildings. Five interviewees in fact highlighted the fact that the foundation incorporates new structures with the ancient buildings of a former distillery. This feature was appreciated because of the idea of re-use of old buildings and their transformation into exhibition spaces in perfect balance with the new constructions. Besides, this choice is also contributing to the requalification of the neighbourhood, as this interviewee, the architecture student, explains:

I really like the intervention because it puts together two elements that are very important in the historical period we are living in. These interventions are the re-use of a building – that could be a factory, an ancient building or others – that is influential also for the rehabilitation of a part of the city that was suburban and now it is in a new centrality and so it reactivates these peripheral areas that you tried to avoid crossing before, because they were dangerous. And now these areas are the new centres of the city. And I appreciate the fact that it units new and old, because it has very modern and innovative elements that surprise also architects. (È un intervento che mi piace molto perché riunisce due elementi...
Attract people

In relation to the role of Prada Foundation some (3 out of 18) interviewees also underlined the power of the institution to attract a large audience because it is not only a place where visitors can go to admire the artworks, but it is also a glamorous venue where people can spend some time surrounded by outstanding architectures. A 24-year-old male architecture student for instance, highlighted the fact that the venue’s architecture features are good subjects for taking pictures to post on social networks. This element gives visibility to the foundation, because a lot of people enter in contact with it thanks to social networks. In this way, the stylish venue creates a sort of interest that in the end pushes plenty of people to visit the location and hence, entering in contact with contemporary art.

2.2 WILLINGNESS TO BUY PRADA

Another important point of investigation is the respondents’ willingness to buy Prada because of the brand involvement in the promotion of art and culture through the foundation. This element can contribute to understand if the presence of the foundation can represent a brand reinforcement. For this reason, the interviewees were asked to express their availability to buy Prada’s products since the fashion brand is involved in the promotion of contemporary culture through the foundation. In this case I did not elaborate any sub-codes. Despite that, two tendencies can be observed.

On the one hand, 6 out of 18 respondents expressed their willingness to buy Prada if they would have the interest in fashion or if they would have the monetary resources to afford high expensive fashion products. All the people who showed a positive disposition to buy Prada in fact, were also the people who do not buy it, and they expressed the opinion that the brand’s activity in contemporary culture could represent an incentive for them in the case they would start to buy products from high levels fashion brands.

On the other hand, 11 out of 18 interviewees said that they would not be more available to buy Prada due to its involvement in the promotion of contemporary art. These people were all sharing the passion for Prada’s style and already were Prada’s clients. For this reason, despite the fact that they recognize as positive
the presence of the foundation, they would not have changed their attitude in any case. This woman, a 54-year-old engineer said:

No, I have always liked Prada, independently from the fact that there was Prada Foundation. Certainly, I like the fact that there is this investment, this interest to establish this foundation. So, I recognize a good choice, a great effort in this sense. However, I liked Prada before, I like Prada now and I would buy it even if it did not create Prada Foundation. (No, nel senso che Prada mi è sempre piaciuta, indipendentemente che ci fosse la Fondazione Prada. Sicuramente mi fa piacere che ci sia questo investimento, questo interesse per aver creato questa fondazione. Quindi sicuramente riconosco un'ottima scelta, riconosco un grandissimo impegno in questo senso. Però comunque Prada mi piaceva prima mi piace adesso quindi la comprerei comunque anche se non avesse creato la Fondazione Prada) (S. Giovanna, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

Therefore, the respondents who already buy Prada did not show to be more available to buy the brand’s products because of the involvement of the company in the promotion of contemporary art, because they like Prada style and products. On the contrary, the presence of the foundation emerged to be an incentive to buy Prada for the people who do not buy it. Hence, it could be said that the cultural activity of Prada through the foundation can also become a reinforcement for the brand, both for its image and for its marketing. In the former case, the image is improved because people perceive as positive the involvement of the company in the contemporary cultural field. Then, the foundation also represents an element of Prada marketing strategy because it is a tool to attract new clients.

2.3 WILLINGNESS TO VISIT PRADA FOUNDATION

Afterwards, in the same way I investigated the opposite situation, that is the visitors’ availability to visit the foundation because it is owned by Prada. In this case as well, I did not identify any significant sub-codes. Here, the respondents did not split into two groups as in the previous case. When asking about their willingness to visit Prada Foundation because they knew that it is owned by Prada fashion brand, 10 out of 18 expressed that the name ‘Prada’ was not the primary motivation to visit the foundation. As a matter of fact, these people were attracted to the foundation for its cultural offer rather than for its name. Despite that, a great number of respondents, 13 out of 18, also added that the name ‘Prada’ was an additional element that played the role of increasing the curiosity towards the cultural institution. Overall, people without any interest in fashion, did not consider at all the name of the foundation. On the contrary, people with a certain interest and knowledge about fashion decided to visit the foundation also because they were intrigued by the fact that a cultural institution of contemporary art brings the name Prada. Finally, there was a small group of people, 3 out of 18, who said that they visited the foundation because they knew it is owned by Prada.
To sum up, the architecture is a physical resource that can help the foundation to carry on its cultural activity and affirm it as an important cultural centre for the city. In fact, what emerged from the data collection is that the spaces of the venue are big and versatile, hence they offer the opportunity to create every sort of art installation. Moreover, due to the fact that the architecture rehabilitates old buildings that were not used anymore and their function was switched, it is perceived as a positive element because it contributes to the improvement and wellness of a part of the city. Therefore, the foundation has also the social role of giving citizens a space for leisure. This feature of public utility is one of the elements that characterize a museum, according to the academic literature (Stephen, 2001). For this reason, the architecture is contributing to the legitimation process of this institution as a museum.

As for non-physical resources, the name Prada plays a certain role. The name Prada in fact, represents an attractiveness and incentive to visit the foundation, hence it is useful for the cultural institution in order to increase the number of visitors. Therefore, the more visitors the institution has, the more important it becomes. On the other way around, the presence of the foundation can be considered as a marketing tool for the brand, because it can attract new clients. However, it should be highlighted that being Prada a luxury fashion brand, its power of increasing the number of consumers is limited by affordance limitations. People visiting the foundation are not all Prada’s clients because the items sold by the brand are very expensive. Nevertheless, the fact that only few people can buy Prada’s products could, in a certain way, facilitate the legitimation of the fashion company. As a matter of fact, luxury products are expensive, and usually the more expensive an item is, the more high-quality and precious is perceived. Besides, luxury items, such as the ones sold by Prada, are also quite unique or scarce. This scarcity increases the uniqueness, the monetary value of the product and also its symbolic value. These characteristics enclose the fashion product to the art product, because also the latter is unique, expensive and with a symbolic value that goes beyond the material value (Throsby, 2001).

