

The Growth of International Women's Magazines in China and the Role of Transnational Advertising

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Abstract

International women's magazines have been expanding into China for the past few decades. This expansion is, in large part, driven by global brands in need of advertising vehicles for their transnational products. In this paper, we analyze the growth of international women's magazines in China and the role advertising plays in these magazines. Through a content analysis of the advertising in three types of Mandarin-language women's magazines available in China: a Western-based, a Japanese-based and a local, we compared the content of these magazines. We found that international women's magazines are more commercialized in content than local Chinese magazines and that Western-brands dominated the advertising in international magazines. The most advertised products in women's fashion and beauty magazines in China are beauty and personal care products. We also found a significant difference in the race of models used in advertising in women's magazines in China with the Western magazine using predominately Caucasian models while the Japanese and the local Chinese magazine used predominately Asian models.

Introduction

In China, the number of women's magazine titles has risen exponentially in the last twenty years. The speed of this expansion has been accelerated by the China's Open Door policy. Since *Elle* first entered the Chinese magazine market in 1988, the number of international women's magazine titles has risen dramatically and today there are about 45 international titles available in China (Fang, 2006). Most of the international women's magazines in China are the Mandarin editions of popular titles from the U.S. or Europe, such as *Elle*, *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Marie Claire*, and *Harper's Bazaar*. However, there are also a number of Mandarin editions of popular Japanese magazines that are also available in China, such as *Rayli*, *Mina*, *With*, and *ViVi* (Hu et al., 2007, p. 187).

According to the *International Herald Tribune* (2004 February 13), the expansion of international women's magazines in Asia is driven by global brands in need of advertising vehicles. By including foreign fashion and lifestyle with skillfully designed editorial material and beautiful photos, international women's magazines in China attract foreign advertisers as well as Chinese readers away from existing local women's magazines. A number of authors have pointed out that international women's fashion & beauty magazines in China serve the interests of advertisers and their target readers, the new middle-class, by elevating ideas of consumption (Cheng & Frith, 2006; Frith et al., 2005; Hu et al., 2007; Loong, 2003; Shaw, 1999).

This study examines the expansion process of international women's magazines in China and the important role of advertising as a major source of revenue for women's magazines. To understand the close relationship between women's magazines and transnational advertising, this study will also compare the advertising content of international women's magazines with the content of a local Chinese woman's magazine.

Literature Review

Since the early 1980s, media industries worldwide have been restructuring with the emergence of global media. Herman and McChesney (1999) point out that five main elements have contributed to the growth of global media: first, cash flow across national borders; second, saturation of local markets; third, the collaboration between media giants and international banks; fourth, development of technologies such as fiber optic cable, phone systems, and videocassette recorders; lastly, the impact of deregulation on media systems worldwide.

Herman & McChesney (1999) note that the privately owned global media serve primarily as advertising vehicles for transnational companies (TNCs). The globalization of media propels the growth of TNCs, which in turn propels the centralization and conglomeration of media. In the 1980s, more than fifty global firms dominated the output in the media industries but by the end of the 1990s this number declined to half that due to mergers and acquisitions. Bagdikian (1992) indicated, "Tightening concentration was most dramatic in magazines, which went from twenty dominant corporations to three between 1981 and 1988" (p. 23).

The most important effect of media globalization has been the increasing domination of commercial media. As noted by McChesney (2004), "Perhaps the best way to understand how closely the global commercial system is linked to the neo-liberal global capitalist economy is to consider the role of advertising. And the traditional notion of the separation between editorials and advertising is weakened, especially in women's magazines" (p. 12).

Many media historians have noted that in the late 1800s ads were put in the back pages of magazines and segregated from the editorials in order to avoid intruding readers. But in the early 1900s, ads were moved from the back of the magazine pages to the front after advertising revenue became important. More recently, ads have been integrated with the editorials—which are now called "advertorials." In addition, to ads and advertorials, advertisers put pressure on magazine editors to provide a "friendly environment and buying mood for advertising" (Bagdikian, 2004, p. 236).

