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Chan, Sally (2024) An investigation of martial arts tropes in British advertising from the 1960s-1990s: issues of aesthetics and authenticity in action. Doctoral thesis, University of West London.

<https://doi.org/10.36828/thesis/14392>

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**AN INVESTIGATION OF MARTIAL  
ARTS TROPES IN BRITISH ADVERTISING FROM THE 1960s-1990s:  
ISSUES OF AESTHETICS AND AUTHENTICITY IN ACTION**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the University of West London  
for the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy

December 2024

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this thesis is to evaluate how martial arts tropes have been utilised in historical British advertising from the 1960s to the 1990s.

The research identifies key themes relating to how martial arts are deployed as a creative means of promoting brands within the context of race relations in Britain. Race and media representational discourse are considered in the context of racial/colonial ideologies surrounding the Chinese in Britain, thereby extending the study to cultural production. For example, modern television commercials featuring a mixed Chinese/non-Chinese cast will be discussed in the context of cultural capitalism. As such this research also contributes to debates surrounding martial arts aesthetics as indicators of cultural authenticity and appropriation. By focusing on how this population has been depicted in film and television as a starting point for the inquiry, it is hoped that further understanding of martial arts aesthetics and authenticity in martial arts depictions or the representational commodification of martial arts will fuel interest in future research in this area.

The study utilises an interdisciplinary approach whereby ethical visual representational frameworks in advertising and martial arts aesthetics in film and television are used to understand the degree of exoticisation and exclusion of the Chinese during the period 1960s-1990s. In the case of advertising, both iconic and racialised imageries that were used to depict martial arts aesthetics have been considered as part of this study.

Through the paradigm of post-structuralist hermeneutics, and following Foucauldian ideology, I have utilised a critical visual analysis of TV and print advertisements, as well as of racial and martial arts discourse in documentaries and published media, to

identify cases of martial arts tropes that either authenticate, mirror, or caricature the Chinese as 'the Other'. These range from 'yellow face' with its negative connotations to 'yellow mask' with its nationalist Chinese references. Case studies of brands that have utilised a martial arts aesthetic, and its commodification by brands in their messages, form the basis of my analysis.

This thesis contributes to critical debates surrounding the use of martial arts representations in British advertising through its cultural and colonial history, focusing on how the Chinese as a silent minority have been mis- or un- represented or constructed in early advertising. The study also maps the use of martial arts aesthetics as a means by which cultural production and commodification are used in advertising.

The foundation of the study is discussed in this thesis, with Chapter 1 providing the rationale and aims of the study, and the contextual background to Britain's relationship with the Far East, and thereby Chinese and martial arts portrayals on-screen. Chapter 2 provides the theoretical underpinning for the study, building on critical race and media studies by focusing on concepts developed with respect to the visual representation, commodification and authentication of martial arts and recurrent tropes in advertising. Detailed methodological considerations for the study are discussed in Chapter 3 before this thesis presents a selection of case studies as evidence of advertising during the 1960s and 1970s in Chapter 4, and 1980s and 1990s in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 aligns the findings from the preceding evidence chapters to support the proposed authenticated aesthetics in advertising framework. Chapter 7 concludes the thesis with theoretical and practical implications for the advertising profession or those in the business of representational practices.



## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my parents. My father, Chan Lam Kwei, was a former soldier in the Royal Army Service Corps regiment in Hong Kong who migrated to England in the 1950s. My mother, Tsang Ah Kiu was a formidable Hakka woman who encouraged me to follow my passion. I hope I did you proud.

## **Acknowledgements**

I am indebted to my supervisors, Prof Emily Caston and Prof Maddie Ohl, for supporting me through this long journey of discovery. Thanks are also due to Maria Pennells at UWL's Graduate School for keeping things in order; Steve Foxon (Curator at the British Film Institute National Archive), and Alistair Moir (Deputy Director at the History of Advertising Trust) for putting up with my many visit requests.