3. FRAMING

In this last section I am going to highlight the way the general audience perceive the activity and the role of Prada Foundation as well as their knowledge about the fashion brand. To begin with, I am going to give an overview about respondents’ opinions about the activity of Prada Foundation and its role as a cultural institution in Milan. Then, there is a section in which I asked the interviewees to compare the foundation to other cultural institutions and give an explanation of their choices, in order to understand the symbolic image they give to Prada Foundation. Afterwards, I also asked them if they know something about Prada and their appreciation towards the brand, as well as questions more related to the image of the foundation, the image of the brand and their connections. Finally, I tried to investigate which are the possible benefits that a cultural
foundation can give to the fashion brand and vice-versa. In this first part of the analysis I elaborated the following codes and sub-codes:

Table 3: Overview of codes and sub-codes for the group Framing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRAMING</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTERESTING PLACE</td>
<td>For contemporary culture and richness of cultural proposal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For the venue</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scepticism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IMPORTANT ROLE</td>
<td>Promotion of contemporary culture</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>COMPARISON</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRADA FASHION BRAND</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IMAGE OF PRADA VS IMAGE OF PRADA FOUNDATION</td>
<td>Exclusivity</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Vehicles of contemporary art</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARCHITECTURE REFLECTS THE IMAGE OF PRADA</td>
<td>Image and activity of Prada Foundation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connection with Prada style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENEFITS FROM THE FOUNDATION TO THE FASHION BRAND</td>
<td>Image and Visibility</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BENEFITS FROM THE FASHION BRAND TO THE FOUNDATION</td>
<td>Money</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Network</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Innovation and creativity</td>
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3.1 INTERESTING PLACE

When asking the respondents their opinion about Prada Foundation, the most frequent answer was that ‘Prada Foundation is an interesting place’. Hence, this became the first code. Afterwards, many sub-codes related to the reasons why this space is interesting were retrieved. There are two main sub-codes: for contemporary art and richness of cultural proposal and for the venue. Finally, a third sub-code was highlighted and named as scepticism referring to the doubts of some respondents about the activity of Prada Foundation.
Interesting space for contemporary art and richness of cultural proposal

Seven respondents recognized Prada Foundation as an interesting space because it exhibits contemporary art and culture and according to them, it is only one of the few spaces that are working for the promotion of contemporary art in Italy. One of the respondents, a 23-year-old male philosophy student said:

This is the space – at least among those I visited – most interesting of Milan, at least for those realities that are involved in contemporary art. (Lo spazio – almeno tra quelli che ho visitato – più interessante in assoluto della realtà milanese, almeno di quella che si occupa di realtà contemporanea) (V. Antonello, personal communication, 7 April, 2018).

Another person, the theatre director also highlighted the fact that the foundation is a space where contemporary artists who are already consecrated are put in dialogue with younger artist: “The fact that the foundation support younger artists is also interesting. To see a sort of dialogue between sacred contemporary giants” (Anche il fatto che sponsorizzino, artisti più giovani è comunque interessante vedere una sorta di dialogo tra i mostri sacri contemporanei nuovi) (D. Emanuele, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

Furthermore, six people also stressed their appreciation for the choice of the foundation to present a variety of art expressions, such as painting, sculpture, cinema and performing art. This 21-year-old female scenography student stated:

The foundation offers very interesting exhibitions because they vary a lot. For example, they vary from dance, to sculpture, to painting. So, it is a rich cultural centre. (Le mostre che offre sono molto interessanti perché variano moltissimo. Ad esempio vanno dalla danza alla scultura alla pittura. Quindi è un centro culturale molto ricco) (R. Jessica, personal communication, 5 April, 2018).

Besides, another interviewee, the 21-year-old male student in economics and management of art, culture and communication also underlined that the foundation has the ability to exhibit both Italian and international artists, generating the side effect to push the city of Milan as a relevant centre for contemporary art not only in Italy but also abroad:

First of all they [Prada Foundation] exhibit both Italian and international artists, and this is an element that allows the foundation to well connect both things – so the international environment with the Italian one – but, more than everything, to push Milan as a super important focal point of interconnection and of importance of contemporary art that doesn’t exist now. (Prima di tutto le mostre che fanno sono di artisti sia italiani che internazionali e questa cosa le permette di collegare molto bene entrambe le cose – quindi l’ambiente internazionale e l’ambiente italiano- ma soprattutto di spingere Milano come importantissimo polo di collegamento e di importanza dell’arte contemporanea che invece non c’è) (A. Giacomo, personal communication, 10 April, 2018).
In addition, the foundation also promoted new artists that then became well-known in their field, as this 48-year-old female art critic explained:

I believe it is doing an exceptional activity because it is one among the few foundations that first of all has an extraordinary visibility, so the foundation has used the brand to spread contemporary art. It organised exhibitions of young artists who became very famous afterwards, giving them the opportunity to create new artworks, all absolutely payed, that is not a very normal habit in the art world. (Io trovo che fa un’attività ottima perché è una delle poche fondazioni che innanzitutto ha una visibilità pazzesca per cui ha usato il nome del suo brand per portare nell’arte contemporanea. Ha fatto mostre di giovani artisti che sono diventati poi degli artisti molto affermati per cui ha dato loro la possibilità di creare anche opere nuove tutte assolutamente pagate, che non è una cosa tanto normale nel mondo dell’arte purtroppo) (G. Marinella, personal communication, 9 May, 2018).

About this point of the variety of cultural proposal, the same representatives of the managerial and curatorial department of the foundation explained that interdisciplinary is a relevant characteristic of Prada Foundation:

Another important feature of this cultural activity is its multidisciplinary, since Prada Foundation is interested in a variety of contemporary culture expressions. This does not mean only visual arts, but also cinema, there was a series of meetings about philosophy. This happens also thanks to the new venue that allows to host special activities, also performing arts. We did some projects about contemporary dance. (Un’altra delle caratteristiche importanti di questa attività culturale è stata multidisciplinarità, nel senso che Fondazione Prada è interessata alle forme più interessanti della cultura contemporanea, che non significa necessariamente arti visive ma significa anche ad esempio cinema e, o c’è stata una serie abbastanza ricca di convegni dedicati alla filosofia e in tempi più recenti, con la nuova sede che ci permette anche a livello logistico di ospitare delle attività più speciali, eh-anche le arti performative. Abbiamo avuto i nostri progetti di danza contemporanea) (Prada Foundation, personal communication, 29 March, 2018).

**Interesting space**

Another reason why the foundation was defined as interesting, is its venue. As a matter of fact, since the beginning of eight interviews - in the introduction section – the respondents expressed their amusement when entered the foundation the first time. The most recurrent argumentations were that Prada Foundation is an interesting space for the architectural features, especially for the wide spaces that allow a variety of different settings for the exhibitions, as well as the interest for the cultural proposal offered in the spaces of the institution. The 53-year-old ballet dancer explained:
I found the foundation in a sensational location, amazing, a place that allows to tell and represent everything, every art genre. It could go from music, dance, theatre, to fashion, prose, plays, also martial art I’d say. Really, these amazing spaces are also a bit contemplative, in the sense that they really give you the opportunity to find your corner where you can admire an art expression. (La Fondazione l’ho trovata in una location strepitosa, meravigliosa, che ti permette di poter raccontare, avvicinare, rappresentare, qualsiasi cosa, qualsiasi genere. Potrebbe spaziare dalla musica, alla danza, al teatro alla moda, alla prosa, ai giochi, alle arti marziali mi viene da dire. Veramente questi spazi meravigliosi e anche un po’ contemplativi, nel senso che ti dà proprio la possibilità di trovare il tuo angolo dove poter ammirare un’arte) (C. Patrizia, personal communication, 11 April, 2018).

Scepticism

The last sub-code that I identified is scepticism. Under this group in fact, I put all those interviewees’ critical points about the activity of the foundation (3 out of 18 respondents). Some scepticisms are related to the fact that it is not clear if the owners of the institution, Miuccia Prada and Patrizio Bertelli, are really involved and passionate for contemporary culture or if their foundation is a mere great marketing strategy. The theatre director expressed his ambivalent feelings and also his hypothesis that the foundation could be a means for the fashion brand, and fashion in general, to get recognition as an art expression on the same level as paintings, sculpture and others:

To be honest, I always feel ambivalent between thinking that everything is free and only related to the pleasure of the two patrons Bertelli and Prada, and on the contrary, a great marketing action. That is, they [the fashion brand] do tattered clothing and leather pieces stitched together, because in the end this is fashion. So, there is the need to always chase a sort of certification in order that during the years everything would reach an elevation, that it [fashion] becomes something beyond the design, beyond the business. (Devo dire una cosa, che sono sempre molto ambivalente tra il pensare che tutto ciò sia gratuito e legato un piacere dei due mecenati Bertelli e Prada e invece una grande azione di marketing. Ciòè, fanno Stracci e pezzi di pelle cucita perché questa tutto sommato è la moda no. Quindi c’è bisogno di rincorrere una sorta di certificazione che tutto ciò subisca in qualche modo negli anni un’elevazione che diventi oltre il design, il business) (D. Emanuele, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

According to the representatives of Prada Foundation, the institution does not have any marketing goal, in fact it is not a corporate foundation – namely an entity that has the strategic goal to promote the company through the pursuit of an activity of social utility – rather a philanthropic institution that have the goal of producing and promoting culture. Despite that, they also highlighted that even if the brand and the
foundation are completely separated, the presence of the foundation has the side effect to improve the image and visibility of the brand.

