



## Why Does Fashion Fits China so Much?

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[Doi: 10.19044/esipreprint.9.2022.p503](https://doi.org/10.19044/esipreprint.9.2022.p503)

Approved: 21 September 2022

Posted: 23 September 2022

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*Cite As:*

Scaini L. & Belhaddad M. (2022). *Why Does Fashion Fits China so Much?* ESI Preprints.  
<https://doi.org/10.19044/esipreprint.9.2022.p503>

### Abstract

The present paper investigates the relationship of cause and effect between cultural behavior and Physioeconomy with Fashion in China. The purpose is to identify which cultural reasons lie behind the massive adoption of fashion in China, entrusting to these the success of fashiopulling fashion. The methodology adopted is an exploratory comparative analysis between nations (China, Japan and India), which have cultural physioeconomic similarities, both genuine or artifact. The paper starts from an initial direct observation of the phenomena, checked through the bibliographic review of the background throughout the last 30 years, and supported by a survey supporting the hypothesis. Findings are that fashion is adopted for anthropological reasons of cultural homologation, and not for differentiation due to the specific socio-psychological and cultural structure of the Chinese Nation, similarly to Japan but contrarily from India. The different attitude toward fashion is motivated by cultural reasons. The value of the paper is the exploratory investigation of the anthropologic behavior, offering a scoped analysis with practical interest for socially based commodities and following the research course of the motivations behind buying fashion and China. It is interesting as it will lead to deeper quantitative researches.

**Keywords:** China, Fashion, Anthropology, Consumer Behavior, Marketing

### **Introduction: The Chinese and Asian framework**

Since three decades back, scholars have been studying how physioeconomic phenomena affect social and economic behavior. Some of these can be found acting more deeply in Asia and they are strongly influencing the socio-economic sphere. Issues like overpopulation (Biao et al. 2017; Chandler, Steinberg et al. 1987), anthropological similarity (Pietrusevsky 1994; Bourgress 2004; Okano 2006) and political systems based on mass society (Doak 2001; Doctoroff 2012; Doron 2016; Pye 1993; Mullaney 2010), as well as forms of mono-cultural, ethnical, and religious membership (Harris 2001; McCleary and Barro 1996<sup>1, 2</sup>, Okano 2006; Scaini 2017; Westerlund 1996) are physioeconomic elements forming the very puzzling Asian frame. The topics were and still are actual and interesting for the central role of the region in the world economic frame, and for the increasing relevance of the fashion system under both social and economic points of view. Considering the fact that, in this “complex environment”, there are two out of three world-leading economies, three out of ten world global economic giants (figures read). Moreover, the three out of ten world's most important markets for both fashion and luxury. The relevance of the study always appears to be remarkable. Fashion itself is elevated to a rising role in the business panorama due to the financial and social numbers that it is able to produce, not to mention that it is among the main expenses in several markets, and the basic source of income for a vast number of families in many Asian Countries (The State of Fashion 2017). Hence, the hypothesis that the implanted seeds of fashion and luxury are mainly growing, not under the push of western companies willing to open new markets, but mostly under the pull of the locally stimulated and stimulating physioeconomic background. The present paper is targeting among those, the cultural anthropologic behavior as the main reason of fashion success, combining a robust literature review with a consistent exploratory qualitative research based on structured interviews without any interference from interviewer, and no interference with other interviewees in order to understand this growing phenomenon and to validate direct observations. No SOR has been pursued, but it can be considered as a future improvement for an in-depth analysis of the reaction to specific stimulations that led to the author's PhD thesis. The attention of this research is scoped especially on China (which is now called to lead the economic trend of the sector, overthrowing the historical markets, Zhang and Kim, 2013), in a comparative analysis with other countries and anthropological nations that share a similar socio-economic development and physioeconomic structure, under the point of view of cultural behavior. The reasons of investigation are clear and deserve

in-depth studies. This “physioeconomic background” has been leading, since the late sixties, to specific situations: it is a very “fertile ground” for strategies based on socials, likewise for the common concept of fashion.

