



# Consumption, brand territory of origin and consumer well-being

Mohua Zhang

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## THÈSE

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préparée au sein du **Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches  
Appliquées à la Gestion**  
dans l'**École Doctorale en Sciences de Gestion – EDSG 275**

## **Consommation, Territoire d'Origine de la Marque, et Bien-Être du Consommateur**

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*There is no royal road to learning.*

— *Euclid*

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To be a doctoral student is a coincidence. If I were asked whether I would like to be a doctoral student when I was 24 years old, my answer would be 100% no. I could even say that it had never been to my mind to be a doctoral student until I met Professor Merunka one day. My deep appreciation toward his professional attitude and research excellence motivated me to discover the research world.

Now I am reaching the end of my doctoral studies. I look at myself today, and I find that there is still a long way in front of me and I am still far away from my teacher. In this research journey, things such as loneliness, being lost, or anxiety are just like necessities. I have experienced them, and I believe it is true for many other doctoral students too.

At the same time, it is also a happy journey where I find that I have improved in several aspects. Firstly and most obviously, I have improved in being clearer in my reasoning. Being an emotional person with divergent thinking, I am sensible enough to notice details, but need to improve at explaining things clearly. Thanks to the non-stop guidance of Professor Merunka, I do it better than yesterday. Secondly, I find myself more independent, and thirdly, I am better at controlling my emotions, in particular in front of certain stressful events. Doing such a lonely job (PhD studies) forces me to grow up and to learn how to face many things alone. I in particular enjoy doing the research concerning subjective well-being. The fact of having read many psychological studies also enables me

to have a better understanding of humans, of life, and makes me better understand why we can be stressed, and how to find the way out. Overall, even though I am not satisfied with myself today, I am still glad that I am better than what I was yesterday.

I have impression that travelling in the life journey is similar to making a big doctoral dissertation, from being unclear of what we search in life at the very beginning to gradually seeing things better based on what we learn.....When I look back today, I feel that it is my destiny to do a PhD study.

No matter it was a result of a coincidence or of my destiny, what is clear is that I do not regret to do such a study, and I am so happy that I have done it. It is a great chance for me to have directors like Professor Dwight Merunka and Professor Pierre Valette-Florence. I especially appreciate that they opened the doors to me when I was in the dark time of my life. They welcomed me with warmth, letting me feel that I was not alone at that moment. Therefore, in addition to my appreciation toward their professional achievements, I would like thank them for their kindness to reach out their hands to me, which is one of the most beautiful things in my life.

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## **RESUME EN FRANÇAIS**

## INTRODUCTION

Cette thèse traite de deux sujets principaux : l'impact du territoire d'origine de la marque sur la relation entre le consommateur et la marque, et l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur.

Plus précisément, cette thèse se compose de trois articles. Le premier article concerne l'influence du territoire d'origine du produit sur son authenticité perçue: une étude empirique en Chine. Cet article a été présenté à la conférence *European Marketing Academy Annual Conference* en 2013 et publié dans la revue *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics* en 2015.

Le deuxième article concerne comment utiliser le territoire d'origine comme un outil pour créer l'image de la marque. Cet article a été publié dans la revue *Global Business and Organizational Excellence* en 2014.

Le troisième article propose une hypothèse de motivation binaire du consommateur afin d'expliquer l'influence de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur. Cet article a été présenté à la conférence *Asia Pacific Association for Consumer Research* en 2015 et va être soumis à une revue académique.



**ARTICLE 1****L'INFLUENCE DU TERRITOIRE D'ORIGINE DU PRODUIT SUR SON****AUTHENTICITE PERCUE :****UN ETUDE EMPIRIQUE EN CHINE**

Le concept « pays d'origine » a été largement abordé dans la littérature et utilisé en marketing (Roth et Diamantopoulos, 2009). Cependant, il a montré toutefois ses limites (Thakor et Lavack, 2003), ou même des effets négatifs (Hamin et al., 2013 ; Samiee, 2011) dans le marché d'aujourd'hui. En particulier, la prévalence des produits hybrides ou multinationaux a poussé le consommateur à rechercher des produits régionaux ou locaux au lieu des produits standards et homogènes avec des origines douteuses (Elaydi et McLaughlin, 2012 ; Ger, 1999 ; Seidenfuss et al., 2013). Dans ces conditions, de plus en plus d'entreprises mettent l'accent sur ce qu'on appelle le territoire du produit, au lieu du pays d'origine, comme un facteur de différenciation et de valeur ajoutée de leurs produits. Par exemple, Armor-Lux, une marque d'habillement venant de la Bretagne de la France, a réussi à augmenter son chiffre d'affaire de plus de 30% après qu'elle a utilisé l'étiquette « 100% fabriqué en Bretagne » au lieu de « fabriqué en France ». Elle a ensuite délocalisé son siège de

Paris à Bretagne, afin de mieux souligner sa distinction territoriale (Jaxel-Truer, 2012). Ses produits sont vendus internationalement, y compris sur les marchés asiatiques. Cela indique que la demande et l'intérêt sur des produits locaux ne s'arrêtent pas aux frontières de leur continent, et particulièrement de l'Europe.

Le territoire, c'est « *le lieu où la terre, le climat, la topographie, et l'âme du producteur se réunissent* » (Iversen et Hem, 2008, p. 615). Des chercheurs (e.g., Charters et Spielmann, 2014 ; Suri et Thakor, 2013) proposent que pour que les produits locaux ou régionaux puissent pénétrer le marché international, le territoire d'origine du produit est un indice précieux pour le consommateur et un atout essentiel pour l'entreprise qui évite « les désavantages réels ou perçus...du pays d'origine » (Samiee, 201, p. 474). Par rapport au pays d'origine, territoire d'origine semble inhérent au produit local et offre la marque d'«une empreinte qui est unique» (Inversen et Hem, 2008, p. 603). Pour la marque, il crée des opportunités de différenciation dans des marchés variés. Néanmoins, il y a très peu de recherche sur l'impact du territoire d'origine du produit sur le comportement et du consommateur et sur l'évaluation du produit (Charters et Spielmann, 2014 ; van Ittersum et al., 2003). Le peu d'études existantes affirment que les marques locales peuvent communiquer sur le territoire d'origine du produit afin de souligner la qualité unique du produit et de justifier l'authenticité du produit (Dion et al., 2010).

Le concept d'authenticité en marketing est un sujet important depuis une dizaine

d'années. L'authenticité, c'est « *une évaluation subjective de vérité attribuée à la marque par le consommateur* » (Napoli et al., 2014, p. 1091). Aujourd'hui, dans une période post-moderne, où la consommation manque de profondeur, d'originalité et de sens (Baudrillard, 1988), l'authenticité peut être valorisée par le consommateur qui veut retrouver un sens à ses choix et ses expériences de consommation et par l'entreprise qui y trouve un moyen de construire une identité de marque (Aaker, 1996 ; Keller, 1993). La perception de l'authenticité est souvent liée aux éléments d'information générés par le lieu d'origine comme l'histoire, la culture, et la tradition (Grayson et Martinec, 2004), ou la sincérité, l'honnêteté, l'innocence, l'originalité, la nature, et la simplicité (Beverland, 2006 ; Napoli et al., 2014), ou l'unicité (Iversen et Hem, 2008). Les associations du territoire d'origine peuvent donc être un outil important pour construire la perception de l'authenticité de la marque et pour générer des associations fortes et uniques de la marque qui ont un impact sur le comportement du consommateur. Par des études de cas, Beverland et al. (2006) montrent que les producteurs de vin ont mis l'accent sur le lieu de la production (i.e., Bordeaux), afin de justifier l'authenticité des grands crus des châteaux du vignoble bordelais. Néanmoins, le lien entre le territoire d'origine, l'authenticité perçue, et le comportement du consommateur n'a jamais été testé par des études empiriques.

L'objectif de notre étude est donc de valider d'une manière empirique l'impact du territoire d'origine d'un produit sur son authenticité perçue et sur sa relation avec le consommateur. Selon les résultats des études qualitatives (Leigh et al., 2006), la

connexion du consommateur à la marque est l'une des conséquences de l'authenticité. Nous étudions donc une chaîne d'effets, des associations du territoire d'origine d'un produit à son authenticité perçue à la connexion du consommateur à la marque. Ainsi, nous introduisons deux modérateurs de la relation entre le territoire d'origine et la perception d'authenticité du consommateur : la familiarité du consommateur au territoire d'origine et la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale. Nous considérons que le consommateur devrait pouvoir connaître le territoire d'origine et le lier à certaines catégories du produit pour que le territoire d'origine puisse influencer la perception de l'authenticité du consommateur et générer sa connexion au produit. Dans la continuité d'un courant de recherche (e.g., Hamzaoui et Merunka, 2006) qui a choisi les marchés émergents pour étudier les concepts liés aux lieux, nous conduisons notre étude empirique en Chine.

## **1. Développement des Hypothèses**

### *1.1 Territoire d'Origine et Authenticité Perçue*

La perception de l'authenticité peut être construite par des associations générées par un lieu d'origine, quel que soit le critère actuel que le consommateur utilise pour évaluer l'authenticité d'un produit (Beverland, 2006 ; Grayson et Martinec, 2004). Si le lieu d'origine est associé avec des sens tels que le climat, la tradition, la culture, l'engagement ou la passion, le consommateur sera plus enclin à percevoir le produit

comme authentique. De même, la perception de l'authenticité reflète soit des éléments intrinsèques au produit, tels que les ingrédients naturels ou la méthode de la fabrication qui respecte la tradition, soit des éléments subjectifs qui sont liés à un lieu d'origine tels que la sincérité ou l'unicité (Beverland, 2006). Comme la marque peut bénéficier de l'équité ancrée dans sa provenance, l'indice du pays d'origine ou du territoire d'origine peut générer les associations qui poussent le consommateur à percevoir la marque comme authentique. Cependant, par rapport au pays, le territoire est plus homogène dans son environnement naturel et humain (van Ittersum et al., 2003), ce qui doit donc contribuer plus à la perception de l'authenticité. De plus, la perception de l'unicité est un facteur critique à l'authenticité de la marque (Iversen et Hem, 2008). Comme les choses qui sont plus petites sont perçues comme uniques à un niveau plus élevé (Brewer et al., 1993), un territoire doit donner l'impression de l'unicité plus qu'un pays et donc conférer aux produits territoriaux une identité pure et unique qui est rare, de la valeur difficile d'imiter ou de remplacer (Elaydi et McLaughlin, 2012). Par conséquent, nous supposons que le territoire d'origine a un effet positif sur la perception de l'authenticité, plus fort que celui du pays d'origine. Ceci indique aussi l'importance unique du territoire d'origine dans la création de la perception de l'authenticité.

D'un côté, par ses associations avec la tradition, avec l'environnement naturel ou avec des facteurs humaines, le territoire d'origine peut construire une catégorie cognitive à laquelle les consommateurs associent des produits spécifiques si bien que

certains produits apparaissent plus typiques que d'autre. Ces spécificités des territoires, comme par exemple des spécialités culinaires, sont ensuite suggérées aux consommateurs et restent dans leurs esprits, ce qui entraîne donc que le territoire bénéficie d'une réputation concernant la production d'un produit particulier. Par exemple, Saint-Émilion (une région dans le Bordelais) peut générer des associations à la tradition, à son histoire et à la façon de produire du vin, et puis bénéficier en retour de la réputation de son vin.

D'un autre côté, des associations symboliques comme la solidarité de la communauté, la sincérité du producteur, sa passion, ou l'honnêteté peuvent aussi être activées par le territoire par les relations culturelles ou des valeurs intégrées propres au territoire en question (Elaydi et McLaughlin, 2012) et créer le lien entre le territoire et la perception de l'authenticité. Par exemple, le territoire peut faire rappeler au consommateur un producteur qui protège la pureté de son environnement afin de garantir la qualité de ses produits ou l'harmonie entre la fabrication du produit et l'environnement. Un autre exemple, l'abbaye des moines Trappistes, lieu de production de la bière du même nom, est associé à la motivation des moines qui produisent la bière pour ensuite donner les bénéfices tirés de sa vente aux gens qui sont dans le besoin (Beverland et al., 2008). Ces associations donnent l'impression de la sincérité et de la bienveillance. Comparé au pays d'origine, le territoire d'origine évoque l'impression de la transparence et permet aussi au consommateur de se trouver ses racines, car il offre une origine plus spécifique où la tradition, la culture, et l'histoire sont préservées.

En accord avec ces arguments, nous proposons :

*Hypothèse 1* : L'association d'un territoire d'origine du produit a un effet positif sur l'authenticité perçue de ce produit.

### *1.2 Authenticité Perçue et Connexion du Consommateur à la Marque*

Quand le consommateur perd la source traditionnelle du sens ou bien son identité, souvent, il cherche des produits ou des expériences authentiques qui peuvent évoquer du sens tels que l'unicité, l'attachement aux origines ou la connexion au passé, afin de renforcer son identité qu'il désire (Arnould et Price, 2000 ; Beverland et Farrelly, 2010). Le consommateur peut gagner une identité positive, ainsi que des caractéristiques favorables, par le fait de transférer les sens qui sont liés à l'authenticité d'un produit à lui-même. Pendant ce processus de la construction de l'identité, le consommateur intègre l'authenticité d'un produit dans son concept de soi. Arnould et Price (2000) démontrent que le consommateur utilise l'authenticité pour identifier les aspects importants de sa vie et il construit l'identité authentique par deux moyens : soit par la création de l'authenticité d'un produit, soit par la participation aux expositions culturelles (e.g., festivals, rituels). Les managers en marketing aussi utilisent la communication authentique comme une tactique afin d'encourager le consommateur à intégrer la marque dans son identité et créons aussi une connexion forte du consommateur à la marque (Malar et al., 2011). Le degré auquel que le

consommateur intègre une marque authentique dans son identité indique le niveau de sa connexion à la marque (Escalsas et Bettman, 2003). Une marque qui est perçue comme authentique devrait donc créer des associations significatives et une connexion forte du consommateur à la marque. Nous proposons :

*Hypothèse 2 : L'authenticité perçue a un effet positif sur la connexion du consommateur au produit.*

Dans la littérature, il y a deux variables en particulier qui sont montrées comme modérateurs de l'influence du pays d'origine sur l'évaluation du produit du consommateur : la familiarité du consommateur avec le produit (Basfirinci, 2013 ; Josiassen et al., 2008) et la congruence entre le pays d'origine et la catégorie du produit (Hamzaoui et Merunka, 2006 ; Josiassen et Assaf, 2010). Nous considérons que ces deux modérateurs devraient aussi s'appliquer au territoire d'origine.

### *1.3 Familiarité au Territoire d'Origine*

En adoptant la définition de la familiarité du produit d'Alba et Hutchinson (1987) (i.e. la quantité d'expérience liée à un produit accumulée par le consommateur), nous définissons que la familiarité au territoire d'origine est la quantité d'expérience directe ou indirecte avec un territoire acquise par le consommateur. L'expérience directe



comprend la(s) visite(s) d'un territoire et la consommation des produits ou des services fabriqués dans le territoire. L'expérience indirecte implique l'exposition du consommateur aux communications concernant un territoire, tels que des films, des livres, ou le bouche-oreille. Par rapport à un pays, un territoire par définition est un petit espace géographique, par exemples la Corse ou la Normandie en France, la Bavière ou la Saxe en Allemagne. Le consommateur donc manque de la familiarité avec un territoire spécifique, qui ensuite limite la quantité des associations dans le mémoire du consommateur, et donc gêne le transfert du sens tel que la perception de l'authenticité d'une marque ou d'un produit. Par conséquent, le consommateur a besoin d'être familier avec le territoire en question afin d'intégrer l'indice du territoire d'origine dans son évaluation du produit, ainsi que de réduire son doute sur la qualité du produit. D'où:

*Hypothèse 3* : La familiarité au territoire d'origine joue un rôle modérateur entre le territoire d'origine et l'authenticité perçue. Plus le consommateur est familier avec le territoire, plus le territoire a un effet positif sur l'authenticité perçue.

#### *1.4 Congruence de la Catégorie du Produit avec son Origine Territoriale*

La perception de la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale est un facteur important qui détermine l'influence du territoire d'origine sur l'évaluation du produit du consommateur (van Ittersum et al., 2003). Hauble et Elrod

(1999, p. 199) conceptualisent le degré de la congruité entre une marque et son pays de fabrication comme « la force avec laquelle une marque est associée à son pays d'origine ». D'après la littérature du pays d'origine, la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale renforce l'impact positif du pays d'origine sur les associations de la marque et la perception de la qualité du consommateur (consumers' brand associations) (Hamzaoui et Merunka, 2006). C'est en particulier vrai pour les consommateurs qui sont moins engagés (Josiassen et Assaf, 2010). Nous pensons que ces résultats peuvent être appliqués au transfert du sens d'un territoire d'origine à une marque ou à un produit. C'est-à-dire, le transfert devrait être plus efficace quand la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale est plus forte. Donc :

*Hypothèse 4* : La congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale joue un rôle modérateur entre le territoire d'origine et l'authenticité perçue. Plus la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale est élevée, plus le territoire a un effet positif sur l'authenticité perçue.

## **2. Méthode**

Pour mettre en évidence les causalités concernant notre sujet, nous avons utilisé une méthode d'expérimentation et la régression des moindres carrés partielle. L'expérience est conduite en Chine et se compose de trois enquêtes en ligne. Un premier groupe de

participants sont exposés à un produit sans l'indication de son origine (i.e., le groupe de contrôle) (n = 160), un deuxième groupe de participants sont exposés à un produit avec l'indication de son territoire d'origine (i.e., la Provence en France) (n = 280), et un troisième groupe de participants sont exposés à un produit avec l'indication de son pays d'origine (i.e., France) (n = 225). Le troisième groupe a pour but d'éliminer la possibilité que la conséquence (i.e. la connexion du consommateur au produit) peut-être générée par l'impact d'une origine en général, au lieu d'être spécifique au territoire d'origine. Les consommateurs chinois ont connu la région de la Provence à travers un téléfilm « *Yī Lián Yōu Mèng* » (Le Lien de Rêve) qui a été tourné en Provence. Le produit choisi est un savon à la lavande, car la région de Provence est fortement associée à la lavande par les consommateurs chinois. Un pré-test avec 60 consommateurs chinois confirme qu'ils sont familiers avec la région de Provence (un moyen de 4.9 sur une échelle de 7) et associent la Provence à la lavande (un moyen de 4.2 sur une échelle de 7).

Toutes les échelles utilisées (l'authenticité perçue, la connexion du consommateur au produit, la familiarité au territoire d'origine, et la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale) proviennent de la littérature (Beverland et al., 2008 ; Escalas et Bettman, 2005 ; Heimbach et al., 1989 ; Aaker et Keller, 1990). Ces quatre échelles sont chacune unidimensionnelles. Leur fiabilité mesurée par Cronbach alphas et Joreskog's rhos dépasse le niveau recommandé dans la littérature ( $\alpha$  entre .72 et .92 et rhos entre .83 et .93). Elles ont aussi une bonne validité ( $Rho_{vc} > .5$ ).

### *2.1 Les Effets Principaux*

Tout d'abord, nous comparons les valeurs moyennes de l'authenticité perçue entre le groupe de contrôle et le groupe exposé au territoire d'origine ( $n = 418$ ). La valeur moyenne de l'authenticité perçue du groupe de contrôle est de 3.09 ( $SD = .31$ ). Elle est de 3.51 ( $SD = .39$ ) pour le groupe exposé au territoire d'origine. Concernant la connexion du consommateur au produit, sa valeur moyenne est de 2.85 ( $SD = .54$ ) pour le groupe de contrôle et de 3.18 ( $SD = .66$ ) pour le groupe exposé au territoire d'origine. Dans les deux cas, les valeurs moyennes sont différentes l'une de l'autre d'une façon significative ( $p < .001$ ) et sont plus élevées pour le groupe exposé au territoire d'origine. Donc, nous considérons que l'exposition au territoire d'origine aide à créer la perception de l'authenticité du produit et la connexion du consommateur au produit. Puis, nous conduisons la régression des moindres carrés partielle afin de tester l'impact du territoire d'origine sur l'authenticité perçue et l'impact de l'authenticité perçue sur la connexion du consommateur au produit. Les résultats montrent que les données correspondent bien au modèle (goodness-of-fit criterion [GoF] = .38) et que la taille de l'effet est important (Wetzels et al., 2009). Le territoire d'origine (une variable binaire avec non-indication = 0, territoire d'origine = 1) a un effet positif sur l'authenticité perçue ( $R^2 = .11$ , coefficient partiel = .33,  $p < .01$ ). L'authenticité perçue a un effet positif sur la connexion du consommateur au produit ( $R^2 = .35$ , coefficient partiel = .59,  $p < .01$ ).

Nous comparons ensuite les valeurs moyennes de l'authenticité perçue du groupe

exposé au pays d'origine ( $M_{\text{authenticité perçue}} = 3.13$ ,  $SD = .72$ ) avec celles du groupe de contrôle ( $M_{\text{authenticité perçue}} = 3.09$ ,  $SD = .31$ ). La différence des valeurs moyennes entre les deux groupes n'est pas significative ( $p = .49$ ). De même, la différence des valeurs moyennes de la connexion du consommateur au produit entre ces deux groupes n'est pas significative non plus ( $p = .19$ ), avec la valeur moyenne du groupe exposé au pays d'origine étant de 2.85 ( $SD = .54$ ) et celle du groupe de contrôle étant de 2.74 ( $SD = .78$ ). Après, la régression des moindres carrés partielles ( $n = 369$ ) est utilisée afin de tester l'impact du pays d'origine sur la perception de l'authenticité. Les résultats indiquent que les données correspondent au modèle ( $GoF = .27$ , la taille d'effet est moyenne), mais l'impact du pays d'origine (non-indication = 0, pays d'origine = 1) sur l'authenticité perçue n'est pas significatif ( $R^2 = .05$ , coefficient partiel = .07,  $p < .17$ ). Par conséquent, nous concluons que le pays d'origine n'a pas d'effet sur l'authenticité perçue. Par contre, l'authenticité perçue garde son effet positif sur la connexion du consommateur au produit, moins fort que celui trouvé dans le groupe du territoire d'origine ( $R^2 = .24$ , coefficient partiel = .49,  $p < .001$ ). Ces résultats confirment le rôle unique du territoire d'origine dans la création de la perception de l'authenticité.

A la fin, nous comparons directement l'impact du territoire d'origine et celui du pays d'origine (pays d'origine = 0 ; territoire d'origine = 1) sur l'authenticité perçue ( $n = 479$ ). Les résultats démontrent que le territoire d'origine a un effet positif différenciant sur l'authenticité perçue ( $R^2 = .07$ , coefficient partiel territoire d'origine/pays d'origine = .25,  $p < .001$ ). Cela confirme le rôle unique du territoire d'origine sur l'authenticité perçue trouvé dans la première étude. L'effet de

l'authenticité perçue sur la connexion du consommateur au produit reste le même que celui trouvé dans l'étude 1 ( $R^2 = .33$ , coefficient partiel =  $.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Aussi, en ajoutant un effet direct du territoire d'origine/pays d'origine sur la connexion du consommateur au produit, nous trouvons que le territoire d'origine conserve son effet sur l'authenticité perçue du produit, mais en même temps, il a un effet direct positif sur la connexion du consommateur au produit (coefficients partiels: authenticité à la connexion =  $.53$ , territoire d'origine/pays d'origine à la connexion =  $.13$ ,  $p < .001$ ). De nouveau, nous vérifions nos hypothèses 1 et 2 et confirmons le rôle unique du territoire d'origine.

## *2.2 Les Effets des Modérateurs*

Les effets de la familiarité au territoire d'origine et la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale sont testés avec le groupe exposé au territoire d'origine. Les résultats de la régression des moindres carrés partielles montrent que la familiarité au territoire d'origine et la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale ont un effet positif sur la relation entre le territoire d'origine et la perception de l'authenticité du produit. De plus, le GoF est de  $.51$  qui indique que les données correspondent bien au modèle, et  $R^2$  pour l'authenticité perçue est de  $.42$ . Nous trouvons que le territoire d'origine garde son impact sur l'authenticité perçue (coefficient partiel =  $.12$ ,  $p < .01$ ), et les deux termes d'interaction (territoire d'origine x familiarité et territoire d'origine x congruence) ont des effets positifs sur l'authenticité

perçue (coefficients partiels = .39 et .28, respectivement, avec  $p < .01$ ). Donc, ces deux variables jouent un rôle de modérateur de la relation entre le territoire d'origine et l'authenticité perçue. Nous validons H3 et H4.

### **3. Conclusion**

Les doutes concernant l'importance de l'indication du pays d'origine poussent les experts en marketing à rechercher une autre approche de communication. Nous avons montré que le territoire d'origine peut jouer un rôle critique dans l'évaluation du produit par le consommateur. Par une approche expérimentale, nous avons démontré que le territoire d'origine a un effet positif sur la perception de l'authenticité du produit, qui a ensuite un effet positif sur la connexion du consommateur au produit. Cette chaîne d'effets a déjà été proposée dans la littérature, mais nous contribuons à la démontrer d'une manière empirique. Plus important, nous avons trouvé que, par rapport au pays d'origine, le territoire d'origine joue un rôle unique dans la création de la perception de l'authenticité du consommateur. De plus, nous avons identifié deux modérateurs de la relation entre le territoire d'origine et l'authenticité perçue : la familiarité au territoire d'origine du consommateur et la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale. Ceci est cohérent avec les résultats que l'on peut trouver dans la littérature relative au pays d'origine et confirme leur importance dans le processus du transfert du sens. Enfin, nous avons indiqué que le territoire d'origine peut aussi contribuer à créer la connexion du consommateur au produit.

Pourtant, notre travail a certaines limites. Premièrement, le territoire d'origine n'explique que 11% de la variance de l'authenticité perçue dans notre étude. Nous pensons que ce taux de la variance expliquée est relativement faible à cause du fait que la seule information donnée aux participants est l'indication « fabriqué en Provence ». D'autres informations telles que des photos qui indiquent le territoire d'origine en question peuvent augmenter l'impact du territoire d'origine sur l'authenticité perçue du produit. Par conséquent, nous proposons de conduire un autre test qui utilise une vraie publicité en mettant l'accent sur le territoire d'origine.

Deuxièmement, l'utilisation d'une seule catégorie de produit très ciblé (un savon à la lavande) comme stimulus est certainement réducteur, car selon les consommateurs, ceux-ci peuvent s'appuyer sur des critères différents afin de juger de l'authenticité. Une piste de recherche serait d'explorer l'effet du territoire d'origine sur l'authenticité perçue, en testant plusieurs catégories de produits, afin de vérifier dans quelle mesure l'effet du territoire d'origine peut être généralisable, ou limité à certains territoires symboliques, ou limité à certains produits typiques de certains territoires. Et de voir par la suite comment adapter la communication publicitaire selon la situation rencontrée.

Troisièmement, nous avons testé seulement les effets de deux modérateurs (i.e., la familiarité avec le territoire d'origine et la congruence entre la catégorie du produit et son origine territoriale). Il serait intéressant de tester les effets d'autres modérateurs, tel que l'ethnocentrisme du consommateur. De plus, des modérateurs sociodémographiques, tels que l'âge, le genre, pourraient aussi influencer la relation entre l'authenticité perçue



et la connexion au produit. Sur ce dernier point, notre base de données peut servir pour exploiter ces axes de recherche.

Enfin, le modèle est seulement testé auprès de consommateurs chinois, ce qui constitue une autre limite, car l'authenticité est un concept qui dépend fortement de la culture. Dans une voie future, il serait nécessaire d'appliquer ce même test empirique dans d'autres contextes culturels, et identifier l'effet de l'environnement culturel dans l'influence du territoire d'origine sur l'authenticité perçue.

## **ARTICLE 2**

### **COMMENT UTILISER TERRITOIRE D'ORIGINE DE LA MARQUE**

#### **COMME UN OUTIL POUR CREER L'IMAGE DE LA MARQUE**

Cet article complète l'étude présentée dans l'article 1. Il aborde plutôt l'aspect managérial dans l'application des résultats obtenus dans l'article 1.

Dans la communication avec les consommateurs, le territoire d'origine d'un produit peut être utilisé d'une façon stratégique pour créer l'image de la marque. Cette stratégie offre aux entreprises des opportunités à long-terme, et en même temps, offre des retombées positives à l'ensemble des parties prenantes. Mettre l'accent sur les caractéristiques uniques d'un territoire spécifique renforce la qualité et l'authenticité d'une marque perçue par les consommateurs. Cependant, comme toute chose a son pendant, la stratégie du territoire d'origine peut aussi créer des difficultés. Pour que cette stratégie réussisse, il est nécessaire de choisir/promouvoir les produits dont les caractéristiques correspondent à l'image du territoire en question. D'autres façons telles qu'établir le bilan des ingrédients du produit, clarifier le processus de sa fabrication, souligner l'héritage de la marque peuvent participer à la réussite de cette

stratégie. Par ailleurs, cette stratégie territoriale joue un rôle important dans la responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise qui est alors perçue comme orientée vers le bénéfice du consommateur et de la communauté locale.

### ARTICLE 3

#### LA CONSOMMATION OSTENTATOIRE ET LE BIEN-ETRE SUBJECTIF

#### DU CONSOMMATEUR :

#### UNE EXPLICATION DE LA MOTIVATION DUALE

Depuis ces dernières années, le bien-être subjectif du consommateur est devenu un sujet important dans le marketing. Mais il existe des avis contradictoires sur sa relation avec la consommation ostentatoire. D'un côté, Linssen et al. (2011) démontrent une relation négative entre ces deux concepts. D'un autre côté, DeLeire et Kalil (2010) montrent que la consommation ostentatoire a un effet positif sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur.

D'après Shrum et al. (2013), quand le consommateur utilise un objet de consommation pour signaler son identité aux autres ou à soi-même (i.e., la consommation symbolique), il y a deux motivations derrière ce comportement. Soit l'objet est utilisé pour se prouver sa valeur, soit il est utilisé pour éveiller l'attention des autres. De plus, c'est la *motivation* dominante qui décide la direction de l'impact de la consommation symbolique sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur. D'après eux, la consommation symbolique a un effet positif sur le bien-être du consommateur si le consommateur utilise l'objet pour se prouver sa valeur. Par contre, la consommation

symbolique a un effet négatif sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur si l'objet est utilisé afin d'éveiller l'attention des autres. Ceci peut être une explication aux relations contradictoires entre la consommation ostentatoire et le bien-être subjectif du consommateur découvertes dans la littérature. C'est-à-dire, quand l'objectif de la consommation ostentatoire a pour but de se prouver sa valeur en tant que consommateur, elle a un effet positif sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur. Par contre, quand l'objectif de la consommation ostentatoire est pour éveiller l'attention des autres, elle a un effet négatif sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur. Mais cette proposition n'a jamais été empiriquement validée.

L'objectif de cette étude est donc d'utiliser des tests empiriques afin de comprendre la relation entre la consommation ostentatoire et le bien-être subjectif du consommateur suivant la proposition de Shrum et al. (2013). Plus précisément, nous étudions l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire sur les sous-composants du bien-être subjectif tels que la satisfaction de la vie (SDV), l'affect positif (AP) et l'affect négatif (AN). Nous proposons que la consommation ostentatoire a un effet positif sur la SDV du consommateur, sur son AP, et un effet négatif sur son AN si le consommateur utilise les objets ostentatoires pour se prouver sa valeur. En revanche, la consommation ostentatoire a un effet négatif sur la SDV du consommateur, sur son AP, et un effet positif sur son AN si le consommateur utilise les objets ostentatoires pour éveiller l'attention des autres.

En plus, les personnes ayant un niveau de matérialisme plus élevé ont une tendance plus forte d'utiliser les objets matériels comme des symboles afin de communiquer avec les autres des informations tels que le statut ou l'identité (Hudders et Pandelaere, 2012 ; Lynn et Harris, 1997). Par conséquent, nous considérons que pour les gens qui sont plus matérialistes, la possibilité d'utiliser les objets ostentatoires pour éveiller l'attention des autres les expose plus à subir les effets négatifs venant de ce comportement. Donc, nous proposons que le matérialisme du consommateur renforce l'effet négatif de la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres sur la SDV du consommateur, et sur l'AP du consommateur. Il renforce aussi l'effet positif de cette consommation ostentatoire sur l'AN du consommateur.

## **1. Développement des Hypothèses**

Le comportement de l'humain est régi par deux motivations : motivation intrinsèque et extrinsèque (Ryan et Deci, 2000). De plus, ce n'est pas le *comportement* lui-même mais la *motivation* au derrière de ce comportement qui décide l'impact du comportement sur le bien-être subjectif de l'individu (Carver et Baird, 1998 ; Sheldon et al., 2004 ; Srivastava et al., 2001). De la même manière, la consommation symbolique est aussi régie par deux motivations : pour se prouver sa valeur et pour éveiller l'attention des autres (Shrum et al., 2013). Quand le consommateur exécute une consommation symbolique pour se prouver sa valeur, ce comportement a un effet

positif sur le bien-être du consommateur. Par contre, quand le consommateur effectue une consommation symbolique pour éveiller l'attention des autres, ce comportement a un effet négatif sur son bien-être (Shrum et al., 2013).

Même si la consommation ostentatoire est souvent considérée comme un comportement pour éveiller l'attention des autres, elle peut aussi être régie par une motivation pour se prouver sa valeur, et son ostentation est « seulement une coïncidence » (Shrum et al., 2013, p. 1182). Par exemple, McFerran et al. (2014) démontrent que les gens qui rencontrent le succès ont une tendance plus forte de dépenser somptueusement par l'achat d'objets de luxe, afin de fêter leur succès ou mérites. Le consommateur peut aussi déplacer les attributs attrayants des objets sur soi-même et se percevoir comme ayant leurs qualités (Park et John, 2010). Par exemple, Mandel et al. (2006, p. 57) montrent que les étudiants « rêvent de leur propre succès futur » après avoir été exposés aux marques de luxe. Sivanathan et Pettit (2010, p. 564) trouvent également que certaines personnes ayant un niveau socio-économique bas gagnent l'estime de soi en s'engageant dans la consommation de luxe, car ils croient que ça leur permet d'avoir « l'accès aux bénéfices qui sont normalement réservées aux élites ».

Les consommateurs qui utilisent les objets ostentatoires pour se prouver sa valeur se concentrent sur ce qu'ils veulent et l'objectif de leur affichage ostentatoire est de leur amener le succès ou un accomplissement momentanés (Wilcox et al.,

2011). Ils considèrent que le sens enfoui dans les objets ostentatoire correspond à leur qualités (McFerran et al., 2014). Pour eux, la consommation ostentatoire leur permet de gagner l'estime de soi (Sivanathan et Pettit, 2010) et l'impression de compétence (McFerran et al., 2014). L'estime de soi et la compétence sont deux déterminants de la satisfaction de la vie de l'individu (Diener et Diener, 1995), de la présence l'affect positif (Vignoles et al., 2006), et l'absence de l'affect négatif (Sheldon et al., 2004). Par inférence, les consommateurs utilisant les objets ostentatoires pour se prouver sa valeur devraient augmenter leur satisfaction de la vie, avoir plus d'affect positif et moins d'affect négatif. Il s'ensuit :

*Hypothèse 1* : La consommation ostentatoire a un effet positif sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur, si elle est motivée par le besoin du consommateur de se prouver sa valeur.