Other respondents are more critical about the possibility of the audience to experience the cultural offer of the foundation, because of the complexity of the contents and artworks exhibited and the lack of explanations that could help people to understand contemporary art. For instance, four respondents underlined the absence of good explanatory panels or the fact that the artworks labels are so small that it becomes hard to read them. For this reason, some interviewees argued that Prada Foundation gives the impression to be addressed to an ‘elite’ audience that is able to understand and appreciate contemporary art, and it does not care about all the people who are interested in these new art expressions but do not have a sufficient cultural capital and knowledge to experience it. This 24-year-old male teacher, graduated in art history, perfectly explained this point:

However, I had the impression that –both in the setting up and in the general conceptions- the impression of an elitist thing. It is like –how can I explain- as if someone don’t know art deeply and don’t understand it, he or she will never understand it because these things are not explained. Hence, there is a conception that if you have a good knowledge I [the foundation] give you the privilege to see my artworks, otherwise it is worse for you. (Però ho avuto l'impressione di -sia nell'allestimento sia in proprio della concezione generali - l'impressione è di una cosa un po’ elitaria e come se la -come dire- chi non è chi non conosce bene l'arte molte cose non le capisce e non le capirà mai perché non vengono spiegate e quindi c'è quasi una concezione del se tu sai bene, ti do questo privilegio di vedere le mie opere altrimenti peggio per te) (G. Francesco, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

This feature represents a sort of contradiction because on the one hand the goal of the foundation is to attract a large number of visitors and new audiences, on the other hand visitors do not have the impression that the institution is opened to everybody since it does not offer enough tools – like explications of the exhibitions – in order to allow the audience to improve their knowledge about a specific exhibition or about contemporary art in general.

3.2 IMPORTANT ROLE

The second code is related to the definition that the interviewees gave about the role of Prada Foundation as a cultural institution. Five interviewees gave short definitions, such as “I believe that it [the foundation] is the patron of our days” (Io credo che sia cioè mecenate dei giorni nostri) (S. Giovanna, personal communication, 30 April, 2018), another one said “it is an institution in line with the times, but outside the box” (Un’istituzione al passo coi tempi ma molto fuori dagli schemi) (S. Maria Teresa, personal communication, 29 April 2018) and finally “It is an example to follow for many entrepreneurs, absolutely” (Un esempio per
molti imprenditori da seguire assolutamente) (D. Emanuele, personal communication, 30 April, 2018). On the contrary, the majority of the interviewees stressed the importance of the role of Prada Foundation for different reasons, that are here presented as sub-codes: promotion of contemporary culture and people’s attraction.

**Promotion of contemporary culture**

According to this first sub-code, the foundation has a central role because it is one of the few institutions in Italy that gives space and promotes contemporary art and culture. However, it is important to say that almost all the interviewees – at least the ones living in Milan or in the surrounding area, 16 out of 18 - were quite sure about the primary role of the foundation in the city of Milan, because according to them it is one of the few cultural institutions with the power to promote contemporary art. On the contrary, they did not show to have a clear idea about the centrality of the foundation in the Italian environment. The 22-year-old male musicology student said: “I’d define it as an institution that has the role to bring to Milan this kind of art [contemporary art]. (La definirei come un ente che ha il compito di portare a Milano questo tipo di arte) (M. Riccardo, personal communication, 21 April, 2018).

In addition, another interviewee, a 23-year-old male philosophy student, highlighted that the foundation not only brings contemporary art in the city of Milan, but it is also a tool for people to find again a relationship with the contemporaneity:

In this sense I believe that the foundation is important, because it is a place in which you can find a relationship with our contemporaneity. (E in questo senso ritengo che la Fondazione Prada sia importante, cioè un luogo nel quale –per l’appunto- trovare un rapporto con la propria contemporaneità) (V. Antonello, personal communication, 7 April, 2018).

Furthermore, the foundation is considered as important because it has enough resources to promote culture and also the power to provoke the audience’s opinion about certain art expressions. Referring to one of the latest exhibitions titled *Post Zang Tumb Tuuum. Art Life Politics: Italia 1918-1943*, this 23-year-old female Master student in Economics of Art stated:

In my opinion, even –ok, it is super famous for contemporary art- it is able to have such great power and appeal to also break a bit some preconceptions about certain art kinds. (Addirittura secondo me – va bè è famosissima per il contemporaneo – riesce ad avere un potere e un appeal così grande da poter un attimo anche a sconvolgere alcuni preconcetti su determinate tipologie di arte) (M. Maria Serena, personal communication, 28 April, 2018).
3.3 COMPARISONS

In the framing section, the interviewees were also asked to compare Prada Foundation to other cultural institutions and to explain the reasons of their answers. This point is relevant to better understand how people perceive the role and image of the foundation. In order to be clearer, I will divide the comparisons in three groups. Comparisons with institutions based in Milan, in Italy and abroad. The table below shows all the cultural institutions cited and their frequency:

Table 4: Overview of cultural institutions to which Prada Foundation was compared and frequency of the comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Milan</th>
<th>Hangar Bicocca (7); Triennale (3); Museo del Novecento; Fondazione Trussardi; Pac</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Italy</td>
<td>MAXXI (Rome) (2); Fondazione Sandretto (Turin) (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abroad</td>
<td>Louis Vuitton Foundation (Paris) (2); Centre Pompidou (Paris) (2); Maison Rouge (Paris); MoMu (Antwerp); Hamburger Bahnhoff (Berlin), MoMa (New York).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At a first glance, the most popular comparisons done is Hangar Bicocca in Milan. According to the respondents these institutions – Prada Foundation and Hangar Bicocca - have in common three main features: first of all, both exhibit contemporary art expressions, secondly the two are characterized by huge spaces that allow the institution to be creative adapting the spaces to the needs of the exhibitions and hosting any kind of art works, from big installations to performances and finally these institutions are located in former factories that were rehabilitated and converted into exhibition spaces mixing old structures and new buildings. Besides, both are private institutions coming from famous companies. Furthermore, Prada Foundation was also compared to MAXXI (Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo) in Rome, to Fondazione Sandretto in Turin, and to Louis Vuitton Foundation and Centre Pompidou in Paris. All these institutions are considered as well-known and recognised centres for the exhibition and promotion of contemporary art and culture. For this reason, it could be affirmed that Prada Foundation is perceived as a relevant cultural institution in the field of contemporary culture.

3.4 PRADA FASHION BRAND

In this part I tested how many people knew that Prada is a fashion brand and then the respondents taste and willingness to buy the brand. All the interviewees were aware that Prada is an Italian fashion brand well-known all over the world. Despite that, a certain number, 5 out of 18, did not have any idea about the style of products produced by the fashion brand, because they were not interested in fashion at all. On the contrary, all the people who were also passionate of fashion, appreciated Prada style for the pure lines, the versatility and comfort of the clothes, as well as for the attention to the use of original materials and to the
innovation capabilities. Besides, 5 interviewees highlighted the ability of Prada to maintain its original style without adapting to the most popular trends, as this respondent explained:

I like it [Prada] because in respect to other fashion houses that during the time adapted to the taste of the moment, Prada has a creativity and originality rather important. (Mi piace perché rispetto a molte altre case di moda che nel tempo si sono adeguate in qualche modo al gusto corrente, Prada eh – è di una creatività e originalità piuttosto importanti) (V. Antonello, personal communication, 7 April, 2018).