### **Literature Review**

A robust scholar research has been conducted, throughout several titles, toward the discovery of invisible socio-economic phenomena influencing three selected Asian countries (China, Japan, and India, Terry 2015) and gathering them in a homogenous work questioning reasons, issues and specific cultural development of this environment. The literature shows an endemic structure in the physioeconomic background. The theoretical approach is questioning what is really hiding behind the social behavior in the Far-East when approaching fashion, and is adopted as the gnoseological base of present paper, including recent papers. The general physioeconomic concepts are structured around Parker (1997<sup>1, 2, 3</sup> and 2000), while the classic Nakamura (1964) confirms the understanding of the behavior in Asia. My previous papers are used to gather different cases and to offer different physioeconomic evidences (Scaini 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015<sup>1, 2</sup> and Scaini and Navarra 2015, Scaini 2018). Next to general knowledge, the review shapes on Fogel (1994) and Parker (1995), representing the main studies on the link between physical ambience, climate and socio-economic development. McCleary and Barro (1996<sup>1, 2</sup>) and Singh (2008) are specially adopted as a base for the specific relationship between Asian environments and religions, next to more specific papers: Chandler, Steinberg et al. (1987), Dipankar (2000), Harris (2001), Mishima (2008<sup>15</sup>). The anthropological and ethnic issues, next to traditions (Smith, 1985 and Viswanathan 2014) are strongly targeted as primary causes of the mass behavior in the environment by the qualitative research, and are mainly based on Bourgeess (2004), Doak (2001), Mullaney (2010), Pietrusevsky (1994), Yang (1996). Eventually, the problem of mass phenomena under socials and politics, gathers all the previous issues in specific national forms, yet with very common outcomes, are explored through Bakken (2000), Callahan (2014), Chen (2004), Gutherie (2012), Jia and Torsten (2017), Pye (1993), Rambourg (2014) (about the specific formal outcome in China), after all different self-studies and papers published between 2011 and 2015, about the general contextualization of physioeconomic forces and behavior, like De Mooij and Hofstede (2002), Schütte and Ciarlante (2016) and Wu and Yan (2018).

### **Methodology of Research**

The entire literature-based hypothesis has been verified through the survey, using a specific set of questions and choosing a respectable sample. The selection is based on limited number of screeners, in fact the exploratory

purpose is also to identify the right set of screeners to obtain a bias-free investigation and reliable basis for the quantitative analysis in SSPS. The methodology is based on an original idea deriving from direct observation and practical experience that was initially confirmed by secondary sources. The literature review touches and explores different studies about the complex far-eastern Asian framework throughout the last 30 years (Terry 2015), and afterwards, narrows them down to the two main fields of the present research, which are: the “*physical environment*” (China, with Japan and India), next to the physical, there is the “*physioeconomic environment*”: it is "fashion£ and its deeper and hypothesized reasons of adoption, that are hypothesized to be mainly cultural. The methodological reason why the three Countries are compared in the investigation, apart for the socio-economic reasons that gather them around the number of key-market nowadays, are:

- The specific high-contextualization of their culture (making them potentially hostile to mass-adoption of culturally-linked products),
- The systematic mass-orientation of the population (making it potentially favorable to mass-adoption of culturally-linked products),
- The cross-cultural similarities that are useful to identify hidden forces fostering and hindering fashion.

Data were collected through questionnaires administered online and considering the gathering of answers finished when reaching the number of 600, with a minimum of 500 validated. The questions asked to all the interviewees in three different environments were the same.

### ***Validation***

About the origin of respondents and cultural influence: Intentionally, 200 interviewees “from or relative to” each of the three considered countries/environments were randomly selected. This is important to mix in right proportion the effect of the meta-brand perception. A total number of 600 with a minimum of 500 expectedly validated answers leads to a different subtotal from each environment. Anyway, the variation is consistently non-relevant and the single subtotal acceptably similar. Cultural biases: Among the total 600 interviewees and the partial 200 interviewees “from or relative to” each Environment, a maximum of 50% of the total questionnaires were expected and accepted from non-autochthons. This is important to limit the effect cultural biases. The validation of a minimum of 500/600 has interfered with the final ratio by only 2%. External cultural analysis: Non-autochthons were required to answer about all the three environments, autochthons only about their own environment. Therefore, non-autochthons responded three times. This was important to observe the reaction of culturally non-biased interviewees in their observation of the three environments. The final number of questionnaire usable and validated is 518 (86% of total gathered)

and they are free from validation bias and inconsistencies between Q1: does “X” influence fashion business? (X= GEOgraphy, ANTropology, RELigion, ETHnics, SOCIal behavior, INDIVidual behavior, POLiticis, ECONomics) and Q12, last question: “Is there any relation between fashion and pshyco-social phenomena?”. Moreover, all questionnaires, to be validated, must be free of unanswered questions. The Bias and inconsistency between Q1 and Q12 happens if the answers are not aligned (yes-yes or no-no).

**Table 1.** Excluded answers for biases between Q1 and Q12 and incomplete answers:

Environment	Biases	Incomplet e	Total	% of exclusions
China	36	10	46/246	18.69
Japan	11	10	21/183	11.47
India	10	15	25/181	13.81
Grand Total	57	35	92/600	15.33

The first part of the questionnaire is intended to gather anagraphic, statistically important data. The Ratio expresses the proportion between autochthon and non-autochthon respondents in each market kept after the validation (non-autochthons are the same per each market, and must have respond to each market for the validation, 4 interviewees had double citizenship):

- From China and from non-Chinese about China: 200 (% ratio 61/39)
- From Japan and from non-Japanese about Japan: 162 (% ratio 50/50)
- From India and from non-Indians about India: 156 (% ratio 48/52)

Originally, the answers to the questionnaires were sorted between those received from autochthons (Group 1) and those received from non-autochthons (Group 2). The discrepancy between the answers of the group is average  $Var(X) \Rightarrow 2\%$ . (Where, X refers to Group 1 and Group 2). The final outcome is that China results biased mostly among non-autochthons, which is also confirms the validity of the new hypothesis H4 and H5 that refers to the lack of deep knowledge of the Chinese physioeconomic reasons for fashion adoption. All incomplete or biased questionnaires (Q1 and Q12) are already invalidated, so the index of variance and its acceptance is reliable. Given that the only possible answers are Yes or No in Q2~12 (excluded is Q4, that present the possibility to link two or three environments or to deny the possibility), the relevant data is the ratio between confirming the hypothesis and rejecting and the cross check between different environments.

