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**THE INFLUENCE OF PACKAGING EVOKING NOSTALGIA ON BRAND-  
EQUITY: A CROSS CULTURAL STUDY AMONG BELGIANS IN THE  
CONFECTIONERY MARKET**

*Case study of Delacre*

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## Foreword

This thesis, whose goal was to study the influence of packaging evoking nostalgia on brand-equity, is written in English. This choice was made as I wanted to make a contribution to the marketing research in Belgium, by remaining neutral and be easily understood by both regions of the country. Moreover, studying Belgium and its consumers is very important to me due to my education and values, and making a comparison between French and Dutch speakers was meaningful to me. I have been educated in both languages and I wanted to express my deep Belgian roots through this thesis. However, this resulted in double work as I had to work in three languages all the time, translating information, surveys and testimonies from one language to the other and analyzing the data twice. Moreover, an important part of the literature concerning nostalgia has been written in French. In order to be coherent, I translated those most faithfully possible.

This thesis, the culmination of my studies in Business Management at the Louvain School of Management, couldn't be achieved thanks to several people I want to acknowledge here.

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## 1. Introduction

Brands are part of our everyday life. They represent a company and are used as a vehicle for their values. Marketing continuously tries to enhance the image of those, strives for a better position in the market with more and better satisfied customers, leading to higher sales volumes and profits. Multiple and various techniques exist in order to achieve those goals, but nostalgia has been in the center of the attention for the last two decades. Scholars have shown interest in this topic as it is a concept that combines cognition, perception and behavior and goes far behind the simple marketing trick. Indeed, when processing nostalgic cues different types of memories are involved. The way nostalgia will be perceived will influence the consumer responses, namely attachment in terms of loyalty and preference and behavior in terms of purchase intention and activity.

The concept of nostalgia has been analyzed under different perspectives by psychologists as well as sociologists and marketers. Although no single definition of nostalgia has been accepted, most of researchers agree on the fact that nostalgia is a positive feeling linked to the past (e.g. Lu et al., 2015; Kessous & roux, 2010; Goulding, 2002). Former research kept the topic on a broad level and focused on nostalgia as a unidimensional construct which has two main dimensions: personal and historical nostalgia (Havlena & Holak, 1996). Recent scholars, however, developed the concept of brand nostalgia as a multi-dimensional concept, consisting in perceived brand oldness, personal- and historical memories (Bartier, 2014). This will be the starting point of this paper.

Moreover, nostalgia has been mostly analyzed from a qualitative point of view, but rare are the theories and findings that can be generalized on a broader level. Recently, scholars have begun to focus on “the role of brand nostalgia in the formation of consumer-based brand equity” (Bartier, 2014, p. 118) and this will be our common thread throughout this thesis.

Nostalgia has been investigated in multiple marketing areas and for different product categories (Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Havlena & Holak, 1991). Food stands out as the most studied topic as well as the effects of nostalgia in advertising (e.g. Muehling & Pascal, 2011; Muehling & Sprott, 2004). Surprisingly, nostalgic cues in packaging have not been examined thoroughly. For this reason, our study will focus on packaging evoking nostalgia and the effects of it on brand equity. Brand equity is indeed considered as a key factor for the success of a brand and must be managed efficiently (Bartier, 2014; Aaker, 1991). More specifically, our study will concentrate on a certain type of brand equity model, called the consumer-based

brand equity framework. This model takes into account the importance of brand associations which are able to act as differentiators and add value to the brand (Bartier, 2014; Keller et al., 2008).

As said previously, most of the research (Telford, 2013; Ferrandi, 2012; Sugimori et al., 2011; Boonefaes et al., 2010; Kessous & Roux, 2010) has focused so far on nostalgia evoked by food, as this is the strongest way to recall memories from the past. Indeed, nostalgic brands are consumed because people tend to seek assurance and stability in a fast-changing world. By buying products that evoke the “good old days”, consumers reassure themselves and reconnect with the past (Stern, 1992; Braun-LaTour et al, 2007; Loveland et al., 2010). Indeed, nostalgic brands often reflect authenticity and quality (Hemetsberger & Pirker, 2006; Ferrandi, 2011; Parsons & Cappellini, 2011; Renko & Bucar, 2014). Food is the product category that uses nostalgia the most on its packaging and advertising. This is especially true for sweet products such as cookies, dairy products, jam and chocolate. Indeed, nostalgia is linked with fond childhood memories which are associated with happy moments during which sweet food was consumed (Boonefaes et al., 2010; Kessous & Roux, 2010).

Finally, several research papers focused on the moderators or influencers of nostalgia and its resulting responses. Although gender, age and the propensity to be nostalgic have already largely been discussed in the literature, no general agreement has been found (Muehling & Pascal, 2011; Davis, 1979). Additionally, little research has concentrated on the influence of culture, while in previous studies it appeared that culture may have a direct impact on survey responses and how nostalgia is perceived (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013; Guzman and Paswan, 2009; Holak et al., 2008; Reisenwitz, 2001).

For all the reasons cited above, we want to focus on the gaps that have not been tackled by the literature previously. The objectives of this thesis are multiple. Firstly, we have empirically re-tested some aspects of the recent model developed by Bartier (2014) and generalized its use by applying it to packaging for low-involvement products. More specifically, we tested this on packaging of *Delacre* cookies. Second, we have introduced the concept of culture as an influencer on nostalgic responses to the literature. We have analyzed two samples of the two dominant cultures in Belgium, namely the Flemish and the Walloons. In addition to this, we have also defined to what extent the moderating factors of socio-demographical differences come into play in packaging evaluation and brand nostalgia. This aims to establish relations between individual characteristics and nostalgia in order to draw the profile of the nostalgic Belgian consumer. This may contribute to the Marketing research and help to

segment the population based on the individual's personal characteristics in order to predict his behavior towards nostalgic cues.

The relevance of this study lies in the fact that we live in a globalized world where companies try to adopt global marketing techniques in order to benefit from economies of scale. If nostalgic cues are proved to elicit the same responses among two different cultures in Belgium, marketers will know that they will not have to adapt their packaging or advertisement (except of the language) according to the single cultural region.

This thesis is structured as follows: After reviewing the literature on nostalgia, we will develop three research questions and hypotheses linked to those. Then, after the methodology description, we will analyze the results of a quantitative study conducted on over 400 Belgians in an attempt to confirm the influence of culture and of nostalgia on packaging evaluation. Based on the consumer-based brand equity model, we will analyze the hierarchy of effects resulting from packaging evoking nostalgia. Afterwards, we will examine the cultural preferences towards different types of packaging, from which we may draw some general conclusions regarding the Belgian consumer. In the penultimate part, the theoretical and managerial implications of the results of this research will be discussed. Finally, the limitations of the study will be reviewed and new research avenues for the future will be suggested.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Definitions

#### 2.1.1 Historical roots

The term nostalgia originally comes from the Ancient Greek words “νοστος”: homecoming and “αλγος”: pain. It was used for the first time by Homer in his *Odyssey* where Ulysses was feeling nostalgic, meaning in this sense, “home sickness”. The concept then evolved and was used in the psychological domain, where it was more described as a mental illness. In the twentieth century, nostalgia received the meaning of a “yearning for the past” (Hirsch, 1992).

Since then, nostalgia has been an object of study in many areas, varying from psychology, sociology and recently, consumer behavior. The different definitions are presented below according to domain.

#### 2.1.2 Psychologic definition

In the literature, the term “nostalgia” has been used in different contexts and was mostly seen as a “lost realm of innocence, purity and happiness” (Renko & Bucar, 2014). Kant described nostalgia as a temporal distance, while Proust saw it as a quest for lost time with his famous “madeleine” (Kessous & Roux, 2010). During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, nostalgia was seen by Hofer and others as a mental illness, a psychological disorder, a disease where the mind can affect the body (Boonefaes et al., 2010). Since then, nostalgia in the psychological area is regarded as an affective reaction coming from a cognitive activity (Kessous & Roux, 2014).

According to Davis (1979), nostalgia also serves as “a means to preserve one’s identity when confronted with the major transitions in the life cycle” and helps to have a continuity between the past and the present self (Sedikides et al., 2008). Nostalgia can also evoke pessimistic reactions toward the present and the future as “things were better in the past” (p. 18).

Moreover, in our ever changing environment, people are looking for safety and stability, a point to which they can refer to in order to reassure themselves. In this way, nostalgia could be seen as useful and participates to the creation of selfhood (Kessous & Roux, 2010). With this idea in mind, a nostalgic product is a point of reference for the self-concept, a way to keep one’s identity through the changes of life, while reducing fear linked to it (Boonefaes et al., 2010). The same researches introduced the four main functions of nostalgia in the psychological area. First, it serves as agent of emotions and positive feelings. In addition, it enhances self-confidence as well as social ties and finally, it reduces the existential menace.



Sugimori et al (2011) further developed the concept of nostalgia in the psychological domain and described it as “a psychological resource that protects and fosters mental health by transforming situations that cause negative moods, loneliness, and a sense of meaninglessness” (p.51).

### **2.1.3 Sociological definition**

The importance of nostalgia in the sociological context was already discovered by Unger et al. in 1991. Thanks to it, the consumer can re-establish symbolic links with people who are important to him and the relationship to others can create strong nostalgic souvenirs (Ferrandi, 2011; Holbrook & Schindler, 2003a). Moreover, nostalgia is a learnt emotion and depends on socialization as it is a shared experience (Goulding, 2002). According to Ferrandi (2012), nostalgia presents three types in the sociological domain: simple, reflected and interpreted. This classification will be further developed in section 2.2. Under the term sociology, we include the concepts of anthropology and culture as nostalgia is linked to rituals, to societal changes and to health (Renko & Bucar, 2014). An interesting cultural approach can also be acknowledged as nostalgia can lead to an enhanced feeling of being part of a culture (Vignolles & Pichon, 2014). Indeed, nostalgia helps to create a symbolic connection with the past and this individual brand connection is used to construct identity (Kessous & Roux, 2010). In this way, nostalgia is a vector of social integration.

### **2.1.4 Meaning in Consumer behavior**

The most widely used definition of nostalgia is “an ideal recollection of the past, a bittersweet affective reaction” (Kessous & Roux, 2010), “a warm feeling caused by recalling happy memories from the past” (Lu et al., 2015), “a longing for the past”, “a preference towards objects that were more common when one was younger” (Holbrook & Schindler, 1991). Moreover, nostalgia is often linked to warmth, joy and affection (Pascal, 2003). Goulding (2002) stated that “nostalgia is a positive attitude toward earlier times that some people develop early in life [...] an emotional reaction most frequently experienced by the baby boomers and the elderly” (p. 542). The most extended definition was developed by Divard & Robert-Demontrond (1997) and identified nostalgia as “a bittersweet affective reaction, possibly associated with a cognitive activity, and which is felt by an individual when an external or internal stimulus has the effect of transposing him for a period or an event from an idealized past, in keeping or not with his own life” (p. 48). With the idea of an “idealized

past” in mind, Reisenwitz (2001) demonstrated that nostalgic memories can be as well imaginary as authentic.

According to Ferrandi (2012), nostalgia is a moodstate, a preference and sentimental desire towards the past, making life full of sense. In most of the studies, nostalgia is perceived as a positive notion, related to the self-concept, an emotional state, a driving force for actual behavior (Hirsch, 1992). According to Boonefaes et al. (2010), nostalgia is a preference, a reactive state that can result in enduring preferences (Goulding, 2002).

Vignolles and Pichon (2014) also found out that nostalgia is an “ambivalent and bittersweet emotional reaction [with] feelings coming from an idealized past” that “can be a relevant concept to comfort consumers in their purchasing and consumption activities as well as in their everyday life” (p. 233).

In order to have a more global view of the different definitions, a summary table was constructed and can be found in Appendix 1.

Based on all those definitions, we selected the definition of Divard & Robert-Demontrond (1997) for this paper because it is the most complete, it was used in much other research and it is one of the only definitions that associate both affective and cognitive dimensions.

## **2.2 Types of nostalgia**

As can be seen from the section above, nostalgia is a broad term that has multiple meanings. This results in many different forms and intensity of nostalgia depending on socio-historical context and on personal developmental changes (Holbrook, 1993; Parsons & Cappellini, 2011).

Taking the concept of nostalgia in the context of consumer behavior, two main types of nostalgia were identified by Unger et al. (1989), namely private and public nostalgia. Based on this idea, Stern (1992) developed the concepts of personal and historical nostalgia. Personal nostalgia relates to the personal memories and history of the individual. In this case, nostalgia is more self-referencing and personally lived experiences are idealized, leading to a certain “sentimentalisation” of the past (Pascal, 2003; Stern, 1992). An example of this type of nostalgia can be found in the famous “madeleine” of Proust which evokes for him particular moments of his past.

Historical nostalgia is not directly experienced by the individual, but is rather part of the society and its reflection is based on an idealized, unexperienced, imaginary past (Marchegiani & Phau, 2005). It is related to empathy and this kind of past is constructed

through “verisimilitude” that will activate consumer’s engagement and imagination (Stern, 1992). Verisimilitude is a concept developed by Stern (1992) and is defined as “the illusion of reality conveyed by faithfully depicted details” (p.16). It is actually a set of physical cues to evoke a certain place, time and culture which are able to stimulate nostalgia (Stern, 1992). Therefore, historical nostalgia is best used for socially visible products in order to construct a self-identity (Stern, 1992).

Compared to personal nostalgia, historical nostalgia is weaker, less effective, less salient and able to evoke less positive thoughts and emotional responses, such as pleasure and arousal (Marchegiani & Phau, 2005; Telford, 2013; Hwanga & Hyunb, 2013). However, some scholars (e.g. Pascal, 2003) contradict the latter as they prove that affective intensity is similar. Additionally, according to Hemetsberger and Pirker (2006), both types of nostalgia are interrelated and difficult to separate.

Nevertheless, not all authors agree on this basic division, thereby bringing other categories to light. For example, Davis et al. (1979) classified nostalgia into 3 categories: simple, reflected and interpreted. Kessous & Roux (2014) developed another distinction between desired and incurred, “long-standing nostalgia” and “first-time nostalgia”. This first one refers to continuity, such as happy childhood days, while the contrary is related to unique emotional experiences that leave their mark and change one’s life (Ryynänen, 2015).

Furthermore, Holak developed a four-category based concept of nostalgia adding to the previously introduced concept of personal nostalgia, the aspects of interpersonal, cultural and virtual nostalgia (Holak et al., 2008; Boonefaes et al., 2010; Ferrandi, 2012).

Interpersonal nostalgia is experienced when an individual’s interaction is influenced by another person’s memories and experiences (Davis, 1979). This can be found in cultures where different generations of the same family live under the same roof like most communities in Asia or Africa. For example, grandparents share with their grandchildren their experience with certain brands and therefore, grandchildren develop a certain preference towards this brand.

Cultural nostalgia is directly experienced when similar responses from a group help to form the cultural identity (Stern, 1992). Typically, cultural nostalgia is found when ads use famous figures of a historical period, like leaders of a political party or a country, to evoke the past (Stern, 1992). Additionally, cultural nostalgia could be linked to historical nostalgia and the concept of tradition-related nostalgia introduced by Hemetsberger and Pirker (2006) due to their close definitions.

Finally, virtual nostalgia is also shared across members of a group but is indirectly experienced. Virtual nostalgia can be illustrated by an ad showing an old village and people making hand-made products (Stern, 1992).

Goulding (2001) introduced the idea of vicarious nostalgia which means that consumers attempt to reconstruct or re-live an event from a bygone era. It is a constant emotion of consumption experiences. This concept is linked to Stern's historical nostalgia as well as Holak's cultural and virtual nostalgia (Bartier, 2014).

Another famous classification is based on the division "positive versus negative". Positive nostalgia is described as the "good old days", the "sweet" part, while the negative, "bitter" nostalgia takes the idea of "the irreversible past" into account (Kessous & Roux, 2014). Moreover, Boonefaes et al. (2010) added the concept of "ambivalent" to this dual classification.

A final categorization was introduced by Rindfleisch et al. (2000) with its "Life Nostalgia" and "Product Nostalgia" when measuring nostalgia proneness. This concept will be further developed in section 2.4.4.1. Product nostalgia relates to products and their quality compared to the past while life-nostalgia has a positive overtone linked to history.

In order to have a clear view on the different types of nostalgia, summary tables were created according to the authors and their views.

**Table 1:** Summary table of types of nostalgia developed by Nawas and Platt, 1965 (Rutherford, 2010)

<b>Past</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Future oriented</b>
Desire to return to an earlier time in one's life as far back as the womb.	Reaction due to the inability to adjust to the current environment, stressing insecurity as a trigger of nostalgia.	Individual is pessimistic (more nostalgic) or optimistic (less nostalgic) about the future.

**Table 2:** Summary table of types of nostalgia developed by Davis (1979)

<b>First-order/simple</b>	<b>Second order/reflexive</b>	<b>Third order/ interpreted</b>
<p>Things were better in the past and people want to return to that period while realizing it is impossible (Reisenwitz, 2001). All current progresses are overlooked.</p> <p>“Positively toned evocation of a lived past in the context of some negative feeling toward the present” (p. 18)</p>	<p>The past is critically analyzed and questioned by individuals rather than experienced as a feeling (Reisenwitz, 2001). They ask themselves whether “the past was really the way it appears to have been” (Reisenwitz, 2001, p. 95).</p> <p>The nostalgic feeling is scrutinized (Holbrook, 1990) and therefore rationalized which transforms nostalgia into a more complex activity (Reisenwitz, 2001).</p>	<p>Attitudes and responses towards the nostalgic experience are analyzed (Reisenwitz, 2001). Individuals question themselves about the source, character, meaning and psychological reason of the nostalgic feeling (Reisenwitz, 2001)</p>

**Table 3:** Summary table of types of nostalgia developed by Rindfleisch, Freeman and Burroughs (2000)

<b>Life-nostalgia</b>	<b>Product-nostalgia</b>
<p>Material values are negatively related to life-nostalgia.</p> <p>Related to the four positively valenced items of the reduced scale of nostalgia proneness developed by Holbrook (1993)</p> <p>E.g.: modern business build a better future</p>	<p>No relation between material values and product nostalgia.</p> <p>Related to the three negatively valenced items of the reduced scale of nostalgia proneness developed by Holbrook (1993).</p> <p>E.g.: products are getting shoddier and shoddier</p>

**Table 4:** Summary table of types of nostalgia developed by Baker and Kennedy (2004)

<b>Real</b>	<b>Stimulated</b>	<b>Collective</b>
<p>Symbolic of a time with which there is a direct experience; an exemplar.</p>	<p>Vicarious nostalgia evoked from stories and possessions. Symbolic of a time with which there is no direct experience; a prototype.</p>	<p>Symbolic of a culture, nation, or generation.</p>

**Table 5:** Summary table of types of nostalgia developed by Holak, Matveev and Havlena (2008)

	<b>Personal</b>	<b>Interpersonal</b>	<b>Cultural</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
<b>Type of experience</b>	Direct individual	Indirect individual	Direct collective	Indirect collective
<b>Examples</b>	Brand experience linked to own past, recalling memories from childhood	Brand experience shared through family	Use of a famous figure of a country's history	Use of a scenery to reproduce the past

Finally, in order to fully understand the concepts of personal and historical nostalgia it is important to comprehend the way souvenirs are stored, which types of memories are involved and how individual's brains work when confronted with nostalgic cues.