*Hypothèse 1a* : La consommation ostentatoire a un effet positif sur la satisfaction de la vie du consommateur, si elle est motivée par le besoin du consommateur de se prouver sa valeur.

*Hypothèse 1b* : La consommation ostentatoire a un effet positif sur l'affect positif du consommateur, si elle est motivée par le besoin du consommateur de se prouver sa valeur.

*Hypothèse 1c* : La consommation ostentatoire a un effet négatif sur l'affect négatif du consommateur, si elle est motivée par le besoin du consommateur de se prouver sa valeur.



Quand les objets sont utilisés ostentatoirement pour éveiller l'attention des autres, il est plus difficile d'en contrôler le résultat, car c'est plus difficile de savoir comment les autres perçoivent le comportement de la personne. Par exemple, McFerran et al. (2014) démontrent que les consommateurs qui sont fiers de eux-mêmes ne comprennent pas ce qui représente le succès aux yeux des autres, et donc sont perçus comme des gens arrogants. Quand le consommateur utilise les objets ostentatoirement pour se prouver sa valeur, il atteint facilement ses attentes car il sait ce qu'il lui plaît. Mais quand c'est pour éveiller l'attention des autres, la probabilité que les autres nous perçoivent comme nous le voudrions est très faible. Donc, le consommateur peut subir plus souvent les effets négatifs à cause erreurs de prévoyance (Shrum et al., 2013). Aussi, ce qui plaît aux autres est moins explicite et change plus vite que ce qui plaît à soi-même. Quand quelqu'un fait trop attention à ce que les autres pensent, il est bloqué dans les activités qui plaisent aux autres et donne moins d'énergie pour rechercher ce qu'il veut vraiment (Ryan et Deci, 2000). A la fin, le fait de suivre les plaisirs des autres ramène un mauvais résultat sur le bien-être de soi-même (Shrum et al., 2013).

De plus, les personnes qui ont plus l'habitude de montrer aux autres un soi exagéré manquent souvent de l'estime de soi et de sécurité (Tracy et al., 2011). Pour eux, ils luttent pour apparaître parfaits et régulièrement utilisent les objets ostentatoires afin de cacher leur réalité, dans le sens que quelqu'un qui pratique une consommation ostentatoire peut avoir ni de l'argent, ni de statut (McFerran et al.,

2014). Certains d'entre eux peuvent même acheter des objets ostentatoires même s'ils ne peuvent pas se les offrir (Linssen et al., 2011) ou au prix de leur santé (Mead et al., 2011). Cela approfondit l'incohérence entre la réalité et l'image présentée qui met en danger l'affect positif (Vignoles et al., 2006), et donc a un effet négatif sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur. Par inférence, nous proposons :

*Hypothèse 2* : La consommation ostentatoire a un effet négatif sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur, si elle est motivée par le besoin du consommateur d'éveiller l'attention des autres.

*Hypothèse 2a* : La consommation ostentatoire a un effet négatif sur la satisfaction de la vie du consommateur, si elle est motivée par le besoin du consommateur d'éveiller l'attention des autres.

*Hypothèse 2b* : La consommation ostentatoire a un effet négatif sur l'affect positif du consommateur, si elle est motivée par le besoin du consommateur d'éveiller l'attention des autres.

*Hypothèse 2c* : La consommation ostentatoire a un effet positif sur l'affect négatif du consommateur, si elle est motivée par le besoin du consommateur d'éveiller l'attention des autres.

L'impact de la consommation symbolique sur les trois dimensions du bien-être subjectif varie selon le niveau du matérialisme de chacun (Hudders et Pandelaere, 2012). D'après Richins et Dawson (1992, p. 308), le matérialisme est « un état

d'esprit concernant l'importance des possessions dans la vie ». Spécifiquement, le matérialiste met ses possessions et acquisitions au centre de sa vie, et considère qu'elles sont essentielles pour sa satisfaction de la vie. Souvent, il utilise le nombre et la qualité des possessions accumulées afin de juger de son succès et de celui des autres (Richins et Dawson, 1992). Les matérialistes ont un désir plus fort vers les objets qui soit montrent le statut social (Heaney et al., 2005), soit sont uniques (Lynn et Harris, 1997). De plus, ils utilisent plus souvent ces objets afin de communiquer aux autres (Hudders et Pandelaere, 2012) et ils font plus attention aux satisfactions extrinsèque (Ryan et Deci, 2000). Donc, nous considérons que les matérialistes peuvent s'engager plus dans la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres, et par conséquent, subir plus les effets négatifs venant de ce comportement. Nous proposons :

*Hypothèse 3* : Le matérialisme du consommateur est un modérateur de la relation entre la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres et le bien-être subjectif du consommateur. Plus le matérialisme du consommateur est élevé, plus la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres a un effet négatif sur la satisfaction de la vie du consommateur.

*Hypothèse 3a* : Le matérialisme du consommateur est un modérateur de la relation entre la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres et la satisfaction de la vie du consommateur. Plus le matérialisme du consommateur est élevé, plus la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres a un effet négatif sur la

satisfaction de la vie du consommateur.

*Hypothèse 3b* : Le matérialisme du consommateur est un modérateur de la relation entre la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres et l'affect positif du consommateur. Plus le matérialisme du consommateur est élevé, plus la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres a un effet négatif sur l'affect positif du consommateur.

*Hypothèse 3c* : Le matérialisme du consommateur est un modérateur de la relation entre la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres et l'affect négatif du consommateur. Plus le matérialisme du consommateur est élevé, plus la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres a un effet positif sur l'affect négatif du consommateur.

## **2. Méthode**

Une série d'études ont été menées afin de tester les hypothèses. Le terrain choisi est en Chine. D'abord, un pre-test a été mené avec un échantillon d'étudiants exposés à une expérience imaginaire de consommation ostentatoire. L'objectif de cette étude est de tester si la consommation ostentatoire *imaginée* est efficace pour éveiller le sentiment et l'affect des participants, puis pour avoir un effet sur leur niveau de bien-être subjectif.

## *2.1 Pre-test*

Cent quatre vingt dix huit étudiants d'une grande université à Beijing (dont 153 femmes, avec un âge moyen de 19 ans) ont participé à la première étude. Le processus d'influence est classique – intrinsèque à la demande d'imaginer une situation (McFerran et al., 2014). Un groupe de participants ( $n = 112$ ) a été choisi de façon aléatoire et on leur a demandé d'imaginer un scénario où ils achètent des objets ostentatoires comme des cadeaux pour se faire plaisir. On a demandé à un autre groupe de participants ( $n = 86$ ) de se mettre dans la scénario où ils achètent des objets ostentatoires afin d'attirer l'attention des autres (e.g., des amis). Ensuite, on a demandé aux participants de répondre aux questions concernant l'objectif principal de leurs achats et leur bien-être subjectif tel que leur satisfaction de la vie, leur affect positif et négatif. Les questions démographiques sont également posées à la fin.

La satisfaction de la vie est mesurée avec l'échelle de Diener et al. (1985) – Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), qui se compose de cinq items notés sur une échelle de 5 point (1 = fortement en désaccord, 5 = fortement en accord) ( $\alpha=.79$ ). La moyenne des cinq items représente le niveau de la satisfaction de la vie du participant. L'affect positif et négatif sont mesurés par l'échelle de Thompson (2007) – Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS). Cette échelle se compose de dix items, avec cinq items mesurant l'affect positif ( $\alpha=.71$ ) et cinq pour l'affect négatif ( $\alpha=.74$ ). On a demandé aux participants d'indiquer sur une échelle de 5 points comment chaque item

décrit leur sentiments après avoir imaginé cette expérience (1 = pas du tout ; 5 = complètement). L'affect positif est la moyenne des cinq items qui le mesurent, et pareil pour l'affect négatif. Afin de vérifier l'efficacité de l'influence, nous adoptons deux questions comme « *Dans la scène que j'imagine, l'objectif principal de mes achats est pour me faire plaisir* » et « *Dans la scène que j'imagine, l'objectif principal de mes achats est pour attirer l'attention des autres* » (1 = fortement en désaccord, 5 = fortement en accord) ( $\alpha=.75$ ). Le deuxième item est codé à l'inverse et puis on moyenne deux items pour former un indice.

Les résultats montrent que l'influence est réussie. Les participants qui ont été mis en condition d'achat d'objets ostentatoires comme des cadeaux pour eux-mêmes indiquent que l'objectif principal de leurs achats est pour eux-mêmes ( $M_{\text{pour soi-même}} = 3.68$ ,  $SD = .88$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres}} = 3.32$ ,  $SD = 1.01$  ;  $t = 2.57$ ,  $p = .01$ ). Par contre, les participants qui ont été mis en condition d'achat d'objets ostentatoires pour attirer l'attention des autres indiquent que l'objectif principal de leurs achats est de se montrer aux autres ( $M_{\text{pour soi-même}} = 2.20$ ,  $SD = .86$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres}} = 2.98$ ,  $SD = 1.11$  ;  $t = -5.51$ ,  $p = .00$ ). Ensuite, nous testons les effets de l'âge et du genre. Ni l'un ni l'autre n'est lié aux variables focales dans cette étude ou les études suivantes.

Afin de tester les hypothèses 1 et 2, tout d'abord, nous comparons les moyennes des variables dépendantes. Malheureusement, les résultats ne montrent aucune différence de la satisfaction de la vie, de l'affect positif et négatif entre les groupes. Ceci indique qu'une expérience qui demande d'imaginer une consommation

ostentatoire n'est pas efficace pour éveiller l'affect des participants.

Nous conduisons donc nos études suivantes avec une expérience sur la consommation ostentatoire *vécue*. D'après McFerran et al. (2014), la variable indépendante est traitée comme un *état* qui donne des effets *temporaires* par l'influence, et comme un *trait de personnalité* qui donne des effets *chroniques* par le questionnaire. Afin d'augmenter la validité de nos études, nous testons l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire vécue de deux façons. Dans l'étude 1, nous adoptons l'angle de vue du *récepteur*, afin de comprendre comment les gens prédisent le bien-être subjectif d'une personne qui montre ce qu'elle possède ostentatoirement pour se compenser, ainsi que d'une personne qui exhibe ses objets pour éveiller l'attention des gens autour d'elle. Nous testons nos hypothèses 1 et 2 en traitant la consommation ostentatoire comme un *état* dans cette étude. L'étude 2 examine une limite des effets documentés dans les études précédentes (hypothèse 3), mais cette fois-ci, nous traitons la consommation ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur et pour éveiller l'attention des autres comme un *trait de personnalité*, afin d'examiner ses impacts *chroniques* sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur et de valider les hypothèses 1 et 2 du point de vue de l'*émetteur*.

## 2.2 Etude 1

Cent quatre vingt un participants (dont 92 femmes, avec un âge moyen de 33 ans) ont

participé à cette étude. Le principe du processus d'influence est de leur décrire un consommateur qui achète des objets ostentatoires. Les participants ont été soumis de façon aléatoire à deux scénarii. Dans le premier scénario, le consommateur en question a été décrit comme une personne qui achète des objets ostentatoires (e.g., BMW Série 5 Touring) pour se prouver sa valeur après avoir reçu une prime. Dans le deuxième scénario, le même consommateur achète les mêmes objets ostentatoires comme dans le scénario précédent, mais cette fois-ci, il les achète après avoir su que son collègue a acheté ces mêmes objets. Ensuite, on a demandé aux participants dans les deux scénarii d'évaluer la satisfaction de la vie du consommateur en question, ses affects positif et négatif.

La satisfaction de la vie, l'affect positif et l'affect négatif sont mesurés avec les mêmes échelles comme dans l'étude précédente. Toutes les échelles présentent une bonne fiabilité ( $\alpha_{\text{satisfaction de la vie}} = .77$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{affect positif}} = .77$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{affect négatif}} = .85$ ).

Les résultats de l'effectivité d'influence sont satisfaisants. Les participants qui ont été questionnés sur le consommateur qui achète les objets ostentatoires après avoir reçu une prime considèrent que l'objectif principal de la consommation ostentatoire du consommateur en question est de se prouver sa valeur ( $M_{\text{pour soi-même}} = 3.66$ ,  $SD = .84$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres}} = 2.67$ ,  $SD = .92$ ;  $t = 7.55$ ,  $p = .00$ ), et les participants questionnés sur le consommateur qui achète les objets ostentatoires après avoir su que son collègue possède ces objets considèrent que l'objectif principal de la



consommation ostentatoire du consommateur en question est pour éveiller l'attention des autres ( $M_{\text{pour soi-même}} = 2.92$ ,  $SD = .97$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres}} = 3.54$ ,  $SD = .92$  ;  $t = -4.39$ ,  $p = .00$ ).

Nous nous attendons à ce que les participants considèrent que le consommateur qui achète les objets ostentatoires pour se prouver sa valeur soit plus satisfait de sa vie, et ait plus d'affect positif et moins d'affect négatif que le consommateur qui achète pour éveiller l'attention des autres. Tout d'abord, nous comparons les moyennes de la satisfaction de la vie, de l'affect positif et de l'affect négatif du consommateur entre les deux scénarii. Les résultats montrent que les participants perçoivent que le consommateur est plus satisfait de sa vie, ( $M_{\text{pour soi} - SDV} = 3.13$ ,  $SD = .67$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres} - SDV} = 2.79$ ,  $SD = .60$  ;  $t = 3.62$ ,  $p = .00$ ), et a plus d'affect positif ( $M_{\text{pour soi} - AP} = 3.38$ ,  $SD = .51$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres} - AP} = 2.99$ ,  $SD = .67$  ;  $t = 4.38$ ,  $p = .00$ ) et moins d'affect négatif ( $M_{\text{pour soi} - AN} = 3.03$ ,  $SD = .63$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres} - AN} = 3.41$ ,  $SD = .71$  ;  $t = -3.81$ ,  $p = .00$ ) s'il achète les objets ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur. Ceci apporte une première preuve aux hypothèses 1 et 2. Ensuite, nous conduisons la régression des moindres carrés partielle. Les résultats indiquent que (pour se prouver sa valeur = 0, pour éveiller l'attention des autres = 1) la consommation ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur a un effet positif différentiateur sur la satisfaction de la vie (coefficient partiel Soi/Autre = .30,  $p < .01$ ) et sur l'affect positif (coefficient partiel Soi/Autre = .34,  $p < .01$ ), et un effet négatif sur l'affect négatif (coefficient partiel Soi/Autre = -.28,  $p < .01$ ).

Nous considérons que ces résultats valident nos hypothèses 1 et 2 de deux façons. Premièrement, nous croyons que quand le récepteur prête du bien-être subjectif à l'émetteur en tant que consommateur, ce ressenti peut être appliqué au récepteur lui-même. Deuxièmement, comme la consommation ostentatoire s'appuie sur un comportement de signalisation, l'effet d'éveiller l'attention des autres en est inévitable, et les gens autour de l'émetteur tirent systématiquement des conclusions sur son comportement (Wang et Griskevicius, 2014). Donc, le bien-être subjectif du consommateur, en tant qu'une des conséquences de la consommation ostentatoire, n'est pas qu'une expérience personnelle du consommateur. Autrement dit, les ressentis du récepteur peuvent influencer le niveau du bien-être subjectif de l'émetteur. On peut imaginer une situation où une personne voudrait montrer aux autres qu'elle est heureuse, mais en réalité elle est perçue comme une personne malheureuse par les gens autour d'elle. Par conséquent, elle peut avoir plus d'affect négatif et moins d'affect positif, et être moins satisfaite de sa vie, car elle n'atteint pas son but désiré. En revanche, même si quelqu'un n'a pas du tout l'intention de montrer aux autres qu'il est heureux, mais que par hasard, il est effectivement perçu comme un individu très heureux dans sa vie, il peut avoir un niveau plus élevé de bien-être grâce à ces remarques positives venant des gens autour de lui.

L'étude 1 donne raison aux hypothèses 1 et 2 du point de vue du récepteur. Mais nous voudrions vérifier dans l'étude suivante l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur du point de vue de l'émetteur.

Dans l'étude 2, nous testons le rôle du matérialisme dans la relation entre la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres et le bien-être subjectif du consommateur (hypothèses 3). De plus, nous traitons la consommation ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur et pour éveiller l'attention des autres comme un trait de personnalité, afin de re-tester les hypothèses 1 et 2.

### *2.3 Etude 2*

Deux cents quarante consommateurs (dont 147 femmes, avec l'âge moyen de 31 ans) ont participé à cette étude. Tous les participants ont donné leur consentement éclairé. Ils reçoivent un questionnaire en ligne où ils répondent aux questions concernant les raisons pour eux d'acheter des objets ou des expériences qui ont de la valeur ou ne sont pas ordinaires dans leur vie, leur satisfaction de vie, l'affect positif et négatif, le matérialisme, et leurs biodata.

La consommation ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur est mesurée par l'échelle de Bhattacharjee et Mogilner (2014) qui se compose de trois items ( $\alpha=.85$ ), et celle pour éveiller l'attention des autres est mesurée par l'échelle de Wang et Griskevicius (2014) qui a aussi trois items ( $\alpha=.87$ ). Les participants sont invités à indiquer dans quelle mesure ils achètent les objets visés afin de « se faire remarquer (attirer l'attention des autres) / montrer leur accomplissement personnel (impressionner les autres) / indiquer leur place dans la société (se valoriser) (1 = pas

du tout, 5 = complètement). Les trois items de la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres (codés à l'inverse) avec les trois items de la consommation ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur sont moyennés pour former un indice de la « motivation de la consommation ostentatoire ». Les échelles de la satisfaction de la vie ( $\alpha=.85$ ), de l'affect positif ( $\alpha=.79$ ) et négatif ( $\alpha=.80$ ) restent les mêmes comme dans les études précédentes. Le matérialisme du consommateur est mesuré avec l'échelle de Richins (2004) ( $\alpha=.71$ ) qui se compose de trois items. Toutes les échelles ont une bonne fiabilité.

Nous supposons que la consommation ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur a un effet positif sur la SDV du consommateur et leur AP et un effet négatif sur leur AN (hypothèse 1), et la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres a un effet négatif sur la SDV du consommateur et leur AP et un effet positif sur leur AN (hypothèse 2). De plus, nous supposons que le matérialisme du consommateur renforce l'effet négatif de la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres sur la SDV du consommateur, et sur l'AP du consommateur. Il renforce aussi l'effet positif de cette consommation ostentatoire sur l'AN du consommateur (hypothèse 3).

D'abord, nous conduisons un T-test afin de comparer les moyennes de la satisfaction de la vie, de l'affect positif et de l'affect négatif des consommateurs ostentatoires pour se prouver sa valeur avec les moyennes de ceux pour éveiller

l'attention des autres. Les consommateurs ostentatoires pour se prouver sa valeur sont les participants ayant une valeur moyenne plus élevée que la valeur moyenne de l'indice de la « motivation de la consommation ostentatoire ». Les consommateurs ostentatoires pour éveiller l'attention des autres sont les participants ayant une valeur moyenne en-dessous de la valeur moyenne de l'indice de la « motivation de la consommation ostentatoire ». Selon les résultats, le consommateur ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur est plus satisfait de sa vie, ( $M_{\text{pour soi}} - \text{SDV} = 3.38$ ,  $SD = .76$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres}} - \text{SDV} = 3.12$ ,  $SD = .82$  ;  $t = 2.49$ ,  $p = .01$ ), et a moins d'affect négatif ( $M_{\text{pour soi}} - \text{AN} = 2.39$ ,  $SD = .63$  vs.  $M_{\text{pour les autres}} - \text{AN} = 2.72$ ,  $SD = .74$  ;  $t = 3.72$ ,  $p = .00$ ) que le consommateur pour éveiller l'attention des autres. Néanmoins, la différence de l'affect positif n'est pas significative entre les deux groupes.

Ensuite, les résultats de l'analyse de la régression de moindre carrés montrent que la consommation ostentatoire se prouver sa valeur a un effet positif différentiel sur l'AP du consommateur (coefficient partiel = .22,  $p = .01$ ) (hypothèse 1b), et la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres a un effet négatif sur la SDV du consommateur (coefficient partiel = -.17,  $p < .05$ ) (hypothèse 2a) et un effet positif sur l'AN (coefficient partiel = .29,  $p = .001$ ) (hypothèse 2c). L'impact de la consommation ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur sur la satisfaction de la vie du consommateur et son affect négatif, et l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres sur l'affect positif du consommateur ne sont pas significatifs.

Concernant le rôle du modérateur « matérialisme », les résultats démontrent que le matérialisme du consommateur renforce l'effet négatif de la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres sur la SDV du consommateur (coefficient partiel<sub>matérialisme x pour les autres</sub> = -.53,  $p = .00$ ) (hypothèse 3a) et son effet positif sur l'AN (coefficient partiel<sub>matérialisme x pour les autres</sub> = .31,  $p = .01$ ) (hypothèse 3c).

### **3. Discussion Générale**

A travers deux tests empiriques, nous démontrons que la direction de l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur dépend de la motivation de la consommation, à la fois du point de vue de l'émetteur et du récepteur. Plus précisément, nous montrons comment la consommation ostentatoire pour se prouver sa valeur et pour éveiller l'attention des autres influence les sous-composants du bien-être subjectif (i.e., la satisfaction de la vie, l'affect positif et négatif) de façon différente. Ainsi, nous indiquons que le matérialisme du consommateur augmente l'effet de la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres sur la satisfaction de la vie du consommateur et son affect négatif.

Notre contribution comprend deux points. D'abord, notre étude est la première étude empirique qui investigate l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur sur une perspective de motivation duale. En général, les résultats confirment la prédiction de Shrum et al. (2013). Ensuite, nous

clarifions comment le matérialisme du consommateur joue sur la relation entre la consommation ostentatoire montrée aux autres et les sous-composants du bien-être subjectif du consommateur.

Toutefois, nos études ont des limites. Nous considérons seulement un effet direct de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur dans l'étude actuelle. Pourtant, cet effet peut être indirect à travers certaines variables telles que la satisfaction des domaines de la vie ou l'estime de soi. Dans une voie future, nous pourrions tester des médiateurs potentiels de la relation entre la consommation ostentatoire et le bien-être subjectif du consommateur, afin de mieux comprendre le processus d'influence de cette relation.

## 中文摘要



## 综述

本论文主要包括两个主题：产品产地对消费者行为的影响，以及炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度的影响。这两个主题又分别由三篇期刊论文构成。其中，第一篇和第二篇针对产品产地对消费者行为影响这个主题，第三篇则主要研究炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度的影响。

第一篇期刊文章题为《产品地区产地对消费者产品真实性感知的影响——以中国为例的实证分析》。该文章分别在欧洲市场营销2013学术年会(2013 European Marketing Academy Annual Conference)及亚太市场营销及物流期刊(Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics)上发表。

在第一篇文章的研究基础上，第二篇文章针对产品产地在实践中的应用方法，提出《如何利用地区产地来树立品牌形象》。该文章分别在2014年的亚洲市场营销学术会(2014 Marketing in Asia Group Scholar Conference)及全球商业与卓越组织期刊(Global Business and Organizational Excellence)上发表。

第三篇文章题为《炫耀性消费与消费者幸福度：基于双动机假设的解释》。该文章已在美国消费者研究协会举办的2015年亚太区年

会（2015 Asia Pacific Association for Consumer Research）上发表，并进入生活品质应用研究期刊（Journal of Applied Research in Quality of Life）的审稿阶段。

下面的部分将会对每篇文章的内容做进一步介绍。

## 文章 1

### 产品地区产地对消费者产品真实性感知的影响

#### ——以中国为例的实证分析

#### 1. 研究背景

消费者利用产品产地来判断产品性能的历史由来已久。自 1960 年有研究提出产品产地可以影响消费者行为以来,该研究方向就吸引了数以百计学者的注意。其中,大部分研究主要针对以“国家”为单位的产品产地对消费者产品评估的影响。例如,研究普遍表明消费者认为德国制造的产品质量比较好。换句话说,“德国制造”这个标签可以对消费者的产品质量感知产生正向影响。然而,随着全球化的不断加深,产品的生产越发的多国化,一件产品可能是德国设计,中国制造,公司总部却又在英国。消费者面对这种情况,也相应地越来越少的依赖“XX 国家制造”这一标签来衡量产品性能(如质量),“XX 国家制造”也因此而逐渐失去了其曾经对消费者行为影响的效用。

近来有迹象表明,消费者对地区产品的需求日益增强。在西欧,许多消费者因为抵触全球化下生产的标准化、同质性的产品,转向购

买一些地区生产的有特色的、异质性强的产品，例如消费者已经不满足于法国红酒，而是开始注重是法国哪个地区（如圣埃美隆）的红酒，并愿意为此付出较高的价格。根据法国世界报的报道，法国一家制衣企业 Armor-Lux 自从将一部分成衣的标签由“法国制造”改为“布列塔尼亚（法国西北部一个区）制造”后，其销量增加了 30%。该企业随即将总部由巴黎迁至布列塔尼亚。在这一背景下，一些学者（如 Charters and Spielmann, 2014; Suri and Thakor, 2013）提出，“XX 地区制造”的标签应该更符合当代市场需求，可以成为消费者用以衡量产品性能的一个重要标准，并成为企业建立品牌的一个重要方式。然而，关于地区产地对消费者行为的影响的研究非常有限。目前现存的少数针对地区产地的研究（如 Dion *et al.*, 2010）和针对产品真实性感知的研究（如 Napoli *et al.*, 2014）共同表明，产品地区产地或对消费者产品真实性感知有影响，但这一建议从未得到实证检验。

## 2. 研究目标

本文的目的就是用实证研究的方法探索以“地区”为单位的产地对消费者行为，尤其对消费者产品真实性感知的影响。另外，消费者产品真实性感知的有关研究表明，随着消费者产品真实性感知的增强，消费者与产品之间的联系也会随之增强。基于此，本文的主要目的就是验证从产品地区产地到消费者产品真实性感知，再到消费者与产品之间的联系这一链效应。另外，本文还研究产品地区产地对消费者产

品真实性感知影响的边界条件。以往的以国家为单位的产地研究指出，消费者对产品的熟悉程度，以及产品种类与其产地的拟合程度这两个变量可以调节国家产地对消费者产品评价的影响。据此，本文将消费者对产品地区产地的熟悉度以及产品种类与其地区产地的拟合程度作为两个调节变量，研究其对产品地区产地与消费者产品真实性感知之间的关系的影响。

### 3. 研究假设与模型

相比国家，地区因地域面积小，自然（气候，土壤等）及人文环境（文化，某种制造技艺等）的同质性更强，而给人一种更和谐，更纯粹的感觉，也使消费者认为在某个地区出产的产品更有特色，质量更好，也更具真实性。例如，波尔多以其特有的土壤、阳光等自然条件，被认为非常适宜生产红酒。另外，相比以多国共同设计制造的产品，地区产品一般设计、研发、生产都在一个地方，与其产地的联系非常紧密，从而给消费者一种可追根溯源的感觉。由于出自单一产地的产品相较于产地产品更容易被消费者认为其透明度高（如果生产过程易追踪），消费者对地区产品的真实性感知也应该因此而更强。另外，某些地区的居民可能给人诚实、淳朴、善良的印象，从而使消费者认为在那个地区生产的产品也更诚实可靠，从而增强其产品的真实性。针对地区产地这一重要性，欧盟当局已经出台法规，保护某些特定地区的产地使用权。例如，只有在法国香槟地区产的酒才有权叫“香

槟”。

**假设 1：**产品地区产地与消费者产品真实性感知正相关。

另外，有研究表明，消费者在自我人格塑造过程中，会将其所属物的特性纳入到自己的人格中，并在此过程中与其所属物产生联系。那些被认为具有真实性的产品，会让人联想到独一无二、纯洁无暇、真诚可靠等特性，消费者在拥有此类产品时，可以将这些他们想要的特性由产品转移到自己身上。

**假设 2：**产品真实性与消费者-消费品之间的联系正相关。

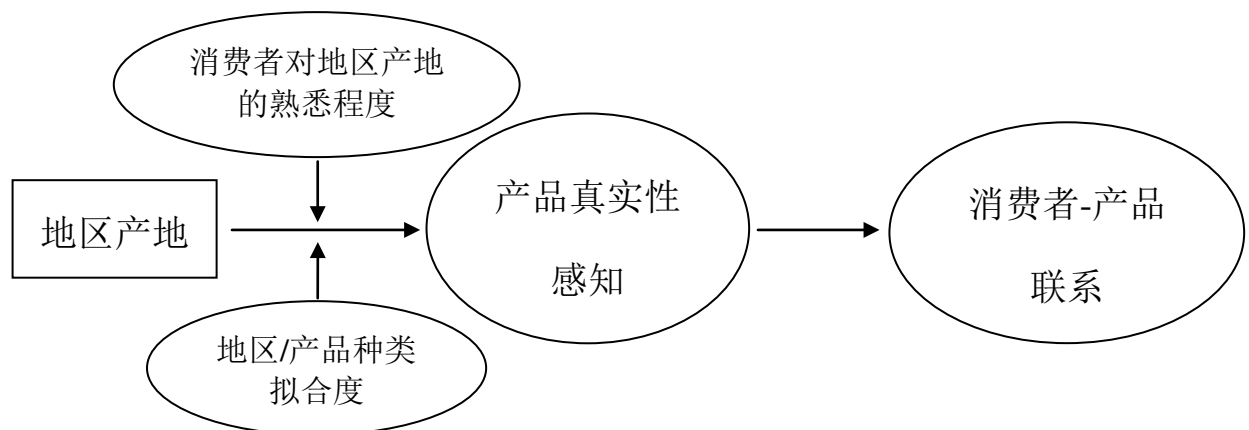
当消费者越熟悉某一地区时，该地区产品的真实性就越强；同理，产品种类与地区产地的拟合度越高，地区产地对消费者产品真实性感知的影响就越强。举个例子，假设“普罗旺斯制造”可以使消费者认为该地区生产的产品真实性更高，则越熟悉普罗旺斯地区的消费者，“普罗旺斯生产”这一标签便可以更强地影响消费者产品真实性的感知。另外，薰衣草相比西红柿与普罗旺斯地区的拟合度更高，所以消费者对产自于普罗旺斯的薰衣草类产品的真实性感知则比西红柿类产品的真实性感知要强。

**假设 3：**消费者对地区产地的熟悉程度调节地区产地对消费者产

品真实度感知的影响。当消费者越熟悉某一地区时，该地区产地对其产品真实性的影响就越强；反之，当消费者越不熟悉某一地区时，该地区产地对其产品真实性的影响就越弱。

**假设 4：**产品种类与其地区产地的拟合度调节地区产地对消费者产品真实度感知的影响。当产品种类与其地区产地的拟合度越高时，该地区产地对其产品真实性的影响就越强；反之，当产品种类与其地区产地的拟合度越低时，该地区产地对其产品真实性的影响就越弱。

该文的理论模型如下所示。



#### 4. 研究方法 with 结果

本文选取中国作为实验地点。参与实验的 665 名中国消费者被随机的分为三组：第一组（共 160 人）作为基线组，组内的消费者在看到一

张薰衣草香皂的照片后，被要求评价该香皂的真实性以及他们感受到的与该产品之间的联系；第二组的消费者（共 280 人）与第一组成员看到的香皂完全相同，只是这次照片上在香皂旁边多出了“普罗旺斯制造”几个字。在看过照片后，组内消费者也被要求评价该香皂的真实性以及体会到的与该产品之间的联系。同时，参与者还回答了有关其对普罗旺斯地区的熟悉程度，已经对普罗旺斯地区 and 该薰衣草香皂的拟合度感知的问题；第三组参与者（共 225 人）也与第一组成员看到的香皂完全相同，但这次照片上在香皂旁边多出的是“法国制造”这几个字。该组的用处主要是用于规避消费者香皂真实度感知的变化是因为消费者从照片中得到了更多的信息（XX 制造），而非单是由“XX 地区制造”这一变量造成的。如果消费者对薰衣草香皂真实度的感知只源于“普罗旺斯制造”这一标签，而非任意“XX 制造”（如法国制造），则地区产地的特殊作用则可以得到证明。

首先，我们拿第一组与第二组作比较。T 检验结果表明，第二组参与者对薰衣草香皂真实性的感知显著高于第一组参与者 ( $M_2 = 3.51$ ,  $SD = .39$ ;  $M_1 = 3.09$ ,  $SD = .31$ ;  $p < .01$ )。同时，第二组参与者感受到的与该薰衣草香皂之间的联系也显著高于第一组 ( $M_2 = 3.18$ ,  $SD = .66$ ;  $M_1 = 2.86$ ,  $SD = .54$ ;  $p < .01$ )。偏最小二乘法回归检验结果进一步证明，地区产地（地区产地=1，无产地=0）与产品真实性感知显著正相关 ( $R^2 = .11$ , 路径系数 = .33,  $p < .01$ )，产品真实度感知与消费者-产品联系显著正相关 ( $R^2 = .35$ , 路径系数 = .59,  $p < .01$ )。假设 1 和 2 得到初步证明。

接着，我们比较第一组和第三组。T 检验结果表明，第三组参与者



对薰衣草香皂真实性的感知 ( $M_3=3.13$ ,  $SD = .72$ ;  $M_1=3.09$ ,  $SD = .31$ ;  $p = .49$ )及与香皂之间的联系 ( $M_3 = 2.74$ ,  $SD = .78$ ;  $M_1 = 2.86$ ,  $SD = .54$ ;  $p = .19$ ) 均与第一组无显著差异。偏最小二乘法回归检验结果进一步证明, 国家产地 (国家产地=1, 无产地=0) 与产品真实性感知相关性不显著 ( $R^2 = .05$ , 路径系数 = .07,  $p = .17$ )。但产品真实性感知与消费者-产品联系保持正相关关系 ( $R^2 = .35$ , 路径系数 = .59,  $p < .01$ )。该实验结果证明地区产地是与产品真实性感知相关的唯一变量。

我们最后直接比较第二组和第三组。偏最小二乘法回归检验结果显示, 地区产地 (地区产地=1, 国家产地=0) 与产品真实性感知显著正相关 ( $R^2 = .07$ , 路径系数 = .25,  $p < .01$ )。此结果进一步确认了地区产地是影响消费者产品真实性感知的唯一变量。产品真实性感知与消费者-产品联系的相关关系与之前得到的结果相同 ( $R^2 = .33$ , 路径系数 = .57,  $p < .01$ )。令人惊讶的是, 地区产地还对消费者-产品联系有直接正效应 (路径系数 = .13,  $p < .01$ )。假设 1 和 2 得到最终证明。

接下来, 我们用第二组消费者的数据检测调节变量如何影响地区产地对消费者产品真实性感知的正效应。偏最小二乘法回归检验结果显示, 消费者对地区产地的熟悉程度以及产品种类-地区产地拟合度两个变量均正向调节地区产地对产品真实性感知的正效应 (路径系数<sub>熟悉度</sub> = .39,  $p < .01$ ; 路径系数<sub>拟合度</sub> = .28,  $p < .01$ ), 假设 3 和 4 得到验证。

