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German Studies Review, Volume 43, Number 1, February 2020, pp. 107-126  
(Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/gsr.2020.0005>



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# “Consuming” China: Images of China in German and American Television Advertisements of the Twenty-First Century

Weijia Li

## ABSTRACT

Examining the representation of China and the Chinese people in German and American television advertisements aired between 2008 and 2012, this essay provides a critical analysis to illustrate how these images and their function in commercials reflect popular views of China in German and American society. I argue that the place that China holds in the German imagination is drastically different from that in the American view. Specifically, the German perception of China is evidently influenced by remnants of older European orientalist, or even colonialist worldviews, while the American view of China reflects various responses to the notion of globalization.

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With the rise of China as the second-largest economic power in the world and a dominant figure in the the international political-economic discourse on both sides of the Atlantic, Western mass media has significantly increased its coverage of China, stimulating a negotiation and reconciliation of China’s contemporary and past images in the public consciousness of many Western countries, including Germany and the US. Notably, China’s hosting of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics initiated a new wave of China-related broadcasting in Western media. In Germany, this stimulated a period of heated debates and controversies over whether and how the media presented a distorted image of China. In April 2008, in Berlin Germany, over 3,000 Chinese immigrants and students protested against Western media’s bias against China.<sup>1</sup> Adding fuel to the controversies, between 2008 and 2011, the state-owned German broadcasting service Deutsche Welle dismissed five Chinese-born German journalists due to their allegedly pro-China reporting practices.<sup>2</sup>

There have since been multiple studies on the representation of China in German media.<sup>3</sup> Despite their value, these studies have largely focused on news coverage in German mainstream media and have left unaddressed many other important aspects, such as television commercials featuring China and Chinese people. In both Germany and the US, the years 2008–2012 saw a marked boom in the production and broadcasting of television advertisements featuring images of China. Given the brevity (typically 30-seconds) of television commercials, they tend to tap presumptions and stereotypes held by the general public in order to communicate messages in a swift, appealing way. Thus, television commercials represent a major but still underaddressed venue for situating research on the representation of China in Western media. This study sets out to address this gap through a comparative lens by examining images of China in television commercials targeting European and American audiences, in an effort to enrich the understanding of Western perceptions of China by using television commercials as a key media context.

Using discourse analysis, enriched by cultural studies, television studies, film studies, German studies, and Asian American studies, I employ an interdisciplinary approach to examine the image of China as reflected in typical narrative topoi: the stereotypical Western imaginary of China or Chinese culture and commonly employed iconographic references to China and the Chinese. Furthermore, I analyze thematic and methodological patterns in the depiction of China and the Chinese by examining filmic settings, *mise-en-scènes*, and relationships between Chinese and non-Chinese elements. Finally, by situating my analysis in an intellectual-historical discourse pertaining to the evolution of the Western perception of China in German and American culture, I provide a comparative perspective on images of China in German commercials and their counterparts in American advertisements. I argue that these images and their function in individual commercials reflect popular views of China in German and American society. My findings suggest that the place that China holds in the German imagination is drastically different from its position in American minds. Specifically, the German perception of China is evidently influenced by remnants of older European orientalist, or even colonialist worldviews, while the American view of China reflects various responses to notions of globalization.

### **Television Commercials and Cultural Studies**

As a powerful agent for the transmission and socialization of cultural values, television commercials present compelling audiovisual texts that facilitate the representation and negotiation of cultural identities.<sup>4</sup> Although television commercials, like other advertising products, do not necessarily reflect human society in a truthful and holistic way, they do mirror a quasi “collective consciousness” of the society in that they largely rely on stereotypical representations of gender, ethnic, racial, national,

and cultural identities. Because using stereotypes can expediently create settings and convey characters that deliver key commercial messages, advertising depends on stereotypes constantly reinforced in society in order to effectively achieve immediate recognition and a long-lasting impression.<sup>5</sup> As such, television advertising provides a rich corpus of diverse audiovisual as well as textual sources for examining cultural and intercultural discourses.

Indeed, cultural studies has long included television as a field for textual analysis and discourse analysis.<sup>6</sup> In the English-speaking world, especially in North America, cultural studies and television studies have been deeply intertwined since the 1980s when textual analysis and discourse analysis increasingly included television products as subjects of discussion.<sup>7</sup> Ethnic studies and media studies draw on television advertisements to investigate how cultural, ethnic, and racial stereotypes are reflected in the context of minority discourse.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, gender studies examine television advertising as a primary platform for constructing and disseminating gender imaginaries.<sup>9</sup> Both media studies and cultural studies have adopted cross-cultural and comparative approaches to investigating the variations among intercultural representations in television advertisements.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the burgeoning role of television commercials as a subject of investigation in the scholarship of cultural studies in North America, interdisciplinary research addressing the stereotypical representations of ethnic, racial, and national identities in television is extremely sparse in German studies scholarship. While a substantial body of literature exists addressing racial and national stereotypes in German cinema, only a small number of studies explicitly focus on German television advertising.<sup>11</sup> Although both serve as subjects for cultural studies, notable differences separate movies and television commercials, with movies often serving as an artifact of directors' artistic, aesthetic, and philosophical approaches and orientations, and television commercials primarily manufactured through a sophisticated assessment of the viewing audience. Therefore, literary and film studies mainly reflect the artistic and aesthetic ambitions of a given author or director and the devices they employ, while commercial analysis resorts to the "collective" other end—the targeted audience members, along with their presumptions and worldviews. Unlike readers or movie viewers, television viewers do not actively seek out commercials for entertainment.

### **Case Selection and Methods**

To inform my analysis, I used the following procedures to ensure an objective selection of television commercials suitable for the study. Since 2009, I have collected and analyzed China images in German and American media including television commercials.<sup>12</sup> For the purpose of this study, I accessed multiple databases and archives of advertisements to exhaust all possible cases between 2008 and 2012.<sup>13</sup> I

focus on this timeframe both because of the surge of representations of China and associated controversies in Western media during that time and to ensure a focused and situated analysis for this study.

My selection criteria are as follows: First, the advertisements must be broadcast on major television networks. Second, the advertised brands must be owned by non-Chinese companies. Third, the advertisements must contain explicit and substantial references to China or Chinese people. Accordingly, I identified five German television advertisements containing Chinese elements that were broadcast on public and private television channels of German-speaking countries between 2008 and 2012. I further identified a total of eleven American television commercials with explicit and significant reference to China broadcast on major television networks during the same timeframe. While I analyzed all commercials to reach my conclusions, due to space constraints, my essay focuses on three of the German television commercials, and for the purpose of comparison, I also discuss three American commercials aired during roughly the same time. Each of the discussed advertisements represents a strong and illustrative device of utilizing China-related stereotypes in order to achieve its advertising effectiveness. As a project in cultural studies, my inquiry, in contrast to social science studies, follows the traditions of literature and film analysis, and thus focuses on in-depth analysis of prominent cases instead of on the aggregation of a random sample or whole set of cases. Nonetheless, my analysis extends to all commercials that met the selection criteria and, where appropriate, I incorporate additional commercials throughout the essay to offer a fuller context.

