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The Cultural Aspects of Advertising Communications in Modern China

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Abstract Advertising studies allow us not only to differentiate successful from unsuccessful marketing activities, but establish the fact as well that advertising reveals specific cultural norms that somehow differ depending on global regions. Advertising studies feature a clearly pronounced interdisciplinary nature and allow us to better understand what cultural basis specific advertising texts are made on. An advertising message is oriented on both rational and emotional-affective processes among the people perceiving the message. Modern Chinese consumers live in a complex social and cultural space. The ideology of the People's Republic of China combines traditional philosophy, socialist ideas, and technological pragmatism. In modern China, advertising costs are skyrocketing (the year-to-year increase is about 100%). Chinese visual advertising images are based on a complex mixture of global and traditional cultural values and embody different aspects of “the Great Chinese Dream.” A visual analysis of Chinese advertisements allows us to see what traditional and global values are embodied by advertisers in advertising texts in order to render such advertising messages more effectively. Generally encountered are female images, nature-related images, and images pertaining to the ancient past of China. At the same time, ancient Chinese traditions are subject to globalization. Chinese traditional female images are created in the context of trends of mass culture. Nevertheless, the keynote remains within China's traditional values. All the while, it features no forced separation from the global culture. It is more likely that China harmoniously includes the components considered acceptable within its own worldview.

Keywords China · Advertising texts · Advertising research · Cultural values

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Introduction

China is now the world's second largest economy in regards to a number of key parameters [e.g., 24, 26, 36, 43, 51]. Wherein the basic ideology of the People's Republic of China is Marxism-Leninism followed by Mao Zedong's ideas and theories [e.g., 18, 33, 55]. At the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, the concept of socialism with Chinese characteristics appeared and stemmed from many efforts made by Deng Xiaoping, which has predetermined the modern political, economic, and cultural processes in China [e.g., 8, 25, 34].

Modern Chinese social and cultural space combines traditional, industrial, and post-industrial practices; global and local trends and advanced creative technologies are actively being used [e.g., 11, 14, 37, 47, 63]. Industrial and post-industrial processes in interaction with traditional culture are generating fundamentally new cultural practices and technologies that not only put China into the global, high-tech world, but also reveal and emphasize its ancient traditional originality.

A combination of traditional Chinese culture, socialist ideas, and advanced cultural technologies and practices in modern China has been expressly exhibited in advertising. Based on an analysis of samples of modern advertising, one can reveal specific Chinese cultural aspects of such marketing communications. In particular, the authors' interest is focused on two objectives. The first is to evaluate the relationship between traditional and global values in Chinese advertisements, and thus to understand which role China assigns for itself (whereby, at one polarity, it may include complete refusal of its own traditional culture, while the other polarity may include isolation from the globalizing world). The second is to analyze how "the Great Chinese Dream" is represented in advertisements and what aspects can be noted as being portrayed in advertising images.

Advertisements as the Object of Social and Humanitarian Research

Advertising is investigated, first and foremost, within applied marketing studies. Such studies help to resolve specific tasks associated with a certain advertising message, its commercial success, and its influence on consumer behavior [e.g., 9, 31, 61]. For this purpose, researchers have recourse to sociological, psychological, and linguistic methods.

Economists investigate the impact that advertising has on sales and profit enhancement. Economic models often exhibit that advertising texts are poorly effective as their simultaneous, numerous presence in the market practically neutralizes their influence on consumer behavior. In this case, advertising reduces profits or does not produce them at all as expenses related to advertising production and prevalence inevitably go up [50].

Advertising may be fully investigated not only as an economic fact, but also as a recognizable social phenomenon, a space of revealed social norms, and cultural values [e.g., 2, 4, 5, 42, 62]. Advertising contributes to a certain object being chosen among others and reveals or even designs its positive qualities having social and symbolic value. The social experience of communications considers advertising as a text based on emotional or reasonable perception.

On the one hand, *advertising is a rational message*. The well-known unique selling proposition theory is based on the fact that advertisers use consumers' rationality and reveal products' important and unique qualities [23]. An advertising message relies on a real consumer value and on a product's functionality. An advertising image is created after completing several stages: analyzing a product's or service's consumer qualities, creatively found advertising ideas, and their embodiment in certain promotional items. The second and third stages consider features of the target impact group that contributes to a "striking accuracy" of a particular unique selling proposition. An advertising text suggests that consumers can have a critical and reasonable attitude towards both products and an advertising message itself [e.g., 15, 41, 48].

On the other hand, *advertising often affects incentive and emotional aspects of consumer behavior*. During the early stages of advertising's development, advertising texts were positive and optimistic as all advertising images were associated with happiness and joy and all possible problems were resolved with the use of certain promoted products. Nowadays, advertising texts generate a more complex artistic and advertising space where idyllic images are accompanied by negative and pessimistic ones. Sometimes, there are advertisements directed towards the youth (representatives of such "dark" emotions frequently use social advertising messages); sometimes, there are advertisements specifying particular serious problems that may be resolved with the use of a certain promoted product [e.g., 3, 16].

