

**Everyday's Fantasy Life: The Shaping of Real Identities through the Reflection of an Unreal World**

Trying to trace the young Chinese generation's very own definition of identity shaped by both, western and traditional influences, I decided to choose the "microcosm" of advertising as research object. If we consider TV-advertising a kind of model-world, we are able to gain insights into topics that concern people of certain groups at given times. Although artificially constructed, it is precisely such an exaggerated demonstration which makes the reality reflected in it so clear. An analysis of one recent Coca-Cola ad series produced for the Chinese market reveals the latest trends among Chinese youngsters: apart from the common wish to become a star - a fact which Coca-Cola utilizes by employing six Chinese celebrities as "leading force" - more subtle desires can be detected as well. The slogan "girls make the first move" is a central theme in all the series' sequences. As it elaborates on the gender-role allocation from a new perspective the striking display of (female) self-confidence attracts attention. Moreover, the deliberate use of girls-power also questions other firmly established traditional Chinese patterns of relationship in a humorous way: for example, blind submission to power and pressure, be that coming from family or society.

Interestingly enough, in order to popularise these topics which are rather modern to Chinese society and which centre around the promotion of a Western product, an ancient and very Chinese genre was chosen to provide the basis: Knights-errant fiction. This tension between the strongholds of tradition and the openness for global influences reflects exactly the area of conflict to which the Chinese "generation Y" is constantly exposed. Therefore, advertising can be a highly complex field for social studies. It reflects the state of "wishful thinking" which again also allows to draw conclusions as to the aspired and ideal state of being and the values associated to it.