



McDonald's hamburgers are only part of the offering to consumers in China. The restaurants' western styling and western food are as much of an attraction as the hamburgers themselves.

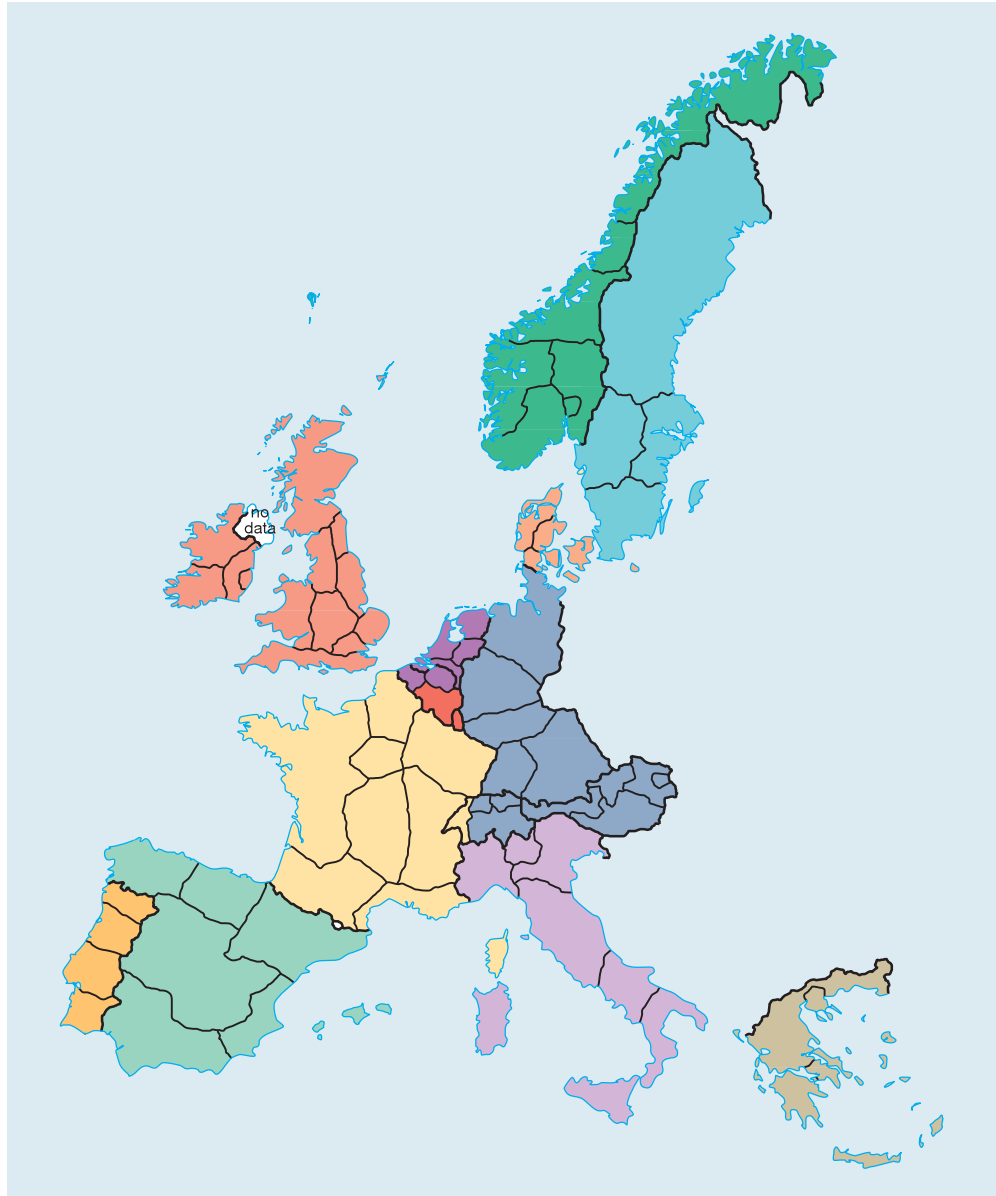
Corbis/Michael S. Yamashinka

marketers should beware of overestimating the homogeneity of such macro-regions. Portraits of macro-regions can be drawn with rough strokes only with a very big brush. In the following section we will look at a couple of examples of such macro-regions in Europe.

Such regions are taken increasingly seriously by marketers. In the wake of the construction of the bridge over the strait of Øresund linking Copenhagen in Denmark with Malmö in the southern part of Sweden, the potential for a whole new region of education, research, shopping and other kinds of interaction has been created.⁴⁴ As a consequence, a regional dairy producer introduced what may well be the first-ever deliberately transnational regional product – a fermented yogurt-type product specifically designed and tested to span the variations in taste found in the Swedish and Danish markets. The product, named after the strait, comes with complete text in Swedish and Danish and features a person bathing in the water that separates but now (re)connects the two regions.

Since food consumption is traditionally linked to geographical conditions such as climate, or distance from the sea or mountains, another study hypothesized the importance of local or regional patterns of consumption across national borders compared to national consumption patterns.⁴⁵ The results of an analysis of 138 food-related variables from 15 countries, however, showed that national or linguistic borders seem more significant in defining patterns of food consumption. Figure 16.8 illustrates the 12 general food cultures in Europe suggested by this study. To list a few of the defining characteristics of some of the food cultures, the French/French–Swiss, Wallonian and Italian clusters are characterized by, among other things, the importance of sensory pleasure and the high consumption of red wine; the Germanic cluster of countries by a high degree of health consciousness; the Portuguese and Greek food cultures by relatively traditional eating patterns with a fascination for new 'global' food; the Norwegian and Danish food cultures by their openness to convenience products (and, for the Danes, also the love of beer); and the British and Irish for their extraordinary desire for sweets and tea. One large Dutch travel firm has even developed and promoted a resort hotel in Turkey where all the rooms are done in 'Amsterdam style' and, of course, the hotel's menu consists of Dutch favourites.⁴⁶

Interestingly, it is predominantly in the centre of Europe that food cultures exhibit overlapping national borders (France–Switzerland; Germany–Switzerland–Austria; the

Figure 16.8 Twelve possible European food cultures?

Source: Søren Askegaard and Tage Koed Madsen, 'The local and the global: Exploring traits of homogeneity and heterogeneity in European food cultures', *International Business Review* 7(6) (1998).

Netherlands–Flanders), the only exception being the British–Irish food culture. The more geographically peripheral countries (Scandinavia, Iberia, Italy and Greece) show 'national food cultures'. Is this due to more exchange and interrelationship historically among the people in the 'crossroads of Europe'? Or is it language that decides basic cultural patterns? If so, this would confirm the famous Whorf–Sapir hypothesis that language is not only a means for expressing culture but actually creates it by instituting certain schemes of classification of events, things and people. The fact that the food cultures defined in this study exactly follow linguistic lines of division (with the exception of there being two French-speaking clusters) could point in that direction. Or it could reflect the simple fact that the language of the questionnaire is very decisive for the

response pattern. If the latter is the case, then it would be a strong criticism of the way in which marketers use surveys as a cross-national research instrument.⁴⁷ The truth probably lies somewhere between the two.

We have seen the fact that grand traits of differences can be located between certain regions in Europe, for instance a distinction between Teutonic, Gallic and Anglo-Saxon styles of communicating,⁴⁸ stressing the logical strictness of the argument, its rhetorical qualities and its empirical validity respectively. Such grand traits of similarities do not necessarily permit us to conclude that there are broad similarities in the food consumption or other consumption areas as well. Obviously it is a matter of scope. Certain parts of Europe tend to have consumption patterns similar to each other compared with China, for example. But whether these similarities are detailed enough to be useful to marketers other than in a very broad sense is another question.

National consumption differences

A series of articles recently discussed 'the changing consumer' in various European countries. The focus in these articles was predominantly macro-oriented changes in demography and economy, aggregate family expenditures or size of distribution outlets and similar information.⁴⁹ However relevant such information is, it does not provide a very vivid 'flesh-and-blood' portrait of European consumers in various countries. Needless to say, such portraits are extremely difficult to draw unless one wants to fall back on the most simple use of stereotypes: the French with baguette, cheese and Renault; the Spanish with paella, tapas and Seat; the British with tea, biscuits and Rover; the German with sauerkraut, sausage and Volkswagen.

We will try to refrain from such portraits here, and instead provide a set of examples that should illustrate some similarities and differences among European countries. We will do that by referring to research results pertaining to consumer behaviour from three different market sectors.

Food

Food is one of the most important fields of consumption when it comes to the impact on the structure of people's daily lives. The wealth of symbolic meanings attached to various kinds of food and hence food's capacity as a 'marker' of certain roles, status, situations, rituals, etc. is well documented.⁵⁰ How is the meal prepared and eaten? How often do we eat and at what times during the day? What do we drink with the meals? What is the social function of eating? These are questions for which the answers vary from country to country and from segment to segment.

Western European households spend typically between 14 and 17 per cent of their income on food, although the UK (10.1 per cent) and the Netherlands (11.0 per cent) are exceptions to this rule.⁵¹ How this sum is spent varies greatly from country to country, depending on local production and local culinary patterns. The per capita consumption of different food products in European countries varies several hundred per cent in all categories. For example, the consumption of fresh fish in Spain and Portugal is about ten times that of Austria or the UK, and the consumption of pork in Denmark about ten times that of France. The consumption of potatoes is high in Ireland, but it is actually higher in Greece, and by far the lowest in Italy, which consumes approximately four times more pasta per inhabitant than the Swiss, who are the second most avid consumers of pasta in the European market.⁵² There is evidence that Britons are eating out more. They spent an average of £312 (460 euros) per person a year in 2004; and this is forecast to rise to £356 (525 euros) by 2009. This compares with Italians (who spent £295 (435 euros)) and the French (£249 (367 euros)) per head in 2004. This also indicates a trend away from home-cooked meals, and by 2008 it is estimated that '3 billion extra breakfasts, lunches and evening meals will be consumed out-of-home relative to 2003 in the UK . . . Consumers

Table 16.2 Food-related lifestyle segments in four countries

	France %	Germany %	UK %	Denmark %
Uninvolved	18	21	9	11
Careless		11	27	23
Rational	35	26	33	11
Moderate	16			
Ecological moderate				20
Conservative	13	18	19	11
Adventurous		24	12	25
Hedonistic	18			

Source: Adapted from Karen Brunsø, Klaus G. Grunert and Lone Bredahl, 'An Analysis of National and Cross-National Consumer Segments Using the Food-Related Lifestyle Instrument in Denmark, France, Germany and Great Britain', MAPP Working Paper 35 (Aarhus: The Aarhus School of Business, January 1996).

now want to maximize their time and going out in the week allows them the chance to socialize without the hassle of cooking.⁵³

A group of researchers developed a food-related lifestyle instrument based on means-end theory (see Chapter 4).⁵⁴ The instrument includes attitude statements concerning five different domains: quality aspects, ways of shopping, cooking methods, consumption situations and purchasing motives. Tests of its cross-cultural validity showed reasonable results, at least within north-western Europe.⁵⁵ An application of the food-related lifestyle model in four European countries between 1993 and 1995 suggested that certain segments are found in all countries, some are found in three countries and some only in one country. The size of the segments, however, varies significantly, as seen in Table 16.2. These differences may shed some light on the differences between the national food cultures in question.

The 'uninvolved' segment (predominantly in Germany and France) have little interest in food, do not attach importance to quality, tend to nibble and graze rather than eat 'real meals' and use convenience products and fast food more than the average. Single males with a low education level are over-represented in this segment. The 'careless' segment (predominantly in the UK and Denmark) are spontaneous food shoppers, tempted by new products. They are attracted by convenience foods, are younger, single and have relatively high incomes. The 'rational consumers' segment (predominantly in France and the UK) are very interested in food and are careful planners of both dinner and shopping. They try to maximize the quality/price ratio of their purchases, and get self-fulfilment from cooking. They tend to be female, with families, working part-time. The 'conservative' segment (predominantly the UK and Germany) consider cooking a woman's task. They plan their meals and shopping, eat at fixed hours and seek security in their eating behaviour by sticking to traditions. They are older, rural and with lower income and education. The 'adventurous' segment (predominantly Denmark and Germany) like to try new (exotic) recipes and products, they go for quality products and often shop in specialized stores. The whole family takes part in the cooking, and the social aspects of eating are considered very important. They are generally well-educated families with double incomes and children.

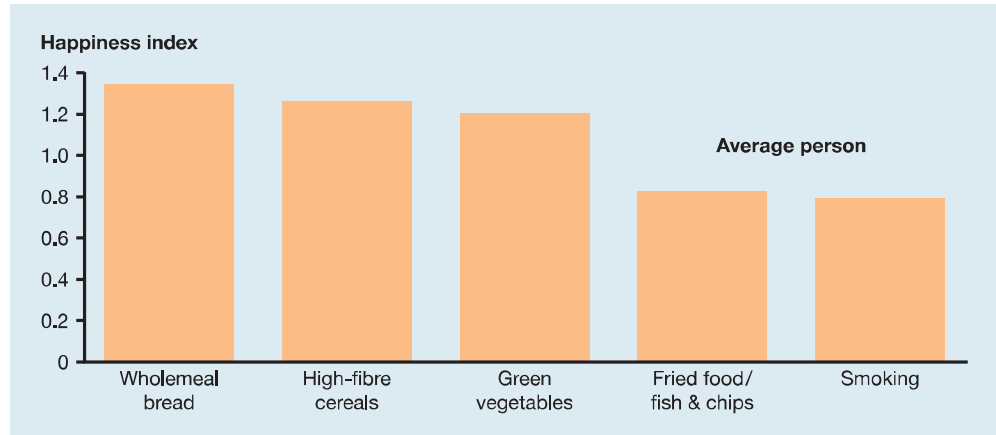
Apart from the relative distributions of the segments, two of the segments found may tell us something specific about the national consumption environments. In Denmark the 'ecologically moderate' (moderately involved in food, highly involved in environmentally friendly produce) indicate the strength of the market share of ecological produce

(35 per cent increase in sales volume in 1996). The hedonists in France are a little less adventurous than segments of that name in other countries beyond the scope of this study, but they are more focused on the sensory pleasure of eating, indicating a gastronomic sophistication. For example, it has been suggested that French consumers have more sophisticated purchasing behaviour for beef than consumers in Germany, the UK and Spain.⁵⁶ An important emerging concern across European societies revolves around attitudes to genetically modified foods, for example, Danish health authorities opposed the introduction of fortified cereals by Kellogg's onto the Danish market. Under recent European rules, genetically modified ingredients have to be identified on the labels of all food products.⁵⁷ Organics represent the fastest-growing segment of natural food and drinks. Between 2002 and 2007 the European organics market is expected to see a compound annual growth rate of 10.6 per cent, reaching \$16 billion in 2007.⁵⁸

Research such as this food-related lifestyle study may be taken as evidence that it is easier to define segments across countries and cultures based on psychological rather than behavioural variables. This would seem to be the case, since similar motivations may result in very different kinds of behaviour, which are influenced by Europe's varying cultural norms and habits.

Trends in tastes and foods are tracked by companies concerned with new product development or new product extension. Recent research by Mintel showed that 'the world is getting spicier'. 2005 saw the launch of lavender-flavoured custard or *crème anglaise*; ice cream with a hint of green tea; Unilever's Magnum chilli ice cream and innovations such as Nestlé's apple crumble-filled chocolate bars and Douwe Egberts' sugar lumps flavoured with amaretto, chocolate or 'Irish cream'.⁵⁹ Another important growing trend is the adoption of 'new age beverages' (herb or juice based drinks or iced tea and coffee) in Europe. This market has seen value growth at 10.2 per cent a year from 1996 to 2001, while volumes have grown by 9.7 per cent. European tastes remain conservative, and iced tea currently holds the largest market share. However, 'new age beverage sales differ radically across the continent. Eastern Europe has not yet caught "new age fever", and there is little penetration. In the rest of Europe, wide variations exist – Sweden's market was worth \$12.1 million in 2002 for example, but neighbouring Finland sold three times that figure . . . Switzerland has the largest new age beverages sector in Europe, accounting for almost a quarter of the market . . . in consumption terms, the average European drank 6.46 litres of new age beverages in 2001, whilst the average Swiss drank 107.48 litres . . . carbonates still hold the largest share in Europe, representing over 40% of the soft drinks market . . . [whilst] bottled water [is] the second largest sector of the European soft drinks market.'⁶⁰

Global trends can be seen in changing patterns of product-related consumption; for instance, Starbucks has opened shops in Paris, in competition with the city's 2,000 traditional cafés and 31 Columbus Café outlets, in order to try and introduce the 'to go' coffee culture among Parisians . . . 'We were told the French would never drink coffee out of paper cups', said Philippe Bloch co-president of Columbus Café, 'wouldn't take them to go, wouldn't drink anything other than espresso, and certainly not coffee beverages with a high added value like cappuccino or iced coffees. And that is not true.' Preliminary results for Columbus Café for 2003 indicate that revenue was over 8 million euros.⁶¹ The UK market for on-the-go food and drinks is predicted to grow by 262 million euros to 20.1 billion euros by 2008. 'In the face of lengthening working hours, increased commuting time and delays, consumers are increasingly making use of their time in transit to eat and drink, in an attempt to use what many view as lost time.'⁶² There is evidence that eating trends are moving away from meals towards snacking. Across Europe the number of meals that people eat is forecast to decline at the rate of 0.2 per cent per year between 2003 and 2008, while snacking is forecast to rise by 0.7 per cent: 'the trend is particularly clear in . . . Spain'.⁶³ In Britain about one in five (22 per cent) eating occasions are 'on the go' which compares with a European average of about one

Figure 16.9 What are people eating?

Source: Ed Crooks and Dan Roberts, 'How to be happy', *Financial Times*, 27/28 December 2003.

in six (15 per cent). 'The overriding need for convenience means that health takes a back seat in consumer's food and drink choices. British consumers eat healthily only 31% of the time when on-the-go – compared to 44% of the Swedes and 43% of the Dutch.'⁶⁴

The other key global trend is changing styles of consumption, with the growing adoption of American-style eating habits being blamed for the increasing incidence of obesity. British consumers have been described as the 'waddling snack kings of Europe'. . . They eat 10 billion bags of crisps a year, more than the rest of Europe put together . . . consumption stands at 7.2 kg a year or up to three bags of crisps a week for every man, woman and child in Britain, and is growing by 3 per cent a year. Italy, by contrast, consumes 1 kg per person per year.'⁶⁵ There's also some evidence that this 'unhealthy' eating is negatively correlated (not a causality claim) to an individual's subjective rating of 'happiness': Figure 16.9 shows survey results of Europeans' eating behaviours, correlated with their self rating of happiness (where a measure of 1 is the average happiness rating). Those respondents eating relatively 'healthy' foods self-rate themselves as happier, relative to those who eat fried food/fish and chips, and those who smoke. Does this sound like you? Do you have an explanation for this study's findings?⁶⁶



**marketing
pitfall**

Lifestyle trends: American patterns of eating spreading out

'Krispy Kreme arrived in Britain this month at the food section of Harrods, just a quick sashay away from pricey bonbons and minitubs of pâté. It is another example of how familiar American-style eating habits, and their bulging consequences, have become in Britain and most other European countries. While Americans have a reputation for tilting the scale more than any other people in the world – and in fact they do – Europeans are fast catching up.

In Britain the percentage of obese adults is three times what it was just two decades ago, the fastest-growing rate in Western Europe. An estimated 21 percent of men and 23.5 percent of women are now considered obese here, compared with 27 percent of men and 34 percent of women in America. The definition does not cover people regarded as merely overweight and is based on a body mass formula that factors in weight, height, sex and age.

The trend is similar across Europe. Sedentary lifestyles are part of the reason, experts say. So is an environment where adults and children alike are bombarded with commercials for yummy, sugary foods. But most of all, Europeans are eating differently: they are eating more like Americans. Fast-food restaurants and jumbo American-style portions have barreled

across borders and oceans. Fatty foods are not only plentiful but often cheaper than fresh, healthful food.

The rates of obesity for children in Britain have tripled in just 10 years. Nearly 1 in 5 of all 15-year-olds in Britain is obese, according to recent figures from the Health Development Agency. The figure is 1 in 10 for 6-year-olds. International Obesity Task Force, a research group affiliated with the World Health Organization, argues that 'There is a high risk that these children are going to die before their parents.' In one survey of parts of southern Italy, cited in a report by the task force, 36 percent of the 9-year-olds were obese or overweight. In Spain the figure for overweight or obese children and adolescents reaches 27 percent.⁶⁷

Drink

Drinking, like eating, is an activity full of symbolic dimensions linked to gender, class, lifestyle, situations and rituals.⁶⁸ The drinking cultures in Europe differ highly in terms of what is drunk, how and when. One of the most obvious differences in the European drinking pattern is the distinction between beer cultures and wine cultures. Countries such as Germany, Belgium, Austria, Denmark and Ireland have the highest per capita consumption of beer, whereas Italy, France, Portugal and Luxembourg lead the way in wine consumption.⁶⁹ To explain such huge differences, it has been argued that in some of these countries, such as Germany, France and Italy, consumption of beer and wine is so interwoven in daily lifestyles and the cultural fabric that it is hard to imagine those cultures without them. Economic and public policy factors are also important, and reflect attitudes towards alcohol in government institutions. In countries such as Finland, Norway and Sweden, alcoholic beverages stronger than 'light beer' (around 2 per cent alcohol) are sold only in state monopolies and are heavily taxed. Hence, the figures in Table 16.3 may be understated by up to 30 per cent due to legal and illegal duty-free imports and home production.⁷⁰

It has been suggested that we should distinguish between two kinds of drinking traditions in Europe. Multidimensional drinking patterns characterize drinking that occurs in connection with other social activities. Examples would be wine with meals in southern Europe, or beer and wine festivals in Germany. Drinking in these countries is traditionally not related to excess or to special occasions only. On the other hand, unidimensional drinking patterns occur in countries where moderate continuous drinking linked to daily social activities is replaced by occasional drinking (weekends or holidays only) but is characterized by people drinking excessively.⁷¹

Other major variations in drink consumption patterns are revealed by statistics. Carbonated drinks are most popular in Great Britain, Ireland and Denmark, whereas mineral water consumption is especially high in France, Belgium and Italy. The Germans, Dutch, Finns and Greeks consume most spirits among western Europeans, while Italians have the lowest consumption level of such drinks.⁷² Obviously, statistics of this kind do not reveal much about the types of product consumed, nor about the consumption situations. For example, schnapps may account for the spirits consumption in Germany, ouzo in Greece, genever in the Netherlands and vodka in Finland. Furthermore, the commonness of various consumption situations for such drinks varies across countries and among lifestyles. Wine may be used at religious ceremonies or at dinner each evening, beer on the beach or in a bar after working hours, carbonated drinks after sports or for children's birthday parties, and so on. What kinds of various rituals involving drinking can you think of in your country? Does your country have rituals related to the drinking of non-alcoholic beverages, such as coffee and tea?

European drinking patterns seem to indicate that increasing health consciousness leads to a trend in drinking lower alcohol content beverages. This may also be due to

Table 16.3 Beer and wine consumption per capita in 19 countries

Ranked in order of per capita consumption in 1991 (wine in litres)			Ranked in order of per capita consumption in 1991 (beer in litres)		
Rank	Country	1991	Rank	Country	1991
1	France	66.8	1	Germany	142.7
2	Portugal	62.0	2	Denmark	125.9
3	Luxembourg	60.3	3	Austria	123.7
4	Italy	56.8	4	Ireland	123.0
5	Switzerland	48.7	5	Luxembourg	116.1
6	Spain	34.3	6	Belgium	111.3
7	Austria	33.7	7	United Kingdom	106.2
8	Greece	32.4	8	Netherlands	88.5
9	Germany	24.9	9	USA	87.4
10	Belgium	23.9	10	Finland	85.3
11	Denmark	22.0	11	Spain	70.9
12	Netherlands	15.3	12	Switzerland	70.1
13	Sweden	12.3	13	Portugal	67.4
14	United Kingdom	11.5	14	Sweden	59.3
15	Finland	7.4	15	Norway	52.8
16	USA	7.2	16	France	40.5
17	Norway	6.9	17	Greece	40.0
18	Ireland	4.6	18	Iceland	24.2
19	Iceland	4.4	19	Italy	22.5

Source: Adapted from David Smith and J. Robert Skalnik, 'Changing Patterns in the Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages in Europe and the United States', in Flemming Hansen, ed., *European Advances in Consumer Research 2* (Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research, 1995): 343-55. Used with permission.

increasingly blurred borders between multidimensional and unidimensional drinking patterns. In general, drinking patterns are becoming more similar across Europe. Traditional wine-drinking countries show the largest increase in beer consumption over time, while an increase in wine-drinking is occurring in traditional beer-drinking countries.⁷³

Cars

The car is a third highly symbolic good with a great deal of cultural significance attached to it. Again, consumption differs among European countries for various reasons, such as local infrastructure, local production facilities, taxation or traditions. For instance, the percentage of families owning two cars is highest in Italy (41 per cent), France (30 per cent), the UK (29 per cent) and western Germany (26 per cent). The numbers reflect, among many other factors, the power and importance of local car industries to shape conditions so that car ownership is feasible. But industry efforts to facilitate car ownership only help to explain a general 'car culture' in these countries. The reasons for a low number of families having two cars may vary from relative poverty (Greece, Portugal, Spain) to small distances (the Netherlands) and high taxation (Denmark).⁷⁴

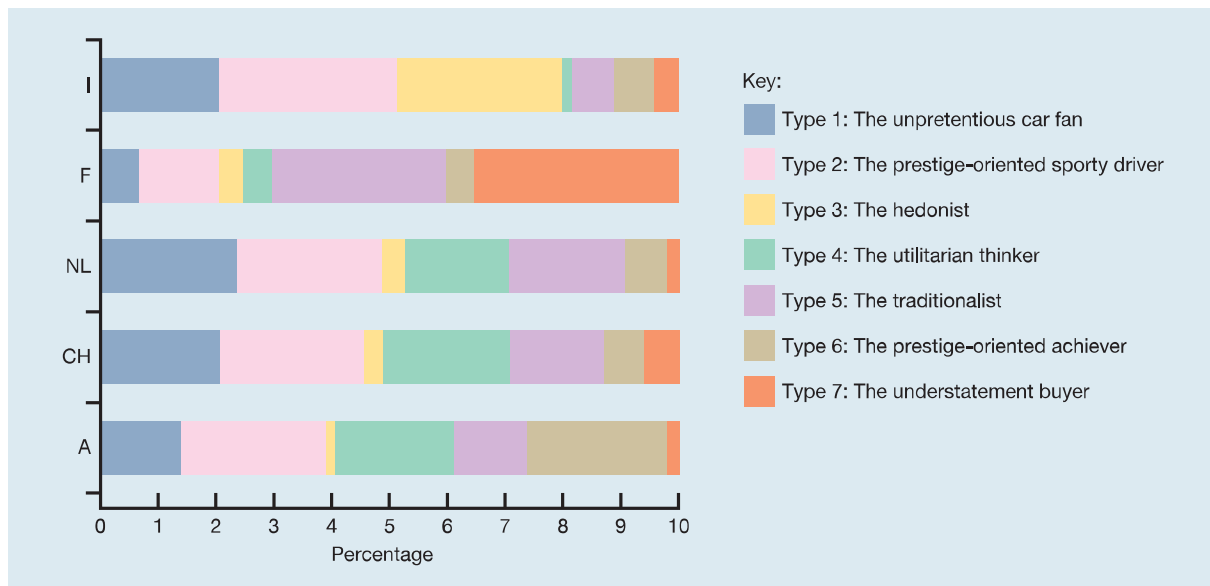
In the car market, as in many other markets, the discussion continues as to whether it makes sense to segment consumers across countries. One argument for segmentation which cuts across countries is that the benefits of private car ownership are strongly felt, regardless of the differing driving habits and transport circumstances in different countries. Thus, in principle, all car consumers should be found in one of the basic proposed categories: pleasure-seekers, image-seekers and functionality-seekers.

