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# International Advertising Research
## *A Historical Review*

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### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review and evaluate the historical literature on international advertising research. This review includes an assessment of the:

- contributions of such research to knowledge;
- research approaches that have been used in the past;
- research topics that need to be investigated; and
- appropriate research approaches to do so.

International advertising researchers, teachers, and business executives (including students who are future executives or researchers) can make use of such information not only to avoid mistakes of the past but also to maximize the benefits from using such knowledge in the future.

#### Definition of key terms

**Advertising**. Historically, most international advertisers have tended to think of advertising in broad terms – to include other marketing communication activities. In the USA in the 1960s the terms "promotional strategy" and "marketing communication mix" came into wide usage, followed later by "integrated marketing communication." For many, the term *advertising*, broadly defined, continued to be the term of choice. In this chapter "advertising" will be used broadly to include all marketing communication activities. They include not only sales messages in mass media, but also sales promotion, point-of-purchase materials, marketing public relations, customer relations, sponsorship of events, collateral sales materials, corporate advertising,

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outdoor boards, kiosk advertising, transit advertising, direct marketing, mail order advertising, Internet advertising, and other means to promote the reputation of sellers and to influence customers to purchase or explain to customers how to use and benefit from the brands, products, or services they sell.

Advertising (marketing communication) is a component in the marketing mix. Marketing in turn is a component in the broader mix of interrelated business activities that includes production, finance, and other functions. Viewed as a system, all business activities are functionally related to each other. They are also functionally related to, and must be made in response to, conditions in the business environment: for example, the nature of the market, customer behavior, conditions of competition, laws and regulations, etc.

**International advertising**. Many terms have been used that are similar to "international advertising," such as export advertising and sales promotion, international promotion, global advertising, multinational advertising, transnational advertising, international marketing communication, and cross-cultural advertising. In this chapter the term *international advertising* includes all of these meanings.

Most importantly, international advertising is that which is conceived or initiated in, or at least in part influenced, designed, or executed, in one country for use in at least one other country. It is important that those who conduct international advertising research should understand the total international business system, including the complex international business environment.

**International advertising research**. Broadly, research consists of collecting, processing, analyzing, and interpreting information for a purpose. There are two main purposes of international advertising research: (1) to assist business executives to make profitable international advertising decisions for their specific products and services, and (2) to contribute to general knowledge of international advertising that is potentially useful to a variety of business executives, educators, government policy makers, advertising self-regulatory organizations, and others interested in understanding the process and effects of international advertising. Most research that is conducted for the first purpose is proprietary and not readily available to outsiders; it is not appropriate to include such research here. Instead, this chapter is devoted to research that is intended to contribute to general knowledge of international advertising and to the research approaches and methods needed to advance such knowledge.

## The origins of international advertising research

Rudimentary practice must evolve before an occupation, field of activity, or profession can become an academic discipline that is a suitable subject for scholarly research. When a field of endeavor becomes sufficiently important economically or socially it attracts teachers to train new employees for entry-level positions. Initially these teachers draw from their past practical experience. But it soon becomes clear that research is necessary not only to explain but also to lead practice. Leading requires doing research that yields information to build models or theory that can explain and predict relevant outcomes of the activities that comprise the field. Those who teach past practice are sooner or later replaced by teacher-researchers who not only transfer existing information and practices, but also generate and transfer new knowledge.

The new knowledge that scholarly researchers produce leads to theory and generalizations, which in turn lead to increasingly rapid development of sophisticated practice (usually a few years later), followed by more sophisticated teacher-scholars who in turn produce an increased volume of scholarly research – a synergistic process. In a mature professional discipline, research supports teaching. Teaching and research both support practice.

The evolution of international advertising practice, teaching, and research has begun to follow this traditional pattern. In the USA export or international advertising emerged as an important business activity in the early 1900s. It was planned and executed on the basis of judgment and accumulated practical experience. As it became more important economically and socially after World War II, teachers at colleges, institutes, and universities in the 1960s and 1970s began to see the need for systematic inquiry to: (a) *explain* the nature of international advertising practice and the process and effects of international advertising, and (b) *study* the many functional relationships among the factors that make it possible to predict when and under what circumstances international advertising is effective in accomplishing its objectives. Teachers and researchers also became increasingly interested in the economic and social effects of advertising, and more recently those effects of international advertising.

In the early development of an academic discipline it is necessary to define and categorize the many components of it. To a great extent international advertising is still in that stage. Next, theory evolves from research as the functional relationships between the variables in these categories are specified, not only in words but also quantitatively. To a limited extent international advertising has advanced to this stage, and is gradually becoming a mature discipline.

Since much of the research relevant to international advertising was published in the USA, this chapter focuses primarily thereon. It also includes notable perspectives from research conducted in other nations.

## International Advertising Practice and Knowledge

Information in the next few pages explains the development of international advertising practice and its importance as a business activity. It illustrates why scholarly researchers became interested in investigating international advertising.

### International advertising practice in the early 1900s to mid-century

Sellers likely engaged in some form of international advertising as long ago as trade was conducted across national boundaries. For our purposes, international advertising gradually became a significant business activity with the industrialization of the economies of countries in Europe and North America. Advertising is largely a phenomenon of developed economies in which companies sell branded products and services to ultimate consumers and to each other (business-to-business).

In the first 30 years of the 1900s, especially in the prosperous 1920s, increasing numbers of European and US manufacturers sold branded consumer or industrial products outside their home countries. Some of them utilized "export advertising agencies." Most such agencies depended primarily on foreign agencies (called affiliate, associate, or correspondent agencies) either to modify domestic campaigns or to initiate entirely new campaigns, whichever was appropriate from their clients' point of view. Export agencies and their foreign affiliates serving international industrial (now called business-to-business) advertisers tended to translate and adapt domestic advertising materials for use abroad. Agencies serving international advertisers of consumer products tended to depend somewhat more on foreign correspondent agencies to develop localized advertising campaigns appropriate for their particular markets (Miracle, 1966).

By 1930 a few large full-service US agencies such as J. Walter Thompson, McCann-Erickson, and N. W. Ayer had established offices outside the USA (Miracle, 1966). They provided international service for the brands their US clients exported or manufactured abroad. Because they were able to provide service to their clients both at home and abroad, they had a competitive advantage over export advertising agencies. This advantage in forthcoming decades contributed to the decline in business for export agencies. These US full-service agencies also served local clients in the countries in which they had offices (Miracle, 1966). Such local service occasionally led to obtaining some of the US or other international billings of those clients. Sometimes these foreign offices even served clients who employed a competitor's advertising agency for their US or home-country advertising. Such complex arrangements made for an interesting advertising agency competitive climate, especially when clients wished to build a coherent brand image at home and abroad. It was sometimes important for each foreign office to work closely with the agency's other foreign offices in order to serve a client worldwide. At the same time, each foreign office had to operate with a great deal of autonomy when seeking new business from local clients.

