

A study of cultural reflections in women's magazine advertising in Taiwan

by

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on cultural reflections within advertisements associated with women's magazines of Taiwan. The types of women's magazines selected are: (1) a domestic women's magazine, (2) and a transnational women's magazine. A domestic women's magazine is defined here as being founded by a Taiwanese publisher and its distribution is mainly focused within Taiwan. A transnational women's magazine is defined here as a magazine distributed internationally with each country having their own version, written in its native language, of the same magazine. The women's magazine will deal with women issues only. Consequently, the targeted audience for this magazine will be women.

The key concept in this study is "culture." In the post-industrial age, mass media have become major institutions for the transmission of cultural values. Therefore, advertising, being one type of mass communication, is an influential way by which cultural values are transmitted. Through the messages and appeals conveyed in it, advertising plays a significant role in changing habits and affecting the basic patterns and structures in society (Bell, 1976). As Potter (1954) put it, advertising has "joined the charmed circle of institutions which fix the values and standards of society... and it becomes necessary to consider with special care the extent and nature of its influence, how far it extends, and in what way it makes itself felt" (p. 177).

During the 1987-1988 abolishment of newspaper censorship in Taiwan, mass media in Taiwan have become more active than in any other period. An improved media environment, which was due to fundamental changes of policies, ushered in two major impacts within the advertising industry of Taiwan. One is the

acceleration of the growth within Taiwanese advertising. In Lee and Leu's (1992) study, Taiwanese advertising expenditures were rated in the top 16 world-wide during 1988. Advertising revenues reached \$ 2.6 billion in the U.S dollars in 1992. International advertising agencies were, as a result, attracted to the Taiwanese market. In 1992, 24 of the top earning advertising agencies were either foreign branches, joint ventures, or local companies with a technical cooperation agreement with foreign agencies (Yuan, 1993). The international advertising agencies not only introduced new concepts with Western cultural values to Taiwan, but also aroused an interesting discussion on the role of culture in the content of Taiwanese advertising.

Problem Description

The debate over standardization or specification of international advertising messages in different countries around the world has accelerated the research in cultural values. There is also a concern regarding the influence international advertising has on developing countries. In 1980, the MacBride Commission criticized advertising for its uninvited cultural intervention in Third World countries. Some research also found that the cultural content of advertising in countries like Philippines and India appears to reflect western culture rather than their own cultures (Marquez, 1975; Srikanth, 1991).

Despite Taiwan's economic growth, it is still a developing country. The potential for growth is seen as a possible exploration for the international corporations. Therefore, Taiwan has recently attracted significant investment

from international corporation. Although Taiwan has become an internationalized society, Confucian ideology still tends to control the people's thoughts and behavior (Lo, 1993). When facing the dilemma of traditional and western values existing simultaneously in one society, an interesting question arises: Will Western values play more heavily on the culture of the people, or will the local culture tend to prevail and reflect a Taiwanese culture? If the advertisements reflect Western cultural value, then the standardized strategies will be used in Taiwan. On the other hand, if the advertisements reflect local cultural values, then specialized strategies should be used. Therefore, understanding cultural reflection in the advertising of the magazine should help advertising strategists better accommodate the ads message.

There are several studies which have been undertaken that examine cross-national advertising messages in print media, including the Japanese and American advertisement appeals (Mueller, 1987), British and American print advertising (Frith, and Wesson, 1991), and a Malaysia and U.K. cross-culture comparison (Frith & Sengupta, 1991). However, the role of culture in the content of Taiwanese magazine advertisement has been given very little attention. It is still unknown how advertising will reflect culture value in two different background magazines within one society. This is first study in this area.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I is the introduction which includes the problem description. Chapter II consists of a review of the culture of Taiwan, theory, and related research

regarding international advertising. The hypothesis for this study is drawn from Chapter II. Chapter III focuses on the research methodology, which includes operationalization, reliability and data analysis. Chapter IV presents findings and discussion. Finally, Chapter V states the conclusions of the study, limitation and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Background Introduction

Advertising message development can be a perplexing problem for multinational consumer goods firms that market their products on a worldwide basis. These firms are faced with the decision of whether to specialize their messages in every country or to standardize their messages across countries. To solve this problem, "an analysis of the current literature reflects an increasing number of articles, conference papers, and research studies on the topic of standardization versus specialization" (Mueller, 1987, p. 52).

With respect to the standardization of advertising, the prospect of running a single advertising campaign translated into many languages offers a great appeal to multinational advertisers. According to Lynch's (1984) global marketing theory, "people all over the world have the same tastes and desires, and that they are remarkably alike regarding love, hate, fear, greed, joy, patriotism, pornography, material comforts, mysticism and the role of food in their lives" (Lynch, 1984, p. 49). Along the same lines, Fatt (1967) noted that people share the same basic needs and motivations, and that advertising campaigns that are constructed around these needs and motivations can employ universal appeals. Theodore Levitt (1984) said the world is becoming a common marketplace in which people, no matter where they live, desire the same goods and services which are related to a more comfortable lifestyle. Customers over the world want up-

to-date products, because of “homogenizing modernity.” According to Theodore Levitt (1984):

Nothing confirms this as much as the success of McDonald’s from the Champs Elysees to the Ginza, of Coca Cola in Bahrain and Pepsi Cola in Moscow, and of rock music, Greek salad, Hollywood movies, Revlon cosmetics, Sony televisions, and Levi jeans everywhere. Everywhere everything gets more and more like everything else and the world’s preference structure is relentlessly homogenized (p. 30).

According to Mueller(1987), there are several practitioners who have noted that luxury items targeted toward upper-class markets are a product type amenable to standardized advertising. Products such as fine jewelry, expensive autos, perfumes, cigarettes and imported beverages are all high visibility items and easily positioned as symbols of achieved success. “Status” is a universal appeal among upper-class markets in many industrialized countries and is easily employed in standardized messages for such products. On the other hand, Vern Terpstra (1972) believes lower-priced consumer goods are more amenable to international advertising campaigns. He notes that the standard approach is probably effective for other low priced consumer goods. The success of Coca Cola, a product which meets similar consumer needs and desires everywhere, is a good example.

In contrast to the standardization approach, several researchers have stated that approaches should be tailored to each country. Emphasizing the relationship between culture and a person, Hollowell (1972) noted that a person who is exposed to a specific culture becomes committed to that culture’s style of thinking and feeling and also with its value systems, attitudes and even perception processes

being culturally influenced. Because culture has a profound impact on a person and the way in which they think regarding all issues in society, Ricks, Arpan & Fu (1974) warned that most international communications blunders happen because of a failure to fully understand the foreign customs, attitudes and needs.

