

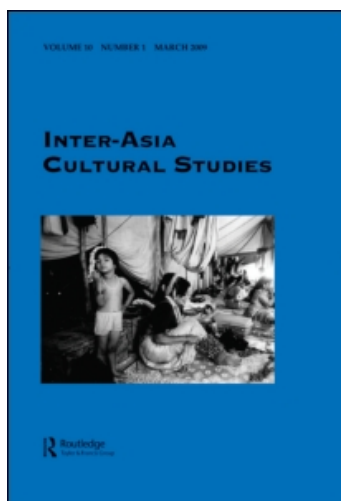
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Fake logos, fake theory, fake globalization

Hsiao-hung CHANG (Translated by Yung-chao LIAO)

ABSTRACT *This essay attempts to map out the global networking of counter-feit production and consumption by considering the historical and economic complications of fake superlogograms in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Mainland China as a point of departure. It traces not only the 'capital logic' of the counter-feiting industry, which duplicates the international division of labour, but also its 'cultural logic', which creates the Euro-American superlogograms under the spell of Western imperialist ideology. The essay is divided into three main parts to foreground the 'glocal' circulation of fake superlogos. The first part considers the famous French Louis Vuitton as a case study to explore the economic, historic and cultural formation of the logomania in East Asia piloted by Japan in the 1980s. The second part discusses the double cultural reproduction of fake logos in Taiwan as both an imitation of Japan and an imitation of Japanese imitation of Europe. The third part seeks to theorize the fake under the context of Asian consumption of the superlogo and to foreground further the historical change of how the 'fake' becomes ubiquitous, how the 'fake' could be produced out of no originals, and how the 'fake' turns out to be perfectly indistinguishable and doubly authentic, which could rewrite the whole theory of mimesis. A new theorization of 'fake dissemination' is attempted in this essay to map out the co-dependent ongoing (de)construction between 'fake globalization' and 'globalization.' What we mean by 'fake' here is no longer the mere difference between real/fake; the 'fake' in 'fake globalization' means 'counter-feiting' as well as 'appropriating'. (In Chinese, 'Jia' means both 'fake' and 'by a particular means'.) That is, counter-feit products appropriate the power of globalization to disseminate themselves. 'Fake globalization' is the 'dark flow' within globalization; it counter-feits and appropriates globalization, repetitively reduplicating and deconstructing it. 'Fake globalization' and 'globalization' are not a pair in binary opposition. 'Fake globalization' is the 'subversion' of global capitalism; it is subject to global superlogo fashion consciousness and simultaneously resistant to the manipulation of 'glogocentrism'. This subversive fake globalization is different from the traditional anti-globalization movement, which tends to highlight the protection of international worker's rights, anti-monopoly and anti-sweatshops, for the latter focuses chiefly on the 'oppositional' stance while the former stresses more the 'reverse' side of it. Fake globalization helps to turn globalization itself inside out and outside in. Fake globalization is not an external attack on globalization from without, but an internal exposure of how the historical and psychic formulations of the logics of global capitalism are subject to the cultural imagination under (western) imperialist ideology, and how they are influenced by the political-economic deployment of international divisions of labour. What fake dissemination does is to expose from within the possibility and impossibility of 'glogocentrism.'*

KEYWORDS: brand name, counter-feit, logo, globalization, logomania, cultural reproduction, 'glogocentrism', fake dissemination.

The globalization of fake logograms involves a complex networking of commodity (re)production and circulation. Its emergence as a prevailing economic and cultural phenomenon is chiefly boosted by advanced duplication technology and restructured global economic system. Contemporary technology helps to make reproduced 'analogous' copies virtually indistinguishable from the 'original/official' ones and 'digital' copies exactly the same. The overwhelming economic influence of globalization accelerates the rapid exchange of commodi-

ties and, simultaneously, of counter-feit products.¹ The proliferation of counter-feits adopts almost the same routes of global capitalism with even more flexible and agile 'glocal' tactics of manoeuvres to evade national crackdowns. In 1998, the trade volume of the counter-feit industry, be they sumptuous superlogos or everyday products, was estimated as 5% ~ 7% of the global trade (*Qian Jiang Evening News* 2002).² Fake logo(gram)s have been ubiquitously spreading all over the world and successfully constituted a global market that is simultaneously duplicating the networking of late capitalism and destabilizing it as a counter-feit sub-version.

The most rampant (re)production of counter-feits in the world comes from East and Southeast Asia (*Ta Kun Pao* 2000). According to the statistics issued by Department of the Treasury USA, the list of the top five countries that export counter-feit products to America, but intercepted by the Customs in 1999, goes as follows: Taiwan (the second on the list in 1997), China (the first on the list in 1997), South Korea (the fifth on the list in 1997), Hong Kong (the third on the list in 1997), and Singapore (*Central News Daily* 2000). For the first half year of 2000, the top-five list is slightly reshuffled as China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Panama. It is no wonder that China, Taiwan and Hong Kong have always been nicknamed 'the Paradise of Counter-feit Products' or denigrated as 'the Kingdom of Piracy' (*Hong Kong Daily News* 2000).

However, Taiwan, as one of the leading countries in the global counter-feit industry, has produced few works of social and cultural studies on fake logos, let alone counter discourses of counter-feits that would offer a critique of globalization. What most people in Taiwan are familiar with, besides the appeals to moral codes and intellectual property rights, are still the anti-counterfeit, anti-piracy official discourses that takes juridical regulations as its base and the protection of national image and profit as its aim. This official discourse emphasizes that the act of counter-feiting and piracy seriously violates the economic order of the free market and is detrimental to national image, the result of which would lead to the termination of the treatment of the most favoured nations or to the intersecting economic revenges launched by international trade organizations, such as the Special 301 Priority Watch List, whose annual announcement by the US government devastatingly intimidates trade officers in Taiwan. This official concern is further put into practice by stressing the increasing number of successful raids after Taiwan entered the WTO in 2002. The Ministry of Economy not only set up 2002 as the year of Anti-Counterfeit Products, but also asked the Bureau of Investigation, Ministry of Justice, to launch a large-scale search all over the island for counter-feit products. In the short period of two months, from January to March 2002, it had successfully confiscated enormous amount of counter-feit products whose accumulated market price was worth over US\$62 million. Perhaps this impressive record provided by the Taiwan government testifies not how efficient the raids are, but ironically how rampant are counter-feit products in Taiwan.