International trade languished during the worldwide "great depression" of the 1930s and was further interrupted by World War II. The number of US international advertisers, their international sales, and the volume of their international advertising declined. In the late 1940s and 1950s some US manufacturers of industrial and consumer products revived and expanded their previous international operations. At the same time new international marketers began to sell abroad. Some of these US firms established manufacturing capabilities abroad. European companies, devastated by World War II, did the same a few years later. The process occurred also in a few other countries.

Pent-up demand developed in many countries after World War II, not only because of the disruptions of business during the war, but also because of the postwar development of new and better consumer and industrial products. Consequently, export sales grew rapidly in the years after the war with only minimal demand-stimulating activities such as advertising (Miracle, 1966).

## Early twentieth-century industry knowledge of international advertising

In the first half of the twentieth century, marketing research techniques to provide information that was useful to make international marketing decisions were not well developed. Exporters depended mainly for needed market information on past experience, their sales force, channels of distribution, and secondary sources.

As the practice of export advertising evolved, leading practitioners wrote about their experience and offered advice to others. Articles on export advertising were published in trade publications such as *Printer's Ink* and in several books, including *Export Advertising*, by Brown (1923), the advertising manager for the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, and *Export Advertising Practice*, by Propson (1923), the manager of sales promotion for Bausch and Lomb, and previously export advertising manager for Du Pont.

Eroglu and Eroglu (1994) reported that the first international marketing book published in the USA bore the title *World Marketing* (Collins, 1935). They observed that it was "dominated by the works of pioneers [e.g., sales executives] who had come from non-marketing backgrounds." They wrote that Collins' book was descriptive and prescriptive; it explained and recommended a broad range of detailed marketing practices that were suitable for US companies "operating in far-distant lands." Two decades later, another book with many of the same practical characteristics, *Modern International Commerce*, was authored by Pratt (1956), professor of foreign trade at New York University. The content of these two books was typical of the practical foreign trade literature at the time, which included brief mention of advertising practices while providing a broad range of detailed information on other commercial, credit, financial, marketing channel, product, pricing, physical distribution, and sales practices needed by exporters.

Until the mid-1960s the literature dealing specifically with export/international advertising was written *by* practitioners *for* practitioners. In addition to the two export advertising books mentioned earlier, typical examples of such articles were "Consumer Habits and Consumer Advertising in the Benelux Countries" in *Export Trade and Shipper* (Rosseels, 1957), "The Nigerian Consumer" in *International Advertiser* (Alperton, 1962), "How to Write Spanish Copy – Without a Yankee Accent," in *Industrial Marketing* (Langen, 1959), "Use Symbols with Sense to Earn More Dollars," in *Export Trade* (Kelly, 1959), "Why Can't the French Write Copy?" in *Printers Ink* (Marcus, 1960), and "Advertising Decentralization Abroad Creates Major Coordinating Problem," in *Export Trade* (Patterson, 1963). This literature gradually faded in importance as the scholarly literature increased in importance in the late 1960s and 1970s, especially regarding issues related to the standardization of international advertising.

## The development of modern international advertising practice

Between 1930 and the mid-1950s the number of export or international advertising agencies declined. In 1958 in the USA six full-service advertising agencies and a handful of export/international advertising agencies were capable of providing international advertising services for their US clients. These six accounted for more than 90% of all international billings of US agencies. A somewhat larger number of the remaining small export/international agencies accounted for the rest (Miracle, 1966). Although no similar statistics are available, anecdotal evidence suggests that a similar pattern occurred in Europe, but several years later.

Small- and medium-sized international advertising agencies did not disappear entirely. Today some still exist in many countries. They serve not only their local clients, but also, as a participant in a network of independently owned agencies in a number of countries, provide service in their local markets for the international clients of other members of the network.

Into the 1960s most exporters and manufacturers with foreign subsidiaries necessarily continued to utilize local foreign advertising agency services available in the countries in which they did business. But gradually an increasing number of them demanded coordinated US and international service from their "domestic" advertising agencies. This pressure was a stimulus for US advertising agencies to expand abroad (Miracle, 1966).

To develop their international capabilities, most US agencies purchased minority, majority, or 100% ownership interests in foreign agencies. Ownership gave them the ability to provide the services their clients desired. Most could not start new foreign agencies from scratch, since they knew little about foreign laws, regulations, consumers, markets, competition, and media. Moreover, offices in another country could rarely be profitable unless they had at least 50% of their billings from local clients. Although there is little published information on European advertising agencies, anecdotal information suggests that some of them evolved similarly.

By 1964 more than 20 US full-service advertising agencies provided at least minimal international advertising service to a few clients in at least a few countries (Miracle, 1966). There was continued substantial growth in the international billings of US agencies in the late 1960s and beyond, as they "followed the flag" of their multinational clients.

With some notable exceptions, much international advertising in the 1960s was rather primitive by today's standards. The personnel of most advertisers, agencies, and media – with only a few exceptions – were limited by their lack of international knowledge of (a) general market conditions and the size and extent of relevant market segments, (b) customer characteristics and behavior, (c) competition, (d) laws, regulations, and barriers to trade, (e) international and foreign marketing channels, and the sales forces that sold to or through them, (f) the structure of advertising agencies, media, and other service organizations, and (g) many other cultural, economic, legal, political, social, and technological conditions important to doing business in other nations. Most agencies had few internationally competent managers or creative, media, and support personnel, and most had inadequate organizations and methods to handle international advertising for their clients. Likewise, principals in the foreign agencies in which US agencies purchased an interest often were not knowledgeable about the practices of their new US owners or partners. Sometimes there were misunderstandings. In the midst of this lack of knowledge, advertising agencies differed considerably in the quality of their international service (Miracle, 1966).

Agency service also varied by types of products and characteristics of customers. For example, US domestic advertising in trade magazines or radio for business-to-business products or for agricultural equipment to farmers often was easier to adapt appropriately for international use than advertising for consumer products. The profit motive and the relatively more rational (and less emotional) buyer behavior of industrial and agricultural customers tended to be relatively more similar and predictable across countries than the purchasing behavior of ultimate consumers, thereby permitting the use of many of the same appeals in many countries (Miracle, 1966).

The expansion of international advertising in the 1960s led to many different kinds of advertiser and agency organizations. Most advertisers established geographical, area, or regional structures that grouped countries in logical ways, for example, by languages, cultures, or economic conditions. Some advertisers with product-line international structures tended to centralize their advertising and handle it largely within their organizations, except for media placement, which required an agency. Agency organizational structures tended to match the structures of their major clients (Miracle, 1965, 1966).

In the 1970s and 1980s many consolidations and mergers led to the emergence of large international media buying organizations and large holding companies consisting of groups of international advertising agencies. Some conglomerates included an international media buying organization as well as groups of agencies with offices in many countries. Restructuring, consolidation, and mergers, along with occasional breakups and failures, have continued.

From the 1980s onward, advertising practices within domestic advertising agencies in Europe and the USA continued to improve. The earlier ideas of the marketing communication mix and promotional strategy evolved into modern integrated marketing communication (IMC). Advertising agencies made organizational adjustments needed to implement IMC and they evolved into broader marketing communication agencies. Improved marketing research techniques were developed. Improved services from marketing research companies became widely available. Marketers had increased access to reliable information on markets, consumer behavior, competitive conditions, and other needed information.

