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**HERITAGE AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRAND HERITAGE,  
CORPORATE BRAND HERITAGE AND  
CORPORATE HERITAGE IDENTITY?\***

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# **Heritage as a social construction: implications for Brand Heritage, Corporate Brand Heritage and Corporate Heritage Identity?**

Abstract:

This paper aims to conceptually and empirically demonstrate brand heritage (Urde et al., 2007) is a social construction. After gathering the emergent marketing literature on brand heritage (Balmer, 2011; Blombäck and Brunninge, 2009; Hakala et al., 2011; Hudson, 2011; Hudson and Balmer, 2013; Wiedmann et al., 2011), a multi-disciplinary literature review on the concept of heritage provides conceptual evidence that heritage is socially constructed.

The empirical research is a set of two studies conducted on Marseilles' city brand. Study 1 is qualitative: a content analysis of 11 experts' interviews leads to a list of 23 brand heritage elements organised in 6 constructions. Study 2 is quantitative: a questionnaire (n=213) on the brand heritage elements' legitimacy and valence lead to 5 constructions, consistent with the 6 found in study 1.

As a conclusion, this paper indicates the implications of such a relativist approach of the brand heritage concept.

- If different heritages exist for the same brand, a corporate heritage image could exist along corporate heritage identities. Should brand heritage be conceptualized with two dimensions?
- Can all constructions of heritage have the same legitimacy? What happens if groups of stakeholders recognise a certain brand heritage, different from the corporate construction?
- Can different brand heritages be measured and compare? Can the consistency among different versions of heritage be an indicator?

Key words:

Brand heritage, social construction, city brands

Brand heritage emerges in the marketing literature through the nineties on as a concern for a brand’s past. It gains interest and is conceptualized from a corporate perspective (Urde et al., 2007; Balmer, 2011). Many research efforts helps understanding the concept and its role in repositioning (Hudson, 2011), its interaction with cultural heritage (Hakala et al., 2011) or family businesses (Blombäck and Brunninge, 2013). A model of its drivers and outcomes is also suggested (Wiedmann et al., 2011). Although the concept is acknowledged to be socially constructed, the existing contributions take the corporation’s perspective.

This paper has two objectives. The first is to conceptually ground a relativist approach of brand heritage through a multidisciplinary approach of the concept of heritage. The second is to empirically test a stakeholders’ perspective on a brand’s heritage.

## 1. THE RECENT EMERGENCE OF BRAND HERITAGE

There are explicit mentions of “brand heritage” and “heritage brands” in the marketing literature before 2006. Nevertheless, authors do not conceptualise it, the meaning slightly varies from one article to another.

### *1.1. Primarily related to different concepts*

**Table 1 - Earlier contributions to Brand Heritage**

Related concept	Contributions	Authors
Brand Identity	<p>Brand heritage is the twelfth dimension of the brand identity concept, under the perspective of the brand as a symbol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A vivid, meaningful heritage can also sometimes represent the essence of the brand” (1996, p.85).</li> </ul> <p>Activating a brand’s heritage can serve present strategy, especially for brands in troubles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Any brand, but especially those that are struggling, can benefit from going back to its roots and identifying what made it special and successful in the first place” (2004, p.7).</li> </ul>	<p>Aaker, 1996</p> <p>Aaker, 2004</p>
Perception of authenticity	<p>The perception of the MG car as an authentic one depends on how it respects the brand’s heritage, a heritage current consumers are able to define.</p>	<p>Leigh, Peters and Shelton, 2006</p>

Brand Image	<p>Heritage is a key dimension of brand image, especially for prestige brands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Brand heritage has become one of the most valuable assets to help create an image of authenticity and integrity that is likely to appeal to today’s consumers.” (p.348)</li> </ul> <p>Brand heritage activation should bring brand attachment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Those brands whose image demonstrates the key facets of heritage and authenticity are more likely to succeed in developing symbolic and emotional attachment with consumers” (p.349)</li> </ul>	Ballantyne, Warren and Nobbs, 2006
Retro-marketing	<p>Brand heritage is an alternative way to connect with a brand’s past (together with brand revival and nostalgia) that must be distinguished from retro-marketing.</p> <p>Heritage is an ambivalent notion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “However, because cultures are complex and individuals heterogeneous, heritage is often an ambivalent legacy” (p.20).</li> </ul> <p>Heritage is a construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Heritage, moreover, might need to be created and managed” (p.20)</li> </ul>	Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, 2003

### **1.2. Conceptualisation of Brand Heritage as a corporate asset**

Through two articles in 2006 and 2007, Balmer, Greyser and Urde conceptualise and distinguish brand heritage, heritage brands and brands with a heritage. Brand heritage is then seen as a dimension of a brand’s identity, a corporate asset the brand manager (or stewardship) can use the base the brand’s value proposition and position on.

