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**American Cultural Imperialism: Propaganda and Impact in  
Contemporary China**

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Degree in British and American studies

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## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this work to my parent, my brothers and sisters, my teachers, my classmates, and to all the member of the Department of English.

## **ABSTRACT**

This work aims at studying American cultural imperialism and the impacts of cultural propaganda on the Chinese contemporary society. It aims at providing the necessary information to understand the indirect infiltration of the American culture into China and its impact on the Chinese social structure and social consumption. In addition, this work considers English linguistic imperialism and the ideological implications behind it in China. Moreover, it attempts to show how societies can be dominated indirectly through the use of the technology and the modernity as means to propagate the American values and to influence the cultures of other foreign communities. This study explains also the Chinese cultural resistance which role is to reduce the impacts of American cultural imperialism on the Chinese society.

## **RESUME**

L'objet de cette recherche est d'étudier l'impérialisme culturel Américain et l'impact de la propagande culturelle dans la société Chinoise contemporaine. Son but est de fournir les informations nécessaires pour mieux comprendre l'infiltration indirecte de la culture Américaine en Chine et son impact sur la structure et la consommation sociale. Ce travail prend aussi en considération l'impérialisme linguistique de l'Anglais et ses implications idéologiques en Chine. En plus de cela, il essaie de montrer comment il se peut que des sociétés soient dominées indirectement à travers la technologie et la modernité, deux moyens pour faire répandre les valeurs américaines et les faire adopter par d'autres sociétés à travers le monde. Cette recherche explique également la résistance culturelle Chinoise dérivée pour faire face à l'impérialisme culturel Américain.

## ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة الإمبريالية الثقافية الأمريكية وتأثير الدعاية الثقافية داخل المجتمع الصيني المعاصر. كما يهدف إلى تقديم المعلومات الضرورية لفهم التسلسل غير المباشر للثقافة الأمريكية إلى الصين وأثرها على الهيكل و الاستهلاك الاجتماعيين. يأخذ أيضا هذا البحث بعين الاعتبار الإمبريالية اللغوية للإنكليزية وما تنطوي عليه من أيديولوجية الأمريكية في الصين. أكثر من ذلك، فهو يحاول أن يظهر كيف تمكنت الثقافة الأمريكية بالهيمنة على المجتمعات عن طريق التكنولوجيا الإعلامية والحدثة كوسيلتين لنشر القيم الأمريكية وتأثير على ثقافات الشعوب الأخرى. كما يشرح أيضا هذا العمل المقاومة الثقافية الصينية و دورها في التخفيف من تأثير الإمبريالية الثقافية الأمريكية عن المجتمع الصيني.

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## **General Introduction**

Since the seventeenth century, the concept of imperialism has got a meaning related to colonial expansion. Great Britain and France two famous colonizing powers had developed unified political systems through the use of military power to dominate and extend their boundaries. They had taken great economic advantage of their colonies. This kind of practice survived with mercantilism and the slave system. Accordingly, colonialism had been sustained by the Industrial Revolution in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when industrialized countries were looking for raw materials and capital in order to turn on the machine of industry and trade. As a result, many territories had been exploited for the benefit of the colonial country. North Africa and the Eastern costs of North America had experienced much of that European imperialism.

Because the world is changing, the nature of things changes as well. After World War II, the United States of America emerged as a powerful country. It was strong economically following capitalism, and politically controlling international organizations. Like its predecessors, the U.S. had developed an imperialistic attitude to keep hegemony on the world. For this reason, it had led a long-lasting unarmed war against the Soviet Union to spread its ideology which was mixed with economic interests. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and after some new inventions in the field of telecommunication, American imperialism has taken another dimension with a wider implication of culture as a powerful factor of domination. The American hegemony on the means of communication evokes cultural hegemony, and societies have been assimilated to the American way of life. The study of this phenomenon requires a careful observation to depict the tools used and measure their impacts on peoples' life.



Today, most of the peoples of the world know a lot about the American culture, in particular the culture of democracy. Most of them glorify the American culture because of the historical experience of the United States which is considered the first country based on democratic institutions, freedom of choice and respect of human rights. Simultaneously, the Americans sustain this wide spread belief towards the American society so that they win the admiration of other foreign communities. In fact, the American culture of democracy and human rights has become a central aspect of many countries of the world because of the positive role that it can result in the society. However, behind the spread of the American culture, there is a depiction of an imperialistic attitude developed by American institutions. Some scholars look at the glorification of the American culture from a critical eye, as it represents a danger to the other cultures. This brings some questions to the mind: what is the secret behind the reputation of the American culture? Is the process of spreading the American culture arbitrary or intended through propaganda? To what extent is it powerful in shaping societies like China?

This work hence would study the nature and the impacts of American cultural imperialism. This study analyzes and describes American cultural imperialism in China, and tries to provide the necessary information to understand the process of indirect imperialism in the Chinese society. Its aim is to show the power of American cultural imperialism to shape the Chinese society, and to shed light on two main means of propaganda -technology and modernity- which contribute to cultural infiltration:. Historians have noticed the wide spread of American culture, and they have related this phenomenon to the advance of the U.S. in the domain of communication and to the American will to impose its order on the outside world. To defend this view, we rely on works of postcolonial writers such as John Tomlinson, Edward Said and books of cultural studies such as *Cultural Intelligence*, *Post-colonial*

*Studies, Linguistic Imperialism*, in addition to books and articles about modern history and international relations such as Barbara Bush's *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*.

Choosing China as a case study would give the research more credibility and authority because China today is considered as one of the greatest countries in the world, and it has the potentialities to be a superpower in the future. Yet, this country could not stop the infiltration of American culture. In addition, the choice of a conservative and powerful country would confirm the supremacy and the intelligence of American culture, i.e. if the American life style succeeded to make a way into such a conservative and reserved society, what would be the results in other weak open societies. Furthermore, China is among the first countries which recognized the threat of American culture and tries to resist its effects. These are the main reasons of choosing China as a case study.

To achieve the underlined objectives, the research paper is divided into two chapters. The first chapter deals with American cultural imperialism, and it shows how postcolonial thinkers look at this phenomenon. The chapter clarifies also the American impacts on the Chinese social structure and social consumption. In short, it demonstrates the changes caused by the infiltration of American culture to the Chinese society, mainly after the opening of China to the international market. Besides, it considers "linguistic imperialism" in which English language becomes a *Lingua Franca*. The second chapter is related to cultural propaganda. This is to show how societies can be dominated indirectly through the use of technology and modernity as means to propagate the American values and to influence other foreign cultures. This chapter explains also the cultural resistance resulting from the conscious part of the Chinese society which aims to preserve national identity and heritage. In this way, I hope to provide the necessary items and information to identify the real implications of culture in American imperialism.

## **Chapter One: American Cultural Imperialism**

The last three decades have known an intensified debate and discussion about culture and imperialism giving birth to a new stream of writers and thinkers who are studying this field from different points of view. They tend mainly to show explicitly the relation that exists between the concepts- *culture* and *imperialism*. In an era where the United States has become a superpower economically and culturally, cultural imperialism is widely associated with this country.

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century, scholars have observed a wide spread of the American culture all over the world. They have also noticed that it is taking more and more space in a restricted and short period of time. This fact has created not only a feeling of suspicion and distrust, but also a feeling of curiosity and interest among historians and sociologists. This chapter will thus consider the relevance that exists between American imperialism and the American culture. From a postcolonial examination, I will try to show the truth of American cultural imperialism, also called “cultural hegemony”. Taking as a case study China, this chapter will evaluate the concept of globalization as a new word to replace imperialism and to create a uniform world culture following the American interests.

### **A. American Cultural Imperialism from Postcolonial Perspectives**

It is almost impossible to study the history of a great power without mentioning the word imperialism. Throughout history, the notions of power and imperialism have gone hand in hand to form empires and civilizations. Historians such as Robert McKeever consider the U.S. as a result of the British imperial expansionist policy of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In his book, *Politics: U.S.A.*, he speaks of westward expansion and the American interventionism in Asia and Latin America as something not different from European imperialism. In short, the U.S. is

a continuing European power on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Today, it has become the most influential country in the world dominating most aspects of peoples' life.

To understand well American cultural imperialism requires a good understanding of the concepts "culture" and "imperialism". The former is a field which attracts scholars from other fields. Among them, we find sociologists, anthropologists, linguists and historians such as Ibn Khaldun, Edward Said, Frantz Boas, Margaret Mead and lot of other thinkers. The word culture is always referred to as a system which distinguishes human beings from other creatures, on one hand, and distinguishes between human societies on the others.

To discuss American imperialism, it is useful to refer to *Post-colonial Studies* which provide an appropriate definition of culture. According to Bill Ashcroft, it is "a range of separate and distinct systems of behavior, attitudes and values" (60). This is why people speak of cultural diversity instead of cultural uniformity. Culture gathers all aspects of life of a particular community, and it includes beliefs, behavior, language, customs, works of arts, inventions, and traditions.

As regards imperialism it is considered as a complex term. Due to its ambiguity and the scholars' different positions- ideological, political and cultural- the conceptualization of imperialism widely differs from one to another. In their analysis of the concept of imperialism, scholars get to a variety of definitions which sometimes disagree on the way each looks at some of its aspects. For instance, in his book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin relates the concept of imperialism to free trade which, for him, facilitates the process of colonization and exploitation. Ronald Robinson instead gives us a more general definition: "... a political function of a process of incorporating some countries at some times into the international economy" (cited in Bush 45). While Lenin discussed the economic side

of imperialism, Robinson included the political dimension. In the same context, the 1990s saw another movement of scholars who defined culture as a powerful factor of domination.