The following table shows an overview of the amount of people who likes and dislike Prada and the number of people who also buy its products:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Like Prada</th>
<th>Buy Prada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/No idea</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 IMAGE OF PRADA VS IMAGE OF PRADA FOUNDATION

In this section, I tried to investigate if there are any similarities or differences between the image of these two institutions, according to the visitors. Generally speaking, except for recognizing that these two institutions dedicate to different activities – fashion and art - the respondents did not find many differences because both of them were considered as exclusive and as vehicles of contemporary art.

Exclusivity

I would like to start explaining this sub-code using a quote retrieved from the interview with the 24-year-old architecture student, who explained which is the similarity between Prada foundation and the fashion brand: “Also for the typology of exhibitions, because contemporary art is only for few people —everybody knows- as well as high fashion is for few” (E anche per il tipo di esposizione, perché l’arte contemporanea –lo sanno tutti che è arte per pochi così come l’alta moda è moda per pochi) (P. Andrea, personal communication, 10 April, 2018). Therefore, the feature of exclusivity emerged from six interviews quite insistently. Besides, exclusivity is not only related to the image of the foundation and the brand, but also in the atmosphere that some visitors experienced at Prada Foundation, like this 21-year-old student in Economics of art explained:
Unfortunately, I don’t know the brand and so I can’t tell you much about that. However, it is clear that
the target audience to which the foundation is addressed is quite elevated, I don’t know if we can say it
like this. (…) For sure it’s a place that allows you to look and admire from a certain distance, like I think
you might feel in front a Prada’s shop window in ‘Via della Spiga’. “ (Io purtroppo non conosco il brand
di Prada e quindi non posso parlare molto di quello, però sicuramente si sente che il target a cui è rivolto
la fondazione è un target abbastanza elevato, non so se neanche possiamo dire così. (…) è sicuramente
un ambiente che ti permette di guardare e di ammirare da una certa distanza come penso che ci si senta
ta guardare una vetrina di Prada in via della Spiga insomma) (A. Giacomo, personal communication, 10
April, 2018).

The outcome of this sub-code is interesting because exclusivity is a definition that emerged especially
from those respondents who did not know the style of the products produced by Prada. Nevertheless, after
some reflections, these people – not interested in fashion – were able to identify the feature of exclusivity as
a common element between the fashion brand and the foundation.

As I already highlighted in a previous section, exclusivity also represents a sort of contradiction. One
of the aims of Prada Foundation in fact is to attract as many visitors as possible and chasing the public function
of offering a service for the community through the promotion of contemporary culture. However, some
visitors do not perceive the foundation in this way, because they feel a sort of distance generated by the
atmosphere and the fact that the product of the cultural institution – contemporary art – is not easily
comprehensible by everybody.

**Vehicles of contemporary art**

The second pattern that emerged is that plenty of the interviewees recognised both Prada and Prada
Foundation as tools of transmission of contemporary art and culture. This feature emerged mostly from those
respondents who also like and buy Prada’s products (12 out of 18). As a matter of fact, in some people’s
opinion the goal of the foundation is to spread art, and the same occurs in the brand whose target is also
composed by people involved and passionate of art and culture and who recognize the artistic side of Prada
fashion products. This 23-year-old female master student of Economics of Art pointed out her opinion in these
words: “Because Prada foundation has the will of – its vision and mission are related to the transmission of
contemporary culture basically, and the fashion brand does the same because it is addressed to a target of
clients who put attention to contemporary art” (Perché Fondazione Prada ha una volontà di – vision e mission
sono legate a trasmettere cultura contemporanea principalmente – il brand Prada lo stesso perché il target a
cui è rivolto è di persone molto attente all’arte) (M. Maria Serena, personal conversation, 28 April, 2018). The
comment of this interviewee makes emerge once again the feature of exclusiveness. The foundation is a place
open to everybody, but in the end, it is addressed to a specific target, that is an audience that already know
and appreciate contemporary art and have the cultural capital to experience it. Furthermore, besides being vehicles of culture, the 36-year-old fashion designer also expressed that from her point of view the two institutions also share the coherence:

I think they are quite coherent. Because, in my opinion Prada in the fashion field does what it wants, it is very independent, if they like something they do that even if in others’ opinion their idea is horrible or non-functional. And I have the impression that this concept is also present in the foundation. I mean –in a positive sense- the foundation is Prada’s toy and so they do what they want with that. ... That is, they tried to keep these creative choices also in the choice of the exhibitions. (Io penso siano abbastanza coerenti. Perché allora, secondo me Prada a livello di moda fa quello che le pare, sono molto indipendenti, gli piace una cosa e loro la fanno anche se magari a detta di altri può essere orribile o non funzionare, loro fanno quello che vogliono. E mi dà l’idea che questo concetto viene anche tradotto nella fondazione, nel senso –ti dico in maniera positiva- è il loro giocattolo e loro fanno quello che vogliono. ... Nel senso, han cercato di mantenere queste scelte di creatività anche nelle scelte delle esposizioni) (C. Francesca, personal communication, 11 April, 2018).

Also the freelancer in the fashion marketing agrees with the fact that the brand and the foundation are coherent:

Certainly, as I told you before, in my opinion the element that identify Prada is a strong coherence, the continuity. Since many years ago, they imposed themselves as a brand, to be kind of a patron of the Italian Heritage. With same coherence, in my opinion, they wanted to create a container that is Prada Foundation, in which the ‘knowledge’ is preserved, and also artworks are preserved, because, from my point of view, they are something like ‘savoir-faire protectors’ not only in the fashion field but also in the field of art and culture. That is, in this sense they are coherent. (Sicuramente, come ti ho detto prima, e cioè per me, quello che contraddistingue Prada è sicuramente un discorso fortemente legato alla coerenza, la continuità. Loro si sono posti come brand da parecchi anni, si sono ripromessi in un certo senso di salvaguardare un po’ quello che è "l'Heritage del sapere italiano". Quindi con altrettanta coerenza, dal mio punto di vista, hanno voluto creare un contenitore, che poi è la Fondazione, dentro la quale conservare " il Sapere," o comunque opere d'arte perché loro, dal mio punto di vista, si posizionano un po' come dei "Protector del savoir-faire" e anche di quello che sostanzialmente può essere un discorso legato all'arte e alla cultura. Ecco in questo senso sono coerenti) (F. Silvia, personal communication, 6 May, 2018).

The theme of the coherence between the brand and the foundation also emerged during the interview with the representatives of the foundation managerial and curatorial department:
The complexity, the originality of the Foundation’s projects, is coherent with some works done by Prada .... Miuccia Prada is not a person covering an honorary position as president. Rather, she is extremely involved in all the activities of the foundation because she is passionate of contemporary art. Therefore, the contribution that a person like her, with her qualities, cleverness, passions and culture gives to a fashion collection, are the same contributions she could give to one of our artistic projects. ... Hence yes, since there is a great coherence of intentions and contributions, clearly the points of contact – even if in different fields – are so strong and clear that a constant nourishment and reinforcement occurs from and to both sides. (La complessità, l’originalità, ehm dei progetti che vengono svolti in Fondazione è molto coerente con una serie di lavori di Prada.... Miuccia Prada non è una persona che sta lì nella sua carica di presidente in maniera un po’ onoraria e si occupa poco di noi. Miuccia Prada è una persona estremamente coinvolta in tutte le attività di Fondazione Prada perché l’arte contemporanea è una sua forte passione personale. Quindi il contributo che può dare come persona con delle qualità, un’intelligenza, delle passioni, una cultura, a una collezione – sono gli stessi contributi che può dare a un nostro progetto artistico.... E quindi si, siccome c’è questa fortissima coerenza di intenti e anche di contributi, evidentemente i punti di contatto –anche se in settori diversi- sono così forti e così chiari che questo nutrimento reciproco e rafforzamento reciproco di chi siamo noi e chi sono loro, avviene regolarmente) (Prada Foundation, personal communication, 29 March, 2018).

