

**Taste in Chinese culture and Western Luxury  
Brands: Exploring young Chinese Customers'  
perceptions of Chinese culture elements in Western  
advertising**

**Thesis Master Media Studies**

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**ABSTRACT**

Since China's reform and opening as the world's most populous nation, China has been regarded as the world's most significant consumer, significantly influencing the global economic system and western brands. Among them, the consumption level of luxury products in China is among the best in the world. Moreover, previous findings shows that as Chinese luxury customers tend to prioritize exterior societal demands above internal personal needs, Chinese consumers exhibit a strong desire for luxury goods. In other words, the symbolic value of luxury goods has a place in contemporary Chinese society, as shown by several literary works. Based on the literature of European fashion and luxury goods in the Chinese market, combined with the study of Chinese culture and Chinese elements, this study investigates the attitude of Chinese consumers towards European luxury goods advertisements.

Meanwhile, Chinese culture is a complex subject that researchers know little about. Chinese customers' interpretation of Chinese culture is also a significant element influencing their behavior. Therefore, this research aims to investigate how Chinese customers perceive European luxury products' expression of Chinese culture. These significant fields, which have been undervalued so far, might provide European fashion and luxury firms operating in China or contemplating market entry with valuable strategic guidance.

Under the impact of Orientalism, this study examines the perspectives of European brands on Chinese culture from an academic standpoint. As well as the scholarly explanations for the patriotic opposition of Chinese consumers to European products. To achieve this goal, the researcher conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with sixteen Chinese customers who had luxury brands purchasing experience in Europe and studied the process of interpreting European luxury products' comprehension of the Chinese cultural environment from a realistic standpoint. The results indicate that Chinese consumers perceive that

European fashion luxury brands are rife with cultural stereotypes and biases. Under the impact of patriotism, Chinese consumers have raised outrage at the portrayal of Chinese cultural elements in the cross-cultural branding of European luxury products.

The findings also provide advice for the cross-cultural strategies of European fashion and luxury firms entering the Chinese market. In addition, it can facilitate the entry of fashion and luxury products into the Chinese market by giving further cross-cultural communication recommendations and enhancing the interaction between brands and customers, thereby promoting effective communication between businesses. From a scientific perspective, research can help European fashion and luxury items better comprehend how Chinese customers view Chinese culture. In addition, the value structure of luxury brands and the motivations of Chinese customers to purchase European fashion and luxury items are investigated.

*Key words: China, luxury advertisements, audience perception, Chinese culture, cultural difference*

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## Introduction

While parts of the world have mourned an economic downturn, luxury sales in China have continued to grow to 30 per cent of the global market in 2010 [ CITATION JNg12 \l 1033 ]. Japan, once the most significant market for luxury goods, has been in recession since 2009, compared with China's demand for luxury goods continues to be strong. Due to China's importance as a worldwide market, several luxury brands are attempting to build a regional presence [ CITATION Che20 \l 2052 ]. Scholars believe that the growth of western luxury goods is partly due to the positive attitude of Chinese consumers [CITATION Nor17 \l 1033 ].

Literature indicates that one of the characteristics of luxury products is its high price and complexity of mass manufacturing, which makes products more exclusive [CITATION Yin111 \t \l 1033 ]. Therefore, Chinese customers consider luxury brands are incredibly precious, elite-only assets. Moreover, Chinese consumers eagerly chase luxury items to satisfy the social demands of influential group norms [CITATION Ju107 \l 2052 ]. In other words, ostentatious purchasing is prevalent among Chinese consumers [ CITATION Lin12 \l 1033 ]. This tendency implies that Chinese consumers could be more affected by social factors than by the practical benefits of luxury products. For example, buying a Louis Vuitton handbag or a Rolex watch might not be driven by personal preference or need but rather as necessary social functions that integrate the owner into significant social groups and support its users in engaging in a range of appropriate behaviors [CITATION Yin111 \t \l 1033 ]. In other words, from a societal perspective, Chinese consumers are not only purchasing products when they consume luxury brands. In addition, consumers are spending money on relationship-enhancing goods, indicating that Chinese consumers are using European luxury products for the value of society [ CITATION Nan98 \l 2052 ].

Therefore, to accomplish the cultural and commercial interaction between China and the West, Chinese culture and Chinese components have become communication symbols in advertisements for Western luxury products entering the Chinese market [CITATION YeW20



[1033]. In other words, advertising is essential for reinforcing brands with social and cultural significance and bridging the gap between brands and customers [CITATION Joh \1033]. Combining the familiar culture of the Chinese people with western luxury advertising is a strategy for bringing customers and companies closer [CITATION Hua17 \1033], which is another reason Chinese customers purchase luxury items. Culture could have a significant impact on one's perception of luxury products [CITATION Far181 \1033]. When entering the Chinese market, several European luxury companies integrate Chinese culture with European culture by deploying narratives to stimulate the cultural identity and patriotism of Chinese customers, hence increasing consumption (S. Yu & Y. Hu, 2020).

In order to attract more Chinese customers, Chinese culture is included in certain product advertising [CITATION Per98 \1033], which indicates that many foreign firms' advertising material is often tailored to Chinese customers (P.J. Hoven, S. Lin, & X. Zhao, 2012). Thus, the merger of internationalization and localization is unavoidable when dealing with multinational advertising [CITATION Deg \12052]. Previous research has shown that culturally integrated narratives in European luxury items can substantially affect Chinese consumers' perceptions [CITATION Lin121 \1033]. In addition to having autonomous self-interpretation, consumer behavior is also influenced by collectivist culture [CITATION Far181 \1033]. Collectivism and patriotism are modes of expression heavily inspired by a Confucian tradition in Chinese culture. Therefore, in the context of patriotism, it is worthwhile to investigate how Chinese consumers understand features in commercials for international brands.

While further, this paper will use two examples (Gucci and Dolce & Gabbana) further to illustrate the different situations of Western luxury brands when using Chinese elements to promote in China. Among them, as a European fashion and luxury brand well-known to Chinese customers in recent years, Gucci has also been employed frequently as a case study in market research [CITATION Fra141 \1033]. Furthermore, Dolce & Gabbana was forced to leave the Chinese market in 2018 due to a scandal about the use of Chinese culture in its video advertisements, showing that Chinese customers do not purchase due to the

“fawning” of multinational brand advertising [CITATION YeW20 \1 1033 ]. However, there is no research on integrating the two brands into Chinese culture. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap in this academic investigation.

Gucci can be regarded as a typical case of Western luxury goods promoting the brand in China by using Chinese elements in advertisements [ CITATION LeX19 \1 1033 ]. The example of Gucci contrasts with the case of Dolce & Gabbana to be described below, showing that when luxury brands convey their rich cultural significance in China, it becomes a challenge for them because of cultural differences and the way social media works [CITATION YeW20 \1 1033 ]. First, Gucci noticed from preliminary market research that Chinese young people seek the realism of nature and like flowers and vibrant designs [ CITATION Yuc11 \1 1033 ]. As a result, the Creative director of Gucci, Alessandro Michele drew inspiration from the Chinese style, highlighting bright colors and flowery patterns in Gucci's product designs [ CITATION LeX19 \1 1033 ]. Second, Gucci draws advertising marketing inspiration from Chinese history and culture [CITATION Li109 \1 1033 ]. For example, Gucci released “Year of the Dog” series posters to cater to the Chinese Spring Festival and commercials for the “Tanabata” series to interact with Chinese Valentine's Day [ CITATION LeX19 \1 1033 ]. In 2020, Gucci continued to promote its Chinese Valentine's Day marketing campaign, and the commercial video had over 16.7 million views by the end [CITATION KeJ20 \1 1033 ].

However, not every Western brand understands and effectively combines traditional Chinese features in brand promotion [ CITATION Dan19 \1 1033 ]. For example, Dolce & Gabbana was boycotted in China in 2018 for several promotional videos, including the hashtags #DGLovesChina and #DGTheGreatShow [ CITATION Mek18 \1 1033 ]. Certain Chinese features in the film, such as chopsticks, were referred to in the AD as “small sticks”, leading some Chinese to believe that Dolce & Gabbana was ridiculing Chinese culture. Meanwhile, Chinese consumers believe that several traditional Chinese symbols in the video depend excessively on preconceptions, which could be referred to as insincere symbolism [ CITATION BBC19 \1 1033 ]. Even the founders of Dolce & Gabbana have apologized, pleading for Chinese consumers to forgive their “misunderstanding of Chinese

culture”. However, the brand remains banned in China, and all its products have been removed from Chinese e-commerce platforms [ CITATION BBC18 \1 1033 ]. As shown, Chinese culture is different from what Western perceives [CITATION Edw85 \1 1033 ].

This is not the first time Dolce & Gabbana has eliminated Chinese elements for its advertising campaign. However, the brand failed to promote its products in China in 2018 and lost some of its original clients [ CITATION Meg21 \1 2052 ]. As can be seen, brands must first comprehend Chinese culture to include Chinese elements in their design and advertising. Simultaneously, brands must understand how customers perceive advertising. Thus, this research aims to ascertain *how do Chinese consumers perceive elements of Chinese culture in commercials of European luxury goods ?*

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Luxury brands in China**

Driven by the global economy, China's industry has continued strong development, with an average annual GDP growth rate of 9.52 percentage points [ CITATION Sue19 \l 1033 ]. China has been the world's fastest growing major economy over the last decade. Therefore, China is the world's most significant market for luxury products. China's developing luxury industry has significant prospects for luxury shops, and China has risen to prominence in the luxury and haute couture industries within ten years [CITATION KPM13 \l 1033 ]. Since 2008, western luxury companies have increased their focus on the Chinese market [ CITATION Bai201 \l 1033 ]. More discretionary incomes and increased travel possibilities have offered the further potential for Western luxury companies to develop in China [ CITATION Eri12 \l 1033 ]. Between 2008 and currently, the number of luxury products purchased by Chinese households has increased [ CITATION Sue19 \l 1033 ].

In 2014, only thirty-nine per cent of Chinese customers purchased luxury products, compared to sixty-five percent in 2016 [ CITATION Bai201 \l 1033 ]. In 2018, Chinese consumers spent a total of 770 billion yuan (100 billion euros) overseas on luxury goods, representing 35 per cent of the global luxury market [ CITATION Sue19 \l 1033 ]. Due to the growing economy and purchasing power year after year, Chinese consumers are estimated to account for 40% of the global luxury market by 2035 [ CITATION Bai201 \l 1033 ]. As a result, the Chinese market cannot be overlooked in the luxury business. Chinese customers are becoming more brand conscious and willing to invest in luxury fashion brands [ CITATION Aro14 \l 1033 ]. However, the conditions for realizing the enormous market that could be created by consumers' strong

intentions to purchase luxury brands are insufficient [CITATION Lin121 \1 1033 ]. Thus, the motivation of Chinese consumers to purchase fashion and luxury brands and their views on European fashion luxury advertising must be considered [CITATION Lin091 \1 2052 ].

Furthermore, purchasing luxury products online is the preferred method for Chinese customers, particularly during the pandemic [CITATION She \1 2052 ]. European luxury brands such as Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, and other fashion luxury brands have entered China's retail market and social media [CITATION Mar14 \1 1033 ]. Those brands are growing brand value and sales in China through massive digital marketing and online advertising initiatives. European luxury products integrate physical sales with internet advertising to establish customer relationships, increase brand recognition, and enhance brand appearance (S. Bazi, R. Filieric, & M. Gorton, 2020). In other words, luxury brands rely heavily on e-commerce to increase their sales. The report from McKinsey confirms that the majority of Chinese consumers access information about luxury products through both online and offline channels, mainly by paying attention to brand official social account and e-commerce platforms, celebrity endorsements and KOLs (key opinion leaders) [CITATION G1o10 \1 2052 ]. Given these unique characteristics of the Chinese market, western luxury companies make every effort to engage with Chinese customers (Tsai, Yang, & Liu, 2013). Advertising seems to be one of the most effective mediums. The Internet has dissolved geographical and temporal barriers, allowing Western luxury companies to easily reach Chinese customers through the Internet [ CITATION Rob99 \1 2052 ]. Therefore, luxury companies in China must consider their strategy, positioning, and narrative more thoroughly, ensuring seamless integration across digital and physical branding (Yu & Hu, 2020).

More specifically, the ideology of Chinese customers has a significant impact on the sales of European luxury products [ CITATION Eve08 \1 2052 ]. Contemporary Chinese society attaches great importance to one's social status, which is defined by various characteristics, such as occupation and wealth. Meanwhile, social status is a significant factor influencing Chinese consumption [CITATION Kei15 \1 2052 ]. Previous research has demonstrated the distinct motivations of Chinese luxury consumers, including prestigious

face-saving [CITATION Ju107 \1 2052 ], subculture (Wang, Sun, & Song, 2011), gift-giving [CITATION Ju107 \1 2052 ], and other luxury brand consuming culture. In other words, luxury goods not only have the functional attributes and experience value of products (Shukla et al., 2015). Meanwhile, purchasing luxury products symbolizes flaunting wealth and face-saving, which contributes to establishing individual status in the Chinese social hierarchy (Liang, Ghosh, & Oe , 2017). More specific, face-saving is part of the Chinese value structure system, which embodies self-image, ability, dignity, and reputation, and refers to the respect, pride, and dignity attained by individuals because of their social accomplishments (Zhou & Zhang, 2017). Therefore, in the research topic of European luxury goods in the Chinese market, consumers' construction of product attributes is worth further exploring.

