



MASTER'S DISSERTATION

BUILDINGS AND PLACES IN CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
AUTHENTICITY OF CORPORATE HERITAGE BRANDS
THE VISTA ALEGRE CASE STUDY

AUTHOR: Ana Teresa de Oliveira

SUPERVISOR: Fernando Pinto Santos, Ph.D

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For mom and dad, my world and strength

For my sister, my best friend

For Diogo, my love and life

For my family, my support

For my grandparents, my supporters

For Madalena, my favourite baby

For Maria, my partner

For my friends, my happiness

For Vista Alegre, my inspiration

For Professor Fernando, my guidance

Para a minha avó Irzalinda,

Por sempre me fazer ver beleza no passado.

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ABSTRACT IN ENGLISH

While being a recent topic in the corporate marketing literature, corporate heritage brands are an acknowledged topic of research. A corporate heritage brand is a brand that embraces its own past in a relevant way, and that takes advantage of that past, in the present and to build a successful future. The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of buildings and places in consumers' perceptions of authenticity in corporate heritage brands. This study was, therefore, designed within qualitative-inductive research, consisting of a single case study. The research process consisted of the analysis of 25 semi-structured interviews. This study's contributions include geographical proximity of the spaces of corporate heritage brands to the residents, as a reason for consumers to visit the space while the region is part of the brand's identity. Besides, by including stores from other brands in their space, corporate heritage brands can increase consumers' chance to visit the space, while developing a cohesive image for consumers. Factors such as the aging of the buildings in the space of corporate heritage brands, as well as the representation of the company's effort to provide good living conditions for the workers, influence consumers' assessment of authenticity of the space.

KEYWORDS: Corporate heritage brands; Buildings and Spaces; Authenticity; Case Study; Qualitative Research.

RESUMO

Apesar de ser um tópico recente na literatura de marketing corporativo, as *corporate heritage brands* são já um tópico de pesquisa reconhecido. Uma *corporate heritage brand* é uma marca que abraça o seu passado de uma forma relevante, e do qual tira partido, no presente e na construção de um futuro de sucesso. Este estudo pretende entender o impacto dos edifícios e espaços de *corporate heritage brands* nas perceções de autenticidade do consumidor. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa-indutiva, através do caso de estudo de uma marca apenas. O processo de pesquisa consistiu na análise de 25 entrevistas semiestruturadas. Quanto às contribuições deste estudo destacam-se a proximidade geográfica destes espaços como motivo de visita por parte dos consumidores, tornando a região onde a marca se insere parte da identidade da marca. Para além disso, a inclusão de outras *corporate heritage brands* no espaço da marca contribui para o aumento das visitas no espaço assim como para a criação de uma imagem de coesão por parte da detentora do espaço. Finalmente fatores como a deterioração dos edifícios e a representação, no espaço, do esforço da empresa em proporcionar boas condições de trabalho e vida aos seus colaboradores influenciam as perceções de autenticidade dos consumidores.

KEYWORDS: Corporate heritage brands; Buildings and Spaces; Authenticity; Case Study; Qualitative Research.

INTRODUCTION

Corporate heritage brands are a recent topic in the corporate marketing literature. However, it is an acknowledged field by scholars, and it has earned a lot of interest since Balmer firstly introduced the notion in 2006. A corporate heritage brand is a brand that embraces its own past in a relevant way, and that takes advantage of that past to be relevant in the present and to build a successful future (Balmer & Urde, 2006). An applicable example is the Portuguese brand of soap, Ach. Brito, that encompasses all the characteristics of a corporate heritage brand (Santos et al., 2016). Wiedmann and colleagues state that a brand with heritage encompasses depth, authenticity, and credibility to consumers' perception of value (Wiedmann et al., 2011; Urde et al., 2007). Through their past, companies can enhance their perception in the eyes of the consumer, become relevant in the present and build a sustainable future for their business (Urde et al., 2007).

Corporate heritage brands' focus on the past is connected not only to the company's perception of authenticity, in consumers' minds, but also to its track records and historical references (Balmer & Urde, 2006). Thus, corporate heritage brands possess certain attributes, physical or intangible, that design the company's heritage and distinguishes them from companies that do not have or use their heritage. These attributes can be a logo, a certain product category, and

even spaces or buildings that are owned by the company since the beginning of its activity or that represent the company's history, like factories and museums.

The literature on corporate heritage brands mentions buildings and places that are owned by a company as a tool to portray the company's past and to make it available to consumers. Some of the examples that arise in literature are corporate visitor centers, museums, and even a brewery that to this day operates in the company's historic buildings and that is filled with the company's historical artifacts that amplify the perceptions of corporate heritage brands of those who visit it (Hudson et al., 2013; Pecot & De Barnier, 2017; Burghausen & Balmer, 2014; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Although the literature includes these references, the impact of spaces and buildings in consumers' perceptions, as well as the characteristics that distinguish them in the eyes of the consumer, are still understudied.

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of historic buildings and places in consumers' perceptions of authenticity in corporate heritage brands. Concepts such as architectural heritage, corporate visitor centers, museums and authenticity of old buildings and places have arisen in the corporate marketing literature however a gap concerning consumers' perceptions of authenticity of buildings, and spaces of corporate heritage brands was still to address (Balmer, 2011b; Burghausen & Santos, 2015; Burghausen & Balmer, 2014; Pecot & De Barnier, 2017; Rindell & Santos, 2021; Grayson &

Martinec, 2004; Pecot et al., 2019; Hudson & Balmer, 2013; Pecot et al., 2018; Rindell et al., 2015; Pecot et al., 2018). Within the existing gap three research questions arise: What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places? What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer? What do consumers perceive as authentic in the buildings and places of a corporate heritage brand?

This study focuses on Portugal's Porcelain factory, Vista Alegre. Founded in 1824, Vista Alegre is a primary example of a corporate heritage brand that endured in time. Nowadays, Vista Alegre holds its international positioning with 85% of its production (Jornal de Negócios, 2021). Besides its many stores, Vista Alegre owns an interesting patrimony of physical attractions in the company's foundation property such as a factory, a museum, a chapel, a theatre, a day-care for the factory workers, the neighborhood that accommodated factory workers, a new five-star hotel for tourists to experience the brand in its birthplace, a store and an outlet store, the Art Lab focused on developing new porcelain designs and the CADE (*Centro de Artes e Desenvolvimento da Empresa*) which promotes new model and design developments as well as the training of the company's workers (Vista Alegre, 2021a). Besides, the space also includes the store of an independent brand that was recently incorporated in Vista Alegre's portfolio: Bordallo Pinheiro (Vista Alegre, 2022). While acquiring the owner of Bordallo Pinheiro, Vista Alegre remains an independent brand, and both stores, styles and history are separate (Dinheiro Vivo, 2022). Thus, these spaces create an

immersive experience for those that visit Vista Alegre's birthplace in Ílhavo, Aveiro.

Vista Alegre is the object of this qualitative-inductive research, which consists of an exploratory single case study (Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Dubois & Gibbert, 2010; Verschuren, 2003; Yin, 2009). The research process involves the collection of data through observation in the Vista Alegre compound, and with 25 semi-structured interviews with consumers outside Vista Alegre's main store.

1.LITERATURE REVIEW

The present literature review offers the state of the art on corporate heritage brands, consumers' perceptions of corporate heritage brands and the design of spaces, such as buildings and places.

1.1. CORPORATE BRAND HERITAGE

To speak of corporate heritage brands is to speak of time and its influence on consumers' perceptions of brands. Brand heritage is considered a resource for companies to reinforce mental associations based on historical references (Burghausen & Balmer, 2015). As some brands grow and endure in time, certain qualities become associated with their success and they begin to be considered authentic in a way that, despite their effort, younger companies in the market cannot be.

Time, particularly the past, influences the decision-making process of consumers, as they tend to look for security and continuity through heritage (Balmer, 2011b). The past is what can be trusted since it is familiar and recognizable (Pecot & De Barnier, 2017; Balmer & Burghausen, 2015). The incorporation of the corporate past into the brand in a strategic way can be valuable to the brand due to its impact on consumers' perceptions (Santos et al., 2016; Burghausen & Balmer, 2014). Companies can communicate an image that

is trustworthy and authentic by making the past relevant in today's time (Urde et al., 2007).

The concept of Brand Heritage was formally introduced in the marketing literature in Balmer's study on the British Monarchy, as an example of a Corporate Heritage Brand (Balmer & Urde, 2006). Urde's definition of a corporate heritage brand considers a brand with both positioning and value proposition, that are based on its heritage or a "dimension of a brand's identity found in its track record, longevity, core values, use of symbols and particularly in an organizational belief that its history is important" (Urde et al., 2007, p.1). From the consumer's perspective, corporate heritage promotes the engagement of consumers with the history of the company (Hudson & Balmer, 2013). Corporate heritage is an asset to a corporate brand if it translates into impact on consumers' actions (Urde et al., 2007). The value of corporate heritage can even surpass the benefits for the consumer onto the company's staff since it can be proof of the company's stability and longevity (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014).

It should be noted that a brand that is infused with heritage can be leveraged, especially in global markets, an attractive feature due to the brand's ability to appear invariable in time (Urde et al., 2007; Balmer, 2011b). Heritage is the promise of security and trust for both consumers and managers.

1.1.1. Characteristics of Corporate Heritage Brands

Together, the characteristics that compose a corporate heritage brand, define, and distinguish the brand from others in the market. A corporate heritage brand must be manageable just like a corporate brand with the added premise of longevity and of the history of the brand (Balmer & Urde, 2006). Longevity is one of the key attributes of corporate brands for its indisputable value in the minds of stakeholders. This comes with the brand's need to embrace change, to accompany the ever-growing evolution of society while remaining transparent about its past and history (Balmer & Urde, 2006). Another key feature of corporate heritage brands is the continuity that the brand itself possesses and that surpasses any manager, CEO, or stakeholder that, at any point in time, joins the brand. The institution of the brand "(...) does not fall into abeyance when an individual monarch dies: the institution of the monarchy continues (...)" (Balmer & Urde, 2006, p. 141).

Thus, the longevity of a corporate heritage brand adds context and value to the brand since it can then be a reference in time for itself and others (Balmer, 2011a). The need for the corporate heritage brand to stay relevant through its life comes hand in hand with the necessity to respond to the changing needs of consumers with flexibility and authenticity (Balmer & Urde, 2006).

1.1.2. Corporate Heritage brands' elements and Heritage Quotient

The assessment of brand heritage of a corporate heritage brand can be defined in five dimensions that together constitute the brand's heritage quotient. The five dimensions include track records, longevity, core values, use of symbols and history important to the brands identity, and are presented in Figure 1 (Urde et al., 2007). The corporate heritage brand's elements are centred in Brand Stewardship given that the way a company can define its heritage must come from the managers, or stewards.

Firstly, the company's Track Records serve as evidence of the company's ability to deliver value to its consumers over time, besides constituting one of the ways that the company's historical references can bring value to the brand (Urde et al., 2007; Pecot & De Barnier, 2018). Even when corporate communications are scarce, consumers can always turn to evidence through the company's past; hence, the value of track records in these cases (Pecot & De Barnier, 2018). Track Records are some of the tools used by consumers, as proof of evidence, to corroborate the company's past.

Longevity is the evolutionary prevalence of a company through time, therefore, as valuable as track records in reminding consumers of the value of the brand (Urde et al., 2007). For companies, heritage comes as an essential asset in promoting longevity and continuity and ensuring the survival of a business

throughout the years (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014). The way a company is adaptable, flexible, and pioneer in implementing and improving its corporate management strategy, while considering consumers' needs, is important in constructing a corporate heritage brand (Sammour et al., 2020; Urde et al., 2007). Innovation is essential for corporate heritage brands to expand and grow, therefore maintaining their longevity and continuity.

The company's Core Values, as well as the History Important to Identify influence the present operations of the company as well as the decisions to be made in the future. Historical references can work as a means to deliver value through the brand's Core Values (Pecot & De Barnier, 2018). The importance of the company's Core Values, to both organization and consumer, derives from the promise of value that is transmitted. Thus, the way a company acts on this promise will determine the perception of the brand in consumers' minds.

Finally, the use of symbols composes the last of the five elements of the heritage quotient and is pertinent in the way it communicates what the remaining elements represent (Urde et al., 2007). Through symbols, the company's Core Values, History, Longevity, and Track Records are expressed to consumers and can influence their perceptions of each of these elements (Rose et al., 2016). Thus, the use of symbols constitutes the most accessible element to consumers, and it can be defined as "(...) historical references used at a product brand level to induce the existence of a corporate heritage (...)" (Pecot et al., 2018a; p. 3).

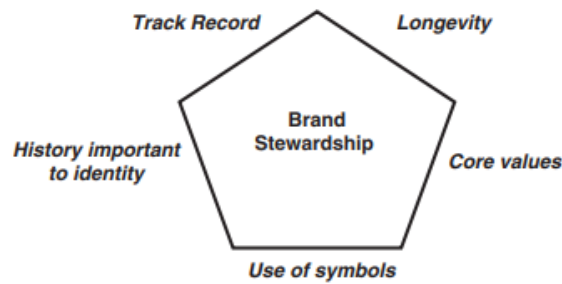


Figure 1 – Elements of brand heritage
Source: (Urde et al. 2007)

The elements of corporate heritage brands converge on Brand Stewardship considering that for any of the elements to be implemented the brand must activate its Brand Stewardship properly, as seen in figure 1. Only after a cohesive conceptualization of each element is it possible for a brand to define its Heritage Quotient. The higher the number and relevancy of the elements seen, the higher the Heritage Quotient (Urde et al., 2007). For a corporate heritage brand, it is essential to possess the highest Heritage Quotient possible; hence, the importance of an adequate conceptualization of each element.

1.1.3. The Temporal Attribute of Corporate Heritage Brands

The concern with not only the present and future, but also with the past, enriches the decision-making process of managers of corporate heritage brands with a sense of direction and the precept of “pressing forwards with the past”

(Balmer, 2011a, p. 520). Thus, past, present and future constitute a tripartite temporal dimension that is acknowledged by many authors due to its imperative role in the conceptualization of heritage for brands and in the distinction of corporate heritage brands from others (Balmer et al., 2006; Urde et al., 2007; Balmer, 2011a; Balmer, 2011b; Burghausen & Balmer, 2014; Balmer & Burghausen, 2015; Santos et al., 2016; Balmer & Chen, 2017; Pecot & De Barnier, 2017; Pecot & De Barnier, 2018; Balmer & Burghausen, 2019; Sammour et al., 2020).

However, the tripartite of time alone, is not sufficient in the conceptualization of a corporate heritage brand. Besides the three-time frames, a corporate heritage brand needs to own certain qualities that will meld a sense of continuity and disseminate the separation of time into a cohesive brand identity that remains relevant in time (Balmer, 2011b). The relative invariance phenomenon grants companies the opportunity to apparently remain the same for stakeholders, especially consumers, while positively adjusting and changing in time (Balmer, 2011b).