My gratitude also goes to martial arts instructors (past and present) who have helped inform my knowledge of the different forms of martial arts: Senseis Denis Casey, Paul Lomax and Helen Lomax (Shito Ryu Shukokai Karate); Master Chen Deqing (Jinlong Chinese Martial Arts Academy); Master Khalid Iqbal (AMA Taekwondo); and Sensei Tim Westerman (Renshinkai Shotokan Karate).

Finally, the construction of this thesis would not have been possible without the support of my family. My understanding husband, Sean, and my son Ethan who kindly let me follow my dream. My siblings, Dr Chris Chan, Suzanne Chan and Dr Sui Mee Michelle Chan who have each helped me in their own way. My peers on the Rowena Murray Writing Group who provided much needed company in the early hours.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Background and rationale**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter introduces the background and rationale for the study, which is the first to investigate the meaning construction of martial arts representation in early British advertising, focusing on the Chinese as a ‘silent’ minority. The chapter firstly considers Britain’s relationship with the Far East. Secondly, different forms of martial arts representations in film and television are introduced. Thirdly, martial arts tropes that have existed in mainstream film and television, and their influence on martial arts’ visual aesthetics and discourse over four decades from the 1960s to the 1990s, are discussed. Fourthly, the authenticity of martial arts as a form of visual representation of the British Chinese is highlighted, before recurring martial arts representational imageries and discourse as forms of the authentication and commodification of popular culture are discussed. Finally, the research aims and questions formulated for this investigation are proposed, alongside an indication of the value of the study, before the chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of the thesis. The study shows that the popularisation of martial arts tropes in films and television is linked to its increasing use as a creative theme in advertising production.

This study builds on a paper that the author has published in the area of martial arts tropes in British advertising entitled ‘Hai Karate and Kung Fuey’ (Chan et al., 2020).

#### **Britain’s relationship with the Orient**



This thesis concerns racialised constructions resulting from cultural production and processes within advertising. It maps the adoption of martial arts as a creative advertising theme adopted by key advertising agencies and producers over four decades. As the third largest ethnic minority community in the UK, this study seeks to understand those stereotypical representations of the Chinese in Britain arising from popularised martial arts depictions in film and television. It is therefore prudent to provide a contextual background, including the historical setting and relationship that Britain has had with, and its attitude towards, the 'Far East', the 'Orient', or 'Far East Asia' – particularly Hong Kong, China and Japan. Unlike today's multicultural Britain, during the 1950s -1980s, past studies have shown that these groups were prominent (Chan, 1997, 2002; Benton and Gomez, 2007). This is crucial to understanding how Britain's changing perceptions of these countries have informed Western notions of Sinophobia and Japanophilia that underpin the 1960s –1990s period analysed within this thesis.

Despite the strong colonial links between Britain and the Far East, it must be noted that references to the 'Chinese in Britain' have loaded meanings in terms of racialised categorisations. Chinese migrants during the 1950s and 1960s belonged to the Cantonese and Hakka dialect groups from Hong Kong (Thorpe and Yeh, 2018). During the 1970s and 1980s Malaysian, Singaporean and Vietnamese Chinese migrants followed. Account must also be made of Japanese migration. 'Orientals' became a convenient way to categorise these different ethnicities into one category (Thorpe and Yeh, 2018). However, this blurring of boundaries in the early period is explained by trading relationships between Britain and the Far East.

## **From Chinoiserie to Japanning to Yellow Peril**

Britain's initial interest in China was fuelled by the Western craze for **chinoiserie**, initiated by Italian merchant Marco Polo's success in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Price, 2019). Although the Portuguese were the first Europeans to trade with China, Macau<sup>1</sup> was established in 1557 to facilitate European trade with China and Japan (Price, 2019). British success is attributed to the East India Company in 1637 with regular trading between China and Britain fully operationalised in the 1670s. European Jesuit missionaries had already established a presence in South China to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, science, and culture in the 1500s, much to the consternation of the Chinese imperial court. As trade grew, Chinese productions of art, porcelain and teas were targeted specifically at the European market. Although chinoiserie refers to artefacts made in China, British consumers could not distinguish between Chinese and Japanese aesthetics – as highlighted above, these commodities were collectively known as 'Oriental'. Not only that, but the strength of China-Britain trade relations in 1834 fuelled the popularity of 'Japanning', where aesthetics from China, Japan and India were imitated by art and design movements of the time (Dawson, 1967). These differing terminologies highlight the 'distorted impressions of China' held by colonisers (Dawson, 1967, p.111), that contributed to the 1960s stereotypes of Chinese laundrymen and restaurateurs and their 'slant eyes, yellow skin, pigtailed, bound feet, chopsticks, bird's nest soup' (Dawson, 1967, p.164). This was soon replaced with modern images of communist China.