Therefore, Prada Foundation and the fashion brand seem to be on the same symbolic level and art and fashion are under the same classification. Italian Heritage and contemporary culture in fact is composed both from art and fashion. Consequently, the foundation represents a reinforcement of the brand Prada as a vehicle of culture and art.

3.6 ARCHITECTURE REFLECTS THE IMAGE OF PRADA

After having asked a general opinion about the architecture of the venue, I also investigated if some of the features of the venue could reflect the image and activity of Prada Foundation as well as the fashion brand. These questions required the interviewees more elaborated answers, and in some cases, they encountered some difficulties in giving an answer justifying themselves telling that they had never thought about this topic. Moreover, some of the people who were not interested in fashion or did not know anything about Prada’s style, were not able to answer. This code was originally situated within the resources group. Afterwards, it was moved to framing because it contributes to understand how people perceive and ‘frame’ the overall image of Prada, both the fashion brand and the foundation.
**Image and activity of Prada Foundation**

The respondents, 9 out of 18, found some connections between the style of the architecture and Prada Foundation in the sense that the structure not only contains artworks, but it is an artwork itself for its features (shapes and materials). Besides, the attention to details is one of characteristics of both the activity of the foundation and its way to exhibit artworks, as well as the architecture itself, as this master student in Economics of art expressed: “And also that one becomes an artwork, the architecture itself is a means of communication of the attention to details” (E anche quello diventa un oggetto d’arte, un’architettura che si fa anch’essa comunicatrice di questa attenzione al dettaglio) (M. Maria Serena, personal communication, 28 April, 2018). A respondent also underlined the fact that the architecture and the exhibitions share a feature: complexity. In fact, when visitors enter the venue they feel lost because it is not clear which is the sense of the tour and in the same way, the audience sometimes have problems to understand artworks because they are not well explained or because the labels of the artworks are small.

**Connection with Prada style**

When asking about the presence of any connection between the image of Prada and the architecture, almost all the interviewees were able to find some similarities. Some of them highlighted that in their opinion, even if with a small knowledge of Prada’s products, the golden tower is the element that they immediately associate to the fashion brand because it is perceived as being precious as the products of a fashion brand.

Furthermore, other respondents with a better knowledge of Prada style, stated that the brand’s products and the architecture share pure and ‘cold’ lines. The 53-year-old gallerist said:

The cleanness I believe, I mean a great strictness, great neatness, few decorations. Few visible decoration, noticeable, but actually there is a lot of decoration related to details, I mean that everything is well-finished. (La pulizia mi sembra, cioè un grande rigore, grande pulizia, poca decorazione. poca decorazione visibile, avvertibile, in realtà c’è grande decorazione legata ai dettagli, cioè tutto è molto curato) (P. Giuseppe, personal communication, 9 May, 2018).
Another interviewee, the 24-year-old teacher with a master degree in art history and scarce knowledge of the brand, argued that in his opinion both the brand and the foundation do not offer a service for everybody but give a sense of closeness, that is reproduced in the architecture:

Maybe involuntarily, actually the architecture is a bit closed on itself. I mean, a-part from the tower that looks outside the border of the foundation towards the city - but always from a high perspective - all the other buildings are closed within an enclosed space that do not look towards other squares or parks etc. So, involuntarily there is the idea of a foundation that is an exclusive space that it opens but only as it wants and as it pretends. (Forse involontariamente questo, in realtà l’architettura è un po’ chiusa su se stessa, cioè nel senso che al di là della torre che effettivamente guarda fuori dal confine della fondazione no, guarda la città, però sempre dall’alto, tutto il resto è chiuso, cioè chiuso all’interno di uno spazio recintato che non va verso piazze verso parchi etc. Involontariamente c’è l’idea di una fondazione comunque di qualcosa di un po’ elitaria che si apre sì, ma un po’ come voglio io un po’ come pretendo io) (G. Francesco, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

Here again the contradiction of exclusivity is present. On the one hand, the venue of the architecture is opened to visitors because there is not entrance fee to enter and this choice is also due to the fact that the foundation wants to offer a public space to the city where people can enjoy their leisure time. On the other hand, from the outside the architecture seems to be close on itself and do not invite people to enter, nor offering itself as a public space.

3.7 BENEFITS FROM THE FOUNDATION TO THE FASHION BRAND

In the conclusion of the interview, I asked about the side effects that the cultural activity of a foundation could bring to the fashion brand. In this case two connected sub-codes emerged: image and visibility.

Image and visibility

Immediately all the respondents stated that the cultural activity of the fashion foundation brings benefits of image to the fashion brand. As a matter of fact, the presence of a cultural institution connected to the fashion brand, improve the image of the brand and could also be a sort of quality certification. The 23-year-old male student in Economics of art explained:

For sure the brand has image benefits. Generally speaking, it is addressed to every kind of customers target, to both the target that can’t afford a cloth by Prada and the target that can afford it instead. (Ha sicuramente un ritorno di immagine per il brand. E in generale questo è rivolto a qualsiasi
target, sia per il target che il vestito di Prada non se lo può permettere, sia per il target che invece il vestito di Prada se lo può permettere) (Z. Giacomo, personal communication, 10 April, 2018).

The other advantage that the foundation can bring to the fashion brand is a benefit in terms of visibility, because the promotion of culture is always perceived by the respondents as an extremely positive choice, and, as the interviewee said before, the foundation aims to attract as many people as possible and not only Prada’s customers. Besides, the gallerist explained the visibility in this way:

It is a different way to spread the name in an exclusive environment, because the field of art collecting is quite exclusive. However, the mere fact that now we are talking about it, it means that the issue is more diagonal. That is, the name Prada is circulating and will circulate also among art history students for the presence of the foundation. (è un modo diverso per far circolare il nome in un ambiente comunque abbastanza elevato, perché collezionismo d’arte è abbastanza elitario però il fatto che ne stiamo parlando ora vuol dire che è qualcosa si molto più trasversale. Cioè, il nome Prada circola e circolerà anche presso gli studenti di storia dell’arte per la fondazione) (P. Giuseppe, personal communication, 9 May, 2018).

Therefore, the benefits of visibility are not only to interpret in terms of monetary benefits both for the brand that increases the number of potential clients and the foundation that increases the number of visitors. An example of the brand reinforcement is the fact that, as explained above, respondents who are not Prada clients, would be more willing to buy the brand’s products because they appreciate the fact that the fashion house promotes contemporary art and culture. The visibility is a benefit also because it can expand the symbolic value of both, the brand and the foundation, as means of creation and diffusion of culture.

3.8 BENEFITS FROM THE FASHION BRAND TO THE FOUNDATION

Last but not least, the respondents were asked to think about the possible presence of benefits that the fashion brand could bring to its foundation. Everybody came out with the same answer at first: the brand can sustain the cultural activity because of its monetary power. Afterwards, the interviewees added that there are also other advantages: network, innovation and creativity.

Money

The first advantage that the interviewees identified is the economic power of a foundation that comes from a fashion brand. This discourse is also related to one of the previous points about the difference between a private and public institution involved in culture. Also in that case, all the respondents agreed on the monetary capital as the distinctive feature between private and public institutions. The gallerist explained the point in these terms:
At the moment, fashion brands have great availability [of capital], those that work properly like Prada I mean, so they can address part of their budget to cultural activities. (In questo momento le case di moda hanno grosse disponibilità, cioè quelle che funzionano bene come Prada, quindi possono destinare una parte del loro bilancio alle attività culturali) (P. Giuseppe, personal communication, 9 May, 2018)

**Network**

In addition, other respondents thought about some advantages of network. In other words, the name Prada and the reputation of the foundation, can help the cultural activity to generate a net of artists and important names that afterwards are also exhibited in the cultural institution, as the musicology student stated:

The foundation creates around itself, a circle of big names, important artists to whom it is related and that calls many times.... For this reason, I believe that this relationship with artists is also generated by the name Prada and by the identity of the foundation. (La fondazione crea attorno a sé questo giro di grandi nomi, di grandi artisti a cui si lega e che chiama più volte.... E quindi credo proprio che si crei questo legame con gli artisti anche grazie al nome Prada e a quello che è la fondazione) (M. Riccardo, personal communication, 21 April, 2018).