Some of these domestic advances also flowed to agencies' international offices. For example, large international advertising agencies transferred account planning, advanced marketing research techniques, and new advertising production technology to their offices around the world. The term "global advertising" came into wide usage, suggesting, perhaps, that advertisers, agencies, and media were somewhat more sophisticated than they actually were in communicating effectively with consumers in other cultures.

Starting in the early days of export advertising, and especially since the 1960s, many advertisers and agencies tried to standardize their international advertising as much as possible. This policy sometimes led to problems as well as successes, depending on the circumstances. It proved difficult to implement internationally the advances in the sophistication of advertising within the countries of Asia, Europe, and the USA. Much of the international advertising in the world remained essentially local in nature. For example, Kanso and Nelson (2007) surveyed 84 firms and found that 70%

decentralized their advertising decisions for foreign markets, and 30% used a centralized decision process. Eight reported that US headquarters made all advertising decisions for their foreign markets. These percentages are almost identical to ones reported 39 years earlier by Donnelly (1968).

## The Support of International Advertising Research by Industry Organizations

In the first half of the twentieth century in the USA numerous industry trade associations were established, along with organizations such as the American Management Association and the National Industrial Conference Board. They have a broad mission to support their members with information through seminars, industry research, and trade publications on a comprehensive range of business topics, sometimes including international advertising. They also maintain contacts with a few marketing and advertising educators, occasionally including those who conduct scholarly international advertising research. Somewhat similar organizations have evolved in Asia, Europe, and a few other countries.

In the early 1960s the US business community established and funded the Marketing Science Institute (MSI). MSI supports scholarly marketing research that leads to theory and generalizations that are considered to have the potential to be useful to marketing practice, occasionally including international advertising. Supporting companies often partner with scholarly researchers and MSI pre-publication research reports are provided to them. Frequently these reports serve as the basis for subsequent articles in scholarly journals and papers in academic conference proceedings. They not only advance existing knowledge, but often suggest directions for future research.

### Advertising and marketing industry organizations

The US advertising industry has established a number of associations such as the American Association of Advertising Agencies, the Association of National Advertisers, the American Advertising Federation, the Advertising Research Foundation, the Direct Marketing Association, the Outdoor Advertising Association, the Internet Marketing Association, the Business Marketing Association, the Mobile Marketing Association, and the Web Marketing Association. Some of these associations conduct industry conferences or seminars that include a few educators, or they support advertising and marketing education in other ways, sometimes including international advertising teaching and research. Somewhat similar organizations have evolved in Asia, Europe, and a few other countries.

### The International Advertising Association

In 1938, export advertising executives founded the Export Advertising Association (EAA) in New York. In 1953, when the term "international advertising" had come into wide usage, the EAA was renamed the International Advertising Association (IAA).

The IAA is dedicated solely to international advertising. Through a newsletter and other publications, and through member presentations at bi-annual World Congresses, the IAA has had a significant influence on the flow of international advertising knowledge within the business community. In the 1980s the IAA published a number of monographs on several international advertising topics, especially on the regulation and self-regulation of advertising in countries. The IAA made these reports available not only to its members, but also to the academic community for use in teaching. Some of these reports also led to scholarly publications (Boddewyn, 1982, 1988, 1992).

In the early 1980s the IAA appointed a Director of Professional Development, and established standards for an advertising diploma program. The IAA granted accreditation to colleges, institutes, and universities that adhered to these standards so that their students could qualify for the diploma. At about the same time, the IAA established an International Advertising Diploma, which was granted to students on the basis of a once-a-year examination conducted at approved educational institutions in many countries. This international diploma was discontinued a decade ago. Also since the early 1980s, the IAA hosted bi-annual international advertising educator conferences. They facilitated educator–practitioner interactions and promoted educator interactions with each other through presentations of papers on teaching and, to a limited extent, on research. Until a few years ago, the IAA Director of Professional Development supported teaching in a number of ways, including (a) maintaining an extensive bibliography of publications on international advertising (some also useful for research), (b) providing teaching advice, cases, and other resources, and (c) sponsoring InterAd, an international case competition for students. The IAA dropped InterAd a few years ago. Thus the IAA facilitated international advertising teaching, especially for its now more than 50 accredited institutes in 35 countries. However, IAA support of international advertising research and contributions to knowledge, therefrom, have been modest.

In 2008 the IAA Director of Professional Development retired. IAA future support of international advertising teaching and research seems uncertain.

## The Influence of Educator Organizations on International Advertising Research

### Historical advertising and marketing educator associations

The National Association of Teachers of Advertising (NATA) was established in 1915 at the annual convention of the Association of Advertising Clubs of the World in Chicago. The NATA later became the National Association of Marketing Teachers (NAMT) and in 1937 merged with the American Marketing Society (AMS) to form the American Marketing Association (AMA). These associations were established to share knowledge and promote the development of marketing practice. The *Journal of Marketing* was established by the AMS and the NAMT in 1936 to disseminate marketing knowledge, including advertising. The majority of AMA members from the beginning have been marketing executives. They shared AMA leadership with academic members. Business and educator members conduct separate national conferences and other service activities, with appropriate overlap. Reportedly, the activities of these early twentieth-century associations sometimes were relevant to export/international advertising.

In recent decades the AMA and other marketing educator organizations such as the Academy of Marketing Science and the Association for Consumer Research have a broad mission to support marketing teaching and research. Their conferences, journals, and other activities sometimes include international advertising.

## The American Academy of Advertising

The American Academy of Advertising (AAA) was established in 1958 by advertising educators. Based primarily on their practical advertising experience, early AAA members dedicated their efforts to preparing students for entry-level positions in the advertising business. Initially the main purpose of the AAA was to facilitate the development and sharing of teaching materials and techniques, especially to obtain "state of the art" teaching materials and resources from the advertising business they served. Gradually the focus shifted to include advancing knowledge through scholarly research. In 1972 the AAA established the *Journal of Advertising*, which has become the leading academic journal in the field of advertising.

Several AAA members met informally at the 1988 and 1989 AAA national conferences to discuss their international teaching and research interests, especially to share their ideas and resources among themselves and with other Academy members. Under the leadership of Hall Duncan and Gordon Miracle, they obtained approval to form a special committee, the International Advertising Education Committee (IAEC).

In 1990 the IAEC conducted the first of a number of one-day international advertising pre-conference programs at the National Conference of the AAA. The program featured both industry and educator presenters. The interaction among them led to fruitful exchanges that benefited international teaching and research. The internationally experienced members of the IAEC also made plans to provide other AAA members with international teaching and research experience. However, the AAA Executive Committee decided that it was beyond the mission of the IAEC to arrange such activities in other countries.

During the decade of the 1990s the international pre-conference programs of the IAEC brought educators and industry representatives together to share their perspectives and knowledge. The pre-conferences attracted increasing numbers of AAA members, including members from other countries. Within a few years international advertising research papers increasingly met standards that qualified them to be included in the main program of the AAA national conferences. By the end of the 1990s, international advertising *research* had become mainstream in the AAA.