The attraction of European luxury products could be related to their higher quality, recognizable design, and prestigious reputation (Nueno & Quelch, 1998). However, luxury design is characterized by its subjectivity, while there are some visual and conceptual elements in luxury design, most notably their non-historical, immersive, and dysfunctional qualities since its price far exceeds the functionality [CITATION Jon45 \1 1033 ]. As objects with large price labels, luxury goods also enable customers to connect their inner selves and outward trends while constructing their identities through purchase (Brun & Castelli, 2013). Therefore, as mentioned before, Chinese customers might purchase luxury products for the purpose of their reputation and face-saving (Liang, Ghosh, & Oe , 2017).

At the same time, some literature mentioned that celebrity endorsement influences Chinese customers' purchases of luxury items (Yu & Hu, 2020). To be more precise, highly popular celebrities have a role in influencing purchases in China's consumer market (Liu & Brock, 2011). Localized celebrity endorsement is one of the most essential social media marketing strategies. When entering China, European luxury brands advertise images of celebrities using their products on social media (Heine & Gutsatz, 2015). On the Chinese social media platform Weibo account, Dior frequently highlights Chinese celebrities (such as Huang Xuan and Zhao Liying). In addition, the research demonstrates that the usage of localized celebrities on European luxury products has a beneficial effect on those with a high

degree of patriotism (Yu & Hu, 2020). Patriotism refers to a strong feeling of devotion and allegiance to one's nation without commensurate antagonism to other countries [CITATION Geo011 \t \l 1033 ], which will be discussed in further detail in a later section.

Besides, product marketing relies heavily on cultural awareness and sensitivity, particularly in China [ CITATION Dav09 \l 2052 ]. As stated before, an increasing number of European luxury products companies are beginning to engage in the internationalization process. To effectively execute global marketing strategies, culture is a crucial aspect that cannot be overlooked during market growth (Moorea &Manring, 2009). Customer purchase motivation and consuming behaviors would vary based on their cultural background, while cross-cultural differences will influence customers' luxury goods purchasing habits [CITATION Qin12 \l 2052 ]. Edward Hall formally introduced the concept of cross-cultural communication in the 1950s, which refers to the information transmission and cultural exchange activities between individuals, organizations or countries belonging to different cultural systems (Tian & Borges, 2011). On the one hand, cross-border products trade activities may provide enormous economic advantages [ CITATION Mic10 \l 1033 ]. On the other hand, cross-cultural conversations can influence people's values and encourage the growth of globalization and the worldwide interchange of civilizations [ CITATION Zo120 \l 1033 ]. Nonetheless, transnational product purchases are accompanied by cross-cultural conflict, which refers to the process of reciprocal hostility and exclusion between diverse cultures or cultural aspects (Skarmeas, 2006). However, concurrently, European luxury products, values, and consumption patterns under the influence of traditional Chinese culture continue to clash, combine, and evolve (Hsu & Huang, 2016).

In order to attract Chinese consumers, numerous European fashion luxury brands have integrated Chinese cultural elements into their products and marketing posters and videos [ CITATION Lau10 \l 1033 ]. The construction of luxury brands and the interpretation of the meaning of Chinese cultural elements in advertisements of European luxury goods by Chinese customers could explain and predict the future for European luxury goods in the Chinese market (Wu, Chen, & Ng, 2015). As a unique product brought from the West, luxury products require a high-level symbolic value and western consumerism

(Kaufmann, Vrontis, & Manakova, 2012). However, incorporating Chinese cultural elements into the process of brand promotion for European fashion luxury products could be seen as cross-cultural business activity (Li, et al. 2012).

When a brand is promoted globally, the advertisements produced by combining local culture can be regarded as the process of localization of an international brand (Hoven, Lin, & Zhao, 2012). The brand's awareness of local culture can be illustrated through advertisements that combine cultures from diverse backgrounds (Cayla & Arnould, 2008). In the process of cross-cultural comprehension and cross-cultural brand marketing, it is essential to understand and adapt to the local culture (Chiu & Cheng, 2007). Because people from various cultural backgrounds could understand the exact text differently [CITATION Mar14 \1 1033 ], in other words, commercials for European fashion luxury products are based on the culture of the country where the brand is manufactured. However, Chinese consumers' perception of the same advertisement might vary from the creator's original goal [ CITATION Nan04 \1 1033 ]. As stated in the literature, the inaccuracy resulting from cross-cultural interpretation is uncertain [ CITATION Aru03 \1 1033 ]. The Chinese culture has a vast history and several sub-cultural branches, making it more difficult for European luxury brands to interpret Chinese culture (Fan, 2000), as will be detailed in further depth in the next section. In conclusion, there are gaps between the Chinese beliefs that Chinese customers are willing to exhibit and European luxury brand perceptions (Schroeder et al. 2014).

At this point, as previously said, Dolce & Gabbana has failed to succeed in Chinese society with its marketing campaign in 2018 [ CITATION Meg21 \1 2052 ]. Hence, this study is committed to discovering the role of Chinese traditional cultural elements in advertisements.

### **Chinese culture in transnational marketing**

Chinese culture is a broad concept that encompasses China's history, economic and political impact, social structure, cultural evolution, and other variables, with the fundamental components being complicated and diverse (Wu & Tseng, 1985). In addition, throughout the history of thousands of years, Chinese culture has been impacted by Confucianism, which is



people-centered and focused on values and social interactions [CITATION Zha22 \1 1033 ].

Due to the complexity and diversity of Chinese culture, it is superficial to represent and trivialize Chinese culture if the concept of Chinese elements is limited to the level of symbols [CITATION Edw85 \1 1033 ]. The core of Chinese elements is the geographical area of national culture, while it is the emblem of China's national spirit and culture [ CITATION TuW91 \1 1033 ]. Chinese elements should be positioned on the outward tangible and internal intangible object bearers of traditional Chinese culture and the contemporary Chinese cultural environment (Zhou, Zhang &Edelheim, 2013). In the creative transformation of Chinese elements, people often unintentionally confront the inner opposition of traditional culture (He & Guo, 2018). To understand Chinese cultural elements, it is necessary to combine traditional spiritual and psychological structure with the influence of innovation capacity (Li, 1993). As well as to apply a contemporary perspective of the value of creativity, science and technology, and economic innovation from a neutral standpoint and with an international consciousness [ CITATION Dai03 \1 1033 ]. Understanding Chinese culture and elements of Chinese culture should be blended with various culture and knowledge innovation to expose Chinese elements that are universally acknowledged (Boisot & Child, 1996).

Even though a single manifestation of Chinese culture with pictures or elements will signify Chinese culture, people must acknowledge that owing to the limitations of language, Chinese culture is more rapidly disseminated around the globe through visual cultural elements [CITATION Che10 \1 1033 ]. Chinese characteristics are a form of Chinese culture and art that has extended around the globe in the modern era since contemporary times and is more known in western nations [ CITATION Sue91 \1 1033 ]. Chinese traditional cultural elements have a more intuitive function in cultural symbols' expression and brand marketing in visual art communication design [ CITATION LiK12 \1 2052 ]. Chinese cultural elements are the focal point of studying traditional Chinese culture and other fields. In order to meet the criteria of cultural globalization, traditional Chinese cultural symbols are also progressing alongside contemporary society [ CITATION Liy13 \1 1033 ]. The

profound cultural meanings of Chinese traditional cultural symbols are transmitted to European nations based on absorbing the essence of foreign culture.

More specifically, Chinese symbols, music, graphics, typefaces, and other forms of expression have Chinese characteristics [CITATION Che18 \1 2052 ]. For example, Chinatown is a subculture of Chinese culture that has spread across Europe, the United States, and other areas of the globe (Leeman & Modan, 2009). In addition, multiple traditional imageries, colors, and folk artefacts are regarded to be distinctive Chinese components in advertising design [ CITATION Liq12 \1 1033 ]. For example, cranes are a classic Chinese motif in China because they signify longevity. Louis Vuitton, a French fashion brand, utilized a large set of crane elements in its Spring 2016 menswear design to represent the luxury and brilliance of Chinese value [ CITATION Soh17 \1 2052 ].

Additionally, several European brands have included Chinese features to demonstrate the artistry and beauty of their goods. For instance, in 2019, Belgian fashion label Dries Van Noten collaborated with China's Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development Fund (CHSDF) to launch a collection of Chinese-inspired designs. Furthermore, the combination of Phoenix, infused with Chinese aesthetics elements, with Belgian brands resulted in outfits with a powerful Oriental unique aura [CITATION Lau19 \1 1033 ]. This means that Chinese characteristics sometimes play a significant role in marketing these worldwide businesses (Anderson & Zhang, 2015).

Western brands tend to favor Chinese cultural elements not merely to win the support of Chinese customers but also to honor the spiritual civilization that underpins Chinese cultural elements (Melewar et al. 2003). Traditional Chinese components contain auspicious patterns and animals and calligraphy, paper cutting, and other sophisticated inventions that have evolved through time [ CITATION YiC18 \1 2052 ]. While these Chinese elements may seem simple images to Europeans and Americans, they represent a deep and profound heritage and spirit of the Chinese people. Thus, in addition to aesthetic expression, Chinese cultural aspects processed via western design occasionally seek innovation mindlessly, obliterating the Chinese national identity and its true meaning [CITATION Edw85 \1 1033 ].

Cultural discount describes the phenomena in which European luxury brands promote their products with Chinese cultural elements, but Chinese consumers can not recognize them [CITATION Co1 \p 1 \l 1033 ]. Initially, the concept of cultural discount contributes to the economic value of the transaction of movie and television entertainment products, which would be misinterpreted owing to cultural differences, resulting in a decline in economic value (McFadyen, Hoskins, & Finn, 2004). In the 1980s, Canadian media economics expert Colin Hoskins used the cultural discount to characterize cultural variations in national market exchanges, which is a type of communication gap (Hoskins, Mirus, & Rozeboom, 1989). In other words, the transmission of cultural products will be hampered by the criticism or misunderstanding of other areas because of cultural differences. Consequently, the cultural discount has become an essential factor influencing the global marketing of multinational businesses. For instance, during the 2018 Dolce & Gabbana Chinese event, the traditional Chinese chopstick culture was misunderstood by Dolce & Gabbana itself because of the function of cultural discount in various cultural contexts, resulting in the misconception of Chinese customers (Tyler, 2020). Faced with foreign brands' interpretations of Chinese culture, Chinese consumers would have the instinct to protect and resist invasion psychology due to patriotism, making it easy for their attention to deviate from the brand's original intent [CITATION Xia13 \l 2052 ]. This is the reverse effect of cross-cultural communication, resulting from different typical cultural backgrounds.

Due to disparities in cultural backgrounds and ways of thinking between China and other European nations, the cultural symbols generated by European fashion and luxury brands tend to depart from the interpretations of Chinese customers, preventing both disseminators from reaching a consensus (Ho, 2022). The complexity of Chinese culture can be seen as a barrier for European luxury businesses seeking to penetrate the Chinese market (Liu et al. 2016). In Said's Oriental theory, he emphasized the deviation of cross-cultural understanding. That is, the Oriental culture in the perspective of westerners is not the authentic Oriental culture [CITATION Sai85 \l 2052 ]. According to Oriental theory, eastern culture is diverse and mystifying to the West. Due to geographical constraints, linguistic difficulties, and the discrepancy in economic power between the East and the West decades ago.

Due to geographical constraints, linguistic difficulties, and the discrepancy in economic power between the East and the West decades ago, westerners have preconceived stereotypes about Chinese culture (Boden, 2016). The definition of a stereotype is an unalterable opinion towards a specific category of items or people. Walter Lippmann introduced the stereotype in his book *Science of Public Opinion*, which refers to people's fixed, generalized, and broad perspectives about a particular group of people or objects in a social context (Lippmann & Curtis, 2017). The adoption of new ideas by people or society is limited by stereotypes, which also have a negative impact on the actual value of brands and emotional transmission (Hoskins, Mirus, & Rozeboom, 1989). European luxury brands penetrate the Chinese market, which is decided by brand recognition and brand adaptation, mainly through cross-cultural brand communication awareness (Tian & Borges, 2011).