Certain attributes of corporate heritage brands are associated with an ever-evolving meaning over time. Hence, for a corporate heritage brand to survive the passage of time, its apparent invariance must be perceived as a nuanced variance among stakeholders' own individual evolution (Balmer et al., 2015; Burghausen & Balmer, 2014; Pecot & De Barnier, 2018). A much-needed skill for companies

regarding their relative invariance perception is adaptability, and the required balance between change and immobility (Pecot et al., 2019).

Corporate heritage brands can materialize their past for consumers through historical references and the brands' track records. The company's track records can work as a verifier to the consumer of the brand's past. The better the ability of the brand to answer consumers' needs in a satisfying way, the bigger the bond between consumer and brand (Pecot et al., 2018).

1.1.4. Corporate Heritage Identity

The elements of a corporate heritage brand need to be aligned in a cohesive construct - the identity. The ability of the brand to evolve through time while remaining relevant comes from the collective group's memory of its stakeholders. Heritage identities are not composed with one secluded identity but with a set of identities that are linked to places, cultures, and institutions (Balmer, 2011b).

Corporate heritage identities are "institutional attributes and qualities that are also, to a lesser or greater degree, ostensibly invariable, and which, in part, meaningfully define an organization's corporate identity" (Balmer, 2011b, p. 1381). Therefore, a corporate heritage brand includes heritage in its identity with the purpose of positioning itself in a superior context of tenacity through

time (Urde et al., 2007). The concept of heritage is therefore characterized by its identity-related reading of the past (Pecot & De Barnier, 2017). This does not remove the brand's ability to evolve and be up to date, but it grants the opportunity of the brand to be viewed as superior in its way of doing so. Heritage is such a relevant trait in the institutions' identity that once applied correctly it can outgrow the corporate's objective age and become more relevant than the historical references available (Pecot & De Barnier, 2017).

As for stakeholders, if corporate heritage brands can deliver a set of corporate heritage identity characteristics valuable for them, then there will be an increase in the willingness to attach importance to these same organizations (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014). The strategic advantage of the definition of heritage as part of the company's identity is both external and internal since it works as an informer of the culture and the envisioned future of the company (Santos et al., 2016).

Brand Omnitemporality constitutes one of the six precepts of a corporate heritage identity alongside: institution trait constancy; external/ internal tri-generational hereditary; augmented role identities; ceaseless multigenerational stakeholder utility and unremitting management tenacity (Balmer, 2013). The augmented role identity of a corporate heritage brand associates the brand with additional identity modes that can be linked to peoples, cultures, territories and more (Balmer & Chen, 2017). In their study of the Ton Reng Tang, a traditional Chinese medicine company, Balmer and Chen showed that the company was associated with China through territorial identity (Balmer & Chen, 2017). With

brand omnitemporality, an augmented role identity and the remaining precepts, a corporate heritage brand “can be regarded as having a bona fide corporate heritage” (Balmer, 2013).

The complexity of omnitemporality derives from the company’s need to perpetuate its brand in a positive way (Pecot & De Barnier, 2018). As previously mentioned, corporate heritage brands endure in multiple temporal stratum having a perennial nature, not only in their traits and title but also in terms of time (Hudson & Balmer, 2013). The various tangible traits of omnitemporality in corporate heritage brands are assessed as “an amalgam of memory, sight, and expectation” and add a degree of responsibility that other brands, without heritage, do not have to endure. Omnitemporality works as the fundamentally distinctive trait of corporate heritage identity and its importance cannot be overstated (Sammour et al., 2020; Balmer & Chen, 2017).

1.2. THE CONSUMER AND CORPORATE HERITAGE BRANDS

The experience of time and consequently of the past is made by people’s perceptions of change and continuity. Consumers’ perceptions of authenticity for corporate heritage brands can be influenced by consumers’ childhood memories, experiences, and social conventions and can result in an intensified brand loyalty (Pecot et al., 2019; Rindell & Santos, 2021). A strong corporate heritage identity can strengthen both customer satisfaction and corporate reputation, either

through cognitive or affective reactions (Balmer & Chen, 2017; Pecot et al., 2019). This identity perception can evolve over time in consumers' minds since the corporate brand image also develops in time. A brand is therefore wired in consumers' minds as a net of associations, in consumers' minds, which makes the decision-making process memory based (Rindell et al., 2015).

The conceptualization of corporate heritage brand's image derives from the constant association between the consumer's lived experiences and memories and the brands' stimuli (Rindell et al., 2015). Brand image is defined as “a perception about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory”, which is determinant in the brand's awareness in consumers' minds and has a direct influence on the perceived quality, performance, and expectations of the brand (Wiedmann et al., 2011, p. 208).

Still, brand heritage's perception in consumers' minds is not valuable if it fails to translate into a sustainable asset to the business. Companies survive through sales, and the positive correlation between corporate heritage brands and consumers' purchase intention further corroborates the value of heritage for companies (Rose et al., 2016).

1.2.1. Corporate Image Heritage and Corporate Heritage Brands

Following the conceptualization of a corporate heritage brand, the impact of image heritage in consumers' perceptions of authenticity is addressed. Thus, the signals and symbols that a corporate heritage brand communicates must be defined considering consumers' perceptions. Afterwards, the thematic of signals will be conceptualized in the setting of corporate heritage brands' buildings and places.

1.2.2.1. Signals and Symbols for Corporate Heritage Brands

The use of symbols results in the materialization of the corporate heritage brand's signals - the past and present strategies and activities of the company associated with the brand (Pecot et al., 2018). Some signals become symbolically tied to the brand and assume meaningfulness to the consumer through repetition and consistency – symbolic authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021). The company's purpose should be to provide consumers with signals that they can hold on to and use to assess the brand and to compensate for uncertainty. The work of Pecot and colleagues conceptualized Erdem and Swait's 1998 Signalling Theory within the literature on corporate heritage brands and presented the four factors of the signal: the content of the signal, the clarity of the signal, the consistency of the signal, and the credibility of the signal (Pecot et al., 2018). This

set of factors represents the four requirements of the signal to be of value to both the corporate heritage brand and the consumer.

According to the signalling theory, brand heritage can strengthen the perception of the brands' signal by reinforcing the perceived quality of the brand through brand credibility (Pecot et al., 2018). The more a brand emphasizes its heritage, the more credible and qualified it is perceived by the consumer since brand heritage tends to clarify the image of the brand in consumers' minds (Pecot et al., 2018). This reinforcement of perceived quality as a consequence of brand heritage can increase consumer's willingness to pay a premium price and be a cue of brand consistency and clarity (Pecot et al., 2018). This relates to Rindell & Santos work concerning the need for signs to be accepted as symbolically authentic through repetition over time, to then turn into widespread and shared symbols (Rindell & Santos, 2021).

Consumers' attachment to symbols and signals is so strong that if the corporate heritage brand fails to deliver them, consumers will look for historical references to verify the quality and the level of heritage of the brand (Pecot et al., 2018). For consumers, even the use of brand relics, objectifies heritage by making it more tangible and providing evidence of the company's longevity (Pecot et al., 2018). According to the signalling theory, a consistent signal in time will generate brand credibility and perceived brand quality (Pecot et al., 2018). Thus, the more a brand emphasizes its heritage, the bigger the signal of quality to consumers and the ability of the company to command a premium price.

Time can, therefore, be signalled to the consumer through corporate heritage brands in three dimensions: stability, adaptability, and longevity (Pecot et al., 2019). These three temporal dimensions must coexist consistently since the lack of even one of them will impact the overall perception of omnitemporality for the consumer (Pecot et al., 2019). Stability comes as the perception of perseverance of the brand's values and promises in time without a predominant change in its essence (Pecot et al., 2019). This stability can be signalled through the company's core values and track records and by the amount of time that symbols prevail in the company's communication such as the same logo, slogan, packaging, a long tradition continuously held by the brand and the usage of words like "consistent", "continuous" and "same" (Pecot et al., 2019). The second dimension is adaptability and relies on the significance of the stewardship management of the company to deliver a consistent image in time that stands between the ability to change and to remain the same (Pecot et al., 2019).

Finally, the longevity of a brand represents the company's consciousness of its length of existence, traditions, and roots (Pecot et al., 2019). Certain symbols such as the founding date, the website, packaging, or the use of certain fonts are of importance when it comes to the portray of the company's historical references to consumers since "the dimension of brand heritage is stronger when the organization has manifest interest in history, care for tradition (Pecot et al., 2019), or when symbols express a sense of the past" (Pecot et al., 2019,

p.1632; Burghausen & Balmer, 2014). Thus, the use of symbols is of importance for the corporate heritage brand notion and consumer's perceptions of the brand. Signals are an asset for any corporate heritage brand and can influence the user experience as the most accurate signal of quality (Pecot et al., 2018).

1.2.2.2. Corporate Image Heritage

Consumers' corporate image heritage is a consequence of the company's own corporate heritage (Rindell & Santos, 2021). However sometimes the company's perceptions of their own image heritage might differ from what consumers perceive. Brand image is, for this reason the result of the corporate heritage brand's efforts in sticking to consumers' minds after sending several signals to do so. Also, brand image results in the authentic perception of the brand during a consistent period. Corporate image is therefore essential to effective brand management and an important factor in the success of a corporate heritage brand specifically (Rindell, 2013).

In 2015, Rindell proposed the addition of the consumers' corporate image heritage to Urde et al.'s corporate heritage model (represented in Figure 1) (Rindell et al., 2015). The corporate image on consumers' minds is there due to the dynamic relational processes that connect the earlier images in the mind of the consumer with multiple sources over time (Rindell et al., 2015). Thus, the interpretation that consumers have of the company, due to their own

experiences in the past, should inform corporate heritage brands onto the relevant components of the consumer's history so that the brand can always use it to meet consumers' needs (Rindell, 2013).

The role of memory is vital in connecting what individuals take as the normal order of things and what they remember of the world. Image heritage refers to the influence of past company-related experiences and company representations received overtime (Rindell et al., 2015). Consumers' memory will trigger a reaction every time a company-related input is activated creating a coalescence of past and present images as well as the future expectations for the company, into the mind of the consumer (Rindell, 2013). Consequently, the image heritage is not static nor is it conscious for the consumer and evolves in the consumption context, and companies must manage the representation of the past in the present in a positive way (Rindell, 2013).

The three dimensions that encompass image heritage are the time span of awareness, the content of image heritage and the temporal focus. The first entails the mental relationship developed with the company over time; the content of image heritage consists of company-related experiences arising from multiple sources, that are then collected and processed by the consumer, and the temporal focus refers to specific episodes in consumers' minds given that not all moments hold the same importance for the consumer, and some will prevail in the brand's corporate image heritage (Rindell, 2013).

1.2.2. Authenticity for Corporate Heritage Brands

Authenticity relates to the maintenance of the corporate heritage brand's identity, and it impacts consumers' perceptions of the brands' longevity as well as their trust in the institution (Balmer, 2011a; Balmer, 2011b). Thus, corporate heritage brands are dependent on bilateral trust between the company and stakeholders (Balmer, 2011a).

Authenticity is considered to work as the "key strategic competitive advantages that companies can gain by including corporate heritage as an element of their corporate brand identity" and is usually associated with genuineness, truth, and reality (Rindell & Santos, 2021, p.1; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Therefore, if the expectations of consumers are satisfied, the judgment of authenticity will be favourable to the company and its current corporate activities will be judged as credible for the consumer.

When in contact with things such as museum souvenirs, reproductions of period artifacts and, of course, brands, consumers are always seeking authenticity. The assessment of authenticity happens when consumers are faced with different cues, given by the brands, that differently influence its perceived benefits (Grayson & Martinec, 2004).

The way a corporate heritage brand reflects its heritage authentically can take several forms, one of them being the relationship that the company establishes

with its stakeholders (Sammour et al., 2020). If a positive relationship is established, a reputation that can be improved and sustained in time, is therefore created (Sammour et al., 2020). Also, the company's actions to improve consumers' perceived authenticity alone, are not sufficient with consumers' memories, social conventions and previous experiences also being an influence on the perception of authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Therefore, authenticity is understood as a social construct and given its symbolic dimension it can even contribute to the construction of a country's national identity (Rindell & Santos, 2021).

One way of assessing the role of authenticity consists in analysing the relationship between what the brand presents now to what it presented in the past. The highest the resemblance between these two, the higher the perception of authenticity for consumers (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Alongside this past to present correlation, timelessness is also a required asset in the creation of authenticity since it represents the company and stakeholders' ability to endure in time (Rindell & Santos, 2021).

For companies to maintain their authenticity there must be an interactive process between corporations and the market and managers should be clearly aware of the organizations' key traits (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Authenticity should, therefore, be seen as the established promise between the two parties.

1.2.2.1 Precepts of authenticity

Brand heritage can influence consumers' and various stakeholders' cognitive and affective responses through its omnitemporal dimension (Pecot et al., 2019). Thus, three precepts are considered to positively influence the perception of the corporate heritage brand such as trust, authenticity, and affinity and they should all must meet in equilibrium (Balmer, 2011a).

Trust is dependent on the bilateral trust between company and stakeholder and requires an equilibrium of the remaining precepts (authenticity and affinity) for the benefit of the corporate heritage brand (Balmer, 2011a). Also, it should be noted that trust has an evolving dimension considering that it is not static, and it can shift over time alongside the evolution of the public and it depends on the context.

The precept of authenticity derives from the ability of the company to maintain the correlation between its past image and what it is in the present as well as a cohesive identity that evolves naturally for the consumer, over time (Balmer, 2011a). Finally, affinity arises from the public's expectations of the company and its ability to deliver those same expectations or even more to the consumer (Balmer, 2011a). Scholars have endorsed the importance of these three precepts in the conceptualization of authenticity for a corporate heritage brand, especially the importance of trust in the assessment of authenticity by

consumers (Balmer, 2011a; Balmer, 2011b; Wiedmann et al., 2011; Pecot & De Barnier, 2017; Rose et al., 2016; Pecot et al., 2019).

1.2.2.2 Dimensions of Authenticity

Regarding the assessment of authenticity, three key dimensions of corporate heritage brand authenticity arise namely: uniqueness, credibility, and consistency (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Thus, to be authentic with a temporal continuity focus, brands must bear connections to the company's roots, the product must be a reference in the market and the brand must continuously represent what it represented in the past (Rindell & Santos, 2021).

Uniqueness is revealed in the relationship between what the brand is and shows today and what it was in the past (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Often related to the company's historical references, the ability to show what it is *vis-a-vis* what it used to be, distinguishes brands from competitors and transmits uniqueness as a trait that others cannot copy. Credibility is revealed in the way the company meets consumers' expectations (what consumers expect the brand to look and feel) and what they are presented with - the consumers' image heritage (Rindell & Santos, 2021). The consistency dimension relates to the ability of the company to be unique and credible through time, culminating in an assessment of authenticity in a clear way for the consumer.