In 2001 and 2003, under the leadership of Robert King, the AAA conducted the first two of its bi-annual Asia-Pacific Conferences in Tokyo. They were followed by conferences in Hong Kong, Seoul, Beijing, and Brisbane. In 2010 the AAA conducted its first bi-annual European Conference in Milan. At these conferences educators present research findings, discuss teaching and research activities, and interact with international advertising executives. The influence of AAA member activities on the development of international advertising research has been broad and deep.

### Other advertising educator organizations and publication outlets

In the mid-1960s a few professors of advertising and marketing (see Appendix) began to publish international advertising research results in the *Journal of Marketing*, the *Journal of Advertising Research*, and other scholarly journals in the fields of marketing, journalism, communication, and business administration. Their work also appeared in conference proceedings.

As academic researchers increased their productivity, outlets for the publication of their findings also increased. Existing marketing journals absorbed some of that output. Additional organizations and journals came into existence. Among the most influential regarding international advertising were the American Academy of Advertising's *Journal of Advertising*, the *Journal of Advertising Research*, the *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, and the *Journal of International Advertising*.

In 2002 the members of the European Advertising Academy (EAA) established the International Conference on Research in Advertising (ICORIA). This annual educator conference includes special sessions, invited lectures, and research paper presentations. Conference proceedings are published. Soon ICORIA began to attract scholars from the USA and other countries. In its brief existence ICORIA has already had substantial influence on the advancement of international advertising research.

The Japan Advertising Academy (JAA) draws only a few scholars from other countries to its national conferences. But an increasing number of Japanese university scholars regularly attend academic advertising and marketing conferences abroad.

Scholars from many other countries also attend and present research papers at each other's national and international conferences. For example, in recent years the Korean Academy of Marketing Science (KAMS) held global marketing conferences in Seoul, Shanghai, Beijing, and Tokyo that attracted hundreds of European, US, Chinese, Indian, and other international marketing researchers, including some who made presentations on international advertising.

## Academic Research Contributions to Knowledge of International Advertising

The scholarly international marketing literature emerged before the more specialized scholarly literature on international advertising. The first US textbook, entitled *International Marketing*, was authored by Kramer (1959), a university professor who previously had written on international marketing in the "international trade" literature. In the next years, advertising executives and marketing professors published a few articles in trade magazines and scholarly journals on marketing and market conditions in particular countries; some of them included material on advertising in those countries. Most international marketing books, like those by Collins (1935), Pratt (1956), Kramer (1959), Hess and Cateora (1966), and Miracle and Albaum (1970), devoted a chapter or two to export advertising, international advertising, or international marketing communication.

## International advertising research published in the US literature

Prior to the 1960s, there was little or no scholarly literature on international advertising. S. Watson Dunn (1964) at the University of Illinois recognized the need to pull together the only available information on the topic, namely, articles on international advertising published in industry magazines, and new material from a few knowledgeable authors. He compiled and edited the *International Handbook of Advertising*. It consisted of 76 readings, written mostly by advertising executives, but a few also by academics. Most contributions to the book were based primarily on the authors' practical international experience.

In the mid-1960s, in harmony with the fairly widespread industry desire to standardize international advertising whenever possible, several executives wrote articles, in which they cited their experience to support the idea that international advertising should be standardized (Elinder, 1965; Fatt, 1967; Patterson, 1963; Roostal, 1963).

Roostal (1963) and Elinder (1965) made a coherent case for standardization of appeals in advertising intended for several European countries. They pointed out that for selected products, consumer purchasing behavior, as well as the ways in which consumers use the selected products, are similar from country to country. Therefore, they asserted, the same appeals can be effective in many European countries.

Fatt (1967) and Levitt (1983) were also prominent proponents of standardization. They stressed that standardization not only yielded cost reductions in planning and enhanced control, but also led to the building of an international brand and company image.

Some academic researchers such as Donnelly and Ryans (1969) concluded that the arguments for international advertising standardization were not conclusive. Sometimes identical products are purchased or used by consumers somewhat differently in different countries. This possibility suggests that somewhat different advertising appeals among markets might maximize the effectiveness of their advertising. However, some successes in the standardization of advertising had been achieved through the use of prototype campaigns, pretested in a limited number of nations, and used by a company's subsidiaries in groups of countries that had similar characteristics that were salient for the product. For example, climate is an important influence on the advertising of automobile tires, so the same safety appeals for winter tires can be used effectively to influence customers in countries with similar climates.

Miracle (1966) authored the first research monograph with the term "international advertising" in the title. In this book he examined a broad range of international advertising activities of many advertisers and agencies. His conclusions led to a broad view of the standardization issue, especially regarding message, media, and budgeting decisions. The topics included:

1. Communicating with foreign consumers.
2. Trends in client organization.
3. Clients' international advertising policies and procedures.
4. International expansion of US advertising agencies.
5. Policies of agencies on foreign branches.
6. Other methods of providing international service.
7. Agencies' internal operating policies.

The book was both descriptive and analytical. The analysis led to a number of conclusions about how advertisers and agencies should handle international advertising, including perspectives on the standardization/localization issue. Miracle's (1966, 1968) analyses of the many factors that determine the nature of international advertising led to an intermediate position on whether or not advertising messages, media plans and schedules, and advertising budgets should be standardized across international markets. He argued that such decisions depend on:

- type of product;
- homogeneity or heterogeneity of markets and customers;
- characteristics and availability of media;
- types of advertising agency service available in each market segment;
- government restrictions on the nature of advertising;
- government tariffs on artwork or printed matter;
- trade codes, ethical practices, and industry agreements; and
- corporate organization.

The above list expresses basic ideas from which more comprehensive sets of factors influencing standardization were later developed. The main point that Miracle (1968) made was that those who were beginning to do research on whether or not international advertising should be standardized were not asking the right questions. He wrote that the questions should have been:

- When, and under what conditions, should international advertising be standardized, and when not? Why or why not?
- Which aspects of advertising should be standardized, e.g., objectives, strategies, or executions – for messages, media plans, or budgets?
- How should international advertising be planned, directed, controlled, and evaluated?
- How should markets be segmented?
- What should be the respective roles of advertisers, agencies, and media in planning and executions?
- What factors should be taken into consideration when making decisions to standardize or not to standardize?
- What decision-making methods and tools should be used?

Rather than trying to standardize international advertising, Miracle (1968) concluded that international advertisers ought to *standardize the methods they used to make decisions* on how best to advertise in each market. Miracle's recommendation subsequently became known as *process standardization* (Walters, 1986).

Miracle's (1966, 1968) research questions to guide international advertising research and his recommendation to focus on process standardization were largely ignored. Most academic researchers continued their quest for ways to standardize international advertising messages. Nearly 40 years later, Fastoso and Whitelock (2007) reported increased interest in the idea of process standardization and pointed out that several studies had been done in recent years that dealt with it in the context of headquarters' control and centralization of international advertising. They wrote: "Probably, the most comprehensive work in the area of process standardization is that presented by Laroche *et al.* (2001)."