Important, that *advertising not only uses signs and their meanings like any other message, but, first and foremost, deals with subjectively designed meanings, which ensures their effective distribution and adoption*. Being part of a rational management and marketing system, advertising effectively fulfills its functions only when it helps to redesign subjective meanings for the purpose of affecting individuals' value orientations: for example, when it is expressly shown how a product or service offered contributes to strengthening a desirable value and denying everything that is associated with a lack of values. A purchase or any other action connected with advertising becomes a means of the existence (occurrence or destruction) of a social idea, principle, standard, norm, or value [e.g., 12, 40, 53]. In this aspect, advertising is always a space for socially and personally significant meanings. In this case, the fact of acquiring an object is connected not so much with utilitarian benefits but more with social values and identities. Advertising is a sense-making or sense-adopting technology. For example, a promotional item is very often put into the artistic and advertising social space of a "happy," "standard" family—a construct, which created by advertising. Advertising creates a prevailing style and way of life. According to M. McLuhan, advertising is a compressed image of modernity [32]. It accumulates all of society's feelings and experience.

Modern society is subject to social transformations that connected with destruction of traditional social institutions (family, religion, education and others), that is forcing people to look for new social identification and self-identification methods and create new social markers emphasizing their status [e.g., 21, 49]. Modern social status is generally based on private property. An individual's dignity is based on his/her material advantage over other people and his/her social status is determined by the quantity and quality of things he/she possesses. Promoted objects may be satisfaction-related symbols of their own particular level in the hierarchy of needs. By consuming them, an individual overcomes a particular social and status level and tries to maintain his/her

position at the next level [44, 45]. Modern promoted products and services are psychological images where symbols of personal features and purposes are concentrated, entailing social structures and social practices. All things that are sold feature a symbolic and unique sign that specifies a modern value of such things in the case they are purchased [e.g., 7, 35].

Chinese Advertising as a Cultural Text

Advertising studies pay special attention to the global transformation and globalization processes and analyze invariants of global advertising texts in the specific social and cultural environment. Since advertising activities are directly connected with market production, consumption, and commerce levels, the advertising industry has been developed in countries where large consumer communities are concentrated. China features the world's second largest advertising industry after the USA in regard to its production output. Significant production of advertising in China is justified by the growth in its living standards and its increased consumption. Thus, the number of families with an income of more than one million dollars accounts for nearly one million there. Despite the fact that the majority of Chinese people living in rural areas have low living standards, rather rapid growth is taking place of the Chinese middle class, including a portion of highly qualified employees engaged in modern industrial practices. In 2011, the Chinese advertising market had a volume of 36 billion dollars, while in 2014, it was 80.6 billion dollars. Advertising expenses are constantly rising there. The industry engages more than two million people. Advertising-related skills and knowledge can be obtained in 250 universities. Thus, advertising technologies for the reproduction of social communications in modern China are of considerable interest. Will Chinese society be able to resist the global massification and standardization expressed in the global advertising empires' advertising texts? Or will Chinese cultural identity be constantly subject to dissolution during a period of "global blizzards?"

The researchers addressing the issue of the relationship between global and traditional content in Chinese advertisements cannot agree on what is of the most importance. One polarity (the prevalence of global content) is held to by Jing Zhang, Sharon Shavitt, et al., while the other is encourages in the conclusions of Yaolung James Hsieh, Lee C. Simmons, and Robert M. Schindler et al. (the prevalence of traditional content). Most researchers tend to believe that Chinese advertisements combine both trends to one extent or another. Furthermore, we examine a range of viewpoints on the relationship between global and traditional content in Chinese advertisements.

The Prevalence of Global Cultural Values in Chinese Advertisements Jing Zhang and Sharon Shavitt carry out a content analysis of 463 Chinese ads and examine the presence or absence of the remarkable manifestation of cultural values in them [62]. The results indicate that both values of modernity and individualism predominate in these advertising messages. These values are more pervasive in magazine advertisements that target the Chinese X generation (aged 18–35 years with a high education and income level) than in television commercials that are aimed at the mass market. Collectivism and traditional values are found to be more pervasive on television than in magazine ads. Generally, Jing Zhang and Sharon Shavitt believe the consequences of

the influence of particular western cultural values reflected in advertisements on modern Chinese society may be considerable.

Carolyn A. Lin examines cultural values as reflected in US and Chinese advertising appeals. The obtained findings support most of the hypotheses indicating that the portrayal of traditional Chinese cultural values remains relatively stable [24]. However, as the author believes, subtle changes in cultural values and advertising strategies can also be seen. In particular, the youth/modernity appeal that reflects the westernization as well as the modernization trend in China seems as prominently displayed in Chinese commercials as in US commercials. Images of modern Chinese young people are gradually beginning to dominate in Chinese advertising video clips in the same way as images of young Americans prevail in US advertisements. Carolyn A. Lin considers this fact as a consequence of the standardization of advertising images taking place in opposition to the national and cultural orientation of Chinese advertising strategies.

The Nominal Prevalence of Global Cultural Values in Chinese Advertisements Czyan Gao states that any large Chinese advertising campaign always features values and motives based on traditional Chinese culture and approved ancient behavioral models [6]. He makes an interesting example of the finest arrangement of Chinese advertising images and their emphasis on basic Chinese cultural values. For its advertising strategy in China, Gillette used Lin Dan, a well-known Chinese badminton player and two-time Olympic champion, as a model. It was necessary to find such situations that would show that using this company's products was the most direct route to social success as a young man acquiring a good look. But in traditional Chinese culture, the supreme value for a young man is his successful marriage, whereas his successful career advancement is secondary. In modern China, there is a considerable demographic gender imbalance and marriage with a dignified young woman is a real success. In advertising, Lin Dan gets engaged with a dignified Chinese girl. He starts a family, which is a fundamental Confucian value for every Chinese man. Juan Gao underlines a number of specific qualities that reveal Chinese consumers' basic cultural features without which, as he believes, Chinese advertisements will not be perceived by traditional Chinese society, such as: frugality, domesticity, face-saving, virtues being more important than money, utmost respect for traditions, modesty, and humility with regard to other people. The researcher believes that westernization, having come together with specific products and images, does not destroy traditional Chinese culture, but shies away from it. Traditional Chinese values prevail in the advertising images of modern China.