The German car manufacturer BMW has argued that although their customers' demographic and economic profiles are quite similar, they do not operate within a standard

European consumer market and standardized marketing activities.⁷⁵ This is due to two reasons: first, they argue that the differences in size of the various segments are so great that it makes no sense to target the same segment in various countries; but secondly, and more importantly, they argue that they have discovered variations between the *benefits ultimately sought* by car drivers in different countries.

As a consequence of a study conducted in Italy, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria, BMW can break purchase criteria down into three levels: criteria that are important in *all* countries, criteria that are important to all motorists in *one* country, and criteria that are important to *some consumers in all* countries. On the pan-European level the following criteria were detected: reliability, safety, quality and advanced technology. These are thus necessary minimum requirements to be considered as a potential supplier. On the national level, the following set of differences was detected. In the Netherlands, much importance is attached to the car's overall integrity rather than to qualities such as interior design. Furthermore, the reputation of the brand turned out to be very important for the Dutch. In France, special importance was attached to the self-confidence provided by the car and to its road-holding abilities. Both Austrian and Swiss customers were very demanding, but, unlike the Austrians, the Swiss wanted a car to be discreet while Austrians placed importance on a car as a prestigious status symbol. Finally, the Italians looked for a car that accorded with their personal style and with dynamic driving capacities. In general, the study's conclusions were that BMW drivers are more demanding in terms of styling, exclusiveness, driving dynamics and advanced technology than average European drivers, but that, within this segment, special importance was attached to different dimensions across different countries. In the five countries studied, BMW discovered a total of seven common segments whose names speak more or less for themselves: the unpretentious car fan (18 per cent); the prestige-oriented sporty driver (25 per cent); the hedonist (9 per cent); the utilitarian thinker (13 per cent); the traditionalist (17 per cent); the prestige-oriented achiever (10 per cent); and the understatement buyer (9 per cent). However, as shown in Figure 16.10, the size of each of the segments varies considerably in each country. The country-specific results indicate that different models appeal to different segments in different countries. For example, it could be types 6 and

Figure 16.10 Distribution of car segments in five European countries



Source: Horst Kern, Hans-Christian Wagner and Roswitha Harris, 'European aspects of a global brand: The BMW case', *Marketing and Research Today* (February 1990): 47-57. Used with permission.

2 in Austria whereas it could be types 1 and 4 in Switzerland. The case of BMW is a good combination of pan-European and country-specific approaches to analysing consumer behaviour.



**marketing
opportunity**

Big cars, small cars, sporty cars, practical cars, sleek cars, family cars . . .

'Diversity is the name of the game at 75th International Motor Show in Geneva. With the huge emphasis placed on catering to as many consumers as possible, today's variety means the show's 80,000 square meters (861,000 square feet) of floor space at the PalExpo are filled with a mind-boggling range of vehicles designed for every conceivable life style. 'The trend is going toward versatility and a lot of variety,' said Yves Dubreil, vice president-deputy director of vehicle engineering at Renault. 'It used to be that car brands had a straightforward range that went from small to big. It reflected social status. The bigger the car I had, the more important or rich I was.'

'Cars are no longer an indication of a driver's social status, instead, they make a statement about a person's lifestyle. And there are a lot of different lifestyles.' For the sociable soul, there's the cavernous and friendly Renault Grand Espace. For the more dynamic, there's the sporty Ferrari F430 Spyder or the Mazda MX-5, both making their world premieres in Geneva. The adventurous can take control of the 4x4 new Jeep Grand Cherokee, an off-roader actually produced in Austria, or the top-of-the-range Mercedes M-Class SUV. The business tycoon can slip into the sleek, newly redesigned BMW 3-Series or the Mercedes CLK, which also underwent a stunning facelift.

'You spend a lot of time in your car; you want it suited to you,' said Fabio Capano, director of product communication for Toyota Motor Marketing Europe. 'You also want it tailored to all of your modern-day needs.' This means today's vehicles must meet mobile phone, music, entertainment, navigational and informational demands.

'Bluetooth, a hands-free option for your phone, having your mobile phone reception switch over to reception from your car antenna, a place to recharge your mobile phone, a navigational screen where you can also look at all your phone numbers and your address book: you want a car that features or adapts to the latest electronic possibilities,' Dubreil said. 'It's one of our major concerns today.'

Cars are now being built so well that they can last at least 10-12 years, but electronic technology evolves much faster than that, and allowing for swapping out components requires a great deal of forethought, he added. Some car makes, such as Toyota, Renault and Lexus, already offer bluetooth options, but other companies are less willing to make costly additions today for tomorrow's unknown.

'We want to keep Chevrolet as affordable as possible, an entry-level car,' said Eric Neve, manager of Motorsports Europe for Chevrolet. 'We won't install capabilities for a technical accessory if there's only a slight possibility it's coming up in future years.' But the relationship between car makers and the electronics business is getting tighter. Accepting the widely respected Deutsche Industrie Normen, car makers from around the world use universal dimensions for electronic accessories so consumers can change radios, CD players and navigational aids unhampered. This also applies to hidden electronic devices, such as air bags. That, however, gives electronics suppliers a certain amount of power over the automotive industry.

'It's an interesting debate because the car industry relies heavily on electronics suppliers,' Neve said. 'You don't want them dictating what's available or else all the cars would be the same. There are only a few big suppliers - Delphi, Bosch, Siemens - but you still want your car to be a Chevrolet and not something simply off the shelf. We have some power to demand certain things, of course. When a supplier talks to Chevrolet, it's a potential 1.3 million cars a year. It's the power of volume.'⁷⁶

European advertising preferences and regulations

Consumers in different countries are accustomed to different forms of advertising. In many cases, advertising content is regulated by the government. For example, tobacco advertising in Denmark is not allowed to depict young people, and Swedish tobacco advertising targeted at end-users must not show any people at all. The European Commission in Brussels has taken initiatives to impose even stricter controls on advertising, introducing among other things a total ban on tobacco advertising in Europe.

In Germany, pricing is controlled, and special sales can be held only for a particular reason, such as going out of business or the end of the season. Advertising also focuses more on the provision of factual information rather than on the aggressive hard sell. Indeed, it is illegal to mention the names of competitors.⁷⁷ Unlike the Anglo-Saxon advertising culture, comparative advertising is banned in most Latin and Germanic countries in Europe.

But the differences among European countries are not restricted to the legal area. There are also differences concerning which type of television advertising spots and print ads will work best in various European countries. A comparative study of French and German TV spots revealed a distinct profile of the ads in these two countries. French TV ads tended to have less product information, to have a less direct way of communicating about socially sensitive topics, to rely more on non-verbal and implicit communication types and to present women in a more seductive and sexually alluring manner.⁷⁸ The same differences concerning the general image of French communication as seductive and imaginative vs. a more factual and sober German style were confirmed when looking at other types of communication such as television news programmes and news magazines. Another study of all ads sent out on a couple of TV channels in each country confirmed this difference, stressing the more frequent use of puns and the more rapid and personalized rhythm of the French ads, although no difference in information level was found.⁷⁹ Surprisingly, in the latter study not one single common ad was sampled in Germany and France. It seems that the use of pan-European advertising is still limited.

►► One possible explanation for this difference may be due to the distinction between **low-context** and **high-context cultures**.⁸⁰ In a high-context culture, messages tend to be more implicit and built into the communication context, whereas communication in low-context cultures tends to be more explicit, specific and direct. France, according to this perspective of classifying culture, is relatively high-context compared with Germany, which belongs among the most low-context cultures in the world.

In comparison, the British have a more favourable attitude to advertising than either the French or the Germans. They tend to think of advertising as a humorous and entertaining part of daily life, and have less concerns about its manipulative capacities.⁸¹ Indeed, the British ads may be funnier. One study found a relatively big difference between the degree to which humour is used in televised advertising. Humour was used in 88.8 per cent of British ads compared to 74.5 per cent in France and only 61 per cent in Germany. And in a sample of internationally used ads, the share of humorous ads dropped to 32.2 per cent.⁸² It seems that humour is still a very national thing. Or maybe there are other explanations? These findings are supported by another source which concluded that, relative to Americans, the British tended to regard advertising as a form of entertainment. Compared with the United States, British television commercials also contained less information.⁸³ One advertising executive stated outright that from watching a sample reel of German and British car ads respectively, it would be evident that the German ones would be much more rational and the British ones much more emotional.⁸⁴

Not only do attitudes about ads vary across Europe, the same can be said for preferences of media. For example, in France outdoor posters are a highly developed and popular medium for creative campaigns. Cinema advertising is also enjoyable to the

French. In the UK, adverts in daily newspapers are more important compared with other European countries, and in Germany the radio medium is more important than elsewhere.⁸⁵ But the use of various media is difficult to compare among countries due to variations in the regulation of media use: interrupting programmes with advertising is not permitted in Scandinavian countries, for example, and is not practised on German public TV channels.

Cultural differences may influence actual reader comprehension of a certain advertisement. Most of these studies have concluded that ads, like other pictures or communications, are understood culturally, and that readership is so different that a standardized execution of the ad becomes problematic.⁸⁶ When two different TV spots (called 'Hitchhiker' and 'Quackers') for the chocolate bar KitKat were tested in six different countries, the consumers (all younger people) showed significant differences in what they retained as the main idea of the ad and the main product characteristic (see Table 16.4).⁸⁷

The variations could be explained by different factors such as relative familiarity with the product concept (in Italy), the small size of the product in relation to local competitors (the Netherlands), popularity of English-style humour (Germany) and the prevailing advertising style in the country (France). Another study comparing Danish and American readings of international ads has detected similar variations in readership due to cultural backgrounds. For example, an ad for a lemon-flavoured soft drink featuring young people enjoying themselves on a beach was interpreted by the Danes as showing the strength of the community and by Americans as showing individual freedom.⁸⁸ It

Table 16.4 Differences in message decoding of two ads in six European countries

Main idea			
	Hitchhiker		Quackers
Belgium	Product for young people	A break with KitKat	You can share it
England			
Holland	Product for young people	Product quality	A break with KitKat
Italy			
Germany	To relax		A break with KitKat
France	'Magic effect'		To relax
© Copyright GfK Source: ESOMAR, Madrid, 1992.			
Main product characteristics			
	Hitchhiker		Quackers
Belgium	Good product	Little	Crispy bar
England	Chocolate bar with wafer		A snack
Holland		Good product	
Italy			
Germany	Relax with KitKat		Chocolate bar
France	Crispy bar		Good product
© Copyright GfK Source: ESOMAR, Madrid, 1992.			

Source: J. Andrew Davison and Erik Grab, 'The contributions of advertising testing to the development of effective international advertising: The KitKat case study', *Marketing and Research Today* (February 1993): 15-24. Used with permission.

is probably safe to conclude that, although there are often certain similarities in the way ads are understood across cultures, the readership tends to focus on different themes in different countries.⁸⁹

A recent worldwide study by Leo Burnett found that women are ‘underserved by our [advertising] industry, at least in terms of being approached with advertising that motivates and moves them in ways they find relevant and meaningful . . . they’re tuning out ads that don’t present women in realistic and believable ways’.⁹⁰ Their research suggested that ‘changing perceptions of money, sex, humor, emotion and authenticity’ meant that advertisers were having increasing difficulty in reaching this key group which is responsible for up to 80 per cent of consumer decision-making.⁹¹



multicultural dimensions

The internet is bringing new cultural differences to the marketplace. The Scandinavians are those who have the highest home-internet linkage frequency in Europe, but the sales leaders by far in terms of turnover are Germany and the UK. These two countries alone account for about 55 per cent of the e-commerce turnover in Europe (Germany 30 per cent and the UK 25 per cent). It takes France, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden combined just to reach the turnover level of the UK. Also, there are big differences in user profiles. The UK is heavily over-represented among the group of 12-17-year-old Europeans who surf the net, whereas the Germans are very under-represented. On the other hand, relatively more French (21-34 years) and Germans (age group 25-34 only) surf the internet compared to the British. For the EU-25, market penetration of the internet is high (47%), relative to much of the world, and relative to non-EU-25 European countries (16%). Sweden (73%), Denmark (69%), and the Netherlands (66%) lead the EU-25 in market usage.⁹²

Regional consumption differences: the micro-level

Geodemography

- ▶ The term **geodemography** refers to analytical techniques that combine data on consumer expenditures and other socio-economic factors with geographic information about the areas in which people live in order to identify consumers who share common consumption patterns.

Geodemography is based on the assumption that ‘birds of a feather flock together’ – that people who have similar needs and tastes tend to live near one another. Given this, it should be possible to locate ‘pockets’ of like-minded people who can then be reached more economically by direct mail and other methods. Important dimensions in differentiating between neighbourhoods, suburbs, inner-city areas or towns are factors such as income level, ethnic background and demographics (most notably age). Geographic information is increasingly being combined with other data to paint an even more complete picture of the consumer. Several marketing research ventures now employ

- ▶ **single-source data** where information about a person’s actual purchasing history is combined with geodemographic data, thus allowing marketers to learn even more about the types of marketing strategies that motivate some people to respond.

ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS SUBCULTURES

Sevgi, waking up early on Saturday morning, braces herself for a long day of errands and chores. As usual, her mother expects her to do the shopping while she is at work, and then help prepare the food for the big family get-together tonight. Of course, her older

brother would never be asked to do the shopping or help out in the kitchen – these are women’s jobs.

Family gatherings make a lot of work, and Sevgi wishes that her mother would use prepared foods once in a while, especially on a Saturday when Sevgi has errands of her own to do. But no, her mother insists on preparing most of her food from scratch; she rarely uses any convenience products, to ensure that the meals she serves are of the highest quality.

Resigned, Sevgi watches TRTint on the family’s cable-TV while she’s getting dressed, and then she heads down to the local newsagent in ‘De Pijp’ to buy a magazine – there are dozens of Turkish magazines and newspapers for sale and she likes to pick up new ones occasionally. Then Sevgi buys the grocery items her mother wants; the Islamic *halal* butcher is a long-time family friend and already has the cuts of lamb prepared for her. The vendors at the open air stalls in the Albert Cuyp Market where she and her mother shop all the time know her, and provide her with choice quality olives and vegetables. One quick stop at the local sweetshop to pick up the family’s favourite *drop* (liquorice) and she’s almost done. With any luck, she’ll have a few minutes to stop at the music shop and pick up the latest Black Eyed Peas CD. She really liked their music on Bob Geldof’s Live8 concert worldwide telecast. She’ll listen to it in the kitchen while she chops, peels and stirs. Sevgi smiles to herself: despite a busy day preparing the house and meal for the family party, she feels that Amsterdam is a great place to live.

Subcultures and consumer identity

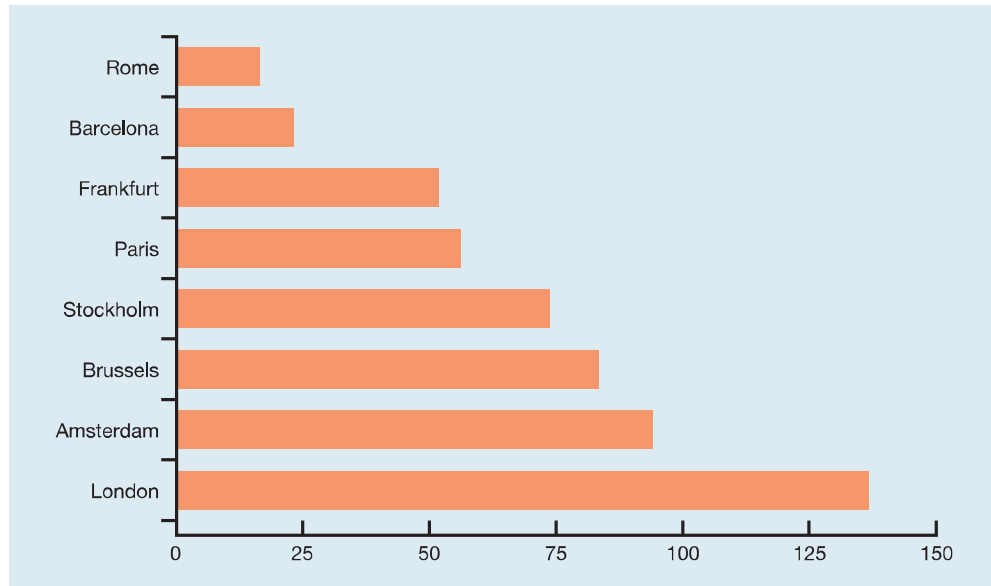
Yes, Sevgi lives in Amsterdam, not Istanbul. However, this consumer vignette could just as easily have taken place in London, Berlin, Stockholm, Marseilles or thousands of other cities throughout Europe. There are well over 25 million Europeans who belong to an ethnic sub-group, and in several European countries such as France, Belgium and Germany, they collectively account for around 10 per cent of the total population. In the UK, the ethnic communities represented are forecast to double in population to over 6 million within the next 30 years.⁹³

Turkish consumers have much in common with members of other racial and ethnic groups who live in Europe. These groups of consumers observe the same national holidays, their expenditures are affected by the country’s economic health and they may join together in rooting for their host country’s national team in the football World Cup. Nevertheless, while European residency (and in most cases European citizenship) provides the raw material for some consumption decisions, others profoundly affect (see Figure 16.11) and are profoundly affected by the enormous variations in the social fabric of the country where they live.

Consumers’ lifestyles are affected by group memberships *within* the society at large.

- These groups are known as **subcultures**, whose members share beliefs and common experiences that set them apart from others. While subcultural group memberships often have a significant impact on consumer behaviour, some subcultural identifications are more powerful than others. Every consumer belongs to many subcultures. These memberships can be based on similarities in age (major subcultural consumer groups based on age have already been discussed in Chapter 13), race or ethnic background, place of residence, or even a strong identification with an activity or art form. Whether ‘Dead Heads’, ‘Netizens’, or skinheads, each group exhibits its own unique set of norms, vocabulary and product insignias (such as the British Lonsdale sports and fashion clothier, whose sweatshirts signify white racists to many youths in the Netherlands⁹⁴). These ‘communities’ can even gel around fictional characters and events. Many devotees of *Star Trek*, for example, immerse themselves in a make-believe world of starships, phasers, and Vulcan mind melds.⁹⁵ Our subcultures often play a key role in defining the extended self (see Chapter 7) and typically command fierce loyalty.

Figure 16.11 Ethnic food service outlets per million population in major European cities



Source: Adapted from Datamonitor, *Wall Street Journal Europe* (9 December 1997): 4.

Ethnic and racial subcultures

- Ethnic and religious identity is a significant component of a consumer's self-concept. An **ethnic** or **racial subculture** consists of a self-perpetuating group of consumers who are held together by common cultural and/or genetic ties, and is identified both by its members and by others as being a distinguishable category.⁹⁶

In some countries, such as Japan, ethnicity is almost synonymous with the dominant culture, since most citizens claim the same homogeneous cultural ties (although Japan has sizeable minority populations, most notably people of Korean ancestry). In heterogeneous societies like those found in Europe, many different cultures are represented, and consumers may expend great effort to keep their subcultural identification from being submerged into the mainstream of the dominant society.

Ethnicity and marketing strategies

Although some companies may feel uncomfortable at the notion that people's racial and ethnic differences should be explicitly taken into account when formulating marketing strategies, the reality is that these subcultural memberships are frequently paramount in shaping people's needs and wants. Membership of these groups is often predictive of such consumer variables as level and type of media exposure, food preferences, the wearing of distinctive apparel, political behaviour, leisure activities and even willingness to try new products.

Furthermore, research evidence indicates that members of minority groups are more likely to find an advertising spokesperson from their own group to be more trustworthy, and this enhanced credibility in turn translates into more positive brand attitudes.⁹⁷ In addition, the way marketing messages should be structured depends on subcultural differences in how meanings are communicated. As discussed earlier in this chapter, sociologists make a distinction between *high-context cultures* and *low-context cultures*. In a

high-context culture, group members tend to be tightly knit, and they are likely to infer meanings that go beyond the spoken word. Symbols and gestures, rather than words, carry much of the weight of the message. Many minority cultures are high-context and have strong oral traditions, so perceivers will be more sensitive to nuances in advertisements that go beyond the message copy.⁹⁸

'To be or not to be: that is the answer'

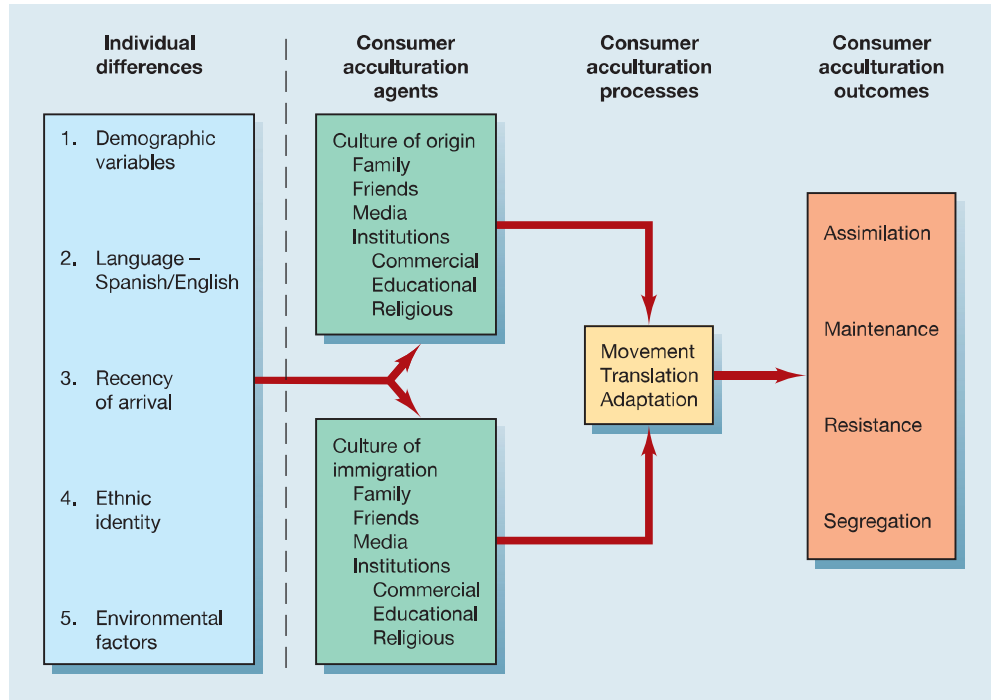
One important way to distinguish between members of a subculture is to consider the extent to which they retain a sense of identification with their country of origin vs. their host country. **Acculturation** refers to the process of movement and adaptation to one country's cultural environment by a person from another country.⁹⁹ The nature of this transition process is affected by many factors. Individual differences, such as whether the person speaks the host country language, influence how difficult the adjustment will be.

- ▶ The person's contacts with **acculturation agents** – people and institutions that teach the ways of a culture – are also crucial. Some of these agents are aligned with the *culture of origin* (in Sevgi's case, Turkey). These include family, friends, the mosque, local businesses and Turkish-language media that keep the consumer in touch with his or her country of origin. Other agents are associated with the *culture of immigration* (in this case, the Netherlands), and help the consumer to learn how to navigate in the new environment. These include state schools and Dutch-language media.

As immigrants adapt to their new surroundings, several processes come into play. *Movement* refers to the factors motivating people to uproot themselves physically from one location and go to another. Although many ethnic members throughout Europe are second generation (born in the country where they live), their parents are more likely to have been the first to arrive in the new country. On arrival, immigrants encounter a need for *translation*. This means attempting to master a set of rules for operating in the new environment, whether learning how to decipher a different currency or understanding the social meanings of unfamiliar clothing styles. This cultural learning leads to a process of *adaptation*, where new consumption patterns are formed.

As consumers undergo acculturation, several things happen. Many immigrants undergo (at least to some extent) *assimilation*, where they adopt products that are identified with the mainstream culture. At the same time, there is an attempt at *maintenance* of practices associated with the culture of origin. Immigrants stay in touch with people in their country, and many continue to eat ethnic foods and read ethnic newspapers. Their continued identification with their home culture may cause *resistance*, as they resent the pressure to submerge their identities and take on new roles. Figure 16.12 provides an overview of the processes involved in consumer acculturation.

These processes illustrate that ethnicity is a fluid concept, and that the boundaries of a subculture are constantly being recreated. An *ethnic pluralism* perspective argues that ethnic groups differ from the mainstream in varying degrees, and that adaptation to the larger society occurs selectively. Research evidence argues against the notion that assimilation necessarily involves losing identification with the person's original ethnic group. For example, Sevgi feels comfortable in expressing her 'Turkishness' in a variety of consumption-related ways: the magazines she buys, the TV programmes on the Turkish network she chooses to watch, her choice of ethnically appropriate gifts for events such as weddings and *bayram* (religious holidays).¹⁰⁰ Alternatively, she has no problems at all in expressing consumption behaviours of the mainstream culture – she loves eating *drop* (Dutch liquorice), buys 'Western' music and has her favourite outfits for going out to the cinema and clubs. The best indicator of ethnic assimilation, these researchers argue, is the extent to which members of an ethnic group have social interactions with members of other groups in comparison with their own.¹⁰¹

Figure 16.12 A model of consumer acculturation

Source: Adapted from Lisa Peñaloza, 'Atravesando fronteras/border crossings: A critical ethnographic exploration of the consumer acculturation of Mexican immigrants', *Journal of Consumer Research* 21 (June 1994): 32–54.

The impact of religion on consumption

Religion per se has not been studied extensively in marketing, possibly because it is seen as a taboo subject. The very low-key or non-existent approach by large multinational or pan-European companies reflects the same sort of caution that these companies have in targeting ethnic groups – companies are having to decide whether religiously or ethnically-tailored programmes foster greater brand loyalty or whether any advantage is outweighed by the risks of misreading the target market and causing offence. Without question, the most successful companies targeting and serving both ethnic and religious segments are small businesses, whose managers and owners are often members of the group.¹⁰² However, the little evidence that has been accumulated indicates that religious affiliation has the *potential* to be a valuable predictor of consumer behaviour.¹⁰³ Religious subcultures have been shown to exert an impact on such consumer variables as personality, attitudes towards sexuality, birth rates and household formation, income and political attitudes.

