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# I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke: Consumptionscapes of the "Less Affluent World"[1]

ABSTRACT. The impact of globalization on the consumption patterns of the Less Affluent World are examined, drawing on examples of consumer culture contact with the More Affluent World. We find that rising consumer expectations and desires are fueled by global mass media, tourism, immigration, the export of popular culture, and the marketing activities of transnational firms. Yet rather than democratized consumption, these global consumption influences are more apt to produce social inequality, class polarizations, consumer frustrations, stress, materialism, and threats to health and the environment. Alternative reactions that reject globalization or temper its effects include return to roots, resistance, local appropriation of goods and their meanings, and especially creolization. Although there is a power imbalance that favors the greater influence of affluent Western cultures, the processes of change are not unidirectional and the consequences are not simple adoption of new Western values. Local consumptionscapes become a nexus of numerous, often contradictory, old, new and modified forces that shape unique consumption meanings and insure that the consumption patterns of the Less Affluent World will not result in Western consumer culture writ globally.

In 1990 the $15 million World of Coca Cola museum opened in the ubiquitous bottler's corporate headquarters city, Atlanta, Georgia. It immediately began to draw a million visitors a year. The theme of this polished and well-presented museum is symbolized by the twelve and a half ton Janus-faced Coca Cola logotypes ("Coke"/"Coca Cola") rotating inside the hollow globe that dominates the facade of the museum. The globe announces that Coke pervades the world and is its axis as well as its gyroscopic source of equilibrium. Inside, this theme is further developed in such a way as to make clear that Coke is a magical elixir that has brought its particular salvation to even the most exotic and remote cultures of the Less Affluent World. Visitors see numerous foreign advertisements for Coke as well as photographs situating Coke aboard camels in Egypt, bicycles in Indonesia, and long-tailed *hang yao* boats in Thailand. One of the focal spectacles in the museum is an eight and a half by fifteen foot high-definition television depicting the 1991 creation of the "Hilltop

Reunion" commercial featuring the multicultural international cast of the original 1971 Hilltop commercial gathered on the same Italian hilltop and singing the same tune ("I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke"), this time with their children. Not only is Coke presented as saving the world by serving it America's elixir, its effect is heralded as nothing less than the creation of world peace. Coca Cola is the quintessential multinational consumer goods corporation whose products and influence extend around the globe.

The extent of this influence is evident in some of our recent encounters with the brand. In a small Turkish town renowned for its ceramics, an old man in a crude atelier was observed casting a mirror frame commissioned by Coca Cola to be hung on a wall in the entrance hall of their local bottling plant. The frame was a traditional Islamic archway in arabesque style, with ceramic tiles, on two sides of which are inlaid Coke bottles dipped in gold. Two posters of 1927 Coke advertisements were observed to cover almost all of one of the walls of a very modest refreshments shop in a small Syrian town. The youngsters in the shop, while sipping their "Sport Cola" (the label in Latin characters in this Arabic country), lamented that the real Coke was not yet sold in Syria, but they were excited that it was to arrive in a few months. And, one of the corporation's Santa Claus depictions (created by Haddon Sundblom starting in the 1930s and helping shape modern images of Santa – see Pendergrast, 1993) was observed hanging from a thatched roof in a remote hill tribe village in northern Thailand.

The presence of Coca Cola on the arabesque frame in Turkey and its Santa Claus in Buddhist and animist Thailand also illustrates that whereas the domestic message of the Coca Cola museum is that Coke is the corporate colonializer of the exotic "other," this "other" is appealed to on his and her home turf in very different terms. Coke is still portrayed as associated with the exotic, but in the Less Affluent World the exoticism is that of the contemporary, sophisticated, and materialistic United States. Like Santa Claus, Coca Cola is the symbol of that glittering consumer paradise widely imagined to exist in the U.S. Accordingly, in many countries like post-Communist Romania, Coca Cola makes it a practice to advertise in English, despite the small number of English speakers in the country. For the point is not to convey information, but rather to sell Coke as a high status symbol of modernity and Western consumer culture. Consequently, J. Friedman (1990) reports that in the former colony that is now the People's Republic of the Congo, while the Congolese have access

to both less expensive locally bottled Coke and a more expensive canned variety imported from Holland, status is established by displaying the imported can on the dashboard of local cars. Such phenomena are not peripheral to identity, since food, clothing, jewelry, music, sports, and other consumer goods and services are central to the processes through which national and ethnic identities are established and reinforced (Belk & Paun, 1995; Douglas & Isherwood, 1979; Foster, 1991). When the Congolese consume, the satisfaction gained is not in the small contribution to lifestyle experience that these objects convey in the West, but in the constitution of an entirely different and more prestigious self (J. Friedman, 1990).

The joint processes of marketization and globalization of local economies increasingly affect consumers in much of the Less Affluent World. The most sudden shifts to marketized economies have occurred following the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989, but similar developments are occurring somewhat more gradually in Africa and Asia. Globalization announces itself in the banners of Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Sony, IBM, Mercedes, Marlboro, and many other transnational corporations. These banners now fly in such diverse locations as Russia, Tanzania, Malaysia, and China. Television, cinema, and advertising around the world increasingly reflect similar global images as well. And facsimiles of American shopping malls are becoming the new pride of many world cities. Faced with these changes, consumers of the Less Affluent World (LAW) try to adapt to their increasingly global environment. In the process, culture inevitably changes as well. In many eyes, marketization and globalization imply an endorsement of capitalism and the "Western" values with which it is associated. Some see this change as involving a global homogenization with an increasingly global consumption ethos that is generally labeled consumer culture (see Belk, 1988, 1995; Featherstone, 1990). Others argue that the global is not likely to dominate local patterns of meaning (e.g., Alger, 1992; Featherstone, 1990, 1991; J. Friedman, 1994; Joy & Wallendorf, 1996; Robertson, 1992; Sklair, 1991; Strassoldo, 1992). But there is relatively little work focusing on consumption patterns (rather than the production or presence of a material culture – the supply side) in the Less Affluent World, to understand globalization. Andreasen (1990) observes that what he terms "cultural interpenetration" "has received little attention in the field, yet is going to have a dramatic effect on both local and international social relations over the next fifty years" (p. 847).

Joy and Wallendorf (1996) argue that consumer culture in the Third World cannot be understood by focusing solely on production and without an emphasis on consumption. Thus, the question remains: what is the nature of consumption as experienced in the LAW? Is the change in the LAW's consumption necessarily a unidirectional adoption of new Western values? Is the local "consumptionscape" merely a replica of a globally spreading Western consumer culture?

In this article we attempt to assess the cultural impacts of encounters of the Less Affluent World with marketization and globalism and examine possibilities of different kinds of consumer responses in the face of these forces. In the sections that follow we first conceptualize global consumer culture and then consider the forces that drive globalized consumerism and global consumption homogenization. We next ask what are the effects of such globalization of consumption, and consider alternatives to such globalization that appear to be emerging. We take a descriptive rather than a moral or a prescriptive stance. We conclude with a discussion of when different alternative consumer responses are more likely, and indicate that consumptionscapes involve neither simple emulation and spread of Western consumer culture nor simple resistance to it. We discuss conceptual implications of our suggestion that consumer cultures are becoming creolized, and propose an analogy to earlier creolization in global religions.