However, a distorted understanding of Chinese culture does not negate the desire of western firms to include Chinese characteristics in their goods and promote them to their target audiences (Liu & Zhou, 2021). The only method for an international brand to connect across cultures is through cultural integration, which is a long adaptation process from cultural surface to cultural depth (Xu & Su, 2009). Cultural integration is primarily determined by communication viewpoint, communication content, and communication methods, which is the internal situational circumstances for European luxury fashion brands to engage in cross-cultural communication (Voyer et al. 2017). Cultural integration would be complex when European luxury fashion brands' understanding of the host country's cultural environment and their own cultural adaptability diverge (Gannon, Roper, & Doherty, 2015). Or when European luxury fashion brands fail to recognize the significant impact of cross-cultural communication activities on brand communication activities and business events. In contrast, if European luxury fashion brands have a firm intention of cross-cultural interaction, despite the vast cultural differences between the two countries, and if the international brand has a strong initiative in communication, the degree of consumer acceptance would be significantly enhanced (Ramaseshan, Bejou, & C. Jain, 2006).

Therefore, how Chinese consumers view the Western expression of this Oriental element is an important issue that must be studied and explored.

## **Chinese audience and patriotism**

China has become one of the world's most important markets in recent years, owing to the remarkable rise of the Chinese economy and the rising buying power of Chinese consumers [ CITATION Máx20 \1 2052 ]. China, the world's largest consumer of luxury brands, has an absolute market worth that cannot be disregarded (Atsmon, Y. & Dixit, V., 2012). Existing research indicates that luxury items have a strong bond with Chinese customers, and that Chinese consumers' perceptions of brands serve as an incentive for brand growth (Yu & Hu, 2020).

However, European brands entering the Chinese market seem to have a stereotypical understanding of Chinese culture (Shen et al., 2019). Therefore, Chinese consumers have developed patriotism to protect Chinese culture and fight Western stereotypes, Chinese consumers have developed a patriotism (Yu et al., 2022). Patriotism can be seen as commitment and loyalty to someone's country, as well as a positive attitude and respect for the nation (Bartikowski, Fastoso, & Gie, 2021). When Chinese customers' patriotism is stimulated, their purchase behavior and attitude toward European brands will change. This paragraph will discuss in detail the relationship between Chinese consumers' distinctive patriotism and their purchasing of European fashion and luxury items.

Milan Business Weekly paid close attention to Chinese customers and stated that the global luxury market will become increasingly reliant on China, as well as that the post-80s and post-90s generations will be a significant driving force for the rapid expansion of the Chinese luxury market [ CITATION Mi117 \1 1033 ]. In 2018, Chinese customers who were born after 1980 spent 415 billion yuan (54 billion euros) on luxury products, representing 56 per cent of overall luxury expenditure by Chinese consumers. Meanwhile, the post-1990 generation spent the same amount on luxury items as their parents, people born between 1965 and 1970 with 170 billion yuan (22 billion euros). Additionally, the report investigates the factors influencing Chinese consumers' purchasing of luxury products. Unlike the 65-70 generation, which purchases luxury items at a rate of 94%, the post-80s and post-90s pay more attention to information other than the luxury brand itself. For instance, while

purchasing luxury products, post-1990s consumers additionally consider design style, manufacturing process, pricing, and material.

Meanwhile, previous research indicates that most luxury product customers in China are upper- and middle-class women (Chen & Lamberti, 2015). Even in recent years, Chinese male customers have spent far more on European fashion and luxury products than Chinese female consumers (Yu et al., 2022). Nevertheless, prior research proves that Chinese women give more attention to and are more attracted to luxury advertisements than males (Kim et al., 2014). Even though male and female customers exhibit distinct purchase patterns, European luxury advertising is crucial for brands to establish contact and communicate with Chinese consumers, considering the growing popularity of social media advertising in China [ CITATION Fed21 \1 1033 ].

In addition, the younger generation of Chinese customers is becoming an increasingly influential group of luxury consumers with ever-rising expectations of brands (Chen, Wang, & Qiao, 2021). According to the McKinsey report, Chinese young people are no longer satisfied with merely watching various luxury fashion shows and purchasing products. Instead, Chinese young generation prefer to attend brand-related art activities and wine parties to gain a deeper understanding of the luxury brand and propose new requirements for the luxury products sales model [CITATION Lin121 \1 1033 ]. In reality, a considerable number of luxury companies are aware of this trend and are using lifestyle and brand narratives as alternative approaches to attract young Chinese customers. For example, Gucci, Prada, and Louis Vuitton have undertaken public relations initiatives in China over the past years. Consider the Louis Vuitton Show, which debuted on November 16, 2018, while during its 78-day engagement at the Shanghai Exhibition Center, a total of 270,000 people attended [ CITATION Gl019 \1 1033 ].

Simultaneously, European luxury brands believe marketing in China might bring them closer to the Chinese customer. For instance, by using features that link China with the company, such as well-known Chinese spokespersons or traditional Chinese iconography, the brand may establish a social identity and cultural resonance with Chinese customers (Yu & Hu, 2020). However, due to the cultural divide between China and the West, individuals from

diverse cultural backgrounds have varying attitudes about products, attention levels, and other factors [ CITATION Far18 \1 2052 ].

From a group perspective, people who express patriotism could demonstrate that a country fulfills the economic, socio-cultural, and political demands of its citizens, which giving people with a feeling of security, belonging, and prestige (Bartikowski, Fastoso, & Gie, 2021). On the consumption side, when a consumer's patriotism gets stimulated, he or she will be prouder of his or her country's culture. Patriotism enhances the perception and cognition of groups among Chinese consumers (Lantz & Loeb, 1998). Hence, when Chinese consumers' patriotic and nationalistic sentiments are aroused, they would have a more positive attitude towards products branded with Chinese culture (He et al., 2015). By purchasing things associated with Chinese culture, Chinese consumers illustrate their connection with the community. Once consumers' patriotism or nationalism is stimulated, the comparison between the in-group and out-group is triggered, thereby elevating the in-group items' perceived social worth (Bartikowski, Fastoso, & Gie, 2021).

According to some existing literature, most luxury products do not originate in China now [ CITATION Shu20 \1 1033 ]. As a result, patriotism is likely to impact how certain Western brands are perceived by Chinese customers. As mentioned before, patriotism is a strong commitment and allegiance to one's nation in this context [CITATION Geo01 \t \1 1033 ]. Chinese consumers will be loyal to Chinese elements based on their understanding and love of Chinese culture [ CITATION Shu20 \1 1033 ]. At the same time, the literature emphasizes that patriotism may only result in extreme attachment to one's own nation and does not imply hostility against other countries [CITATION Gia21 \1 1033 ]. Patriotism is brought up here because when Western brands include Chinese elements into their advertising and design, Chinese customers will associate the products with patriotic sentiments. Therefore, western companies might use the potential to include Chinese features to increase their brands' status [ CITATION Shu20 \1 1033 ].

However, due to the cultural differences between European luxury brands and Chinese customers, the perception of Chinese culture could be unclear when brands enter the Chinese market (Zhang, Doorn, & Leeftang, 2014). To be more precise, in the long-term sales and

marketing process of foreign luxury brands on the Chinese market, there are a great deal of misconceptions and biases towards Chinese culture, resulting in a great number of cultural disputes. Chinese consumers' patriotism has been provoked by the disparity in brand interpretations of Chinese culture, resulting in their uncertainties and disputes. Consequently, the brand's image in China is diminished, or the company leaves the Chinese market.

Research indicates that the cross-cultural conflicts of European fashion and luxury brands in China can be generally classified into three categories (Liu & Zhou, 2021). The first are cultural conflicts inside institutions. In 2019, for instance, Versace classified mainland China, Macao, and Hong Kong as countries on their newly listed T-shirts and made them available to the public. This act of subverting China's national sovereignty and territorial integrity has harmed Chinese customers' emotions (Liu & Zhou, 2021). Similar situations have occurred with COACH, Givenchy, and other luxury companies, showing that fashion luxury brands do not respect China's sovereignty or reality. Many purposefully cross China's political red line, provoking strong sentiments of patriotism and discontent among Chinese customers and resulting in a complete boycott [ CITATION Sus08 \1 1033 ].

The second factor is a clash of cultural backgrounds. In November 2018, the Italian luxury brand Dolce & Gabbana, for instance, launched a chopstick-themed advertising campaign on Instagram and Chinese social platform Sina Weibo (Tyler, 2020). The improper usage of chopsticks in the video has prompted debate among Chinese netizens, with Chinese customers questioning if the film disrespects Chinese chopstick tradition and is offensive to China (Atwal, Bryson, & Kaiser, 2020). The initial intention of the Dolce & Gabbana campaign was to combine the traditional cultures of China and Italy. However, Dolce & Gabbana lack of understanding of Chinese culture evoked the patriotic emotions of Chinese customers.

Thirdly, the operation of luxury brands' Chinese social media is low in quality, while the cultural integration effort is insufficient. Due to the impact of the pandemic, LV began online marketing in Chinese e-commerce platform RED (Xiao Hongshu) for the first time in 2020. As a result of its poor display room facilities and harsh setting, Chinese netizens have ridiculed it hysterically, and its sales are dismal (Aurimas, Pengshuo, & Xiang, 2020).



In order to further investigate how to interpret the understanding of Chinese culture in European advertisements for luxury products in the context of patriotism, this study is expected to explore the cognition and attitude of Chinese consumers towards western product advertisements through in-depth interviews.

## **Research design and methods**

### **Qualitative method**

This research used qualitative research to explore how Chinese customers perceive Chinese cultural elements in European commercials for fashion and luxury goods. In contrast to the natural sciences, which can be evaluated based on the frequency of occurrences, this research aims to explore the concepts of the target audience and explain objective facts in the precise world [ CITATION Mar95 \1 2052 ]. In terms of understanding the phenomena, qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews could be used [ CITATION Don06 \1 2052 ]. In addition, qualitative research may reveal specifics of human behavior, emotion, and personality that quantitative research cannot. As data are gathered rather than quantitatively examined, researcher discover patterns in the data [ CITATION Mar97 \1 2052 ].

Qualitative data collection is widely used in research sociology topics because most qualitative researchers think that reality is socially produced, and qualitative research is beneficial to researchers' quest for explanatory social knowledge and target audiences' perspectives on the topic [ CITATION Jan94 \1 2052 ]. In addition, the specific philosophical foundations, paradigms, and objectives of qualitative research often incorporate supplementary or alternative criteria to assure and evaluate quality, validity, and reliability [ CITATION MQP99 \1 2052 ]. Furthermore, qualitative research can assist researchers in comprehending the research topic, extracting facts, and identifying significant themes, and framing the information content to decrease data. When patterns are detected, researchers can synthesize their findings (J. Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012).

The purpose of qualitative research is not to manipulate variables or answer questions by confirming hypotheses, but rather to observe with the intention of explaining and comprehending [ CITATION kab04 \1 2052 ]. Then to transform the interviewees opinions into patterns, attitudes, and insights. Typical qualitative research approaches include group discussions, in-depth interviews, participant observation, and so forth (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). One of the benefits of this approach is that it can acquire rich data, and another is that it may provide researchers with more scope for interpretation and allow them to express their creativity to compensate for the limitations of quantitative research.

Based on the positivist viewpoint of qualitative research, the in-depth interview can be seen as a method for investigating a field through the thoughts and perceptions of interviewees (Qu & Dumay, 2011). In addition, the study process would generate further new concepts and themes (Reeves et al. ,2013). To comprehend and explain society phenomenon and to generate theoretical insights, descriptive research and direct interviews are used to obtain precise cultural descriptions.

However, qualitative research methods have drawbacks as well. This is due to the fact that the research method presupposes those interviewees are capable of narrating tales, expressing their own views, and providing subjective suggestions for the research topic [ CITATION Tor06 \1 2052 ]. In addition, the attitudes of respondents are controllable variables that held ethical notions about the occurrence of idealistic circumstances, which might complicate the interviewee screening process for the researchers.

### **Semi-structured in-depth Interview**

To answer the research questions, semi-structured in-depth interviews will be used in this study. Semi-structured interview is a qualitative method that researchers commonly used [CITATION Sch04 \1 1033 ]. In contrast to quantitative research, which is concerned with solving experimental problems with numbers, qualitative research is concerned with investigating social phenomena or human thoughts [ CITATION Uwe07 \1 1033 ]. In other words, qualitative research is used to explore a certain kind of social meaning based on words and conversation. Johnson argues that conducting in-depth

interviews is beneficial for understanding the meaning of potential problems (Johnson, Scheitle, & Ecklund, 2019). The purpose of the study is to comprehend the thoughts of Chinese consumers, which rely on the necessity, feasibility, and rationality of qualitative research [ CITATION Zub05 \1 1033 ]. In-depth interviews can provide insight on how individuals think and feel about a subject. Interviews, whether done alone or in combination with other data collecting techniques such as observation or text analysis, enable researchers to get access to people's meaning-making processes in a more natural environment [ CITATION Chr05 \1 1033 ].