**Table 2 - Definitions of Brand Heritage and similar concepts**

Concepts	Definitions (References)
Brand Heritage	Brand heritage is a dimension of the brand identity, a corporate asset a brand manager can decide to use (Urde et al., 2007).
Heritage Brands	Heritage brand is a brand that bases its proposition value and position on its heritage (Urde et al., 2007).

Brands with a heritage	Brand with a heritage is a brand which has the substantial heritage but has not decided to use it yet (Urde et al., 2007).
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Balmer (2011) adds the concepts of Corporate Heritage Brands (category) and Corporate Heritage Identities (traits).

**Table 3 - Definition of Corporate Heritage Brands and Corporate Heritage Identities**

Concepts	Definitions (References)
Corporate Heritage Brands	“Corporate heritage brands refers to a distinct category of institutional brand where there is a degree of continuity in terms of the brand promise as expressed via the institution’s identity, behaviour and symbolism [...]Moreover, corporate heritage brands – in order to remain salient – need to be relevant and respected and, in addition, should not be sclerotic but should be capable of adaptation; in short, to be responsive to change” (Balmer, 2011, p.1385)
Corporate Heritage Identities	“Corporate heritage identities refer to those institutional identity traits which have remained meaningful and invariant over the passage of time and, as such, a corporate heritage identity is viewed as being of the past, present and future” (Balmer, 2011, p.1385). CHI management is a marriage between “brand archaeology” and “brand strategy” (Balmer, 2011).

Additional contributions investigate brand heritage as a corporate resource for repositioning (Hudson, 2011), within the broader scope of the attraction of past in marketing (Blombäck and Brunninge, 2009; Hudson and Balmer, 2013), in its interaction with cultural heritage (Hakala et al., 2011) or family businesses (Blombäck and Brunninge, 2013).

### **1.3. The measurement of a “Corporation-based brand heritage”**

Four different scales have been designed and tested since 2011, this is another clue of the academic interest the concept generates. They do not rely on the same conceptual basis, and seek different objectives. Spiggle et al. (2012), Napoli et al. (2013) measure brand heritage in two models whose first objective is to capture brand authenticity, Merchant and Rose (2012) do the same focusing on vicarious nostalgia and its impact on brand attachment.

Wiedmann et al. (2011) and Wuestefeld et al. (2012) want to explore the drivers and outcomes of the brand heritage concept per se, from a firm’s perspective. They identify and

test 15 drivers for the Brand Heritage within a brand, and prove its significant impact on six dependent variables (all items are in the appendices, p.22).

They address the value-based antecedents and outcomes of Brand Heritage. The drivers summarize which elements (inside the brand) add value to the consumer's perception, but neither the actual content of the heritage definition, nor the individual variables that could impact the perception of an automotive brand heritage (revenues, age, current automotive brand...).

This scale is a corporation-based brand heritage one, distinct from the stakeholders-based brand heritage scale this research could help to develop in the future, from the convictions that brand heritage is a social construction, and therefore subjects to individual and social variations in its definition.

In the following part, a multidisciplinary literature review provides conceptual evidences of brand heritage being socially constructed.

## **2. BRAND HERITAGE AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION**

Ambivalent, highly selective, subject to interpretations... the marketing literature has already paved the way for further exploration of the brand heritage concept as a social construction. This second part starts with a reminder on those mentions before presenting a more detailed literature review on the notion of heritage in other social sciences.

### **2.1. Mentions in the marketing literature**

In their publication on retro branding, Brown, Kozinets and Sherry (2003) mention Brand Heritage as distinct from retro: an alternative way to connect with a brand's past (together with brand revival and nostalgia) that must be distinguished from retro-marketing. Relying on Hosbawn and Rangers (1992), they see heritage as an ambivalent notion, and a potential construction: "heritage, moreover, might need to be created and managed" (p.20).

Blombäck and Brunninge (2013) also mention constructions from institutions' past as potentially highly selective constructions, able to fit with the organisations or the individuals' priorities of the moment. In their Gucci case study, DeFanti, Bird and Caldwell (2013) analyse the construction of an equestrian heritage through the slow apparition of the horse bits and the green/red/green strap, leading to the invention of the Gucci having been noble saddle makers in the Middle Age.

Balmer (2013) mentions an important stakeholders' significance for the brand heritage. Stakeholders' group identify with an interpretation of the brand heritage, they can have different viewpoints making the heritage complex.

Those statements are consistent with the different definitions of heritage found in history, anthropology or sociology, as presented below. In addition, those references outside the marketing scope provide information on the how and why is heritage constructed.

## **2.2. The concept of heritage itself is a social construction**

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the English word "heritage" comes from the French "hériter" meaning "to inherit" and defined by Gotman (2006) as an operator of continuity between the past and the present.