**Table 2.** Anagraphic Data (group 1 – group 2)

Origin	China - 200		Japan - 162		India - 156	
	Group 1	Group 2	p 1	p 2	p 1	p 2
	122	78	81	81	74	82
Age Range (%)						
<24	15		21		38	
24-34	62		58		30	
>34	23		21		32	
Gender (F/M) (%)	47/53		44/56		41/59	
Education (Degree MA/PhD) (%)	17/45/38		10/55/35		29/30/41	

**The 12 Questions present in the survey:**

Q1: Does “X” influence fashion business? (Where X= GEOgraphy, ANTropology, RELigion, ETHnics, SOCial behavior, INDividual behavior, POLiticis, ECONomics)

Q2: “Massification” is the spontaneous or artificial process through which people regroup and gather with others, tending to a generic similarity, and trying to avoid phenomena of social isolation and individualism. Hence, is Massification actual in Japan (Y N) China (Y N) India (Y N)?

Q3: (Genuineness) Is Massification a historical and/or natural phenomenon and not artificially built by political forces in Japan (Y N) China (Y N) India (Y N)?

Q4: Among the aspect mentioned sub Q1, China has characteristic in common with Japan (), India (), both ()?

Q5: Is Massification typically a far-eastern phenomenon? (Y/N)

Q6: Does Massification support fashion in Japan (Y N)?

Q7: Does massification support fashion in India (Y N)?

Q8: Does massification support fashion in China (Y N)?

Q9A: Does any mass-background exist in China (Y N)?

Q9B: Is the Chinese “Massified” background genuine (Y N)?

Q10: Is there any link between Massification and Fashion (Y N)?

Q11: Is there any use by people to adopt fashion to gather themselves into social groups (Y N)?

Q12: Is there any relation between fashion and psycho-social phenomena?

Table 3. Exclusions Based on Biases and Incomplete Answers

Environment	Biases	Incomplete	Total	% of exclusions
China	36	10	46/246	18.69
Japan	11	10	21/183	11.47
India	10	15	25/181	13.81
Grand Total	57	35	92/600	15.33

Table 4. Results of Q1~Q11 (in %)

	JAPAN		CHINA		INDIA		ALL	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Q1: does “X” influence fashion business? (X= GEOgraphy, ANthropology, RELigion, ETHnics, SOcial behavior, INDividual behavior, POLiticis, ECONomics)	65	35	56	44	44	56	5	45
Q2: “Massification” is the spontaneous or artificial process through which people regroup and gather with others, tending to a generic similarity, and trying to avoid phenomena of social isolation and individualism. Hence, is Massification actual in Japan (Y N) China (Y N) India (Y N)?	86	14	94	6	72	28	4	16
Q3: (Genuinity) is Massification a historical and/or natural phenomenon and not artificially built by political forces in Japan (Y N) China (Y N) India (Y N)?	65	35	21	79	48	52	5	55
Q4: Among the aspect mentioned sub Q1, China has characteristic in common with Japan (), India (), both	65				32			
Q5: is massification typically a far-eastern phenomenon?	81	19	78	22	77	23	4	36
Q6: does massification support fashion in Japan (Y N)?	59	41	64	36	55	45	9	21
Q7: does massification support fashion in India (Y N)?	21	79	20	80	21	79	0	40
Q8: does massification	53	47	67	33	62	38	5	33

support fashion in China (Y N)?							7	
Q9a: does any mass-background exist in China (Y N)?	88	22	95	5	84	16	9	11
Q9b: is the Chinese massified background genuine (Y N)?	20	80	55	45	28	72	4	66
Q10: is there any bond between massification and Fashion (Y N)?	56	44	75-71	25-29	38	62	5	6
Q11: is there any use by people to adopt fashion to gather themselves into social groups (Y N)?	80	20	85	15	78	22	6	0

**Table 5.** Detailed Results of Q1 (by variable, in %):

	JAPAN		CHINA		INDIA	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
GEO	59	41	31	69	14	86
CUL(ANT)	61	49	73	27	55	45
REL	21	79	51	49	50	50
ETH	81	19	62	38	44	56
SOC-b	74	26	69	31	12	88
IND-b	56	44	10	90	75	25
POL	87	13	84	16	58	42
ECO	85	15	65	35	48	52

