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Moeran, Brian

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THE FIELD OF WOMEN'S FASHION MAGAZINES: A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF *ELLE*

Brian Moeran
Professor of Culture and Communication
Copenhagen Business School

The Department of Intercultural Communication and Management

Bdm.ikl@cbs.dk

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Brian Moeran

The relations between culture and economy, and between anthropology and economics, has formed the foundations of economic anthropology, whose proponents from Weber onwards have been concerned to bring moral philosophy and values into the study of economic behavior (cf. Wilk 1996, Chapter 5). For some time now, the distinction between 'culture' and 'economy' has also been exercising the minds of scholars in sociology and cultural studies. If there is one thing that has been ingrained in our heads by the latter it is that, while the economy is becoming more culturally inflected, culture is itself becoming more economic in content (Lash & Urry 1994: 64). Still, given that this kind of observation was made well over two decades ago by Raymond Williams (1977: 136), who wrote that 'large scale capitalist economic activity and cultural production are now inseparable,' we have not got *that* much further in our understandings of just *how* they are inseparable.

The problem has been compounded, perhaps, by those who talk – not *that* more clearly – of a 'cultural economy' (du Gay 1997: 3-6), a 'culturising economy,' or an 'economising culture' (Ray and Sayer 1999: 16). Fine phrases maybe, but, logically, it is impossible for the economic *not* to be social (and cultural). So others (for example,

Jackson et al 2000) have sought to overcome the perceived dualism between culture and economy by saying that we should ground theory in practice, and focus on 'the circuits and flows' that underpin commercial cultures. However, the important issue of *how much* culture does or does not determine the economy still remains relatively unexplored (Wilk 1996: 132)

All this might make an economic anthropologist yearn for the old debate between formalists and substantivists (Wilk 1996: 8). This is especially so for someone trained as an anthropologist in Europe rather than in the United States, because that debate involved social rather than purely cultural aspects of the economy.[1] At the risk of getting embroiled in another (neo-)Marxist debate at this point, I will follow the approach of Pierre Bourdieu who has argued that the distinction between culture and economy was 'a survival of a Marxist vision of the social structure' (in Mahar 1990: 49) and should therefore be abandoned. It was this line of reasoning that led him to develop the concept of 'field' which was designed to get round the problem of how symbolic and economic structures articulated with each other by bringing to the fore the positions, strategies, position-takings and games that social actors therein played. The notion of 'field', together with its encompassed social 'worlds' (Becker 1982), makes sense because it allows us to pry apart the different structural, social, symbolic and other elements that constitute and complement both the cultural and the economic. It also makes us realize that these two concepts are themselves part of a broader field of ideas and should not be isolated.

In this chapter, I will look at the field of fashion and the world of fashion magazines, focusing in particular on American and Japanese editions of *Elle*. This means that I will be covering a broad sweep of social phenomena, ranging from issues of magazine production to characteristics of the global fashion industry, by way of content analysis of the magazine in question. One aim here is to show how an apparently global magazine title is in fact subject to all kinds of local social, cultural and institutional pressures that affect each issue of the magazine in the United States and Japan (and, by implication, elsewhere in the world). A second, possibly more fundamental aim is to address the ways in which, as human beings, we interact with goods, commodities, and things in general.

Because economies everywhere are concerned with the production, circulation, representation and consumption of goods and services, economic anthropology has to address two inter-related social realms. One is that of people interacting – by themselves and in the company of others, forming networks, associations, corporations, and other institutions and organizations. Here we are concerned, broadly speaking, with a social anthropology. The other realm consists of people's relations to the things that they produce, circulate, represent and consume. Here our interest is in an anthropology of material culture.

In his development of the concept of field, Bourdieu has, as outlined above, provided us with a means towards understanding intricate social forms of economic behavior. By comparison, however, coherent theories in the anthropology of material culture remain, to my mind, relatively undeveloped. It is true that a significant amount of research has been done on, for example, gifts and exchange, or the anthropology of art and aesthetics. Yet we still do not have an overall theory of material culture that is able to deal equally well with such diverse objects as a painting by Picasso (or my daughter), a CD by a classical or popular musician (who may or may not be one of my sons), an imitation antique stone-carved fireplace (by the other of my sons), a Bernard Leach *Pilgrim* plate (which instigated my first anthropological fieldwork), and all kinds of other things, from a bottle of perfume or wine to academic book or spy story.

This chapter is intended to rectify this lacuna in economic anthropology by focusing on the different kinds of values that people bring to bear in their interaction with things. I use 'values' in all three of the senses – sociological, economic and linguistic – outlined by Graeber (2001: 1-2), and try to show how they bring together the two social realms of interest to economic anthropologists: namely, the field of relations in which objects are produced, circulated, represented and consumed, and individual actors' relations with those objects. In so doing, I will try to explain a number of puzzling phenomena in fashion magazines. For example, why are items of clothing named and priced, but hardly shown in fashion photographs? Why are they also occasionally so blurred as to be unrecognizable? Why will a magazine's cover credits sometimes include the name of a fragrance worn by the cover model when the reader cannot even smell it? Why does a model get paid $15,000 for a catwalk show, but only $200 for an fashion

magazine cover? Why is a fashion photographer prepared to lose money on a magazine's fashion shoot? And why are operating losses by *haute couture* fashion houses 'in line with management expectations' (www.hoovers.com 19/09/2000) and allowed to continue year after year?

International Fashion Magazines

Women's magazines are both cultural products and commodities. As *cultural products*, they circulate in a cultural economy of collective meanings, providing recipes, patterns, narratives and models of and/or for the reader's self. As *commodities*, they are products of the print industry and crucial sites for the advertising and sale of commodities (particularly those related to fashion, cosmetics, fragrances and personal care). Magazines are thus deeply involved in capitalist production and consumption at national, regional and global levels (Beetham 1996: 1-5).

