

## From Toyota's "Dominant, You Have to Respect" to Dolce & Gabbana's "Eating with Chopsticks" to See the Emergence and Enlightenment of "Problem Advertising"

Mei Dong<sup>1</sup>, Qinxue Li<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Literature and Journalism, Shandong University of Technology, Zibo 255000, China;

<sup>2</sup>School of Foreign Languages, Shandong University, Jinan 250000, China.

### Abstract

Advertising creation must follow the necessary principles and guiding ideology. "Culture" is the source of inspiration, material library and creative promotion. It is also the guidance, spur and restriction factor of advertising creation in a certain context. "Think twice before acting." Although advertising is only a part of marketing, how the quality affects the development and success of marketing and brand to a certain extent, we must work hard to strengthen the audit and check to ensure that there are no problems before public launch.

### Keywords

Problem; Culture; Difference; Respect.

### 1. Introduction

On November 6, 2003, an advertising company in Beijing made two print advertisements for Toyota: one is "Domineering, you have to respect", let the stone lions of Lugou Bridge salute the domineering cars"; the other is no one in Hoh Xil. District, a Toyota cruiser pulled a green truck with a rope. After two print advertisements were published in "Friends of Automobile" magazine, public opinion was in an uproar. The Lugou Bridge incident was the full start of the Japanese war of aggression against China. The stone lions in the advertisements It is easy to think of the stone lions on the Lugou Bridge; the first domestically produced vehicle born in the history of the Chinese automobile industry was a Jiefang truck, and the green truck is usually the color of a Chinese military vehicle. The two advertisements are so-called in terms of language and pictures. The creative expression of the Chinese people feels that the national dignity is offended, which affects the feelings between the Chinese and Japanese people, and arouses strong dissatisfaction among the Chinese people.

What is even more surprising is the agency and creative staff behind this advertisement. The advertisement came from Beijing Shengshi Great Wall International Advertising Company and was made by a Chinese employee. After the news came out, it was even more difficult to understand. A prestigious international advertising company, a full-time staff member, although we cannot directly doubt and deny the purpose and professional quality of the company and its employees because of a problem advertisement, it is true that such an advertisement with obvious controversial issues appears. It feels incredible. The final result: the advertising company, staff, and Toyota Motor Corporation formally apologized to the Chinese, and the two advertisements were quickly removed from the magazine.

Today, this incident has been a long time ago, but similar incidents have occurred many times. For example, the Nippon Paint "Dragon Slipping" incident, Nike's "Fear Chamber" advertisement, such advertisements did not disappear completely, but still appeared. I don't know if it is due to lack of professionalism or intentional. It's just that once things are exposed, the impact will be very bad, and the brand will suffer heavy losses as a result.

The video of Dolce & Gabbana's "Eating with Chopsticks" insulting China that appeared on November 23, 2018 is one of the typical cases of this kind in the past two years. In the advertisement, a model with an Asian face eats pizza with a pair of chopsticks. The model calls the chopsticks "little sticks" in crappy Mandarin, babbled voice, and contrived intonation, and "studies" how to eat what

she said. "The Great Pizza Margherita" has a stiff smile, a sullen posture, and his verbal expressions are full of teasing, irony and disdain for traditional Chinese eating tools. Netizens were very angry when they saw this video and left a message to contact Dolce & Gabbana's official website. Unexpectedly, what was waiting was not the company's due apology, but the arrogant and rude attitude of the two brand founders, Dolce & Gabbana brothers. And use dirty words to insult the Chinese. Although Dolce & Gabbana is making money in the Chinese market, it looks down on the Chinese at all. Its arrogant and rude attitude is very different from the international high-end image created by the brand, and the Chinese are completely angered. Some Chinese film and television stars who were originally invited to participate in the annual fashion show to be held in Shanghai took the lead and refused to attend the event, and the established fashion show was forced to cancel. E-commerce and shopping malls across the country have removed Dolce & Gabbana products. Chinese consumers refused to buy the brand's products in the future. Finally, Dolce & Gabbana withdrew from the Chinese market. As the situation further spread, the international market also launched some activities to remove the Dolce & Gabbana brand. The two Dolce & Gabbana brothers stopped being tough and began to apologize to the Chinese. The company has also done several good brand marketing activities to show the Chinese people, including the design of T-shirts with zodiac signs during the Chinese New Year of the Pig to pay tribute to Chinese culture. The person does not buy it. The serious consequences of Dolce & Gabbana's insult to China were first caused by seemingly inconspicuous problematic advertisements, and finally completely lost China, the world's largest consumer market, and brought immeasurable heavy losses to the brand.

## 2. Case enlightenment

### 2.1 "Advertising creativity can be freely thought, but not freely done" - "idea" should be "selected" to "do something and not do something".

If creativity is a "kite" flying freely in the sky, then the guiding ideology and cultural principles of creation are the "thread" held in the hands of advertisers. Creativity can be broad and all-encompassing, but it does not mean that there is no boundlessness and no principle. And the bottom line. In March 2017, the German spreadshirt company website sold insulting China T-shirts, and the Chinese Embassy in Germany requested that the series be removed and apologized. The company argued that: "Save a dog and eat a Chinese" printed on the T-shirt and "Save a shark and eat a Chinese" does not mean racial discrimination. The company website just provides an "open" and "creative and diverse" platform. The spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in Germany pointed out: The statement is not a genuine apology, but a justification for the company's insults and discriminatory behavior. China once again strongly urges the company involved to remove all products that insult China and sincerely apologize to China. [1] Creativity is not an excuse or shield for arrogance and disrespect for other cultures. It cannot be used to cover up the true purpose or the negative impact that it actually brings to the audience.