The publications of scholarly researchers gradually provided material for educators to teach university courses in international marketing and advertising. Prior to 1960 some universities offered courses in international trade that included exporting practices. For example, at the University of Wisconsin in the spring semester of 1960, the author of this chapter was assigned to teach a course entitled "Export Sales Management." He immediately renamed it "International Marketing" and adopted the new textbook with that title by Kramer (1959). After experience in teaching international marketing, with a substantial component on international advertising, Gordon Miracle in the spring of 1967 at Michigan State University offered the first US university course in "International Advertising." S. Watson Dunn at the University of Illinois followed a few years later with a similar course. Gradually over the years other universities added international advertising to their curricula. Early international advertising courses were based on each professor's industry experience, articles and books by advertising executives, cases written for classroom use, and on the limited academic research results that were available.

In the 1960s, based in part on prior practitioner descriptions of their international advertising strategies, academic researchers began to classify topics into categories for investigation and analysis (Miracle, 1966, 1968, 1984). One result was the emergence of the concept of the international marketing communication mix, sometimes called the international promotional mix (Miracle & Albaum, 1970). These phrases meant an integrated combination of the elements in the mix of international marketing communication activities. The number of research articles in scholarly journals and books on international advertising by scholarly researchers increased steadily in the 1970s and beyond. However, actual progress in advancing knowledge has been slow and limited.

Taylor (2005), citing Miracle (1984), summarized the research progress made in the two decades up to 1984 as follows:

> An early review of the literature on international advertising … looked at contributions of international advertising research in four areas: theory, practice, public policy, and research methods. With regard to theory and methodological approaches … international

> advertising research was "exceedingly underdeveloped." … this underdevelopment [was attributed] to a small number of scholars constituting the major contributors to the literature, as well as to a lack of programmatic and systematic research … rather than building on prior research, many international studies started from scratch, ignoring advances made by other studies. (p. 8)

Agreeing with Miracle (1984), Taylor (2005) concluded that "as a discipline, international advertising had not yet reached the point where scientific generalizations based on conclusions of multiple studies could be made" (p. 8). Still citing Miracle (1984), he continued,

> the field began along the typical path of investigation through the scientific method, starting with a general description of phenomena in the field, followed by a cataloguing of them on some consistent, sensible basis. This process was typically followed by attempts at hypothesis testing; generalizations were then made, and eventually analytical models were developed. … [I]nternational advertising seemed to be stuck in a period of haphazard investigation that was not yet allowing for many generalizations to be made. (Taylor, 2005, p. 8)

However, instead of pursuing international advertising research in the ways suggested in this 1984 review, many scholarly researchers continued to focus on standardization issues, especially standardization of appeals and messages.

A decade later, after reviewing what he called "the 40-year debate," Agrawal (1995) concluded that with regard to international advertising messages:

1. In the 1950s, most practitioners and academicians favored adaptation rather than standardization.
2. In the 1960s, many practitioners shifted somewhat toward increased standardization, while retaining necessary adaptations. The idea for prototype campaigns that permitted some local adaptation became more popular.
3. In the 1970s practitioners seemed to return back to adaptation, whereas academicians were split between the adaptation approach and the contingency approach.
4. In the 1980s practitioners, both agencies and advertisers, tended to favor greater standardization or alternated between the adaptation and the standardization approach. In contrast, most academicians were generally consistent in advocating the adaptation or contingency approach.

Another decade later, Cheon (2004) had identified more than 400 articles and books that dealt with international advertising standardization and related issues over the 44-year period 1960 to 2004. He did a comprehensive meta-analysis of these publications, which covered all major journals that publish research findings on these topics. His main finding was that most standardization issues remain unresolved or inconclusive.

Theodosiou and Leonidou (2003) offered the following assessment of the state of standardization of international marketing strategy, which includes international advertising strategy:

> Despite 40 years of debate on international marketing strategy standardization vs adaptation, extant empirical research is too fragmented to yield clear insights. Based on an integrative analysis of 36 studies centering around strategy standardization/adaptation, its antecedents, and performance outcomes, this stream of research was found to be characterized by non-significant, contradictory, and, to some extent, confusing findings attributable to inappropriate conceptualizations, inadequate research designs, and weak analytical techniques. (p. 141)

Stemming from this analysis, their central conclusion is that "the decision whether to standardize or adapt the marketing strategy to achieve superior business performance will largely depend on the set of circumstances that a firm is confronted by within a particular foreign market at a specific period of time" (Theodosiou & Leonidou, 2003, p. 141).

Similarly, a few years later, Fastoso and Whitelock (2007) concluded that over the 38-year period from 1969 to 2007, "the contribution of some of these studies to the body of knowledge has remained questionable" (p. 602).

After decades of practice and research, it appears as if little progress has been made by international advertising decision makers or researchers as to whether or not international advertising should be standardized or how to do it. While a few advertising executives (and perhaps even a few scholarly researchers) are still interested in the standardization debate, mercifully, the proportion of studies on the issue has declined greatly in the last 20 years.

In the 1990s many scholarly international advertising researchers turned their attention to relatively more productive avenues of research. Zou (2005) reported that the frequency of international advertising topics in major journals from 1990 to 2002 was:

| | |
|---|---|
| Standardization | 27. 87% |
| Consumer response | 21.31% |
| Advertising content | 14.75% |
| Social issues | 13.93% |
| Cultural values | 11.48% |
| Campaign | 7.38% |
| Agency | 3.28% |
| | (N = 122) |

## International advertising research conducted outside the USA

Scholarly research approaches, designs, methods, and paradigms, as well as the selection of research topics, differ considerably from country to country. The reasons for such differences are complex. The educational processes at universities are influenced by university cultures. They in turn are influenced by national cultures, economic considerations, social conditions, and traditions. Researchers tend to select research topics and research methods that are in harmony with their university cultures and national traditions (Brioschi & Miracle, 2007a, 2007b; Miracle & Brioschi, 2008; Miracle *et al.*, 2010).

Elisabeth Tissier-Desbordes (Brioschi & Miracle, 2007a) reported that scholarly research on advertising in France was influenced by media structure, laws on advertising, culture, and traditions – all of which are somewhat different from those in other countries. Rossella Gambetti (Brioschi & Miracle, 2007a) reported that the past advertising research methods utilized in Italy could best be characterized primarily as "interpretative, empathic, introspective, and intuitive, essentially qualitative in nature, and involving imaginative reconstruction." But, she added, empirical research and quantitative methods are coming into wider use.

The development of international advertising research in Asian countries has been relatively more recent than in Europe and North America. From a "Western" perspective, an understanding of the development of international advertising research in Asian countries is somewhat problematic because the national cultures and the university cultures are so different (Brioschi & Miracle, 2007a, 2007b; Miracle & Brioschi, 2008; Miracle *et al.*, 2010).