In response to these raids on counter-feits and illegal duplications, a student coalition allied with local activists emerged in 2002 due to a series of civil violations and campus raids in Taiwan. Chiefly influenced by the International New Left's rhetoric, this student discourse foregrounds the concepts of anti-monopoly and copyLeft (instead of copyright), by positioning itself clearly as anti-(American-)imperialist and anti-capitalist. Since this copyLeft counter-discourse is chiefly initiated by students, its major argument inevitably tends to be limited within issues of 'non-profit-making', duplicated software and books with which students' 'Right to Knowledge' is strongly concerned. Formulated by these glocal con-texts(con-text as also a text), this paper aims to suggest an alternative way of thinking that goes beyond the rigid official discourse on the one hand and that of the radical students' concern on the other by taking fashionable superlogo counter-feits as the main object of analysis. The first reason for highlighting the fashionable superlogo is chiefly concerned with its 'feminine association': fashion, consumption, and popular culture are deemed metaphorically as feminine, and superlogo fashion accessories also take women as their main customers, the result of which doubly intensifies the negative cultural associations, such as cheating, deception, masquerading, performance, vanity, and pretension. The extreme 'political incorrectness' of the superlogo

makes her (the consumer who is specifically gendered) not only incompatible with the strict moral and legal tones of the official anti-counterfeit discourse, but also inappropriate to be integrated into the international leftist discourse that tends to exclude this 'superficial' and 'frivolous' fashion phenomenon.

Secondly, the reproduction techniques of fake superlogos still follow the traditional mode of commodity production that is based upon the global division and exploitation of labour, the factory system of production, and, more specifically, the now notoriously widespread subcontracting system around the world. Completely different from the small-scale digital duplication of the leftist student discourse, it cannot be easily achieved by simple steps of copying, downloading and free exchange; instead, it involves a complicated global (underground) distribution and local market networking, constantly influenced by evanescent fashion trends. Moreover, the consumption side of 'embodying' fake superlogos is as complex as its production side. What we call a 'superlogo' is, by definition, the top among logos, a 'symbol' that is world-famous and presents privileged social status. However, the abstract commodity value that a (fake) superlogo takes on the market is always physically displayed on the surface of the body, such as leather products, watches, clothing, shoes, etc., which turn abstract commodity value into bodily experience and material presence. Hence, it is insufficient to apply any traditional notion of mimesis that stubbornly emphasizes the visual distinction between the original and the copy by presupposing the original's unique, irreversible priority. Since the fake reproduction techniques have been perfectly improved to make the mass-produced counterfeits almost identical, our current discussion of 'fake' has to shift its focus from the 'visual' emphasis of 'copy' to the more 'embodied' notion of 'contact' in order to foreground the bodily experience one feels when the (fake) superlogo is 'put on' the body — all the emotions and sensations evoked in the processes of purchasing, wearing, and showing. We need to tease out the processes in which the abstract global symbol is transformed into everyday life consumption and bodily practices.

Finally, why the critical attention is urgently needed to the studies of fake superlogos comes not only from its prevalence but also from its impending decline: fake superlogos might be soon out of date. The logomania in East Asia in the 1980s revitalized the international superlogo market that had then undergone a long depression and simultaneously boosted the circulation and distribution of fake superlogos from Asia to the whole world. However, after going through the economic recession in Japan, the economic storm in Asia, and 9/11 terrorist attack in the US, whether the consumption of the (fake) superlogo market will keep its momentum and vitality still needs to be observed. Moreover, in terms of the recent changes in the market of the global counter-feit industry, the main profit making has shifted from fake superlogo fashion accessories to compact discs and pirated software, from the sumptuous to the everyday. That is to say, the appearance and disappearance of the fake superlogo might embody the material traces that global capitalism inevitably leaves in its historical development. Walter Benjamin (1999) once searched in the arcades for the ruins of capitalism as the most recently outdated; today, is it possible for us to see an allegory of global capitalism in the possible outdatedness of the glamorous fake superlogo?

Therefore, this paper attempts to map out the global networking of counter-feit production and consumption by taking the historical and economic complication of fake logos in Taiwan as a point of departure. It traces not only the 'capital logic' of the counter-feit industry that duplicates the international division of labour structure, but also its 'cultural logic' that creates the Euro-American superlogograms under the spell of Western imperialist ideology. The paper is divided into three main parts to foreground the 'glocal' circulation of fake superlogos. Part I takes the famous French Louis Vuitton as a case study to explore the economic, historic and cultural formation of logomania in East Asia, piloted by Japan in the 1980s. Part II tries to discuss the double cultural reproduction of fake logos in Taiwan as both an imitation of Japan and an imitation of Japanese imitation of Europe. Part III seeks to theorize the fake under the

con-text of Asian consumption of the superlogo and to further foreground the historical change of how the 'fake' becomes ubiquitous, how the 'fake' could be produced out of no originals, and how the 'fake' turns out to be perfectly indistinguishable and doubly authentic that could rewrite the whole theory of mimesis.

I. LV in Japan and the logomania in East Asia

Fake fashionable superlogos are different from ordinary fake brand names. This is like the differences among a fake Chanel diamond watch, a pair of fake Nike sneakers, and fake National batteries; each has its own distinctive historical con-texts for its commodity image, sign value and techniques of reproduction. Since the focus of this essay centres on the discussion of fake superlogos, I would take the (fake) leather products of Louis Vuitton, one of the leading superlogos in the world, as a point of departure to explore the possible capitalist and cultural logics that work behind the Asia-craze for 'LV' in the past 20 years. The French company Louis Vuitton opened its first shop of travel leather goods in Paris in 1854, and set up the first overseas branch in London in 1885. After opening the largest shop of leather goods in the Champs-Élysées in 1914, LV achieved its world-famous status as the classic superlogo of leather products. Since then its business has been increasing steadily, passing through two world wars, the economic crisis, individualism in the 1970s, and regaining its position as the top fashionable superlogo in the 1980s in accordance with 'the logomania in East Asia'. LV's privileged stance as one of the leading representatives of contemporary fashion superlogos well demonstrates a successful renewal and refashioning of an old French logo; its global sales amounted to 25 billion francs in mid 90s (Fair Trade Commission 1998: 37).