CHINA AS AN EXOTIC AND INCONCEIVABLE PROJECT: HORNBACH: "MACH'S WIE DU WILLST. ABER MACH'S." ("CHINESISCHE PAGODE," 2008)<sup>14</sup>

In the Western cultural tradition, China has long been an embodiment of the foreign and the "other." Due to these metaphysical associations, China has always served as a conventional topos of otherness in German art, literature, and culture. Evidence of German fascination with exotic Chinese-ness is reflected, for example, in Chinoiserie such as the "Chinesischer Turm" (Chinese tower) in Munich's Englischer Garten and Frederick the Great's "Chinesisches Teehaus" (Chinese tea house) at the Sans Souci Palace in Potsdam. Further, it is embodied in the entanglement between the Western search for the "alternative" other and European interpretations of Eastern "otherness." In the twenty-first century, China continues to play the role of the "exotic" and, therefore, the "otherness" assigned by German constructions of auto- and heteroimages in contemporary television advertising.

As part of its spring commercial campaign in 2008, Hornbach Baumarkt, one of Germany's largest home-improvement and do-it-yourself chains, released a series of television advertisements entitled "Mach's wie du willst. Aber mach's" (Do it however you like, just do it). The advertisements emphasized the personal freedom to be

achieved by using Hornbach's products when working on home or garden projects.<sup>15</sup> One commercial in the series features a young woman who works tirelessly on what appears to be a large wooden structure. She uses various tools to sand, hammer, and paint. Toward the end of the commercial, the camera zooms out, revealing that her project is what appears to be a full-size pavilion in a distinctive Chinese classical style. The structure was clearly perceived as exotic by German and European audiences; the German media mistakenly referred to it as a "pagoda."<sup>16</sup> Despite this confusion, the commercial probably achieved its intended purpose by using an exotic architectural concept to illustrate the social-psychological longing for personal freedom and self-realization in a German context.

More intriguing is the treatment of the allegedly Chinese elements adopted in this television advertisement. The first shot captures a beautiful, spacious garden as the filmic setting of the advertisement. Immediately afterward, a female voice is heard singing an unknown, supposedly exotic song in an unidentifiable language. This shot is followed by a close-up of a white woman who is singing the song as she polishes a supporting pillar of the pavilion. Both the melody of the song and the woman's intonations suggest that it should be a Chinese folk song. Yet, any native Chinese speaker would immediately recognize that the "words" of the song that accompanies the advertisement are merely a nonsensical imitation of the sounds of Mandarin or Cantonese speech. In the next shots, the young woman is seen with her parrot, which is singing the same song; the woman obviously sings the song so often that her parrot has learned it too. Singing a "Chinese" song while building a Chinese pavilion indicates that the individual featured in the commercial is fully enjoying her freedom to be unique and to achieve something unimaginable. The use of a Chinese style for the pavilion in Hornbach's advertisement clearly reveals the European orientalist convention of assigning China the cultural symbolic role of representing the exotic and unimaginable. The fact that the producers did not bother to include an authentic Chinese song illustrates their disinterest in representing the actuality of China in German television advertising.

The German reluctance to accurately represent contemporary China is largely a consequence of the excessive number of stereotypes regarding China and the Chinese that persist in the European cultural tradition. Oftentimes, a reference to contemporary China falls back on the long-standing German perception of China's ancientness. The German focus on ancientness, the quality of "being old" associated with China, is attributed to two major waves of the German-Chinese cultural encounters in a transnational context. The first wave of the German fascination with Chinese culture was inspired by the European account of China and especially of Chinese Confucianism delivered by Jesuits in Beijing in the seventeenth century. The extremely positive yet sometimes exaggerated assessment of Chinese Confucianism not only invited euphoric admiration of China's ancient philosophy by European intellectuals during

the Enlightenment era, but in the nineteenth century also triggered criticism of China as an embodiment of despotism and as lacking in progress.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, as Europe sought philosophical and cultural alternatives amid the existential and cultural crisis following World War I, Chinese Taoism entered the European sphere via translations of the *Tao Te Ching*, the *I Ching*, and other major Chinese philosophical classics, generating the second wave of German reception of Chinese culture. Both waves of German fascination with Chinese culture over the past 300 years focused on receptions of Chinese ancient philosophy, with its thousand-year-old doctrines and major historical figures such as Confucius and Lao-tsu, which played an essential role in shaping the German imagination of China. For example, in the twentieth century, the vast majority of German literary and artistic works with Chinese themes still focused on ancient rather than contemporary China, often using stereotypical tropes and topoi such as old dynasties, palaces, the Great Wall, philosophers, and emperors.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, in the twenty-first century, German television advertising depicting Chinese themes often finds itself recycling centuries-old tropes and topoi adopted from the cultural and literary traditions of the German-speaking world.<sup>19</sup> A television advertisement made for Ricola in 2011 illustrates the orientalist recycling of old stereotypes in a new context. As argued in a study entitled *Die China-Berichterstattung in den deutschen Medien*, published by Germany's Heinrich Böll Foundation in 2010, the image of China "created by books and the media to date has fluctuated between the poles of excessive (historical) exuberance and reveling in the country's exotic aspects on one hand, and the construction of a disconcerting and in some respects threatening adversary to our social order on the other."<sup>20</sup>