When confronted with a brand/product/packaging/ad evoking nostalgia, two types of memory are put into action: autobiographical and collective memory (Baker et al., 2005). The latter is a "shared interpretation of the past" and used when historical nostalgic cues are processed (Baker et al., 2005, p. 402). Autobiographical memory consists in souvenirs from the individual's past. Brand memory is one dimension of it and is constructed at a very early age (Braun la Tour et al., 2007). As explained previously, when a child sees a brand, he encodes and stores his experience with it in his long term memory and retrieves it in the future when the same brand will be presented (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013). Moreover, based on the reconstructive nature of memory, people can change their memory about their past through autobiographical elements (Meuhling et al., 2013). Finally, food-related consumption experiences are memorized through senses, emotions and the social environment. Indeed, family and friends as well as celebrations and events appear to affect memories (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013).

### 2.3 Brand nostalgia

Based on those classifications, Bartier (2014) introduced the term "Brand nostalgia" which is composed by three dimensions of nostalgia: personal-, historical memories and perceived oldness. This third dimension of brand nostalgia has been defined by Bartier (2014) as the impression the consumer has that a brand is old and established or exists since a long time while not knowing exactly when it was launched in the market.

Brand nostalgia is a "positively-valenced past feelings experienced when a perceived old brand evokes positive past memories, lived or learned" (Bartier, 2014, p.16). For a long time, nostalgia has been perceived as a one-dimensional construct, but was discovered to be multi-dimensional thanks to Bartier's research (2014).

According to Kessous and Roux, nostalgic brands are those brands which were known in the past, but that are still present in the market, seem ageless and have a strong power of attachment and identification (Bartier, 2014). Thanks to those, souvenirs are materialized into products and values are transmitted (Kessous & Roux, 2014). Moreover, some brands are associated with childhood memories and those are consumed in order to re-live an idealized past. Examples of nostalgic brands are *Nutella*, *Ford* or *Lacoste* (Bartier, 2014). Therefore,

recent brands may not be considered as nostalgic as they do not remind personal memories and were not consumed during the past of the consumer (Bartier, 2014).

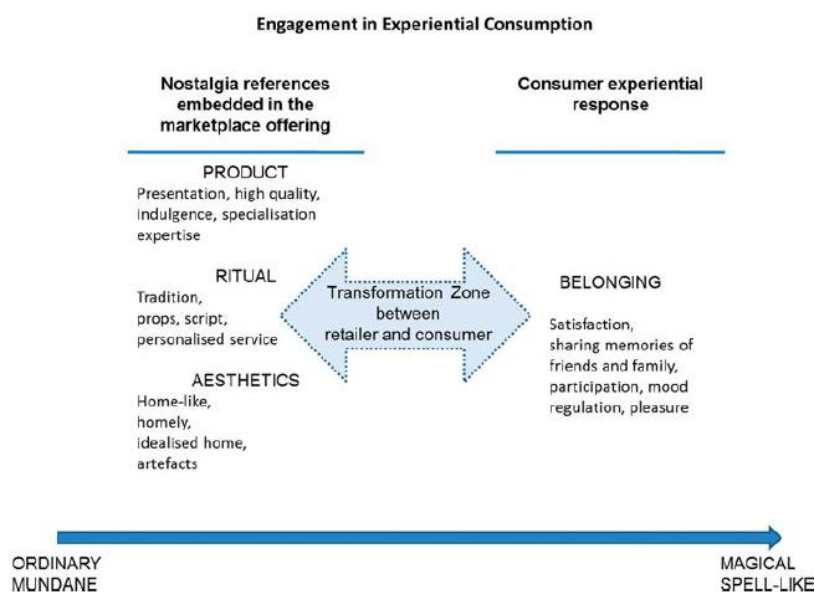
However, it may be questioned why brand nostalgia forms such an important research topic among scholars as well as marketers. The reason lies in the consumer as they get benefits by consuming brands perceived as nostalgic. The following subsection develops this point.

### 2.3.1 Reasons for consuming nostalgic brands

In a time where changes happen fast and when new products and techniques are continuously brought in the market, consumers tend to look for products and brands to re-assure themselves. According to Hirsch (1992), there is a current trend consisting in an increase of nostalgic desire and today's consumers are looking for nostalgic products (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013). They try to secure their environment, bring stability into their household by consuming brands that recall their childhood, positive souvenirs, the past in general in order to escape the present (Davis, 1979). Consuming nostalgic products has one main function: it brings the feeling of belongingness back, especially for socially excluded persons (Loveland et al., 2010).

These aspects were modeled by Hamilton & Wagner (2014) in Figure 1. The model shows the impact of nostalgic cues in the product, the ritual and in aesthetics produced by the marketer on the consumer. The individual will get a sense of belonging when experiencing nostalgia mixed with feelings of satisfaction, pleasure and arousal (Hamilton & Wagner, 2014).

**Figure 1:** Consumer responses elicited through nostalgic cues in the marketplace



Source: Hamilton & Wagner (2014)

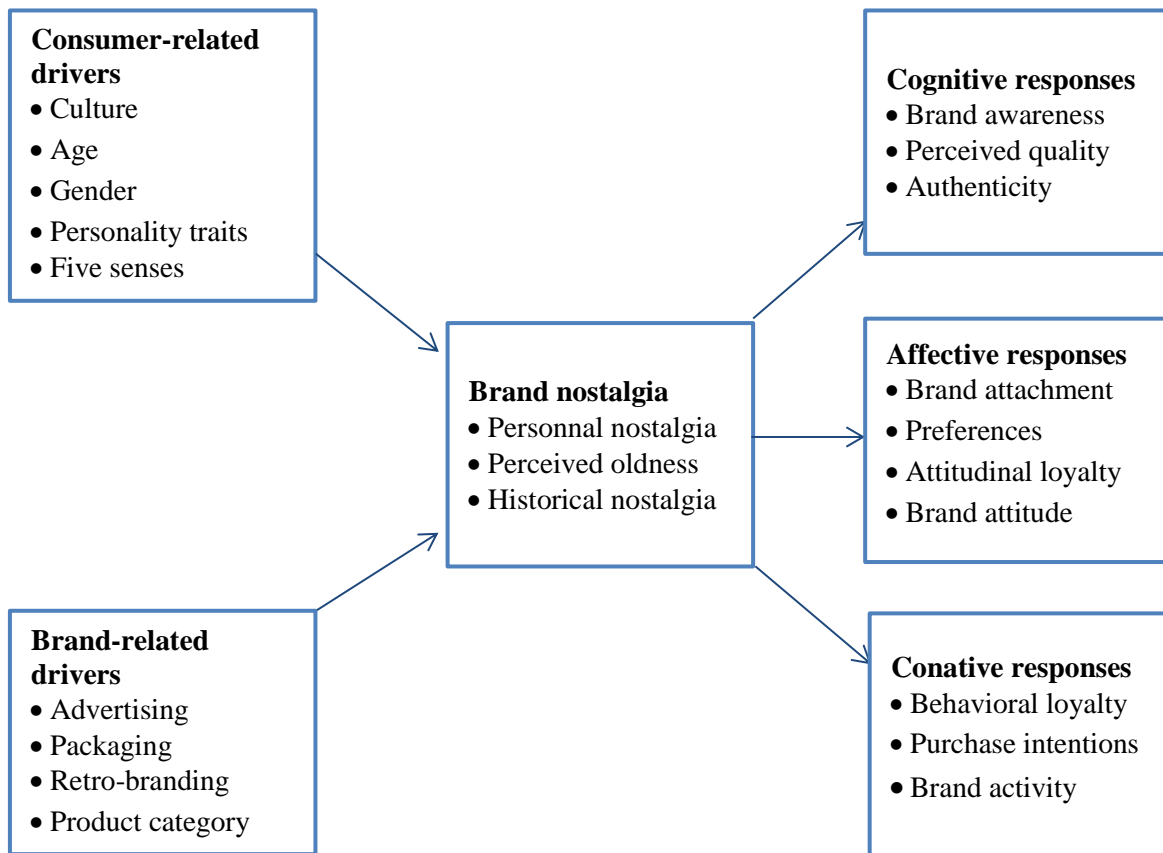
In order to capture those desired feelings, marketing attempts to let people (re-) experience the past through consumption and to arouse personal emotions induced by consumer's lived experience (Havlena & Holak, 1991; Renko & Bucar, 2014). Therefore, the strategy consists in embedding the sense of belonging in nostalgia (Hamilton & Wagner, 2014). Indeed, the consumer looks for symbolic and experiential benefits through the consumption of products and brands (Levy, 1959; Belk, 1988). Moreover, according to Lu et al. (2015), consumer tries to get spiritual satisfaction from consumption. In this sense, meaningful consumption experiences involving packaging may reflect nostalgic, cultural, social and individual aspects (Ryynänen et al., 2016).

Consumer experiences have been studied in depth in psychology and marketing research, in order to better understand the consumers and develop specific techniques to improve the consumer experience. For instance, Hamilton & Wagner (2014) developed consumer experience stages as a marketing technique which proved to be a key competitive strategy (Ryynänen et al., 2016). Moreover, a distinction between the different types of consumer experiences may be interesting to establish in order to understand which type of experience marketers can focus on with nostalgic brands. Additionally, the concept of consumption experience, which is more complex and goes beyond the marketplace, may impact nostalgic responses (Ryynänen et al., 2016). However, this will not be further developed in the context of this paper as it falls outside of the framework of our topic.

Now that the various definitions and concepts of nostalgia have been defined, the second part of this paper will follow the structure of Figure 2. This model, based on the research of Bartier (2014), has brand nostalgia as central point. As can be seen on the model, brand nostalgia is influenced by two types of drivers, consumer- and brand related drivers. On the one hand, consumer related drivers are all those aspects inherent to the consumer which may affect the way nostalgia is perceived and experienced. On the other hand, brand related drivers are all the elements related to the brand and which marketing can influence. Those two drivers are developed in the next two sections. Next, the consequences of brand nostalgia are explained in the last sections of this chapter. In order, first cognitive related responses such as brand awareness, perceived quality and perceptions related to authenticity are developed. Then, affective consequences, i.e. brand attachment, preferences, attitudinal loyalty and brand attitude are described. Finally, brand nostalgia leads to conative responses, composed by behavioral loyalty, purchase intention and brand activity



**Figure 1:** Drivers, dimensions and consequences of brand nostalgia



## 2.4 Consumer-related drivers

Consumer-related drivers, or better known in the literature under the term “moderators”, are those factors that have an influence on brand nostalgia and consequently on the responses elicited by it.

Nostalgia can have different effects depending on the type of consumer, on psychographic and on demographic variables, on lifestyle and on the individual stable disposition towards nostalgia developed early in life (Holbrook & Schindler, 1994). The same authors already demonstrated that age, gender and nostalgic proneness are important influencers (2003b).

In addition to these three classic drivers, the literature gives a relatively large importance of culture in respect to nostalgia, but scholars remain vague about this topic. However, we decided to take this into account for our research and therefore the first subsection of this part deals with the relation between culture and nostalgia.

After that, the aspects of age, gender and personality traits are each developed in a specific section hereunder.

### 2.4.1 Culture

According to Zimmerman (2015), culture is composed by “the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts”. Although little attention has been paid to cultural influence on nostalgic responses in the literature, the scholars who investigated the impact of culture on nostalgic responses revealed interesting findings. Indeed, nostalgia is a culturally-specific phenomenon and marketing using nostalgia in their visuals takes this into account (Reisenwitz, 2001). Indeed, many marketers try to create symbolic associations between the product and positive cultural values (Campbell, Martin, & Fabos, 2013). Those associations are defined by the socio-cultural context of use and determine “the extent to which a product is seen to reflect or support identity” (Crilly et al., 2004, p.563).

Indeed, culture and nostalgia are two concepts intrinsically related in both senses. On the one hand, thanks to cultural changes and evolutions, nostalgic feelings are created (Xue & Woolley, 2013). On the other hand, culture dictates the tastes of people, and so their responses. They feel a social pressure to like or dislike something based on socio-cultural agreements on “what looks good [...] what materials are to be valued [...] what is worth aspiring towards and how aspirations can be reinforced with material goods” (Crilly et al.,

2004; Dormer, 1990). Due to this, the tangible assets of a product are not sufficient for a positive appreciation and attitude towards it (Crozier, 1994).

Furthermore, personality traits that are common in a culture can be at the origin for differences in nostalgia across cultures (Holak et al., 2008; Guzman and Paswan, 2009). Moreover, cultural aspects have an influence on remembered eating experiences and so on the nostalgia that can be evoked by food (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013).

Culture is also related to history. This proved to have a considerable impact on people's mindset and relation to nostalgia. Indeed, it has been demonstrated that after revolutions and wars, people show a higher tendency towards nostalgic products and the nostalgia effect is enhanced (Holak et al., 2008). Moreover, some scholars argue that at the end of a century, nostalgic feelings are stronger. Indeed, people may feel more anxious as they perceive a discontinuity between the old century and the new one (Reisenwitz, 2001). In order to re-assure themselves, people consume authentic products. This phenomenon is called the "fin du siècle" effect and is time and culturally related (Miller, 1990; Stem, 1992; Reisenwitz, 2001).

On a broader view, it can be said that events related to history have positive and significant impacts on recalling memories and evoking nostalgia (Lefi & Gharbi, 2011).

Taking all those concepts into account, nostalgia has been shown to have a significant impact on nostalgic responses. Indeed, the context of consumption is important to take into account as it is in this context that the brand message is understood and that the consumer responds to (Crilly et al., 2004). Moreover, cultural preconceptions play a role in the interpretation and social acceptance of the design (Crilly et al., 2004). In line with this, the visual appeal of a product, for instance packaging, is also impacted by socio-cultural and historical factors. For example, the beauty standard is not the same in every culture and will not be accepted everywhere. Furthermore, culture appears to have a moderating effect on nostalgic responses. Tastes, trends, standards, colors, shapes and ideals have to be taken into account as consumers may react in a totally different way than marketers would have predicted (Crilly et al., 2004).

#### **2.4.2 Age**

Age should also be taken into account when evaluating the responses provoked by nostalgia (Loveland et al., 2010; Holbrook & Schindler, 2003b). Researchers are divided what concerns the influence of age on nostalgic response. Some argue that there is no difference between age groups (Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009) while others support that elderly or lonely people

are even more looking for nostalgic products as it gives them a sense of security (Loveland et al., 2010). According to Holak, & Havlena (1991), nostalgic feelings are the strongest when remembering adolescence or early adulthood. Nevertheless, Telford (2013) proved that younger groups have stronger feelings toward nostalgic ads as young adults already have nostalgic memories and are able to self-reference them to connect with the product (Bray, 2014).

It is agreed that individuals from the same cohort will have nostalgic feelings for the same products as nostalgic experiences are the same by generation and are intergenerational phenomenons (Holak, & Havlena, 1991). Indeed, products evoking nostalgia depend on the consumer's age and strong heterogeneity in terms of nostalgic responses was observed among people from the same age range (Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Havlena & Holak, 1991; Stern, 1992; Lambert-Pandraud & Laurent, 2010).

Finally, cognitive age influences nostalgia and is the base for communities and social groups (Goulding, 2002).

Most of researchers (Holak & Havlena, 1991; Unger et al., 1991; Lambert-Pandraud & Laurent, 2010; Vignolles, 2014) agree that nostalgic marketing should target the elderly, the baby-boomers that are looking for traditional products to fit into their modern lifestyle (Lewis, 2008). Indeed, they represent a good target as this age group is currently composed of a large number of people, having higher purchasing power and living longer. However, Hirsch (1992) argues that consumers under 60 are better targets for nostalgic products. Indeed, those younger customers, even if they look for innovativeness and switch easily to newer brands, are also a target for older brands (Lambert-Pandraud & Laurent, 2010).

Kessous and Roux (2014) developed in that respect a classification of consumers based on the generation they belong to. This classification is presented below in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Summary table of types of consumers and their characteristics

	<b>Generation X</b>	<b>Generation Y</b>	<b>Baby-boomers</b>	<b>After--war</b>
<b>Characteristics of the cohort</b>	Quest for bearings Authenticity Transmission of history	Need for security Hedonism Re-live fun moments from the past.	Independence Identity aspect Construction of the future and the present	Need for brands representing wellbeing and health. Need of memory, fill the lack and immortalize the past
<b>Associated brand</b>	Ovomaltine	Tagada candies from Haribo		Banania

Source: Kessous & Roux, 2014

### **2.4.3 Gender**

Gender also plays a role in nostalgia both as a driver and as an influencer in the way the consumer will respond to nostalgic cues. Indeed, nostalgia is experienced by both genders in different ways (Stern, 1992). For example, women proved to express more positive attitudes towards nostalgic ads and are “comprehensive processors” (Meyers-Levy, 1989; Bray, 2014). Nevertheless, Phau & Marchegiani (2011) claim that nostalgia influence consumers anyway, regardless of their gender.

Gender also affects the brands and products that are considered as nostalgic. For instance, female respondents prefer sweet food and products related to memories (Boonefaes et al., 2010; Baker & Kennedy, 1994) while nostalgia is, for men, linked with bittersweet and salty food and consumer goods (Boonefaes et al., 2010; Baker & Kennedy, 1994). However, gender does not describe which brands are considered as nostalgic or not (Bartier, 2014).

General tendencies towards nostalgia exist among genders. In several studies, men revealed to be more nostalgic than women because they used to experience more disruption in their lives such as job changes (Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Davis, 1979; Havlena & Holak, 1991; Stern, 1992). But nowadays, this theory is not applicable anymore as more and more women are working and are thus able to experience job changes as often as men.

### **2.4.4 Personality traits**

Nostalgic reactions depend on personality traits such as the ability to selectively recall from the past, the number and nature of roles, the degree of alienation and the desire for social contact (Goulding, 2001). Moreover, people that are more dissatisfied with life tend to be more nostalgic as well (Reisenwitz, 2001; Reisenwitz et al., 2004).

Goulding (2001) defined two types of consumers: aesthetics and existentials. The latter is extremely nostalgic and is able to transfer values from the past to their current behavior. They are self-determined escapist. Aesthetics are more critical, financially secure and search for authenticity (Goulding, 2001). Ferrandi (2011) developed a classification of consumers based on personality traits. This typology of consumers is based on the perceived level of authenticity (origin, nature, identity, uniqueness) of the food product from which the consumer is nostalgic (Ferrandi, 2011). The following table summarizes his findings.

**Table 7:** Summary table of nostalgic preferences based on personality traits

	<b>Root-identitarians</b>	<b>Non-authentics</b>	<b>Naturals</b>
<b>Consumption</b>	Still nowadays Home-made food, consumed with family during special events at table.	Industrial raw product as a snack during childhood.	Industrial raw product as a snack during childhood.
<b>Type of product</b>	Salty and refined, complex product	Sweet and simple product	Sweet and simple product
<b>Implications for managers</b>	Resentment of identity proximity with the nostalgic product.		Process proximity

Source : Ferrandi, 2011

Furthermore, materialism was claimed to have a counter-effect on nostalgia as materialistic people present low levels of nostalgic feelings. This personality trait has a predictive validity in relation to preference and choice (Rindfleisch et al., 2000; Rindfleisch & Sprott, 2000). A final personality trait influencing nostalgic responses is the individual's nostalgic proneness. This aspect, considered as a major moderator in the literature, will be developed in the next section.

#### *2.4.4.1 Nostalgic proneness*

According to Holbrook (1993), nostalgia proneness is the personal tendency to be more nostalgic. It is an attitude towards the past associated with individual differences in early experience effects (Holbrook & Schindler, 2003). This can heavily influence the reactions, attitude and emotions of respondents when confronted with nostalgic ads or brands (Reisenwitz, 2001). Indeed, individual nostalgia proneness was discovered to be positively related to the intensity of feelings toward the ad and the brand (Reisenwitz et al., 2004). Moreover, nostalgia proneness has a moderating role in the relationship age - preference, while it has only a little direct effect on preference and choice and no predictive validity (Rindfleisch & Sprott, 2000).