Another philosophy student, also suggested that the name Prada can represent an incentive for the people to visit the foundation and for the artists to collaborate with it:

It could be possible that the big audience would be more willing to visit the foundation and also for those artists contacted by the foundation, the fact that Prada contacts them, represents an incentive. (Può essere possibile che per il pubblico che vuole visitarlo anche per quegli artisti che si trovassero contattati dalla Fondazione, il fatto che sia Prada a contattarli, rappresenta un incentivo in più) (V. Antonello, personal communication, 7 April, 2018).

The advantage of an improved network is a feature that emerged also during the interview with the project manager of the foundation. As a matter of fact, he explained that Miuccia Prada's wide knowledge of people, artists, architects, cinema directors, etc., allowed them to contact a variety of people who contributed to the realisation of exhibitions, or the creation of the venue of the foundation. An example is Bar Luce, projected by the cinema director Wes Anderson, known by Prada because the brand produced special luggage for one of his movies.
Innovation and creativity

An additional advantage that some respondents identified is the power of the fashion brand to bring its innovative and creative approach to the fashion industry also to the cultural institution. The engineer stated:

Due to the creative ability, a fashion creator, a designer is obviously an artist, so I think he or she will have a certain sensitiveness so that the designer can create and maybe also put attention to young artists or to other cultural fields and then influence the foundation in the choice of the content of the exhibitions. (Anche questo è un sì, nel senso che appunto proprio per la capacità creativa per la - come dire, un creatore di moda, un designer è sicuramente un'artista cioè, e quindi penso che abbia una sensibilità tale per cui può anche creare o comunque avere l'attenzione verso magari giovani artisti o altri ambiti culturali per poter poi influenzare la fondazione magari nella scelta di cosa esporre.) (S. Giovanna, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

The theatre director defined Prada as patrons of our culture and promoter of young talents using these words:

Absolutely yes. Thanks to the patronage and to the huge monetary capital, contemporary artists that probably wouldn’t have great capabilities to produce artworks because of the lack of funds and visibility, thanks to this kind of foundations, also the great audience can be able to know these artists. (Assolutamente si certo. grazie al mecenatismo e ai capitali ingenti, artisti contemporanei che probabilmente non avrebbero grandi capacità di produrre opere per mancanza di fondi e di visibilità, grazie a queste fondazioni, invece anche il grande pubblico riesce a conoscerne) (D. Emanuele, personal communication, 30 April, 2018).

Finally, the 54-year-old dancer speaking more generally argued:

I’m thinking about benefits of expression, creativity, economical, of planning, of openness.... You can’t divide the two things. The fashion brand could make a lot for the promotion of culture that is an heritage that shouldn’t be lost.... It should enclose and open to the youngest, to young talents that maybe no one recognise, using these spaces to promote capabilities that could risk remaining hidden without the help of those who can give a help.... Now, it is time to learn to share with everybody and for everybody. More than everything when there are the possibilities, the cleverness, the foresight, the style, the competence. (Mi vengono in mente benefici di espressione, di creatività, economici, progettuali, di apertura.... Non si possono scindere le due cose. [La casa di moda] Potrebbe fare molto, attraverso questo marchio, promuovendo cultura e un bene che è un patrimonio che non deve essere perso.... avvicinare e aprire ai giovani, ai giovani talenti che magari non riconosce nessuno, utilizzando questi spazi per promuovere capacità che diciamo rimarrebbero nascoste se non avessero l'aiuto di chi può dare una mano a chi magari non ce la farebbe da solo.... Bisogna ora imparare a condividere con tutti e
per tutti, ecco. Soprattutto dove c’è la possibilità, l’intelligenza, la lungimiranza, lo stile, la professionalità) (C. Patrizia, personal communication, 11 april, 2018).

3.9 CONCLUSION

The framing section is composed by many elements that helped to grasp the idea that people have about Prada fashion brand and the Foundation. These ideas in fact can be facilitators in building the structure in which the practice of a fashion foundation and fashion brand takes place. To sum up, some striking elements emerged.

To begin with, the general opinion about the foundation is that it is as an interesting place because it exhibits contemporary art and culture, promoting new artists and pushing the city of Milan as a centre for contemporary art not only in Italy but also internationally. However, its activity is also perceived as being a great marketing action and also not so close and opened to people who would like to enter in contact with contemporary art for its exclusivity. Moreover, its activity related to contemporary art made people agree on the noticeable role that the foundation has. This role is also favoured by the fact that the institution has many resources at disposition, from money to network. For this reason, it was compared with other famous museums of contemporary art. This means that people consider Prada Foundation as an institution that has the same function and status as other museums.

Another striking element is that in people’s opinion the image of the brand and the image of the foundation are coherent because both of them are exclusive and are tools of transmission of culture. Exclusivity is related to the fact that the atmosphere within the foundation is that it is a place for people with a high social status and a certain knowledge of contemporary art, rather than a place for all kinds of audiences, as well as Prada offers products just for an elite of clients who can afford its products. This feature has two side-effects. On the one hand, the fashion products are similar to contemporary artworks because both of them are unique and hence considered as luxurious items. Therefore, fashion is compared to art and art to something fashionable and luxurious. On the other hand, the exclusiveness distances fashion and contemporary art from a kind of culture to which everybody can have access. Furthermore, the definition of the fashion brand as a means for the transmission of culture is also relevant, because the sample recognizes that culture can also be expressed by the clothes and not only by those artworks that already have the status of art like sculptures or paintings. In addition, the style of the architecture of Prada Foundation’s venue in Milan is perceived to be a sort of frame for the activity of the foundation, that also reflects the features of the products of the brand, like the pure lines and the attention to details. Therefore, it could be said that the architecture is a sort of reinforcement of the values and the functions of the foundation and of the brand.
Finally, according to the collected data, the fashion brand can contribute to the activity of the foundation providing certain resources (like money, network, innovation and creativity) and also a certain visibility that can improve the willingness of the people to visit the cultural institution and an incentive for the artists to collaborate with it. On the other way around, also the foundation brings certain advantages to the fashion brand in term of image and visibility. All these characteristics allows people to locate the brand in a position of patron and, at the same time, of creator of contemporary art and culture because with its resources and choices can influence the field of art, for instance selecting the artists to exhibit in its spaces.
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The case study of Prada Foundation is an explicative example of an Italian cultural fashion foundation, being this one the biggest institution of this kind in Italy. The case was used for the investigation of the legitimation process in the field of fashion. As a matter of fact, the goal of this study is to try to understand the reasons underpinning the increasing collaborations and relationships between fashion and art. As mentioned in the previous sections, the study is mostly based on Baumann’s theory of legitimation (2007). Besides, the analysis of the data was also conducted in view of the concept of artification introduced by Shapiro and Heinich (2012). The research was based on interviews with the audience, for this reason I addressed this research question: how the audience evaluate the activity of a fashion brand’s art foundation such as Prada Foundation in Milan? Afterwards, I elaborated more specific sub-questions: which are the symbolic spill-overs that the cultural activity brings to the fashion brand? which are the side effects that the image of the fashion brand brings to the cultural activity?, and finally how opening a foundation reflects on the reputation and legitimation of contemporary art and Prada fashion brand?.