**Reference:**

- GEO: Geography
- ANT: Anthropology
- REL: Religion
- ETH: Ethnics
- SOC: Social behavior
- IND: Individual behavior
- POL: Politics
- ECO: Economics

Q1 is a very important question because double-checked with Q12 offers a proof of non-statistical consistency, it reveals which factor are considered more influential of the adoption of fashion (independently) in the three markets (and can also reveal through a cross-check which factors are the most common), finally it reveals the role of the cultural factors. The cultural factors are 6 out of 8 totals, and only CULTure and POLitics are present as relevant factors in the three environments. The factors fostering fashion are consistently higher in China and Japan than in India. The first coupling (China and Japan) counts 5 out of 8 common factors: 4 out of 5 are cultural factors and 4 out of 6 are cultural factors: CULTure, SOCIAL behavior, POLitics, ECONomy). The second coupling (China and India) has only 4 out of 8 and 2 out of 4 are cultural and 2 out of 6 total cultural factors:



(POLitics and CULTure). The remaining set of questions is intended to understand the relevance of the phenomenon of “Massification” in the three environments. Massification is explored like genuine or artificial and as the main cultural complex phenomenon of adoption of fashion. Consistently with Q1 it results as main “complex cultural factor” In China and Japan, but not in India. A second questionnaire, identical to the first, was administered following the same rules but in smaller quantities, (fixed maximum number was 100 questionnaires in equal number in the three environments +1 for China. The obtained ratio of valid answers, was 86, so the second test can be considered consistent with the first. The purpose was to validate two years after the first investigation any possible variance or changing. The  $\text{Var}(X)=0.84\%$ , within a tolerable variance (Where X refers to the first and second questionnaires). The variation between the first and the second round was:

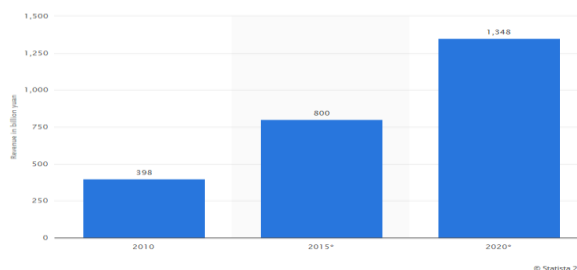
- About China: <2% in favor of the hypothesis
- About Japan: <0,12% in favor of the hypothesis
- About India: <0.4% in favor of the hypothesis

The irrelevant discrepancy was adopted to verify the integrity of the first round of answers and to maintain the consistency of original proofs.

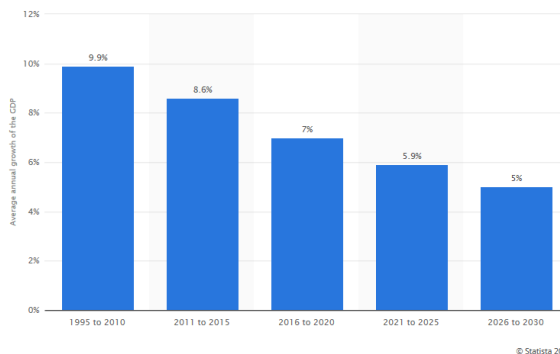
## Analysis

### Problem: Why Does Fashion Fit China So Much?

Actually, scholars and experts from the industry remark with a daily frequency how today in China luxury and fashion's growth rate is experiencing some never seen augmented pace (see figure3 and Helmore 2014), despite the fact that figures of the growth have been severely reappraised (see figure 1 and 2 and Krugman 2013). Present paper suggests how real investigations should be focalized on deeper reasons of it all, which might be very different from other business fields, even massive ones. Reasons and issues now seem to collide with a question that could be scholarly educated as : “to what extent does fashion fit China, as a result of physioeconomic influence?”