In order to serve the needs of transnational advertisers, global women's magazines have expanded across borders through the franchise system. This model works by allowing the parent company to build up branches or subsidiary networks of local agents and in this way, they can establish important connections and alliances in foreign markets (Herman & McChesney, 1999). Loong (2003) noted that in China when new editions are to be launched, local publishing companies form joint ventures with the head office of an international publishing company. Then the staff from the head offices will be sent to train the staff and editors in the new foreign office. Also, the local editions of foreign magazines will receive text and pictures from the head offices. By making use of the parent publication's brand name, reputation, format, and experience the local editions of the international magazines have more of a chance to attract international advertisers.

The rise of global media in China

Since the late 1980s, magazines from the U.S., Japan, France, and Germany have expanded into overseas markets. For instance, *Cosmopolitan* now has 33 foreign country editions. When China entered WTO in 2001, it began to open its publishing industry to foreign companies (Hu et al., 2007). In addition, the Four Modernization Reforms started during that period. Thus, China has gradually been transformed into a socialist market economy. The state control has gradually decreased while free market mechanisms are being carried out (Luo, 2004). Although direct ownership by foreign companies has not been

allowed in the publishing industry, foreign companies can “cooperate” with Chinese publishing institutions through licensing agreements (Hu et al., 2007, p. 187).

The entry of the first generation of international women’s magazines in China came from Western countries, such as the U.S. and France. They used Beijing as their marketing base (Wang, 2004). Most of the Western magazines were from the four magazine publishing groups: Hearst, Condé Nast, Hachette Filipacchi, and Marie Claire.

The second generation of international cooperation in women’s magazine publishing came from Asian countries, such as Japan, South Korea, and Singapore (Li, 2004; Wang, 2004). Of these, Japan has been the leading country in entering the Chinese magazine market. The Japanese magazines use Shanghai rather than Beijing as their marketing base (Wang, 2004). As shown in Table 1 most of the Japanese-style magazines are from four main magazine groups in Japan: Shueisha, Shufunotomo, Kodansha, and Shogakukan (Ming, 2006, p. 457).

<i>Table 1 Japanese Magazine Expansion Overseas</i>		
Publisher	Title in Japan	Foreign Editions
Shufunotomo	Ray	China
		Taiwan
	Mina	China
		Taiwan
	ef	China
Kodansha	ViVi	China
		Taiwan
	With	China
	Style	China
	Glamorous	China
Shogakukan	Oggi	China
		China
	CanCam	China
Hachette Fujingaho	25 ans	South Korea
		China
Fusosha	Luci	China
Shueisha	Non-no	Taiwan
Shogakukan & Shueisha	Shonen Jump	U.S.
Recruit	Zexy	China

Source: *Japan Economic Report 2006*

Nearly all of the literature on international women’s magazines has been based on the expansion of Western global media. Herman and McChesney (1999) carried out their research on global media mainly based on the experience of U.S and some European countries. Thus, the case of China is interesting as Western global media are only one of the forces at work. The influence of other Asian countries, such as Japan, has generally been overlooked by Western researchers. In their book, Herman and McChesney (1999) stated, “Japan is notably absent as the home base for global media corporations, and this is a consequence of the low level of advertising in Japan, along with the laws and regulations imposed by U.S. authorities after World War Two that limited conglomeration and multiple newspaper and broadcast station ownership” (p. 103).

However, according to the *Japan Economic Report* (JETRO, October- November 2006), Japan is playing an active role in popularizing its media products overseas, especially in terms of books and women's magazines. Japanese women's magazines have been expanding overseas since the late 1990s, and they have been particularly successful in gaining a foothold in Asian countries. The rise of Japanese women's magazines in China, for example, cannot be separated from the rise in East Asian pop culture (Craig, 2000). Allen and Sakamoto (2006) pointed out, "Cultural flows among East Asian countries, particularly between Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China and South Korea were gradually becoming active and constant more than ever. And Japanese popular culture at the moment plays a central role in the flow" (p. 16). In addition, Flew (2007) points out, "East Asian popular culture is not seen as an alternative to the flows of American and other Western popular cultures, but is instead reflective of a dramatic growth in patterns of cultural consumption among an identifiable segment of the various East Asian national populations" (p. 161).