Nan Zhou and Russell W. Belk state that Chinese sociodynamics which mirrors images of Chinese culture only superficially uses global mass culture clichés and stereotypes [63]. The researchers believe that pictures using images of global mass culture and foreign text clichés in Chinese advertising are often incorrectly recognized as evidence that regional Chinese culture is becoming global and that consumer values are changing in accordance with global transformations. The arrangements between an advertiser and an advertising producer in regard to the development of advertising texts intended for high-status Chinese consumers and people who watch global and regional Chinese television channels and read printed advertisements were analyzed. The authors revealed two dialectic (contradictory) aspects in Chinese consumers' reactions. One side is considerably based on aspirations for global cosmological and purchasing

products for the sake of personal reputation, whereas the other side is motivated by a national desire to live in the context of traditional Chinese values. These opposite advertising meanings and preferences are important in terms of understanding of how international advertising influences modern Chinese culture.

Combination of Global and Traditional Cultural Values in Chinese Advertisements Cheng Hong and John C. Schweitzer conduct a content analysis of 1105 Chinese and US TV commercials and identify eight cultural values that dominate Chinese and US TV advertising [5]. US commercials usually tend to portray utilitarian, positivist, and material values, whereas Chinese commercials resort more often to spiritual, national, and cultural ones. The obtained findings indicate that Chinese advertising is a melting pot of Eastern and Western cultural values and a double-distorted mirror that reflects advertising's commercial nature with a strong tendency to fit into China's idiosyncratic social reality.

Prevalence of Traditional Cultural Values in Chinese Advertisements Yaolung James Hsieh considers Confucian values as a fundamental part of the Chinese culture and the influence of these values on the export marketing strategy of Taiwanese computer firms [17]. The obtained findings show that the Confucian values affect practically all aspects of export marketing strategy in the firms of study. Among the most influential Confucian values are differential rules based on status, an emphasis on flexibility, and the use of appropriate words, all of which are interpreted in Confucianism to facilitate the maintenance of a harmonious society.

Lee C. Simmons and Robert M. Schindler reveal the influence of traditional Chinese superstitions on the contents of advertising texts and images [52]. For example, in traditional Chinese superstition, the numerical digit 8 is associated with prosperity and good luck while the digit 4 is associated with death. An examination of the price endings used in a sample of Chinese price advertisements indicates a distinct tendency to favor the digit 8 and to avoid the digit 4. These results, as the scientists believe, constitute evidence of the role of superstition in the Chinese marketplace and provide guidance for price setting in this increasingly important market.

Thus, the coexistence of global and traditional Chinese values in advertising images is noted by all experts engaged in analyzing Chinese advertisements. The main point is what values will be revealing themselves in the future.

“The Great Chinese Dream” Concept

The concept of the Great Chinese Dream (中國夢) underlies the modern cultural policy of the People's Republic of China. In spite of the fact that Xi Jinping fairly recently announced the ideological thesis The Great Chinese Dream, in particular, in March 2013 [56], the amount of research and interpretations of this term is extremely great, including Russian cultural studies and foreign Chinese studies. Xi Jinping has explained what this term entails. “The Great Chinese Dream” means: (1) a powerful and rich country, (2) revival of the nation, and (3) happy people [20]. Xi Jinping clarified what economic basis can underlie the Great Chinese Dream on the Chinese nation's revival:

The objective of our forthcoming battle is as follows: by 2020 the GDP and average income of urban and rural population is to double as compared with the 2010 figures. An on the whole prosperous society should be completely formed. By the middle of the current century we are to turn our country into a rich, powerful, democratic, civilized, harmonious socialistic state and bring to life the Chinese dream of the great revival of the Chinese nation [60].

Historically, the term “Chinese Dream” stems from the ancient classical poetry of Shijing in which the poet woke up in the morning in despair because the blessed time of the Western Zhou dynasty had become history. The dream of the ancient poet is to restore China’s prosperity in the time of the Western Zhou dynasty. For any nation, the need is crucial to address ancient images and idealogemes of the national culture within the ongoing process of the formation of ideals. Many Chinese, Russian, American, and other cultural specialists emphasize this fact. In particular, O.A. Karlova points out the sacral importance of a range of ancient images and the ideals contained therein for the national self-consciousness of subsequent eras [19]. These indivisible synthetic cultural systems created by prelogical thinking are insensitive to contradictions, and not subject to the criticism of public policies due to their predominating value. This predominating value is experienced collectively and it is described and serves as a special cultural organism that helps humans of this culture to adopt the norms of the worldview, as well as thinking about this worldview in a certain semantic context.

The concept of the Chinese Dream existed in Chinese culture long before Xi Jinping announced it from the top down. Thus, using a great deal of statistical and analytical material, N. Mars and A. Hornsby consider the possible reasons for the Chinese economy’s growth over last 30 years as well as the unprecedented social and cultural changes in modern Chinese society pertaining to urbanization [30]. According to the authors, China is undoubtedly turning into a global superpower, which, as such, is the Chinese Dream.