1.2.2.3 Omnitemporality in Consumer's Perceptions of Authenticity

The perceptions of a corporate heritage brand include the perceptions of longevity, stability, and adaptability (Pecot et al., 2019). These three dimensions together reflect the heritage level of a corporate heritage brand as well as its omnitemporal feature (Pecot et al., 2019). An authentic approach to brand heritage cannot only rely on longevity without stability and adaptability (Pecot et al., 2019). The changes that the consumer perceives are what grants a sense of time passing by, in consumers' interactions with the brand. Evolution is, therefore, necessary and favoured by consumers that can perceive a brand as stable and adaptable (Pecot et al., 2019).

As stated before, omnitemporality is the defining feature of corporate heritage brands and therefore in their perception of authenticity for the consumers (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Omnitemporality can be envisaged from the consumers' side besides the perspective of the brand, particularly in the way the consumer assesses authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021). For any corporate heritage brand, the concept of omnitemporality is central in consumer's perceptions of the institution and it must be carefully addressed by the company (Rindell & Santos, 2021). It is possible to say that the way the consumer sees a corporate heritage brand will not be detached from his perception of time.

1.3.SPACES ON THE SETTING OF CORPORATE HERITAGE BRANDS

Within the corporate heritage brand literature, the concept of corporate design heritage allows the understanding of several manifestations of corporate heritage through artefacts design (Santos et al., 2016). Companies used their corporate design heritage as an active representation and manifestation of their brand (Balmer & Burghausen, 2015).

1.3.1. Corporate Design Heritage

Brands that developed corporate design heritage in their activities can articulate the corporate brand and identity in a cohesive way in the present and in the projected future through the application of heritage in the brands' material artefacts such as products, packaging and even tools and machinery (Balmer & Burghausen, 2015). Thus, the implementation of a corporate design with the brands' heritage has a strong component of the past, onto the present and strategically conceiving the future, which is determinant for corporate heritage brands' perceptions of authenticity. Thus, omnitemporality, prevails in the implementation of corporate design heritage (Balmer & Burghausen, 2015).

The aesthetic is considered a conducive element of corporate design heritage and its relevance in brands endeavours is, not only, presenting consumers with past material artefacts as symbolic representations of the past but crucially as

“aestheticized manifestations of corporate heritage” (Santos et al., 2016, p.5). If correctly implemented, these manifestations hold the power to serve as remembrances of the continuous development of the company as well as the inter-generational exchange of corporate heritage traits that are reinterpreted in the present prospectively into the future (Balmer & Burghausen, 2015).

The importance of providing consumers with an opportunity to experience the company’s heritage through corporate design heritage goes onto the ability of the physical artefacts to materially potentiate the corporate heritage, making it immediate, accessible, and less complex to consumers while manifesting the tripartite timeframe of past, present and future in a tangible way (Balmer & Burghausen, 2015).

1.3.2. Symbols in the Spaces of Corporate Heritage Brands

The study of symbols through semiotic explores the meaning – symbology - behind signals and defines concepts such as icon, index, and symbol (Peirce, 1998; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Rindell & Santos, 2021). An index is a sign referring to an object by correspondence of fact, or, in other words, it represents the relationship established, in viewers’ minds, with something they are familiar with (Peirce, 1998; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). This relationship is built upon factual and spatio-temporal links that derive from the viewers’ previous

experiences and memories and not from the object itself (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Regarding corporate heritage brands, this spatio-temporal link is made in relation to the past (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014; Balmer & Burghausen, 2015). Thus, an icon is a sign that refers to something that materially resembles what an object is expected to be, through a factual and spatial-temporal link, or its indexical authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). As for iconic authenticity, it is based on the match between what consumers observe and their previous expectations (Rindell & Santos, 2021). For consumers to perceive a sign from the brand as iconically authentic, it must resemble something that consumers are familiar with, and have previous knowledge on, or expectations about (Grayson & Martinec, 2004).

A company's heritage is defined by four elements: quality / craftsmanship / product; community / family / people; locality / territory / place; and independence / individuality / institution (Balmer, 2011a). The locality or place of a company is fundamental in consumers' view of the corporate documents and conduct (Balmer, 2011a). Several researchers have suggested that "when consumers believe they are in the presence of something authentic, they can feel transported to the context to which the object or location is authentically linked, and thus they feel more connected with the context" (Grayson & Martinec, 2004, p. 302). That can be since authentic possessions are proven to help reproducing the past into the future, or because it has been observed that an authentic building can imprint a direct link between a viewer and the historical period it

represents. An example of this link is the ability that some historical and tourist attractions have to make one travel through history and feel like they stepped out of the current reality onto a past one (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). It is understandable that a corporate place is a source of confirmation of the corporate heritage brand authenticity and identity, which validates and reinforces the value of heritage brands.

Table 1 to 4 identifies the different elements used by scholars to characterize the spaces owned by corporate heritage brands that reflect their heritage, from architectural heritage to corporate visitor centres including museums and the brands’ historical artefacts that enhance its perceived heritage in the eyes of the consumer. Table 5 presents the reasons behind why people tend to associate the appearance of old buildings and places with authenticity that were introduced in Grayson and Martinec’s study of indexical and iconic authenticity (Grayson & Martinec, 2004).

Architectural Heritage	Quote	Reference
Heritage can be represented in many ways in corporate heritage brands and one of them is through architectural heritage	“Heritage can pertain to an object, monument, inherited skill or symbolic representation (...)” “(...) the heritage footprint can be found in design heritage (...) architectural heritage (...)”	Balmer, 2011b, p. 1 1383
	“(...) the heritage footprint can be found in design heritage (...) architectural heritage (...)”	Balmer, 2011b, p. 1386
	“(...) corporate design heritage can be used as a resource for (...) corporate representation (e.g., corporate museums and other sites and forms of corporate marketing activities.”	Burghausen & Santos, 2015, p.6
Buildings are preserved to then serve as a source of verification of the company’s history and heritage	“One example is the conservation and preservation of the many listed buildings the company owns and still acquires. This acquisition, conservation, preservation of historic buildings is not only seen as a sound financial investment but is also meaningful in protecting England’s pub heritage.”	Burghausen & Balmer, 2014, p. 2317

Architectural heritage can also be defined as the brands inherited assets	"(...) brand inheritance is defined as a static set of assets that brand managers have received from their predecessors. These assets include not only material elements such as buildings, physical objects, archives (...)"	Pecot & De Barnier, 2017, p. 75
An example of architectural heritage are historical elements	"(...) defines heritage a priori, according to criteria pre-established by scholars or institutions, such as Historical Monuments (...)"	Pecot & De Barnier, 2017, 74
Architectural heritage can even confirm the brands establishments as belonging to the brand	"However, and importantly, the brand seems to be regarded as still being from its original place. The factory continues to be central in this connection"	Rindell & Santos, 2021, p.550
	"Hence, overall, consumers regard the authenticity of the brand Fazer as a connection to its origins (...) the connection to places - the factory and the first coffee shop, as well as the city of Helsinki and the country of Finland."	Rindell & Santos, 2021, p. 550
	"A material relation exists here; the brand is physically connected to a geographic place and to particular places and buildings that in their materiality are regarded as the origins of the brand."	Rindell & Santos, 2021, p. 550
Authentic site features were believed, by consumers, to be of the expected time that they assume Shakespeare and Sherlock Holmes to be.	"First, authentic site features were often believed to be really from the time of Shakespeare or Holmes. We refer to this as "actual indexicality with inhabitant's era."	Grayson & Martinec, 2004, p. 300

Table 1 - Architectural Heritage in the Corporate Heritage Literature

Source: Self elaboration

Corporate Visitor Centres	Quote	Reference
The corporate visitor centre is more than an outside building to showcase the company, but it is an integral part of it	"The visitor center of the company is actually not a separate museum tucked away from the present day operations, but is an integral part of the brewery."	Burghausen & Balmer, 2014, p. 2316
	"(...) the corporate visitor center on the historic brewery site serves as a multi-purpose tourist attraction and as a venue offering a wide variety of hospitality and entertainment services."	Burghausen & Balmer, 2014, p. 2319
When the corporate heritage brand has history, it potentiates its brand heritage	"This dimension of brand heritage is stronger when the organisation has manifest interest in history, care for traditions (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014), or when symbols express a sense of the past (Urde et al., 2007)."	Pecot et al., 2019, p. 1632
An example of corporate visitor centres is a museum	"Corporate visitor centres are often created to showcase such items, as exemplified by museums (...)"	Hudson & Balmer, 2013, p. 350

Table 2 - Corporate Visitor Centres in the Corporate Heritage Literature

Source: Self elaboration

Museums	Quote	Reference
A museum is one of the ways that corporate heritage brands can use their heritage to make the brand visible to consumers	“Corporate heritage brands should also be very active in corporate communication and make the company behind the brands available and visible to consumers. That can be implemented with elements (...) such as corporate museums (e.g. Volkswagen), public enactment (e.g. Ford’s 100th anniversary) but also through public relationships on a regular basis.”	Pecot et al., 2018, p. 26
	“Brands can mobilize their heritage in distribution, for the staging of a venue, particularly sales outlets (...) but also brand museums (...)”	Pecot & De Barnier, 2017, p. 79
	“(…) creating a corporate museum or exhibition in their buildings or premises.”	Rindell et al., 2015, p. 482
	“Working on a temporary exhibition or the opening of a brand museum is an opportunity to identify, collect and promote brand relics while involving former and current stakeholders, including consumers”	Pecot et al., 2018, p. 13
Brands like Peugeot Adventure created museums to showcase their heritage	“Peugeot Adventure is a museum with the stated objective of enhancing the company’s brand heritage.”	Pecot & De Barnier, 2017, p. 72

Table 3 - Museums in the Corporate Heritage Literature

Source: Self elaboration

Historical Artefacts	Quote	Reference
Historical artefacts are used to enhance and verify the brand heritage in the corporate visitor centres	“Further, the brewery still operates within historic buildings steeped in history, with various documents, photographs and memorabilia that were on public display and which presented past glories and current achievements (e.g. recent business awards)”.	Burghausen & Balmer, 2014, p. 2316
	“The aesthetic properties of material objects and spaces actualizes the corporate heritage identity dimension; including corporate architecture with the company’s historic buildings and pubs (...)”	Burghausen & Balmer, 2014, p. 2318

Table 4 - Historical Artefacts in the Corporate Heritage Literature

Source: Self elaboration

Authenticity and Old Buildings and Places	Quote	Reference
Old buildings and places tend to be considered authentic since it is usually more	“One explanation comes from Lowenthal (1975, p. 26), who suggests that, because authentic things are frequently presented as being old and worn, people have a hard time granting authenticity to new-looking things, even if they are in fact old.”	(Grayson & Martinec, 2004, p. 305)

difficult for people to think that new things are authentic, rather than old things		
The relevance of assessing the influence of signs of age in buildings and places	“The influence of signs of age on assessments of authenticity deserves further examination, in part because, in the broader marketplace, these signs are not found only on market offerings whose authenticity is related to distant history.”	(Grayson & Martinec, 2004, p. 305)
The experience of past resembling places is often associated with perceptions built upon both reality and fantasy. The old buildings and places of corporate heritage brands are an example of this since they can transport those who visit them into a past time.	“Our study also contributes to a growing body of research that has identified a porous boundary between consumer fantasy and subjectivity, on one hand, and consumer perceptions of reality and objectivity, on the other. For example, consumer researchers have described consumption experiences as a “blending [of] fantasy and reality” (Kozinets et al. 2002, p. 18), the creation of a “fantasy reality” (Belk and Costa 1998, p. 227), and “a blur of fantasy and reality” (Peñaloza 2001, p. 372).”	(Grayson & Martinec, 2004, p. 306)

Table 5 - Authenticity and Old Buildings and Places

Source: Self elaboration

The literature on corporate heritage brands associates several different examples of corporate heritage brands’ buildings and places and how they can create to potentiate the consumers’ perceptions of heritage. One of the most common examples is museums due to their ability to showcase the brand and its history in the same place (Pecot & De Barnier, 2017).

1.3.3. Brandscapes in the setting of corporate heritage brands

The literature on the spaces owned by brands to improve consumers' experiences and quality perceptions began in the conceptualization of experiential marketing. Schmitt (1999), considered that consumers wanted more than functional features and benefits from products, product quality and a positive brand image, specifically communications and marketing campaigns that stimulated an intrinsic subconscious reaction of awe to make the consumer experience desirable (Schmitt, 1999). Experiential marketing focused on consumption as a holistic experience and on consumers that have rational and emotional reactions. A way of enhancing the sense of kinship towards the brand is determined by the conceptualization of the company's aesthetic, the feelings and emotions of the consumer, their stimulated intellect and the relation between the consumer and the communicated message by the company (Schmitt, 1999). Experiential marketing has its focus on the experience that consumers have and desire when interacting with a brand and this applies to the search for authenticity in corporate heritage brands.

The aesthetic feature of the company spaces is relevant since it constitutes a type of consumption value with an emotionally intrinsic core resulting in the appreciation of the beauty of any kind. The feeling of experiencing an aesthetic is often associated with that of going to an art show or performance (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006). Brandscapes are considered experiential brand spaces "where all the elements of the brand can be assimilated into a coherent entity; and where

value can be co-created in the form of a place-based experience by the firm's management and consumers alike" (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006, p.3). In the present overcrowded consumption environment in which consumers are demanding and commodification is a given, the differentiation of brands is made through the consumption experience (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006).

To impulse the perception of quality of a corporate heritage brand and consumers' understanding of the company's identity, the experience of brandscapes can be an asset. Brandscapes can improve brand loyalty in the consumption process, due to both cognitive and emotional sources with the latter being more relevant in the assessment of the experience. While brandscapes, together with experiential marketing, define the desired experience of the consumer in the consumption process, the conceptualization of the process of experiencing spaces, that are inherent to the company's corporate heritage, is still under researched.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The general purpose of this research is to understand the impact of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings on consumers' perceptions of authenticity. The literature on corporate heritage brands' mentions buildings and places as assets for brands. However, a study on the impact of these buildings and places in consumers' perceptions of authenticity is yet to be undertaken and represents a gap in the corporate heritage marketing literature.

The following research questions aim to tackle this gap:

1. What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places?
2. What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer?
3. What do consumers perceive as authentic in the buildings and places of a corporate heritage brand?

2.2. EMPIRICAL CONTEXT

2.2.1. The case study of Vista Alegre

The focus of this study is Portugal's Porcelain factory, Vista Alegre. Founded in 1824 by José Ferreira Pinto Basto. The brand remained in the Pinto Basto's family until 2009 (Jornal de Negócios, 2021), for many generations, which helps to confirm its longevity and assessment as a corporate heritage brand (Urde et al., 2007). In time, Vista Alegre solidified its international positioning and became a reference in the porcelain and crystal markets with 85% of the production exported yearly (Jornal de Negócios, 2021).