#### CHINA BETWEEN ANCIENT WISDOM AND CONTEMPORARY INTELLECTUAL

##### PROPERTY THEFT: RICOLA—WER HAT'S ERFUNDEN? (CHINESEN-SPOT, 2011)<sup>21</sup>

The Swiss company Ricola, headquartered near Basel, is one of the most renowned manufacturers of herbal cough drops in the world. In 2011, Ricola kicked off a worldwide commercial campaign to highlight the company's product concept "Chrüterchraft," which refers to the integration of functionality, joyfulness, and good taste in their cough drops containing thirteen different herbs. The campaign was centered around a series of four television commercials entitled "Wer hat's erfunden?" (Who invented it?) broadcast on Germany's major television channels.<sup>22</sup> Although three advertisements in this series employ the concept of "Chrüterchraft," only the one entitled "Chinesen-Spot" (Chinese television commercial) emphasizes the originality and ownership of the concept. Ricola's official web page about this television campaign provides a brief summary of the Chinesen-Spot: "Ricola stresses no one else should be allowed to claim the invention of the thirteen-herb mixture as their own. Therefore, Ricola's 'truth commissioner' travels to the Middle Kingdom [i.e., China]."<sup>23</sup> In the context of this commercial, native Chinese are featured as individuals suspected of

illicitly claiming to have invented the thirteen-herb mixture and thus infringing on the company's patent. The view of China as the main suspect of industrial espionage and Chinese industry as embodiment of intellectual property theft and infringement violation not only represents a popular treatment of the national image of China, but also serves the purpose of portraying China as a threat, which reflects a revival of the old racist, imperialist notion of "yellow peril," at least a potential one for the German-speaking world facing the globalization of capital and knowledge. Already in November 2006, the German magazine *Spiegel* worried about "Angriff aus Fern-Ost" (Attack from the Far East) and featured an article about "Weltkrieg um Wohlstand" (World war for prosperity) against the Asians. Without worrying about its clear racist and sexist attitudes, in its August 2007 issue, *Spiegel* portrays China as "Die gelben Spione" (the yellow spy) with its cover page featuring an Asian-looking woman looking through a window blind painted with the Chinese national flag. Moreover, in the public discourse in German-speaking countries, there was, at that time, a rising perception of China's economic growth as a threat, as evidenced in books such as *Entmachtung des Westens: Die neue Ordnung der Welt* (2009; Disempowerment of the West: The new order of the world) and *Die gelbe Gefahr: Wie Chinas Gier nach Rohstoffen unseren Lebensstil gefährdet* (2012; The yellow danger: How China's greed for raw materials endangers our lifestyle).

Although the plot in Ricola's advertisement is rooted in the modern European perception of China as a country known for intellectual property theft, the advertisement itself is set in late nineteenth-century China. Its mise-en-scène suggests a shabby kitchen or drugstore workshop located in old China. The entire commercial was shot in constant low-key lighting with high contrast, which both enhances the dramatic effect and portrays China as a shadowy site of mysterious intrigues. With traditional Chinese folk music playing in the background, an old Chinese man with a long white beard, wearing a traditional robe characteristic of the late Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), is seen addressing the camera while the narrator of the commercial provides a German translation. The old Chinese man states, using the first-person plural, that "wir die Chinesen" (we the Chinese people) use the power of herbs for heart and lungs, and "we the Chinese people" invented cough drops. Two younger Chinese men seem to be self-importantly preparing a mix of herbs, while the old man holds Ricola's product in his hand and proudly presents it in its iconic yellow package in front of the camera. Suddenly a white man in a suit—Ricola's "truth commissioner"—emerges from the tall bamboo basket in which he was hidden. The lid of the basket sits on his head like a "Chinese" bamboo hat. He grips the end of his red necktie, on the back of which a white cross is embroidered, which resembles the Swiss national flag. He holds it if it were a badge while a police siren is heard on the soundtrack. Nonetheless, the darkness created by the constant low-key shooting in the commercial suggests that the shabby kitchen could be seen as a crime scene. The

truth commissioner, acting like a plainclothes detective or policeman, asks the old Chinese man, “Wer hat’s erfunden?” (Who invented it?) with a distinct Swiss German accent. The old man who first peers over his spectacles at the truth commissioner and then fixes his gaze at the Swiss “badge” flashed by the European man, bows and confesses, “Li, li-cola,” a defective pronunciation of “Ricola” mocking the old man’s incapability of pronouncing the German fricative sound “r.”

The old man with a long white beard is a stock figure in depictions of China, an essential prop serving to align representations of China with the stereotypical European imagination of the country. From the European excitement about Confucianism in the seventeenth century to the German fascination with Taoism in the early twentieth century, a longstanding admiration of ancient Chinese philosophy—a sinophile tradition in German culture—has created and nurtured this archetypal figure. He has become a common trope in German cultural products that adopt Chinese themes and motifs.

Furthermore, the treatment of Chinese “infringement” in Ricola’s commercial resonates with the European “sinophobic” perception of the untrustworthiness of Chinese people. Take Hegel’s vicious attack on the alleged immorality of the Chinese as an example: “Sie sind dafür bekannt, zu betrügen, wo sie nur irgend können . . . Sie verfahren dabei auf eine listige und abgefeimte Weise, so dass sich die Europäer im Verkehr mit ihnen gewaltig in acht zu nehmen haben” (They are notorious deceiving wherever they can, Their fraud most astutely and craftily performed, so that Europeans have to be painfully cautious in dealing with them).<sup>24</sup> Even in German encyclopedias published at the beginning of the twentieth century, such as *Meyers Großes Konversationslexikon* (1903) and Brockhaus’s *Konversationslexikon* (1908), “Verschlagenheit” (deceitfulness) was ascribed as characteristic of the Chinese.<sup>25</sup> Thus, both the sinophile and the “sinophobic” tradition in German cultural history—a dichotomy of Chinese representations—encouraged the German search for Chinese ancient wisdom and reinforced the orientalist archetype of China’s eternal past, which inevitably led to the reluctance to portray contemporary China.

Moreover, the representation of China in the Ricola commercial closely resonates with the country’s place in the European colonial imagination. The television commercial is set between the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, an era in which China suffered severe setbacks due to Western imperialist ambitions in East Asia beginning with the First Opium War (1839–1842). The final sequence of the advertisement captures the white man teaching all three Chinese men how to pronounce “Ricola” correctly; despite their steadfast efforts, the Chinese men struggle to reproduce the German-voiced uvular fricative sound “r” in “Ricola.” Their version of “Ricola” still sounds more like “Li-cola,” and one of the younger men is now wearing the bamboo lid previously worn by the European commissioner. Ricola’s “truth commissioner” has become a representative of the superior European

civilization, which is entitled to correct and teach the Chinese. The commercial's depiction of China in the era of European colonialism, intentional or not, exemplifies the tenacity of the colonial worldview.

CHINA AS A RELIC OF THE GERMAN COLONIAL IMAGINATION:  
KNORR'S "WOK PFANNE CHINA TOWN" (2010)<sup>26</sup>

A close examination of the Chinese themes utilized by the German television advertising industry reveals that its construction of images of China largely relies on a colonialist depiction that can be traced back to German imperialism during the second half of the nineteenth century. Between 1898 and 1914, the German empire occupied China's Qingdao and the Jiaozhou Bay, thus establishing its first and only colony in East Asia. Accounts by German military personnel, diplomats, missionary, business people, and travelers yielded a multidimensional picture of China and the Chinese people, which was nevertheless heavily tinted by imperialism and colonialism. Derogatory depictions of the Chinese as coolies wearing conical hats of straw or bamboo became a conventional trope in the Western imagination, lasting even to the present time. A television advertisement for one of Knorr's Chinese-themed products preserves a relic of European colonial fantasies about China that, unfortunately, continues to be marketable in Germany.