Within the genre of women's magazines in general, women's fashion magazines form a separate class.[2] In the United States, this class consists of nine titles: *Allure, Elle*, *Glamour*, *Harper's Bazaar, InStyle, Mademoiselle, Marie Claire, Vogue* and *W*. The most popular of these is *Glamour*, with an average paid circulation of 2,139,672 copies. By comparison, *W* sells only 442,358 copies. Both *Elle* and *Marie Claire* sell just under one million copies a month. Total audited sales of fashion magazines come to just over 10 million copies a month (ABC, June 30, 2001).

Readers of these magazines are predominantly women (83.8% *InStyle* to 94.8% *Mademoiselle*), whose average ages vary between 28.7 (*Allure*) and 37.9 years (*Harper's Bazaar*). From two thirds (70.5% *Harper's Bazaar*) to three-quarters (78.4% *Marie Claire*) are employed in some capacity or other. Of these about one quarter are in professional or managerial positions (21.9% *Mademoiselle* to 31.5% *InStyle*). Their media household incomes are between $49,788 (*Vogue*) and $67,826 (*InStyle*) (MRI Fall Report, 2000). Their mean reading time for a fashion magazine is said to be somewhere between 55 (*Elle*) and 71 (*InStyle*) minutes (MRI 2001).

Fashion magazine contents may be divided into Fashion, Beauty & Health, Lifestyle, Entertainment, Technology, Issues & Culture, and Other. In the year 2000,

Vogue carried 1,056 pages (57.5%) of fashion matter; *Allure*, on the other hand, carried only 243 (21.3%). These magazines placed correspondingly less or more emphasis on beauty and health (190 pages for *Vogue* vis-à-vis 650 for *Allure*). Each magazine tends to differentiate itself from others in its class by devoting more space to particular types of contents. *Marie Claire*, for example, devoted 21% of its space to social and cultural issues (*vis-à-vis Allure*'s 2.8%); *InStyle* devoted 22.9% of its pages to lifestyle topics (*vis-à-vis Allure*'s 0.7%). [3]

Like women's and many other kinds of magazines, advertising forms a large percentage of each fashion magazine title's pages and contributes to its overall financial well-being. Full figures are not available, but between January and December 2000, total advertising pages for *Elle* were 2,221; *Vogue* 3,309; *Harper's Bazaar* 1,786; and *W* 2,184 pages. The cost of a full four colorr page in the same year was $75,900 for *Elle* and $68,680 for *Marie Claire* (with discounts being given for volume purchase of advertising space) (PIB 2000).

By comparison, in Japan, the class of fashion magazines contains 23 titles in all. These include such local titles as *Classy, Domani, Ginza, Gli, Grazia, Hi Fashion, Miss, Oggi, Spur, 25 Ans,* and *Vingtaine*, as well as the international titles: *Elle, Figaro Japon, Harper's Bazaar, Marie Claire,* and *Vogue Nippon*. Unaudited circulations range between 280,000 (*Oggi*) and 105,000 (*Miss*) for the former, and 225,000 (*Vogue Nippon*) and 140,000 (*Harper's Bazaar*) for the latter. Total (unaudited) sales for the class come to approximately four and a half million copies a month.[4]

Readers of women's fashion magazines in Japan are predominantly (more than 95%) women, aged between 18 and 34, with an average age of approximately 24-5 years. *Elle Japon* readers are younger than readers of the American edition of *Elle*. 87%, as opposed to 61.1%, are under the age of 34. Fewer (57% versus 70.8%) are classified as 'working women,' although the average income (as well as cost of living) of Japanese women is higher. Most of these readers are single; most are employed; many live at home and thus have a comparatively large amount of discretionary income to spend on fashion, beauty, entertainment and travel.

Japanese fashion magazine contents may be divided into Fashion, Beauty & Health, Lifestyle, Entertainment, Travel, and Culture. An exact breakdown of these

content headings into magazine pages is not available, but most magazines devote about one third of their contents to fashion, one third to beauty and health, and the remaining third to the other four topics. Interim data base analysis shows that an average 237 page issue of *Elle Japon* devotes 53 pages (22.6%) to Fashion photography, 19 pages (8.1%) to Beauty and Health, and 162 (68.3%) pages to textual matter devoted to fashion- and beauty-related news, celebrities, entertainment, travel, social and cultural issues, and so on. Each 336 page issue of American *Elle* analysed devotes 66 pages (19.6%) to fashion, 14 (4.5%) to beauty, and 143 (42.6%) to similar textual matter.

Advertising accounts for 77 pages (32.6%) in *Elle Japon* (as opposed to 193 pages [57.3%] in the American edition). Advertisements are common generally in Japanese fashion magazines, although they are usually structured in blocks between editorial, fashion and beauty features, rather than run simultaneously with them on opposing pages (as in the United States). The total number of advertising pages carried in the year 2000 by *Elle Japon* was 1627, *Marie Claire Japon* 956, and *Vogue Nippon* 928 pages. In the same year, a standard four color page advertisement cost ¥1,720,000 in *Elle*, ¥1,500,000 in *Marie Claire* and ¥2,350,000 in *Vogue Nippon* (US$1=¥120).

Rhetoric of Value: Objects of Desire

So much for background details of the field of fashion magazine publishing in the United States and Japan. However, since fashion magazines are both commodities *and* cultural products, I want now to look at *Elle* magazine's contents and see what values are revealed in the rhetoric of written-clothing found in its American and Japanese editions. Here we must start with the language of fashion. What happens when an object or thing, real or imaginary, encounters or is converted into language? This is the question posed in his discussion of the language of fashion magazines in France during the 1950s by Roland Barthes (1983: 12) who distinguished between image-clothing and written-clothing, on the one hand, and real clothing, on the other. Each of these represents distinct structures: iconic (or plastic), verbal and technological.