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<sup>1</sup> Macau is a city in the Pearl River delta in southeast China.

Prior to the emergence of Communism in 1949, the British Empire played a key role in influencing China's relationship with the outside world with respect to two Opium Wars that shaped the Qing dynasty in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first Opium War (1839-1842) led to the Treaty of Nanjing where Hong Kong was ceded to the British, with trade expanded from Canton to Shanghai, amongst others. The second Opium War (1856-1860), and resultant 1860 Treaty of Beijing, opened China to foreign diplomats and Christian missionaries, as well as legalising opium imports and coolie trade (Lovell, 2012).

As a commodity, opium that was grown in India was traded by British merchants in exchange for Chinese silks, teas, and ceramics. By 1880, China became the world's biggest opium market – opium was initially used as medicine but was frequently desired as a recreational drug. The association of the Chinese with opium therefore stretches as far back as the 1840s, with opium dens and gambling vices identifiable as cultural aesthetics by Europeans.

With China's morality at stake, Christian missionaries in China provided a haven for opium addicts, whilst British anti-opium lobbyists raised concerns about the trade in 1867 (Lovell, 2012). These missionaries were the subjects of a documentary in 1959, where 'The Mission to Seafarers' was founded in 1856 by the Reverend John Ashley. Their role was to provide support to the community of Chinese seamen in London's docklands who first came to London in the 17<sup>th</sup> century aboard the East India Company (East Sixteen, 1959).

In addition, by 1900 the enforced legalisation of the coolie trade resulted in the emigration of Chinese workers to Australia, British Columbia, New Zealand, and Britain. Christiansen and Xiuqing (1999) support this, arguing that the migration of South Chinese seafaring men to Europe through shipping resulted in populations of overseas Chinese settling in London and Liverpool during the Second World War. The first ever Chinese quarter in Britain was Shadwell in East London (Benton and Gomez, 2007). Benton and Gomez (2007) argue that the 'racist exclusion' that limited the mobility of early Chinese settlers explained the growth of Chinatown – rather than the other commonly held view of their natural propensity to organise themselves abroad. Chan (1997) provides a discussion of further acts and legislation affecting the growth of Chinese migrant communities.

The term 'Yellow Peril' is believed to originate from Germany in 1898, with its use widespread by 1900 as Western fears of Oriental invasion rose. China and Japan remained uncolonized by Europe at the turn of the century, aggravated by Japan's power on the global stage, increasing Chinese migration abroad, and the 1900 Boxer Rebellion<sup>2</sup> (Bright, 2017). Aside from coloniser anxieties, 'Yellow Peril' is also a consequence of 'mercantile Sinophobia', about China's literary significance, as well as threat to Anglo-Saxon ideals (Lovell, 2012, p.268). It is interesting to note that science and policies enforced the concept of 'Othering'. For example, taxonomist Carl Linnaeus described the Chinese as 'homo-monstrous' in 1758. The naturalist Charles Darwin and his 'Origin of the Species' in 1859 described the inferiority of the colonised, and in 1911, the Home Office reported on 'the Chinese in England: A

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<sup>2</sup> Boxer Rebellion refers to organised uprising in China against foreigners in the 1900s

Growing National Problem'. These examples demonstrate the negative connotations that the coloniser had on the colonised.

### **Early mediatised coverage**

In addition to the above, British journalism and mediatised content sensationalised Chinese settlers further. Examples include East London news coverage of the 'terrors of opium dens' in 1892; stereotypical racial references (eyes, teeth, pigtailed) in children's comics; and the inaccurate claim that foreigners were massacred during the Boxer rebellion (Lovell, 2012; Bright, 2017). Bright (2017) discusses how pigtailed were a means of objectifying China and Chinese people through the commodification of differences. She also refers to the role of media, where for example between 1905 and 1906 weekly newspaper reports of the Chinese and 'Chinese Outrage' were common in British and South African newspapers and spread globally via Reuters.