Putting together descriptive demographic profiles of Europe's major religious groups is not an exact science. For example, French law prohibits any question on religion in national censuses, although with an estimated 4–5 million Muslim inhabitants France undoubtedly has the biggest Islamic community in western Europe. As a faith, Islam is now second only to Roman Catholicism in France.¹⁰⁴ Similar problems with taking a census are found in the UK. Britain's 1.6 million-strong Muslim population is small, but has the fastest growth rate of all religions in the country. The thousand or so existing mosques are likely to be converted warehouses, churches or community halls. The hundreds of new mosques being built feature traditional Islamic domes and minarets – a trend which signals the growing economic vitality of British Muslims, as well as local authorities' growing acceptance of mosques.¹⁰⁵ While Islam is the fastest-growing religion

in Europe, it is difficult to generalize about Muslims beyond belief in the teachings of the Koran, identifying holidays and periods of fasting such as Ramadan, and certain dietary restrictions. Coming from more than 120 countries and a variety of ethnic groups (Blacks, Asians, Arabs, Europeans), they are like many groups of consumers in Europe – diverse in their celebrations of consumption habits.

Christianity has dominated the history and cultural development of Europe, and has played an important role in the shaping of the European continent. While the many denominations of Christians make it the largest religious grouping in Europe (roughly 600 million), active membership is on the decline, with fewer and fewer adults attending services on any given Sunday.¹⁰⁶ In response to this trend, the Vatican has been involved in a variety of events aimed at developing closer and more active relationships with Europe's youth. Enlisting French fashion designers for World Youth Day, having Bob Dylan perform at a Vatican-sponsored rock concert, and having Easter Mass and information about the Vatican on a website are recent attempts to get youth involved with the church.¹⁰⁷ Divided roughly into the more Protestant North and the predominantly Catholic South, Christianity still makes up the majority religion in Europe in terms of claimed membership. Its major holidays of Easter and Christmas and celebrations such as 'Carnival' (*Faschung* in Germany) are celebrated or observed to such an extent that large industries such as travel and retailing rely on these seasons as the times of the year when they earn the most revenues.



**marketing
pitfall**

There are mixed feelings in the Catholic community about the spread of religious imagery in popular culture. On the one hand, the Vatican museum opened its first boutique outside Vatican walls, and is now selling silk ties and scarves designed for the Vatican by Salvatore Ferragamo.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, an ad in a Danish campaign for the French car manufacturer Renault had to be withdrawn after protests from the Catholic community. The ad described a dialogue during confession between a Catholic priest and a repenting man. The man's sins can be atoned for by reciting Ave Marias until he confesses to having scratched the paint of the priest's new Renault – at which point the priest shouts 'heathen' and orders the man to pay a substantial penalty to the church.¹⁰⁹

■ EURO-CONSUMERS: DO THEY EXIST?

A number of trends seem to be valid for all western European markets.¹¹⁰ These include:

- a tendency to more unevenly distributed income;
- an increasing number of older people;
- a decrease in household size;
- a growing proportion of immigrants;
- increase in environmental concern and consumption of 'green' products;
- relatively increasing consumption of services compared to durable goods.

In spite of these common trends, there are, as we have seen, big differences in the local contexts in which these trends are found as well as differences in the degree to which the trend is significant in each individual country.

Many European managers expect an increase in the importance of Euro-brands and Euro-consumers.¹¹¹ However, *why* and *when* companies should or could adopt pan-European strategies or not remains a complex matter. One study suggested 21 influencing factors on pan-European marketing standardization, including management

characteristics, firm characteristics, industry characteristics and government characteristics, but not market characteristics!¹¹²

We believe that consumer behaviour analysis must play an important role in the decision to standardize or adapt marketing strategies. All consumers will differ to some extent in what they buy, why they buy, who makes the purchase decision, how they buy, when they buy and where they buy.¹¹³ Some of these differences may be explained at the lifestyle level and less so on the national level, and some are very obviously related to national or regional differences. It is also obvious that some differences are disappearing, due to the increasingly international supply of goods and the increasing internationalization of the retailing system in Europe.¹¹⁴ However, not even the fact that similar goods are bought in similar stores across European countries permits us to confirm the existence of the Euro-consumer. Product usage and knowledge, and to a certain extent imagery, may be relatively shared among Europeans, but as soon as one takes the contexts of acquisition, consumption and disposal into account, the actual role and meaning of the product in daily life becomes coloured by the local culture. No lifestyle survey has yet demonstrated a truly European profile in any of the lifestyles; European segments continue to be defined in rather abstract common denominators.

It is often asserted that segments such as international business people, or younger people mainly influenced by trends from MTV and other 'global youth culture' phenomena, are especially prone to standardized marketing. European managers are people who tend to be prime consumers of pan-European media, like business magazines or CNN (in hotel rooms).¹¹⁵ So there may be a tendency to a higher degree of internationalization among younger, wealthier and more educated people. The question is how deep the similarity really is. A study of consumption of luxury goods in five major European markets concluded that the pan-European consumer of luxury brands is between 35 and 49 years old, lives in a major city, has a high income and a university education, and occupies a managerial job. On the other hand, there were big differences between the various countries in the level of brand awareness and purchase level, and the degree of significance of socio-economic factors for purchase of luxury brands. For example, Spain and Italy are strongly segmented due to socio-economic differences, while in France, the UK and Germany these socio-economic differences are less useful in explaining luxury consumption. The level of purchase and awareness was found to be high in France, the UK and Italy, and low in Germany and Spain. The most 'mature' market for luxury brands was France, the UK and a narrow Italian segment, whereas the rest of the Italians lacked the money, the Germans lacked the motivation and the Spanish lacked both.¹¹⁶

In general, the absence of the Euro-consumer does not mean that Svensson of Sweden, Smith of the UK, Smit of Holland, Simón of Spain and Schultz of Germany cannot have more in common in certain aspects than they have with their compatriots. But it means that these similarities can be analysed and understood only with methods that are also able to take the differences into consideration. Hence the call for an understanding of the new cultural units that make up today's marketplace of international lifestyles, global issues, national rituals and local habits.¹¹⁷

■ CHAPTER SUMMARY

- A consumer's *lifestyle* refers to the ways he or she chooses to spend time and money and how his or her values, attitudes and tastes are reflected by consumption choices. Lifestyle research is useful to track societal consumption preferences and also to position specific products and services to different segments.
- Marketers segment by lifestyle differences, often by grouping consumers in terms of their AIOs (activities, interests and opinions).

- *Psychographic techniques* attempt to classify consumers in terms of psychological, subjective variables in addition to observable characteristics (demographics). A variety of systems, such as RISC, have been developed to identify consumer 'types' and to differentiate them in terms of their brand or product preferences, media usage, leisure time activities, and attitudes towards such broad issues as politics and religion.
- Interrelated sets of products and activities are associated with social roles to form *consumption constellations*. People often purchase a product or service because it is associated with a constellation which, in turn, is linked to a lifestyle they find desirable.
- Where one comes from is often a significant determinant of lifestyle. Many marketers recognize national or regional differences in product preferences, and develop different versions of their products for different markets.
- Because a consumer's culture exerts such a big influence on his or her lifestyle choices, marketers must learn as much as possible about differences in cultural norms and preferences when marketing in more than one country. One important issue is the extent to which marketing strategies must be tailored to each culture, rather than standardized across cultures.
- A set of techniques called *geodemography* analyses consumption patterns using geographical and demographic data, and identifies clusters of consumers who exhibit similar psychographic characteristics.
- Consumers identify with many groups that share common characteristics and identities. These large groups that exist within a society are called *subcultures*, and membership in them often gives marketers a valuable clue about individuals' consumption decisions. A large component of a person's identity is determined by his or her ethnic origins, racial identity and religious background. The growing numbers of people who claim multi-ethnic backgrounds are beginning to blur the traditional distinctions drawn among these subcultures.
- Recently, several minority groups have caught the attention of marketers as their economic power has grown. Segmenting consumers by their *ethnicity* can be effective, but care must be taken not to rely on inaccurate (and sometimes offensive) ethnic stereotypes.
- Because a consumer's culture exerts such a major influence on his or her lifestyle choices, marketers must learn as much as possible about differences in cultural norms and preferences when marketing in more than one country.
- Given that we, as consumers, must take part in many activities that reflect our local cultures, Euro-consumers as an overall segment do not exist. The existence of a Euro-consumer is at best limited to certain segments of the population, the young and the (international) managerial class, and to certain situations.

► KEY TERMS

Acculturation (p. 589)

Acculturation agents (p. 589)

AIOs (p. 563)

Consumption constellations (p. 562)

Ethnic subculture (p. 588)

Geodemography (p. 586)

Habitus (p. 569)

High-context culture (p. 564)

Lifestyle (p. 558)

Lifestyle marketing perspective (p. 560)

Low-context culture (p. 584)

Product complementarity (p. 561)

Psychographics (p. 562)

Racial subculture (p. 588)

Single-source data (p. 586)

Subcultures (p. 587)

VALS (p. 570)



CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

- 1** Compare and contrast the concepts of lifestyle and social class.
- 2** In what situations is demographic information likely to be more useful than psychographic data, and vice versa?
- 3** Discuss some concrete situations in which international similarities in lifestyles may be more relevant than national cultural differences for market segmentation and for the understanding of consumer behaviour.
- 4** Compile a set of recent ads that attempt to link consumption of a product with a specific lifestyle. How is this goal usually accomplished?
- 5** The chapter mentions that psychographic analyses can be used to market politicians. Conduct research on the marketing strategies used in a recent, major election. How were voters segmented in terms of values? Can you find evidence that communications strategies were guided by this information?
- 6** Construct separate advertising executions for a cosmetics product targeted to three of the RISC segments: ethics and universalism; appearance and international symbol status; and action and personal drive. How would the basic appeal differ for each group?
- 7** Using media targeted to the group, construct a consumption constellation for the social role of university students. What set of products, activities and interests tend to appear in advertisements depicting 'typical' university students? How realistic is this constellation?
- 8** If you were segmenting European consumers in terms of their relative level of materialism, how might your advertising and promotional strategy take this difference into account? Construct two versions of an ad for a suntan lotion, one to appeal to a high materialism country and one to appeal to a low materialism country (under the untenable assumption of all other things being equal).
- 9** There are, of course, people of most lifestyle types in all European countries, but their numbers vary. Try to determine which lifestyles are the most common in some European countries that you know.
- 10** If you have access to foreign TV channels, try to compare the advertising in the ones from your own country with the foreign ones. Are the styles different? Are the predominant products different? Is the use of a certain style of advertisement for a certain type of product similar or dissimilar?
- 11** Extreme sports. Chat rooms. Vegetarianism. Can you predict what will be 'hot' in the near future? Identify a lifestyle trend that is just surfacing in your universe. Describe this trend in detail, and justify your prediction. What specific styles and/or products are part of this trend?
- 12** Locate one or more consumers (perhaps family members) who have emigrated from another country. Interview them about how they adapted to their host culture. In particular, what changes did they make in their consumption practices over time?

13 Religious symbolism is being used increasingly in advertising, even though some people object to this practice. For example, the French fashion house Marithe and François Girbaud used a poster of well-dressed women posed in a version of Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*: the poster was banned in Milan.¹¹⁸ In another example, a French Volkswagen ad for the relaunch of the Golf showed a modern version of *The Last Supper* with the tag line, 'Let us rejoice, my friends, for a new Golf has been born'.¹¹⁹ A group of clergy in France sued the company and the ad had to be removed from 10,000 hoardings. One of the bishops involved in the suit said, 'Advertising experts have told us that ads aim for the sacred in order to shock, because using sex does not work any more.' Do you agree? Should religion be used to market products? Do you find this strategy effective or offensive? When and where is this appropriate, if at all?

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NEW TIMES, NEW CONSUMERS



Six weeks before St Valentine's Day, called Lovers' Day in Turkey, Ayşe starts planning for that special romantic evening. She remembers that last year she and her husband could not find a table in any restaurant in Ankara, all hotels and restaurants had been fully booked and florists had run out of red roses. So she acts early and makes a reservation for two at a good restaurant. She starts window shopping for a gift that she would like to receive. She sees a St Valentine's Day Swatch that she really likes. Two weeks before Lovers' Day she starts asking her husband what he is thinking of getting her. She takes him to the shopping centre and shows him the St Valentine's Day Swatch and tells him that she'd like

that very much. On Lovers' Day Ayşe's husband remembers that he has not yet bought anything, goes to get the St Valentine's Day Swatch - only to discover that the shop has run out of them. Instead he buys a much more expensive Swatch. When he comes home, he finds his wife, dressed up ready to go out for dinner. Excited, she closes her eyes and puts her arm forward, confident that he will put a watch around her wrist. And he does. But when she opens her eyes and sees that it is not the St Valentine's Day Swatch, she is upset - and furious. She bursts into tears; they have an argument; and Ayşe goes to the bedroom and takes off her nice clothes. They spend the evening at home, in separate rooms, not talking to each other. Some Lovers' Day, she thinks.

Later, Ayşe tells the story to her friends, some of whom think it's very funny . . .

GÜLİZ GER, Bilkent University, Ankara

■ INTRODUCTION

The opening vignette illustrates one of the processes related to changes in consumer societies that are discussed in this chapter, globalization. Lovers' Day started to be celebrated in Turkey about a decade ago, first by exchanging cards among school friends. It has become more widespread in the last few years, mostly among the urban middle class who now exchange gifts and make a special evening of it. St Valentine's Day, appropriated as Lovers' Day, is taking root among married and unmarried couples in this Muslim country where traditional norms of respectability did not allow dating – dating is not what 'nice' girls were supposed to do, and many from conservative or lower-middle-class families still frown on it. As well as globalization, we will take a closer look at two other tendencies that may be profoundly changing the way we consume and behave in the marketplace, namely environmentalism and political consumption on the one hand and postmodernism on the other.

■ ENVIRONMENTALISM: SAVING THE PLANET WITH A SHOPPING BASKET

The environmental issue has gained a lot of momentum in recent years. The environmental concerns of the general public endure in spite of a certain backlash and disbelief in the flourishing 'green marketing' strategies in the 1990s.¹ There is a growing awareness that rather short-sighted lifestyles in all parts of the world lead to the depletion of energy sources, pollution, deterioration of soil fertility, reductions in biodiversity and climate change. One example has been the exponential growth of cheap flights in Europe, which have changed patterns of travelling and patterns of consumption – but are also provoking an increasingly lively debate about the environmental costs involved (see more details regarding the consumer concerns around these cheap flights in Chapter 16). And there is also an awareness that consumption patterns play a direct or an indirect role in all of these problems.²

Furthermore, there is a growing awareness that a 'greener consumer society' need not be one of joylessness and abstention and need not be in total opposition to the current system of production and marketing. The fashion clothing manufacturer EDUN, launched by, among others, U2's Bono, positions itself as a fashion clothing line promoting respect for the people who make its products, the place where those people work, the materials used, and the consumer – all of EDUN's retail outlets are on the high end, with a lifestyle orientation that matches up with EDUN's intended image of fairness, thoughtfulness and the total environment.³ But it all started some decades ago with the encouragement to recycle . . .

Recycling

- ▶ The issue of product disposition and **recycling** is doubly vital because of its enormous public policy implications. We live in a throwaway society, which creates problems for the environment and also results in a great deal of unfortunate waste. Training consumers to recycle has become a priority in many countries. Japan recycles about 40 per cent of its waste, and this relatively high rate of compliance is partly due to the social value the Japanese place on recycling: citizens are encouraged by waste disposal lorries which periodically rumble through the streets playing classical music or children's songs.⁴ In Europe in 1999 a network was established in Vienna to provide a repair and service centre. This network has grown to include 43 companies which now repair everything from leather gloves to dishwashers. During 2004, 73,000 items were repaired for over 4,400 customers.⁵ Companies continue to search for ways to use resources more

efficiently, often at the prompting of activist consumer groups. For example, McDonald's restaurants bowed to pressure by eliminating the use of styrofoam packages, and its outlets in Europe experimented with edible breakfast dishes made of maize.⁶ Even in China, the waste problem is taken more seriously, as hundreds of restaurants have started washing and recycling chopsticks, and the government is planning to put a tax on disposable chopsticks.⁷

Several studies have examined the relevant goals consumers have to recycle. One used a means-end chain analysis of the type described in Chapter 4 to identify how specific instrumental goals are linked to more abstract terminal values. The most important lower-order goals identified were: 'avoid filling up landfills', 'reduce waste', 'reuse materials' and 'save the environment'. These were linked to the terminal values of: 'promote health/avoid sickness', 'achieve life-sustaining ends' and 'provide for future generations'. Another study reported that the perceived effort involved in recycling was the best predictor of whether people would go to the trouble – this pragmatic dimension outweighed general attitudes towards recycling and the environment in predicting intention to recycle.⁸ Yet another (European) study concluded, among other things, that one major motivating factor for recycling was a high perceived effectiveness of the action, that is, whether the consumer thinks it makes a difference if he or she recycles.⁹ By applying such techniques to the study of recycling and other product disposal behaviours, it will be easier for social marketers to design advertising copy and other messages that tap into the underlying values that will motivate people to increase environmentally responsible behaviour.¹⁰

Even taking into account the difficulties in measurement, statistics reveal that the production of waste differs enormously among the countries of Europe. In the late 1980s, the yearly municipal solid waste per capita in western European countries ranged from 231 kg in Portugal to 608 kg in Finland. As a comparison, the corresponding figure in the United States was 864 kg. The different levels of waste generation are due to differences in general income level and to differences in consumption styles.¹¹

Waste management also differs among countries. Different types of recycling programmes in Denmark encourage people to cut down on household waste and recycle as much as possible, as the municipal waste management systems charge consumers according to weight or volume of the household waste.¹² The Danish model of waste management, which stresses local responsibility for source separation programmes, is now marketed globally through onsite visits and video cassettes.¹³ In Germany, producers are required by law to be responsible for the redistribution and recycling of used products.¹⁴ In addition to recycling, other disposal programmes have caught the authorities' interest. In several European countries, including Spain, Italy, France and Denmark, economic incentives have been offered by the state to encourage car owners to replace their old car with a newer one, in order to reduce air pollution and increase road safety.¹⁵ The advent of the expanded European Community in January 2004 saw the introduction of a European Union Directive WEEE: Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment, alongside the initiative ROHS (Reduction of use of certain hazardous substances), due to come into force in January 2006. 'These directives seek to set in place the means by which companies recycle electrical and electronic products and to eliminate the uses of some toxic materials . . . a major concern is to reduce the release of toxic materials into the environment during product disposal; some of the routes include leaching into watercourses, if products are dumped, or into the atmosphere, if assemblies are incinerated . . . companies that have carefully studied design for dismantling have reported that the insights they've gained can lead to substantial economies in manufacturing'.¹⁶ Graham Prophet goes on to examine the importance of brand image: 'in the fiercely competitive world of consumer product sales, it is one more battleground where the right image might give you an edge'.¹⁷ Showing environmental responsibility and sustainability as integral to the production and sales of goods could add an important



This ad recalls the refrain from a song 'Ten green bottles' to emphasize its message about recycling bottles and glass.

Corbis/Mike R. Whittle; Ecoscene

dimension to the brand image of products and services, and thus influence consumer attitudes, especially amongst the younger generation of consumers.

Recycling has proved to be only the beginning of a more profound process, taking into consideration not only recyclability but also environmental issues connected to the production process. Concern for the environment, or **environmentalism**, is no longer confined to recycling but applies to all aspects of the production and consumption processes and is affecting marketing strategies for products ranging from nappies to fast food. For example, Ecover, a highly environmentally conscious Belgian producer of detergents and cleaning products, appealed to consumers' environmental concerns in a tongue-in-cheek way by recycling its competitors' old TV commercials. The company used five black-and-white commercials from the 1950s and superimposed a colour picture of its brand over the competing brand while a voice-over explained that the old commercial had been recycled.¹⁸ It has been argued that environmental concern is gradually becoming a new universal value, not in its militant form but as a more tacit precondition for the degree of acceptability of products.¹⁹ One commentator expressed it in a paradox: 'Environmentalism means that we will no longer have ecological milk. We will have milk and industrial milk.' This might also lead to more sensitivity towards various kinds of natural products and products from smaller, independent producers. Different consumer groups are thus increasing pressure on producers to demonstrate that they are producing in such a way as to preserve nature and resources rather than exploit them.

Certain retail chains in Europe have been pioneering environmentally friendly policies. Migros, the largest Swiss retail chain, has cut down on packaging material, increased its use of train transportation, and introduced various forms of non-toxic, well-insulated stores to cut energy consumption, etc. Tengelmann of Germany (chlorine-free products, milk-dispensing machines for recyclable milk containers), Otto, the world's largest mail-order company (environmental friendliness as corporate culture, collaborations with the Worldwide Fund for Nature), Sainsbury's (recycled plastic bags, a 'Penny Back Scheme' donating refunded pennies to charity), Tesco (comprehensive labelling, healthy eating

programme and organically grown produce) and Co-op of the UK are among the pioneering retailers for environmental issues.²⁰

There are obvious differences among various European countries concerning the role of environmentalism. It is a politically more important issue in such countries as Germany, Denmark and Sweden. A study of the relative importance of environmental concern in car purchases ranked Germany first, followed by the UK, France and Spain.²¹

Environmental attitudes and behaviours have proved hard to predict. Some have argued that the trend is waning since an organization such as Greenpeace has experienced a decline in membership. Others have concluded that while attitudes are 'green', actual behaviour is less likely to change. This was the conclusion of one 1991 study of Danish consumers.²² Since then, the demand for ecological produce in the dairy, egg and vegetable sectors has exploded, in Denmark as in many other countries. One major indication that environmentalism is becoming a (more or less) global value and is not just a passing fad is the role that concern for the environment plays in youth-oriented media such as MTV and, not least, in school curricula.²³

Many consumer studies have tried to establish a distinct value profile for environmentally-oriented consumers,²⁴ discussing, for example, whether they are more individually or socially oriented.²⁵ Values such as 'close relationships to others' and 'social justice' have been identified as being associated with a higher degree of environmentally conscious attitudes and behaviour.²⁶

An environmentally related issue such as the use of growth hormones in milk and beef is a major problem in trade negotiations between Europe and the United States. Some argue by references to scientific data stating that there is no risk,²⁷ but others maintain that it is a matter of production and consumption ethics more than of actual risks to consumers.

The debate over the risks concerning growth hormones in beef has been overshadowed by the problems relating to the spreading of BSE (or Mad Cow Disease) which created a general distrust of British beef when the disease was first detected in 1996, both in Britain and abroad.²⁸ Since then, the disease has spread to other European countries, creating a virtual consumer flight from beef in certain countries, notably Germany and Italy (where sales dropped 30 per cent nationwide).²⁹ Even in Sweden, where no cases of BSE have been detected, 41 per cent of consumers have become doubtful whether they should eat beef and 11 per cent have begun to eat less. Two per cent stopped eating beef altogether.³⁰ The latest food scare in the UK involved an illegal cancer-causing dye, Sudan 1. Adulterated chilli powder was imported from Asia, and used in the production of Worcestershire sauce, which was subsequently added to a range of products so that there were over 30 contaminated foods which were then re-exported across Europe (e.g. to Malta, Spain, Greece, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark) and to American markets (such as, the USA, Canada, Bermuda, Bahamas, Antigua and Grenada).³¹ Such food scares have led to a growing distrust in modern industrial production methods, especially within the food industry, following the logic expressed by many consumers that 'when you make the poor cows into cannibals just for profitability, things are bound to go wrong'.



**marketing
pitfall**

National news: product recalls rise sharply

'A sharp rise in recalls of dangerous or faulty products - dramatically illustrated by last month's Sudan 1 dye alert which sparked Britain's most sweeping food recall - is hitting businesses across Europe.

The number of recalls has increased by 175 per cent in a year following the introduction of a European Union product safety directive, according to PwC, the professional services firm. It expects this expensive trend to continue and predicts a rise in insurance claims filed as a result.

Premier Foods, WM Morrison, Boots, Mitsubishi Motors and Coca-Cola have all been involved in high-profile recalls.

The advertising costs alone of pulling a single product line are estimated at £100,000 by the CBI. The total bill can top seven figures and demands for compensation can pass down the supply chain from retailers to wholesalers to manufacturers and their suppliers.

Toys, skincare products, food-making equipment and garden sheds were among items withdrawn in EU states during the year to February 2005 surveyed by PwC. Some 373 product recalls were reported in total. Recalls occurred at the rate of 11 a week in February, compared with four in the same month in 2004.

Most products were pulled on regulators' orders in member states rather than voluntarily by companies. The EU directive is designed to improve consumer protection and increase transparency in the reporting of recalls.

As part of its implementation of the EU directive, however, the government also plans to move from the current voluntary system on withdrawal to one where, as a last resort, companies could be forced to pull products.

Companies will also be compelled to keep more information on product origins and any customer complaints, and to notify enforcement bodies if problems arise.

Businesses continuing to sell unsafe products would be liable to fines and directors to prison sentences.

The regulations will cover second-hand and antique products as well as products provided as part of a service, such as children's high-chairs used in restaurants. The CBI is generally supportive of the changes but believes that businesses should not have to pay enforcement costs in all cases, including if alerts prove unfounded.

It said: 'We believe this is inequitable and the general rule that the loser pays should apply'. The employers' body also wants to see a central notification body for product recalls. For UK companies trading in several EU states, there is the issue of ensuring that regulators in different countries have been made aware of any recalls.

Businesses have until the end of the month to lobby the Department of Trade and Industry about the new rules.

Experts warn that there appear to be inconsistencies in how different countries report recalls. Large markets such as Italy and the Netherlands do not appear in PwC's top 10 of most active recallers, which is headed by Hungary and Spain. The UK was seventh.

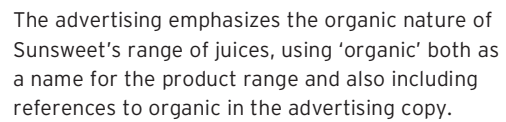
Graeme Berry, a director at PwC, said it was too early to identify clear national differences but forecast a rise in companies trying to protect themselves.

Companies can take out liability policies against claims for damage or injury to people or property resulting from faulty, dangerous or contaminated products. There is a further market in insurance designed to cover the costs of operational recalls ranging from publicity to supply chain investigation, destruction of faulty stock, lost profits or the marketing needed to offset damage to the company's brand.

Mr Berry said: 'Recall insurance is a product that will feature much more commonly in the future as general understanding of the risks, and general appetite among underwriters, increases.'