Having studied the causes and factors of the appearance of the middle class in contemporary China (separation of the private sector in the economy, a crisis of collective identities, and the hugest migration), Helen Wang does not define the Chinese Dream theoretically [57]. Rather, she creates an image of the hopes and expectations of the Chinese people through individual portraits of this growing audience. X. Wang concludes that the Chinese Dream is part of the world dream. She states that the Chinese society brings to life this dream based on traditional Chinese values, such as a culture of respect for the family, nature, the creation of new technologies, and the development of human creativity.

There are particular disagreements on the interpretation of the content the Great Chinese Dream. Sinologists highlight, primarily, values that are socialistic in their nature, which underlie the Chinese Dream. Thus, Zeng Guoping and Wei Feng state that up to the present time the establishment of socialistic values in Chinese society has been merely declared, whereas now it is time to mobilize the entire Chinese society and utilize all contemporary means to render basic socialistic values an all-round reality for the first time in human history [13].

Initial ambiguity of the term “the Chinese Dream” has caused varying political interpretations of this notion. Joseph Mahoney writes about this considering the Chinese Dream in the context of a wider historical and political discourse that is

intrinsic to the Chinese communist party [29]. J. Mahoney presumes that the issue is on how to specify the challenges which Chinese society is to face in economic and especially in political aspects. In summation of the past, present, and future, this term-concept provides a means for Xi Jinping to consolidate political power, fight corruption, and prepare the Chinese people and Chinese communist party for complex reform.

The concept of the Chinese Dream was developed in the beginning of the twenty-first century in the context of radical economic, social, and cultural transformations in Chinese society related to economic growth, urbanization, the emergence of new social and economic classes, and collective identities that are new to China. At the same time, this concept entails many historical prerequisites, which are mentioned, in particular, by Zhan Wang when he talks about the meanings of this notion in the context of national revival and its possible interpretations in the international context [59].

Financial expert Robert Lawrence Kuhn believes that the Chinese Dream consists of four elements of meaning: (1) a strong China (in the economic, political, diplomatic, scientific, and military aspects); (2) a civilized China (equality, rich culture, rectitude); (3) a harmonious China (friendliness among all social groups and classes); and (4) a beautiful China (healthy environment, low level of pollution). The Chinese Dream presumes “a moderately prosperous society” in which rural and urban people have similar life standards. In economic terms, this means doubling the per capita GDP by 2020 compared to the 2010 level (US\$10,000 per person) and an urbanization breakthrough when at least one billion of Chinese people will be living in cities that shall comprise at least 70% of China’s population by 2030 [22].

Chunlong Lu’s research based on polling of the urban population has demonstrated the following: Firstly, Chinese urban residents strongly support the Chinese Dream; secondly, the Chinese Dream concept features three dimensions (the national, social, and individual dreams) and includes a strong collectivist function that creates a sharp contrast to the American Dream [27]. As we have, the author is sure that implementation of the Chinese Dream is based on the main pillars of Chinese traditional culture: respect for political power, the desire for public order, and support of a strong government. On the other part, the author concludes that implementation of the Chinese Dream is an open and dynamic process transforming together with the development of social values in China.

Camilla Sørensen considers the meaning of the Chinese Dream’s implementation processes for China’s international relations with foreign countries. C. Sørensen writes that one should analyze the Chinese Dream by Xi Jinping in the terms of how the Chinese government sees its role on the international stage in order to better understand the new, more active, and dynamic tendencies of China’s foreign policy over recent years [54]. It is important that in their speeches and statements on the Chinese Dream, China’s governors, as a rule, present this dream as a continuation of the peace strategy of the China’s development.

Forming preliminary conclusions, the author underlines that the strategy of the Chinese Dream’s implementation supports the slow development of new thinking and a new approach to China’s foreign policy as well as indicating big changes in China’s relations with the entire international system of countries and interstate institutions. C. Sørensen considers it especially important to focus on studying the domestic-level attitude towards the Chinese government—on growing internal

expectations as to the role to be played by China at the international system in upcoming years and on the country's enhanced sovereignty. The dynamics and forcefulness of China's foreign policy in recent years are explained by the necessity to meet these growing internal expectations.

The polemic trend of the content of the Chinese Dream and "the American Dream" plays a significant role in demonstrating the gist of the new aims and objectives of China's foreign policy. Thus, David S. Pena states that the Chinese Dream features four main themes: national revival, general prosperity, democracy, and people's happiness; meanwhile, the American Dream highlights personal freedom, individual success, and upward movement on the social and economic "ladder" [39]. It is concluded that the Chinese Dream's objectives are achieved through successful construction of socialism with Chinese specifics.

Many scientists tend to see a predominant national nature in the Chinese Dream even if they consider this issue from sociological and political perspectives rather than the national and cultural ones. Based on the modernization theory, D. Owen considers the conditions required to ensure the country's transition into a democratic political system. He underlines the unconditional relationship between economic and political development while the growth of a strong middle class deals with the interest of its class in the political representation. The author highlights the connection of society's modernization and the development of the working class. He specifies that empirical studies demonstrate that both social classes (the working class and the middle class) are politically apathetic and do not take any action towards changing the existing political regime. "The social classes of modern China support the policy of the Chinese communist party with the view that 'the Chinese Dream' should be rendered China's reality," concludes D. Owen [38].