By 1910, Yellow Peril fictions, typified by Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu, encapsulated Sinophobic depictions of the Chinese as evil, unscrupulous, cruel, cunning, arrogant and foreigner hating –distorted and ubiquitous representations of the Chinese that reinforced Western fears about China further (Lovell, 2012). The 1920s Limehouse area in London was mediatised in film. In *Wonderful London* (1924), Harry Parkinson and Frank Miller directed a series of travelogues showcasing the early days of multicultural Britain. In its *Cosmopolitan London* episode, the 'dim and mysterious' district of Limehouse, and its Chinese, Asian and African immigrant seaman inhabitants, were captured in a silent film made for a white audience. The film reveals mainstream suspicions about the new Londoners with its focus on opium-smoking in Chinatown:

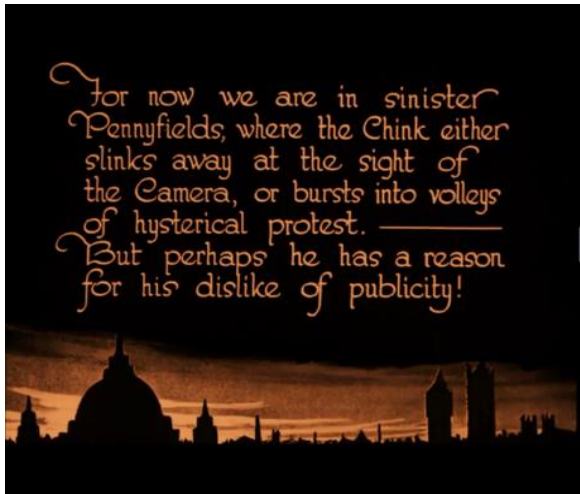


Fig. 1. Still from Miller and Parkinson, 1924, Cosmopolitan London (8:04)

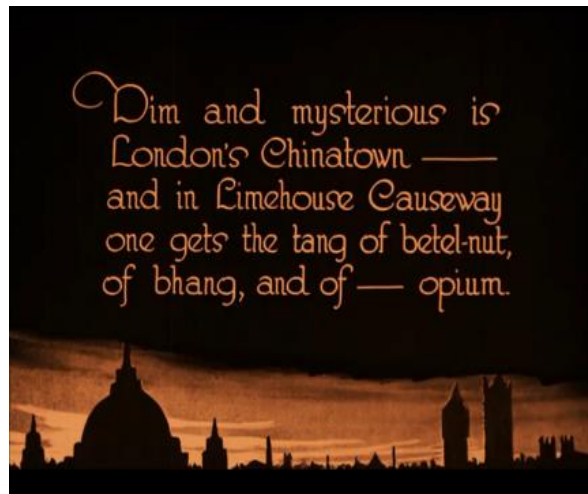


Fig. 2. Still from Miller and Parkinson 1924 Cosmopolitan London (8:25)



Fig. 3. Still from Miller and Parkinson, 1924, Cosmopolitan London (8:38)



Fig. 4. Still from Miller and Parkinson, 1924 Cosmopolitan London (9:31)

Likewise, Ogilvy and Mather's guard book of press advertisements for Pagoda Oranges from the early 1930s were fronted by a bespectacled, rotund Fu Manchu animated character. Targeted at grocery retail buyers, the 'welly welly good' stock of oranges were sourced from 'Empire, Groves and Sunny Spain'.