The semantic evolution is slightly different in English compared to its French origin. Gotman (2006) makes a distinction between "héritage" and "patrimoine", the former being the social process organizing the transmission and the latter the object of transmission itself. Today, heritage would be closer to "patrimoine" and inheritance to "héritage". The research in social sciences focuses on the notions of heritage in the English-speaking literature and patrimoine in the French-speaking references.

### *2.2.1. Distinction between the notions of "Past", "History" and "Heritage"*

As Blombäck and Brunninge (2009) or Hudson and Balmer (2013) suggest, brand heritage must be studied within the broader scope of consumers' attraction for the past. The concepts of past, history and heritage are distinct, heritage being a constructed interpretation of the past, driven by present agenda.

History and heritage are two notions dealing with an object's past. In philosophy, the past is studied in the broader interrogation about human relations to time, as this constantly growing portion of time presenting a tension between two forces or dimensions (see Busnel, 1998 for detailed literature review).

The past is a raw material subject of all interpretations (Fowler, 1992), a "foreign country" (Lowenthal, 1985) observed from the present context (Kosseleck, 1997). History and heritage are two kinds of human efforts to handle their past.

A historical analysis and a heritage inventory can use the same elements from the past; they are all constructed in the present but yet different in their purpose and methodology. It is important to differentiate them.

Historians differentiate history and heritage for heritage doesn't imply a critique analysis of the past, Lowenthal sees heritage as a secular religion: "heritage relies on revealed faith rather than rational proof. We elect and exalt our legacy not by weighing its claims to truth, but in feeling that it must be right" (Lowenthal, 1998 p.6).

Far from being a religion, representing the past as an historian implies a scientific work of source analysis. And as even historians cannot escape the bias of their own times, some recommend they disclaim what are their principles (Schlegel in Koselleck, 1997). Fierce debates on the status of history, fiction and faction never reached consensus on the appropriate methodology and purpose (Delacroix, 2008), but as an academic discipline, history is obliged to rigor and has a serious purpose.

On a marketing perspective, Goulding (2000) states that heritage is the commodification of history. From the different representations of the past, it would be the more able to meet popular tastes, because entertaining, sanitised and inauthentic.

### *2.2.2. Heritage is a construction driven by the present's agenda*

Nothing is heritage per se, any object can become an element of a group's heritage through a process of adoption: when the group understand the meaning of the object and identify itself with it (Leniaud, 1992).

Heritage is also a representation of the past grounded in present times. As such, it is highly influenced by present context. Heritage usually tells more about the present in which it is grounded than about the past it is supposed to represent (McCrone et al., 1995; Walsh, 1991).

This construction based on present times can serve different purposes including stressing the sense of belonging or give legitimacy to a new social order. Many authors have showed how heritage is constructed for the use of a political agenda:

- Chastel (1986) describes how a first heritage's inventory was constructed during the French Revolution. Despite the will of turning the back of the Ancient Regime, the revolutionary regime declared some monuments or pieces of art conformed to a certain "génie français" and therefore saved them from destruction. The idea was to put those elements to use in the new nation's construction.



- Walsh (1991) describes the representation of the past in English museums as a construction to provide legitimacy to new elite (bourgeoisie in the 19th century) or policy (neo-conservatism in the 1980's).
- Anderson (1996) investigates the use of the past in the construction of national identities.
- Hobsbawn and Rangers (1992) demonstrates the construction of traditions from an unscientific interpretation of the past, with clear political or cultural purpose.
- Koselleck (1997) has analysed war memorials across Europe and written “different social and political groups use memorials to establish their own tradition by claiming the sense of the past death” (p.193)

This contextual aspect means disagreements exist on the way heritage interprets the past. For Tornatore (2010), heritage is highly political and a potential source of conflicts. There are no reasons why this aspect should not exist for brand heritage.

One can draw parallels between the different social or political groups whose constructions are described by the heritage specialists, and a company's stakeholders who can build different heritages from a same past.

### **2.3. Justifications for two research proposals**

The heritage notion is defined as a social construction. Building on those conceptual evidences, this paper aims to empirically demonstrate that brand heritage is also a social construction, whose content can therefore vary among stakeholder. Those statements are acknowledged in the literature on brand heritage but no empirical research has focused on this demonstration to our knowledge.

RP1: Brand Heritage is a social construction.

As a construction, is it shared by all group members like Nora's “lieux de mémoire”, or does the definition of the brand's heritage vary among stakeholders? Brands seem not to be necessarily based on a strong group unity. Merrillees et al. (2012) show brand meaning varies among stakeholders, this empirical studies show it is also the case for brand heritage.

RP2: Brand Heritage varies among stakeholders.

### 3. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

#### 3.1. Introduction to the two studies: why is a city brand a brand with a heritage? Details of the methodology

Those two studies were conducted in two steps between April and June 2013 on the Marseilles city brand. Cities can be considered as corporate brands (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2007), and more precisely as corporate brands with a heritage which could benefit from brand heritage activation as summarised in Table 4.