## WHAT IS GLOBAL CONSUMER CULTURE?

There are at least four distinct but interrelated ways in which global consumer culture has been conceptualized. The first is in terms of the proliferation of transnational corporations producing and marketing consumer goods. In 1990 there were 60 countries in the world (excluding Eastern Europe and countries with fewer than one million people) that had Gross National Products of less than U.S.$ 10 billion, while there were more than 135 transnational corporations with revenues in excess of that amount (Sklair, 1993). These corporations have a potentially overwhelming power to influence our lives as consumers. A second understanding of global consumer culture focuses instead on the proliferation of global capitalism. With the 1989 demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and the de facto rise of capitalism in China that began a decade earlier,

some have announced a total global victory for capitalism. But, trans-
formation of any local culture is not inexorable, nor unidirectional
(see, e.g., Comaroff, 1985), and the historical and present local con-
ditions partially shape the transformation in each locality. Extension
of capitalism into the LAW will not be a replay of the history of the
West (see, e.g., Shultz, Belk, & Ger, 1994). Thus, global capitalism,
with increasing world interdependencies, is becoming the dominant
world economic system, but one where market economies in dif-
ferent places will be different and remain fluid.

   The third perspective is that of global consumerism, or a global-
ized consumption ethic. Consumerism[2] is generally taken to involve
a widespread and unquenchable desire for material possessions (e.g.,
Baudrillard, 1983; Campbell, 1987; Dröge, Calantone, Agrawal, &
Mackoy, 1993; Featherstone, 1991; Fox & Lears, 1983; Leach, 1993;
Lury, 1996; McCracken, 1998; McKendrick, Brewer, & Plumb, 1982;
Mukerji, 1983; Rassuli & Hollander, 1986), sometimes even an
"uncritical obsession with consumption" (Sklair, 1991, p. 72). The
number and variety of available goods grow enormously, and new
products are introduced with greater frequency. Surrounded by material
goods and images of goods, pleasurable expectations mount. Shopping
becomes more and more of a leisure pursuit. Shopping and con-
sumption desires permeate daily life such that the meaning of life is
sought, identity is constructed, and relationships are formed and main-
tained more and more in and by consumption. Individuals interpret
"well-being more and more exclusively in terms of their relative
success in gaining access to high levels of consumption" (Lury, 1996,
p. 49). We fantasize about fashionable or novel goods, and we use
or long to use them to gain status and social acceptance.

   Consider the example of cigarettes in contemporary Romania. Even
before the fall of Ceauçescu in 1989, American Kent brand ciga-
rettes were so popular in Romania that they became an underground
currency (Ger, Belk, & Lascu, 1993). One story explains the intro-
duction of these cigarettes into the Romanian economy as initially
occurring through 1977 earthquake relief efforts which included
packets of the cigarettes. After that they became a stable part of the
underground economy. Since the 1989 revolution Kent's popularity
has declined somewhat as multiple brands of American, French, and
British cigarettes have become extremely popular, even though they
cost six to eight times more than locally produced Romanian brands.
To smoke a pack a day of foreign cigarettes consumes an entire

average Romanian salary. Nevertheless, there are people willing to do this (and rely on other family members for food) because of the enhanced feelings of status and modernity that such consumption provides them (Ger et al., 1993). A second example is that of electronic appliances in Turkey. Television was so widely desired that within a five-year period in the 1980s, electricity was provided to even the most remote villages lacking plumbing and indoor running water. Customer credit programs of banks and stores have made purchases possible for many who are willing to cut back on food in order to afford such things. In some shanty town homes, appliances are piled up and stored in a corner of these small dwellings because there is no room for them in the kitchen or the living room (Bilgin, 1986). Some are brand new, still in boxes, while others are broken, usually because of a lack of knowledge about use or maintenance, with repairs unaffordable or unavailable due to a lack of service centers. These goods are there for status and social acceptance: for being able to say to friends and neighbors that "We have it; we no longer feel the shame of inadequacy for lacking what we should have." Other examples of globalizing consumerism in the LAW are provided by Belk (1988), Ger (1992), Shultz et al. (1994), and Sklair (1991).

A final perspective on global consumer culture is an extension of global consumerism to global consumption homogenization. Increasingly consumers in almost every corner of the globe are able to eat the same foods, listen to the same music, wear the same fashions, watch the same television programs and films, drive the same cars, dine in the same restaurants, and stay in the same hotels (Belk, 1995). We also see evidence for a world standard package of goods (Keyfitz, 1982) in which consumers throughout the world have the same expectations for the material things thought to comprise the good life. Products wished for were found to be very similar across students from 13 More Affluent World (MAW) and LAW countries (Ger & Belk, 1996). As in the U.S.A., in many LAW countries, including some that are Muslim, gifts of consumer goods are now given on holidays, such as Father's, Mother's, and St. Valentine's Days, and Christmas. For example, Christmas is celebrated among pro-Western urbanites in Muslim Turkey, where even gift-giving on birthdays in not traditional. "Christmas" gifts are exchanged on New Year's Eve, in rooms decorated with Christmas trees, and the main meal that night is turkey, which is not even available any other time of the year. And whereas standard shopping mall trinkets fill many middle class homes in the

LAW in the name of modernity, the same CDs, PCs, books, similar "authentic" ethnic artifacts from Bali, and jade Chinese bowls bought in Singapore or Hong Kong can be found in the homes of transnational cosmopolitans of the LAW and the MAW. An illustration of transnational cosmopolitanism is found with upscale Indian professionals who move, function, and communicate more easily between New York, London, and Bombay than between Bombay and the villages around it (King, 1990; Venkatesh, 1994; Venkatesh & Swamy, 1994). Globalization facilitates this by providing a common language of homogenized fashions, entertainments, and foods (Firat & Venkatesh, 1993).

Global consumer culture then has been identified as involving one or more of these four trends: proliferation of transnational firms, globalized capitalism, globalized consumerism, and global consumption homogenization. While all these are related phenomena, we shall concentrate on the latter two in the remainder of this paper. What are the forces that drive these tendencies?


THE IMPETUS FOR GLOBAL CONSUMER CULTURE

Some of the reasons that global consumer culture has become a possibility at this point in human history have been touched upon above. With the marketization of previously state-controlled economies as well as the democratization of access to foreign goods, mass media and advertising, one further impetus is found in the revolution of rapidly rising consumer expectations that often accompanies such changes. Consider Romania. It does not exaggerate to say that the 1989 revolution, like the more peaceful revolutions elsewhere in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (Kohák, 1992; Kozminski, 1992), was at least as much a result of consumer longing and frustration as it was political longing and frustration. Before the revolution access to Western goods was restricted to the black market and to the few nomenclatura who had the opportunity to travel to the West. These goods as well as knowledge of Western popular culture were both objects of great status and yearning (Bar-Häim, 1987). Shortages of consumer goods were the norm and shopping opportunism, waiting in long lines, and using connections became standard, while clerks with access to goods became powerful figures (Belk & Ger, 1994). Even such staples as bread, flour, sugar, meat, gasoline, heat, and

hot water were rationed. Since the revolution, shortages, rationing of staples, and corruption have remained, but the Romanian market has now been flooded with foreign consumer luxuries including automobiles, liquor, soft drinks, cigarettes, candy, clothing, pirated videocassette tapes, televisions, stereos, computers, and VCRs. In addition, European and American television shows and films have entered the market along with bright and "modern" advertising for foreign goods. The effect has been like rocket fuel to Romanian consumer desires. In 1992 surveys of consumer wishes, all the latest desiderata of the West were listed by Romanian consumers, along with more mundane items such as water, soap, and books (Belk & Ger, 1994). As one man in their study put it, "I want it now and I want it fast."