**Fig 1.** Fashion Retail Revenue in China (2010-2020, in billion RMB) (source: Statista© 2015)



**Fig 2.** Forecast for the average annual growth of Chinese GDP (1995-2030)  
(source: Statista© 2015)

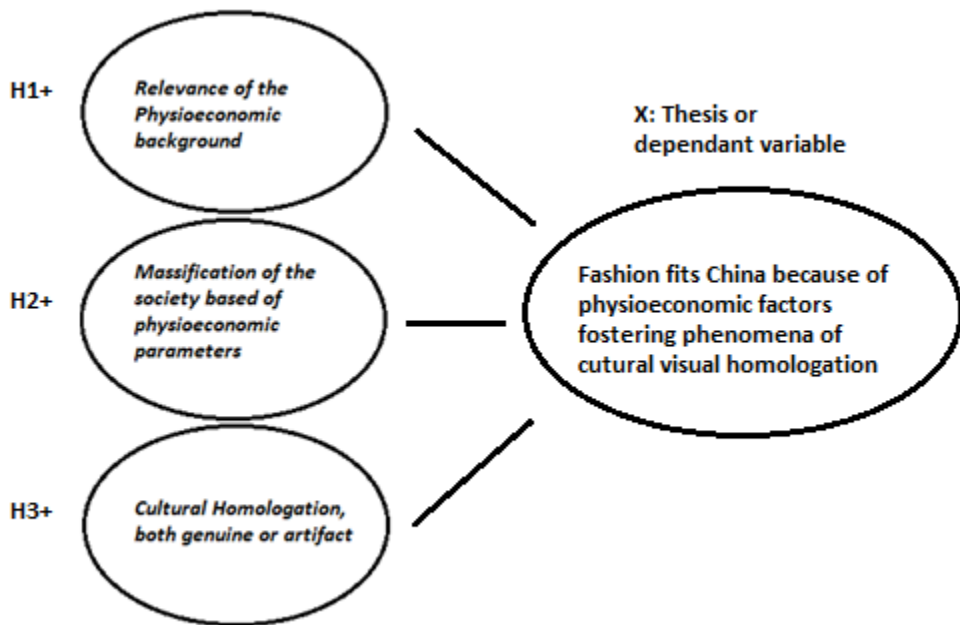
Figures show how the growth and the trend of Fashion, and GDP diverge drastically between from 2010-2012. This is a neat proof of the loose relationship between power of purchase, or economic growth, and the real turnover generated by fashion in China. Reasons cannot be gathered simplistically around the economic growth of the market (seen like a reason and instead, yet arguably, a consequence of specific anthropological reasons, Chen 2004; Fogel 1964), at least in this field, or linked with an undemonstrated search of individuality or self-acknowledgment, based on a “market feeling” rather than on deep research (Lee and Edwards 2014). It is a matter of fact that social behavioral reasons are commonly influenced by external factors (theory of social groups and classic physioeconomy give evidences, next to recent studies on Chinese perception of value, (Hun, Wong and Tjosvold 2015; **Jia and Torsten 2017**; Wu and Yan 2018). Moreover, the paper is exploring which different anthropological conditions, and they appear to be many, help to gather people around fashion and luxury totems in massive forms and around their brand's represented values and how this grouping acts under specific environmental forces (Fogel 1964, 1994; Parker 19971, 19972, 2000), religions (Parker19973; McCleary and Barro 20061, 20062), traditional and anthropological factors (Locke et al. 1991; Clark 1990; Sheer 2003; Zhou and Belk 2004; Smith 1985; Yang 1996). Paper suggests a comparative verification of the hypothesis between similar Countries, crossing the analysis of the development of different physioeconomic fields. The interesting relationship between money and physioeconomic conditions (Marber 2003), is to be seen like subject of future improvement.

### Hypothesis

1. The main hypothesis is that fashion fits China and is widely adopted, bought and consumed in many commodity forms because of the

specific physioeconomic background of the Chinese nation, mainly cultural.

- a. Therefore, retail strategies (pushing strategies) of many companies encounter a weak cultural resistance and mostly a fertile background for fashion items (Scaini 2015). It is physioeconomics that foster phenomena of pulling fashion, rather than letting them being pushed by external marketing forces and business operations.
2. The second hypothesis suggests that the local cultural values are most influencing physioeconomics on the socio-economic environment (and here specifically the fashion environment), both in a positive way that fosters fashion (Japan, China), or in a negative one (India).
  - a. Therefore, the comparative analysis intends to offer reasons and evidences as to why the Chinese and Japanese nations have a psychosocial and cultural behavior linked to a similar fashion consumption (and the Massification of the society is one of these aspects).
  - b. Moreover, the analysis proves that this behavior is different from India (despite different aspects being apparently similar) where in fact there is a stronger cultural resistance, making fashion harder to be adopted and pushing strategies less effective.
3. More in depth, a third hypothesis is that the cultural physioeconomic forces considered are actually merged into Chinese society helping to create a fertile ground for fashion strategies of homologation thanks to specific values like Massification and identity equality, analysis proofs.
  - a. The comparative analysis with Japan's system shows very specific and not so dissimilar conditions,
  - b. The comparative analysis with India shows a radically different cultural development.

Fig. 3 Proposed Model**Fig. 3.** Proposed Model

As an expected outcome the fact that very favorable conditions in physioeconomic instances linked with politics, with traditional structure of the society and thinking can be found in all of three nations, but basically acting on consumers behavior in a different way, stronger in China. The expected outcomes and the entire research is scoped on consumes and not on purchases, being speculated that the consumes pull fashion into the society, allows it to become buyable, and pushing strategies from the companies are basically acting on the level of retail. This is a specific future recommended improvement of the resent research. Expected outcomes can be gathered into three main groups:

1. Fashion fits China because of the specific cultural background, similarly to what happened in Japan
2. Pushing strategies that aim to insert fashion commodities into the retail are basically helped by a favorable cultural pulling background.
3. Evidences proofing that without a favorable cultural background pushing strategies fail. This is explained through comparative analysis with similar markets and different success cases in fashion.