However, controversial discussions raised around the fact that nostalgia proneness is age- and gender- dependent. One school tends to say that men are more prone to be nostalgic (Holak and Havlena, 1991), while some argue there is no difference (Holbrook & Schindler, 2003; Muehling and Sprott, 2004; Lefi & Gharbi, 2011) and others defend that women tend to be more prone than men (Holbrook, 1991; Reisenwitz et al., 2001, 2004).

The same debate exists regarding age. According to Holbrook and Schindler (1991) and Holbrook (1993), age has no impact on nostalgic proneness, while the majority of researchers support the view that elderly tend to more regret the past and are therefore more nostalgic-prone (Holak & Havlena, 1991; Reisenwitz, 2001; Reisenwitz et al., 2004; Chou & Lien, 2010; Lefi & Gharbi, 2011; Vignolles, 2014). Indeed, people above 60 years old tend to have the mindset that things were better before and they regret the products from their past (Vignolles, 2014). In line with this, Stern (1992) argued that a strong demographic factor combined with a temporal phenomenon like the baby boom in the 50' enhances nostalgic proneness (Reisenwitz, 2001).

#### *2.4.4.2 Past attachment, knowledge and experience*

Previous in-home exposure as well as past brand attachment do not have a significant impact on the effects of nostalgia on the consumer (Muehling et al., 2013). Nevertheless, several researchers proved the opposite by showing that consumers who were in contact with some brands/products during their childhood/adolescence/early adulthood may experience more nostalgic emotions regarding those (Holbrook & Schindler, 1996; *Ibid.*, 2003; Bartier, 2014; Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Goulding, 2002; Stern, 1992). This is due to re-experiencing emotions that are linked to remembered personal experiences with those brands/products (Sujan et al., 1993; Bartier, 2014). In line with this, brand-focused outcomes such as brand recall and purchase intention are stronger when past personal associations have been experienced with the brand (Muehling et al., 2013). Indeed, an affective link with the brand/product is developed because of the personal history experienced with it (Lambert-Pandraud & Laurent, 2010). However, as mentioned above, the period during which the brand experience happened can differ widely and could be seen as a moderator for the relationship between brand nostalgia and consumer-based brand equity dimensions (Bartier, 2014).

On the contrary, ad-focused outcomes such as ad involvement and attitude are not influenced by past experiences (Muehling et al., 2013). Finally, product knowledge is considered to be a moderator as it may moderate the relation between nostalgia evoked by a product and the responses provoked by it (Bray, 2014).

#### **2.4.5 Five senses**

Sight, smell and taste have a significant influence on the perception of nostalgia as well as on experiential value and purchase intentions. Indeed, external stimuli can trigger consumers' remembrances and has the power to induce re-purchasing and re-visiting behavior (Renko &

Bucar, 2014). Sight is expressed through packaging and is, according to Vignolles & Pichon (2014), the strongest element to evoke nostalgia as it recalls memories in an easier way (Lu et al., 2015). However, according to Stern, (1992), smell could even be considered as the strongest way to recall memories while taste may be a useful reinforce of it (Vignolles & Pinchon, 2014). The fourth sense consists of hearing and has formed a study object for many researchers. Music has been demonstrated to have the ability to elicit nostalgic feelings. When ads are associated with music, the effect is even bigger and preferences are created (Marchegiani & Phau, 2005; Lefi & Gharbi, 2011; Telford, 2013).

The sense of touch has not been further developed in the literature, but could be an interesting path for future research.

## **2.5 Brand-related drivers**

Brand-related drivers are those aspects of a brand that are purposefully created by the marketer in order to elicit nostalgic responses. For instance, product categories and their related consumers' level of involvement influence heavily the type and the strength of nostalgic responses (Bartier, 2014; Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Havlena & Holak, 1991; *Ibid.*,1996; Stern, 1992). As the rest of this paper will focus on nostalgia in food, this category, and more precisely low involvement goods, will receive special attention in the next section.

Next, marketing strategies, and more specifically, advertising, packaging and retro-branding are described in relation to nostalgia.

### **2.5.1 Nostalgic brands in the food sector**

As said before, brand nostalgia is present in many types of categories. However, according to Sugimori et al. (2011), nostalgia has the most effects on food and beverages which can elicit stronger nostalgic feelings (Telford, 2013). Therefore, this concept was extensively used in this area. Moreover, eating fills 3 main functions: symbolic, hedonic and nutritional as food is considered to be a catalyst of emotions (Boonefaes et al., 2010; Ferrandi, 2012), possesses a strong affective dimension (Kessous & Roux, 2010), allows the use of multiple senses, facilitates the reminder of experiences, is a vector of nostalgia (Boonefaes et al., 2010) and its consumption is ruled by important rituals (Vignolles & Pichon, 2014). According to Holtzman (2006), food participates to the creation of the personal and cultural identity, is a social and psychological construct and has a cultural power due to its ability to give



mnemonic cues (Boonefaes et al., 2010). Food is sometimes able to elicit memories by itself and when used in combination with nostalgic ads, this effect is reinforced (Unger et al., 1991). Furthermore, many concerns have recently risen about food quality, origin and safety. Therefore, traditional food is considered to be safer, and in this sense, nostalgic products are preferred (Vignolles & Pichon, 2014). Consumers search for authenticity in their consumption habits due to a societal need to belong to a group or community. This search for authenticity will also glorify the past as the only “real good food” comes from the past (Parsons & Cappellini, 2011; Renko & Bucar, 2014).

Moreover, regularly consumed homemade dishes shared with family or friends are mostly defined as traditional and nostalgic: the fact of eating those together is remembered as a nostalgic experience (Boonefaes et al., 2010; Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013). Traditional food is related to childhood, positive experiences in the past, identity due to its importance for self-representation, culture and heritage, as consumers will “re-live same eating experiences” (Parsons & Cappellini, 2011; Renko & Bucar, 2014). Furthermore, traditional food is perceived as healthy, unique, tasteful and juicy. Food nostalgia is mostly linked to seasons, familial events, ethnic and religious traditions and heritages and is an effective mean to “transport consumers back in time” (Baker et al., 2005).

Nostalgia is also present in recipes as they have a symbolic and a psychological function linked to the self-concept and self-construction, help to reinforce family relationships and intergenerational continuity (Boonefaes et al., 2010; Baker et al., 2005).

As said before, childhood plays an important role in the formation of nostalgic souvenirs and emotional food memories. It influences behavior and attitude in the future and gives warm feelings as pleasure and security when consuming food remembering the past (Unger et al., 1991; LeBlanc, 1999; Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2013).

Nostalgia is often associated with sweet, soft, melting and creamy products (Boonefaes et al., 2010; Ferrandi, 2011). It has a soft, humid and fresh sensation in the mouth and an intense, sometimes fruity smell (Ferrandi, 2011). The words « cake », « chocolate », « apple » and « mum/family » are the most associated with nostalgia, and by consequence positive nostalgia, as supported by Vignolles’ research (2014). These words can easily be related to the category of “comfort food” like sweets, hot drinks, cereals and desserts whose consumption allows the revival of good times (Stern, 1992). Additionally, Zarantonello & Luomala (2011) focused more on chocolate as a nostalgic food product and discovered that it stimulates retrieval of souvenirs and creates nostalgia when associated with people, context

and periods from the past. *Côte d'or*, *Nutella*, *KitKat* and *Kinder* were the most famous brands applying this concept. However, chocolate brands have not used nostalgia extensively, while it could be an interesting source, especially for consumer types called innovators and hedonists (Zarantonello & Luomala, 2011).

Vignolles and Pichon (2013) developed in that respect six themes represented when consuming nostalgic food.

**Table 8:** Summary table of themes experienced through nostalgic food consumption developed by Vignolles and Pichon (2013)

<b>Childhood</b>	<b>Yearning</b>	<b>Substitute</b>	<b>Homesickness</b>	<b>Special occasions</b>	<b>Rediscovery</b>
Importance of childhood memories in nostalgic reminiscence	Bitter dimension of nostalgia. Elderly people are looking for products that no longer exist and that were related to their past.	Products are copies of what used to be on the market while still reminding happy times. Nostalgia is used to fill an emotional or existential gap in the face of imminent threat.	Nostalgia of products from the homeland left because those cannot be found in the host country. Goal: restore a sense of social connections from their past.	Idealization of special occasions in autobiographic memory, associated with intense and highly emotional occasions, triggering precise recollections	“Rediscovering a product long forgotten makes it easier for the consumers to buy it because they are willing to recreate the emotions experienced in the past and their associated memories” (p.233)

### 2.5.2 Nostalgia as a marketing technique

For various reasons cited previously, nostalgia has been an interesting research topic, especially in marketing and consumer behavior. Indeed, nostalgia is since the beginning of the 90' a widely used technique in marketing. From beverages to cars, passing by clothes and watches, nearly every consumer goods has been touched by this phenomenon.

Lehu (2004) defined this trend of referring to the past in the marketing process or communication as “retro-marketing” while Holbrook (1990) also defined it as “turn[ing] yesterday as a trend”. Indeed, due to the common belief that “the past was better”, a product is perceived to be of good quality when the product has been used for a long time. In this sense, recreating old brands can be used to evoke nostalgia as well as quality (Kessous & Roux, 2014). By emphasizing traditions, ingredients or methods, marketers are also able to elicit nostalgic feelings of the consumer (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013).

Nowadays, nostalgia is commodified into a banal trick to attract consumers (Parsons & Cappellini, 2011) in order to improve the brand image and sales, to expand the target and to

respond to segmentation (Kessous & Roux, 2010). Finally, such brands are able to communicate their history, heritage, traditions and production processes (Lewis, 2008).

Applied to low involvement purchase situations, nostalgia contributes to enhance product positioning, brand awareness and –attitude, and creates long-lasting cognitive associations (Reisenwitz, 2001, Hwanga & Hyunb, 2013). Moreover, nostalgia plays a significant role in the evaluation of a brand, a product, its packaging and its advertisement. Indeed, perceived attributes such as elegance, functionality and social meaning form the basis for evaluations (Crilly et al., 2004). The more positive are the emotions or the nostalgic images, the more positive is the brand image and the evaluation of the ad or the packaging (Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009; Guzman & Paswan, 2009; Hemetsberger & Pirker, 2006). Finally, the mental process of a message contained in an ad or packaging is also positively influenced by the presence of nostalgic cues and the self-referencing power of nostalgic memories (Bray, 2014).

Product or packaging reintroductions are frequent. Stern (1992) defines this strategy as “the fin du siècle effect” where people look for safety and stability in a world of discontinuity and change. Sometimes, advertisement and packaging with “fake nostalgic cues” for relatively recent brands are perceived as ancient by consumers. Those brands create then the “illusion of a lost past” (Bartier, 2014, p.47). Therefore, perceived age of a brand has more value in the eyes of the consumer than its objective age (Bartier, 2014).

Nevertheless, the difference should be drawn between nostalgia-based marketing and nostalgic products such as traditional food. This type of product can indeed elicit nostalgic feelings from itself and does not need nostalgic ads or packaging to evoke such emotions.

Nostalgia in marketing can be translated into three forms: advertising, packaging and retro-branding, namely “relaunching historical brands with updated features” (Brown et al., 2003). However, the marketplace should not be neglected as the environment where the purchase situation will be made plays a considerable role in the consumer experience. Indeed, nostalgic products should be commercialized in social spaces and communities should be created around those in order to capture the whole potential of nostalgic evocation (Loveland et al., 2010).

### *2.5.2.1 Advertising*

Among all dimensions of the marketing mix, nostalgia has been the most used and studied in the area of advertising. However, we decided not to go into too many details for this part as

the focus of our research lies in the packaging. Only broad and major findings are discussed here as it may be interesting to compare those with packaging responses.

Some scholars discovered that nostalgia is not directly linked to the advertised brand (Muehling & Sprott, 2004) while others discovered the contrary (Marchegiani & Phau, 2005; Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009). In any case, nostalgia is recommended for emotional products and low involvement products targeting women, such as food and beverages, as it can help to enhance the perception concerning quality, safety, purity and healthfulness (Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009; Unger et al., 1991, Bray, 2014).

By showing childhood, family times and intergenerational aspects, the ad is able to evoke nostalgia (Vignolles & Pinchon, 2014) and to stimulate word of mouth (Kessous & Roux, 2010). Good examples can be found in Appendix 2a.

Moreover, nostalgia can appear in advertising through slogans alluding to security and hedonism such as in *Haribo* with its famous headline “Kids and grown-up love it so, the happy world of Haribo” (Kessous & Roux, 2014)

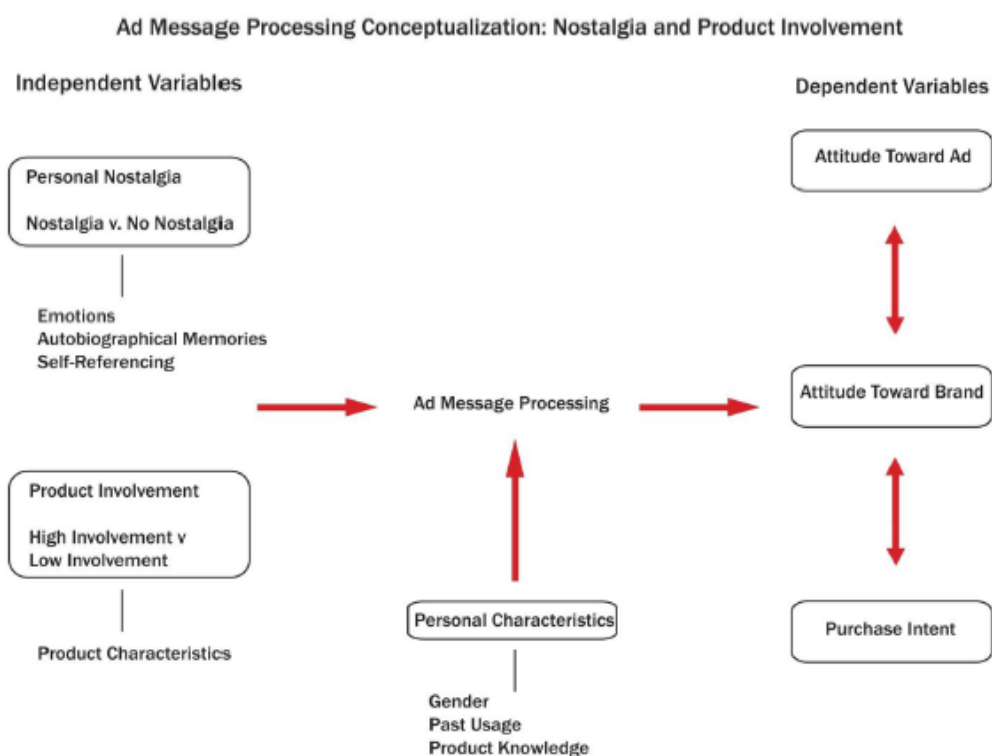
Based on these findings, nostalgia is perceived as a powerful tool to influence consumer’s behavior towards the brand by transferring emotions into the brand (Vignolles & Pichon, 2014). Most often, an idealized image, part of a cultural history, evoking the first order nostalgia is used in advertising (Havlena & Holak, 1991). The impact of advertisement messages is even greater when aesthetic value is enhanced (Holbrook & Schindler, 1994). In this way, “nostalgic ads evoke mental images capturing mental processes” (Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009, p. 391). Nostalgic advertising creates nostalgic feelings that will develop likeability and a positive attitude towards the product as well as facilitating the retrieval of past events (Sugimori et al., 2011). According to Muehling & Sprott (2004; 2013), nostalgic advertisement produces more positive attitudes towards the ad, encourage nostalgic reflection and influence self-referencing and mental-processing. Nostalgic advertisements results in more positive emotions, more intensive mental images, enhanced involvement and more consumer retention (Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009; Muehling et al., 2013; Unger et al., 1991).

Some types of ads also automatically evoke autobiographical memories and are associated with feelings of empathy (Baumgartner, 1992). Indeed, this kind of memories related to products and their experiences are emotionally loaded (Baumgartner, 1992). Consumers are curious and when a new element is added, attention increases which can lead to enhanced comprehension and receptivity thanks to cognitive associations (Unger et al., 1991). However,

the newness effect is rapidly lost when repeated (Unger et al., 1991). Due to the retrieval of autobiographical memories, information processing is reduced and this can lead to a distracting effect of nostalgia (Baumgartner, 1992). This risk will be developed further in the part dealing with the risks associated with using nostalgia in marketing.

Autobiographical memories positively influence ad evaluation, but not brand evaluation (Baumgartner, 1992). On the contrary, Bray (2014) recently argued that information processing influences both evaluation toward the ad and the brand. This effect is modeled into the following figure showing the impact of personal nostalgia on ad message processing and its affective responses.

**Figure 3:** Drivers and results of ad message processing



Source: Bray, 2014

However, it is important to precisely define the target for the nostalgic advertising (Reisenwitz et al., 2004). Moreover, nostalgic ads do not work for all brands as they need to be traditional, well-known, classic brands with an appropriate price range (Telford, 2013). Combining nostalgic ads with names that easily evoke nostalgic feelings is not recommended as those ads are more rapidly forgotten (Sugimori et al., 2011). Therefore, incongruence was proved to be better remembered than any congruency between ad and product.

Furthermore, it is crucial to create the right associations between brand image and ad in the consumers mind. In order to achieve this, marketers should “identify the local perceptions toward their brands [in order] to assess correctly the associations a company's brand can have and their impact.” (Guzman & Paswan, 2009, p. 81). Finally, only high nostalgia levels, i.e. when stronger nostalgic stimuli are perceived by the five senses, can truly and efficiently elicit consumers’ nostalgic emotions (Lu et al., 2015).

### *2.5.2.2 Packaging*

Packaging and its design are one of the most powerful marketing tools to evoke positive emotions, influence the purchase behavior on the point of sales and enhance customer satisfaction (Chun-Chih Chen, 2013). Indeed, the consumer is directly influenced by appearance and design of a product as it may make the consumer feel confident and so contribute to create a relationship between brand and consumer (Dhurup et al., 2014; Suresh et al. 2012). Moreover, packaging is able to reflect the brand identity and image as well the product’s content. It has the power to improve those aspects by “conveying functional, symbolic and experiential benefits” (Chun-Chih Chen, 2013, p. 143; Shimp, 2004). Even if consumers do not always think about packaging as part of their daily consumer experience, it revealed to be a strong way to enhance nostalgic feelings and proved to have a real impact on the purchasing process (Ryynänen et al., 2016).

Packaging may evoke emotions and therefore managers should try to recreate accessible packaging-related experiences that are “evoking positive feelings, addressing consumers’ senses in a meaningful way, representing traditions and celebrations” and that are “memorable for its distinctive design” (Ryynänen et al., 2016, p.17). Nostalgic packaging should include a minimum level of comfortable attributes linked to sense and usability (Chun-Chih Chen, 2013).

A symbiotic relationship exists between products and packaging, allowing consumers to remember the products more easily and to enhance brand heritage (Ryynänen et al., 2016). Moreover, packaging evaluation depends on nostalgia proneness and bonding (Ryynänen et al., 2016). The latter needs a short explanation before going further. Nostalgic bonding is the “consumer’s history of personal interaction with a product during a critical period of preference formation that occurs roughly in the vicinity of age 20” (Holbrook & Schindler, 2003a, p. 109). Nostalgic bonding is a personality trait that happens earlier for people who are more nostalgia prone and that requires strong feelings to be created (Holbrook & Schindler, 2003a).