But why is LV so popular in East Asia? Where does the aura of LV as one of the top superlogos in the world derive from? And how is the co-presence of LV and fake LV in East Asia related to the transformation of the economic and consumer structures when the international division system of capitalism during the Cold War period sped up the economic growth and the accumulation of wealth in Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore? And how is it related to the cultural imagination, the structure of feeling, and the psychic mechanism of consumption formulated under the imperialist ideology and colonial history from both outside and inside East Asia? One needs to begin with Japan's LV cult when it comes to the discussion of the fake LV products in East Asia. First, let us see how popular LV is in Japan. LV's largest flagship store was opened in September 2002 in Tokyo, and the location was situated in Omotesantou, which has been renowned as 'the Champs-Élysées in Tokyo'. This is the 44th LV store and the seventh LV 'Global Concept Flagship Store' in Japan, with all the commodities and VIP-only accessories available.³ After its entrance into the Japanese market in 1978, LV has occupied the top position among other superlogos, and this position was not threatened even during the collapse of bubble economy in the 1990s. Consider 2001 as an example, the sales of LV in Japan still grew with an impressive 16% to US\$1 billion (*United Daily News* 2002; *Economic Daily* 2001). Japan is still one of the largest markets for luxurious commodities; Asia contributes half of LV's world sales, and Japan alone contributes one third of LV's world sales.

However, what are the transformations of the economic and consumer structures that lie hidden behind this craze for the French superlogo LV? And what kinds of cultural imagination and bodily imitation are shaping and shaped by the logomania in East Asia piloted by Japan in the 1980s? We can begin with the transformation of the economic and consumer structures in postwar Japan. The defeated Japan under the takeover of the American army was left almost with nothing, but this situation was drastically changed due to the confrontation between the US and Soviet Union during the Cold War period. Within this period, Japan was taken as the most important partner in the 'Free Trade Association', designated under the reign of American capitalism in East Asia, which subsequently stimulated the economic growths in South Korea,

Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. And after the rapid economic growth in the 1960s and the 1970s, Japan had developed a mode of consuming superlogos in the 1980s under an unprecedented economic prosperity that once made Japan allegedly a country with '10 million upper class people'. In 1988, Japan's GNP had amounted to US\$23,400, the same year when the US's GNP amounted only to US\$19,800. And the average income in Japan was 18% higher than that of the US in the same year, which testified to Japan's top status in the economy. The rapid growth of income in Japan was directly caused by its high economic growth. The successful transformation from an export-oriented economic structure to a dependent economic structure that relied more on the domestic market made a super economic growth of 5% in 1988 and the increase of yen (in 1998 Japan created a US\$95.2 billion trade surplus, the foreign exchange reserves amounted to almost US\$100 billion, which made the exchange rate of yen 125 to 1 USD) also provided the economic driving force for the trend to consume imported luxurious goods (Hoshino 1992: 6–7).

Besides these economic factors and backgrounds for consuming super luxurious goods, the Japanese logomania for European superlogos in the 1980s also pointed to a transition from 'the American mode' (mass production and mass consumption) to 'the European mode' ('quantity' was displaced by 'quality,' which stressed the trinity of quality, brand, and taste: quality comes from the guarantee of brand, and brand comes from the cultivation of taste). Therefore, luxurious European superlogos became the everyday commodities for the Japanese well-to-do class. BMW, for example, was nicknamed 'Roppongi Corona', and could be purchased by college students with a part-time job or a loan from the bank (Hoshino 1992: 5). However, this wave of consuming European superlogos prompted by the bubble economy in Japan was specifically coded in class and gender: the logomania of the office ladies became the 'trademark' for this '(pseudo)aristocratic consumerism' and also the target for social criticism.

In the past, the young people who led the fashion trend were called 'single nobles;' now those middle class consumers with pseudo-aristocratic manners, not only young people but also those office ladies especially, can be said to lead the aristocratic consumerism. *Hanako*, a magazine published by Magazine House, nicknamed those office ladies who expressed an extreme sensibility of aristocracy in Tokyo 'Miss Hanako.' From their aristocratic fashion sensibility, one can discern the phenomenon of 'aristocratic sensibility on the middle class identity.' In the capital of this super-economic nation Japan, the office ladies in Tokyo can be categorized as highly aristocratic. ... To 'Miss Hanako' in Tokyo, Chanel, Tiffany, Hermès, and the leading superlogo Louis Vuitton are synonymous with 'the representative superlogos for the office ladies.' (Hoshino 1992: 11, 13)

'Miss Hanakos' created their own consumer identities with their extraordinary ability to buy, and European superlogos such as LV, Chanel, Tiffany, Hermès became the symbols of their postmodern consumer identities (such as 'Miss Chanel' as a somewhat denigrated nickname for the office ladies who wear Chanel commodities from head to toe).

But why are European superlogos so dominant and pervasive? And why does LV lead the trend? If we want to explore further the logomania in East Asia piloted by Japan in the 1980s, we need to move further from the discussion on the transformation of the economic/consumer structure to the historical dimension that helped shape the cultural imagination and psychic mechanism of consuming European superlogos. What stands behind this 'aristocratic consumerism' is a longing for western taste and heritage that can be cultivated only through the purchase of products imported from the cradle of European history and tradition. And to run after European superlogos is believed to achieve the superiority of spiritual or mental sublimation that might transcend the simple mode of material(ist) consumption. This attitude of 'imitating the West culturally', as reflected on the consumption of western commodities, can be traced back to the over 100-year development of westernization and modernization that started from Meiji Restoration (1876). Even after the 30-year economic boom in the postwar era that

created the most impressive economic power in the world, Japan still fails to stay away from the shadow of 'being a powerful nation in economy and a minor nation in culture'.