Although this is not the place to enter into detailed discussion of Barthes's theoretical approach to the fashion system,[5] we may note that the language used in fashion magazines serves three purposes. Firstly, it provides a description of what

Fashion is. Secondly, it adds knowledge to the image that it describes. And, thirdly, it emphasizes what is (not) seen. The fact that language emphasizes certain parts of an image (a pattern, for example, a hemline, or material) and not others (a color, collar, or shape) shows that the rhetoric of written-clothing *limits value* (Barthes 1983: 15).[6]

Content analysis shows that magazines' primary concern is with *appearance* as a, or the, main focus of interest for readers. Cover headlines in the U.S. edition of *Elle*, for example, focus on fashion and – what is frequently stressed as 'American' – beauty. Both fashion and beauty are to a large extent defined in the magazine's pages by *the look* (of summer, the season, Hollywood, and so on). The look may be 'sharp,' 'fresh,' 'exuberant,' or 'exotic,' but it almost invariably exhibits *attitude*. Attitude itself is expressed by the idea that social life is a *drama*, in which fashion becomes 'bold,' 'daring,' and 'powerful.'[7]

A central part of this drama is *sex appeal*, which helps formulate a *style*. Sexiness is found in individual garments, tailoring, decorative techniques and colors. It can also be a feeling**.** Associated words include 'seductive,' 'slinky,' 'sultry,' 'flirty,' and 'animal.'

Sexiness is also related to drama in the sense that it incorporates, and is incorporated in, the *celebrity* worlds of entertainment and royalty. Image-clothing is justified and legitimized by reference to celebrities in the entertainment world ('Ken Paves, an L.A. stylist whose clients include Jennifer Lopez').

Related to these associations, we find an emphasis on *sophistication* and *elegance* that mirror the perceived no-work-and-all-play image of celebrity worlds. The latter image can be seen in such phrases as 'real panache,' 'light and playful,' 'chic and easy,' 'funky,' 'casual,' 'jaunty,' and 'eased-up nonchalance.'

Although other traits in the language of written-clothing may be found (like 'femininity,' 'romance,' 'charm' and so on, depending on the season), the most frequently encountered element in the American magazine rhetoric of fashion focuses on *luxury* and the neologism 'luxe.' Rhetorical associations include 'opulent,' 'plush,' 'sumptuous,' 'lavish,' and so on. Luxury relates to garments, fabrics, design, color, makeup, and overall feel ('a lush touch of texture'). Together these form *objects of desire*:

> There are some things in this world so sumptuous, so colorful, so enticing, that once glimpsed, they're virtually impossible to live without. Here, our ultimate objects of desire – to give or to get – from slinky shoes to shimmering jewels to racy new cars. (*Elle*, December 1996)[8]

Luxury is associated in particular with being *rich* and the trappings of wealth: jewelry; gold; and treasure.

Such trappings are supported by the *price* of every item of image-clothing shown in the magazine. For example, the by-line for the opening page of the fashion reportage *Aquarius Rising* (February 2002) reads: 'Printed rayon top, Iceberg, $212. Stretch shorts, Guess?, $54. Goatskin coat with sable trim, J. Mendel, $8,000. Agate necklace, Shelly, $290. Flower belt, Celine by Michael Kors, $460. Sandals, Sergio Rossi, $440.'

If we turn to the Japanese edition of *Elle*, we find that keywords in the Japanese rhetoric of written-clothing are not focused on attitude so much as *balance* and *accent*. These are particularly related to the way in which garments are shown and worn, so that Japanese pay close attention to *form* as they comment critically on both 'silhouette' and 'line.' Unlike American *Elle*, the Japanese version of the magazine's written-clothing is based primarily on technical description and knowledge, rather than on image. It thus pays close attention to *material, cut, detail, technique*, *color* and *design* – all of which intimately affect the wearer's senses in one way or another. In short, the rhetoric of written-clothing in Japan is much closer to the language of fashion designers themselves than is that found in the American magazine.

At the same time, thirdly, *femininity* (*onna rashisa*) is a crucial element in Japanese written-clothing and is clearly a vital part of a woman's appearance (cf. Moeran 1995). This femininity is closely aligned to *softness* (*yasashisa*)*, quality*, *elegance* (*yūga*)*, high class* (*jōhin*) and a sense of *cleanness* (*senren sareta*). To these should be added other associations found in American magazines: *romance, drama* and *sexiness*. What is missing, however, is more than a passing allusion to *luxury*. Prices, for example, tend to be included only if they fall within range of the average reader's discretionary spending power (up to a maximum of approximately $3,000. Otherwise, they are generally left out). Instead, fashion and femininity are tied into a language of the *senses* – particularly, touch (*tezawari, hadazawari, kanshoku*) and smell (*nioi, kaori*). In short, Japanese

written-clothing would seem to be more concerned with an inner intimacy than with an outer world.

This is not to suggest, however, that the rhetoric of written-clothing ignores the social world in which fashion is manufactured, distributed, represented and consumed. On the contrary, it consciously aims to build up a picture of the *fashion world* and its celebrity names, not just to give provenance to the image-clothing (as in the United States), but to provide historical and cultural background to fashion labels and their designers. *Paris* is the very focus of attention in the fashion world.

In short, if the rhetoric of American magazine written-clothing focuses on materialism, symbolized by objects of desire, then perhaps that of Japanese written-clothing can be said to focus more on status and the-individual-in-society (with a dash of – Orientalist? –intimacy thrown in for good measure).