Although recalls are most common in children's, food and drugs sectors, they have also hit industrial suppliers.³²

- It has been suggested that we live in a **risk society**, where our ways of producing goods are increasingly producing just as many and even more 'bads' or risks,³³ risks that the consumer will have to take into account in his or her decision-making. Another field where such unknown risks have made consumers sceptical about the benefits suggested to them by the industry is that of genetically manipulated organisms (GMO). One fear



expressed by consumers in a study of acceptance or rejection of GMO foods in Sweden and Denmark was of too great a concentration of power in a few giant corporations dominating both research and industry.³⁴ Thus, what is at stake on the consumer level, disregarding the international economic interests involved, seems to be the confrontation of an economic vs. a moral logic.

Similar results were found for several European countries in a cross-national study. Testing consumer attitudes and purchase intentions regarding GMO foods, it was concluded that an overall rejection of the technology as such was found in Denmark, Germany, Great Britain and Italy, although a slightly less negative attitude was found in Italy (mainly because consumers said that they knew less about GMO).³⁵ In connection with this study, various types of information material were also tested, some more informational, some more emotional, in order to estimate the potential of informational campaigns in changing negative attitudes. But whatever information was given to the consumers, it only made their attitude *more* negative. Thus, any cue that reminded the consumers about the fact that the product contained or had used GMO in the production process immediately turned the consumers against the product even if the cues were positive, something which points to the deep-seated nature of this scepticism among European consumers. The introduction of the European wide General Products Safety Directive³⁶ has helped to heighten European consumers' awareness of product safety generally, and has established standards and policies to protect consumer health and safety.³⁷

Corporate social responsibility

- Parallel to changing consumer attitudes towards environmentalism and sustainability can be traced changing attitudes among companies and businesses as they recognize the changing nature of their customer. **Corporate social responsibility (CSR)** has become increasingly prominent in companies' provision of and stakeholders' approaches to buying goods and services. CSR addresses two kinds of commercial responsibility: 'commercial responsibilities (that is running their businesses successfully) and social responsibilities (that is their role in society and the community)'.³⁸ CSR Europe, established in 1995 by the then EC president, Jacques Delors 'is the leading European business network for corporate social responsibility with over 60 leading multinational corporations as members . . . [committed to helping] companies integrate CSR into the way they do business every day'.³⁹ CSR Europe commissioned MORI (Market and Opinion Research International) to undertake the first ever European survey of consumers' attitudes towards CSR in September 2000. Twelve thousand participants were interviewed across 12 European countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland): '70% of European consumers say that a company's commitment to corporate social responsibility is important when buying a product or service, and 1 in 5 would be very willing to pay more for products that are socially environmentally responsible. . . . The research strongly implies – in line with previous studies – that the public's key priority for companies is a demonstration of corporate citizenship [e.g. quality and service; human health and safety; being open and honest] rather than just charitable or community giving'.⁴⁰ In turn the study also identified 'the active conscious consumer' or 'socially responsible activists' (SR activists) who were defined 'as those people how have participated in 5 or more socially responsible activities in the last twelve months. Across Europe more than a quarter are activists. In Switzerland, Sweden and Belgium the proportion rises to two in five. In contrast, only around one in ten could be classified in this way in Germany, France, Portugal and Italy. The top ranking activities across Europe are recycling household waste, followed by giving money to good causes. Each has been done by more than half the public in the last twelve months. Around two in five have also bought a product or service because of its links with good causes, or a product labeled as social, ethical or environmental. Similar proportions have bought organic food and given voluntary help to a good cause'.⁴¹

The political consumer

- The discussion above points to an increasing awareness of the political and moral consequences of consumption choices among many consumers. This means that the green consumer is gradually being followed by, or perhaps is turning into, the **political consumer**.⁴² The political consumer uses his or her buying pattern as a weapon against companies he or she doesn't like and in support of the companies that reflect values similar to the consumer's own. This consumer type selects products according to the company's ethical behaviour, which includes respect for human rights, animal protection, environmental friendliness and support for various benevolent causes. The political consumer is supported by such agencies as the Vancouver-based Adbusters,⁴³ which engages in twisting campaigns from major companies that, for some reason, have come under their spotlight for immoral or harmful behaviour. For example, they made a spoof on the well-known Coca-Cola polar bear campaign by depicting a family of bears on a tiny ice floe, with the sign 'Enjoy Climate Change' written in that well-known type from the Coca-Cola logo, thereby protesting against the company's use of ozone-harming gases in its vending machines.⁴⁴ This kind of 'peaceful' rebelliousness against what is seen as control over our minds and imagination by major companies is called *culture*



This Adbusters campaign against exploitation of cheap labour in Indonesia highlights the role of the major corporation, Nike, and uses its logo and line 'to be all you can be' to create individual awareness of the global impact of big corporations (and individual consumer choice of running shoe) on newly emerging economies and their labour forces.

Courtesy of www.adbusters.org

jamming.⁴⁵ Vigilante marketing is also emerging where new ads and ideas for campaigns appear without either client or agency involvement. These are often generated by freelancers, fans or agencies looking for work.⁴⁶

Not all companies are on the defensive, though. Companies such as The Body Shop are founded on the idea of natural and non-animal-tested products and a maximum of environmental concern. But their concerns are becoming directed towards a broader array of social values. They took up the debate over beauty ideals by introducing 'Ruby', a Barbie lookalike doll but one with considerably rounder forms, in order to fight the tyranny of thinness and the impossible body ideal of the supermodels which are also endorsed by Barbie's shape. The reaction was predictable: Mattel Inc., the producers of Barbie, took out an injunction against The Body Shop because Ruby's face was too like Barbie's.

Many other companies are now working proactively to avoid the sort of trouble Shell ran into in Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany with the Brent Spar case,⁴⁷ or the difficulties French exporters experienced in the wake of nuclear testing in 1996. Just to mention a few cases, the mineral water company Ramlösa, together with the Red Cross in Scandinavia, campaigned for clean water acts in the Third World under the slogan 'Water for Life',⁴⁸ and British Telecom ran a campaign underlining its work for elderly and disabled people.⁴⁹ The two brewery giants Heineken and Carlsberg both withdrew plans for large-scale investments in Myanmar (Burma) after consumers' protests against what was seen as direct support for the repressive military government there.

There is a risk that the political consumer may become an even more moralizing, politically correct consumer, as has occurred in the political and cultural climate of the United



The Body Shop's Ruby, a Barbie lookalike doll but with considerably rounder forms, introduced in order to fight the tyranny of thinness and impossible body ideal of the supermodels which are reinforced by Barbie's shape.

The Advertising Archives

States. In fact, some British consumer groups have taken action against the companies that screened commercials during the TV broadcast of the controversial film *The Last Temptation of Christ*.⁵⁰ The question is: where is the dividing line between morality and moralizing?

Consumer boycotts

As we have seen, we live in a period when many consumers are becoming increasingly aware that their consumption pattern is part of a global political and economic system, to the extent that they become political consumers. Sometimes a negative experience can trigger an organized and devastating response, as when a consumer group organizes a *boycott* of a company's products. These efforts can include protests against everything from investing in a politically undesirable country (as when Carlsberg withdrew their investments from Myanmar, as mentioned above, or when Shell was accused of tolerating pollution and political repression of the people of the Ogoni region of Nigeria) to efforts to discourage consumption of products from certain companies or countries (as during the boycott of French wines and other products during the nuclear testing in the Pacific in 1996, an action which was especially strongly felt in the Netherlands and in the Scandinavian countries). In the United States, the inclusion of obscene or inflammatory song lyrics have led to boycott threats, as when law enforcement organizations threatened to boycott Time Warner after it distributed a rap song by Ice-T entitled 'Cop Killer'.

Boycotts are not always effective – studies show that normally only a limited percentage of a country's consumers participate in them. However, those who do are disproportionately vocal and well educated, so they are a group companies especially don't want to alienate. The negative PR that arises from media coverage of the boycott may be problematic for the company in the long run, since competitors may gain relative advantages. After the boycott of French wines in Denmark had calmed down, French wines had lost 20 per cent of the market share. However, that was not seen as the biggest problem, since the general impression was that consumers could be persuaded to switch back to French wines. But many supermarket shelves had been reorganized in order to give more space to Italian and Spanish wines, and this was considered a more serious problem.⁵¹

One increasingly popular solution used by marketers is to set up a joint task force with the boycotting organization to try to iron out the problem. In the United States, McDonald's used this approach with the Environmental Defense Fund, which was concerned about its use of such things as polystyrene containers, bleached paper and antibiotics in food. The company agreed to test a composting programme, to switch to plain brown bags and to eliminate the use of antibiotics in such products as poultry.⁵²

Lately, much of consumers' political resistance to the behaviour of companies and marketers has been related to the processes of globalization. The global marketplace has been accused of being based on unfair trade principles and of eroding cultural and social patterns around the world, favouring the rich countries and cultures of the western world at the expense of the rest of the world's populations and cultures. Demonstrations at the gatherings of the World Trade Organization have attracted much media attention, as has the action led by a French cheese producer against the construction of a McDonald's restaurant in his home town in southern France. The target was not so much McDonald's per se as the processes it represents, sometimes called *McDonaldization*,⁵³ the cultural erosion and the withering of quality standards for cheap, large-scale production. Consequently, the activists behind this formed an organization the name of which translates into something like 'farmers against lousy food'.⁵⁴ This and other organizations, like ATTAC, questioning the benefits of what they perceive as an uncontrolled global market, have enjoyed considerable success recently. Hence, we will take a closer look at some aspects of globalization, consumption and marketing.

■ GLOBAL MARKETING AND CULTURE

Learning about the practices of other cultures is more than just interesting – it is an essential task for any company that wishes to expand its horizons and become part of the international or global marketplace at the beginning of the new millennium. In this section, we'll consider some of the issues confronting marketers who seek to use a global marketing approach. We'll also consider the consequences of the 'Americanization' or 'Westernization' of global culture, as marketers continue to export Western popular culture to a globe of increasingly affluent consumers, many of whom are eagerly waiting to replace their traditional products and practices with the offerings of Benetton, Levi's, McDonald's, Nestlé and Unilever.

Think globally, act locally

As corporations increasingly find themselves competing in many markets around the world, the debate has intensified regarding the necessity of developing separate marketing plans for each culture. A lively debate has ensued regarding the need to 'fit in' to the local culture. Let's briefly consider each viewpoint.

Adopting a standardized strategy

Proponents of a standardized marketing strategy argue that many cultures, especially those of relatively industrialized countries, have become so homogenized that the same approach will work throughout the world. By developing one approach for multiple markets, a company can benefit from economies of scale, since it does not have to incur the substantial time and expense of developing a separate strategy for each culture.⁵⁵ This viewpoint represents an **etic perspective**, which focuses on commonalities across cultures. An etic approach to a culture is objective and analytical: it reflects impressions of a culture as viewed by outsiders, which assume that there are common, general categories and measurements which are valid for all cultures under consideration.



This advert for HSBC illustrates how a global company uses a local message to signify its relevance to the consumer marketplace in different countries.

The Advertising Archives

Adopting a localized strategy

- ▶ On the other hand, many marketers choose to study and analyse a culture using an **emic perspective**, which focuses on variations within a culture. This approach assumes that each culture is unique, with its own value system, conventions and regulations. This perspective argues that each country has a **national character**, a distinctive set of behaviour and personality characteristics.⁵⁶ An effective strategy must be tailored to the sensibilities and needs of each specific culture. An emic approach to a culture is subjective and experiential: it attempts to explain a culture as it is experienced by insiders.

Given the sizeable variations in tastes within a relatively homogeneous country like the United States, it is hardly surprising that people around the world have developed their own preferences. Unlike Americans, for example, Europeans favour plain chocolate over milk chocolate, which they regard as suitable only for children. Whisky is considered a 'classy' drink in France and Italy, but not in England. Crocodile bags are popular in Asia and Europe, but not in the United States. Americans' favourite tie colours are red and blue, while the Japanese prefer olive, brown and bronze. Even global brands are perceived differently across markets. In the Netherlands and the UK, Heineken beer is positioned (and perceived) as a middle-priced, mainstream beer, while in the United States and the rest of Europe it is perceived (and priced) as a premium beer. Alternatively, Budweiser beer (the American brand, not the original Czech brand) has a very middle-priced and mainstream position in the United States, yet is a premium-priced beer in Europe and South America.⁵⁷

Superstitions and cultural sensitivities

Marketers must be aware of a culture's norms regarding such sensitive topics as taboos and sexuality. For example, the Japanese are superstitious about the number four. *Shi*, the Japanese word for four, also means death. For this reason, in Japan Tiffany sells glassware and china in sets of five.

The consequences of ignoring these issues became evident during the 1994 soccer World Cup, when both McDonald's and Coca-Cola made the mistake of reprinting the Saudi Arabian flag, which includes sacred words from the Koran, on disposable

packaging used in promotions. Despite their delight at having a Saudi team in contention for the cup, and the satisfaction with Coca-Cola sponsoring the team, Muslims around the world protested at this borrowing of sacred imagery, and both companies had to scramble to rectify the situation.⁵⁸

Cultures vary sharply in the degree to which references to sex and bodily functions are permitted. Many American consumers would blush at much European advertising, where sexuality is much more explicit. This dimension is particularly interesting in Japan, which is a culture of contradictions. On the one hand, the Japanese are publicly shy and polite. On the other hand, sexuality plays a significant role in this society. *Manga*, the extremely popular Japanese comic books which comprise a billion-dollar industry, stress themes of sex and violence. Nudity is quite commonplace in Japanese advertising and general media.⁵⁹

In contrast, a controversy in India illustrates problems that can arise in a more conservative culture. The government-run television network rejected a spot for KamaSutra condoms which showed a couple sitting on a bed playing chess. As the woman sweeps the pieces off the board, she mouths the word 'Check' while he mouths the word 'Mate'. The tagline reads, 'For the pleasure of making love'.⁶⁰



**marketing
opportunity**

Let's talk about (selling) sex

'Sex is big business. Yet, oddly enough, the companies whose business is founded on the sexual activities of ordinary people know very little about what goes on in the bedroom. Certain facts which companies in other industries take for granted - such as the size of the market, product trends, market dynamics - are not available to companies that operate in and around the sex business.

Since Alfred Kinsey's work about sexual behaviour contributed to the sexual revolution that took place in the 1950s and 1960s, there would appear to be - at least in the west - a second sexual revolution. Sex has always been a good way for companies to sell their products, whether these are cars or clothing. Yet now a host of companies that trade on sex in some way - from high-street retailers to drugs companies - are experiencing a dramatic growth in their business.

For example, the women's lingerie market is now estimated to be worth \$30 bn a year, according to just-style.com, a leading research company. Euromonitor, another research group, estimates that the US market for women's underwear is worth \$11 bn.

The subject of sex remains controversial, however. Only last year, Boots, the UK's high street chemist, reversed its initial plan to stock sex aids such as vibrators on its shelves.

Companies and other interested groups have endeavoured to fill the knowledge gap about sexual behaviour. But, here again, the research has been skewed to address particular interests. For example, pharmaceutical companies have invested huge sums in the development of drugs for tackling sexual malfunction and disease. Bringing Viagra to market is thought to have cost Pfizer between \$500 m and \$1 bn in research and development, typical of the cost of launching a new drug - a sum that is far greater than that spent on conventional sex research. All told, it means that the picture of people's sexual behaviour remains an unfinished jigsaw puzzle. It also means that the business opportunities - together with any wider social, health and emotional consequences - will be harder to establish.

Given the remarkable paucity of evidence about people's sexual behaviour, it would appear that corporate strategy is based more on guess work than hard facts. As yet this does not seem to have impeded the development of companies that put sex at the core of their business. Many, indeed, are fast becoming mainstream.

Beate Uhse, Europe's only quoted retailer of sex products, which is based in Germany, has 200 sex shops in nine countries. Last year it saw sales rise by 30 per cent - having opened outlets at motorway service stations.

Ann Summers, the UK's leading "passion and fashion" retailer, has 110 high street stores, together with other outlets in Ireland and Spain. SSL, the manufacturer of the Durex condom range and other sex aids, has seen sales of its market-leading contraceptives rise steadily in recent years.

Meanwhile, Marks & Spencer, a traditional provider of underwear to Britain's middle classes, now stocks the clothing of Agent Provocateur, a lingerie company.

In the pharmaceutical industry, companies such as Pfizer, Lilly and Bayer have found new business opportunities by devising drugs that deal not only with disease but also dysfunction. This year, sales of drugs such as Viagra and Cialis, which deal with erectile dysfunction, are expected to be around \$2.25 bn, having quadrupled in the past seven years, according to Datamonitor, a consultancy.⁶¹

Does global marketing work?

So, after briefly considering some of the many differences one encounters across cultures globally, the often voiced question still remains: does global marketing work? Given the growth of global brands and global marketing strategies over the past few decades, the practical answer has to be 'yes'. But this doesn't add much in terms of insights for managers. Perhaps the more appropriate question is, *when* and *why* does it work?

Although the argument for a homogeneous world culture is appealing in principle, in practice it has met with mixed results. We have discussed how one reason for the difficulties of using a global marketing approach is that consumers in different countries have different conventions and customs, which may mean that they simply do not use products in the same way. Kellogg's, for example, discovered that in Brazil big breakfasts are not traditional – cereal is more commonly eaten as a dry snack.

Some large corporations, such as Coca-Cola, have been successful in crafting a single, international image. Still, even Coca-Cola must make minor modifications to the way it presents itself in each culture. Although Coke commercials are largely standardized, local agencies are permitted to edit them to highlight close-ups of local faces.⁶² Says one executive: 'Coca-Cola is a *multi-local* company.'⁶³

Starbucks represents another major US corporation which has exported its imagery abroad. A recent study examined 'consumers' experiences of glocalization and global brands' hegemonic influences upon local markets as well as consumer tastes and practices within the context of the Starbucks brandscape'.⁶⁴ The authors argued that Starbucks represented an example of a **hegemonic brandscape**, i.e. 'a cultural system of service-scapes that are linked together and structured by discursive, symbolic and competitive relationships to a dominant (market driving) experiential brand'.⁶⁵

As the world's borders seem to shrink due to advances in communications, many companies continue to develop global advertising campaigns. In some cases they are encountering obstacles to acceptance, especially in less-developed countries or in those areas, such as central and eastern Europe, that are only just beginning to embrace Western-style materialism as a way of life.⁶⁶

To maximize the chances of success for these multicultural efforts, marketers must locate consumers in different countries who nonetheless share a common worldview. This is more likely to be the case among people whose frame of reference is relatively more international or cosmopolitan, and/or who receive much of their information about the world from sources that incorporate a worldwide perspective.

Who is likely to fall into this category? The same two segments that were candidates for pan-European marketing: (1) affluent people who are 'global citizens' and who are exposed to ideas from around the world through their travels, business contacts and media experiences, and as a result share common tastes. For example, one study when it

was carried out found that, with the exceptions of musical taste and food consumption, the new elite in Zimbabwe to a high degree emulated the consumption tastes and styles of the UK and the USA;⁶⁷ (2) young people whose tastes in music and fashion are strongly influenced by international pop culture broadcasting many of the same images and sounds to multiple countries.⁶⁸



marketing pitfall

The language barrier is one problem confronting marketers who wish to break into foreign markets. One technique that is used to avoid this problem is where a translated ad is retranslated into the original language by a different interpreter to catch errors. Some specific translation obstacles that have been encountered around the world include the following:⁶⁹

- Wrigley's Spearmint Gum reads as 'Shark's sperm' in some east European countries.
- When Vauxhall launched its Nova model in Spain, it realized that the name meant 'doesn't go' in Spanish.
- Also in Spain, Mitsubishi discovered that its four-wheel-drive model Pajero would be known as 'Wanker'.
- When Rolls-Royce introduced its Silver Mist model in Germany, it found that the word 'mist' is translated as 'excrement'. Similarly, Sunbeam's hair curling iron, called the Mist-Stick, translated as 'manure wand'. To add insult to injury, Vicks is German slang for sexual intercourse, so that the company's name had to be changed to Wicks in this market.

The Coca-Cola invasion: exporting Western lifestyles

The allure of western consumer culture has spread throughout the world, as people in other societies slowly but surely fall under the spell of far-reaching advertising campaigns, contact with tourists and the desire to form attachments with other parts of the world. This attraction sometimes results in bizarre permutations of products and services, as they are modified to be compatible with local customs. Consider these events:⁷⁰

- In Peru, Indian boys can be found carrying rocks painted to look like transistor radios.
- In Papua New Guinea, some tribesmen put Chivas Regal wrappers on their drums and wear Pentel pens through their noses, instead of traditional nose bones.
- Bana tribesmen in the remote highlands of Kako, Ethiopia, pay to watch *Pluto the Circus Dog* on a Viewmaster.
- When a Swazi princess marries a Zulu king, she wears red touraco wing feathers around her forehead and a cape of windowbird feathers and oxtails. He is wrapped in a leopard skin. All is recorded on a Kodak movie camera while the band plays 'The Sound of Music'.
- In addition to traditional gifts of cloth, food and cosmetics, Nigerian Hausa brides receive cheap quartz watches although they cannot tell the time.

'I'd like to buy the world a Coke'

As indicated by these examples, many formerly isolated cultures now incorporate Western objects into their traditional practices. In the process, the meanings of these objects are transformed and adapted to local tastes (at times in seemingly bizarre ways). Sometimes the process enriches local cultures, sometimes it produces painful stresses and strains the local fabric.

The West (and especially the United States) is a *net exporter* of popular culture. Western symbols in the form of images, words and products have diffused throughout



As this Swedish ad for Wrangler jeans shows, products associated with the 'authentic' American West are in demand around the world.

The Advertising Archives

the world. This influence is eagerly sought by many consumers, who have learned to equate Western lifestyles in general and the English language in particular with modernization and sophistication. As a result, people around the world are being exposed to a blizzard of Western products that are attempting to become part of local lifestyles.

For example, American-inspired TV game shows are popular around the world: *Geh Auf's Ganze* (*Let's Make a Deal*) is one of Germany's top shows. Although *The Dating Game* went off the air in the United States in 1989, it is now seen in ten foreign countries and emerged top in its time slot in Poland, Finland and (when it was shown) England, where it's called *Blind Date*. In Singapore a cult has formed around locally produced broadcasts of *The \$25,000 Pyramid*, while in France *Le Juste Prix* (*The Price is Right*) attracts almost half the country's viewers. Not everyone in these countries is happy with the Western influence – producers of *The Dating Game* in Turkey received death threats from Muslim fundamentalists.⁷¹

The American appeal is so strong that some non-US companies go out of their way to create an American image. A British ad for Blistex lip cream, for example, includes a fictional woman named 'Miss Idaho Lovely Lips' who claims Blistex is 'America's best-selling lip cream'.⁷² Recent attempts by American marketers to 'invade' other countries include:

- Kellogg's is trying to carve out a market for breakfast cereal in India, even though currently only about 3 per cent of Indian households eat such products. Most middle-class Indians eat a traditional hot breakfast which includes such dishes as *chapatis* (unleavened bread) and *dosas* (a fried pancake), but the company is confident that it can entice them to make the switch to Corn Flakes, Froot Loops and other American delicacies.⁷³ However, India has proved quite a difficult market to change, even for powerful multinational companies.⁷⁴
- The National Basketball Association is fast becoming the first truly global sports league. Nearly \$500 million of licensed merchandise was sold *outside* the United States

in 1996. A survey of 28,000 teenagers in 45 countries conducted by the DMB&B advertising agency found that Michael Jordan is by far the world's favourite athlete. In China, his Chicago Bulls team (translated as 'The Red Oxen') is virtually everyone's favourite.⁷⁵

- The British are avid tea-drinkers, but how will they react to American-style iced tea? US companies like Snapple are hoping they can convince the British that iced tea is more than hot tea that's gone cold. These firms may have some way to go, based on the reactions of one British construction worker who tried canned iced tea for the first time: 'It was bloody awful.'⁷⁶
- Pizza Hut is invading, of all places, Italy. The country that invented pizza will be exposed to the American mass-produced version, quite a different dish from the local pizza, which is often served on porcelain dishes and eaten with a knife and fork. On the other hand, one of Pizza Hut's top performing restaurants is now located in Paris, a centre of fine cuisine, so only time will tell if Italians will embrace pizza 'American-style'.⁷⁷

Globalization is often identified with Americanization – and American foreign policy (e.g. over Afghanistan and Iraq) can therefore affect consumer attitudes to American products.⁷⁸ Younger European consumers (18–35) seem more positively predisposed towards US goods than older consumers (aged 35+). Recent research (based on a poll of 1,000 people in nine countries) suggests that 'young adults in several European countries are more inclined to have a taste for American goods than older people in their countries ...

- 1 A third of those between the age of 18 and 24 in France said they would prefer to buy US goods if the price and quality were the same. Only about one in 10 of those 35 and older felt that way.
- 2 Six in 10 of those from 18–24 in Britain said they would prefer to buy American goods if the price and quality were the same, almost twice the number of those 35 and over who felt that way.
- 3 A third of those from 18–24 in Italy said they would prefer to buy American goods compared with one in 10 of those 35 and over.⁷⁹

The West invades Asia

Although a third of the world's countries have a per capita GNP of less than \$500, people around the world now have access to Western media, where they can watch reruns of shows like *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* and *Dallas*, idealized tributes to the opulence of Western lifestyles. To illustrate the impact of this imagery around the world, it is interesting to compare its impact in two very different Asian countries.

Consider how the material expectations of consumers in the People's Republic of China have escalated. Twenty years ago, the Chinese strove to attain what they called the 'three bigs': bikes, sewing machines and wristwatches. This wish list was later modified to become the 'new big six', adding refrigerators, washing machines and televisions. At the last count, the ideal is now the 'eight new things'. The list now includes *colour* televisions, cameras and video recorders.⁸⁰ Chinese women are starting to demand Western cosmetics costing up to a quarter of their salaries, ignoring domestically produced competitors. As one Chinese executive noted, 'Some women even buy a cosmetic just because it has foreign words on the package.'⁸¹

In contrast to China, the Japanese have already become accustomed to a bounty of consumer goods. Still, the Japanese are particularly enthusiastic borrowers of Western culture. American music and films are especially popular, perhaps because they are the best way to experience US lifestyles and popular culture. They have even recreated an

entire Dutch village (complete with real Dutch people who 'perform' daily), which is one of Japan's top honeymoon destinations.