And this development from the American mode of consumption in the 1960s, and the 1970s to the 1980s characterized by the European mode of consumption reveals simultaneously a psychic mechanism of self-indulgence in the nostalgia for a 'Europeanized Japan' at the turn of last century. What this nostalgic imagination marks is not only the affluent consumerism that was proudly being formed after Meiji Restoration; it is also the peak of the interactions and convergences between European and Japanese cultures. For example, the influence of '*Japonisme*' on European art and culture in late 19th century was regarded as enormous: 'Impressionism acquired its inspirations from Japanese Uki Yo-e, or Art Nouveau was influenced by Kawakami Sadayako, Japanese pottery, and clothing' (Hoshino 1992: 94).⁴ And the French superlogo Louis Vuitton was founded and ascended to its top status at this exact pivotal moment when Europe ardently incorporated Japanese elements of aesthetic taste into its own cultural creations. When Napoleon III came to his throne in 1852, Louis Vuitton the craftsman was chosen as the Queen's royal servant and began to step into the aristocratic society. In 1896, Louis Vuitton's son, Georges Vuitton, designed the classic monogram combined by 'L', 'V', the four petals, and two diamonds under the influence of Japanese art in Europe.⁵ The mythical construction of LV as a 100-year-old fashion house was rather colourful; it not only related to the French royal family, celebrities and aristocrats (from Ms Chanel, Indian Queen, French President to the famous conductor Leopold Stokoski, etc) but also participated in many historical events and romances (the most famous among them refers to the sinking of the Titanic. Rumour has it that one hard leather suitcase designed by LV was not infiltrated by the water after the shipwreck).

What is even more important, the classic monogram of LV was regarded by the Japanese as 'the perfect mix of French and Japanese art' in the late 19th century, hence the importance it occupied in Japanese people's cultural imagination was getting incredibly high. It is only under this particular historical con-text that one can discern the cultural imagination of contemporary Japanese logomania for LV, for the 'surplus value' of LV was predominantly constructed from this westernized, west-crazed complex that was fabricated from the western imperialist cultural dominance in the past century, a complex interwoven by both Japan's glorious past and defeated past, a complex turbulent with the contradictory feeling of pride and humility combined. Therefore, one can grasp the reason why Louis Vuitton is deemed the top of the tops among European superlogos by the Japanese people, in light of this historical and psychological formation, for it exemplifies exactly 'the French-Japanese style', which satisfies the double cultural imagination of 'European superlogo' and 'Japanese nostalgia'.⁶

And the third contradictory consumer psychology that comes to the scene together with 'Miss Hanako' and 'European superlogos, Japanese nostalgia' as discussed above is the representative status that LV took as the 'mass production of aristocratic crafts' in Japan's super-luxurious consumerism in the 1980s. If 'Miss Hanako' exemplifies the kind of (pseudo)aristocratic consumerism that 'consumes in the name of aristocracy', then the mass appearance of 'Miss Hanakos' also creates the need for a large quantity of aristocratic superlogos (that is, the 'mass' production of 'aristocratic' superlogos, no longer valued by the scarcity of the commodity). On the one hand, LV prides itself on the perfection of quality inherited from European (royal) tradition of craftsmanship; on the other, LV still needs to face the huge demands from the neo-aristocratic class from Japan and East Asia where everyone wants to own at least one LV product. In other words, LV needs to distance itself from the image of mass production to maintain its creed of production in a small quantity of hand-making, *while* at the same time it needs to set up new factories to meet the huge demands from East Asia. And what comes in accordance with this contradiction to 'produce the aristocratic goods in large quantity' is the strategy of 'limited purchase' and 'limited production'. It is obviously not because technically these commodities cannot be produced in large quantity, but because

the best sales strategy is to elevate the artistic, aristocratic, and hand-made image of the superlogo.

Take LV's flagship store in Paris as an example, every day before its opening time, lots of customers from all over the world (especially from Japan) have been lining up at its entrance, and there even exists a black market that can sell or purchase the products for the customers (in order to evade the rule of 'limited purchase'). Obviously, this phenomenon was openly ridiculed by the media as 'the extravagant sight/site of Vanity Fair' (Wang 2001). While the strategy of 'limited purchase' and 'limited production' has successfully induced the free-advertising and psychological effects by making the customers line up in front of the superlogo store (that is, sometimes you cannot own a LV item even if you can afford it), it also creates the shortage of stock and the situation in which the customer's urgent need is far from being satisfied. It intensifies the superlogo's sovereign status of inaccessibility while at the same time opens up ironically the space of economic prosperity for LV's deceptive and non-deceptive counter-feit market.⁷

II. Fake historical materialism in Taiwan

If, as the previous discussion suggests, the LV logomania in Japan foregrounds the complex economic restructurings and dominant cultural imagination, then what are the differences between Japan's obsession with LV and the belated but no less devoted LV logomania in Taiwan and other East Asian countries? First, let us take a look at the process in which LV and its counter-feit products enter Taiwan's market. In 1983, Louis Vuitton opened its first store in Taipei and thus formally enlisted Taiwan as one of the key locations within its global market networking deployed in East Asia. By 1997, LV had opened four stores all over the island, including Kaohsiung and Taichung. In 1999, LV set up a global image store within the Regent Commercial District on Chung-shan North Rd. in Taipei, with its grand opening peopled by celebrities ranging from politicians, famous business men/women, to show-business stars. The annual profits that LV made in Taiwan, let us take 1995–1996 as an example, amounted to 1 billion NTD (Fair Trade Commission 1998: 37). However, one of the characteristics of LV's global image store in Taipei, besides local customers, is the huge amount of Japanese female tourists. It was amazed to find an almost empty store at the beginning of its grand opening in 1999, since most of the displayed items were immediately grasped and purchased by Japanese customers. The fact is that European superlogos bought overseas were generally cheaper than those purchased in Japan by 20–30% (there are higher taxation and sales costs in Japan), together with the fact that the strategy of limited production and distribution might provide overseas markets with commodities unavailable (completely sold out) in Japan. Therefore, under the combination of tourism and shopping, there came the amazing sight/site of Japanese tourists flooding the Regent Commercial District in Taipei, which in turn persuasively provided an 'embodied' advertisement for the imported European superlogos for Taiwanese people. Taking LV's global image store in Taipei for example, its luxurious space constantly crowded with Japanese tourists made the LV logo even more elevated and unattainable in Taiwan (*Min Sheng Daily* 2002).