## 5. 结论

面对国家产地这一变量逐渐衰退的影响力,市场研究者与实践者正在积极寻找新的营销方式。本文指出,地区产地可以成为今后重要的树立品牌形象的一个重要方式。虽然已经有学者提出地区产地的重要性,但迄今为止,还没有关于地区产地对消费者行为影响的实证研究。本文以中国市场为例,是第一篇通过实证研究的方法来确认地区产地重要性的研究。尤其值得提出的是,本文明确了地区产地相比国家产地,对消费者产品真实性感知有着其独一无二、不可替代的作用。而且,地区产地的使用还可以增进消费者与产品之间的联系。

当然,文本也有不足之处。地区产地对产品真实性感知的影响或许会因产品种类的变化而改变,而本文只考虑了一种产品。另外,产品真实性感知应该不是地区产地的唯一因变量,产品质量、产品可靠性、以及消费者购买意向等都可以受地区产地的影响。今后的研究应该纳入其他因变量做进一步的验证。再者,本文只考虑了两个调节变量,其他的调节变量如消费者爱国倾向等或许也可以调节地区产地对消费者行为的影响。最后,本文只选取中国消费者作为实验样本。不同国家的消费者对产品真实性的定义或许有差异。本文的结论还需要在其他文化环境中做进一步的验证,以此来测试本文提出模型的可扩展性。

## 文章 2

### 如何利用地区产地来树立品牌形象

基于上一篇文章的研究成果，本文主要针对如何在实践中应用地区产地树立产品品牌形象做进一步讨论。

地区产地由于可以赋予产品独一无二性，使产品更好的区别于竞争对手而成为树立产品品牌形象的一个重要工具。并且，有研究证明，全球化的生产导致消费者在消费过程中逐渐找不到“根”的感觉。而地区产品则因被视为与其产地紧紧相依，而使消费者通过消费该产品重拾“失去”的“根”，从而对地区产品产生好感甚至依恋。根据凯文·凯勒的品牌管理理论，品牌建设的关键就是使消费者看到品牌后，可以产生强烈的，有好感的，并且独一无二的品牌联想。由此推理，地区产地是树立品牌形象的一个重要工具。但正如所有的事物均有两面一样，利用地区产地树立品牌形象并不是一个简单的过程，营销人员会遇到诸多困难，比如消费者有可能担心地区（相比国家）狭小的地理范围会导致其资源有限，因而生产者无法获取所有其需要的自然和人力资源，从而无法保证产品质量等。

本文围绕如何成功利用地区产地树立品牌提出以下建议：首先，要尽可能找到地区产地与产品特性相一致的地方，来强化品牌的不可替代性。比如针对农作物，如果一个地区的阳光或土壤有其特殊性，尤其适于制造某种产品，则市场人员就需要向消费者强调指明该产品因这一地区的特有环境而优于其他竞争者的特性。比如，普洱茶可以借助普洱地区特殊的地理环境而强调其不可取代性。这样，即便其他地区的厂家也做茶，他们也很难取代源自于普洱地区的普洱茶的特殊性。如果地区与产品之间的联系性不明显，市场人员则需要尽可能找到其拟合的地方，并进行强调。例如，法国布列塔尼亚地区并不以生产棉花闻名，但大海却是其特色之一。法国制衣公司 **Armor-Lux** 就是利用充分强调旗下海魂衫与其产地布列塔尼亚的共通之处，并紧紧与其发源地相连，而赢得消费者的青睐。其次，“有根可循”是消费者青睐地区产品的另一个重要原因。为了强化这一特性，厂商需要深植于地区，例如公司总部，生产部门，都应设置在地区产地内部，用行动向消费者证明公司坚持“把根留住”。要使得消费者产生这样一种联想：地区产品的原材料采集、制作过程、研制开发、甚至人员的雇佣，都来自于同一片土地，这使得地区产品与其产地紧紧相连，是一个“有根”的产品。当产品有根可循时，地区产品就会给消费者“真诚”的感觉。消费者甚至会想象到：在某个地区生活着一群勤劳朴实的人，这些人热爱着他们的土地，呵护着他们的环境，于是，这块土地上的产品是在一个“纯洁”的环境里被创造的。同时，这些远离繁华大都市，勤恳劳作的人，又被认为是“心灵未受污染的”、“诚实的”，

由这些人制造出来的产品，比起商业化氛围十足的产品，当然是“真诚”的。以此来增强消费者对产品的好感和信心。基于这一点，厂商可以将产品的原料采集及制造过程进行全方位公布，进一步增强这种“透明”和“诚实可信”感。厂商还可以追溯历史，在其中找到该地区在制造这类产品方面的传统和经验。同时公司还应与当地人民建立友好的关系，积极参与地方社会活动，做到“取之于地区，用之于地区”，不断巩固产品与地区的联系，使二者做到互相依赖，彼此扶持。

## 文章 3

### 炫耀性消费与消费者幸福度：

### 基于双动机假设的解释

#### 1. 引言

近年来，消费者幸福度成为市场营销学领域的一个重要话题。然而，现存研究对于炫耀性消费如何影响消费者幸福度的看法却存在争议。一方面，Linssen et al. (2011)证明炫耀性消费与消费者幸福度负相关。但另一方面，DeLeire et Kalil (2010)却证明二者正相关。

Shrum et al. (2013) 提出，当消费者实施象征性消费时，他们受两种消费动机驱动：向他人发出信号（即利用消费品向他人传递某种信息）或向自我发出信号（即利用消费品满足自己内心的需求）。并且，象征性消费对消费者幸福度的影响由消费动机来定。当消费者实施象征性消费是为了向他人发出信号时，象征性消费对消费者幸福度有负效应；然而当消费者实施象征性消费是为了向自我发出信号时，象征性消费对消费者幸福度有正效应。这或许可以解释炫耀性消费与消费者幸福度之间的矛盾关系。也就是说，当消费者想要利用消费品向他人炫耀时，炫耀性消费应该会降低他们的幸福度；反之，当消费

者的消费目的是为了奖励或肯定自己时，炫耀性消费则应该会增加他们的幸福度。

本文的目的就是实证检验受两种不同目的驱动的炫耀性消费（即向他人炫耀的消费和向自我炫耀的消费）对消费者幸福度的影响。因为幸福度包括三个维度：积极情感，消极情感，和生活满意度，本文将分别研究两种炫耀性消费对这三个维度的影响。本文提出，向他人炫耀的消费会减少消费者的积极情感，增加其消极情感，并降低其生活满意度；而向自我炫耀的消费会增加消费者的积极情感，减少其消极情感，并提高其生活满意度。

## 2. 研究假设与模型

人类行为通常受两种动机指引：内生动机和外生动机（Ryan et Deci, 2000）。心理学家指出，人的幸福度的高低不是由行动，而是由指引行动的动机来决定的。以此推理，Shrum et al. (2013) 提出，当消费者用消费来传递信号时，其消费行为也受两种动机驱使：向他人发出信号和向自我发出信号。依照 Shrum et al. (2013) 的说法，当消费者用消费向自我传递信号的时候，该消费行为可以提高消费者的幸福度；而当消费者用消费向他人传递信号时，该消费行为会降低消费者的幸福度。

炫耀性消费通常被认为是向他人传递信号的一种消费行为。然而，炫耀性消费也可以是消费者自我奖赏的一种行为，其炫耀性可能完全是“无意”发生的。比如，研究证明成功的人更容易购买奢侈品，以此作为对自己的一种补偿，并展现自己的成就。在实施这一行为时，他们很可能完全无意向他人炫耀。更有研究证明，消费者可以将奢侈品具有的特性从所属物转移到自己身上，认为自己拥有这些物品具有的性质。比如，LV 或使用 LV 的人被视为具有“地位”，有些消费者会因为自己拥有 LV 而认为自己拥有地位。所以，消费者购买炫耀性消费品时，可能只是因为自己想拥有这些物品具备的性质，而非纯粹为了向他人炫耀。

对于那些购买炫耀性消费品主要为了犒劳自己的消费者来说，他们更注重自己喜欢什么，或者是物品是否可以体现他们想要体现的价值。他们从消费此类产品中进行自我肯定，加强自己的成就感，也因此而获得满足感。于是，我们认为：

**假设 1：**为了向自我传递某种信号的炫耀性消费与消费者幸福度正相关。

**假设 1a：**为了向自我传递某种信号的炫耀性消费与消费者的生活满意度正相关。

**假设 1b：**为了向自我传递某种信号的炫耀性消费与消费者的积极情感正相关。



**假设 1c：**为了向自我传递某种信号的炫耀性消费与消费者的消极情感负相关。

当消费者购买炫耀性消费品是为了引起他人的注意时，他们很难控制该类消费品给他们带来的效用，因为别人怎么想是很难控制的。比如，想要向周遭炫耀成功的人可能没有被周遭的人肯定他们的成就，反而被认为是自大的人而受到排斥。当消费者购买物品是为了自己开心时，他们很容易控制物品给他们带来的效用，因为人更清楚自己喜欢什么。但当消费者购买物品是为了获得别人的肯定时，购买行为带来的效用则很难控制，甚至适得其反。这一预见的失误可能会导致消费者的消极情感。当一个人完全陷入讨好别人时，他就无法尊重自己的内心做选择，因而幸福度也很低。于是我们推论：

**假设 2：**为了引起他人注意的炫耀性消费与消费者幸福度负相关。

**假设 2a：**为了引起他人注意的炫耀性消费与消费者的生活满意度负相关。

**假设 2b：**为了引起他人注意的炫耀性消费与消费者的积极情感负相关。

**假设 2c：**为了引起他人注意的炫耀性消费与消费者的消极情感正相关。

研究证明，象征性消费对消费者幸福度的影响受消费者物质主义

程度的调节。物质主义程度指物质的拥有在一个人生命中所占的重要性的大小。具体来说，物质主义程度高的人认为拥有物质对人生极为重要，并认为这是获取幸福的方式。通常，物质主义程度高的人更倾向于用物质来显示身份和向外界展示自我，也更为在乎外在的满意度。于是我们认为，物质主义程度高的人更倾向于实施为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费，也因此，为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度的负面影响也因消费者物质主义程度的增高而增大。于是：

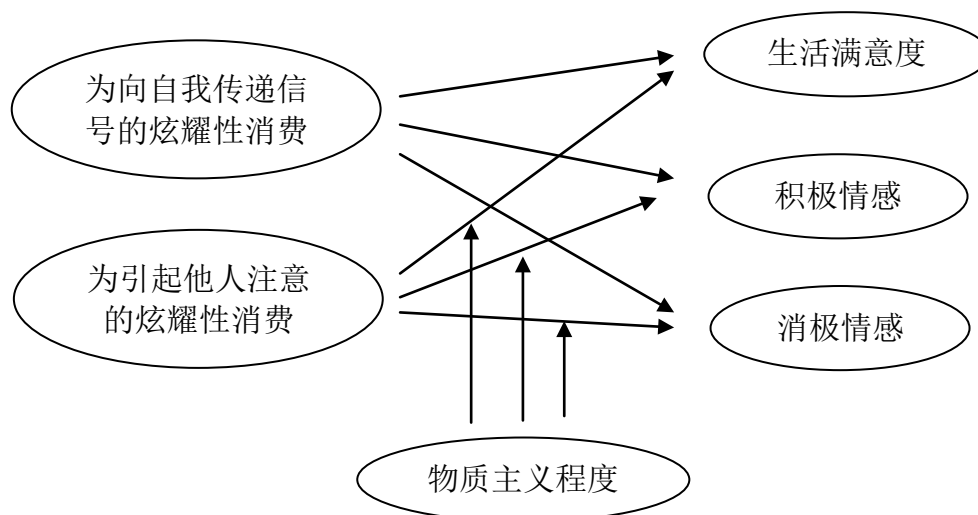
**假设 3：**消费者物质主义程度调节为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度的负影响。物质主义程度越高，为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度的负影响越大。

**假设 3a：**消费者物质主义程度调节为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者生活满意度的负影响。物质主义程度越高，为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者生活满意度的负影响越大。

**假设 3b：**消费者物质主义程度调节为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者积极情感的负影响。物质主义程度越高，为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者积极情感的负影响越大。

**假设 3c：**消费者物质主义程度调节为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者消极情感的正影响。物质主义程度越高，为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费对消费者消极情感的正影响越大。

该文的理论模型如下所示。



### 3. 方法

我们选择中国作为实验地点，并用一系列实验来验证假设。我们首先用一组学生进行预测试。该预测试的目的是看想象的炫耀性消费经历能否引起参与者情感的变化，进而对他们的幸福度产生影响。

#### 3.1 预测试

北京一所大学的 198 名学生参与了预测试。其中，153 名女生，平均年纪 19 岁。参与者被随机地分配到两种情况：一组参与者 ( $n=112$ ) 被要求想象他们获取成功后为奖励自己购买奢侈品的经历；另一组参与者 ( $n=86$ ) 则被要求想象在朋友购买了奢侈品后，为了有跟朋友一样

的东西而购买奢侈品的经历。在此之后，两组参与者均回答了有关他们生活满意度，积极情感和消极情感的问题。

生活满意度采用的是 Diener et al. (1985)的生活满意度量表( $\alpha=.79$ )。积极( $\alpha=.71$ )和消极情感( $\alpha=.74$ )采用的则是 Thompson (2007)的量表。所有量表均有很好的信度。

结果显示，年纪和性别均对参与者的幸福度无影响。然而，两组参与者的生活满意度，积极和消极情感也无显著差异。这一结果证明，“想象的”炫耀性消费经历无法有效的引起消费者情感的变化。

于是，在接下来的实验里，我们采用“亲身经历的”炫耀性消费经历来检测其对消费者幸福度的影响。我们会采取两种方法来检测：在实验 1 里，我们选取“信号接受者”的角度，来检测两种炫耀性消费者周遭的人如何推断他们幸福度的差异；实验 2 则选取“信号发出者”的角度，来检测两种炫耀性消费者本身所感受到的幸福度的差异。

### 3.2 实验 1

180 名消费者（92 名女性，平均年纪 33 岁）参与了该实验。参与者被随机的分到两组。一组成员阅读一名银行职员在得到年终奖后为奖励自己而购买了一辆宝马的故事；另一组成员读到的故事内容则是同样一名银行职员购买了同一种宝马，但这次是在看到同事购买后，才购买的。参与者在阅读故事后回答有关该名银行职员的生活满意度，

积极与消极情感等问题。

生活满意度,积极与消极情感的测量量表与初测中所使用的相同,并也都有很好的信度( $\alpha_{\text{生活满意度}} = .77$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{积极情感}} = .77$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{消极情感}} = .85$ )。性别与年纪对因变量无显著影响。

我们希望得到的结果是,参与者认为因得到奖金而购买宝马的银行职员比因同事购买而购买宝马的银行职员的生活满意度更高,有更多的积极情感,以及更少的消极情感。我们首先用 T 检测比较两组参与者对故事中银行职员幸福度评价的平均值。结果显示,参与者认为因得到奖金而购买宝马的银行职员比因同事购买而购买宝马的银行职员的生活满意度更高 ( $M_{\text{为自己}} = 3.13, SD = .67$  vs.  $M_{\text{为别人}} = 2.79, SD = .60$ ;  $t = 3.62, p = .00$ ), 有更多的积极情感 ( $M_{\text{为自己}} = 3.38, SD = .51$  vs.  $M_{\text{为别人}} = 2.99, SD = .67$ ;  $t = 4.38, p = .00$ ), 以及更少的消极情感( $M_{\text{为自己}} = 3.03, SD = .63$  vs.  $M_{\text{为别人}} = 3.41, SD = .71$ ;  $t = -3.81, p = .00$ )。之后,我们设定“拿奖金后买宝马的炫耀性消费”为 0,“因同事买宝马而进行的炫耀性消费”等于 1,再用最小偏二乘法进行测试。结果显示,“为自己的炫耀性消费”对消费者的生活满意度(路径系数 = .30,  $p < .01$ )及积极情感(路径系数 = .34,  $p < .01$ )均有正效应,对消极情感有负效应(路径系数 = -.28,  $p < .01$ )。于是,假设 1 和 2 得到验证。

我们认为以上结果可以支持假设 1 和 2 的理由如下。首先,我们认为旁观者对于炫耀性消费实施者的幸福度判断可以反过来应用到他们自己身上。其次,即便是为自己的炫耀性消费也不可避免的会向

外界传递信号，于是因炫耀性消费而引起的幸福度的变化不可避免会受到外界影响。如果一个人的最初目的是为了奖励自己而实施炫耀性消费，但这一行为无意间被旁人认为其幸福度很高，我们相信，这一反馈回实施者的信号会进一步提高其幸福度。相反，如果一个人是为了吸引他人的注意而实施炫耀性消费，他期待周遭的人认为他很幸福，结果得到的反馈反而是周围的人认为他不幸福，我们相信这也会进一步降低他的幸福感。

因此，我们认为假设 1 和 2 从旁观者的角度得到了验证。在实验 2 中，我们会选取从实施者的角度再次验证假设 1 和 2，并同时测量消费者物质主义程度对“为引起他人注意的炫耀性消费”对消费者幸福度影响的调节作用。

### 3.3 实验 2

240 名（其中 147 名女性，平均年纪 31 岁）消费者参与了该实验。参与者在线填写他们在生活中购买奢侈品的原因，并在之后对自我的生活满意度，积极情感，消极情感状况，以及物质主义程度做评价。我们使用 Bhattacharjee et Mogilner (2014) 的量表来测量“为自己”的消费目的( $\alpha=.85$ )，而“为吸引他人注意”的消费目的( $\alpha=.87$ )则用 Wang et Griskevicius (2014)的量表测量。“为吸引他人注意”的消费目的的反向编码后与“为自己”的消费目的合并为一个名为“炫耀性消费目的”的变量。我们以“炫耀性消费目的”的平均值为界，参与者此

变量的值大于该平均值的被划分到“为自己的炫耀性消费者”一组，而拥有小于该平均值的参与者则被划分到“为吸引他人注意的炫耀性消费者”一组。消费者物质主义程度由 Richins (2004) ( $\alpha=.71$ ) 的量表测量。消费者生活满意度( $\alpha=.85$ )，积极( $\alpha=.79$ )与消极情感( $\alpha=.80$ )的测量与之前的实验一样。所有量表均表现出很好的信度。

我们首先用 T 检验比较“为自己的炫耀性消费者”和“为吸引他人注意的炫耀性消费者”的生活满意度，积极与消极情感。结果证明，相对为吸引他人注意的炫耀性消费者，为自己的炫耀性消费者有更高的生活满意度 ( $M_{\text{为自己}} = 3.38, SD = .76$  vs.  $M_{\text{为别人}} = 3.12, SD = .82$ ;  $t = 2.49, p = .01$ )，和更少的消极情感( $M_{\text{为自己}} = 2.39, SD = .63$  vs.  $M_{\text{为别人}} = 2.72, SD = .74$ ;  $t = 3.72, p = .00$ )。然而，两组参与者的积极情感无显著差别。我们接下来用最小偏二乘法检验。结果显示，“为自己”的炫耀性消费对消费者的积极情感有正效应（路径系数=.22,  $p = .01$ ) (假设 1b)；“为吸引他人注意”的炫耀性消费对消费者的生活满意度有负效应（路径系数= -.17,  $p < .05$ ) (假设 2a)，对消费者消极情感有正效应（路径系数= .29,  $p = .001$ ) (假设 2c)。然而，“为自己”的炫耀性消费对消费者的生活满意度及消极情感，以及“为吸引别人”的炫耀性消费对消费者的积极情感均无显著效应。同时结果证明，消费者物质主义程度加强“为吸引别人”的炫耀性消费对消费者生活满意度的负效应(路径系数= -.53,  $p = .00$ ) (假设 3a)，以及其对消费者消极情感的正效应 (路径系数= .31,  $p = .01$ ) (假设 3c)。

#### 4. 结论

本文通过两个实验证明了炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度的影响取决于消费者的消费目的。“为了吸引他人注意的炫耀性消费”与“为了奖励自己的炫耀性消费”以不同的方式影响消费者幸福度的三个维度，包括消费者生活满意度，积极情感与消极情感。同时，本文证明了消费者物质主义程度影响“为了吸引他人注意的炫耀性消费”对消费者生活满意度的负效应及对消极情感的正效应。

本文的贡献有两点：第一，本文是第一篇用实证方法从双动机角度检验炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度影响的文章；第二，本文明确了消费者物质主义程度在“为了吸引他人注意的炫耀性消费”与消费者幸福度之间的关系里扮演的角色。然而，本文也存在局限性。本文只考虑了炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度的直接影响，而二者直接的关系可能存在一些中介变量，如消费者自信等。未来的研究应研究潜在于二者的中介变量，以便进一步明确炫耀性消费对消费者幸福度的影响过程。



## **CHAPTER 1 – GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the research background of territory of origin and subjective well-being, so as to raise the research questions and carry out the research objectives of this dissertation. Following this, the organization of this dissertation is presented. The aim of this chapter is to introduce the interest of the studies presented in this dissertation, and to offer a clear understanding of the organization of this dissertation.

### **1.1.1 Territory of Origin: Context, Research Questions, and Research Objectives**

In the marketing literature, “made in” labels have attracted considerable research attention and prior research mainly concentrates on investigating how country of origin (COO) affects consumers’ evaluations of the product (Herz and Diamantopoulos, 2013). However, COO seems to lose its relevance in modern markets (Samiee, 2011; Usunier, 2011). Confronted with hybrid, multi-national products, consumers appear less sensitive to COO information (Usunier, 2011), and this lack of relevance cannot be resolved by decomposing the construct into specifications, such as country of design, manufacture, assembly and parts (e.g. Hamzaoui and Merunka, 2006; Li et al., 2000). In a global world, consumers increasingly integrate other elements to evaluate products, such as the brand name

(Häubl and Elrod, 1999), the culture of origin (Lim and O’Cass, 2001) or global product foreignness (Leclerc et al., 1994; Zhou et al., 2010), leading to the lost of COO’s validity and managerial relevance. Some recent studies (e.g., Basfirinci, 2013; Hamin *et al.*, 2014) even propose that COO may generate negative impacts in modern markets.

Under this condition, some scholars (e.g. Charters and Spielmann, 2014; van Ittersum *et al.*, 2003) propose that territory of origin (TOO), referring to “the holistic combination in an environment of soil, climate, topography, and the ‘soul’ of the producer” (Iversen and Hem, 2008, p. 615), is a valuable signal for consumers and a critical managerial tool for marketers. Compared with multiple countries of production, sourcing and assemblies, TOO is inherent to the local products and provides brands with “individual fingerprints that are unique” (Iversen and Hem, 2008, p. 603). It thus may address “the real or perceived inadequacies of ... COO” (Samiee, 2011, p. 474) and create opportunities for brand differentiation in various markets. Real world evidence also shows that faced with the prevalence of hybrid and multi-national products, consumers are increasingly seeking regional or local products rather than standardised, homogenised products with uncertain origins. For example, Armor-Lux (a clothing brand from France’s Brittany region) increased its sales by more than 30% in the markets including France, the U.S. and Japan, after labelling its products “100% Made in Bretagne” (instead of “Made in France”) (Jaxel-Truer, 2012). The store brand of Europe’s leading retailer Carrefour – “Reflets de France” – also uses the TOO as a communicating tool in order to highlight the local culinary heritage

of a range of its products, which enables it to ask consumers for price premium. However, little empirical research has investigated the impact of TOO on consumer brand evaluations or behaviour (Charters and Spielmann, 2014; van Ittersum *et al.*, 2003).

The *research questions* are: How does TOO influence the consumer's product/brand evaluations? Are there any boundary conditions of the influence of the TOO of a product on consumers' product/brand evaluation? If TOO can be used as a communicating tool, how to use it in brand building programs?

Based on the few studies available, we find that local brands may highlight their unique qualities and justify their authenticity by communicating their TOO (Dion *et al.*, 2010). Defined as “a subjective evaluation of genuineness ascribed to a brand by consumers” (Napoli *et al.*, 2014, p. 1091), authenticity is often associated with meanings generated by a place of origin, including history, culture, and tradition (Grayson and Martinec, 2004) together with sincerity, honesty, innocence, originality, nature and simpleness (Beverland, 2006; Napoli *et al.*, 2014), or uniqueness (Iversen and Hem, 2008). At the same time, territories, compared to countries, are more homogeneous in their human and natural environment factors (van Ittersum *et al.*, 2003), and therefore should provide territorial products with pure and unique identities which contribute to create consumers' perception of product authenticity. Besides, smaller things generally are perceived as more unique (Brewer *et al.*, 1993).

As perceptions of uniqueness are critical to brand authenticity (Iversen and Hem, 2008), territories should relate more closely to uniqueness perceptions than do countries, which further enhances local products' perceived authenticity. Therefore, TOO associations may offer important tools for building brand authenticity and for generating strong and unique brand associations which have an impact on consumer behaviour. To the best of our knowledge however, the link between TOO, perceived authenticity and consumer behaviour has not been tested empirically.

Our *first research objective* is therefore to empirically validate the impact of TOO associations on product perceived authenticity. Besides, previous qualitative studies (e.g. Leigh *et al.*, 2006) propose that consumers' perception of brand authenticity strengthens their connection to the brand, referring to the extent to which consumers incorporate brands into their self-concept (Escalas and Bettman, 2003). We thus relate perceived authenticity to a consumer/brand relational outcome (consumers' self-brand connection) and test a chain of effects, from TOO associations to perceived authenticity, and in turn to consumers' self-brand connections. Besides, we explore boundary conditions of the benefits of such a territorial strategy. Finally, based on our results and previous studies, we offer marketers with important managerial implications on how to use TOO as brand-building tool.

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### **1.1.2 Subjective Well-Being: Context, Research Questions, and Research Objectives**

Subjective well-being (SWB), defined as a person's own evaluation of his or her life (Diener et al., 1999), has also increasingly attracted interest from both marketing practitioners and the academia. Many variables are considered to be linked to an individual's SWB, such as income, personality, marital status, religion, age, sex, profession, education, intelligence, and health (see Diener et al., 1999 for a review). In particular, consumption is one of the most extensively researched factors accounting for the variance in SWB (Guillen-Royo, 2008). Accordingly, the impact of various kinds of consumption on consumers' SWB has been investigated in previous literature. For example, consumption of commodities is generally considered to have a positive impact on the well-being of population (Diener et al., 2010). Hedonic consumption is also shown to be positively related to consumers' SWB by a number of studies (e.g., Bhattacharjee and Mogilner, 2014; Brajsa-Zgenc et al., 2011; Caprariello and Reis, 2013; Carter and Gilovich, 2012; Zhong and Mitchell, 2010).

However, only limited research has been conducted on the influence of conspicuous consumption and consumer's SWB, and the nature of their relationship has generated controversy. For instance, Linssen et al. (2011) find a negative relationship between conspicuous expenditure and consumers' SWB. In other words, the more individuals spend on conspicuous consumption, the less SWB they have. In contrast, DeLeire and Kalil (2010) demonstrate that consumers who have a higher

expenditure on status objects are more satisfied with their life.

Being the behavior where one flaunts wealth through conspicuous possessions in order to signal to others that he/she has wealth or status (Shrum et al., 2013; Veblen, 1899), conspicuous consumption is viewed to have a negative impact on consumers' subjective well-being by certain researchers (e.g., Linssen, et al., 2011) for the following reasons. First, conspicuous consumption is considered as wasting social resource to show wealth and status rather than consuming for necessities (Veblen, 1899), which reflect people's endless struggle for fulfilling extrinsic needs (e.g. fame, social comparison). As people's search for extrinsic satisfaction may pull out their search for the satisfaction of intrinsic needs (e.g., self-actualization) which is more beneficial for their well-being (Ryan and Deci, 2000b; Sheldon et al., 2010), conspicuous consumption thus should have a negative impact on consumers' SWB. Besides, conspicuous display may lead to social rejection or even exclusion, since individuals associated with materialistic purchases rather than experiential ones are considered as more selfish and self-centered by their social surroundings (van Boven et al., 2010). As the acceptance from one's social surroundings is important to an individual's happiness (Vignoles et al., 2006), this offers another reason why conspicuous consumption may be detrimental to consumers' SWB.

However, many consumers still spend a large amount of their income on conspicuous goods, even the poor who can hardly satisfy their basic needs (Linssen et al., 2011). Demand theory states that consumers try to maximize their satisfaction

through consumption activities (Oropesa, 1995). This indicates that some utility, in particular psychological utility, should be derived from this type of consumption. Conspicuous consumption may nurse psychological wounds of people under self-threat and boost their self-esteem (Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010), or bolster the feelings of competence and meaningful existence of socially excluded people (Lee and Shrum, 2012). As the satisfaction of these needs is beneficial for individuals' happiness (Vignoles et al., 2006), by inference, conspicuous consumption should have a positive impact on consumer's SWB. Among the seniors, DeLeire and Kalil (2010) find that consumers are more satisfied with their life, as they increase their expenditure on status consumption which enables them to feel a sense of social connectedness.

The *research questions* are: What is/are the motive(s) driving consumers to engage in conspicuous consumption? Do they gain or damage their subjective well-being through this behavior? How to explain the controversy demonstrated in the previous literature?

Prior psychologists' dedication shows that it is not *what* goals are pursued, but *why* the goals are pursued which determines the impact of human behavior on SWB (Carver and Baird, 1998; Sheldon et al., 2004; Srivastava et al., 2001). According to self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2000a), human behaviors are driven by two kinds of motives including intrinsic and extrinsic motives. Intrinsic motive



refers to the self-desire to seek out new things and new challenges and to analyze one's capacity. It is driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself or from the sense of satisfaction in completing or even working on a task, and exists within the individual rather than relying on external pressures or a desire for reward. Extrinsic motive is the opposite of intrinsic motive, driven by external rewards such as money, frame, grades, or praises (Ryan and Deci, 2000a). SDT posits that behaviors driven by intrinsic motives are beneficial to the individual's SWB, but those driven by extrinsic motives have damages to one's SWB.

Applying this principle to consumer behavior, Shrum et al. (2013) propose that consumers' symbolic consumption (i.e., the behavior where consumers consume objects to signal their identity to the self or to others) is driven by two motives including self-signaling (i.e., to show the meanings linked to a symbolic product to oneself) and other-signaling motive (i.e., to show the meanings linked to a product to others), and it is only when symbolic consumption is driven by an other-signaling motive that its impact on consumers' well-being is negative. As conspicuous consumption is one kind of symbolic consumption, it is reasonable to consider that the contradictory results of the relationship between conspicuous consumption and consumers' SWB may be explained by which motive (self- vs. other-signaling) predominates the behavior. In other words, conspicuous consumption driven by a self-signaling motive (self-signaling conspicuous consumption) may have a positive impact on consumers' SWB, and the one driven by an other-signaling motive (other-signaling conspicuous consumption) may have a negative impact on consumers'

SWB. However, this has never been empirically tested.

Our *second research objective* is thus to empirically test this bi-motive hypothesis and investigate the impact of conspicuous consumption on consumers' SWB when a self-signaling or an other-signaling motives is predominant. As SWB includes distinct sub-components, life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect, and each component relates differently to consumer's consumption behavior (Hudders and Pandelaere, 2012; Diener, 1994), we separately investigate the relationship between conspicuous consumption and each component of consumer's SWB, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of their relationship.

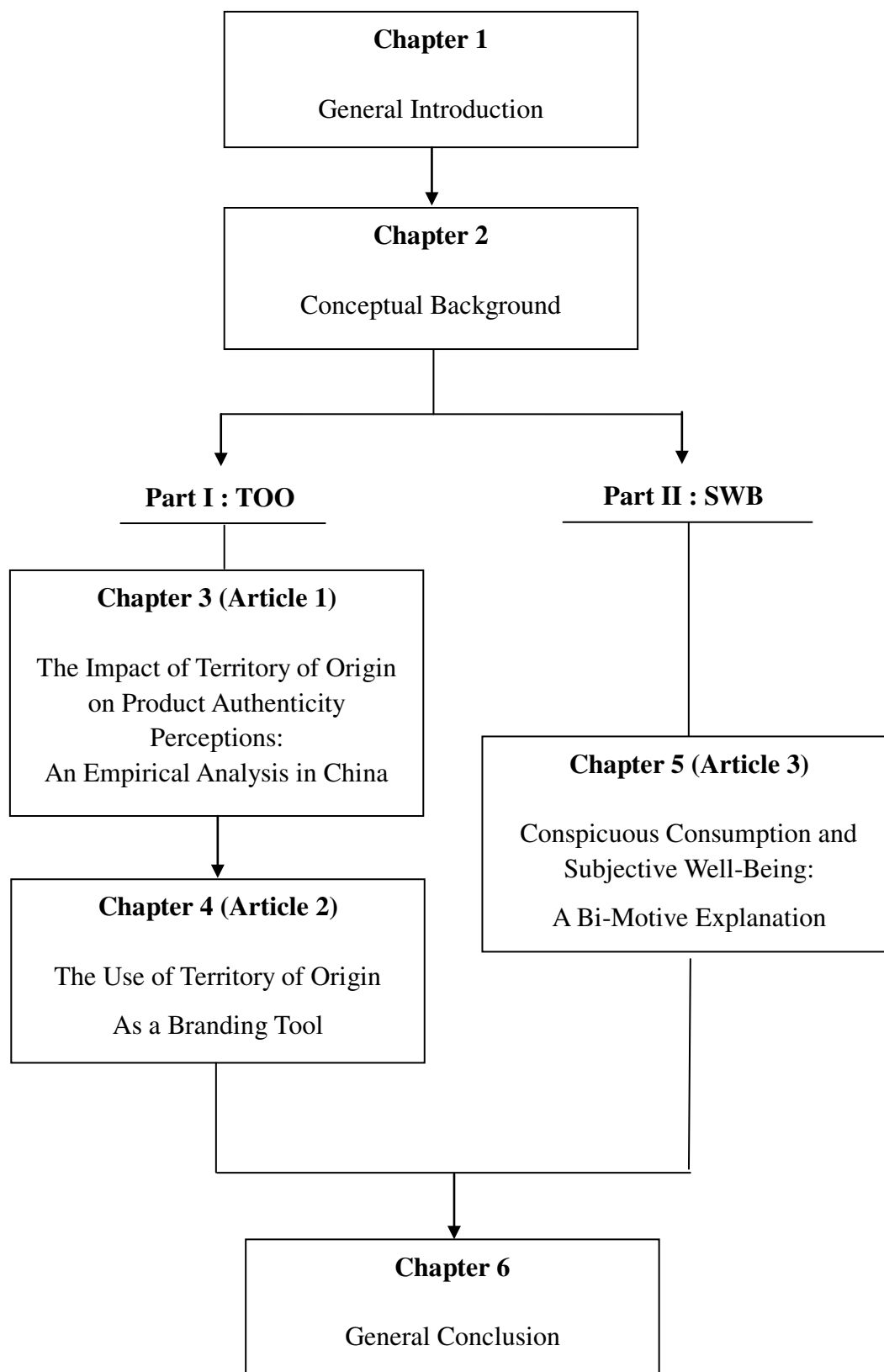
## **1.2 DISSERTATION ORGANIZATION**

This dissertation consists of two main subjects: the impact of territory of origin of a product on consumers' behavior and the impact of conspicuous consumption on consumers' subjective well-being. More specifically, three articles concerning these two topics are presented in this dissertation. The first article concerns the impact of the territory of origin of a product on consumers' product authenticity perceptions. Based on the first article, the second article is a managerial paper which proposes marketers with four main ways to use the territory of origin as a branding tool. The third article investigates the influence of conspicuous consumption on consumers'

subjective well-being through a bi-motive hypothesis.