A third school declares that the appropriateness of the standardization approach to advertising will vary across product categories and will depend upon several product-related and environmental factors. Sommers and Kernan (1967) take this position when they recognize that standardized advertising is possible when the product serves the same needs across cultures. However, they also note that cross-cultural differences will mean that many products will not be used universally for the same reasons and will therefore require the use of different appeals in the nations where the product is sold.

As can be seen from the preceding discussion, both marketing communicators and researchers are split with regard to the advisability of employing a standardized versus specialized approach to international advertising. In order to further define the issue, as well as to provide an empirical basis for developing hypotheses, the following paragraphs will review research undertaken in this area.

The Culture of Taiwan

Chinese cultural values are based on Confucian culture. After almost two thousand years of immersion in Confucian values and codes of behavior, the Chinese have developed an identifiable cluster of cultural values that dominates their social and cultural life (Smith, 1991). The core of the Confucian value

system is a set of hierarchical relationships between people. Chinese people are required to remain loyal to their emperor, respect elders, venerate scholars, and serve others before themselves. According to Chu (1985), there are five themes that can be drawn as typical characteristics of the Chinese personality and social relationships:

1. An overriding sense of duty and responsibility to the family as the fundamental unit of society.
2. The development and maintenance of very close bonds between parents and their children.
3. The overwhelming importance of other people and relationships within the social network, as opposed to individualism.
4. The ability to control or hide emotions and feelings, and the cultivation of high moral standards.
5. A strong, almost fanatical emphasis on education and achievement for the children (pp. 15-28).

Taiwan's culture, whose origins are rooted in Chinese culture, was brought by immigrants from the Fukien and Canton Provinces and reflects to a considerable degree regional variations as well as the national culture in China (Hsiun, 1981). During the Dutch colonial days (1622-1663), Western influence impacted Taiwan more than China. The Japanese occupied era (1885-1943) also had its effects, most notably through the Japanese language and educational system imposed on Taiwan. During this period Western influence continued, but in large part filtered through Japan (Copper, 1990).

Chinese influence increased and a Chinese cultural revival began with the restoration of political control to the Republic of China in 1945. After Chiang Kai-Shek's government moved to Taiwan in 1949, cultural promotion was both

encouraged and controlled. Traditional cultural activities, such as Chinese calligraphy, classical painting, opera and folk art, were encouraged by policy but the themes of the Soviets and the Communists were forbidden (Copper, 1990).

Although culture manipulated by the government for political reasons was to a considerable extent, this did not extend so far as to discourage freedom of expression. In fact, Taiwan has been increasingly influenced by Western culture, because of the growing contact with the West through trade and other interaction (Hsu, 1981). Many Western words and concepts have become part of the language spoken in Taiwan. This radical process of modernization challenged the Chinese values. According to Yang's (1976) long term study from 1969 to 1976, the mentality and behavior of the Chinese people in Taiwan has changed. Those changes include:

1. Motivation for achievement.
2. Concept of "harnessing nature".
3. Sense of "deciding one's own fate".
4. Concept of stressing the importance of the present and the future.
5. Adaptability to changes and reforms.
6. Emphasis on egalitarian attitudes as opposed to authoritarianism.
7. Needs for independence and self-reliance.
8. Emphasis on equality in human relations.
9. Tolerance of different opinions and creeds (p. 270).

In short, Taiwan's culture has blended with Chinese traditional culture, Japanese culture, and Western culture. As Lo (1993) said, due to the economic development, political reforms, and urbanization, the Chinese people in Taiwan have experienced some prominent changes in cultural values. In other words, the present culture in Taiwan has shifted from the traditional culture.

Theoretical Approach

The Definition and Importance of Culture

According to McQuail (1993), culture is defined as:

Something collective and shared with others (there is no purely individual culture); it must have some symbolic form of expression, whether intended as such or not; it has some pattern, order or regularity, and therefore some evaluative dimensions (if only degree of conformity to a culturally prescribed pattern); there is (or has been) a dynamic continuity over time (culture lives and changes, has a history potentially a future) (p. 95).

Carey (1975) defined culture as a process and attribution that can be shared with a human group, such as tools, religion, customs and practices. Carey (1975) also said that culture also can refer to texts and symbolic artifacts which are encoded with particular meanings by people with particular cultural identifications. According to Fiske (1989, cited in McQuail, 1993), "culture is the constant process of producing meaning of and from our social experience" (p.1). In addition, according to Williams (1982), culture had been defined as a "system":

For a signifying system is intrinsic to any economic system, and political system, any general system and, most generally, to any social system. Yet it is also in practice distinguishable as a system in itself: as a language, most evidently; as a system of thought or of consciousness, or, to use that difficult alternative term, an ideology; and again as a body of specifically signifying works of art and thought. Moreover all these exist not as institutions and works, and not only as systems, but necessarily as active practices and states of mind (p.208).

As to the relationship of people and culture, Hall (1966) noted no matter how hard a person tries it is impossible for him to divest himself of his own culture, for it has penetrated to the roots of his nervous system and determines how he perceives the world. Culture also provides people with a sense of identity and an understanding of acceptable behavior within society . According to Harris and Moran (1987), some of the important attitudes and behaviors influenced by culture are communication and language, dress and appearance, food and feeling habits, relationships (family, organizations and government), values and norms, beliefs, attitudes, mental process and learning.

Culture and Media

From oral communication, written language, and new communication technology, each new medium transcends the boundaries for experience reached by earlier media and contributes to further change. McLuhan (1964) predicted the attainment of a 'global village' in which information and experience would be freely available for all of us to share. The movement towards a global media culture has several sources, according to McQuail (1993), "most notably the greatly increased capacity to transmit sounds and (moving) images at low cost across frontiers and around the world, overcoming limits of time and space, and the rise of global media businesses (and global markets for media products), which provides the organizational framework and driving force for globalization (p.112)".

These global media businesses accelerate global homogenization and have impacts on culture, especially within developing countries. During the 1970s, developing countries opposed Western media-cultural imperialism (Boyd-Barrett,

1977, 1982). According to Meyer (1988), Western media serves not only as an information provider but also a vehicle for Western values, Western norms and Western culture which dilutes the cultural integrity and political autonomy of developing countries.