However, in Taiwan, when there are people in growing numbers purchasing LV in its global image stores, there are far more people in astonishing amounts buying counter-feit LV at night markets. Taking the market networking of fake LV in Taipei as an example, be they the vendors in the East District, the shopping plazas, the boutiques on Lin-sen North Road, or night markets such as Tung-hua, Hsin-lin, Wan-hua, and Tien-mu, one can easily find the counter-feit LV canvas hand bags with its classic monogram of 'L'V', four petals, and two diamonds (this is the most popular fake LV item in Taiwan). The factory sources of these counter-feit products are various, including Taiwan, South Korea, and China, and they are usually categorized into super A, AA, A, B and C of five different grades in terms of quality. The similarity of the super

A grade product can reach 95% of the original and is thus virtually indistinguishable; it even has the fake product series number concealed within its inner layer. As for the counter-feit products of lower levels, they generally have the problems of bad-smelling, poor synthetic material, off-colour or asymmetrical graphic prints. Generally speaking, almost every popular item of LV's products can find its counter-feit part in Taiwan, from the bags of Monogram, Damier, to Graffiti. In terms of the locations for different grades and prices, one can easily find grade A, B and C at night markets, whereas super A and AA can only be obtained through special channels. The cheapest LV leather product at the night market costs only 399 NTD (US\$11); higher levels of fake products would cost from 2000 to 3000 NTD (US\$57–85), but still, the counter-feit prices cost less than 1/10 of the original (*Next Magazine* 2002).

After briefly analysing the distribution of LV and its counter-feit products in Taiwan, we now need to turn to the historical-cultural and theoretical aspects to explore further the transformation of fake LV in terms of both production and consumption. From the historical-cultural perspective, the popularity of LV and its counter-feit products is directly related to the emergence of fashion consciousness and the formation of the consumer society under the strong Japanese influence in Taiwan. Judged from the history of Japanese colonization and the proximity of cultural geography, the first key point is the direct influence that Japan has on the consumer taste in Taiwan. Since there had been, in the early years, few retailers selling imported international brand-name commodities in Taiwan, local rich people were urged to go to Japan for luxurious goods. For the elder generation who received a Japanese education, the information gathered from Japanese (fashion) magazines also performed an important role (Shi 1997). As the consumer society rose in accordance with the formation of the cultural industry at the end of the 1970s, fashion consciousness and brand consciousness in Taiwan were further enhanced by the permission of importing international brand goods, the opening of international tourism and, finally, the direct access to fashion information through international magazines of Chinese editions.

In relation to the coming into market of the international superlogos in the mid and late 70s in Taiwan, the transformation of consumer values enacted by the growth of national income in the 80s, and the global multi-dimensional development of international fashion houses, the trend of Taiwan's fashion magazines also shifted from the earlier piecemeal reports on the national and international fashion trends in '*Women's Magazine*' and '*TV Weekly*' to the Japanese magazines ... that were purchased by special orders in certain bookstores, and then in the 90s many American-European transnational magazine conglomerates launched their Chinese editions in Taiwan, such as *Harper's Bazaar*, *ELLE*, *Marie Claire*, and *Vogue*, etc., together with the large amount of imported international editions by big chain bookstores. As the globalization of information grows, readers in Taiwan have multiple choices of fashion magazines to refer to and can thus utilize them to grasp the pulsation of up-to-date fashion trends, even take them as the references for their consumption. (Lin 2002: 3–4)

However, even in contemporary Taiwan in which fashion trends are virtually synchronized with the world, the information on fashion from Japan still performs a prominent role. If the elder generation of 'Ha-ri-zu' (fans of Japanese culture) who received Japanese education took the information from Japan as their main source on fashion, then the 'Ha-ri-zu' of Taiwan's younger generation, who may have known nothing about the Japanese language, also follows the dictates of Japanese fashion magazines. For years the Japanese bi-weekly *Nonno* has been the most popular magazine for young teenage girls in Taiwan: 'this magazine was first introduced to Taiwan at the end of the 70s and started to enjoy its popularity in the 80s. Though we cannot find a reliable data, roughly about 100,000 copies are imported to Taiwan every month, which makes it the top-selling magazine in Taiwan's big chain-bookstores to date' (*AdM* 1994, quoted in Iwabuchi 1998: 28–29). What Taiwanese fashion followers find in 'the latest

fashion in Japan' is to find simultaneously the international fashion trend through the mediation of Japan. Hence the popularity of LV in Taiwan is deeply related to this historical-cultural complicity and the psychic mechanisms of 'imitating Japan's imitating Europe'; the aura of LV leather goods in Taiwan's cultural imagination is thus thoroughly conditioned by this double imagination and fashioning of taste.

After enumerating the 'manifest' reasons for the prevalence of (fake) LV in Taiwan, let us now turn to the 'latent' factors as well. Taiwan's earlier knowledge of the superlogos came not only from Japanese fashion magazines and commodity information but also from Taiwan's position as the major factory source of LV counter-feit products that served as the black market for Japanese buyers (South Korea and Hong Kong also had similar situations). Owing to relatively loose laws, cheaper labour and production costs, Taiwan was once one of the major sites to 'export' fake LV to Japan or to provide fake LV for Japanese tourists to purchase at local outlets. It was not until the rise of Taiwan's brand name consciousness and the official setting up of LV stores in Taipei that the channels of 'domestic consumption' of (fake) LV logos were expended. The process that LV entered Taiwan's market is not only characterized by a Japanese (post)colonial influence on Taiwanese fashion taste; it is also symptomatic of a certain kind of anachronism of the 'imported' superlogo: LV 'was' popular on the market before its products were officially introduced, and the fake LV were sold on the market before its imported 'originals'. This anachronism certainly made the counter-feit an alternative advertisement for the 'original/official' ones.⁸

Hence, if we borrow the term 'belated modernity' from contemporary postcolonial discourses, then LV can be seen as 'the belated superlogo' that intermingles Japan's craze for the West and its nostalgia for its own glorious past. And LV can also be regarded as 'the belated superlogo' that intermingles Taiwan's craze both for Japan and for Japan's craze for Europe. Since Louis Vuitton has already established its global image store in Nan-jing Rd. of Shanghai in Mainland China, and aimed to take it as its primary market in the foreseeable future, will LV become another 'belated superlogo' in Mainland China that duplicates the transfer(ence) of both consuming desire and counter-feiting techniques from Japan to Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea? (History never stops repeating itself: before establishing itself as the prominent target market for global commodity, Mainland China has already become the major factory source for fake superlogos worldwide. Nowadays, even in Taiwan fake LVs are chiefly 'imported' from Mainland China.)