A Field of Values

Before proceeding to discuss the overlaps of and interplay between 'commercial' and 'non-commercial,' and between 'economic' and 'non-economic' (cultural, aesthetic), in the world of fashion magazine publishing (and its encompassing field of fashion), I want to look more closely at how it is that mere 'things' becomes 'objects of desire.' In particular, I will examine the kinds of values that are brought to bear when we consider valuables, goods, wealth and money.

In a much discussed essay in the Introduction to *The Social Life of Things*, Arjun Appadurai (1986: 3) starts off with the proposition that 'economic exchange creates value' and, as part of his collapsing of distinctions between commodity exchange, barter and gift exchange, argues for the commodity potential of all things. He then proposes (1986: 13) that '*the commodity situation in the social life of any 'thing' be defined as the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other thing is its social relevant feature*.' From this he distinguishes three elements in the commodity situation: the commodity phase, commodity candidacy, and commodity context (1986: 14-16).

Appadurai recognizes that changing notions, as well as cultural constructions, of value are extremely important to any discussion of things. He notes that commodities

include extremely complex social forms and distributions of knowledge and argues that it is 'the *total* trajectory from production through exchange/distribution, to consumption' (1986: 3) that we need to study.

Unfortunately, as with so much of his clearly imaginative work, Appadurai gives no examples of how a commodity operates in a 'regime of value.' This phrase has such an 'evocative' ring to it that a large number of scholars have taken it up and bandied it around in their discussions of art and material culture. But, as David Graeber has taken pains to point out (2001: 30-33), there are several problems with the idea of regimes of value – not least its precise applicability to the production, circulation, and representation, as well as consumption, of things during their 'social lives.' Moreover, it has tended to be used qualitatively, in a way that makes it more or less equivalent to 'context' (Myers 2001: 55).

I myself have two simple criticisms of the term 'regime of value.' Firstly, a regime implies some overall controlling mechanism (in the hands of a dominant elite), but it is by no means certain that such a mechanism functions effectively at all stages in a commodity's 'career path.' Given Bourdieu's (1993b: 163; 1993a: 72) definition of a 'field' as 'an independent social universe with its own laws of functioning,' consisting of 'structured spaces of positions whose properties … can be analysed independently of the characteristics of their occupants,' I prefer to talk in terms of a *field* of values.[9] Secondly, if there were but a single value attached to a commodity, life would be exceedingly simple – and the need for economic anthropology would quietly disappear. This is why we have to talk in terms of a field of plural *values*.

As I see it, we need to know *who* is bestowing commodities (valuables, goods) with what kind of values, when, where and why. We also have to find out and analyze to what extent these values are contested and negotiated by different specialists or interested parties along a commodity's trajectory from its production to its consumption, by way of its circulation and representation. In the context of this chapter's discussion, it will become clear from the above – and, more particularly, ensuing – discussion of fashion magazines that various people have various kinds of input which affect both the commodities represented in the magazines and the magazines themselves as commodities.

At the production end of the commodity trajectory, *technical values* are extremely important. Those employed in magazine publishing houses make use of and continually develop professional skills that inform their work. Photographers, for example, tend to pride themselves on certain photographic techniques and skills, involving cameras, lighting, and film, as well as posing models in such a way as to focus attention on the stitching or drape of a garment. Art directors can talk at great length about the fine variations brought to a magazine page by adoption of different kinds of typeface,[10] or the ways in which grid structures can be used to create aesthetic effects in page layout. Even free-lance writers will have certain criteria about what constitutes a 'well written' article and complain bitterly if, for one reason or another, an editor interferes with the final result.

Less obvious, but not entirely absent, are the personal attachments that individuals have to particular objects with which they work. Here sentimental or *affective values* are at work. A photographer, for example, may prefer never to be without a particularly old and battered camera (her first piece of professional equipment, given her by her father, for example). If offered a choice, a makeup artist may always opt for a certain kind of mascara or foundation (because that was what his mother or a teenage lover used to wear, and he wishes to remember her). Affective values tend to prevent an object from circulating in a social world, although they may influence others in their selection of similar objects (a second hand Leica camera, for example, or Shiseido liquid foundation).

At various stages in the commodity's trajectory, judgment and taste are brought into play. Here *appreciative values* affect the finished product. Such appreciative values can be closely connected with technical values developed by professionals. An art director, for example, knows by instinct what kind of page layout or color combination 'works' and what does not. A writer with a keen ear cultivates the well-turned phrase. A photographer judges just the right balance of light and shade, or compilation of people and objects, for his photographs. Appreciative values come into play, too, in selection of a model (blond or brunette, fair or dark skin, waif or just slender), as well as in decisions about what location to use for a fashion shoot, what kinds and colors of clothes and accessories to dress the model in, and in what combinations. Such aesthetic preferences are then further tweaked in how a magazine's art director chooses to cut photographs for

publication, in their sequence and placement opposite one another, even in the final color shade in which they are printed. Such appreciative values – like the use of a white background for fashion stories in American *Elle* – contribute to a fashion magazine's perceived overall 'style.'