But while consumer demand has grown rapidly with the marketization of the Romanian economy, real wages for most Romanians have fallen. Ger et al. (1993) quote a focus group participant who summarized the effects of these economic changes:

Before we had nothing to buy from the shops. Everywhere you could find the same products (if any was available in the market). Now there are so many goods there, but no money to buy them (p. 103).

One way to try to ease this frustration is by working two jobs. A small number of Romanians who have become successful entrepreneurs are far better off materially (Sampson, 1994). But for other Romanians witnessing the explosion of consumer goods, the decline of real income, the newly opened window on the rest of the world, and the increase in disparity of incomes in their country, many are beginning to conclude that "Things were better under Communism." As long as all were suffering equally and the affluence of others was not too glaringly evident, relative consumer poverty for Romanians was easier to take. But now their undeniable relative deprivation among the world's consumers breeds frustration. Property crime has greatly increased, as has ethnic violence toward scapegoated Gypsies and Hungarian-Romanians (Belk & Paun, 1995). Nevertheless, there has been little questioning of the desirability of the "modern" consumer lifestyle associated with the West in Romanian minds.

Beyond the revolution of rising expectations that has occurred in countries that have undergone rapid changes in their economic and political systems, a broader array of countries have reason to be propelled toward a consumer culture by the globalization of mass media

and the export of other forms of popular culture (e.g., comic books, Disney characters, computer games, fast foods, MTV, television, videos, music, films) from the West (Huey, 1990; Schudson, 1991). Global communication networks, and rapidly accelerating intense and similar communications (King, 1990), seem to inexorably move us toward sameness throughout the world. Growth in the concentration of media ownership around the world, and in deregulation and privatization of media (McQuail, 1994) make global information industries powerful in directing the global flow of information.

In Romania in the early 1980s the American television series "Dallas" had been broadcast by the Communist government in an apparent effort to show the decadence of Western capitalism. This effort clearly backfired and "J.R" [Ewing] became a revered icon representing American popular culture. More recently, shows such as "Beverly Hills 90210," "Santa Barbara," and "Dynasty" rank among the top television shows in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Russia, where teens with their baseball caps featuring American teams listen to the latest Top 40 favorites from REM and Whitney Houston on their walkmans (Rockwell, 1994). Even in countries like Nepal, where televisions and electricity are rare, entrepreneurs with access to television have invested in VCRs and make money screening videocassettes like *Rambo* for local community residents (Iyer, 1988). With the proliferation of images like these it is not surprising to learn that Chinese children are familiar with Big Bird, that children in isolated villages of Papua New Guinea (PNG) wear Mickey Mouse t-shirts (Arnould & Wilk, 1984; Belk, 1988), and that some children in Turkish villages are named J. R. The result sometimes appears as a jarring culture clash. In a restaurant in Aleppo Syria, Santa Claus figures stand in turquoise-tiled arabesque archways set in the walls, and Christmas carols precede songs in Arabic on New Year's Eve. In Turkey, fashionable Topsiders or high-heels, and tights or jeans are visible under the Islamic overcoats on some fundamentalist females. One of the authors pulled to the bank on a rafting trip on the Wahgi River in PNG when a group of men were encountered on their way to a sing-sing wearing traditional penis gourds, body paint, and boar's tusks through their noses. What was more striking however was that around the middle of the long narrow kundu drum that one man carried was wrapped a bright aluminum Chivas Regal wrapper and around their shirtless necks were brightly colored Western neckties.

Besides media and Western popular cultural influence, this last

example also illustrates the effect of increased international tourist contact. Herzfeld (1991) describes the "makeshift modernity" that has resulted from the infusion of tourists in the town of Rethymno on Crete. He depicts the pervasive changes that have resulted in the temporal order and in the accompanying sounds and smells of daily activities, from the warm spiciness of early morning bread baking announcing a long-established local craft, the roar of motorbikes on narrow streets, and the horns of trucks trying to squeeze through a passage, to the leisurely strolling tourists,

> . . . with the chemical scent of suntan oil from, especially, the foreign women now heading for the beach, intensifying the scented soap and aftershave that the more modish local men have already spread generously round . . . [as] a whiff of mutton fat emanates from some passing villager's heavy, dark clothes. . . . The hours of this 'smellscape' reproduce the larger changes in the town's history in a sensual, embodied, social time that risks losing itself, finally, in the packaged pollutants of the newest comers. This battle over time is a battle over the possession of identity, . . . over the future of the past (pp. 3–4).

In this clash of foreign elegance and local roughness, European and Oriental are intertwined and there is a precarious balance between East and West, and between rusticity and cosmopolitanism. In Herzfeld's (1991) view, "European culture is both a goal and an imposition, a dream of incorporation into the civilized West and a nightmare of cultural colonization" (p. 25). Similar changes and challenges are reported by Costa (1988a, 1988b) and Buck-Morss (1987) elsewhere in Greece. In the village of Mirtos in southeastern Crete, Buck-Morss (1987) describes some of the consumption changes that have resulted from tourism and their broader effects on village life:

> Families now "need" consumer items – cassettes, imported cigarettes, skin cream, blue jeans, cameras, beach equipment – that they never [formerly] thought of owning, and this is the result of mass tourism. In the cafes talk of money is incessant. The most frequently asked question to foreigners is *passo kostizi*? ("how much"?) How much was your plane fare? your camera? your watch? The question is the means by which the villagers attempt to position themselves within a world system of abstract exchange. In the process of evaluation, as villagers and Greeks, they sense their relative powerlessness. In this world system money has taken on an ontological value. . . . Increasingly cash is desired as part of dowries as well as for the purchase of imported commodities which the new breed of tourists has made seem desirable. Whereas the first wave of tourists were most often in rebellion against the materialism of their culture, the new ones are walking advertisements for commodity culture. Their very presence promotes Minolta cameras, Levi jeans, Nivea cream, Coca Cola, as agents of what might be called "trademark imperialism." The images they provide the villagers, reinforced by television advertisements, appear to be compelling the village into "modernity" less by force than by seduction (pp. 224–225).

What is true of Greece in terms of tourist impact is true of numerous once isolated cultures that are now being invaded by a tourist army of wealthy foreign travelers (e.g., Belk, 1993; Belk & Costa, 1995; de Kadt, 1979; MacCannell, 1989; Rossel, 1988). If it is regarded as a single industry, tourism is the world's largest and international tourism is predicted to involve a growing portion of the world's population in years ahead. During 1990 alone, already 8 percent of the world's population traveled internationally as tourists (Barnet & Cavanagh, 1995). Thanks to the protection of the "tourist bubble," the likelihood of deep inter-cultural learning is much less than the chance for transferring knowledge of consumption patterns, especially by tourists who act as walking billboards for luxury consumption lifestyles of their home cultures (Belk & Costa, 1995).

Not only tourists but also immigrant workers returning for home visits act as walking displays for the glittering consumer goods they bring back from their adopted cultures. Immigrant and guest workers are now a major flow of people influencing global center-periphery relations (Chambers, 1994; J. Friedman, 1994). In Turkey, they come back annually to their villages or towns, displaying, and sometimes selling from their suitcases or cars, loads of prized electronics, watches, and other goods. One peasant family which owns a motel on the Mediterranean even bought a 10 kilo bag of Thai rice from such a guest worker in his German van. While they used the Thai rice to make "pilav" (a Turkish rice dish) for themselves and their personal guests, they served Turkish rice to German tourists. Almost on the other end of the social class range are the transnational cosmopolitans we alluded to earlier. Rapid transport and travel to every corner of the globe (Levitt, 1988), enhances global flows of people in international tourism, immigrant workers, and transnational cosmopolitanism (Featherstone, 1990).