The Japanese often use Western words as a shorthand for anything new and exciting, even if they do not understand their meaning. The resulting phenomenon is known as 'Japlish',⁸² where new Western-sounding words are merged with Japanese. Cars are given names like Fairlady, Gloria and Bongo Wagon. Consumers buy *deodoranto* (deodorant) and *appuru pai* (apple pie). Ads urge shoppers to *stoppu rukku* (stop and look), and products are claimed to be *yuniku* (unique).⁸³ Coca-Cola cans say 'I feel Coke and sound special', and a company called Cream Soda sells products with the slogan 'Too old to die, too young to be happy'.⁸⁴ Other Japanese products with English names include Mouth Pet (breath freshener), Pocari Sweat ('refreshment water'), Armpit (electric razor), Brown Gross Foam (hair-colouring mousse), Virgin Pink Special (skin cream), Cow Brand (beauty soap) and Mymorning Water (canned water).⁸⁵ For an interesting and revealing website which features dozens of well known Western celebrities doing commercials for Japanese media, spend some time at Japander!⁸⁶

Emerging consumer cultures in transitional economies

In the early 1980s the American TV show *Dallas* was broadcast by the Romanian communist government to show the decadence of Western capitalism. The strategy backfired, and instead the devious (but rich!) J.R. became a revered icon in parts of eastern Europe and the Middle East – to the extent that a tourist attraction outside Bucharest includes a big white log gate that announces (in English) the name: 'South Fork Ranch'.⁸⁷ Western 'decadence' appears to be infectious.⁸⁸



Mainland China is one of the newest markets opening up to Western business and culture. When McDonald's opened in China in the early 1990s, their new Beijing restaurant became their largest outlet in the world with more than 700 seats and 1,000 employees. Hong Kong Disneyland opened their \$1.8 billion park in September 2005. They expect to attract 5.6 million visitors in their first year, drawing a third of these from mainland China (http://money.cnn.com/2005/09/11/news/international/disney_hk.reut/).

Getty Images/M.N. Chan

After the collapse of communism, eastern Europeans emerged from a long winter of deprivation into a springtime of abundance. The picture is not all rosy, however, since ► attaining consumer goods is not easy for many in **transitional economies**, where the economic system is still 'neither fish nor fowl', and governments ranging from China to Romania struggle with the difficult adaptation from a controlled, centralized economy to a free market system. These problems stem from such factors as the unequal distribution of income among citizens, as well as striking rural–urban differences in expectations and values. The key aspect of a transitional economy is the rapid change required in social, political and economic dimensions as the populace is suddenly exposed to global communications and external market pressures.⁸⁹











The newest members of the EU-25 countries are already aware of the challenges and opportunities that face them. Table 17.1 provides an overview of these new member countries, and a summary of some of their aspirations as citizens and consumers in the enlarged European Union.

Some of the consequences of the transition to capitalism include a loss of confidence and pride in the local culture, as well as alienation, frustration and an increase in stress as leisure time is sacrificed to work ever harder to buy consumer goods. The yearning for the trappings of Western material culture is perhaps most evident in parts of eastern Europe, where citizens who threw off the shackles of communism now have direct access to coveted consumer goods from the United States and western Europe – if they can afford them. One analyst observed, 'as former subjects of the Soviet empire dream it, the American dream has very little to do with liberty and justice for all and a great deal to do with soap operas and the Sears Catalogue'.⁹⁰ But consumers regularly have found themselves in situations where their real income and their employment security have gone down. Typically, the share of income used on basics such as food has risen, so for a large part of the population the question is how much wealth and happiness consumer society has brought, at least in the short term.⁹¹ This frustrating situation, and the lack of experience with 'real capitalism', has made too many consumers an easy prey for hustlers, who persuade them to invest their money in pyramid games and dubious investment companies. This does not just happen in small side streets. One Russian investment company gave free metro tickets to all Muscovites and advertised heavily on TV. For those who knew what advertising was about, this was a sign of economic potency, while those who did not took it as some kind of officially approved encouragement from the state. Both resulted in a lot of confidence in the firm. Unfortunately, the whole thing ended in political scandal and enormous losses for the consumers-turned-investors.⁹²

In 1990 more than 60 countries had a GNP of *less* than \$10 billion. In contrast, more than 135 transnational companies had revenues greater than that figure. The dominance of these marketing powerhouses has helped to create a *globalized consumption ethic*. As people the world over are increasingly surrounded by goods and tempting images of them, a material lifestyle becomes more important to attain. Shopping evolves from being a weary, task-oriented struggle to locate even basic necessities to being a leisure activity, where possessing consumer goods becomes a mechanism to display one's status – often at great personal sacrifice. In Turkey one researcher met a rural consumer, a mother who deprived her child of nutritious milk from the family's cow and instead sold it in order to be able to buy sweets for her child because 'what is good for city kids is also good for my child'.⁹³ As the global consumption ethic spreads, the products wished for in different cultures become homogenized – Christmas is now celebrated among some urbanites in Muslim Turkey, even though gift-giving (even on birthdays) is not customary in many parts of that country.

In some cases, the meanings of these desired products are adapted to local customs and needs. In Turkey some urban women use ovens to dry clothes and dishwashers to ► wash muddy spinach. The process of **creolization** occurs when foreign influences are absorbed and integrated with local meanings – just as modern Christianity incorporated

Table 17.1 The new Europeans: demographics and attitudes towards EU membership

	 Poland	 Czech Republic	 Hungary	 Slovakia	 Slovenia
Population (millions)	38.2	10.2	10	5.4	2
GDP per capita	42,900	2,900	55,300	491	69.7
Unemployment rate	19.10%	8.00%	5.90%	16.60%	6.40%
Hourly labour cost	£4.48	£3.9	£3.8	£3.1	£9.0
Internet usage rate	23%	26%	16%	16%	38%
Mobile telephone usage rate	36%	84%	68%	54%	77%
Higher education rate	12.2%	11.80%	14.10%	10.80%	14.80%
% household spending on food	19.9%	18.80%	19.40%	22.10%	17.20%
% household spending on housing	24.6%	22.80%	18.40%	23.10%	20.00%
Meaning of the EU	Freedom of movement Euro Peace	Freedom of movement Euro Peace	Freedom of movement within the EU Peace Euro	Freedom of movement Euro Economic prosperity	Euro Freedom of movement Peace
Meaning of EU citizenship	Right to work in the EU Right to emigrate	Right to work in the EU Access to education	Right to work in the EU Access to education	Right to work in the EU Access to education	The right to work in the EU Access to healthcare and social welfare Access to education
Main fears of enlargement	Cost of accession Problem for farmers Increase in organized crime	Problems for farmers Cost of accession Increase in organized crime	Problems for farmers Cost of accession Transferred jobs	Increase in organized crime Cost of accession Problems for farmers	Increase in organized crime Problems for farmers Cost of accession
	 Cyprus	 Malta	 Estonia	 Latvia	 Lithuania
Population (millions)	0.7	0.4	1.3	2.3	3.4
GDP per capita	78.0	69.2	42.2	36.6	41.4
Unemployment rate	4.70%	8.80%	9.50%	10.50%	11.70%
Hourly labour cost	£10.7	£7.5	£3.0	£2.4	£2.7
Internet usage rate	29%	21%	33%	13%	14%
Mobile telephone usage rate	58%	70%	65%	39%	47%
Higher education rate	30%	8.80%	29.70%	19.60%	21.90%
% household spending on food	19.60%	20.40%	22.90%	25.5%	30.70%
% household spending on housing	7.70%	5.9%	21.00%	16.10%	14.00%
Meaning of the EU	Economic prosperity Freedom of movement Peace	Freedom of movement Stronger say in the world Economic prosperity	Freedom of movement Euro Bureaucracy	Freedom of movement Social protection Economic prosperity	Freedom of movement Euro Economic prosperity
Meaning of EU citizenship	Right to emigrate Right to work in the EU Access to education	Right to work in the EU Access to education Right to emigrate	Right to work in the EU Access to education Right to emigrate	Right to work in the EU Access to education	Right to work in the EU Access to education Right to emigrate
Main fears of enlargement	Increase in organized crime Transferred jobs Cost of accession	Transferred jobs Loss of power Increase in organized crime	Increase in organized crime End of national currency Cost of accession	Increase in organized crime Problems for farmers Cost of accession	Increase in organized crime Cost of accession Problems for farmers

Source: Stephen Brown, *Postmodern Marketing* (London: Routledge, 1995). Table 4.2, page 120.



Consumption of global products and symbols: Japanese motorcyclists with 'chopped' bikes, jackets, jeans and that 'rebel' look.

Harley Davidson, Inc.

the pagan Christmas tree into its own rituals. Thus, a traditional clothing style such as a *bilum* worn in Papua New Guinea may be combined with Western items like Mickey Mouse shirts or baseball caps.⁹⁴ These processes make it unlikely that global homogenization will overwhelm local cultures, but rather that there will be multiple consumer cultures, each blending global icons such as Nike's pervasive 'swoosh' with indigenous products and meanings.

Consumer resistance: back to the roots?

Despite the proliferation of Western culture around the world, there are signs that this invasion is slowing. Japanese consumers are beginning to show signs of waning interest in foreign products as the health of their country's economy declines. Some of the latest 'hot' products in Japan now include green tea and *yukata*, traditional printed cotton robes donned after the evening bath.⁹⁵ Several locally made products are catching on in parts of eastern Europe due to their lower prices and improved quality, combined with the perceptions that sometimes the imported products are inferior versions. Some Muslims are rejecting Western symbols as they adhere to a green Islamic philosophy which includes using natural, traditional products.⁹⁶

Some critics in other countries deplore the creeping Americanization of their cultures. Debates continue in many countries on the imposition of quotas that limit American television programming.⁹⁷ The conflict created by exporting American culture was brought to a head in trade negotiations in the WTO (the global trade agreement), which deadlocked over the export of American films to Europe (the US share of the European cinema market is about 75 per cent). As one French official put it, 'French films are the cinema of creation. American films are products of marketing.'⁹⁸

In Europe the French have been the most outspoken opponents of creeping Americanization. They have even tried to ban the use of such 'Franglish' terms as *le drug-store*, *le fast food* and even *le marketing*, though this effort was ruled unconstitutional.⁹⁹ The French debate over cultural contamination was brought to a head by the 1991 opening

of EuroDisney in a Paris suburb. In addition to the usual attractions, hotels with names like The Hotel New York, The Newport Bay Club and The Hotel Cheyenne attempt to recreate regions of America. The park seems to have rebounded after a shaky start, including renaming it Disneyland Paris since EuroDisney somehow seemed incompatible. But some Europeans have been less than enthusiastic about the cultural messages being sent by the Disney organization. One French critic described the theme park as 'a horror made of cardboard, plastic and appalling colours – a construction of hardened chewing gum and idiotic folklore taken straight out of a comic book written for obese Americans'.¹⁰⁰

There is also evidence of changing attitudes among women worldwide, in this case in relation to advertising. Research conducted in seven countries suggested changing perceptions of how marketers used money, sex, humour, emotion and authenticity in their marketing communications. Leo Burnett Worldwide Chairman and CEO, Linda Wolf, has argued that 'Women around the world are changing in significant ways . . . their evolving perspectives . . . must be addressed by advertisers if they want to truly connect with women [who make] . . . upwards of 80 per cent of all buying decisions'.¹⁰¹ Along with Wolf, Cheryl Berman, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Leo Burnett USA, argued that advertisers must:¹⁰²

- 1 *Follow the money:* Acknowledge how women's new financial strength is affecting their buying habits in many key categories.
- 2 *Try a new position:* Sex sells, but it has to be approached with a distinctly female point of view.
- 3 *Use emotion carefully:* Women will turn off advertising that tries to portray emotion without truly evoking emotion.
- 4 *Make it funny:* Women would welcome more humour in commercials directed at them.
- 5 *Make it real:* Present women with authentic characters and situations that they can relate to in real ways.'

Globalization: not a one-way street

- Based on these discussions, we are now able to reflect a little more on the notion of **globalization**. An anthropological study of developments in the British food culture revealed four different types of consumption practices that are currently shaping the way local and foreign products and practices enter into the British way of creating a self-identity through food.¹⁰³ The *global food* culture, represented mainly by American fast food, indicates a willingness either to buy into the particular context of Americana, or quite the opposite, to join a wave of globally uniform consumption patterns that are found everywhere and therefore belong nowhere in particular. *Expatriate food* refers to the search for authentic meals and products from other cultures – a 'real Tuscany evening for you and your partner'. Thus it also depends on global knowledge of food cultures, but focuses on the differences between local food cultures. Thirdly, *nostalgia food* represents a search for local authenticity – Stilton cheese, sticky toffee puddings – from the cultural heritage, which is threatened by the internationalization of British cooking patterns. The study quotes the *Sunday Times*: 'Having shamefully neglected our own traditional dishes for 40 years, we now have a flashy, meretricious cuisine based, for the most part, on ersatz imitations of Mediterranean food.'¹⁰⁴ Finally, *creolization* of food involves blending various traditions into new ones, such as Chinese dishes omitting ingredients considered unappetizing in Western culture, Mexican food with less chilli, or Indianized versions of sandwiches. This creolization, or 'localizing' of foods, is found in many European countries. In the Netherlands, Indonesian food has been adapted to fit the tastes of the mainstream culture, just as Turkish sandwiches have been modified in Germany.¹⁰⁵ These

trends probably exist in all European countries but vary in importance and in their influence and outcomes in terms of eating behaviour.

It is interesting to note that all four are related to globalization trends, but only global food leads to a tendency to standardize consumption patterns. The typology is also interesting because, in a fairly comprehensible way, it illuminates that globalization is much more than McDonaldized homogenization. And we may see these tendencies as relevant for all types of consumption, not just for consumption of food. So whether we look at retailing, interior decoration, tourism or musical tastes, we may find at least these four tendencies, taking the notion of globalization beyond the interpretation of it as homogenization. It also includes the increasing awareness of other styles and tastes, and the search for 'exotic authenticity', as well as the incorporation of this 'exoticism' into local habits and consumption styles. And finally, the exposure to all this 'otherness' often makes consumers more aware of their own cultural roots, and the tastes and consumption styles that they would define as 'our own'. All these offers of old and new, strange and familiar, authentic and creolized, tend to coexist in the marketplace. Therefore, it is not so strange that some authors discuss globalization more in terms of fragmentation than in terms of homogenization.¹⁰⁶ Fragmentation is also a key aspect of the post-modern view on consumers and consumption, to which we shall now turn.



marketing pitfall

Cigarettes are among the most successful of Western exports. Asian consumers alone spend \$90 billion a year on cigarettes, and Western tobacco manufacturers continue to push relentlessly into these markets. Cigarette advertising, often depicting glamorous Western models and settings, is found just about everywhere, on hoardings, buses, shop fronts and clothing, and many major sports and cultural events are sponsored by tobacco companies. Some companies even hand out cigarettes and gifts in amusement areas, often to pre-teens.

A few countries have taken steps to counteract this form of Westernization. Singapore bans all promotions that mention a product's name. Hong Kong has prohibited cigarette ads from appearing on radio and TV. Japan and South Korea do not allow ads to appear in women's magazines. Industry executives argue that they are simply competing in markets that do little to discourage smoking (e.g. Japan issues health warnings like 'Please don't smoke too much'), often against heavily subsidized local brands with names like Long Life (Taiwan). The warnings and restrictions are likely to increase, however: smoking-related deaths have now overtaken communicable diseases for the 'honour' of being Asia's No. 1 killer.¹⁰⁷

■ POSTMODERNISM?

Many of the themes mentioned earlier in this part of the book, such as the globalization process, reality engineering or the blurring of the fashion picture, have been linked to larger social processes dominating the last part of the twentieth century. One proposed summary term for these processes is **postmodernism** – one of the most widely discussed and disputed terms in consumer research in the past few years.¹⁰⁸

Postmodernists argue that we live in a modern era where we share beliefs in certain central values of modernism and industrialism. Examples of these values include the benefits of economic growth and industrial production, and the infallibility of science. In opposition, postmodernism questions the search for universal truths and values, and the existence of objective knowledge.¹⁰⁹ Thus a keyword is **pluralism**, indicating the co-existence of various truths, styles and fashions. Consumers (and producers) are relatively free to combine elements from different styles and domains to create their own personal expression.

There have been several attempts to sum up features of postmodernism and their implications for marketing and consumer behaviour.¹¹⁰ Together with pluralism, one European researcher has suggested that postmodernism can be described by six key features:¹¹¹

- ▶ ● **Fragmentation.** The splitting up of what used to be simpler and more mass oriented, exemplified by the ever-growing product ranges and brand extensions in more and more specialized variations. An alternative form of brand extension is **retro branding** conceptualized as 'the revival or relaunch of a brand from a prior historical period that differs from nostalgic brands by the element of updating'.¹¹² Even within the retailing environment we experience the proliferation of outlets within the concentration of bigger outlets (shopping centres). Such specialized and stylized outlets often carry an in-depth assortment of a very narrow product range, such as teas or ties. The advertising media have also become fragmented, with increasingly specialized TV channels, magazines, radio stations and websites for placing one's advertising.
- ▶ ● **De-differentiation.** Postmodernists are interested in the blurring of distinctions between hierarchies such as 'high and low culture', or 'politics and show business'. Examples would be the use of artistic works in advertising and the celebration of advertising as artistic works. Companies such as Coca-Cola, Nike and Guinness have their own museums. Another clear example is the blurring of advertisements and TV programmes, wherein more and more TV programmes feature advertising for themselves (in order to increase viewer ratings) and TV commercials look like 'real' programming, as in the ongoing soap opera with a couple spun around the coffee brand Gold Blend. The blurring of gender categories also refers to this aspect of postmodernism.
- ▶ ● **Hyperreality.** The spreading of simulations and the loss of the sense of the 'real' and the 'authentic', as in the cases of re-engineered environments discussed earlier in this chapter, or in shopping centres simulating ancient Rome (The Forum in Las Vegas) or a Parisian street (West Edmonton Mall, Canada). Finally, products can be hyperreal to the extent that they simulate something else: for instance, sugarless sugar, fat-free fat (olestra) or the butter replacement brand I Can't Believe It's Not Butter! In fact, it has been argued that marketing may be the most important contributor to the creation of hyperreality, since the essence of marketing and particularly advertising is to create a simulated reality by resignifying words, situations and brands.¹¹³



marketing pitfall

Sometimes companies may fall victim to their own hyperreality. It is the dream of many producers to create a strong brand with a solid position in cultural life. But as they do so, their brand images are incorporated into the general cultural sign system, and the company loses control over the signs attached to the brand name. For example, the name 'Barbie' today is much more than a brand name - it has almost become a name for a personality type. When a Danish pop group, Aqua, enjoyed a huge success with the song 'Barbie', which contained lyrics alluding to the sex life of this hyperreal personality (e.g. 'you can dress my hair, undress me everywhere'), Mattel Inc. was not amused. They sued the pop group for abuse of the Barbie name and for destroying the pure and positive image of Barbie's world created through a long range of expensive campaigns. This is yet another example of the blurring of marketing and popular culture, and the question is: can you patent culture?¹¹⁴

- ▶ ● **Chronology.** This refers to the consumer's search for the authentic and a preoccupation with the past - like real or authentic Chinese or Italian foods or the search for one's nostalgic roots in foods (or other consumer goods) as we 'used to know it'.¹¹⁵ Likewise, the increase in the 'no-nonsense' formats of various advertising campaigns may be seen as a return to a simpler, less contrived period of the past. Retro brands are of relevance here as well because 'these revived brands invoke brand heritage which triggers personal and communal nostalgia'.¹¹⁶ What appeals to consumers here



The seventeenth-century Danish landmark of the 'round tower' of Copenhagen has been recreated (in a slightly smaller version) in the simulated Danish environment of Solvang, California, founded as a 'little Denmark' by Danish immigrants in the nineteenth century, but gradually becoming more of a hyperreal theme park under the influence of marketing in the postwar period. The tower in Solvang houses a local pizza restaurant: Tower Pizza, of course!

Photo: Søren Askegaard

is that in a period of accelerating change, the stability of the good old days remains comforting.

- ▶ ● **Pastiche.** The playful and ironic mixing of existing categories and styles is typical of pastiche. An example would be one advertisement doing a parody of another or making references to slogans or other elements borrowed from other campaigns. Pastiche also involves self-referentiality (the advertisement recognizes itself as being an ad, by showing (mock) scenes from its own creative process). Table 17.2 provides a set of examples of such parodies and self-referentialities from British advertising. Self-referentiality may create hyperreality, as when a British ad for the Yellow Pages featuring an author searching for a retail store where he could find a copy of his own old book about fly-fishing actually led to the writing of such a book. Needless to say, when the book was launched, the advertisement was re-run!¹¹⁷

Other pastiches flourish, as when we see deliberate blurring of styles such as advertisements borrowing from films, or films and TV programmes borrowing from the advertisement style, all of it done 'tongue-in-cheek'. A British ad for cream depicted a Mona Lisa looking first to one side, then to the other, then drawing out an éclair (cake with cream), which she would bite, followed by the pay-off line: 'Naughty but nice'.¹¹⁸ Indeed, one discussion of postmodernism and its impact on marketing was in itself a pastiche using a lot of cinematic metaphors and changed film titles to structure its chapters.¹¹⁹

- ▶ ● **Anti-foundationalism.** This last feature of postmodern marketing efforts refers not to parody but to an outright 'anti-campaign campaign' – for example, campaigns encouraging the receiver of the message *not* to take notice of the message since somebody is trying to seduce and take advantage of him or her. Other examples include anti-product products like 'death brand cigarettes', Jolt Cola ('with all the caffeine and twice the sugar'¹²⁰) or the Icelandic Aquavit brand's appropriation of its own nickname 'black death', complete with new labels including skulls. Finally, there's

Table 17.2 A few examples of pastiche in British advertising

Category	Content	Examples
<i>Parody</i>		
Direct	One advertisement parodies another	Carling Black Label (lager) spoof of Levi's (jeans) celebrated 'laundrette' sequence
Indirect	Advert 'appropriates' byline/icon etc. of another	Do It All (DIY superstores) advertised 'the united colors of Do It All' (Benetton)
<i>Self-referentiality</i>		
Direct	Adverts about advertising (set in soap advertising agency; adverts for forthcoming ads, etc.)	Next 'instalment' of advertising operas (Renault 21 family; Gold Blend couple, etc.) advertised beforehand
Indirect	Retransmission of old adverts that have acquired new meanings in the interim, or stylistic evocation of old ads	Repeat showings of 'I'm going well, I'm going Shell' series featuring Bing Crosby, etc. Once innovative, now quaint

'anti-fashion' – consumers' claims that they search for certain types of ugliness when buying shoes and clothing in order to construct a very personal and ostentatious style (sound like anyone you know?).¹²¹ The green movement and the political consumer discussed above, as well as groups involved in movements of voluntary simplicity (particularly active in the United States) or the like, can be seen as anti-foundational in their rejection of standard products in favour of alternative choices which they perceive as less harmful to the natural and human environments.

Postmodernism has also been attached to such themes as the ability of readers to see through the hype of advertising.¹²² This may suggest that we are becoming more skilled consumers and readers/interpreters of advertising, recognizing ads as hyperreal persuasion or seduction attempts which do not intend to reflect our own daily experiences. This skilled readership may have sparked various of the tendencies to anti-ads or pastiches discussed above. Younger consumers especially may be prone to detect and enjoy the self-referentiality or intertextuality of advertising.¹²³

Another process attached to postmodernism is the greater significance of the aesthetics of everyday life, referring to the tendency to focus more and more on the design and appearance of goods or objects. According to this view, the style and imagery attached to consumer objects becomes of primary importance when judging your purchase. Indeed, some may argue that the consumer lifestyle in itself becomes a kind of work of art. More and more people act as if they are the main character in the film about their own life, and their activities and styles have to be selected carefully in order to meet the quality and excitement criteria of this personally staged biography.¹²⁴

Certain postmodernists stress the liberatory aspects of postmodernism – that consumers are free to play with symbols and create their own constellations of products and lifestyles from available elements while being less concerned with norms and standards. Since there is an inherent scepticism in postmodernism, a postmodernist attitude is also a critical attitude.¹²⁵ Others point to the fact that the refusal to accept, indeed to *care* about, values, may lead to passivity and political degeneration of societies¹²⁶ and to the inherent contradictions within the positions taken by postmodernists.¹²⁷ Whether one sees the 'postmodern consumer' as a critical and creative person, or as a passive, entertainment-seeking 'couch potato', the changes in marketing and consumption referred to in the postmodern framework are fundamental for understanding changes in our European markets as we move further into the twenty-first century.

I'M A BIG LOSER.

You Can Lose Twice the Weight with The Slim-Fast Plan.

"That's not my kind of plan. Slim-Fast took the guesswork out. They counted the calories and included the nutrition your body needs. So you can lose twice the weight their counting calories by your lonesome." They got it down to a system where you can eat six times a day. And shake that notion of just shakes out of your head. There's soup, pasta, meat loaf, even ice cream sundaes. This is no quick fix—it's a way to eat healthily that you can stick with. And it's the only plan with a built-in, easy-to-follow activity program. Want live support? Hook up with a buddy online, get your own meal plan and recipe recipes, or chat with a dietitian. (I mean, if I can be a big loser, there's nothing stopping you.)

For live personal support, call 1-800-SLIMFAST or visit slimfast.com

Slim-Fast LOSE BIG.

DIETITIAN SYSTEM ACTIVITY SUPPORT SLIM-FAST PLAN

©2008 Slim-Fast Food Company. Nutrition information used to calculate weight loss based on average adult metabolism. Your results may vary. This is a brand name used as part of the Slim-Fast plan.

Self-parody is one approach to communication in our postmodern era. The Advertising Archives

■ CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The *green movement* is a common denominator in the trend towards increased attention to the environmental impact of human activities. In terms of consumption, this has broadened the scope of environmental judgement from recycling of scarce resources to attention to the whole production and distribution process.
- The green movement may be an indication of an even broader trend towards more conscious reflection on the ethical aspects of consumption. The *political consumer* 'votes with his/her shopping basket' in an attempt to influence companies to care for the natural as well as the human environment, adding issues such as human rights to the set of dimensions that influence purchases.
- Followers of an *etic perspective* believe that the same universal messages will be appreciated by people in many cultures. Believers in an *emic perspective* argue that individual cultures are too unique to permit such standardization: marketers instead must adapt their approaches to be consistent with local values and practices. Attempts at global

marketing have met with mixed success: in many cases this approach is more likely to work if the messages appeal to basic values and/or if the target markets consist of consumers who are more internationally rather than locally oriented.

- The Western world is a net exporter of popular culture. Consumers around the world have eagerly adopted Western products, especially entertainment vehicles and items that are linked symbolically to a uniquely Western lifestyle (e.g. Marlboro, Levi's, BMW, Nestlé). Despite or because of the continuing 'Americanization' or 'Westernization' of cultures in the world, some consumers are alarmed by this influence, and are instead emphasizing a return to local products and customs.
- Postmodernism involves processes of social change in an era, where the 'grand truths' of modernism such as scientific knowledge or the progressiveness of economic growth are no longer taken for granted. Postmodernism includes social processes such as fragmentation, de-differentiation, hyperreality, chronology, pastiche and anti-foundationalism.