The organization of this dissertation is as follows. Chapter 1 provides the general introduction of the dissertation, including the research background, research questions, and research objectives. Chapter 2 presents prior literature concerning the key concepts of this dissertation, including the territory of origin, subjective well-being, and conspicuous consumption. More specifically, the definitions, dimensions, and outcomes of TOO, the definitions, dimensions of SWB, and its relationship with different kinds of consumption behavior, as well as the nature, the meanings signaled by and the needs related to conspicuous consumption are presented in detail. Then the dissertation is divided into two parts. Part 1 is composed of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 which concentrate on the TOO subject. More precisely, Chapter 3 presents the article entitled “the impact of territory of origin on product authenticity perceptions: an empirical analysis in China”. In this article, previous literature concerning the territory of origin, perceived authenticity, as well as consumers’ self-brand connection is reviewed, which offers the theoretical background of the hypotheses concerning the impact of a product’s TOO on its perceived authenticity and the impact of consumers’ perception of product authenticity on their self-brand connection. Then, COO literature on the role of consumers’ familiarity with the product and of perceived congruence between the place of origin and product category is reviewed, which offers the theoretical basis of the hypotheses concerning the moderating impacts of consumers’ familiarity with the TOO and of the perceived congruence between TOO

and product category in the relationship between TOO and perceived authenticity. The methodology is presented following this. At last, findings are discussed and some future research directions are offered. Chapter 4 presents the article entitled “the use of territory of origin as a branding tool”, which is a managerially oriented article aiming at marketing managers and practitioners. In this article, four main strategies on how to use the TOO as a brand-building tool in the marketing communication programs are provided, in order to offer firms with long-term market opportunities while benefiting stakeholders. The four main strategies include: promoting TOO-congruent products, establishing track records, emphasizing TOO uniqueness, and using TOO strategy as corporate social responsibility. Part 2 changes the topic to consumers’ SWB and consists of Chapter 5 which presents the article entitled “conspicuous consumption and consumers’ subjective well-being: a bi-motive explanation”. In the first place, self-determination theory (SDT) and Shrum et al. (2013)’s proposition concerning consumers’ motive of symbolic consumption are introduced in order to offer the theoretical background to the bi-motive proposition concerning the impact of conspicuous consumption on consumers’ SWB. In the second place, consumers’ materialism is introduced, and its role in the relationship between conspicuous consumption and consumers’ SWB is proposed. Thirdly, three studies conducted with 619 Chinese consumers to test the bi-motive hypothesis, as well as the moderating role of consumers’ materialism, are presented. In the end, the contributions and the limitations of the study are discussed and the future research directions are indicated. Figure 1 shows the structural organization of this dissertation.

**FIGURE 1.** Structural Organization of the Dissertation

## **CHAPTER 2 – CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND**

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature review of three main concepts of this dissertation, including territory of origin, subjective well-being, and conspicuous consumption. This chapter has two main goals. The first one is to present the concept of territory of origin and to introduce the outcomes that are related to the territory of origin of a product. The second one is to present the constructs including subjective well-being and conspicuous consumption, as well as to introduce previous literature concerning the relationship between consumption and consumers' subjective well-being and the outcomes of conspicuous consumption. Knowing the outcomes of the territory of origin of a product will provide the theoretical framework to Part 1 of this dissertation. Besides, the introduction of the relationship between consumption and consumers' subjective well-being and the consequences of conspicuous consumption builds up the theoretical framework to Part 2.

The organization of this chapter is as follows. First, the definition, the dimensions, and the outcomes of the territory of origin of a product proposed in prior literature are reviewed. Next, the definition and the component of subjective well-being, as well as its relationship with a variety of consumption behaviors which have been found in the literature, are presented. Last, the nature of, meanings signaled by, and the needs related to conspicuous consumption are demonstrated.

## 2.2 TERRITORY OF ORIGIN (TOO)

### 2.2.1 Definition of TOO

Territory of origin (TOO), or *terroir*, reflects a French origin, in that the word *terre* means *land*. According to Oxford Dictionary (2015), territory refers to *land with a specified characteristic*. Sociologist defines the term “territory” as “a geographic space transformed by human labour” (Raffestin, 1986, p. 177). Under the globalization, territory is used to describe the integration of individual or collective practices, beyond physical space (Giraut, 2008). TOO can be a region, a province, a trade zone, or a continent. In the marketing literature, TOO initially was used to describe how the soil, place, and climate of a specific territory influenced the taste of food and wine and produced unique flavours (Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012). For van Ittersum et al. (2003, p. 215), territory refers to “a geographical area within a country”. Rooted in a community that has been built on social interactions and shared cultural elements, TOO is also a “quasi-sacralized site on which meanings of depth, communal tradition, and expressions of genuine cultural difference are projected” (Thompson and Tambyah, 1999, p. 238). According to Iversen and Hem (2008, p. 615), TOO refers to “the holistic combination in an environment of soil, climate, topography, and the ‘soul’ of the producer”.

Being an extrinsic cue, TOO can be communicated through the “made in” label,



be portrayed by the brand, or be even included directly in brand name (Charters and Spielmann, 2013). Until now, TOO research is still in its infancy, and only in the last decade has a number of academics (e.g. Charters and Spielmann, 2013; Iversen and Hem, 2008; Suri and Thakor, 2013; van Ittersum et al., 2003) consider in this direction.

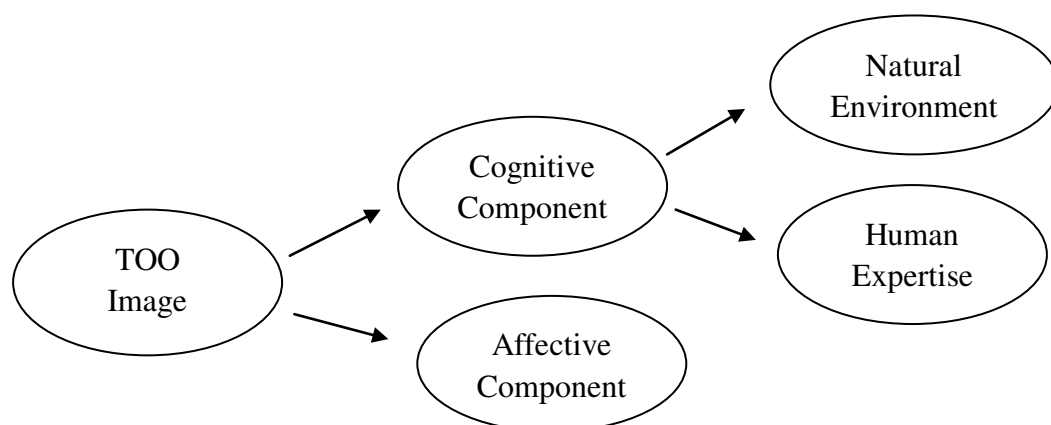
### **2.2.2 Dimensions of TOO**

From a theoretical perspective, consumers store information about specific places or about the overall concept of a place in their memories, which form the image of the specific place in their mind (Anderson, 1983). A place of origin then influences consumers' product evaluation through its image (Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009), referring to "the total of all descriptive, inferential and informational perceptions of a given place, which is organised as a knowledge structure in consumers' memory" (Iversen and Hem, 2008, p. 608). This is also applied to territory of origin. Thus, TOO influences consumers' product evaluation through its image, defined as the general image that consumers hold of that territory (van Ittersum et al., 2003).

As "a combination of material and symbolic resources", TOO image consists of cognitive and affective dimensions (Lévy and Lussault, 2003, p. 910). Its cognitive dimension comprises of beliefs about the physical attributes of a territory, including a

natural environment (e.g., soil, sunshine, temperature, plants) and a human factor (e.g., history, tradition, manufacturing methods) (van Ittersum et al., 2003). The natural environment factor represents the natural and climatic suitability of a territory for making a product, and the human factor represents the expertise present in the territory for making the product (e.g. workmanship). For example, Jingdezhen is perceived to have the suitable natural environment such as Kaolin which offers the unique raw material to its porcelain and the people there are considered as having the know-how to make porcelains.

TOO also has an affective dimension referring to cultural relationships and values of a territory, such as a high degree of community solidarity or a producer's sincerity, honesty, morality or passion (Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012). For example, Brittany may generate images of passionate producers who carefully protect the purity of their TOOs to guarantee consistent product quality and harmony with the environment. These images in turn imply sincerity and benevolence.



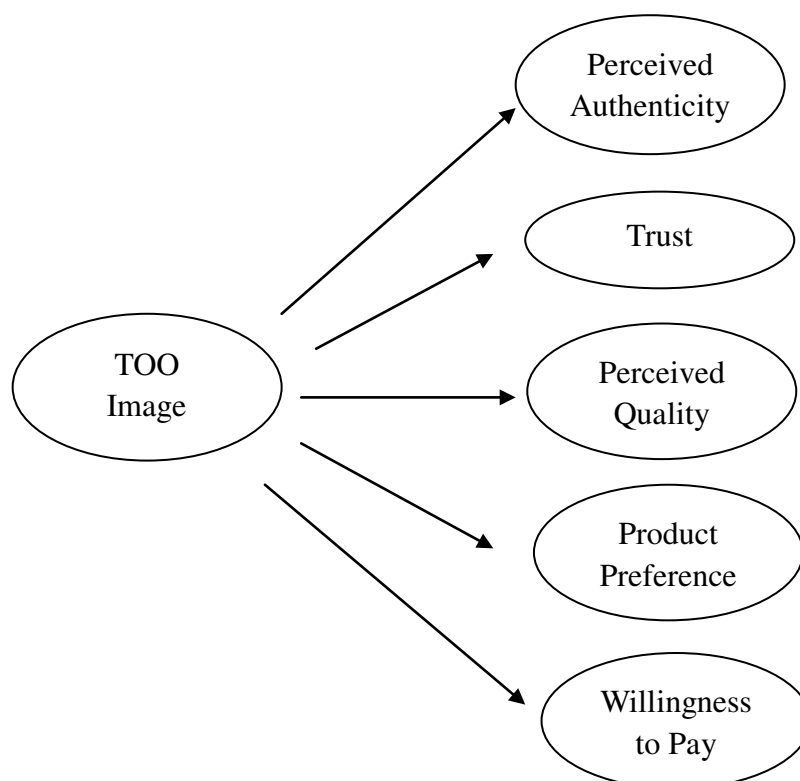
**FIGURE 2.** Dimensions of TOO Image

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### 2.2.3 Outcomes of TOO

Since the 1960s when place branding was truly recognized, decades of research has demonstrated that place of origin influences consumers' perceptions about products and the range of benefits linked to brand associations and brand equity grounded in their provenance (Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009). Consumers use an array of extrinsic and intrinsic cues to infer product attributes (for example, quality or authenticity) and to assess price sacrifice (Suri and Thakor, 2013). Even though intrinsic product attributes are deemed more useful than extrinsic ones, consumers might have little opportunity to process intrinsic information because of their limited product knowledge or access to information. Hence, extrinsic cues are often used to make product decisions.

TOO is such an extrinsic cue that consumers use to infer intrinsic product attributes. Different origin cues (e.g., COO and TOO) influence consumers' product evaluation in different ways, however (van Ittersum et al., 2003). Therefore, to capture the potential value of TOO, it is necessary to understand the specific consequences after consumers' exposure to the TOO information. There are five main outcomes of TOO proposed by prior literature including product's perceived authenticity, consumers' trust toward product, product's perceived quality, product preference and willingness to pay (Figure 3).



**FIGURE 3.** Outcomes of TOO Image

Authenticity is a first main outcome of TOO image, as indicated in the few existing studies concerning TOO (e.g., Dion et al., 2010; Hojman and Hunter-Jones, 2012). Defined as “a subjective evaluation of genuineness ascribed to a brand by consumers” (Napoli et al., 2014, p. 1091), authenticity is often associated with meanings generated by a place of origin, including history, culture, and tradition (Grayson and Martinec, 2004) together with sincerity, honesty, innocence, originality, nature and simpleness (Beverland, 2006; Napoli et al., 2014), or uniqueness (Iversen and Hem, 2008). In this sense, any place of origin (e.g., territory of origin, country of origin) may generate consumers’ authenticity perception. However, compared to

country of origin (COO), TOO is a smaller place which is “more homogeneous in terms of human and natural environment factors” (van Ittersum et al., 2003, p. 215), which enables TOO to provide a more consistent image. Also, territories evoke a more detailed sense of “somewhere” with preserving rural traditions, cultures and history. All these offer the local products with specific origins thus benefit their perceived authenticity from a cognitive process. From an affective process, perceptions of uniqueness are critical to brand authenticity (Iversen and Hem, 2008), and smaller things generally are perceived as more unique (Brewer et al., 1993). Therefore, territories should relate more closely to uniqueness perceptions than do countries and should provide territorial products with pure and unique identities that are authentic, such that it clearly distinguishes the real from the fake. Both TOO and authenticity literature converge to say that local brands seek to justify their products’ authenticity by communicating their TOOs (Dion et al., 2010; Hojman and Hunter-Jones, 2012), and researchers recognize TOO associations as important tools for assessing the influence of product authenticity (Beverland, 2006; Iversen and Hem, 2008).

A second outcome of TOO proposed in the literature is consumers’ trust toward the product (Chaters and Spielmann, 2014; Fensterseifer and Rastoin, 2010). Trust refers to “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party” (Mayer et

al., 1995, p. 712). It points out that trust is at the perceptual level rather than the behavioural level, since it stresses that trust is not the act of taking risk but rather the willingness to engage in risk-taking behaviour. More precisely, trust has two dimensions including benevolence and competence (Garbarino and Lee, 2003). Perceived benevolence involves the perceived willingness of the trustee to behave in a way that benefits the interests of both parties with a genuine concern for the partner even at the expense of profit (Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000). Perceived competency involves the trustor's confidence in trustees' competence to carry out their promises (Garbarino and Lee, 2003). It is thus necessary for brands to have the *willingness* and *ability* to deliver trust. The "suitability" of a TOO such as expertise should ensure the *ability* of territorial brands to carry out their promises (van Ittersum et al., 2003), which indicates the relationship between the cognitive component of the TOO and consumers' trust toward the territorial products (i.e. competence). In addition, the affective dimension of a TOO also tends to enhance the consumer's level of trust towards the brand (Fensterseifer and Rastoin, 2010). Territorial brands are perceived to be inseparable from social and community context, rather than merely chasing for economic benefits (i.e. benevolence), which assures the *willingness* of territorial brands to stick to their promises. This "social glue" is a necessity for territorial brands to build the image that the stakeholders of a territorial brand must work together and "this cohesion provides the boundaries within which acceptable business behaviour can take place, and the social penalties for inappropriate economic activity" (Chaters and Spielmann, 2014, p. 1465).

A third outcome linked to TOO image is consumers' perception of product quality (Chaters and Spielmann, 2014; van Ittersum et al., 2003). However, the direction of the impact of TOO associations on product's perceived quality is unclear. Broadly, quality can be defined as "superiority or excellence". By extension, perceived quality refers to "the consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority" (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 3). Intrinsic attributes that signal product quality involve physical composition of the product (Zeithaml, 1988). Take a beverage as an example, such attributes can be flavour, colour, and texture. But for a car, such attributes can be the engine, response speed, etc. For certain products, a territorial brands can use its physical attributes to justify and endorse the quality of the product (Chaters and Spielmann, 2014), such that consumers regard certain products as more typical, more respectful of traditional values and higher in quality than others. The distinguishing features of territories also invoke their reputations for the quality production of particular products. For example, Saint-Emilion (a region in the Bordeaux vineyards) generates associations with a long history, traditional production methods, old vine stocks, ancient skills and expert knowledge, all of which benefit the reputation of its wines. In accordance with this process, the European Union created a Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) certification for wine, cheese, butter and other agricultural products, designed to certify their origins and quality and thereby help protect the reputations gained by the relevant territories. However, as some categories might benefit more or less from quality perceptions than others, TOO can

also generate consumers' uncertainty about the product's quality (Suri and Thakor, 2013). For example, TOO may be effective for agricultural and food items naturally linked to a territory, because the ingredients needed to manufacture the product are critical components (e.g. Turrón, a Spanish nougat from Andalusia in southern Spain, made from almonds). In contrast, TOO may be not effective or even generate negative impacts if the benefits linked to the territorial strategy are difficult to establish or the consumer worries about the resource constraints of a territory, such as for consumer durables. For example, higher-risk products such as furniture made in a TOO is shown to cause consumers' fears of quality penalties (Suri and Thakor, 2013).

A fourth outcome of TOO is consumers' preference for products (van Ittersum et al., 2003; Suri and Thakor, 2013). From a cognitive perspective, consumers' product preference for territorial products is explained from variations in product attribute perception (van Ittersum et al., 2003). Consumers use the suitability of a product's territory of origin for producing that product to infer the true state of product attributes. According to van Ittersum et al. (2003, p. 223), the impact of the TOO on product preference is "an indirect effect" which is "through product attribute perception" (e.g., perceived quality). Suri and Thakor (2013) further demonstrate that TOO can influence consumers' preference for product with local origins through an affective process. As stated in their study (p. 129), consumers' preference for territorial products "is not based simply on economic calculation but also arises because some products evoke identity effects", which in turn elicit favourable



evaluations.

A fifth outcome of TOO is consumers' willingness to pay. Often, marketers use TOO as a communicating tool to ask consumers for price premium (Beverland, 2006; Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012; Hojman and Hunter-Jones, 2012), and consumers are ready to pay price premium in order to get top quality goods (Hojman and Hunter-Jones, 2012). For example, Elaydi and McLaughlin (2012, p. 1743) show that firms use TOO strategy to capture and build their capabilities around community resources, which in turn enables them to "deliver a product that will be competitive in multiple types of markets and that can be sold at a premium price". Also, it is shown that Japanese tourists are prepared to pay 50 and 85 dollars for halfbottles (375ml) of unoaked and oaked icewine which is originated from Inniskillin winery in the Niagara region of Canada (Hojman and Hunter-Jones, 2012).

This part is only a first attempt which is made to summarize the influence of TOO image on consumer's behavior and five main outcomes are proposed including the consumer's perception of product authenticity, trust toward the product, perception of product quality, preference for products, and willingness to pay. Being a relatively new concept, there is no doubt that TOO may be linked to other outcomes which need further investigations.

Among these five outcomes, only the impacts of TOO image on consumers' perception of product quality and on their preferences for products are tested with

quantitative studies. Studies concerning its influence on both the product's perceived authenticity and the consumer's trust toward the product are qualitative (see Table 1 for a summary). Accordingly, the objective of our first article presented in Chapter 3 is to adopt a quantitative method to empirically test the impact of TOO image on the consumer's perception of product authenticity.

**TABLE 1.** Studies Proposing TOO's outcome in the Marketing Literature

<b>TOO's Outcomes</b>	<b><i>Qualitative Method</i></b>	<b><i>Quantitative Method</i></b>
<b>Perceived Authenticity</b>	Dion et al. (2012); Hojman and Hunter-Jones (2012)	
<b>Consumer's Trust</b>	Chaters and Spielmann (2014); Elaydi and McLaughlin (2012)	
<b>Perceived Quality</b>	Chaters and Spielmann (2014)	van Ittersum et al. (2003); Suri and Thakor (2013)
<b>Product Preference</b>		van Ittersum et al. (2003); Suri and Thakor (2013)
<b>Willingness to Pay</b>	Elaydi and McLaughlin (2012); Hojman and Hunter-Jones(2012)	

## **2.3 SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING (SWB)**

### **2.3.1 The Field of SWB**

Subjective well-being (SWB) is one facet of the broad construct – quality of life (QoL) that requires both subjective and objective measures (e.g. economic and social indicators) for an ideal appraisal (Diener and Suh, 1997). Previously, the majority of research tends to focus mostly on the way to improve people’s objective well-being (Fernandez-Ballesteros, 2011), holding “the belief that science and technology alone will improve human life and the quality of human life” (Kelley-Gillespie, 2009, p. 262). Nevertheless, scholars began to realize that “the effects of objective circumstances are filtered through individuals’ unique interpretations and goals, as well as their current life stage” (Lucas and Diener, 2004, p. 669). People react differently to the same circumstances, and they evaluate conditions based on their unique expectations, values, and previous experiences. Therefore, social indicators alone do not define QoL (Diener and Suh, 1997). Referring to the person’s own evaluation of his or her life (Diener et al., 1999), SWB is thus now considered as key to QoL (Diener and Suh, 1997; Fernandez-Ballesteros, 2011).

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### 2.3.2 Components of SWB

Views on the components of SWB vary from scholars to scholars. Previously, SWB was mainly studied in psychology and was treated as singular in nature, referring to mood and emotions. Previously, SWB research focuses on examining its negative emotional states, such as depression and anger. However, “well-being necessarily includes positive elements” (Diener et al., 1999, p. 276). Gradually, SWB researchers study the entire range of well-being from misery to elation which transcends economic prosperity, given that people approach positive incentives and do not just avoid misery (Diener et al., 1999). For example, Waston et al. (1988) take SWB as the presence of positive affect (PA) and the absence of negative affect (NA). Presumably, if one’s life is going well, he/she will experience high levels of PA and low levels of NA. Certain researchers (e.g., Layard, 2005; Vignoles et al., 2006) even consider that NA and PA are just the “opposite poles of the same underlying dimension” (Lucas and Diener, 2004, p. 670), thus equals SWB as positive affect (PA) (i.e. pleasant emotions that gained from enjoying life and hope). Even though the degree of the independence between momentary positive and negative affect is still debated, it is found that PA and NA become increasingly separate as the time-frame increased (Diener and Emmons, 1984). Besides, it is shown that the two variables (i.e., PA and NA) are often differentially related to distinct predictors and outcomes. For example, positive affect is more strongly related to the personality trait of extraversion than negative affect is (Lucas and Diener, 2004). As SWB researchers are primarily interested in long-term

moods rather than momentary emotions (Lucas and Diener, 2004), the majority of SWB scholars thus consider that it is necessary to include both positive and negative affect components. Going a step further, Kozma and Stones (1980) and Stones (2014) divide the long-term emotions into recent and longer-term affect and propose that SWB consists of recent affect (i.e., affect during the preceding month including PA and NA) and longer-term affect (i.e., affect experienced in his/her life in general, including positive (PE) and negative experiences (NE)).

Another view of SWB regards it as an individual's cognitive evaluations of life satisfaction. In the literature, there are two approaches to define this cognitive evaluation. One regards the construct as a single, unitary entity being life satisfaction (LS) (i.e. a person's judgment about his/her life as a whole). For example, Andrews and Withey (1976) and Deleire and Kalil (2010) take SWB as people's global judgments of life satisfaction, also named life satisfaction. The other considers it to be composed of discrete domains and measures the individual's cognitive evaluation of satisfaction with various aspects of his/her life experience, also named domain satisfaction (DS). For example, Cummins (1996) proposes that there are seven life domains including material, health, productivity (e.g. productive activity), intimacy (e.g. social and family connection), safety (e.g. security, personal control, privacy), community (e.g. community integration, community involvement), and emotional (e.g. leisure, spiritual), and the level of a person's SWB is the result of his/her satisfaction with each life domains.

Neither the affective nor the cognitive perspective can address all meanings of SWB, which is a multi-dimensional concept. With the advancement in SWB understanding, the majority of scholars (e.g. Diener et al., 1999; Lee et al., 2008; Lucas and Diener, 2004; McAuley et al., 2000; Pinquart and Sörensen, 2000) agree that SWB is a broad category of phenomena that includes people's emotional responses and cognitive evaluations of life satisfaction. For instance, Lee et al. (2008) and Pinquart and Sörensen (2000) hold SWB as people's global judgment of their life satisfaction (LS) and positive affect. Lucas and Diener (2004) view SWB as composed of people's multidimensional evaluations of their lives, including life satisfaction, satisfaction with life domains (e.g. health, family life, occupation, and social life), and people's emotional responses. McAuley et al. (2000) take SWB as comprised of people's cognitive evaluation of their satisfaction with life and affective evaluation of their positive affect, negative affect, positive experience, and negative experience. As far as Diener et al. (1999) are concerned, SWB refers to people's general satisfaction with life (including the desire to change life, their satisfaction with current life, with past, with future, and significant others' views of one's life), the presence of positive affect and the absence of negative affect. Diener et al. (1999)'s proposition is also what is chosen in this dissertation.

Table 2 provides a summary concerning the components of SWB proposed in the literature.

**TABLE 2.** Components of SWB Proposed in Previous Literature

Authors	Subjective Well-Being					
	Cognitive Component		Affective Component			
	LS	DS	PA	NA	PE	NE
Andrews and Withey (1976)	X					
Cummins (1996)		X				
Diener (1984)	X		X			
Diener (1994)	X		X	X		
Diener and Biswas-Diener (2002)	X					
Diener and Oishi (2000)	X					
Diener and Ryan (2009)	X	X	X	X		
Diener et al. (1993)			X	X		
Diener et al. (1999)	X		X	X		

Authors	Cognitive Component		Affective Component			
	LS	DS	PA	NA	PE	NE
Deleire and Kalil (2010)	X					
Kozma and Stones (1980)			X	X	X	X
Lachman and Weaver (1998)	X					
Layard (2005)			X			
Lee et al. (2008)	X		X			
Lucas and Diener (2004)	X	X	X	X		
McAuley et al. (2000)	X		X	X	X	X
Mullis (1992)	X	X				
Oishi et al. (1999)	X		X	X		
Pinquart and Sörensen (2000)	X		X			
Stone (2014)			X	X	X	X



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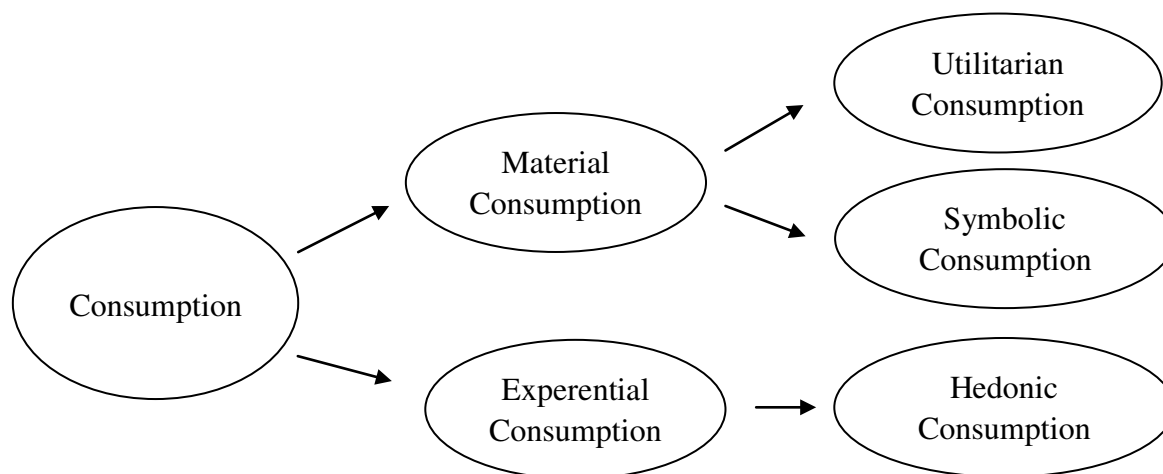
Authors	Cognitive Component		Affective Component			
	LS	DS	PA	NA	PE	NE
Vignoles et al. (2006)			X			
Waston et al. (1988)			X	X		

### **2.3.3 Consumption and Consumers' SWB**

The correlation between SWB and a number of variables have been studied extensively including personality, culture, and socio-demographic variables such as gender, education, age, religion, marital situation, intelligence, income (see Diener et al., 1999 for a summary). In the following part, only the literature concerning the relationship between consumption and consumers' SWB is reviewed, given the specific research objectives of this dissertation.

According to Guillen-Royo (2008), consumption is one of the most extensively researched factors accounting for the variance in SWB, and often, the relationship between consumption and SWB is extrapolated from the impact of income, wealth, and expenditure which are used interchangeably. Consumption can be divided into material and experiential purchases (Figure 3), with material purchases being tangible and referring to the purchases made with the primary intention of acquiring a material possession, while experiential purchases being intangible and referring to the purchases made with the primary intention of acquiring a life experience (Nicolao et al., 2009). Examples of material goods are cars, houses, and clothes, and those of experiential goods are movies, restaurant dinners, and amusement parks. Based on this intention distinction, people can decide for themselves whether a particular purchase (e.g., a bicycle) is an experiential one (being used to ride Colorado canyon

roads) or a material one (adding to one's collection of high-end Italian bicycles) (van Boven, 2005). In the literature, most researchers concentrate on the relationship between hedonic consumption and consumers' SWB to understand the the impact of experiential purchases on consumers' SWB. Concerning the impact of material consumption on consumers' SWB, the relationship between two kinds of material purchases and consumers' SWB is mainly investigated. One refers to the consumption behavior where goods are consumed for their utilitarian value (utilitarian consumption), and the other one refers to the consumption behavior where goods are consumed for their symbolic value (symbolic consumption) (Shrum et al., 2013). One classical example of utilitarian consumption is consumption of necessities (NC) such as food. In contrast, consumption for un-necessities such as luxury consumption or conspicuous consumption is symbolic consumption (SC). According to Shrum et al. (2013), consumers use symbolic consumption to signal the symbolic meanings linked to the material objects. This occurs "when consumers choose, buy, and use products to assist individuals in the creation, confirmation and communication of their identity" (Ekinici et al, 2013, p. 711).



**FIGURE 4.** Different Kinds of Consumption

Different consumption behaviors are related to consumers' SWB in different ways. The following part reviews of previous studies conducting on the relationship between consumers' SWB and the consumption of necessities, hedonic consumption, and symbolic consumption.

Concerning the consumption of necessities, there is a general agreement that it has a positive impact on people's SWB (Diener et al., 2010; Guillen-Royo, 2008) (Table 3), and the general assumption is that consumption of basic necessities contributes to the individual's well-being by enabling the consumer to meet basic needs such as physiological and security needs (Diener et al., 2010) which are essential for one's survival (Maslow, 1954). This is in particularly true for the poor (Guillen-Royo, 2008).

A lot research attention has also been given to the relationship between hedonic consumption (HC) and consumers' SWB, and previous research findings are consistent. Generally, the experiential purchase is found to be positively related to consumers' well-being such as life satisfaction and positive affect (Bhattacharjee and Mogilner, 2014; Caprariello and Reis, 2013; Carter and Gilovich, 2010, 2012; Howell and Hill, 2009; Nicolao et al., 2009; Rosenzweig and Gilovich, 2012; Thomas and Millar, 2013; van Boven, 2005; van Boven and Gilovich, 2003; Zhong and Mitchell, 2010) (Table 3). For example, van Boven (2005) show that compared to material purchases (i.e., to acquire material possessions), experiential purchases (i.e., to acquire life experiences) make people happier. Zhong and Mitchell (2010) also demonstrate that consumption of leisure have a positive impact on the consumer's SWB. Going a further step by dividing experience consumption into ordinary experience (i.e., common and frequent experience) and extraordinary experience (i.e., uncommon and infrequent experience), Bhattacharjee and Mogilner (2014) demonstrate that the positive impact of extraordinary experience consumption is more pronounced for younger people, but the positive impact of ordinary experience consumption is stronger as people get older.

Concerning the impact of symbolic consumption (SC) on consumers' SWB, only limited research efforts have been given in the direction. Some studies (e.g., Diener et al., 2010; Hudders and Pandelaere, 2012; Frank, 1999) concentrate on the relationship between luxury consumption (LC) and consumers' SWB, but find different results.

For example, in contrast to the statement of Frank (1999) that people who own luxuries are no happier than those without luxuries, Hudders and Pandelaere (2012) empirically demonstrate a positive impact of luxury consumption on consumers' life satisfaction and positive affect. Other studies (e.g., DeLeire and Kalil, 2010; Linssen et al., 2011) focus on the relationship between conspicuous consumption (CC) on consumers' SWB, but do not clearly separate conspicuous consumption from luxury consumption. For example, Linssen et al. (2011) consider conspicuous consumption as consumers' expenditure on luxury items, and DeLeire and Kalil (2010) take consumers' expenditure on vehicles as conspicuous consumption.

According to Webster's 3rd new international dictionary (2002), luxury is defined as *non-essential items or services that contribute to luxurious living; an indulgence or convenience beyond the indispensable minimum*, and conspicuous as *very easy to be seen; attracting attention by being great or impressive*. Conspicuous consumption is often used interchangeably with luxury consumption because it is generally considered as flaunting wealth through conspicuous possessions in order to signal to others that one has wealth and status (Shrum et al., 2013; Veblen, 1899; Wang and Griskevicius, 2014), wealth or status is only one of the meanings signaled by conspicuous consumption (more details are given in the following section 2.4.2). Also, luxury consumption conducted in a private condition (with rare visibility to others) is neither conspicuous consumption. Therefore, conspicuous consumption and luxury consumption overlap on certain dimensions, but are not the same thing. The key point for luxury consumption is the price of the good, while the one for

conspicuous consumption is the signaling function of the good.

Based on the rare existing studies, the nature of the relationship both between conspicuous consumption and consumers' SWB has also generated controversy. Linssen et al. (2011) find that people who spend more on conspicuous consumption report lower level of SWB, DeLeire and Kalil (2010) in the contrary demonstrate that the more the consumers spend on status objects (e.g., vehicles), the more they are satisfied with their lives.

Table 3 summarizes the studies concerning the relationship between different kinds of consumption and consumers' SWB, with the specifications on the component of SWB adopted in the studies. From this table, we can see that, firstly, studies conducted on the relationship between conspicuous consumption and consumers' SWB are quite limited. Secondly, the rare existing research only considers SWB as a whole to be the dependent variable. The impact of conspicuous consumption on the sub-components of consumers' SWB has never been empirically investigated. This explains why Article 3 aims to investigate the relationship between conspicuous consumption and the sub-components of consumers' SWB.

**TABLE 3.** Studies on Relationship between Consumption and SWB

Authors	Consumption				SWB			
	NC	HC	SC		SWB in general/ Happiness	LS	PA	NA
			LC	CC				
Bhattacharjee and Mogilner (2014)		X			X			
Brajsa-Zganec et al. (2011)		X			X	X		
Caprariello and Reis (2013)		X			X			
Carter and Gilovich (2010)		X			X			
Carter and Gilovich (2012)		X			X			
DeLeire and Kalil (2010)				X		X		
Diener et al. (2010)	X		X			X	X	X
Guillen-Royo (2008)	X				X			
Howell and Hill (2009)		X			X			
Hudders and Pandelaere (2012)			X			X	X	X



Authors	Consumption				SWB			
	NC	HC	LC	CC	SWB in general/ Happiness	LS	PA	NA
Linssen et al. (2011)				X	X			
Nicolao et al. (2009)		X			X			
Robert Frank (1999)			X		X			
Rosenzweig and Gilovich (2012)		X			X			
Thomas and Millar (2013)		X			X			
Van Boven (2005)		X			X			
Van Boven and Gilovich (2003)		X			X			
Zhong and Mitchell (2010)		X					X	X

## **2.4 CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION**

Conspicuous consumption is not a new phenomenon developed in modern time. It is an important factor for understanding consumer behavior, not just for the rich but for all social classes (Veblen, 1899; Belk, 1988). McCracken (1987, p. 50) notes that “conspicuous consumption is especially important to the study of the history of consumption because it plays an important role in the growth of a consumer society.” To better understand this behavior, it is firstly necessary to know its nature.