Despite the differences among themselves, scholars agree on the fact that imperialism carries the notions of domination and imposition. In this respect, it seems that Edward Said has reached a moderate and an appropriate definition which is adequate to carry on this work. He had put it as a “practice, theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory” (Culture and Imperialism, 8).

Postcolonial studies or what is also called the “cultural imperialism thesis”, pioneered by the French sociologist Michel Foucault, John Tomlinson, the Italian Antonio Gramsci and the Palestinian writer Edward Said, appeared in the 1960s as a reaction against the colonial discourse. This latter aimed mainly to show the superiority of the colonizing western civilization over the colonized countries. At the beginning, this theory was concerned by what is economic and political because these were the prominent problems of the post independence period. In addition, the notion of neo-colonialism occupied the minds of historians.

Scholars thought that this new colonial relation between the “North” and “South”, the West and the former colonies, was purely economic. It took them time to recognize the role of culture in the history of imperialism. The shift took place in the 1990s. During that decade, the socio-historical background showed the emergence of the U.S.A ahead of all other powers, especially after the fall of the communist bloc. Step by step, the world was becoming more and more uniform adopting the American culture embedded in the concepts of democracy and freedom. In this case, the postcolonial theory challenged the orthodox imperial history and revealed the past as more diverse.

Actually, no one can deny the power in the hands of the U.S.A. Those who try to deny it are like those who cannot see the forest because they are inside it. Because the U.S.A. has created such new system; “globalization”, the American hegemony has got access to every aspect of peoples’ life. In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the creation of a new global system in which individuals and communities are affected by economic and cultural forces “stands... as a legacy of American imperialism” (Ashcroft 112). Algranati in *Mondialisation des Resistances* argues that “U.S. hegemony... is a reality in the era of globalization” (54).

In fact, American cultural imperialism is not something completely new. It goes back to the early years of the American independence. In 1801, a letter from Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the U.S., to James Monroe who was at that time the governor of Virginia, demonstrates the American will to expand and spread their culture. Jefferson wrote:

when our rapid multiplication will expand itself beyond those limits, [and] cover the whole northern, if not the southern continent, with a people speaking the same language, governed in similar forms, [and] by similar laws; nor can we contemplate with satisfaction either blot or mixture on that surface.

This statement shows the real intention of Washington in expanding its empire not only on the political scale but also on the cultural scale. Hence, Thomas Jefferson describes an empire speaking one language which is English, a language which represents the whole culture. It represents the culture because it is its bank memory. The German American anthropologist and ethnologist, Franz Boas said that “different in culture, different in language.” That is who says language says culture.

However, even though the process started long ago, it is in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century that it has become more effective and quicker. This is due to the rapid technological evolution in the field of communication, and also to some American sophisticated strategies which will be examined in the second chapter.

The popularity of U.S. films, music, books, and other cultural commodities in countries across the continents has urged scholars to look closer and vigilantly at the possible effects of the globalization of American culture. Emilee Rauschenberger explains, “[t]he spread of American culture goes beyond popular consumption, raising questions of U.S. dominance in the cultural sphere” (2). Here, what is clear is the role of the free market, the consuming products and exportation destined to the world market in the flow of the American culture to every corner of most countries.

In this way, the American life style is well represented in the works of arts which attracts the admiration of other societies. In addition, what peoples like becomes the vehicle of values and ideologies of Americans. Music illustrates very well this point. Because it is a means accessible to all individuals, available and easy to get, this cultural vehicle has got a great influence on people, mainly youth. The cultural revolution of the 1960s and the emergence of the rock music for the first time in the U.S. became a world event during the 1980s and 1990s. Accordingly, American personalities such as Joan Baez, Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan won a universal celebrity. Bill Haley and the Comets “sold 16 million copies of their hit song ‘Rock around the Clock’ in one year” (McWilliams 31-32) in many countries. This is a huge amount carrying American culture to other frontiers.

Like in the field of music, other fields imitate the way, and as a result there is a cultural domination followed by an unequal exchange between cultures. Without doubt, these kinds of cultural dominating relations are not excluded from economic and political relations. The widespread of the American culture could have effects on people’s way of seeing the American political system. Moreover, any imitation to the American life style is going to affect the American economy positively through exportation. The consumption of the American products, which stands most of time to modernity, becomes a fashion in other countries.

In this context, Professor Jacques Bonnet explains that culture entered the merchants' relations, for it represents a stake between great powers and multinational firms which are interested in tertiary sector (49). The idea of "global manager" is grounded on this statement. Or, a successful American business manager is the one who is able to convince a foreign market of the superiority of the American culture to increase the demand for American products and thus American culture.

To speak about American cultural imperialism leads us to speak about the "McDonaldization" and standardization of the consumption and markets. This is thought to be on the American mode. David C. Thomas and Kerr Inkson wrote in their book *Cultural Intelligence*:

One way of trying to deal with the problem is to stick to the *Be Like Me* policy and try to brazen it out. We can reason, particularly if we come from a dominating ... culture, such as the United States, that it is for us to set norms for business behavior, and for others to learn how to imitate us. (12)

This statement explains very well how the Americans look at the world and their expectation from other cultures. It even shows the American "manifest destiny" to lead the world. This mentality is also expressed by William Henry Seward, a Secretary of State under presidents Lincoln, Johnson, and Grant, as early as 1850. He described the immensity of the U.S. as a country which "... must command the empire of the seas, which alone is real empire..." he added that a "more perfect civilization will arise to bless the earth" (cited in Rosati 24). Hence, it is clear that this American thinking is not new, but is as old as the American nation.

Language represents another aspect of American cultural imperialism. More than that, it is much influential than other aspects because it is the body and memory store of every



culture. Franz Boas, a German American anthropologist and ethnologist, sees language as a vital element of culture. Indeed, to learn a language of a given group is the best way to learn its culture. Boas emphasizes the idea of “different in culture, different in language” (Burke, 379). Nowadays, American English is becoming the *lingua franca*\* and increasingly spoken all over the world. English is now taking part in speeches of about 508 millions of the world’s population, second level after Chinese (Chautard 141). From here, we can say taking on American English as new language means taking on American culture or American way of life.

All in all, the world’s cultures are in a continuing transformation. This transformation is seen by postcolonial scholars as a threat to cultural diversity because societies, most of time, unconsciously become more and more turned to be influenced by the American culture. In other words, the widespread of the American culture widens the gap between peoples and their indigenous cultures. As a result, cultures are americanized either directly or indirectly. Robert Boyer argues that it was at the level of the Third World that, in the second half of the 1960s, the notion of cultural imperialism points to the process of americanization [and modernization] (38). The spread of the American culture resulted in the search of the Third World societies for modernity is a new form of imperialism in modern world.

The debate over American cultural imperialism leads us also to evaluate another concept which has started with colonialism, persisted with neo-imperialism, and is now facing American modern imperialism. As a reaction to the strategies of imposing a culture on another one, “cultural resistance” developed its role in the monopolized societies. Some countries, like China, promote local cultures and sometimes put barriers in front of the

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\* (Italian, “Frankish language”), language used over a wide geographic area as a means of communication—generally to facilitate commerce and trading—by people who have no other language in common. (Encarta 2009)

imported cultures mainly that of the U.S. In fact, it is apparent that there is a strong struggle between cultures- American culture against the rest. In accordance with these circumstances “the rest” today is resisting thanks to a powerful strategy. In short, it is a permanent Darwinian fight for the survival of cultures.

## **B. Chinese Experience of American Cultural Imperialism**

The first contact between Chinese and American cultures took place in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, before the American incursion in the Asian world, Britain had already paved the way to the Anglo-Saxon culture. Modern history shows that China has often been controlled by a foreign power either under a formal or informal empire\*. Russia, Great Britain, Japan and the United States were the main participants in the domination of China. In fact, these imperial actors had had a great impact on the Chinese culture. They influenced local societies in many ways mainly in the field of religion which is a very important aspect of people’s life in Asia and, in particular, China. The relation between China and the other powers pushed one modern historian to ask the question, “why did China become vulnerable to Western penetration?” (Bush 101). This question would help in unveiling the entry of the American culture to China today.

To answer this question, we need to go back and shed light on China before and during the British control in Asia. China with its geographical and labour force abilities stood isolated from the external and international market. In term of expansion, comparing to the achievement of Spain during that time and the expeditions of Christopher Columbus, China had been isolated in its boundaries. Even though it possessed a big navy, it did not exploit it to build an empire as the European countries did. For instance, between 1400s and 1430s, Zheng

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\* Historians have differentiated between two kinds of imperialism. The first is *formal*: it exists when a country forfeits its sovereignty and is incorporated into an imperial power as it was the case with *French Algeria*. The second is *informal*: it exists when a country has already got its sovereignty, but its political freedom is constrained by an indirect control as it was the case with China in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> c.

He who was appointed admiral of the Western Seas by Emperor Zhu Zhanji (the fifth Ming emperor) had embarked only on a number of sea voyages. Whereas, Columbus who “had only 3 vessels sailed some 35,000 miles, visiting 30 countries” (101). This isolationism was the key reason of Chinese vulnerability during the period, contrary to Japan which succeeded in going beyond its boundaries when it got the necessary force to do it.

Great Britain for its part played a great role in bringing China to open its market to European countries, and the Opium Wars (a conflict between Britain and China over trading right, 1839-60) aimed to gain British monopoly on the growth of opium in India and to control its trade. During that period, the Chinese were the first consumers of opium in the region. As a result, they had to trade with Britain. In addition, the Opium Wars were justified as a fight against “backwardness”. In *Industry and Empire*, Eric Hobsbawm reveals that the wars were a clash of two cultures with differing world views and demonstrates the failure of the Chinese to resist British cultural expansion (126-127).