► KEY TERMS

Anti-foundationalism (p. 623)
Chronology (p. 622)
Corporate social responsibility (CRS) (p. 606)
Creolization (p. 617)
De-differentiation (p. 622)
Emic perspective (p. 610)
Environmentalism (p. 602)
Etic perspective (p. 609)
Fragmentation (p. 622)
Globalization (p. 620)

Hegemonic brandscapes (p. 612)
Hyperreality (p. 622)
National character (p. 610)
Pastiche (p. 623)
Pluralism (p. 621)
Political consumer (p. 606)
Postmodernism (p. 621)
Recycling (p. 600)
Retro branding (p. 622)
Risk society (p. 604)
Transitional economies (p. 617)



CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

- 1 In your opinion, in which areas have environmental issues had the biggest impact on consumer behaviour? Why do you think that is the case?
- 2 Is the 'political consumer' a fad or a new and growing challenge for marketers and producers? Discuss.
- 3 Go to your local supermarket to check the selection of ecological products. How are they presented in the store? What does that say about the way these products are regarded?
- 4 Try to provide an estimate about how often environmental issues are mentioned in advertising. Are these messages credible? Why, or why not?
- 5 What do you think about boycotts as consumers' response to what is perceived as companies' unethical behaviour?

- 6 Identify and assess the importance of corporate social responsibility for companies, consumers and government policy.
- 7 What role does the globalization process play in your personal consumption profile? After reflecting on that, take a walk in your nearest shopping area and look for signs of the global and the local. What is from 'somewhere else'? What is distinctively local? Are there mixtures, or are these two domains separate? Can you identify any hegemonic brandscapes?
- 8 Try to collect advertisements that reflect the postmodern features of fragmentation, de-differentiation, hyperreality, chronology, pastiche and anti-foundationalism.
- 9 Reflect on your and your friends' consumption patterns in the same light. What do you see?

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Consumption and immigration: the distribution of the Halal brand in Spain

CARLOS BALLESTEROS, CARMELINA VELA, LAURA SIERRA Universidad Pontificia Comillas, Madrid, Spain

Zahara has the same problem every time she goes to the supermarket. In addition to the difficulty which faces all housewives in drawing up a shopping list, she has to spend half her precious time checking the labels on the products she wishes to buy. Just as if she were buying pharmaceuticals, this mother of a Muslim family must scrutinize the labels of all the food products she purchases to ensure that nothing that is considered as *Haram* (forbidden) by her religion will end up on her dinner table. For the 700,000 Muslims living in Spain, this is not an easy task. The religious restrictions imposed on the consumption of foodstuffs means that in many cases the consumption of even everyday items can represent a challenge to their spiritual beliefs.

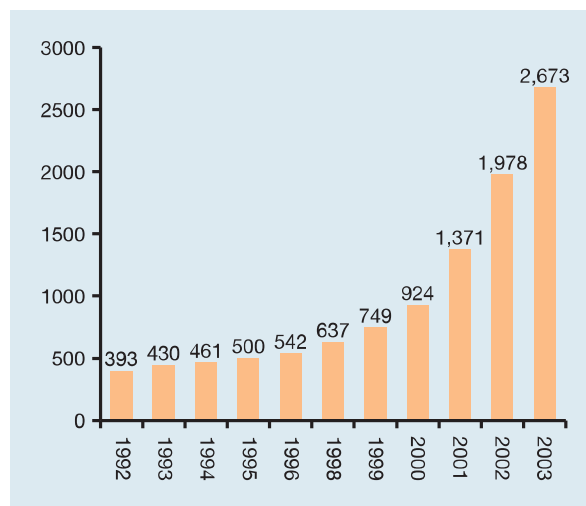
Islam teaches that before eating meat, a good Muslim must be sure that the animal has been sacrificed without suffering and under certain conditions. These conditions are difficult to verify when you don't live in a Muslim country. However, some organizations have responded to the significant opportunity represented by some 25 million consumers throughout the EU. They have begun providing products produced in accordance with religious regulations, aimed specifically at this market. Thus, for Zahara and her family, it is becoming much easier to buy foodstuffs which conform to their religious beliefs.

THE ENVIRONMENT: THE IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN SPAIN

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Spain was a population exporter. A large number of Spaniards left the country, travelling to the north of Europe and Latin America for political and economic reasons. Today, history has reversed itself. Spain has become a receiver of population with an immigrant community of approximately 5 per cent. Immigration has significant social and economic repercussions, modifying the character of the host country. The market is transformed through the appearance of new and diverse needs of new multicultural communities.

It is difficult to gather accurate information regarding this phenomenon. The most reliable information is probably that of the Municipal Register. Between 1992 and 2000 the growth in immigration was fairly steady.

Figure 1 Growth in immigration, in thousands of persons



Source: INE, *Evolución de los extranjeros residentes. España en Cifras 2003-04*, www.ine.es, online publications (date of publication 02.04, (May 20, 2004)).

From 2000 onwards this growth may be described as exponential, as demonstrated by Figure 1.

The Municipal Register gives a total of 2,672,596 immigrants in 2003, which is almost double the figure of the previous year. The largest percentage of immigrants come from Ecuador, followed by Morocco, Colombia, the UK, Romania, Germany and Argentina, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Immigrants by nationality

Nationality	Number	Percentage of total foreign population
Ecuadorians	390,297	14.65
Moroccans	378,974	14.23
Colombians	244,684	9.18
British	161,507	6.06
Rumanians	137,347	5.16
Germans	130,232	4.89
Argentines	109,445	4.11

Source: INE, *Explotación estadística del Padrón. January 1, 2003*, www.ine.es (accessed May 2004).

The supermarkets, hypermarkets and other distribution companies are adapting some of their product lines to meet the gastronomic needs of the immigrant population. In Spain, a change is occurring among the large food distribution companies. They are beginning to note the increased demand for foreign products. A report of the Vth Semana de Alimentación, held in Madrid in October 2003, revealed that the Spanish Ibero-American food market had a turnover of some 25 million euros. Demand grew in particular for basic food products such as corn flour, cane sugar, tropical fruits, guayaba-based sweets and malt beverages. However, this adaptation is more complicated when religious requirements need to be taken into account.

A SPECIFIC CASE OF ADAPTATION: THE HALAL BRAND ENTERS THE HYPERMARKET



Junta Islámica

As we have seen, Zahara looks for quality and healthy products for her and her family which are prepared or produced according to the precepts of the Koran without this becoming an additional economic burden. For Zahara, it is essential to know

the process from the slaughterhouse to the supermarket, what is now known as the 'traceability system'. Muslims are often doubtful about the origins of food, particularly as it is difficult to find the necessary information regarding the origin of meat and how and by whom it was sacrificed.

However, it has become increasingly easy to find these products. Alcampo, Carrefour and Eroski, three of the principal food distributors in Spain, have recently started stocking items bearing the *Halal Guarantee* in their product lines (June 2004), particularly in those cities with significant Muslim communities. This introduction, which has not been associated with price increases, was also accompanied during the early months by free consumer information in order to familiarize consumers with the brand. Some of the most prominent meat producers in Spain, such as El Pozo or Casademont, now include this type of guarantee with some of their products.

The *Halal Guarantee* is a brand created by the Halal Institute of the Islamic Council of Spain in order to identify those products which meet the conditions

required by Islamic law. Thus, in addition to fresh meat, it controls the production process of other manufactured food products: dairy products, biscuits, prepared meats, products containing lactic acids, and even non-alcoholic beer. This brand has been regulated by law for more than 15 years. In Spain there are approximately 60 Spanish companies whose products now bear this quality guarantee.

The two sectors where this label principally applies are:

- 1 Food producers and/or processors or beverage companies. In this case, the *Halal* label guarantees that
 - products are free of any substance or ingredient which may be forbidden (*Haram*), or any component derived from a forbidden animal;
 - if a product is produced, manufactured and/or stored, the tools or machinery used are in accordance with the stipulations of Islamic law as well as Spanish health regulations;
 - these food products do not come into contact with substances or products which are forbidden during their production, manufacture, processing, storage or transport;
 - in the case of fresh meats, the animals have been sacrificed in accordance with Islamic law;
 - in the case of beverages, these do not contain alcohol.
- 2 Service sector establishments. In this case it signifies that they meet the conditions required by Muslims in terms of food, places dedicated to prayer and facilities necessary to perform ablutions.

However, Zahara and her family may be the victims of false guarantees or possible fraud. While the Islamic Institute is the only entity officially authorized by the Spanish government to provide this guarantee (Spain is the only European country with a certifying institution), many products are sold with a *Halal* label which was not granted by the Institute. At certain times of the year, many North African immigrants cross Spain from Belgium, Holland or France, en route to their countries of origin on the so-called Ruta del Estrecho, and this has been the source of some problems.

In August 2004, the Institute sued a well-known chain of service stations 'for the illegitimate use of the *Halal* label and for consumer fraud'. It also sought the removal of the signs announcing the sale of *Halal* products in its service stations, specifically those on the 'Route' mentioned above. According to the company, it was not offering food produced or prepared by Spanish companies according to the precepts of the Koran but

selling products from various countries and for this reason they were not eligible for the guarantee label. A simple case of unfair competition? A monopolistic drive by the Institute? A fraud by producers trying to sell something as pure which in fact isn't?

The truth is that many places sell a wide range of products bearing the *Halal* label (whether official or not). For Zahara and her family and the rest of the Muslim community resident in Spain (and by extension, in Europe), it is becoming easier to find foodstuffs which meet their religious beliefs, values and consumption habits.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Investigate if a case similar to that of Zahara has occurred in your community. Are there cultures and groups that require special products because of their beliefs?
- 2 Consider the repercussions on consumption caused by religious norms in other religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism.
- 3 Reflect on the future of immigration in Spain (or another country) and the consequences this may have on sectors other than the food industry e.g. banking and money transfers to other countries, holidays, customs of dress, and opinions on advertising.
- 4 Do you believe that a company should anticipate the specific needs of an immigrant community or should it wait until their number becomes significant?
- 5 Debate the issues around acculturation, and the flow of influences between immigrant and host communities.
- 6 What new consumption trends or situations may arise out of the second or third generation of immigrants as compared to the first?

Black youth identity in Britain: acculturation, consumption, hip hop and self-identity

ANDREW LINDRIDGE, Manchester Business School, UK and
KAMALDEEP DHILLON, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, UK

BACKGROUND

*I'm in the Benz on Monday, the BM on Tuesday
Range on Wednesday, Thursday I'm in the Hooptay
Porsche on Friday, I do things my way
Vipe or Vette, I tear up the highway*¹

The lyrics of the black² American singer 50 Cents (whose mother was an immigrant to the USA from the Caribbean) singing about the cars he drives demonstrates the importance of symbolic and conspicuous consumption in emphasizing success and wealth. This case study briefly explores hip-hop music and symbolic consumption amongst ethnic minorities, particularly in relation to the construction of black identity amongst black youths in Britain.

INTRODUCTION

The advent of hip-hop music in the United States has been widely seen as the only original musical genre to appear in the past 30 years. Originating in the South Bronx, New York, in the late 1970s, hip hop represents a cultural movement with specific styles of dance, fashion, graffiti art and music (rap).³ Hip-hop music captures the daily experiences within the US black community in New York, and has been seen as providing a way to confront and challenge the racism they experience in everyday life. Some African-Caribbean groups within the British black community have also used hip-hop music in order to express their experiences of life in Britain.

Andrea Levy's prize-winning novel *Small Island* shows the degrees of prejudice encountered by Caribbean immigrants into Britain after the Second World War. A consequence of African-Caribbean people's experiences of racism in Britain may be reflected in their limited opportunities to utilize Britain's economic wealth, compared with other ethnic groups, such as immigrants from the Indian subcontinent. In twenty-first-century Britain, 49 per cent of African-Caribbean households are classified as low income (Stationery Office 2004). An African-Caribbean school student is four times more likely to be excluded from school; by 16, they are the lowest performing ethnic group, which is in stark contrast to their performance at 11, when they are the highest achieving ethnic group on leaving primary

school. Christian (2002) argues that a consequence of racism is that to be black and British demands a double consciousness. This point can be linked to debates about acculturation where members of a minority community seek to negotiate their relationships with the dominant societal groups, and strive to achieve access to wider opportunities.

ACCULTURATION, CULTURE, CONSUMPTION AND HIP HOP

Acculturation represents a multifaceted and ongoing process where the continual interactions between the minority and dominant ethnic group iteratively affect cultural attitudes, behaviours and values across society. An important aspect of the acculturation process is often the need for individuals to demonstrate success in life, either to the dominant societal group or to their own ethnic group. This behaviour is consistent with consumer acculturation theories that argue that products imbued with cultural meaning are deliberately consumed by ethnic minorities to demonstrate their cultural adaptation, i.e. acculturation. However, an alternative consumer acculturation perspective is that ethnic minority individuals who demonstrate conspicuous consumption often do so in order to show their sense of rejection from the dominant society. This rejection may arise from experiences of racism often culminating in poor academic performance, inability to obtain well-paid jobs and struggles to establish a self-identity that is both recognized and valued by their own ethnic group and others. The ethnic minority person's sense of rejection may then be represented by the consumption of products that differentiates them from the dominant group and highlights their differences. A consumption act potentially reflects their perceived sense of rejection and demonstrates their inability and/or unwillingness to conform to the dominant societal culture.

One example of how acculturation and consumption affects African-Caribbean black identity in Britain (and its related cultural values) can be seen in music and poetry. These art forms provide important opportunities to represent the experiences and relate the narratives of ethnicity and difference. Black youths living in Britain may, therefore, use hip-hop culture as a way of

supporting cultural identity in everyday settings and to authenticate a wider sense of their black identity. Music is one way of facilitating the formation of subcultural groups and networks for young African-Caribbeans living in Britain, as well as the maintenance and enhancement of personal identities. Consumption of key products can convey clearly determined cultural meanings, such as group belonging, as well as success and wealth in a hostile society. Hip hop has become a particular pop culture phenomenon because it uses brands within its lyrics as a means of demonstrating success and wealth to others, without necessarily wanting their approval. For example, the American Top 40 in 2003 contained hip-hop (rap) songs that had brand references for Mercedes-Benz cars (112 times), Gucci (47 times), Burberry (42 times), Hennessy Cognac (35 times) and Nike (26 times). The hip-hop (rap) artist most likely to sing about brands in 2003 was 50 Cents who mentioned 31 different brands compared with the second highest artist, Lil' Kim, who mentioned only 15 different brands.

Considered then within the wider debates about acculturation, culture and racism, some African-Caribbean youths in Britain may use hip hop in order to create part of the cultural context for black identity. Wearing the same brands as their favourite hip-hop artists may provide a means of identifying themselves with black role models, and also reflect a deliberate and conscious effort to assert their individual and group differences from both their own ethnic group and the dominant societal culture.

QUESTIONS

- 1 To what extent would you agree that products can be imbued with cultural meanings? What brands or products do you think are imbued with which specific cultural meanings?

- 2 The case study argued that when ethnic minorities experience racism, during the acculturation process, they may feel excluded from society. A consequence of this exclusion may be a desire to consume products that emphasize their difference. Is this argument still valid considering the worldwide success of hip-hop culture and rap music?
- 3 Do you think that hip-hop culture and rap music's focus on brands has more to do with general youth attitudes and behaviours regarding using brands to demonstrate a sense of belonging to reference groups rather than as a cultural statement about racism?

Notes

1. 'Poor Lil Rich' from the album *Get Rich or Die Tryin* by the artist 50 Cents who is singing about a variety of car brands in these lines: Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Range Rover (from Land Rover), 'Hooptay' means an old car that has been customized at large cost to make it distinctive, Porsche, Viper (from Dodge) and Corvette (from General Motors).
2. The term 'Black' was used in the 1960s during the Civil Rights Movement in the USA.
3. Rap is the musical culmination of hip-hop culture.

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Brand building on Holy Mount Athos: consumer perceptions of speciality wine brands

APHRODITE PANAGIOTALIDES,
Evangelos Tsantalis SA, Halkidiki, Greece

INTRODUCTION

In 2002, Evangelos Tsantalos SA, the leading Greek winery in terms of both Greek market and export market sales, commissioned market research to investigate the relative position of its Agioritikos wine brand in the Greek market. Agioritikos had been in the market for almost 30 years and had inevitably reached maturity.

The aim of the research was to investigate consumer attitudes towards the brand and to detect possible directions for development of this and other brands from the Mount Athos Vineyards.

THE AGIORITIKOS VALUES

Agioritikos was the first '*topikos oinos*' (regional wine) of Greece, a category initiated in 1981 with the accession of Greece to the EEC. The Greek appellation system is built according to the French system and this category corresponds to the French Vin de Pays.

Topikoí oinoi (regional wines) are a special category of table wine, a level above the 'common' table wine and a level below OPAP (VQPRD) wines. Like OPAP wines, *topikoí oinoi* originate from specific vineyard areas and grape varieties, but there is greater flexibility in terms of both geographical area and grape varieties permitted by law. The ability to mention variety, vineyard area and vintage year on *topikoí oinoi* labels (something not allowed for table wines) also offers more value to the consumer.

Apart from instilling a new wine category, Agioritikos wine embodies an entire cultural system, tightly interwoven with the Greek Orthodox religion. Holy Mountain or Mount Athos ('Agion Oros' in Greek, hence the name 'Agioritikos') is the third finger of the Halkidiki peninsula in Northern Greece. The history of Mount Athos is very rich and for more than 1,000 years closely related to the Orthodox Church. Mount Athos is an independent monastic community, a unique place of great natural beauty, dedicated to prayer, obedience and meditation. Here lie 20 monasteries, 12 monastic villages and 700 small communities of Christian Orthodox monks in steep, impervious rocks and hills.

Wine has always been an integral part of life on Mount Athos and vine cultivation one of the most important occupations of the monks. A notable

winemaking tradition exists that has lasted throughout the centuries and has made the Mount Athos wine renowned.

Many dignitaries visit Mount Athos to speak with the monks about intellectual or worldly matters, to seek their precious advice and to soak up the inimitable beauty of the unspoilt nature, away from modern civilization. Prince Charles is a regular visitor and has made many donations to the Vatopedi Monastery of Mount Athos.

The Agioritikos wine therefore carries all the strengths of its holy origins, of the 'unspoilt' ecosystem of Mount Athos, as well as the famous viticultural and winemaking tradition of the monks of Mount Athos, who have been making wine both as part of their religious duties (for use in Holy Communion) and to drink with their meals. Evangelos Tsantalos is the only winery allowed to cultivate vineyards on Mount Athos and bring the Mount Athos wine to the 'outside world', a very important USP for the winery.



So consumers bought Agioritikos as a treat, to drink on special occasions, to entertain at home or in restaurants. It was considered a status symbol that reflected the exalted status of Mount Athos.

The bottle, in the shape of a flask, echoes the flasks used by the monks to carry water or wine to the fields or when travelling.

The label is printed on a beige parchment-like paper in Byzantine-style lettering and carries the insignia of the Saint Panteleimon Monastery, where the Mount Athos Vineyards are situated. At a time when branded Greek wine was a rarity, Agioritikos was a real category leader.

MARKET SURVEY RESULTS

But let us see how far these values coincide with today's consumer perceptions of the Agioritikos brand. The

following general associations (in no particular order) were recorded for the Agioritikos wine during the market survey:

- Delicious, soft, pleasant, refreshing wine
- For a festive occasion
- With good food
- Traditional wine
- Mount Athos
- Well-known brand
- Fun, party, dance, celebration
- Invigoration
- Relaxation
- Euphoria
- Escape
- Quality

The basic parameters of Agioritikos' identity according to the survey were:

Product

- A product of consistent quality
- Worth its money
- Easily drunk
- Pleasant wine

Price

- Not expensive

Bottle

- Stands out
- Has been around for a long time - habit
- Characteristic ('only Agioritikos has a shape')

Tsantali winery

- Has been in the market for years
- Traditional
- Strong brand - Tsantali is a strong name in the world of wine - 'Guarantee'
- Distinctive packaging
- Affordable quality
- 'Honest' wines

Reasons for acceptance

- 'Good price/quality ratio'
- 'Popular'
- 'Good taste'
- 'Tsantali is a winery with more than a century of history - quality guarantee'
- Familiarity: 'the wine you know'

Reasons for rejection

- 'Common'
- 'You get bored with it' - 'there are so many other choices'
- 'It has aged; it hasn't been renewed for a long time'.

Occasions to use

Agioritikos is consumed:

- with 'parea' (close friends)
- in tavernas or nightclubs
- often at club functions

but not consumed:

- in upmarket restaurants
- with romantic company
- with acquaintances (as opposed to friends)
- alone

THE AGIORITIKOS VALUES IN TODAY'S WINE MARKET ENVIRONMENT

Social and individual modes of wine consumption

To understand the Agioritikos values for the present-day consumer, one must first understand that all wines should achieve a careful balance between their social and individual values of consumption, where individual values are presently on an upward trend.

Taking the instance where wine is consumed in a *social* context, we have the notions of status and social acceptance linked to a 'successful' wine choice. The consumer enters an attractive role in which perhaps they feel they do not belong, that of the wine connoisseur, and acts out this role during a business meal or social dinner. We also have the notions of the 'parea' (circle of friends), a vital component of Greek society, companionship and communication within the parea, even 'emancipation' through the parea.

On an *individual* level, wine is a reward after a hard day at work, i.e. a taste of something different, something healthy or luxurious, or a means of stress relief and relaxation. Wine in Greece (as opposed to 'hard' alcohol) is considered 'pure' and 'natural' and 'good for the health'.

And then there is wine as a simple thing, a habit, i.e. wine for *everyday* consumption, with normal meals. Let's not forget that traditionally wine is consumed in Greece at the table, with food, on an everyday basis.

Discussion of survey results

In the last decade small, 'boutique' wineries have emerged capturing sales from established brands, by conveying an image of luxury and uniqueness. Agioritikos, which embodied these values in the past, has in the process experienced declining sales.

In terms of *social* values of consumption, these boutique wines are seen to offer more status value,

higher quality, more attention to detail and more know-how. In terms of *individual* values of perception, boutique wines are believed to exude an air of sophistication and luxury. This is a general consumer perception problem for quality wines from large producers.

Agoritikos has therefore found itself stuck in the middle among:

- 1 more expensive (boutique) wines from small producers;
- 2 wines of the same level – also from large producers. Newer wines that are therefore seen to be more unusual belong here;
- 3 cheaper ‘mass production’ wines, which have a price advantage.

The survey suggested that the Tsantali winery needs to remind those consumers, who are growingly sceptical of the Agioritikos brand, of the brand values: ‘uniqueness and authenticity of Mount Athos’, ‘parea’, ‘affordable luxury’. Tsantali need to promote the reasons that explain and justify the unique quality of Agioritikos and to reassure these customers of their choice.

There are also consumers, however, for whom Agioritikos still represents ‘stability’, ‘timeless value’, ‘quality’, a ‘classic’, ‘traditional’ choice. The survey found that for these consumers a possible packaging change of the bottle and/or the label would alienate the wine from its core values of heritage and tradition. Such a change was seen by the consumers to show lack of consistency: if Agioritikos were to be bottled in a standard ‘Bordeaux’ bottle, it would not be recognizable any more and some might even view it with scepticism, as a sign of lesser quality. These consumers stated that the wine’s packaging should remain as it is, with the possible inclusion of extra information in the form of a neck tag.

EVANGELOS TSANTALIS’ MARKETING STRATEGY FOR THE AGIORITIKOS BRAND

The marketing strategy Evangelos Tsantalis SA chose to follow was to bring to market contemporary brands conveying ‘limited release’ values, in other words to introduce more focus into its product offering. The vineyard site of Mount Athos, with its holiness, purity and uniqueness, was ideally placed to convey such distinct attributes.

The company’s board decided to focus its new product development on the Mount Athos Vineyards and bring to market two product ranges:

- ‘Mount Athos Vineyards Red’, ‘Mount Athos Vineyards White’: an entry-level offer;



- ‘Metoxi’ and ‘Chromitsa’, red and white wine respectively, as a limited-release duo of flagship wines, only available through specialized wine shops at premium prices.

Thus the Mount Athos Vineyards play the role of a boutique winery within the large Evangelos Tsantalis winery. What the Agioritikos wine used to offer in terms of peerless prestige and sophistication, and which came under threat from the boutique wineries, is now offered by the new brands from Mount Athos.

The graphic design of the labels of the Mount Athos wines is especially strong, while the Tsantali brand name is downplayed on the label. The company is hoping that the new brands will be seen to embody added value, to convey quality and reward on an emotional level and thus to add a layer of complexity that will appeal to the more discerning consumer.

The Agioritikos wine is still part of the Tsantali portfolio, targeting the more traditional consumer and also the Greek communities abroad, who have a nostalgic attitude towards their homeland. This is a very large and important market for Tsantali, who sell a lot of Agioritikos wine to the Greek restaurants and Greek delicatessen stores abroad, mainly in Germany and the United States.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What proposals would you make to the Marketing Manager of Evangelos Tsantalis SA regarding the Agioritikos wine, the ‘new’ brands from Mount Athos and any further new product development from Mount Athos?

- 2 Discuss how lifestyle choices are determined by status, role-playing and show-off issues.
- 3 What is the role of heritage and tradition in modern product choices? Are the emotional factors embodied by artisanal products strong enough to instigate purchase?
- 4 How can a company capitalize on tradition and an established image, yet move ahead?
- 5 How can wineries bypass the hurdles of generational marketing ('I don't want to drink what my parents' drink')?
- 6 How can 'historical' brands ward off competition?
- 7 What branding opportunities arise from changing demographics: ageing population; increasing disposable income; growing interest in wine and culture; bias towards higher quality and price?

Sandra: an illustration of addictive consumption

SUSAN ECCLES, Department of Marketing,
Lancaster University Management School, Lancaster, UK

Superficially, an addictive consumer in the retail environment looks no different from any other consumer – *'people see a smart, well-dressed woman, not a hopeless addict'*. Unlike many other addictive behaviours, there are no physical signs; no obviously bizarre actions; no unsociable behaviour that would give rise to comment from staff or other customers. To most of us, we would see someone immersed in, and enjoying, the same activity as many other consumers. Away from the retail environment, another picture emerges of someone who feels guilty, hides or never uses her purchases, and soon feels the familiar craving and anticipation that only another shopping trip can alleviate. However, it would be misleading to present all these women as profoundly unhappy, or in urgent need of medical supervision. Many of them lead reasonably satisfactory lives, fulfil their roles as wives, mothers, daughters and employees, and it is only their addiction to consumption that marks them out as 'different'.

Sandra is 58 years old, twice divorced and now married to Nick, who is 15 years her junior. Her son committed suicide some 13 years ago, but she has a married daughter and grandson. She lives in a spacious modern house in the north of England. She works full-time as an administrator, but is due to retire soon. She is not in debt but has spent several thousand pounds of her own savings over the past few years to pay off credit cards and loans. She tends to buy goods in phases – a week buying handbags, a few days buying blouses and so on. Sandra is extremely energetic and she does not appear to need (or get) much sleep. She is very smartly dressed and presented, and her house is tastefully decorated and furnished. She describes herself as:

'... a very, very fussy shopper. I go into the shop and I've got to have a sweater. I weigh them all up; I measure them all out; I can't make up my mind about three of the same colour. I bring them all home and try them on until 2 a.m. or 3 a.m. in the morning, until I find the one that is just right. Then, when I've found the right one, I have to go back the next morning and buy one of every colour in that. Then, they are forgotten. Probably just hung up in the wardrobe and never worn.'