Important as such influences on the spread of consumer culture are, the most direct influence on this proliferation and homogenization is no doubt the marketing and advertising activity of multinational firms themselves. Boorstin (1968), focusing on the U.S., detected the growth of "consumption communities" in which people feel a sense of interconnectedness and commonality by virtue of consuming the same brands. More recently there has been some evidence that such consumption communities are becoming global in character (M. Friedman, Vanden Abeele, & DeVos, 1992, 1993). In answer to the question of what there is to believe in within our postmodern world,

the world's consumers might now chant a consumer creed of "Gucci, Rolex, Armani, BMW, Johnny Walker, Sony, these are the things in which we believe." Such brands are members of the global pantheon of "quintessential brands" (Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry, 1989) that speak the multinational language of status. These transnational icons of consumer culture are joined by a number of minor deities such as Marlboro, Michelin, Coca Cola, Playboy, Windows95, and many others. The demi-gods of this consumer cosmology include the Marlboro man, Bibendum (the Michelin man), Ronald McDonald, Mickey Mouse, Colonel Sanders, Elvis Presley, the Rolling Stones, Michael Jordan, and a host of others (Belk, 1995). Furthermore, the marketing and advertising of many local firms mimic those of multi-nationals, expanding and endorsing the march of consumer icons and desires.

SOME EFFECTS

These then are some of the influences that urge a global consumer culture. Marketization has helped fuel a revolution of rising consumer expectations that is further excited by global mass media, popular culture, advertising, distribution, migration, transnational cosmopoli-tanism, and international tourism. But is there anything wrong with this? Mightn't these consumer goods be the stimuli that motivate workers, improve national economies, facilitate better infrastructures and health care, and create more comfortable and enjoyable lives for consumers in nations emerging from poverty? There is merit to this view, but there is also a potentially darker side to the globalization of consumer culture. In this section we briefly consider this dark side and what might be wrong with becoming a global consumer society.

One of these areas of adverse consequences is the much-discussed environment. Another physical effect is on health and diet, endangered by cutting on food to afford foreign cigarettes, or a pair of much-desired jeans, or by replacing local foods, even milk, with tempting, attractively packaged, and well-advertised candy, and other less nutri-tious or carcinogenic new and modern world foods (Belk, 1988, 1993; Ger, 1992; Wallack & Montgomery, 1991).

While the effects of a global consumer culture on environment, diet, and physical health are tangible and observable, some of the most

profound potential detrimental effects are cultural, social, and psychological, and more difficult to detect. One threat is the loss of confidence and pride in local goods and material culture. Coupled with the widespread admiration for the foreign and the new, the often-occurring disregard for local products and consumption (Ger, 1992, 1995; Miller, 1996; Sklair, 1991) is damaging for local identity as well as local production. For example, in Turkey, well-known for its copper and rugs, the decorative or functional copper wares, and handwoven rugs have been replaced with standard "modern" porcelain or plastic wares, and mass produced carpeting or, in some homes, wall-to-wall carpeting (Ger, 1995). Such a cultural threat is problematic both for local empowerment, identity, and esteem, and for global diversity.

Another macro effect of following global consumption patterns is the fostering of local social inequality, and threatening the integrated social fabric in the LAW (Ger, 1995; Heap & Ross, 1992; Mattelart, Delcourt, & Mattelart, 1993; Illich, 1977). The marketization and the newfound consumption serves the elite but not the majority (Dholakia, Sharif, & Bandari, 1988; Ger, 1992, 1995; Illich, 1977). Nonconsumption is experienced as a lack of control and an exclusion that perpetuates poverty and creates withdrawal (Douglas & Isherwood, 1979). Especially with raised consumer expectations that cannot be satisfied for the masses, these growing polarizations fuel alienation, frustration, and relative deprivation which in turn may nurture social strife and crime, as has occurred in post-Soviet Russia (Humphrey, 1995).

Related to the these effects is a prominent increase in stress. Since (literally) buying into consumer culture involves seeking to improve perceived social status, keeping up with the Joneses or the Satoses involves an invitation to increased stress. In chasing after consumer goods and the money to acquire them there is an escalation in the pace of life, a reduction of leisure time, and an emphasis on a work-and-spend ethic precluding the luxury of free time (Cross, 1993; Tomlinson, 1990). The other major psychological effect of a shift to global consumer culture is the adoption of greater materialism, as seen in recently marketized economies (Ger & Belk, 1996). Materialism is a belief that happiness lies in things rather than people or experiences (Belk, 1985), but has paradoxically been found to be associated with unhappiness (Belk, 1985; Richins & Dawson, 1992).

While many of the forces that drive a global consumer culture and the likely effects are global, they are more forceful, more pre-

dominant in the LAW than in the MAW. This is due to the norm
being affluence in the MAW (even though there are poor people),
versus poverty in the LAW (even though there are some very affluent
people). It is also due to the center/periphery relationships in the world
political economy, and the abruptness of LAW contact with the global
consumer culture. Many LAW nations move from information-con-
trolled societies to participation in a global scene in which an
information explosion has occurred (Simms, 1996). Furthermore, the
novelty originates much more from outside the LAW. Thus, confu-
sion is higher, and it is more difficult for the LAW consumers to
make sense of their environment. How do the LAW consumers respond
faced with a global consumer culture whose effects may be detrimental
to the sustainable well-being of individuals and their societies? There
are several alternatives.

ALTERNATIVES TO GLOBALIZATION OF CONSUMPTION

With dangers like those just discussed from global consumer culture,
it may be encouraging to recognize that the worldwide tilt toward
globalism is not inevitable. However, some of the alternatives are
themselves problematic. This is especially true of the alternative of
nationalism. Strong nationalism offers a way of resisting globalizing
forces by building national pride emphasizing a people's mythic and
heroic past. In times of turmoil due to new global influences, ethnic
or religious movements and geographic nationalism are common reac-
tions that attempt to regain a sense of stability and identity (Smith,
1984, 1990). In addition, the increases of ideological activity that
follow contact with the West (Swidler, 1986) and reactions against the
homogenizing threat of globalization, tend to strengthen national and
communal identities (Arnason, 1990). This helps to explain the
upsurge of ethnic divisions and violence in Eastern Europe and the
former Soviet Union following the changes of 1989. While Romania
has not divided like Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union,
it has been torn by ethnic hatred and violence directed by the
Romanian majority against the Gypsy and Hungarian minorities of the
nation (Belk & Paun, 1995). It is also no coincidence that funda-
mentalist religions are gaining a strong foothold in post-Communist
Eastern Europe. While religion can be a force for tolerance and charity,
it can also be a force for intolerance and ethnic bigotry. The Bosnian

war is one graphic example of this. Another example is fundamentalist Islam. Furthermore, Islamic radical movements are as much a reaction against the previous local elites as against the West and globalizing forces, and thus are a search for equality and an identity (Göle, 1991). In Turkey, faced with polarized social inequality, the accompanying stress, frustrated consumption aspirations, and the confusions bred by the rapid transformations of marketization of the 1980s, some have turned to Islamic fundamentalism. What is modernization for the pro-Western progressives, means to others excessive admiration and imitation of the West, superficial snobbery, and indecency – bars, drinking, discos, "immodest" dress versus the integrity and morals of Islam (Keyder, 1993). This further polarization between the pro-Western elites versus the reactionary fundamentalists is symbolized in consumption, such as recently popular Atatürk pins versus fundamentalist headscarves. The result is stronger tensions.