Clearly, representations went beyond the visual in terms of how Chinese people appeared to mainstream audiences, but in terms of their ability to speak perfect English. Now recognised as rhotacism, many of the caricatures of Chinese people involved this inability to pronounce the letter 'R':

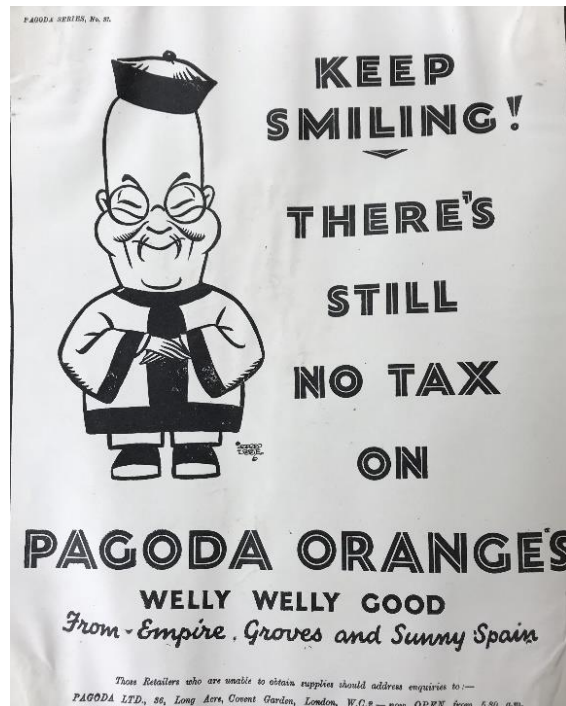


Fig.5. Pagoda Ltd print advertisement 1930-31.  
Ogilvy and Mather Ltd.  
(Source: History of Advertising Trust HAT).

## Japan – a non-Western Empire

Since this study is concerned with the appropriation of Chinese and Japanese martial arts for mediatised consumption, it is clear that Britain's colonial relationship with 'Orientals' extends beyond China to the influence of Japanese imperialist power in China, the Far East and beyond. Having avoided Western colonisation altogether, the situation in Japan differed to China markedly. As detailed above, Hong Kong was a British colony and dependent territory of the British Empire from 1841 to 1997, but

the Pacific War also led to Hong Kong's occupation by the Japanese Empire from 1941 to 1945.

Japan, as a colonial empire, is often described as only non-Western empire of modern times (Peattie and Myers, 2020). It has successfully avoided Western 'colonial subjugation' resulting from careful monitoring of both European colonial efforts in China and the British occupation of Hong Kong during the first Opium War (1839-1842) (Peattie, 1989; Taylor, 2013).

It is also noteworthy that Japanese culture was influenced by Korean and Chinese refugees fleeing from the regimes of the Qin and Han dynasties (221 BCE–9 CE).

Japan was also a successful coloniser of the natives of northern Japan, the Ainu (Taylor, 2013). In 1879, Japan took over the Okinawa islands and sought to imperialise the Okinawans by replacing their cultures with Japanese traditions.

Japan was successful in the First Sino Japanese War (1894–95), Russo-Japanese War (1904–5) and the second Sino-Japanese War (1937–45) which led to the colonisation of Korea in 1910, German Micronesia in 1914, and Manchuria in 1931.

Japan's initial success in the Pacific War would also see Hong Kong, Indonesia, Singapore, and British Malaya come under Japanese rule.

## **Background to Chinese in Britain**

As this study deals specifically with the Chinese community in Britain, some contextual background to their early migration and settlement patterns are required. Despite the first records of Chinese people in Britain dating as far back as the 1600s and given their colonial links with the British Empire highlighted above, they remain largely invisible to the mainstream population compared to other minority communities. This is surprising given that their experiences of racism and discrimination continue unabated despite increasing dialogue surrounding 'diversity'



and 'whitewashing' in recent years (Benton and Gomez, 2007; Price, 2019). A possible explanation comes from their association with a 'hidden minority mentality', often said to be linked to the dispersal of the Chinese community and their reluctance to speak out about facing discrimination, is sometimes contrasted with their American 'model minority' cousins (Parker, 1995; Yeh, 2000). They lacked critical mass or political leadership, tending to keep to themselves (Benton and Gomez, 2007 p.169), resulting in a 'disunited' and invisible silent community due to their self-sufficiency and insularity when compared to other ethnic minority groups (Chan, Cole and Bowpitt, 2007). Patterns of migration of the first generation to Britain, and their subsequent entrepreneurial pursuits, led to catering enclaves in every town and city in Britain, and the creation of Chinatowns built around clan associations. Over time, second generation Chinese began to seek out mainstream occupations. These push-and-pull factors for catering businesses explain the tendency towards a highly dispersed pattern of settlement in Britain, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s (Watson, 1977; Baker, 1994), with consequences for how the community is perceived by the mainstream population and media (Chan, 1997).