Vista Alegre owns an interesting patrimony of physical attractions in the company's foundation property: the factory of Vista Alegre, a Museum dedicated to the factory and the company's history, a Chapel of Vista Alegre, a Theatre, a Daycare for the children of the Vista Alegre's factoryworkers, a factory workers' neighborhood, a five-star hotel, the main store, an outlet store, an Art Lab that develops new styles for the porcelain and crystal collections, as well as the CADE (*Centro de Artes e Desenvolvimento da Empresa*) which focuses on promoting new model and design developments as well as on the training of the company's workers (Vista Alegre, 2021). Also, the Vista Alegre compound has the store of a brand that recently integrated its portfolio: Bordallo Pinheiro (Vista Alegre, 2022). While now belonging to Vista Alegre, Bordallo Pinheiro keeps an independent store, and style of products, as well as a long history since its

beginning in 1884 (Bordallo Pinheiro, 2022). This set of buildings and spaces creates an immersive experience of Vista Alegre's history to those who visit it in Ílhavo, Aveiro.

The choice of a single case study research derived from the need to extend the theory on corporate heritage brands and consumers perceptions. The literature on corporate heritage brands has previously left a gap on the empirical study of consumers' perceptions of a company's buildings and places, which was the starting point of this study: corporate heritage brands with spaces, other than only the stores, that are a part of the company's history and patrimony. Given the novelty of the intersection between consumers' perceptions, corporate heritage brands and the buildings and places owned by them, the adequate choice for this study is a single case study approach. Therefore, the rationale behind this choice was a revelatory case to contribute to theory building on these spaces in consumers' perceptions (Yin, 2018).

Vista Alegre was chosen as the object of this single case study research since it is one of the main corporate heritage brands in Portugal, as well as it owns a patrimony of buildings and places beyond its stores. Also, given the scarce focus of scholars on developing the literature regarding consumers' perceptions of the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands, the use of a revelatory case is adequate (Yin, 2018). This revelatory case is likely to be regarded as a discovery and it provides an opportunity for an exemplary case study.

The choice of conducting a research based on Vista Alegre was a result of revelatory case sampling given that the brand has an established position in the market and its factory and remaining buildings, and those places have been the same since the brand's birth in 1824, which makes this brand the most adequate case for this study and to answer the respective research questions (Yin, 2018).

2.2.2. Vista Alegre as a Corporate Heritage Brand

The Heritage Quotient was conceptualized to define the five dimensions of a corporate heritage brand. Vista Alegre's heritage quotient increases as these five characteristics are more prominent in the company's communication efforts: the company's track records, longevity, core values, history important to identity and use of symbols (Urde et al., 2007).

Vista Alegre has a long list of evidence concerning the company's history and promise to live up to its values over time (Urde et al., 2007). Besides the company's buildings and properties that surround the Vista Alegre factory and that are prove of evidence of its existence since 1824, the Museum of Vista Alegre presents the company's past with important documents and artefacts that show the history of the company in Portugal. Table 6 illustrates the elements of Vista Alegre that make it a corporate heritage brand.

Heritage Quotient Dimensions	Vista Alegre's Heritage Quotient Elements	Meaning
Longevity	The village built for Vista Alegre's workers to live and raise their children in 1824	The space shows the company's investment in providing its staff with good work conditions. The purpose of building this village was to promote continuity inside the company with a low staff turnover rate (since the staff was expected to inhabit the village throughout their life) (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014).
Company's Track Records	Vista Alegre's Museum	The museum presents pieces produced by Vista Alegre and the history of the brand with iconic products from the main collections that date more than 100 years ago, which validates its positioning as a corporate heritage brand.
Core Values	"Rigor, sophistication and versatility" (Vista Alegre, 2021b, p. 3).	Vista Alegre's core values combine tradition and modernity and are coherent with the company's commitment to bring new designs and collections, as well as maintaining past ones that are now established as iconic for the brand (Vista Alegre, 2021b, p. 3).
History important to identify	Vista Alegre's history is revealed in the company's compound that includes the factory, the church, the museum, and remaining places	These buildings altogether represent the company's history through the years.
Use of Symbols	Vista Alegre's symbols can be the logo (figure 2), the company's product collections and the stores layout	Through its symbols, Vista Alegre portrays the company's values and history in a cohesive way. Since its founding date, Vista Alegre's logo has suffered many changes, but the founding date of the company is a part of it from the company's birth (Figure 3).

Table 6 - Vista Alegre's Heritage Quotient

Source: Self elaborated



Figure 2 - Vista Alegre's logo

Source: Google Images



Figure 3 - Vista Alegre’s history visually represented inside the museum in a wall with all the logos that the brand has owned

Source: This image was taken in the author’s first visit to the Museum

Besides its Heritage Quotient, Vista Alegre possesses other elements that make it an eligible choice for this single case study, represented in the table below. Given that these places are also frequently visited by consumers and tourists, Vista Alegre is an eligible case to collect answers for the proposed research questions.

Eligible Characteristics for this study	Rational behind the characteristic
Vista Alegre is a corporate heritage brand	Vista Alegre is a 198-year-old corporate heritage brand given the brand’s use of its history and past in the present and onto the future, as well as the fact that it has a solid heritage quotient (Urde et al., 2007; Balmer, 2011a)
The company has buildings and places that are original from the time when it was founded	Vista Alegre’s factory compound in Ílhavo, Aveiro dates to the early years of the company and it has a Museum, Church, Theatre, Staff Housing, and other buildings that showcase the history of the place and its origins.
Vista Alegre is a brand with international presence that endured in time	As an almost 200 years old brand, Vista Alegre has solidified its international presence and it now owns 85% of its production exported (Jornal de Negócios, 2021)

Table 7 - Vista Alegre’s eligible characteristics for a single case study research

Source: Self elaborated

With Vista Alegre's assessment as a corporate heritage brand and the various buildings and places in its compound, Vista Alegre is an eligible case for this research. This study's methodological approach is presented below.

2.3.METODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The present study is designed within a qualitative-inductive research tradition since it develops from consumers opinions and perceptions, to then create theory regarding corporate heritage brand's buildings and spaces to consumers (Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Dubois & Gibbert, 2010; Verschuren, 2003). Specifically, this study foresees the development of theory, from the need to understand the current perspective of consumers regarding corporate heritage brands' buildings and places, therefore following the inductive approach.

Due to the lack of empirical study on consumers' perceptions of corporate heritage brands' buildings and places, this study was designed within a qualitative research paradigm to develop detailed understanding on how consumers perceive the buildings and spaces of a corporate heritage brand (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Thus, to overcome the lack of extant empirical knowledge on this topic, the choice was to conduct a single case study research design. By focusing this research on a single case study, it will be possible to deepen the understanding on consumers' perceptions of Vista Alegre's buildings and places, other than the physical store. The results that will arise from this

research may then be replicated for other corporate heritage brands and specific buildings and places.

This research will, therefore, consist of an exploratory single case study (Yin, 2009). Case-based study research is especially relevant in this case, given the early definition of corporate heritage brand’s buildings and spaces in the literature allowing the investigation of this phenomenon, where context is essential (Yin, 2009).

2.4. DATA SOURCES, TECHNIQUES AND DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The research process of this study is divided in two stages as the following table shows:

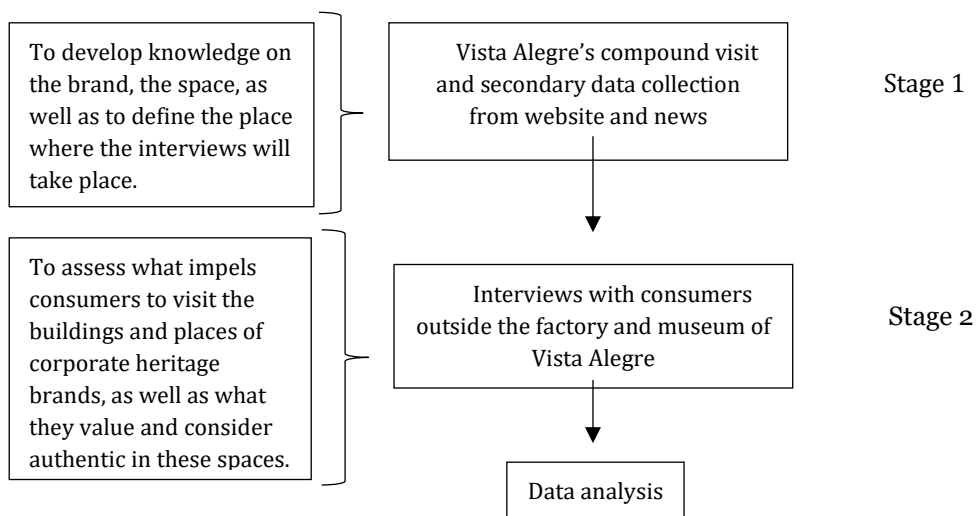


Figure 4 - Research Framework

Source: Self elaborated

The first stage of this study consists of an informal visit, from the researcher to the Vista Alegre factory compound including the Museum, Church, Main Store and Outlet Store to assess the main features of the space, as well as the circuit usually taken by the visitors. The purpose of this visit was to collect secondary data from observation and to interact with those that were at the compound at the time of the visit, either the Vista Alegre staff or consumers. Below is the map of the spaces in the compound that should be visited in a specific order, communicated at the time of visit. The stores are accessible without any ticket; however, the museum and church require a ticket for the entry.



Figure 5 – The Vista Alegre factory compound

Source: Vista Alegre's website

The researcher's visit of the space followed the typical touristic guideline, according to information provided by the Vista Alegre staff:

- First, the Church, that preceded the visit to the museum.

- The Museum, the main attraction of the compound, that presents the history of Vista Alegre with iconic products of the brand from the beginning as well as important documents and memorabilia.
- The side entrance of the Main Store, where the tour of the museum ends, giving visitors a chance to discover a broad selection of products.

The main store ends the visit of the compound. However, depending on the purpose of the visit, consumers may also choose to stay at the Hotel, visit the other spaces on the compound such as the Day-care, Theatre and the Staff's Housing, the Bordallo Pinheiro store, or the outlet store. The visit of the researcher to the space was essential to determine where the interviews should take place, guaranteeing that by the time of the interview, visitors already had been to most of the spaces of the compound (the church, the museum, and the main store). Therefore, the outside of the Main Store was the selected spot to perform the interviews. Alongside the data collected while visiting the Vista Alegre's compound, secondary data was also collected from Vista Alegre's website (Vista Alegre, 2022) and from online news.

Sources of Data	Data Collection Techniques & Sources	Process of research
Secondary document data (text and images)	Website and news	Online research in the company's website and on news websites that mention Vista Alegre
Photographs taken by the researcher while visiting the compound	Visit to the compound and museum of Vista Alegre	Visit to the Museum and compound of Vista Alegre to collect photographic data to understand how consumers experience the space and what they see while visiting
Vista Alegre's consumers that visit the brand's compound in Ílhavo, Aveiro	25, 15-minute, semi-structured interviews	The interviews are held outside the main store of the compound since the Museum and Chapel visit ends in that space, which makes consumers more knowledgeable of the space and confident to answer the questions

Table 8 - Data Collection Techniques, Sources and Process of Research

Source: Self elaborated

The second stage of the research consisted in 25 semi-structured interviews, with the average time of 15 minutes, with Vista Alegre's consumers outside the Main Store since this is the place where the Museum tour ends and where consumers have more knowledge of the space they are visiting, therefore contributing with much deeper insights on the topic. The time span of the interview is due to both requirements of the company in keeping the interview short and concise in order not to disturb consumers, as well as for the context of where the interviews take place - consumers are visiting and tend not to like to be disturbed.

2.5. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The data collected from this study included both primary and secondary data. The researcher's visit to the Vista Alegre compound had the duration of 1 hour and 36 minutes and included the visit to Vista Alegre's church, museum, and

main store as well as a conversation with the museum staff. The visit to the museum allowed the deep understanding of the company’s history and important milestones and resulted in the collection of 14 photographs and one informal 10-minute conversation with the staff from the museum at the time of visit. This was an informal visit that culminated in the collection of important data that was determinant to define where the interviews should take place.

The second stage of research included the collection of data from 25 semi-structured interviews outside the main store. The use of random selection was based on the criterion of the interviewee leaving the main store since this could mean that the participant was leaving the main store after a visit to the museum. After this selection, it was possible to continue the interview with the certainty that the interviewee was aware of the main spaces of the compound.

Given the semi-structure of the interviews, when the answers from the interviewees focused on a pertinent topic, outside the previously designed interview, the researcher followed that input and started asking questions that were not previously foreseen, for a deeper understanding. The structure of the interview, as well as the respective research question it aims to answer, is presented in the following table.

Interview Question	Research Question	Literature Background
How did you become acquainted of the existence of Vista Alegre?	1. What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands’ buildings and places?	Consumers’ childhood memories can influence its perception of authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021)

How would you describe Vista Alegre using your own words?	1. What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places?	Relates concepts such as "Longevity", "continuity, uniqueness, credibility, and consistency" (Balmer & Urde, 2006); the brand is "unique", "credible", and "consistent" (Rindell & Santos, 2021; Balmer, 2011a).
Which memories about Vista Alegre do you have from your past?	1. What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brand image as "a perception about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory" (Wiedmann et al, 2011, p. 208) Consumers' childhood memories can influence their perception of authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021)
What do you think made Vista Alegre endure over such a long time?	1. What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past, present and future as a tripartite temporal dimension for corporate heritage brands (Balmer et al., 2006; Urde et al., 2007; Balmer, 2011a; Balmer, 2011b; Burghausen & Balmer, 2014; Balmer & Burghausen, 2015; Santos et al., 2016; Balmer & Chen, 2017; Pecot & De Barnier, 2017; Pecot & De Barnier, 2018; Balmer & Burghausen, 2019; Sammour et al., 2020). Omnitemporality (Rindell & Santos, 2021); Consumers' perceptions of longevity, stability, and adaptability a corporate heritage brand (Pecot et al., 2019) Heritage Quotient (Urde et al., 2007)
What do you feel about the products of Vista Alegre?	2. What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer? 3. What do consumers perceive as authentic in the buildings and places of a corporate heritage brand?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some signals become symbolically tied to the brand and assume meaningfulness to the consumer through repetition and consistency (Rindell & Santos, 2021). The more a brand emphasizes its heritage, the more credible and qualified it is perceived by the consumer since brand heritage tends to clarify the image of the brand in consumers' minds and that can be done through the brands' products (Pecot et al., 2018). Consumers' memory will trigger a reaction every time a company-related input is activated, creating a coalescence of the past and present images and future expectations into the image heritage of the consumer (Rindell, 2013). Image heritage then owns both a context-bound and a cultural bound according to both context and cultural influences on the image defined in consumers' minds (Rindell, 2013). The aesthetic can be a conducive element of corporate design heritage and it is relevant in brands' endeavors in, not only, presenting consumers with past material artefacts as symbolic representations of the past but crucially as "aestheticized manifestations of corporate heritage" (Santos et al., 2016, p.5)
What do you think of Vista Alegre's product packaging?		
What caught your eye (interested you the most) in the Vista Alegre compound? Why?		
While visiting the Vista Alegre factory, museum, and remaining places, what do you feel?		
What elements of the Vista Alegre factory and museum do you consider authentic? And why?		
How did you find out about the existence of the Vista Alegre factory and museum compound?	1. What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places?	Brand image is, therefore, the result of the corporate heritage brand's efforts in sticking to in consumers' minds after sending several signals to do so. The role of memory is vital in connecting what individuals take for granted as the normal order of things and what they remember of the world. Image heritage refers to the influence of past company-related experiences and the company representations received overtime in the processes of reconstructing images in the present with a direction towards the future (Rindell et al., 2015).