The most important aspect of the Chinese Dream is the civilian institutionalization, i.e., the creation of new societies in which real socialistic values are to prevail. According to a range of researchers, the embodiment of the Great Chinese Dream can be associated with another political doctrine the aim of which is the China-specific urbanization. A range of researchers point out that Chinese modern urbanization is associated with processes of industrialization and social modernization, but, on the other hand, this Chinese variant of urbanization features much more positive aspects as compared to the similar processes in other countries. For instance, the growth of the urban population in China is not accompanied by growth in slum areas and there is marginalization of a considerable segment of new citizens, including villagers having moved to the city and failing to find support for their new social status there. The experts see the reasons of these positive tendencies to be thought-out state policy concerning urbanization where an emphasis is placed on the transformation of rural settlements into small modern towns rather than a population explosion in the biggest megalopolises like Shanghai, Beijing, Harbin, and other giant cities. In the first case, no sheer destruction of traditional rural community is occurring and, as a result, neither is there disastrous marginalization of various social groups.

Anna Ahlers studies the relationship between the Chinese Dream doctrine and an urbanization course which arose much earlier than the political wording of the Great Chinese Dream [1]. A. Ahlers believes that, based on China-specific forms of rural urbanization, Chinese political leaders are creating a real opportunity to render this dream a social reality. The Great Chinese Dream of the country's rural population also

did not emerge on in an empty place. Starting in the middle of the 2000s, the Chinese government replaced the previous concept of large-scale macro-urbanization with a better-balanced distribution of urban infrastructure and a socially more acceptable concentration of resources in rural provinces. The political documents of contemporary China discuss with increasing frequency a new type of rural urbanization, the necessity to systematically create new rural communities, and new rural landscapes.

A. Ahlers assumes that new rural urbanization processes, the attraction of various resources for the development of rural areas, and competent planning and distribution of these resources appear to be beneficial for rural public authorities, including in relation to initiation of the land use managerial processes. She emphasizes that the motivation and interests of the rural public authorities are quite complicated and ambiguous with regard to implementation of the state's policy concerning rural urbanization. It is the interests of this particular group that are exhibited in the creation of modern urban services and other public goods (health care system, education, insurance, etc.) in the urbanized rural settlements of contemporary China. A. Ahlers believes that the reasoning of the governors responsible for the management of a certain settlement requires particular attention. It is possible that certain preventive measures of managerial nature are required if individual interests prevail over public ones.

Adoption of the state law in China on the prohibition of illegal seizure of land has resulted in reduced eviction of people. The researcher also assumes that, perhaps, the government is aware of the particular danger of the expansive growth of the urban population that may result in similar sharp changes in political consciousness. Nevertheless, rural urbanization in contemporary China is declared to be a component of the up-to-date embodiment of the Great Chinese Dream that is proven by the numerous signs, and images symbols characteristic of today's China.

A new type of community is emerging, in which traditional rural life is modernized through the development of a new urban infrastructure and new infrastructural solutions in the sphere of rural production. This new type of community can form the basis for the embodiment of the Great Chinese Dream. This raises the question of whether former local government bodies are preserved in these new types of communities. A. Ahlers assumes that three main scenarios are possible: (1) preservation of all the stable qualities of traditional rural management; (2) autocratic enhancement thanks to new opportunities, for example, in the sphere of land use and land seizure; and (3) combination of the first and second scenarios in different configurations. Depending on what scenario is to be implemented, it will be able to be determined whether the rural urbanization is to become the uppermost platform for bringing the Chinese Dream to life.

Michael Feng is also careful in his conclusions concerning the Chinese Dream's implementation in which he envisages the ideological mechanism of economic recovery. He writes that this political doctrine has formed by no means by accident [10]. According to M. Feng, the negative factor of its emergence is the slowing of the economic growth of China as well as a lingering low level of income per capita. Meanwhile, entrepreneurial enthusiasm is quite high in modern China, though the economic policy of the country has recently been characterized by a new wave of nationalization and strengthening of the state monopoly in the economy.

M. Feng emphasizes that the political doctrine of the Great Chinese Dream's embodiment has obtained a considerable amount of supporters and the enhanced

emergence of a new energy wave of public enthusiasm. It is very important for modern Chinese leaders to ensure that the Great Chinese Dream is not mere rhetoric. For this purpose, some new economic processes have been initiated: it is permitted to establish private banks and the course into the market economy in certain sections has been preserved. The researcher studies what particular values are declared as the ideological basis of the Great Chinese Dream's implementation: socialism, socialist democracy, freedom, supremacy of the statute law, and scientific development.

The traditional Chinese values related to Confucianism are also included into the concept of the Great Chinese Dream. The main Confucian value is the social harmony. The necessity to build a harmonious society was also declared by Xi Jinping's predecessor during whose time there were some ongoing phenomena of social and political instability. Modern China is spending more money to ensure internal security rather than external defense (in 2011, it amounted to 720 and 769 billion RNB, respectively) [10, p. 171]. When thoroughly considering the traditional Confucian values, it is clear that they hardly differ from traditional Christian or Buddhist values. Kindness, honesty, ritual etiquette, wisdom, and fairness underline these values. Moderateness, charity, respectfulness, tolerance, and attentiveness form the basis of the behavior code.