III. Fake theory and fake globalization

However, if we want to depart from the historical-cultural entanglement and the double reproduction of commodity and desire in East Asia as exemplified in the case of LV to the construction of a discourse on 'the globalization of counter-feits,' we need to develop a different theoretical conceptualization of 'the fake'. Here I would like to suggest a new theoretical term 'glogocentrism' to elaborate further the economic and cultural phenomenon of the globalization of counter-feits. We know that 'glocalization' is one of the important terms applied to the current discussion of globalization and this neologism intends to destabilize the binary opposition of 'globalization' and 'localization' by emphasizing the imbrication in between (Robertson 1995).⁹ And here the theorization of 'glogocentrism' is an attempt to relate 'globalization' to 'logocentrism'. 'Logocentrism' was the critical term introduced by deconstruction, which refers to western metaphysics that takes pure origin — reason, logic, word, truth — as stable presence ('logos' here stands for 'reason' in Greek) (Derrida 1978). And what is interesting here is that the word 'logos', when largely applied in contemporary cultural studies on consumerism, means also the letters or logograms printed on the surface of the commodities. If the 'logos' in western metaphysics is collided with the 'logos' of the commodity, then the term

'glogocentrism' is aimed exactly to foreground the 'logocentrism' of 'commodity metaphysics' in the contemporary discourse of globalization.

Hence, the first point that 'glogocentrism' intends to highlight is the abstract value form of the superlogo. In the western society, 'brand name' appeared around 1880s to replace the names of traditional wholesalers or retailers. From then on, customers started to use the 'brand name' to distinguish between goods from different manufacturers, by making it the guarantee of quality. However, as the real quality differences of these mass-produced products began to narrow, these brand names that were originally designed to distinguish qualities turned to mark the 'style' of consuming certain goods. And the material reliability that each brand name stood for was subsequently 'abstracted' to 'the prominence of the brand name' that represents its market share, competitiveness, and, finally, the life style it embodies. And the local, regional 'brand name' that appeared in the 19th century has been successfully transformed into contemporary international language of commodity exchange, a kind of gravity-free, rootless, de-materialized abstract form, to create a 'logo-linked globe' and a 'brand new world' (Klein 2000: 6). Therefore, for the late capitalist market piloted by 'the abstraction of brand name,' what the consumer desires is not so much the material form of the product but the abstract form of its brand name, of its logo (exchange value, symbolic value, and aesthetic value combined).¹⁰ 'Brand name' is the 'Idea' and the real product is the 'phenomenon'; 'brand name' is the 'original' while the real product is its 'copy'. Although the rise and fall of the economy would relatively bring up different modes of consumption, and the expansion of brand names in the 1980s had entered a recession, the super 'brand name' of certain international logograms still enjoys its leading status.

This privileged status of world superlogos serves to highlight the second point that 'glogocentrism' exposes; namely, the total control and merger of global superlogos by transnational conglomerates. In order to have a tight and direct control of commodity image and market sale, some 'superlogo kingdoms' tend to expand its territory by the strategy of constantly and incessantly incorporating other super brand names and also by the strategy of direct marketing (replacing traditional agents with company branches). For example, the superlogo Hermès incorporated Jean-Paul Gaultier, and Prada incorporated Helmut Lang and Jil Sander. Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy (LVMH), which is often referred as the 'Napoleon of the superlogos,' is superbly adroit at incorporating other brand names to raise its sales, and is the representative of the trend of superlogo incorporation inaugurated in the middle of the 1990s. LVMH started by selling LV leather goods and Hennessy brandy liquors and expended its market to clothing, cosmetics, art auction, and DFS stores at the airports. The super brand names under this conglomerate, besides Louis Vuitton and Hennessy, also include KENZO, Christian Dior, Christian Lacroix, Donna Karen, and Fendi, etc, which exhibit its ambition to totalize the global market of the superlogo (Ho 2000; Guo 2001).¹¹ According to statistics, in the economic recession of 2002, LVMH still creates marvellous sales of €12.7 billion, with net profit amounting to €2 billion, growth rate of 29%, and the stock value also increased 8.3% (Nan Fang 2003).¹²

In the face of the centralized and direct marketing of the superlogo, here I would like to suggest a counter theoretical concept to 'glogocentrism': namely, 'fake dissemi-nation'. The term 'dissemi-nation' comes from deconstructionist Jacques Derrida and postcolonial critic Homi K. Bhabha's appropriations, which stresses the repetitiveness and proliferation of 'supplement' and '*différance*' that have already existed within totality, and whose existence testifies to the impossibility of totality and unity (Derrida 1981; Bhabha 1994: 139–170). What 'fake dissemi-nation' intends to expose is not only the fact that 'national' boundaries are constantly disrupted by the flow of the global capital of transnational conglomerates; it also points to how the centralized control (mainly the accumulation of exchange values and the manipulation of consumer desire) of transnational conglomerates is incessantly interrupted by the de-centralizing force of fake dissemi-nation. Hence, our theorization of fake logos should

not be confined to the theory of 'mimesis' developed within the western philosophical tradition since Plato. This tradition takes the fake as the 'metaphorical substitution' at the 'vertical axis' by stressing that the fake is the 'copy,' or the 'simulacrum' (the copy of the copy) of the original. This mode of thinking in terms of an above/below spatiality (the original as above/the copy as below) and a before/after temporality (the original as before/ the copy as after) has been successfully deconstructed by contemporary theorists such as Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze and Jean Baudrillard. Accordingly, the concept of 'fake dissemi-nation' here suggests that the disruption and interference of the fake functions as the 'metonymic movement' at the 'horizontal axis,' flowing and running around in all directions; this movement not only contaminates the pure origin of the centre but also destabilizes its fixity and makes it drift.¹³