Furthermore, there are a few reasons why this research applies semi-structured in-depth interview over a focus group. Firstly, this research aims to understand Chinese consumers' personal perceptions on the usage of Chinese elements in marketing for western luxury goods. In order to have deeply discussion and dig out the private ideas of interviewees, the personal in-depth interview will be undisturbed by others and will enable interviewees to express themselves more freely [ CITATION Har09 \1 1033 ]. Secondly, semi-structured interviews are most successful when many interviews on the same subject are conducted, which is suitable for this research since this study employs several interviewees to support sample size [ CITATION Chr05 \1 1033 ].

In addition, the semi-structured interview is a technique of data collecting that is discipline-neutral and adaptable in form. While the interview structure can be modified according to the research objective, research question, and research object (Bernard, Wutich, & Ryan, 2016). Researcher and interviewees have more space to engage in semi-structured interviews, and researcher may ask effective questions based on interviewees' spontaneous replies within a flexible framework (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Before conducting an interview, to evaluate the validity of the questions, researcher must undertake a vast quantity of study in the research area and create an effective interview guide. Interview Guide covers all essential research subjects and offers a logical, consistent, and adaptable structure for the interviewing procedure (Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016).

Interview Guide and interview quality can impact data collection (Qu & Dumay, 2011); thus, the researcher approved the final version with the supervisor after three revisions and

two pre-tests. The interview guide is divided into seven parts. The first section is designed to familiarize interviewees to the subject and general procedure of the interview, as well as confirm that they have signed the consent form. The second section is the warm-up, which focuses on gaining an understanding of the interviewees' basic information, job, and educational background. Even if the researcher has previously validated the interviewees' identities before to the interview, this stage might still be viewed as a secondary screening. The third section examines the development of European fashion and luxury brands in China; the questions in this section reveal how interviewees construct luxury items. The fourth section focuses on interviewees' perceptions of Chinese cultural elements as consumers with diverse educational backgrounds, as well as their insight of how Westerners see Chinese culture. The sixth section combines Chinese cultural elements with fashion and luxury products in order to know how interviewees perceive Chinese culture in commercials for luxury brands. The seventh section is the conclusion, which addresses the last question and finishes the interview. The precisely designed questions in the guide are participant centered, are not leading, and clearly stated in order to encourage spontaneous, in-depth, original, and vivid responses from participants (Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2013).

### **Sampling and size data sets**

As mentioned previously, this research will focus on Chinese customers and this paragraph will elaborate in more detail. Be more specific, the target audience of this study will be young Chinese people between the ages of 18 and 35 who are interested in Chinese culture and luxury items in China.

To begin, Chinese netizens are the group that currently has the ability to shape public opinion in China [ CITATION Rog16 \l 1033 ]. In other words, Chinese netizens are the main participants in discussions about foreign brands entering China and the numerous marketing campaigns undertaken by foreign brands in China. Meanwhile, Chinese digital platforms such as WeChat are important for promoting Western luxury goods in the Chinese market [ CITATION Sin18 \l 2052 ].

Second, in comparison to their elders, young Chinese netizens are more individualistic [ CITATION Rob05 \1 2052 ]. With the development and penetration of social media in China, censorship systems such as the Internet in China have gradually become complicated (Fu & Zhu, 2020). China has by far the most Internet users and the most comprehensive censorship system in the world. However, Chinese citizens are not hesitant to discuss sensitive issues, particularly young netizens, who are more likely to express their own thoughts and opinions, which is conducive to the data collection of this study [ CITATION Nig10 \1 2052 ].

Thirdly, Chinese luxury customers are younger than their counterparts in wealthy western economies and customers born in the 1990s will account for around 46% of luxury goods sales on the Chinese mainland [ CITATION Ten22 \1 1033 ]. Chinese consumers between the ages of 18 and 35 have certain purchasing degree of independence, are economically stable, and are interested in luxury items [CITATION KPM13 \1 1033 ].

Fourthly, the interviewers should concentrate on Chinese consumers who have studied or worked abroad in Europe who can be considering in a sizable population with diverse cultural origins (Zhang & Brunton, 2007). The experience of studying or working overseas exposes Chinese people to western cultural systems and habits of thinking. On the one hand, Chinese graduates maintain their Confucian background [ CITATION Wan061 \1 1033 ]. On the other hand, studying or working overseas exposes Chinese students to western cultural systems and ways of thinking (Li, Chen, & Duanmu, 2009). Therefore, Chinese customers with cross-cultural education and job experience can be more forthcoming with subject-related information during the interview.

After determining the sample population, this research will use purpose sampling. As one of the methods of qualitative research, purposive sampling is a technique used to obtain insight into the respondents' thinking rather than to generalize a conclusion based on statistics (Hadi, et al., 2012). Because quantitative research places a premium on random selection, all participants have equal opportunity (Campbell, Greenwood, Prior, & Bywaters, 2020). However, the purpose of this research is to enhance comprehension of the research topic using a very small and purposefully selected sample. Purpose sampling is a way for

identifying and evaluating instances that optimize the utilization of limited research resources (Campbell et al., 2020).

Besides, the samples in the purpose sampling method are selected and invited, which has certain particularity. Purview sampling, in a sense, narrows the range of variance, which contribute to the reliability of study findings [ CITATION Suz20 \1 1033 ]. Therefore, it is feasible to select interviewees within the range of target audience by means of purposive sampling in this study. Additionally, since COVID-19 and regional travel limitations have had a considerable influence on the researchers and people's lives have altered significantly, online interviews will be conducted in the form of online videos in this study [ CITATION Lei20 \1 2052 ].

### **Operationalization**

The operationalization of academic research is closely related to the research topic, interviewees, and research objectives. Qualitative research focuses on interpreting meaning, symbols, and relationships from the participant's viewpoint (Hughes, Seidman, & Williams, 1993). Qualitative research presupposes that the survey approach is based on individual cultural values and that the interview interaction will impact the outcomes (Cobb & Forbes, 2002). Moreover, in-depth interviews could help interviewees to depict social reality more precisely (Hughes, Seidman, & Williams, 1993). When culture overlaps with the research process, attention should be given to develop methods that consider the relationship between interviewers and interviewees, cultural norms, and participants' familiarity with interviewing practices [CITATION Lis07 \1 2052 ]. Researchers contributed their own cultural background, class, race, ethnicity, and gender to the interview, which affected interviewees' impression of social reality [CITATION Bev99 \1 2052 ]. However, the interviewees have been selected by purposive sampling method, therefore the interviewees meet the research objective of preserving variety within the framework.

After conducting interviews and collecting data, the researcher applied the online voice transcription software from iFlyTEK to convert the audio recordings of the interviews into text. For data processing, the transformation of intermittent spoken language into static

written language is important [ CITATION Iri11 \1 2052 ]. The transcription of linguistic information facilitates the continual management, analysis, classification, examination, evaluation, and citation of text by scholars. In addition, this study project's intended interviewees are all Chinese, and the interviews will be performed in Chinese. After the whole interview has been transcribed into text, the entire Chinese interview must be translated into English. The translation process complicates the data analysis procedure. However, since Chinese is the native language of the respondents, they may be more ready to discuss and voice their thoughts throughout the interview [ CITATION Tae02 \1 1033 ].

After respondents' verbal information has been translated into text, the qualitative data tool Atlas.ti would be used for analysis and research. The Extended Case Method (ECM) refactoring methodology from Michael Burawoy was used to the encoding and analysis of this data in Atlas.ti [ CITATION Lui19 \1 1033 ]. Create a deductive theme cipher book through the review of the text, along with the literature theory of each concept. Open coding enables the theory to be refactored by adding new code to the basic codebook and merging other code. The topic code for these specific concerns becomes rationale [ CITATION Ale16 \1 1033 ]. Through this coding procedure, the researcher may use these fundamental principles and expand upon them to develop subject codebooks.

Therefore, to get the final topic code, research conclusions, the research shall use the thematic analysis approach to analyze the data into pertinent themes or groups. According to Bryman, thematic analysis will be divided into three stages [ CITATION Ala16 \1 1033 ]. The first step is to familiarize with the data and develop the initial code. Researcher reads and analyzes the interview content continuously, taking notes and adjusting get an understanding of the basic code. The second step is to conduct a review and includes conducting a category search, consolidate critical information, summarize the subject, and analyze the facts to generalize the findings into wider topic categories. The third section is to develop the key idea and create a framework for it. Each theme is represented by a text, and the perspectives offered by respondents on each topic are examined and synthesized into wider societal norms and attitudes (Clarke & Braun, 2008).

## Validity and reliability

Most research divisions emphasize validity and reliability. Careful attention to these two areas can distinguish between studies with high credibility and validity from those with relatively weak results [CITATION Va193 \1 1033 ]. Furthermore, validity and reliability support other research professionals in accepting study findings as reputable and trustworthy [ CITATION He1 \1 1033 ]. Validity and reliability are especially crucial in qualitative studies since the bias of researcher might influence data interpretation (Eamonn & David, 1999). This research examines at how Chinese consumers understand and react to Chinese cultural elements in European fashion and luxury brand commercials. Therefore, using a semi-structured interview to gather data is reliable, and the study data and results are valid [ CITATION Jef03 \1 1033 ]. The next paragraphs will discuss into validity and reliability in depth.

First, this study proceeds towards qualitative research, which assumes that reality is constructed, multi-dimensional, and constantly changing (Healy & Perry, 2000). In other words, qualitative research is a realistic approach that combines academic and practical interpretations formed by researchers' comprehension of the field and interviewees' interpretations of the topic [ CITATION Jos10 \1 1033 ]. As a result, in order to assure the validity of qualitative research, this study expanded the number of respondents from the requisite 15 to 20. Which is a standard method for ensuring the validity of qualitative research known as triangulation [ CITATION Mer95 \1 1033 ]. To validate academic conclusions, the triangulation method involves studying various investigators, utilizing multiple data sources and strategies. For example, throughout the interview and study process, scholars might discover a new understanding of Chinese culture. As a result of the comparable interpretation of several interviews and various interviewers, this new definition of Chinese culture could be considered valid.

Second, qualitative research results are often derived from one of three methods: in-depth interviews, direct observations, or written documentation (Lehnert et al., 2016). In-depth interview studies are often used to investigate marketing research or study content sorts of data. To be more precise, interviews could be used to delve deeper into actual concerns and



get a better understanding of customers' perspectives and interpretations [ CITATION Jef03 \1 1033 ]. Qualitative research is used to investigate human experience, which is inherently complicated. Therefore, increasing the number of participants and ensuring their random selection, as well as delving deeply into the topic with interviewees has rigor and integrity (Stephanie & Sarah, 2001). Which may effectively assure the credibility of the findings in qualitative research. In addition, the comprehensive screening of the interviewees' identities has confirmed the validity of the study findings, while gives a reliable assurance for the research results and indicates the precision and objectivity of the results (Engel & Friedrichs, 1980).

Through semi-structured interviews, various thoughts of Chinese customers on Chinese culture and European luxury brands are revealed in this research, therefore enriching and expanding the gathered data (Schlütz & Möhring, 2008). In addition, the interviewers can express themselves and respond freely to the questions based on the topic matter. The openness of a semi-structured interview allows respondents to discuss their thoughts more honestly [ CITATION Jan95 \1 1033 ].

However, it is important to note that the flexibility of semi-structured interviews may potentially complicate the data gathering process, given that interviewers are picked at random and are unmanageable (Noble & Smith, 2015). In other words, certain uncontrolled elements need the investigator's mastery of tactics to enhance the quality of the interview. Before conducting the official interview of the audience, this research administered two pre-tests to guarantee the investigators' questioning skills and increase the interview's dependability.

## **Result and analysis**

The following concentrated themes were collected from sixteen interviewees. The first theme relates to the perspectives of Chinese consumers towards fashion luxury goods on the Chinese market, which reflects the role of European fashion luxury goods on the Chinese economic consumption market. According to the interview, thirteen out of sixteen

interviewees believe that Chinese consumers desire European fashion items excessively, supporting the finding that consumers' personal values and attitudes influence their purchase of luxury fashion companies, as discovered in the study literature [CITATION Jia13 \l 2052 ]. Among them are materialism and face-saving concern (mianzi), which bring more opportunity for Western fashion luxury brands to enter the Chinese market and increase the sales of European fashion luxury in China [CITATION Byo11 \l 1033 ]. Face-saving(mianzi) is one of the most influential aspects on Chinese consumer behavior, particularly in collectivist society [CITATION Lin09 \t \l 1033 ]. In other words, face-saving is connected to the motivations of luxury consumption among Asian customers (Li & Su, 2007). Goffman defined face-saving in 1967 as a self-esteem image connected to social characteristics and represents the need to be recognized or respected in interpersonal interactions (Sun, Alessandro, & Winzar, 2011), which is confirmed by the opinions of interviewees.