However, not all Confucian values entail universal meaning. In particular, the Confucianists consider businesspersons as "mean people" and thus "honorable people" cannot be engaged in trade and cannot deal with market values. Mencius (孟子), who is the most famous philosopher after Confucius and who predetermined the content of the Chinese traditional values, also supported moderate welfare and was against the concentration of big financial or other material values in the hands of a few. Confucianism itself is against prioritization of individual interests. They must be consistent with social fairness. M. Feng assumes that Confucian ethical principles have a serious influence on the specifics of business and social relations in contemporary China.

In the context of the Chinese Dream, such declared values as patriotism or national identification drew the experts' attention. In two of the three aspects of the great Chinese Dream, in particular, the "prosperity of the Chinese nation" and "rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," Xi Jinping places an emphasis on predominating national development; that is, from M. Feng's point of view, an adequate response to the mass growth of the nationalist moods in contemporary China. From the point of view of modern political leaders, resting on these moods provides a means to secure China's territorial integrity. Historically, patriotism is included in the traditional Chinese cultural values system: in ancient times, China's integrity was ensured by united cultural foundations rather than political motives. Traditional Chinese culture impeded external assimilation of Chinese people. National feelings were insulted during the Japanese invasion and they also resisted Western technological and military actions, including during the Opium Wars. Relying, in particular, on the national rise, Mao Zedong (毛泽东) ensured his victory, at the same time making great efforts to modernize Chinese society and establish a powerful national state. This is yet another specific aspect of the country's development: reliance on state power during reconstruction of national might is also preserved in modern China. The state institutes themselves enhance the success of contemporary China.

Thus, it is obvious that a return to the traditional Chinese values of Confucianism refers, in particular, to the return to a strong sense of national pride that should be

communicated in the government's political rhetoric as well. Activities programs in which socialistic principles are combined with traditional Confucian values, including honesty, fairness, and patriotism, are being performed in order to implement the Chinese Dream.

The Chinese Dream Images in Advertising Texts

Modern Chinese policy connected with the embodiment of the Great Chinese Dream relies in many respects on urbanization, including macro-urbanization (a characteristic of the end of the 1990s of the twentieth century and the first 5 years of the twenty-first century) and rural urbanization (a characteristic of the period of 2005–2015). A consumer quality of infrastructure is a central element of urbanism in China and is actively propagandized as a means of courtesy and politeness in the mass media and official discourse. A striking example of urban ideology are street advertisements that are widespread and often occupy visible public places. The transformation of each Chinese citizen into a consumer of high-quality products and services has become part of this widespread ideologeme of the Chinese Dream that is used for mobilization. Advertisements play a major role in this process and are used by all official organizations and private corporations for the purpose of facilitating all types of urban consumption, from specific products, such as apartments in beautiful and prestigious districts and luxury goods, to non-material symbols, such as modes of life, world views, and living habits.

According to the American scientist Meigying Wang, the works of the contemporary Chinese artist Ni Weihua in the documentary photography field where there is a contrast between urban billboards and non-glamorous images of real residents may be considered as a protest against glossing over social contradictions by way of advertising billboards where the Chinese Dream is visualized [58]. Thus, Weihua deconstructs cultural advertising communications if not by destroying the ideal image of the Chinese Dream in the urban environment, then by exhibiting its remoteness from today's realities.

Choon-Piew Pow and Lily Kong examine advertising themes and discourse gathered in the marketing places of Shanghai's newly built gated communities [46]. The authors demonstrate how marketing strategies, in this case selling the Chinese dream home, draw upon specific landscape meanings and traditional values embedded in Chinese/Shanghainese history. Collectively, these representations of the good life both reflect and reinforce exclusive housing aspirations and privatist visions of the middle-class residents of gated communities in contemporary Shanghai. While advertisements do not always achieve the outcomes that property developers wish for, there is no doubt that they play significant roles in both shaping and reflecting landscape meanings and values. As a medium and outcome, they reveal the growing aspirations of a new Chinese middle class.

According to Sheldon Lu, one can identify several methods that Chinese artists use to present urbanization in modern China [28]. Modern Chinese visual arts are in conflict with society: on the one hand, artists have their own strong individual aspirations, while on the other hand, the Chinese public culture's tolerance is undoubtedly finite. In addition, contemporary Chinese artists are forced to conduct an artistic dialog in the contradictory reality of China: the portrayal of a prospective society is

carried out in the official mass media with “pink colors” unlike the difficult situation many social groups are in that have not managed to benefit from modern China’s rapid movement towards prosperity. Artists try to find a balance of “artistic truth” by way of expressing themselves in their art and balancing between national regionalism and globalization, between the traditional roots of their art, on the one hand, and the external pressure and the global capitalist economy’s and the international art market’s tempting opportunities, on the other hand.

Furthermore, we consider some samples of print products (see Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) which can be deemed as representatives of Chinese advertisements. Consequently, conclusions made based on these representatives can be extrapolated onto Chinese advertisements as a whole.