Culture and Advertisement

As to the relationship of culture and advertisement, according to Frith (1989), advertisements are seen to be a cultural artifact built through complex cultural processes. Hay (1989) described advertisement as a 'sign' of our culture and our perception of it. Mueller (1987) stated that "advertising theorists supporting the specialization of commercial messages suggest that the ad is one of the most difficult marketing elements to standardize, more often because of cultural differences" (p.51). Hong, Muderrisoglu & Zinkhan (1987) also said that cultural values tend to be reproduced in idealized form through advertising, so that the audience may want to identify closely with the subject of the advertisement. As a form of mass media, advertising has emerged as a major institution that is engaging in the portrayal and transmission of culture values. According to Bell (1976), through the messages and appeals conveyed in it, advertising plays a significant role in changing habits and affecting the basic patterns and structures in society.

Schiller (1976) and Kumar (1980) believed that the cultural values and lifestyles of Western industrial nations are being imposed upon the developing nations through imported advertising and other forms of imported mass communication. McQuail (1993) also noted that culture is very vulnerable to alien

influences. However, he also said that some of the effects of “transnational flow” on culture are not easy to observe, especially the widespread adoption of, or adaptation to foreign cultural models in domestic media production. Lubis (1986), in his study, mentioned: “A living culture is an entity, which is in a continuous process of change and of self-renewal, of absorbing and adapting and adopting new values from other cultures, reshaping them into its own” (p.64).

An example of the reshaping process in Taiwan is bag puppetry. Bag puppetry is a traditional Taiwanese performance, popular in the 1960’s, of folk media. According to a study by Wang (in press), the bag puppetry program, which is deeply rooted in the parent culture, survived and became popular in modern media. Meanwhile, during that period, a study by Bitterman (1985) indicted that the domestic programs had the potential to attract more Taiwanese advertising than foreign programming. Bitterman also explained that “transmission does not guarantee reception or influence. Where a culture does not understand or is not interested in the message-where no responsive chord is struck-the effort involved in sending it is wasted (p.39)”. McQuail (1993) thought that the effects of cultural invasion depends on the particular context and circumstances with strong cultural identities surviving and weaker ones giving way.

Scholarly Research on International Advertising

To shed light on the debate of “standardized versus specialized” advertising, Frith & Wesson (1991) compared how cultural values are manifest in print

advertising in two similar countries--the U.S. and Great Britain. In order to do so, they developed these hypotheses:

1. Since individualism is an important American cultural value, American advertisements would more frequently feature single individuals while British advertisements would more often feature people in a group context.
2. That respect for authority in England would be manifested by British advertisers using company representatives (authority figures) as spokesmen in their advertising more frequently than would American advertisers.
3. That Americans being egalitarian, their advertising would more often feature a homogeneous, idealized upper class consumer while the British would be stratified by social class.
4. That since directness of speech is an American culture value, headlines which used direct rhetorical devices would be found more frequently in American advertising.

A total of 372 print advertisements gathered from mass circulation magazines of two types have been examined. One type was general interest weeklies and the other was women's monthlies. *The London Sunday Times Magazine* was selected as the general interest weekly magazine from Britain. From the United States, *The New York Times Magazine* was selected. The British women's magazine selected was *Harper's and Queen* and the comparable American women's magazine was *Town and Country*. Units of analysis were restricted to full-page, four-color advertisements containing people which ran in the selected magazines during the one year period between September 1, 1987 to

August 31, 1988. Of the 372 ads collected, 186 were from American publication and 186 were from British.

The values of individualism, egalitarianism and direct speech were found to be significantly different between the two samples. The findings of this study suggest that even though the United States and Great Britain are similar in that they are both industrial, urbanized and English-speaking, there are culture and communication differences exist between the two countries. One possible implication of the results is that British consumers are more responsive to indirect sales messages delivered to audiences clearly stratified by social class than are their U.S. counterparts. If this is so, standardized global ads based on the more direct and less class-sensitive American model may tend to miss all but the British elite.

A study by Marquez (1979) utilized cross-cultural research to answer whether advertising could be used interchangeably in countries. The cultural contents of display advertisements from the United States, Philippines and Thailand were analyzed and compared. A total of 2,359 advertisements were analyzed and included 414 ads from the United States, 1,027 from the Philippines and 918 from Thailand. There were eight cultural parameters that discerned male-female roles: masculinity and femininity, personality type, family type, social class, ethnocentrism, the concepts of time and space, and one racial image which included to identify the races of the models shown in the advertisements.

The results showed how these aspects of culture were portrayed in advertisements collected from the three countries. Males were shown as leaders, decision-makers, with independence and technical know-how and females were depicted playing opposite roles. Overall, 95.2%, 72.7% and 64.7% of male-female

roles were depicted as traditional in American, Philippine and Thai advertisements, respectively. The advertisements from the three countries also tended to be alike in their projection of the concept of masculinity and femininity. The combined numbers of males pictured as superior to females and of females shown as inferior to males totaled 24% in American advertisements, 22.3% in Philippine advertisements, and 21.1% in Thai advertisements. On the other hand, figures for females featured as superior to males and those for males shown as inferior to females comprised 1.2%, 7.2% and 9.6% in American, Philippine and Thai advertisements.

As for the depiction of the social classes, 64.4% of all the models depicted in American advertisements appeared to belong to the middle class, while the figures for Philippine and Thai advertisements were 34.3% and 34.9%. The number of models who appeared to belong to the upper class was extremely high in advertisements of Philippine and Thai (32.6% and 43.5%, respectively) with only 1.8% in American advertisements.

With regard to the portrayal of racial image, it was expected that the American advertisements would be predominantly populated by Caucasian models and the Philippine and Thai advertisements by Asian models. It turned out that the 93.9% of the models in the American advertisements were Caucasians; however, not as large of a percentage for the Philippine and Thai models were Asian. Also, approximately 40% of the Asians representing the two countries could not be distinguished as either Caucasian or Asian. This ambiguity may be because Asian advertisements were nearly as predisposed to projecting a Caucasian image as the American advertisements.

The American advertisements employed 72.9% inner-directed appeals, an advertising states which has its own standards of right and wrong and pays little heed to how others think or act, compared to approximately 30% more than Philippine and Thai advertisements. Meanwhile, the type of family depicted in advertising of the three countries is nuclear. These three countries failed to assert ethnocentrism in their advertisements in similar fashions. As to the concept of time and space, almost no difference existed between these three countries.

In short, the findings showed that the advertisements from the three countries portrayed aspects of culture in a strikingly similar manner. There were two major conclusions that appeared to emerge from this study. First, in making a decision to use standardized or non-standardized global advertising in that country, the cultural contents of a country's advertising can be used as a basis. Second, it would be important to the international advertiser to check those cultural contents with the country's actual culture. The author concluded that this is because the Philippines was previously an American commonwealth.