For many Asians, Japan's pop culture has a resonance that is derived from ethnic similarity and from shared values, tastes, and traditions. The faces of Japan's pop stars and actors resemble their own (Craig, 2000, p. 15). Craig (2000) also indicated that in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, "Teenagers take their fashion cues from the clothes of Japanese singers and TV stars" (p. 310). In fact, some authors argue that, "Japan now uses its popular culture to set up new relationships with Asian countries" (Allen & Sakamoto, 2000, p. 20).

In 1996, the publishing industry in Japan went through an economic depression, and Japanese publishers tried to branch out to overseas markets to increase sales and profits (Sun, 2007). The *Japan Economic Report* (October-November 2006) has pointed out:

Japanese magazines are making headway into China and South Korea. In China, which has a circulation potential three times that of Japan in Shanghai and coastal cities alone, European and American fashion magazines are starting to appear, including *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Elle*. However, Chinese women appear to prefer Japanese magazines to western ones for fashion information... Through partnerships with local companies, Japanese publishers have introduced localized versions of both comic and fashion magazines. The (partnerships with local magazines) trend was initiated by Shufunotomo's fashion magazine *Ray*, which now has a Chinese circulation of 400,000 copies, outstripping its Japanese publication circulation.

Expansion of international women's magazines in China

The major international women's magazines available in China today are mostly part of Western and Japanese media conglomerates set up under licensing agreements. According to a newly issued, government report, foreign investors can build Chinese-foreign cooperative enterprises and Chinese-foreign joint ventures in printing, book and magazine distribution and artwork sales. However, the Chinese partner's investment ratio must be 51% or higher in these joint ventures and the Chinese side is expected to take the leading role (GAPP, 2006). Thus, in order to reduce the risk of entering China, most international women's magazines choose to use a licensing agreement or partnership between the foreign publishing house and a local Chinese publishing house (Loong, 2003). Table 2 also provides some evidence of the changes in cooperative strategies brought by the new liberalization policy. Like their Western counterparts, Japanese publishers also have started to establish their joint ventures in China.

Table 2
International Women's Magazines Published in China

Magazine	Established	Foreign Affiliate	Chinese Publisher	Cooperation Type
<i>Elle China</i>	1988	Hachette Filipacchi Medias (France)	Shanghai Translation Publishing House	First Procedure: Licensing
<i>Cosmopolitan China</i> <i>Harper's Bazaar China</i>	1993 2001	Hearst (U.S.)	Trends Media Group, China	Joint Venture (49%:51%) Licensing
<i>Rayli (Fashion & Beauty, Woman Custom, Fashion Herald)</i>	1995	Shfunotomo Co, Ltd (Japan)	China Light Industry Publishing Press	Licensing
<i>Woman's Day</i>	1995	Hachette Filipacchi Media (France)	China Sport Newspaper Principal Office	Licensing
<i>VIVI China</i>	2000	Kodansha (Japan)	China Textile & Apparel Press	Licensing
<i>Oggi China</i> <i>CanCam China</i>	2001 2005	Shogakukan (Japan)	Shanghai People's Fine Arts Publishing House	Joint Venture (49%:51%)
<i>With China</i>	2002	Kodansha (Japan)	Shanghai Literature & Art Publishing Group	Licensing
<i>Mina China</i>	2004	Shufunotomo (Japan)	Henan Literature & Art Federation	Licensing
<i>Vogue China</i>	2005	Condé Nast Publications (U.S.)	China Pictorial	Licensing
<i>Style China</i>	2005	Kodansha (Japan)	Shanghai Scientific & Technical Publishers	Licensing
<i>25 ans</i>	2005	Hachette Fujingaho (France-Japan, joint venture)	China Council for the Promotion of International Trade	Licensing

Source: <http://www.gotoread.com>

Role of advertising in women's magazines in China

Of the top ten magazines that have the highest advertising revenues in China, seven are women's magazines. Of these, six are international women's magazines and only one magazine *Trends Health* is a local women's magazine (see Table 3).