**Table 4 - Brand heritage answers city branding challenges**

<b>City branding challenges</b>	<b>Benefits from Brand Heritage activation (Urde et al., 2007)</b>
<p>Evans (2003) notes the ways cities are regenerated through culture and entertainment tends to make them look the same. Hannigan (2003) wonders to what extent the Guggenheim effect can work again and again. Movement, allusion to industrial tradition, a great location for business, local quality of life... Griffiths (1998) indicates that the same images are regularly included in or excluded from cities' promotional tools, "making sameness."</p> <p>"Many of the innovations and investments designed to make particular cities more attractive as cultural and consumer centers have quickly been imitated elsewhere, thus rendering any competitive advantage within a system of cities ephemeral" (Harvey, 1989, p.12).</p>	<p>Increase distinctiveness in positioning</p>
<p>Many cities claim to be brands even though they only have a slogan and a logo which lacks depth as long as corporate branding is concerned (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2009)</p> <p>According to Harvey (1989), place marketing is the triumph of image over substance.</p>	<p>Add depth, authenticity and credibility to the value proposition</p>
<p>Residents are a crucial target of place branding (Braun, Kavaratzis, and Zenker, 2013)</p> <p>Regeneration should be based on the empowerment of local communities (Trueman, Cook and Cornelius, 2008), but current branding processes exclude significant parts of the population (Hanningan, 2003)</p>	<p>Generate pride and commitment among internal audiences</p>

The empirical research is made of two sequential studies – one qualitative and one quantitative – with a focus on legitimacy and valence of each of the heritage elements in the analysis. If brand heritage is unanimously accepted by all stakeholders, there should not be any conflict about one element being legitimate part of Marseilles' heritage. The same way, there should not be major difference in the valence of each element.

### **3.2. Study 1: experts' in-depth interviews to elicit the city brand's heritage**

Study 1 is a set of eleven semi-structured interviews with brand experts on the brand's heritage: people whose professional, academic or artistic careers are linked to the city's heritage issues (see details in appendices, p.22). Each interview lasts between 45 and 100 minutes.

Experts were questioned about the concept of heritage and their definition of Marseilles' heritage. Sixty five elicited heritage elements appeared in the pre-analysis. Twenty-three of which were mentioned by 4 or more experts (Table 5). Conducting the research with those 23 more cited elements minimises the chance of generating difference in the stakeholders' appreciation (in study 2) of a heritage element which would only be quoted by one or few experts (the 65 elements and the corresponding citations are presented in appendices, p.24).

Each interview was coded based on the unity of meaning (Bardin, 2007) to clarify experts' statements on their legitimacy and valence of the 23 brand heritage elements, as well as the meaning they associate with them. In total, 168 meaning units were coded. The 23 elements can be break into five categories: famous locations (39% of coded units), cultural traits (21%), natural elements (18%), economy (15%) and sports (7%).

The content analysis of the interviews leads to three conclusions: heritage elements are challenged in terms of legitimacy and valence; and heritage elements usually hold more than one meaning. Finally, study 1 reveals six different constructions of Marseilles' brand heritage.

#### ***3.2.1. Legitimacy and valence***

Experts challenge the brand heritage elements in their legitimacy. A detailed table reports the number of experts challenging each element's legitimacy as part of Marseilles' brand heritage. It also includes the number of experts who never mentioned the element, as it is also way of challenging its legitimacy (p.23 in appendices).

As an example, the soap is challenged because its production nearly stopped in Marseilles (at an industrial level). Also because an expert reported the inhabitants of Marseilles never really accepted this industry as part of the heritage.

NM (sociologist): “Some things disappeared but they are still considered as heritage. For instance, there is no soap factory left in Marseilles, they almost all disappeared or they are really small. But still, we keep selling soap pretending it is authentically Marseilles, even as if it was city heritage, it is absolutely mental!”

**Table 5 - Marseilles city brand heritage elements**

Experts mentioning the element	Coded units	Elements	Meanings associated	Categories
10	22	Notre-Dame de la Garde (Church)	6	Famous places 65 units (39%)
6	7	Palais Longchamp (Museum and monument)	4	
4	6	Mucem (State museum built in 2013)	3	
4	5	Quartiers Nord (Northern and sensitive neighbourhoods)	5	
6	6	Saint-Victor (Abbey)	3	
4	6	Canebière (The city’s main Street)	3	
6	6	Vieille-Charité (Museum and monument)	3	
6	7	Vieux-port (Old port)	3	
5	6	Pastis (Local alcohol)	3	Culture 35 units (21%)
6	8	Marcel Pagnol (writer)	3	
5	6	Pétanque (traditional game, form of lawn bowling)	1	
4	5	Accent (Marseilles accent in French)	2	
4	5	Life outside	5	
4	4	Easiness (lay-back lifestyle)	5	
4	5	Calanques (National Park in the city)	4	Nature 30 units (18%)
4	6	Natural light	3	
7	12	Sea	8	
7	7	Sun	4	
6	8	Soap	3	Economy 25 units (15%)
5	13	Harbour	5	
4	4	CMA-CGM tower (Skyscraper)	2	
6	8	Olympique de Marseille or O.M. (football club)	4	Sports 13 units (7%)
5	5	Vélodrome Stadium (Football stadium)	3	