Knorr is a German food and beverage brand owned by the English-Dutch company Unilever. It produces dehydrated soup mixes and condiments. One of its most popular product lines, "Ein Tag Knorr Fix," includes the seasoning mix "Knorr Wok-Pfanne China Town." The television advertisement for this product is set in a family apartment or house, as is typical of Knorr's commercials. The narrator of the commercial says, "Ein Tag für Knorr ist ein Tag, an dem drei Chinesen zu Besuch sind" (A day for Knorr is a day when three Chinese people come to visit). Three German children, two boys and one girl, are seen playing together in what appears to be a playroom. The younger girl is wearing a conical hat made of straw or bamboo. Moreover, all three children are singing a well-known, nonsensical German children's song, "Drei Chinesen mit dem Kontrabas" (Three Chinese men with the contrabass). As the children begin another stanza of "Three Chinese men with the contrabass," a woman who appears to be their mother joins them and inserts a new line in the song, "haben großen Hunger" (are very hungry). The girl wearing the "Chinese" hat completes the verse, "und kochen sich was" (and cook something for themselves). The next shot is a close-up of a kitchen drawer opened by the mother, who reaches in for a package of "Wok-Pfanne China Town." In the following sequence, a standard feature in Knorr's advertisements, the preparation of the dish—in this case using a wok-like frying pan—is illustrated while the narrator provides a step-by-step guide. Interestingly, another close-up of the girl with the "Chinese" hat is inserted among the shots of the cooking process.

In the opening scene of this advertisement, there is a still shot of a cork bulletin board, with a notepad bearing the brand logo “Ein Tag für Knorr Fix” in the center of it. The Knorr logo is surrounded by shopping notes, grocery store receipts, and family photos, including a snapshot of the young girl, once again wearing the conical hat. Close to that photo is a cartoonish drawing of a human figure, presumably the work of a child. This figure also wears a “Chinese” hat and furthermore has the stereotypical “Schlitzaugen” (slanted eyes) associated with racist Western depictions of Chinese or East Asian people. The final shot of the commercial reprises the still frame seen at the beginning. The only difference is that the “Ein Tag für Knorr Fix” logo has been replaced by an actual package of “Wok Pfanne China Town” that features caricatures of three slant-eyed “Chinese” figures wearing conical hats.<sup>27</sup> The portrayal of Chinese persons in Knorr’s commercial and on its product package is rooted in a derogatory perception of China and Chinese people that is still prevalent in German society today.<sup>28</sup> The Asian conical hat, or the so-called Chinese “coolie hat,” has been a trope in the colonialist depiction of Chinese or Asians since the nineteenth century, along with the racist stereotype of slant-eyed Chinese or East Asians. The disparaging caricature of a Chinese character found in Knorr’s advertising is an uncritical adoption of a colonialist depiction of the “other.” In a television commercial produced and broadcast as recently as 2010, the adherence to the German colonialist depiction of China and Chinese people created over a century ago is astounding. The commercial replicates the imagery that European colonialist historiography imprinted in the German collective cultural memory.

Ironically enough, although Herder’s main criticism of China addressed its alleged stagnation in the development of human history, it is truly the German perception of China that has remained stagnant. In the historical German-Chinese cultural encounters, Herder illustrated the stagnation of Chinese political system and society as “eine balsamierte Mumie, mit Hieroglyphen bemalt und mit Seide umwunden; ihr innerer Kreislauf ist wie das Leben der schlafenden Wintertiere.” (an embalmed mummy, wrapped in silk, and painted with hieroglyphics; its internal circulation is that of a dormouse in its winter’s sleep).<sup>29</sup> In the case of German television commercials that aim to speak to the public perception of China in the twenty-first century, it seems that the image of China and the Chinese people in the German public discourse is still in hibernation.

Unlike the German television advertisements discussed thus far, prime-time television advertisements in the United States are much more likely to depict contemporary China. In the American imagination, China is less of a metaphysical symbol of inscrutability and is viewed instead from a geopolitical point of view as distant, yet at the same time accessible, often in the context of the global economy. In lieu of the overt references to Chinese stereotypes in German advertising, the images of China and Chinese people in American commercials reveal, by and large, only subtle or subliminal biases.

CHINA AS A CONVERSATION PARTNER IN THE CYBERNETIC WORLD:  
CISCO ADVERTISEMENT FEATURING ELLEN PAGE (“FIELD TRIP,” 2009)<sup>30</sup>

In sharp contrast to the German Ricola commercial, which stages an investigation of suspected intellectual property theft in nineteenth-century China, an advertisement produced for Cisco treats China as a contemporary conversation partner. In November 2009, Cisco Systems, a widely known American technology company, released a series of commercials introducing its new videoconferencing gadgets: “Cisco TelePresence® systems.”<sup>31</sup> The star of the ad campaign is the award-winning Canadian actress Ellen Page, who enjoys worldwide popularity and fame among teens and young people. All three commercials of this series were filmed in Page’s hometown, Lunenburg, a small Canadian port town located 90 kilometers southwest of Halifax, Nova Scotia.<sup>32</sup> The first commercial, entitled “Field Trip,” introduces videoconferencing as a way to conduct virtual field trips for K–12 students, under the slogan “Bring the World Into the Classroom.” In the commercial, Page has been invited to visit a class at Lunenburg Academy. After the teacher introduces Ellen, the children in the classroom greet her with great enthusiasm. One student announces with enormous excitement: “We are going on a field trip to China!” Yet, Ellen’s response seems to suggest that she is not sure whether she heard this correctly, “When we were kids, we . . . we just went to the farm.” In a brief flashback, a group of schoolchildren is seen visiting cattle and a young Ellen Page is startled when a cow suddenly moos at her. The following shot returns to the classroom, where Page asks, “No, seriously, where are you guys going?” The student who made the announcement points to a big screen at the front of the room. A series of intercuts captures students in a classroom in China and at Lunenburg Academy greeting each other via the videoconferencing system, as both groups excitedly shout “Ni hao” to each other. The intercuts are followed by a close-up of Page, who is clearly amazed and apparently a bit embarrassed by her failure to keep up with advances in classroom technology.