The ‘backwardness’ of the Chinese culture, as it was seen by Westerners, was also used by Americans to justify their presence in China. Thus, the transitional period between the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 20<sup>th</sup> century was known for the American missionism in the region to spread democracy and Christianity which has eventually come to represent the western modernity. Jerel A. Rosati wrote that during the regional era (a period in the history of the U.S.: from 1860s to 1940s), “there was a large American ‘missionary’ presence in Asia particularly in ...China” (25). In this context, it is apparent that by the late nineteenth century, the newly emerging United States had claimed Britain’s position as the empire of modernity in the region, with an idealized mission to spread some new American ideas in the world.

Barbara Bush, a professor of imperial history at Sheffield Hallam University, when writing about the weight of U.S. and Britain in challenging World’s affairs, noticed that these

two countries “shared a mission to spread their superior Anglo-Saxon culture globally” (86). However, this mission, through time, has become unilateral, and highlighted by American principles. It has taken new forms under the U.S.A., but it has the same objectives. The U.S.A. has not limited its expansion to the use of weapons and political control; it has also overwhelmingly implemented a cultural strategy. Thus, the culture of democracy that is, according to historians, first applied in the U.S has a considerable position in the American ‘mission’.

At the same time, there was a strong will to teach English for the role it could play in that mission. This language would help to understand the bible and to communicate with the natives who were converting to American culture, wave after wave. Moreover, the American international “open door” policies facilitated the infiltration of American values. The policies aimed mainly to protect American economic interests, yet they got a broader cultural influence. They remained the basis of U.S. policy toward China until the establishment of the communist regime in 1949. These events resulted in a degree of Americanized Chinese culture.

The process of Americanization in China was interrupted by the growth of Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and then by the advance of communism in Asia. The adoption of the communist system since 1949 brought China to a lasting isolationism. China spent about 40 years avoiding having relations with the Western bloc under the American leadership, and thus the Cold War put China under the influence of Russia.

To understand cultural imperialism in China, it is important to make a reference to the changes mentioned previously. Yet, the first turning point in Chinese policy towards national and international issues came in the 1960s. Students succeeded in mobilizing the population of Beijing in the spring of that year. Their goals were to eradicate the remains of the so called

bourgeois ideas and customs of early Chinese Communism. Schools and universities remained closed from 1966 to 1969. At that time, Mao Zedong, whom many people worshiped as godlike, called the students to “‘smash the 4 olds:’ old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits” (Rogaski). Later on, the demonstrations and the movement of 1960s in general came to be called “Cultural Revolution”.

After more than 20 years of totalitarian domination and social close-minded society, it was difficult for China to implement democracy claimed by people. On the contrary, the chaos resulted in the movement of the 1960s caused some bad effects on the Chinese society, as it caused also a partial collapse of the Chinese economy. However, the Cultural Revolution has pushed the communist leaders to reduce their political domination. The Chinese Communist Party has lost much of its prestige, and China entered in the process “Le Grand Relachement” (Domenach 159). Since the 1980s, the Chinese have started to turn their sight to democracy and free market. They have started demanding a more moderate and open economy. For them, “le traditionalisme social n’est pas forcément contradictoire avec la modernisation” (167). That is China can enter the international competition with great powers including the U.S. without losing its national identity and sovereignty. Right away, the process of “Le Grand Relachement” that began with Deng Xiaoping and continued with Jiang Zemin was oriented to the modernization of Chinese economy. Moreover, it opened the Chinese society on an international scale.

The period of 1980s and 1990s was a period of reformation in economy, politics and culture. The change in the Chinese societies was a necessity since other surrounding countries such as Japan were ahead and the national condition insisted on the fact. The Chinese managed to bring in China the American system of free trade, and thus democracy. This was the beginning of a new age in that sphere. At once, Chinese entry into the international market

sprouts quickly. Gradually, China saw a volatile combination of political Phenomena which gave birth to various and complex relations with the West, mainly the United States.

Accordingly, the penetration of American modernity got its effects on different communities in China. Trade and importation of cultural products created a gap between people and their culture. Roughly, the fact of knowing the position of the American culture in the world and its authority makes every person feel the superiority of the U.S. as a country. This way of thinking is referred to as “dependency complex”. Nowadays, in China everything American is good. Hugues Jallon, a French scholar in international relations, argues that due to some historical, geographical, demographic circumstances, cultural groups are not equal in expressing their differences in human societies (189).

For various reasons, cultural groups do not also possess the same access to public. For this reason, certain groups dominate others through imposing their own vision of the world. In Domenach’s words, China has been weakened by the invasion of foreign goods and models (173). Indeed, there is a mutual relationship between the economy of a nation and its ability to shape foreign culture. Economically speaking, it is clarified that “[e]ven if China continues to grow at a rapid rate of about 10 percent and the United States at 3 percent, China will still be less than half the economic size of the United States in 2025” (Nye, 275). Hence, unequal relationships will certainly exist between the U.S. and China. The conflict between the two cultures would be favourable to that of the Americans since it is more hegemonic because American culture serves as a magnet to Chinese culture.

The reforms that occurred in China in the 1990s have really affected the Chinese culture. Some scholars go even to say that “the Cultural Revolution” in China was a product of American cultural imperialism. Like most countries of the world, for economic and technological reasons, China adopted also American English. This language is simultaneously

the centre of American cultural imperialism. To concretize what is said previously, the following titles will clarify two main points of American culture in China: life style imitation and linguistic imperialism.

### **1. Americanization of Life Style in China**

After its entry to the international market and after the reforms in the field of economy and some political reforms, china has known a new age. Economically, official statistics published by the Chinese government show that China is experiencing a period full of hope. For example, in the 1950s when the majority of economy was under the communist government, the annual average of economic growth had never exceeded 8 percent. But after the economic reforms, in the 1980s, China's economy grew at an average annual rate of 10.2 percent. And for the year 2006, Chinese economy grew at an average rate of 10.7 percent (Clunas). These three examples show the Chinese prosperous economy. However, some regions, mainly the rural ones, claim equal share of this economic prosperity. In this case, globalization has brought into China some sparks of development. In addition, it has given birth to a mass consuming society, according to Kin Chi Lau, never known in modern history of China (31).

However, the Chinese change has brought other unexpected social changes which can be harmful in the future. With people consuming foreign American cultural products, the society started to be affected by American cultural imperialism. Moreover, with a population of more than 1,330,044,600 (census of 2008), China represents a huge market for the U.S. products. To show how the American life style operates in China, two sides need to be discussed: social order and social consumption.

### **a. Imposition of a New Social Order in China**

Cultures differ from each other not just in their details but also in their pervasiveness and popularity. In some societies, there is virtually a strict agreement on the form of correct behaviour. In others, there may be much greater diversity and tolerance of difference. In this case, the Chinese culture is based on uniformity and agreement. In addition, it is often based on homogeneous populations or the dominance of particular beliefs, whereas the U.S. with its diverse populations has relatively cultural liberty and freedom. This shows how much Chinese culture and American culture are not identical, but they seem to be contradicting and cannot meet.

However, the growth of “global culture” under the monopoly of the American model has distorted the traditional order of the Chinese society which has been gradually submerged. As a result, a new cultural order is born, more identical to the American one. Although the pace is sometimes slow, many aspects of the Chinese values have been converted to the American ones, and there are many evidences to demonstrate this convergence.

To understand the change in the Chinese social order caused by cultural imperialism, it is necessary to describe some essential features of this society. In their daily life, the Chinese have a much more group oriented culture than Americans. When an activity is planned, it is much more common to invite a large group than just one or two individuals. This kind of relation in a social group is called by sociologists’ *collectivism*. In the collectivistic Chinese culture, people primarily view themselves as members of a group rather than as autonomous individuals. They are concerned by the effects of actions on their group. Some scholars argue that this relation is very important for the survival of people, and it creates cohesion among them. They even explain that collectivism is imposed on the group by some natural and geographical conditions. For this reason, activities of the people are likely to happen in a



group, and decisions are to be oriented to consultation. In short, the Chinese are guided by the principle of common interest rather than personal interest.

In the last decade of the twentieth century, cultural imperialism has dramatically transformed social relationships in China. Collectivism has been replaced by individualism. Kin Chi Lau, a Chinese professor of cultural studies and a member of Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives (AREN), wrote that in its blind search for modernity, traditional Chinese culture which cements the communities based on... collectivism... is thrown in forgetfulness (31). In fact, social structure is being Americanized. Individualism which is associated with the American freedom and free market replaces the old order. This is not all. According to Jerry Mander even consumerism has been introduced to the Chinese society. He argued that even in the villages where roads are not yet built, people dream of cars and big houses due to the materialism occupying the mind of people. Jerry Mander wrote when reporting a speech of a Chinese who was protesting against this fact:

Nos traditions sont en grande partie inspirées par la nécessité de survivre. Seuls la coopération et le partage au sein de la communauté, l'absence du matérialisme, nous permettent de vivre ici. Mais la télévision véhicule toujours des valeurs opposées à celles-là. (108)

Without doubt, this cultural influence can be seen by some Chinese as positive, but most of them feel nostalgia to the authentic values. Yet, one thing is made clear by sociologists, ethnologists and anthropologists, it is that whenever a social group gives up its culture, it is difficult for it to go back and restore it.