On the brighter side, such return to roots enhances a partial revival of localism in consumption. Consumers in parts of Eastern Europe have begun to shift back to local products as the lure of forbidden fruit fades (Browning, 1993). Partly because of the lower prices and improved quality of local goods, partly because of erosion of initial naive trust in the imported foreign products (which are sometimes the lowest quality versions of those sold in the "center" or core countries), and partly because of nostalgia or special tastes, many Eastern Europeans as well as Turks are returning to local products. In Turkey, this is manifested in the increased, if not widespread, use of local/ethnic items (e.g., clothes and accessories, furniture, decorative objects, calligraphy), cookbooks of local cuisines, revival of forgotten herbs and regional herbal teas, new restaurants featuring traditional Turkish food, and heightened interest in living in restored houses. There is a return to traditional natural bayleaf and olive oil soaps after the fading popularity of Lux, the "beauty soap," to Turkish cigarettes after the Marlboro fad, and to Turkish coffee in fashionable cafes where Nescafe reigned five years ago. Copper utensils and handwoven carpets are making a comeback as decorative items in some upper middle class homes, although carpet weaving is stimulated by both Turkish and American dealers, and the functional use of copper has totally disappeared.

Interestingly, a return to roots is not something that emerges solely from within the local. There is a global reawakening of roots, a "rise

of specifically designated cultural activity" (Miller, 1996, p. 159), and global flows of images, ideologies, money, and technology support this trend. For example, financial and information networks involving other Islamic countries, Muslim immigrants living in MAW, and the internet are all involved in the rise of Islam in Turkey.

Another alternative to globalism is consumer resistance. But given the relative poverty of most consumers in the Less Affluent World, there is a real question of whether strategies of consumer resistance are possible or likely to effectively challenge the globalization of consumption patterns. It is one thing for someone who has experienced affluence to adopt a strategy of voluntary simplicity. It is quite another for someone who has only seen affluence in the media and through the affluent tourists visiting their country to be happy with what Rudmin & Kilbourne (1996) quite aptly label involuntary simplicity. Nevertheless, there are precedents suggesting that it can happen, including Ghandi's Swadeshi movement (Bayly, 1986), the non-importation movement in the American colonies (Breen, 1988; Witkowski, 1989), and the homespun movement in the former state of Deseret (Belk, 1994). But as these examples also suggest, the rallying point for such consumer resistance is deep resentment of foreign powers controlling local life. Mattelart et al. (1993, p. 425) observe that, "The very ideal of resistance implies an aggression felt in the very heart." The difficulty in resisting contemporary forces of globalism is that they seem so benign and innocent. What could seem more innocuous than Ronald McDonald or the desire to buy the world a Coke (Belk, 1995)? As Fishwick (1983, p. 12) observes, ". . . there is too little malice and too much ignorance to offend – which is the way many of us feel about Ronald peddling his burgers to the cavernous stomachs of the world." This is despite the fact that Ronald McDonald's name recognition is second only to Santa Claus (Ritzer, 1993) and that his power and influence has been compared to that of world religious leaders (Fishwick, 1978, 1983; Kottak, 1981).

Consequently, although some contemporary instances of rejecting the global consumer culture exist, they are sparse and unusual. In Turkey, both voluntary simplicity (to the extent of not buying cars) and a rejection of the consumption symbols of the West and of modernity – such as American products and brands of jeans, sneakers, soft drinks – are observed, but only among a few elite urbanites. Interestingly, another group who rejects consumption symbols of the West are some Muslims who oppose Western symbols, and others who

adhere to a green Islam philosophy, aligning themselves with environmentalism and using natural traditional products. And, an unusual example of resistance is provided by an accomplished ceramics artisan, of rural background, who has pieces in the British Museum, and who identifies very strongly with his traditional Turkish art. He wears the traditional vest, consciously rejects ties and suits, and spends most of his weekends in a cave in the mountains which he has furnished with traditional floor coverings and pillows (although he has a nice "modern" flat in town, and a weekend home by a lake in the country).

Consumer resistance as group activity is also rare. Consumer movements such as protests and boycotts that take place in the MAW are not seen in the LAW. A rare incidence was a campaign in India against Pepsi's dumping of plastic waste, which may be part of a larger Swadeshi movement to boycott foreign goods (Mokhiber, 1994). Associations organized and funded by consumers remain as MAW phenomena. Consumer protection and counseling centers were set up in East Germany in 1990–91 with the help of West German consumer associations (Köhne, 1991). Initiated by governments, and with help from UN and European countries, consumer education programs are being developed in Latin America and the Caribbean (Jensen, 1991). But these activities are not initiated by the consumers themselves, and consumer policy and consumer action are predominantly perceived, in these countries, as some strange activities reflecting European ideas. Although such consumer movements are potential means of resistance, they are more to empower the consumer to be a better consumer than to oppose global consumerism.

Moreover, rather than resisting global consumer culture, it may be more likely that participation in global consumer culture is used as a way of resisting local conditions or non-consumption aspects of the marketization process. For instance, Ong (1987) found that Malaysian women lured by money to work in factories spent this money as a way of seeking retribution for the dehumanization of the factory. They went into town in their Malay tunics and sarongs and returned in tight t-shirts and mini-skirts or jeans. Whereas in the recent past the painted face was a mark of prostitution in Malaysia, regular visits by "Avon ladies" to even remote villages increased village cosmetic sales fourfold in two years. Village women were found to be willing to spend a great deal to achieve the "Electric Look." Such a code of dressing may be triggered by a consumption-as-rebellion against marketized production, but its effect is to trade traditional

localism in consumption for a version of international urban "youth culture" that distances these women from their village roots. Thus, while consumer resistance is theoretically one way of rejecting global consumer culture, the lack of outrage toward this seductive culture may make resistance much more likely to be directed toward traditional consumption. Short of a major organized ideological movement like Islamic fundamentalist rejection of Western consumer influences, widespread resistance seems an unlikely way of opposing global consumer culture.

A third alternative to global consumer culture that is less problematic than nationalism and more feasible than resistance is local appropriation of global consumer goods and reconfiguration of their meaning to better fit local culture. Objects such as motorscooters have also been appropriated by subordinate groups and made to carry meanings that express, in code, an opposition to the order which guarantees their continued subordination (Hebdige, 1988). A parallel appropriation of media images was found by Liebes and Katz (1990) who showed that various immigrant and ethnic groups in Israel "read" the television show "Dallas" very differently than those in America and instead used it to critique the foreign lifestyles and values they saw in the show. Similar findings are reported by Wilk (1993) in Belize, Miller (1990) in Trinidad, Gailey (1990) in Tonga, Klein (1991) in the Dominican Republic, and Michaels (1988) in Aboriginal Australia. For instance, in the Dominican Republic, Klein (1991) found that:

At showings of the films Robocop and Platoon, the reactions of the Dominican audiences were the opposite of what the filmmakers had intended them to be. The message of Robocop is clearly one of opposition to corporate strongmen and sympathy for the common folk. But the scenes and dialogue that make North American audiences hiss or laugh at corporate villains only made Dominican audiences applaud. Likewise, scenes from Platoon, Oliver Stone's film about American soldiers being killed in Vietnam, were predictably troubling to audiences in the United States, but they were taken lightly by Dominican viewers, some of whom even found them laughable. The response to Robocop may reflect in part the Dominicans' ambivalence toward Trujillo. While Dominicans were relieved to be rid of him, they also took to his message of the country's need for strong, centralized leadership (p. 114).