Next to emotions, the visual appearance of a product is critical for its success and consumer responses (Crilly et al, 2004). Aesthetics are one of the reasons why products are bought and their packaging kept (Ryynänen et al., 2016). Therefore, marketers need to be very careful when changing the packaging of a product as radical changes may lead to a loss of the original bond between the consumer and the brand (Vignolles & Pichon, 2014

The most evident way to show nostalgia is through visible elements on the packaging (Kessous & Roux, 2010). Indeed, the design of a product is able to stimulate nostalgic feelings through multiple cues as color, images, material, etc. According to Boonefaes et al. (2010) and Kessous and Roux (2014), drawings illustrating the past with hand-written style combined with individual portions, white and yellow (traditional) colored packages and natural packaging material, such as glass or wood, are able to create credibility and evoke nostalgic feelings. A very good example of this kind of packaging can be seen through the *La Laitière* vanilla cream and the *Bonne-Maman* jam (Appendix 2b) (Kessous & Roux, 2014). Based on these findings, Ferrandi (2011) developed specific types of packaging for each type of consumer. This typology of consumers is based on the perceived level of authenticity (origin, nature, identity, uniqueness) of the food product from which the consumer is nostalgic (Ferrandi, 2011).

**Table 9:** Packaging preferences according to types of consumers

	<b>Root-identitarians</b>	<b>Non-authentic</b>	<b>Naturals</b>
<b>Fabrication process</b>	Transparent Natural material Spherical form	Classical square with picture	Classical with picture

Source: Ferrandi, 2011

Previous research has shown that advertisements with nostalgic cues elicit more positive attitudes towards the featured brand than those without nostalgia. Although many studies have investigated the relation between brand and attitude towards ads, only a few researchers focused on the impact of packaging. However, packaging has a major impact on the consumer purchasing process, is able to vehicle brand values and the product's attributes and represents an important differentiation tool. Previous research showed a positive relation of packaging with brand loyalty, perceived quality, attitude and perceptions (Dhurup et al., 2014).

### **2.5.2.3 Retro-branding**

Retro-branding is a frequent and common strategy, consisting in launching a product or a brand from the past, updated with current features and standards, adapted to today's tastes and performance (Brown et al., 2003). Retro-branding is a way to "search for authenticity in an

inauthentic world” (Hemetsberger & Pirker, 2006, p.3). In this way, *Volkswagen* re-edited the Beetle (Kessous and Roux, 2014).

However, the difference should be drawn between new brands trying to evoke nostalgia and old brands that are relaunched.

Thanks to retro-branding, marketers can position the product as a premium product and take advantage of consumer life-cycles and re-launch products for adults who were children at that time (Vignolles, 2015; Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013). Retro-branding can be seen as a manipulation strategy and should be managed carefully as it could have negative impacts as well (feelings of fake/authenticity, bitterness, backward-looking attitude).

Moreover, this strategy “could stimulate the formation of nostalgic experiences, improve packaging usability and perceived functionality and, therefore, influence how the packaging is eventually experienced by the consumer.” (Ryynänen et al., 2016, p.19).

## 2.6 Responses to nostalgia

Responses to nostalgic cues evoked by ads, packaging and products are very diverse. Three main categories of effects have been discovered and were divided into:

- 1) cognitive effects, referring to mental responses such as perceptions;
- 2) affective effects, focusing on the feelings that memories from the past evoke;
- 3) conative effects, concentrating on the consumer behavior after being exposed to memories from the past (Ford & Merchant, 2010). The first one is more important than the second according to Hamilton & Wagner (2014).

Moreover, all those effects were demonstrated to be linked to each other in the consumer-based brand equity model, defined as “the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand” (Keller, 1993, p.8).

First, in order to better understand this concept of brand equity, a point related to this is developed.

Then, the three types of effects are tackled following the structure showed in Figure 2 (p.13).

### 2.6.1 Brand equity

Since 1979, brands have acquired a special importance as it was discovered that brands on their own could bring additional value to the product (Srinivasan, 1979). This extra value is called “brand equity”. Since then, it has been a key topic in marketing research as brands are considered as one of the strongest assets of any company (Bartier, 2014). Indeed, strong brand equity represents a competitive advantage as it offers the opportunity to acquire a strong



position against competitors, to differentiate itself and to create barriers (Aaker 1991; Farquhar, 1989; Wood, 2000). Therefore, measuring brand equity is crucial in order to assess the strength of it and to manage it consequently (Aaker, 1991; Keller et al., 2008; Bartier, 2014).

Several scholars tempted to define this new topic. The first attempt described brand equity as “the set of associations and behaviors on the part of a brand's customers, channel members and parent corporation that permits the brand to earn greater volume or greater margins than it could without the brand name” (Leuthesser, 1988). Shortly after that, a broader definition was suggested by Farquhar (1989) defining brand equity as “the added value with which a given brand endows a product” (p. 24) where a brand is defined as “a name, symbol, design, or mark that enhances the value of a product beyond its functional purpose” (p. 24). Later, Srivastava and Shocker (1991) proposed another meaning of brand equity defined as “the aggregation of all accumulated attitudes and behavior patterns in the extended minds of consumers, distribution channels and influence agents, which will enhance future profits and long term cash flow”.

Research then showed that three approaches exist regarding brand equity. The first two ones: product- and financial market will not be further developed in this paper as the focus of this study lies on the consumer (Keller & Lehmann, 2003). Therefore, the customer mindset approach, i.e. the consumer's thoughts and feelings regarding a brand, will be applied in this research. This approach, more commonly known under the name “consumer-based brand equity”, is applicable in our case as we are interested in the brand value and suggestible variables (Bartier, 2014; Keller et al., 2008).

Based on those definitions, Aaker (1991) conceptualized brand equity into five elements, namely brand awareness, perceived quality, loyalty, brand image/identity and other proprietary assets such as brand associations. This model is now widely accepted and used for main research regarding brand equity. Brand associations are one of the dimension that interests us as it is related to our research focus, namely nostalgia. This concept can be divided into two dimensions, namely functional and emotional associations. The former is linked to tangible assets of the product while the latter is linked to intangibles such as attachment and perceptions of brands evoking nostalgia (Bartier, 2014; Keller, 1993; Lehmann et al., 2008). For this reason, nostalgia plays a significant role in the formation of brand associations and thus consumer based brand equity in general.

## 2.6.2 Cognitive responses

The first set of responses stimulated by brand nostalgia is related to cognition, perceptions and evaluations.

Several types of cognitive responses have been identified in the literature. We decided to focus on the three most studied aspects because those will be useful for constructing our conceptual framework later on. The topics that will be developed are brand awareness, perceived quality and authenticity

### 2.6.2.1 *Brand awareness, recall and recognition*

Brand awareness, generally defined as “the probability that consumers are familiar about the availability and accessibility of a company’s product and service” (Malik et al., 2013, p.168) and measured through brand recognition or brand recall, is linked to what extent consumers can recall and recognize a brand and has an influence on the formation and the strength of brand associations in consumers’ minds (Keller, 1993).

Linked to nostalgia, brand awareness was found to have a direct positive impact on the three dimensions of brand nostalgia (Bartier, 2014). The other way around, nostalgic cues can stimulate brand recall or recognition (Reisenwitz, 2001) and this effect is even stronger when personal nostalgia is used (Muehling et al., 2013). This stimulates the formation of positive associations related to the brand (Reisenwitz, 2001). The only exception exists for transformational advertisement for a negatively-valenced product which will not increase brand awareness (Reisenwitz, 2001).

However, historical memories are not always affected by brand awareness, especially for low involvement products, such as cookies, beers or dairy products, as those are bought automatically as part of a purchasing routine (Bartier, 2014).

Finally, brand awareness is a necessary and true condition for evoking nostalgic feelings. If the consumers do not know or recognize the brand, it is impossible that they feel nostalgic when seeing it (Bartier, 2014).

As suggested by Bartier, “Brand awareness is therefore the first step to eliciting nostalgia” (p. 62).

### 2.6.2.2 *Perceived quality*

Perceived quality, as part of the consumer-based brand equity, is the consumer’s opinion about the “product’s overall excellence or superiority that is different from objective quality”

(Zeithaml, 1988, pp. 3-4). The latter is measurable, quantifiable and comparable, but does not automatically lead to higher brand equity (Anselmsson et al. 2007). Perceived, or subjective, quality is based on perceived attributes, associations and symbols which create expectations, help to form an overall evaluation of the product quality and affects satisfaction (Gotlieb, Grewal, & Brown, 1994). Attributes may be intrinsic, linked to the physical product aspect, or extrinsic like the brand name, price and packaging (Bernue's et al.2003; Zeithaml, 1988; Steenkamp, 1997). Based on those attributes, consumers can deduct the quality of unknown products (Chieng & Goi Chai, 2011).

Applied to the nostalgia literature, brand nostalgia is seen to enhance the perceived quality of brands because traditional brands give the consumer a sense of guarantee regarding the quality of the brand (Bartier, 2014). Additionally, packaging with nostalgic cues was seen to improve perceived quality of the product (Dhurup et al., 2014). Therefore, evoking the oldness of a brand may be a successful technique to improve the perceived quality (Bartier, 2014).

### *2.6.2.3 Authenticity*

Authenticity is part of the perceptions consumers have when looking at nostalgic brands. However, nostalgia and authenticity, even if closely related, are not synonyms for each other and do not go along all the time (Ferrandi, 2012). According to Camus (2004), product's authenticity is linked to its origin, singularity, nature, the consumer's identity who experience a certain lack towards the past (Ferrandi, 2011). Indeed, in an ever-changing world, the consumer is constantly looking for authenticity in its consumption, which is reflected by simple and sincere products (Kessous & Roux, 2014; Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013). This impression can be created by images and operations (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013). Thanks to the consumption of authentic goods, the consumer is able to go back to his roots, the product becomes part of his self-representation and enables the consumer to find his personal identity back (Ferrandi, 2011).

According to Ryyänänen et al. (2016), product image, brand positioning, authenticity and nostalgia are all linked in mediated experiences. Indeed, authenticity is positively influenced by consumers' perceptions of the nostalgia evoked by a brand and is positively related to brand nostalgia (Bartier, 2014). However, authenticity does not influence image evaluation significantly (Hemetsberger and Pirker, 2006).

### **2.6.3 Affective responses**

After the cognitive responses, it has been demonstrated that consumer can feel emotions when nostalgic cues are presented. Four types of affective responses, namely brand attachment, nostalgic preferences, attitudinal loyalty and brand attitude, have been identified in the literature and will be explained in this section.

#### ***2.6.3.1 Brand attachment***

Brand attachment is a long term inalienable affective reaction towards the brand, expressing a psychological proximity relation created through brand reliability (Ratier, 2003; Vignolles, 2015). It is related to brand loyalty and persistence and appears as a consequence of brand nostalgia (Bartier, 2014). The relation between nostalgia and attachment to a brand has first been described by Fournier (1994) who introduced the term “nostalgic attachment”, aimed to “evaluate the quality, depth and strength of the relationship with the brand” (Kessous & Roux, 2010). Nostalgia was seen in the literature as having various roles in the formation of attachment, either as being one of the drivers or as an element of it (Lacoeuilhe, 2000; Heilbrunn, 2001). Nevertheless, it has been agreed that attachment results from the feeling of congruity between the brand and the consumer (Kessous & Roux, 2010).

Moreover, nostalgic cues have a positive influence on brand attachment as its effect was proved to be stronger for nostalgic brands than for non-nostalgic brands (Kessous & Roux, 2010; Vignolles, 2015).

Finally, demography plays a role in the extent to which a consumer is attached to a brand or not. Indeed, older consumers tend to present higher levels of brand attachment for older brands (Lambert-Pandraud & Laurent, 2010).

#### ***2.6.3.2 Nostalgic tastes and preference***

According to Holbrook and Schindler (2003), there is a period in life during which nostalgic preferences are formed and are resistant throughout life. The formation of those tastes through a similar process to imprinting and classical conditioning is based on time-dated stimuli, memory and is age-dependent. Indeed, product and/or brand memory is developed at a very young age due to the fact that brands are also seen by children. Those related memories are encoded in the long-term memory, and will have an influence on the future consumption preferences (Braun-La Tour, La Tour and Zinkhan, 2007; Bowlby, 1982). Zajonc (1968) explained this process by demonstrating that the more exposed to a stimuli, the more people

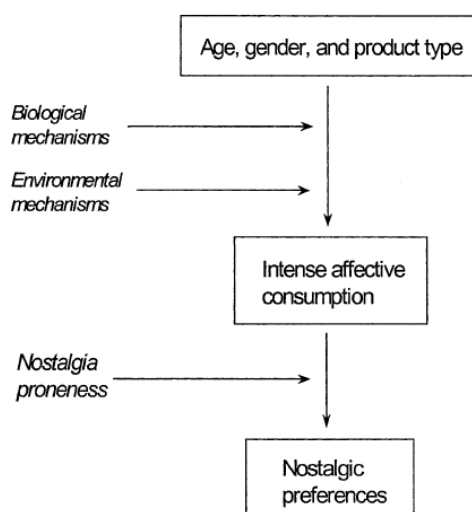
liked it. Preference peak appears around the end of adolescence or early adulthood, although preferences can be developed at an earlier age if nostalgia proneness is present at a higher degree.

The conditions required for developing nostalgic tastes are a period of intense consumption and strong affective experiences (Holbrook & Schindler, 1994). The primacy effect is applied in this case, as the first strong affective reactions can play a causal role in forming preferences towards the past (Holbrook & Schindler, 1994). Moreover, preferences based on personal emotions and influenced by nostalgic cues are different between age groups, whereby the related nostalgic effects will differ accordingly (Hwanga & Hyunb, 2013; Hamilton & Wagner, 2014). However, nostalgia is a poor predictor for preferences and choices (Rindfleisch et al., 2000), but is rather an influencer, as well as tradition and culture (Holbrook & Schindler, 1994; Renko & Bucar, 2014).

Pascal (2003) proved that preferences and higher net positive affect are developed when nostalgia is evoked in ads, especially for aesthetic products (Muehling & Sprott, 2004).

Holbrook and Schindler (2003b) conceptualized the formation of nostalgic preferences in the following model. It shows the formation of nostalgic preferences triggered by age, gender and product type. Those factors influence the intensity of affective consumption which will lead to nostalgic preferences. Hence, biological, i.e. related to the human development and hormones, and environmental mechanisms such as culture and reference groups are believed to have a moderating effect on the direct influence of age, gender and product type (Holbrook & Schindler, 2003b). Nostalgia proneness has the same role in the relation between consumption and preference.

**Figure 4:** Integrative model of nostalgic preferences



Source: Holbrook & Schindler (2003b)

Applied to packaging, Chun-Chih Chen proved that consumer preferences towards nostalgic packaging are not enhanced when the past or traditions are represented without creative insights. Indeed, consumers prefer to have a packaging which evokes “the good old days” through symbolic and meaningful characteristics like color or material (Chun-Chih Chen, 2013).

### *2.6.3.3 Attitudinal loyalty*

Attitudinal loyalty is the consumer’s attitude and feelings towards the brand (Toleda & Lopes, 2016). Compared to behavioral loyalty which will be tackled in the next section, attitudinal loyalty is stronger regarding customer involvement. It is not simply repurchasing the same brand but means that the brand scores high in the classification of brands (Brito, 2010). Toledo and Lopes (2016) found out that attitudinal loyalty is positively impacted by nostalgia, but we will not focus further on this topic as too little research has studied the influential role of nostalgia on attitudinal loyalty.

### *2.6.3.4 Brand attitude*

Brand attitude is the overall evaluation of a consumer towards a brand (Wilkie, 1986). It is a crucial concept as it is the starting point for other responses such as consumer satisfaction and purchase intention (Keller, 1993). Brand attitude is the result of the combination of the associated attributes and functional as well as symbolic benefits (Keller, 1993; Rossiter & Percy, 1987; Zeithaml, 1988). Beliefs about (non)product-related attributes are also part of the concept (Rossiter & Percy, 1987; Zeithaml, 1988)

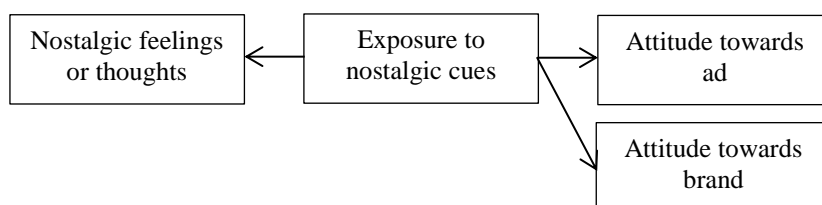
Brand attitude is positively impacted by nostalgia, especially with emotion-loaded (called transformational) or low-involvement ads for positively-valenced products (Reisenwitz, 2001; Muehling et al., 2013; Muehling & Sprott, 2004; Vignolles, 2015). The result is even more important when personal nostalgia is used (Pascal, 2003). The same results were found for nostalgic packaging that lead to enhanced brand attitude (Dhurup et al., 2014). However, negatively-valenced low involvement products with nostalgic cues do not improve brand attitude.

Moreover, attitude towards the brand and towards the ad are interrelated, meaning that if one is positively influenced by nostalgia, similar consequences will be observed on the other. This was proven by many studies (Marchegiani & Phau, 2005; Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009; Bray, 2014; Vignolles, 2015) and was conceptualized in the following frameworks. Figure 5 shows how nostalgic cues provoke nostalgic feelings and influence the attitude towards the ad

and towards the brand. In this case, the nostalgic cues are present in the ad, but it should be interesting to test the same model on packaging

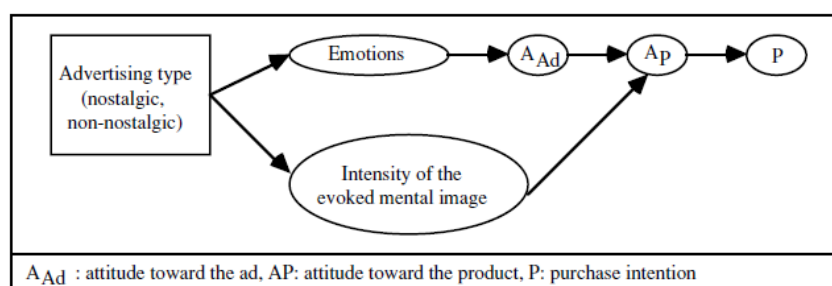
Figure 6, on the other hand, shows how the (non-) nostalgic ad provokes emotions, influence the attitude towards the ad leading to the attitude towards the product and finally resulting in enhanced purchase intention. Moreover, this model adds the impact of the intensity of the evoked mental image on the attitude towards the product. Again, it may be interesting to assess the impact of a nostalgic packaging cues on emotions and attitude.

**Figure 5:** Attitudes resulting from exposure to nostalgic cues



Source: Marchegiani & Phau, 2005

**Figure 6:** Impacts of advertising with nostalgic cues



Source: Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009

## 2.6.4 Conative response

The conative aspect is the behavioral response to a stimulus (Swaen, 2014). Nostalgia not only has an impact on mental and attitudinal aspects, but can also result in changes in behavior, namely loyalty, purchase intention and brand activity.

### 2.6.4.1 Behavioral loyalty

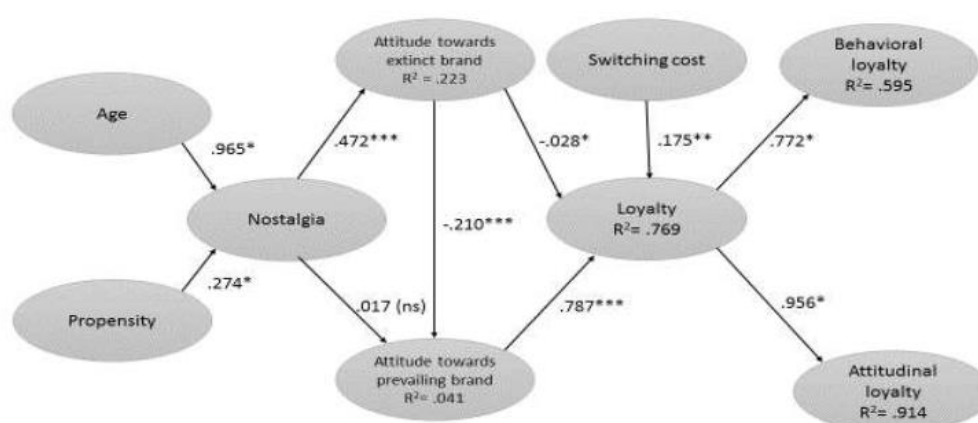
Loyalty in the consumer behavior literature is defined as “a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future” (Oliver, 1999, p. 34). Indeed, “consumers regularly buy the same brand because they know what to expect from this brand” (Bartier, 2014). Brand loyalty can be divided into behavioral/purchase and attitudinal loyalty, which was tackled in the previous section (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

Nostalgia has a great potential to attract and retain consumers, especially if the brand is well-established (Lambert-Pandraud & Laurent, 2010). This is especially the case for functional and useful products as those usually stay longer in the market, whereby the ability to create relationships with the consumer is increased (Ryynänen et al., 2016). Moreover, creating personal relationships through communities is a very good way to enhance customer loyalty (Lambert-Pandraud & Laurent, 2010).