American cultural imperialism has also affected Chinese families and resulted in a split in kinship, mainly between young and old. In China, if collectivism is very important to society, it becomes more important and fundamental within the family. This split in its part is

a result of the growth of eagerness for money and materialism. The youth tries to mimic the American “self-made man”. As a consequence, at their early age, men and women try to become autonomous in their life. At the same time, the role of the elders in teaching the younger generations the Chinese values has been reduced because of the growth of personal interests. In this context, Helena Norberg-Hodge, a Swedish philosopher and researcher specialized in Asian societies, said “I saw divisions operating in different ways. A ditch is hollowed out between the young and the old people, the men and the women, the rich and the poor” (79). The old social order was mainly guided by Buddhism and some supernatural beliefs, but now it is guided by the greed for wealth.

Moreover, the nature of work has changed. The traditional ways of working have become a sign of stagnation in the minds of young people, so they prefer to leave the countryside and go to cities in search for jobs. In fact, they are more destined to work in factories than in plantations of tea and cotton. In fact, this phenomenon has caused many problems in the Chinese society especially if we know that China is not well equipped economically and politically to face such internal problems. China has just come to experiment some changes on the international scale, and the results have brought other anomalies to the whole society such as violence and joblessness. In addition, the Chinese experimentation has taken place in an era of “virtual democracy” where the distance between people and information is reduced to nothing. This fact has accelerated the happening of events.

Furthermore, the American status of women has given the Chinese women a new vision of their role in their country. According to Barbara Bush, the role of women has changed considerably these last years because of Chinese imitation of the west and free market necessities. The U.S.A. “has advocated Westernization [in China] through the emancipation of women” (104). Women have got the same duties as men, and their functions

have been polarized in their quest for modernity. As a result, housewives and traditional farmers or unprofessional women have fallen in the situation of insecurity and mediocrity. Indeed, the effect on women is in a direct relation with the family which is in turn a small unit of the society. Without doubt, the change in the status of women due to the American cultural influence has affected the Chinese social order.

Actually, the different social domains are in connection, and any change brought about by American cultural imperialism is to affect all the order. Under the influence of mass media and modernity, American life style spreads in the Chinese society. Nowadays and according to Mattelard, it is the most preferred style for most people just because it comes from the U.S.A. Mattelart argues that this preference is the result of a new cultural order imposition (331). People believe that they have chosen that culture, but sometimes their choice is a result of a well planned strategy which aims to impose American ideas on the non-American societies like China.

#### **b. Imposition of a New Social Consumption in China**

This part of the study is related mainly to the effects of the American Cultural exports to the rest of the World. The American movies, television programmes, fast food and corporations are seen to disseminate cultural products which marginalize local products and values. In particular, Americanization has become a symbol of Western dominance. The flow of American cultural products and their consumption in China is clear and needs a careful study. It creates a centre of attention among Chinese authorities and businessmen, as it kills the Chinese ability to compete.

Since television, news paper, internet and other means of communication represent a significant entertainment of peoples' daily life, Americans link these means directly with industry. Noam Chomsky, linguist and political theorist, calls this modern industry of

advertisement (16). This industry developed first of all in the U.S., in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Americans feed their TV programs with advertisements about new American cultural products. In this context, the expertise of psychologists is very important to make of mass media an imperialistic means because they know when and how pictures and slogans would have impacts on the viewers.

Besides, advertisements make an important aspect of marketing which aim is to convince and persuade the audiences who are also consumers. CNN and Fox cinema are famous advertisers, and they have an experience of more than 30 years in broadcasting programs in all domains. In the cultural context, these means represent horses of Troy. They permit to the American products to enter the world market not only from airports and ports but also from TV screens. For example, thanks to these channels many trademarks, such as Coca Cola, can be viewed by a huge number of people in the world for several times a day.

Nowadays, many regions of the world, including China, are threatened by the American cultural invasion because of their preferential consumption of Western cultures. Because of American modernity, mass communication and some historical advantages, a feeling of inferiority has grown in some societies. Some scholars see this attitude as a result of psychological effects of cultural propaganda. The Chinese, for example, see the world from the eyes of the Americans, so they adopt a foreign life style: in their way of wearing clothes, the kind of clothes, and even the food and the way of eating. For example, such words as “Hamburger”, “McDonald”, and “Hip Hop” are introduced by the American society, and then they spread them in many other societies by different means and in different ways.

The editor of and contributor to *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia* (1998), James L. Watson studied fast food consumption in Beijing and many other Asian big cities. The New York Times said about Watson’s book that "At a time when academics regularly

write impenetrably about abstruse irrelevancies, this book is engaging and arises from straightforward questions.” The book is devoted to study comparative food system in China and transnational global culture, but it shows also a large consumption of “McDonald culture.” Today, McDonald which is well known for selling fast-food beef-burgers and hamburgers in the Western world has opened many branches in China, and it has raised the famous international campaign: “I’m Lovin It” (Galeota 23).

In the same way, Coca Cola which was first marketed in China in 1920s has won celebrity mainly among the Chinese children. Some authorities tend to call it “Coca-colonialism” for the ideological consequences it carries and for the special significance it has. Bush advocates that “‘Coca Cola’ imperialism and the ‘McDonaldization’ of the world have changed tastes and economic organization of labour” (194). In the same way, George Ritzer has defined McDonaldization as “efficiency, rationalization..., no time society. It promotes predictability and uniformity, emphasizes quantity, not quality, and uses no-human technology to control people”<sup>1</sup>. Tomlinson calls this “international food culture” (273). Thus, it is arguable that Chinese culture is converging to a common American norm, assisted by mass communication and McDonalization or standardization of consumption.

The American influence on Chinese consumption in the field of cinema and music is also noticeable. Despite a thriving Chinese film industry, people eventually prefer movies from Hollywood. China is the first consumer of the American cinema in Asia, and even the Chinese President Jiang Zemin in a speech before China’s National Peoples’ Congress praised the 1997 U.S. blockbuster film *Titanic* (McChesney 115). In addition, the American series become famous among Chinese and their small families of four or three members are imitated and even favored by the government.

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<sup>1</sup> George Ritzer’s definition is cited in: Bush, Barbara. *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*. Britain: Pearson, 2006.

Hong Kong, the Chinese capital of arts, displays yearly an international music festival and organizes a variety of cultural activities. It has many professional music companies such as the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra which the Chinese themselves consider as lucrative companies. Yet, the flow of the American genre of music is continuously growing. Chinese music fans listen to contemporary songs like Americans do, and American popular music or what is also called pop music has become famous and even the Chinese singers imitate this music.

The Walt Disney Company is an entertainment and Media Corporation founded in Burbank, California. It has produced many famous cartoons such as Mikey Mouse. Since the 1980s, this company has got branches and built parks which are visited by huge numbers of people every day. Today, even the Chinese can spend their week-end at Disney Park. In effect, the opening of Disneyland in China in 2005 is a great success for the American transnational industry. Children's cable channels, the Cartoon Network, and the Disney Channel now exist and "claim close to 80 percent of the country's young viewing audience" (Rauschenberger 22). Furthermore, it is imperative to point to children and youth in general as the principle actors of cultural consumption mentioned previously. Eric Schlosser pointed out that:

McDonald's soon loomed large in the imagination of toddlers, the intended audience for the ads. The restaurant chain evoked a series of pleasing images in a youngster's mind: bright colors, a playground, a toy, a clown, a drink with straw, little pieces of food wrapped up like a present. Kroc had succeeded, like his old Red Cross comrade [Walt Disney], at selling something intangible to children, along with their fries. (42)

In this way, cultural imperialism has become more powerful and sophisticated as the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed, and now it operates primarily through multinational corporations like Coca Cola, McDonald, Disney Company, Hollywood and many other companies.

## **2. Linguistic Imperialism of English in China**

Cultural imperialism does not operate only at the level of popular culture and social structure as it is seen previously, but also intellectual culture. It operates at the level of universities and schools, and it implies a wide spread of one language over the globe. Eventually, English language is spoken and taught as the first foreign language in many countries. It has become a *Lingua Franca* used by people whenever they find difficulties to communicate. The linguist Robert Phillipson has devoted a whole book entitled *Linguistic Imperialism* in which he has studied the case of English in dominating other languages.

Anthropologists argue that it is impossible to separate between *culture* and *language* because they are one whole that makes the identity of a social group. The anthropologist and linguist, Claude Levi-Strauss for example studied how far it is necessary to learn the language to know the culture, and how far it is necessary to know the culture to understand the language. The study he made on the Brazilian native tribes of Amazon has proved that it is impossible to succeed in studying a given society without knowing its language, and it is impossible to decipher the real meaning of the words and symbols without having knowledge about the culture of the group. The relation between culture and language is so big that it is impossible to speak about one without mentioning the other. Thus, the study of American cultural imperialism in China necessitates a study of American linguistic imperialism in China.

If the Chinese language is spoken by more people and classified the first spoken language before English, it is because of the Chinese demographic explosion. In addition, the

Chinese language is limited to the territories of China. In contrast, English is spoken not only in Great Britain and the U.S. but also beyond these boundaries. Nowadays, even the Chinese use English in their current speeches for different reasons. David C. Thomas and Kerr Inkson wrote:

the English language –the main language of North America and Britain but for from the most common language in the world- is becoming the lingua franca of business, is increasingly spoken in business circles all over Europe and large parts of Asia [including China].... (12)

Till now, linguistic imperialism in China does not mean a complete rejection of the Chinese language, but a partial reference to it in some fields. The nature of international relations of China -either political or economic- necessitates or even forces the Chinese people to use English. This is simply because of the uselessness of the Chinese language outside China. And after the entry of China to the Global market, globalization has imposed the use of a global language which is English. The Chinese language, for example, is not understood in the U.S. with whom relations grow, and even in the neighbouring countries with whom China has to deal such as Japan. Taiwan as well which official language is Chinese is converting to and tolerating more English language rather than Chinese for some historical reasons.

