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The social, cultural, political and economic consequences associated with the growth of transnational advertising are profoundly different in Third World countries and require a separate analysis. The consumption patterns promoted by advertising, if excessive in industrialized countries, are inaccessible in poor countries. Transnational strategies of needlessly differentiated products and costly packaging often make these products exorbitantly expensive. Moreover, they often replace local products that are cheaper, more durable, and more nutritious. Furthermore, the lifestyles promoted in advertising include implicit and explicit agendas for social relations, political action, and cultural change. (128)

The explosive growth of transnational advertising began in the 1960s and 1970s as competition forced U.S. corporations to seek out foreign markets. Recently, high rates of income growth in Latin America have attracted the attention of transnational agencies. The resulting flood of advertising has produced a variety of changes in Latin America's economic, social, cultural and political domains.

THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The globalization of U.S. advertising agencies has supported conditions of monopoly capitalism in Latin America by 1) promoting competition at the level of marketing rather than at the level of production; 2) yielding higher profits by accelerating capital turnover; and 3) artificially stimulating demand. Transnational advertising tends to encourage consumption of highly profitable but nonessential products and discourage competition by raising barriers to entry.

Monopoly conditions allow transnationals to limit the range of goods they offer in peripheral countries. Transnationals deliberately choose to market goods that require high advertising-to-sales ratios, which national firms often cannot afford. Leading examples of products favored by transnationals are soaps, tobacco, drugs, perfumes, deodorants, toothpaste prepared foods, beer and soft drinks. Prohibitive marketing costs (e.g., expensive television advertising time) drive away indigenous firms, allowing transnationals to dominate certain markets involving goods with high profit margins. “[R]ather than expressing the level of development in a given Third World country, the production, marketing, and sales of these product types express the kind of development model it has chosen.” (129)

Transnational firms sometimes promote consumption habits or lifestyles that are incompatible with traditional cultures. A defense of transnational advertising is that it benefits consumers by teaching novel consumption behaviors and bringing local cultures into the modern world. However, transnational firms often must employ sophisticated and expensive marketing strategies to overcome individual and cultural resistance to new products. For example, Kellogg's struggled for many years to change the Japanese breakfast preference for rice, fish and seaweed, with some signs of success appearing by the end of the 1970s. Rather than responding to consumer preferences, transnational advertising frequently is designed to overcome them.

SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES

Current transnational advertising techniques attempt to commercialize all aspects of social discourse, including culture, values, and lifestyles all over the world. This modern approach to marketing, called *projective advertising*, has become the preferred marketing strategy of transnational advertising agencies. The earliest advertising techniques, consisting of informative and mechanistically repetitive messages, first gave way to psychologically "suggestive" advertising; but all these approaches addressed the consumer as a single individual making decisions independently of the social environment. The newer style of projective advertising differs radically in assuming that the individual makes consumption-related decisions as a social being embedded in a social environment, and seeks to inscribe commercial messages into that environment.

Utilizing this view of the consumer, transnational advertisers target group attitudes, social norms, and individual preferences through the worldwide promotion of a standardized global culture and lifestyle. A global advertising campaign involves the creation of a common theme or message that is applied in all countries where a particular product is distributed. Transnationals prefer the universal appeal of the US lifestyle that originated during the postwar era of seemingly unlimited growth. "The dissemination of a lifestyle specific to advanced capitalism in the United States is significant because it occurred at the precise historical moment that it became possible to propose a 'lifestyle' for Third World consumers that was unconnected to concrete economic realities." (136)

The political ramifications of transnational advertising in the Third World are dramatized by a Pepsi-Cola advertising campaign in Brazil. Pepsi used the theme phrase "Pepsi Revolution" rather than its traditional "Pepsi Generation" theme in order to take advantage of the Brazilian desire for change that had been repressed by government for years. This example illustrates how advertisers can undermine social protest by co-opting terms charged with political meaning. As traditional religious and political values disintegrate, advertising helps to create a new social consensus around an ideology of consumerism.