Mueller (1987) analyzed Japanese and American advertisements to determine the existence or absence of advertising appeals in which cultural values, norms and characteristics are embedded. Two categories of advertising appeals were defined: traditional appeals and modern or Westernized appeals. Traditional appeals were: (1) group consensus, (2) soft-sell, (3) veneration of elderly and traditional, (4) status, and (5) oneness with nature appeals. Modern and Westernized appeals were: (1) individual and independence, (2) hard-sell, (3) youth and modernity, (4) product merit, and (5) manipulation of nature appeals. A total of 378 four-color full-page advertisements were separately selected from Japanese (146 ads) and American (232 ads) magazines.

The results showed that the traditional Japanese reverence of the group over the individual did not appear in advertisements. The individual and independence appeals have greater usage in Japanese advertisements than in American advertisements. Not surprisingly, the data also showed few differences between the two countries. As hypothesized, Japanese advertisements consisted of a much more emotional appeal and a less hard-sell appeal than American advertisements. More than one in ten Japanese advertisements surveyed emphasized the traditional or respect for the elder generation. A major distinction was found for the general usage of status appeals. In almost twice as many Japanese advertisements as American advertisements, some form of status appeal was made to the consumer. However, there were no major differences found in the employment of nature-oriented appeals in advertisements of the two countries. The usage of product merit appeals in Japanese advertisements was much higher than expected. Both countries infrequently used manipulation of nature appeals in their advertisements.

There was a significant difference between the East and West on the findings of the product involvement level. The most commonly used appeals in Japanese advertisements was status appeals while it was product merit in American advertisements. In the selling of medium involvement products, U.S. marketers rely on product-merit appeals for the majority of their advertisements, but Japanese advertisements tend to use a variety of appeal types.

Finally, Mueller (1987) concluded that there were some appeals that are common to both countries and that are likely universal. The product merit is a very good example. However, there were other themes that are not universal, such as grouping and consensus behaviors. Mueller (1987) also predicted that "if

such unique cultural traits are increasingly discarded and replaced, or transported to other cultures to fit manufacturers' and advertisers' needs, we will see the onset of the homogenization of all cultures into a world culture and the 'manufacture' of a universal consumer in our very near future (p.58)".

Research Hypotheses

Based on the above literature review and the cultural approach theory, ten hypotheses were formulated and tested. According to Frith & Wesson (1991), directness of speech is an American cultural value. Moreover, in the Mueller (1987) study, the results showed that there are more hard-sell appeals used in American advertisements and more soft-sell appeals used in Japanese advertisements. She concluded that the Eastern advertisements appeal played much more to the emotional level of the consumer and relied on the building of an atmosphere within the confines of the printed page. Therefore, the first and two hypothesis are:

H1: The advertisements in a transnational women's magazine will reflect more hard-sell appeals than in a domestic women's magazine.

H2: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect more soft-sell appeals than in a transnational women's magazine.

In Mueller's (1987) study, the results showed that the use of product merit appeals is considerably higher in American advertisements as opposed to Japanese advertisements. However, according to Mueller (1987), the usage of

product merit appeals in Japanese advertisements was much higher than expected due to the increasing number of branded products being sold in Japan. Recently, international trade has ushered in more foreign business to Taiwan. It is no longer adequate to simply portray the product in the highly competitive market. Therefore, the third hypothesis is:

H3: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect more product merit appeals than in a transnational women's magazine.

According to Chu (1985), the overwhelming importance of other people and relationships within the social network is one of five themes of typical characteristics of the Chinese personality and social relationships. In the study of Mueller (1987), there were almost twice as many Japanese advertisements as American advertisements using status appeals. Thus, the fourth hypothesis is:

H4: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect more status appeals than in a transnational women's magazine.

In Taiwanese culture, which is influenced by Confucianism, the respect for parents and the overriding sense of responsibility formally is one of the most important values of Chinese culture (Chu, 1985). Moreover, according to Mueller's (1987) study, more than one in ten Japanese advertisements surveyed stressed the traditional appeal. Thus, the fifth hypothesis is:

H5: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect more traditional and family appeals than in a transnational women's magazine.

The Marquez (1979) study showed that the American advertisements would be predominantly populated by Caucasian models while Philippine and Thai advertisements by Asian models. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis is:

H6: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will use more oriental models than in a transnational women's magazine.

According to Hornic (1980), "while concepts like product attributes are probably universal, and while the product function is probably similar across nations, the exact form of attribute perception in each society might differ considerably" (p.43). In the Mueller's study (1987), it was significant that there is a difference between the East and West in promotion of high-involvement products. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis is:

H7: The advertisements in a transnational women's magazine will display higher involvement level product than in a domestic women's magazine.

Taiwan has been increasingly influenced by Western culture and many Western words and concept have become part of the language spoken. However, according to Bitterman's (1985) study, domestic programs attract more Taiwanese advertising than foreign programs. In addition, Meyer (1988) indicated that Western media conveys Western culture. Since the language is part of culture, therefore, the eighth hypothesis is:

H8: Advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will more often use the Chinese language than in a transnational women's magazine.

According to Frith (1989), advertisement is a cultural artifact built through complex cultural processes. Since advertising is the spokesman for products and is closely related with culture conveyance (Meyer, 1988), the ninth hypothesis is:

H9: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine reflect a more Eastern product origin, while the advertisements in a transnational women's magazine reflect a more Western product origin.

Since Western media serves not only as an information provider but also a vehicle for Western values, Western norms and Western culture (Meyer, 1988), a transnational women's magazine which is a media from Western countries will have different degree of Eastern cultural reflection compared to a domestic women's magazine. On the other hand, the culture tendency in a transnational women's magazine is different from a domestic women's. Therefore, hypothesis tenth is:

H10: After controlling for product involvement level, language used, ad model race, product origin and cultural indicators, the advertisements style will significantly discriminate between a domestic women's magazine and a transnational women's magazine.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

To address the hypotheses, this study used content analysis to examine the differences in culture reflection in advertisements between a Taiwanese transnational women's magazine, *Elle*, and a Taiwanese domestic women's magazine, *Citta Bella*. Stempel (1989) defined content analysis this way:

Objectivity is achieved by having the categories of analysis defined so precisely that different persons can apply them to the same content and get the same results,Systematic description means that a set procedure is applied in the same way to all the content being analyzed, and categories are set up so that all relevant content is analyzed (p. 125).

Krippendorff (1980) defined content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context”. Budd et al. (1967) said, “content analysis is a systematic technique for analyzing message content and message handling--it is a tool for observing and analyzing overt communication behavior of selected communicators” (p. 2). According to Frankfort-Nachmia C. and Nachmias D. (1992), there are three applications of content analysis: (1) to describe the attributes of the message; (2) to make inference about the sender of the message and about the cause of the message; and (3) to infer aspects of culture and cultural change. This study applied the third application.