She describes these phases of buying particular items as 'missions':

'When I knew I was going to retire, I went off sick for a couple of days... I thought, "What will I wear?" I've got forty to fifty work suits, but that was my next mission – something to wear in the house. So I bought tracksuits, indoor and outdoor; Reebok trainers, lightweight and silky; polo shirts in every colour, so that I could have one a day, and I never wear them. I'll be like a tramp in jeans in the house or my old trousers but they are there, so that when I get out of bed I could think, "That is what I could put on". Bags next. I love leather bags...'

And she goes on to describe her handbag mission. Apart from the purchases themselves, Sandra finds the whole experience of going to the shops exciting and describes the experience:

'I just love the feeling of excitement and wonderment as I go into the shopping mall. I love the buzz of people; the colour and displays; the whole atmosphere. I can just soak up that feeling at the beginning of my shopping trip – it's almost as if I say to myself "OK, you're at home now, you can relax and enjoy yourself".'

Sandra considers herself to be a very discerning shopper (*'I do surveys on things, like which will wash the best'*) and will check each item to make sure it is perfect (has no snags or marks) and that the fit and cut are just right. She has a real 'eye' for colour and design, and can tell almost at a glance whether an item will match up with other clothes in her wardrobe. She admits:

'I will spend hours both in the shops and at home considering and comparing different items – invariably, buying more than one and, on many occasions, worrying at night about something I have seen that day in the shops but not bought.'

On these occasions, she will arrive late for work in order to go back to the shop as soon as it opens the next day. Sandra is not secretive about her shopping behaviour:

'I don't think I necessarily boast about my purchases, but I do feel a great pride when I find that "perfect outfit" – even though I may have spent several days searching for it and it ends up, along with most of my other

purchases either in the loft or hanging unworn in one of my four double wardrobes!

She feels she is seen as a 'canny shopper' by others (akin to the 'market maven' described by Feick and Price 1985) who often turn to her for advice on where to shop or how to coordinate an outfit. However, she goes shopping virtually daily:

'I get withdrawal symptoms and feel depressed if I don't go to the shops. I tried staying in on a Saturday last week and went for a long walk with Nick. We got back at 4.20 p.m. and I was sweating. I thought, "I have to go in to town" and I thought, "Well, what am I looking for? I don't need anything" but I can always see something.'

About shopping generally, Sandra is quite adamant about its importance in her life:

'If ever there was anyone born to shop, it must be me! I have to say it's the most important thing in my life and gives me a real sense of purpose. Although I hate the fact that I can't break the habit, if I'm really honest, I don't want to - what else could I do that would give me so much pleasure and satisfaction?'

It would be unfair to say that Sandra has had a particularly charmed or easy life. She was one of five children, and her father was in the Second World War while her mother worked in a local mill. Although she won a scholarship to the high school, her family was too poor to afford the full school uniform - a source of great embarrassment to the young Sandra. She does admit that she wanted her children to have the material things she never had, and has had to cope with the suicide of her only son when he was 19 years old. She does, however, come across as a person who has coped with the ups and downs of life, and is generous with her time to others, offering a sympathetic and supportive ear to those who need to talk. She is smart, articulate, intelligent and meticulous. She perceives herself as a skilled shopper - *'I get so much pleasure out of it'* even though *'I know it is a problem'*.

Sandra was accompanied on one of her shopping trips, and the behaviour she describes is evident in her actions. Her energy, determination and sense of 'mission' are quite exhausting to experience - but the very genuine pleasure and satisfaction she gains from making just the right decision and purchase is quite obvious.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Do you think the behaviour of Sandra (and other addictive consumers) is deviant and/or abnormal? Why, or why not?
- 2 Identify some of the reasons why consumers such as Sandra may become addicted to the consumption

experience. How does this inform us about the consumption behaviour and patterns of more 'mainstream' consumers?

- 3 To what extent does marketing and advertising influence the behaviour of consumers like Sandra, and should marketers be more ethical and responsible in their practices?

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Glass collectors in consumer culture

KARIN M. EKSTRÖM Centre for Consumer Science (CFK), Goteborg, Sweden

It is Saturday morning and Sven is driving his Volvo on his way to a meeting arranged by an association of glass collectors in the south of Sweden. He is cheerfully singing some old Abba tunes as he drives along. His wife, Anna, looks at him and smiles happily when he sings for the fifth time 'I have a dream'. She knows his dream is to have a big collection of glass from the 1920s. Anna has been really looking forward to this weekend trip, because it represents an adventure that is miles away from the mundane routines of the week. Sven is also thinking about the meeting; there will be a researcher there talking about collecting as a consumption phenomena. He wonders what she is going to say: maybe that he is crazy, or just passionately involved in collecting. He was surprised that there is research in this area at all, but why not? Things are important in people's lives and there are plenty of collectors around. Sven is really looking forward to meeting Björn who regularly attends these meetings.

Björn has a very interesting collection and also knows a great deal about glass. Sven is going to ask him about a bowl he bought at an auction a couple of weeks ago. It is a fantastic bowl, the glass really shimmers, but it does not have signature. Perhaps Björn knows who the designer is. Sven paid quite a lot for it. He thinks it is designed by a Simon Gate in the 1920s, but even if it isn't, it is OK, because he really likes it. It complements the other items in their collection and Anna likes it as well.

As he drives into the parking lot, the mobile phone rings. It is Olle, another collector, who is calling to see if they are on the way. He is worried about the icy November roads and says that he really is looking forward to the dinner tonight. He also asks if they want to take a walk to the Cathedral of Växjö on Sunday morning to see the recently created triptych by glass artist Bertil Vallien.

The collecting club which has gathered in the auditorium represents a group of glass enthusiasts. They listen attentively to the researcher, Dr Karolina Svensson, who starts out by saying that collecting is a widespread activity among consumers in their everyday lives, and this is particularly true among children. Stamps, coins, porcelain figures and cuddly animals are

examples of common collections. However, collecting embraces not only material things, but can also involve ideas and experiences such as visits to mountain peaks or islands. Collecting is different from accumulating and hoarding (Belk et al. 1988). A common definition is: 'the process of actively, selectively, and passionately acquiring and possessing things removed from ordinary use and perceived as part of a set of non-identical objects or experiences' (Belk 1995a: 67). The researcher continues her talk on collecting, describing how it reflects many aspects of contemporary consumer culture (e.g. Belk et al. 1991). A collector devotes a lot of resources such as time, money and skills to define and develop his/her individual collection. Exchange, which involves both acquisition and divestment of things, takes place in flea markets, collectors' markets, antique shops and over the internet. Collecting is widespread as it involves both consumption and production phenomena. Collecting represents consumption in that collectable items are acquired, displayed and disposed of, often involving different rituals (e.g. McCracken 1988) related to acquisition, possession and divestment. The collector produces and redefines his/her collection over time by adding, displaying and divesting items. Also, the collector produces him/herself as a collector and relates him/herself to other collectors and collections. In a postmodern society, consumption and production should not be considered as juxtapositions of opposites, but rather as something which is iterative and interchangeable (e.g. Firat and Venkatesh 1995).

Anna whispers to Sven that this all sounds a bit too complex. He nods. The researcher says that individuals creatively construct their own meanings of collecting. It is important to understand not only what a collector does to his/her collection, but what a collection does to the collector. She cites Corrigan (1997: 48) who writes: 'It becomes hard to know whether you are collecting French clocks, or they are collecting you - there is a tight connection between the individual subject and the object.' The audience of glass collectors is laughing. Karolina Svensson thinks that maybe they recognize the strong connections between themselves and their collections.

She continues to present different motives for collecting such as curiosity, interest, nostalgia and memories about times which have passed, status, a way to express power and control, but also social interaction. Sven thinks that for him and Anna it is about interest in glass, the design, the craft involved, the beauty, but also social interaction. Maybe he is more involved in the technical details of how glass is produced than Anna, but she shares the interest in design and really likes visiting glass studios, glass factories, glass exhibitions at museums as well as going to the auctions and collectors' markets regularly. He looks at the collectors who are gathered at the meeting today, wondering what is driving their collecting interest. Well, he knows for sure that for Ulf it is nostalgia. Ulf's collection consists of glass from the glass factory near where he grew up. His father used to work in the glass factory, but it was really only when he grew up that Ulf discovered the beauty of glass and became a collector, focusing on glass from the place where and the period when he grew up. Erik, in the back row, collects drinking glasses, for example, glögg glasses. He loves to bring them out for Christmas and crayfish parties and thinks it is important to use them and not just have them shut away neatly in cupboards. They remind him of parties during his childhood.

The researcher says that collecting can express stability in a turbulent world. Collections can express values or something which is important for a collector's identity. To lose a collection can involve losing part of your identity. Sven thinks that it is good that he installed a burglar alarm recently. Now he does not have to worry about being away for the weekend. Karolina Svensson continues by saying that the degree of goal orientation differs among collectors. Sven thinks of Rune and Ingrid, sitting next to him, who have visited auctions every week for the past 20 years looking for glass. Also, the rituals vary among collectors. While some collectors only want the perfect glass, others are willing to buy something with a chip. Rituals regarding the cleaning of glass and dusting also differ. The researcher explains that collections can be displayed in different ways such as vertical/horizontal, and structured/unstructured (Belk et al. 1988). Vertical display means that the collection is often gathered in a cupboard or on a shelf, while horizontal display means that the collection is spread or scattered around, for example all over the house. The structured/unstructured dimension has to do with aspects of order, balance, and symmetry as opposed to entropy, collative properties and disarray (Belk et al. 1988). Anna whispers to Sven that their collection is displayed horizontally and Sven laughs quietly.

The researcher continues by saying that even though collecting has accelerated in the twentieth century (e.g.

Belk et al. 1991), there is a long history of collecting (e.g. Belk 1995a; Pearce 1995). Some reasons why collecting has increased during the last century are rising real incomes, broadened conceptualization of collectables, accelerated production of identical objects in series or sets, and the reduced age at which old things are perceived as being worth preserving (Belk et al. 1991). Over the years, certain companies have started to mass-merchandise 'collectables' to consumers, for example dolls and coffee cups. They thereby reinforce the social and economic significance of collecting by prepackaging the experience for consumers (Belk et al. 1991). Also, ordinary companies have started to recognize that consumers often buy things for collecting, and therefore have started marketing things as collectables or including promotional collectables in their standard packages (such as breakfast cereals). Karolina Svensson points out that income can be a barrier to what consumers can afford to collect and can therefore be excluding. For example, poorer families may not be able to afford to buy commercial collectables aimed at children. Collecting can involve passionate consumption while the negative aspects can involve addiction and selfishness (Belk 1995a). Collecting which becomes addictive or compulsive can harm both the collector and his/her family financially as well as psychologically (Belk 1995b).

The researcher explains how fears about completing a collection can be avoided by upgrading the standards for the collection, branching into related areas of collecting, or by starting a completely new collection (Belk et al. 1991). It is the process rather than the end which is of interest to the collector. Sven thinks about Arne who is sitting in the first row. His glass collection can never be completed. No one knows how many items were produced of the glass he collects and they lack signatures. Karolina Svensson ends by saying that collectors represent a variety of personalities, people with different experiences and backgrounds. Sven feels happy, the researcher has helped him justify his behaviour to himself: he is not crazy and he is proud of their collection. Karolina Svensson says that collectors develop expertise, become knowledgeable and preserve history. By studying collecting over time, it is possible to recognize how the meanings of things change during different historical periods. Sven and Anna smile and look at each other; it sounds as if their big leisure activity isn't so bad after all, even though they sometimes feel that they spend a little too much money. On the other hand, they do not smoke and they watch their spending carefully when it comes to food and clothes.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Discuss the ways in which collecting represents symbolic consumption.
- 2 Give examples of companies which consider collecting in their marketing strategies. Can you identify factors which make them successful and unsuccessful?
- 3 Interview a collector and try to identify the process of collecting, and also the different rituals related to his/her collecting behaviour(s).
- 4 Discuss the benefits and problems of collecting in our society.

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Adapt or die? Developments in the British funeral industry

DARACH TURLEY, Dublin City University, Eire and
STEPHANIE O'DONOHUE, University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Six Foot Under, the American gothic tragicomedy about a caring but dysfunctional family who run an independent funeral home, has registered impressive ratings on many European TV networks. This superior soap opera has not only been an impressive recruitment tool for an industry not previously associated with glamour and sexiness; it has also lifted the veil on practices shrouded in mystery, fear and distaste. One of the key storylines in the first two series was the family's steadfast refusal to be wooed or bullied into selling out to a large profit-hungry conglomerate. Such a theme would no doubt resonate with many British funeral directors; the UK market – worth over £1 billion a year – has been characterized as a 'cottage industry', since 60 per cent of the market is controlled by private, local firms. The co-operative movement accounts for 25 per cent, and the remaining 15 per cent is controlled by corporate groups. The market is likely to become more consolidated, however, as venture capitalists enter it. Currently, over 600,000 funerals take place each year, at an average cost of around £1,600 (about 2,400 euros) but this number is set to rise in the next decade as baby boomers enter old age.

One of the most significant developments in the UK market was the creation of Dignity Caring Funeral Services in 1994, when Houston-based Service Corporation International (SCI) acquired two regional funeral groups accounting for 12.7 per cent of the UK market. SCI has been called the McDeath of the funeral industry. Owning over 1,200 funeral homes in seven countries, it has grown by acquiring established family-owned funeral homes. Although it standardizes operations where possible, it encourages family members to stay on in the business as employees, and those businesses continue to trade under the original names. Not all private businesses have been tempted to join the SCI fold: as Guy Thompson, an independent funeral operator in Fort Worth, Texas, declared 'a funeral home is more than an inventory, more than its list of clients, more than a profit-making business. A funeral home is an institution that serves the community.'

No stranger to controversy, SCI has been the subject of many lawsuits for restraint of trade, monopolistic practices, and distressing events surrounding the

preparation and treatment of human remains. In the UK, its acquisitions attracted the attention of the Competition Commission, which insisted that the company dispose of funeral homes in areas where it dominated the market. More controversy was to come over SCI's working practices. The UK funeral industry has traditionally been characterized by a 'no sell' or 'low sell' approach, but this was not the SCI way; a BBC television exposé in 1996 drew attention to internal SCI documentation concerning its strategies to increase the average spend on funerals (and coffins) and engage in more aggressive selling. Two years later, a Channel 4 documentary caused outrage when it showed staff in one of the company's funeral homes treating the dead disrespectfully. SCI's presence in the UK market is now much reduced; a £220 million management buyout of Dignity took place in 2002, although SCI retained a 20 per cent share of the company. Over 500 funeral directors now work for Dignity, which is the UK's largest provider of funeral plans. Reflecting standard SCI practice, although it has streamlined and standardized its literature, logo, and corporate colours, the Dignity brand is not emphasized; its funeral homes retain their original name to capitalize on local reputation: as the Dignity website puts it, it 'has funeral directors in towns and cities across the country who have served their local communities for generations'.

Co-operative Funeralcare (formerly the Co-operative Group's Funeral Service) is the other major force in the UK market, performing over 85,000 funerals a year through more than 500 branches in the UK. As its website emphasizes, it is part of the Co-operative movement, and thus 'caring for others and concern for the community are at the heart of everything we do'. In recent years, it has sought to update the funeral experience and ensure its services resonate with contemporary consumer requirements. It developed a new design concept for its funeral homes to make them lighter, brighter and more welcoming than the traditional model, associated with 'mahogany furniture, aspidistra plants, a ticking grandfather clock, a musty smell and an elderly gentleman out of a Dickens novel', as one independent undertaker put it. Seeking to provide more choice, knowledge and support to bereaved customers,

it established a public panel, Funeralcare Forum, to examine ways of improving funeral experiences. Members of the panel were drawn from various charities working with dying and bereaved people, and the Forum also commissioned research to understand British people's attitudes to death and funerals.

Co-operative Funeralcare also appointed a design company to develop integrated marketing materials, spanning newspaper and radio advertising, display material, classified advertising, direct mail, an information pack and website. Seeking to differentiate the brand by focusing on 'local people giving extraordinary care', promotional material features stories of staff uncovering little details about the deceased which helped bereaved customers create a personally meaningful funeral.

CRITICISMS OF THE FUNERAL INDUSTRY

As the Director General of Fair Trading has noted, 'the bereaved are at their most vulnerable as consumers and need protection from the effects of unfair competition and aggressive sales techniques'. A number of reports indicated that the interests of bereaved consumers have not always been well served. A 2001 report by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) noted that funeral directors are not subject to any registration, licensing or control, and the absence of compulsory professional qualifications. There was no single code of practice, and compliance with the various codes was 'patchy' and inadequately monitored. Although 96 per cent of the 400 bereaved respondents surveyed expressed satisfaction with the funeral they had organized, many people did not know what to expect in the first place. They felt under pressure to act quickly, spent little time thinking about their purchase and were reluctant to shop around. The OFT recommended that funeral businesses should be more open about their charges, details of their ownership and the options available to consumers.

Several subsequent reports indicate little progress. A 2002 *Which?* report drew on a mystery shopping exercise in 25 funeral homes - including independent, Co-op and Dignity businesses. While most funeral directors were helpful and considerate, a few were tactless and insensitive, and the quality of information and advice was sometimes poor. Enormous differences in price, service levels and code compliance were found. No one tried to pressure the researchers into buying expensive, unsuitable coffins, but some commented disparagingly on the cheapest options. Similarly, the Citizens Advice Service has provided evidence of a continuing lack of information on choice, costs and sources of financial assistance.

It appears that funeral directors are not the only ones causing problems for bereaved consumers; research by the Funeralcare Forum indicates that families have been poorly served by crematoria, which set vastly inconsistent (and often unreasonably short) time slots for example, and by the lack of standard regulations across burial authorities concerning headstone size, material, inscriptions and mementoes.

THE TREND TOWARDS PERSONALIZATION

One development facing both individual and conglomerate funeral directors in the UK is growing consumer disillusion with standardized, conveyor-belt funeral and burial ceremonies. This development may be attributed in part to an ageing population: at the beginning of the twentieth century two-thirds of all deaths were due to infectious diseases where people died young and relatively quickly. Nowadays, the same proportion die from long-term degenerative ailments associated with old age, meaning that they will have both the time and the ability to arrange their own rituals of departure and disposal. The move towards personalization may also reflect a more general desire on the part of consumers to individualize and personalize marketplace offerings. Very often, this trend results in moving away from the commercially specified, commodified product or service and returning to some original, more authentic and wholesome version. There are signs that this mood is filtering through to the funeral industry too. Dissatisfied with what are seen as tired, depersonalized generic funeral rituals, both those planning ahead for their funerals and bereaved survivors are looking to play a more active role in the style and format of the final farewell. A report commissioned by Co-operative Funeralcare found 'growing enthusiasm for personal, custom-made ceremonies that owe less and less to religion'. Even within the more traditional funeral ceremony there are signs that mourners desire more involvement, coupled with greater flexibility and less anonymity in the way it is conducted. For example, goods and possessions that were intimately associated with the dead person - part of their extended self - or that symbolized their goals or accomplishments feature prominently in many services. Most ceremonies now include some appreciation of the deceased spoken by a close relative or friend. Indeed, responding to growing demand for advice on writing eulogies, Co-operative Funeralcare published a guide called *Well-Chosen Words*, containing examples of tributes to both public and private figures.

The personalizing imperative is also evident in the choice of funeral music. In 2002, the Co-operative

Group's Funeral Service reported increasing demand for popular music, with the top three songs being Bette Midler's 'Wind Beneath My Wings', Celine Dion's 'My Heart Will Go On', and Whitney Houston's 'I Will Always Love You'. A sense of gallows humour is evident in other less common choices, such as 'Firestarter' by The Prodigy, 'Another One Bites the Dust' by Queen, and 'Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go' by Wham! In March 2005, 45,000 Europeans were asked what music they would like to be played at their funeral. The top two choices were Queen's 'The Show Must Go On' and Led Zeppelin's 'Stairway to Heaven'. Mozart's *Requiem* was the only piece of classical music featuring in the top ten, causing *The Times* newspaper to print an editorial bemoaning the departure from the dirge in funerals.

The break with tradition can also be seen in new ways of disposal. At present there are over 100 woodland and nature reserve burial sites dotted around the UK countryside. Clients are welcome to visit and select their preferred burial site while still well and in full health. The manicured and managed rows of headstones in traditional cemeteries have given way to woodlands and meadows. Families can use whichever mode of transport they wish to bring the remains to the site. Any type of coffin, casket or shroud is acceptable provided it is biodegradable. Headstones and plaques have been replaced by wooden notices that will disintegrate over time. There is a strong preference at these sites for burial and the ceremony itself tends to be of the 'designer' variety, tailored to the life, loves and achievements of the deceased. For those who have been cremated, there is still great potential for personalization. Many people have their ashes scattered in a favourite place, like a football ground, river, or site of significant memories.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Many consumer advocacy groups have expressed concern over the vulnerability of bereaved consumers to commercial exploitation. To what extent do you feel this concern is justified?
- 2 What are the barriers to an overtly commercial approach to providing funeral services in the UK?
- 3 In Chapter 14 it was noted that rituals usually involve both symbolic behaviours and artefacts. What would you consider to be the principal symbolic behaviours and artefacts in contemporary British funerals? Are there any of these elements that are 'new', any others that seem to be diminishing in importance?
- 4 How do developments within the UK funeral industry reflect changing consumer demographics, values and lifestyles?
- 5 Researching the needs or experiences of bereaved consumers calls for great sensitivity on the part of the researcher. What considerations should be taken into account in order to conduct ethical research in this area?

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GLOSSARY

Absolute threshold the minimum amount of stimulation that can be detected on a sensory channel (p. 46)

Accommodative purchase decision the process to achieve agreement among a group whose members have different preferences or priorities (p. 410)

Acculturation the process of learning the beliefs and behaviours endorsed by another culture (pp. 115, 589)

Acculturation agents friends, family, local businesses and other reference groups which facilitate the learning of cultural norms (p. 589)

Activation models of memory approaches to memory stressing different levels of processing that occur and activate some aspects of memory rather than others, depending on the nature of the processing task (p. 74)

Actual self a person's realistic appraisal of his or her qualities (p. 210)

Adaptation the process that occurs when a sensation becomes so familiar that it is no longer the focus of attention (p. 48)

Affect the way a consumer feels about an attitude object (p. 140)

Age cohort a group of consumers of the same approximate age who have undergone similar experiences (p. 456)

Agentic goals goals that stress self-assertion and mastery and are associated with males (p. 216)

AIOs (Activities, Interests and Opinions) the psychographic variables used by researchers in grouping consumers (p. 563)

Androgyny the possession of both masculine and feminine traits (p. 217)

Anti-foundationalism an anti-campaign campaign encouraging the consumer not to take notice of a message (p. 623)

Art product a creation viewed primarily as an object of aesthetic contemplation without any functional value (p. 532)

Atmospherics the use of space and physical features in store design to evoke certain effects in buyers (p. 323)

Attention the assignment of cognitive capacity to selected stimuli (p. 48)

Attitude a lasting, general evaluation of people (including oneself), objects or issues (p. 138)

Attitude object (A_o) anything towards which one has an attitude (p. 138)

Attitude towards the act of buying (A_{act}) the perceived consequences of a purchase (p. 156)

Attitude towards the advertisement (A_{ad}) a predisposition to respond favourably to a particular advertising stimulus during an exposure situation (p. 144)

Autocratic decisions purchase decisions that are made exclusively by one spouse (p. 411)

Baby boomers a large cohort of people born between 1946 and 1964 who are the source of many important cultural and economic changes (p. 464)

Balance theory considers relations among elements a person might perceive as belonging together and people's tendency to change relations among elements in order to make them consistent or balanced (p. 149)

Behaviour a consumer's actions with regard to an attitude object (p. 140)

Behavioural economics the study of the behavioural determinants of economic decisions (p. 428)

Behavioural influence perspective the view that consumer decisions are learned responses to environmental cues (p. 260)

Behavioural learning theories the perspectives on learning that assume that learning takes place as the result of responses to external events (p. 62)

Binary opposition a defining structural characteristic where two opposing ends of a dimension are presented (p. 504)

Body cathexis a person's feelings about aspects of his or her body (p. 223)

Body image a consumer's subjective evaluation of his or her physical appearance (p. 223)

Brand equity a brand that has strong positive associations and consequently commands a lot of loyalty (p. 67)

Brand loyalty a pattern of repeat product purchases accompanied by an underlying positive attitude towards the brand (p. 289)

Chronology the consumer's search for the authentic and a preoccupation with the past (p. 622)

Classic a fashion with an extremely long acceptance cycle (p. 550)

Classical conditioning the learning that occurs when a stimulus eliciting a response is paired with another stimulus which initially does not elicit a response on its own but will cause a similar response over time because of its association with the first stimulus (p. 63)