The 2011 and 2021 censuses showed the Chinese population increasing from 400,000 people, representing 0.7 per cent of the total UK population, to 502,216, or 0.8 per cent (Census, 2011, 2021). The bulk of studies focus on issues of cultural identity (Parker, 1995; Song, 1999), gender-based portrayals in magazine advertising (Chan and Cheng, 2012), Chinese contributions to Hollywood feature films (Shu, 2003; Chan, 2009), with some references to martial arts discourse (Farrer and Whalen-Bridge, 2011; Bowman, 2013). From an advertising perspective, beyond film studies, limited research focuses on martial arts as a form of the depiction of the

Chinese in popular media, despite the prominence of martial arts in discourse about films (Desser, 2000; Marchetti, 2014). The consequential use of martial arts representation in constructing meaningful messages for brands remains largely unexplored. A gap exists in how martial arts representations of the Chinese in advertising are constructed, given this disconnect with the community's insularity and invisibility. This study will aid researchers in understanding the historical mapping of racialised constructions and the role the advertising industry has played in ethical representations.

The historical nature of this study requires clarification as to the ethnicity of the Chinese population, given their heterogeneity worldwide. This study explores advertising as it relates to Chinese migrants from the former British colony of Hong Kong who settled in Britain from the 1950s onwards, which parallels the onset of television advertising and a changing media landscape in Britain. The analysis of this thesis concerns colonial representations of the Chinese from the 1960s-1990s (see Chapters 4 and 5). This period also reflects demand by the British public for 'exotic cuisines fuelled (by) the burgeoning expansion of Chinese catering businesses (restaurants and takeaways) in Britain during the 1960s and 1980s' (Chan et al., 2020, p.4). The period of analysis, from the 1960s to the 1990s, perfectly encapsulates the time period during which those involved in advertising production were adopting more creative and innovative forms of advertising, with martial arts themes becoming more mainstream over these four decades.

The fact remains that one of the common stereotypes of the Chinese, as 'high-kicking chop-socky martial artists', can be found in all forms of media, including advertising (Bowman, 2020). This study, therefore, contributes to knowledge by providing context to how this community has been portrayed in film and television

during the 1960s heyday (when British advertising was gaining recognition for its level of creativity) to understand how martial arts tropes in advertising came to represent this silent minority. It deals with questions of how martial arts representation is constructed in popular media such as film and television and discusses how authenticity is constructed for one of the largest and fastest-growing ethnic minority groups in Britain. This study, therefore, identifies the iconographical representation of martial arts to authenticate aspects of its imagery before evaluating a range of television (and print) advertisements within the context of how Britain's view of 'the Other' has been formed. Consideration is given to:

- aspects of the art direction (visual aesthetics) and copy (texts) in martial arts advertising that are deemed stereotypical
- changing martial arts tropes over four decades
- aspects of martial arts tropes that constitute authenticity in representations
- lessons from historical advertising that features martial arts stereotypes.JS

In addition, the racial and ethnic makeup of the actors or models featured in advertising is reflective of the recent revival in representational research that addresses authenticity and constructions of race. As well as using martial arts tropes archives to understand racialised stereotypes in advertising, the study provides an opportunity to understand the evolution of ethical stances as adopted by the advertising industry over four decades. The next section considers the changing representations of the Chinese on-screen, with an emphasis on Britain.

### **Chinese on screen: From 'yellow face' to 'yellow mask' and 'white washing'**

The 1970s was an era during which race politics gripped Britain. Enoch Powell's 1968 'Rivers of Blood' speech (as a response to the 1948 British Nationality Act that afforded commonwealth minorities British citizenship) ignited racial tensions as immigration to Britain from the Commonwealth countries started to rise (Tomlinson, 2018). The Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962 (previously introduced to limit immigration) provided British citizenship, with the Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968 offering protection from discrimination. The Race Relations Act 1976 prohibited racial discrimination based on colour, nationality, ethnic and national origins (Crown, Bray and Earle, 2010). Race relations, therefore, played a key role in how mainstream media portrayed immigrants in the 1970s.