However, although traditional advertising education continues to exist in Asian countries, teaching and research practices are evolving. For example, in recent decades many Korean advertising researchers have been educated in the USA. With their US dissertation experience as their research foundation, and sometimes with a few years of experience as junior faculty members at US universities, some Koreans have returned to take academic positions at Korean universities. They have upgraded traditional Korean advertising research to international standards. In recent years they have been doing advanced international advertising research. Sometimes they present papers at scholarly international conferences and publish their research results in English-language conference proceedings and journals, as well as in Korean proceedings and journals. A few professors in Korean university departments of advertising teach courses in English, using research results and other teaching materials similar to those used in advertising courses at US universities. To some extent a similar situation has evolved in Hong Kong and Singapore universities and perhaps a few others. University courses in advertising in China and India also seem to be evolving, perhaps in a similar way.

In Japan, Shizue Kishi (Miracle & Broschi, 2008), who had earned her PhD degree from the University of Illinois, reported on her successful research on Japanese advertising and consumer behavior using qualitative as well as quantitative methods of logical positivism. But she also said that the culture of Japan led to difficulties in her research (Miracle & Brioschi, 2008). Also in Japan, Yasuhiko Kobayashi (Brioschi & Miracle, 2007b; Miracle & Brioschi, 2008) pointed out that communication activity in the "high-context" country of Japan is different from communication in the USA. He stated that Japanese communication could be "silent negotiation" and "point communication." He pointed out that such communication does not follow a linear sequence. He said that Japanese advertising could be "irrational, subjective, and emotional" in ways that are different from US advertising. Therefore, he concluded, advertising research in Japan requires a holistic approach.

Kazue Shimamura (Miracle *et al.*, 2010) and Carolus Praet (Miracle *et al.*, 2010) reported that Japanese universities offer only a few courses in advertising, and that no university in Japan has an advertising department. They added that Japanese universities traditionally have had fewer research and publication requirements for faculty members than US universities. Praet indicated that this situation is changing and that Japanese requirements are tending to become similar to those in other countries. For example, Japanese university professors Morikazu Hirose, Shizue Kishi, Kazuhiro Kishiya, Chieko Minami, and Carolus Praet have already done research or have research in progress that meets or intends to meet the standards of leading international journals (Miracle *et al.*, 2010).

Advertising is taught at some Central and South American colleges, institutes, and universities (e.g., in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Peru) and also at a few Middle Eastern universities (e.g., in Egypt, Lebanon, and Dubai) and at two South African institutions. But most advertising faculty members in African, Middle Eastern, and Latin American universities do little or no research on international advertising.

## Research on the regulation and self-regulation of international advertising

It is impossible in this brief chapter to describe and evaluate knowledge of the widely varying laws and regulatory conditions that influence advertising in the many countries of the world. A few observations may be useful to illustrate the current state of research on this topic, and to suggest needed future research.

Laws and government regulation of advertising exist in virtually every country, as well as at the regional level in the European Union (Rijkens & Miracle, 1986). There are also self-regulatory codes of advertising and sales promotion practice in many countries, as well as codes for other marketing communication activities. Most are an adaptation of the *Code of Advertising Practice* and related codes published by the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris (Boddewyn, 1982, 1988, 1992).

Laws and regulations on advertising reflect the local culture, history, and traditions of each country. There are many legal systems and variations within them. Initially, scholarly research on these topics necessarily must be local in nature, or partly regional in nature among countries in the European Union. Subsequently, such local and regional knowledge needs to be integrated for international understanding.

Interestingly, laws and regulations relating to advertising are usually based more on political considerations than on the effects of advertising on consumers, the economy, or society (Miracle & Nevett, 1987). Controversial topics that attract the interest of scholarly researchers include, for example, the effects of sexist advertising, the effects of alcohol advertising on beverage consumption, the effects of tobacco advertising on cigarette consumption, and the effects of advertising on children.

Many articles and several books have been written on the regulation and self-regulation of advertising (e.g., Boddewyn, 1982, 1988, 1992; Miracle & Nevett, 1987; Rijkens & Miracle, 1986). But publications in this field are far short of worldwide comprehensive coverage, especially regarding the international implications of national legal and regulatory knowledge.

In addition to information on the nature of laws and regulations, theory on the effects of advertising, as generated by international advertising research, can be useful to those who enact legislation and promulgate administrative law, as well as to those who establish and enforce self-regulatory codes. Research on the effects of advertising on consumers and the economy can be helpful to guide government regulators and industry self-regulators to make informed decisions on how to "police" international advertising. Scholarly research findings can also be used to determine if a law or its enforcement is accomplishing its intended purposes. Since research is seldom employed for these purposes, there are many opportunities for scholars to do research and make the results available to politicians, government officials, and self-regulatory bodies. The use of research to guide public policy is especially important with regard to controversial international topics such as advertising of alcoholic beverages, comparative advertising, advertising to children, decency and sexism in advertising, and pharmaceutical advertising. The effects of advertising differ among cultures, economic systems, and social conditions. Consumer research, along with studies on economic and social effects, needs to be integrated with legal and regulatory research on international advertising. For an example of such research see Choi and Miracle (2004).

## Past Research Suggests Needed Future Research

### Past research approaches and topics

From the mid-1960s into the 1990s, descriptive research methods dominated scholarly international advertising research in the USA, especially surveys of advertising executives and content analyses. These methods yielded information to describe and explain, but not to predict.

In the 1990s a few scholarly international advertising researchers began to place emphasis on empiricism, logical positivism, and experimental methods to test hypotheses (e.g., Taylor, Miracle, & Wilson, 1997; Taylor, Wilson, & Miracle, 1994). There were continuing debates about which methods were most productive of new knowledge. There are still disagreements on which research methods should be utilized, for example, content analysis, critical, empirical, ethnographic, experimental, qualitative, quantitative, or survey. Perhaps all methods are still needed, but experimental research has rightly continued to come into wider use as the international advertising discipline matures.

In the past, many scholarly studies have used national culture as a proxy for the many cultural variables that are related to communication effectiveness. Wide usage has also been made of specific cultural characteristics that vary in their frequency or dominance from one national culture to another, for example, Hofstede's (1991) variables (power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and Confucian dynamism/long-term orientation); and Hall's (1987) concepts of high and low context.

These and other more recent specifications of "national culture" variables suffer from the weakness that they are not uniform among people in the populations of countries. There is great variation not only between but within nations. For example, on average the populations of one country may be more individualistic than in another country, but that does not necessarily make the national cultural variable of individualism a suitable independent variable for advertising research.

Scholarly researchers still disagree on how to define and measure important independent and intervening variables that are related to the effectiveness of international advertising. However, researchers increasingly are using individual-level cultural variables such as (a) independent and interdependent self-construals (e.g., Choi & Miracle, 2004; Polyorat & Alden, 2005), or (b) social presence and telepresence (Choi, Miracle, & Biocca, 2001). There are many other possibilities.

Measurement scales are being improved and new scales are being developed. For example, in the past many studies have used confirmatory factor analysis for assessing cross-cultural scalar equivalence. Ewing, Salzberger, and Sinkovics (2005) showed that Rasch (1960) measurement theory might be a better approach to assessing cross-cultural scalar equivalence. Cross-cultural research methods regarding languages and translations have also evolved to improve the reliability and validity of research results (e.g., Miracle, 2005; Miracle & Bang, 2002).