In addition, since 2001 China has become a member of the World Trade Organization. Joining this organization imposes on China to reduce government control over the economy, as it imposes also to reduce state subsidies and restrictions on foreign investment. Besides, the Chinese have to deal with foreigners for the sake of economic development what requires English to communicate. In addition, English media from the U.S. have negative results on the Chinese standard language. However, today anthropologists cannot speak about the extinction of the Chinese language because of the power it has on local scale and of the



novelty of relations with American English. The evidence is that some other minor languages are threatened by English penetration. Here, it is imperative to mention that though approximately 95 percent of people in China speak Chinese which is the language of the dominant ethnic group Han, there are other languages spoken by minorities such as Tibetan, Mongolian, Lolo, Miao and Tai. These minor languages are those which are more threatened by American cultural imperialism. That is why, The UNESCO warned the communities of the World against this problem: the extinction of languages or “the threatened heritage”.

According to Frederico Mayor, the extinction of languages is accelerated by several factors related to globalization (338). The influence of the audiovisual media and the appearance of a new fashion of consumption, things which are also linked to cultural propaganda and “one-way flow of information”, have contributed to the disappearance of some languages. The statistics show that the proportion of languages in danger is very high in eastern Asia (ibid). In this context, scholars do not underestimate the role of Cultural propaganda. The latter has resulted in mass consumption of the U.S. products which in turn has led to a global American culture where English plays the role of intermediary between the consumers (e.g. Chinese market) and the advertisers (the Americans). Hence, the Chinese social reality and the nature of the Chinese relations with the external world shows the need for the American language as a tool the world of mass communication and mass culture where China is involved some two decades ago.

At schools and universities, the young generations prefer to study English rather than Chinese. The latter, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century is spoken just as mother tongue, and it is not privileged in the crucial domains. In contrast, English is favoured by people and represents a symbol of modernity and science. For this reason, though it is taught as a foreign language, English is taking more space in China. Michael Armstrong, the U.S. business executive, said in one of his speeches, “today there are more Chinese studying English than there are

Americans.” These words show the truth of English language and its utility in China to the extent that it is more studied in China than in the U.S. In the same context, Jerry Mander noticed that the young people lose interest in their mother tongue and want to learn only English (108). The rejection of the mother tongue in fact would condemn some particular and minor Chinese languages to die sooner or later, and it would diminish the role of the standard language.

The spread of American English over the world is not only imposed by the situation of the day; it is also promoted by the American administrations, mainly the American Embassies. For example, the programmes of American Corner (such as that of Macau University in China) and educational aids by the U.S. encourage and maintain the dominance of the American language. Barbara Bush pointed out that “U.S. universities and textbook publishers, backed up by U.S. aid programmes, have penetrated educational systems and played a crucial role in shaping elites” (195). In fact, these kinds of American programmes are destined to the intellectual rank of the society because they deal directly with schools and universities, two fragile sectors of a society. Hence, the effectiveness and the ineffectiveness of these programmes and their aims in the society depend on that intellectual class. In short, under informal imperialism, education and language remain important to the strategies of cultural dominance. Simultaneously, linguistic imperialism persists in the hegemony of English.

As every language expresses a given ideology of a given society, taking on another language is taking on another ideology. American English in turn carries the values and the principles of American society. Alastair Pennycook argues that “every language carries the weight of a civilization. The decision to use a certain language means to support the existence of a given cultural matrix” (22). Thus, if the Chinese enjoy the English language, this means

that they enjoy the American life style and civilization, and accordingly they would abandon their own life style when they abandon their language.

As a conclusion, after having seen the definition and the history of different concepts related to the topic and the relation that exists between them from a postcolonial view, it is clear that the American culture is of a significant role in the imperialistic practice of the United States. It is the matrix of the American modern domination of the world. Unconsciously and without predicting its results, the adoption of the American life style has distorted the Chinese traditional social structure and social consumption. As a result, the Chinese culture is superseded by the American way of life, and its market proves to be beneficial to the American multinational corporations. It is also clear that linguistic imperialism is a derivation of the American cultural imperialism and contributes to the infiltration of the American civilization to China.

Without doubt, some of these consequences of the American cultural imperialism are arbitrary. However, most of them are results of a well planned strategy of propaganda waged by a category of Americans. The following Chapter aims to study cultural propaganda and its important tools to influence people.

## **Chapter Two: American Cultural Propaganda in China**

Coercing other states to change is a direct method of exercising power. Such practice of power on a given social group leads usually to a direct reaction from that group. As it is known and argued by physicians, every pressure results in explosion. The colonial period in some countries such as Algeria before 1962 is a good example to show how the use of power ends with a war, insurrection or a defensive rebellion. There is also an indirect way to exercise power in order to assimilate societies to another one “more intelligent” in term of means and strategy.

The cultural expansion of the United States around the world is a result of what Joseph S. Nye, a professor at Harvard University, calls “soft power” (63). This term is used in international relations to describe the ability of a political body like the White House to influence indirectly the behaviour or the interests of another country. Cultural propaganda resulted in technological improvement in the field of telecommunication and in some cultural programmes is also a “soft power” practice. It is an appropriate term to discuss the American indirect way of leading the world.

Hence, this chapter introduces two significant American tools of propaganda which made the American way so famous in other societies mainly in China. It makes clear the role of mass media and American modernity in promoting American cultural imperialism. In addition, it tries to answer how the notion of modernity is implicated by these propaganda tools to make people disregard their culture.

### **A. The Propaganda of Mass Media**

Joseph Ki-Zerbo, a historian from Burkina Faso, West Africa, wrote, “Our cultures are being reduced little by little to nothing. These technologies have no passport and no visa, but they are affecting us and shaping us.” These two sentences are very meaningful, and they

show an important social truth in modern world. In fact, American cinema and popular music and other technological programs introduce American traditions, principles and values to foreign cultures, often to the detriment of native traditions.

Mass media are the means which make of the world a very small village, and the purpose of their existence is communication. There are seven billion people in the world from different cultures, but this amount of people live in a “small village” as it was predicted by Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s. Nowadays, the five continents are just a “global village” where events taking place 10,000 miles away seem as close as events happening nearby. Every person finds himself in this global village whenever he faces a TV screen or a computer to the extent that people become as closer as they are around one table or less. In the same way, their cultures get in touch and exchange norms and values. This kind of relation between societies and cultures can be profitable, especially when there is control and regulation from ones’ self or institutions and other organizations.

However, after some great inventions in the field of technology, mass media became an efficient means of imperialism. Armand Mattelart calls this fact “L’empire du cable.” (188). All countries in the world participate in this practice since all of them own these means of communication, but the monopoly is for the nation which holds the most sophisticated technologies. As it is mentioned, the power lies not on the quantity of the means, but it is more quality and quantity together. In spite of the European and some Asian countries competition, the Americans have been ahead in this field mainly after the invention of the computer and then internet which are now widely used and demanded.

In his words, Robert Boyer relates cultural strength of the U.S. with its ability to communicate since this latter in its turn helps to perpetuate the first. He advocates that:

American superpower is the 'first global society' in the history because she is the society that communicates more (65 percent of global communications come from the United States), and she is the only one which succeeded to make of her life style, her techniques, her cultural products, her ways ... universal (trans. 85).

Thus, means of communication are source of power for the U.S. they provide a very sophisticated weapon which can replace the traditional ways of leading a war against enemies and foreigners. Today, the U.S counts 15 major telecommunication companies which offer competing plans and encircle the globe with a constellation of satellites. Sometimes even people when looking at the sky and see shining things, think of American satellites instead of stars. Then, it is understood that "l'empire du cable" about which Armand Mattelart speaks just before is that of the U.S.

As it is mentioned in the first chapter, because China opened its door to the world at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the country's structure and cultural atmosphere, traditions, and people's life have changed dramatically. Chinese reformers are eager to learn advanced technologies from western countries. At the same time, western countries, in particular the U.S. consider China as a big market in Asia and try to make it as beneficial as possible to themselves. Accordingly, the relations between China and U.S. are based on the economic interest, but this does not reject other indirect effects of these relations. It is on this fact that professor Wen Tiejun tried to draw the attention of the Chinese. He wanted to remind public opinion that the Chinese society is not exclusively limited to its economic aspects\*.

The Sino-American relationship has always been a receptive one among international relations. Zhizhong Li argued that "The United States is the most important one in the western world that has a big influence to China," despite their different political systems and cultural

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\* Wen Tiejun's statement taken from *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (2001) is found in *Mondialisation des Résistances*.

values. The U.S. government proclaims that American objectives are to protect and advance U.S. interests and enlarge the world community of secure, democratic and free market economic. The Chinese economic reform gives the United States a good chance to try to achieve this objective in Asia. With its door wide open to the world, China unavoidably has to deal with the influence coming from the United States and other countries. The influence of the internet, for example, is so noticeable on the Chinese society.

After the Chinese government under the president Deng Xiaoping had started the economic reform, the Chinese had got the chance to observe the world outside. From newspaper, radio and TV, Chinese people gradually experienced American culture. However, with the limits set up by the government, the information from traditional media was far from enough for Chinese people to understand American culture. During the 1990s, although China opened its market, it was still politically guided by the old tradition. This was eventually reflected in Chinese media which was still conditioned by some authoritarian laws of the communist period.