A sample of advertising from the *Elle* (a Taiwanese transnational women's magazine), and from *Citta Bella* (a Taiwanese domestic women's magazine) was analyzed to determine the extent to which either traditional or Western values exist in advertisements. This study focused on *Elle* and *Citta Bella* because *Elle*

is the second largest advertising source for women's magazine in Taiwan with 214,000 copies in circulation and *Citta Bella* is one of the oldest domestic women's magazine, which also has 241,000 copies in circulation (Brain, 1994). *Elle* also has the highest published growth rate, 41%, in '92-'93 of the women's magazines in Taiwan (Brain, 1994). Both magazines are matched by audience demographics which are 20- 35 year old working women living in urban areas with high education levels, self- confidence and egalitarian views.

According to the common concept for the 17 international editions published to date, *Elle's* philosophy, "Always the same. Never the same", will be utilized as their edition standard worldwide (ELLE, 1991). *Elle* assumes that fashion, beauty and art will never be isolated by territory or borders, but rather are the common language of human beings. However, *Elle* also assumes that only culture can reflect the beauty of a nation, *Elle* also emphasizes the indigenous culture which is unique to that country (ELLE, 1991).

Sampling

The basic unit of analysis is restricted to full-page individual advertisements in the monthly transnational women's magazine, *Elle* and *Citta Bella*. The available editions of *Elle* and *Citta Bella* were selected from October 1991 to April 1995. These dates were chosen because October 1991 was the first publication date for *Elle* and April 1995 is the most recent publications for both *Elle* and *Citta Bella*.

Out of a total of 86 issues, there are approximately 6450 advertisements. In order to have 3.5 percent standard error, 400 full-page four-color advertisements were randomly selected from *Elle* (200 ads) and *Citta Bella* (200 ads). Using random numbers, 22 issues were separately selected from *Elle* and *Citta Bella*. Systematic sampling was used to select the advertisements. An initial number was decided by using random numbers, then, every 8th advertisement was selected until the total sample size, 400 ads, was attained.

Operationalization

In this study, the independent variables were *Elle* and *Citta Bella*. These magazines are representative of cultural values within their original countries. *Elle* magazine represents the Western culture (coded 1) and *Citta Bella* magazine represents traditional culture (coded 2). The dependent variables in this study are cultural indicators, ad model race, product involvement levels, language used and product origin in the advertisements of *Elle* and *Citta Bella*. The advertisements were typically carried in the illustration and headline. Both the visual and the headlines were taken into consideration.

Cultural Indicators

In the cultural indicators, although an advertisement may contain more than one appeal, the majority of advertisements tend to contain one dominant appeal.

It is the dominant appeal that is coded. However, if there are still some disagreements between coders, the decision of the majority will be accepted.

Traditional and Family Appeals The individual is related to others. The family is the emphasis of the appeal. The individual in the commercial is depicted as an integral part and every effort is for the family. Advertisements not only emphasize the benefit of consumer but also of the family. Old group members are depicted being asked for advice, opinions, and recommendations. Traditional structure, costume, symbol or dialect is used in advertisements.

Soft-Sell Appeal Mood and atmosphere is developed through an emotional story or verse. Human emotional sentiments are emphasized over product-related appeals. More suggestive language is used.

Hard-Sell Appeals Sales orientation is emphasized here, stressing brand name and product recommendations. Explicit mention may be made of competitive products, sometimes by name, and the product advantage depends on performance. This appeal includes statements such as “number one” and “leader”.

Product Merit Appeals Focus is on the product and its characteristics. Some aspect or feature of the product is described in depth. Facts and detailed information are included and emphasized. The benefit to the consumer is secondary or implied.

Status Appeals Advertisements suggest that the use of a particular product will improve some inherent quality of the user in the eyes of others. Position and rank within the context of the group are stressed. This category also includes foreign status appeals by using models, and foreign celebrity endorsements.

Other Appeals Those advertisements which do not belong to any categories above belong to this category.

Ad Model Race

Ad model race was used to identify the races of the models shown in the advertisements. This applies to physical appearance of the model. To those advertisements which used humans as their model, there are four kinds of image tested in this study: oriental, non-oriental, mix and unidentified. The “mix” here means that the advertisements show more than one race of people.

Product Involvement Level

According to Frith and Wesson’s (1991) study, the matrix of Foote Cone and Belding was used to classify products into high involvement, medium involvement and low involvement categories. Table 1 shows that high involvement products, such as autos, financial services and jewelry, tend to be higher priced, purchased relatively infrequently, and require information seeking by the consumer. Medium involvement products involve, cameras, TV’s and watches, are priced in the mid-range and require moderate search activities. Low involvement products, such as food products, hair care products and beer/wine, tend to be packaged goods of relatively low price which are purchased frequently by the consumer. In the study of Mueller (1987) and Chin (1994), similar approaches had been used.

Product Origin

The products being analyzed originate from Europe, America, Asia and others. France, Italy, Germany and England belong to the category of Europe. The U.S and Canada belong to the category America. Taiwan, Japan, and Hong Kong belong to Asia. Products which do not have a country of origin belong to category “other”.

Language Used

The context of language was analyzed to understand its importance in advertisement. There were four kinds of language coded in this study: English, Chinese, Chinese with English and Chinese with Japanese.

Table 1. Three Product Involvement Levels

Product levels	Codes	Categories
High involvement	3	Autos, jewelry, beauty salon, travel
Medium involvement	2	Hotels, electronics, auto body repair shops, cosmetics, watches, kitchen appliances, perfume, institution
Low involvement	1	Clothing, food/beverage, department store, cleansers, shoes

Reliability

After the coding process, an inter-coder reliability test was done to ensure the reliability of the categorization system. Intercoder reliability is the level of agreement among several coders processing the same communication material. It is the degree of consistency between coders applying the same set of categories to the same content. The more precise the categories are, the higher the intercoder reliability should be (Kassarjian, 1977).

Two coders were invited to participate in this study in September 1995. The author was the third coder. All coders were given a coding sheet and a code book of definitions for culture indicators, ad model race, level of product involvement, origin of product and language used. After the coders read the definitions, the coding process was started.