Slow progress in advancing research on international advertising has been due in part to the focus of practitioners and scholarly researchers on message standardization issues, especially appeals and message executions, to the exclusion of a broad range of other important topics.

## Recommendations for research topics and methods

The groundwork for the selection of suitable international advertising research topics was laid out several decades ago by Miracle (1966, 1968, 1984) and others. More recently Lovelock and Wirtz (2003), Taylor (2005), Liu and Johnson (2005), Zhou, Zhou, and Xue (2005), Stafford (2005), Brioschi (2006), Cho and Khang (2006), Kanso and Nelson (2007), Okazaki and Mueller (2007), and others have taken the initiative to suggest needed research topics and methodology for the future.

Dynamic international markets, consumers, industrial buyers, conditions of competition, laws and regulations, social conditions and other features of the international advertising environment continue to evolve. Restructuring, consolidation, and mergers among international advertising agencies, media and advertisers, along with occasional breakups and failures, continue to this day. International advertising is related to these market, environmental, organizational, and industry structure topics. More scholarly research should be conducted on these relatively under-researched topics.

Miracle and Chirapravati (1995) recognized that much previous standardization research was narrow in scope. Therefore they recommended that research on the standardization question should be conducted not only on *messages*, but also on *media* and *budgeting* decisions. Moreover, they said, research should be conducted not only on what strategies and executions should be employed, but also on what should be the proper *objectives* of international advertising message, media, and budgeting decisions.

More than a decade later Kanso and Nelson (2007) reported that “the international advertising literature, with the exception of two dissertations, three research articles and four book chapters, [had] concentrated on the problem of message selection … not media selection" (p. 565). They added: "[D]espite the increasing volume of scholarly work in international advertising, media selection has received very little attention" (p. 563).

As new media continue to develop, the concerns of Kanso and Nelson will become increasingly important. Indeed, "since the Internet may be viewed as an advertising medium it is important to evaluate its effectiveness in reaching consumers in international markets" (Cho & Khang, 2006).

Most scholarly researchers have also ignored the study of process standardization. Fastoso and Whitelock (2007) reported in their literature review:

> despite the fact that advertising processes have been found to be more suitable for standardization than programmes (Miracle, 1968; D'Antin, 1971; Sorenson and Wiechmann, 1975; Dunn, 1976), this review found that only eight of 33 studies on standardization included elements of process standardization in their analyses. (p. 595)

Taylor (2005) offered research questions and suggested methodologies for investigating them. First, he mentioned that with regard to the issues identified by Miracle (1984), it "is clear that considerable progress has been made" (p. 10). He pointed out that we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of studies comparing two or more countries; more advanced methodologies are being applied; and theory has been applied to studies more frequently than in the past.

Taylor (2005) observed that until recently, theory building through experimentation has been used only rarely in scholarly international advertising research. He indicated that the future might be different, since many current US academic investigations use modeling or experiments.

However, Taylor (2005) added, relatively few attempts have been made to use research which leads to generalizations that can be converted into comprehensive theoretical models about international advertising. There is still too little programmatic and systematic research. There is a pressing need for stronger and more comprehensive theoretical models that can be tested empirically. Recently it appears as if the field may be on the verge of such theoretical breakthroughs. In this regard, Taylor (2005, 2007) proposed key research topics that need increasing attention:

1. Models of standardization, especially the circumstances under which standardization of advertising is effective.
2. Evaluating the link between global standardized advertising and the firm's performance.
3. Building brand equity in a global context, especially the relationship between global advertising strategy and brand equity.
4. Reaching cross-national market segments effectively.
5. Examining the effectiveness of specific executional techniques cross-culturally, especially to develop a general theory of culture's impact on advertising.
6. The evolution of new advertising media.

7. More insight on client–agency relationships in a global context, including integrated marketing communication (IMC).
8. Public policy and advertising regulation/self-regulation issues in international markets.

Taylor (2005) concluded that international advertising research has reached the point where:

- greater attention must be given to methodological issues, especially data equivalence;
- cultural dimensions need to be measured more precisely;
- more interaction is needed – cross-national, across disciplines, and among academics and practitioners.

Stafford (2005) stated that more research on services is needed. Services are the fastest-growing segment of the expanding global market. But advertising strategies for goods cannot be automatically applied to services. Stafford (2005) added that more experiments to test message effectiveness of service advertising, as well as the impact of campaigns, are sorely needed to develop consistent theoretical foundations and services classification systems. It is important to classify different service types because the classification system allows the cross-fertilization of advertising strategies (Lovelock, 1983). It allows scholarly researchers to investigate the functional relationships between the elements in the classification.

More well-designed country-of-origin studies are also needed. Numerous studies over more than 50 years have shown that country-of-origin can influence consumer judgments of a product, and these effects are highly robust (Liu & Johnson, 2005). Survey results do not produce valid consumer responses on country-of-origin effects "for reasons we have yet to understand fully" (Liu & Johnson, 2005, p. 87). They added that people do not like to admit that that country-of-origin affects their product judgment.

More cross-cultural studies of advertising visuals are also needed. Although visuals convey much of the power of television commercials (and Internet advertising), there is still a paucity of research on their effectiveness across cultures (Zhou, Zhou, & Xue, 2005). Many studies of advertising visuals have used content analysis, which describes the visuals that are used, but cannot explain or predict viewer response to them. Empirical research on visuals is needed to develop theory that yields reliable and valid predictions.

One of the features of scholarly research is that it is necessary to define topics ever more narrowly in order to inquire ever more deeply into them. Although this process is essential, it is also important to integrate such knowledge into the larger picture. The interrelatedness of advertising with other forms of international marketing communication is clear. International advertising includes all of the elements in the integrated international marketing communication mix. This mix needs to be integrated into the international marketing mix, which in turn needs to be integrated into the total set of communication activities that are conducted by, and occur within, a business, whether aimed at internal or external audiences. From a communication standpoint, international advertising is a component in the larger context of international marketing communication, and indeed in the much larger context of total business communication (TBC) (Brioschi, 2006).

Brioschi (1973) introduced the topic of TBC long ago. This concept holds that there is no element, no activity of the business that is not reflected on the plane of communication. Consequently, all of these factors influence the identity, and through it, the image of the business itself (Brioschi, 2006).

Brioschi (2006) categorized many of the variables in TBC. They include the many communication activities *within and by* each business entity in the system of interrelated communication activities. As a research topic, TBC is in the early descriptive stage. Only word models are available to explain the functional relationships among most of the many internal and external variables that form the system and subsystems of communication activities in every enterprise.

The next needed steps are to design research to test the functional relationships between:

- the complex interactions that comprise the internal communication activities within a business;
- the complex interactions that comprise the communications activities of a business that are intended to reach external audiences;
- the complex interactions between the above two internal and external communication activities; and finally,
- the relationships between all of these three categories of variables and the environmental or exogenous variables in the total system.