### **2.4.1 Nature of Conspicuous Consumption**

The origin of the word *conspicuous* is from Latin *conspiciuus*, which means *visible*. At the product level, conspicuousness refers to the extent to which a product "stands out" or is noticeable by consumers; at the brand level, it refers to the ease with which people can identify a specific brand of a product that another is using (Grimm, 1999). Conspicuous objects are often considered as un-necessities, with its essential function being an interpersonal signaling system including the interactions between the sender and the receiver (Wang and Griskevicius, 2014).

For a signaling system to work, senders should send the signal in an appropriate context and perceive receivers to be able to decipher the signal (Wang and Griskevicius,

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2014). Accordingly, products may be considered as conspicuous by two criteria. The first criterion lies in the social visibility. Often, conspicuous consumption is bound to public consumption, since consumption taken out in an overt environment enables interactions with the external environment (Childers and Rao, 1993), thus constitutes the appropriate context for the signals to be perceived by others. As postulated by Veblen (1899, 24), “in order to gain and to hold the esteem of men, it is not sufficient merely to possess wealth or power. The wealth or power must be put in evidence, for esteem is awarded only on evidence.” The second criterion is that the symbolic meaning of conspicuous products should achieve certain social recognition, in other words, the meanings associated with the product is well established and understood by related segments of the society, so that the sender can consider that their signals can be interpreted by the relevant others in the intended way (Wang and Griskevicius, 2014).

The following question is: What meanings do consumers want to signal through conspicuous consumption?

#### **2.4.2 Meanings Signaled by Conspicuous Consumption**

In the literature, three symbolic meanings are proposed to relate with conspicuous objects including status and wealth (Veblen, 1899; Wang and Griskevicius, 2014), group

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membership (Gil et al., 2012; Leibenstein, 1950; Mason, 1998), or distinctiveness (Bourdieu, 1984; White and Argo, 2011) (Table 4).

Veblen (1899) is the first to introduce the term conspicuous consumption to describe the act or practice of the new rich (i.e. leisure class) spending great wealth on unnecessary expensive things as a means of publicly manifesting their social power and prestige, be it real or perceived, to impress other people. Stemming from economic literature which considers that the utility of conspicuous consumption is retrieved from status signaling, the first meaning signaled by conspicuous consumption is the possessor's wealth or status (Veblen, 1899). Status is the place in the social hierarchy that others award to an individual (Goffman, 1959). Historically, this place was attained either by birth (e.g. born in a middle class or upper class family) or by ordainment (e.g. assigned by the king). Since the eighteenth century, a person's achievement, in particular personal wealth, is often used as a bar to define the place of each social category within the stratification structure (De Botton, 2004; Shipman, 2004). Since then, a reliable connection is made between wealth and status (Gulas and McKeage, 2000; Shipman, 2004). As affluence is difficult to observe, people base many of their impression on people's possessions to infer their social class (Solomon, 1983). Conspicuous consumption is one strategy adopted by people to reach impression management. According to Veblen (1899), conspicuous consumption is a purposive conduct in which status considerations predominate. Accordingly, people who intend to communicate their wealth and status use expensive objects that denote material achievement "as a proxy for the level of status" (Wang and Wallendorf, 2006, p. 497).

This original logic is still adopted by many researchers (e.g. Sundie et al., 2011; Shurm et al., 2013; Trigg, 2001; Wang and Griskevicius, 2014), who refer to conspicuous consumption as the behavior whereby individuals attain and exhibit “costly items to impress upon others that one possesses wealth or status” (Sundie et al., 2011, p. 664). In this case, conspicuous goods refer to “highly visible popular luxuries” (Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012, p. 1402) or “loud luxury goods” (Han et al., 2010, p. 15). For example, some product categories (e.g. clothing, automobile) are with high potential for signaling, but only products with a high price within this category are conspicuous goods. Products which are expensive but in categories with low potential for signaling (e.g. furniture in the bedroom) are not called conspicuous objects. As noted by Wang and Wallendorf (2006, p. 497), goods are conspicuous items when they are “in a product category that is often used by other people in communicating status” (i.e. popularity) as well as the “price paid for a product within this category [...] is an indicator of the level of status communicated”.

However, with the advancement of research understandings, some other researchers (e.g. Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Banner, 1984; Bourdieu, 1984; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012; Lee and Shrum, 2012; Mason, 1998; Trigg, 2001) argue that the assumption of conducting conspicuous consumption to show wealth or status lacks generality since it applies only to luxury goods and thus develop an expanded view of conspicuous consumption. According to them, conspicuous goods, in addition to be used to signal status and wealth, are also a way adopted by consumers to signal the possessor’s group membership or distinctiveness.

Accordingly, the second meaning signaled by conspicuous consumption is group membership, with conspicuous goods being group membership markers (Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Chen et al., 2008; Clark et al., 2007; Gil et al., 2012; Han et al., 2010; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012; Leibenstein, 1950; Mason, 1998; Shipman, 2004; Trigg, 2001). To demonstrate group membership, people publicly purchase the commodities highly appreciated within those groups to which they wish to belong, in order to avoid social exclusion (Mead et al., 2011), to be “one of the boy” (Leibenstein, 1950), or to associate with aspirational others (Wong, 1997). For example, teens try to join the group through displaying the possessions of “right” brands (Gil et al., 2012). Consumers even spend money on unappealing items favored by a peer to make associations with the peer (Mead et al., 2011).

Conspicuous objects can also signal distinctiveness (Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Bourdieu, 1984; Chen et al., 2008; Clark et al., 2007; Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Han et al., 2010; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012; Lee and Shrum, 2012; Nunes, 2009; Shipman, 2004; Trigg, 2001). Conspicuous goods under this condition refer to exclusive or scarce goods (Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Bourdieu, 1984). Sometimes, people choose to buy and display a product different from which is popular merely for the sake of being different from other consumers rather than to display their wealth or social status (Shipman, 2004; Tian et al., 2001). For example, sophisticated consumers choose goods such as peasant dishes or folk music in order to differentiate themselves from those who choose luxury dishware or opera (Bourdieu, 1984). For consumers searching for distinction, only “unavailability or inaccessibility to the majority tends to raise the value assigned” (Shipman, 2004, p. 282). They measure product value by its

distinctiveness, and product price is meaningful only if it assures product exclusivity (Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Bourdieu, 1984; Shipman, 2004).

Table 4 summaries the meanings signaled by conspicuous consumption which are proposed in previous literature.

**TABLE 4.** Meaning Signaled by Conspicuous Consumption

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Wealth &amp; Status</b>	<b>Group Membership</b>	<b>Distinctiveness</b>
Amaldoss and Jain (2005)	X	X	X
Bourdieu (1984)	X		X
Chen et al. (2008)	X	X	X
Clark et al. (2007)		X	X
Gierl and Huettl (2010)			X
Gil et al. (2012)	X	X	
Han et al. (2010)	X	X	X
Kastanakis and Balabanis (2012)	X	X	X
Lee and Shrum (2012)			X
Leibenstein (1950)	X	X	
Mason (1998)	X	X	
Pyone and Isen (2011)	X		
Shipman (2004)	X	X	X
Shurm et al. (2013)	X		
Sundie et al. (2011)	X		
Trigg (2001)	X	X	X
Veblen (1899)	X		
Wang and Griskevicius (2014)	X		
Wong (1997)	X	X	



Now the question is: Why do people want to signal these meanings? What can they gain from performing conspicuous consumption?

### **2.4.3 Needs and Conspicuous Consumption**

Individual perform behaviors to satisfy their needs, including physiological and psychological needs (Diener et al., 2010; Ryan and Deci, 2000a, 2000b; Vignoles et al., 2006), which is an important determinant of SWB (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Oishi et al., 1999b; Ryan and Deci, 2000a, 2000b; Ryff and Keyes, 1995; Tay and Diener, 2011; Vignoles et al., 2006). Consumption is one of such behaviors adopted by consumers to satisfy their needs (Chan et al., 2012; Diener et al., 2010; Howell and Howell, 2008; Lee and Shrum, 2012; Tay and Diener, 2011; Vignoles et al., 2006; White and Argo, 2011). For example, people consume necessities to satisfy their basic physiological needs including food, water, air, or shelter which are indispensable for one's well-being (Tay and Diener, 2011). Also, consumers purchase symbolic objects to satisfy some psychological needs (Shrum et al., 2013; Vignoles et al., 2006) such as self-esteem and/or social recognition.

Likewise, conspicuous consumption is used by consumers to satisfy different needs (Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Chaudihuri and Majumdar, 2006; Clark et al., 2007; DeLeire and Kalil, 2010; Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Gil et al., 2012; Han et al., 2010; Lee and Shrum, 2012; McFerran et al. 2014; Nunes, 2009; O'Cass and McEwen, 2004; Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010; Sundie et al., 2011; Veblen, 1899; Wang and Griskevicius, 2014). In relationships,

conspicuous consumption is used by men to attract mates (Sundie et al., 2011) and by women to deter female rivals (Wang and Griskevicius, 2014). At the individual level, conspicuous consumption is proposed as a way to satisfy consumers' need for status (Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Bourdieu, 1984; Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Chaudihuri and Majumdar, 2006; Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Han et al., 2010; Nunes, 2009; Velen, 1899), social conformity (Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Chaudihuri and Majumdar, 2006; Chen et al., 2008; Clark et al., 2007; Gil et al., 2012; Han et al., 2010; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012; Leibenstein, 1950; Mason, 1998; O'Cass and McEwen, 2004; Shipman, 2004; Trigg, 2001; Wong, 1997), uniqueness (Chen et al., 2008; Clark et al., 2007; Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Han et al., 2010; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012; Nunes, 2009; Shipman, 2004; Trigg, 2001), self-esteem (Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010), competence/efficacy (McFerran et al. 2014), and/or belongingness (DeLeire and Kalil, 2010) (Table 5).

In the following part, needs related to conspicuous consumption are reviewed, since a good understanding of the relationship between conspicuous consumption and needs provides the possibility to understand why conspicuous consumption is linked to consumers' SWB. Given that the research focus of this dissertation is at the individual level, only needs related to conspicuous consumption at the individual level are concerned.

A first well recognized need linked to conspicuous consumption is consumers' need for status (Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Bourdieu, 1984; Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Chaudihuri and Majumdar, 2006; Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Han et al., 2010; Nunes, 2009; Velen, 1899).

For example, Han et al. (2010) experimentally demonstrate that wealthy consumers use highly conspicuous goods to signal to the less affluent that they are higher in status than them, and those who cannot afford true luxury use conspicuous counterfeits to emulate those they recognize to be wealthy to satisfy their need for status. In addition to using wealth as status signal, consumers also signal the scarcity/uniqueness of their conspicuous possessions to others in order to show their superior status (e.g., Bourdieu, 1984; Chaudihuri and Majumdar, 2006; Chen et al., 2008; Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Gil et al., 2012; Han et al., 2010; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012), considering that the scarcity of their possession allows them to position themselves as innovators or fashion leaders (Gierl and Huettl, 2010) or people who have a better taste (Bourdieu, 1984).

Social conformity referring to the behavior whereby individuals respond to social norms with compliance (Asch, 1951; Sherif, 1963) is a second need related to conspicuous consumption (Amaldoss and Jain, 2005; Chaudihuri and Majumdar, 2006; Chen et al., 2008; Clark et al., 2007; Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012; Mason, 1998; O’Cass and McEwen, 2004; Shipman, 2004; Trigg, 2001; Wong, 1997). As stated by Trigg (2001, p. 113), conspicuous consumption is “a standard of decency that exerts social pressure on the behavior of individuals”, to such an extent that all social classes, even the poorest “blend their energies to live up to” this decency. Both O’Cass and McEwen (2004) and Clark et al. (2007) show that consumers who are in particular susceptible to normative interpersonal influence conspicuously signal their group membership through their possessions, so as to conform to social criteria.

Thirdly, conspicuous consumption is shown to be used by consumers to satisfy their need for uniqueness (Chen et al., 2008; Clark et al., 2007; Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Han et al., 2010; Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012; Nunes, 2009; Shipman, 2004; Trigg, 2001). The need for uniqueness refers to people's need for the maintenance of a sense of differentiation from others (Vignoles et al., 2006). People need to feel at least somewhat unique and feeling to similar to others can generate negative emotional reactions (Lynn and Harris, 1997). Consumers can increase their uniqueness in comparison to friends or colleagues through seeking scarce goods which are limited due to supply (e.g., special edition bag) (Gierl and Huettl, 2010). It is also shown that consumers who have a stronger need for uniqueness seek for distinctive luxury objects to dissociate themselves from the mass population and enhance their sense of uniqueness through the dissociation with the majority (Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012).

In addition, as a way to construct one's identity (Vignoles et al., 2006), recent studies also demonstrate that conspicuous consumption is used by consumers to satisfy needs such as self-esteem (Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010), competence/efficacy (McFerran et al. 2014), and belongingness (DeLeire and Kalil, 2010).

People's need for self-esteem refers to the need to "maintain and enhance a positive conception of oneself" (Vignoles et al., 2006, p. 309). A variety of studies suggests that the strive for positive self-conceptions exists in all cultures, but people use different strategies

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according to specific cultural beliefs and values (Heine et al., 2001). Sivanathan and Pettit (2010) show that conspicuous consumption has reparative effects on one's ego. Through experimental studies, they demonstrate that individuals with low socioeconomic status can nurse their psychological wounds (e.g., lack of self-esteem) and gain self-esteem through the ownership of high-status goods.

The need for efficacy refers to individuals' need for "maintaining and enhancing feelings of competence and control" (Vignoles et al., 2006, p. 310). McFerran et al. (2014) show that people who make progress towards success are more prone to spending lavishly on luxury objects due to licensing effects (they believe that they deserve these objects because of their success), and believe the meanings associated with conspicuous objects show themselves as competent people making progress towards a goal, success, or momentary accomplishment. Conspicuous consumption also happens when people feel ignored, but the sense of being ignored is eliminated when efficacy need is bolstered (Lee and Shrum, 2012).

The need to belong is "the need to maintain or enhance feelings of closeness to, or acceptance by, other people, whether in dyadic relationships or within in-groups" (Vignoles et al., 2006, p. 310). According to certain psychologists (e.g., Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Deci and Ryan, 2000; Vignoles et al., 2006), threats to belonging can lead to various coping strategies. In the United States, DeLeire and Kalil (2010) find that seniors gain a sense of relatedness through spending on status objects such as vehicles.

Table 5 provides a summary of the needs related to conspicuous consumption proposed in previous literature.

**TABLE 5.** Needs Related to Conspicuous Consumption

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Need for Status</b>	<b>Social Conformity</b>	<b>Uniqueness</b>	<b>Self-Esteem</b>	<b>Efficacy</b>	<b>Belongingness</b>
Amaldoss and Jain (2005)	X	X				
Bourdieu (1984)	X		X			
Braun and Wicklund (1989)	X					
Chaudihuri and Majumdar (2006)	X	X	X			
Chen et al. (2008)	X	X	X			
Clark et al. (2007)		X	X			
DeLeire and Kalil (2010)						X
Gierl and Huettl (2010)	X	X	X			
Gil et al. (2012)		X				
Han et al. (2010)	X	X	X			
Kastanakis and Balabanis (2012)	X	X	X			
Lee and Shrum (2012)					X	

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<b>Authors</b>	<b>Need for Status</b>	<b>Social Conformity</b>	<b>Uniqueness</b>	<b>Self-Esteem</b>	<b>Efficacy</b>	<b>Belongingness</b>
Leibenstein (1950)	X	X				
Mason (1998)	X	X				
McFerran et al. (2014)					X	
Nunes (2009)	X					
O'Cass and McEwen (2004)		X				
Shipman (2004)	X	X				
Sivanathan and Pettit (2010)				X		
Trigg (2001)	X	X				
Velen (1899)	X					
Wong (1997)	X	X				



### 2.4.4 Motive and Conspicuous Consumption

However, it is not *what* goal (e.g., need satisfaction) are pursued, but *why* the goals (i.e., motivation) are pursued which determines the impact of human behavior on SWB (Carver and Baird 1998; Sheldon et al. 2004; Srivastava, Locke, and Bartol 2001). For example, it is often considered that the search for financial success and status is negatively related to individual's well-being, in contrast, community involvement such as helping others in need or making the world a better place is positively related to well-being (Kasser and Ryan 1993). However, Carver and Baird (1998) and Srivastava et al. (2001) both experimentally demonstrate that people can increase their SWB through helping others in need or making the world a better place when they find the process itself is enjoyable, rather than because they hold the belief that such activities will make other people respect or like them more.

According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Ryan and Deci, 2000a, 2000b), individuals' pursue of the satisfaction of psychological needs can be driven by two kinds of motives: intrinsic and extrinsic motives.

Intrinsic motive refers to the self-desire to seek out new things and new challenges and to analyze one's capacity. When people's behavior is driven by an intrinsic motive, the need satisfaction is reached through behaviors which are driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself or from the sense of satisfaction in

completing or working on a task, and exists within the individual rather than relying on external pressures or a desire for reward (Ryan and Deci, 2000a). Examples of behaviors in this group include studying because one finds the challenge fun and exciting, participating in a sport because one finds the activity enjoyable, or doing the homework because one likes to do it. In each of these examples, the person's behavior is motivated by an internal desire to participate in an activity for its own sake.

In contrast, extrinsic motives are opposite to intrinsic ones and individuals' behavior in this condition are driven by external rewards such as money, fame, grades, praises, or social approval (Ryan and Deci, 2000a) and the utility of the behaviors (e.g., SWB) depends on how others perceive one's behavior (Shrum et al., 2013). Example of actions in this group include studying because one wants to get a good grade, participating in a sport to win awards or to be like others, or doing the homework to avoid being reprimanded by the teacher. In each of these instances, the objective of the behaviors is to gain a reward or to avoid an adverse outcome.

Accordingly, behaviors driven by different motives lead to different outcomes (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Shrum et al., 2013). If one's behavior is driven by an intrinsic motive, the behavior can be beneficial to one's SWB. In the contrary, behaviors damage people's SWB if they are driven by extrinsic motives. Even though conspicuous consumption is often viewed as a behavior driven by extrinsic motives (e.g., show to others to gain social respect), which should have a negative impact on consumers' SWB, it can also be driven by intrinsic motives (e.g., one needs to feel

competent for his/her own sake), with its conspicuousness (to others) being “merely incidental” (Shrum et al. 2013, 1182). Consequently, the direction of the impact of conspicuous consumption on consumers’ SWB may depend on its motive. More details concerning the relationship among conspicuous consumption, motive and consumers’ SWB are provided in Chapter 5.

## **PART 1 – TERRITORY OF ORIGIN**

## **CHAPTER 3 – ARTICLE 1**

### **The Impact of Territory of Origin on Product Authenticity Perceptions: An Empirical Analysis in China**

*“Authenticity is the benchmark against which all brands are now judged.”*

*— John Grand*

This paper was presented in *European Marketing Academy Annual Conference* Istanbul, June 4-7, 2013, and published in *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 2015, Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 385-405.

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose** – This article highlights the importance of territory associations for consumers' perception of product authenticity and empirically tests the chain of effects, from a territory of origin association to perceived authenticity to consumers' self-brand connections.

**Methodology** – An experimental method and a partial least square (PLS) approach were adopted. Hypotheses were tested with 665 Chinese consumers.

**Findings** – Results demonstrate that territory of origin (TOO) exerts a positive impact on perceived product authenticity, which improves consumers' self-brand connections. In addition, compared with country of origin (COO), TOO has a unique positive impact on perceived authenticity and a direct positive effect on consumers' self-brand connections. Also, the positive impact of TOO on perceived authenticity is enhanced by consumers' familiarity with the TOO and congruence between the product category and TOO.

**Research limitations** – Only one outcome of TOO (perceived authenticity) and one product category (lavender soap) have been considered in this study.

**Originality/value** – Noting the diminishing relevance of COO associations, this study demonstrates that territory of origin is an appealing alternative strategy for strengthening brand equity.

**Keywords** Territory of origin, Perceived authenticity, Self-brand connection, Familiarity, Congruence, China

**Article classification** Research paper

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The influence of place of origin is well-documented in the marketing literature which tends to concentrate on country of origin (COO) effects (Basfirinci, 2013; Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009), despite their seemingly diminishing relevance, or even negative impacts, in modern markets (Basfirinci, 2013; Hamin *et al.*, 2014; Samiee, 2011). In particular, the prevalence of hybrid and multi-national products has prompted consumers to seek regional or local products rather than standardised, homogenised products with uncertain origins (Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012; Ger, 1999; Seidenfuss *et al.*, 2013). Some firms have responded to these demands by promoting products according to their territory of origin (TOO) in reference to “the holistic combination in an environment of soil, climate, topography, and the ‘soul’ of the producer” (Iversen and Hem, 2008, p. 615). For example, Armor-Lux, a clothing brand from France’s Brittany region, increased its sales by more than 30% after labelling its products “100% Made in Bretagne” (instead of “Made in France”). It also relocated its headquarters from Paris to Bretagne to highlight its territorial distinctiveness (Jaxel-Truer, 2012). Moreover, its products sell internationally, including in Asian markets, indicating that increasing demand and interest in local products is not exclusive to Western countries (Ger, 1999).

Some recent investigations of the potential for local or regional brands to expand internationally (e.g., Charters and Spielmann, 2014; Suri and Thakor, 2013) propose



that TOO offers a valuable signal for consumers and a critical managerial tool that can address “the real or perceived inadequacies of ... COO” (Samiee, 2011, p. 474). Compared with countries, territories appear inherent to their local products and provide brands with “individual fingerprints that are unique” (Iversen and Hem, 2008, p. 603), which create opportunities for brand differentiation in various markets. However, little empirical research has investigated the impact of TOO on consumer brand evaluations or behaviour (Charters and Spielmann, 2014; van Ittersum *et al.*, 2003). The few studies available assert that local brands may highlight their unique qualities and justify their authenticity by communicating their TOO (Dion *et al.*, 2010). Defined as “a subjective evaluation of genuineness ascribed to a brand by consumers” (Napoli *et al.*, 2014, p. 1091), authenticity is often associated with meanings generated by a place of origin, including history, culture, and tradition (Grayson and Martinec, 2004) together with sincerity, honesty, innocence, originality, nature and simpleness (Beverland, 2006; Napoli *et al.*, 2014), or uniqueness (Iversen and Hem, 2008). Therefore, TOO associations may offer important tools for building brand authenticity and for generating strong and unique brand associations having an impact on consumer behaviour. Beverland *et al.* (2006) describe through case studies how premium winemakers create brand authenticity. To the best of our knowledge however, the link between TOO, perceived authenticity and consumer behaviour has not been tested empirically.

The objective of this study is to empirically validate the impact of TOO

associations on product perceived authenticity and consumer/brand relationships. Based on the results of qualitative studies (Leigh *et al.*, 2006), we relate perceived authenticity to a consumer/brand relational outcome (consumers' self-brand connection). We also explore boundary conditions of the benefits of such a territorial strategy.

Accordingly, we adopt an experimental approach. We expose consumers to an unbranded product, with or without indication of its TOO, and measure product authenticity perceptions and self-brand connections. To verify that the effect on authenticity perceptions is specific to TOO associations rather than to any place of origin association, we expose another sample of consumers to the same product but this time with an indication of its COO. We also introduce two potential moderators of the relationship between TOO associations and perceived product authenticity: familiarity with the TOO and perceived congruence between the TOO and the product category, with the rationale that a territory should be both recognisable and linked to the product category if it is to affect perceived product authenticity and thus consumers' self-brand connections. Following a stream of research testing place related concepts in emerging markets (Hamzaoui and Merunka, 2006), we conduct our empirical investigation on the Chinese market.

The article is organized as follows. First, we review the TOO and perceived authenticity literature positing a chain of effects from TOO association to perceived

authenticity and to consumers' self-brand connections. Second, we examine the role of consumers' familiarity with the TOO and perceived congruence between the TOO and the product category as moderators of the relationship between TOO and perceived authenticity. We then present the methodology, discuss findings and offer some future research directions.

## **3.2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **3.2.1 Territory of origin (TOO)**

Territory of origin (TOO), or *terroir*, reflects a French origin, in that the word *terre* means *land*. It initially was used to describe how the soil, place, and climate of a specific territory influenced the taste of food and wine and produced unique flavours (Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012). Famous examples include Bordeaux red wines, Jingdezhen porcelain, Quebec maple syrup or Parma ham. Among economists, sociologists and anthropologists, the term “territory” describes the integration of individual or collective practices, beyond physical space (Giraut, 2008), or “a geographic space transformed by human labour” (Raffestin, 1986, p. 177). Rooted in a community that has been built on social interactions and shared cultural elements, TOO is a “quasi-sacralized site on which meanings of depth, communal tradition, and

expressions of genuine cultural difference are projected” (Thompson and Tambyah, 1999, p. 238). Thus, TOO reflects a place’s potential to express capabilities with a unique combination of characteristics and meet consumer demand with valued products, usually sold at a premium price (Suri and Thakor, 2013). Marketers use it, explicitly or not, to compete for trade (Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012). Being an extrinsic cue, TOO may be communicated through “made in” labels, implied by or directly included in the brand name. For example, Jingdezhen porcelain uses “made in Jingdezhen” as a selling point. It is perceived to be of high quality and is sold at a premium price. Le Petit Marseillais implies its TOO through the brand name to benefit from Marseille’s historical reputation in soap production. Old Texas BBQ and Java cafe also include their TOOs in their brand names. In 1997, Europe’s leading retailer Carrefour cited the local culinary heritage of a range of its products when promoting its new store brand “Reflets de France”, now among the 30 most frequently purchased brands in all supermarkets in France. The more than 300 products sold under this brand banner (e.g., honey from Jura, salt from Guérande) all cite a specific French region, territory or town to signal their quality, authenticity and respect for traditional production processes and ingredients. Consumers in turn perceive these local products as trustworthy and high in both quality and value.

From a theoretical perspective, place associations likely reflect associative network theory (Anderson, 1983) which predicts that consumers store information about specific TOOs or about the overall concept of territory in their memories, which

then shapes their knowledge into networks of individual meanings (nodes) that relate to one another through links. Whether encoded from external sources or retrieved from long-term memory, the information represented by each node is a potential source of activation for other nodes. A process of activation thus spreads across the network, following paths that connect an initial node (e.g. TOO or the brand name itself such as Old Texas BBQ) to other nodes generating associated meanings. If the connection between an activated node (TOO) and its linked nodes is strong, the spreading activation is greater, which increases the amount of information retrieved and transferred from the TOO to the brand (Anderson, 1983; Collins and Loftus, 1975). Associations with the concept of territory or with a particular TOO in consumers' memory (e.g. quality ingredients, sincere producers, sunny) then get retrieved and influence the resultant image of the brand or product (e.g. authenticity).

Because it is linked to both material and symbolic resources, TOO can engender two main types of meaning. From a cognitive perspective, TOO is a topographic metric space, characterised by continuity and contiguity. It generates meanings pertaining to the geographical and climatic environment (e.g. soil, sunshine, temperature) and ingredients (e.g. plants) linked to this natural environment. In addition, TOO activates meanings related to history, tradition, manufacturing methods or expertise, which all involve human factors. These meanings then transfer to the brand or product, prompting product evaluations through cognitive processes (Suri and Thakor, 2013).

From an affective perspective, TOO generates meanings linked to cultural relationships and values of a territory, such as a high degree of community solidarity or a producer's sincerity, honesty, morality or passion (Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012). For example, TOO may be associated with images of specialist local producers who use time-honoured techniques and natural ingredients to manufacture products, or passionate producers who carefully protect the purity of their TOOs to guarantee consistent product quality and harmony with the environment. These images in turn imply sincerity and benevolence. In contrast with COO, territories evoke a more detailed sense of "somewhere" by providing specific origins, meanings and identities (Ger, 1999), as well as preserving rural traditions, cultures and history. Accordingly, consumers likely enjoy related notions of exoticism, myth or rarity. A TOO strategy can help firms leverage key territorial "resources around culture, history and production method, ... and purposefully take pride in ownership of local specialties by packaging culture, history and destination" (Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012, p. 1744), such that it clearly distinguishes the real from the fake.

In accordance with this process, the European Union created a Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) certification for wine, cheese, butter and other agricultural products, designed to certify their origins and quality and thereby help protect the reputations gained by the relevant territories. In this sense, both European and national authorities clearly recognise the importance of TOO for suppliers and consumers. Besides, as globalisation obscures distinctive social and cultural

characteristics at the national level (Suri and Thakor, 2013), it becomes difficult for consumers to derive sources of self-identity from COOs, considering the multiple locations of production, sourcing and assemblies that apply to most products. By contrast, a TOO association offering a more precise and helpful source of meaning that consumers transfer to the brand or product could better enhance their sense of self.

### **3.2.2 Authenticity**

Authenticity is both a central demand of consumers (Grayson and Martinec, 2004) and “one of the cornerstones of contemporary marketing” (Brown *et al.*, 2003, p. 21). Being a challenging concept, marketers have little agreement about its nature or dimensions (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). Some researchers treat authenticity as singular in nature, such that it can be assessed by objective attributes. For example, experts claim to be able to test artwork and antiques to determine if they are what they claim to be (Boorstin, 1964). In this context, authenticity is based on a static understanding of place and culture. An object declared authentic must display certain attributes or indicators of its authenticity; authenticated Italian furniture must demonstrate that it is made in Italy, or else they are false and inauthentic, even if still beautiful. This etymological sense of authenticity as an objective criterion also appears in social sciences, such that descriptions of products as authentic or

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inauthentic rely on criteria that require they have been manufactured or designed by local people in a traditional way. Authenticity then becomes inherent to the object, depending on its link to a historical period, spatial origin or nature in general (Grayson and Martinec, 2004).

An alternative view regards authenticity as highly subjective and independent of the object. Because there is no true or absolute origin, judgments of authenticity depend on each person's feelings and knowledge. Accordingly, authenticity can be defined on the basis of inauthenticity, and the rigour of the definition depends on the person's prior experiences, because "authenticity is a socially constructed concept, and its social connotation is not given, but 'negotiable'" (Cohen, 1988, p. 374). A person thus may consider furniture authentic because it is made following an Italian style or is sold in a shop decorated in Italian style, even if it is made in China.

Neither the objective nor the subjective perspective can address all meanings of authenticity though. Grayson and Martinec (2004) conceptualize a two-dimensional model, with indexical and iconic authenticity. Any item in an index must "actually have a factual and spatio-temporal link with something else," so indexicality is the distinction between the real thing and its copies (Grayson and Martinec, 2004, p. 298). For example, to judge whether a vase is an indexically authentic Chinese porcelain vase, it is necessary to verify that it is made from the porcelain of Jingdezhen (i.e. Chinese porcelain). Iconic authenticity instead refers to "things whose physical



manifestations resemble those which are indexically authentic” (Grayson and Martinet, 2004, p. 298). Iconic authenticity is often distinguished by phrases such as “authentic reproduction” or “authentic recreation” (Bruner, 1994, p. 399). A vase sold in a gift shop of a museum is authentic if its extrinsic features resemble those of the indexically authentic vase in its collection; it is less important that the material comes from Jingdezhen, but the style of this vase must be Chinese, to justify its (iconic) authenticity. Cognitive criteria (e.g. manufacturing method, material, product style) linked to the product origin also influence consumers’ perceptions of both indexical and iconic authenticity.

Beverland *et al.* (2008) identify three forms: pure, approximate and moral authenticity. First, pure authenticity implies a strong connection to the place of origin and a strong commitment to tradition. In this case, consumers rely on indexical cues that signal respect for tradition related to the manufacturing process, place of production or product style. Pure authenticity also demands a verifiable link between the product and past traditions, because consumers base their judgments on historical messages to verify that the product has not changed. Second, though also tied to traditions, approximate authenticity involves less strict demands. A product can be authentic if it corresponds to abstract, overall impressions of traditions, because consumers judge products using iconic cues that fit with their mental picture of how things ought to be. They do not seek to compare product attributes with indexical cues to verify authenticity but rather consider the product genuine, depending on the feelings it evokes. As long as products suggest the essence of a tradition, they can be

perceived as authentic. Third, moral authenticity is “a self-referential act which dictates the consumer’s favourite choice of consumption” (Beverland *et al.*, 2008, p. 11). This judgment is similar to that of approximate authenticity, in that it reflects consumers’ overall impressions. However, it focuses on the producer’s motivation, passion, merit or attention paid to product quality. Consumers make judgments using iconic cues that identify products as authentic rather than impersonal or mass produced. Authentic products are manufactured by producers passionately committed to and proud of their production, so consumers’ evaluations result from both cognitive and affective processes, using cues connected to history, time or place.

### **3.2.3 Consumers’ self-brand connections**

Possessions and brands may offer consumers with psychological benefits such as actively creating one’s self-concept, reinforcing and expressing self-identity, and allowing one to differentiate oneself and assert one’s individuality (Belk, 1988). Possessions and brands have also social functions such as reflecting social ties with one’s family, community, or cultural groups (Escalas and Bettman, 2003). As consumers use brands as symbols to add to and/or reinforce the way they think about themselves, the set of brand associations can be used to create and define consumers’ self-concept. Through building strong, favourable and unique brand associations, marketers can build a positive brand image (Keller, 1993) which is then adopted by

consumers to construct themselves and present themselves to others based on the congruence between brand image and self-image (Escalas and Bettman, 2003, 2005). As a result of this process, the set of brand associations are linked to the consumer's mental representation of self. Therefore, in addition to helping consumers express their self-concept, the meaning and value of brand image (e.g. authenticity, exoticism, rarity) help consumers create and build their self-identities by forming connections to brands (Escalas and Bettman, 2003).