<p>What made you visit the Vista Alegre compound?</p>	<p>1. What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The locality or place of a company is fundamental in consumers' view of the corporate documents and conduct (Balmer, 2011a). Several researchers have suggested that "when consumers believe they are in the presence of something authentic, they can feel transported to the context to which the object or location is authentically linked, and thus they feel more connected with the context" (Grayson & Martinec, 2004, p. 302). By answering this question interviewees might identify experiential brandscapes "where all the elements of the brand can be assimilated into a coherent entity; and where value can be co-created in the form of a place-based experience by the firm's management and consumers alike" (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006, p.3)
<p>What did you like and what did you didn't like?</p>	<p>2. What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brand image is defined as "a perception about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory", which is determinant in the brand's awareness in consumers' minds and has a direct influence on the perceived quality, performance, and expectations of the brand (Wiedmann et al, 2011, p. 208). Some signals become symbolically tied to the brand and assume meaningfulness to the consumer through repetition and consistency (Rindell & Santos, 2021). For consumers, even the use of brand relics, objectifies heritage by making it more tangible and providing evidence of the company's longevity (Pecot et al., 2018). Brand image is, therefore, the result of the corporate heritage brand's efforts in sticking to in consumers' minds after sending several signals to do so.
<p>Considering your interaction with Vista Alegre, how do you think that Vista Alegre has created a cohesive image for consumers?</p>	<p>2. What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Longevity comes with the brand's need to embrace change, to accompany the ever-growing evolution of society while remaining transparent about its past and history (Balmer & Urde, 2006). The relative invariance phenomenon grants company's the opportunity to apparently remain the same for stakeholders, especially consumers, while positively adjusting and changing through time (Balmer, 2011b). The ability of the brand to evolve through time while remaining relevant comes from the collective group's memory. Heritage identities are not composed with one secluded identity but with a set of identities that are linked to places, cultures, and institutions (Balmer, 2011b)
<p>If you can recall most of your interactions with Vista Alegre, how has the brand met your expectations of authenticity?</p>		
<p>What do you think makes Vista Alegre unique?</p>	<p>2. What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uniqueness is revealed in the relationship between what the brand is and shows today and what it was in the past (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Often related to the company's historical references, the ability to show what it is vis-a-vis what it used to be, distinguishes brands from competitors and transmits uniqueness as a trait that others cannot copy. Credibility is revealed in the way the company meets consumers' expectations (what consumers expect the brand to look and feel) and what they are presented with - the consumers' image heritage (Rindell & Santos, 2021).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consistency dimension relates to the ability of the company to be unique and credible through time, culminating in an assessment of authenticity in a clear way for the consumer.
What do you think makes Vista Alegre unique?	2. What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uniqueness is revealed in the relationship between what the brand is and shows today and what it was in the past (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Often related to the company's historical references, the ability to show what it is vis-a-vis what it used to be, distinguishes brands from competitors and transmits uniqueness as a trait that others cannot copy. Credibility is revealed in the way the company meets consumers' expectations (what consumers expect the brand to look and feel) and what they are presented with - the consumers' image heritage (Rindell & Santos, 2021). The consistency dimension relates to the ability of the company to be unique and credible through time, culminating in an assessment of authenticity in a clear way for the consumer.
How did you experienced your visit on the Vista Alegre Museum and remaining compound?	<p>2. What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer?</p> <p>3. What do consumers perceive as authentic in the buildings and places of a corporate heritage brand?</p>	Authenticity relates to the maintenance of the corporate heritage brand's identity and it impacts consumers' perception of the brands' longevity as well as their trust in the institution (Balmer, 2011a; Balmer, 2011b). Thus, corporate heritage brands are dependent on bilateral trust between company and stakeholders (Balmer, 2011a). Authenticity is considered to work as a "key strategic competitive advantages that companies can gain by including corporate heritage as an element of their corporate brand identity" and is usually associated with genuineness, truth, and reality (Rindell & Santos, 2021, p.1; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Therefore, if the expectations of consumers are satisfied, the judgment of authenticity will be favorable to the company and its current corporate activities will be judged as credible for the consumer (Rindell & Santos, 2021).

Table 9 - Interview Guideline

Source: Self Elaborated

The structure of the interview guideline allows the understanding of consumers' perceptions of Vista Alegre as a brand, followed by the understanding of their perceptions on the space itself. This choice of structure guarantees that the insights from the interview are pertinent since the researcher will assure that consumers are aware of the brand before questioning about the space.

2.6.PROCESS OF ANALYSIS

For this qualitative study, a Thematic Analysis approach was chosen due to the need to identify common ideas throughout the interviews to understand the opinions and thoughts of the visitors from the Vista Alegre’s buildings and spaces that related to the proposed research questions (Braun & Clark, 2006). Considering its use in the comprehension of qualitative data – such as opinions and ideas - the Thematic Analysis approach allows the analytic process to be conducted in a systematic yet flexible way (Braun & Clark, 2006).

The chosen procedure for this data analysis, is divided in four phases and it is framed within the work of Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2018). The full process of data analysis is presented in the following table:

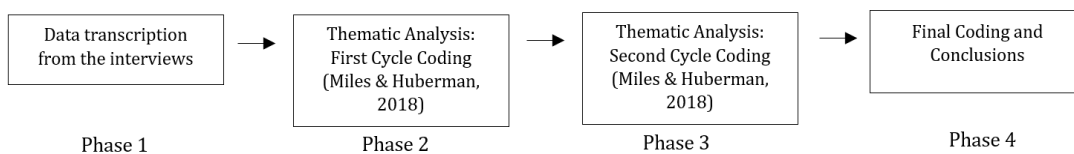


Table 10 – Data Analysis Process

Source: Self elaborated

Phase 1 of the data analysis process consisted of the systematic transcription of the audio-taped interviews into Word documents. This process was conducted throughout the period in which the visitors of Vista Alegre’s buildings and places were being interviewed, so that some necessary changes and improvements could be made ahead of time in the interview’s process and guideline (Saunders

et al., 2009). The interviews were transcribed in the language in which the interview was conducted. This process took three weeks to be completed and by its end, all the 25 interviews were transcribed into Word documents, all with the same structure.

The second phase culminated in the First Cycle coding with the creation of thematic labels, or codes, to interpret and analyse the information provided in the interviews (Miles et al., 2018). Given the inductive nature of this study, this was essential in the data analysis process since the codes must derive from data, or in this case, the interviews (Saunders et al., 2009). Therefore, by systematically reading all the interviews, after transcription, the codes started to arise as similar topics throughout the interviews.

Whenever a topic was visible in more than one interview, it would then be coded, independently of its pertinence to the study in question. In this phase, the interviews were almost completely coded due to the exploratory nature of the data analysis process (Saunders et al., 2009). The creation of the code itself was a mixture of two methods of coding, Descriptive Coding and In-Vivo Coding: the first coding assigns labels to the data through summarizing what the interviewee is saying in a short-sentence; the second one uses the actual expressions of the interviewee to create the codes and is especially pertinent when the researcher believes that the interviewee defined an idea in the best way possible (Miles et al., 2018). The use of both methods was pertinent given the assessment of the interviewee's opinions and thoughts. By the end of phase one, more than 50

codes were identified, that then proceeded to be shortened or dismissed in the third phase, given their adequacy to answer the research questions of this study.

The third phase of the data analysis process – the Second cycle coding - consisted in connecting the codes identified in phase one and grouping them into a smaller number of categories, to condensate the information (Miles et al., 2018). In this phase, the research questions were integrated in the analysis process so that the new codes, generated from the first cycle coding and now adapted, started to develop towards generating the answers to these questions. During this process, most of the codes were obsolete and therefore discarded since no answer for the research questions arised from them. Besides, during this phase, insights from the literature that supported the design of the interview guideline were also included as interpretative lens for the creation of the new codes.

The final phase of the data analysis process consisted of developing findings that would then be discussed and assessed as contributions for this study. The contributions would then compose an answer to the proposed research questions.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

Following the presentation of the different phases of the data analysis process, this next chapter presents the analysis of the collected data. Table 11 presents a set of codes to answer the first research question “What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands’ buildings and places?”. Alongside the codes are the correspondent quotes, justifying the respective codification. References to the city of Aveiro as the home of the brand Vista Alegre, the events that are organized by the brand and a visit to the outlet store to get products with discount are some of the reasons that make consumers visit the space. Besides, another reason to visit relates to consumers staying at the hotel. The history of Vista Alegre and its buildings and spaces also attracts visitors that want to see its representation in the place of Vista Alegre, as well as to see the compound today as a representation of what it was in the past.

Code	Quote
Consumers’ geographical proximity to the Vista Alegre compound	"We, right, we... since we are here from Aveiro we always heard of the existence of this chapel even because we could pass through the middle of what is now the hotel, we... before... it was, it was the road and when there were weddings here in the chapel..."
	"... since I was always from here, this, for me, is like home... It is the standard"
Aveiro's residents show their guests the space, as a representation of the regional patrimony	"... since, in the meanwhile, we came by to spend the weekend and it... it is tradition for them to show us the factory"
	"... to show them since they came to visit us"
	"For them to get to know the space... Since they have only been to the store now, I am showing them the surroundings..."
Events organized in Vista Alegre's compound	"...even one day there was a three-day party here and... in the summer... right? In August, I think and... there was a co-worker of ours that... we then started to know people... and they brought me here"
	"Oh, because I... there, I remember... then when I was little we came here to the store, before there were the others... so, I remember there was a marketplace, I remember I was little and once in a year or something..."

Visiting the outlet store to buy cheaper Vista Alegre's products	"...I already came here to buy day to day pieces you see... tableware for everyday use, even in the store, at the time that I came here there was a store where you could buy with a small defect..."
	"... cheap things and it is a good way to get to every house..."
	"Right, back then when I came here, I had pieces that well, let's say that or the drawing was badly printed or anything and I took it to... to... for daily use... Even that way it was worth it but... And I took other cups as well..."
Purchasing and looking for the other brand that also has a store in the Vista Alegre compound	"Of course, the fact that it has the stores that were the store of Vista Alegre and also of Bordallo Pinheiro, I am a fan"
	"All of the pieces that we saw in here, every partnership... Bordallo... before... They were separated companies"
	"He likes it and I like it too, so I pulled him a little... I pulled my compass in here because I felt like seeing a piece from Bordallo Pinheiro"
The main store's broader offer comparing to other Vista Alegre's stores	"The offer here is superior to what other commercial spaces have in the malls and I could be better enlightened here about the doubts that I might have"
	"So... that... I remember, I remember coming here with my parents, when this was one the few stores of the brand"
To stay at the Vista Alegre hotel	"...oh, I already came here many, many, times and now we stayed at the hotel..."
	"Today we are spending... we are staying at the hotel. It is my husband's birthday, and we came to celebrate a little...something"
To see the representation of Vista Alegre's history in the buildings	"... and I wanted to show him those children... That I was so sorry for those children... How it began... But that is the course of society, right, and I think that at ten years old they already worked here, and it was normal"
	"For the history, history... Of Ílhavo... This families, the families that created this. Now it is no longer a family that is behind this..."
To see how the compound was designed and created	"...and so that... and for... the other generations I even think it is important these visits to factories... these things, for people to see... because I was really impressed"
	"It is important that this... that other brands see, in fact... have that as an example... and continue to have"
	"I know the story of other factories are... not of porcelain but I know that those that endured were the ones where the owners were persistent and believed in their project and... stubbornly, they knew how to survive in the long run"
Curiosity to see Vista Alegre's compound today as a representation of what it was in the past	"The chapel and the whole surrounding space that... that now has been arranged... it is better, right?"
	"...before this was just a factory... now it is a factory with a lot to offer in terms of tourism it is very appealing"

Table 11 - Second cycle coding with reasons why consumers visit the Vista Alegre compound

Source: Self elaborated

Upon the presented reasons to visit the space of corporate heritage brands', the codes related with the second research question are presented. This set of codes details the characteristics that are more valuable for consumers in the

space. Associated with the second research question “What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands’ spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer?”, the codes are presented in Table 12. Some of the characteristics identified by consumers consist of the overall ambience, the designing of the space and the interaction of all the elements that together compose the space. Besides, more specific elements that compose the buildings such as lamps, windows, and the roof tiles are also mentioned by consumers when assessing the space.

Code	Quote
The buildings that are designed to house the community of Vista Alegre’s workers	“aaae this really... this has history right? The factory has and it was basically a big family. I think that... I think that the very own little buildings... their disposition... the day-care, the schools it transmits a little bit of a small village”
	“... back in the day this worked as a closed community almost... It had the farm, the barber, the dairy... it had it all, everything made with a community... an ecosystem”
	“Because is... everything seems like... the little houses, that part where the workers stay in... The theatre, the chapel... then everything seems a small thing... a small city”
The ambience created with the space design and the nature is peaceful and welcoming	“...a peace... the nature... the silence and a comfort”
	“The sun also pulls us a little... the sun lights, the facades, and it creates a different light...this like outdoors and... the contact with nature”
	“Tranquillity, peace... This reminds me of Alentejo”
The features of the buildings that resemble a home rather than an industrial factory	“In terms of feeling... there is a wellbeing... yes, a harmony because really... this place is... is much nicer right and the location”
	“It is an industrial space and... that it has something of human let’s say... because I don’t know... if it is the type of construction... It doesn’t appeal much to an industry... You don’t see it, at least you don’t see it.”
The group of all elements in the Vista Alegre compound	“... a very nice complex... besides being a complex and having a factory. It is a recreational complex. It is a... a very nice area... inviting and it ends up calling a lot of families that end up bringing their children to check on the factory... and it works”
	“... this is what makes it unique, the ... It is the set in itself”
	“The architectural part, right? I don’t know... it is the chapel and everything else surrounding”
The roofs with the original roof tiles (Figure 6)	“...the greatness of the set of the space. It is very big and very beautiful... The part of the hotel... Of the river behind... everything is big... everything is in a big scale”
	“...also, I think it has a lot... a lot of influence in that... in that situation but mainly I think that the roofs... a person looks and sees and there is a tile that is... that might be broken... there isn’t... so they kept the original Portuguese tile and for those who like it... who enjoy it...”
	“The tiles, for example, the Windows, the paintings... the paintings... they kept the original painting and the gardening part I think too...”