The second aspect is how Chinese consumers perceive Chinese culture and elements, which reflects Chinese attitudes and sensibilities about their own culture [CITATION Rui08 \l 1033 ]. The results of the interviews corroborate the literature's statement that Chinese culture is a wide notion which cannot be simplified to the definition of specific cultural concepts [CITATION Seg \l 1033 ]. In addition, via the evaluation of Chinese cultural elements from a western viewpoint, the interviewees refined their knowledge of Chinese culture from a comparative standpoint.

Thirdly, all the interviews demonstrate that Chinese customers' perceptions of European fashion luxury brands are influenced by cultural values [CITATION Rui08 \l 1033 ]. During the interview, Confucian methodology affected Chinese customers' attitudes on the design and promotion of European luxury products on the Chinese market, while interviewees demonstrated strong patriotism [CITATION Yan07 \t \l 1033 ]. Using Dolce & Gabbana and Gucci as examples, this research explored Chinese consumers' opinions toward European fashion luxury brands in light of Chinese consumers' understanding of traditional Chinese elements and the examples of European fashion luxury businesses' usage of Chinese culture.

In the following paragraphs, the mentioned three factors will be explained in depth in connection with the opinions of interviewees.

### **The Construction of luxury brands in China**

China has always been one of the most important marketplaces for multinational enterprises and global economies [CITATION Jia13 \1 2052 ]. China has been among the top three consumers of luxury goods since 2010, with a total consumption of 212 billion yuan and 33.7 billion dollars [CITATION Bru22 \1 1033 ]. China's luxury brands consumption has surged by more than 70 percent and is predicted to become the world's largest luxury market by 2025, despite the terrible social and economic issues the globe has encountered throughout the pandemic over the last two years [CITATION Kev22 \1 1033 ]. Meanwhile, Chinese customers have been the main purchasers, particularly of global luxury brands, with Bain noting that sales of individual luxury items in China increased by 48 percent in 2020 [CITATION Bru22 \1 1033 ].

This study summarizes the viewpoints of interviewees about the construction of European luxury brands by Chinese consumers and the phenomena of fast growth in China as follows: European fashion luxury goods are expensive; luxury purchase related to tax rate concerns and the connection between purchasing agents; luxury consumption is influenced by the Chinese face-saving narrative; luxury products have a unique history and design; luxury advertising relies on social media, celebrities, and other entertainment media.

### **High prices of European fashion and luxury goods**

First, the interview results support the theoretical research findings that European luxury fashion brands are more expensive to purchase in China than in Europe [CITATION Jea13 \1 1033 ], which can be one of the definitions of luxury brands provided by interviewees such as Yan:

“First and foremost, European luxury products are very costly in its literal meaning, which the average salaryman cannot afford. A luxury item could cost a month's income for an

office worker. While this expenditure may diminish your wealth and comfort [...] the price of European luxury products is quite high since they are not considered objects of daily use. The product price, design expense, and brand premium of luxury brands far surpass the items' functional worth. Rather of emphasizing a product's utilitarian worth, luxury underlines its symbolic value.”

Even Li highlighted the fact that:

“The cost of luxury items remains prohibitive for the average working-class people. They are useless in everyday life and unaffordable for the average person [...] I lose interest in luxury brands due to their high cost.”

At the same time, Yujing, a political economics, and anthropology professor at Leiden University said, “Only the wealthy can purchase luxury items.”

In other words, European and American luxury products prioritize “luxury” above the actual product itself[CITATION Jea13 \1 1033 ]. Consequently, interviewees believe that a brand might be regarded a luxury item when the brand's value exceeds the product's functionality[CITATION Jam05 \1 1033 ]. This reinforces the literature-mentioned value structure of luxuries that functional value, product experience value, and product symbol value comprise luxury value, with symbolic value referring to the representation of luxuries on personal property[CITATION Pau15 \1 1033 ]. The high price of luxury items will increase consumers' self-awareness and provide hedonic value unrelated to the commodity itself.

### **High tax rates sparked the "daigou" craze**

Meanwhile, interviewees Li and Yan both indicated: “The price of luxury products in China is rather expensive, but in the United States and other Western countries, there will be a very large discount, prices are much lower than in China.” Which confirms the literature that it is more difficult to purchase European fashion luxury brands in China than in other Western countries due to high taxes and strict import restrictions. Xinyi, a master's degree student in tourism management at Erasmus University, said:

“Because the airport in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, is plenty with duty-free goods, I did a lot of shopping before traveling to China. I purchased Gucci at the airport because it was the least expensive in the world. [...] Earrings in Chanel's flagship store in Amsterdam are likewise much less expensive than in China. [...] I would only purchase such European fashion and luxury items if they were on sale or reasonably priced.”

To sum up, on the one hand, interviewees such as Xinyi stated that European luxury brands are more expensive in China “because several items that are readily accessible on the European market while difficult or impossible to get in China.” On the other hand, European fashion and luxury labels are more costly and harder to purchase in China than in certain Western nations due to China's high tax system on luxury products and tight customs inspection regulations [ CITATION Chi12 \1 1033 ]. In other words, interviewees notice that the prices of European luxury brands in China and Europe are not comparable. Due to China's high tax system on luxury products and stringent customs inspection regulations, European fashion and luxury brands are more costly and harder to purchase in China than in certain Western nations. Consistent with prior findings, economists at China International Capital Corporation (CICC) anticipate future luxury-goods tax increases in China [ CITATION Bl021 \1 1033 ]. The decision comes as the Chinese government aims to increase the consumption tax in an effort to establish a more equitable distribution of income within the economy and reduce China's wealth gap [CITATION Lau21 \1 1033 ].

At the same time, interviewees Li, Yan, and Jing all said that their families in China had asked them to help in purchasing European fashion and luxury products in Europe in order to avoid the tax difference. This phenomenon has therefore contributed to the growth of “daigou” in China's consumer sector, which are mostly Chinese immigrants residing in Europe and other Western nations, who may help guide Chinese customers in purchasing premium products that are unavailable in China [CITATION Xia21 \1 1033 ]. As stated by Yan, and Jing, as Chinese students and expatriates, they assist their families and friends in purchasing identical things in Europe at much cheaper prices than in China and transport luxuries to Chinese buyers without paying taxes [CITATION Xin20 \1 1033 ]. As an illegal business, daigou has become a specific lucrative and widespread profession in China,

as well as a distinct economic trend in China [CITATION Ari19 \1 1033 ]. There is currently a paucity of scholarly research on daigou, although its fast expansion has been regarded as a modern Chinese phenomenon [CITATION Xia21 \1 1033 ]. Interviewees Yan, Jing, and Xinyi all emphasized that daigou is one of the most essential methods for Chinese individuals to receive knowledge about European luxury items [CITATION Ari19 \1 1033 ]. In addition, Li emphasized that:

“The daigou craze made luxury products trendy in China, which not only boosted the sales of luxury goods in China but also caused European luxury goods to increase their costs. This trend might be considered both a consumer trap and a social phenomenon.”

This is consistent with the literature in that an increasing number of Chinese people, not only students, are participating in such businesses owing to the high income, cheap cost, and even devoid of inventory requirements [CITATION Ari19 \1 1033 ]. Daigou has become a major phenomenon that has invaded high-end retailers all over the globe, due to China's better quality of life and its increasing middle class's broad riches. Daigou streamlines the processes for Chinese customers to acquire European luxury goods, increases Chinese consumption of luxury products, therefore contributes to the present shortage on the luxury market [CITATION Mar17 \1 1033 ].

### **Luxury consumption and Chinese face-saving narrative**

In addition, responders Li, Yan, and Yujing confirmed that purchasing luxury products is an issue of face-saving for the majority of Chinese customers. Face-saving is a Chinese value structure system, representing the self-image, ability, dignity, and reputation of its residents [CITATION Lin17 \1 1033 ]:

“According to my observation, most Chinese consumers believe that purchasing luxury goods is a question of face-saving, and Chinese people prefer to pay attention to face, and the import of European luxury products into China causes the whole Chinese society to become more impulsive.”

In conjunction with the consumption of luxury goods, interviews revealed that some Chinese people associate their self-image and social standing with the purchase of luxury items [CITATION Zhu10 \1 1033 ]. Chinese people devote greater attention to face-saving, while the import and high cost of European luxury goods have caused the Chinese population to perceive the purchase of luxury goods as a model of self-image and face-saving [CITATION Lin17 \1 1033 ].

Siyu, who works in Advertising in China, stated that:

“For the majority of regular Chinese working-class women, the consumption of European fashion and luxury products is a subject of admiration. Inside the Chinese media, it is often mentioned that many girls would save for months to purchase a luxury handbag [...] They are financially unable of affording luxury, but pay for face-saving, which is a kind of vanity.”

The association between luxury consumption and vanity described by the above interviewees validates the consumption demand with face-saving as motive cited in the literature [CITATION Lin21 \1 1033 ]. That is, the consumption reason indicated in the research, which is the pursuit of renowned brands and status. Chinese consumers believe that the purchase of luxury items demonstrates their social standing, and the more well-known luxury brands they acquire, the more they believe they may flaunt their status [CITATION Lin17 \1 1033 ].

Meanwhile, Yan said in the interview that: “Luxury products signify social standing and economic capabilities in a way, consumer luxury goods that can only be obtained when the income reaches a particular level, which is a social status symbol of the wealthy.” Moreover, Yan confirmed that one of the goals of purchasing luxury is to emphasize personal identity and particular symbolic roles through luxury brands [CITATION Zhu10 \1 1033 ].

## Luxury brand design and celebrity endorsement

Although Chinese customers pay more attention to the correlation between the price of luxury items and a person's reputation, they also consider the brand storytelling and design quality of luxury products. Shufan, a freelance English teacher in the Netherlands said:

"Luxury is not only a product or a brand; it also sets fashion trends, has an aesthetic role in society, and affects the price of other items. [...] the advertising and design attitude of western fashion and luxury items is worth learning from other products. And that behind these brand logos is not just a design, but also a culture and a history."

The attitudes of the interviewees verified the aesthetic concept and historical coherence of luxury design as described in the literature [CITATION Jon45 \1 1033 ]. Interviewees Shufan, Siyu, Yujing, and Linmin all described their favorite luxury brand Celine as "simple and sophisticated" when explaining how to identify luxury brands. Thus, it is evident that luxury brands' unique design and made procedure are identifiable and exclusive, which also consistent with the literature-mentioned concept that luxury brands focus more on design and brand identification, while it is a major method for buyers to define luxury goods [CITATION Ant091 \1 1033 ].

Except Yujing mentioned that she learnt about European luxury through magazines and the Internet. Other interviewees, such as Yanjing, a content marketer in the Netherlands, highlighted that the definition of European fashion and luxury in the eyes of Chinese consumers is closely tied to Chinese social media and celebrities [ CITATION Shu203 \1 1033 ]: "I receive information about luxury goods mainly through Weibo and Xiaohongshu, since European luxury brands rely heavily on Chinese celebrities and influential online public figures in China. And Chinese celebrities and Internet celebrities tend to be fashion setters in China. After all, China is a major market in the world economy [...] If I like the style or the celebrity endorsement, I'll purchase it." This confirms the literature-mentioned relationship between social media and luxury customers and implies that buyers would judge brand information characters and their traits in the same way they evaluate celebrity spokespeople [CITATION Kim20 \1 2052 ].



Xiaoxi, a media student from Erasmus University, has ten years of experience as a television producer in China, which has provided her with a wealth of knowledge about brand endorsements. She believes: “Chinese personalities with the same style as luxury companies, as well as suitable placement in TV series or films, may often play a crucial role in driving the conversation about European luxury on Chinese social media. [...]. As an example, Chanel in China recruited Zhou Xun as an ambassador; Chanel's elegance and Zhou's overall style are very congruent. Zhou will convince Chinese customers that purchasing this brand would make them classic, elegant, and self-reliant women.” Which reinforces prior research indicating that celebrity and brand compatibility may impact customers' perceptions of brands [CITATION Kim20 \1 2052 ].

The expansion of European luxury brands in China is strongly tied to social media and local exposure in China, which is also an essential method for Chinese customers to construct European premium brands [CITATION Iry18 \1 2052 ]. According to Li: “Most European luxury brands are well-known. This example, whether it's about your ongoing buzz and someone else's request to purchase a specific product, may encourage me to recall the product's brand name since it is often referenced. Therefore, if I continue to hear that it is a nice thing, I will remember it. The brand will simultaneously debut in a big number of China's key retail hubs. When you visit a large department shop, most stores carry foreign brands, such as Louis Vuitton. Then I would consider these companies to be premium western European products.” In other words, being the primary method for European luxury brands to spread information and engage with Chinese consumers, advertising is a very influential tool. Moreover, luxury brand marketing could affect consumer behavior in China.

However, not all celebrity endorsements and social media initiatives are beneficial for European luxury goods. This is similar with the opinion of the previous responders that excessive advertising of luxury items would increase Chinese vanity and pricing of luxury products [CITATION Jia13 \1 2052 ].