Even more radical, what we observe in 'fake dissemi-nation' is the ubiquitous and indistinguishable fake that comes out of no originals. The rampancy of the fake is now unprecedented. We used to think that the fakes always lag one step behind the official or authorized ones, but now they can be put on the market for sale before the official or authorized ones appear (as long as one can get the latest photo catalogues of new commodities to fake). We used to think that the fakes had low qualities and poor services, but now there are stands of service maintenance for counter-feit products, and some of those who bought them even dare to send the broken ones to the superlogo's global image stores for repair. We used to think that the fakes were extremely cheap and poorly made, but now the prices of the super-grade fakes are comparatively high in the non-deceptive counter-feit market, or they are sold at almost the same prices as the official or authorized ones in the deceptive counter-feiting market, or on discount in the name of 'Superlogo Big Sale', 'Superlogo Clearance Sale', or 'Flawed Superlogo'. We used to believe that the fakes were produced by illegal small factories, but now lots of counter-feit products come from registered companies or chain-corporations that are internationally certified. As for the selling places, we used to think that the fakes were mainly sold at night markets, but now the diversity and flexibility of the sales channels of counter-feit products have exceeded beyond one's imagination. Some dealers rent fine places such as office buildings, commercial centres, or 5-star hotels to sell their products; some set up distribution centres especially for the patrons; some set up stores for tourists only; some use magazine photos as catalogues for the patrons to order in common shops, and then go fetch the goods from the warehouses afterwards; and some even sell their fake by mail order and internet shopping network by camouflaging these goods as second-hand.

For example, in September 1999, the Bureau of Investigation in Taiwan caught fake Prada leather goods at the counter in Han Shin department store in Kaohsiung, which were publicly displayed and deceptively sold to the consumer in the name of 'smuggled items'. And the trade company Sheng-yi that got involved in this case later discovered that, ever since 1996, it had been producing fake Prada leather goods in Italy. These products were sent to Barcelona first and then imported to Taiwan to be distributed and sold at the finery shops or the counters at the department stores all over the island, which in turn made tens of millions (Zhang and Yang 1999). Another example is that on British Airway's long-distance planes travelling between London, Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore, there were stewards/stewardesses selling fake products to the passengers by substituting the official or authorized products for the cheap fake ones they bought in Hong Kong and Singapore. At the same time, BA also received protests from anti-piracy organizations for it had printed on its travel pamphlet regarding Turkey the information about where to purchase fake products (*Sing Tao Daily* 1999).

The wonder of contemporary fake products is not only that they are everywhere, but they can also create themselves out of nothing. In the past, the creating out of nothing of these fake products was mostly playing on visual ambiguity: they tried to avoid the punishment of the laws by changing b to d, W to M, N to M, G to C, cK to CK, Prada to Prado, ELLE to ELLF, CHANEL to CHANNEL, etc. However, nowadays the creating out of nothing belongs to the genetic-modelling type. For example, in November 2000, the Hong Kong media warned its

citizens that there were fake designer's sneakers on the market, which were produced by obtaining the material from the 'original' manufacturing factories (such as Nike and others) in China and then using it to produce other models of sneakers known as 'Shui-huo' (smuggled goods in Chinese) and 'special colour edition' for sale (*Apple Daily* 2000). Or take Nike's T-shirts as another example. Often the designs of these T-shirts were famous athletes' pictures, but after 11 September, there appeared in Pakistan fake Nike T-shirts with machine guns, the map of Afghanistan, and words celebrating Osama bin Laden, etc (*Gong Zheng Bao* 2000). Another famous case-in-point of the creating out of nothing of the fake superlogo was the publicity photos of Hong Kong singer Kelly Chen taken with her LV monogrammed handbag; afterwards she was informed by LV's Hong Kong branch that the item she owned was fake, for LV had never produced that kind of model before.

What is more important is that the development of counter-feit techniques has been refined to the extent that virtually all these counter-feit products are indistinguishable from the official or authorized ones. Take the fake Prada case of Han Shin department store we mentioned earlier as an example. Every fake item had the fake certificate issued from the manufacturer, and one could not tell the fake from the 'original' even if you turned it completely inside out. Even the professionals from Prada could not tell the visual difference from the outside. And it was only after cutting the inner layers of the suspected items that one finally saw the difference, for some items had watermarks while others did not, and the inner layers of the fake ones were rougher than those of the official or authorized ones. Moreover, some fake superlogos were produced with the same material as the original ones, or even in the same factories, which simultaneously produced authorized items and unauthorized 'extra' items. For these counter-feit products, the question is no longer the dialectics of real/fake, original/copy, but only the legal distinction of official/unofficial, authorized/unauthorized. They are totally indistinguishable in terms of material and appearance and could be deemed ironically as truly 'authentic' fakes.

Judged from these social phenomena, our traditional conceptualization of counter-feit products is totally insufficient, and what the new theorization of 'fake dissemination' foregrounds is exactly the co-dependent ongoing (de)construction between 'fake globalization' and 'globalization.' Now what we mean by 'fake' here is no longer the mere difference between real/fake; the 'fake' in 'fake globalization' means 'counter-feiting' as well as 'appropriating.' (In Chinese, 'Jia' means both 'fake' and 'by a particular means'.) That is, counter-feit products appropriate the power of globalization to disseminate themselves. 'Fake globalization' is the 'dark flow' within globalization; it counter-feits and appropriates globalization, repetitively reduplicating and deconstructing it. However, this 'dark flow' is quite different from the traditional 'dark continent' with strong gender and racial connotations. Although both are the projection of the fear of the western 'white mythology' and 'phallogocentrism', the dynamics of the 'dark flow' has already flooded the stable and solid association of 'the continent'. This 'dark flow' within global capitalism might be deemed abstract in terms of capital, but it is also completely materialized in everyday life and embodied in specific gender terms by all the fake superlogos that we see everywhere in the street vendors, stores, markets and finally even on our own bodies.

Therefore, 'fake globalization' and 'globalization' are not a pair of binary opposition. 'Fake globalization' is the 'sub-version' of global capitalism; it is subject to global superlogo fashion consciousness and simultaneously resistant to the manipulation of 'glogocentrism'. This subversive fake globalization is different from the traditional anti-globalization movement, which tends to highlight the protection of international worker's rights, anti-monopoly and anti-sweatshops, for the latter focuses chiefly on the 'oppositional' stance while the former stresses more on the 'reverse' side of it. Fake globalization helps to turn globalization itself inside out and outside in. Fake globalization is not an external attack on globalization from without, but an internal exposure of how the historical and psychic formulations of the logics of global

capitalism are subject to the cultural imagination under (western) imperialist ideology, and how they are influenced by the political-economic deployment of international divisions of labour. What fake dissemi-nation does is to expose from within the possibility and impossibility of 'glogocentrism'.