Unlike the German television advertisements, Cisco’s commercial features elements of contemporary China as they are brought to the Western world in real time through Cisco’s technology. Instead of slanted eyes, an Asian conical hat, or an old white-bearded man in nineteenth-century China, the American advertisement depicts Chinese schoolchildren in modern school uniforms communicating with their American counterparts via a videoconferencing system. The trope of being old and unable to keep up with the development of modern technology is not ascribed to China or Chinese people in Cisco’s advertisement. Rather, it is the adult generation in the Western world, represented by the pop-culture icon Ellen Page, that fails to imagine a virtual field trip via modern technology.

As the commercial demonstrates how Cisco’s technology brings the Chinese and Western world together, it relies on China as a symbol of remote and faraway regions that are no longer inaccessible. Despite the commercial’s main goal of highlighting

Cisco's instrumental role in cutting-edge communication, the Chinese are presented here as equal conversation partners with Westerners. By featuring Chinese schoolchildren adopting and thus benefiting from the modern technology provided by a Western company, the commercial displays modern elements of Chinese culture and society that are young and budding. Presenting Chinese children as contemporary playmates of their American counterparts becomes a new trope in American commercial language. For example, in Oreo's commercial "Chinese Train" released in 2008, an American girl and a Chinese girl sit in different trains in China and synchronize their motions using Oreo's signature move: dipping the cookie in milk.<sup>33</sup> This commercial further illustrates the globalized capitalism and consumerism underlying the modern technology that brings together China and the US. The advertised product or service, be it food or technology, is not the main reason for the differentiated treatment of China.<sup>34</sup> Instead, the objective of a particular advertising campaign and its targeted audience drive the advertising strategies. Both coming from the food industry, Oreo's "Chinese Train" depicts a Chinese girl as a contemporary playmate of her Western counterpart, whereas both Ricola and Knorr rely on the device of treating China as the mythic, exotic past.

The American concept of China exposed in the commercials abandons the Hegelian depiction of China as eternally ancient and backward. Furthermore, the realistic features of these commercials are indicative of American television advertising's attempts to create an authentic Chinese setting for its imagery narrative, seen also in the next example from General Electric.

#### CHINA AS A COMPLEX BLEND OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY: GE'S

"HEALTHCARE RE-IMAGINED COMMERCIAL" ("LOVE STORY—CHINA," 2008)<sup>35</sup>

In 2008, as part of a marketing campaign called "Healthcare Re-Imagined," GE released a series of television advertisements, including one that captures a Chinese love story. The story is set in the present, at a market in a small rural town in southern China. A young man who owns a food stand sees a beautiful woman walking through the market and tries to catch up with her. His actions cause a minor traffic accident that triggers a domino effect, and the crowded market stands begin to collapse one after the other. A perspective shot of the broader landscape shows a cloud of dust rising from the town, which is ringed by the distinctive peaks of the Karst Mountains. During this chaos, the young man loses track of the woman and injures his foot. He is sent to the hospital, where he is overjoyed to realize that the woman is the doctor in charge of his case. The commercial ends with the doctor treating the young man's injury with the aid of GE's advanced medical imaging technology.

A vivid sense of reality runs through the entire commercial, which seems to place a high priority on depicting the "real" China. Indeed, the "Love Story" commercial was filmed in Yang Shuo, a small town close to Guilin in southwest China, in an area known

for its picturesque Karst Mountains and breathtaking scenery. Because the commercial was filmed in China, both the settings and cinematographic characteristics represent “Chinese-ness” in a compelling and eloquent way. The background music throughout the commercial is the love song “In Summer” by the Chinese pop singer Cao Fang, released in 2005 on her second album, *Meet Me*. While Hornbach’s German television advertisement invented a nonsensical “Chinese” song, the American commercial features authentic contemporary Chinese pop music.<sup>36</sup> More intriguing is the commercial’s attempt to combine the conventional images of the natural beauty of China with references to Chinese pop culture as well as the notion that the Chinese are eager to adopt Western technology. The ad’s representation of China interweaves idyllic scenery and a close-to-nature lifestyle with the dynamic local market scene and the adoption of modern medical technology. China is thus presented as a unique integration of the traditional and the future-oriented, at once an “other” and now a peer of Western nations. It serves neither as a Hegelian allegory of eternal stagnation, as in the Ricola commercial, nor as the destination of a futuristic cybernetic journey, as in the Cisco ad. The representation of China in the GE commercial emerges from an accumulation of various timeless yet time-representative elements.

Instead of the archetypal old Chinese man seen in the Ricola commercial, the GE advertisement features two young characters—the vendor and the doctor, played by a pair of very amiable, attractive actors—in a love story, clearly appealing to a Western audience. Overall, the presence of Chinese or Asians in advertisements is more common in American television than in German television and they are often portrayed in a more modern and positive light. On the other hand, in the context of American society, Asians or Asian Americans are often cast as the stereotypical “model minority” that is supposed to be highly educated, technology-savvy, and affluent.<sup>37</sup> A recent advertisement for American Honda Motor Co. plays on this stereotype, but it also assigns a new role to the Chinese language that is much different from Hornbach’s fabricated Chinese song and Ricola’s mocking of Chinese pronunciation.

#### CHINESE AS THE LANGUAGE OF THE MODERN WORLD: HONDA REALLY BIG SALES EVENT COMMERCIAL (“CHINESE COUPLE,” 2012)<sup>38</sup>

In addition to promoting its various product lines, Honda, a giant in the automobile industry, and its branches worldwide also launch promotional campaigns for sales events to boost their market performance. In a television advertisement released by the American Honda Motor Company in 2012 to promote Honda’s Really Big Sales Event, Chinese elements, notably the Chinese language itself, play a central role. The advertisement starts with a scene in which two people of Chinese descent are conversing with Ryan, a salesperson, in front of a Honda Accord displayed in a dealer’s showroom. The setting can be considered typical for any Honda dealer in North America. The Chinese couple take turns asking a slew of questions about topics such

as the fuel efficiency and safety features of the car. They both speak very rapidly and display a great deal of preparedness and confidence. They do not appear to be taking any time to evaluate the information offered by Ryan. After Ryan, a white man, has replied to all the questions in an equally rapid and confident manner, the couple turn to each other and start talking in Mandarin, assuming that Ryan as a white person is not able to understand their “code language.” The commercial provides English subtitles for the couple’s conversation:

Husband (H): Don’t act too eager.

Wife (W): I know, but I love it (the car).

H: Don’t let him know that.

W: But it’s so pretty.