The main research question is based on people’s perception and evaluation of the activity of the foundation. Generally speaking, the foundation is considered as an important institution for the promotion and support of contemporary culture. As a matter of fact, due to its resources (money, network, visibility, image) it can carry on the cultural activity with success because it is one among the few spaces in Italy giving the opportunity to contemporary artists to exhibit their artworks and for the public to enter in contact with them. Furthermore, despite the fact that the foundation brings the name of the brand Prada, the audience tend to perceive the two institutions as separated, even though some similarities are visible, for instance in the relationship between the style of the architecture, the image of Prada and the activity of the foundation. Besides, the data shows that Prada Foundation and Prada fashion brand are perceived as exclusive institutions because they both offer a product that is not completely accessible to people. The foundation exhibits contemporary art that is not easily comprehensible by the general audience and the brand offers luxury products that are not saleable on large scale. Last but not least, another striking element emerged from the analysis of the interviews: the foundation and the brand are vehicles of contemporary culture and for this reason Prada is considered as a patron of the Italian Heritage not only because of the presence of the foundation but also for the activity of the brand itself, that through fashion preserves Italian identity and savoir-fair. Therefore, fashion and art are put under the same category of means for the transmission of culture.

This discourse brings to the discussion of the other sub-questions. In fact, when talking about the image of the two institutions – the brand and the foundation – the presence of side-effects was another essential point of investigation. In this case, the answer is not only related to monetary and marketing benefits,
but the issue goes beyond. On the one hand, the cultural activity of the fashion foundation can bring advantages in terms of visibility and advertisement, as well as confirming Prada fashion brand as important contemporary culture producer and promoter. On the other hand, the fashion brand can contribute to the cultural activity providing enough financial support, a network and also being a source of inspiration and creativity. For this reason, hypothesis 1 (Hypothesis n. 1: the cultural activity can bring to the fashion brands benefits in terms of image and visibility) and 2 (Hypothesis n. 2: the fashion brand can bring to the cultural foundation benefits in terms of funding, visibility, attractiveness, network) are met. Nevertheless, I would like to highlight some points related to the benefit of visibility. The presence of the foundation can improve the visibility of the brand also among all those people who are not interested in fashion. Besides, the fact that the foundation brings the name Prada – that I would like to underline once again, it is one of the most well-known Italian fashion brands worldwide, also among people who have a scarce or no interest in fashion – helps the institution in its activity of cultural promotion because the name can trigger people’s curiosity, especially of those who are passionate of fashion, and it can also improve artists’ willingness to collaborate with the foundation. At the same time, some contradictions emerged from the interviews because even though visitors usually showed to be more willing to buy Prada’s products because of its involvement in culture, they also admitted that they would not buy Prada because it is a luxury brand, exclusive for few consumers. The theme of exclusiveness recurs also in the description of the activity of the foundation, whose cultural proposal is not open to everybody because the institution do not offer visitors enough tools to experience contemporary art. On a more symbolic level, the involvement of the brand in art and culture through the foundation, represents a reinforcement both for the brand and the foundation. This reinforcement is favoured by the fact that there is a certain level of coherence between the foundation and the brand, because both are seen as vehicles of contemporary culture and they both are innovators in their sectors. Moreover, the presence of the foundation is contributing to the legitimation process of the fashion brand because - as the data shows - both the activity of the brand and of the foundation in the field of contemporary art are considered as creative and innovating. However, this is acceptable only till a certain level, because the activity of the brand is strongly related to the production of clothes and accessories on a large scale and for a use value. Therefore, this feature represents an obstacle to the process of recognition of fashion as an art expression. For these reasons, hypothesis n. 3 (the involvement of the fashion brand in contemporary art is a means to increase fashion recognition and legitimation as art expression) can be only partially match.

Limitations and further research

As already stated above, Baumann’s model of the legitimation process was used to collect and analyse the data. Despite the advantage of being structured in three specific groups of factors that favour the legitimation process – opportunity space, resources and framing – sometimes I encountered some difficulties of classification. In fact, during the analysis of the interviews and the coding process, I had to change more
than once the position of some codes and sub-codes, because they could have been included in more than one group. Sometimes in fact, some of the elements that I identified as opportunity space, could also join the group of resources. The fact that Prada Foundation is a private institution for instance, can be considered as a contextual feature as well as a tangible and intangible resource because it can give the institution the tools (money as material resource and freedom of choice as non-material one) to pursue its cultural activity. The same situation occurred for the presence of facilities within the foundation and the accessibility by public transport, which can represent both the context and a resource for the foundation. Therefore, I decided to enclose into the opportunity space group all those elements that may affect the accomplishment of the recognition of the fashion foundation as an official museum. The identification of the factors composing the framing group did not generate many issues of classification because it was quite evident which codes contributed to the definition of the symbolic image of the foundation and the brand.

An additional limitation that could emerged from this thesis is that my research is based on a single case study, hence it could be argued that there is little basis for scientific generalization and consequently there could be the risk of a lack of rigor. However, the risk of a lack of rigor was overcome by keeping an open mind when analysing the data to avoid alterations of the information in order to demonstrate each point of investigation more effectively (Yin, 1994).

Last but not least, another limitation could be found in the fact that in this research I focused on the new venue of Prada Foundation in Milan (Largo Isarco) which opened in 2015. However, Prada Foundation started its activity in the early 1990s, when Miuccia Prada and Patrizio Bertelli decided to share their passion for contemporary art with a wider public, funding and promoting the activity of many artists. At the beginning this activity was lead through the realization of site-specific artworks because the foundation did not have yet a specific venue. Later, the foundation opened its two main venues, one in Venice in 2011 and the other in Milan in 2015. For this reason, I believe it would be relevant to highlight this feature: the research was only based on the experience that the audience had visiting the venue opened in Milan in 2015, hence very recently. Instead, I think that further investigations on the previous activity of Prada Foundation could contribute to provide a wider overview of how the relationship between the foundation and the brand changed during the years and which side-effects this relationship brought on a longer period.

Final remarks

The case of collaboration between fashion and art illustrated by the case of Prada Foundation could be considered an example of the application of the legitimation process to a social activity. After the analysis of the collected data, I would argue that the establishment of a foundation for the promotion of culture by a fashion brand is a mean to improve the identification of the fashion production as an artistic activity because the identity of the brand then it is also connected to certain values like creativity, innovation, novelty and
paradigm breaking, that are also the values underpinning contemporary art. Therefore, fashion is elevated to an art expression. Nevertheless, at the same time, the cultural activity of the brand, would never totally help fashion to accomplish this process of legitimation, because the brand and the foundation are recognised as two different institutions with also different goals. As a matter of fact, the commercial side of fashion and its production on a large scale – also industrial – pose fashion in an area of craft that would probably always represent an obstacle in this process of recognition of fashion as an art expression.
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### APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWEES OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION</th>
<th>INTEREST IN ART</th>
<th>INTEREST IN FASHION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 R. Jessica</td>
<td>30:19</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student (Academy, scenography)</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 C. Francesca</td>
<td>26:34</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Printed and fashion designer</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 C. Patrizia</td>
<td>58:24</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Dancer and ballet teacher</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 M. Maria Serena</td>
<td>54:28</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student (economics of art)</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 S. Maddalena</td>
<td>43:03</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student (philosophy) and worker at Prada foundation</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 S. Maria Teresa</td>
<td>40:58</td>
<td>Torino</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 S. Giovanna</td>
<td>31:29</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 A. Silvia</td>
<td>39:53</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student – looking for a job</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 G. Marinella</td>
<td>26:50</td>
<td>Torino</td>
<td>Art Critic</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 F. Silvia</td>
<td>29:04</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Freelancer in marketing (fashion)</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION</th>
<th>INTEREST IN ART</th>
<th>INTEREST IN FASHION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 V. Antonello</td>
<td>37:43</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student (philosophy)</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 A. Giacomo</td>
<td>42:16</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student (Economic and management for arts, culture and communication)</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Z. Giacomo</td>
<td>42:16</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student (Economic and management for arts, culture and communication)</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 P. Andrea</td>
<td>35:43</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student (architecture)</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 M. Riccardo</td>
<td>26:24</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Student (musicology)</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 D. Emanuele</td>
<td>27:02</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Theatre Director</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 G. Francesco</td>
<td>28:06</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 P. Pero</td>
<td>26:29</td>
<td>Milano</td>
<td>Gallerist</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Prada Foundation</td>
<td>1:16:38</td>
<td></td>
<td>Representative of Prada Foundation’s managerial and curatorial department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDES

a. INTERVIEW GUIDE for Prada Foundation’s representatives

Introduction and Framing:
1. Could you tell me your current position at Prada Foundation?
   - How did you get to this position?
   - Where did you work before?
2. Could you tell me about the history of Prada Foundation?
   - How was the idea of Prada foundation born?
   - How was it connected to Prada brand at the beginning? And now?
   - Which are the goals of Prada Foundation?
3. Are there any connections between the fashion brand and the foundation?
   - How the artistic action influences the brand?
   - Is the audience the same as the audience/costumers of the fashion brand?
4. Do you think are there any connections between art and fashion?
   - Do you think that fashion firms have influence on art and culture?
   - In which way the fashion foundation and the fashion brand can influence themselves? (Do they cooperate in certain ways?)
   - All brands have a concept and ideas and values behind them. Do you think that these values are the same in the fashion brand and in the foundation?
5. Do you have a model of Foundation that inspires you?
6. Which are the differences between Prada Foundation and other fashion foundations?
7. Which is the role and importance of Prada Foundation in the promotion of contemporary culture in the city of Milan and in Italy?
   - Which is the difference with the activity of museums?

Opportunity Space:
8. Are there any financial supports for non-profitable foundation (for instance from the government or municipality)?
9. Why did the Foundation locate in this neighbourhood (close to Piazza Lodi)?
   - Does this neighbourhood have specific characteristics that attracted the foundation?
   - Did the municipality gave some support due to the fact that you located in this neighbourhood?
10. The foundation also host Miuccia Prada and Patrizion Bertelli’s art collection. Which was the role of this collection in the establishment/opening of the Foundation?

Resources:
11. Does Prada foundation have an impact on Prada as fashion brand?
   - Do you think that Prada consumers are more willing to buy products because Prada is also involved in the promotion and support of art and contemporary culture?
12. Who are the members of the Prada Foundation?
   - Who are the people involved in setting connections with artists?
13. Could you tell me something about the process of borrowing the artworks?
- Is it easy to get in touch with artists?
- how do you select the artists?
- which is the procedure? Do you contact the artists directly or do firstly ask to galleries?
- Are the artists familiar with Prada foundation?
- Are they willing to work with Prada? Or are they scared about the name of Prada?

14. How does the location of the foundation in Milan influence the willingness of artists and cultural institutions to collaborate with you?
- Do you think that the location and the prestigious name of the architect who projected the venue are attractive for artists? Or the name of Prada plays a much important/central role?
- And for visitors?

15. Do you think that artists exhibiting here receive more visibility and recognition in their art field?

Conclusion:
16. Do you believe that promoting contemporary culture can improve Prada prestige as a fashion brand?

b. INTERVIEW GUIDE for the general audience

Introduction:
1. Could you briefly present yourself?
   - Age, education, occupation
   - How many times a year/per month do you visit cultural institutions or attend cultural events (in general)?
   - Which kind of cultural events do you prefer?
   - Do you have a favourite art expression or movement?
   - Are you interested in fashion?
   - Which are your favourite fashion brands?
   - Do you often buy clothes/items from the fashion brands you like?

2. How many times have you visited Prada Foundation in Milan?
   - have you ever been to the other venues of the foundation: Osservatorio in Galleria Vittorio Emanuele (Milano) or Ca’ Corner della Regina in Venice?
   - do you also visit other Fashion Foundations, such as Trussardi in Milan, or Fendi in Rome..?

3. What attracted you the first time you visited the Foundation?

Framing:
4. What do you think about Prada Foundation?
   - what do you think about their cultural offer (exhibitions)?
   - what do you think about the venue?

5. How would you define the role of Prada Foundation? [ in the activity of promotion of the contemporary culture?]
   - and more specifically, in the city of Milan?

6. To which other contemporary art museum would you compare Prada Foundation?
   - which are the differences between these institutions?

7. Are you aware of the fact that Prada is first of all a fashion brand?
   - do you like Prada? And why?
   - do you buy Prada’s products?

Opportunity Space:
8. Do you think there is a difference between a public and a private institution involved in art and culture promotion? Which are the differences?

9. And in the case of Prada Foundation?

10. Do you have to pay a ticket to enter the Foundation? And to visit the exhibitions (or performances)?
    - Are there any discounts?
    - How important is the entrance fee in your decision to visit the Foundation?
    - The entrance ticket also includes the visit to the foundation new exhibition space for photography in Galleria Vittorio Emanuele within 10 days. Would you consider this aspect as an additional point in favour to visit the main venue of the Foundation?

11. In which ways does or does not the presence in the foundation of facilities like the bookshop, the new library (that is going to open) and Bar Luce (designed by the cinema director Wes Anderson) represent a point of attraction to you?

12. How relevant is the accessibility by public transport (tram, metro, share-bike) or by car in your decision to visit Prada Foundation?
    - Do you go to the foundation easily by public transport? Or by car? Or by bike?

13. In which ways does the presence of any facilities in the neighbourhood surrounding the Foundation influence your decision to go to the Foundation? For instance: when you go to the foundation then you also plan to spend time in the neighbourhood because it has certain attractiveness?

Resources:

14. In your opinion, are there any similarities or differences between the image of Prada Foundation and Prada as a fashion brand?
    - Would you be more willing to buy Prada's items because you know that they are involved in the promotion of contemporary art and culture?
    - Would you be more willing to visit the Foundation because you appreciate Prada fashion brand?

15. What do you think about the architecture project of Prada Foundation venue in Milan?
    - Do you know who projected the spaces? (Name of the architect)
    - Do you think that the architecture reflects the image and the activity of Prada foundation?
    - Does a connection exist between the architecture of the foundation and Prada as a fashion brand?
    - Would you say that the architecture and style of the building is a more attractive feature than the name of Prada?

Conclusion:

16. Are there any benefits for the fashion brand deriving from its activity of promotion of contemporary culture, in your opinion?

17. And for the cultural activity that is promoted by a fashion brand?
**APPENDIX 3: LIST OF CODES**

**Group 1**

### OPPORTUNITY SPACE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROLE OF MONEY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL CAPITAL</td>
<td>Freedom of choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELEVANCE OF THE ENTRANCE FEE</td>
<td>Entrance to another exhibition space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESENCE OF FACILITIES WITHIN THE FOUNDATION</td>
<td>Bookshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improvement of the atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEIGHBOURHOOD</td>
<td>Critics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hope for rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gentrification?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group 2**

### RESOURCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sub-code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OUTSTANDING ARCHITECTURE</td>
<td>Shape of the buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incorporation of new and old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attract people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLINGNESS TO BUY PRADA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLINGNESS TO VISIT PRADA FOUNDATION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Sub-code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| INTERESTING PLACE | *For contemporary culture and richness of cultural proposal*  
*For the venue*  
*Scepticism* |
| IMPORTANT ROLE | *Promotion of contemporary culture* |
| COMPARISON | _ |
| PRADA FASHION BRAND | _ |
| IMAGE OF PRADA VS IMAGE OF PRADA FOUNDATION | *Exclusivity*  
*Vehicles of contemporary art* |
| ARCHITECTURE REFLECTS THE IMAGE OF PRADA | *Image and activity of Prada Foundation*  
*Connection with Prada style* |
| BENEFITS FROM THE FOUNDATION TO THE FASHION BRAND | *Image and Visibility* |
| BENEFITS FROM THE FASHION BRAND TO THE FOUNDATION | *Money*  
*Network*  
*Innovation and creativity* |