Not only can appropriation involve a change in meaning, but products may be adopted by LAW consumers to perform different functions as well. For instance, the motorscooter in India not only generated different meanings and identities, but also different pleasures and uses as a family vehicle (de Pyssler, 1992). In Turkey, some

peasants use the old-fashioned washing machines with rollers to make butter, and some urban women use ovens to dry clothes, and dishwashers to wash muddy spinach, giving these appliances a more general meaning – mechanical aid devices, rather than sticking to their original functional definitions. Collective use such as borrowing from neighbors, using handed-down things, and sharing vacuum cleaners and cars also provide a more social meaning to goods, emerging from the collectivistic culture of Turkey. Whereas previously a village of farmers shared a tractor, now extended family members who live in separate houses may share a car, continuing the convention of sharing, and maintaining social and family bonds.

Such creative alteration of the original use and meaning of objects is, in a sense, unintentional opposition. Transforming and playing with meaning is interpreted by some as assertion of consumer power (Abercrombie, 1994; Fiske, 1989; Hebdige, 1988). Abercrombie (1994) argues that "the authority of the producer is sustained by the capacity to define the meaning of the transactions involved and is lost as consumers acquire that power" (p. 50). Baudrillard (1983) argues that by not taking their cue from a uniform and imposed encoding, but by instead decoding messages in their own way, people redirect material diffused by the dominant culture. This is ". . . an unanalysed but conscious rejection 'without knowing it' " (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 43). Although altered meanings may not subvert global consumerism, they undermine consumption homogenization.

On the other hand, there is one global force opposing local appropriation of consumption meanings attached to transnational branded goods and that is the appropriative power of transnational corporations themselves. Subculturally this appropriation is seen in the fashion industry's ability to co-opt the oppositional fashion innovations of alternate lifestyle groups such as hippies, punks, and gays, making their countercultural fashions into mainstream fashions (Austin, 1994; McCracken, 1988). The late Italian designer Franco Moschino used fashion as protest against the fashion system and its manic consumerism (Mulvagh, 1994). Some of his designs were: a sweater with "This sweater costs £180" printed on the back, a jacket with "waist of money" printed along the waistband, "a shirt for fashion victims only" embroidered across a garment with 10-foot sleeves, and "I am full of shirt" on another. The irony of this protest was that it too became fashion. Cross-culturally the same appropriative tendency would occur in taking a national fashion such as the "Nehru

jacket" or "Mao coat" and making it a part of global fashions. This threat is generally illusionary, however, since rather than truly undermining the meaning of local fashions, these cooptations create a stylized hyperreal version of these fashions that leaves the original intact (Belk, 1995). Such efforts most commonly pose little more threat to local cultures than Disney's Adventureland cruises pose to African identities. Therefore, the existence of local appropriation and interpretation of global consumer goods potentially offers a real buffer to the forces of global homogenization – one that cannot be counteracted by global appropriation of the local.

The last alternative to global consumer culture that we will discuss is perhaps the most realistic. It is the process that Hannerz (1987, 1992) calls creolization. Creolization refers to the meeting and mingling of meanings and meaningful forms from disparate sources (Hannerz, 1992). For example, in Turkey, in the home of a greengrocer, baroque, highly ornamented "Western" furniture, black and white art photography posters, and a stereo set decorate the room where guests are received, whereas the family room, called the "Eastern room" by the family, has a TV, traditional cushions and a big tray on the floor (no chairs or tables), walls heavily decorated with handmade textiles – some old, some new, some imported from Azerbaijan, others made in the customary fashion by his wife when she was a new bride. In the homes of the wealthy businesspeople in Istanbul the mix includes antique calligraphy, rugs and handicrafts, something American showing that they have been to the U.S.A., expressionistic or abstract paintings of Turkish painters, and fine Ottoman and "Western" (contemporary Italian or Scandinavian) furniture. In other homes, posters of Madonna may be seen in the same room with an Islamic prayer rug, or a Western artist's print framed with calligraphy, or pillows which have English words embroidered on them on chairs with Turkish patterned upholstery in a room with floor cushions and flatwoven carpets covering the floor. Other examples of synthesis and symbiosis in the urban Turkish consumption are old Turkish embroidery and traditional loin cloths being used in Western-style clothes, modern handbags made with carpet pieces, traditional ankle jewelry (*hal hal*) under fashionable pants, and rural vests over jeans. In a rural Mediterranean community in contact with tourism, even more striking examples can be found: a teenager, riding a motorbike, dressed in a new wetsuit, carrying a pile of traditional flatbreads made for the religious holidays. On the way to her house he meets his aunt – a

middle aged woman with a headscarf decorated by handknitted flowers made from small pearls and bright thread, with a somber long gray skirt, a Mickey Mouse bomber jacket, and sneakers.

These, and many other examples from all over the world involve both a use of Western goods as symbols of modernity and status as well as symbols preserving or reviving traditional roots. They also involve reconfigurations of meaning – absorbing otherness, the foreign. Although some may take these creolized consumption patterns to be a fragmented postmodern pastiche more than an integrated coherent adaptation, the transformation of meaning and local sense-making make it very coherent in the local experience.

Creolization is not just a one-way hybridization on the part of the Less Affluent World, but is rather a two-directional give and take with the result being a new synthesis of consumption patterns combining the once local and the once global. For Australian Aborigines there is a use of global clothing, foods, and music not in rejection of traditional culture, but rather in order to incorporate these new consumer goods into more traditional ceremonies and ways of life. Thus there might be a funeral ceremony with clan t-shirts printed up, a combination of traditional music (performed on didgereedu and clapsticks) and world music (performed on boombox cassettes), and a simultaneous use of traditional religious ceremony and mission priests. At the same time, Aboriginal Australian music and art are being combined with world forms (e.g., electric guitars, acrylics, stretched canvases) in their own creolized fashion for consumers in Europe and North America. Similarly, Turkish pop music incorporates Western pop with Turkish rhythms, old folk melodies, and instruments, with MTV-like video clips, and American-style concerts, while Western jazz incorporates Turkish music, as in Dave Brubeck's "Take Five" and "Blue Rondo Alaturka", and in the music of the Danish "Bazaar" and "Istanbul Express" bands. In addition, the periphery "walks" into the center (core) in the form of immigrants' shops, restaurants, and music. A variant of the Turkish *döner kebap* that Çağlar (1995) calls McDöner, and Cartel, a Turkish-German rap group are increasingly popular in Germany, while in Turkey the "new" Turkish "fast-food" restaurants serve the traditional *döner* and *lahmacun* in McDonalds-like outlets, rather than the customary street stands. Other examples of influences from the local to the global include the Turkish rugs that decorate upscale American or Western European homes, and the magazine titled "Halı" (the Turkish word for carpet) sold in

Western bookshops. Just as the global informs the local, the local informs the global. Coca-colonization is balanced by Banana Republic-anization (Friedberg, 1993). Such exchanges may not be perfectly symmetrical, but they are reciprocal.