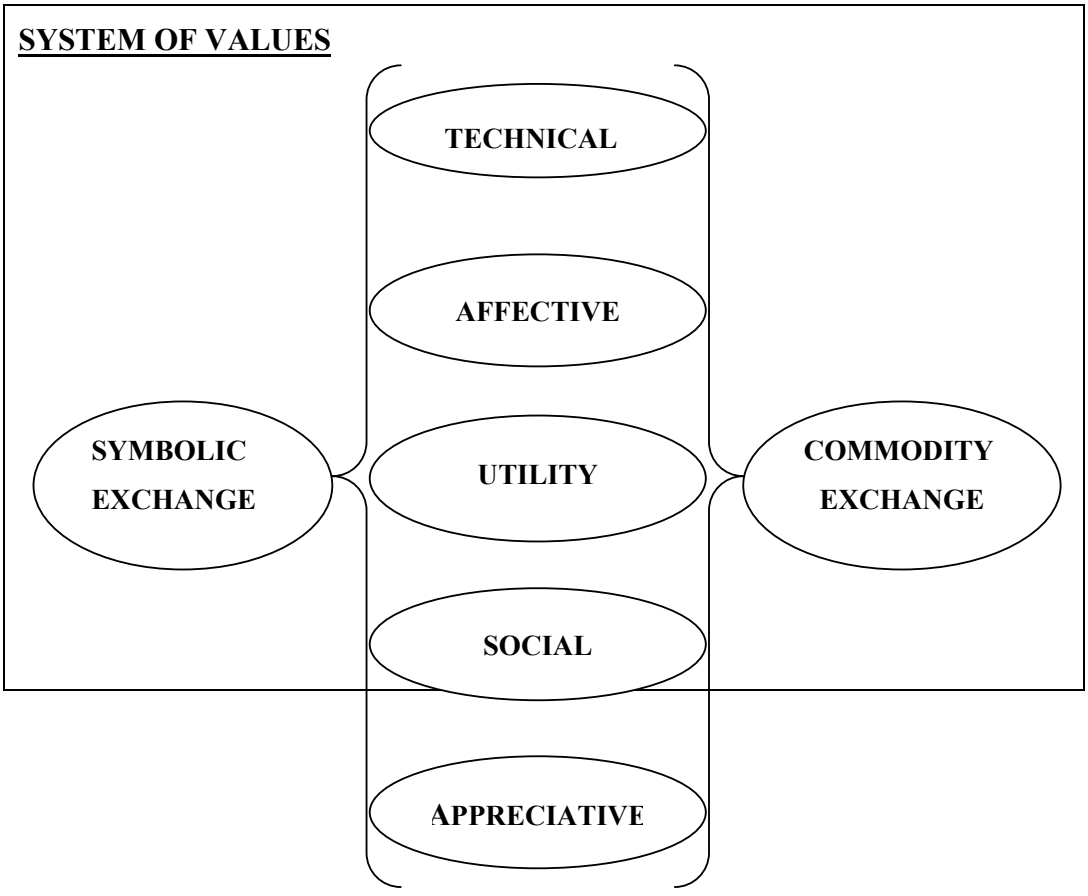
Appreciation, however, is not limited to such strictly 'aesthetic' values for it also includes such notions as authenticity, novelty, luxury, cultural or national identity, with which an object may be imbued by participants in its social world. All these forms of appreciation are constantly subject to affirmation, contest and (re)negotiation by actors involved in 'the social life of things'. As a result, old forms may be discarded and new values introduced (following, for example, the introduction of new technologies).

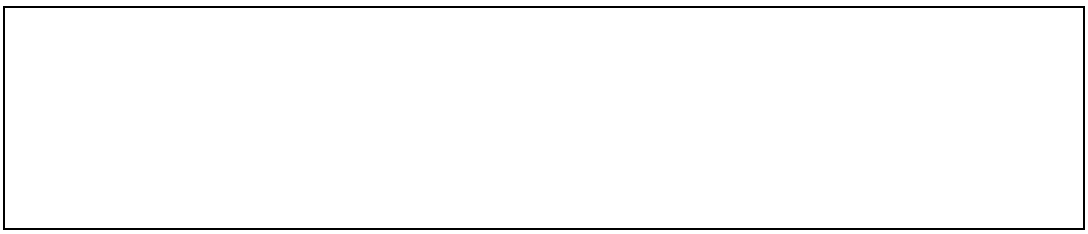
Closer to the consumption end of a commodity's trajectory, we find *utility values* at work.[11] Different people may utilize things in different ways, not always as intended by their producers. Thus, dozens of copies of *Elle* magazine, for example, may be stacked upon one another to form 'legs' for a coffee table, where they can never be leafed through again. An empty bottle of perfume can be used for wild flowers. A fashion designer may make a model wear a brassiere *over* a blouse, or design a shoe as a hat. Or a hairdresser, in a moment of inspired frustration, may pick up a pair of chopsticks lying nearby atop a half-finished bowl of noodles and use them to keep a model's hair in place. The ways in which such objects are used affects actors' perceptions of them.

Throughout the commodity's trajectory, *social values* are crucial to the outcome of a particular product (fashion story, magazine issue, and so on). Everybody in the field of fashion magazine publishing – from editors and art directors to photographers and models, by way of agents, stylists, hairdressers, makeup artists, printers, and so on – makes use of networking and personal connections to keep abreast of gossip and information. Such connections also help them become integrated into, and accepted as a member of, the social world in which s/he works. The fact that a photographer can make a model encourages liaisons of various kinds between them (like David Bailey and Jean Shrimpton, for example, or Victor Skrebneski and Cindy Crawford). But models also occasionally make photographers (as Janice Dickinson did Mike Reinhardt). Alternatively, they can link up with model agents (like Linda Evangelista and Gérald Marie) and, via connections with a renowned photographer (in this case, Peter

Lindbergh), become famous enough to 'make' the agency (Elite) (Gross 1995: 28, 190, 356, 456, 481). In all these cases, it is *who* a particular model or photographer is that, as in art, gives the product (a fashion photograph or advertising campaign) a provenance that contributes markedly to the other values outlined above.