The windows signs of aging that are original (Figure 6)	“Look those windows... those guillotine windows are windows that... That no one uses anymore you know... no one cares about them... but someone with respect decided to keep them because they are made of wood... and so heavy... to open them it is a sign of courage because you must take its full weight...”
	“...they are windows and back then they were used, and you have to respect that... I think it is amazing to keep that area to the detriment of an aluminium window... That would be the wise thing to do... but luckily there are people wiser that say no...”
The streetlamps that seem to be old (Figure 7)	“The streetlamps are gorgeous and... the streetlamps are also very very old”
	“The streetlamps are authentic, ok?... The chimneys are authentic”
The stones on the walk that appear to be originally from the space (Figure 8)	“The point is that the stones that I like very much... I like granite very much... on the bubble steps like those pieces here... those pieces could have been ripped apart and they could have put something else in here made of cement... but they kept it...”
	“It was going out into the trash, and they kept it okay? This... this is not straight... the sidewalk you can't make a sidewalk but if you see it from the top it looks like roman strip”

Table 12 - Second Cycle Coding with what consumers find valuable in Vista Alegre’s compound

Source: Self elaborated



Figure 6 – The Rooftiles and original windows at the Vista Alegre compound

Source: Picture taken by the researcher’s while visiting the space



Figure 7 – The Streetlamps at the Vista Alegre compound

Source: Picture taken by the researcher's while visiting the space



Figure 8 – The original Stones on the walk at the Vista Alegre compound

Source: Picture taken by the researcher's while visiting the space

Finally, and to answer the third research question “What do consumers perceive as authentic in the buildings and places of a corporate heritage brand?”, table 13 presents the assessment of the features considered authentic for the consumer in the Vista Alegre compound.

Code	Quote
The original elements that were kept in the compound until today	"...the frames, the stairwells, the stones on this walk... they are authentic, okay? The chimneys they are authentic..."
	"These are the windows that were used then... and you've got to respect that, and I think that it is spectacular to keep that..."
	"... that it is restored but yet, it still keeps things that are in fact initial"
The maintenance of the buildings' architectural style and design as it was in the past	"Well, first because it is really well maintained, both inside and out... We already went inside the chapel, and I said, until today I think it was the chapel... until today that I saw, that was best maintained... It is pretty and it is very well maintained. And I am not even religious, so I think that, as a chapel it is... it is a beautiful chapel"
	"Even the gardens they were able to keep. I assume that the image of this... I imagine... I imagine that this, one hundred years ago, would be like this"
	"The factory... I always remember the factory like this right?"
The aging and deterioration of the elements in the space	"Look because... because this... these doors... the doors... what are they made of? I don't know... How can I say this... because now you can't make things like this anymore...? Even if they tried, they couldn't. And because they are deteriorated... but let it be... I like to see the passage of time"
	"...the space itself reflects that, okay? It is not something modern... contemporary... you can see a certain aging in all this..."
	"I mean there is like a sign in the space that was put there because it is mandatory but... taking the signs away and some lighting I think they were able to maintain this space really well and I think that... well that this continues to be authentic"
The antique architecture that reminds of an ancient way of living	"I imagine what this life was like, right? Without the running around that we have today in our lives it is not... the mother stayed at home taking care of her kids and they have the little school here... they have the factory... everything was... was a community, that it almost... it almost doesn't exist in Portugal, right? The life here as a community, almost... almost doesn't exist nowadays"
	"...but if we could take advantage of this in the future... to keep this... this... because this feeling, this sentiment of what... of what Vista Alegre was: a family, basically"
	"It feels like I went back in time"
The village-like setting where the community lived	"The factory has, and it was basically a big family. I think that I think that the very own little buildings, their disposition, the day-care, the schools it transmits a little bit of a small village"
	"...this worked as a closed community almost... It had the farm, the barber, the dairy... it had it all, everything made with a community, an ecosystem"
	"it's having the factory on one side and in front we have the theatre, the doctor's office, the day-care... day-care... things that don't make sense anymore for my generation... the recreational group. This used to work... I mean... like a city, right? Like a city..."
The different spaces built represent the brand's entrepreneurship and concern for its workers	"... it is impossible to hide a story over one hundred and something years old. And if we want to be curious then let's see what happened in the beginning... because one guy decided to do that... why did he do it like that? Couldn't he have done it in other way? What made him do a kind of... giant condominium"
	"...there you go, our ancestors did something stable for the workers... something to last for a whole life"
	"... and Vista Alegre has... well... it is a factory, and it was born, like any other factory in the XIX century... with a... a big social initiative ... of social support and so... it was born with... it was born with charisma, and it was born to serve people and to serve, certainly, the locality here that and... and its founders"
The contrast between the old architecture and the newer incorporations	"Yes, yes there is a good harmony between the modern, with this... and that doesn't shock us and... yes it doesn't shock us, right?"
	"...we have the contrast there between the old stork... that part that is very beautiful... these chimneys... this... all of this roofs they look... with this... with a really clean look that only made it better and it attracted attention to the old part... The contrast between the old part that is taken care of and the hotel... that contrast... it fits"
The building of the factory	"...before this was a factory... now this is a factory with a lot to offer in terms of tourism... It is very appealing"
	"...they have here... the little school and there the factory... it is all here"
	"The factory... I always remember the factory as it is right?"

The houses for the workers to live in	“What I stand out is the architectural part right? That is also old and has the house for the workers...”
	“I imagine how life must have been, right? Without the running around that we have today... The mother stayed at home to take care of the kids... and they have the little school and there the factory... it is all here”
	“...I would say the museum, the chapel, the surrounding space... the little houses that used to be the old houses of the workers...”

Table 13 - Second Cycle Coding with the authentic elements in the Vista Alegre compound

Source: Self elaborated

The maintenance of the of the buildings’ architectural style and design as it was in the past as well as the aging and deterioration of the elements in the space are some of the elements considered authentic in the buildings and space of Vista Alegre.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the first research question: what impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places? two findings arise, that are presented in table 14. The first relates to the geographical proximity with the Vista Alegre compound and the link that residents form with the brand and its space. The second presents other reasons that impelled consumers to visit the space. Besides visiting to see the buildings and places in the compound, consumers also stay at the hotel, visit the outlet store of Vista Alegre as well as the store of another brand - Bordallo Pinheiro - that is set in the Vista Alegre compound.

Reasons to visit the Vista Alegre compound	Finding
Consumers' geographical proximity to the Vista Alegre compound	1.The residents of Aveiro form a link with the brand through the Vista Alegre compound and the space is part of the patrimony of the region.
Aveiro's residents show their guests the space, as a representation of the culture of that city	
To see the representation of Vista Alegre's history in the buildings	
To see how the compound was designed and created	
Curiosity to see Vista Alegre's compound today as a representation of what it was in the past	
Events organized in Vista Alegre's compound	2.The organization of events, the outlet store as well as the other brand's store inside the Vista Alegre compound are reasons to visit that make consumers familiar with the space. Also, consumers' choice to stay at the hotel is a reason to visit the space.
The main store's broader offer comparing to other Vista Alegre's stores	
Visiting the outlet store to buy cheaper Vista Alegre's products	
Purchasing and looking for the other brand that also has a store in the Vista Alegre compound	
To stay at the Vista Alegre hotel	

Table 14 – Findings related to the reasons to visit the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands
Source: Self elaborated

The third finding presents the elements that consumers consider that contribute to the overall ambience of the space. This relates with the second research question: What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer? Consumers value the good atmosphere that is created, not only from one specific element, but from the interaction of all the elements that compose the Vista Alegre compound. This includes the buildings and the surroundings of the space. Besides, the space can be assessed as a whole or for its specific elements such as its roofs, windows, and streetlamps.

Characteristics that are valued by the consumers in the space of Vista Alegre	Finding
The buildings that are designed to house the community of Vista Alegre's workers	3.The compound is inviting not only for one reason but for a group of elements that creates a good atmosphere for consumers. Consumers also assess the space through its specific elements such as the roofs, windows, and streetlamps.
The ambience created with the space design and the nature is peaceful and welcoming	
The features of the buildings that resemble a home rather than an industrial factory	
The group of all elements in the Vista Alegre compound	
The roofs with the original roof tiles (Figure 6)	
The windows signs of aging, that are original (Figure 6)	
The streetlamps that seem to be old (Figure 7)	
The stones on the walk that appear to be originally from the space (Figure 8)	

Table 15 – Findings related to what consumers value in the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands
Source: Self elaborated

The fourth finding relates to the second and third research questions on the features that consumers value and find authentic in the Vista Alegre compound, that represent the history of the brand: What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer? What do consumers perceive as authentic in the buildings and places of a

corporate heritage brand? Consumers value the houses built for the workers, the day-care and remaining buildings, all of which represent the effort of the founders to provide good living and working conditions for its workers. These spaces were not intentionally designed to attract visitors to the space rather to give the workers the right conditions to live and work. Nonetheless, consumers value those constructions.

Finally, the fifth finding presented is related to consumers’ assessment of authenticity regarding the Vista Alegre compound. The signs of aging and deterioration in the space contribute to consumers’ perceptions of authenticity of the compound, as proof of its aging and history.

Characteristics that are considered authentic by the consumers in the space of Vista Alegre	Finding
The village-like setting where the community lived	4.The history of Vista Alegre is represented in the space with the houses for the workers, the day-care and remaining buildings that are proof of the life that the founder wanted to give to its workers, and consumers value that.
The different spaces built represent the brand’s entrepreneurship and concern for its workers	
The contrast between the old architecture and the newer incorporations	
The building of the factory	
The houses for the workers to live in	
The original elements that were kept in the compound until today	5.The signals of aging in the buildings are proof of its past, history and originality.
The maintenance of the buildings’ architectural style and design as it was in the past	
The aging and deterioration of the elements in the space	
The antique architecture that reminds of an ancient way of living	

Table 16 – Findings related to what consumers consider authentic in the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands
Source: Self elaborated

As for this study’s contributions to the literature, the reasons for consumers to visit the spaces of a corporate heritage brand, as well as the process of their

assessment of its elements, once in the space, are presented next. Besides that, the elements that are valued by consumers and that are considered authentic are also presented, alongside the reasons why consumers sustain that appreciation.

CONSUMERS VISIT THE SPACES OF CORPORATE HERITAGE BRANDS FOR REASONS OTHER THAN THE BRAND

When deciding to visit the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands, consumers' motives vary and are not always linked to the space, or the brand, itself. The reasons that may contribute to a visit like this are presented in Figure 9. A visit can be related with the attendance of events, a purchase from the outlet store and for consumers to discover more about the history of the brand. However, other reasons that are not directly linked to the corporate heritage brand also arise.

This study's first finding indicates that the residents that live near the space of a corporate heritage brand form a link with the space, and, therefore, that brand. Thus, the geographical proximity of residents is a contributing factor to a stronger link to the space of corporate heritage brands. Even though proximity, as a reason to visit, is related with the brand, it also has a special nature. Residents live nearby the space of the brand, therefore are faced with it in their day-to-day life. If they reside somewhere else, perhaps, they might not visit that space. Also, the residents that choose to show that space to their guests do so due to the convenience of being close to something that has history and a past

and that might be relevant to see. Thus, proximity as a reason to visit the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands is a matter of context and it contributes as an indirect reason for a visit – a reason that goes beyond the history and the buildings of the brand.

Another indirect reason for consumers to visit the space of a corporate heritage brand is through the visit of other brands' stores in that space. While not initially intending to visit the corporate heritage brand's space for its own brand, consumers get to discover it and the space that is part of the company's history. Besides, by having more than one brand's store in its buildings and spaces, the corporate heritage brand can diversify the offer in the space, therefore inviting more visitants. This a way for the brand to stay relevant and to create a desirable place for consumers to visit.

In addition, if the brand to incorporate the space is also a corporate heritage brand, that can improve the consistency and credibility of the brand that owns the space, therefore improving the perceptions of authenticity for the consumer. By including another reason for a visit, that is adjusted with the company's space, values and environment, the corporate heritage brand can further develop its own identity.

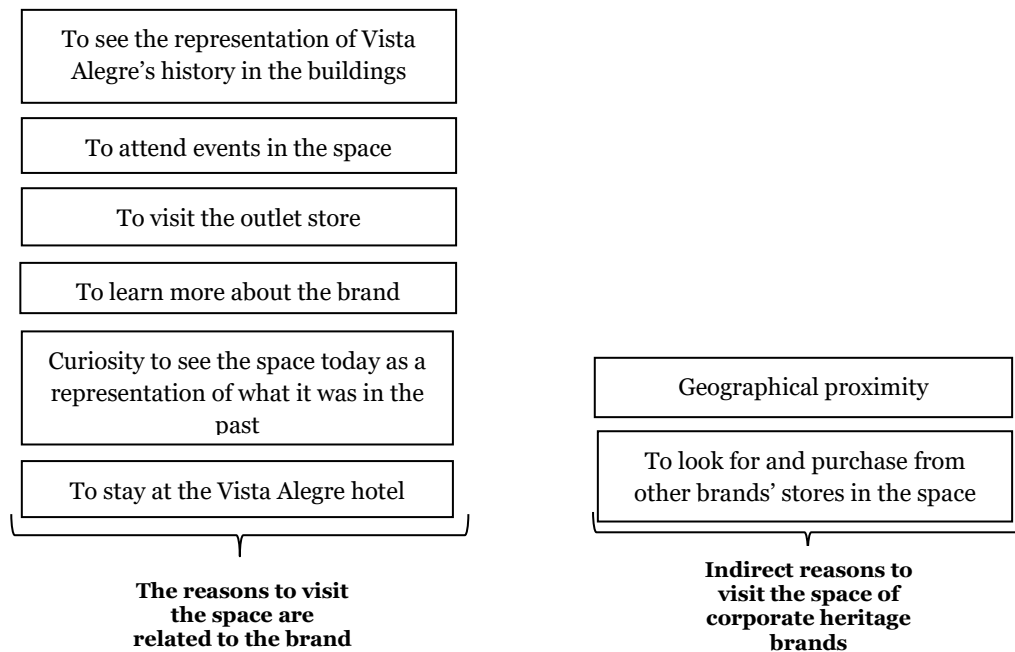


Figure 9 – The reasons to visit the space of corporate heritage brands

Source: Self elaborated

Therefore, the first contribution from this study concerns the motive behind a visit to the space of corporate heritage brands, that can be directly or indirectly associated with the brand. The second contribution consists of the addition of other brands to the spaces of corporate heritage brands as a way of reaching more consumers and diversify the offer in the space. If the brand in question is a corporate heritage brand this can also contribute to the company's credibility and the overall assessment of the space as well as its perception of authenticity. Thus, even if the motives behind a visit are not primarily related with the corporate heritage brand in question, that takes consumers to discover and get to know the space and the brand itself.

THE ASSESSMENT OF AUTHENTICITY IN THE SPACES OF CORPORATE HERITAGE BRANDS OCCURS THROUGH A HOLISTIC AND INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVE

The third contribution from this study relates to the way consumers assess the spaces of corporate heritage brands, not only from one specific element, but also from the interaction of all the elements that compose the space. This makes the assessment of the space happening in two different ways.

During a visit to the spaces of corporate heritage brands, consumers assessment occurs through a holistic perspective of the elements as well as through the analysis of specific elements in the space. Within the holistic perspective, consumers judge the environment and the design of the space in the way the elements are displayed and the respective image they create. Another way is through the analysis of the specific elements that compose the space, independently from the remaining elements. Figure 10 presents the two processes of analysis of the space of a corporate heritage brand.