Technology actually allows Chinese people to discover the American culture. Thanks to internet, people over the world can meet every day or even every hour to exchange ideas. For this reason, the U.S.A. has always sustained “the free flow of information” (Mattelard 66) which is taken as a source of American power or what Eric Alterman calls “global powerhouse” (126). Many Chinese Web users can access to American Web sites. The spread of English and translation software facilitates for Chinese surfers to understand the content on American Web sites. Information about the United States also appeared on Chinese Web sites. All these things have got effects on the Chinese culture and perception of the world. Those famous Chinese Web sites like Sohu.com and Sina.com.cn have a section where users can find a lot of detailed information about American culture. What is more important is the way in which that information on the American culture have been exposed to the Chinese viewers.

The veneration and the glorification of the American democracy, individualism and liberty overwhelm the web users. The flag of the U.S. with many stars and colored in blue, red and white is found in every page and every site. These things, in addition to the psychological estate of the surfers, manipulate peoples' cultural taste. This is the highest stage of propaganda.

Barbara Bush has declared, "Roman culture had less influence in the countryside [than in cities]" (22). This is not true with the American culture. Thanks to wire and wireless technology, American culture has got no frontiers. It has reached rural and urban places, young and old, men and women. It has become something uncontrollable as well as unavoidable. In a work of fiction, *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1949), George Orwell predicted a future world where people are guided by some sophisticated inventions, and culture is distorted for the interests of a given social group. Because of that, Orwell warned against the birth of totalitarian countries which would uniform and standardize the world. He implemented the word "telescreen," which stands for new technological inventions, as a means to control societies and a brute force of propaganda.

Without doubt, economic interests are not neglected in spreading American culture in China. Today, managers of great American businesses are studying Chinese culture for a good competition with China. Hence, internet is a good opportunity to do that indirectly. The commercial power of the Internet is of big impacts on the American companies to run business in China and elsewhere in the world. Mark I. Schwartz, an attorney in the Washington, D.C. office, asserts that "Free-market capitalism is the engine that created the technological wonderland" (Schwartz). American influence also has a huge impact on China in the area of entertainment. Today, people usually go to the internet whenever they want to entertain themselves. Most of means of entertainment they find available are American made,



in an American way. As a result, people during their entertainment are indirectly connected to the American culture.

Besides, the efficiency of American cultural propaganda, either through utilizing media or the display of American modernity, can be seen through economic perspectives. It is impossible to speak about cultural imperialism without referring to trade and commercial affairs. The propaganda is destined mainly to spread American culture which is eventually a source of economic profits. China stands for a great American market, and according to James Petras, young people and children are the most vulnerable to such propaganda, so he wrote in one of his essays:

Imperial entertainment and advertisement target young people who are most vulnerable to U.S. commercial propaganda. The message is simple and direct: 'modernity' is associated with consuming U.S. media products. Youth represent a major market for U.S. cultural export and they are most susceptible to the consumerist-individualist propaganda. The mass media manipulates adolescent rebelliousness by appropriating the language of the left and channelling discontent into consumer extravagances.

In this sense, it is worthy to refer to video games and playstations which have made revolution in the field of entertainment. Quickly, these entertainers have won reputation all over the world, mainly the youth. They are widely available in the Asian countries including China.

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> c., technological propaganda has become a cultural event par excellence. The communication encourages the manipulation of codes, images and symbols. Because of this role played by the American technology, some scholars confirm that culture inequalities are going to worsen. Actually, this is what everybody cannot reject.

Federico Mayor, a famous figure in the field of telecommunication and a former General Director of UNESCO, regards the revolution in computer science and communication as a source of social and cultural upheaval. He considers it as the matrix of the “third industrial revolution” which will affect all aspects of life. Yet, this new revolution is seen as a prelude to a “new age of inequalities” (283). Statistics show that 60 percent from 9 million and half of computers connected to internet are possessed by the Americans. China is underestimated by the statistics. Accordingly, China and U.S. do not have the same access to this technology. Comparing to the U.S, China is just leapfrogging in this field. As a consequence, it falls in a situation of resistance instead of action. The fact of controlling modern technology of communication gives the Americans power to shape foreign communities and thus cultures.

Mohandas Gandhi says in one of his speeches that the greatest invention of the USA is Hollywood because it makes people believe what is not true. In fact, Americans used this technology of mass media to convince the public opinion that American Indians were savages, uncivilized, and barbarians; however, history shows that it is the Europeans who destroyed the Indian communities under the pretext of civilizing them till almost the disappearance of Red Skin race. Historians estimate that more than 8 million of Native Americans were killed in their lands. Americans used also mass media during the Cold War as means of propaganda against the Soviet Union, and hundreds of movies were recorded and broadcasted for this purpose. Today, these means have another major role in transforming whole communities into a more Americanized ones.

Nowadays, in the same way, the American technology is used against and to mislead public opinion of some regions and cultures. Edward Said wrote a whole book *Orientalism* to show how the West sees the East as inferior mainly in term of culture and technology. Such tools as television and internet are widely used to criticize these cultures and to propagate and

impose some others under the slogan of “civilizing them”. On television, USA’s channels always show how Americans are living. It shows mainly all the good aspects of their life style in order to make other people of other countries appreciate and enjoy that culture. David Hesmondhalgh argues in one of his essays that some commentators note the importance of TV in the worldwide spread of American culture and commercial values. “This has had the effect of producing a global culture that in fact follows Western (mainly American) trends and norms” (Encarta 2005). In fact, any TV program can have a great impact on the opinion of the viewer and change his view because he is overwhelmed by series of news and images.

In mass media, Advertisements are of central role in shaping the way in which people see their life. Ideas are enforced through the repetition of the same advertisement. For instance, Cable News Network (CNN) and other channels and radios contribute a lot to “misrepresent” the Orient where Chinese are included. This led E. Said to write:

Accompanying such warmongering expertise have been the omnipresent CNNs and Foxes of this world, plus myriad numbers of evangelical and right-wing radio hosts, plus innumerable tabloids and even middle-brow journalists, all of them recycling the same unverifiable fictions and vast generalizations so as to stir up ‘America’ against the foreign devil (Said *Orientalism* XV).

In this quotation, Said shows how Americans see the “others” or the foreigners and Chinese in particular, and how they generalize any bad aspect of a given group on the whole societies. This fact happened also after the events of 11<sup>th</sup> September when a terrorist group attacked the World Trade Centre and some other places in the U.S. The ruling administration was accusing all Muslims and Islam as responsible for these problems. On the international scale, this kind of generalizations can have a negative effect on the psychology of people and their culture. In fact, this is one main role of propaganda.

As a result, American culture enters and influences the Chinese world mainly the cities where English is widely spoken, sometimes as a first language. Language is important because any propaganda depends on its accessibility to people. Hence, knowing American English is having access to American propaganda and play a role within it. Furthermore, because of being influenced by the American television, most people from China see modernity in the American culture. The latter is taken as the reference to determine if a given culture is developed or underdeveloped.

In addition to advertisements, movies directed by Hollywood come and make of a fiction a reality. They always portray Americans as being superior and defending the ideals of their country based on individualism, democracy and freedom. Indeed, such movies as *The Shepherd Border Patrol* (2007) under the slogan “One man shall lead them to justice” describe non-American people in a very horrible and inhuman way contrary to American soldiers and citizens. The aim of this cinema is to convince the audiences that an American is a modern man. Hence, the audiences should follow and support the heroes of the movies who represent the Americans. Besides, Hollywood wants to impose indirectly the American culture through criticizing the “others” as being uncivilized.

In this context, behaviourists’ scholars such as John B. Watson studied the impact of advertisement and television in general on the viewers, and they concluded that it is very useful to mobilize and lead a certain group of citizens (Mattelard 330). Following this idea, the American government endeavours to encourage civil societies and governments to establish a global audiovisual democracy and liberate journalists and cameras. The aim is the expansion of one and global mass culture under the monopoly and the management of the American culture and the creation of global citizenship (Sampedro 258). In this case, it is sure

that the unconscious parts of society and children are the most affected by this cultural imperialism or cultural neo-colonialism\*.

The U.S. dominates the global traffic of information and ideas. American music and movies, American television and software are so monopolizing, so required and so visible. They are now available everywhere on the globe. They affect tastes, lives and aspirations of not only China but almost every nation. Television, for instance, has promised to contribute in the progress of communication, wrote Jerry Mander, but it has not kept its promise (108). As it is the case with China, the programmes are not local products, but they are imported from the U.S. and some other occidental countries. It is cited that 60 percent of TV programmes in most of countries of East Asia comes from U.S.

A study managed by Helena Norberg-Hodge, a Swedish scholar who studied rural communities in China and India, confirms that television has got devastating consequences mainly in rural areas of China. “It seduces the behaviours and values of people living in those isolated villages” and corrupts their relationships (80-81). Even though this study seems to be excessively rejecting television, without doubt its judgement carries some truth which no one can deny. At the same time and without doubt, this means is beneficent to the U.S. As it is known, something which is harmful for a social group can be beneficent to another. In fact, these means contributed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the emergence of the U.S. as a global superpower. Historians believe that any development in the field of communication is a key step in the expedition of American cultural imperialism.

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\* Neo-colonialism is the use of economic, political, or cultural pressures to control or influence other countries, especially former dependencies (Pearsall 955).

## **B. The Propaganda of Modernity**

Postcolonial theorists lean on the idea of “modernity” to explain the proliferation of the American culture in developing countries. This is the reason why they believe in the fact that modernity is crucial in order to understand differences between old and new empires. It is also indispensable to understanding the nature of cultural imperialism and Americanization. In its vague sense, modernity makes the core of American cultural imperialism. To clear up this idea, one should go to the role of modernity in cultural propaganda and its effects on the growth of the U.S.A. outside its borders.