The four potential alternatives to a global consumer culture have been identified: return to local roots, consumer resistance, local appropriation of global goods and reconfiguration of their meanings, and creolization. A partial return to roots and limited resistance may be detected in creolization. By offering such a new synthesis, creolization thus appears to be the most prevalent and realistic alternative in the LAW.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our argument in brief has been that there are multiple forces moving all of us – the Less Affluent World and the More Affluent World as well – toward a global consumer culture, that the potential effects (which are more pronounced for the LAW) of such a culture are not entirely benign, and that there are several possible alternatives to such a one-world consumer culture. When would each of the four alternative consumer responses be likely?

A return to roots would be likely when there is a strong ideology – political, ethnic, or religious – as an alternative to the dominant consumption ideology. Aggressive reactions occur especially if the alternative ideology has been previously repressed or opposed by the dominant local elites or nation-states, and where there are polarized social inequalities (economic or political), barriers to desirable consumption patterns, and frustrated consumption expectations. Then there is the anger to react and the energy to persist. If consumption is accessible, and consumers gain experience with consumption, a brighter, nonviolent revival of localisms may be observed. Accordingly, different social classes and groups may respond differently to global reawakening of roots. Furthermore, the "return to roots" will not be a singular return, and not to what really was. Rather, there are emergent and multiple constructions of new "old"s since there are multiple social distinctions, based on gender, age, class, religion, and ethnicity, multiple "old"s, and multiple global flows.

Some form of resistance is likely only if there is a strong awareness, confidence, and ideology – either due to prior experience with

Western consumption and exposure to global trends of resistance
(including voluntary simplicity and environmentalism), or an intense
ethnic pride due to a local accomplishment (as in the example of the
Turkish ceramic artisan), or a strong opposing religious ideology, or
a Swadeshi-like deep resentment of neo-colonialism. But, consump-
tion is not generally threatening, and there is no one target for
resistance – there are multiple local as well as global dominance struc-
tures. With the temptations of consumption and the multiple and
moving targets of resistance, simple or direct resistance is not to be
expected. Resistance is likely not even the right word to describe
the pluralistic, diverse, fluid, and weaker forms of struggle embodied
in consumption.

Consumers of the LAW actively place the transfer of goods and
the (re)construction of their meanings into the context of their own
culture. The possibilities of recontextualization (transforming images
in a manner not intended by the producers, as with motor scooters –
developed as a feminine bike in Italy, recontextualized as a subcul-
ture's style in the UK, and as a family vehicle for salary earners in
India) vary for a given object according to its historical context (de
Pyssler, 1992; Hebdige, 1988; Miller, 1987). As with the scooter,
products will generate diverse meanings, pleasures and identities, in
different political socioeconomic structures, and as perceived by dif-
ferent people, at different times. Yet, unlike Japanese consumers
reading Tokyo Disneyland as a treatise on Japanese cultural superi-
ority (Brannen, 1992), the local reconstruction of meaning may more
often involve confusion and contradictions. This may be due to the
perceived relative deprivation and powerlessness of the LAW con-
sumers. If the LAW comprises the poor of the global community,
they experience their poverty and lack of consumption as an exclu-
sion from control and from the global community (Douglas &
Isherwood, 1979). Therefore consumers of the LAW may not appro-
priate or reconstruct local meanings for global products as widely,
happily, and effectively as the Japanese do. Local appropriation of
products and the reconfiguration of their meanings will take place
in different societies of the LAW with more or less success and felt
coherence depending on feelings of relative deprivation, feelings of
relative power, strength of their sense of identity and pride, and group-
support.

Creolization – mixing what is at hand, the old and the new – is what
"just happens" in an emergent fashion as the LAW encounters global

consumer culture. Consumers draw from all available global and local, new and old sources as they use products to position themselves in the local age, gender, social class, religion, and ethnic hierarchies. Creolization is the most likely and pragmatic response for the consumers, to secure, assert, empower, and enjoy themselves, and their families and communities, while facing abrupt and confusing changes in the alluring world of goods and images. Consumption creolization reflects the dialectics of adoption and resistance to global and local hegemonies. Thus, it incorporates the other three alternative responses in various combinations. But, faced with culture contact where relative power imbalance favors the MAW, subversion and reconstruction by LAW nations are not likely to be as successful as earlier Italian, English, or Japanese creolization. In these countries Chinese pasta came to be seen as Italian spaghetti, Chinese chai soup as English tea, and the Chinese tea ceremony as Japanese, due to the power of these local cultures. Powerlessness and the accompanying lack of self-respect and confidence as a result of being a LAW society undermine the ability to incorporate the global as evident in the preceding examples.

If consumer cultures throughout the world are creolized, it is important to pursue the observation that the give and take between the Less Affluent and More Affluent Worlds is not likely to be balanced and equal. As with Wallerstein's (1976) world systems perspective on the flows of materials and labor, the production and control of popular culture resides in affluent core countries and particularly in the United States. Appadurai (1990) identifies five global cultural flows that he labels ethnoscapes (global movements of people as immigrants, tourists, or guestworkers), finanscapes (global movements of money in all its forms), technoscapes (global movements of technologies and information), mediascapes (global movements of media images), and ideoscapes (global movements of ideologies). To these worlds we have added the consumptionscape which is the focus of this paper. None of these movements is unidirectional or even bidirectional, but with the partial exception of ethnoscapes, core countries continue to dominate these flows.

Thus, unlike Joy and Wallendorf (1996), when we examine the consumptionscapes in the LAW, we see neither simple emulation and adoption of global consumption, nor simple persistence or resistance. LAW consumers are more active than passive, imitative, or staunchly traditional. But they are not active and motivated enough for resis-

tance. We find consumption creolization that makes sense to the locals, and that involves negotiating ambivalence and contradictions. This finding has several implications.

One implication is that the people in the LAW will not merely replicate Western history in putting together their consumer culture. The world has become too small and time too accelerated for that. And the global consumer culture that is emerging and being locally adapted and interpreted is not one simply made in the West and exported elsewhere. It is rather a jointly shaped culture that gives and takes from all possible sources. In this process the multinational corporations and the MAW do have a greater say than consumers of the LAW in determining what is produced and consumed. But the outcomes and meanings of global consumption are far less hegemonically imposed than is often supposed. Dehegemonization of the Western-dominated world is simultaneously a dehomogenization – the weakening of a formerly monolithic hegemonic world system is concurrent with the West losing its power to homogenize the world (J. Friedman, 1994). It is unlikely that global homogenization will overwhelm local cultures, as feared by some (e.g., Sherry, 1987). Opposing forces of heterogenization/homogenization and globalization/localization (Appadurai, 1990; J. Friedman, 1994; Miller, 1996) will pull and push towards differentiated, pluralistic, multiple global consumer cultures (plural). Consumptionscapes are likely to remain diverse, and we are likely to see global consumer cultures (plural) rather than a singular global consumer culture.