## **How do Chinese consumers construct Chinese culture**

The second part of the analysis of the interview data will concentrate on how Chinese consumers build Chinese culture, which reflecting Chinese people's understanding, cognition, attitude, and sentiments toward their own culture [CITATION Wen13 \1 1033 ]. At the same time, this section shall demonstrate Chinese consumers' knowledge of Chinese culture by incorporating westerners' opinions on Chinese culture. In other words, Chinese people's comments to how the western perceives Chinese culture might indicate Chinese comprehension of their culture.

First of all, Chinese culture is not limited to a particular form of expression, but also encompasses cultural implications, imagery, symbols, characters, historical narrative and ways of thinking, etc. [CITATION Wen13 \1 1033 ]. Therefore, the interviewees' description of Chinese culture is rather comprehensive and intricate. Miss Dao, who works in the marketing department of an advertising agency, said during interview:

“I cannot express Chinese culture in a general sense since it is a notion entrenched in the Chinese people's spirits. For instance, the concept of the Tao Te Ching's essence (an ancient book of the pre-Qin era, authored by Lao Tzu, a typical classic of the Taoist philosophy towards the conclusion of the Spring and Autumn Period) and Chinese distinctive family and country values [...]. Some tangible features, such as bamboo and pandas, are more exterior items. A greater emphasis should be placed on humanism in Chinese culture.”

As noted in the literature, the opinion from Miss Dao demonstrates that people must first understand its philosophy and cultural history to comprehend the ongoing development of Chinese culture [CITATION Zha141 \t \1 1033 ], rather than just the superficial graphics and colors.

Similar argument is also raised by Miss Li, who is presently work in landscape design company in the Netherlands:

“There are several forms of expression for Chinese culture, which is a broad term that could also be narrowed down. From the aspect of humanities, traditions, poetry, and novels, for instance, these traditional components constitute Chinese culture. On the other hand, my attitude and manner of thinking are also influenced by Chinese culture. For instance, I believe

I should prioritize the sentiments of others while dealing with problems, since this is the Chinese cultural style inherent in my personality.”

The insights from Miss Li substantiate prior literature on the connection among Chinese culture and philosophy [CITATION Wan06 \1 1033 ]. In addition, Miss Li's opinion emphasizes the intimate relationship between Chinese culture and the learning process. That is, under the impact of a particular cultural background and social structure, Chinese people conceal their ideology behind Chinese culture in their manner of doing things, which makes the relationship between Chinese culture and Chinese people complex [CITATION Ant15 \1 1033 ].

At the same time, Yan Song also argues that Chinese traditional cultural elements are aesthetically portrayed: “The first thing that comes to my mind is the traditional Chinese red and gold, Chinese characters, Chinese lanterns, symbols of dragon and phoenix, and Chinese historical locations.” While Mr. Zhan also claims that the distinctive Chinese lotus flower, embroidery, and silk, as well as other pictures with Chinese features, might function as a symbol of Chinese elements.

Additionally, ten of sixteen participants noted Chinese zodiac components while characterizing traditional Chinese elements. This is consistent with the research on the complexity of the Chinese zodiac [CITATION Zhi18 \1 1033 ]. The Chinese regard the zodiac to be a cultural element replete with Chinese features and traits, since it occurs in several disciplines of study on Chinese culture, such as history, literature, and metaphysics.

Li Lin also emphasized several Chinese traditions and Spring Festival, such as family reunion meals and dragon and lion dances, while explaining Chinese culture. These symbolic religious practices, according to Li Lin, are characteristic representations and distinctive elements of Chinese culture [CITATION And93 \1 1033 ]. Nevertheless, in addition to the deeper connotations of these ancient civilizations, Chinese culture is also visible in other visual features, according to Dr Lin: Chinese restaurants or certain designs could include Chinese themes into the space design.

In addition, while describing Chinese culture elements, all the interviewees had a deeper and comparative understanding of Chinese culture than the Western conception. Which could

be inferred that most interviewees feel Europeans do not know enough about Chinese culture and cannot distinguish Chinese culture from eastern culture [CITATION Zia99 \1 1033 ]. As an example, when Li Lin talks Chinese components and Western Chinese restaurants, she considers the following:

“As an example, when Li Lin talks Chinese components and Western Chinese restaurants, she considers the following: However, Chinese restaurants in Europe do not present Chinese aspects properly. They display Chinese culture with strong intention. [...]. Europeans perceive Chinese culture to be far more superficial than we do. The Europeans have placed China, Japan, and South Korea in the same cultural category. In the viewpoint of westerners, for instance, a very visible aspect of Japanese culture might be termed Chinese culture. I believe that what they perceive to be Chinese culture is really the mysterious Asian culture. And the aura continues from the 1960s and 1970s, when China was only beginning to expand internationally.”

As for how westerners view Chinese elements, Lin believes that most westerners' understanding of Chinese culture is still in the 1960s and 1970s [CITATION LiL90 \1 1033 ]. Yan Song and Ms. Li also mentioned in the interview:

“I believe the impression of Chinese components in the west has not kept up with The Times and is still trapped in the 1980s. Elements of traditional Chinese culture, such as the Chinese red and the zodiac, are still representative of China hundreds or thousands of years ago. These are cultural emblems of China, but they do not imply that we Chinese are stuck in the past.”

Orientalism is a product of western cultural hegemony and represents the cultural differences between Europeans and non-Europeans, as stated in Said's Orientalism, which also mentions the interviewees' belief that there is no difference between westerners' perceptions of Chinese culture and eastern culture [CITATION Sai85 \1 2052 ]. Meanwhile, the word Orientalism was coined by westerners, therefore there is no distinction in art, philosophy, culture, etc. between China, the Middle East, and Egypt.

### **Patriotism of Chinese consumers and European fashion luxury brands**

To examine Chinese consumers' attitudes and perspectives about the presence of Chinese culture in European luxury design and marketing, the third discussion point of this study shall concentrate on interviewees' interpretations of Dolce & Gabbana and Gucci commercials. During the interview process, Chinese interviewees with a strong sense of patriotism continue to perceive Chinese culture and European fashion luxury brands [CITATION Don22 \1 1033 ].

First, consider the Dolce & Gabbana video that was published in China before to the 2018 Shanghai Show. Interviewees argued that European luxury brands do not comprehend Chinese culture well. Meanwhile, interviewees stated that these brands seem to have a strong prejudice towards Chinese culture. For example, Dr. Tan pointed out in the interview:

“The video contains several stereotypes about Chinese culture. I cannot determine whether this is an insult to China. First, I don't believe that Dolce & Gabbana are disrespecting China; rather, they might be naive. However, I am aware that when this video first surfaced on Chinese social media two or three years ago, there was much controversy around it. Consumers who believe Dolce & Gabbana is demeaning to China interpret the whole commercial video through the lens of the brand's female model. Is it not true that the model in the video has an oriental face? Consequently, some Chinese believe that orientalism is repulsive in western eyes and is therefore an insult to China. I find the conduct of these Chinese individuals to be really irritating. I believe that no one can evaluate the attractiveness of this model. However, this is really an orientalism manufactured by the West. [...] If a certain element represents a kind of national identity, it is a very academic issue how to establish the relationship between them.”

In the book *Orientalism*, Edward Said emphasizes that the Oriental is a European construct [CITATION Sai85 \1 2052 ]. In other words, the East or China is an illusion rather than a reality in the perspective of Europeans. Similar to how Dr. Tan mentioned the Dolce & Gabbana women in the interview, Ms. Xu, Ms. Li, and Yan Song shared their same insights on female models as Chinese customers. In fact, interviewees thought that the video's female model had a typical Western style for an attractive Chinese woman who has long, narrow eyes and black hair [CITATION Dan71 \1 1033 ]. Nevertheless, it seems to be the

result of European prejudice towards Asian women since the recent research indicates that Chinese individuals view double eyelids to be more appealing and feminine [CITATION Har14 \1 1033 ]..

In addition, interviewees such as Yan Song stated that the view of Chinese culture by European luxury brands or the broader picture of China from those brands is not keeping pace with the times, which seems to be the principal cause of brand stereotypes [CITATION Sai85 \1 2052 ]. According to 16 interviews, all interviewees agreed that there were various components of the Dolce & Gabbana video might be considered as Chinese cultural symbols. In this video, for instance, interviewees such as Dr. Tan and Li Lin argued that the setting and atmosphere resembled the interior architecture of China during the Republic of China era, which occurred more than a century ago. The decoration of Dolce & Gabbana video may seem to be traditionally Chinese. However, Yujing Tan and other interviewees indicate that this is not the case in contemporary China, while considering it is a kind of oriental conception of China and an understanding of the ancient Chinese society. Meanwhile, the usage of crimson lanterns and chopsticks in the film demonstrates Dolce & Gabbana's superior grasp and interpretation of Chinese culture. What can be explained by the literature is that orientalism reflects the arrogant attitude of 1990s European colonialists. Despite the vast history, China at the time lacked self-control. Therefore, it can be claimed that Orientalism developed at that time because of western cultural hegemony [CITATION Sai85 \1 2052 ].

Continuing the Western chauvinism criticized by Said, contemporary Chinese society approaches the creation of Chinese culture with self-assurance and strategic resolve [CITATION Jin15 \1 1033 ]. During the interview, the interviewees not only demonstrated their knowledge of Chinese culture, but also criticized the way Chinese culture was portrayed in the Dolce & Gabbana video and highlighted the distinctive patriotic values of Chinese consumers [CITATION Don22 \1 1033 ].

For example, Ms. Li and Yan Song both mentioned the narration in the Dolce & Gabbana video clip. They found the film unsettling since the narrator's tale was illogical and his provocative tone was demeaning to Chinese culture and women. Yan Song said:

“The man's voiceover in the video is weird, like an old-fashioned translation of movie dialogue, which causes viewers to feel distant. Because Dolce & Gabbana is an Italian brand and its target clients are Chinese, I believe this advertisement aims to represent the partnership of East and West. Therefore, the advertising most likely implies that Chinese individuals must absorb and understand Italian luxury products in their own manner. However, the video production is odd, particularly the provocative announcer and the strangely female model. Even those who have never used chopsticks do not wink in this way. This video fails to persuade me. [...] Chopsticks are the most obviously Chinese culture aspect of the video. In addition, the whole video is colored red, which represents China as intended by the company. However, I can only say that it is an Asian sensation and not a Chinese one. [...] Many of the set's components are Japanese, not Chinese.”

Meanwhile, Miss Zhan regarded the Dolce & Gabbana video with the same discomfort:

“This video makes me feel uncomfortable. First, chopsticks are the standard silverware used by Chinese people, yet the model in the video seemed bewildered as she eats western cuisine with chopsticks. It gives me the impression that Dolce & Gabbana wants to demonstrate that Italian cuisine is more refined, while the Chinese model was unsure of what to do. In Chinese culture, the distinction between host and guest is given tremendous significance, referred to as main and secondary. Guests that are welcomed into a home should obey the host. So should Dolce & Gabbana's video presentation. Dolce & Gabbana, being an Italian company, wants to reach the Chinese market, hence the firm's advertising should conform to the Chinese language and culture. In this film, however, the company is seeking a model who cannot even handle chopsticks, so I do not feel like the owner. I was on the contrary, outraged.”

In the conversation, Miss Zhan and Li Lin, and other interviewees showed their outrage against the Dolce & Gabbana video on multiple times. Interviewees believed that Dolce & Gabbana awkwardly portrayed chopsticks, which have been used in China for thousands of years. In addition, the narration's style and content make the Chinese customer feel as a kid as an audience member. Participants noted that China is a significant worldwide market [CITATION Jia99 \1 1033 ], yet in the Dolce & Gabbana video, the protagonist

could not manage any Chinese culture elements such as chopsticks. Simultaneously, interviewees stated that Dolce & Gabbana, as a European company seeking to penetrate China, lacked appropriate knowledge and respect for Chinese culture in its commercials. Therefore, as Chinese customers, the interviewees exhibited a strong feeling of patriotism over this brand's disregard for national sovereignty and interests. In other words, interviewees considered that they should protect national sovereignty and interests during the conversation [CITATION Don22 \1 1033 ].

In addition, while reviewing Dolce & Gabbana's promotional film, Yan Song, Li Lin, and Shuya, a Dutch-based Chinese freelance designer, as well as other interviewees, all agreed that they could not understand what Dolce & Gabbana was attempting to convey through its advertising video. Although Chinese elements, such as Chinese red and chopsticks, are present in the clip, the brand's message appears unclear. Which demonstrates that Chinese customers have not recognized Dolce & Gabbana's usage Chinese components in their narratives and exposes brand's lack of cultural awareness [ CITATION Kno18 \1 2052 ]. Meanwhile, Dolce & Gabbana also misjudged Chinese shoppers' patriotism and national pride.

Dolce & Gabbana is not the only brand that so-called China restricted line lacks Chinese features. In the interview, interviewees also claimed that Gucci did not seem to understand how to display Chinese components and did not comprehend Chinese culture.

