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## **SUSTAINABILITY MARKETING: INSIGHTS FROM DAOIST WISDOM IN CHINESE EVERYDAY PRACTICES**

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### ***ABSTRACT***

This paper urges marketing academics committed to a sustainable future to look outside of the modern industrial ideologies that characterize western societies. Marketing has addressed sustainability issues for more than four decades. However, mainstream sustainability theory in marketing is rooted in industrial ideologies founded on the Enlightenment philosophy. This philosophy promotes a dichotomous worldview that effectively separates people from Nature. Thus, industrial civilization is inherently unsustainable because it promotes an instrumental view of Nature based on the anthropocentricity embedded in the industrial worldview. This paper suggests that accumulated indigenous wisdom of a pre-industrial civilization provides rich insights for industrialized societies to address the compelling sustainability issues the world faces today. Focused on the influence of Daoist philosophy and principles in the everyday lives of ordinary Chinese people, we used the research method of Memory Work to study human-Nature interactions as lived by 26 Chinese participants. Data show that pre-industrial Daoism has a significant effect on the participants' living habits. As a philosophy centered on human's relationship to the natural world, Daoism encourages these Chinese participants to connect closely with Nature in their daily routines, through sustainable practices that respond actively and respectfully to their natural environment. We believe such insights from the Daoist guidelines for daily living can make a meaningful contribution to re-visioning 'sustainability' in western post-industrial civilization. In particular, these insights provide sound support for the development of new alternative business models such as sustainability marketing.

**Keywords:** marketing, sustainability, ideologies, insights, philosophy, Daoism