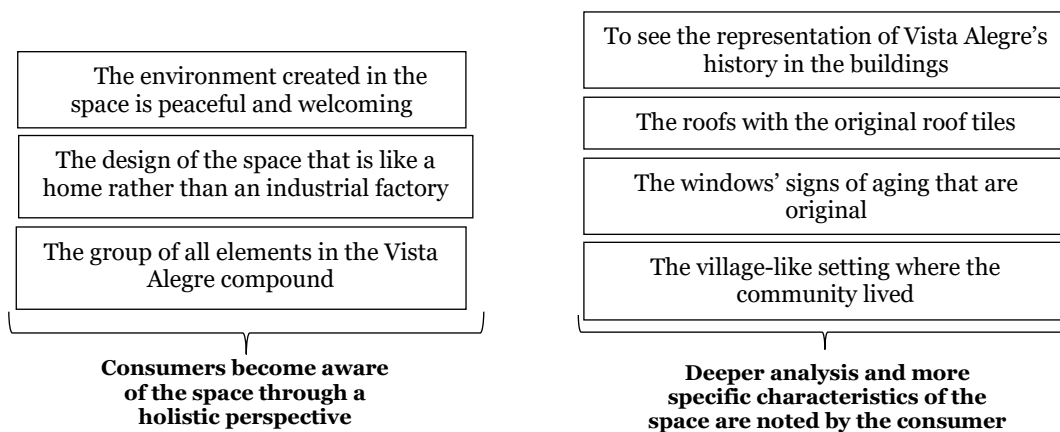


Figure 10 – Two ways consumers assess the spaces of corporate heritage brands

Source: Self elaborated

Thus, the use of a holistic perspective does not compromise the analysis of the individual elements in the space, but rather complements the assessment of the spaces of corporate heritage brands and its value for consumers.

CONSUMERS VALUE THE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE CORPORATE HERITAGE BRAND'S HISTORY IN THE SPACE, AS WELL AS THE SURROUNDINGS

The findings regarding the characteristics that are valuable and authentic for consumers are presented in figure 11. Aspects related with the history of the space and the brand, that are expected to contribute to consumers' perception of authenticity, are followed by another element that is independent from the company's efforts to show its history.

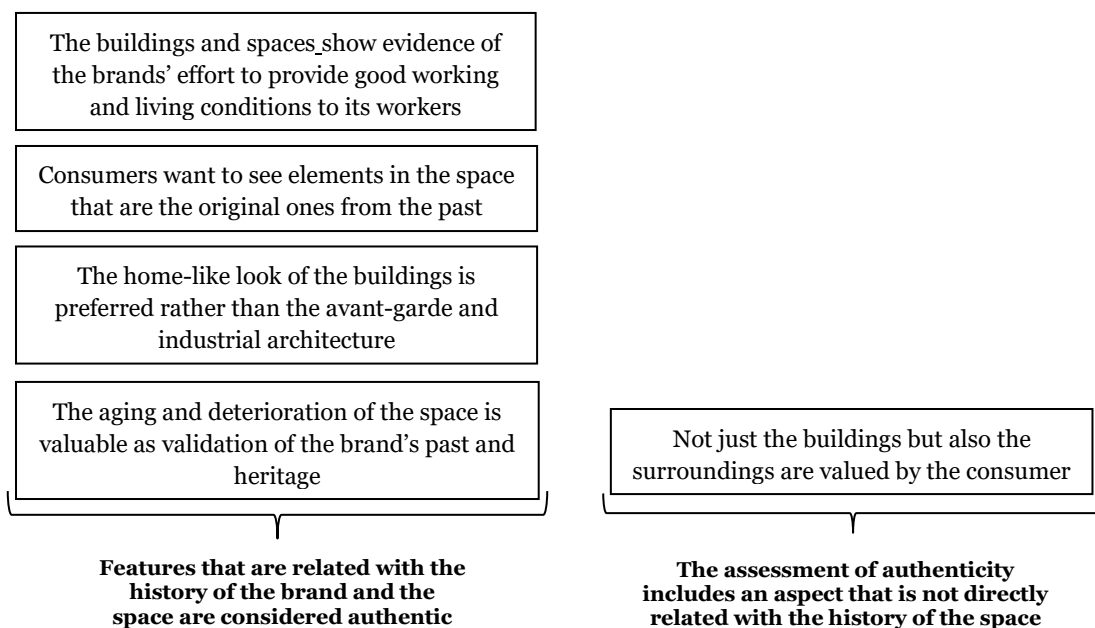


Figure 11 – The assessment of authenticity related with the history of the space

Source: Self elaborated

During the visit, consumers assess the features related with the history of the brand. The search for representation of the founders', and, therefore, the brand's effort to provide a space for its community is assessed by consumers. Considering that the space belongs to the brand, consumers assess the decisions of the founders and management in its design and development. Moreover, that assessment develops from the search for elements that are proof of evidence of the stewardship of the brand towards its workers. Buildings that have no commercial value for the brand but that are designed specifically for the workers, are evidence of the company's effort to provide good working and living conditions for its workers and are valued by consumers. Also, when analysing the space in search for authentic features, consumers look for elements that appear to be originally from the space. That process consists of identifying elements and features today, that represent how the buildings and spaces must have been in the past.

Following what consumers value and consider authentic in the spaces of corporate heritage brands and the conditions provided for its workers, another element that arises is the home-like look of the buildings in the space. Consumers value the conservation of an architectural style that resembles a home, rather than an industrial factory, and that is built with a purpose beyond business.

The perception of authenticity of the corporate heritage brands' buildings and places is also influenced by the aging and deterioration of the space. The worn

out look of the elements in the space is evidence of the buildings, and, consequently, the brand's past (Pecot et al., 2018). This aged appearance influences the perception of authenticity of the corporate heritage brand through the preservation of its buildings, while also representing the passage of time. Consumers value the signs of deterioration in the space.

The features presented above, while related with the company's history and past, are joined, in consumers assessment of authenticity, by another element in which the brand does not have influence. Therefore, another contribution from this study, regards consumers' assessment of authenticity in the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands that goes beyond the buildings built by the brand. Consumers look for nature within the surroundings of the space due to the feeling of peace and tranquillity it transmits and that contributes to the space's overall image. Thus, even though the features of the spaces of corporate heritage brands, that relate to the company's history and past, are considered authentic for consumers, elements such as the ambience and the nature surround will also influence that perception. Figure 12 presents the contributions from this study alongside the preceding findings.

FINDINGS

- 1.The residents of Aveiro form a link to the brand through the Vista Alegre compound and the space is part of the patrimony of the region.
- 2.The organisation of events, the creation of an outlet store as well as providing an offer of several different brands inside the Vista Alegre compound are reasons to visit that make consumers familiar with the space. Also, consumers’ choice to stay at the hotel is a reason to visit the space.
- 3.The compound is inviting not only for one reason but for a group of elements that create a good atmosphere for consumers.
- 4.The history of Vista Alegre is represented in the space with the houses for the workers, the day-care and remaining buildings that are proof of the life that the founder wanted to give to its workers, and consumers value that.
- 5.The signals of aging in the buildings are proof of its past, history and originality.

CONTRIBUTIONS

- Consumers visit the spaces of corporate heritage brands for reasons that may or may not be directly related with the brand
- The addition of other brands’ stores to the spaces of corporate heritage brands is a way to reach more consumers and diversify the company’s offer in the space
- The assessment of authenticity in the spaces of corporate heritage brands occurs through a holistic and individual perspective
- Consumers value the representations of the corporate heritage brand’s history in the space, as well as the surroundings

Figure 12 – Contributions deriving from the findings
Source: Self elaborated

The contributions from this study result from the analysis of the findings and are subsequently linked with the literature. This study presents not only the reasons why consumers visit the buildings and places of corporate heritage brands, but also the process of assessment of those spaces, as well as the characteristics that are valued and considered authentic for consumers.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE LITERATURE ON AUTHENTICITY, CONSUMERS AND CORPORATE HERITAGE BRANDS

Following the presentation of this study's findings, table 17 links the resulting contributions to the existing literature. The first contribution relates to the reasons why consumers visit the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands.

While most reasons are related with the brand itself, this study presents reasons that have a special nature and that are not directly linked with the corporate brand image in consumers' minds. Consumers can choose to visit the space of a corporate heritage brand's space due to the geographical proximity of its residents or even to see other brands that own a store in that place.

The regional proximity of a corporate heritage brand to consumers is a matter of context therefore it has a context-bound influence on consumers, according to the brand's image (Rindell, 2013). The proximity to the residents in the area, makes the space of a corporate heritage brand part of the image that is developed in residents' minds (Rindell, 2013). If the brand was not close in proximity to the residents, the chance would be that they would not visit it. This makes regional proximity an indirect reason to visit the space of a corporate heritage brand.

However, while being a matter of context and an indirect reason for consumers to visit the spaces of corporate heritage brands, that proximity makes

the brand part of the regional patrimony. The space, and therefore, the brand plays a part in the development of the region's identity, and it becomes part of its patrimony (Rindell & Santos, 2021). As Rindell and Santos stated that the symbolic dimension of a corporate heritage brand can contribute to the construction of a country's national identity, this study adds that the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands can integrate the regional identity and patrimony of the region they are established in (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Besides, these spaces can contribute to the augmented role identity of a corporate heritage brand since they associate the brand with an additional identity mode, in this case through the link of the brand to the identity of a specific region (Balmer & Chen, 2017). As an indirect reason for consumers to visit the space of a corporate heritage brand, geographical proximity links the buildings and places to the patrimony of the region they belong to.

Another indirect reason for consumers to visit these spaces consists of the choice of visiting the stores of other brands, that are present in the space of a corporate heritage brand. While not being related with the brand, the visit to another brand's store contributes to the brand's image. Even though consumers might not intend to visit the space for the corporate heritage brand that owns it, that brand's image will develop in consumers' minds upon the visit. By including another brand in its space, the corporate heritage brand is diversifying its offer and maintaining its relevancy today, while preserving its past, to build a successful future (Balmer & Urde, 2006; Balmer, 2011a). This way the brand can

guarantee its longevity, by embracing change with the inclusion of another brand in its own space (Balmer & Urde, 2006).

Besides, if the store to include in that space also belongs to another corporate heritage brand, this addition will contribute to the brand's perceived consistency and credibility (Pecot et al., 2018; Rindell & Santos, 2021). Since corporate heritage brands share some characteristics alike, such as the use of their past in a coherent way, this addition will appear authentic for consumers. The brandscape – experiential brand space - of the corporate heritage brand will allow the assimilation of both brand's elements into a coherent entity (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006). The choice of adding another corporate heritage brand to its buildings and places contributes to the brand's augmented role identity, as the additional brand is an increment to the main brand's identity (Balmer & Chen, 2017). Thus, with the association to another corporate heritage brand and its respective consumers, the corporate heritage brand expands its identity and promotes a credible image, for consumers. This will contribute to the brand's consistency and therefore its symbolic authenticity, given that the new brand will be symbolically tied to the corporate heritage brand, therefore assuming meaningfulness to the consumer (Rindell & Santos, 2021).

The early findings from this study present reasons to visit the spaces of corporate heritage brands such as a visit to the outlet store, the hotel, and the events that occur in the space of a corporate heritage brand, all linked to the brand's image. Consumers visit the space of a corporate heritage brand due to

the previous associations they have established with the brand and its space (the attendance of events that consumers knew would happen or to stay at the hotel they had discovered and so on). The reasons to visit relate to the findings of Windmann and colleagues regarding the associations held in consumers' memory with the brand's image that make consumers visit the space (Wiedmann et al., 2011).

Besides, once in the space, consumers will judge the brand on its iconic authenticity. The findings of Rindell and Santos regarding consumers' assessment of a corporate heritage brand's iconic authenticity state that "consumers can expect different things, and if their expectations match their observation" then the authenticity of the brand is judged favourably (Rindell & Santos, 2021, p. 552). Therefore, the space of a corporate heritage brand is expected to resemble something that consumers have previous knowledge of and are familiar with (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Given the focus of this research on the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands, the ability of the brand to meet consumers' expectations, prior to the visit, contributes to the positive judgement of the brand for its authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021). This study adds the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands as a contribution to consumers' perceptions of authenticity of the brand, through iconic authenticity, therefore contributing to the brand's credibility (Rindell & Santos, 2021).

Another contribution from this study relates to the process of assessment of the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands. Besides the identification of the elements that consumers consider authentic in the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands, the process of that assessment is also contribution from this study. Consumers can assess the authenticity of the elements in the space through a holistic perspective where the space is analysed as a whole, and through an individual perspective where the space is analysed through its individual elements separately. This adds to the perspective of experiential marketing that focus on consumption as a holistic experience and on consumers that have rational and emotional reactions to it (Schmidtt, 1999). Consumers will, therefore, assess the space and react rationally and emotionally to it through a holistic perspective as well as through the analysis of its individual elements.

The process of assessment is therefore influenced by the experience of visiting the corporate heritage brand's brandscapes - experiential brand spaces "where all the elements of the brand can be assimilated into a coherent entity" (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006, p.3). Besides elements other than those that were designed, built, and created by the brand in the compound, such as the surroundings, also influence the experience of the visit (Schmidtt, 1999). Therefore, not only is corporate design heritage valued in the brandscapes of corporate heritage brands, but the experience that consumers have while visiting the space also contributes to their perception of authenticity. That

experience can be related to elements created by the brand as well as those that the brand cannot control.