H: Play it cool and watch me work my magic.<sup>39</sup>

The couple are depicted as smart and savvy consumers prepared to bargain with the car dealer. Yet, what happens after this conversation conducted in “secret code” is unexpected. When the husband asks Ryan about the promotions the dealer offers, Ryan simply replies, “We have some really good deals going on right now.” “Really?” asks the husband. “Really!” Ryan reassures him, without providing any information on the deals, as if he senses that the couple will eventually purchase the car. Indeed, the husband cannot wait to own the car and he immediately says, “OK, we take it.” Then, to everyone’s surprise, Ryan confirms the deal in fluent Mandarin, “Hao ji le, xian zai wo kai shi zhun bei wen jian” (Fantastic, now I’ll start to prepare the paperwork). The final shot shows the couple looking very surprised and a little embarrassed.

In Honda’s commercial, the young Chinese couple are presented as confident individuals who are not only well-versed in the terminology of automobile technology but also possess the secret code of Mandarin. They take it for granted that a white person will not be able to decipher their communications and thus they aim to seize an advantageous negotiation position by concealing their strong desire to purchase the car. But because Ryan is fluent in Chinese, he is able to penetrate the “Chinese secret” and thus gain the upper hand over “Chinese smartness” when the couple unwittingly reveal their eagerness to purchase the car. Knowing that the couple cannot wait to own the car, Ryan expends minimum effort to inform his customers of discounts or negotiate with them.

Consequently, in the Honda commercial, the Chinese language is ultimately portrayed as an accessible and open system, a shared tool promising access to trade partners and thus business success. The Chinese language is similarly used as an open-access resource in another American television commercial: “Charter Communications: Quick Load,” released in 2013. Throughout the whole 30-second commercial, a cowboy in Texas speaks Chinese Cantonese with a strong southern American

accent and proudly describes how being fluent in Chinese Cantonese enables him to enjoy watching downloaded Chinese Kung Fu movies via Charter's wireless Internet service anywhere and anytime.<sup>40</sup> The American commercials do not use the Chinese language as a symbol of incomprehensibility, as suggested by the pejorative German expression "Fachchinesisch" (literally: "professional Chinese language") referring to obscure technical jargon or gibberish.<sup>41</sup> Compared with the fake Chinese song in Hornbach's advertisement and the pronunciation lesson in the Ricola commercial, the Chinese language in Honda's ad does not serve to depict Chinese exoticism, nor does it provide a platform for mocking the inability of Chinese speakers to pronounce certain German phonemes.

While German television advertisements feature imagery narratives based on an uncritical adoption of a stereotypical image of China and Chinese people created centuries ago, Honda's commercial utilizes contemporary perceptions of Asian Americans as a "model minority." The portrayal of the young Chinese couple and their smooth code-switching between English and Mandarin demonstrates well the conventional image of Asian Americans in American television. Researchers in media studies and ethnic studies have detected similar patterns in the portrayal of Asian American young adults who speak English with no noticeable accent.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, Asian Americans have often been depicted in television commercials as technology-savvy, intelligent, business-oriented, and successful.<sup>43</sup> Thus, in American television, Asian characters appear most often in advertisements for technology products.<sup>44</sup> These racial stereotypes of Asian Americans are evident in the Honda commercial; on the other hand, the narrative twist provided by Ryan's ability to speak fluent Mandarin suggests a revision of an Asian stereotype: it is not Asian racial identity but rather fluency in an Asian language that promises success.

The rendering of Asian Americans as the "model minority" is a modern-day phenomenon in American society. Nonetheless, in the nineteenth century, Chinese immigrants were characterized as "coolie labor" and deviant "Orientals" in the US, and allegedly represented both an economic threat for the white working class and the threat of "racial pollution" due to interracial intimacy, ultimately culminating in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.<sup>45</sup> In the early twentieth century, Asian Americans were often described in association with "yellow peril," a racist and geopolitical trope that America first adopted from Europe and then reinforced through theatrical and cinematic adaptations of its quintessential incarnation: Fu Manchu.<sup>46</sup> The representation of Chinese or Asian Americans as a "model minority" gained traction in American public discourse in the late 1960s and 1970s.<sup>47</sup> This shift in the perception and representation of Asians and Asian Americans can be attributed to Asian immigrants' rejection of derogatory stereotypes through the legal system and through engagement in racial discourse in American society. Already in the 1960s, Asian American playwrights strove to dismiss orientalist and racial stereotypes in their works.

In 1972, protests organized by the Chinese and Japanese immigrant communities in Los Angeles successfully blocked the planned screening of a Fu Manchu series at a local television station.<sup>48</sup>

Compared with their American counterparts, the Chinese and Asian immigrants in German-speaking countries have faced significantly different historical, social-economic, cultural-political, and racial contexts in their host countries. Unlike American society that merely had adopted the European perception of China before its first immense encounter with Chinese immigrants in the nineteenth century, Germany has a much longer “tradition” of production and reproduction of Chinese stereotypes that have been perpetuated over the past centuries. Efforts to overcome this orientalist tradition may take another few centuries.

## Conclusion

The images of China and the stereotypes of Chinese people reflected in the German television advertisements discussed here reveal how China is perceived in German media culture and society as both a concrete nation-state and a cultural emblem. The German imagination and representation of China are still unable to distance themselves from the traditional European prejudice against China dating back to the nineteenth century and beyond. China and Chinese culture in all the five advertisements targeting German consumers are treated, without exception, as an epitome of the exotic and incomprehensible quintessence of unapproachable otherness, and as an incarnation of the eternal past. As a matter of fact, what German television’s portrayal of China as stagnant really signifies is German society’s torpid acceptance of the centuries-old conventional European perception of East Asia.

On the other side of the Atlantic, American media appears to be more ready to adopt a dichotomous view of modern China. In all the eleven American television advertisements, China is portrayed as a contemporary conversation partner, a strategically important peer that must embrace modern technology and globalized consumerism—a central element in the modern Western socioeconomic value system—if it is not to be excluded from the international arena of prosperity and progress. On the other hand, subtle stereotypes still prevail in the media representation of China and Chinese immigrants in the United States.

## Notes

1. Sven Hansen, “Chinesen gegen westliche Presse,” *taz*, April 20, 2008, <http://www.taz.de/15183339/>.
2. Fengbo Wang, “Entlassung von ‘unangepassten’ Redakteuren. Ideologische Instrumentalisierung der China-Redaktion bei der Deutschen Welle,” *Neue Rheinisch Zeitung* (NRhZ-Online), April 1, 2011, <http://www.nrhz.de/flyer/beitrag.php?id=16357>. See also: Hans Leyendecker, “Deutsche Welle. China-Berichterstattung. Zwieback für den Tiger,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, March 25, 2009, 15.