Table 3
Advertising Expenditure in the Top Ten Magazines in China 2007

Rank of Magazine (by ad revenue)	Rank	Share of Total Adv. Expenditure in China	Local/International
<i>Cosmopolitan China</i>	1	5.00%	U.S.
<i>ELLE China</i>	2	4.81%	France
<i>Rayli (Fashion & Beauty)</i>	3	3.34%	Japan
<i>Harper's Bazaar China</i>	4	3.34%	U.S.
<i>Rayli (Lady's Vogue)</i>	5	2.95%	Japan
<i>Vogue China</i>	6	2.89%	U.S.
<i>Caijing</i>	7	2.23%	Local
<i>Trends Health</i>	8	1.78%	Local
<i>Life Week</i>	9	1.70%	Local
<i>Fortune China</i>	10	1.64%	U.S.

Source: China Newspaper and Magazine Advertising Market Report, 2007

Keane and Spurgeon (2004) note that foreign advertisers are reluctant to buy local media because of the absence of independent and reliable consumer measurement mechanisms in China. Thus, Chinese editions of international women's magazines become the vehicles of choice for transnational companies (TNCs). Since transnational advertising provides the primary funding for international women's magazines, these advertisers play a crucial role in shaping the form and content of women's magazines (Loong, 2003; Shaw, 1999). Advertisers are increasingly interested in the context in which their ads appear and the articles surrounding their ads in these magazines. Major advertisers often insist on specific ideas for "editorial content" (Bagdikian, 2004, p. 236).

Chinese scholars (Cai, 2006; Hu et al., 2007) have pointed out that women's magazines in China can be divided into two categories: the first kind, mainly local titles such as *Zhiyin* and *Family*, contain lots of stories and are based on emotional appeal; the second type are the fashion and beauty magazines, such as *Rayli* and *Cosmopolitan China*, with international content and stories about "a romantic world where people serve the interests of advertisers" (Xu, 2007, p. 269).

Generally, those advertisers with the largest budgets are the global fashion leaders. As Bagdikian (2004) noted, "The fashion section in magazines, for example, is almost always either taken from press releases submitted by designers and fashion houses or written by fashion editors who attend the fashion shows with all expenses paid by the fashion houses." (p. 248). There are about ten giant players which provide the main sources for advertising funding for international women's magazines. They are L'Oreal Company (France), Procter & Gamble Company (U.S.), Estee Lauder (U.S.), Shiseido Company (Japan), Kose (Japan), Unilever Corporation (UK & Holland), LVMH Corporation (France), BENETTON Group (Italy), LG Company (South Korea), and Amore Pacific Company (South Korea) (Statistics of top ten global cosmetics firms' brands, 2007).

Zhang (2006) has noted that Japanese women's magazines provide an ideal venue for Japanese brands, such as Shiseido, Kose, and Sofina. Currently, there are no Chinese editions of Korean women's magazines, so Korean fashion companies often use the Japanese women's magazines for their advertising vehicles, since nearly every issue of *With China*, *ViVi China*, and *Mina China* have fashion stories about Korean fashion style.

Based on the literature review on the growth of global media in China and the rise of international women's magazines poses the following research question: How do local and global women's magazines currently being sold in China differ in terms of the content, types of models used, products advertised and the origins of products advertised?

Content analysis of advertisements

The discussion above has shown that advertising is a major revenue source for women's magazines in China, and that transnational advertising is closely related to the expansion of international women's magazines in China. Thus, comparing the advertising content of the local magazines and international ones is an important way to understand the influence of transnational advertising on women's magazines.

Shaw (1999) content analyzed the advertisements in both local and international women's magazines in Taiwan and found that the international women's magazines devoted more space to advertising than local magazines did. She found that international women's magazines contained more ads for transnational brands and that the most frequently advertised product categories in international magazines differed from those in local magazines. Zhang (2006) found that while Western magazines tended to carry more brands from Western countries, Japanese magazines carried more ads for Japanese brands, such as Kose, and Shiseido, and brands from other Asian countries, such as South Korea.