This combination of technical, affective, appreciative, use and social values (what Bourdieu has on different occasions, when discussing *people*, referred to as social, cultural and educational capital) gives rise to what may be termed the commodity's *symbolic exchange value* (equivalent to symbolic capital in the realm of human relations). A photograph by Patrick Demarchelier of a pair of jeans designed by Calvin Klein and worn by a topless Kate Moss in the arms of pop singer Marky Mark has a certain cachet that a photograph by you or me of a young woman in a pair of jeans does not. These elements making up symbolic value cannot be enumerated or reduced to economic sums in any way. However, the symbolic value of a commodity is, by a strange twist of reasoned calculation, converted into a sum of money that enables that particular thing to be exchanged. This sum of money is a commodity's *commodity exchange value*. It is the exchange between symbolism and commodity that allows a pair of designer jeans to retail at twice the price of other less well-known brands.





The system of values outlined here permits and sustains relationships between *people and things*. It thus complements Bourdieu's outline of different forms of capital as developed between *people and other people*, institutions and organizations. Such values operate according to certain social norms within different worlds (Becker 1982) of cultural production, which are themselves integrated into various fields of cultural production.

The Fields of Fashion Magazines and Fashion

In order to take this discussion of valuables, goods, wealth and money further, it is useful – as I suggested earlier – to see fashion magazines as operating in a particular *field* (Bourdieu 1993a) of cultural production. This field comprises a number of different social worlds (Becker 1982): fashion (Skov 2000), fashion photography (Aspers 2001), (women's) magazine publishing (Ferguson 1978), advertising (Moeran 1996, 2001), and so on. These themselves often partially constitute other fields (of, for example, textiles, media and advertising).

As is the case with fields of cultural production in general, each of the fields of fashion and fashion magazines has its 'social universe having its own traditions, its own laws of functioning and recruitment, and therefore its own history' (Bourdieu 1993b: 140). The opposition between the 'commercial' and the 'non-commercial' acts as a fundamental, occasionally disavowed, structuring principle of both fields – a principle which then generates many of the judgments made about fashion. The fact that both fashion and fashion magazines are products of 'a vast operation of social alchemy' (Bourdieu 1986: 137) means that there is often no clear measurement between their cost of production and commercial value. It is this failure to measure valuables (in terms of

both objects and people) in monetary terms that I shall consider in the concluding section of this essay.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, fashion magazines are both socio-cultural products and commodities in themselves. This means two things. Firstly, they put forward in their pages an eclectic mixture of written and visual images, in both text and advertising, which uphold a field of values and make them part of the field of fashion and beauty. This is the main means by which magazines attract their audiences. Secondly, they appeal not to a single set of readers, but to several different audiences: to women readers, on the one hand; to advertisers, on another; and to members of the fashion and photography worlds, on yet another. Publishers print magazines as 'cultural products' and sell them to readers. At the same time, they sell the existence of those readers (plus a 'pass along' readership) to corporations interested in advertising their products to women (aged between 24 and 39 years). In this latter respect, magazines, together with their readers, are commodities.

It is the relation between advertising and textual matter, between a magazine as commodity and as socio-cultural product that will concern us here. Firstly, every magazine uses its cover to advertise and sell itself every time it comes out (McCracken 1993: 13-37; Moeran 1995: 114-120). In some countries like Japan, where subscription rates are customarily very low and a magazine's success depends on news stand sales, the cover is even more important than it is elsewhere. Fashion magazines, therefore, follow a tried and tested formula that makes it virtually imperative to have a model, celebrity or star on the cover. Smiling models outsell unsmiling faces; and 'Black cover models hardly sell west of the Hudson River' (*Elle*, Art Director). These models sell the cover headlines that themselves sell the magazine's contents.

Models also use cover opportunities to advertise themselves in the fashion field. In the fashion modeling business, being on the front cover of a prestigious fashion magazine is itself prestigious. There is a two-way rubbing-off process involved between commodity and celebrity that centers on names, with each enhancing the other. Appearance on the cover, or, to a lesser extent, in the pages of a well-known fashion magazine, also tends to boost a model's career.[12] This means that there is a close structural relationship between models and photographers, since neither can survive

without the other. Young women wishing to become models spend a lot of time visiting fashion photographers with their portfolios in the hope that they will be selected for a photo shoot. Photographers, for their part, are always on the lookout for 'fresh' or 'new' faces to photograph and put into *their* portfolios – which they then take to magazine fashion editors.

When selected for a fashion shoot, a model may not be paid very much. When photographing a fashion shoot, a fashion photographer will also not be paid very much ($100-200 per published page [Aspers 2001:181]), and he may lose money if his overheads are too high. What sustains this apparently unsustainable market is advertising. Both model and photographer work for comparatively little in the hope of being selected to do lucrative advertising campaigns. The fashion magazine field thus consists of both economic and 'aesthetic' markets (Aspers 2001:237-248).

The overlap of the commercial and the non-commercial in the field of fashion magazines is reduplicated in the social interaction of those who constitute the field. Models, fashion photographers, hairdressers, stylists, designers and others all use their appearance in fashion magazines to promote and sell their work to others in the fashion field. Fashion magazines are the medium by which those in the fashion world show their 'artistic talent,' 'creativity,' 'beauty,' and so on to a mass public, in order to make, sustain or enhance their names. In other words, on the one hand, magazines as cultural products are enabled and sustained by the fact that they are also commodities. On the other, the distinction between 'culture' and 'economy' is actively maintained through social interaction among all actors in the field actors who calculatedly misrecognize the cultural as 'aesthetic' and the economic as a question of 'names.'