3. Such as “Die China-Berichterstattung in den deutschen Medien” published by the Heinrich-Böll Foundation, “Deutschland und China. Wahrnehmung und Realität” sponsored by Huawei, and “China im Spiegel der deutschen Gesellschaft. Images, Einstellungen und Erwartungen in Wirtschaft, Wissenschaft und Kultur” sponsored by Bonner Akademie für Forschung und Lehre praktischer Politik (BAPP) GmbH.
4. Wanhsiu Sunny Tsai, “Family Man in Advertising? A Content Analysis of Male Domesticity and Fatherhood in Taiwanese Commercials,” *Asian Journal of Communication* 20, no. 4 (2010): 423.
5. Kim Sheehan, *Controversies in Contemporary Advertising* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 76. Also see Marieke de Mooij, *Global Marketing and Advertising: Understanding Cultural Paradoxes* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 62; and Katherine Toland Frith and Barbara Mueller, *Advertising and Societies: Global Issues* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 93.
6. Graeme Turner, “Television and Cultural Studies,” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 4 (2001): 372. See also Horace Newcomb and Paul Hirsch, “Television as a Cultural Forum,” *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 8 (1983): 571.
7. Turner, “Television and Cultural Studies,” 372.
8. To cite a few exemplary studies: Dana E. Mastro and Susannah R. Stern, “Representations of Race in Television Commercials: A Content Analysis of Prime-Time Advertising,” *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 47, no. 4 (2003): 638–647; Charles R. Taylor and Barbara B. Stern, “Asian-Americans: Television Advertising and the ‘Model Minority’ Stereotype,” *Journal of Advertising* 26, no. 2 (1997): 47–61; Julia M. Bristol, Renee Gravois Lee, and Michelle R. Hunt, “Race and Ideology: African-American Images in Television Advertising,” *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 14, no. 1 (1995): 48–59.
9. Recent studies include Jörg Matthes, Karoline Adam, and Michael Prieler, “Gender-Role Portrayals in Television Advertising across the Globe,” *Sex Roles* 75, no. 7–8 (2016): 314–327; Michael Prieler, “Gender Stereotypes in Spanish- and English-Language Television Advertisements in the United States,” *Mass Communication and Society* 19, no. 3 (2016): 275–300.
10. See, for example, Hong Cheng and John Schweitzer, “Cultural Values Reflected in Chinese and U.S. Television Commercials,” *Journal of Advertising Research* 36, no. 3 (1996): 27–45; Bongjin Cho, Up Kwon, James W. Gentry, Sunkyu Jun, and Fredric Kropp, “Cultural Values Reflected in Theme and Execution: A Comparative Study of U.S. and Korean Television Commercials,” *Journal of Advertising* 28, no. 4 (1999): 59–73.
11. To name just a few notable examples for studies on racial or national stereotypes and their representations in German cinema: Qinna Shen, “Factories on the Magic Carpet: Heimat, Globalization, and the ‘Yellow Peril’ in ‘Die Chinesen Kommen’ and ‘Losers and Winners,’” in *Imagining Germany Imagining Asia: Essays in Asian-German Studies*, ed. Veronika Fuechtner and Mary Rhiel (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013), 64–86. And: Sabine Hake and Barbara C. Mennel, eds., *Turkish German Cinema in the New Millennium: Sites, Sounds, and Screens* (New York: Beghahn, 2014); Sabine Hake, “Mapping the Native Body: On Africa and the Colonial Film in the Third Reich,” in *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and Its Legacies*, ed. Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox, and Susanne Zantop (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 178–184; Tobias Nagl, *Die unheimliche Maschine. Rasse und Repräsentation im Weimarer Kino* (Munich: text + kritik, 2009). Research on the stereotypical representations of racial and national identities in German television is extremely underdeveloped, to name one example: Ays Çaçıl, “Mediascapes, Advertisement Industries and Cosmopolitan Transformations: German Turks in Germany,” *New German Critique: An Interdisciplinary Journal of German Studies* 92, no. 2 (2004): 39–61.
12. I have had the opportunity to offer an advanced-level German undergraduate course entitled “China aus deutscher Sicht” (China from the German point of view) since 2014 in which analysis of the images of China in German and US media and television commercials serves as an essential teaching topic.

13. Databases that I accessed include Coloribus.com, AdForum Creative Library, Ads of the World, i-Spot.tv, Admeira.ch, and Historisches Werbefunkarchiv (HWA).
14. "Hornbach—Chinesischer Garten—Werbung," YouTube video, 0:30, posted by "TVWerbung," April 20, 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMVa2Nh-P3Q>.
15. "Spot-Check: Hornbach und Heimat ermuntern zur Selbstverwirklichung," *Horizont Online*, February 26, 2008, <http://www.horizont.net/agenturen/nachrichten/-Spot-Check-Hornbach-und-Heimat-ermuntern-zur-Selbstverwirklichung-74846>.
16. "Heimat und Hornbach setzen Frühjahrs-Kampagne fort," *Kress News*, April 22, 2008, <https://kress.de/news/detail/beitrag/91323-heimat-und-hornbach-setzen-fruehjahrs-kampagne-fort.html>.
17. There exist numerous studies on the reception of China by the European intellectuals from the era of enlightenment to the nineteenth century, such as Willy Richard Berger, *China-Bild und China-Mode im Europa der Aufklärung* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1990); and Bettina Brandt and Daniel Purdy, eds., *China in the German Enlightenment* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016).
18. Such as Döblin's novel *Die drei Sprünge des Wang-lun* (1916), Brecht's play *Turandot* oder *Der Kongreß der Weißwäscher* (1954), Volker Braun's *Großer Frieden* (1976), to name just a few examples.
19. Another example for the lack of reference to contemporary China in German television commercials can be found in an advertisement made for OBI GmbH & Co., another major Germany company offering home improvement and gardening products, similar to The Home Depot in the US. In an advertisement featuring the Great Wall of China broadcast in 2007, the Great Wall of China was called an inconceivably long and inconceivably stupid wall ("unvorstellbare dumme Mauer"), as it could have earned 5% discount had it been built with OBI Biber Bonus Card. See: "Obi Werbespot Chinesische Mauer," YouTube video, 0:30, posted by "Golfprofi187," September 27, 2007, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VB-4V6yCLhM>.
20. Carola Richter and Sebastain Gebauer, "The Portrayal of China in the German Media," <https://www.boell.de/en/2011/06/14/portrayal-china-german-media>. For the full report in German, see *Die China-Berichterstattung in den deutschen Medien. Eine Studie von Carola Richter und Sebastian Gebauer. Mit Beiträgen von Thomas Heberer und Kai Hafez* (Berlin: Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, 2010), <https://www.boell.de/de/content/die-china-berichterstattung-den-deutschen-medien>.
21. "Ricola—Wer hat's erfunden (China)," YouTube video, 0:25, posted by "Ricola," October 17, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkZ1zklbTY0>.
22. "TV-Spots," Ricola.com, <http://www.ricola.com/de-de/Spiel---Spaß/TV-Spots>.
23. "TV-Spots," my translation.
24. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* vol. 9, ed. Eduard Gans (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1837), 130–131. English translation cited from *The History of Philosophy*, trans. John Sibree, (New York: Colonial, 1899), 131.
25. *Meyers Großes Konversations-Lexikon*, 6th ed., 1903, s.v. "China"; and *Brockhaus' Konversations-Lexikon*, 14th ed., 1908, s.v. "China." Also see Weijia Li, *China und China-Erfahrung in Leben und Werk von Anna Seghers* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2010), 129.
26. "Lowe Deutschland inszeniert Einen Tag für KNORR Fix," YouTube video, 0:23, posted by "Besserwerberlog," May 5, 2010, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TB\\_maucjw3U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TB_maucjw3U).
27. Besides "Wok-Pfanne China Town," the package of another Knorr's product "Gebratene Nudeln: Typisch Asiatisch" (Fried noodles: typical Asian style) also used to feature a supposedly Asian character with a conical hat and slanted eyes.
28. In October 2016, Günther Oettinger, Germany's EU Commissioner, drew worldwide media attention after he made the notorious remark about Chinese people as "slant eyes" ("Schlitzaugen") in a speech given to 200 invited business and industry leaders. See: Matthew Karnitschnig, "Günther Oettinger defends calling Chinese 'slant eyes,'" *Politico*, October 30, 2016, <https://www.politico.eu/article/gunther-oettinger-defends-calling-chinese-slant-eyes/>; and Samuel Osborne,