The alleged democratization of fashion under the reign of global capitalism is still a utopian dream. One famous scholar once pointed out, that what economic development means is that ordinary female factory workers can finally afford the stockings once only the Queen could wear (Schumpeter 1976, quoted in Hoshino 1992: 8). Although the global economy has been sweeping around the world, those female factory workers perhaps still cannot afford the luxurious stockings worn by the Queen nor even those promoted by fashion designers; they can only afford cheap stockings or fake superlogo ones. The dissemi-nation of fake globalization makes and unmakes the (im)possibility of 'glogocentrism' to achieve its totality, unity, and homogeneity. The ubiquity of fake globalization leads us inevitably to the 'hautology' within the ontology of every superlogo. Fake globalization makes us discern that there will always be a BwO (Body without Organs) that is constantly fleeting, flowing and connecting within the WTO. Fake globalization finally forces us to find the ruins of global capitalism on every counter-feit product (In Hong Kong, part of the confiscated and destroyed counter-feits were really used to stuff the sea.) And it is only by standing on this particular historical-geographical ruins that we can face the past and look forward to the future, while at the same time seeking the point of cultural intervention within today's ever-changing globalization.

Notes

1. The term 'counter-feit' with a hyphen is used throughout this paper to emphasize less upon its negative association of falsity, but more upon its possible 'counter' thinking of global capitalism. Besides, the term 'original' with quotation marks or not is adopted in this paper to stand more for 'official' or 'authorized' in a wish not to perpetuate the binarism of the original/the copy and its implied metaphysics of depth. It is no longer the 'original' sense of the privileged 'original.' A more detailed deconstruction of the 'original' as 'a non-originary origin' will be developed later on.
2. This statistics was originally issued by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.
3. What we mean by 'Superlogo Concept Flagship Store' stresses the creative thematic design of each store fashioned by top designers in accordance with the consuming space of each metropolis, together with the combination of the image of each brand name with local cultures. Take LV's concept store in Omotesantou in Tokyo as an example. The style of glass building blocks designed by the famous Japanese architect Jun Aoki echoes the history of LV's suitcase and Japanese style, and has thus become the new shrine for Japan's LV lovers.
4. Kawakami Sadayako was a world-famous Japanese dancer and actress at the turn of the century.
5. Some people believe that the four petals of LV came from the coat of arms of Japanese aristocracy, while others believe that they came from Japanese folk art. But no matter where they came from, we should also take into consideration the construction of LV's own mythology, together with LV's over-dependence on and catering to the Japanese market. But what perhaps is more interesting is the century-long paradoxical co-dependence between LV products and their counter-feits. The genesis of the classic LV was due to the threatening similarity and proximity of the counter-feit products already in existence: in 1888, LV used square symbols to replace the old one and printed its logo on the products, but that did not stop the rampancy of counter-feits; only later did it come out with the classic monogram of LV, four petals, and two diamonds. In other words, the genesis of LV as an 'original' classical design was produced in accordance with its fake: it's not that 'there will be no fake without LV' but that 'there will be no LV without fake'. And LV's status as 'a non-originary origin' depends also on how its fake helped to ennoble LV: the reason why LV's products and their fake would fit into the binary oppositions of hand-made/mass produced, classic/popular, original/imitated is simply that without the latter, the associations of classic/original/perfect craft of the former will not appear in the first place. In other words, without the fake as its counter-feit, LV's products cannot present their uniqueness; the counter-feits make the 'original' ones (which are themselves also produced and reproduced in large quantity) 'authentic'.
6. This 'French-Japanese' trend does not only stem from the historical intersection of the past; it is also grounded on and intensified by the important role that the contemporary Japanese market performs within LV's global strategy of management. For instance, in 2003, Louis Vuitton invited French-

Japanese pop artist Takashi Murakami to refashion its clothing with a combination of Medieval style and Japanese comics; he surprisingly added some glossy and surrealist graphics of eyes, panda, and sakura on LV's classic monogram, which further reinforces the aesthetic appeal and marketing strategy of the 'French-Japanese' LV.

7. Here what I refer to are those counter-feit products that are bought at similar prices as the authorized products (through various channels such as smuggling, tourism, etc.) and are mistaken as the authentic. Grossman and Shapiro (1988a, 1988b) classify the selling act of counter-feits into two categories: 'deceptive counter-feiting' (the customers purchasing fake commodities at the same prices as the authentic ones unknowingly) and 'non-deceptive counter-feiting' (the customers consciously knowing that what they buy are counter-feit products, judging from the prices of the commodities or the locations at which the products are sold).
8. Within traditional discussions on counter-feit products, the most frequently encountered interrogations are: 'does a counter-feit product endanger the market of the original product?'; 'do the markets of the original product and counter-feit product overlap?'; 'Is a counter-feit product the alternative advertisement for the original product?' etc. And 'the paradoxical co-dependence' of the authorized products and its counter-feits that this paper aims to explore tends to problematize any simple answer of yes/no by providing a more complex analysis, hoping to showcase the different 'time lags' and modes of production that this 'paradoxical co-dependence' of the authorized and unauthorized copies expresses within different historical periods and geographical spaces.
9. This neologism first came from the Japanese business term 'dochakuka,' meaning the strategy to adapt locally within the global context (the Japanese 'dochaku,' which originally means 'living on one's own land,' refers to the flexibility of the planting principles to adapt in different environments).
10. There even appear corporations which mainly focus on the management of marketing and the image of the brand name; these corporations subcontract the work of commodity design and production to companies in other countries. (The most notable example is perhaps Nike; it leaves the work of production to the subcontractors in Taiwan and South Korea, while the headquarters of the company in the US solely focuses on the 'production' of the image of the brand name.) The 'lightness' of these well-known world brand names can even make tons of money simply by 'authorization'. For more information, see Coleridge (1995).
11. The materials of these two reports were taken from the British press and *Business Week*.
12. Generally speaking, the 'brand name value' of the 'luxurious business' usually takes more than 60–70% of the sale price.
13. Therefore, transnational conglomerates usually fight hard against the counter-feit products for the super/surplus value they construct upon their logos. Take LV as an example, it contributes 2% of annual sales to fight piracy. For more details, see Yang (1991).

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Special Term

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