Brand loyalty is a consequence of brand nostalgia and has an influence on purchase intention. Moreover, there is a positive and significant link between brand nostalgia and loyalty as higher levels of brand nostalgia may lead to higher consumer loyalty (Urde et al., 2007; Wiedmann et al., 2011). This is partially due to the perceived brand oldness that increases the security and certainty aspects as well as the perceived quality and the overall attitude and trust towards the brand (Bartier, 2014; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Moreover, loyalty has also a positive and significant influence on purchase intention.

This relationship between loyalty and nostalgia has been modeled in the following figure by Toledo and Lopes (2016). This figure shows how age and nostalgia proneness influence nostalgia which leads to attitudes towards the extinct brand (the prevailing brand revealed not be significantly linked to it) which influence both types of loyalty, namely behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. Moreover, switching costs have a significant impact on loyalty, meaning that high switching costs will result in higher loyalty.

**Figure 7:** Structural model of the relation between nostalgia and loyalty



Source: Toledo and Lopes, 2016



#### *2.6.4.2 Purchase intention*

Purchase intention is defined as the “intention to make a purchase of a specific product or service in upcoming” (Malik et al., 2013, p.168). It depends on brand awareness, attitude and brand loyalty as well as consumer’s feelings and impulsive situations (Bray, 2014; Malik et al., 2013).

Nostalgia can have an impact on purchase intentions as it was demonstrated that brands recalling good memories increase the willingness to buy the brand (Bartier, 2014). Moreover, past experiences with brands as well as a unique and highly nostalgic atmosphere are able to stimulate the desire of purchase (Bartier, 2014; Lu et al., 2015). Purchase intention is positively related to brand nostalgia, perceived authenticity and loyalty (Camus, 2004). Moreover, Kessous and Roux (2010) proved that nostalgic brands and their related cognitive and affective dimensions result in more favorable purchase intentions than non-nostalgic brands (Kessous & Roux, 2010; Sierra and Shaun, 2007).

However, researchers are divided what concerns the direct effect of nostalgia on purchase intentions. Some (Marchigiani & Phau, 2005; Muehling et al., 2013; Telford, 2013) proved that purchase intention increases when nostalgic feelings are directly experienced with nostalgic advertising , while others refuted the effect (Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009, Bray, 2014). Nevertheless, Dhurup et al. (2014) proved that nostalgic packaging significantly increases the purchase intention.

#### *2.6.4.3 Activity*

Nostalgia evoked by brands results also in less noticeable reactions, such as involvement with the brand, word of mouth or research of information concerning the brand (Bartier, 2014). Muehling et al. (2013) demonstrated that involvement towards the product and the brand is enhanced through nostalgia. However, nostalgia was discovered not to be sufficient enough to elicit higher brand message response involvement (Muehling, & Sprott, 2004).

Moreover, as people feel nostalgic from their “good old days”, they talk about the experience they had with a brand in the past (Kessous & Roux, 2010). In this way, word of mouth is stimulated.

## 2.7 Risks of using nostalgia in marketing

However, it should be noted that nostalgia-based marketing is not always successful and should be used thoughtfully. It is only advised for a certain type of goods and services, as it may create the contrary effect if used inappropriately (Kessous & Roux, 2014). Moreover, nostalgic marketing should also differ from one target group to the other (Meuhling et al., 2013).

Multiple risks can appear due to unsuitable use of nostalgia like rejection of the brand, negative perception of the brand considered as “out of fashion” or loss of authenticity if the product is “deceptively old”. Negative evaluations towards the ad, the brand or the product can also be created if nostalgia is not managed carefully. For instance, when retrospective self-referencing ads discord with expectations, less favorable evaluations are developed (Muehling, & Sprott, 2004). Furthermore, personal nostalgia was observed to act as a distracter of the ad’s main message, resulting in reduced analysis of the ad and reduced remembrance of the product features (Unger et al., 1991, Pascal, 2003; Muehling & Sprott, 2004). Indeed, personal nostalgia recalls nostalgic memories and because of this, self-content is activated. This results in less free active memory for processing ad messages (Pascal, 2003). This is called central memory processing compared to peripherally processing of historical nostalgia (Pascal, 2003). Therefore, it is recommended to use nostalgia only for a certain type of products. In the case of high-involvement products for example, emotions can even serve as persuasive argument (Pascal, 2003). Personal nostalgia is advised when a personal link is desired and when no strong arguments are present in order to get attention of the public in another way.

With all those risks in mind, it is recommended to adapt the product to the present and to find a right balance between nostalgia and innovativeness (Kessous & Roux, 2014; Vignolles, 2015).

## 2.8 Limitations of previous research and research interest

Although nostalgia has been studied by multiple researchers, there are still some major limitations to those and most of the time they all mention the same. For instance, elderly are a more difficult group to reach while they may form an interesting research topic (Boonefaes et al., 2010; Ferrandi, 2012). Furthermore, as was revealed previously, huge debates exist around the moderating role and the impact on attitude and behavior of age, gender and nostalgia proneness (Bartier, 2014).

A question frequently raised relates to the replicability of the study as it is dangerous to generalize the results of one particular study in one country for one or more product categories. This doubt was raised by Bartier (2014) who suggested extending the study of brand nostalgia to a cross-cultural context to test the applicability of her model and “to understand the role played by consumers’ perceptions of brand-induced nostalgia in the formation of consumer-based brand equity” (Bartier, 2014, p. 155). Therefore, it could be interesting to analyze the influence of the culture on nostalgia as this has never been done before.

Finally, as has already been mentioned previously, studies related to packaging and nostalgia are scarce. Indeed, most of scholars and marketers focused on the effects of nostalgic cues on advertisement while not showing interest in packaging.

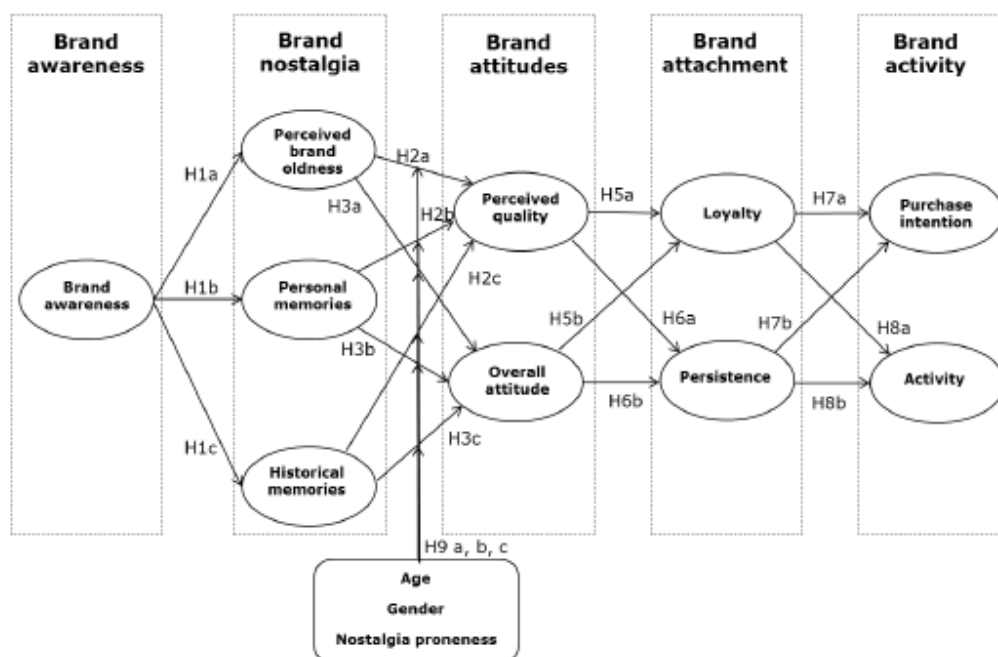
Due to all those limitations mentioned above, this study would focus more on the influencers of nostalgia such as age, gender, nostalgia proneness with special attention to age as A fourth moderator has been introduced and will consist in culture. Moreover, our study will be based on packaging as its influence on the consumer based brand equity has not been analyzed thoroughly.

### 3. Conceptual framework

Based on the literature review, we developed the following conceptual model depicted in Figure 11. This framework is a consumer-based brand equity model based on that of Bartier (2014), Lehmann et al. (2008) and Cobb-Walgren et al. (1995), respectively pictured in figure 8, 9 and 10.

From Bartier's model (based itself on Keller and Lehmann (2003) and Lehmann et al. (2008)), we took the concepts of brand nostalgia, perceived quality, loyalty and purchase intention. This choice was made because discussion still exists about the impact of nostalgia on brand loyalty and purchase intention. On the contrary, previous research has already uniformly shown that brand nostalgia positively influences overall attitude (Reisenwitz, 2001; Muehling et al., 2013; Muehling & Sprott, 2004; Bartier, 2014; Vignolles, 2015). The aspect of persistence has not been developed in our literature review so will not be tackled in our conceptual model and finally, the concept "activity" is simply not part of our research interest.

**Figure 8:** Hierarchy of effects model of consumer-based brand equity.

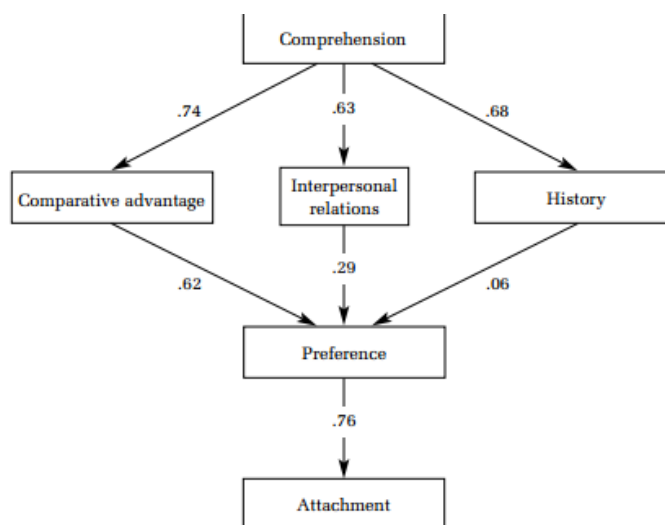


Source: Bartier, 2014

From Figure 9, we decided to focus on one line of effects, namely the relation between "comprehension", i.e brand awareness and knowledge, "history", in our case nostalgia, "preference", consisting in attitude, loyalty and bonding, and "attachment", linked to persistence and activity. This choice was made because the focus of our study lies on

nostalgia and so, in order to be efficient, the two other elements of “comparative advantage” and “interpersonal relations” were eliminated.

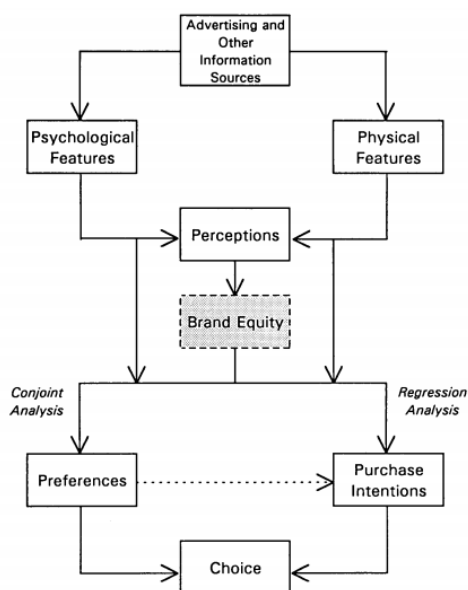
**Figure 9:** Hierarchy-of-Effects Relationship Among Brand Equity Factors.



Source: Lehmann et al., 2008

The third framework on which we based our research is the one of Cobb-Walgreen et al. (1995). Instead of analyzing the effects of advertising, we will replace this by packaging. The physical features of it, in our case the material of the packaging, the picture, the color and the size, are evaluated and lead to perceptions which are influenced by psychological features such as nostalgia proneness. Positive perceptions lead to higher brand equity which positively influence preferences and purchase intention to finally make a choice.

**Figure 10:** Antecedents and Consequences of Brand Equity.



Source: Cobb-Walgreen et al., 1995

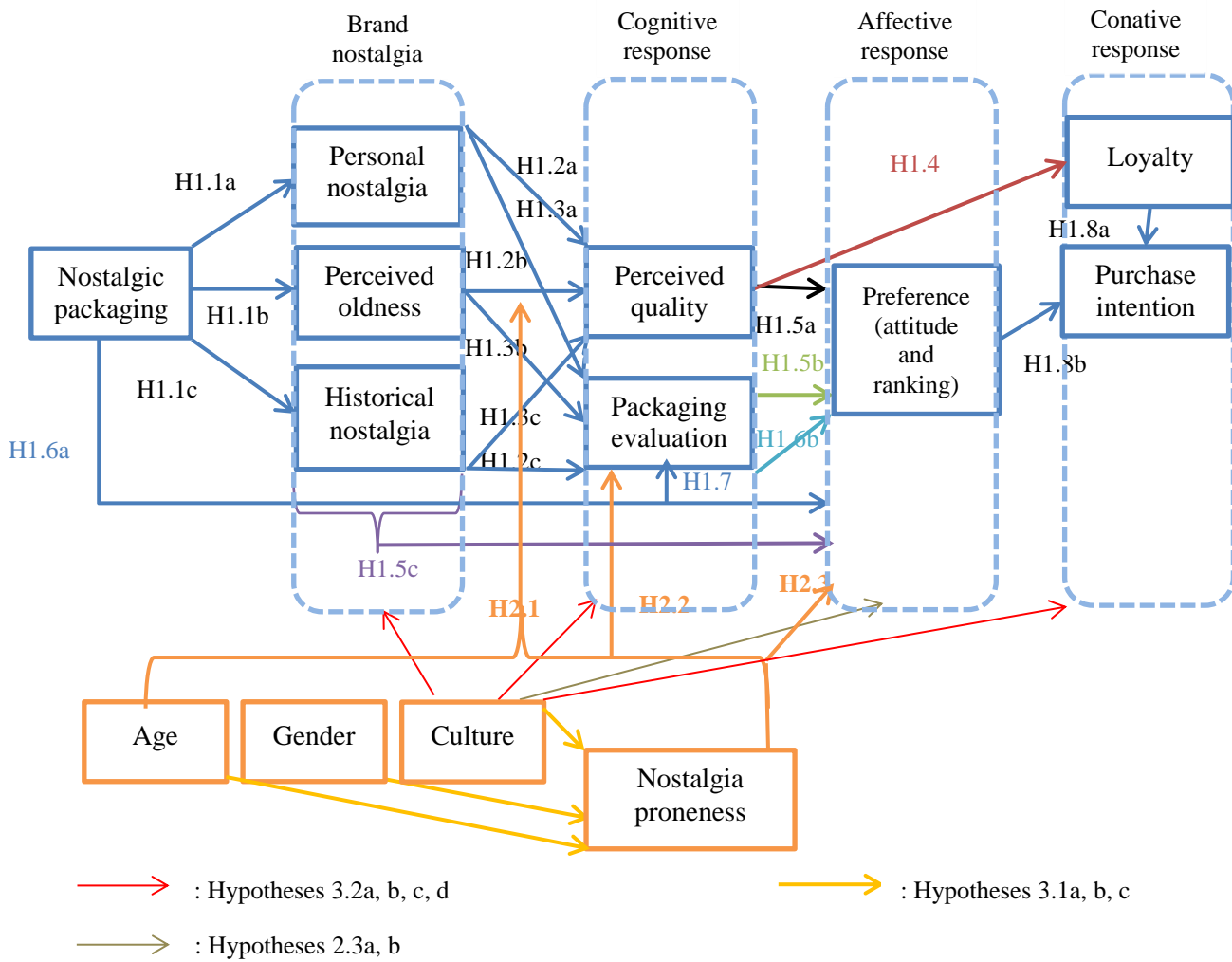
Based on those three frameworks, we developed a new conceptual causal model where packaging influences brand nostalgia, which affects perceived quality and packaging evaluation that impacts brand loyalty, preference attitude and finally purchase intention.

Packaging evaluation is part of the model and is believed to be influenced by brand nostalgia as proven by Crilly et al. (2004) who argued that nostalgia plays a significant role in the evaluation of a packaging. Moreover, packaging evaluation is part of brand attitude, which is part of the consumer-based brand equity. In our case, packaging evaluation is measured through the overall liking towards the packaging and its physical aspects.

The preference towards the product based on the packaging is measured through two concepts, namely the ranking given to a nostalgic packaging and the overall preference attitude compared to other brands.

Furthermore, the effects of moderators such as age, gender, nostalgia proneness and culture in the relationships between brand nostalgia and perceived quality is analyzed as the literature showed a relative small amount of studies measuring this relation. The impact of those moderators on packaging evaluation and preference has also been investigated. Finally, cultural differences in the responses provoked by brand nostalgia and packaging have been examined by testing the same model on two cultures, namely French speaking Walloons and Dutch speaking Flemish.

**Figure 11:** Conceptual framework of consumer-based brand equity and the effects of moderators on packaging and brand nostalgia



## 4. Research questions and hypotheses

### 4.1 Summary of literature review

Through the literature review, we can see that nostalgia is a well-established concept in the consumer behavior area and most of the studies focused on the same aspects, namely the drivers and moderators and their consequences on the consumer. Those results can be divided into three distinct parts based on perceptions (cognitive), attitudes (affective) and behavior (conative).

The effects of nostalgia differ between gender, age, level of nostalgia proneness but also for different types of products.

Nostalgia can be evoked through multiple manners and the marketing tends to abuse of this technique. Therefore, more and more researchers put attention to the risks of using nostalgia which revealed not to be appropriate in every case.

However, most of research was based on qualitative interviews and focus groups, which do not allow us to take general conclusions.

Moreover, due to some divergent opinions concerning the moderating effect of age, gender and nostalgia proneness, the profile of the nostalgic consumer has not been developed yet. Finally, academics concentrated on their domestic market, but none of them has analyzed the effects of culture on nostalgic feelings or conducted a cross-cultural study to examine the difference in response to nostalgic cues.

### 4.2 Research questions

The main goal of this research is to evaluate the impact of nostalgic cues of packaging on brand nostalgia and certain aspects of the consumer-based brand equity model. Moreover, the influence of socio-demographical and psychological variables inherent to the consumers on the relation packaging-brand nostalgia is examined. Based on that, we may be able to create a profile of the typical consumer for whom nostalgic packaging is important in the purchase decision. The final objective of this research paper is to measure the cultural differences in the responses evoked by nostalgia.

The questions are the following:

RQ1: In what sense does packaging evoking nostalgia influence the formation of some aspects of the consumer-based brand equity?

RQ2: To what extent do individual differences (i.e., gender, age, culture or nostalgia proneness) have an influence on certain dimensions of consumer-based brand equity?