### 2.2 "Culture" in advertising is the source of inspiration, material library and creative promotion. It is also the guiding, spurring and restrictive factor of advertising creation in a certain context.

In 2016, a video advertisement of "Qiaobi Laundry Dissolving Beads" affiliated with Shanghai Leishun Cosmetics Co., Ltd. was suspected of racial discrimination, which was widely reported and reprinted by Western media. In the advertisement, a young and beautiful woman stuffed a black man into the washing machine, and put a "Qiaobi laundry bead" in his mouth. After washing the black man out of the washing machine, he became a young and white man. Asian man. This Chinese advertisement was broadcast on foreign media and social media such as Facebook and caused an uproar, because it stepped on a major "minefield" in Western society. As Vox News commented on the laundry detergent advertisement, "This is blatant racism. ", is considered to be discrimination against blacks. Leishun Cosmetics issued a statement on Sina Weibo, saying that it regrets the controversy caused by the content of the advertisement and that it will never shirk its responsibility. [2] This advertisement should not have the issue of racial discrimination, but since it happened, we

must seriously reflect on it and make practical improvements, especially to strengthen cultural training and professional sensitivity; on the other hand, there is no denying the difference in context. It is also an important reason for the advent of the problem. Due to the differences in historical development, social environment, cultural cognition and many other factors between China and the United States, there are indeed big differences in the sensitivity and feelings of the people of the two countries to issues such as race and skin color.

In cross-cultural communication, different cultures should respect each other, understand and respect the cultural background of consumers, take into account background factors such as political sensitivity, national self-esteem, ethnic and religious taboos, and avoid obstacles to communication. In cross-cultural communication, we must broaden our horizons, take into account the diversified context of the audience's cognition with a global mindset, strengthen the understanding and auditing of cultural differences, and avoid similar problems. "Be ready to change at any time. Positional thinking, randomly adjusting one's original thinking style, attitude, values, hobbies, etc., is an inevitable way for advertisers to mature, and it is also a panacea for curing rigid thinking and conservative thinking." [3]

### **2.3 Advertisers should strengthen professional ethics and cultivate correct values.**

"With the deepening of globalization, the development and popularization of information technology, network resources, and global television networks, all ideological, creative and cultural fields have entered a new stage of equal competition. As an advertiser, no matter what you are in the world. Wherever you go, the rules of the game are the same, so you must have a certain international outlook." [4] Ideological awareness, cultural attitudes, values, etc., are not dispensable for advertisers. If something goes wrong in these areas, even the most amazing advertisement will fail, which will cause huge losses to the brand. The advertisements are permeated with the audience's value expectations, but at the same time, they are deeply imprinted with the advertiser's own value consciousness and cultural intentions. What kind of advertising work is promoted to the society, and what effect will be produced in the future, in addition to the audience's value expectation and acceptance mentality, the cultural quality of the advertiser also plays a big role, because advertising works not only incorporate the creator's thoughts and concepts, but also reflect the advertiser's knowledge, culture, cultivation, and character. [5] Advertisers should continuously strengthen the breadth and depth of cultural knowledge, pay attention to the cultivation and accumulation of cultural qualities, and systematically learn and master the historical and cultural background, national psychology, cultural differences, and social changes of the importing country in cross-cultural communication. In terms of knowledge, comprehensive consideration of advertising content and prudent delivery.

### **3. Conclusion**

Advertising communication is not only an activity that promotes commercial and trade exchanges, but also a cultural exchange activity. Advertising is not just a commercial advertisement, but also carries a certain amount of cultural communication and exchange content. Although advertising is only a part of marketing, how the quality affects the development and success of marketing and brand to a certain extent, you must work hard, strengthen audits, and do not sensationalize and opportunistic before public launch. Respect for cultural differences is the prerequisite and foundation for advertising in cross-cultural communication. Product quality is the fundamental, and ideology and cultural attitude are the key. In the creation of works and pseudo-transnational media placement, it is necessary to strengthen advertising creativity and audit checks, and further establish "communication", Cooperation, openness, and win-win" attitude, promote active transnational communication and exchanges, and create an excellent and sustainable international image for more brands.

## References

- [1] Peng Dawei, the Chinese Embassy once again negotiates with German companies to insult China T-shirt: Don't insult others in the name of freedom, China News Network, 2017.3.11.
- [2] The "whitewashing" advertisement of black people caused controversy, the product company apologized, China Daily Bilingual News, 2016-05-31.
- [3] Cui Dequn, Cultural Exploration of Advertising Communication Context, News Spring and Autumn, Proceedings of the Third International Symposium on World Chinese Media and Chinese Civilization Communication, 2004.8.1.
- [4] Advertising Culture, edited by Li Zongcheng, Zhengzhou University Press, published in January 2008, page 194.
- [5] Song Yushu, edited by Wang Chunfei, Advertising Culture, Central South University Press, published in December 2006, page 274.