- "EU commissioner describes Chinese people as 'slit eyed' and jokes about 'compulsory gay marriage,'" *Independent*, October 30, 2016, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/eu-commissioner-gunther-oettinger-german-chinese-gay-marriage-schlitzaugen-slit-eyed-a7387706.html>.
29. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, vol. 3 (Riga: Hartknoch, 1784), 17. English translation cited from *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, trans. T. Churchill (New York: Bergman, 1966), 296.
  30. "Ellen Page Cisco Advertising Field Trip," YouTube video, 0:30, posted by "Official5Joey5Brooks," December 29, 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHFUwFgu5w4>.
  31. "Virtual Field Trips: Bring the World Into the Classroom," [http://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en\\_us/solutions/industries/docs/gov/classroomconnect120810VirtualFieldTrips.pdf](http://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en_us/solutions/industries/docs/gov/classroomconnect120810VirtualFieldTrips.pdf).
  32. "Ellen is doing commercials for Cisco," [http://www.ellenpage.org/inc/newsscript\\_print.php?id\\_print=200](http://www.ellenpage.org/inc/newsscript_print.php?id_print=200).
  33. "Oreo—Chinese Train," *AdForum Creative Library*, 0:29, <https://www.adforum.com/creative-work/ad/player/12657721/chinese-train/oreo>.
  34. Research shows that, although a particular industry has a great influence on advertising strategies, in reality, creative directors of advertising agencies do not always take into consideration the distinction between products and service. See: K. Mortimer, "Services advertising: the agency viewpoint," *Journal of Services Marketing* 15, no. 2 (2001): 139.
  35. "GE Healthcare Re-imagined Commercial: Love Story—China," YouTube video, 0:47, posted by "AMR TV," April 14, 2011, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pt69g72\\_MWU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pt69g72_MWU).
  36. Another example for using Chinese cotemporary songs in American commercial, also a rare and extreme example, is "UPS—China" broadcast in 2010. Produced by Ogilvy & Mather in New York, the commercial features UPS delivery scenes in multiple countries and regions around the world while a Chinese pop song serves as the background music throughout the whole commercial. See: "UPS—China," *AdForum Creative Library*, 0:30, <https://www.adforum.com/creative-work/ad/player/34460985/china/ups>.
  37. Paek Hye Jin and Shah Hemant, "Racial Ideology, Model Minorities, and the 'Not-So-Silent Partner': Stereotyping of Asian Americans in U.S. Magazine Advertising," *The Howard Journal of Communications* 14, no. 4 (2003): 227.
  38. "Honda Commercial—Chinese Couple," YouTube video, 0:23, posted by "jason lee," March 16, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FikAAB7VA4>.
  39. "Honda Commercial—Chinese Couple."
  40. For example, the German company OBI released an advertisement in 1994, called "OBI Fachchinesisch," that ridicules its competitors whose customer services were portrayed as inaccessible as they were speaking "Fachchinesisch." This advertisement can be found at the Coloribus Database: <https://www.coloribus.com/adsarchive/tv-commercials/charter-communications-quick-load-18194555/>.
  41. This advertisement can be retrieved from OBI's own "TV-Spot-Archiv": [http://www.obicom.de/company/de/Presse\\_und\\_Neues/Downloads/TV-Spot-Archiv/index.html](http://www.obicom.de/company/de/Presse_und_Neues/Downloads/TV-Spot-Archiv/index.html).
  42. Dana E. Mastro and Susannah R. Stern, "Representations of Race in Television Commercials: A Content Analysis of Prime-Time Advertising," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 47, no. 4 (2003): 644.
  43. Charles R. Taylor and Barbara B. Stern, "Asian-Americans: Television Advertising and the 'Model Minority' Stereotype," *Journal of Advertising* 26, no. 2 (1997): 49. See also Haseeb Shabbir, A. Hyman, Michael Reast, and R. Palihawadana, "Deconstructing Subtle Racist Imagery in Television Ads," *Journal of Business Ethics* 123, no. 3 (2014): 424.
  44. Mastro and Stern, "Representations of Race," 642.
  45. Robert G. Lee, *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 9–10.

46. One of the earliest writings on the notion of yellow peril, the British author M.P. Shiel wrote in his book entitled *The Yellow Danger*: “The yellow conquest meant, naturally, that wherever it passed, the very memory of the white races it encountered would disappear for ever.” M.P. Shiel, *The Yellow Danger, 2nd ed.*, (London: Richards, 1898), 256.
47. Lee, *Orientalism*, 10.
48. Ruth Mayer, *Serial Fu Manchu: The Chinese Supervillain and the Spread of Yellow Peril Ideology* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013), 165.