RQ3: What are the cultural differences in the formation of certain aspects of the consumer-based brand equity model?

### 4.3 Hypotheses

Different hypotheses were defined in order to answer the research questions.

The overall purpose of this study is to analyze the effects of nostalgia-based packaging for low-involvement products and more specifically in the confectionery market.

This study has the aim to answer the research questions developed above by testing the related hypotheses that are described below.

The first set of hypotheses is linked to the first research question. We want to demonstrate that packaging can have an influence on the formation of consumer-based brand equity. Based on the model previously explained, we developed the following hypotheses:

H1.1: Packaging positively influences (a) perceived brand oldness, (b) personal memories and (c) historical memories.

H1.2: Perceived quality is positively influenced by (a) perceived brand oldness, (b) personal memories and (c) historical memories.

H1.3: Packaging evaluation is positively influenced by (a) perceived brand oldness, (b) personal memories and (c) historical memories

H1.4: Loyalty is positively influenced by perceived quality.

Hypothesis 1.5 and 1.6 concerns preference. As this concept is divided into the dimensions “attitude” and “ranking”, the related hypothesis are divided according the studied dimension.

H1.5: Preference attitude is positively influenced by (a) the perceived quality, (b) the packaging evaluation and (c) the three dimensions of brand nostalgia.

As preference can be influenced by either emotions or appearance or even both, we tried to distinguish the relation between those with the following sub-hypotheses:

H1.6: Ranking of the packaging is related to (a) emotions linked to the past and (b) to physical evaluation of the packaging.

This hypothesis was decided to be measured because responses to packaging are based on memories, learned attitudes and preferences (Dhurup, 2014; Aaker 2010), but also on physical appearance like shape, color and material (Aaker 2011). Therefore, it may be interesting to compare the responses for packaging evaluation based on physical elements and on emotions. Indeed, people may prefer a packaging based on tangibles assets like design without taking

emotions into account, while others will prefer a certain type of packaging because of their personal history with it. For instance, respondents may prefer the box with the Tintin character for its design, but indicate that the box with the Royal Family is the one evoking the most emotions linked to the past.

Finally, we want to investigate if the previous answers effectively lead to higher purchase intentions, tested with the last hypothesis.

H 1.7: Purchase intention is positively influenced by (a) loyalty and (b) preference.

The next set of hypothesis will tend to answer the second research question concerning the moderating effect of age, gender, nostalgia proneness and culture on the relation between brand nostalgia and perceived quality, but also the impact of those elements on packaging evaluation and nostalgic preferences.

H2.1: Age (a), gender (b), nostalgia proneness (c) and culture (d) moderate the relation between the three dimensions of brand nostalgia (i.e., perceived brand oldness, personal memories and historical memories) and perceived quality.

H2.2: Packaging evaluation depends on (a) age, (b) gender, (c) nostalgia proneness (d) culture

H2.3: Nostalgic preferences (attitude and ranking) are influenced by (a) age, (b) gender, (c) nostalgia proneness, (d) culture

Nevertheless, culture has rarely been tackled as a driver in nostalgic feelings, the formation of nostalgic preferences and the brand equity model of a nostalgic brand. This absence in the literature is surprising as culture plays a major role in the formation of souvenirs, influences the individual's past and may also impact the way individuals respond to nostalgic cues. As we have the chance to live in Belgium, it would be interesting to analyze the cultural differences between French speaking Walloons and Dutch speaking Flemish. Even if both are inhabitants of Belgium, there is still a great disparity among those two groups due to historical reasons. Although this gap has decreased, differences still exist in the mentality, habits and customs. Finally, due to the rise of certain extreme political parties, cultural differences are even more a hot topic for Belgium.

Thanks to the setting in which the survey has been conducted, we were able to directly approach two cultures and so to test the influence of culture on the consumer-based brand

equity model. Moreover, we took advantage of this situation to investigate the difference in nostalgic responses and proneness on a broader level.

This set of hypotheses linked to culture is described as follow:

H3.1: The profile of the consumer showing a higher level of nostalgia proneness is different in both cultures.

H3.2: Brand nostalgia (a), perceived quality (b), loyalty (c) and purchase intention (d) responses are different according to culture.

Important to note is that hypothesis 3.1 is subdivided on the conceptual framework in 3.1a for the relation age-nostalgia proneness, 3.1b for the relation gender-nostalgia proneness and 3.1c for the relation culture-nostalgia proneness.

## 5. Methodology

This paper aims to better understand the drivers of brand nostalgia evoked by packaging as well as its consequences. Even if nostalgia is a personal emotion, it has been decided to conduct a quantitative research in order to collect data about the Belgian consumers. In order to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses, a survey was developed. This is the best method for causal studies as they are useful to “test hypotheses and get relations from cause to effect [...], understand which variables are at the origin of a phenomenon [...] determine the nature of the relations between the causal variables” (Kervyn, 2014 p.33).

First, the objective is to verify the existence of nostalgia in the packaging and its dimensions (personal, historical and perceived brand oldness). Then, following the hierarchy of effects model, perceived brand quality, packaging evaluation, loyalty, preference attitude, preference ranking and purchase intention are analyzed. Next, the impact of socio-demographic and psychological variables on brand nostalgia is examined.

Cookies were chosen as the main topic of the survey used for this thesis. The reasons for choosing cookies for this study lies in different aspects.

First, as mentioned by Stern (1992) and Ferrandi (2011), sweet products are considered to be the ones that evoke the most nostalgic feelings. Therefore, the category of biscuits was decided to be analyzed after the chocolates have been examined by Zarantonello & Luomala (2011) and candies by Ryyänänen et al. (2016).

Second, according to Kessous and Roux’s reasons for choosing a particular product category (2010), the category must meet the conditions of competitive intensity and implication levels in order to get significant results from the survey. Cookies fulfill the first criteria as multiple brands offer a wide selection of cookies. Moreover, cookies can have different implication levels as some are bought as a gift while some are bought as part of the consumer’s routine.

Finally, following Bartier’s future research options, we decided to investigate an additional product of the low involvement category with affective dimensions according to the Foote, Cone and Belding grid (FCB) of Vaughn (1980) (explained in Figure 12), namely cookies, appearing in the bottom right hand side corner of the figure depicted below. This was done in order to evaluate which dimensions of brand nostalgia are involved in the formation of some aspects of the consumer-based brand equity.

Figure 12: FCB grid

	Thinking (Rational)	Feeling (Emotional)
High Involvement	<p><b>Expensive, Commitment products</b> Ex: Cars, homes, furnishings</p> <p>Informative appeals: Heavy copy, provide detailed information on the product. Use two-sided arguments, present the strongest argument last.</p>	<p><b>Appearance Products</b> Ex: Jewelry, cosmetics, fashion goods</p> <p>Psychological appeals: Heavy imagery, little copy, vicarious emotional experiences.</p>
Low Involvement	<p><b>Habitual Products</b> Food, household cleaning items</p> <p>Responsive appeals: Use one-sided arguments, present the strongest argument first, and provide a conclusion for the consumer. Use reminders to keep product on top of mind.</p>	<p><b>Impulse / Self-satisfaction Products</b> Cigarettes, liquor, candy</p> <p>Social appeals: Glitter, lights, and everything showy allowed here. The key is to use attention-grabbing designs and arrangements.</p>

Based on Vaughn (1980)

### 5.1 Selection of brands

In a pre-test, 118 respondents (57% French speaking, 43% Dutch speaking) from all ages were selected, mostly at the exit of 2 different supermarkets in Walloon Brabant and in Flemish Brabant. They presented the same profile as those that would answer the online survey. They were given the definition of the brand nostalgia construct and a list of 10 cookies' brands with their related classical packaging (see Appendix 3). This list was created based on the brands that are currently available in nearly every supermarket that could evoke nostalgic feelings. Moreover, brands with non-nostalgic packaging (ex: Milka) were added in order to control if people perceived nostalgia the right way.

Those respondents then had to give three brands that were the most associated with brand nostalgia. Based on their answers, we retained the three most cited brands. Those brands were *Lu*, *Lotus* and *Delacre*. As we believe that more dimensions of brand nostalgia would be involved if the brand is originally from Belgium, we restricted our study to Belgian brands. For this reason, *Lu* was eliminated. *Lotus* and *Delacre* presented very similar results in terms of brand nostalgia (Appendix 3). As we wanted to have a brand that specifically plays with nostalgia in its packaging and that has a more targeted public, we decided to select the brand *Delacre* with its traditional green box of 1kg composed of 10 different kinds of cookies (packaging showed in Appendix 4 and 5 in the survey). Indeed, originally *Delacre* targeted elderly from higher social classes, but tries currently to democratize its products.

Moreover, in order to confirm the choice of *Delacre* as a nostalgic brand, we used the five criteria developed by Kessous and Roux (2010), namely (i) age of the brand, (ii) reputation, (iii) (trans-)generational character of the brand, (iv) notion of a family purchase or for a gift, (v) control of the gender effect. Each aspect was carefully checked. First, the age of *Delacre* is verified as *Delacre* is a brand created 125 years ago. The brand reputation was measured during our pretest in supermarkets as most of consumers questioned still buy this brand now. *Delacre* is a transgenerational brand as it covers the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century and does not belong to one specific generation (Kessous & Roux, 2010). As can be seen through the collected testimonies and the reactions during the pretest in supermarkets, *Delacre* is sometimes bought as a gift, was consumed mostly during shared familial moments and stands for interpersonal relationships. Finally, *Delacre* is a brand that targets both men and women. This was proven during the pretest where half of the respondents were male and the other half women and no significant difference appeared related to preference between genders.

*Delacre* has a strong history in the Belgian market and there are several reasons why it is associated with nostalgia by the population. Since 1891, *Delacre* is a famous Belgian cookie brand founded in Brussels. It directly received the official and prestigious recognition of “Official supplier of the royal Court” and created every year a special edition with the royal family on it (packaging showed in Appendix 4 and 5 in the survey). This tradition linked to the King of Belgians and his family is an indispensable work, a way to “guide the history of Belgium while enjoying delicious cookies “ (Wehrlin, 2014). The boxes are collected, stored or used for other purposes.

Even if the company or brand *Delacre* has been acquired and transferred by multinationals such as Campbell's Soup, United Biscuit, Yildiz and very recently Ferrero, it keeps its strong Belgian roots by editing special boxes linked to the Belgian history (Dubois, 2014). Since 2011, *Delacre* publishes special editions with Tintin, the famous comic character created by Hergé (packaging showed in Appendix 4 and 5 in the survey). This, again, evokes historical memories, but can also be linked with personal memories as perceived brand oldness. It can evoke nostalgic feelings due to remembered moments during childhood where the Tintin comics were read or watched on TV. Meanwhile, it can make people nostalgic about the good old days during which Hergé was still alive.

## 5.2 Sample and procedure

After the first pre-test, an initial online survey to test our hypotheses was created and then tested and evaluated by a diversified sample of 20 people presenting the same characteristics as the one that would receive the survey. This group of 20 people was composed by 50% French speakers and 50% Dutch speakers. After their comments have been taken into account and the survey has been modified in consequence, the improved survey was distributed online through social media and emails to student and non-student respondents recruited via convenience sampling. The goal was to have a representative sample of the Belgian population with 200 Walloons and 200 Flemish. This number has largely been achieved through an online survey created with Qualtrics (367 French speakers and 218 Dutch speakers). This method proved to be the most convenient for reaching them as well as showing different packaging to respondents in order to evaluate their nostalgic preferences. Moreover, as the survey presented multiple repetitive and redundant questions to verify the consistency of answers, using internet proved to be easier for answering complex questions. A final advantage for using an online survey is the automatic Excel spreadsheet that comes out. However, SPSS requires at least 30 respondents per age group category. As we were missing at least 25 Flemish respondents from the age group 60+ to reach that goal, we proceeded to a self-administrated paper-and-pencil method in one retirement home in Flanders. This method proved to be efficient for this group as they are not used to online survey and feel more comfortable with the traditional method of a printed survey. In order to be sure respondents understood the questions, I assisted them personally and fill in the survey with them. After having proceeded to the survey completion, the answers were introduced manually in the Excel spreadsheet as this represented a considerable time gain. Nevertheless, this has the disadvantage that the infographics and figures created by Qualtrics are not 100% representative of our sample. For this reason, we will not show those graphs in Appendix like we did for the French-speakers.

The variables were measured through scales found in the literature. To measure the three dimensions of brand nostalgia, i.e. perceived brand oldness, historical and personal memories, the scale developed by Bartier in her second essay (2014) was used. Perceived quality was measured using the scale developed by Ambler (2003), while loyalty and purchase intention were measured through the scales developed by Keller (2002). Nostalgic preference was measured through the scale introduced by Holbrook (2003). In order to measure nostalgia proneness, the short version of the scale developed by Holbrook (1993) was used. As four out

of eight items were developed inversely, we had to give them a reverse score in order to be able to compute a mean score on five by subtracting item 4, 5, 7 and 8 by 6. After that, two levels of nostalgia proneness were created. The first one, the least nostalgic prone, having a mean of 20 (or lower) on 40 (8 items \* 5 points on Likert scale), and the second one having a mean above 20, meaning they are the most prone to be nostalgic.

Each construct was measured using a five-point Likert scale (with values ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). This scale was chosen as it is a scale with an odd number of points, allowing the respondents to be neutral.

The surveys ended with a request for demographic variables (gender, age, culture, occupation and nationality) in order to verify the representativeness of the respondents but also to analyze the effects of those moderators on brand nostalgia. People were asked to fill in the age group they belong to instead of giving their exact age. This is because of methodological reasons in order to make sure the sample was diversified regarding the age. The age groups were created based on generational categories, namely baby-boomers, Generation X, Y and Z. It was required to have at least 30 people in each age group in order to be able to compute those in SPSS.

The questionnaire was developed in French and in Flemish in order to be the closest possible to the Belgian population allowing them to answer in their mother tongue and to fully understand the questions. This is a way to delete possible bias due to language. The scale of brand nostalgia had already been translated previously in French and was translated in Dutch by two language teachers and native speakers from French to Dutch using back-translation (Brislin, 1970). Using the same method, the other scales were translated from English to French and from English to Dutch.

The complete questionnaire can be found in Appendix 4 (Dutch version) and 5 (French version).

Moreover, as some respondents answered the survey in my presence, I noted down the comments that emerged regarding the brand *Delacre*. Some were even very enthusiastic and voluntarily wrote back to me to express their feelings and souvenirs linked with the brand. Those testimonies are added to the findings' part in the next section and were translated from French or Dutch to English.



### 5.3 Representativeness

As it was necessary to know the brand and the product to be able to answer the questions of the survey, the latter automatically ended if the respondent indicated not to be aware of one of those. Based on this selection criteria, 18 (5.2 %) out of the 347 French speaking respondents were excluded due to the brand and the product. Based on the same criteria as for French speakers, 21 (9.2 %) Flemish speakers out of 222 respondents were excluded because of lack of knowledge regarding the brand.

As was predicted by the survey method, the respondents were relatively young. For the French speaking part of the sample, the most represented age group was the one of 18-24 years with 41.2% with an average age of 27.55 years. 31.6% were men and 68.4% were women. Most of the respondents were students (36.4%). More information about the sample can be found in Appendix 6.

For the Dutch speaking part, the average age of the respondents was 32.05 years, with the most represented age group of 41-60 years old. 46.1% were men and 53.9% were women. The most represented occupation is the one of employee (24.9%). More information about the socio-demographic profile of the Flemish respondents can be found in Appendix 8.

As can be seen from the numbers here above, significant differences exist in represented ages and genders. Because of this, survey results will not be able to be perfectly compared. This bias is further explained in the part dealing with limitations.

As the study has the objective to measure nostalgia towards a Belgian product and to compare the responses between cultures, it has been decided to eliminate the responses of all the people with another nationality than Belgian. Therefore, the total number of respondents on which calculation will happen is 243 French speakers (250 respondents out of which 7 were non-Belgians) and on 193 Flemish. (201 respondents out of which 8 were non-Belgians).

## 6. Findings

First, in order to verify the internal coherence between items from the scales, we realized an analysis in principal components and then calculated Cronbach's alpha to verify the validity of the scale. All scales revealed to be valid, except for the one of loyalty for French speaking Walloons that had an alpha below the required 0.7. In order to raise Cronbach's alpha, we deleted the item with the highest loading, i.e. « I would pay extra for this brand » (See Appendix 10.1, pp.118-125, and Appendix 11.1, pp. 158-171).

The findings section is organized by research question. The first sub-section deals with the different aspects of brand nostalgia and the formation of consumer based brand equity in regards to the packaging. In the second part, the influence of moderators such as age, gender, culture and nostalgia proneness are studied. Finally, cultural differences are examined in regards to certain aspects of the formation of consumer-based brand equity.

### 6.1 Hypothesis 1

H1.1: Packaging positively influences (a) perceived brand oldness, (b) personal memories and (c) historical memories.

In order to accept or reject this hypothesis, each dimension of brand nostalgia was analyzed separately. First, we analyzed how many respondents choose the classic box as the one which elicits the most nostalgic feelings towards the past. In both cultures, the classic box was elected as the one linked with nostalgia. For Flemish, 61.66% chose this box as most nostalgic. For French speakers, however, 50.2% chose this box, meaning that the distribution between the other of boxes was better balanced.

Then, knowing this, we realized correlation tests to see if there is a link between brand nostalgia and packaging with nostalgic cues.

No linear regression model exists for any dimension of brand nostalgia for French speakers (Appendix 10.2, p.126-127), while for Flemish, the packaging significantly positively contributes to evoking personal memories ( $\beta=.185$ ) (Appendix 11.2, p 172).

However, as no specific question evaluated the packaging itself, we decided to compare the means of each dimension of brand nostalgia linked to the packaging.

Following a mean test (Appendix 12.5), the packaging scored the most on “perceived brand oldness” for both cultures with an average of 4 (I agree) out of 5. Then, personal nostalgia

was seen to have the second highest score with a mean between 3.47 (W<sup>1</sup>) ad 3.39 (F<sup>2</sup>), meaning that the *Delacre* packaging evokes relatively some personal memories. Finally, historical memories are seen not be linked to packaging at all as the majority of respondents indicated not to agree that this packaging evokes historical memories.

Moreover, testimonies collected during the survey proved once again that the packaging of *Delacre* evokes personal memories.

*Geneviève (71): “I remembered the box with the Royal Family on top of the shelf at my grandmother’s place. I’ve always seen it there and it recalls good memories to me. We could eat those cookies only during special occasions. Now, this box is symbol for stability and trust for me »*

*Harold (75): “This box is so meaningful for me, it remembers me my dad that worked there. I was fed with trash of Delacre cookies during my childhood. Even when I was a baby, Delacre cookies were mixed with fruits for my snack. That’s the reason why I’m so tall now. »*

*Lorraine (22): “My grandparents loved to collect the boxes with the Royal Family on it. It’s a tradition. When the boxes with Tintin appeared, my grandmother started to buy them for us. It’s a symbol for solid value of the belgian heritage. “*

*Charlotte (69): “A Delacre box has always been the typical gift my mother received from friends. Now, I still buy it as a gift for friends as well, it’s a reference.”*

*Geoffrey (25): “Those green boxes represent all my childhood. I remember so well the disputes we had about the cookies, those which were eaten first and those nobody wanted.”*

*Natalie (52): “Delacre cookies have always been my favourites. I associate them with my childhood and I still buy them for my children.”*

*Roxane (23): “Those cigarette cookies that were in the box are my favourite. When we were at my grandmother’s place, we could always have as dessert a scoop of moka ice-cream with one cigarette.”*

*Francis (82): “Those cookies are the favorites of my former husband and myself, they are the ones that forged our wedding”*

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<sup>1</sup> French speaking Walloons

<sup>2</sup> Dutch speaking Flemish

*André (87): “Those cookies are the best, I ate only those when I was a child, but now I can't anymore because I am not allowed to eat sweets”*

*Anna (91): “I always kept one box at home for my guests and we ate them with the coffee.”*

However, those correlations tests revealed an interesting point: Personal memories and Historical memories are related with each other for both cultures. This is not surprising as previous research on the difference between those two types of nostalgia already agreed on their interrelation and it is sometimes difficult to extract the effects on one without the other (Pascal, 2003).