Brioschi (2006) has made a start in identifying and describing these internal and external components in the communication systems that exist in a business. The systems are not only complex, but they vary greatly from firm to firm because there are so many different products, customer purchasing behaviors, organizational structures, cultures, and so forth. Many years of research by numerous scholars with diverse perspectives will be needed to investigate and explain the functional relationships between these interrelated activities and to express the theories that will emerge. Eventually these theories will permit cause-and-effect predictions and thereby benefit business practice. Brioschi's framework is a starting point to extend these concepts to international firms.

## Summary and Conclusions

Export advertising grew in importance in the first half of the twentieth century. Export advertising executives wrote articles in trade magazines and authored books based on their experience. Export advertising agencies flourished. Most changed their name to international advertising agencies in the 1950s and early 1960s. They declined in importance in the 1960s and beyond.

International business expanded in the late 1940s and 1950s. In the 1960s, US domestic advertising agencies began to develop their capabilities to provide international service for them. Standardization of international advertising was an increasingly important issue for advertisers, agencies, and scholarly researchers from the 1960s onward.

International advertising practice, teaching, research, and theory developed in sequence. Practice led to recognition of the need for teaching, which then led to recognition of the need for scholarly research. These developments combined to serve as a foundation for the development of international advertising into an academic discipline in the second half of the century.

Early in the century advertising industry associations led the transfer of practical knowledge among international advertisers. In the second half of the century, to a limited extent, they also supported related teaching and scholarly research. The emergence of international marketing educators in the late 1950s, and international advertising educators a decade later, eventually led to scholarly research that was intended to resolve the many uncertainties about how to conduct international advertising successfully. Educator associations and organizations supported and influenced the development of international advertising teaching and scholarly research.

The growth of international advertising in the 1960s and beyond was accompanied by increasingly serious attempts of advertisers and agencies to standardize their international advertising. International brands were developed. However, the "meanings" of brands to consumers often differed greatly from country to country, in spite of standardization of at least part of the advertising. Lack of knowledge of different climate, cultural, economic, geographic, historical, legal, political, social, and technological conditions across countries made the quest for standardization problematic.

## An assessment of historical research contributions

The purpose of scholarly research on international advertising is to generate new knowledge on the:

- nature of international advertising processes and effects, especially the relationships among the many interrelated internal and external communication activities in each system that comprise the processes that cause the effects;
- nature and structure of the organizations that conduct international advertising and the relationships among them; and
- relationships among international advertising activities and the numerous factors in the business environment that influence the effects of international advertising.

Early scholarly research on international advertising was descriptive in nature. It was necessary first to describe and define the many interrelated elements in the international advertising system, and then to categorize them in a way that might suggest interrelationships between them. Survey research and content analysis are the two most important methods that were used to make progress in this endeavor. International advertising as an academic discipline is still to a large extent in the descriptive stage, since researchers are still working to define relevant variables. In recent decades, however, scholarly researchers are tending to move from descriptive research to a combination of descriptive and experimental research, as they begin to specify the relationships among the elements in the system of international advertising activities.

Research results are beginning to produce emerging theory. Theories are already to a limited extent able to explain and predict the effects of international advertising, especially theory on the impact of international advertising on consumer attitudes and behavior, individually and collectively, as well as its impact on the economy and society more broadly. Such theory has already been useful for teaching purposes, and to a limited extent to guide managerial practice or public policy. More scholarly research is being conducted as the discipline matures.

Theories regarding the complex relationships between communication activities within a business are also emerging, such as IMC. Theories regarding the relationships between variables in the advertising environment and communication activities are also emerging. Consumer behavior theory is also becoming more refined, for example, the relationships between international advertising and individual-level variables such as consumer self-concepts.

Scholarly researchers from many countries have contributed to current knowledge of international advertising. But much remains to be done. Unfortunately, the focus by researchers on standardization issues to the exclusion of other research topics probably has retarded the development of theory. For example, Zou (2005) concluded that "international advertising remains a relatively under-researched field" (p. 108). He further elaborated,

> [G]iven the increasing importance of international advertising in the era of globalization, more and better research needs to be conducted in the future … Given that the standardization issue has been researched since the 1960s, it is surprising to see that there are still many scholars investigating the extent of standardization/adaption in international advertising … Given the complexity of cultures, it can be expected that much more is needed in this area of research … In an area of globalization of the advertising industry, it is surprising to find that issues related to agencies and campaigns did not attract more research attention. (p. 108)

Slow progress in the past has also been due in large part to the incredible complexity of the wide range of cultures, economic systems, legal systems, political conditions, social structures, and technological developments that influence the interrelationships between and among the elements in the system. Moreover, until recently only a few scholarly researchers conducted programmatic research on international advertising (see Appendix). More programmatic research is needed as international advertising continues to grow in importance.

## The future of international advertising research and practice

The bleak assessment of the past progress of scholarly research on the topic of international advertising suggests rich opportunities for future researchers to generate new knowledge. The material in this book will help to crystalize those opportunities.

The future is bright. Scholarly international advertising research is still in the early stages of development. But the right directions for progress have been suggested. Scholarly researchers who have the methodological capabilities and the interest in suitable topics are available to advance knowledge in this field of endeavor. The body of relevant theory is likely to grow with increasing rapidity.

# Appendix

## Leading International Advertising Researchers

Most academic researchers who have investigated international advertising have published the results of only a few studies, most often only one or two. Only a few international advertising researchers have conducted programmatic research. The first of these was S. Watson Dunn, who for a 14-year period starting in 1962 wrote about international advertising in more than a dozen articles and research reports. He used secondary sources and surveys of business executives to obtain information to write about:

- advertising in Egypt, France, and Japan;
- US and European attitudes toward advertising;
- advertising by multinational corporations;
- cross-cultural research/effectiveness of foreign and domestic advertisements.

From 1965 to 2010, more than 70% of Gordon Miracle's more than 125 published articles, books, conference papers, monographs, and research reports have dealt with international/cross-cultural advertising or marketing. He conducted survey research, content analyses, and experiments on a broad range of international topics. They included advertiser, agency, and media organizational issues; advertising message-, media-, and budgeting objectives, strategies and executions; standardization issues; advertising regulation and self-regulation; the relationships between cultural variables and advertising; cross-cultural advertising strategy; and cross-cultural research methodology. He conducted research mainly in England, Germany, Japan, Korea, Norway, the USA, and the European Union.

Starting in 1969, over a 35-year period John K. Ryans, Jr. wrote numerous articles on international advertising standardization issues, primarily using information obtained from surveys of executives of multinational companies. Jean J. Boddewyn in the 1970s and 1980s studied government regulation of advertising and industry self-regulation of advertising in many countries. To obtain information for his numerous articles and published research reports on this topic, Boddewyn examined secondary sources, and conducted mail surveys and personal interviews with international advertisers, government officials, and executives with advertising self-regulatory bodies.

Since the late 1980s a few additional researchers have done programmatic international advertising research including Barbara Mueller, Charles Ray Taylor, and Shintaro Okazaki. In the last 10 years the number of researchers doing programmatic research in this field appears to be growing slowly, including a few European and Asian scholars.

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