***Demonstration: Evidences of Physioeconomic and Anthropological reasons that are Pulling Fashion***

*Comparative analysis China - Japan:* the comparative investigation is basically focalized on two physioeconomic factors: nationalism and ethnic acknowledgment. The goal was to determine “the way how these factors can be spotted in Japanese and Chinese cultures and similarly influence the field of fashion as well as the consumers” actions”.

1. *Nationalism:* how the historical nationalism, lead by a forced closure of the Japanese society to outsiders till the XIX or even XX century (Mishima 2008<sup>15</sup>; Smith 1985; Okano 2006) helped fashion, homologation and the development of a Massified society. The mono-ethnic physical similarity in a small and everlastingly isolated territory is very objective which might have created a nation with a significantly high fashion-oriented perception (in the meaning of ruled and homogeneous) and a historically favorable market. Figures give evidences of the phenomena: actually a consistent 94% of 20 years old Japanese girls living in Tokyo have access to Luxury and fashion goods such as Louis Vuitton bags and 90% to Prada’s (Pellicelli 2005). All those instances were pulled by a specific tribalism and then urban nomadism, which represent now the real counter-trend in the vast, and yet, basically homogeneous panorama of Fashion in Japan, passing through the phenomenology of “*Bosozoku*” in the seventies, are just a very representation of what a social life is (Callahan 2014).

2. *Ethnic Acknowledgement:* how the self-acknowledgment of the Japanese Nation from a single ethnic group (over 98% of the population is homogenous and self-acknowledged as “Yamato Nation”, Doak 2001; Mishima 2008<sup>15</sup>), and the consequent strong cultural identity, worked out a natural adoption process of standardized and homologative goods. Such Massification passes through, and passes by, the research of individualism in comparison, as scholars proofed. Compared to China, the phenomenon is more genuine. Eventually, 68% of the sample (Q3) confirmed such hypothesis, with a robust 81% (Q1, answer ETHnology) among the Asian sample saying that, effectively, Japanese people have a somatic similarity and 81% (Q1, answer ETHnology) adding standardized behavior.

*Comparative analysis China - India:* Some similar physioeconomic instances worked in contrary than in most countries of the broad geographic environment, and it is interesting for the opposite outcome. This is a further

proof of how the human mass factors may be influenced in different ways; due to the specific conditions that lead to their formation, and regarding the dominant role of religion and traditions when it comes to fashion, a very interesting future possible improvement.

1. *Massification:* In India, this phenomenon did not meet any fertile ground (sample reads only 28% for Q2, Massification as a spontaneous phenomenon). From one side, the socioeconomic poverty (21.9% 2011 from a 37.2% 2004 and a 45.3% 1993 of population below general poverty WorldDataBank 2015; Roberts 2014) has seized any possibility of a strong massive adoption of fashion instances. Another important point is the extended specific high cultural context of the country; an aspect in common between Japan and China, which in India conversely, still makes fashion strategy a hard task. In fact, it tends to homologate and homogenize people, better than remarking and pointing out specificities and individualities, important in India for Vindhya (2003) and Viswanathan(2014), and it is really the main outcome of this comparative point with China.
2. *Religion:* Afterwards, it is relevant how the religious influence on society, following McCleary (2006<sup>1</sup>, 2006<sup>2</sup>) and Parker (1997<sup>3</sup>) and a recently spotted consequent historical attitude of subdivision into castes, accordingly with Dipankar (2000), influenced the anthropologic behavior, when it comes to fashion. Eventually, the very endemic and high context culture (Nishimura, Nevgi and Tella 2008, in a comparative study with Japan) is linked on a deeper reading of consumer behavior as adopted by Salomon (2011), reporting to the importance of individuality. Sample returned 94% (Q2 on Massification) of answers linking China and Massification against a mere 28% for India: In fact, sorting only Indians from the sample, it reports a robust 88% of a non-Massification-friendly nation. It is an interesting improvement on the comparative analysis of luxury and fashion in India. As figures report (Roberts 2014) and confirmed by Google (returning Fashion 274.000K times and luxury 135.000K with a turnover that has a more than reversed ratio in 2016).

*Specific factors for comparing China:* In China, results are much clearer in the extended framework analysis. Some physioeconomic aspect is in common with India (population, large masses, high cultural context) and Japan (pretended, or imposed to be perceived somatic and ethnic similarity, and high form of nationalistic political movements). 66% of the sample indicates common physioeconomic characteristics taken into account with