CT (Urban planner) in a different approach: “Industrial heritage is not integrated in Marseilles; they are business activities whereas here, only the people are heritage. It might be changing a little bit now, but consider tiles or soap factories as heritage is not really obvious yet”

Others are challenged in terms of valence. The main street (Canebière) for example, which used to be a high-end avenue, is mainly presented as legitimate part of Marseilles' heritage, but a rather negative one:

*“So we all stay in our own area and a split city appears, divided by this Canebière, more or less easy to cross”* (CT – urban planner)

*“This city cut in two with the poorest at the north, the richest at the south, and this kind of invisible wall the Canebière is”* (LC – chamber of commerce)

### 3.2.2. Meanings:

In the content analysis focused on the meanings associated with each brand heritage element, 22 brand heritage elements out of the 23 hold more than one meaning (cf Table 4). For instance, Notre-Dame church has 6 (see Table 6)

**Table 6 - Meanings associated with Notre-Dame de la garde**

Meanings	Quotes
Number one symbol of the city	<p>“The heritage identifier of Marseilles is Notre-Dame de la Garde. This is the one we showcase, for instance, when the European Capital of Culture was launched, what we saw was Notre-Dame de la Garde” (AD, sociologist)</p> <p>[In Marseilles' heritage] “we've got Notre-Dame, used as a landmark, a symbol, which identify the city” (CT, urban planner)</p>
Protection	<p>[This church is] “a sign of recognition, not to the holly Catholic Church but to the city, to Notre-Dame de la garde who protects sailors, who protects inhabitants, who protects all its inhabitants” (NM, sociologist)</p>
Catholic	<p>“This devotion to Notre-Dame de la garde is based on nothing! Go to any Marist site, you'll find apparition, an Early Christian site, a martyr buried somewhere, miracles etc... And at Notre Dame de la garde, nothing” (MNP, city archivist)</p>
Multi-religious	<p>“Above all, Notre-Dame is finally a multi-religious symbol, a multi-confessional one; I mean anyone takes Notre-Dame de la Garde for a flagship building” (PC, writer)</p> <p>“When I was working for O.M. [football team], I've always been surprised the day before an important match, Muslim players – and there're quite a lot in football – would go with the others to light a</p>

	candle at Notre-Dame, I think it is wonderful!” (LC, Chamber of Commerce executive)
Kitsch	<p>“Why do Marseilles people like opera? Or even the weird architecture of Notre-Dame de la garde, of Palais Longchamp which is similar to what some academic will reproach to Italian opera. This... baroque style, luxurious... Well, I think we need to have a look at Marseilles’ bourgeois values, far from the aristocratic models” (PG, sociologist)</p> <p>“Consider kitsch building Notre-Dame de la garde as heritage... well, that’s a way [...] as far as architecture’s concerned it is <i>kitschissime</i>” (LC, Chamber of Commerce executive)</p>
Tourist activity	“I think it’s the busiest monument of Marseilles, when people come from outside, they want to see Notre-Dame de la Garde” (AD, sociologist)

The polysemous aspect of the brand heritage elements, and the role they can play in the different constructions was directly mentioned in two interviews.

In the city’s heritage “*You got pastis and... CMA CGM Tower [...] depending on which groups, you will find some people to say pastis is good, to advocate this popular heritage, this popular heritage good; and you will find others to say no, CMA CGM tower is good, because pastis is pleb and the tower means the city’s international outreach*” (NM, sociologist).

“*So there’s Saint-Victor and Notre-Dame de la Garde, that’s part of the heritage, a questionable part as far as I am concerned but (laugh)... not necessarily questionable for other people*” (LC, Chamber of Commerce executive).

Six different groups of meanings appear when looking at how elements and their meanings overlap. Altogether, those six groups capture 51.18% of all coded units as presented in Table 7.

Some elements are included in different constructions of the brand heritage, because they never include the element as a whole but only one of its diverse meanings. That supports the first research proposal: brand heritage is a social construction, as well as the second: the definition of a brand’s heritage varies among different stakeholders. Study 2 tests the research proposals in a quantitative approach.