This misrecognition leads to a particular style in the fashion pages presented in the magazines, as editors seek to separate advertising from editorial matter. For a start, many pages which set out to provide information on new fashion and beauty products ('There's an easy luxury to these casual-cool separates and accessories done up in earth-tone suedes' [*Elle*, 2/02]) are in effect little more than advertisements for thematically composed garments ('Peasant top, Celine by Michael Kors, $1,450' or 'Shell-trimmed skirt, Rozae Nichols, $615'). The inclusion of prices on these pages, as well as in fashion story by-lines, is important because it marks them out as *not* advertising. Fashion

advertisements do not advertise the price of garments shown.[13] This distancing from advertising matter is also seen in the fact that, by including prices in their fashion story by-lines, magazines wish to show that the photographs themselves have not been supplied by the fashion houses, but independently produced.

At the same time, however, the garments and accessories shown in fashion photographs are lent free of charge by a fashion house to a magazine and/or photographer with a view to their being used promotionally, since it gets it free publicity. In some respects, therefore, by saying that a particular camisole costs $4,620, or a pendant $12,000, or a pair of slingbacks $525, a magazine like *Elle U.S.A. appears* somehow to have paid for the privilege of including items produced by Christian Dior, Tiffany or Manolo Blahnik. We thus find two interlocking systems at work in fashion magazine stories: one of commodities-as-gifts, the other of gifts-as-commodities.

Another anomaly arising out of the problematic relationship between advertising and editorial matter concerns the actual representation of fashion by magazines. To quote one Swedish fashion editor's instructions to a photographer: 'The clothes don't have to be accessible; you may use whatever you want. It does not even have to be clothes; fashion is not just about clothes' (Aspers 2001: 179). As a result, items of clothing may be named and priced, but hardly shown – as noted at the beginning of this essay. Alternatively, photos may be so blurred that the clothes worn by a model are unrecognizable. Occasionally (as with shoes or tights, for example) products that do not appear at all in the magazines' photos are credited with a designer's name and retail price.

If we now turn to the field of fashion, we find that it is highly segmented because of the nature of the industry itself.[14] Fashion is a business of contrasts: from loss-operating *haute couture* salons in Paris, offering very high-priced, made-to-order, designer originals, to profitable, giant factories mass-producing endless quantities of low-priced apparel. Segmentation occurs in types of apparel (inner- and outer-wear, menswear, womenswear, children's wear, and accessories [shoes, handbags, wallets, scarves, gloves, hosiery]), on the one hand; and in terms of the 'upstream' production of fibers and textiles, together with their distribution 'downstream,' on the other. (In each, technical values tend to differ somewhat). The fashion field thus overlaps with other fields (in particular, that of textiles [cf Skov 2000]). It also includes retailers of various

kinds, plus those who, like trade journals, fashion magazines, publicists, advertising specialists, fashion consultants and buying offices, provide information, assistance and/or advice to producers (Jarnow and Dickerson 1997: 3).

There are, in the fashion field, a large number of larger (Liz Claiborne) or smaller (Valentino) organizations that produce the kind of fashion shown and advertised in women's fashion magazines. Many of these corporations – Chanel, Christian Dior, Ralph Lauren, Versace – are household names. But names do not necessarily correspond to the business organizations that manage them. A second characteristic of the fashion field, therefore, is that its constituent actors are constantly reforming in new strategic social and organizational alliances. For example, Dior is – along with other fashion houses Celine, Donna Karan, Fendi, Givenchy, Guerlain, Kenzo, Christian Lacroix and Louis Vuitton – part of LVMH, the world's largest luxury group, whose brands also include luxury accessories (Loewe and Fred), champagnes and cognacs (Hennesey, Moët & Chandon, and Dom Pérignon), watches (Ebel, Chaumet and TagHeuer), retail stores (Sephora, DFS, Le Bon Marché department store), and so on.[15]

The field is thus dominated by *names* or *brands*. This process of branding takes place at several different levels: things (as with 'brand name' commodities); people (in particular 'celebrities,' 'supermodels,' and 'stars'); and organizations (Chanel, *Vogue*, Elite Model Agency, and so on) (Moeran 1996: 278-80). It is these names (and their associated appreciative values) which dominate the appearance of the field. However, besides the – for the most part hidden – organization of fashion houses into business groups, the structure of the fashion field is further obscured by the fact that, through a complicated system of licensing agreements, different companies manufacture different products belonging to a particular brand name. Thus Donna Karan International (recently acquired by the LVMH Group) licenses its name to the likes of Estée Lauder (beauty products), Esprit de Corps (children's apparel), Liz Claiborne (careerwear), Sara Lee (hosiery), and Fossil (watches).

Although there is a tendency for several brands to belong to the same group, the brands themselves are kept separate and given independent identities. It is the identity of each fashion house and its products that give it its competitive edge vis-à-vis its rivals (so that symbolic exchange is used to enable commodity exchange). To this end, each brand

(fashion house) employs its creative designers to produce the clothes that will bear the brand's name and attract the attention of fashion aficionados, critics, photographers, and magazines. Like many other fields of cultural production, therefore, the fashion field is marked by two contradictory forces: one a comparatively unstructured world in which fashion designers and other 'creatives' work out their ideas and 'intuitions' in terms of technical, appreciative and social values; the other the rational management of business growth by means of sales outlets distributed throughout the world (cf. Skov 2000; Drawbaugh 2001:122-132).