History confirms that over time great powers and stretching empires have got some ideals which cherish their imperial will\*. Those ideals were factors of power, and they legitimize the dominance of a group over the other. In Europe, for instance, the culture of Renaissance, the reformation, the Enlightenment and even the Industrial Revolution were the seeds of the great Empires that emerged after the dark Ages. At the moment where these new notions came to create the eagerness for freedom among people, they condemned other communities, mainly outside Europe, to be controlled or colonized. As a result, they became the symbol of modernization and then opened the door to European “missionism”.

The European reality is not far from that of the U.S.A. According to Robert Mckeever, it is because of its origins that the U.S. is not much different from the Anglo-Saxon mother land. Thus, the American modernity is seen in democracy, capitalism and technology. The two latter are indispensable for the first one, i.e. democracy, and all of them make the modernity in the eyes of the U.S.A. Since the Second World War, Washington has fought for the spread of these principles in the world, and in the name of democracy, it promoted a

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\* Imperial will is the way in which an imperial power legitimizes or justifies its expansion in a given territory, either by propaganda or pretexts (Todd, 55). In its political and economic sense, this concept is also well explained in the books of Noam Chomsky, *Dominer le Monde ou Sauver la Planète* (2004) et *Le Bouclier Américain* (2002).

controversial ideology that stressed the value of respecting differences among people. The result is a culture that allows Americans to intervene on the world scene with the justification that they are doing right. It is till now waging wars for the democratization of the totalitarian countries as it is argued by some American leaders. In fact, American modernity has got a significant role in influencing peoples elsewhere.

As a scholar in imperial history, Barbara Bush noticed that “[t]he impact of modernity on the rest of the world was profound and had a far-reaching transformative influence on ...social relations and cultures...” (78). On the basis of modernity, many societies were assimilated and have become American cultural dependencies. And so Americans transported their culture to their Empire. Bush argued also that “the spread of American culture and civilization heralded modernization” (115).

In this way, the American modernity creates a feeling of inferiority in other societies which live most of time economic problems. In fact, this is what happened in China, mainly after the fall of Eastern Bloc and the collapse of the Soviet Union. The defeat of communism gave the opportunity to the U.S. to show to the world it has always been the country of modernity. Hence, its superior culture should be that of the world. During that period, China found itself in a dilemma; either to continue in the policy of the 1950s and 60s or to enter a new era and a new policy. Despite this dilemma, it seems that China has no choice while most of world countries are testing the merits of the American modernization and individualism. There seems to be no alternative but the adoption of the U.S. global market.

Chinese started to see in the U.S.A. a source of modernity. As a result, a search for modernity created a “mental dependency” in the Chinese society (Burke 435). In a globalized world, cultural hegemony means also cultural suppression. Anyway, in the American

Darwinian world, cultural inferiority means also a nearby death. It is a permanent struggle and fight for survival of cultures.

In the famous *Black Skin, White Mask*, Frantz Fanon argues that “colonization of the personality resulted in the acceptance of the other’s superiority” (32). This is apparent in the Chinese society. The psychological consequences of the American modernity and cultural imperialism in general have pushed the Chinese to accept their inferiority. When reporting a speech of two Chinese that took place in 2005, Jonathan Weber gives a good example to illustrate the feeling of inferiority among the Chinese today. One of them discussed cultural products and said, “if it comes from outside China, it’s going to be better than what comes from inside.” The other person agreed on the friend’s statement. In the context of cultural propaganda, like in mass media, modernity is implemented to influence people and attract their views. It has accelerated a further penetration of U.S. consumerist culture, and it is directed at transforming traditional societies into “modern productive colonies.”

In addition, modernity is also used to disassociate people from their cultures. This function brought a new form of governable people. Postcolonial theorists argue that this is more dangerous because it has the power to make people hate their partisanship to a given culture. It makes them feel lacking something which exists elsewhere. Freedom, democracy and economic development which people lack in China because of historical delay could have a strong effect on the state of minds of people. Consequently, the U.S.A. has become an example to follow not only economically but also culturally. To clarify this point, Barbara Bush wrote that “Chinese culture was increasingly viewed as decadent and a blockage to economic development” (101). This statement explains how the feeling of cultural inferiority in China is connected with modernity and economic development.



Modernity as a means of propaganda has been used by Washington against the communists before the 1990s and then against the rest of world after that period. It succeeded in changing Beijing. Nowadays, even though it has known a yearly economic progress of about 10 percent since its pursuit of the American modernity or the globalized capitalism, Beijing has to face the ghost of cultural uprooting because, according to John Tomlinson, cultural imperialism is entangled in the issues of modernity in the Chinese republic (276). It is said that human beings like the best, so whenever the U.S. convinces them that her culture is the best, people will abandon their cultural values and become little by little Americanized. And in fact the world has become more uniform to the American model.

To show this uniformity, Oliver Zunz has based his book *Why the American Century?* on the notion of modernity. This latter has made of the 20<sup>th</sup> century an “American century,” and it has been used to show the American “social intelligence” (25). Besides, it has a primordial role in exporting “democratic principles throughout the world and in securing American domestic achievement.” In this way, Zunz has artistically connected modernity with the American power, and he has verified its role in propaganda as well.

American cultural propaganda with the negative effects that it could have on the Republic of China has developed a positive feeling among the Chinese to protect their cultural identity. Nowadays, the Chinese policy is guided by the will to preserve cultural identity and to maintain economic progress. ‘The Great Fire Wall’ is a good example to illustrate this idea.

### **C. Chinese Cultural Resistance**

As it is mentioned at the beginning of the first chapter, social groups differ from each other. The differences can be due to the geographical situation or the biological heredity of a particular social group. On the basis of some natural qualities such as colour, anthropologists and biologists such as Charles Darwin have distinguished between the Blacks, the Whites, the

Red Skins. In fact, these qualities are maintained by the geography of the area where that social group lives. For example, Blacks are from African origins, Whites from European and Asian origins and the Red Skins are from American origins. The difference between them is made, in addition to geography and biology, by the difference that exists between the cultures. The latter are very important to determine or define a society despite the invisibility of most of their components. It is by referring to the underlying values, social structure, language and other abstract things that people usually classify social groups. Hence, culture is a kind of existing local, autonomous, independent and distinct experience of a social group which usually lives in the same boundaries or nation. In other words, it is the common heritage on which the *identity* of a nation is based. John Tomlinson defined identity as “a sort of collective treasure of local communities” (269). Eventually, culture and identity subsist together to make what is called cultural identity. The two elements are so dependent on each and they need to be protected and preserved to preserve and protect the unity of the group.

As it has come to homogenize the world diversity and to universalize one culture, globalization has often represented a danger to identities. Without doubt, the western cultural domination can result in the disappearance of some cultures. Statistics by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have proved that many societies are threatened by cultural death caused by cultural hegemony, i.e. losing one’s identity. Hence, according to postcolonial historians, globalization destroys “stable localities” or identities. This fact shows how much fragile and vulnerable identity is. In return, it has given birth to a cultural resistance and stimulated a kind of protestation against distorting global heterogeneity.

American cultural imperialism transforms traditional and conservative societies through technological conquest and rule which in turn creates a new form of opposition. As David C. Thomas and Kerr Inkson observed, “most societies nowadays go out of their way to

ensure that cultures under threat are protected from submergence by majority cultures” (28). The fear is that the whole world will become like the U.S., and will think, talk, and act like Americans.

By compensation, some cultural policies have engaged in the revitalization of autonomous cultural activities to avoid societies of simulation based on the consumption of the standardized cultural products. China, for example, has been trying to prevent cultural assimilating effects of globalization. It has entered a competition that, according to some scholars, would last for a long time. This competition is not only political and economic but is also cultural. Chinese have realized how dangerous indirect imperialism is when promoted by cultural propaganda and legitimized by the American view of modernity. Knowing that China has first mobilized its own cultural and technological possessions to limit the influence of U.S. indirect imperialism and second to spread consciousness of the danger within the society, it has proceeded to something like “decolonizing the minds,” or a liberation “from mental slavery” caused by psychological effects of propaganda.

In order to resist American cultural imperialism, China has adopted some measures that would bring down the degree of influence on people. By the same token, China aimed also to restore some of its lost social order and promote authentic values, and then preserve national identity. Resistance, for instance, has been asserted through cinema movement and national film production in a way to challenge the hegemony of Hollywood. In addition, it has restricted the imports of American music, films and books. As a result, in 2009, arbitrators at the World Trade Organization upheld a declaration that, “China had illegally restricted imports of American [cultural products]” (The Associated Press). Moreover, Beijing’s policy makers most of time restrict American media producers and route their business through state-owned companies.

Like France and Canada, China is today endorsing and subsidizing the Convention on Cultural Diversity (CCD), officially called the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expression. Due to seriousness and gravity of the world cultural situation of the day, many countries participated in the convention, and the number is growing. However, the U.S. is against it because it is contradicted with free trade deals, and it would affect American economic interests in the domain of cultural industry. The CCD was passed by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 2005 despite the opposition of the U.S. for it would preserve cultural diversity threatened by the American cultural imperialism. As Sasha Costanza-Chock affirms:

The CCD has the potential to be a powerful buffer against the persistent attempts by the office of the United States Trade Representative to fully incorporate what is termed “audiovisual services,” or the production, reproduction, and distribution of television, Film, internet....” (270).