#### **3.2.4 TOO and Authenticity**

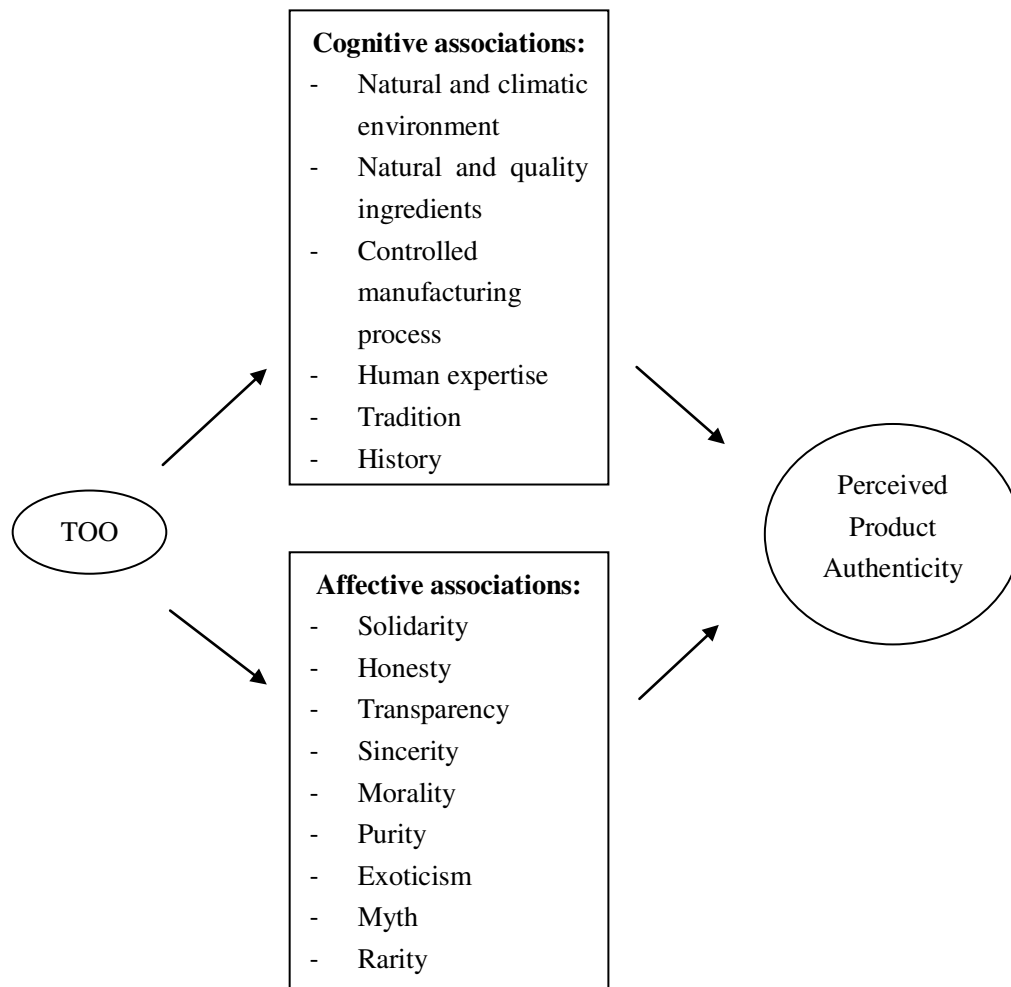
Judgments of a product's authenticity may be based on associations with a place of origin regardless of the criteria consumers actually adopt to evaluate product authenticity (Beverland, 2006; Grayson and Martinec, 2004). If the place of origin is associated with meanings such as climate, tradition, culture, commitment or passion, consumers evaluate the product's authenticity more readily. Similarly, perceptions of authenticity reflect elements intrinsic to the product, such as natural ingredients or time-honoured production methods, as well as subjective elements linked to a place of origin, such as sincerity or uniqueness (Beverland, 2006). Because brands benefit from equity grounded in their provenance, either a COO or a TOO indication might generate associations that prompt consumers' authenticity perceptions. However, compared to countries, territories are more homogeneous in their human and natural

environment factors (van Ittersum *et al.*, 2003), and therefore should contribute more to authenticity perceptions. Perceptions of uniqueness are critical to brand authenticity (Iversen and Hem, 2008), and smaller things generally are perceived as more unique (Brewer *et al.*, 1993); therefore, territories should relate more closely to uniqueness perceptions than do countries and should provide territorial products with pure and unique identities that are valuable, rare, costly to imitate, and nonsubstitutable (Elaydi and McLaughlin, 2012). Therefore, we predict that TOO will have a stronger positive impact on perceived authenticity than COO, indicating its unique importance in creating authenticity perceptions.

Through associations with tradition, the natural environment and human factors, TOO builds a cognitive category, associated with specific products and values, such that consumers regard certain products as more typical, more respectful of traditional values and higher in quality than others. The distinguishing features of territories also invoke their reputations for the quality production of particular products. For example, Saint Emilion (a region in the Bordeaux vineyards) generates associations with a long history, traditional production methods, old vine stocks, ancient skills and expert knowledge, all of which benefit the reputation of its wines.

Symbolic associations also help consumers create links between the TOO and their perceptions of authenticity (Figure 1). Culler (1990) argues that modern tourists find authenticity in ancient places that are not available in their daily world. Exoticism is strongly linked to the peculiarities of a territory, and it appears strongly favoured by

consumers from developing countries who seek to determine authenticity (Zhou *et al.*, 2010). Myths or sincere stories about local products establish unique impressions that create images of authenticity (Beverland, 2006; Iversen and Hem, 2008).



**FIGURE 1.** Meaning Transfer from the TOO to Perceived Product Authenticity

In line with these arguments, we propose:

*Hypothesis 1:* A product's TOO association relates positively to its perceived authenticity.

### **3.2.5 Perceived Authenticity and Consumers' Self-Brand Connections**

When consumers lose traditional sources of meaning or self-identity, they often seek authentic products and experiences that invoke meanings such as genuineness, uniqueness, attachment to origins or connections to the past and thereby reinforce their desired identity (Arnould and Price, 2000; Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). By transferring meaning linked to authenticity from products to themselves, consumers gain positive identity benefits and favourable self-characterisations. They incorporate product authenticity into their self-concept through this self-identity construction process. Arnould and Price (2000) demonstrate that consumers use authenticity to identify important aspects of their lives and construct desired identities in two ways: by co-creating product authenticity as part of their self-authentication, and by deeming cultural displays' authoritative performances (e.g. rituals, festivals). Marketing managers also use authentic communication tactics to encourage consumers to integrate brands into their self-concepts and form strong connections with these brands (Malar *et al.*, 2011). The extent to which consumers incorporate

authentic brands into their self-concept indicates the level of their self-brand connections (Escalas and Bettman, 2003). A brand perceived as more authentic should therefore create meaningful associations and strong self-brand connections. It follows:

*Hypothesis 2:* Perceived product authenticity relates positively to consumers' self-brand connections.

Two factors in particular are shown to moderate the influence of the COO on product evaluation: product familiarity (Basfirinci, 2013; Josiassen *et al.*, 2008) and the congruence between the COO and the product category (Hamzaoui and Merunka, 2006; Josiassen and Assaf, 2010). These moderators should also apply to TOO.

### **3.2.6 Familiarity with the TOO**

There are competing perspectives concerning the role of product familiarity in the relationship between COO image and consumer product evaluation. Several studies suggest that COO image is important only when product familiarity is low. Others consider that COO image can only be important for product evaluation when product familiarity is high (see Josiassen *et al.* 2008 for a review). Using an adaptation of Alba and Hutchinson's (1987) definition of product familiarity (i.e. the number of

product-related experiences accumulated by consumers), we define TOO familiarity as the number of (direct or indirect) experiences with a territory acquired by consumers. Direct experience implies visits to the territory and consumption of products or services produced in the TOO; indirect experience entails exposure to communications about the territory, including novels, films, or word-of-mouth. Because territories by definition are relatively small areas (e.g. Corsica or Normandy in France; Bavaria or Saxony in Germany; a particular state or part of a state in the United States), consumers may lack familiarity with any specific TOO, which could limit the number of associations in consumers' memory and thereby hinder the transfer of meaning, including perceptions of authenticity, to a brand or product. Therefore, consumers may need to be familiar with the TOO to integrate the TOO cue into their product evaluation as well as to reduce their uncertainty about product quality. It follows:

*Hypothesis 3:* Familiarity with the TOO moderates the relationship between TOO associations and perceived product authenticity, such that the influence of TOO associations on perceived product authenticity is stronger when consumers are more familiar with the TOO.



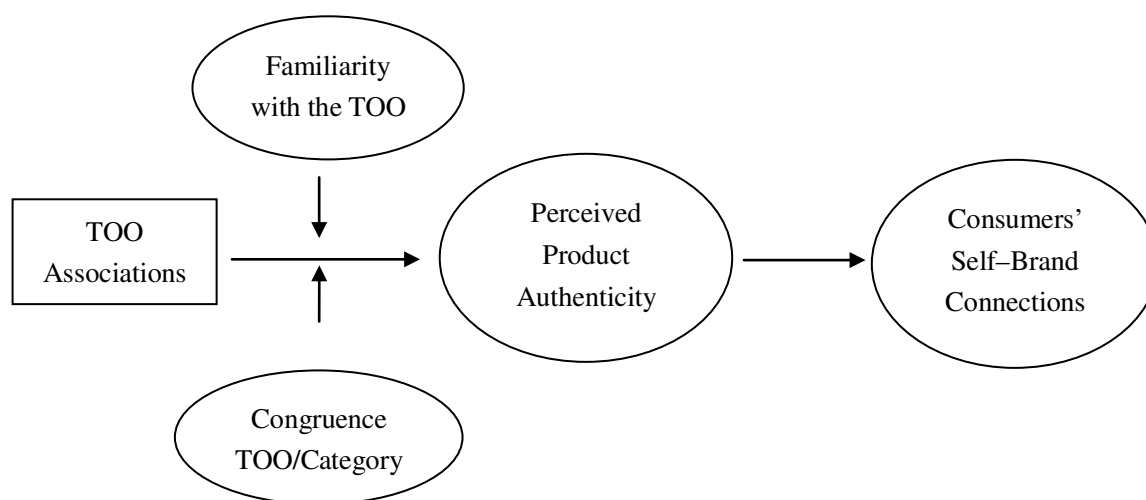
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### 3.2.7 Congruence of the Product Category and the TOO

Consumer perception of the congruence between products and their TOOs is an important determinant of TOO influence (van Ittersum *et al.*, 2003). Haubl and Elrod (1999, p. 199) conceptualise the degree of congruity between a brand and its country of production as “the strength with which a brand is associated with its home country”. According to the COO literature, congruence between a product category and its COO enhances the positive impact of COO on consumers’ brand associations and perceived product quality (Hamzaoui and Merunka, 2006), especially for low-involved consumers (Josiassen and Assaf, 2010). These results should apply to the transfer of meaning from a TOO to a brand or product; that is, the transfer should be more effective with greater congruence between the TOO and the product. Therefore:

*Hypothesis 4:* The congruence between a product category and its associated TOO moderates the relationship between a product’s TOO and perceived authenticity, such that the influence of TOO on perceived product authenticity is stronger when the degree of the congruence between the product category and the TOO is high.

We provide our conceptual model in Figure 2.



**FIGURE 2.** Research Model

### 3.3 METHOD

We use an experimental method and a partial least square (PLS) approach to test the chain of effects, from TOO to perceived authenticity and to consumers' self-brand connections, as well as the moderating effects of familiarity with the TOO and perceived congruence between the product category and the TOO.

#### 3.3.1 Procedure and Sample

The test was carried out across 20 out of 23 Chinese provinces. We used a

convenience sample of both students and non-students. Each respondent received a link to an online survey which firstly presented a photo of a product followed by questions concerning perceived authenticity and self-brand connections. 678 participants were contacted to participate in the study, with 665 questionnaires reclaimed.

To demonstrate the main effects from a TOO association to perceived authenticity and to consumers' self-brand connection, we created three conditions. A group of Chinese consumers were exposed to a product without any indication of its origin (control group,  $n = 160$ ) (Figure 3a), a second group was exposed to the same product with a clear indication of its TOO (TOO group,  $n = 280$ ) (Figure 3b), and a third group was exposed to the same product with a clear indication of its COO (COO group,  $n = 225$ ) (Figure 3c). The COO group served to rule out an alternative explanation that the outcomes might reflect the impact of an origin information in general, not specifically a TOO association. We tested the moderating effects of consumers' familiarity and the congruence of the TOO with the product category within the TOO group.



Figure 3a. No Indication of Origin



Figure 3b. With TOO (Provence region)



Figure 3c. With COO (France)

**FIGURE 3.** Product Stimuli

The experiment featured a lavender bar soap. The category choice was based on the strong sales of lavender soaps in China (Huajingwanxin Research Centre, 2013). The Provence region is well known to Chinese consumers, mainly through their exposure to a popular television series *Yī Lián Yōu Mèng* (*Dreams Link*), which frequently features France's landscapes and, in particular, a panorama of the Provence region. A pre-test with 60 Chinese consumers confirmed that the Provence region was sufficiently familiar to them (mean familiarity score = 4.9 on seven-point scale) and that they associated it with lavender (mean association score = 4.2 on seven-point scale).

We explicitly left the stimuli unbranded. The net effect of the stimulus is a very important notion for this study, because it represents the origin cue's ability to form a unique identity. Some brands claim TOO associations in their names (e.g. Jack Daniel's Tennessee whiskey, Bowmore Islay Single Malt Scotch whisky, L'Occitane en Provence), which creates a confound between TOO effects and brand effects and would prevent us from distinguishing the relative roles of origin cues versus brand names in consumers' product evaluations. Even if a brand offers no provenance information in its name, its image might affect authenticity perceptions and self-brand connections. Therefore, we excluded any brand information to isolate the TOO effects from possible brand effects.

The initial sample of 665 participants provided 633 usable questionnaires (154 from the control group, 264 from the TOO group, and 215 for the COO group), after

exclusion of missing or extreme values. Of these 633 consumers, 51.6% were women, and 32.8% were between 18 and 25 years of age, 42.3% between 26 and 35 years, and 20.2% between 36 and 49 years. University students represented 26.9% of the sample, 23.9% were employees, and 16.7% were managers. The overall sample was relatively young (mean age = 29 years), which reflects the population of online service users in China. Although we used a convenience sample which does not represent the Chinese population, the sample is in line with segments of the population most likely to be targeted by marketers of foreign (European) products. Young consumers are considered as one of the most attractive consumer goods market in China and studies that explored COO and Asian consumption also dominantly selected young people in their samples (Wong *et al.*, 2008).

### **3.3.2 Measurements and Scale Testing**

The measurement scales came from prior literature. To measure perceived product authenticity, we developed a nine-item scale based on Beverland *et al.* (2008); we measured consumers' self-brand connections with seven items from Escalas and Bettman (2003). For the moderators, we assessed consumers' familiarity with the TOO using three items adapted from Heimbach *et al.* (1989). Congruence between the product category and the TOO relied on an adaptation of a scale by Aaker and Keller (1990). The measurement items are shown in Table 1. All scale items were translated

into Chinese by a Chinese–English bilingual speaker, then back-translated to English by another bilingual speaker. Minor inconsistencies were resolved through discussion. All the items used five-point Likert scales (1 = ‘do not agree at all’, 5 = ‘completely agree’).

**TABLE 1.** Measurement Instruments

<b>Perceived authenticity</b> (adapted from Beverland et al., 2008)
<i>Pure authenticity</i>
1. This soap is made in the traditional way.
2. This soap is authentic (is not an imitation).
3. The ingredients used to produce this soap are natural.
<i>Approximate authenticity</i>
4. This soap has existed for a long time.
5. This soap gives me a romantic impression.
6. The producers of this soap have the required know-how.
<i>Moral authenticity</i>
7. The producers of this soap love their jobs.
8. This soap is pure (is not polluted by the modern world).
9. This soap embodies moral values.
<b>Consumers’ self- brand connections</b> (Escalas and Bettman, 2005)
1. This soap reflects who I am.
2. I can identify with this soap.
3. I think this soap helps me become the type of person I want to be.
4. This soap suits me well.
5. I feel a personal connection to this soap.
6. I use this soap to communicate who I am to other people.
7. I consider this soap to be “me” (It reflects who I consider myself to be or the way that I want to present myself to others).
<b>Familiarity with the TOO</b> (Heimbach et al., 1989)
1. I have already heard of Provence.
2. I know Provence well.
3. I have already bought products made in Provence.
<b>Congruence between the product category and its TOO</b> (Aaker and Keller, 1990)
1. It is logical that this soap is made in Provence.
2. It is natural that this soap is made in Provence.
3. It is consistent that this soap is made in Provence.

We conducted both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to refine each scale. The scales were all uni-dimensional. Three scales (consumers' self-brand connections, consumers' familiarity with the TOO and congruence between the product category and its TOO) retained all their initial items. The perceived authenticity scale was reduced to four items. Overall, the measurement scales showed sufficient reliability and validity (Table 2 and 3). Specifically, the Cronbach's alphas and Joreskog's rhos exceeded the recommended levels ( $\alpha$  between .71 and .93; rhos between .80 and .93). All factor loadings were significant ( $p < .01$ ), and the convergent validities (Rho vc) of the scales exceeded .5. In support of the discriminant validity between authenticity and self-brand connection, the average variances extracted (.54 for authenticity, .66 for self-brand connection) were higher than the squared correlations between the constructs (.35).

**TABLE 2.** Scale Reliability and Validity of the Main Constructs

Table 2a.  $n = 418$ , TOO + control group

	<b>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>Joreskog's rho</b>	<b>Rho vc</b>
Perceived authenticity	.72	.83	.54
Consumers' self-brand connections	.92	.93	.61

Table 2b.  $n = 369$ , COO + control group

	<b>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>Joreskog's rho</b>	<b>Rho vc</b>
Perceived authenticity	.71	.80	.50
Consumers' self-brand connections	.91	.91	.65



Table 2c. n = 479, TOO + COO

	<b>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>Joreskog's rho</b>	<b>Rho vc</b>
Perceived authenticity	.77	.82	.53
Consumers' self-brand connections	.93	.93	.70

**TABLE 3.** Scale Reliability and Validity of the Moderating Constructs

	<b>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>Joreskog's rho</b>	<b>Rho vc</b>
Familiarity with the TOO	.84	.81	.58
Congruence between product category and TOO	.79	.75	.52

To test for common method variance, we correlated the measurement error terms of the two latent constructs, perceived authenticity and consumers' self-brand connections (Marsh *et al.*, 1992). The method-based variance was .16, and the average substantively explained variance of the indicators was .60. Noting the small relative magnitude of the method variance, we considered it unlikely to be a serious concern for our study.

Finally, we conducted mean difference tests for all the dependent variable constructs to test the extent to which demographic factors (i.e. gender, age, profession, student or non-student) may influence the variables of interest (Josiassen *et al.*, 2008; Josiassen and Assaf, 2010; Peterson and Merunka, 2014). Results indicate no significant differences of perceived authenticity and self-brand connections between the groups of respondents (i.e. female vs. male; participants under 35 years of age vs. participants above 35 years of age; students vs. non-students). In addition,

multi-group analyses revealed no significant differences between these groups in the loadings of each measurement items on the constructs (in support of measurement equivalence) or the path coefficients of TOO on perceived authenticity and of perceived authenticity on consumers' self-product connection (in support of structural equivalence). Therefore, we considered it appropriate to pool these groups together.

### 3.3.3 Main effects

We first compared the mean values between the control group exposed to the product only and the experimental group exposed to both the product and its TOO. The mean values for perceived authenticity were 3.09 (SD = .31) for the control group and 3.51 (SD = .39) for the TOO group. In terms of consumers' self-brand connections, the mean values were 2.85 (SD = .54) for the control group and 3.18 (SD = .66) for the TOO group. In both cases, the means differed significantly across groups ( $p < .001$ ) and were higher in the experimental group of consumers exposed to the TOO (Table 4). Therefore, exposure to the TOO produced higher perceptions of authenticity and stronger self-brand connections. Next, we conducted a partial least squares (PLS) analysis to test the effect of the TOO on perceived authenticity and the effect of authenticity on consumers' self-brand connections. The model fit the data well (goodness-of-fit criterion [GoF] = .38) and indicated a large effect size (Wetzels *et al.*, 2009). The dichotomous TOO variable (no exposure = 0, TOO = 1) related positively

to perceived authenticity ( $R^2 = .11$ , path coefficient = .33,  $p < .01$ ), and perceived authenticity then related positively to consumers' self-brand connections ( $R^2 = .35$ , path coefficient = .59,  $p < .01$ ) (Table 5).

**TABLE 4.** Results of T-test between TOO and Control Group (n=418)

	<b>Mean<sub>TOO</sub></b>	<b>Mean<sub>control</sub></b>	<b>p</b>
Perceived authenticity	3.51	3.09	.00
Consumer's self-brand connections	3.18	2.85	.00

**TABLE 5.** Results of PLS Analysis between TOO and Control Group (n=418)

	<b>GoF</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Path coefficient</b>	<b>p</b>
TOO → Perceived authenticity	.38	.11	.33	.00
Authenticity → Self-brand connections		.35	.59	.00

We then compared the COO group with the control group and found mean values for perceived authenticity of 3.13 (SD = .72) and 3.09 (SD = .31), respectively. These means did not differ significantly ( $p = .49$ ). The difference in the mean values of self-brand connections also was not significant ( $p = .19$ ), with means equal to 2.74 (SD = .78) for the COO group and 2.85 (SD = .54) for the control group (Table 6). A PLS analysis of the 369 observations tested the effect of COO on perceived authenticity. The model fit the data well (GoF = .27, medium effect size), but the impact of COO (no exposure = 0, COO = 1) on consumers' authenticity perceptions was not significant ( $R^2 = .05$ , path coefficient = .07,  $p < .17$ ). Therefore, COO had no

impact on perceived authenticity. The positive impact of authenticity on self-brand connections persisted though, even if it was weaker than the effect of TOO ( $R^2 = .24$ , path coefficient = .49,  $p < .001$ ) (Table 7). These results indicate that the other most common and researched provenance indication (COO) does not enhance perceptions of authenticity. This confirms the unique role of TOO for that purpose.

**TABLE 6.** Results of T-test between COO and Control Group (n=369)

	<b>Mean<sub>COO</sub></b>	<b>Mean<sub>control</sub></b>	<b>p</b>
Perceived authenticity	3.13	3.09	.49
Consumer's self-brand connections	2.74	2.85	.19

**TABLE 7.** Results of PLS Analysis between COO and Control Group (n=369)

	<b>GoF</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Path coefficient</b>	<b>p</b>
COO → Perceived authenticity	.27	.05	.07	.17
Authenticity → Self-brand connections		.24	.49	.01

We last directly compared the impacts of TOO and COO associations (COO = 0, TOO = 1) on perceived authenticity (n = 479). Results indicated that TOO exerted a positive differential impact on authenticity ( $R^2 = .07$ , path coefficient TOO/COO = .25,  $p < .001$ ), which re-affirmed the Study 1 results regarding the unique effect of TOO on perceived authenticity. The path of authenticity to self-brand connections was unchanged from Study 1 ( $R^2 = .33$ , path coefficient = .57,  $p < .001$ ). Adding a direct path from TOO/COO to self-brand connections, we determined that TOO retained its

impact on perceived product authenticity ( $R^2 = .07$ , path coefficient TOO/COO = .25,  $p < .001$ ) and exerted a slight, yet significant, direct effect on consumers' self-brand connections (path coefficients: authenticity to connection = .53, TOO/COO to self-brand connections = .13,  $p < .001$ ) (Table 8). These results clearly indicate the unique role of TOO, in support of H1 and H2.

**TABLE 8.** Results of PLS Analysis between TOO and COO Group (n=479)

	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Path coefficient</b>	<b>p</b>
TOO → Perceived authenticity	.07	.25	.00
Authenticity → Self-brand connections	.33	.57	.00
TOO → Self-brand connection		.13	.00

### 3.3.4 Moderating effects

Moderating effects are tested on the TOO group. The PLS model with interaction terms indicated that both familiarity and congruence exerted positive effects on the link between the TOO and perceived authenticity. Furthermore, the GoF of .51 indicated the good fit of the model to the data, and the R-square for authenticity was .42. We found that TOO persisted in its impact on perceived authenticity (path coefficient = .12,  $p < .01$ ), and both interaction terms (TOO × familiarity and TOO × congruence) exerted positive impacts on authenticity (path coefficients = .39 and .28,

respectively, both  $p < .01$ ) (Table 9). That is, familiarity and congruence had positive moderating effects on the TOO–authenticity relationship, in support of H3 and H4.

**TABLE 9.** Moderating Effects

	<b>GoF</b>	<b>Path coefficient</b>	<b>p</b>
Familiarity with TOO	.51	.40	.00
Congruence TOO/Category		.26	.00

### 3.4 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Doubts about the importance of COO information have prompted marketers to call for alternative approaches, and TOO represents a criterion that might enhance product evaluations. We confirm this suggestion by demonstrating that TOO associations result in brand authenticity perceptions. Consumers adopt a meaning transfer process to evaluate a product's authenticity and transfer TOO meanings, such as tradition, culture and uniqueness, to the product. In addition, they incorporate the meanings associated with the brand's authenticity into their self-concepts and form a connection with the brand. Our findings empirically establish relationships that have been suggested in prior literature with an experimental approach; they also isolate the unique character and impact of a TOO strategy, compared with a COO version. We identify two moderators of the relationship between TOO and perceived authenticity

(familiarity with the TOO and congruence between the product category and the TOO), which resonate with findings from the COO literature and confirm their importance in the meaning transfer process. Finally, results indicate that TOO offers a promising strategy for building consumer–brand connections.

### **3.4.1 Managerial Implications**

In global markets, product differentiation is increasingly difficult to achieve, so TOO may be an effective option for creating strong brands for both local and international firms. Because brand authenticity perceptions are place-specific and significant for brand building, firms must use appropriate communications to project authentic brand images. In line with anti-globalisation movements and recent trends toward more regionalism, international firms could seek to offer more diversity in their product portfolios and avoid overloading consumers with identical product origins through the use of territorial claims. Local firms may also highlight product specificities using a territorial claim and induce the producer's honesty and sincerity helping to build a unique and positive brand image. Compared with COO, TOO may generate fewer but stronger associations that better meet the needs of specific markets and create more intimate consumer–brand relationships. TOO branding could be especially effective for brands that target niche markets or compete with large, entrenched, mass market companies. TOO may also offer advantages in face of political and economic

international incidents. For example, French nuclear testing in the Pacific in 1995 caused the decline in Australian consumers' product evaluation and purchase intention toward French products (Heslop *et al.*, 2009). TOO provenance may not lead to the same consumer negative evaluative feelings toward products from Bretagne, Provence or Alsace (all French regions). If consumers are unfamiliar with local products, a TOO indication functions similarly to a brand name. However, unlike the long, difficult process of brand creation, TOO associations often already exist in consumers' minds and might be communicated through promotions of the TOO itself. By exploiting the resource advantage derived from the unique characteristics and equity of a TOO, brands can enhance consumers' brand authenticity perceptions and enjoy expanded long-term opportunities.

This is not to suggest that TOO branding is simple. Consumers, especially if they are unfamiliar with a TOO, cannot associate positive meanings with the TOO or use it to judge brand authenticity. They also may be less confident about the quality of TOO-linked products if they perceive a lack of resources in that TOO. People's knowledge of a TOO reflects a variety of sources, such as popular media, prior purchases, trips, contact with citizens, films or novels, and these sources seldom fall under the control of brand strategists. A TOO's image might shift dramatically over time, whether positively or negatively. For example, the Provence region became well known to and favoured by Chinese consumers through the *Dreams Link* television series, but the seafood of Fukushima in Japan has been boycotted since the earthquake



and resultant nuclear disaster in 2011.

To increase the success of TOO branding and ensure that the brand benefits from the core competencies of the TOO, marketers should carefully match products with the images of each TOO. The connection will be obvious for some product categories (e.g. food), especially those that depend on the natural environment of the TOO. But TOO brands also appear among cosmetics (Nuxe de Paris), restaurant chains (Léon de Bruxelles) and leisure activities (Lijiang Travel Agency). If product attributes (e.g. taste) are congruent with the TOO's natural environment (e.g. soil, sunshine), marketers can enhance their product promotions with images of the landscape, highlighting those factors that are critical to the product's quality and authenticity. If product attributes instead relate more closely to human factors, images of dedicated local producers, using specific design and manufacturing processes, can emphasise the suitability of the TOO as a site of manufacturing for such products. However, if the congruence between the TOO and the product is less obvious, brands must rely on matching perceptions to help consumers understand why the TOO is suitable as a source of the specific products and magnify the positive impacts of the TOO on perceived authenticity. Advertisements might increase consumers' exposure to the territory for example, because familiarity with the TOO increases consumers' access to TOO associations.

The uniqueness and traceability of TOOs represent advantages, especially compared with COOs, and this should be highlighted in brand promotions. In addition

to a focus on intrinsic product qualities that might be replicated by competitors elsewhere using modern technology, brands can emphasize on their uniqueness through the irreproducibility and irreplaceability of their TOOs to enhance consumers' perceptions of authenticity. For example, marketers may communicate on the unique combination of characteristics of a TOO, on the discovery of the product or the creation of the brand which designates the TOO as a unique birthplace. This provides consumers with a unique experience and fulfils a need for uniqueness through the rarity of a particular place. Also, as a TOO has the advantage over a COO to offer brands with a traceable origin which helps ensure product purity, adds stature to the brand, and reduces consumers' perceived risk, it is important for TOO brands to reinforce this traceability. Firms can establish track records to highlight either temporal or spatial traceability for their brands. For example, marketers may seek to communicate individual stories retrieved from history and highlight the source of product ingredients through online presentations or through labeling as part of the brand building programs. Take the "Rhum Clément de Martinique" brand as an example. It taps into the historical evolution of rum production processes to justify their know-how gained throughout history. Such TOO associated brands may also develop library stocks, draw on back catalogues, hold traditional ceremonies or offer experiential tours of facilities to communicate, in addition to media communications. Such ceremonies or tours may even become a source of revenue when coupled with a boutique selling the products.

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### 3.4.2 Limitations and Further Research Directions

This study has several limitations. The results indicate that TOO exerts only a moderate positive influence on perceived authenticity, possibly because the only information that the respondents in our study received was “made in Provence”. We designed the experiment to isolate the TOO effect from other possible effects, such as those linked to brand positioning, and we conducted the experiment at the product level (lavender soap) to avoid any influence of the brand name which could transfer provenance meanings if designed for that purpose. In a real-world setting, such associations and meanings would be stronger and directly accessible through brand names, brand positioning and brand communications. Further research should include such experimental variations, which may produce stronger effects on perceived authenticity. For example, a test using real advertisements featuring the TOO would be helpful. Furthermore, our stringent experimental conditions exposed Chinese consumers to a very distant region (Provence, in southern France) and required that they retrieve associations with “Provence” from their long-term memories. Additional studies might adopt more familiar territories (e.g. Paris, New York), which might generate more immediate meanings through spreading activation. Familiar territories could have a stronger, more easily accessible network of associations and thus might reveal a stronger link of the territory to perceived authenticity. In any case, we note that perceived authenticity perceptions linked to TOO associations were significant and stronger than those of COO, which did not exhibit any such effects in our

experiment.

The single product category we tested constitutes another limitation; some categories might benefit more or less from authenticity perceptions than others. For example, TOO may be more effective than COO for agricultural and food items naturally linked to a territory, because the ingredients needed to manufacture the product are critical components (e.g. Turrón, a Spanish nougat from Andalusia in southern Spain, made from almonds). In contrast, TOO may be less effective if the benefits linked to the territorial strategy are difficult to establish, such as for consumer durables, or if the notion of authenticity is not relevant to brand–consumer relationships. Moreover, lavender soap is a relatively low-risk product with search attributes; further research should investigate higher-risk products (e.g. furniture) that might threaten potential disadvantages of TOOs, such as consumers’ fears of quality penalties. Some boundary conditions also might be pertinent, such as if consumers perceive a territory as lacking the abilities or resources needed to manufacture a particular product. In this case, authenticity perceptions, if they exist, might lead to less favourable attitudes or brand relationships. In short, category effects remain to be explored, and further research should test different product categories.

We also note that TOO might transfer meanings other than authenticity, such as quality. Parsons et al. (2012) demonstrate that consumers value locally sourced store brands more than national brands from a foreign country in terms of risk, quality and

value. However, Suri and Thakor (2013) suggest that perceptions of the quality of local products may be lower than those for national products. Authenticity is just one of the consequences of TOO and other effects should be tested. Other factors also could moderate the relationship between TOO and perceived authenticity, such as consumers' motivation to process information, the purchase context (e.g. within or outside the TOO), the presence of other consumers or the purchase occasion (e.g. gift giving). Consumer ethnocentrism or demographic variables also might affect the relationships among TOO associations, perceived authenticity and consumers' self-brand connections. A model incorporating different possible consequences of TOO associations and moderators thus is warranted.

Finally, judgments of authenticity depend on different criteria in various cultures, and what one person or group perceives as authentic might appear false or inauthentic to others. Our test, conducted in China, should be extended to other consumers in various countries.

## **CHAPTER 4 – ARTICLE 2**

### **The Use of Territory of Origin as a Branding Tool**

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Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 32-40.

### **SHORT ABSTRACT**

An indicator of a product's quality and unique characteristics, territory of origin may be used as a strategic marketing and brand-building tool, as well as part of a company's corporate social responsibility initiatives.

### **LONG ABSTRACT**

Territory of origin can be strategically used as a brand-building tool in marketing communications programs. By exploiting the unique characteristics of a particular territory, a brand can enhance consumers' perceptions of product quality and authenticity. The implementation of a territorial strategy offers firms long-term market opportunities while benefiting stakeholders. For territory of origin branding to be successful, it is necessary to promote products that fit with the territorial image. This requires establishing a track record for the product's ingredients, its manufacturing process, and its brand heritage. A territorial strategy can also play an important part in corporate social responsibility initiatives directed at consumers and the broader local community.

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

How did an individual enterprise grow to sell its products in 1,500 retail locations in more than 80 countries within 40 years? What made the price of a product increase twentyfold in 15 years? Why are certain food items popular with consumers, regardless of their cost?

As of this writing, L'Occitane en Provence is preparing another 650 store openings, the price of Pu'er tea is still increasing, and Bresse chicken, Parma ham, and Vidalia onions remain highly sought-after ingredients—all despite premium prices. One thing each of these examples has in common is the deliberate emphasis placed on the products' territory of origin.

## 4.2 WHAT IS TERRITORY OF ORIGIN?

Territory of origin (TOO) — also known as *terroir* from the French *terre*, meaning land — is used to describe how the soil, place, and climate of a specific place influence the taste of food and wine, thus producing a unique flavor (Elaydi & McLaughlin, 2012). Some well-known examples of products that trumpet their TOO are Bordeaux red wines, Champagne wines, and Scottish whisky. TOO strategies are not limited to agricultural products, however. In many regions of the world, firms incorporate TOO into their business strategies as a means of linking their products to local culture or to



the concepts of uniqueness and quality — for example, Carrara marble, Marseille soap, Suzhou silk, and Murano glass.

For economists, sociologists, and anthropologists, the term “territory” simply describes the integration of individual or collective practices beyond physical space (Giraut, 2008), or “a geographic space transformed by human labor” (Raffestin, 1986, p. 177). Rooted in a community built on social interactions and shared cultural elements, TOO often refers to relatively small-scale activities that are geographically bounded and characterized by strong social ties (Marquis & Battilana, 2009), such as a region, province, or trade zone. Even smaller designations are possible, such as the town of Marseille in France or the Isle of Islay in Scotland. TOO thus becomes linked to a “quasi-sacralized site on which meanings of depth, communal tradition, and expressions of genuine cultural differences are projected” (Thompson & Tambyah, 1999, p. 238). In marketing, TOO refers to “the holistic combination in an environment of soil, climate, topography, and the ‘soul’ of the producer” (Iversen & Hem, 2008, p. 615). It thus reflects a place’s potential ability to express its capabilities with a unique combination of characteristics, and to meet consumer demand with valued products sold at a premium price.