In order to test the following relations between the dimensions of brand equity (i.e. perceived quality, loyalty, packaging evaluation, purchase intention and preference attitude), we first conducted a correlation test between those variables (Appendix 10.5, p.152-154 and Appendix 11.5, p. 196-197). As the resulting table showed that a positive and significant correlation exists for all of those variables. We decided to conduct a separate linear regression analysis for each of those constructs (Appendix 10.2, pp.127-136 and Appendix 11.2, pp. 173-180).

H1.2: Perceived quality is positively influenced by (a) perceived brand oldness, (b) personal memories and (c) historical memories.

Through linear regressions, we found that the only dimension of brand nostalgia explaining perceived quality is personal memories with 10.2% ( $\beta=.261$ ) in Wallonia and 14.7% in Flanders ( $\beta=.355$ ).

Perceived quality was overall evaluated very positively with a mean of 3.89 for Flemish respondents and 3.57 for Walloons, meaning that the majority of the respondents agreed on the high quality released by the packaging.

**Table 8:** Means of Perceived quality in both cultures

<b>Statistiques descriptives Flemish</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Moyenne	Ecart type
Total Perceived quality	193	2,50	5,00	3,8951	,54337
N valide (liste)	193				

<b>Statistiques descriptives Walloons</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Moyenne	Ecart type
Total Perceived quality	243	1,00	5,00	3,5772	,67799
N valide (liste)	243				

H1.3: Packaging evaluation is positively influenced by (a) perceived brand oldness, (b) personal memories and (c) historical memories

First, we conducted a correlation test to see if there is a link between brand nostalgia and packaging evaluation. This was done only for the classic box as this is the only packaging that was shown in the beginning of the survey. The test showed a positive and significant correlation only for personal memories for French-speakers (see Appendix 10.5, p.152).

In order to confirm this, a multiple linear regression was realized. This regression indicated that 5.4% ( $\beta=.255$ ) of the total variance of the packaging evaluation is explained by personal memories (see Appendix 10.2, p.136).

H1.4: Loyalty is positively influenced by perceived quality.

Another linear regression was calculated to understand the influence of perceived quality on loyalty. It was found that “perceived quality” explains between 24.2% (W) and 29.4% (F) of loyalty ( $\beta_w=.492$ ,  $\beta_f=.542$ ).

H1.5: Preference attitude is positively influenced by (a) the perceived quality, (b) the packaging evaluation and (c) the three dimensions of brand nostalgia.

a) With the same method as for the previous hypotheses, perceived quality was found to be responsible of 33.1% (F) to 40.1% (W) for the preferential attitude ( $\beta_f=.575$ ,  $\beta_w=.633$ )

b) The linear regression analysis showed that packaging evaluation explains between 5.1 (F) and 7.1% (W) of the preference attitude ( $\beta_f=.226$ ,  $\beta_w=.266$ ).

c) The first positive correlation revealed that only personal and historical memories are positively related to preference in both cultures. By executing a linear regression, personal memories were discovered to explain between 15.8% (F) and 19.8% (W) of the preference ( $\beta_f=.371$ ,  $\beta_w=.455$ ), while, in a lesser degree, only for French speakers, historical memories stand for 9.5% ( $\beta_w=0.309$ ).

This set of hypotheses is linked to the ranking respondents gave when confronted to three types of packaging with nostalgic cues, containing the same cookies and for the same price. Individuals were asked to give a number ranging from 1 to 3, 1 meaning preferred and 3 meaning the least appreciated, to each box.

H1.6: Ranking of the packaging is related to (a) emotions linked to the past and (b) to physical evaluation of the packaging.

a) An ANOVA test resulted in a significant relation of ranking with emotions linked to the past (Appendices 10.4, p.148 and 11.4, p.192). For French speakers, the classic box was cited 48.97% of the time as the one evoking the most emotions linked to the past, while this was the case only 35.8% of the time for the Tintin box and 15.22% for the box representing the Royal family (Appendix 7).

For Flemish, the results were even more distinct. 62.29% of the respondents linked emotions of the past with the classic green box, while this was only the case for 22.29% for the box with a picture of Tintin and 15.43% for the Royal family (Appendix 9).

b) Through another ANOVA test, a significant relation was found between the packaging evaluation based on physical appearance and the ranking given to a certain type of box. Overall, for all the four boxes a relatively favorable evaluation was given most of the time, meaning that respondents gave a score of 4 (“I like it”) out of 5 (“I like it a lot”). This was the case for 41.97% (W) to 47.79% (F) for the classic box, 38.7% (W) to 40.78% (F) for the Tintin box and 25.14% (F) to 30% (W) for the box representing the Royal family.

H1.7: Packaging evoking emotions related to the past is linked to the physical evaluation of the packaging

A significant positive correlation was found between those two variables, meaning that individuals who preferred a certain packaging evaluated it based both on emotions and on physical appearance. This is true for all kind of boxes, except for the “Royal family” box for Flemish (Appendix 11.5, p. 198).

This result explains that H4.1 and H4.2 point to the same direction, namely the classic box is preferred on an emotional and on a physical point of view. Indeed, due to this significant positive relation between physical appearance evaluation and emotional preference, H4.1 and H4.2 could have been predicted.

However, no correlation was found between emotions linked to the Royal family box and the appearance evaluation of it for Dutch speaking respondents. This may be due to the fact that Flemish have memories related to the traditional Royal family box that was at their familial house, while do not appreciate it anymore. Indeed, Flemish Belgian inhabitants are believed to be less royalists than the French-speaking population.

H 1.8: Purchase intention is positively influenced by (a) loyalty and (b) preference.

a) Loyalty explains between 50.9% (W) and 53.6% (F) of purchase intention ( $\beta_w=.713$ ,  $\beta_f=.732$ ).

b) Preference attitude explains 51.1% (W) and 58.8% (F) of purchase intention ( $\beta_w=.715$ ,  $\beta_f=.767$ ).

Through an ANOVA test, we measured the impact of the other dimension of preference, namely ranking. It was proved that the ranking given to the classic box has a significant effect on purchase intention for both cultures.

## 6.2 Hypothesis 2

H2.1: Age (a), gender (b), nostalgia proneness (c) and culture (d) moderate the relation between the three dimensions of brand nostalgia (i.e., perceived brand oldness, personal memories and historical memories) and perceived quality.

For this first set of hypotheses, we conducted 12 multiple regressions analyses for perceived quality including one moderator and one dimension of brand nostalgia (Chumpitaz & Vandamme, 2003). The tests can be found in Appendices 10.2b, 11.2b and 12.4

a) For the Flemish, age has a moderating role on the relation personal memories-perceived quality and historical memories-perceived quality, while for the French speaking respondents, personal memories and perceived oldness have a moderating role on the relation brand nostalgia perceived quality.

b) For gender, we used a dummy variable where 1= men and 2=women. For both cultures, no moderating role of gender was found.

c) For nostalgia proneness, we created another dummy variable according to the level of nostalgia proneness where 1 stands for a low level of nostalgia proneness (score of 20 or less on 40) and 2 stands for a high level of nostalgia proneness (score of 20 or more).

For both cultures, nostalgia proneness does not have a moderating role on the relation brand nostalgia and perceived quality.

(d) For culture, the dummy variable 1=French speaking Walloons and 2= Dutch Speaking Flemish was created. Through a multiple regression analysis with each dimension of brand nostalgia we found that personal memories, perceived oldness and historical memories each have a moderating role on the relation personal memories-perceived quality (Appendix 12.4).

H2.2: Packaging evaluation depends on (a) age, (b) gender, (c) nostalgia proneness (d) culture.

Through independent t-tests, packaging evaluation revealed to be influenced by gender only for Walloons while the level of nostalgia proneness was found not to have any impact for both cultures (Appendix 10.3, pp.143-144 and 11.3, pp.186-187). The same result was found for age through correlations tests (Appendix 10.5, p.155 and 11.5, p.198 ).

Moreover, packaging evaluation does not differ according to culture (Appendix 12.1). However, some differences were observed as well. For instance, personal memories are the only dimension of brand nostalgia to have a significant impact for French speakers, while no correlations were found for Flemish.

H2.3: Nostalgic preferences (attitude and ranking) are influenced by (a) age, (b) gender, (c) nostalgia proneness, (d) culture

a. Attitude

For the French speaking respondents, correlations tests resulted in a non-significant relation for age. T-tests on independent samples resulted in no significant difference on nostalgic preference attitude for gender and the level of nostalgia proneness. Men were found to have a score of 3.35 out of 5, meaning that they had the tendency to have a more favorable attitude towards the packaging than women with a score of 3.18.

For the Flemish cohort, correlations tests brought to light a positive and significant relation between nostalgic preference and age, meaning that the older a person is, the more he/she will prefer a nostalgic brand. Additionally, independent T-tests revealed that preference attitude is not significantly related to neither gender nor nostalgia proneness. Unlike the French speakers, women tend to have a higher mean of 3.35 out of 5 compared to the male's score of 3.25.

We then tended to accept or reject an additional sub-hypothesis related to this:

H2.3.a: Preference attitude towards packaging differs significantly between Flemish and Walloon consumers.

Through a T-test on independent samples, we discovered that there is no significant difference between cultures regarding the preference attitude. However, Flemish women tend to have a stronger attitude compared to men, while the inverse was detected for French-speakers. A final difference was discovered in the influence of age on preference attitude. For French



speaking respondents age does not have an impact on preference attitude while this is not the case for Flemish.

#### b. Ranking

Multiple correlations were calculated and, again, nostalgia proneness and gender do not seem to have a relation with ranking. The three boxes are indeed relatively gender-neutral and it is not astonishing not to see any difference between genders. Moreover, according to previous tests that proved that age is not related to the level of nostalgia proneness, it was not surprising to discover no differences between level of nostalgia proneness and ranking. Those results are valid for both cultures.

Nevertheless, ranking can be explained by age. Through an ANOVA test, a significant difference between age groups was found for Flemish as well as Walloons. For the latter, the classic box is preferred by the youngest group of 18 to 24 years old while the same box was preferred by the elderly Flemish.

On the contrary, the box representing the Royal family was consistently preferred by the oldest age group of 60+ by both language groups. This is in accordance with our expectations as we believed that elderly are attached to traditions. Indeed, *Delacre* edits since 1873 boxes with the Royal family, initially with Leopold II (Leurquin, 2014).

Finally, the box representing the comic figure Tintin was preferred by individuals aged from 24-40 years old in Wallonia. This could be explained by the fact that they were the readers of the comic. Moreover, the comic was transformed into a cartoon in 1992 and was diffused by famous TV chains all over the world (Imdb). If we take the average age of the group 25-40 years, i.e. 32.5, its birth year would be 1984. This means that in 1992, that person would be 8 years old, which is the perfect age to watch the *Adventures of Tintin* on TV and still keep memories of that time. Flemish, however, aged between 41 and 60 are the ones who prefer the box with the comic. The difference may be explained by the fact that the cartoon has been translated in Flemish very lately (broadcasted on Flemish TV chains in 2004) so that 24-40 year old people would not have experienced the cartoon on TV (Imdb).

A second sub-hypothesis was then defined in order to test if the differences between cultures are significant or not.

H2.3.b: Preference attitude towards packaging differs significantly between Flemish and Walloon consumers

For the Classic box and the Tintin box, the ranking people gave differs significantly according to culture.

In Wallonia, the box representing Tintin was observed to be preferred with an average of 1.79 (1 meaning the most preferred, 2 the second position and 3 the least preferred). Closely following this, the classic box had a mean of 1.89. Finally, the box representing the Royal family lies far behind with a mean of 2.32.

In Flanders, the classic box was largely preferred over the two other boxes with a mean of 1.6. The box representing Tintin was mostly classified on the second position with an average of 1.96. Finally, the box with a picture of the Royal family stands on the last position with a mean of 2.4 (Appendix 12.1)

Overall, we can observe that the box with the Royal family is the least preferred by the Belgian population. This could mean that the French speaking Belgian population is less attracted by the Royal family as it was before. Even, if this survey did not measure the feelings towards it, we may observe another “de-royalist” effect as was already showed before through the rise of political parties such a PS in Wallonia and N-VA in Flanders.

### 6.3 Hypothesis 3

The following hypotheses will be answered based on a dataset created by combining respondents of both cultures. The variable “culture” was then created by giving all Walloons a score of 1 and Flemish respondents a score of 2. The tests to the following hypotheses can be found in Appendix 12.

H3.1: The profile of the consumer showing a higher level of nostalgia proneness is different in both cultures.

First, in order to test whether there is a significant difference between both cultures. We need to establish the profile of the consumer who tends to be more nostalgic for each culture. Therefore, we focused on the interrelation between age, gender, culture and occupation as it could be interesting to define the consumer profile that may be more nostalgic prone.

Through a correlation test of Spearman, a significant relation between culture, nostalgia proneness and gender was found, meaning that culture is linked to the level of nostalgia proneness and that gender is related to nostalgia proneness as well. Indeed, females tend to have a higher level of nostalgia proneness with an average of 1.66 out of 2, compared to males with a mean 1.54 (Appendix 12.1). Moreover, with an independent T-test on nostalgia

proneness, we found out that the level of nostalgia proneness differs significantly according to culture. As can be seen in table 9, Walloons tend to be more nostalgia-prone than Flemish and the most nostalgia-prone groups differ according to culture as well. Flemish from 41 to 60 years old are the ones who are the most nostalgic but still at a lesser degree than Walloons from 25 to 40 years old.

Taking a closer look to Appendices 10.4 and 11.4, we replicated hereunder the figure comparing both level of nostalgia proneness.

**Table 10:** Level of nostalgia proneness by age and culture

	Flemish	Walloons
18-24 years	1.44	1.65
25-40 years	1.5	1.72
41-60 years	1.62	1.66
61 and more	1.53	1.69
Total	1.54	1.67

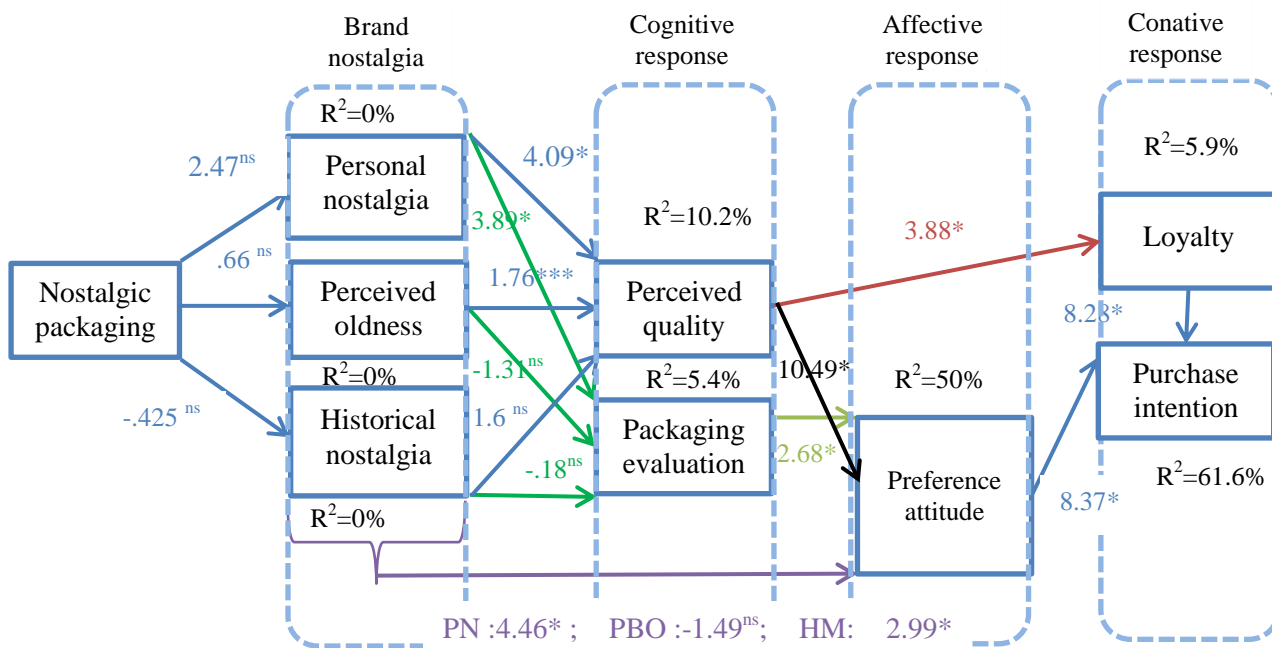
Moreover, via an ANOVA test, the level of nostalgia proneness revealed not to be explainable by age for both languages (Appendix 12.3).

H3.2: Brand nostalgia (a), perceived quality (b), loyalty (c) and purchase intention (d) are different according to culture.

- a) Only historical memories differ significantly according to culture. Culture has a mixed impact on brand nostalgia. Most notably, historical and personal memories are correlated in both cases. Other similarities were found in the significant impact of personal memories on the preference attitude and the independence of gender and nostalgia proneness on brand nostalgia. Additionally, age is correlated with historical memories in Wallonia, while this is the case for personal memories in Flanders. Finally, as said previously, Walloon men were found to have a higher score on the three dimensions of brand nostalgia with 9.75 on 15, while women has a score of 9.59. The results in Flanders were nearly the same for both genders with an average of 9.76 on 15.
- b) Perceived quality significantly differs according to culture. French speaking Walloons tend to evaluate the product of lower quality than Dutch speaking respondents did.
- c) Loyalty does not differ according to culture.

d) Purchase intention significantly differs according to culture. Again, French speaking Walloons indicated to have lower purchase intention than Flemish did.