The participation of China in such a convention illustrates the real intentions of the Chinese administration to conserve the national culture.

Furthermore, China takes advantage of and participates in international ceremonies to display its improvement and the modernization achieved by the Chinese society. The universal exhibition of Shanghai, from May to October 2010, illustrates the will of China to expose its ability to be a competitor of the U.S. and to face the hegemonic American culture. In term of equipment, the exhibition is a record-breaking with the participation of 189 countries and 100 millions of visitors from different places. Some said that it is the greatest exhibition ever seen. News argue that the figures of the preparation to that event show that Shanghai does not want to tell its history to the millions of tourists, but it wants to astonish

and dazzle them<sup>\*</sup>. This kind of events can create feeling of pride, satisfaction and self-respect among the Chinese, so that they stick to and glorify their cultural partisanship.

These manifestations are also considered as Olympiads of science, technologies, designs and inventions of China. According to the news, all Chinese stars of arts are invited and concerned with the event to exhibit the Chinese popular culture. The famous movie actor, Jackie Chan, was present to concretize his role as a fan of Chinese cinema and culture in general. In fact, such international ceremonies aimed to revive dynamism in the Chinese culture. And they create the eagerness to develop and modernize all domains of life because the resistance of any culture lies in modernization and development.

Supported by some other countries such as France and Canada, China has evoked this fact in several international gatherings. It demanded “a restructuring of information flows that would reflect the reality of the majority rather than [only] the interests of the wealthy minority” (Costanza-Chock 268)<sup>2</sup>. This is in fact to reduce the power of technology and to halt the rapid course of Americanization not only in China but also all over the developing countries. The restructuring of information flow is also intended to help China to catch up with the U.S. in term of technology.

Besides, China is not rejecting everything coming from the outside world and the U.S. Yet, it is following a selective way in dealing with international affairs. The Indian leader, Mohandas Gandhi once said, “I would let the winds of the world blow through the doors and windows of my house but I will not be blown away.” This statement juxtaposes today’s Chinese attitude towards American cultural infiltration to the society. This attitude in turn summarizes how the Chinese policy is oriented to economic pragmatism and to cultural

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<sup>\*</sup> Some information in these passages are taken from an article : “La démesure Chinoise éblouit le reste du monde.” *El Watan* 8 pp. 27 Mai 2010.

<sup>2</sup> It is taken from an article cited in: McChesney, Robert, and all. *The Future of Media*. Toronto: Seven Stories, 2005.

protectionism. Like this, China tends to accept some aspects of other cultures and refuse some others. David C. Thomas has presented how the Chinese are moving towards this attitude, and he has written:

[They] have adopted modern competitiveness but rejected modern attitudes toward sexual promiscuity.... Probably the only real convergence that is taking place is in surface matters such a basic business structures and consumer preference, rather than in fundamental ways of thinking and behaviour (28).

In other words, China has got a preferential strategy in managing national business for the sake of protecting the national heritage threatened by the manipulation of the consciousness of the young generations and by the waged American propaganda. China tolerates more the material side of exchange and not the abstract, spiritual side. In the broader sense, the Chinese administration is more conservative when it is question of cultural threat. In this respect, the Chinese president Jiang Zemin declared, “We have to be selective. We hope to restrict as much as possible information not conducive to Chinese development” (Li). And as a matter of fact, to face the problem of the influence of internet in shaping the Chinese society, China has proceeded to control the flow of information from this means. For the Chinese government, which is very much disturbed by this problem, Google is part of the ‘Voice of America’, and it has power to manipulate and disrupt Chinese identity. As a reaction, the Chinese authorities have developed a Web censorship program. This latter which is called “the Great Fire Wall” has created an intensified debate between China and the U.S. Some of the polemist qualify this debate a new Cold War. The Chinese administration announced that Google will not surf in China without the Chinese strict regulations, something that appalled Google and the American administration. The U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton has referred to the Chinese censorship as an “Iron Curtain” reminding us of Churchill’s famous remark; whereas, China Foreign Ministry spokesperson Ma Zhaoxu

responded saying that “Clinton’s critiques [are] unjustified and imperialistic” (Fischer). The Chinese arguments are based on a wider frame of harmful information and strong influence in the everyday life of the citizens. This fact shows how much conflicting the objectives of China and the U.S. are, as it also shows the strong will of China to reduce or even stop the effects of the American propaganda on the Chinese society.

To conclude, it is clear that cultural propaganda contributes a lot in extending empires as is the case for the U.S.A today. The use of some sophisticated means such as media has changed the way of controlling territories and assimilating cultures. China is a good example which shows how American policy makers are standardizing their culture and making profits of it. In addition, it is clear that American cultural products introduced in the Chinese market and promoted by the technology have a significant role in Americanizing the Chinese society which is being overwhelmed by advertisements and the display of images. Moreover, modernity makes the core of cultural propaganda since it has the psychological task to attract the Chinese. It makes them feel inferior and then adopt the American life style unconsciously. The realization of the danger that the infiltration of the American culture and the distortion of the Chinese culture heritage represent to national identity urged the Chinese authorities to restrict the flow of information dominated by the U.S. to China and to promote national cultural products through exhibitions and other cultural programs and decided China to enter the competition with U.S. to preserve its culture, economy, and identity.

## **General Conclusion**

Throughout this study, we have argued that American cultural imperialism is one major aspect of the American dominance of the world. Nowadays, the United States is not only powerful economically and politically but also culturally. The culture has often served American hegemonic policy to gain access to material profits outside the U.S. It provides an efficient tool to control the minds and the abstract side of people. From a postcolonial view and from realistic perception, this Study has investigated some provocative questions about culture, power and imperialism. It has explained that culture, though abstract and invisible, has got implications in what is today the U.S.

Through the case of China, we have seen and measured the implication of the American culture outside the American boundaries. After the reforms of the 1980s, the American culture has got access to the Chinese society. As a result, the predominant culture and the conventional values have been changed to a new culture where we can notice American consumerism. While China was looking for modernity and social prosperity to enter a new époque, the American culture has infiltrated the minds of the Chinese, a thing that caused, to some extent, unexpected social and cultural reforms. Besides, the growth of global culture under the monopoly of the U.S. has distorted the traditional social structure and social consumption of the Chinese community which has been step by step submerged and Americanized.

In addition, this research shows that the American life style has imposed itself on the Chinese despite the opposition that exists between the two cultures. This is due to the flow of information and of cultural products from the U.S. to China. This fact in turn shows the power that a culture has in bringing other cultures under its domination. The American culture is apparent at different levels in the Chinese society. It has transformed the relationships between members from the same community as it has changed their perception of the world. Collectivism which was preached by the Chinese few decades ago is no more tolerated in the



society, particularly in big towns such Shanghai, Peking and Hong Kong. Self-help and individualism have become more acceptable for people. This study explains also the split in the Chinese family caused by materialism. In search for wealth, the youth has become more independent and self-making when compared to the youth of the period before 1980s. After having been guided by Buddhism and some other spiritual beliefs, the Chinese family is now guided by the greed for wealth and entertainment. This makes clear that the American principles are eventually accepted in China.

Accordingly, this work clarifies the impact of the American cultural imperialism on the Chinese market. It argues that even the Chinese taste is changed and reoriented to the society of mass consumption. Hence, even the consumption is often Americanized, and the flow of cultural products and the impacts of such corporations as Coca Cola, McDonald, and Disneyland and even Hollywood shapes peoples' daily consumption. Besides, despite the economic profits that it has gained from its globalized market, China proves to be likely dominated by the U.S. values.

Furthermore, American cultural imperialism operates at the level of the language. It humiliates local languages and gives the American English the role it has in communication. English has become a *lingua franca*. It is the language of science and modernity which carries the Anglo-Saxon heritage and ideology. The Chinese have become more and more converted to the English language which embodies the American ideology.

The second chapter has explained the role of cultural propaganda in spreading the American culture over the world. For this purpose, the U.S. takes advantage of its sophisticated technology and its modernity which are to be efficient in promoting cultural imperialism. Through cultural propaganda, the Americans have indirectly standardized their culture in the "global village." With 15 dominating telecommunication companies, the U.S. encircles the globe with many satellites which have no frontiers. The effectiveness of technological advance

in shaping and controlling other societies is illustrated in China. Today, most of the Chinese have got access to such means as television and internet which frequently encourage the manipulation of codes, images and symbols. At the end, these people find themselves following unconsciously the American life style, loving the American movies and defending the American democracy. The second chapter has also demonstrated the combined impact that mass media has on cultures, and has confirmed that these means could have devastating consequences mainly on rural areas where life depends on the relationship between people and on children for they lack maturity, critical thinking and therefore are easy to influence.

Cultural imperialism has not only socio-economic consequences on people of the world but it has also generated the psychology of inferiority and dependency. Modernity is crucial to understand this fact for it legitimizes the dominance of a group over the other culturally as we have seen previously. The Americans have used such principles as democracy, capitalism and freedom to influence peoples and to justify their imperial attitudes outside the U.S. In short, modernity has profound and far-reaching transformative influences on social relations not only in China but in most countries of the world. As a result, the dominance of the American culture threatens the global diversity and local identities.

At the end, this research has highlighted the key links between cultural imperialism and the Chinese resistance. Due to the threat caused by the wide spread of the American culture, the Chinese administration has passed some measures to restrict and limit the influences on the Chinese society. For example, in the field of trade, China has subsidized some local cultural products and has controlled foreign imports involved in the strategy of americanization. In addition, China has followed a selective policy in term of the flow of information, and the problem of 'the Great Fire Wall' between China and the U.S. is a good example to show the commitment of China to resist.

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