Some scholars have also pointed out that the content of advertising in global women's magazines in Asian countries differs from that of local women's magazines in product categories, race of models used in ads, and origin of products advertised (Cheng & Frith, 2006; Frith & Oh, 2007; Frith et al., 2005). Therefore, we have developed the following five hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: International magazines in China will carry more advertisements than local magazines.

Hypothesis 2: International magazines in China will contain more advertisements for transnational products than local magazines.

Hypothesis 3: Japanese women's magazines in China will carry more brands from Japan and other Asian countries than Western women's magazines.

Hypothesis 4: Product categories in Western women's magazines will differ from those in both Japanese and local magazines in China.

Hypothesis 5: Local women's magazines in China will feature more Asian models while international magazines will feature more Caucasians.

Methodology

Sample

To maintain comparability, we compared the top-selling Western women's magazine in China in terms of circulation (*Cosmopolitan China*) with the top selling Japanese women's magazine (*Rayli Fashion and Beauty*) and the most popular local Chinese women's magazine,

Woman's Friend. While most of the international women's magazines published in China are classified as "fashion and beauty" magazines, it is difficult to find a perfectly matched Chinese magazine that is purely fashion and beauty because Chinese women's magazines cover a broader spectrum of content. Although a few local fashion and beauty magazines were recently introduced, such as *Grace*, *City Beauty*, and *Lady*, their circulation and advertising revenue is very limited. Thus, *Woman Friend (Love) (Love)* was chosen as it has the highest circulation and is most popular in the category of Chinese women's magazines. It also contains a considerable amount of fashion and beauty content. Today, local women's magazines in China also want to attract more fashion and beauty advertisers that can provide the main financial source for them (Wu, 2006).

The Japanese magazine *Rayli (Fashion & Beauty)* was chosen. It is the Mandarin edition of the popular Japanese magazine *Ray* and has the largest circulation among all the international women's magazines in China while ranking third in terms of ad expenditure, just after *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*. The top-selling Western women's magazine, *Cosmopolitan China* was chosen as it has the highest circulation and advertising revenue of all the Western women's magazines in China.

For the purpose of the study, two issues of each magazine for a total of six magazine issues were chosen at random from within the 6-month period, November 2006 to April 2007.

Magazine	Local/International	Circulation	Selling Price (RMB)
<i>Cosmopolitan China</i>	U.S.	528,000	20
<i>Rayli (Fashion & Beauty)</i>	Japan	680,000	20
<i>Woman's Friend</i>	Local	780,000	6

Source: <http://www.AllChina.cn>

Unit of Analysis

In this study, the content of women's magazines was divided into two parts: advertisements, and editorials (including advertorials). These were defined as follows:

Advertisements: The unit of analysis was an advertisement of one or more full pages. The advertisements on the inside of front and back cover and outside of back cover were also included. Identical advertisements were included in the coding process because repetition is a strategy frequently used in advertising campaigns to attract the audience's attention (Frith & Oh, 2007). As a result, a total number of 372 ads were collected and 307 contained at least one dominant woman.

Editorials: To examine the percentage of advertising in women's magazines, editorials were separated from advertising. And editorials were divided into "advertorials" and "non-advertorials." Advertorials in this study were defined as any "mixtures of advertising and editorial content" which included two main formats: theme features and advertorials (Cameron et al., 1996; Neijens et al., 2003; van Reijmersdal et al., 2005) (see Appendix A).

Products categories: Based on previous studies (Millum, 1975; Frith et al., 2005; Shaw, 1999) the following product category system was constructed: (1) beauty & personal care, (2) women's clothing, (3) personal accessories, (4) cleaning products, (5) food & drink,

(6) medicines and other drugs, (7) entertainment & information, (8) electronic appliances, (9) furniture, (10) miscellaneous (see Appendix A).

Origins of products: The origins of products were divided into the following categories: (1) local products, (2) Western products, (3) Japanese & South Korean products, (4) Others (see Appendix A).

Race of Models: Based on previous research on Asian women's magazines (Frith, Shaw & Cheng, 2005) the race of models in advertisements was coded as either Asian, Caucasian or Other.