**Figure 13:** Structural model for French speaking Walloons



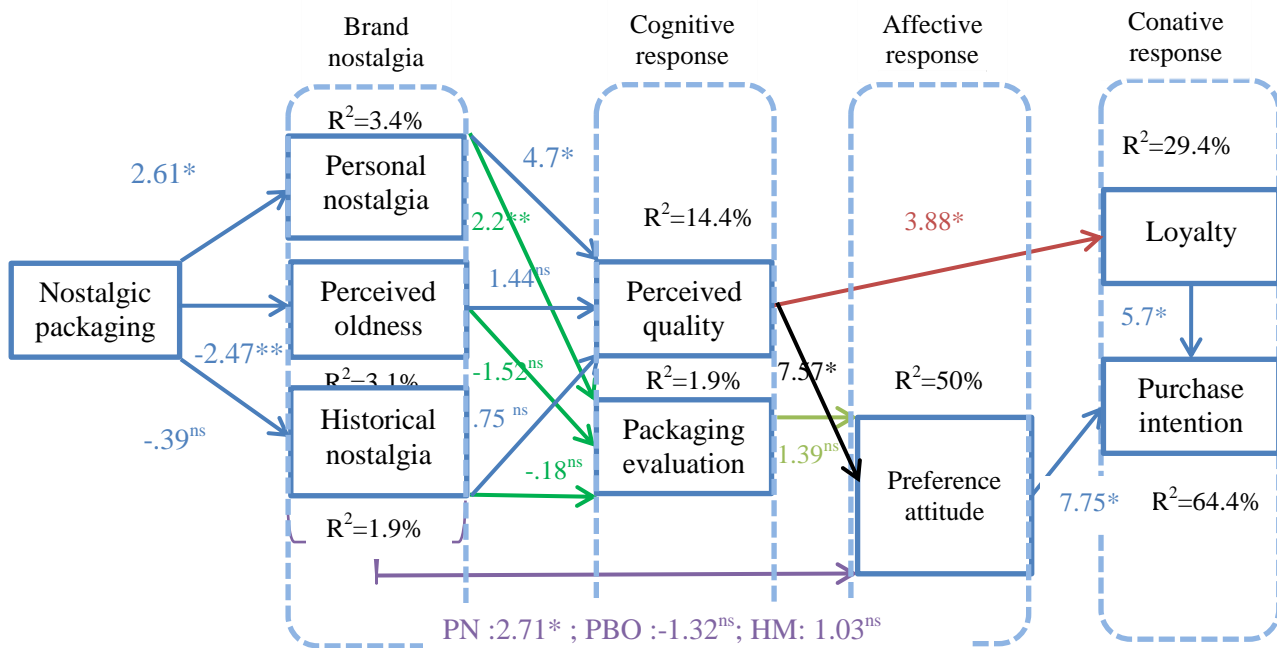
\* : t-values significant at  $p < 0.01$

\*\* : t-values significant at  $p < 0.05$

\*\*\* : t-values significant at  $p < 0.1$

Ns: t-value for not significant relations ( $p > 0.1$ )

**Figure 14:** Structural model for Dutch speaking Flemish



\* : t-values significant at  $p < 0.01$

\*\* : t-values significant at  $p < 0.05$

\*\*\* : t-values significant at  $p < 0.1$

Ns: t-value for not significant relations ( $p > 0.1$ )

## 7. Conclusion

This thesis addressed multiple theoretical views on the concept of nostalgia. First, it was necessary to define nostalgia under all its terms and uses in different domains. Then, based on the definition of brand nostalgia, two types of drivers, namely consumer-, and brand-related were identified and explained. Next, three types of responses have been brought to light from the literature, namely cognitive (perceptions), affective (attitudes) and conative (behaviors) responses. Most of the studies examined the impact of nostalgic cues on advertising and found out that nostalgia positively affects perceived quality, the evaluation of a product and attitude towards the brand/ad. Moreover, loyalty and purchase intention are believed to be enhanced for nostalgic brands compared to non-nostalgic brands. All those responses help to form the consumer-based brand equity and were seen to vary according to multiple elements like socio-demographic variables, but also environment and personality traits. Gender, age and nostalgia proneness were found to be most cited moderators in the literature, but infinite debates still exist about the influence of those. For instance, males and elderly are believed to be more nostalgic (Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Davis, 1979; Havlena & Holak, 1991; Stern, 1992). Moreover, interest rose about the impact of culture, but very few scholars have dealt this subject in depth. Finally, the literature part ends with the risks linked to nostalgia as it does not always result in a success story if not used appropriately.

From the information found in the literature, we discovered that most of research focused on qualitative approaches to understand the concept of nostalgia and the responses provoked by it, especially in the case of advertising. In order to be able to generalize the findings of previous qualitative research, it was suggested to carry out a quantitative study on brand nostalgia.

This paper has the goal to investigate the influence of packaging evoking nostalgia on Belgian consumers. Based on the consumer-based brand equity model created by Bartier (2014), Lehman et al. (2008) and Cobb-Walgreen et al. (1995), we developed a conceptual framework for our study by adding the concepts of culture, packaging evaluation and preference.

As said previously, no in-depth analysis exists about the impact of culture on nostalgic responses. As Belgium offers the opportunity to examine both cultures within one country using the same product, we decided to further investigate this concept. The study focused on the confectionery market and more specifically the traditional green *Delacre* cookies' box.

It has been shown that this packaging evokes the most nostalgia compared to other packaging of the same brand.

The impact of the nostalgic cues present on this box has then further been investigated. This packaging was found to provoke the most personal memories, especially for Flemish. Personal memories also have a significant and positive impact on the perceived quality and on packaging evaluation (only for Walloons). It is not surprising to see that personal memories have the most impact. Indeed, already previous authors found out that personal memories are the strongest part of nostalgia and is able to evoke the most responses (Marchegiani & Phau, 2005; Telford, 2013; Hwanga & Hyunb, 2013).

As Bartier (2014) demonstrated previously, there is a significant relation between perceived quality and loyalty as well as loyalty and purchase intention. Moreover, perceived quality, packaging evaluation and personal memories were found to have a significant positive impact on preference attitude in both cultures. Again, we see that the only dimension of brand nostalgia that has an effect is personal memories.

The ranking people gave was seen to be influenced both by the nostalgic feelings experienced by the respondents when seeing the box and by the physical appearance of it. This is not surprising as people who evaluate a packaging are influenced by both the visual aspects of it like the shape, the colors and the material but also process information present on the box by using memory, and more specifically the autobiographical memory (Baker et al., 2005). For instance, we could imagine that by seeing a box people used to see at their grandmother's place, it will recall memories from the past, influence the respondent's attitude and evaluation and finally the preference ranking given to that specific box.

Finally, preference attitude and ranking were seen to have a significant impact on purchase intention. This has already been explained previously by Kessous and Roux (2010) which proved that cognitive and affective dimensions of the nostalgic packaging result in higher willingness to buy the product.

Thanks to these results, we can say that our model is entirely valid when taking only personal nostalgia into account as a dimension of brand nostalgia.

In a second time, the effect of gender, age, culture and nostalgia proneness as moderators on the relation brand nostalgia –perceived quality was investigated. Age was found to have a moderating effect on personal and historical memories for Flemish, while age has an effect on the relation of personal memories and perceived brand oldness with perceived quality for Walloons. Additionally, culture was found to have a moderating effect on all dimension of brand nostalgia. Nevertheless, gender and nostalgia proneness do not have a significant

impact on this relation. This is contrary to many scholars who found out that men tend to be more nostalgic prone than women as they experienced more disruption in their (professional) life. Our results may be due to the fact that the society is changing and gender differences are softened with more women being in the active life compared to the past.

Furthermore, the evaluation given to a certain type of box is not dependent on age, gender, culture and nostalgia proneness. This may be due to the use of appealing nostalgic cues for every age group. In relation to this, preference attitude was seen to be significantly different only for age for Flemish respondents. Indeed, the other factors such as culture, gender and nostalgia proneness were found not to have any impact.

Finally, ranking was observed to be influenced by age and culture for the Tintin and the classic green box. Again, gender and nostalgia proneness do not have any impact on this. This can be explained by the fact that the three boxes are relatively gender-neutral.

It can be noted that Flemish have a preference towards the classic green box *Delacre* still keeps on editing while French speakers tend to prefer the box with the famous comic Tintin. This overall ranking given to the box representing Tintin by Flemish may find a reason in the origin of the comic. Indeed, Tintin was originally created by Hergé, a French-speaking Belgian and first edited in French in 1930, to be translated in Flemish only 16 years later. Due to these historical reasons, we may understand why Flemish are less attached to the famous Belgian character of the seventh art.

The final part discussed the cultural differences and tried to define the profile of the nostalgic consumer. Nostalgia proneness revealed to be positively correlated to culture and gender with Walloons and women showing higher levels of nostalgia proneness. This may be the result of the general personality traits of French speakers, which are Latins and tend to more express their opinions and thus leading to more radical in the Likert-scales based questions. Moreover, we may emit the hypothesis that females may be more nostalgic prone because they tend to express more their feelings than men do.

Significant differences were found also for historical memories, perceived quality and purchase intention with Flemish showing higher scores on the last two concepts.

Overall, this thesis demonstrated the impact of nostalgic cues on packaging on the consumer perceptions, affection and behavior and evaluated the differences between the French speaking and Dutch speaking culture in Belgium whose responses mostly point in the same direction.



## 7.1 Theoretical implications

The literature regarding nostalgia has been analyzed in the first part of this research paper. Some of the points have been confirmed through our study, but many of them were refuted and by contradicting those we contribute to the nostalgia literature.

First, the main disagreement of this single-product study with the results from the literature concerns the moderating effect of factors such as age, gender and nostalgia proneness. Pioneers in the domain of nostalgia such as Davis (1979), Holak & Havlena (1991), Holbrook & Schindler (1991) or Stern (1992) argued that gender and nostalgia proneness may have an impact on nostalgic feelings evoked by brands. Nevertheless, our study revealed that those two factors do not have any influence on the relation between brand nostalgia and perceived quality. Following this, it should be questioned whether to keep those factors as established moderators of nostalgia. The reason for this disruption with the literature may lie in the fact that the previous studies revealing the impact of moderators were conducted about twenty years ago. Societal, economic and cultural changes may have influenced the role of those moderators. However, it should be kept in mind that our samples are biased for some variables and therefore, we should take this implication with caution.

Moreover, our study revealed that only age has a moderating effect on certain dimensions of brand nostalgia in its relation with perceived quality. This is in line with Loveland et al. (2010). Age has also an influence on the preference attitude for Flemish and the ranking given to a certain type of box.

As a final moderator, culture has been discovered as a moderator on the relation between all dimensions of brand nostalgia and perceived quality. This means that culture is the only totally valid moderator, which has not been proven before except for the research made by Crilly et al. (2004).

A second objective of this paper was to measure the impact of culture on nostalgia. Our study revealed that there are significant differences among cultures, namely for historical memories, perceived quality and purchase intention. Overall, the results go along the same line in both cultures with small differences in terms of percentage. The effects for the Flemish tend to be less pronounced than those of the Walloons. However, major discrepancies were discovered when rankings had to be given to different packaging evoking nostalgia. Generally, Walloons grant a higher score to the box with the comic Tintin than Flemish do. As explained

previously, the reason may lie in history due to the origins of its creator, Hergé, and the time the comic was translated in Flemish.

Thirdly, the other focus of this research was to analyze the hierarchy of effects of packaging with nostalgic cues on brand nostalgia and the ensuing responses helping to form the consumer-based brand equity. Our model proved to be valid as personal memories positively impact perceived quality which leads to higher loyalty and drives to purchase intention. Furthermore, we applied the multi-dimensional concept of brand nostalgia developed by Bartier (2014) on packaging and only personal memories for Flemish respondents proved to have a significant link. This same dimension proved to be also the only dimension having a significant impact on perceived quality, packaging evaluation and preference attitude. Due to this, the viability of the multi-dimensional concept of brand nostalgia may be doubted. However, as explained by Bartier (2014), the dimensions of brand nostalgia have different explanatory effects in the formation of consumer-based brand equity according to the product type.

The fourth and final input of this study is linked to the use of the multi-dimensional concept of brand nostalgia on packaging. We were able to confirm an interesting point in the literature regarding nostalgia effects as our results showed that personal memories are the strongest dimension of brand nostalgia for affective reactions, namely preference. As mentioned earlier, it is not surprising to see that personal memories have the most impact as scholars (e.g. Marchegiani & Phau, 2005; Telford, 2013; Hwanga & Hyunb, 2013) already demonstrated that personal memories are the strongest part of nostalgia and is able to evoke the most responses. Unlike Bartier's findings, personal memories were found to be the only aspect that influences cognitive responses such as perceived quality. This can be explained by the fact that personal memories are linked to moments with the brand directly experienced by the consumer which are self-referencing and affect-laden (Bartier, 2014; Sedikides et al., 2004). However, strong correlations were found between personal and historical nostalgia, which proved the importance of defining brand nostalgia as a multi-dimensional construct (Bartier, 2014).

## 7.2 Managerial implications

Due to the results presented above, we were not able to establish a complete profile of the typical consumer sensitive to nostalgic cues. However, we may conclude from the tests realized on the sample representing the total Belgian population (Appendix 12.2), that Walloons and women tend to be more nostalgic prone than Flemish and men. Moreover, as age was found to have a relative moderating effect on brand nostalgia, it should be taken into account when developing nostalgic products. Unlike previous research, no gender nor nostalgia proneness have a significant moderating impact on brand nostalgia. This means that marketers should not target only males and highly nostalgic people in order to get responses, but can simply focus on a larger market when using nostalgia-based techniques (Bartier, 2014).

As was proven in this study, mainly personal memories play a significant role in the formation of consumer-based brand equity for cookies, which are low involvement products with an affective mode. Therefore, *Delacre* is recommended to foster memories related to the individual's past. It could do this by re-editing the exact same packaging as 50 years ago. This may evoke personal souvenirs from the consumer's childhood and therefore add value in the consumers' mind. This may also be one of the reasons why *Delacre* keeps its traditional green metallic box since decades. Therefore, marketers should pay attention when changing the packaging of their brands/products as this could lead to disruption of affective responses a consumer used to have towards it.

Furthermore, it has been proven that historical memories, perceived quality, ranking and purchase intention significantly differ according to culture. Based on this, it would be recommended for *Delacre* and any other company in the food sector that wants to evoke nostalgic feelings to analyze the history of the target market and develop packaging with historical icons of the country. It seems that *Delacre* understood this very well by editing special cookies' boxes edition according to country. For example, by launching the box with the Belgian Royal family, it recalls the historical roots of Belgium. In France, however, the figures of "Les Triplés", an old French comic series, and "Le Petit Prince", created by St-Exupéry, a symbol of French cultural heritage, are used.

Overall, the responses provoked by nostalgic packaging of Flemish and Walloons are similar. We could therefore suggest to marketers that have Belgians as their target group to adopt the same strategies in both regions. However, as showed by the ranking given to each type of box,

Flemish and Walloons differ in terms of preferences. In both cultures, the classic and the box with Tintin were preferred while French speaking respondents showed a preference towards the comic compared to the Flemish. With this in mind, marketers may develop different boxes for each market, but as the differences were relatively small it would not be worthwhile to segregate the market, especially due to economies of scale.

### 7.3 Limitations and future research

This part deals with the limitations of the study that could be improved in the future for the same type of survey. It gives path for improvement and ideas for better studies about the same topic.

The first comment concerns the representativeness of the study as the average age of the population studied is far below the average Belgian age which is about 41 years (Statistics Belgium, 2013). Moreover, as the most represented age group is the one of 18-24 years in Wallonia, they are the least able to respond to nostalgia-related questions compared to elderly. Indeed, they are the ones who cite industrial brands such as Milka as nostalgic (Ferrandi, 2011). Furthermore, this age group is not the target consumer group of the relatively expensive *Delacre* boxes. Indeed, as can be seen through testimonies in the findings' part, young adults associate the biscuits and boxes with experiences at their grandparents' place, showing clearly that the age group "60+" are those who buy this product. However, the Flemish respondents proved to be a good representation of the Flemish population as most of the respondents are aged between 41 and 60 years.

Furthermore, because of the different age means and proportion of represented genders between cultures, we have two very different samples between French speaking Walloons and Dutch speaking Flemish. Due to this, we are not able to correctly compare the results of our survey and generalize it to Belgium. Indeed, we should have had two similar samples instead.

Moreover, most of the respondents were friends of friends and the respondents' occupations do not represent the mean occupation of the Belgian. The majority of respondents were women (61.15%), especially for the French speaking population with nearly 70% of respondents, and from a relatively middle social class (21.42% employees). Moreover, due to time and financial resources restrictions, we were not able to reach the required 200 Flemish respondents knowing the brand. Indeed, more Flemish respondents were eliminated from the survey with the conditional questions than Walloons (about 10% compared to 6% of French speakers). This may be due to lower brand awareness in Flanders. Indeed, we could emit the

hypothesis that *Delacre* was considered for the higher French speaking social class. Due to this, the representativeness of the study is limited and the results cannot be generalized. Therefore, it would be useful to have a larger and more representative sample of the Belgian population. This may result in more significant results in terms of socio-demographic variables and define the profile of the consumer that is the most influenced by nostalgic packaging.

In a second time, the structure of the survey could be questioned as well. Questions related to nostalgic proneness have been asked at the end of the survey and the respondent could have been biased by the previous questions. For instance, they could have answered the questions while still having the *Delacre* brand in mind.

Thirdly, we could have shown two different boxes for the same *Delacre* cookies, one traditional, the other a totally new and modern packaging. We could then measure the differences in overall attitude towards the two packaging, the preference and the purchase intention.

Finally, the replicability of the study could be questioned. It should be done with other products of other parts of the FCB grid, in other cultures as mentioned above and a more diverse population (Bartier, 2014).

Further research is warranted to investigate the influence of packaging on nostalgic preferences. First, we could have measured the packaging evaluation more deeply through the scales based on Prendergast and Pitt (1996) and Rettie and Brewer (2000) (Dhurup et al., 2014). Moreover, when respondents were asked to give their preference for the three boxes, it could have been useful to measure their nostalgia, attitude, perceived quality, loyalty and purchase intention for each of the boxes and then compare them separately. In line with this idea, we could have used the method based on multiple representative and homogeneous groups in order to minimize bias. We could imagine having three different groups evaluating one box and then compare the results. By doing this, the respondents would not be influenced by their previous answers. However, this method is time-consuming and would not have been possible in the case of this thesis. The survey would have been too long, more respondents would have been needed and different surveys would have been created, which is not realistic in our case.

Moreover, as explained before, the five senses have an important influence on nostalgia and the associated feelings. Ideally, we should have presented the cookies in real life, let

respondents taste and smell them, see the box, etc. We could also measure the impact of music by playing background music in one group and no music in the other. Indeed, the role of music in nostalgic feelings has recently been discovered by Marchegiani & Phau (2005) and confirmed by Lefi & Gharbi (2011) and Telford (2013).

Again, it would be interesting to compare homogeneous groups of respondents to measure the impact of involving one of the five senses.

Moreover, it could be interesting to measure responses towards other cookie brands that were cited during the pre-test. We could imagine creating a survey where respondents evaluate the brands of *Lu*, *Lotus* and *Delacre* and give their opinion regarding perceived quality, loyalty, preference and purchase intention. It would then be possible to generalize the results to the whole cookie market. Also, based on this study, we could see if Belgians are more nostalgic towards Belgian brands, i.e. *Lotus* and *Delacre*, or if the country of origin does not have an impact on brand nostalgia.

On a broader dimension, we could study the whole confectionery market by analyzing chocolates and candies, both using nostalgia in their packaging. This stays in line with the findings of Stern (1992) saying that hedonistic low-involvement and sweet products are the ones who evoke the most nostalgic feelings. Nevertheless, it may be interesting to extrapolate the findings of this study to other product categories such as chips or cereals to evaluate the effect of culture and nostalgic packaging.

The results' analysis showed that there is a difference in the level of nostalgia proneness between age groups among the two cultures. Namely, the French speaking respondents from 25 to 40 years old showed the highest level of nostalgia proneness, while the Flemish tend to be more nostalgic prone when they are between 41 and 60 years. It would be wise to make further research on that point.

Future research could also focus on overall attitude, persistence, propensity to make a gift as, word of mouth and attachment as well as evaluating the influence of attitude towards the packaging on brand attitude (Bartier, 2014; Kessous & Roux, 2010; Marchegiani & Phau, 2005; Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009). In order to realize this, we could have asked one group of respondents to fill in the questionnaire only based on the logo of the brand, while another homogeneous group of respondents would see the packaging and fill in the same survey. We could even go further and add a third group where people would see a nostalgic ad. This may lead to construct a relation between brand -, packaging- and ad-attitude.

We defined a fourth moderator during this study as culture. It could be interesting to replicate this study in other countries to see if culture has a general impact on nostalgic feelings and not only in Belgium. Switzerland would form a perfect case as three cultures are represented in this country, namely Germans, Italians and French. By comparing French and Germans in Switzerland for the same type of product, it could be interesting to see if the cultural differences are close to the ones in Belgium. In relation to this idea, we may investigate the impact of culture on a worldwide level. Indeed, personal memories are related to an individual's own past which depends on the country where he spent his childhood. Therefore, the concept of nostalgia can differ according to the country and people do not have the same references of the past. This additional research may contribute to the strategies of multinational companies.

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