Participants such as Ms. Qin, who works for a Dutch consulting firm, and Ms. Wan, who works for an insurance company in the Netherlands, agreed that the dog in Gucci's commercials had nothing to do with Chinese culture. First, the dog portrayed in the product design and marketing is not unique to China. Second, the presence of dogs as Chinese features in merchandise is rather superficial. Thirdly, a representation of an image that is too superficial will not enable Chinese consumers to perceive the brand's understanding of Chinese culture, but it will reveal the brand's determination to make Chinese customers pay. Therefore, interviewees perceive that European fashion luxury brands lack cultural understanding of China. Thus, interviewees considering the purpose of incorporating Chinese elements into the design and marketing of these luxury brands is to convince buyers that the



brands care about and understand the Chinese culture and market. While brands do not appear to comprehend Chinese components.

Ms. Li's interview exhibited the same thought pattern. In addition to the Gucci Limited Year of the Dog poster, another set of respondents evaluated the Gucci Tiger poster for 2022. Regarding this, Miss Li believes:

“The design on the model's skirt resembled a Chinese artwork, while the brilliantly colored flowers on her sweater resembled traditional Chinese bedsheets. [...] I do not believe this series has any Chinese features or knowledge relevant to Chinese culture, while being far superior to the series centered on the Year of the Dog.”

However, the Chinese aspects in Gucci Tiger are more apparent than in the items dedicated to the year of the Dog, and some netizens believe that Gucci places a significant emphasis on the Chinese market [CITATION Kay22 \1 1033 ]. Interviewee Zhan felt similarly:

“This collection of posters gives me the impression that Gucci wishes to communicate a dignified and timeless brand image. Moreover, Gucci uses several Chinese elements in its design. For instance, the tiger is a representative animal in China, functioning as a symbol of emperor and power. And the general design of the poster is one that Chinese people like. [...]. I believe Gucci has used Chinese cultural themes successfully here.”

Yujing Tan also noted in the interview that many of the embellishments on Gucci Tiger's clothing are 18th century Chinese fashion aspects. In addition, the female model's clothing is composed of silk, a material exclusive to China. Second, while the design on the clothing resembles European oil paintings, the art is an international collaboration. Perhaps Gucci want to keep the brand's style and tone down the Chinese aesthetic:

“In contrast to their prior films, I could tell that Dolce & Gabbana was attempting to satisfy me on purpose but did not comprehend Chinese culture. Gucci Tiger, in contrast, portrays Chinese cultural themes in a more natural manner.”

In conclusion, Chinese consumers believe that Chinese culture encompasses cultural meanings, images, symbols, characters, historical narratives, and particular means of expression [CITATION Che18 \1 2052 ]. Furthermore, Chinese culture encompasses a variety of expressions. To comprehend Chinese cultural components, European luxury

fashion brands must combine the philosophy of understanding China. Nevertheless, the appearance of European luxury brands in China is mostly indicative of the economic status of Chinese buyers [CITATION Byo11 \1 1033 ]. To enter the Chinese market, European luxury brands want to include Chinese design features. However, European luxury brands seem to conflate Chinese culture with eastern culture and have preconceived notions about aspects of Chinese culture [CITATION Sai85 \1 2052 ]. Chinese customers have a strong feeling of patriotism and hostility towards brands that are prejudiced against Chinese culture and do not correspond to Chinese culture. However, Chinese consumers can perceive the goal of companies that harmoniously combine Chinese cultural elements into the brand.

### **Ethics and credibility**

This section shall analyze ethical norms and the credibility of in-depth qualitative interviews. The ethical principles of independence, compassion, and equity support qualitative researchers in resolving inevitable conversation challenges including initial and continuing conflicts between study requirements and aims and interviewee rights [CITATION Ang01 \1 1033 ]. Ethical concerns can be used to drive qualitative research in order to answer original and ongoing problems, meet research objective, and guarantee audience rights [CITATION Ann181 \1 1033 ].

Equal interaction with interviewees and data analysis were used to examine objective outcomes [CITATION Sve05 \1 1033 ]. Through in-depth interviews, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the respondents' knowledge on European fashion and luxury brands as well as Chinese cultural elements. In particular, the cross-cultural educational backgrounds of research contributors enhance the validity of gathered data and improve to the quality of academic research [CITATION Mar15 \1 1033 ].

Furthermore, interviewees must sign permission documents to safeguard the integrity of the interview process, assert their rights, and preserve the interview's secrecy [CITATION Iri111 \1 1033 ]. In addition to ensuring that interviewees understand the interview process and their own rights and interests, interviewees are informed ahead of the significant

topics they would face throughout the interviews to prepare them psychologically [CITATION RLe03 \1 1033 ]. Confirmation from respondents included approval of the research content, authenticity of notes during the interview, language correction, additional guidelines, authority interactions and shifts in the power balance between interviewer and interviewee, feelings of embarrassment and threat, research ethics, and reflective responses [CITATION Ode99 \1 1033 ].

Ethics is a fundamental and unavoidable feature, yet some scholars argue that the warm, caring interview forms are subjectively led and ethically problematic [CITATION SBr05 \1 1033 ]. In qualitative research, researchers create in-depth interview questions after researching a wide amount of literature, yet all interview questions are based on the research goals [CITATION Mea16 \1 1033 ]. An in-depth interview, on the other hand, is a dialogue-based communication process in which the interviewer is necessarily aware [CITATION Jam94 \1 1033 ]. Consequently, the supervisor regularly evaluates and monitors the interview guide throughout the whole academic process of the researcher, which in part ensures the research's adherence to ethical principles and its credibility.

Due to the strong association between the researcher and interviewees in qualitative research, the approach and depth of communication between them during the interview will be more sensitive than in quantitative research, which would raise certain ethical concerns [CITATION RLe03 \1 1033 ]. In addition, all interviews are conducted online, which is internet research and communication. Meanwhile, the distance between the interviewee and the researcher can influence the interview's credibility and ethics [CITATION Na106 \1 2052 ]. Therefore, using consent form could enhance credibility of the research [CITATION Elm16 \1 2052 ].

## Conclusion and limitations

This research examines how Chinese consumers perceive Chinese cultural in European advertisements of luxury products. The study intends to assess young Chinese consumers with luxury purchasing experience through in-depth interviews.

According to research, Chinese consumers believe that Chinese elements in European fashion and luxury goods do not adequately represent the Chinese cultural identity. Moreover, Chinese consumers perceive that European luxury products combine deeply established preconceptions of eastern nations with elements of Chinese culture. Specifically, Chinese customers assume that European luxury brands are unaware of the major differences between Eastern nations and China; Chinese cultural components have been westernized in the one-sided representation of European luxury brands. The distortion of Chinese culture and Chinese components by the brand leads patriotic Chinese customers to recognize it as insulting to China.

More specifically, Chinese consumers consider European luxury goods to be materialistic [CITATION Ju107 \1 2052 ]. The fast growth of European luxury products in China is since Chinese buyers place a high importance on their face-saving and status [CITATION Yan17 \1 2052 ]. Interviewees believe that some Chinese consumers perceive that purchasing luxury products can enhance their self-esteem, reputation, and interpersonal interactions. The vanity attitude of Chinese customers presents a tremendous potential for European luxury brands to enter the Chinese market. In other words, European luxury products link the personal worth and exterior social position of Chinese consumers [CITATION Mar14 \1 1033 ].

Consumers will abandon or boycott brands immediately if luxury products lack to demonstrate appropriate cultural knowledge of the target consumer's country of origin because the price of luxury brands is much higher than standard products [CITATION Gia21 \1 1033 ]. Furthermore, people's understanding of Chinese cultural elements is subjective and affected by their interests, educational backgrounds, and traditional Chinese Confucianism [CITATION Zha22 \1 1033 ]. Interviewees considered that Chinese culture

encompasses pictures, symbols, figures, architecture, modes of thought, developing technology, etc., and is not limited to Chinese red, chopsticks, or other graphics objects seen in European commercials of luxury products [CITATION Che10 \1 1033 ]. Even though the Chinese cultural elements of images seem to be certain forms of expression from an aesthetic standpoint, the cultural elements meanings and its ideology are connected to the principles of Chinese philosophy, mythology, and history. However, the knowledge of Chinese culture by European luxury brands seems to be decades or centuries old [CITATION Jea161 \1 1033 ].

In addition, the degree to which Chinese consumers comprehend Chinese culture has less about their level of education and more related with their interests, concerns, and majors. Chinese consumers believe that cultural elements, as a physical representation of Chinese culture, cannot reflect the whole of Chinese culture due to its richness and complexity [CITATION Edw85 \1 1033 ]. Therefore, when confronted with the contempt generated by the stereotypical and inaccurate expression of European luxury products towards China, the inherent patriotism of Chinese customers will force them to reject European fashion and luxury items [CITATION Gia21 \1 1033 ]. Under the influence of patriotism, Chinese customers attempt to defend Chinese culture and China's reputation in the perspective of European companies. Similarly, patriotism would enable Chinese customers to exaggerate the behavior of European firms to a certain extent, which is a cultural discount caused by cultural disparities in cross-cultural communication [CITATION Co189 \t \1 1033 ].

Therefore, European luxury brands must understand and respect the religious culture and value seeking of Chinese customers while engaging in cross-cultural communication. Only when luxury companies connect their ideas with the mainstream of the Chinese market will their worth be maximized, and Chinese customers will acknowledge brands. In addition, companies should prioritize the needs and concerns of customers in every way and try to elicit emotional resonance to improve brand communication and expand the market.

Although the research yields several valuable insights, it does have some drawbacks. The research focuses on the opinions of Chinese customers toward European luxury brands rather than their purchasing capacity. In other words, the screening of interview audiences has some

limits. In addition, there is no precise methodology or standard for measuring the cultural understanding of Chinese customers. However, people might perceive and comprehend luxury goods and Chinese culture differently [CITATION Xia13 \1 2052 ]. In consideration of the need to decrease research bias, future studies on relevant topics should concentrate on the purchasing power of Chinese consumers.

Furthermore, gender concerns have been discussed in prior research on Chinese customers' views towards luxury items since gender could be a factor that influences purchase attitudes [CITATION Bev99 \1 2052 ]. However, this study did not evaluate gender variations in views about Chinese customers, which might be a subject for future research. Besides, cross-cultural brand research should consider diverse subcultural tendencies within the same cultural background because cultural variety and universality may more effectively validate academic study findings [CITATION Xia13 \1 2052 ]. In conclusion, if the aspects of consumption power, gender, and subcultural background are included in research on Chinese cultural features and European luxury, more study is required.

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# Appendix

## Appendix A: Interview guide

4-5 themes:

- Luxury brands
- Luxury brands in China(marketing)
- Chinese culture and its ideology
- Chinese culture and luxury brands
- Dolce & Gabbana
- Gucci

### **Intro:**

*Before we begin, I'd like to double check that you've read and signed the consent form. And I want to let you that I will be recording this interview, with your permission.*

*This interview will be recorded.*

### **A. Introduction**

Hello! First, I would like to thank you for agreeing to do this interview for my research.

My name is Huijia Cheng, and I am a junior researcher at Erasmus University Rotterdam.

I am working under Alexander Diallo, on the research of xxx Chinese culture used in European brands.

This Interviews will last about 45 minutes.

Do you have any questions for me?

If not, then we can start the interview.

### **B. General question**

1. What is your name? Or: could you please introduce yourself?
2. How old are you?
3. Which country do you live in?
4. What is the level of your education?
5. What is your current occupation?
  - a. If you work, what do you do?

6. Are you interested in luxury brands?

a. Why is that?

7. Are you interested in the news of luxury brands on Chinese social media platforms

(Weibo)?

a. Why is that?

### **C. Fashion Luxury brands in China**

1. How do you define Luxury brands? When I say the words ‘Luxury brands’, what comes to mind?

2. What do you think about European luxury brands in today’s China?

3. Do you have any favorite European fashion luxury brands?

4. Have you seen some ads for European fashion luxury brands on Weibo?

5. What do you think about those advertisements of European luxury brands in The Chinese market?

### **D. Chinese culture and its ideology**

1. When I say the words ‘Chinese elements’, what comes to mind?

What can be seen as Chinese Elements? (give an answer about Chinese elements, such as 鹤)

2. How do you think Western people view Chinese culture?

3. Have you noticed western luxury brands using Chinese elements (in their branding or design) ? - What do you think of this phenomenon?

### **E. Chinese culture and luxury brands**

➤ E1. Dolce & Gabbana

1. Do you remember the Dolce & Gabbana insulting incident?

Now I'm going to show you a promotional film Dolce & Gabbana released on Chinese social media in 2018. Let's look at this clip first, and then we'll talk about it.

\* Show Clip 1 of Dolce & Gabbana \*

2. What do you think about this video?

3. What elements in the video do you think can represent Chinese culture?
4. What do you think about these Chinese elements Dolce & Gabbana used in the video represent?
5. Do you think those elements can be consistent with your definition of Chinese culture?