The results of the intercoder reliability for this study used the following formula reported by Holsti (1969):

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2M}{N1+N2+N3}$$

M: Total agreement amount of coding decisions

N1, N2 and N3: Total amount of coding decisions made (number of advertisements x number of coding decisions)

According to Stemple (1981), it would be better to have a minimum level above 90 percent. Berelson (1952) claimed that the range between 66 and 95 percent, with a concentration at about 90 percent, is quite satisfactory. However, after finishing all 400 advertisements, the original results (culture indicators and

product involvement level) were below 90 percent. Three coders discussed the different items and clarified the definition of all the variables. To those items which still did not have agreements among coders, the decision of the majority was accepted.

$$\text{Coder 1 \& Coder 2} = 2M/(N+N) = 95.95\%$$

$$\text{Coder 2 \& Coder 3} = 2M/(N+N) = 96.62\%$$

$$\text{Coder 1 \& Coder 3} = 2M/(N+N) = 96.05\%$$

The result showed that there was a 95.95 percent agreement between coder 1 and coder 2 and a 96.62 percent agreement between coder 2 and coder 3, and a 96.05 percent agreement between coder 1 and coder 3. Table 2 shows the degree of agreement regarding specific variables.

The composite reliability coefficient was calculated by the following formula and employed by Lo (1993):

$$\text{Coefficient} = \frac{N (\text{average inter-judge agreement})}{1 + [(N-1) (\text{average inter-judge agreement})]}$$

N: The number of judges

The average inter-judge agreement was computed as follows:

$$(95.95\% + 96.62\% + 96.05\%)/3 = 96.21\%$$

$$\text{Coefficient} = 3(96.21)/1 + [(3-1)96.21\%] = 98.7\%$$

The result showed the coefficient of the intercoder reliability (98.7 percent) is satisfactory.

Data Analysis

Each item was on the coding sheet. The data was then processed by a computer using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for Windows v 6.0. Frequency and contingency tables were developed to show the overall picture of the cases. In order to determine statistical significance, the Chi-square, multiple regression and t-test were used.

Table 2. The Degree of Agreement between Coders and Variables

	Coder 1 & 2	Coder 2 &3	Coder 1 &3
Traditional and Family Appeal	0.933	0.857	0.933
Soft-Sell Appeal	0.894	0.929	0.882
Hard-Sell Appeal	0.956	0.960	0.955
Product Merit Appeal	0.943	0.952	0.941
Status Appeal	0.895	0.941	0.913
Others	0.947	0.917	0.870
Racial Image	0.973	0.975	0.980
Product Involvement Level	0.913	0.900	0.918
Language	1.000	1.000	1.000
Product Origin	1.000	1.000	1.000

CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

Comparisons of cultural reflections in advertisements between a Taiwanese transnational women's magazine and a domestic women's magazine in Taiwan is the focus of this study. In all, 200 advertisements from *Elle* and 200 advertisements from *Citta Bella* were examined in this study. The first part of this chapter presents the descriptive results. Tests of hypotheses are shown in the second portion.

Descriptive Results

The ten variables analyzed in this study were: (1) traditional and family appeal, (2) soft-sell appeal, (3) hard-sell appeal, (4) product merit appeal, (5) status appeal, (6) other, (7) ad model race, (8) product involvement level, (9) language used, and (10) origin of product. Table 3 shows that the most frequently used cultural indicator in advertisements was product merit appeal (38.5 percent), followed by hard-sell appeals (31.5 percent) and soft-sell appeals (21 percent).

Table 3. Frequency Distribution for Cultural Indicators

Culture indicators	Frequency	Percent %
Traditional and Family Appeal	7	1.8 %
Hard-Sell Appeal	84	21.0
Soft-Sell Appeal	126	31.5
Product Merit Appeal	154	38.5
Status Appeal	19	4.8
Other	10	2.5
Total N	400	100.0 %

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Racial Image

Racial image	Frequency	Percent %
Unidentified	26	10.6 %
Oriental	60	24.4
Non-oriental	157	63.8
Mix	3	1.2
Total N	246	100.0 %

^a 154 of a total 400 advertisements used a product as their subject instead of people.

As to ad model race, Table 4 shows that 63.8 percent consisted of non-oriental people, 24.4 percent consisted of oriental people and 10.6 percent are unidentified.

Table 5 shows that 44.5 percent of the ads displayed low involvement products, more than 42 percent were medium involvement products, and only 13.5 percent were high involvement products. In other words, most of advertisements in both magazines were for hotels, electronics, auto body repair shops, cosmetics, watches, kitchen appliances, perfume, and institutions.

As shown in Table 6, 47.50 percent of the advertisements used only Chinese in their content, 34.75 percent of the advertisements contained English and Chinese, 17.25 percent advertisements that conveyed their information in English.

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Product Involvement Level

Product involvement level	Frequency	Percent %
High	54	13.5 %
Medium	178	44.5
Low	168	42.0
Total N	400	100.0 %

Table 6. Frequency Distribution of Language Used

Language usage	Frequency	Percent %
English	69	17.25 %
Chinese	190	47.50
English & Chinese	139	34.75
Japanese & Chinese	2	0.50
Total N	400	100.00 %

As to the origin of product, Table 7 shows that 42.75 percent of the products originated in Asian countries, such as Japan, Taiwan or Hong Kong. However, 38.75 percent of the products in the advertisements were made in Europe and 15.75 percent were made in America.

Table 7. Frequency Distribution of Product Origin

Country	Frequency	Percentage %
Europe	155	38.75 %
America	63	15.75
Asia	171	42.75
Other	11	2.75
Total N	400	100.00 %

Tests of Hypotheses

H1: The advertisements in a transnational women's magazine will reflect more hard-sell appeals than in a domestic women's magazine.

The findings displayed in Table 8 indicate that there was a significant difference between the hard-sell appeals in the advertisements of *Elle* and *Citta Bella*. The average number of hard-sell appeals in *Elle* was 0.45 as opposed to 0.19 for *Citta Bella*, a difference which is significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the first hypothesis was supported.

H2: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect more soft-sell appeals than in a transnational women's magazine.

The findings displayed in Table 8 indicate that there was a significant difference between the soft-sell appeals in the advertisements of *Elle* and *Citta Bella*. The average number of soft-sell appeals in *Elle* was 0.17 as opposed to 0.25 for *Citta Bella*, a difference which is significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the second hypothesis was supported.

H3: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect as many product merit appeals as in a transnational women's magazine.

The findings in Table 8 demonstrate that there was a significant difference between the product merit appeals in the advertisements of *Elle* and *Citta Bella*. The average number of product merit appeals in *Elle* was 0.33 as opposed to 0.44 for *Citta Bella*, a difference which is significant at the .05 level. Therefore, hypothesis two was supported.

H4: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect more status appeals than in a transnational women's magazine.