An extrinsic cue, TOO can be communicated through the “made in” label (for example, “made in Normandy”), implied by the brand name (for example, *le Petit Marseillais*), or included directly in the brand name (for example, *L’Occitane en Provence*). Since the 1960s, when place branding was truly recognized, decades of

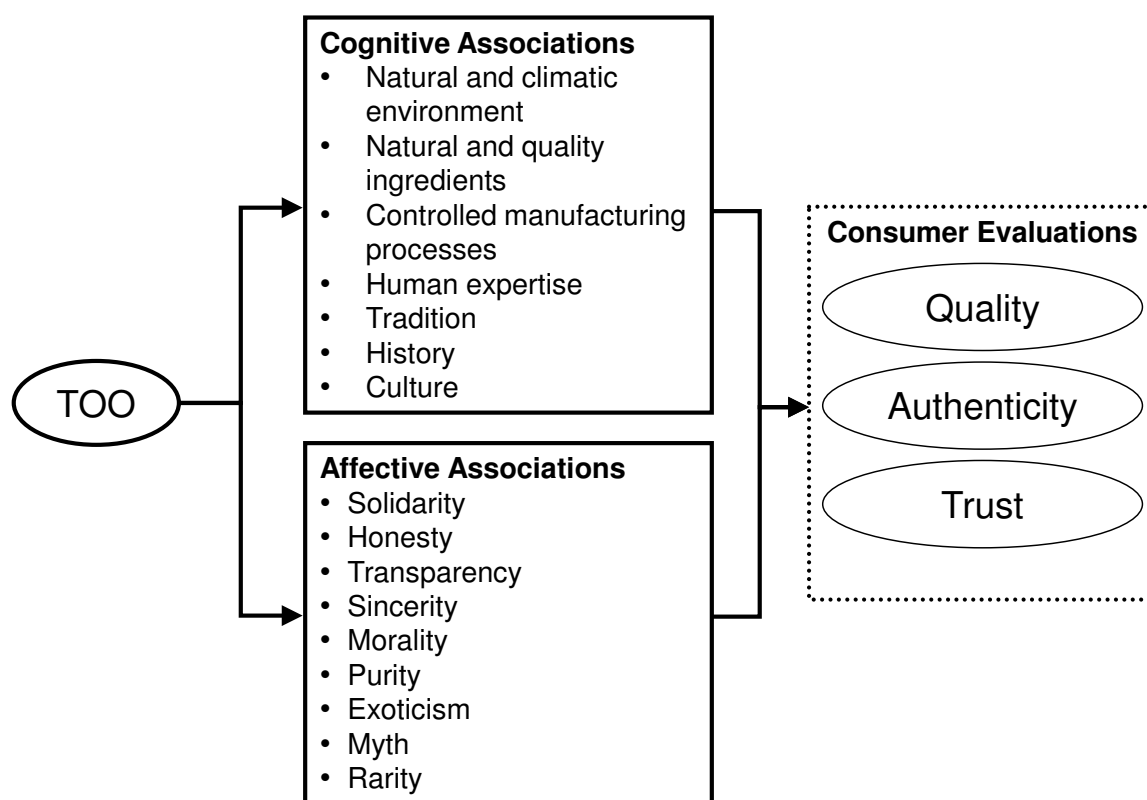
research has demonstrated that place of origin influences consumers' perceptions about products and the range of benefits linked to brand associations and brand equity grounded in their provenance (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009). Different origin cues influence consumers' product evaluation in different ways, however. Therefore, to capture the potential value of TOO, it is necessary to understand the influencing process of TOO on consumer product evaluations.

### **4.3 UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCING PROCESS OF TOO**

Consumers use an array of extrinsic and intrinsic cues to infer product attributes (for example, quality) and to assess price sacrifice. Even though intrinsic product attributes are deemed more useful than extrinsic ones, consumers might have little opportunity to process intrinsic information because of their limited product knowledge or access to information. Hence, extrinsic cues are often used to make product decisions. TOO is an extrinsic cue that consumers use to infer intrinsic product attributes.

TOO is a term that is loaded with meaning and influences consumers' product evaluation through a meaning transfer process. Through interactions with places either by direct experiences of the environment (such as through a visit) or indirectly via media representations (films, books, or word-of-mouth), consumers form images of places that become organized as knowledge structures in their memory. These

inferential and informational associations of a given territory based on consumers' broad spectrum of beliefs and experiences are then transferred to products originating from the TOO, and are used by consumers to form their perceptions of those products. As for any brand, image and associations are at the core of brand building. Thus, by exploiting the associations consumers may have with a particular territory, marketers can provide their brands with a specific image that not only enables them to differentiate their products from those of their competitors, but also to command a premium price for them. A combination of material and symbolic resources, TOO generates two main types of associations: cognitive and affective. These are outlined in Figure 1.



**FIGURE 1.** TOO Associations and Their Influencing Process

From a cognitive perspective, TOO is characterized by continuity and contiguity. It thus generates associations that include the geographical and climatic environment (soil, sunshine, temperature, or plants) and quality ingredients linked to this natural environment. TOO also activates associations with history, tradition, manufacturing methods, and expertise, which are linked to human factors. Consumers then judge a product's quality using these associations. For example, the natural environment of Bordeaux, including slope, orientation, soil types, soil depth, altitude, and levels of solar radiation, are significant determinants of a vineyard's quality, as is the local human expertise based on centuries of experience and tradition.

The associations generated by TOO can also be used to differentiate the “genuine” from the “fake.” For example, because of the unique combination of characteristics in the Champagne area in France, only wines from this territory can carry the name “Champagne” with an uppercase C. These, then, are judged authentic, unique, and “genuine”.

From an affective perspective, TOO generates associations linked to the culture and tradition of a territory, such as a high degree of solidarity within a community network, as well as producers' sincerity, honesty, morality, or passion. For example, TOO is associated with images of specialized local producers using time-honored techniques and natural ingredients to manufacture products, or passionate producers protecting the purity of their TOOs and guaranteeing the consistency of product quality and harmony with the environment. This also implies sincerity and benevolence toward

consumers. As globalization obscures the distinctive social and cultural characteristics of countries, territories evoke a sense of place that preserves rural tradition, culture, and history, contributing to perceptions of exoticism, myth, and rarity. These symbolic associations lead consumers to form perceptions concerning product quality and authenticity, as well as brand trust, through a cognitive and an affective process.

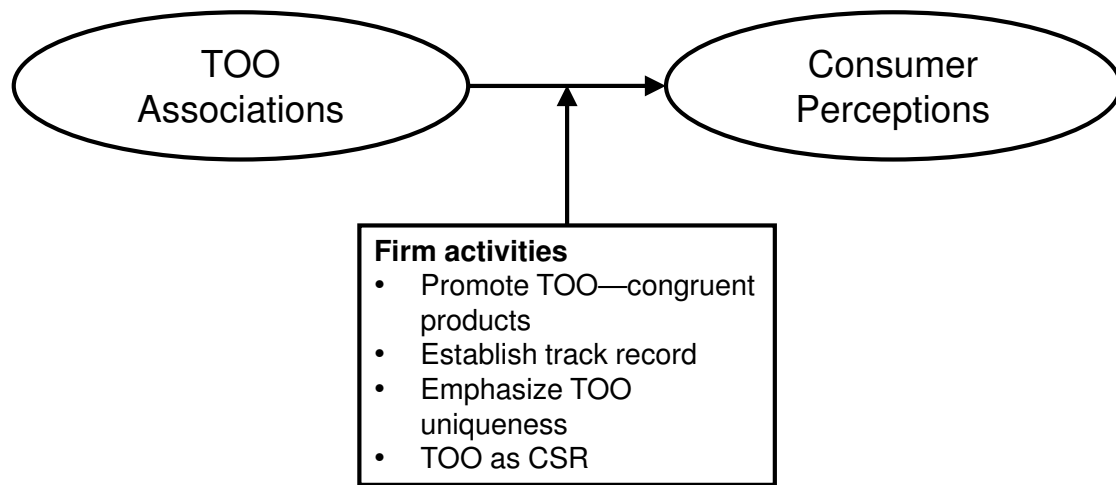
In contrast to standardized and homogenous mass products whose consumption lacks meaning and depth, territorial products are perceived as true, authentic, attached to their origins, and of superior quality. TOO thus offers the brand a genuine unique selling proposition through a rare combination of characteristics. Besides, TOO generates strong associations because of its internal consistency in terms of human and natural environment factors. The essence of successful brand building is to create strong, unique, and favorable brand associations (Keller, 2003). Therefore TOO is a valuable signal for consumers and a critical managerial tool that differentiates a product from its competitors in both domestic and international markets.

Each coin has two sides, however, and TOO branding is no exception. The creation and management of TOO branding can also imply difficulties for brand managers. There may be negative as well as positive impacts of TOO associations on consumer product perceptions. For instance, a TOO designation may lead to consumers' uncertainty concerning product quality because of the perceived resource disadvantages of a particular territory, such as lack of material. Territorial branding is

also a fragile concept to exploit when the territory is unknown or when negative impressions of the territory exist. In a global market, the perceived risk of purchasing territorial products may be more pronounced as TOO associations can appear too distant for consumers in other countries, thus limiting the scaling ability of the brands relying on their TOOs. Therefore, if a firm is to profit from a TOO designation, it is important to develop careful impression management to enhance consumers' perceptions of quality and authenticity.

#### **4.4 STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE TOO BRANDING**

Given the fact that TOO influences consumers' perceptions of a product, how can marketing managers exploit the advantages, and avoid the pitfalls, of TOO? Effective management of the impact of TOO associations requires promoting products that fit the TOO image, establishing a track record, emphasizing a product's uniqueness, and incorporating TOO as part of a corporate social responsibility initiative directed at consumers and at the local community (see Figure 2).



**FIGURE 2.** Managing the Impact of TOO Associations on Consumer Perceptions

#### 4.4.1 Promoting TOO-Congruent Products

One critical determinant of the success of TOO branding is to promote product categories, products, and brands that fit with the TOO image — in other words, to establish product-TOO congruency. TOOs known to consumers will generate a favorable attitude and have a strong positive influence on the evaluation of some products, yet may have little or even a negative influence on the evaluation of others because of perceived resource constraints. Empirical tests demonstrate that the congruence between a product category and its TOO enhances the positive impact of a TOO indication on perceptions of product authenticity (Zhang & Merunka, 2013). For TOOs that are less well-known to consumers, the fit between the image of the TOO and

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products offers brands long-term opportunities to benefit from the core competencies of the TOO. For example, turrón, an almond and honey-based nougat manufactured in Jijona in southwestern Spain, comes from a little known territory. Natural associations of southern Spain with sun, dry soil, almonds, and ancient traditions and know-how, however, should benefit the image of the product.

TOO associations can be used to build a cognitive category, with which consumers associate specific products and values in a way that these products appear more typical than others, more respectful of traditional values, and higher in quality. The distinguishing features of territories lead consumers to perceive or even imagine their reputation for the production of particular products. For brands congruent with their TOOs, the concept will produce consumer imagery leading to favorable brand perceptions. For example, Fuding white tea from Fuding, a Chinese region known for its mountains and seacoast, should generate more positive associations (natural, authentic, unique, traditional, trustworthy, and high quality) than tea simply associated with China.

When using a TOO indication, brands need to position themselves as being specialized to capitalize on market niches. With product attributes (such as taste) congruent with the natural environment of a TOO (for example, soil and sunshine), firms can accompany product promotion with images of the landscape, in particular the factors that are critical to communicating product quality and authenticity. For example, the L'Occitane en Provence brand adopts a lavender field in Provence as an image for



its range of lavender cosmetic products and relies on the environmental suitability of Provence for manufacturing high-quality, authentic products. When product quality and authenticity are closely linked to human factors, images such as local producers using specific designs and manufacturing processes will highlight the suitability of human expertise in the TOO for manufacturing such products. This human expertise may rely on tradition and knowledge passed from generation to generation (such as the use of raw milk to make Camembert cheese in Normandy) or on leading-edge technological knowledge (as for firms from the Silicon Valley).

When the TOO/product congruence is less obvious, brands need to rely on matching perceptions of products and TOOs. For example, even though Brittany does not have a reputation for clothing in general, the Armor-Lux brand successfully promotes T-shirts and sweaters using the congruence between the natural image of Brittany (sea and rain) and the style of its products.

#### **4.4.2 Establishing a Track Record**

Consumers perceive a product with a traceable origin — as opposed to a “placeless” one — as pure, authentic, and high in quality. Therefore, TOO associations are more appealing when they enhance the impression of traceability. Establishing a track record enables brands to gain either temporal or spatial traceability from TOO associations,

which can help ensure product purity, adds stature to the brand, and reduces consumers' perceived risk.

Track records are built from history and tradition, and provide temporal traceability of the know-how embedded in a TOO, leveraging the heritage accumulated for manufacturing specific products. For consumers, an established heritage indicates reliability and a consistent, high level of quality. Brands can then use such records to justify their ability to establish a consistent level of performance.

Track records can be demonstrated by individual stories retrieved from history and communicated with consumers through online presentations, or through labeling as part of the brand building programs. Marketers can also establish track records by developing library stocks, drawing on their back catalogues or from traditional ceremonies. For example, the Rhum Clément de Martinique brand taps into the historical evolution of rum production processes, offering consumers a temporal traceability of the brand and justifying the know-how gained throughout history. Because history and tradition might also be linked to old, out-of-date images, brands need to renew the value gained by heritage constantly through their commitments to on-going quality production.

Track records can also be built upon the traceability of product ingredients or manufacturing processes, as products with traceable ingredients are perceived as pure, natural, and healthy. Marketers can communicate the source of product ingredients on product labels, or make public commitments on sourcing policies to indicate the

brand's dedication to quality via selectivity in raw material, honesty, transparency, and confidence in the suitability of the natural environment of the TOO. Consumers also can gain a sense of authenticity through production processes. Mass-market products represent diluted or impure products partly because of cost-oriented industrial manufacturing processes. Therefore, the demonstration of a sustainable process through which pure and natural raw material is turned into a final product also adds value to the brand by giving an impression of difference, honesty, sincerity, and transparency. In addition to media communications, marketing activities such as experiential tours of facilities are useful ways to establish such records. Such tours may even become a source of revenue when coupled with a boutique selling the products.

#### **4.4.3 Emphasizing TOO Uniqueness**

Uniqueness is a critical component of product authenticity (Iversen & Hem, 2008), and TOO adds value because of its ability to demonstrate that the brand is a unique result of its environment. Being a unique fingerprint, the TOO gives the brand an image that is considered valuable, rare, costly to imitate, and non-substitutable. Since consumers are now "more exploratory, playful, and active, thirsting after new experience and meanings, and wanting to discover something exciting and most importantly, unexpected" (Ger, 1999, p. 67), they value difference and brand uniqueness; this is one of the main reasons why consumers are willing to pay a premium for certain products.

Consumers do not buy a brand based on the place alone, they also buy the history or “soul” of the associated TOO. Accordingly, beyond being a risk reduction and authenticity cue, TOO also signals to consumers the potential for a unique purchasing and consumption experience.

In addition to a focus on intrinsic product qualities that might be replicated by competitors elsewhere using modern technology, TOO brands can emphasize the irreproducibility and irreplaceability of their TOO because of a unique combination of characteristics that enable consumers to experience a unique expression and rarity of a particular place. Cultivating myths linked to the TOO is another way to create brand uniqueness. For example, myths relating to the discovery of the product or the creation of the brand designates the TOO as a unique birthplace, thus enhancing consumers’ perceptions of authenticity.

#### **4.4.4 TOO Strategy as Corporate Social Responsibility**

Small firms first captured the concept of TOO to develop a relationship with their community. With the growth of firms from local to national and global markets, they might face tensions associated with scalability, such as sourcing, increasing consumer demand and pressure from other territories with lower production costs. TOO-associated brands need to stick to their TOO message through communications

that address sourcing, product style, headquarters, and factory and retail locations, as brand performance depends on both core competencies and cooperative relations with local communities (Elaydi & McLaughlin, 2012). For example, in addition to keeping Fuding as the sourcing location of the Fuding brand of white tea, Fujian Haokoufu Group also cooperates with the Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University to provide local farmers with free seeds, fertilizers, production capital, and technical training (Fuding, 2014).

Sticking to a TOO through a product orientation (rather than a consumer orientation) helps to maintain the purity and pedigree of territorial products rooted in a TOO's core competencies, thus maintaining quality and authenticity images. When companies that manufacture products highly dependent on the natural environment face challenges such as climate fluctuations or limited human resources, maintaining a limited supply sold at an increased price is preferable to outsourcing ingredients in order to maintain the pure image of those territorial products. For territories with a long history, it might be more effective for brands to choose slow evolution rather than to follow trends to ensure consistency with TOO associations to tradition.

Being linked to a TOO and its perceived associations implies adapting to trends and new consumers without losing legitimacy with long-time TOO traditions and local consumers. The view that consumers should adapt to the brand, rather than the brand to consumers, runs counter to modern marketing theory and practice. Research shows, however, that brands promoting product authenticity risk devaluating their equity by

being perceived as too commercial, too effective at understanding and exploiting their franchise, or shouting too loudly (Beverland, Lindgreen & Vink, 2008). Thus, TOO brands should consider promoting their territorial products by outwardly downplaying firms' marketing expertise and appearing above commercial considerations.

Building strong attachment to a TOO by engaging in local activities enables brands to consolidate the roots in their TOO and maintain the cooperative relationship with the local community, thereby positioning themselves to better exploit community attributes such as trust and solidarity. The brand's respect for its TOO further strengthens consumers' perception of authenticity. A statement by Olivier Baussan, founder of L'Occitane en Provence, demonstrates this point: "The company is only part of a whole, and one of the fundamental pillars of sustainable development is the relationship that the company has with its community. L'Occitane is an economic and social actor of the first order for the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region" (L'Occitane, 2014). Similarly, Armor-Lux pays great attention to its image linked to Brittany and participates in local activities such as culture and arts festivals and the Brest marine celebration in the Breton capital.

Keeping the location of a firm's headquarters or facilities in the TOO is another way of managing brand equity. For instance, L'Occitane en Provence maintains its headquarters and production facilities in the Provence region of France. The Parma Ham Consortium also ensures that the pigs used in production are bred and the hams produced and cured in specific designated areas of Italy to protect product quality and

authenticity. This guarantees consistency between the projected images of TOO brands and reality. Consumers may directly witness this consistency during tours of production facilities, which ensures a deeper integration of the brand in its TOO. This also engenders additional benefits, such as employment and local economic development and recognition of the brand's corporate social responsibility initiatives at the community level.

#### **4.5 USING TOO AS A BRANDING TOOL**

TOO is an effective communication tool to provide brands with quality and authenticity images, and is used by brands as a unique selling point to add value to products and gain pricing power. TOO branding might be especially effective for brands aiming at niche markets, or facing large, entrenched, mass-market competitors. For consumers unfamiliar with local products, a TOO indication works in a similar way to a brand name.

TOO, however, is different from brand creation which is often a long and difficult process. TOO branding takes less time since firms can use TOO associations that already exist in consumers' minds to a certain degree. By exploiting the resource advantage based on the unique characteristics grounded in a TOO, brands build

consumers' perceptions of product quality and authenticity, which offer long-term opportunities.

The implementation of a TOO strategy also yields strategic benefits to local communities. As the brand authenticity perception is closely linked to other associations, such as the high degree of cooperation and reciprocity that resides within the community network, brands need to build strong ties with local communities, which enable those communities to realize both community and individual-level economic gains. TOO strategies thus "help firms leverage key community resources around culture, history and production method while enabling communities to purposefully take pride in and ownership of local specialties by packaging culture, history and destination based on community brand" (Elaydi & McLaughlin, 2012, p. 1,744).

TOO branding is by no means simple, however. Although some brands bring added value and succeed in the global market, many fail. A TOO strategy needs effective management. Consumers, especially when unfamiliar with a TOO, are not able to judge product authenticity, and may be less assured about the quality of TOO products. Similarly, people's knowledge of a TOO may come from a variety of sources, such as news media, previous purchases, trips, contact with citizens, and even films or novels, which are not under the control of brand strategists. Thus, a TOO's image that is not under the control of the brand might change dramatically. For example, the Provence region of France has become well-known to Chinese consumers and



positively perceived thanks to “Dream Link,” a TV series filmed in Provence. In contrast, the seafood of Fukushima in Japan has been boycotted since the nuclear disaster in that area caused by an earthquake in 2011.

In summary, there are three principal observations concerning the use of TOO strategies:

- There must be congruence between the product category and the TOO image in order for the brand to benefit from the core competencies of a TOO. This is obvious for some product categories, such as food, that are highly dependent on the natural environment of the TOO. TOO branding, however, is not limited to these categories, and can be found in such varied domains as cosmetics (Nuxe de Paris), restaurant chains (Léon de Bruxelles), and leisure activities (Lijiang Travel Agency).
- By offering consumers perceptions of traceability, transparency, and honesty, the establishment of track records reinforces the quality and authenticity images of territorial products. In addition, brands need to highlight the uniqueness of a TOO, as it provides a unique identity to territorial brands. To gain and maintain consumers’ loyalty and trust, it is best for brands to stick to their TOOs in terms of sourcing, manufacturing and headquarters locations.

- Through the communication of sincere stories and myths based on local history, culture and tradition, TOO effects should be managed and magnified for consumers who need to understand why the TOO is suitable for making specific products. They should also be managed and magnified for the broader community through the brand's engagement in local affairs and local development.

## **PART II – SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING**

## **CHAPTER 5 – ARTICLE 3**

### **Conspicuous Consumption and Subjective Well-Being: A Bi-Motive Explanation**

*“Happiness is the settling of the soul into its most appropriate spot.”*

— *Aristote*

This paper was presented in *Asia Pacific Association for Consumer Research*, Hongkong, June 19-21, 2015, and is to be submitted shortly to an academic journal.

### ABSTRACT

Despite the growing importance of conspicuous consumption in all parts of the world, little research focuses on the effect of conspicuous consumption on consumer subjective well-being (SWB), and when this is the case, the results are controversial. We propose and test a bi-motive hypothesis whereby the valence of the effect of conspicuous consumption on consumer SWB depends on whether the conspicuous object is used as self-signaling conspicuous consumption or other-signaling conspicuous consumption. The results of three studies demonstrate that the self-signaling conspicuous consumer has a significantly higher level of SWB than the other-signaling conspicuous consumer. Furthermore, consumer materialism enhances the negative relationship between other-signaling conspicuous consumption and consumer SWB.

**Keywords** Subjective well-being - Conspicuous consumption - Motive - Self-signaling - Other-signaling

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The role of consumption on consumer subjective well-being (SWB), which reflects well-being from an individual's own perspective, has interested many scholars (Bhattacharjee and Mogilner 2014; Diener et al. 2010; Grzeskowiak and Sirgy 2007; Grzeskowiak et al. 2014; Sirgy et al. 2008). For example, commodities and leisure goods consumption is found to relate positively to consumer SWB (Bhattacharjee and Mogilner 2014; Diener et al. 2010). Despite that conspicuous consumption (CC) is “especially important to the study of [...] consumption” (McCracken 1987: 80), little is known about its effect on consumer SWB. In his book review “Shiny objects - why we spend money we don't have in search of happiness we can't buy”, Kruger (2013: 113) highlights the importance of understanding how consumer SWB is influenced when most consumers “opt for ‘shiny objects’ (that is, material possessions) such as cars, [...] and valuable possessions”. The few extant studies on the relationship between conspicuous consumption and consumer SWB show controversial results.

On one side, Linssen et al. (2011) find that conspicuous expenditure is negatively related to consumer SWB. In other words, the more individuals spend on CC, the less SWB they obtain. As conspicuous consumption leads to wasting social resources to demonstrate wealth and status rather than consuming necessities (Linssen et al. 2011; Veblen 1899; Wang and Griskevicius 2014), two reasons may explain the negative relationship between CC and SWB. First, CC can reflect people's endless struggle to fulfill extrinsic needs (e.g., fame, social comparison), which is contrary to a

sustainable way of life, since the pursuit of extrinsic satisfaction may supersede the pursuit of intrinsic satisfaction (e.g., self-actualization), which is more beneficial to well-being (Ryan and Deci 2000b; Sheldon et al. 2004). Second, conspicuous display may lead to social rejection, since individuals associated with materialistic rather than experiential purchases are considered more selfish and self-centered by their social surroundings (van Boven et al. 2010). Acceptance by the social surrounding is important to one's happiness (Vignoles et al. 2006) and could thus be another reason why CC may be detrimental to consumer SWB.

On the other side, many consumers spend a large amount of their income on conspicuous goods (Kruger 2013; Wang and Griskevicius 2014), even the poor who can hardly satisfy their basic needs (Linssen et al. 2011). For example, Chinese conspicuous consumer expenditure amounted to as much as \$106 billion in 2014 (Veragagaga 2015). In the United States, this number is as high as \$525 billion (Wang and Griskevicius 2014). Demand theory states that consumers try to maximize their satisfaction through consumption activities (Oropesa 1995). This indicates that some utility, particularly psychological utility, can be derived from this type of consumption. Conspicuous consumption may be beneficial to individual happiness through nursing the psychological wounds of those under self-threat, thus boosting self-esteem (Sivanathan and Pettit 2010) or bolstering the feelings of competence and meaningful existence of socially excluded individuals (Lee and Shrum 2012). DeLeire and Kalil (2010) demonstrate that US consumers spending more on status objects tend to be more satisfied with their lives.

Some psychologists (e.g., Carver and Baird 1998; Sheldon et al. 2004; Srivastava et al. 2001) propose that it is not *which* goals are pursued but *why* these goals are pursued that determines the effect of human behavior on SWB. According to self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000b), human behaviors are driven by two types of motives, namely, intrinsic (i.e., deriving from within the individual rather than from any external rewards) and extrinsic (i.e., deriving from influences outside of the individual). Behaviors driven by intrinsic motives are beneficial to the individual's SWB, whereas those driven by extrinsic motives damage one's SWB. Shrum et al. (2013) apply this principle to consumer behavior and propose that consumers' materialistic consumption is also driven by two motives: self-signaling (i.e., to show the meanings linked to a materialistic possession to oneself) and other-signaling motives (i.e., to show the meanings linked to a materialistic possession to others). It is only when materialistic consumption is driven by other-signaling that its effect on consumer well-being is negative. Based on this, we propose that the contradictory results of the relationship between CC and consumer SWB may be explained by which motive (self- vs. other-signaling) predominates. In other words, CC driven by self-signaling (self-signaling CC) will have a positive effect on consumer SWB while CC driven by other-signaling (other-signaling CC) will have a negative effect on consumer SWB. To our knowledge, these relationships have thus far not been empirically tested.

Our research objective is therefore to empirically test this bi-motive hypothesis



and investigate the effect of CC on consumer SWB when self-signaling or other-signaling predominates. More precisely, we separately investigate the relationship between CC and each component of consumer SWB including an individual's satisfaction with life (or life satisfaction) (LS), the presence of positive affect (PA) and the absence of negative affect (NA) (Diener 1984). This enables a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between CC and consumer SWB given that each component of SWB may relate differently to other variables (Diener et al. 2010; Hudders and Pandelaere 2012). For instance, LS tends to be more strongly related to material prosperity while PA tends to be more strongly related to psychosocial prosperity (Diener et al. 2010).

Furthermore, since highly materialistic individuals have a strong tendency to use status goods or unique products to communicate information about themselves, such as status or identity (Hudders and Pandelaere 2012; Lynn and Harris 1997), they are more likely to have a predilection for, and engage in, other-signaling behaviors than non-materialistic individuals and consequently bear the negative results of other-signaling CC. We thus test the moderating effect of materialism on the relationship between other-signaling CC and SWB.

To the authors' knowledge, this is the first empirical study investigating the effect of CC on different components of consumer SWB from a bi-motive perspective. We also clarify the boundary conditions of the relationship between other-signaling CC and consumer SWB by incorporating consumer materialism as a moderator.

## **5.2 CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **5.2.1 Motive, Conspicuous Consumption and Subjective Well-Being**

Intrinsic motives in self-determination theory refer to the self-desire to seek out new things, new challenges and analyze one's capacity. These are driven by interest or enjoyment in the task itself or the sense of satisfaction in completing or working on a task, and exist within the individual rather than relying on external pressure or the desire for reward (Ryan and Deci 2000a). By contrast, extrinsic motives are driven by external rewards such as money, fame, grades or praise (Ryan and Deci 2000a). According to self-determination theory (SDT), behaviors driven by intrinsic motives are beneficial to the individual's SWB while those driven by extrinsic motives damage SWB (Deci and Ryan 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000b). Accordingly, even materialistic behaviors that are often considered as relating negatively to one's SWB (Kasser and Ryan 1993) may lead to a sense of well-being if this pursuit is driven by intrinsic motives such as personal pride or willingness to support one's family (Srivastava et al. 2001). By contrast, despite that community involvement, such as helping others in need or making the world a better place, are often considered as relating positively to self-actualization (Kasser and Ryan 1993), people only increase their SWB through these behaviors if they find the process itself enjoyable rather than

because they believe that such activities will make other people respect or like them more (Carver and Baird 1998).

Closely aligned with the concept of intrinsic and extrinsic motives, Shrum et al. (2013) propose that consumers' materialistic consumption is also driven by two motives, namely, self- and other-signaling. Self-signaling consumption refers to consumption whereby consumers show themselves the meanings associated with their materialistic possessions while other-signaling consumption refers to consumption whereby consumers signal the meanings associated with their materialistic possessions to others. As independent constructs, these two signaling motives often coexist but vary in relative importance for consumers since meanings signaled to one's self are normally constructed by society and learnt through the socialization process via different social surroundings such as peers, family and particularly the media (McCracken 1986). Thus, even if the display of possessions is motivated by self-signaling, "the nature and endurance of the symbol can't necessarily escape influence of the perceptions of others" (Shrum et al. 2013: 1183). As a result, even self-signaling consumers can unconsciously signal the meanings associated with their possessions to others. Self-signaling consumption may therefore also have other-signaling effects. To be emphasized however is the *predominant motive*.

According to Shrum et al. (2013: 1182), "not all materialistic behavior [...] or consumption in general necessarily leads to lower well-being, it is only when the goal of the acquisition is [...] other-signaling that predominant effect on well-being is negative". CC is often considered an other-signaling behavior and its essential

function is an interpersonal signaling system including the interactions between the sender and the receiver (Wang and Griskevicius 2014). Nevertheless, CC may also be driven by a self-signaling motive to celebrate one's own success or merits (McFerran et al. 2014) or cope with and compensate for own doubt on competence and self-worth (Sivanathan and Pettit 2010) and its conspicuousness (to others) is incidental (Shrum et al. 2013). It is hence reasonable to assume that the controversial results in extant literature on the relationship between CC and consumer SWB may be explained by which motive predominates in the behavior. CC may have a negative effect on consumer SWB if mainly driven by other-signaling and a positive effect on consumer SWB if mainly driven by self-signaling.

Self-signalers focus on how they, rather than others, perceive the meanings associated with their conspicuous possessions such as talent and achievements (McFerran et al. 2014). As self-signalers believe the meanings associated with conspicuous objects show themselves in their intended way, the objective of their conspicuous display is to drive themselves towards a goal, success or momentary accomplishment (Wilcox et al. 2011). McFerran et al. (2014) find that people progressing towards success are more prone to spending lavishly on luxury objects due to licensing effects (they believe they deserve these objects because of their success). Along with exposure to luxury brands, some consumers may transfer the appealing attributes of products and brands (e.g., status) to themselves and enhance their self-perceptions (Park and John 2010) to “fantasize about their own future success” (Mandel et al. 2006: 57). Sivanathan and Pettit (2010: 564) show that certain

lower socioeconomic individuals obtain self-esteem through engaging in costly behaviors, as they believe this enables them to “gain access to the benefits and rewards usually reserved for the elite”. As the sense of self-esteem and competency increases individuals’ life satisfaction (LS) (Diener and Diener 1995) and positive affect (PA) (Vignoles et al. 2006), by inference, consumers may obtain more LS and PA and less negative affect (NA) through signaling to themselves the symbolic meanings embedded in conspicuous objects. We therefore propose:

***H1:*** *Self-signaling conspicuous consumption is positively related to consumer subjective well-being.*

***H1a:*** *Self-signaling conspicuous consumption is positively related to consumer life satisfaction.*

***H1b:*** *Self-signaling conspicuous consumption increases positive affect.*

***H1c:*** *Self-signaling conspicuous consumption decreases negative affect.*

It is more difficult to control the utility when conspicuous objects are used as other-signals than when they are used as self-signals, since the latter is dependent on one’s understanding or perceptual accuracy of what other people will find impressive (Shrum et al. 2013). People are better able to calibrate their own expectations than those of others and are more aware of what they need and what makes them happy. When consumers use conspicuous objects as other-signals, they may fail to achieve their objectives due to affective forecasting errors. For example, McFerran et al.