Japan, 65% with India, and sensibly 62% with both (Q4 about characteristics pairing China and India). The reasons that the present paper actually calls as main causes of the strong growth of fashion (or hindering it), lie solidly in the way how the concepts of people or nation (73%), as well as unity and mass (84%) were fostered throughout history by anthropology and religion (51%) and ethnicity (62%), entering deeper than elsewhere into the single consumer behavior, and creating a sort of group consumer behavior (69%), better than individual (10%), recreating conditions of nation and tribalism, intended like huge groups (Q1 about influence of physioeconomics on fashion business). Shaping on a passive form of homologation, likewise artificial (In fact, it is more than a wrong preconception of the physical similarity in China and 58 different ethnics and languages, means yet something), from where does a Massification similar to the Japanese one come from? It is a form of membership forced by historical evolution of the country (Friedman 2016; Greenhalgh, S and Winckler 2005; Gutherie 2012; Pye 1993; Yang 1996; China a Nation in Uniform n.d.), where Maoist communism mainly, as Doctoroff wrote (2012), and an early adoption of uniforms (also uniformed behaviors), as a strong traditional heritage passed safe through the two revolutions (nationalist and communist) and the spirit of a compact society, confirmed by the final qualitative outcome, actually is a real wheel for fashion adoption. It is popular in China now to talk about mass-effect, mass-reunion, and mass-grouping of people: a scarcity of individual thinking and individual creativity, which means nothing like design, but way of thinking-acting. From Nakamura (1964) to a recent Bloom (2014) it is one constant and consistent aspect of the society. Basically Chinese people like “Mass” and “big groups” phenomena and the late fashion adoption might have not started from a desire or necessity of differentiation (different internet sources report this without any evidence), but conversely from the willingness to group (or regroup after shuffling around different values) with other members of the same tribe. Those totemic values are those around whom different western models are acting.

## Findings

The main findings can be eventually enlisted as the following:

- Specific physioeconomic factors do influence the adoption of fashion in China. It is equally evident in Japan, but reasonably different in India. These factors are mainly cultural homologation, ethnical and national self-acknowledgment;
- Fashion is so broadly adopted by Chinese people thanks to the influence of processes like self-assimilation with mass groups following a very social behavior;

- The process of Massification does not originate from an endemic, nor natural physioeconomics, but it is artificial, conversely from other nations, like Japan. Massification and fashion adoption in China operate in the same way as in Japan;
- Massification in China starts from the same physioeconomic background as in India, but the outcome, that is, fashion adoption is very different for cultural reasons;
- The reason why fashion is broadly adopted by Chinese people lies in a scheme of physioeconomic membership. Social behavior and fashion behavior are an evident result of specific cultural backgrounds;
- Fashion is highly fostered in China by the specific cultural architecture of the Chinese nation (basically anthropic and non-natural), evident also in Japan, even more genuine. Strategies pushing items into the retail system were and still are fostered by the Chinese social structure, like in Japan, but hindered in India for cultural reasons relying on religion.

Gathered around the action of a number of hidden physioeconomics, the fashion environment has found in China an easy market, similar to Japan, for a physioeconomic background, which those two nations share, even though with a different grade of authenticity. Conversely, the adoption of fashion passes through different actions than in India, despite of some original very common physioeconomic historical aspect, as evidenced by the comparative analysis. Basically, the two nations have been following different paths: China went towards Massification, assimilating it to Japan in fashion adoption, whilst India took a path toward individualism. The qualitative research offers enough evidence on this fact and confirms the vast theoretical existing research. Final answer to the original problem is that Fashion fits China due to specific physioeconomics leading to mass-culture. Practically, there are specific historically and culturally-forced aspects, which cannot be underestimated leaving the initiative of business to a mere superficial observation of financial facts and figures. The reason of such strong and effective adoption lies mainly in the cultural assimilation to a social mass model, better than in any trivially-supposed and never proofed search for individualism. There are actually different actions forcing the construction of a national identity (in physioeconomic terms), especially working under the point of view of self-perception of tribal identity, and a consequent different approach to fashion, in different nations, which might have led to a common outcome, with surprisingly interesting aspects. Fashion, in China, is much more pulled, encountering no form of cultural resistance, conversely from India. Next, it is supposed that the common



concept of luxury is adopted in a broad way to create a sort of upper-level cultural tribes, opposed to sub-cultures (Hitmann and Ward 2007; Scaini and Navarra 2015) that is, very opposite to its nature, and it is an interesting future improvement for the collateral research.