Concerns about the 'whiteness' and negative portrayals of immigrants on British television programmes during the 1960s and 1970s led to initiatives - such as BBC conferences in 1965 - to deal with racial tensions or conflicts relating to Afro-Caribbean and Asian immigrants, as well as fostering integration and promoting a better representation of immigrants (Waters, 2015). The BFI (British Film Institute) 'Race and the Sitcom' provides a historic potted history of British televisual depictions of race from the 1960s, where stereotypes, racist attitudes, 'browning up' white actors, and racist name-calling were all commonplace (Waters, 2015). These 'Enoch Powell sitcoms' (Schaffer, 2010) included: *Till Death Us Do Part* (BBC, 1965-75), *Curry and Chips* (ITV, 1969), *The Melting Pot* (BBC, 1975), *Love Thy Neighbour* (ITV, 1972-76), *It Ain't Half Hot, Mum* (BBC, 1974-81), and *Dad's Army* (BBC, 1968-77; Duguid, n.d.).

Schaffer (2014) explored how British television dealt with and shaped multiracialism between 1960 and 1980, with the 'Campaign against Racism in the Media' opening up dialogue around better representation of ethnic minorities. Before this, ITV's

sitcom *Mind Your Language* (1977-79), with its politically incorrect stereotypical representations of people of colour, was one of the first television shows to feature actors from a diverse background and with 'racial caricatures' at its core (Duguid, n.d.). Although these sitcoms raised public consciousness around race and immigration, they also reinforced racism.

Despite legislative efforts, the Chinese remain resolutely silent as a minority group (Pan, 1998). Knox (2019) investigated the televisual representations of British Chinese identities in television dramas, where 'Asian stock characters and tropes, and the use of stereotypes and reductive tropes' meant many British Chinese actors were cast as criminals or in fantasy, action, and crime genres. These stereotypical tropes have their origins in early media portrayals which overemphasised opium fuelled dens in London's Limehouse during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the 'sly, inscrutable and unscrupulous' Chinese as imagined by Sax Rohmer in the popular Fu Manchu novels of 1913-1959, which were translated to the silver screen (Frayling, 2014; Price, 2019, p.196).

Sinophilia came in the form of Charlie Chan films in the 1930s and 1940s with the main character cast of white actors made to look Chinese (Richards, 2017). The practice of 'yellow face' was also evident in a BBC *Doctor Who* episode *The Talons of Weng Chiang* (1977) and in the Ming the Merciless villain in *Flash Gordon* (1980). These harked back to the 'Yellow Peril' era of Edwardian times (Blair, 2018) with Ming the Merciless in the 1950s version of *Flash Gordon* symbolising 'the West's fear of being overrun by the 'wily Oriental' (Yeh, 2000). This 'yellow peril Fu Manchu representational discourse' was also a common feature in action dramas, such as *The Avengers* (1961-69) and *The Saint* (1962-69).

Although the above depictions occurred when stereotypical representations of minorities were rife across television and film, entertainment from Japan provided alternative representations of the Chinese, albeit played by Japanese actors, which afforded some level of 'authenticity'. The first was *The Water Margin* (1977), a Japanese adaptation of a Chinese classic novel, noted for its incongruous dubbing with British actors imitating 'Oriental accents' (White, 2017). This was followed in 1978 by *Monkey* (1978), another Japanese adaptation of Chinese folklore. Prior to these Japanese imports, samurai films had already made an impression on British audiences during the 1950s, with film director Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954) fuelling demand for foreign films and influencing American Westerns, such as *The Magnificent Seven* (1960).