After analyzing the first image (Fig. 1) where we see the public poster “Welcome to the New Century,” one can immediately note the influence of images particular to the heyday of the USSR: prevailing red colors and canonical shoulder-length portraits of the three people (the young electric welder, the young farmer’s wife wearing a scarf, and the elderly intellectual wearing eyeglasses). A group of three people is also characteristic of Christian iconography traditions; however, shoulder-length portraits with unidirectional facial profiles have become the most characteristic feature of Soviet poster art. In the traditional Soviet interpretation, it is a symbolic union between the working class, rural agriculturists, and intellectuals. However, Chinese tradition also includes a typical Chinese family, including three generations: an elderly man, a young married couple, and a child rising above them. Young people are wearing work clothes: their main business is their work by which means they can support their families in



Fig. 1 Advertising poster “Welcome to the new century”



Fig. 2 Cover of the modern Chinese magazine “The World Brand Insight,” August 2012, No. 248

general and children in particular. It is the elderly generation’s business to bring up children. Eyeglasses worn by an elderly person are associated with reading, knowledge, wisdom, and traditions that should be transferred to children. Furthermore, in the image



Fig. 3 Chinese advertising poster “Paradise treasure of our spirit, or Take care of our spiritual homeland”



Fig. 4 Booklet promoting modern Chinese book production

of interest, the child is the most important component (he is on the sun disk and is compositionally presented at the top of the pyramid whose base is the adults). In other words, an emphasis is placed on the future generation that is lighting up life (though the present generation is beautiful and the past one is wise). The previous generations' activities are aimed at bringing up and educating children. In addition, it should be noted that the woman is represented between the two men: she is under their protection. This ideological concept is also confirmed by the fact that the poster repeats a typical Chinese home's fundamental features. We see a rural house (a double-pitch roof, ears) where people live in affluence (a symbolic image of grain-bearing ears). Thus, the



Fig. 5 Advertising poster “Merry Go,” the text “Life as a Go”



Fig. 6 Advertising poster “Culture” “Bajuy”

poster with a clearly pronounced political and social nature is notable for its reflection of both the influences of the external culture (socialist realism samples from the time of the USSR) and actual Chinese national traditions and ideological concepts.

Analysis of the second image (Fig. 2) on the magazine’s cover (a young charming girl) allows us to draw several conclusions. The keynote of this image in the context of green natural materials and an imitated water flow is its accentuated “naturalness” (blue and grassy-green colors of different shades; clear skies; a hair-raising wind); naturalness (a lack of make-up on the girl’s face); purity (purity of the sky, purity of her light skin); and grace (the girl’s silhouette, a bottle). The presented girl embodies all of these qualities and combines them harmoniously: the girl’s nature and grace allow us to compare her to a charming flower. The outlines of her young body emphasized with a dress as if sewed with herbs tightly fastened to each other are immediately associated with a flower’s expanding bud. Based on the analysis of the image, the most important values include naturalness, nature (ecological compatibility), harmony, youth (immediately associated with reproductive health), and orientation on western features (the girl’s white skin). Ecological compatibility is also expressed there in the form of water: both in the style of the image itself and the crystal clearness of water in the small bottle the girl is holding in her hand. If we consider that the image of a slender young girl, according to the researchers, belongs to western advertising traditions, the subject of harmony, naturalness, and ecology is rather “eastern” and natural for China’s national culture. Also, the laconicism of the colors and forms presented in this advertising sample is characteristic of traditional and national advertising.

The books that we see in Fig. 3 are an eternal, universal symbol of knowledge. Paper, as a Chinese invention, is an additional symbol in the country’s advertising. Therefore, books are cultural symbols in China that in themselves are an ancient source of knowledge and wisdom. The poster shows a pile of ancient books with a black background that is important: in China, black is a symbol of learning, wisdom, and bookishness. The book backs remain invisible and a viewer himself conjectures what works of Chinese culture (and of global culture in general) have been placed on top of each other. A cross formed by strips of white fabric, with a red spot on it, allows us to

assume that the books are tied up with bloodstained bandages. This is a symbol of some kind of sacrifice that many generations have made that finally allowed modern people to take advantage of all of the ancient wisdom. Basic concepts that are symbolically contained in the poster with the signature “Protect Your Spiritual Homeland” include ancient wisdom described in books, an image of China as the location books were invented and the most ancient books were created, and the generations of human sacrifice that is the cornerstone of these spiritual feats. All of this includes features that are embedded in Chinese national traditions. But, on the other hand, this image has recourse to such western symbols as: the cross is, first and foremost, a symbol of Christian tradition.

Figure 4 shows an image consisting of two parts. To the left, we see a little girl who can be compared with a torch lamp represented as a flower. These red flowers are shown on brown wooden stalks (supports). The girl dressed in pink is sitting on a brown chair, planting her elbows on a brown table. Brown is associated with trees (stalks and furniture) and land (both the table and the torch lamp have squares symbolizing the earth as their foundation) that serve as a support for the flowers of life (the lampshades and the girl). The girl is wearing modern-style clothing, but the table is intended for reading ancient scrolls (its table-top is equipped with special limiters). A person who knows Chinese culture and reality will understand that this refers to the girl's time being brought up and growing up, like a flower, on the natural soil of tradition. Furthermore, this is not a backward tradition, but a modern one that is subject to change, which is indicated by the decorative element presented above the girl. In addition, we do not just see a simple fan, but rather, a fan-like form made of wood, which is a modernized traditional Chinese attribute, a symbol of present and eternal changes at the same time.

The right side of the same image shows a vertically oriented sculpture of a scaly dragon opening its mouth, revealing rows of razor-sharp teeth, and is turned towards all of the landscape. The coils of the dragon's snake-shaped body are accompanied by small wind vortices. Therefore, the presented dragon is the embodiment of the powers of the air, wind, and skies. In the bottom left section is an egg-shaped form. Usually, eggs symbolize birth and new life. In this case, the egg-shaped form also represents a water receptacle and a special aquarium full of purity and whiteness where small fishes live and lotuses blossom, which creates a stable pair symbol of mutual love. In other words, the egg of interest represents a new life blossoming with and love protected by the dragon that opens its mouth towards the far horizon. And a viewer has no reason to believe that the egg may be in the slightest danger because it is under such protection and the whole image is harmonious, combining the following main elements: water (egg), air (dragon), tree (pine), and earth (landscape). The blooming new life will be similar to the pine presented: the shape of its trunk indicates that the tree has to struggle for its existence under difficult conditions. And this struggle is very successful, judging by its green pine needles. In general, the image represents an advertisement telling people about modern Chinese products, having characteristic national and cultural features.