- Cognition** the beliefs a consumer has about an attitude object (p. 140)
- Cognitive development** the ability to comprehend concepts of increasing complexity as a person ages (p. 418)
- Cognitive learning** the learning that occurs as a result of internal mental processes (p. 66)
- Cognitive structure** the factual knowledge or set of beliefs about a product and the way these are organized (p. 275)
- Collecting** the accumulation of rare or mundane and inexpensive objects, which transforms profane items into sacred ones (p. 517)
- Collective selection** the process whereby certain symbolic alternatives tend to be chosen jointly in preference to others by members of a group (p. 545)
- Collectivist culture** a cultural orientation which encourages people to subordinate their personal goals to those of a stable in-group (p. 501)
- Communal goals** goals that stress affiliation and the fostering of harmonious relations and are associated with females (p. 216)
- Communications model** a framework specifying that a number of elements are necessary for communication to be achieved including a source, message, medium, receivers and feedback (p. 168)
- Comparative influence** the process whereby a reference group influences decisions about specific brands or activities (p. 350)
- Compatibility** a prerequisite for a product's adoption; the product should fit the consumer's lifestyle (p. 485)
- Compensatory decision rules** allow information about attributes of competing products to be averaged; poor standing on one attribute may be offset by good standing on another (p. 291)
- Complexity** ease of understanding and use of a product; greater ease lowers the effort and perceived risk in adoption (p. 485)
- Conformity** a change in beliefs or actions as a reaction to real or perceived group pressure (p. 361)
- Consensual purchase decision** a decision in which the group agrees on the desired purchase and differs only in terms of how it will be achieved (p. 410)
- Conspicuous consumption** the purchase and prominent display of luxury goods as evidence of the consumer's ability to afford them (pp. 447, 546)
- Consumer addiction** a physiological and/or psychological dependency on products or services (p. 519)
- Consumer behaviour** the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs or desires (p. 5)
- Consumer confidence** the state of mind of consumers relative to their optimism or pessimism about economic decisions; people tend to make more discretionary purchases when their confidence in the economy is high (p. 430)
- Consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (CS/D)** the overall attitude a person has about a product after it has been purchased (p. 328)
- Consumer socialization** the process by which people acquire skills that enable them to function in the marketplace (p. 415)
- Consumption constellations** a set of products and activities used by consumers to define, communicate and perform social roles (p. 562)
- Continuous innovation** a product change or new product that requires relatively little adaptation in the consumer's behaviour (p. 540)
- Convention** norms regarding the conduct of everyday life (p. 503)
- Co-optation** a cultural process where the original meaning of a product or other symbol associated with a subculture is modified by members of mainstream culture (p. 498)
- Craft product** a creation valued because of the beauty with which it performs some function; this type of product tends to follow a formula that permits rapid production; it is easier to understand than an art product (p. 532)
- Creolization** the blending of various eating traditions with new ones to make national food tastes fit the tastes of mainstream culture (p. 617)
- Cultivation hypothesis** a perspective emphasizing media's ability to distort consumers' perceptions of reality (p. 537)
- Cultural categories** the grouping of ideas and values that reflect the basic ways members of society characterize the world (p. 543)
- Cultural formula** where certain roles and props often occur consistently in many popular art forms, such as detective stories or science fiction (p. 534)
- Cultural gatekeepers** individuals who are responsible for determining the types of message and symbolism to which members of mass culture are exposed (p. 531)
- Cultural selection** the process where some alternatives are selected in preference to those selected by cultural gatekeepers (p. 530)
- Culture** the values, ethics, rituals, traditions, material objects and services produced or valued by members of society (p. 498)
- Culture production system (CPS)** the set of individuals or organizations responsible for creating and marketing a cultural product (p. 531)
- Custom** a norm that is derived from a traditional way of doing something (p. 502)
- Database marketing** involves tracking consumers' buying habits and crafting products and information tailored to people's wants and needs (p. 14)
- De-differentiation** the blurring of distinctions between hierarchies such as high and low cultures or politics and show business (p. 622)

De-individuation the process whereby individual identities are submerged within a group, reducing inhibitions against socially inappropriate behaviour (p. 365)

Demographics the observable measurements of a population's characteristics, such as birth rates, age distribution or income (p. 9)

Desacralization the process that occurs when a sacred item or symbol is removed or is duplicated in mass quantities and as a result becomes profane (p. 515)

Desire to wish or long for consumer goods which contribute to the formation of consumers' self-image; also refers to the sociogenic nature of needs (p. 103)

Differential threshold the ability of a sensory system to detect changes or differences among stimuli (p. 46)

Discontinuous innovation a product change or new product that requires a significant amount of adaptation of behaviour by the adopter (p. 541)

Discretionary income the money available to an individual or household over and above that required for maintaining a standard of living (p. 430)

Drive theory focuses on the desire to satisfy a biological need in order to reduce physiological arousal (p. 92)

Dynamically continuous innovation a product change or new product that requires a moderate amount of adaptation of behaviour by the adopter (p. 541)

Early adopters people receptive to new styles because they are involved in the product category and place high value on being fashionable (p. 539)

Ego the system that mediates between the id and the superego (p. 101)

Ego involvement the importance of a product to a consumer's self-concept (p. 109)

Elaborated codes the ways of expressing and interpreting meanings that are complex and depend on a sophisticated worldview; they tend to be used by the middle and upper classes (p. 443)

Elaboration likelihood model (ELM) the approach that one of two routes to persuasion (central vs. peripheral) will be followed, depending on the personal relevance of a message; the route taken determines the relative importance of message contents vs. other characteristics, such as source attractiveness (p. 196)

Emic perspective an approach to studying cultures that stresses the unique aspects of each culture (p. 610)

Encoding the process in which information from short-term memory is entered into long-term memory in recognizable form (p. 72)

Enculturation the process of learning the beliefs and behaviours endorsed by one's own culture (p. 115)

Environmentalism a general concern for the environment as it is affected by all aspects of production and consumption processes (p. 602)

Erogenous zones areas of the body considered by members of a culture to be foci of sexual attractiveness (p. 545)

Ethnic subculture a self-perpetuating group of consumers held together by common cultural ties (p. 588)

Ethnoconsumerism the understanding and analysis of each culture, including consumer culture, on the basis of its own premises (p. 501)

Ethos a set of moral, aesthetic and evaluative principles (p. 500)

Etic perspective an approach to studying culture that stresses the commonalities across cultures (p. 609)

Evaluative criteria the dimensions used by consumers to compare competing product alternatives (p. 277)

Evoked set those products already in memory plus those prominent in the retail environment that are actively considered during a consumer's choice process (pp. 74, 273)

Exchange the process whereby two or more organizations or people give and receive something of value (p. 7)

Exchange theory the perspective that every interaction involves an exchange of value (p. 327)

Expectancy disconfirmation model the perspective that consumers form beliefs about product performance based on prior experience with the product and/or communications about the product that imply a certain level of quality; their actual satisfaction depends on the degree to which performance is consistent with these expectations (p. 329)

Expectancy theory the perspective that behaviour is largely 'pulled' by expectations of achieving desirable 'outcomes' or positive incentives, rather than 'pushed' from within (p. 93)

Experiential perspective an approach stressing the gestalt or totality of the product or service experience, focusing on consumers' affective responses in the marketplace (p. 260)

Exposure an initial stage of perception where some sensations come within range of consumers' sensory receptors (p. 47)

Extended family traditional family structure where several generations and/or relatives such as aunts, uncles and cousins live together (p. 405)

Extended problem-solving an elaborate decision-making process often initiated by a motive that's fairly central to the self-concept and accompanied by perceived risk; the consumer tries to collect as much information as possible and carefully weighs product alternatives (p. 261)

Extended self the definition of self created by the external objects with which one surrounds oneself (p. 214)

Extinction the process whereby learned connections between a stimulus and response are eroded so that the response is no longer reinforced (p. 63)

Fad a short-lived fashion (p. 550)

Family financial officer (FFO) the family member who is in charge of making financial decisions (p. 411)

Family household a housing unit containing at least two people who are related by blood or marriage (p. 405)

Family life cycle (FLC) a classification scheme that segments consumers in terms of changes in income and family composition and the changes in demands placed on this income (p. 408)

Fantasy a self-induced shift in consciousness, often focusing on an unattainable or improbable goal; sometimes fantasy is a way of compensating for a lack of external stimulation or for dissatisfaction with the actual self (p. 210)

Fashion the process of social diffusion by which a new style is adopted by a group or groups of consumers (p. 543)

Fashion acceptance cycle the diffusion process of a style through three stages: introduction, acceptance and regression (p. 549)

Fashion life cycle the 'career' or stages in the life of a fashion as it progresses from launch to obsolescence (p. 548)

Fashion system those people or organizations involved in creating symbolic meanings and transferring these meanings to cultural goods (p. 543)

Fear appeal an attempt to change attitudes or behaviour through the use of threats or by the highlighting of negative consequences of non-compliance with the request (p. 191)

Fertility rate a rate determined by the number of births per year per 1,000 women of child-bearing age (p. 406)

Figure-ground principle the gestalt principle whereby one part of a stimulus configuration dominates a situation while other aspects recede into the background (p. 52)

Foot-in-the-door technique based on the observation that a consumer is more likely to comply with a request if he or she has first agreed to comply with a smaller request (p. 149)

Fragmentation the splitting up of what used to be simple and mass-oriented, exemplified by ever-growing product ranges and brand extensions (p. 622)

Frequency marketing a marketing technique that reinforces regular purchasers by giving them prizes with values that increase along with the amount purchased (p. 70)

Functional theory of attitudes a pragmatic approach that focuses on how attitudes facilitate social behaviour; attitudes exist because they serve some function for the person (p. 139)

Generation X (Gen-Xers or baby busters) the cohort of consumers aged 18–29, who were profoundly affected by the economic recession of the early 1990s (p. 462)

Geodemography techniques that combine consumer demographic information with geographic consumption patterns to permit precise targeting of consumers with specific characteristics (p. 586)

Gerontographics a research tool which divides the mature market into groups based on level of physical well-being and social conditions (p. 471)

Gestalt psychology a school of thought that maintains people derive meaning from the totality of a set of stimuli rather than from an individual stimulus (p. 51)

Gift-giving ritual the events involved in the selection, presentation, acceptance and interpretation of a gift (p. 508)

Goal a consumer's desired end-state (p. 90)

Grey market term used to describe the phenomenon of a fast-growing segment of consumers aged 62 or older (p. 468)

Habitual decision-making the consumption choices that are made out of habit, without additional information search or deliberation among products (p. 262)

Habitus systems of classification of phenomena adopted from our socialization processes (p. 569)

Hedonic consumption the multisensory, fantasy and emotional aspects of consumers' interactions with products (p. 39)

Heuristics the mental rules of thumb that lead to a speedy decision (p. 280)

Hierarchy of effects a fixed sequence of steps that occurs during attitude formation; this sequence varies depending on such factors as the consumer's level of involvement with the attitude object (p. 140)

High-context culture group members tend to be tightly knit and messages and meanings are implicit and built into the communication context (p. 564)

Homeostasis the state of being where the body is in physiological balance; goal-oriented behaviour attempts to reduce or eliminate an unpleasant motivational state and returns to a balanced one (p. 92)

Hyperreality a phenomenon associated with modern advertising in which what is initially stimulation or hype becomes real (p. 55, 622)

Icon a sign that resembles the product in some culturally meaningful way (p. 53)

Id the system oriented to immediate gratification (p. 100)

Ideal of beauty a model, or exemplar, of appearance valued by a culture (p. 224)

Ideal self a person's conception of how he or she would like to be (p. 210)

Impulse buying a process that occurs when the consumer experiences a sudden urge to purchase an item that he or she cannot resist (p. 324)

Individualist culture a cultural orientation that encourages people to attach more importance to personal goals than to group goals; values such as personal enjoyment and freedom are stressed (p. 501)

Inertia the process whereby purchase decisions are made out of habit because the consumer lacks the motivation to consider alternatives (pp. 106, 289)

Information power power given simply because one knows something others would like to know (p. 360)

Information search the process whereby a consumer searches for appropriate information to make a reasonable decision (p. 265)

Informational social influence the conformity that occurs because the group's behaviour is taken as evidence about reality (p. 362)

Innovative communicators opinion leaders who are also early purchasers (p. 376)

Instrumental values those goals that are endorsed because they are needed to achieve desired end-states or terminal values (p. 118)

Interactionist a perspective on human communication which relies on three basic premises about communication, i.e. the meaning of things, ideas and actions (p. 169)

Interference a process whereby additional learned information displaces earlier information resulting in memory loss for the item learned previously (p. 78)

Interpretant the meaning derived from a symbol (p. 53)

Interpretation the process whereby meanings are assigned to stimuli (p. 50)

Interpretivism a research perspective that produces a 'thick' description of a consumer's subjective experiences and stresses the importance of the individual's social construction of reality (p. 26)

Invidious distinction the display of wealth or power to inspire envy in others (p. 447)

Involvement the motivation to process product-related information (p. 105)

ISO standards a set of quality criteria developed in 1987 to regulate product quality by the International Standards Organization (p. 329)

JND (just noticeable difference) the minimum change in a stimulus that can be detected by a perceiver (p. 46)

Kin network system the rituals intended to maintain ties among family members, both immediate and extended (p. 412)

Knowledge structures organized systems of concepts relating to brands, stores and other concepts (p. 74)

Laddering a technique for uncovering consumers' associations between specific attributes and general consequences (p. 119)

Lateral cycling a process where already purchased objects are sold to others or exchanged for other items (p. 336)

Latitudes of acceptance and rejection formed around an attitude standard; ideas that fall within a latitude will be favourably received, while those falling outside this zone will not (p. 149)

Learning a relatively permanent change in a behaviour as a result of experience (p. 62)

Lifestyle a set of shared values or tastes exhibited by a group of consumers especially as these are reflected in consumption patterns (p. 558)

Lifestyle marketing perspective a perspective that recognizes that people are increasingly conscious that we sort ourselves and each other into groups on the basis of the things we/they like to do and how we/they spend our/their disposable income (p. 560)

Limited problem-solving a problem-solving process in which consumers are not motivated to search for information or evaluate rigorously each alternative; instead they use simple decision rules to arrive at a purchase decision (p. 262)

Long-term memory the system that allows us to retain information for a long period (p. 74)

Looking-glass self the process of imagining the reaction of others towards oneself (p. 211)

LOV (list of values) a scale developed to isolate values with more direct marketing applications (p. 118)

Low-context culture messages tend to be more explicit, specific and direct (p. 584)

Market beliefs the specific beliefs of decision rules pertaining to marketplace phenomena (p. 281)

Market maven a person who often serves as a source of information about marketplace activities (p. 376)

Materialism the importance consumers attach to worldly possessions (p. 125)

Means-end chain a research approach that assumes that very specific product attributes are linked at levels of increasing abstraction to terminal values (p. 119)

MECCAs (Means-end Conceptualization of the Components of Advertising Strategy) a research approach in which researchers generate a map depicting relationships between functional product or service attributes and terminal values and then use this information to develop advertising strategy (p. 121)

Memory a process of acquiring information and storing it over time (p. 72)

Metaphor the use of an explicit comparison between a product and some other person, place or thing (p. 194)

Monomyth a myth with basic characteristics that are found in many cultures (p. 504)

Mores norms with strong moral overtones (p. 503)

Motivation an internal state that activates goal-oriented behaviour (p. 90)

Motivational research a qualitative research approach based on psychoanalytical (Freudian) interpretations with a heavy emphasis on unconscious motives for consumption (p. 101)

Multi-attribute attitude models those models that assume that a consumer's attitude (evaluation) of an attitude object depends on the beliefs he or she has about

several or many attributes of the object; the use of a multiattribute model implies that an attitude towards a product or brand can be predicted by identifying these specific beliefs and combining them to derive a measure of the consumer's overall attitude (p. 151)

Myth a story containing symbolic elements which expresses the shared emotion and ideals of a culture (p. 504)

National character a distinctive set of behaviour and personality characteristics that describe a country's people or culture (p. 610)

Negative reinforcement the process whereby a negative reward weakens responses to stimuli so that inappropriate behaviour is avoided in the future (p. 64)

Non-compensatory decision rules a set of simple rules used to evaluate competing alternatives; a brand with a low standing on one relevant attribute is eliminated from the consumer's choice set (p. 290)

Normative influence the process in which a reference group helps to set and enforce basic standards of conduct (p. 350)

Normative social influence the conformity that occurs when a person alters his or her behaviour to meet the expectations of a person or group (p. 362)

Norms the informal rules that govern what is right and wrong (p. 361)

Nostalgia a bittersweet emotion when the past is viewed with sadness and longing; many 'classic' products appeal to consumers' memories of their younger days (p. 78)

Nuclear family a contemporary living arrangement composed of a married couple and their children (p. 405)

Object a semiotic term, the product that is the focus of the message (p. 53)

Observability the visibility of a product (p. 542)

Observational learning the process in which people learn by watching the actions of others and noting the reinforcements they receive for their behaviours (p. 66)

Operant conditioning the process by which the individual learns to perform behaviours that produce positive outcomes and to avoid those that yield negative outcomes (p. 64)

Opinion leaders those people who are knowledgeable about products and who are frequently able to influence others' attitudes or behaviours with regard to a product category (p. 374)

Opinion seekers usually opinion leaders who are also involved in a product category and actively search for information (p. 376)

Paradigm a widely accepted view or model of phenomena being studied. The perspective that regards people as *rational information processors* is currently the dominant paradigm, though this approach is now being challenged by a new wave of research that emphasizes the frequently subjective nature of consumer decision-making (p. 26)

Parental yielding the process that occurs when a parental decision-maker is influenced by a child's product request (p. 414)

Parody display the deliberate avoidance of widely used status symbols, whereby the person seeks status by mocking it (p. 449)

Pastiche the playful and ironic mixing of existing categories and styles (p. 623)

Perceived age how old a person feels rather than his or her chronological age (p. 470)

Perceived risk the belief that use of a product has potentially negative consequences, either physical or social (p. 271)

Perception the process by which stimuli are selected, organized or interpreted (p. 36)

Perceptual selectivity the process in which people attend to only a small portion of the stimuli to which they are exposed (p. 47)

Persuasion an active attempt to change attitudes (p. 166)

Pluralism the coexistence of various styles, truths and fashions (p. 621)

Point-of-purchase stimuli (POP) the promotional materials that are deployed in shops or other outlets to influence consumers; decisions at the time products are purchased (p. 326)

Political consumer the political consumer uses his or her buying pattern as a weapon against or support for companies which share the person's own values (p. 606)

Popular culture the music, films, sports, books, celebrities and other forms of entertainment consumed by the mass market (p. 14)

Positive reinforcement the process whereby rewards provided by the environment strengthen response to stimuli (p. 64)

Positivism a research perspective that relies on the principles of the 'scientific method' and assumes that a single reality exists; events in the world can be objectively measured; and the causes of behaviour can be identified, manipulated and predicted (p. 26)

Postmodernism a theory that questions the search for universal truths and values and the existence of objective knowledge (p. 621)

Potlatch a Kwakiutl Indian feast at which the host displays his wealth and gives extravagant gifts (p. 448)

Priming the process in which certain properties of a stimulus are more likely to evoke a schema than others (p. 50)

Principle of closure implies that consumers tend to perceive an incomplete picture as complete (p. 51)

Principle of cognitive consistency the belief that consumers value harmony among their thoughts, feelings and

behaviours and that they are motivated to maintain uniformity among these elements (p. 146)

Principle of similarity the gestalt principle that describes how consumers tend to group objects that share similar physical characteristics (p. 52)

Problem recognition the process that occurs whenever the consumer sees a significant difference between his or her current state and some desired or ideal state; this recognition initiates the decision-making process (p. 263)

Product complementarity the view that products in different functional categories have symbolic meanings that are related to one another (p. 561)

Product placement the process of obtaining exposure for a product by arranging for it to be inserted into a film, television programme or some other medium (p. 537)

Profane consumption the process of consuming objects and events that are ordinary or of the everyday world (p. 512)

Psychographics the use of psychological, sociological and anthropological factors to construct market segments (pp. 9, 562)

Punishment the process or outcome that occurs when a response is followed by unpleasant events (p. 64)

Racial subculture a self-perpetuating group held together by ties of common culture and/or genetics, identified by its members and others as a distinguishable category (p. 588)

Rational perspective a view of the consumer as a careful, analytical decision-maker who tries to maximize utility in purchase decisions (p. 259)

Reactance a boomerang effect that may occur when consumers are threatened with a loss of freedom of choice; they respond by doing the opposite of the behaviour advocated in a persuasive message (p. 367)

Reality engineering the process whereby elements of popular culture are appropriated by marketers and become integrated into marketing strategies (e.g. product placement) (p. 535)

Recycling the re-use of resources in order to protect the environment (p. 600)

Reference group an actual or imaginary individual or group which has a significant effect on an individual's evaluations, aspirations or behaviour (p. 350)

Referent power the power of prominent people to affect others' consumption behaviours by virtue of product endorsements, distinctive fashion statements or championing causes (p. 360)

Relationship marketing the strategic perspective that stresses the long-term, human side of buyer/seller interactions (p. 13)

Relative advantage the belief that a product's use will provide a benefit other products cannot offer (p. 542)

Resonance a literary device, frequently used in advertising, which uses a play on words to communicate a product benefit (p. 195)

Response bias a form of contamination in survey research where some factor, such as the desire to make a good impression on the experimenter, leads respondents to modify their true answers (p. 82)

Restricted codes the ways of expressing and interpreting meanings that focus on the content of objects and tend to be used by the working class (p. 443)

Retrieval the process whereby desired information is accessed from long-term memory (p. 72)

RISC (Research Institute on Social Change) an organization that conducts international measurements of socio-cultural change in more than 40 countries (p. 565)

Risky shift group members show a greater willingness to consider riskier alternatives following group discussions than they would if each member made his or her own decision without prior discussion (p. 366)

Rites of passage sacred times marked by a change in social status (p. 511)

Ritual a set of multiple, symbolic behaviours that occur in fixed sequence and that tend to be repeated periodically (p. 506)

Ritual artefacts items or consumer goods used in the performance of rituals (p. 508)

Role theory the perspective that much of consumer behaviour resembles action in a play (p. 6)

Rumour a word-of-mouth campaign to promote one product and criticize its competitors (p. 371)

Sacralization a process that occurs when ordinary objects, events or people take on sacred meaning to a culture or to specific groups within a culture (p. 517)

Sacred consumption the process of consuming objects and events that are set apart from normal life and treated with some degree of respect or awe (p. 512)

Savings rate the amount of money saved for later use influenced by consumers' pessimism or optimism about their personal circumstances and perceptions of the economy (p. 432)

Schema an organized collection of beliefs and feelings represented in a cognitive category (pp. 37, 76)

Self-concept the attitude a person holds to him- or herself (p. 208)

Self-gifts the products or services bought by consumers for their own use as a reward or consolation (p. 510)

Self-image congruence models the approaches based on the prediction that products will be chosen when their attributes match some aspect of the self (p. 213)

Self-perception theory an alternative explanation of dissonance effects; it assumes that people use observations of their own behaviour to infer their attitudes towards an object (p. 148)

- Semiotics** a field of study that examines the correspondence between a sign and the meaning(s) it conveys (p. 52)
- Sensation** the immediate response of sensory receptors to such basic stimuli as light, colour and sound (p. 36)
- Sensory memory** the temporary storage of information received from the senses (p. 73)
- Sex-typed traits** characteristics that are stereotypically associated with one sex or another (p. 216)
- Shopping orientation** a consumer's general attitudes and motivations regarding the act of shopping (p. 313)
- Short-term memory** the system that allows us to retain information for a short period (p. 73)
- Sign** the sensory imagery that represents the intended meanings of the object (p. 53)
- Signifying practices** practices that have meaning to individuals, who know how to interpret them, thanks to the understanding of culture as the interpreting system (p. 499)
- Single-source data** a compilation of information that includes different aspects of consumption and demographic data for a common consumer segment (p. 586)
- Sleeper effect** the process whereby differences in attitude change between positive and negative sources seem to diminish over time (p. 173)
- Social class** the overall rank of people in society; people who are grouped within the same social class are approximately equal in terms of their social standing, occupations and lifestyles (p. 433)
- Social comparison theory** the perspective that people compare their outcomes with others as a way to increase the stability of their own self-evaluation, especially when physical evidence is unavailable (p. 363)
- Social hierarchy** a ranking of social desirability in terms of consumers' access to such resources as money, education and luxury goods (p. 434)
- Social judgement theory** the perspective that people assimilate new information about attitude objects in the light of what they already know or feel; the initial attitude as a frame of reference and new information are categorized in terms of this standard (p. 149)
- Social marketing** the promotion of causes and ideas (social products), such as energy conservation, charities and population control (p. 19)
- Social mobility** the movement of individuals from one social class to another (p. 438)
- Social stratification** the process in a social system by which scarce and valuable resources are distributed unequally to status positions which become more or less permanently ranked in terms of the share of valuable resources each receives (p. 437)
- Sociometric methods** the techniques for measuring group dynamics that involve tracing of communication patterns in and among groups (p. 379)
- Source attractiveness** the dimensions of a communicator which increase his or her persuasiveness; these include expertise and attractiveness (p. 176)
- Source credibility** a communication source's perceived expertise, objectivity or trustworthiness (p. 173)
- Stage of cognitive development** segmentation of children by age or their ability to comprehend concepts of increasing complexity (p. 418)
- Status crystallization** the extent to which different indicators of a person's status are consistent with one another (p. 441)
- Status symbols** products that are purchased and displayed to signal membership in a desirable social class (p. 428)
- Stimulus discrimination** the process that occurs when behaviour caused by two stimuli is different as when consumers learn to differentiate a brand from its competitors (p. 64)
- Stimulus generalization** the process that occurs when the behaviour caused by a reaction to one stimulus occurs in the presence of other, similar stimuli (p. 63)
- Storage** the process that occurs when knowledge entered in long-term memory is integrated with what is already in memory and 'warehoused' until needed (p. 72)
- Store gestalt** consumers' global evaluation of a store (p. 323)
- Store image** the 'personality' of a shop composed of attributes such as location, merchandise suitability and the knowledge and congeniality of the sales staff (p. 322)
- Subculture** a group whose members share beliefs and common experiences that set them apart from the members of the main culture (p. 587)
- Superego** the system that internalizes society's rules which works to prevent the id from seeking selfish gratification (p. 101)
- Surrogate consumer** a professional who is retained to evaluate and/or make purchases on behalf of a consumer (p. 377)
- Symbolic interactionism** a sociological approach stressing that relationships with people play a large part in forming the self; people live in a symbolic environment and the meaning attached to any situation or object is determined by a person's interpretation of those symbols (p. 210)
- Symbolic self-completion theory** the perspective that people who have an incomplete self-definition in some context will compensate by acquiring symbols associated with a desired social identity (p. 213)
- Syncretic decisions** purchase decisions that are made jointly by spouses (p. 411)
- Taste culture** a group of consumers who share aesthetic and intellectual preferences (p. 443)
- Terminal values** end-states desired by members of a culture (p. 118)

Theory of cognitive dissonance a theory based on the premise that people have a need for order and consistency in their lives and that a state of tension is created when beliefs or behaviours conflict with one another (p. 95)

Theory of reasoned action a version of the Fishbein multi-attitude theory that considers such factors as social pressure and the attitude towards the act of buying a product rather than attitudes towards just the product itself (p. 155)

Time style determined by an individual's priorities, it incorporates such dimensions as economic time, past or future orientation, time submissiveness and time anxiety (p. 306)

Transitional economies countries that are in the process of transforming their economic system from a controlled, centralized system to a free market one (p. 617)

Trialability the likelihood of experimenting with an innovation prior to making a commitment (p. 541)

Trickle-down theory the perspective that fashions spread as a result of status symbols associated with the upper classes trickling down to the other social classes as these consumers try to emulate those with higher status (p. 546)

Two-factor theory the perspective that two separate psychological processes are operating when a person is

repeatedly exposed to an ad; repetition increases familiarity and thus reduces uncertainty about the product, but over time boredom increases with each exposure and at some point the level of boredom begins to exceed the amount of uncertainty reduced, resulting in wear-out (p. 184)

Uses and gratifications theory argues that consumers are an active, goal-directed audience who draw on mass media as a resource to satisfy needs (p. 169)

Value a belief that some condition is preferable to its opposite (p. 113)

Value system a culture's ranking of the relative importance of values (p. 114)

Values and Lifestyles (VALS) a psychographic segmentation system used to categorize consumers into clusters (p. 570)

Want the particular form of consumption chosen to satisfy a need (p. 92)

Word-of-mouth communication (WOM) the information transmitted by individual consumers on an informal basis (p. 368)

Worldview the ideas shared by members of a culture about principles of order and fairness (p. 500)

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