**Table 7 - The six constructions of Marseilles' brand heritage**

Brand Heritage constructions	Cliché	Quality of life	Monuments	Modernity	Tourism	Lay-back
Brand Heritage Elements	Sea, sun, O.M, Stadium, Pastis, Pagnol, Pétanque, Old Port, accent	Sea, sun, light, calanques	Vieille Charité, Palais Longchamp, Saint-Victor, Mucem	CMA-CGM Tower, Mucem	Old-Port, O.M., Sea, Sun, ND Garde, Pagnol, Canebière, Mucem	Pagnol, easiness, life outside, sea
coded units	20	14	20	5	18	9
Percent of all coded units	11.9%	8.33%	11.9%	2.95%	10.71%	5.36%

**3.3. Study 2: survey (n=213) showing conflicts in terms of the elements' legitimacy and value**

Consumers with at least one experience with the brand (residents, former tourists or people visiting Marseilles on a regular basis) (n=213) answered a questionnaire with the twenty-three elements between the 10th of June and 6th of January 2014.

**Table 8 - Sample demographics**

Gender	Socio-professional Category	Location
64% Female 36% Male	18% Low 55% Medium 27% High	46% Residents 54% Outsiders

The respondents (sample details in table 8) must evaluate each element according to two criteria: legitimacy as part of the city's heritage and their perception of the element in terms of it being positive or negative. To reduce bias due to the length, the item order was randomly assigned to the participants.

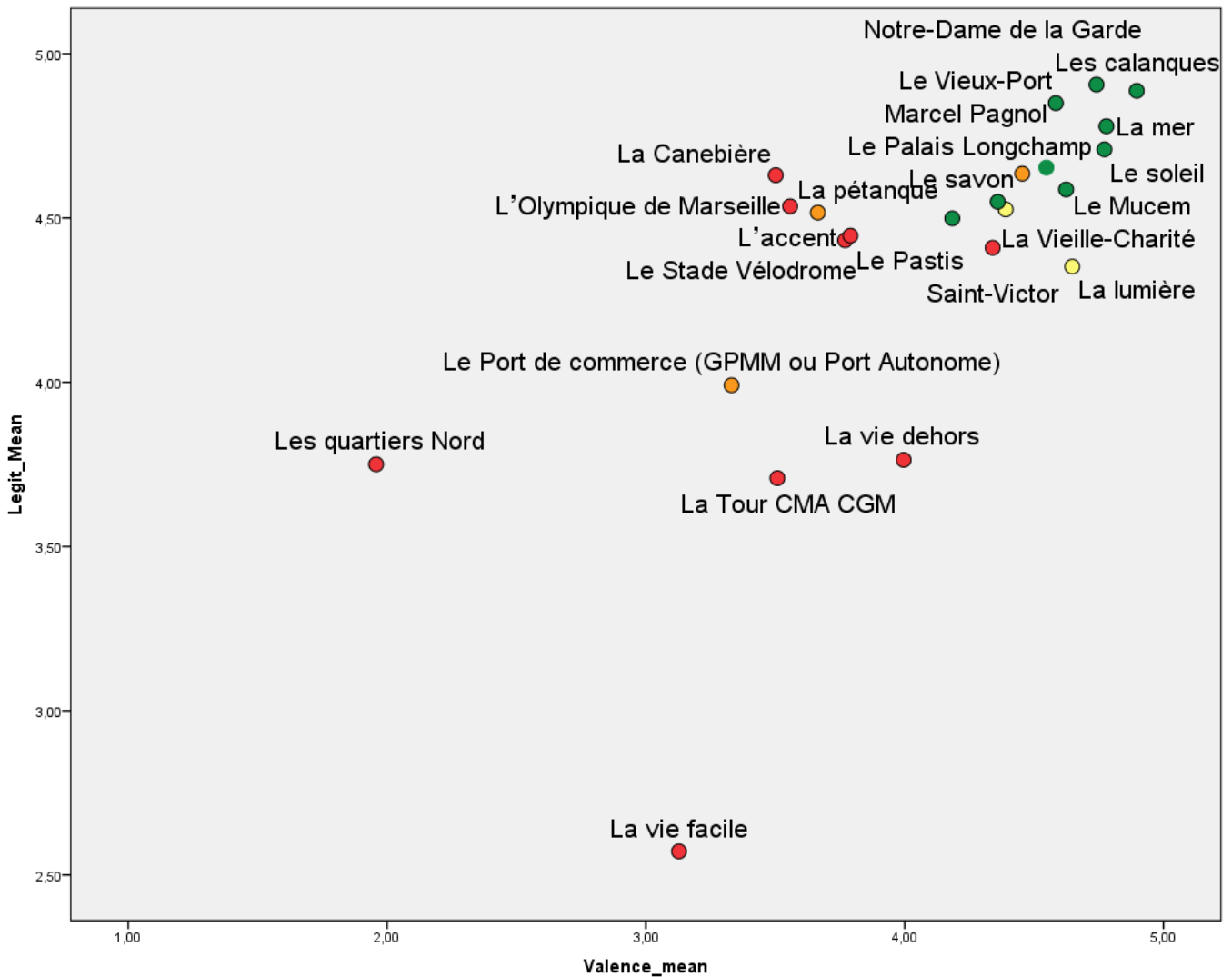
Respondent rated the 23 elements on a 0 to 5 Osgood scale in terms of legitimacy ([element] is part of Marseilles' heritage, do you strongly disagree, disagree, don't mind, agree, strongly agree) and valence (according to you, [element] is highly negative, negative, neutral, positive, highly positive for Marseilles' heritage).