### *Verification and Demonstration*

As a common observation between the three countries and as a general commentary, there are aspects of life which are bordering socials, economics, group behavior and influenced by specific anthropological elements such as traditions, religions, and geography. Such aspects are the real keys to open the doors of a strategy based on Massification and mass product in the Far East and that can be explained as *Paraeconomicals* (Scaini 2105<sup>1</sup>). Such instances are explored as market drivers, where a market is a nation made out of people with acknowledged, perceived, or unnoticed common behavioral characteristics. The verification happens pursuing an extended qualitative research that relies on the primary sources of the present research paper. Scholars stated how in different East-Asian Countries the Massification processes developed and was adopted more naturally (Bakken 2000, Greenhalgh and Winckler 1996; China a Nation in Uniform n.d.): the interviewees confirmed this characteristic, likewise endemic (Q5, Massification typically eastern phenomenon, 64%), and hereby, it is suggested how the phenomenon might have supported fashion (Finnane 2003). It is consistent for Japan (Q6, Massification supports fashion in Japan, 59% of Japanese and 64% other Asians), but not for India (Q7, Massification supports fashion in India, 21% of Indians and 20% of other Asians). It is coherent and robust opinion of China (Q8, Massification supports fashion in China 53% and 67%). Basically, this specific social behavior and its influencing issues could have caused a specific form of “Massification” that influences strategies of segmentation, pushing companies to mass-retail strategies and allowing an equally powerful massively pulling phenomena from huge segments, where differences between people are seen like very minor, and there is a strong attempt to be assimilated while assimilating with the other members. In this case, the qualitative investigation is arguably divided between who thinks that this florid ground was used deliberately (Q9b, genuineness of mass-background in China, 55%) or just found. A very little part of the sample denies the existence of this anthropological structure (Q9a, existence of mass-background in China, 5%). The relationship between Massification and Fashion is evident for the majority (Q10, existence of bonds between Massification and fashion Chinese 75%, other Asians 71%). Eventually, the sample has confirmed the existence of a bond between social mass-structure and fashion in the compared markets as well (Q10, 56% for Japan and 38% for India) and it could be an interesting future

improvement to understand the limits of this bond in India, where it is sensibly lighter. Moreover, it has been proofed that the adoption of fashion is done to recreate new social groups more than for the search of individualism (Q11, fashion to gather into social groups, 60%). All those mentioned phenomena causing Massification and consequent economic boost of fashion products, have happened due to different reasons. The final result appears like an arguable form of almost instinctive “massive tribalization” (Cova et al. 2007; Scaini 2015<sup>2</sup>; Beard 2008). The sample confirmed such hypothesis from a previous research (Scaini and Navarra 2015<sup>3</sup>). The primary source has consistently and solidly verified how, in different environments, the phenomena of fashion adoption have assumed different characteristics through the years likewise with very similar results in the creation of a Massified society, ideal ground for fashion, in its homologative meaning. The reason why fashion fits China so much is to be researched in the physioeconomic background pulling it, just like what happened in Japan but conversely in India, despite some very similar forces; like a highly contextualized culture (Scaini 2015<sup>2</sup>; Viswanathan 2014), religious structure of the society (Dipankar 2000; Harris 2001), and socio-economic structure (Nishimura, Nevgi and Tella 2008; Vindhya 2003). The collected and analyzed data are a valid sample to lead a deeper and broader research that will start from a statistical analysis in order to validate the results (consistency, collinearity, validity and inference) and in order to exclude potential relevant bias,

### **Conclusion**

The paper was able to consistently affirm the existence of a physioeconomic background that makes a specific cultural environment very receptive towards fashion strategies (which means nothing like clothes, but is more meant for standardization strategies). This kind of background is effectively attracting products and companies into the market, fostering financial and commercial success of companies and products, together with the cultural aspects of fashion. The same background could have followed an alternative route leading to hindering issues. The paper suggests that a robust comparative analysis may practically help a company to choose the right marketing and business strategy to apply to its policies in some cultural contexts, better than focusing on the mere economic environment. The behavior of social groups, and both the historical path as well as the anthropological evolution is actually a key driver for these strategies.

### **Limitations and Future Improvements**

Actual limitations were the lack of quantitative measurements of the result, under the point of view of an accurate mathematical model due to lack

of funds. Moreover, the main physioeconomic forces in action can be studied more in-depth, together with the interesting effect of wealth or physical ambience (Fogel 1994). The last interesting limitation lies in the actually unexplored link between self and external perceptions, which has been slightly proofed through the crossed verification (fig. 5) to be regularly adopted as an evidence in the present paper but has offered interesting points of discussion, especially concerning Q6 and Q8 (support of fashion in Japan and China through Massification), and slightly for Q7 and Q10 (support of fashion through Massification in India and eventual bonds between fashion and Massification). The future recommended improvements, appearing like urgent in the sense of understating the role of fashion and standardization in the Asian framework, are the understanding of social behavior in comparative analysis with the western one and the measure of fostering and hindering effect in a practical investigation, mathematically based. The hypothesis of a Japanese custom Massification of the society (with relevant derivate phenomena like urban tribes) can be another interesting future improvement. Actually, present paper, counting on a solid implant of scholarly theories, statistic figures and confirming them through a consistent qualitative research, gives evidence of the physioeconomic reasons and causes influencing fashion phenomena in Far Eastern Asian environments and can be improved by entering into the depths of the specific reasons of the Chinese market in a comparative study that considers more than the 8 specific physioeconomic points or considering them in a deeper way, when applied to fashion strategies. Three further points deserve a future research:

- SOR analysis based on deeper and broader analysis in order to understand the exact relevance, validity, collinearity, inference of the data;
- Why does China adopt imported fashion, while India gathers around genuine cultural values? Can the politically imposed Massification be considered as one of the reasons?
- Do the same fashion outcomes appear to be applicable to other mass products?
- How does luxury result, influenced or not, by similar physioeconomic factors as fashion?

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