Figure 5 shows the two worlds: the imaginary (artificial) one and the real one (stones for the game of Go and flowers). Ink, a traditional visual art, helps to enrich the world, to provide it with cultural meanings, and shows the hidden (lines on the board and possible moves), including harmony (the principles of the male and female, the

heavenly and the earthly, the stone's circle and the board's square). Male and female harmony is also shown through the lotuses (as a female symbol) in full bloom and the dragonflies (the male principle) pollinating the flowers. The combination of the black ink and the contrast pink color as well as the semantic contents of the image emphasizes the Chinese national world view.

Figure 6 presents a traditional image that is especially interesting: it is practically all black-and-white. Only chromatic are a red spot with a white hieroglyph on it, a yellow brown scroll, a dark brown ink slab, and a brush. Such colorful features in combination with a sheet texture made of many small spirals allow us to conclude that we are looking at the following two pictures: the first one is the scroll, the ink slab, and the brush, and the second one representing a black-and-white landscape with the master's seal, birds, and hieroglyphs with a red background. It is as if the images of the architecture, birds, and leaves are created by means of a brush and ink, rather than by means of the camera, as if we are looking at an absolutely realistic landscape and the tools used for its creation. Thus, the author of this advertising image demonstrates a symbol of the Bayu culture.

Summarizing the topics discussed above, one can identify the most general concepts and features that characterize modern China's culture and worldview.

1. There is a wide appeal for ancient Chinese traditions, rituals, and symbols, including the landscape, the game of Go, the book heritage, the Chinese house in the sunlight, the ancient scroll, the dragon, etc. Meanwhile, the traditions are presented not as added to the category of museum objects and covered with dust, but as highly sought-after, modernized, alive, and recovering. Thus, the future generations are brought up through these traditions.
2. The presented images represent, on the one hand, harmony with nature and the environment, a collection of all the elements, while, on the other hand, harmony of the principles of the male and female.
3. The female symbols (flowers, squares, etc.) and presented young girls and women indicate the connection between women and flowering, a period of reproductive health, as well as the need for protection and support. Along with predominance of the female principle, the importance of images of children and youth, i.e., a future bred by China based on traditional principles avoiding separation from the "larger world" is obvious.
4. There is also a semiotic orientation on the other cultures, which is shown through special visual canons, including inscriptions made in English, the cross, an angel's wings, and cosmopolitan signs.

In general, based on the performed analysis of the print ads representatives, one of the points of view considered at previous sections can be supported according to which the combination of global and traditional cultures is portrayed in Chinese advertisements. Meanwhile, this research showed that the dominant idea is still held by China's traditional values. They surround the future of the country (children, young people); traditional values form the basis for raising young generations. Beyond that, there is no forced isolation of children and youth from global culture. It is more likely that China harmoniously adopts the global components which the country considers acceptable based on its own worldview.

The considered advertising samples exemplify different aspects of the Chinese Dream. It is rich culture (books, architecture); healthy environment (images of nature); collectivist origin (image of unity—united home, united challenges); equality and rectitude (no hierarchy in the depiction of various peoples); similar life standards in rural and urban populations (depicting workers and peasants in the same line); frugality (color score, laconism); happy people (images of children, images of third-generation families); rejuvenation of the nation (predominance of children and youth images); etc.

Conclusion

One of the main objectives of this article was to evaluate the relationship between traditional and global values in Chinese advertisements, providing a means to understand the role played by China in the globalizing world. Analysis of research dedicated to this issue revealed that there is no shared opinion among researchers. One polarity is presented with a predominance of global cultural values in Chinese advertisements (especially ads aimed at the youth audience), while the other highlights the prevalence of traditional values, and there is a range of intermediate points of view that the Chinese advertisements combine both tendencies to one extent or another. The research carried out by the authors has shown that the advertising products could feature the combination of global and local (traditional) components, ensuring the prevalence of traditional values. It is interesting that traditional values surround the images of children and youth, which allows a conclusion to be made about the essentials of raising the young generations. However, the images of children and youth are not completely isolated from the global culture. It is more likely that the Chinese worldview harmoniously includes the global world component which this country deems as acceptable.

Another objective of the article was to analyze the representation of the Great Chinese Dream in advertisements. For this purpose, aspects of the Chinese Dream were thoroughly studied in both political texts and the concepts about this dream represented in the academic community. Then, in the analysis of the advertising samples, an effort was made to identify the components of the Chinese Dream there. In particular, the following aspects of the Chinese Dream were identified: rich culture, healthy environment, collectivist origin, equality, rectitude, similar life standards for rural and urban populations, frugality, happy people, domesticity, rejuvenation of the nation, etc. It is important that the analyzed advertising materials samples were created both after the announcement of the Great Chinese Dream ideological thesis in March 2013 and in the preceding years. The presence of visualizations of the Great Chinese Dream in advertisements pertaining to the period before 2013 indicates the immanence of the concept enunciated by Xi Jinping in Chinese culture.

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