This distinction between creativity and business management partly – but only partly – explains the distinction between two types of fashion: *haute couture* and *prêt-à-porter*. *Haute couture*, practiced by a limited number of – primarily European – fashion houses which form a syndicate, provides designers with an opportunity to express their 'flair,' 'creativity,' 'originality' and so on in a range of luxurious and high-priced garments that are occasionally bought (more often lent, occasionally given) in very small numbers by (and to) the very rich and/or famous. These individualized garments tend to make a loss in their own terms (Storper and Salais 1997:125), but the practice of *haute couture* continues because it permits a fashion house to establish itself as part of a hierarchy in the fashion field (a prestige hierarchy that includes fashion photographers, models, fashion magazines, and so on, who cultivate social values to great effect). It also permits its designer to establish, maintain or strengthen a brand identity, or 'name.' This identity is then used by the fashion house to sell ready-to-wear merchandise and, importantly, a whole range of accessories and perfumes to a mass market at the lower end of the price range (commodities in which the fashion designer usually plays no creative part). In other words, *haute couture* symbolically subsidizes and is economically subsidized by *prêt-à-porter*, accessories and fragrance sales – which is why a cover credit may carry the name of a fragrance, as well as of the clothing, worn by a model. This is the logic of what Lise Skov (2000), in her important study of the Hong Kong fashion world, calls the *name economy* in the field of fashion.

In conclusion, this essay has shown that there are three homologous layers of production that we need to take into account in any discussion of valuables, goods, wealth and money. Firstly, there is the object itself, on which – as I have shown –

different actors bring to bear different kinds of values, which together contribute towards the total symbolic and commodity exchange values of that object. Secondly, there are the individual players or actors involved in the production of the cultural object (fashion garment, fashion photograph, fashion magazine, print advertising campaign). Thirdly, there are the institutions that constitute the fields of fashion and fashion magazine publishing. Together these create, manipulate and maintain the system of values outlined here, as well as the intricate web of symbolic, cultural and economic forms of capital analyzed by Pierre Bourdieu (1993a).

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Endnotes

[1] In this respect, I often find myself closer to economic sociology in my social anthropological emphases on economic action as a form of social action that is socially situated, and on the social construction of economic institutions (cf. Granovetter and Swedberg 1992).

[2] The material presented here derives from an on-going research project that seeks to compare two international fashion magazines – *Elle* and *Marie Claire* – published in five different countries: France, Hong Kong, Japan, U.K. and U.S.A. Making use of approximately 500 editions of these and other titles published between 1996 and 2002, the project seeks to discuss the relationship between cultural production, content analysis and audience reception. Its aim is to discover the extent to which international fashion magazines present a coherent global image of 'woman,' and how much different country productions of each title need to adapt their structure and contents to local markets (or fields), tastes, and social norms and expectations. I am very grateful to the Danish Research Council for the Humanities (September 2001-December 2002) and the Danish Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (September 2000-August 2001) for enabling this research to take place.

[3] There are, however, close affinities between certain titles. For example, quantitative content analysis suggests that *Elle* is a 'mini' *Vogue* (which may explain the former's increasing and latter's declining circulation figures). *Marie Claire*, on the other hand, is remarkably close to *Mademoiselle* in overall ratio of space (though not number of pages) devoted to different topics (which may explain the recent demise in Fall 2002 of the latter title).

[4] Actual sales (information based on research interviews) are probably closer to two thirds of this total: three million copies.

[5] Given that Barthes conducted his research in the mid-1950s and used the French edition of *Elle* as one of his two primary sources, my own research should show how the rhetoric of fashion has or has not changed over time, as well as how it may differ cross-culturally.

[6] Barthes (1983:15-16) also claims that written-clothing is 'perfectly functional' and does not praise the 'aesthetic value' of clothing. As we shall see below, my own research suggests otherwise.

[7] As with much else in this part of the discussion, the language of written-clothing is often paralleled in descriptions of beauty and makeup: nails, for example, are 'dramatic,' and hair 'dynamic.' As Jade Jagger says: 'Being beautiful gives you a certain amount of power' (quoted in *Elle*, October 1997).

[8]The December (Christmas) issue of the American edition of *Elle* regularly carries a feature entitled Objects of Desire. The cover of the December 1996 edition, for example, advertised *275 Objects of Desire, Luxury, and Style* above cover model Niki Taylor wearing a silver sequined dress and large bangle earrings. These objects of desire included 35 (pairs of) shoes, 23 hand and shoulder bags, 7 belts, 10 accessories, 7 beauty/makeup cases, 3 suit/shoe cases, 16 necklaces, 3 bracelets, 57 rings, 11 pieces of miscellaneous jewelry, 14 bottles of perfume, assorted pillows and fabrics, and 4 extremely expensive cars.

[9] Myers (2001: 58) (apparently unaware of my earlier work on values [Moeran 1996; 1997]) also returns to

the work of Pierre Bourdieu and situates 'regimes of value' in what he calls 'fields of force'.

[10] I have listened to the French-born Art Director of the American edition of *Elle* going into raptures over the different typefaces that he uses in the magazine, as well as the techniques used by his Creative Director, Gilles Bensimon, in his fashion photographs for the magazine.

[11] In previous work, I have used the term, 'use values'. However, in order to avoid confusion with the Marxist notion of (labour and) use value, I have here resorted to the notion of 'utility.'

[12] There is a certain academic antipathy towards celebrities which reaches its culmination, perhaps, in Delicia Harvey and Lance Strate's (2000:208) discussion of image culture and the supermodel, where the authors suggest gratuitously that the fame of celebrities is 'unearned.'

[13] Different categories of advertised goods have different rules about price inclusion. In Japan, for example, cosmetics and skincare products always include their price in advertisements, while fragrances, jewelry, watches, underwear and some fashion accessories occasionally do so.

[14] I am very grateful to Lise Skov for her long-suffering explanations to me of the workings of the fashion industry and for the many related and intriguing discussions that we have had together over the years. The remaining part of this Conclusion relies very much on her expertise and I am particularly indebted to her for the idea of 'name economy.'

[15] To further complicate the field, the investment partner of the CEO of LVMH, Bernard Arnault, is Guinness, the UK drinks group.