Coding

Two independent, Mandarin-speaking Chinese coders were enlisted to do the coding. According to the coding method suggested by Wimmer and Dominick (2004, p. 166), researchers should select a sub-sample of the content and let independent coders categorize it, to assess any poorly defined categories. Also, chronically dissenting coders can be identified in this way. In this study, coders were trained to analyze a sample from one issue of *Woman's Friend*. During the pilot study, coders met to compare their results. When disagreements arose, coders discussed their interpretations and a final decision was made by consensus. Intercoder reliability for each category was tested. The inter-coder reliability levels for Content Category was 0.938, and for the categories Product Category Advertised (0.966), Origins of Products Advertised (0.873), and Race of Models (0.843). Thus, all categories used in this study have achieved the acceptable level of intercoder reliability.

Findings

As shown in Table 5, a total of 856 units were analyzed from four international women's magazines and two local women's magazines. In terms of content category, international women's magazines in China have more commercial information (advertorials and advertisements) than local women's magazines, whereas local women's magazines have more non-commercial reading material (non-advertorials) than international magazines (see Table 5). The differences between *Cosmo* and *Woman Friend (Love) (Love)* was statistically significant ($X^2=26.230$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$) and the difference between *Rayli* and the local magazine was also statistically significant ($X^2=58.718$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$). In fact, *Cosmo* magazine contained more editorials (29.6%) than *Rayli* (17.5%) and about the same amount of advertisements (46%), whereas *Rayli* contained more advertorials (35.8%). These differences were statistically significant ($X^2=18.791$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$). The data indicate that international women's magazines are more commercialized than the local magazines. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 5
A Comparison of Content Categories

	International				<i>Woman Friend (Love)</i>	
	<i>Cosmo</i>		<i>Rayli</i>			
Content	N	%	N	%	N	%
Editorial (non-advertorial parts)	122	29.6	50	17.5	83	52.2
Advertorial	97	23.5	102	35.8	30	18.9
Advertisement	193	46.8	133	46.7	46	28.9
Total	412	100.0	285	100.0	159	100.0

As can be seen from Table 6, there was a statistically significant difference in terms of product origins advertised in the three magazines. The difference between the Western and the Japanese women's magazines was statistically significant ($X^2=13.705$, $df=3$, $p=0.003<0.01$). And the difference between the Western and the local women's magazines was statistically significant ($X^2=46.740$, $df=3$, $p<0.001$). Also, the difference between the Japanese and the local women's magazines was statistically significant ($X^2=20.357$, $df=3$, $P<0.001$).

More than 85% of the advertisements in both *Cosmo* and *Rayli* were for transnational brands. However, in the local magazine, only about 60% of the products advertised were from transnational corporations. Among all the advertising, brands from Western countries accounted for the greatest number of ads in *Rayli* and *Cosmo*. And *Rayli* contained more Western brands (63.9%) than Japanese brands (24.8%). However, *Rayli* did contain more Japanese and South Korean brands than did either the *Cosmo* magazine or the local magazine. Thus, hypothesis 2 and 3 were supported. Compared with the local *Woman's Friend*, the international magazines were favored by transnational advertisers in China. The Japanese women's magazine did carry more Japanese products than the local or the Western woman's magazine.

Table 6
A Comparison of the Origins of Products in Advertising

	International				<i>Woman Friend (Love)</i>	
	<i>Cosmo</i>		<i>Rayli</i>			
Product Origin	N	%	N	%	N	%
Local Products	12	6.2	14	10.5	18	39.1
Western Products	158	81.9	85	63.9	17	37.0
Japanese & South Korean Products	22	11.4	33	24.8	11	23.9
Others	1	0.5	1	0.8	0	0.0
Total	193	100.0	133	100.0	46	100.0

As shown in Table 7, in terms of product categories that were advertised in each magazine, the differences between *Cosmo* and *Rayli* were statistically significant ($X^2=48.767$, $df=9$, $P<0.001$). And the differences between *Cosmo* and *Woman Friend (Love)* (*Love*) were statistically significant ($X^2=46.320$, $df=8$, $P<0.001$). However, the differences between *Rayli* and *Woman Friend (Love)* (*Love*) were not statistically significant ($X^2=14.478$, $df=9$, $P=0.106>0.05$). Thus, hypothesis 4 was supported. However, it is interesting to note that in all three types of women's magazines in China, beauty products made up the majority of the ads.