A second implication involves conceptual perspectives. Contrary to Joy and Wallendorf's (1996) argument, we suggest that a political economy framework is an incomplete approach to understanding consumer cultures in the LAW. Local consumption patterns do not rest solely on dependency relations with global influences. These patterns also depend upon how locals make sense of their daily experiences when faced with the new complex world. Thus, we suggest that consumer cultures can better be understood by combining the political economy perspective with the view that consumption is about meaning, about sense-making. The dialectic of globalization – localization cannot be understood unless we begin with how the local experiences that dialectic; that is, how the global and local "forces are constantly felt in the lives of those trying to get from one day to the next" (J. Friedman, 1994, p. 193). Consumption is a communicative act crucial to the constitution of self (Campbell, 1987; Douglas

& Isherwood, 1979; McCracken, 1988). The meaning of consumption experiences lies in the local. Selfhood, whether of nations or individuals, is constructed locally and consumption is used in that construction. What appears to be emulation and senseless pastiche when looking from the outside is seen as sensemaking synthesis, and meaningful and coherent symbiosis when looking from the inside. It is a gradual, unexplicated, and largely undetected symbiosis from the local perspective. Different patterns of consumption, which are always local, emerge as the result of the global transformation of the local society. Hence, to understand global consumption patterns we must understand the local experience and meaning of consumption. Not doing that is a flaw analogous to trying to understand advertising effects by examining the advertisement itself rather than how it is perceived by the audience. Thus, we argue that, to understand the consumptionscapes in the LAW, the starting point must be the local, rather than the global (which has been the case in most Western approaches).

A third implication is that the type and extent of negative consequences of consumerism will also rest in the local. How and in what ways consumerism will be detrimental will depend on the complex relationships within the local, and between the local and the global. Different consequences of consumption emerge as the outcome of the global transformation of a local society. J. Friedman (1994) argues that kinds of cultural strategies that emerge in the peripheries will be closely linked to the degree of their integration (or control, or marginalization) in the global system. Cultural strategies of different local social groups will also be closely linked to the degree of the internal integration in the local. Hence, to understand and ameliorate the negative effects of global consumerism we must understand the local experience, meaning, and context of consumption – the historical and current images and ideologies available in the local, the degree of integration within the local culture, and the degree of the local culture's integration in the global system.

In closing it is worth noting that the prospect of global consumerism in the late twentieth century might be seen as similar to the prospect of a global religion in earlier centuries. This is not only to say that such a prospect seems an unreasonable fear, even though some changes are occurring, but also that consumerism is itself a belief system akin to religion. If consumption is the religion of the present day, consumption rituals may be best understood as religious rituals. On a casual night out in Turkey, a group of friends may go to a kebap

restaurant and have döner kebap with Coke, and finish it off with Turkish dessert and coffee. Or, have a BigMac with ayran (a traditional yogurt drink), followed by Nescafe. Many students during a class break may have a candy bar with Coke, while a smaller number may have poaça (pastry with cheese) and fruit juice, more like their parents 15 years ago. But all will continue to refrain from eating while walking on the streets. Rituals define and express a culture and can themselves be active vehicles of change and passage as well as vehicles of stability and cultural anchorage (Turner, 1986). Rituals are reflective – they display ourselves to ourselves – and reflexive – they reveal ourselves to ourselves, through enactment. For example, Umbanda spiritualism in Rio joins together Catholic saints, Indian spirits, and African deities, translating the fusion of three races of Brazil, and it enacts a multiplicity of roles or selves. Umbanda spiritualism is also a way of acquiring prestige, fame, and secular power by the poor (Turner, 1986), just as the examples of creolized consumption we have seen may also involve acquiring status locally through a reintegration of local and global material magic. Many, if not all, religions are creole (e.g., Christianity incorporated the pagan Christmas tree, Islam in Anatolia, North Africa, and Saudi Arabia fused with local pagan beliefs and practices, such as the evil eye, and Chinese Buddhism mixed Indian Buddhism with Chinese ways, making it a unique whole which was then adopted with further creolization in Korea and Japan). So are consumer cultures. Just as is the case when local groups encounter "foreign" or world religions (e.g., Comaroff, 1985; Turner, 1986), consumer culture acceptance involves the dialectics of adoption and resistance within a creative synthesis. Consumption activity, like religious activity, is a means of living through necessary contradictions, changes, and uncertainties. Creolized consumption is a way to reconcile the contradictions, and involves symbiosis, syncretism, as well as struggle. The degree of symbiosis and struggle depends upon the multiplicity of the forces and contradictions within the local, within the global, and within the interaction of the two, in that multiplicity. These forces include the strength of existing ideologies and the degree of integration that has already taken place (or the amount of cultural distance perceived). Thus, LAW, as well as MAW, consumptionscapes are both increasingly becoming the mixing grounds of dynamic local and global consumption icons, spiritual experiences, and emotions.

## NOTES

[1] We use the term "less affluent" to refer to the modernizing or industrializing societies, and as contrasted to the more affluent and dominant "West": "When we speak today of the West, we are usually referring to a force – technological, economic, political – no longer radiating in any simple way from a discrete geographical or cultural center. This force is disseminated in a diversity of forms from multiple centers – now including Japan, Australia . . ." (Clifford, 1988, p. 272). With the disappearance of the Second World, the Third World loses its meaning. Furthermore, the term "developing" is rejected because every society is always developing, and because "developing" has civilizing connotations, whereas many countries of the LAW such as China, India, Egypt, Turkey, and South America have had major civilizations that dwindled, or were wiped away by the Europeans. The term "developing" is also related to the linear time of the progress notion. And we use the term "world" rather than "country", because many of the issues and processes discussed apply to the immigrants, especially recent immigrants who suddenly face adaptation to the West, such as the Algerians and Moroccons in France, Turks in Germany, Carribeans, Africans, and subcontinental Asians in Britain, and Hispanics in the U.S.A. But our focus is on LAW societies, rather than on immigrants.

[2] Our usage of the term differs from another usage, where consumerism refers to being critical of consumption, or suspicious of goods – as in consumer movements, Naderism.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

*"I'd like to buy the world a Coke": Konsumpanoramen in weniger entwickelten Gesellschaften.* Der Beitrag behandelt die Auswirkungen der Globalisierung auf die Konsummuster von weniger entwickelten Gesellschaften und bezieht sich auf beispielhafte Berührungen ihrer Konsumkultur mit Wohlstandsgesellschaften. Er zeigt, daß eine Wirkungskombination aus weltweit agierenden Massenmedien, aus Tourismus und Einwanderung, aus dem Export von Alltagskultur und aus grenzüberschreitenden Marketingaktivitäten zu zunehmenden Erwartungen und Wünschen der Verbraucher führt. Anstelle eines demokratisierten Konsums bewirken diese globalen Konsumeinflüsse jedoch eher soziale Ungleichheit, gesellschaftliche Polarisation, Verbraucherfrustration, Stress, Materialismus und Gefahren für Gesundheit und Umwelt. Als alternative Reaktionen, die eine Globalisierung ablehnen oder ihre Auswirkungen abmildern wollen, kennzeichnet der Beitrag die Rückkehr zu den regionalen Wurzeln, den Widerstand der Verbraucher, die lokale Anpassung von Allerweltsgütern und Veränderung ihrer subjektiven Bedeutungen, sowie vor allem eine "Kreolisierung" im Sinne einer eigenständigen Vermischung und Verschmelzung von Bedeutungsgehalten der unterschiedlichsten Herkunft. Wenn es auch ein Machtungleichgewicht zugunsten eines größeren westlichen kulturellen Einflusses gibt, so gehen die Veränderungsprozesse dennoch nicht einseitig in eine Richtung und das Ergebnis besteht nicht einfach in der Übernahme neuer westlicher Werte. Regionale Konsumpanoramen ergeben sich als Verknüpfung zahlreicher, oft widersprüchlicher, alter, neuer und modifizierter Kräfte, die eigenständige Konsumbedeutungen schaffen und gewährleisten, daß die Konsummuster der weniger entwickelten Welt nicht generell einem westlichen Kulturdiktat unterworfen werden.

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