The results in Table 8 indicate that status appeals were significantly used in the advertisements of *Citta Bella* and *Elle*. The average number of status appeals in advertisements of *Elle* and *Citta Bella* was 0.02 and 0.08 respectively, a difference which was significant at the .05 level. Therefore, hypothesis fourth was supported.

H5: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect more traditional and family appeals than in a transnational women's magazine.

The results in Table 8 indicate that the traditional and family appeal was not significantly different in the advertisements in *Citta Bella* and *Elle*. The average number of traditional and family appeal in advertisements of *Elle* and *Citta Bella* was 0.01 and 0.03 respectively, a difference which was not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis fifth was not supported.

Table 8. T - test for mean differences between culture indicators by *Elle* and *Citta Bella*

	Elle	Citta Bella	Mean Difference	t-value
Culture indicators	Mean	Mean	Mean Difference	t-value
Traditional and family appeal	0.01	0.03	- 0.03	- 1.91
Soft-sell appeal	0.17	0.25	- 0.08	- 1.97**
Hard-sell appeal	0.45	0.19	0.26	5.82**
Product merit appeal	0.33	0.44	- 0.11	- 2.27**
Status appeal	0.02	0.08	- 0.07	- 3.08**
Other	0.04	0.02	0.02	1.28
Total N=	200	200		

df = 398, ** p < .05

a. For each culture indicator, its value is either 0 or 1. When the culture indicator is observed by the coders its value is 1, otherwise it is 0.

H6: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will contain more oriental models than in a transnational women's magazine.

The results depicted in Table 9 indicate that *Citta Bella* significantly used more oriental models in their advertisements than those in *Elle*. Out of a total of 243 advertisements which used models, 36.4 percent were shown with oriental models in *Citta Bella* compared to 15 percent in *Elle*. Therefore, hypothesis sixth was supported.

H7: The advertisements in a transnational women's magazine will display higher involvement level product than in a domestic women's magazine.

By defining low product involvement level as 1, medium product involvement level as 2, and high product involvement level as 3, a t-test for differences between product involvement level by *Elle* and *Citta Bella* was conducted. In Table 10, the results show that there was no significant difference between *Elle* and *Citta Bella* with respect to product involvement level. Out of a total of 400 advertisements, the average number of product involvement level for *Elle* was 1.66 compared to 1.77 from *Citta Bella*, therefore, a difference was not significant at the .05 level. The hypothesis seventh was not supported.

H8: Advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will more often used the Chinese language than in a transnational women's magazine.

The findings in Table 11 show that *Citta Bella* relied more heavily on the Chinese language in advertisements whereas *Elle* did not. More than two thirds of the advertisements of *Citta Bella* used Chinese compared to 27.14 percent in *Elle*. Therefore, hypothesis eighth was supported.

Table 9. The comparison of ad model race between *Elle* and *Citta Bella*

	Elle		Citta Bella	
	No.	%	No.	%
Racial image				
Unidentified	7	5.3	19	17.3
Oriental	20	15.0	40	36.4
Non-oriental	106	79.7	51	46.3
Total	133	100.0	110	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 29.56; df = 2; p < .001$$

Table 10. T- test for mean difference between product involvement level by *Elle* and *Citta Bella*

	Elle	Citta Bella	Mean Difference	t-value
	Mean	Mean		
Product Involvement Level	1.66	1.77	- 0.11	- 1.60
Total N=	200	200		

df = 398

H9: The advertisements in a domestic women's magazine will reflect a more Eastern product origin, while the advertisements in a transnational women's magazine reflect a more Western product origin.

The result depicted in Table 12 indicates that the products in advertisements of *Citta Bella* were more heavily associated with Asia, while *Elle* contained more advertisements that originated in Europe. In general, 56 percent of the products advertised in *Citta Bella* originated in Asia compared to 29.5 percent from *Elle*. In addition, in the advertisements of *Elle*, 53.5 percent of the products originated from Europe, while only 24 percent of the products in the advertisements of *Citta Bella* were from Europe. Therefore, hypothesis ninth was supported.

Table 11. The comparison of language use between *Elle* and *Citta Bella*

Language usage	Elle		Citta Bella	
	No.	%	No.	%
English	58	29.15%	11	5.53%
Chinese	54	27.14	136	68.34
English & Chinese	87	43.71	52	26.13
Total N	199	100%	199	100%

$$\chi^2 = 76.22; df = 2; p < .001$$

H10: After controlling for product involvement level, language used, ad model race, product origin and cultural indicators, the advertisements style will significantly discriminate between a domestic women's magazine and a transnational women's magazine.

In Table 13, approximately 18 percent of the variance between *Elle* and *Citta Bella* is accounted for by product involvement level, language used, model race, product origin and cultural indicators. The results showed that the standardized regression coefficient for language used, product origin, and hard-sell appeal were significant at a .05 level. Therefore, hypothesis tenth was partially supported.

Table 12. The comparison of product origin between *Elle* and *Citta Bella*

Product origin	Elle		Citta Bella	
	No.	%	No.	%
Europe	107	53.5	48	24.0
America	27	13.5	36	18.0
Asia	59	29.5	112	56.0
Other	7	3.5	4	2.0
Total	200	100.00	200	100.00

$$\chi^2 = 40.99; df = 3; p < .001$$

Table 13. Regression of Magazine Type (*Elle* and *Citta Bella*) on Product Involvement Level, Language Used, Ad Model Race, Product Origin and Cultural Indicators

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable Magazine (0= Elle and 1= Citta Bella)
Model Race ^a	0.04
Product Involvement	- 0.06
Product Origin ^a	0.19*
Language Used ^b	0.21*
Traditional & Family Appeal	0.05
Soft-Sell Appeal	0.01
Hard-Sell Appeal	- 0.13 **
Product Merit Appeal	0.00
Status Appeal	0.08
Other	0.08
Total R ² =	0.177 *

* P < 0.01

** P < 0.05

a. Coding for model race and product origin: 0= non-Asian, 1= Asian

b. Coding for language used: 0= non-Chinese, 1= Chinese

CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The results showed that there is no significant difference between the traditional and family appeals in the advertisements of a transnational and a domestic women's magazine. The findings also showed that traditional and family appeals, in general, were not employed often in both magazines. The reasons could be explained as: first, according to Yang (1976), the Taiwanese culture has changed to an egalitarian ideology of independence instead of overemphasizing the relationship with the family. Second, both magazines are women's fashion magazine that have the target audiences focusing on working women with a high self-confidence and egalitarian viewpoints. For a modern women's magazine in Taiwan, women's rights and women's self-determination is what they advocate most, hence, a less traditional appeal in a women's magazine is comprehensible.