Means and standard deviations were computed on SPSS for each brand heritage element, a heritage element is considered challenged in its legitimacy when its score's standard deviation is higher than the median: .72 (mean is .77). When it comes to valence, the median of the score's standard deviation is .79 (mean is .79).

Figure 1 presents the 23 brand heritage elements according to their average mean score on legitimacy and valence. The colours indicate four categories:

- Green: 9 elements with low standard deviation in both legitimacy and valence, suggesting they are consensual brand heritage elements.
- Yellow: 2 elements with low standard deviation in valence but high in legitimacy, suggesting they are seen as positive elements but their belonging to the brand heritage is challenged by some of the respondents.
- Orange: 2 elements with low standard deviation in legitimacy but high in valence, suggesting respondents agree on the fact they form part of the brand heritage, but do not all see them as positive.
- Red: 10 elements with high standard deviation in both legitimacy and valence, suggesting their belonging is questioned by some respondents, who therefore do not see it as positive (regressions show significant relationship between legitimacy and valence scores for all those elements).





**Figure 1 - Brand heritage elements (legitimacy and valence means)**

The principal component analysis applied on legitimacy score gives seven dimensions. Results are not acceptable to state there are seven different constructions from a statistical point of view but they are sufficient to indicate that there is not only one dominant construction of Marseilles' brand heritage. In addition, the 5<sup>th</sup> first dimensions (those explaining more than 5% of the variance) make sense with the constructions extracted from study 1 (Table 9).

- The first construction is the one accepting the different clichés traditionally associated with Marseilles (football club, Stadium, pastis, accent, pétanque).
- The second one is focusing on natural heritage.
- The third is focused on the monuments and reject mostly some elements of the cultural heritage (pastis, accent, football team, pétanque, easiness) as well as negatively perceived areas (Canebière, Quartiers nord).

- The fourth is focused on modernity with CMA CGM Tower and Mucem. It rejects cultural heritage (Pagnol, accent, life outside), an old monument (Vieille Charité) and the “quartiers nord”.
- The fifth focuses on the “postcard” elements (Notre-Dame de la Garde, Canebière, Old-Port) and rejects more complex elements (soap, vieille charité, harbour, light, life outside).

**Table 9 - Five constructions of Marseilles brand heritage extracted on PCA**

Construction	1 Cliché	2 Nature	3 Monuments	4 Modernity	5 Postcard
Elements most accepted (>.500)	Football club Stadium Pastis Accent Pétanque	Sun Sea Light Calanques	Vieille Charité Longchamp St Victor Mucem	CMA CGM Tower Mucem	ND Garde Canebière Old-Port
Elements rejected (negative score)	Longchamp St Victor Vieille Charité		Accent Canebière Pastis Football club Quartier Nord Pétanque Easiness	Vieille Charité Quartiers Nord Pagnol Life outside Accent	Vieille Charité Life outside Soap Light Port
Percentage of variance	21%	12%	7%	6.4%	5.2%

### **3.4. Conclusion**

The first research proposal is that brand heritage is a social construction. The first study shows the same debates exist about what is or is not heritage for the city-brand. Some experts even acknowledge their vision should not be the same than others. The different elements hold several meanings and conflicts exist between those meanings (eg. Pastis or CMA CGM Tower) and are involved in different definitions of the same brand’s heritage. Study two shows consistent results.

The second research proposal is that brand heritage varies among stakeholders. The first study analyses the interviews of the 11 experts, all with different backgrounds, and shows the meaning they attach to each element still varies, even when focusing on the most cited elements. In study 2, a balanced sample of residents and people living outside the city rated the brand heritage elements. The results show the elements do not necessarily reach consensus among the stakeholders' sample. It provides empirical evidence that the definition of a brand's heritage can vary from one stakeholder to another, as suggested by the multidisciplinary literature review on the concept of heritage.

#### **4. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES**

This exploratory research has many limitations that will need to be clarified in further research. A bigger sample for the quantitative study could give statistical validity to the principal components analysis. It would also allow sub-sample analysis, for example, do residents have different constructions than tourists? Or which construction are the residents more likely to adopt, versus tourists?

Also, more qualitative interviews with other stakeholders' categories could help in the understanding and the constitution of the widest list of brand heritage elements possible (associations, residents from different neighbourhoods, business owners, trade unions...). It would be interesting to include the official city brand managers' discourse, and compare it to the different constructions.

Finally, city brands are acknowledged to be a particular type of corporate brands (Aschworth and Karavatzis, 2007). Cities' heritage might be richer than usual brands, so it would be interesting to contrast those results with those of a similar study on other corporate brands.