(2014) show that authentically proud consumers miscalibrate what constitutes achievement in the eyes of others and are perceived as hubristic. Thus, other-signaling consumers may more frequently experience NA than self-signalers due to frequently failing to obtain the expected feedback. What impresses others is more fickle and fast-changing than what impresses oneself, so excessive attention to others' reactions may also lock other-signalers into activities that please others rather than themselves, deterring them from pursuing what they truly want and consequently harming their LS (Hudders and Pandelaere 2012). In addition, people chronically prone to showing off to others have deeper implicit feelings of shame. Such persons strive for the appearance of perfection and regularly use conspicuous display to mask reality, in the sense that someone who conspicuously displays luxury possessions may have neither wealth, status nor worthy accomplishments (McFerran et al. 2014). Some purchase conspicuous objects even when they cannot reasonably afford them (Linssen et al. 2011) and sacrifice their personal well-being (e.g., health) (Mead et al. 2011). This may deepen incoherence between one's actual condition and the projected image with a detrimental effect on PA (Carver and Scheier 1998; Vignoles et al. 2006) and increasing the amount of NA (Carver and Scheier 1998). We thus propose:

***H2:*** *Other-signaling conspicuous consumption is negatively related to consumer subjective well-being.*

***H2a:*** *Other-signaling conspicuous consumption is negatively related to life satisfaction.*

*H2b: Other-signaling conspicuous consumption decreases positive affect.*

*H2c: Other-signaling conspicuous consumption increases negative affect.*

### 5.2.2 MATERIALISM

Hudders and Pandelaere (2012) show that the effect of luxury consumption on consumer SWB varies depending on materialism, defined as “a set of centrally held beliefs about the importance of possessions in one’s life” (Richins and Dawson 1992: 308). Specifically, materialists place possessions and their acquisition at the center of their lives, viewing these as essential to their satisfaction and well-being and tending to judge their own and others’ success by the number and quality of possessions accumulated (Richins and Dawson 1992). High materialists have a stronger desire for status goods (Heaney et al. 2005) and unique products (Lynn and Harris 1997) and often use these to communicate their identity or social conformity with others (e.g., peers) (Wong 1997). Thus, highly materialistic people tend to engage more in conspicuous other-signaling consumption, expecting admiration or social approval. Moreover, people normally perceive individuals associated with materialistic rather than experiential purchases as more selfish and self-centered (van Boven et al. 2010). Instead of admiration, high materialists may experience social rejection when displaying their conspicuous possessions to their social surroundings, often leading to greater NA and lower LS, as they more often fail to achieve their objectives. We thus

propose:

**H3:** *Consumer materialism moderates the effect of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on consumer subjective well-being. The stronger this tendency, the stronger the negative effect of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on consumer subjective well-being.*

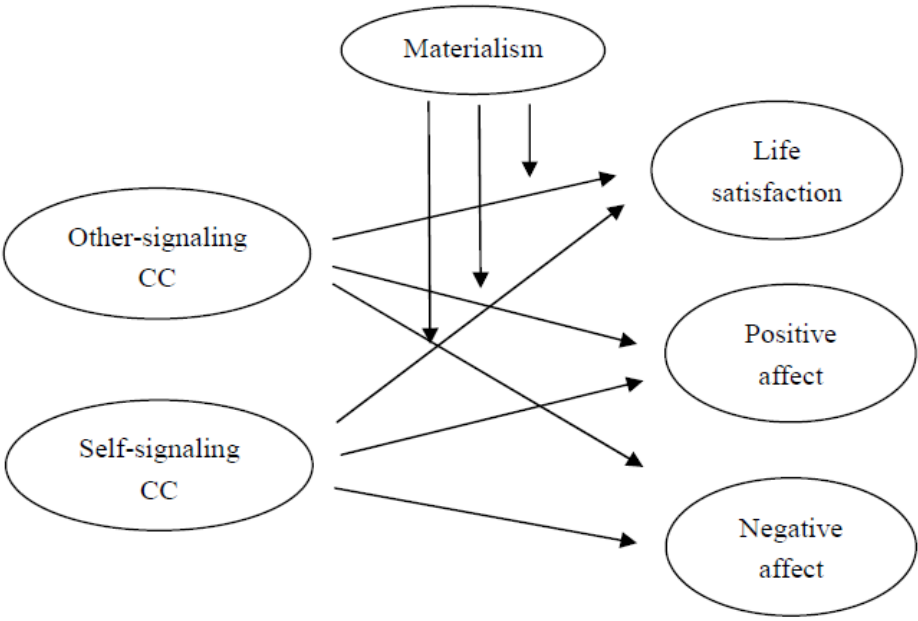
**H3a:** *Consumer materialism moderates the effect of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on life satisfaction. The stronger this tendency, the stronger the negative effect of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on life satisfaction.*

**H3b:** *Consumer materialism moderates the effect of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on positive affect. The stronger this tendency, the stronger the negative effect of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on positive affect.*

**H3c:** *Consumer materialism moderates the effect of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on negative affect. The stronger this tendency, the stronger the positive effect of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on negative affect.*

Figure 1 shows our general conceptual model.





**FIGURE 1.** Conceptual Model

**5.3 METHOD**

To test our hypotheses, we carried out a series of tests in China, leader in the global expansion of conspicuous goods. A pre-test was first conducted on a student sample and an imaginary CC situation. The objective of the pre-test was to establish whether asking participants to imagine a CC situation would be effective enough to arouse participants’ feelings and affect, and potentially have an effect on their declared SWB.

### 5.3.1 Pre-test

#### *Participants, Design and Procedure*

198 undergraduate students at a major university in Beijing (119 female, average age 19) participated in the study. Participants completed a brief survey using a one-factor between-subjects design (motive: self- vs. other-signaling) and were randomly assigned to a self-signaling ( $n = 112$ ) or other-signaling ( $n = 86$ ) condition. Manipulations were embedded in a standard episodic imagination task (McFerran et al. 2014). Those assigned to the self-signaling condition were instructed to imagine a scenario of buying conspicuous objects as a reward for themselves, and those assigned to the other-signaling condition were asked to imagine a scenario of buying conspicuous objects particularly recognizable by other people in their surroundings, such as family or friends. Participants in both conditions were asked to indicate whether their imagined conspicuous purchases were for themselves or to show to others (manipulation check) and complete the SWB measures (LS, PA, NA) and brief demographics.

#### *Measures*

Life satisfaction was measured with Diener et al.'s (1985) Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) consisting of five items rated on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 =

strongly agree). We assessed participants' positive and negative affects with Thompson's (2007) Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which each item characterized how they felt on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all; 5 = extremely). All measures showed satisfactory reliabilities. The LS, PA and NA items were averaged to form a composite score. A detailed list of scale items and reliabilities is shown in Appendix 1.

### *Results*

The manipulation check shows that participants in the self-signaling condition are more motivated to purchase for themselves ( $M_{\text{self-signaling}} = 3.68$ ,  $SD = .88$  vs.  $M_{\text{other-signaling}} = 3.32$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ;  $t = 2.57$ ,  $p = .01$ ) and those in the other-signaling condition are more motivated to show their purchase to others ( $M_{\text{self-signaling}} = 2.20$ ,  $SD = .86$  vs.  $M_{\text{other-signaling}} = 2.98$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ;  $t = -5.51$ ,  $p = .00$ ), indicating a successful manipulation.

We conducted an independent t-test for all predicted variables. The results indicate that the differences in LS ( $M_{\text{LS-self}} = 3.06$ ,  $SD = .71$  vs.  $M_{\text{LS-other}} = 3.06$ ,  $SD = .73$ ;  $t = .03$ ,  $p = .97$ ), PA ( $M_{\text{PA-self}} = 3.34$ ,  $SD = .66$  vs.  $M_{\text{PA-other}} = 3.35$ ,  $SD = .65$ ;  $t = .19$ ,  $p = .85$ ) and NA ( $M_{\text{NA-self}} = 2.84$ ,  $SD = .73$  vs.  $M_{\text{NA-other}} = 2.91$ ,  $SD = .68$ ;  $t = -.66$ ,  $p = .51$ ) between the self- and other-signaling conditions are not significant. This indicates that an imagined conspicuous experience may not be effective enough in arousing participants' feelings and affect.

We thus conducted our study with experienced CC, a situation either described as real within a scenario and submitted to participants or a real situation experienced by participants themselves in the past. According to McFerran et al. (2014), the independent variable is tested as a state through manipulations (short-term effect) and as a trait through scale measurements (long-term effect). To increase our test validity, self- and other-signaling CC are treated either as a state or a trait in the subsequent two studies to investigate their effects on SWB. Study 1 adopts an “outsider” approach and investigates how people infer the SWB experienced by conspicuous consumers driven by a self- or other-signaling motive. Here, experienced self- and other-signaling CC are treated as a state. Study 2 shifts the focus to the sender’s perspective and treats experienced self- and other-signaling CC as a trait to retest H1 and H2, as well as testing the moderating role of materialism on the relationship between other-signaling CC and SWB (H3).

### **5.3.2 Study 1**

#### *Participants, Design and Procedure*

181 participants (92 female, average age 32.5) were enrolled in the study. A one-factor between-subjects design (motive: self- vs. other-signaling) was adopted. Participants were randomly assigned to a self-signaling ( $n = 88$ ) or other-signaling ( $n$

= 93) condition. The key manipulation entailed reading a brief description of a consumer engaging in conspicuous purchases. In the self-signaling condition, the participants were exposed to a consumer buying a conspicuous self-gift (a BMW 5 Series Touring car) after receiving a bonus at work. In the other-signaling condition, the same consumer bought the same car but this time was described as motivated to attract the attention of work colleagues. The participants were then asked to evaluate the LS, PA and NA of the consumer in question.

### *Measures*

LS, PA and NA were measured using the same scales as in the pre-test and showed satisfactory reliabilities (Appendix 1).

### *Results*

The manipulation check gave satisfactory results. The participants assigned to the self-signaling condition considered the consumer in the scenario as more motivated to purchase for himself than to show others ( $M_{\text{self-signaling}} = 3.66$ ,  $SD = .84$  vs.  $M_{\text{other-signaling}} = 2.67$ ,  $SD = .92$ ;  $t = 7.55$ ,  $p = .00$ ) while the participants in the other-signaling condition considered the described consumer as more motivated to show others ( $M_{\text{self-signaling}} = 2.92$ ,  $SD = .97$  vs.  $M_{\text{other-signaling}} = 3.54$ ,  $SD = .92$ ;  $t = -4.39$ ,  $p = .00$ ). We then tested for effects of gender and age; neither was related to any of the

focal variables in this study.

We expected the observers to presume that the consumer described as using conspicuous objects as a self-signal would be more satisfied with his/her life, having more positive affect and less negative affect than the consumer using these objects as an other-signal. We first compared the mean values of participants' perceptions of the SWB experienced by the consumer in the two groups. As expected, participants perceived the self-signaling consumer as more satisfied with his life ( $M_{LS-self} = 3.13$ ,  $SD = .67$  vs.  $M_{LS-other} = 2.79$ ,  $SD = .60$ ;  $t = 3.62$ ,  $p < .00$ ), with greater positive affect ( $M_{PA-self} = 3.38$ ,  $SD = .51$  vs.  $M_{PA-other} = 2.99$ ,  $SD = .67$ ;  $t = 4.38$ ,  $p < .00$ ) and less negative affect ( $M_{NA-self} = 3.03$ ,  $SD = .63$  vs.  $M_{NA-other} = 3.41$ ,  $SD = .71$ ;  $t = -3.81$ ,  $p < .00$ ) than the consumer using conspicuous goods as an other-signal. We then conducted a partial least squares (PLS) analysis with the motives explaining SWB (self-signaling = 1, other-signaling = 0). The results show that self-signaling CC has a positive differential effect on LS (path coefficient Self/Other = .30,  $p < .00$ ) and on PA (path coefficient Self/Other = .34,  $p < .00$ ) and a negative differential effect on NA (path coefficient Self/Other = -.28,  $p < .00$ ).

The results of Study 1 demonstrate that respondents hold the lay belief that consumers performing self-signaling CC are more satisfied with their lives, have more positive affect and less negative affect than those performing other-signaling CC. This indirect "outsider" approach supports H1 and H2 in two ways. First, we believe that one's inferences of SWB obtained by others through consumption behaviors can be applied to oneself, and the use of the *observer's* perspective may offer a more actual

and potentially less biased picture of SWB. Second, people observing a consumer performing CC will make systematic inferences about that consumer's SWB as a result of such a possession (Wang and Griskevicius 2014). Therefore, SWB as a consequence of CC cannot be conceptualized solely as a personal and subjective experience. In other words, the social surroundings' inferences of one's SWB can influence the SWB experienced by a person. If individuals try to show their happiness through other-signaling behavior but are perceived as unhappy by their social surroundings, they may actually feel less satisfied with life, have less PA and more NA due to having failed to live up to their desired goal. In contrast, even if self-signaling consumers do not consume to show to others, they may gain SWB through being unintentionally informed by their social surroundings that they have a higher level of SWB.

Although H1 and H2 are supported from the receiver's perspective, we have yet to test the impact of self- vs. other-signaling CC on consumer SWB from the sender's perspective. In Study 2, we treat self- and other-signaling CC as personality traits to proceed to a further test of H1 and H2 and the moderating effect of consumer materialism (H3).

### 5.3.3 Study 2

#### *Participants, Design and Procedure*

A convenience sample of 240 consumers (147 female, average age 31) answered an online questionnaire. They were asked to think about a recent conspicuous object or experience and indicate the reasons (including self-signaling and other-signaling) why they purchased this valuable or non-ordinary object or service experience. They were then invited to complete the measures of LS, PA, NA, materialism and brief demographics.

#### *Measures*

Self-signaling CC is measured with an adaption of Bhattacharjee and Mogilner's (2014) 3-item scale (e.g., you buy these valuable or non-ordinary objects because they show your personal accomplishment) while other-signaling CC is measured with an adaption of the Wang and Griskevicius (2014) 3-item scale (e.g., you buy these valuable or non-ordinary objects because you consider others will notice them). The three self-signaling CC items together with the three other-signaling CC items (reverse coded) were averaged to form a "CC motive" index. Consumer materialism is measured with the 3-item Richins (2004) scale. LS, PA and NA are measured with the same scales as in the previous studies. All measurements show satisfactory



reliabilities. A detailed list of scale items and reliabilities is shown in Appendix 1.

### *Results*

We first tested for effects of gender and age, and the results show that neither was related to any of the focal variables.

We then conducted t-tests to compare the LS, PA and NA mean values of self- and other-signalers. The group of participants was split in half based on the “CC motive” index. Self-signaling consumers refers to those with an index above the mean while other-signaling consumers are those whose index falls below average. The results indicate that self-signalers have a higher level of LS ( $LS_{\text{self-signaler}} = 3.38$ ,  $SD = .76$  vs.  $LS_{\text{other-signaler}} = 3.12$ ,  $SD = .82$ ;  $t = 2.49$ ,  $p = .01$ ) and less NA ( $NA_{\text{self-signaler}} = 2.39$ ,  $SD = .63$  vs.  $NA_{\text{other-signaler}} = 2.72$ ,  $SD = .74$ ;  $t = 3.72$ ,  $p < .00$ ) than other-signalers. Consumer PA does not significantly differ between the two groups.

Thereafter, we conducted a PLS analysis similar to that in Study 1 and the results show that self-signaling CC has a positive effect on consumer PA (path coefficient = .22,  $p = .01$ ) in support of H1b. Other-signaling CC has a negative effect on LS (path coefficient = -.17,  $p < .05$ ) and a positive effect on consumer NA (path coefficient = .29,  $p = .001$ ), which supports H2a and H2c. The effect of self-signaling CC on LS and NA, and the effect of other-signaling CC on PA are not significant. Therefore, H1 and H2 are partially supported.

Concerning the moderating effect of materialism, the results show that

materialism enhances the negative effect of other-signaling CC on LS (path coefficient<sub>materialism×other-signaling</sub> = -.53,  $p = .00$ ) and its positive effect on NA (path coefficient<sub>materialism×other-signaling</sub> = .31,  $p = .01$ ) in support of H3a and of H3c. No moderating effect on PA was found. These results partially support H3.

## 5.4 DISCUSSION

The results of extant research on the valence of the effect of conspicuous consumption on consumer SWB are divergent. In this study, we adopt a bi-motive perspective in an attempt to explain these contradictory results and provide empirical evidence that the effects of CC on consumer SWB are conditional on the use the conspicuous objects as a self-signal or as a signal to others. We first empirically demonstrate that other-signaling CC has a negative effect on consumer SWB, while self-signaling CC has a positive effect in both the sender's and the receiver's perspectives. More specifically, we show that self- and other-signaling CC exert their effects on consumer SWB in different ways. The positive effect of self-signaling CC on SWB lies in its ability to generate PA, but does not increase consumer satisfaction with life nor does it decrease their NA. There is however no negative effect on any dimensions of SWB. By contrast, the negative effect of other-signaling CC on SWB is particularly evident through its negative effect on consumer LS and NA rather than on PA. The effect on PA is non-significant (not positive). Second, we incorporate consumer materialism to

further clarify the boundary conditions of the relationship between other-signaling CC and SWB, and demonstrate that consumer materialism enhances the negative effect of other-signaling CC on consumer LS and NA.

#### **5.4.1 Contributions**

The contributions of this study are two-fold. From a theoretical point of view, the controversy of the relationship between CC and consumer SWB may be explained by Shrum et al.'s (2013) proposition that the effects of materialistic consumption on consumer well-being are conditional on consumption motives. However, their theoretical proposition is not empirically tested. Our research contributes as a first empirical study adopting a bi-motive perspective to investigate the effect of CC on consumer SWB, clarifying the mechanisms and boundary conditions of their relationship. Furthermore, prior research (e.g., DeLeire and Kalil 2010; Linssen et al. 2011) investigating the relationship between CC and consumer SWB only considers consumer satisfaction with life as the outcome. In the present study, we provide a comprehensive picture of how CC driven by two motives influences different sub-components of consumer SWB (LS, PA and NA). In Study 1, CC has a weaker effect on LS than on PA, and a weaker effect on both PA and NA in Study 2. The relatively smaller effect of CC on LS confirms the proposition in prior research (Park and John 2010: 656) that the utility of luxury brands is “shortlived and limited in

nature”, making it more difficult to generate long-term effects on consumer LS, which is the most consistent and stable component of SWB (Diener 1984).

From a managerial point of view, our study offers marketers some important practical implications. Although the CC phenomenon has received particular attention in recent years from luxury marketers, the interest of consumer researchers is much more recent. Through understanding the differences of self- and other-signaling conspicuous purchases, firms can promote consumer consumption motivations according to their marketing objectives. For example, marketers trying to promote self-signaling CC could adopt a small brand logo (vs. a large logo) or advertising through spokespersons concentrating on their achievements or freedom rather than attracting the surroundings’ attention to increase communication effectiveness.

#### **5.4.2 Limitations and Future Research**

CC is shown to produce a variety of effects that appear to be contradictory. On one side, CC is shown to be detrimental to consumer SWB; on the other side, CC is shown to increase consumer happiness. Although this study offers a clear pathway to reconcile these findings, it only considers a direct effect of CC on consumer SWB. There may be mediators between consumption activities and SWB such as consumption goals (e.g., self-image enhancement) or satisfaction with life domains. Future research could include some potential mediators of the relationship between

CC and consumer SWB to further clarify the influencing process.

Furthermore, CC may be driven by both self- and other-signaling motives. Our research suggests that the motivations underlying CC are double-faced and may in fact be difficult to separate, particularly in non-experimental contexts. In the lab, this implies that if participants are placed in different purchasing contexts (such as the presence of others and the number or description of these others), then self-signaling consumers may also be driven by other-signaling motives. Future research could consider manipulating the self- and other-signaling conditions to incorporate different situations including the nature and number of potential observers.

Other factors than materialism may also moderate the relationship between self- or other-signaling CC and consumer SWB such as consumers' need to belong or their need for uniqueness. A model incorporating different possible moderators is thus warranted.

Finally, consumer behaviors and perceptions (e.g., SWB evaluation) vary across countries. Our test, conducted in China, could be extended to other consumers in other countries to further validate the bi-motive hypothesis.

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**APPENDIX. Scale items and reliabilities****Satisfaction with Life Scale** ( $\alpha_1 = .79$ ;  $\alpha_2 = .77$ ;  $\alpha_3 = .85$ )

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Please indicate your agreement with each item by using a 1-5 scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree).

1. In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with my life.
4. So far, I have obtained the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

**Positive and Negative Affect Schedule**

These questions contain a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Please read each item and then indicate to what extent you feel the word described with a 1 -5 scale (1 = very slightly or not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = extremely).

*Positive Affect* ( $\alpha_1 = .71$ ;  $\alpha_2 = .77$ ;  $\alpha_3 = .79$ )

1. Determined
2. Inspired
3. Alert
4. Active

## 5. Attentive

*Negative Affect* ( $\alpha_1=.74$ ;  $\alpha_2=.85$ ;  $\alpha_3=.80$ )

## 6. Afraid

## 7. Upset

## 8. Nervous

## 9. Ashamed

## 10. Hostile

**Conspicuous Consumption Motive**

In your everyday life, you buy a lot of things such as food, clothes, electronic appliances, etc. Once in a while, you also buy somewhat exceptional objects or famous brands. The following questions refer to these somewhat exceptional objects or famous brands you purchased. Below are three statements with which you may agree or disagree. Please indicate your agreement with each item using a 1-5 scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). Remember that these are very subjective questions and that there are no right or wrong answers.

*Self-Signaling Conspicuous Consumption* ( $\alpha = .85$ )

1. When you buy a somewhat exceptional object or famous brand, you consider it a reward for yourself.
2. You buy these valuable or non-ordinary objects because they show your personal accomplishment.

3. You buy these valuable or non-ordinary objects because they indicate your place in the world.

*Other-Signaling Conspicuous Consumption* ( $\alpha = .87$ )

1. You buy these valuable or non-ordinary objects because you consider they will attract others' attention.
2. When you buy valuable or non-ordinary objects, you consider they can impress others.
3. You buy these valuable or non-ordinary objects because you consider others will notice them.

**Materialism** ( $\alpha = .71$ )

Below are three statements with which you may agree or disagree. Please indicate your agreement with each item by using a 1-5 scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). Remember that these are very subjective questions and that there are no right or wrong answers.

1. You admire people who own expensive homes, cars and clothes.
2. You like luxury in your life.
3. You would be happier if you could afford to buy more things.



## **CHAPTER 6 – GENERAL CONCLUSION**

## 6.1 CONCLUSION

In recent years, marketing scholars have been taking an increasing interest in issues concerning the product's territory of origin and the consumer's subjective well-being.

On one side, questions about the importance of COO information have prompted marketers to call for alternative approaches, and the increase in consumers' seek for regional or local products rather than standardised, homogenised products with uncertain origins encourages marketers to promote their products by the label of territory of origin. Accordingly, scholars shift their focus from global to local/regional brands with the potential for international extension (Suri and Thakor, 2013; Usunier, 2011), and propose that territory of origin (TOO) may be a potentially valuable signal for consumers and a critical managerial tool (Suri and Thakor, 2013). However, research on TOO is limited and demands further investigation, from both managerial and academic standpoints.

On the other side, the societal trends concerning the value of the individual and the importance of subjective view in evaluating life provoke the recognition that well-being necessarily transcends economic prosperity. Thus, this calls for the development of scientific study of subjective well-being. At the same time, it is noticed a turn up, rather than turn down, of conspicuous expenditure after the Great Depression since 2008 (Nunes et al., 2011). This makes certain recent studies (e.g., DeLeire and Kalil, 2010; Linssen et al., 2011) attempt to understand the impact of

conspicuous consumption on consumers' SWB. Nevertheless, their results generate controversy and our understandings on the relationship between conspicuous consumption and consumers' subjective well-being are still quite limited.

In line with these new market demands, this dissertation presents a set of three articles, out of which the first two attempt to demonstrate the relevance of the use of the product's territory of origin as a communicating tool in the modern market, and the last one tries to clarify how conspicuous consumption influences the individual's subjective well-being through proposing a bi-motive hypothesis.

Concerning the potential of the use of TOO as a branding strategy, the first article, through an *experimental* approach, gives empirical evidence of a chain of effects, from a TOO association to perceived authenticity to consumer self-product connections. More important, it isolates the *unique* character and impact of a TOO strategy, compared with a COO version, which advances the understandings concerning the use of product's origin cues in the modern markets. Through a meaning transfer process, TOO image generates meanings such as tradition, culture and uniqueness which are used by consumers to evaluate the product's authenticity. Next, the consumers form a connection with the authentic product when they incorporate the meanings associated with product authenticity into their self-concepts, to construct their selves or to communicate their self-concepts to others. A *direct* impact of TOO on consumers' self-brand connections is also found, indicating that TOO offers a promising strategy for building consumer-brand connections. The

identification of the two moderators of the relationship between TOO and perceived authenticity (familiarity with the TOO and the perceived congruence between the product category and the TOO) resonates with findings from the COO literature. Their importance in the TOO meaning transfer process is confirmed in the study.

Based on the first article and prior research, the second article offers specific managerial implications of how to use the territory of origin as a branding tool by providing four strategies including promoting TOO-congruent products, establishing a track record, emphasizing TOO uniqueness, and integrating TOO into corporate social responsibility, so as to create consumers' perceptions of product authenticity and quality, as well as their trust toward local products. For consumers unfamiliar with local products, a TOO indication works in a similar way to a brand name. Unlike brand creation which is often a long and difficult process, TOO branding may take less time since firms can use TOO image that already exist in consumers' minds to a certain degree. In particular, TOO branding may be especially effective for brands aiming at niche markets, or facing large, entrenched, mass-market competitors. However, TOO branding is by no means simple. Consumers' low familiarity with a TOO may prevent them from being able to judge local products' authenticity or quality. Other sources such as news media, previous purchases, trips, contact with citizens, and even films or novels, which are related to a TOO are out of the control of brand managers, thus may bring some negative effects which causes damages to consumers' trust in a TOO, as well as the products originated from the TOO.

Therefore, a TOO strategy needs effective management. First, brands need to rely on matching perceptions of products and TOOs, as the *congruence* between the product category and the TOO image is critical for the brand to benefit from the core competencies of a TOO. Such perceptions of product/TOO congruence can be increased through teaching consumers why the TOO is suitable for making specific products with sincere stories or local history. Second, it is important for TOO brands to highlight their *traceability*, *transparency*, *honesty*, and *uniqueness*, which serve as guaranties of the product quality. For example, the demonstration of a sustainable process through which pure and natural raw material is turned into a final product shows local brands' honesty, sincerity, and transparency, which in turn indicate local producers' confidence in their product quality. Third, as TOO brand performance depends on both core competencies and cooperative relations with *local communities*, TOO brands need to engage in local affairs and development, or stick to their TOOs in terms of sourcing, manufacturing and headquarters locations to hold their close ties with local communities.

Shifting the focus to consumers' subjective well-being, the third article concentrates on resolving the controversy findings concerning the direction of the impact of conspicuous consumption on consumers' subjective well-being demonstrated in previous literature. By proposing a bi-motive hypothesis, the third article empirically demonstrates that the impact of conspicuous consumption on consumers' SWB is *conditional* and depends on whether consumers use the

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conspicuous objects as a self- or an other-signal. Investigating both from the *sender's* and the *receiver's* perspectives, it is shown that it is other-signaling conspicuous consumption which has a negative impact on consumers' SWB, while self-signaling conspicuous consumptions increases consumers' SWB. Furthermore, this article provides a comprehensive picture of the relationship between conspicuous consumption driven by two motives and the sub-components of SWB, including consumers' life satisfaction (LS), positive affect (PA), and negative affect (NA). For the observers, self-signaling conspicuous consumption has the strongest positive impact on generating the signaler's positive affect, followed by his/her life satisfaction and then preventing his/her negative affect. As far as the senders are concerned, the positive impact of self-signaling conspicuous consumption lies in its ability to generate his/her positive affect, rather than to increase his/her satisfaction with life or to decrease their negative affect. In contrast, the negative impact of conspicuous consumption for the sender him/herself is in particular evident for its influence on his/her life satisfaction and negative affect, but it has no influence on his/her positive affect. Besides, we demonstrate that consumers' materialism enhances in particular the negative impact of other-signaling conspicuous consumption on consumers' life satisfaction and negative affect.

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## 6.2 CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions of the dissertation are several. From a theoretical perspective, Article 1 contributes to be a first empirical study adopting an experimental method to investigate the impact of TOO image on consumers' perception of product authenticity and on their self-brand connection, replying to the call for the alternatives of COO in the modern market.

Similarly, Article 3 is also a first empirical study adopting a bi-motive perspective to investigate the impact of conspicuous consumption on the consumers' SWB, resolving the controversy found in previous literature. In addition, unlike prior research (e.g. DeLeire and Kalil, 2010; Linssen et al., 2011) which only considers consumers' satisfaction with life as the outcome of conspicuous consumption, the influences of conspicuous consumption on all three components of consumers' SWB are studied, which offers a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between conspicuous consumption driven by two motives and consumers' SWB. One boundary condition of the influence of other-signaling conspicuous consumption (i.e., consumers' materialism) on consumers' SWB is as well clarified.

From a managerial point of view, Article 1 and 2 provide local or regional brands with strategies on how to use TOO as an important communicating tool in the domestic market where the consumer is familiar with their TOOs and on ways to build their brand image through their TOOs in the international market where the

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consumer is less familiar or unfamiliar with their TOOs. For the international firms, the use of territorial claims also enables them to add more diversity in their product portfolios and to avoid overloading consumers with identical product origins, which is in line with anti-globalisation movements and recent trends toward more regionalism. Besides, for brand managers in face of political and economic international incidents, they are offered with a way to avoid certain potential harm to their marketing programs, since the consumer in one country may be against the products originated from another country, but may not refuse the products originated from a TOO from that country.

The research focus of Article 3 – conspicuous consumption, in particular that of the Chinese consumers, is a phenomenon that has received particular scrutiny in the last years from luxuries marketers. Due to the specificity of the Chinese culture, it is difficult for non-Chinese marketers to understand the psychological mechanism of how conspicuous products influences Chinese consumers' SWB. Through conducting three studies in China, Article 3 enables international firms to better understand the different motives behind the Chinese consumers' conspicuous consumption and how conspicuous consumption driven by different motives influences SWB of the Chinese consumers. Also, brand managers are provided with suggestions on ways to use their communicating campaign to influence consumers' consumption motive in order to create their sense of SWB. For example, marketers can promote products with small (vs. big) brand logo by emphasizing on its self-signaling function, which in turn may increase the consumer's SWB.



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### 6.3 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

But, as usual, there are limitations to the previous mentioned outcomes.

Concerning the territory of origin, even though Article 1 provides evidence of its potential in brand building programs, its influence on perceived authenticity is still moderate. Certain territories with which consumers are more familiar could have a stronger, more easily accessible network of associations and thus might reveal a stronger link of the territory to perceived authenticity. Thus, future research may adopt more familiar territories (e.g. Paris, New York) which might generate more immediate meanings through spreading activation, to further verify the relevance of a TOO indication.

The single product category we tested constitutes another limitation; some categories might benefit more or less from authenticity perceptions than others. For example, TOO may be more effective than COO for agricultural and food items naturally linked to a territory, but less effective if the benefits linked to the territorial strategy are difficult to establish, such as for consumer durables, or if the notion of authenticity is not relevant to brand–consumer relationships. Moreover, lavender soap is a relatively low-risk product with search attributes; further research should investigate higher-risk products (e.g. furniture) that might threaten potential disadvantages of TOOs, such as consumers' fears of quality penalties.

Besides, authenticity is just one of the consequences of TOO and other effects

such as consumers' trust toward TOO products, their perception of product quality, or willingness to pay should be tested. Other factors also could moderate the relationship between TOO and perceived authenticity, such as consumers' motivation to process information, the purchase context (e.g. within or outside the TOO). A model incorporating different possible consequences of TOO associations and moderators thus is warranted.

Finally, judgments of authenticity depend on different criteria in various cultures, and what one person or group perceives as authentic might appear false or inauthentic to others. Our test, conducted in China, should be extended to other consumers in various countries.

Concerning the consumers' SWB, our study only considers a direct impact of conspicuous consumption on consumers' SWB. There may be mediators between consumption activities and SWB such as consumption goals (e.g. self-image enhancement) or satisfaction with life domains. Future research should include some potential mediators of the relationship between conspicuous consumption and consumers' SWB to further clarify the influencing process.

Besides, conspicuous consumption may be driven by both self- and other-signaling motives equally. Our research suggests that the motivations that underlie conspicuous consumption are double-faced. In fact, those motivations may be difficult to separate, particularly in non-experimental contexts. In these instances, consumers' responses may be a function of what motive-bolstering opportunities a

person is exposed to at the moment. In the lab, this implies that if participants are put in different purchase contexts (such as the number of surrounding others), self-signaling consumers may perform an other-signaling conspicuous consumption. Future research may consider manipulating the self- and other-signaling conditions by the number of observers.

Other factors also could moderate the relationship between self- or other-signaling conspicuous consumption and consumers' SWB, such as consumers' need to belong, need for uniqueness. A model incorporating different possible moderators thus is warranted.

Finally, in addition to China, future tests should be extended to other consumers in other countries to further validate the bi-motive hypothesis.

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### **Résumé Général en Français**

Cette thèse traite de deux sujets principaux : l'impact du territoire d'origine de la marque sur le comportement du consommateur, et l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur.

D'une part, notre étude met en évidence l'importance du territoire d'origine de la marque dans la création de la perception de l'authenticité du consommateur. Elle valide d'une manière empirique une chaîne d'effets, depuis les associations du territoire d'origine d'un produit en passant par son authenticité perçue jusqu'à la connexion du consommateur à la marque. Une méthode d'expérimentation et la régression des moindres carrés partielle ont été choisies, afin de tester les hypothèses avec 665 consommateurs chinois. Les résultats montrent que le territoire d'origine a un effet positif sur la perception de l'authenticité du consommateur, qui ensuite a un effet positif sur la connexion du consommateur à la marque. De plus, par rapport au pays d'origine, le territoire d'origine est le facteur unique qui a un effet positif sur l'authenticité perçue du produit et contribue à créer la connexion du consommateur au produit. Nous avons aussi montré que la familiarité au territoire d'origine du consommateur et la congruence de la catégorie du produit avec son origine territoriale renforcent l'effet positif du territoire d'origine sur la perception de l'authenticité du consommateur. Cependant, une seule catégorie de produit (savon à la lavande) et une seule variable dépendante (l'authenticité perçue) ont été considérées dans cette étude. Compte tenu de la pertinence décroissante des associations du pays d'origine, cette étude démontre que le territoire d'origine est une stratégie alternative intéressante pour le renforcement de la valeur de la marque.

D'autre part, malgré l'importance croissante de la consommation ostentatoire dans le monde, peu de recherches s'intéressent à l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur. De plus, il existe des avis contradictoires sur leur relation. Cette étude propose une explication de la motivation duale et considère que la consommation ostentatoire a un effet positif sur le bien-être du consommateur si le consommateur utilise l'objet pour se prouver sa valeur, et un effet négatif sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur si l'objet est utilisé afin d'éveiller l'attention des autres. Les résultats des trois études empiriques montrent que le sens de l'impact de la consommation ostentatoire sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur dépend de ce qui motive la consommation. Ainsi, le matérialisme du consommateur augmente l'effet de la consommation ostentatoire pour éveiller l'attention des autres sur le bien-être subjectif du consommateur.

### **General Abstract in English**

This thesis consists of two main topics: the impact of brand territory of origin (TOO) on consumer behaviour, and the impact of conspicuous consumption on consumer subjective well-being (SWB).

On one side, this thesis highlights the importance of territory associations for consumers' perception of product authenticity and empirically tests the chain of effects, from a TOO association to perceived authenticity to consumers' self-brand connections. An experimental method and a partial least square (PLS) approach were adopted to test hypotheses with 665 Chinese consumers. Results demonstrate that TOO exerts a positive impact on perceived product authenticity, which improves consumers' self-brand connections. In addition, compared with country of origin (COO), TOO has a unique positive impact on perceived authenticity and a direct positive effect on consumers' self-brand connections. Also, the positive impact of TOO on perceived authenticity is enhanced by consumers' familiarity with the TOO and congruence between the product category and TOO. But only one outcome of TOO (perceived authenticity) and one product category (lavender soap) have been considered in this study. Noting the diminishing relevance of COO associations, this study demonstrates that territory of origin is an appealing alternative strategy for strengthening brand equity.

On the other side, despite the growing importance of conspicuous consumption in all parts of the world, little research focuses on the effect of conspicuous consumption on consumer SWB, and when this is the case, the results are controversial. We propose and test a bi-motive hypothesis whereby the valence of the effect of conspicuous consumption on consumer SWB depends on whether the conspicuous object is used as self-signaling conspicuous consumption or other-signaling conspicuous consumption. The results of three studies demonstrate that the self-signaling conspicuous consumer has a significantly higher level of SWB than the other-signaling conspicuous consumer. Furthermore, consumer materialism enhances the negative relationship between other-signaling conspicuous consumption and consumer SWB.