The fact that the results demonstrate that the advertisements reflect a more hard-sell appeal in a transnational women's magazine and a more soft-sell appeal in a domestic women's magazine was similar to Mueller's (1987) study which suggested that Japanese advertisements consisted of a much more emotional appeal as opposed to a less hard-sell appeal than the American advertisements. In this study, the advertisements in a transnational women's magazine stress the brand names and product recommendations. During the investigation process, it was apparent that a lot of the advertisements in a transnational women's magazine stress the brand name without any other explanation. On the other hand, the advertisements in a domestic women's magazine use more suggestive

language creating a mood and atmosphere which includes emotional sentiments with regards to product-related appeal.

The analysis of product merit appeal indicated that there is a significant difference between both of the women's magazines. In other words, the advertisements which focus on the product and its characteristics with detailed information in a domestic women's magazine were more abundant than in a transnational women's magazine. The findings could be explained by the fact that Taiwan has become a more international society and more affluent than ever before. People having the ability to consume coupled with international trade has ushered in more foreign products to Taiwan, consequently, more brand name products are sold in the Taiwanese market. With regard to new products, advertisements need to introduce the product or distinguish the product from the other competitive brands.

The result of status appeal showed that there was significant difference between domestic and transnational women's magazines. That is, the number of advertisements, which use celebrity endorsements to promote their products was significantly different between the domestic women's magazine and transnational women's magazine. The findings indicated that traditional Chinese culture, which is of overwhelming importance with respect to the relationship of people within the Chinese social network, still has lasting effects on the Taiwanese people.

The analysis of model race showed that the domestic women's magazine did use more oriental models compared to that of the transnational women's magazines. However, the findings also indicated that the non-oriental model was used frequently in both magazines. The reason for this could be due to Western esthetical values having influenced Taiwan. This is especially so with fashion

women's magazines which are so closely linked to beauty. Consequently, the high ratio of the usage of non-oriental models is understandable.

The analysis of the product involvement levels in their usage of advertising appeals provides another insight into how advertising is used in Taiwan. As a result, there was no significant difference between the two magazines. It also indicated that the products belonging to a high, middle or low involvement level in *Elle* will also belong to the same corresponding levels in *Citta Bella*.

The language used is different between the two magazines. The results demonstrate that more than half of the advertisements in *Elle* are English as well as Chinese combined with English. In *Citta Bella*, 32 percent of the advertisements were in English as well as Chinese with English. It is not surprising that English was used so often in the advertisements, because it is the most important and popular foreign language in Taiwan. English is a required course for the students from junior high through college and learning it is a fashionable trend for children and adults in Taiwan.

The results of the product origins were also different between the two magazines. The products in *Elle* originated in the Western countries (Europe and American), while the products in *Citta Bella* originated in Eastern countries (Asia). Even though the principle of *Elle* places emphasis on the blending of local culture, the findings indicate that it still attracts more foreign product advertisements. Another interesting finding was that in *Citta Bella* more than 40 percent of the product originated in the Western countries, indicating that *Citta Bella* has a tendency for Western Culture.

Finally, results of the regression analysis demonstrated that approximately 18 percent of the variance between a transnational women's magazine and a

domestic women's magazine is accounted for all the variables of product involvement, language, product origin, model race and cultural indicators. In addition, only language used, product origin and hard-sell appeal have influence on both types of magazines.

Limitations

There are some limitations to this study.

First, the focus of this study consisted of only two women's magazines. The results cannot be generalized to other kinds of magazines. Secondly, because the first edition of *Elle* was published in October 1991, the trend of culture reflection in advertisements of both magazines could not be observed in terms of a longitudinal analysis because *Citta Bella* had been published before October, 1991, whereas *Elle* was not. Thirdly, the interpretation of the variables by the coders was subjective rather than objective. The content analysis was conducted by only a few coders who used only one approach for measuring product involvement level, and advertisement appeals. However, these variables are perceived differently from person to person depending on viewer characteristics such as education or social status. Therefore, the coders did not represent a true trend of the consumers in Taiwan. Finally, only ten variables were analyzed in this study. There may be more variables which should be included.

Suggestions for Future Research

For further study, the following ideas might be explored:

1. Further research could compare the changes in culture between two or more magazines in terms of a longitudinal analysis.
2. Since Taiwan has been occupied by Japan for almost 50 years, further research could investigate the degree of Japanese cultural values in the advertisements of Taiwan.
3. It would be interesting to study how cultural values differ among societies that have a common ethnic heritage but are different in economic and political ideology, such as Taiwan versus China.
4. An investigation into the different usage of strategies, whether it is standardized or specialized, between multinational and foreign advertising agencies and local advertising agencies.
5. Due to different media characteristics, it would be interesting to compare the cultural reflections in two different media.
6. To help advertisers decide an appropriate strategy, it would be interesting to investigate the effect of standardized and specialized advertising.

Conclusion

This is the first study which examines the role of culture in advertisements for two different women's magazines in Taiwan; One being domestic and the other being transnational. The results of this study indicated that appeals such as soft-sell, product merit and status appeal were used more in a domestic women's

magazine compared to a transnational women's magazine. In regards to the model race, language used, and product origin, the domestic women's magazine demonstrated more Chinese cultural tendencies, while a transnational women's magazine had more Western cultural tendencies.

In summation, there are different cultural reflections between a transnational women's magazine and a domestic women's magazine. That is, there was a significant Western influence associated with advertisements of a transnational women's magazine and Chinese culture was associated with advertisements of a domestic women's magazine. The results suggested that advertisers who are planning the advertising strategies in Taiwan should consider whether its a transnational women's magazine or domestic women's magazine so they could determine whether a standardized or specialized approach will be appropriate.

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APPENDIX

CODE BOOK

Variable name	Variable label Column		Value label	Field
Case number	# ID	Actual	3	1-3
Magazine name	Type	1 = Elle 2 = Citta Bella	1	4
Culture indicators	Culind	1 = traditional 2 = soft 3 = hard 4 = product 5 = status 6 = other	1	5
Racial images	Racial	0 = unidentified 1 = oriental 2 = non-oriental 3 = mix 4 = product	1	6
Product levels	Prodlev	1 = low 2 = middle 3 = high	1	7
Language	Langua	1 = Japanese 2 = English 3 = Chinese 4 = English + Chinese 5 = Japanese + Chinese 6 = other	1	8

Variable name	Variable label Column	Value label	Field
Product origin	Prodori	1 = Europe 2 = America 3 = Asia 4 = other	1 9