Nevertheless, it also clarifies different points and raises several questions. First, it provides both conceptual and empirical evidences for the acknowledged statement that brand heritage is a social construction. In that case, it shows stakeholders do have different understanding of what a specific brand's heritage is, leaving open questions:

- If different heritages exist for the same brand, does a corporate heritage image exist along corporate heritage identities? Should academics conceptualise brand heritage with two dimensions?

- Can all constructions of heritage have the same legitimacy? What happens if groups of stakeholders recognise a certain brand heritage, different from the corporate construction?
- Is it possible to measure and compare different brand heritages? Which tools should be used? Can the consistency among different versions of heritage be an indicator?

This paper also articulates brand heritage and city branding and shows that cities willing to use their heritage in the branding strategies should take into account other stakeholders' views on the definition of the brand heritage. Checking how the heritage is perceived before constructing a brand heritage is an important issue that opens vast avenues for future research

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## Apendices

### Experts participating in the interviews

<p>Sociologist specialised in Marseille</p> <p>Head of the Académie de Marseille (Local academy of Sciences)</p> <p>Archivist of the Académie de Marseille</p> <p>Head of Communications in the Chamber of Commerce (former PR of local Football Club)</p> <p>Journalist and author of a book about his career as a reporter in Marseille</p> <p>A local writer in Marseille, author of many books about the city</p> <p>Municipal archivist</p> <p>Sociologist specialised in Marseille's popular traditions</p> <p>Algerian artist working on a project about the interpretation of Marseille's heritage</p> <p>Heritage specialist at the local Urban Development Agency (AGAM)</p> <p>Political Science PhD, author of a dissertation on Marseille's international development</p>
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### Drivers and outcomes of Brand Heritage (Wiedmann et al., 2011)

Items generation method	The fifteen drivers of Brand Heritage	The six dependent variables
Literature: starting from Brand Heritage as an added-value, they rely on the drivers of brand awareness and brand images (Keller, 1993, 1998)	Knowledge, Bonding***, Differentiation**, Success Images***, Credibility***, Identity Meaning*, Identity Value, Imagination, Continuity***, Cultural meaning**, Cultural value, myth, orientation***, prestige*, familiarity*	Brand image (0.789***) Brand trust (0.248***) Brand loyalty (0.555***) Buying intention (0.279***) Customer satisfaction (0.290***) Price Premium (0.296***)

### Elements challenged in their legitimacy and valence

Element	Challenge		Neutral	No mention	Total
	Legitimacy	Valence			
Accent	0	0	4	7	11
Calanques	0	0	4	7	11
Canebière	0	3	1	7	11
CMA CGM	1	1	2	7	11
Easiness	0	2	1	8	11
Harbour	1	1	3	6	11
Marcel Pagnol	2	1	3	5	11
Mucem	0	0	4	7	11
Natural Light	0	0	4	7	11
ND Garde	0	2	8	1	11
O.M.	1	1	4	5	11
Old Port	0	0	6	5	11
P. Longchamp	0	1	5	5	11
Pastis	0	3	1	7	11
Pétanque	1	2	2	6	11
Quartiers N.	0	2	2	7	11
Saint-Victor	0	1	5	5	11
Sea	1	0	5	5	11
Soap	3	1	2	5	11
Stadium	0	0	5	6	11
Sun	0	0	7	4	11
Vieille Charité	0	1	5	5	11

**The 65 elicited Marseilles' brand heritage elements**

Number of experts mentioning the element	Elements
<b>10</b>	<b>Notre-Dame de la Garde (Church)</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Sea; Sun</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Olympique de Marseille (football club); Palais Longchamp; Marcel Pagnol (author); Saint-Victor (Abbey); Soap; Vieille-Charité (Museum) ; vieux-port (old port)</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Harbour; Pastis (Local alcohol); petanque; Quartiers Nord</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Accent; Calanques (National Park); Canebière (Main Street); Natural light; Mucem; Live outside; Vélodrome Stadium; CMA-CGM tower (skyscraper); Easiness</b>
3	Bastides (Provençal country house); Local painting “école”; Corniche (coast road); Estaque (neighbourhood); Santons; Villa Méditerranée (cultural center)
2	Hiking; Hotel-Dieu (former hospital, now an Intercontinental hotel); Major (Cathedral); Cabanons (fisherman’s house); social and cultural mix; Plegue; Red light district; galerians; village districts
1	Maurice Béjart; Borély; Chamber of Commerce; COMEX; cavalier attitude; housing project; J-C Izzo (author); bombast; three windows building; coastal navigation; Pharo palace; Vallon des Auffes (neighbourhood); local authors; open air markets; Labourdette towers; Saint-Exupéry lycée; multi-confessional; Jazz musicians; Founding myth; Pierre Puget (sculptor); Saint-Laurent (church); the beach; Marseillaise (national anthem).