➤ E2. Gucci

Now I'm going to show you some promotional posters Gucci released on Chinese social media in 2020. Let's look at those posters, and then we'll talk about it.

\* Show posters of Gucci \*

2. What do you think about those posters?
3. What elements in those posters do you think can represent Chinese culture?
4. How do you think Gucci represented Chinese culture here?
5. Do you think about this is consistent with your definition of Chinese culture?
6. Extra Question!!

**F. Last question and closing**

1. Do you believe Dolce & Gabbana can help luxury brands develop in China?  
- Why?
  2. Do you believe Gucci can help luxury brands develop in China?  
- Why?
- Do you think those examples can help fashion luxury brands develop in China?

**G. Concludes of interview**

Ok, that's all the questions I have for this interview. Thank you again for participating in this study. Thank you very much. For clarity, this recording is for processing answers only, after which the recording will be deleted. The study was anonymous, so your name won't appear in the research paper.

Do you have any questions for me? Or is there anything else you'd like to discuss with me?

\* Thank them again, end the interview and stop recording, and provide contact information



### Appendix B: Interviewees' list

Name	Gender	Age	Educational Level	Status	Location
Li	Female	33	PhD of marketing from Utrecht University	The university teacher	China
Shan	Female	29	Master of marketing from Utrecht University	Biological laboratory researcher	The Netherlands
Siyu	Female	28	Bachelor of marketing from Utrecht Hogeschool	Executive director of an advertising company	China
Yi	Female	30	Master of marketing from Erasmus University	Financial practitioner	The Netherlands
Yijing	Female	30	Master of landscape design from Delft University	Designer	The Netherlands
Peiqing	Female	31	Master of IBMS from De Haag Hogeschool	Maketer	The Netherlands
Ya	Female	32	Master of landscape design from Eindhoven University	Designer	The Netherlands
Yan	Male	32	PhD of landscape design from Delft University	Researcher	The Netherlands
Yujing	Female	33	PhD of Leiden University	The political and economic researcher / teacher	The Netherlands
Jiang	Female	28	Master of Delft University	Financial practitioner	The Netherlands
Mengfei	Female	27	Bachelor of Leiden University	Consulting industry	The Netherlands
Shufan	Female	33	Master of English Education from Spain	English Teacher	The Netherlands

Xinyi	Female	25	Master of Erasmus University	Student	The Netherlands
Linmin	Female	33	Master of Tilburg University	Luxury buyer (Daigou)	The Netherlands
Yanjing	Female	25	Master of Groningen University	Content marketer	The Netherlands
Xiaoxi	Female	32	Master of media from Erasmus University	Television producer	The Netherlands

### Appendix C: Consent forms

*This template is intended for creating the Informed Consent Form for your research.*

M. Nariman and M. Domingus, December 2016 (incl. adjustments ESHCC)

#### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Project Title and version	[COMPLETION BY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR]
Name of Principal Investigator	Huijia Cheng
Name of Organisation	Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication, Erasmus University Rotterdam
Name of Sponsor	No.
Purpose of the Study	This research is being conducted face to face or online. I am inviting you to participate in this research project about <b>Exploring young Chinese Netizens' perceptions of Chinese elements in Western advertising</b> . The purpose of this research project is <b>Taste in Chinese culture and Western Luxury Brands</b> , which can help European Western fashion luxury brands to improve their marketing strategy in China market.
Procedures	You will participate in an interview lasting approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. You

	<p>will be asked questions about Chinese culture, Chinese culture elements and European fashion luxury brands related design, marketing in China. Sample questions include: “What do you think about European luxury brands in today’s China?”.</p> <p>You must be at least 18 years old, have an international educational background, and you must be a Chinese.</p>
Potential and anticipated Risks and Discomforts	<p>There are no obvious physical, legal, or economic risks associated with participating in this study. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. Your participation is voluntary, and you are free to discontinue your participation at any time.</p>
Potential Benefits	<p>Participation in this study does not guarantee any beneficial results to you. As a result of participating, you may better understand Chinese culture, European luxury fashion brands, such as Dolce &amp; Gabbana.</p> <p>The broader goal of this research is to fill the academic gap in this area with a non-</p>

	<p>Western narrative and improve the understanding of Chinese culture elements for European luxury fashion brands.</p>
Sharing the results	<p>Your plan for sharing the findings with the participants should be provided. If you have a plan and a timeline for the sharing of information, include the details. You may also inform the participant that the research findings will be shared more broadly, for example, through publications and conferences.</p>
Confidentiality	<p>Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. No personally identifiable information will be reported in any research product. Moreover, only trained research staff will have access to your responses. Within these restrictions, results of this study will be made available to you upon request.</p> <p>As indicated above, this research project involves making audio recordings of</p>

	interviews with you. Transcribed segments from the audio recordings may be used in published forms (e.g., journal articles and book chapters). In the case of publication, pseudonyms will be used. The audio recordings, forms, and other documents created or collected as part of this study will be stored in a secure location in the researchers' offices or on the researcher's password-protected computers and will be destroyed within ten years of the initiation of the study.
Compensation	<i>No.</i>
Right to Withdraw and Questions	<p>Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalised or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.</p> <p>If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the primary investigator:</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>386428hc@eur.nl</b></p>

Statement of Consent	<p>Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree that you will participate in this research study. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form.</p> <p>I have been given the guarantee that this research project has been reviewed and approved by the ESHCC Ethics Review Committee [and IF APPLICABLE: by the EU Ethics Committee]. For research problems or any other question regarding the research project, the Data Protection Officer of Erasmus University, Marlon Domingus, MA (<a href="mailto:fg@eur.nl">fg@eur.nl</a>) [and IF APPLICABLE: the EU Ethics Committee may be contacted through [information of the contact person at the Ethics Committee at EU [COMPLETION BY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR]]].</p>
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	If you agree to participate, please sign your name below.	
Audio recording (if applicable)	I consent to have my interview audio recorded <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
Secondary use (if applicable)	I consent to have the anonymised data be used for secondary analysis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
Signature and Date	NAME PARTICIPANT	NAME PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR Huijia Cheng
	SIGNATURE	SIGNATURE <i>Huijia Cheng</i>
	DATE	DATE <b>26<sup>th</sup> April 2022</b>

**Appendix D: Transcript sample**

说话人2 05:57

明白你关注了这么多，你是如何看待这些欧洲奢侈品，就是fashion拉克斯brand在中国市场的广告？你刚刚已经多次的提到，你其实是作为一个professional，作为做市场或者做广告的人来关注这些信息的，你如何看待这些 Fashion luxury brand的这些广告的中国市场的广告？

Knowing that you have paid so much attention, what do you think of these European luxury goods, that is, the advertisements of fashion Lax brand in the Chinese market? You have just mentioned many times that you actually pay attention to these information as a professional, as a marketing or advertising person. What do you think of these advertisements of Fashion luxury brand in the Chinese market?

说话人1 06:23

我觉得这是一个很好的问题，因为在比如说10年前的话，其实我现在更喜欢他10年前的广告，每个品牌都非常有自己的风格和调性，然后都是很有识别度，但是可能近些年我觉得它都趋同化了，特别是可能会找一些本地中国本地的一些这种爱豆，年轻的爱豆，或者说这些明星就进行一个代言，或者说带直接就说带货就没有了。

I think this is a very good question, because for example, 10 years ago, in fact, I now prefer his advertising 10 years ago, each brand has its own style and tonality, and then it is very recognizable, but maybe in recent years I think it has converged, especially in China.Or these stars will have an endorsement, or they will not have the goods directly.

原来的那种慢慢来的一种调性，现在我觉得更多的是一种比较急于卖货，急于去做他一个比如说阶段性推广，这样的去的一个做事方式，特别是像就拿迪奥来举例，好，曾经的话他可能还是对代言人这些人还是很挑剔的，需要匹配到它的整个品牌文化和调性的人才能去作为它的代言人。

It used to be a kind of tonality that came slowly, but now I think it's more of a way of doing things that is more eager to sell goods, to do periodic promotion, especially like Dior, for example. Well, in the past, he may still be very picky about spokespersons.It needs people who match its whole brand culture and tonality to be its spokesperson.

但是这些年我就觉得太泛滥了，随便一个什么新的偶像都可以成为他的什么区域大使，品牌挚友，就是一堆感觉，没有了那种品牌的格调那种感觉，没有了。

But over the years, I think it's too overflowing. Any new idol can become his regional ambassador and brand friend. It's just a bunch of feelings. Without the style of the brand, the feeling is gone.

说话人2 07:48

你说说是没有了品牌的格调是吗？

Q1 其问题为：一个很存问题，因为在比如说10年...  
celebrities and luxury brands i...  
European luxury brands' prom...

Q2 原问题的背景是：一种调性，现在我觉得...  
celebrities and luxury brands i...

说话人1 07:52

是这个意思，也算是格调或者说态度，因为像现在可能就太太想拉近和消费群的这种连接度这种距离，但是可能我觉得他们这种方式至少对于我个人来说，我觉得就没有他自己的那种形式态度了，就太太谄媚了，这么说也不太准。

That's what it means. It's also a style or attitude, because now maybe my wife wants to close the connection with the consumer group. But maybe I think their way, at least for me personally, I don't think it's his own form and attitude. It's too flattering. It's not very accurate to say so.

说话人2 08:18

可以这么说，每个人都有自己的不同的想法对吧？

It can be said that everyone has their own different ideas, right?

谄媚你就是你刚刚有提到一个比如说迪奥这个牌子10年前和10年后，它的一个在广告这方面完全不同的两种形式，你已经关注了这么久的品牌，或者说市场你怎么定义奢侈品牌？Fashion luxury brand。对你怎么定义？比如说当我提到了fashion luxury brand，或者说luxury你会想到什么？

You just mentioned a brand like Dior 10 years ago and 10 years later. It has two completely different forms of advertising. You have been paying attention to the brand for so long, or how do you define the luxury brand in the market? Fashion luxury brand。 How do you define it? For example, what do you think of when I mention fashion luxury brand or luxury?

说话人1 08:59

我觉得我直接能想到的一种方式，一种生活态度，特别可能就是理想化的生活方式。

I think I can directly think of a way of life, an attitude towards life, especially an idealized way of life.

说话人2 09:15

为什么这么说？为什么是生活方式生活态度？

Why do you say that? Why lifestyle and attitude?

说话人1 09:19

因为我觉得作为正常人来说的话，我们去消费奢侈品，可能只是说一种仰望，包括像之前也有一些新闻能看到，很多女孩省几个月的钱去买一个奢侈品的包，但是在我看来那样的话其实并不是它真正拥有了奢侈品，呃而是被奢侈品拥有了，他自己并不是作为一个主导的地位，但是真正的奢侈品我觉得是当你有一定的经济能力去负担它，或者说可以将他的每一个方面融入到自己的生活中，你

face-saving  
The Construction of luxury br...

本讲主题为奢侈品方法

Because I think as a normal person, when we consume luxury goods, maybe it's just a kind of looking up, including some news we saw before, many girls save money for a few months to buy a luxury bag, but in my opinion, in that case, it's not that it really owns luxury goods, but that it's owned by luxury goods. He himself is not in a dominant position, but I think the real luxury is when you have a certain economic ability to afford it, or you can integrate every aspect of him into your own life. You don't need to pay for him, just enjoy the process of him serving you. I think this may be a luxury.

你。

You.

说话人2 10:14

说的好好，我是恨不得站起来给你鼓掌了。

That's good. I can't wait to stand up and applaud you.

说话人1 10:17

你刚才说没有真的。

You just said no, really.

说话人2 10:21

是因为我本来想的是什么，我想是比如说提到奢侈品，有些人会想到贵对吧？有些人可能想到一些经典的设计，但是你说的是生活态度，所以我觉得你说的很深刻的这种了，所以我说我把它站起来给你鼓掌。

Because what I was thinking, I think, for example, when it comes to luxury goods, some people will think it is expensive, right? Some people may think of some classic designs, but you are talking about the attitude towards life, so I think what you said is very profound, so I said I would stand up and applaud you.

说话人1 10:40

可能就是我自己主观的一种感受，可能就是每个年龄段对奢侈品的定义会不一样，至少现在我就是这么认为，的嗯可能在年轻几岁的话，确实会觉得他那种奢华感，然后他的想想拥有他那种虚荣心或者什么，但是站在现在这个年龄阶段，或者说我从事了广告行业之后，可能对他有了新的一种理解。

Maybe it's my own subjective feeling. Maybe the definition of luxury goods will be different for each age group. At least now I think so. Well, maybe if you are a few years younger, you will really feel his sense of

买了去消费奢侈品，可能只是...  
 4.4 可能只是自己主观的一种感受，可能只是...

face-saving  
 4.4 可能只是自己主观的一种感受，可能只是...

## Appendix E: Atlas.ti