Theoretical Aspect	Past Literature	Findings	Contributions from this study
<p>Brand image, symbolic authenticity, and augmented role identity alongside the motives behind a visit to corporate heritage brands' buildings and spaces</p>	<p>Some signals become symbolically tied to the brand and assume meaningfulness to the consumer through repetition and consistency - symbolic authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021).</p>	<p>1.The residents of Aveiro have a link to the brand through the Vista Alegre compound and the space is part of the patrimony of the region.</p>	<p>1.The first contribution from this study presents geographical proximity as an indirect reason for consumers to visit the space of a corporate heritage brand, while its buildings and places are linked with the patrimony of the region they belong to, and, therefore, with the regional identity of that area.</p>
	<p>Due to authenticity's symbolic dimension a corporate heritage brand can contribute to the construction of a country's national identity (Rindell & Santos, 2021).</p>		
	<p>The augmented role identity of a corporate heritage brand associates the brand with additional identity modes that can be linked to peoples, cultures, territories and more (Balmer & Chen, 2017). In their study of the Ton Reng Tang, a traditional Chinese medicine company, Balmer and Chen showed that the company was associated with China through a territorial identity (Balmer & Chen, 2017).</p>	<p>2.The organisation of events, the creation of an outlet store as well providing an offer of several different brands inside the Vista Alegre compound are reasons to visit that make consumers familiar with the space. Also, consumers' choice to stay at the hotel is a reason to visit the space.</p>	<p>2.A visit to the store of another brand, in the space of a corporate heritage brand is a reason for a visit. This way the corporate heritage brand diversifies its offer, while building a sustainable foundation for its future. Besides, if the brand to add to the space is also a corporate heritage brand, that can improve the consistency and credibility of the owner of the space, in the eyes of the consumer. This addition contributes to the symbolic authenticity of the brand as another symbol and identity are associated with it, contributing to the development of a cohesive brand identity.</p>
	<p>A corporate heritage brand is a brand that embraces its own past in a relevant way, and that takes advantage of that past to be relevant in the present and to build a successful future (Balmer & Urde, 2006).</p>		
	<p>Longevity comes with the brand's need to embrace change, to accompany the ever-growing evolution of society while remaining transparent about its past and history (Balmer & Urde, 2006).</p>		
	<p>According to the signalling theory, a consistent signal in time will generate brand credibility and perceived brand quality (Pecot et al., 2018). Credibility is revealed in the way the company meets consumers' expectations (what consumers expect the brand to look and feel) and what they are presented with - the consumers' image heritage (Rindell & Santos, 2021).</p>		
	<p>Brandscapes are considered experiential brand spaces "where all the elements of the brand can be assimilated into a coherent entity;" (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006, p.3).</p>		
	<p>Some signals become symbolically tied to the brand and assume meaningfulness to the consumer through repetition and consistency - symbolic authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021).</p>		

	<p>The augmented role identity of a corporate heritage brand associates the brand with additional identity modes that can be linked to peoples, cultures, territories and more (Balmer & Chen, 2017). In their study of the Ton Reng Tang, a traditional Chinese medicine company, Balmer and Chen showed that the company was associated with China through a territorial identity (Balmer & Chen, 2017).</p>		
	<p>The brand's image reflects the associations held in consumer memory determining brand's awareness in consumers' minds, while having a direct influence on the perceived quality, performance, and expectations of the brand (Wiedmann et al., 2011).</p>		
	<p>As for iconic authenticity, it is based on the match between what consumers observe and their previous expectations (Rindell & Santos, 2021). For consumers to perceive a sign from the brand as iconically authentic, it must resemble something that consumers are familiar with, and have previous knowledge on, or expectations about (Grayson & Martinec, 2004).</p>		
<p>The authentic characteristics in the buildings and places of corporate heritage brands</p>	<p>Experiential marketing focused on consumption as a holistic experience and on consumers that have rational and emotional reactions (Schmidt, 1999).</p>	<p>3.The compound is inviting not only for one reason but for a group of elements that create a good atmosphere for consumers.</p>	<p>3.Consumers' process of assessment of the space of a corporate heritage brand is another contribution from this study. Consumers can see the space as whole through a holistic perspective or through the individual analysis of its specific elements. Besides, the surroundings of the buildings and spaces, also influence consumers' perceptions. Therefore, not only is corporate design heritage valued in the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands, but the experience that consumers have while visiting that space also contributes to their perception of authenticity.</p>
<p>Brandscapes are considered experiential brand spaces "where all the elements of the brand can be assimilated into a coherent entity; and where value can be co-created in the form of a place-based experience by the firm's management and consumers alike" (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006, p.3).</p>	<p>The corporate design heritage influences consumers perceptions of authenticity as well as the brand's image (Balmer, 2011a; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Wiedmann et al., 2011).</p>		
<p>Authenticity is considered to work as a "key strategic competitive advantages that companies can gain by including corporate heritage as an element of their corporate brand identity" and is usually associated with genuineness, truth, and reality (Rindell & Santos, 2021, p.1; Grayson & Martinec, 2004).</p>			

Table 17 – Contributions from this study
Source: Self elaborated

The contributions from this study regarding the characteristics that are valued by consumers, in the spaces of corporate heritage brands, are represented in Table 18. The home-like aspect of the buildings in detriment of an industrial look, as well as the living and working conditions that were provided to the workers, are characteristics that contribute to consumers' perceptions and value of the spaces of corporate heritage brands. This relates with the ability of the brand to demonstrate its adaptability and credibility, through its space, therefore contributing to consumers' perceptions of authenticity (Pecot et al., 2019; Rindell & Santos, 2021 Grayson & Martinec, 2004). This concern with the workers and the living conditions provided to them is relevant for consumers, regarding their early expectations of the space of the corporate heritage brand. Over time, and due to the history of a corporate heritage brand, consumers develop expectations that the brand must meet. For the brand to develop its own iconic authenticity it must be able to match these expectations (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Thus, this representation of the company's efforts to provide good working and living conditions for its workers as well as the home-like environment in the spaces improves consumers' willingness to attach importance to the brand and contributes to the corporate heritage brand's longevity (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014; Balmer & Urde, 2006).

As the literature on corporate heritage brands presented the consumers' perceptions of authenticity of a corporate heritage brand, as regarded with a temporal nature, that perception was yet to be related with the buildings and

spaces of a corporate heritage brand. Similarly, to a corporate heritage brand, its buildings and spaces are also considered to be authentic now, for the characteristics that they possess from the past (Rindell & Santos, 2021). In this case, the aging process of the space is evidence of the originality, history and therefore authenticity of the space and translates to the brand's relative invariance phenomenon and apparent invariability in the eyes of the consumers (Balmer, 2011b).

Aesthetically, the brand manifests its heritage in its buildings and places through a worn-out and old appearance (Santos et al., 2016). The concept of indexical authenticity is present as a sign that refers to something that materially resembles what an object is expected to be (Rindell & Santos, 2021). In this case, indexical authenticity is particularly relevant due to consumers' expectations of the aesthetic of the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands, to look old and deteriorated, as a sign of aging and the passage of time. Thus, the icon – in this case the buildings and places – must resemble what the space is supposed to look like for consumers, or its indexical authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). With the aging and deterioration of its space the brand can materially present its past in a tangible way for consumers, a concept that was previously associated, by Rindell and Santos, with the brands products (Rindell & Santos, 2021). This study adds the perspective of spaces as another contribute to the brand's indexical authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021; Grayson & Martinec, 2004).

Theoretical Aspect	Past Literature	Findings	Contributions from this study
The assessment of authenticity of the corporate heritage brand through its buildings and places	Factors such as the corporate heritage brand's adaptability and credibility contribute to the brand's image and consumers' assessment of authenticity (Pecot et al., 2019; Rindell & Santos, 2021; Grayson & Martinec, 2004).	4.The history of Vista Alegre is represented in the space with the houses for the workers, the day-care and remaining buildings that are proof of the life that the founder wanted to give to its workers, and consumers value that.	4.The home-like aspect of the space is valued in detriment of an industrial look. Consumers value the good living conditions provided for the workers through the spaces that are built, not just for working, but for the workers to live in. This does not directly relate with the brands' history; however, consumers judge the brand, and therefore its history by its ability to provide for its workers. This representation of the company's efforts to provide good working and living conditions for its workers as well as the home-like environment in the spaces improves consumers' willingness to attach importance to the brand and contributes to the corporate heritage brand's longevity.
	Iconic authenticity is based on the match between what consumers observe and their previous expectations (Rindell & Santos, 2021). For consumers to perceive a sign from the brand as iconically authentic, it must resemble something that consumers are familiar with, and have previous knowledge on, or expectations about (Grayson & Martinec, 2004).		
	Longevity comes with the brand's need to embrace change, to accompany the ever-growing evolution of society while remaining transparent about its past and history (Balmer & Urde, 2006).		
The signs behind the assessment of authenticity of the space of a corporate heritage brand	For stakeholders, if corporate heritage brands can deliver a set of corporate heritage identity characteristics valuable for them then there will be an increase in the willingness to attach importance to these same organizations (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014).	5.The signs of aging in the buildings are proof of its past, history and originality.	5.The assessment of authenticity of the spaces of corporate heritage brands is influenced by the deterioration and aging process of its buildings and places. The worn-out condition of the space is evidence of the apparent invariability of the space which is then associated to the brand's authenticity. Thus, the signs of deterioration and aging of the spaces - icons - of corporate heritage brands influences the brand's indexical authenticity. Besides, it must also resemble what the space is supposed to look like for consumers.
	The aesthetic is considered a conducive element of corporate design heritage and its relevance in brands endeavours is, not only, presenting consumers with past material artefacts as symbolic representations of the past but crucially as "aestheticized manifestations of corporate heritage" (Santos et al., 2016, p.5).		
	The relative invariance phenomenon grants company's the opportunity to apparently remain the same for stakeholders, especially consumers, while positively adjusting and changing through time (Balmer, 2011b).		
	An icon is a sign that refers to something that materially resembles what an object is expected to be, or its indexical authenticity (Rindell & Santos, 2021; Grayson & Martinec, 2004).		

Table 18 – Contributions from this study relating with the representations of the corporate heritage brand's history in the space
Source: Self elaborated

When linked with the literature, this study's findings add new perspectives on the assessment of corporate heritage brands buildings and places. Consumers can visit the spaces of corporate heritage brands for reasons that may or not be related with that brand's image (Wiedmann et al., 2011). The regional proximity, as a reason for this visit, as well as the addition of other corporate heritage brands to that place contribute to the symbolic authenticity of the brand, as perceived by consumers (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Besides, the assessment of the space may occur through a holistic perspective, an individual perspective of the elements, or both, making the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands brandscapes, where the identity of the company is assessed into a coherent entity (Ponsonby-McCabe, 2006). Finally signs such as the deterioration of the buildings and spaces as well as their home-like aspect, rather than resembling an industrial factory, affects consumers' perceptions of authenticity of the brand by influencing the respective brand image (Burghausen & Balmer, 2014). This study introduces new insights to that idea, specifically, the deterioration and aging of the buildings and places of corporate heritage brands as well as the evidence of the brand's effort to provide good working conditions for its works. Both elements contribute to the perceived indexical authenticity of what the brand, and its space, should look like (Rindell & Santos, 2021). Thus, it is possible to affirm that the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands contribute to consumers' assessment of authenticity of these brands.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study proposed the assessment of the impact of corporate heritage brand's buildings and places in consumers' perceptions of authenticity. To do so, three research questions were designed: What impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places? What are the characteristics of corporate heritage brands' spaces and buildings that are more valued by the consumer? What do consumers perceive as authentic in the buildings and places of a corporate heritage brand?

The answer to the first research question, regarding what impels consumers to visit corporate heritage brands' buildings and places, consists of reasons related with the corporate heritage brand, such as a visit to see the representations of the company's history, to shop from the outlet store or to attend events, among others. However, besides these reasons, others that are not directly related with the corporate heritage brand such as the geographical proximity of consumers and a visit to the stores of other brands in that space, impel consumers to visit the space. Geographical proximity represents an indirect reason to visit the space, however by being geographically close to the residents in that area, the corporate heritage brand is part of the regional patrimony and therefore the regional identity. Thus, the region where the buildings and places of a corporate heritage brand are established is linked, as an additional identity mode, to the brand's identity.

The stores of other brands in the place of a corporate heritage brand are another indirect reason for consumers - that otherwise would not visit the brand - to visit it. If these brands are also corporate heritage brands that can contribute to the construction of the space, and therefore, the brand's identity and longevity. Besides, the ability of the corporate heritage brand to bring an addition that is perceived as authentic for consumers will also contribute as an augmented role identity to the brand. The new brand can integrate the identity of another corporate heritage brand as one secluded identity that is credible and valuable for consumers. The reasons to visit the spaces of corporate heritage brand's buildings and places may or may not be directly related with the corporate heritage brand's image in consumers' minds, however, they contribute as a reason for consumers to visit the space, as well as additional links for the corporate heritage brand's identity.

For the second research question, it is possible to affirm that consumers value, not only the specific elements that compose the space, but them as a group. Besides, the elements that influence the value of the space for consumers might not be controlled by the brand, such as the surroundings of the space, however, they still affect the perceptions of authenticity of the space for consumers.

Regarding the third research question, and the perceptions of the corporate heritage brand's buildings and places, for consumers, two aspects arise. The first, relates with the design and architecture of the space, that consumers expect to be a home-like, rather than an industrial look. Besides, consumers value of the

good living conditions provided to the workers through the spaces that are built, not just for working, but for the workers to live in. Thus, the perceptions of authenticity of the corporate heritage brand's buildings and places are influenced by the early expectations of consumers regarding what the space should look like, its iconic authenticity. Consumers will judge the buildings and places, and therefore, the brand, by the evidence of the living and working conditions provided, alongside the home-like environment in the space. This judgement is made accordingly to what was expected by consumers, prior to the visit.

The second aspect that influences consumers' perceptions of authenticity relates with the aging and deterioration of the buildings and places of corporate heritage brands. Consumers expect to see evidence of the company's age through the look of its buildings and will judge its authenticity as a corporate heritage brand accordingly. Materially, the spaces are expected to look old as evidence of the passage of time and therefore of the company's age. While assessing the state of the buildings and places of the corporate heritage brand, consumers are assessing its indexical authenticity, that will transfer into the judgement of the corporate heritage brand's own authenticity as well.

The main objective of this study was to assess the impact of historic buildings and places in consumers' perceptions of authenticity in corporate heritage brands, which has been accomplished through the contributions linked to the

respective research questions above. Consumers visit the spaces of corporate heritage brands due to their earlier knowledge of the brand, or to visit other brands. They value not only one specific elements in the space, but also the holistic feel of all the elements as well as its surroundings and finally value the historic representations of the brand and its efforts towards its workers, as well as the aging of the space. It is possible to affirm that the assessment of the elements in the buildings and spaces of a corporate heritage brand occurs through indexical and iconic authenticity therefore contributing to consumers' assessment and perceptions of authenticity.

Finally, and according to this study, the locality of the buildings and spaces of a corporate heritage brand should be carefully considered since, with the passage of time, the region will be included in the corporate heritage brand's identity. Besides that, by including brands in the space that are independent from the corporate heritage brand, brands might reach more consumers that wish to visit those spaces and that will, consequently, discover it and the corporate heritage brand. Also, if the brand to add fits the values and history of the corporate heritage brand it will contribute to consumers' assessment of the space and consequently of the brand. Regarding the space itself, corporate heritage brands should try to show consumers evidence of the aging of the space by allowing the signals of aging and deterioration to show instead of fixing and modernize them.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study's assessment of consumers' perceptions of the Vista Alegre compound, could have included not only, the main buildings (the Main Store, Outlet Store, Museum and Church), but also the other spaces that are in the compound such as the Theatre, Hotel, Bordallo Pinheiro store and the factory's workers houses. Also, a study on the perceptions of consumers regarding each of these types of spaces, individually, could have also been a topic of research. Thus, as for the suggestions for future research, the study of the impact of different buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands in consumers' perceptions of authenticity could lead to the identification of the different processes of assessment regarding the different types of spaces. Also, the application of the study of consumers' perceptions of corporate heritage brands buildings and places to other brands is also another topic for future research especially if its focus is on comparing different corporate heritage brand's buildings and places with each other.

This research presents corporate heritage brands' buildings and spaces as elements that influence consumers' perceptions of authenticity of a corporate heritage brand. Therefore, these elements can be regarded as influential and an adequate addition to the heritage quotient of a corporate heritage brand. The heritage quotient assesses the level of heritage of a corporate heritage brand and is constituted by five dimensions including track records, longevity, core values,

use of symbols and history important to the brands identity (Urde et al., 2007). Thus, this research proposes the buildings and spaces of corporate heritage brands as the sixth dimension to constitute the heritage quotient.

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