	International				Woman Friend (Love)	
	Cosmo		Rayli			
Products	N	%	N	%	N	%
Beauty & Personal Care	104	53.9	90	67.7	36	78.3
Women's Clothing	55	28.5	17	12.8	0	0.0
Personal Accessories	29	15.0	3	2.3	2	4.3
Cleaning Products	0	0.0	1	0.8	0	0.0
Food & Drink	1	0.5	4	3.0	0	0.0
Medicines & Other Drugs	1	0.5	2	1.5	2	4.3
Entertainment & Information	0	0.0	6	4.5	3	6.5
Electronic Equipment	1	0.5	7	5.3	0	0.0
Furniture & Kitchen Equipment	2	1.0	1	0.8	1	2.2
Others	0	0.0	2	1.5	2	4.3
Total	193	100.0	133	100.0	46	100.0

Finally, in terms of the race of models used in advertising (see Table 8) we found that Caucasian women were featured more often in advertising in *Cosmo* (66.7%) while Asian models were used most often in *Rayli* (50%) and *Woman Friend (Love)* (80%). Thus, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

	International				Woman Friend (Love)	
	Cosmo		Rayli			
Ethnicity	N	%	N	%	N	%
Asian	53	32.7	55	50.0	28	80.0
Caucasian	108	66.7	50	45.5	6	17.1
Others	1	0.6	5	4.5	1	2.9
Total	162	100.0	110	100.0	35	100.0

Conclusion

The growth of women's magazines in China during the past few decades has been dramatic. While the earliest foreign magazines to enter China in the 1980s came from Western publishing giants like Condé Nast and Hearst, beginning in 1995 the Japanese publishing companies also entered the scene. Today, the Western magazines compete with the Japanese magazines for readers and our research shows that in terms of circulation figures, it is the Japanese magazine, *Rayli* that now has the largest share of readers.

As noted earlier in our paper, the growth of women's magazines has been driven by rising consumer spending in China and the need of transnational advertisers for media vehicles to reach these new consumers. Through a content analysis of the advertising in three types of Mandarin-language women's magazines available in China: a Western-based, a Japanese-based and a local, we compared the content of these magazines. We found that international women's magazines are more commercialized in content than the local Chinese magazine. In fact, more than 50% of local magazine content was editorial matter, while the majority of the content in the Japanese and the Western women's magazines was commercial (advertising and advertorials).

We also found that Western-brands dominated the advertising in the Western women's magazine. More than 80% of the ads in *Cosmo* were for Western products. However, in *Woman's Friend*, the local Chinese magazine, the majority of advertisements (40%) were for Chinese brands, and another 24% of the ads were for Japanese or Korean brands making the commercial content of the Chinese women's magazine decidedly Asian in origin. Interestingly, the Japanese magazine, *Rayli*, contained over 60% of its ad content from Western brands and only 25% from Japanese and Korean brands.

While the content of *Rayli* did feature predominately Western brands, they did not use Caucasian models in most of their ads. Unlike the Western magazine, *Cosmo*, which featured Caucasian models 67% of the time, the Japanese magazine used Caucasian models only 45% of the time. This means that in terms of appeals to readers, the Japanese women's magazine was using more Asians to appeal to its Asian readers in China, while the Western women's magazine, *Cosmo*, was using Caucasian models to appeal to their Asian readers. This may explain why *Rayli* is more popular and has a higher circulation than *Cosmo* in China. The Western magazines like *Cosmo* entered the country earlier, and should have been able to establish a loyal reader base, but perhaps the consistent use of Asian, rather than Caucasian models in the advertising has been one reason why the Japanese magazines, like *Rayli*, which entered the country later, have overtaken the Western magazines in terms of circulation and readership. If this is true it again brings into question whether concepts like Western cultural imperialism and global media's hegemony hold sway.

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