As one of the most revered martial artists in the world, San Francisco born Bruce Lee spent his early years in Hong Kong. His struggle to break into Hollywood is well documented, although he had a starring role as butler/chauffeur Kato in the American television series *The Green Hornet* (1966-1967) (Polly, 2018). As Bruce Lee was starting out in Hollywood in the late 1960s, Burt Kwouk's role as Cato in *Pink Panther* (1964-1992) brought martial arts comedy to a wider audience. As Clouseau's Chinese manservant, Cato's main role was to assist in his master's martial arts training. Clouseau would affectionately refer to Cato as 'my little yellow friend' while acting out crazed Karate moves – this led to the popularisation of depicting the Chinese for mainstream audiences, whilst also reinforcing racial stereotypes of the Chinese in films and on television. Although Kwouk's popularity paved the way for more East Asian actors on screen, it was not until the 1980s that BBC1 dramatized *The Chinese Detective* (1981-82) featuring a Chinese leading actor (David Yip) for the first time on mainstream television in Britain. This was in

response to mainstream fears of mass Chinese migration to Britain as a consequence of the British handover of Hong Kong to the mainland and the subsequent establishment of the British Nationality Act 1981 (Chan and Willis, 2012). Although the drama aimed to reduce racial stereotyping, the series was inspired by the Charlie Chan detective series of the 1930s where the practice of 'yellow face' was commonplace – here, Caucasians applied yellow make-up to play Chinese characters. Often linked to villainess roles, 'yellow face' misrepresented and limited the visibility of the Chinese on-screen (Lee, 2019). The practice of yellow face may also illustrate how culture may be appropriated for mainstream audiences, as illustrated by David Carradine's role as a Chinese Shaolin monk in *Kung Fu* (1972-1975) which made the cover of Esquire Magazine's August 1973 edition with the caption, 'Ah, so! A new American hero at last!' (Desser, 2000). Despite these historical examples, the film industry has been slow to embrace change, with more recent accusations of 'whitewashing' occurring with respect to *Ghost in the Shell* (2017) and *Dr Strange* (2016), where Oriental characters were replaced with white actors (Lee, 2019).

Pre-1970s, Japanese martial arts styles (Judo, ju-jitsu) were popular in the West, before Chinese influence onscreen took over with the Hong Kong based Shaw Brothers' success with *King Boxer* (1972) and King Hu's Taiwanese production *Dragon Inn* (1967)<sup>3</sup> (Hunt, 2003). This thesis does not note the country of production of specific wuxia or martial arts films, because geographical boundaries between Hong Kong and Taiwan are not clear cut when producers and directors operate in

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<sup>3</sup> Legendary film maker King Hu had previously enjoyed success with the Shaw Brothers before finding worldwide acclaim in martial arts cinema with *Dragon Inn* (1967).

different Far East Asian localities. The focus of this thesis is the impact of wuxia or Far East Asian films on the global film industry.

For the British Kung Fu generation who followed Bruce Lee's rise in Hollywood during the 1970s, the concept of 'yellow mask' (where non-Chinese readily embrace Chinese symbolism that reinforce a sense of ethnic pride), as exemplified by the adoption of Lee's symbolic yellow and black jumpsuit, and Blaxploitation where Black Americans looked towards Kung Fu films for empowerment. Chinese representations on British television were therefore subjected to opposing powers of influence (Knox, 2019).

Animation entered this trope in the form of Hanna-Barbera's crime-fighter *Hong Kong Phooey* (1977-79), featuring an accident-prone anthropomorphic dog. With his red Gi, eye mask, and 'The Hong Kong Book of Kung Fu', janitor Penry is transformed from a yellow belt to a martial arts superhero. These popular television and film references led to many Karate chop imitations in playgrounds across the UK and demand for martial arts classes grew (Teo, 1997; Hunt, 2003; Bowman, 2013). Finally, the popularisation and exoticisation of Chinese Kung Fu are best exemplified by Marvel Comic's superhero *Shang-Chi – The Master of Kung Fu* in the 1970s, where the character was appropriated as a Caucasian martial artist whilst referring to Chinese characters as 'yellow beasts' (Martin, 2018). It has often been said that Shang-Chi represented Asian American's ethnic awareness. Marvel also introduced Iron Fist – an Americanised Hong Kong hero. DC Comics' own Caucasian Kung Fu martial artist came in the form of *Richard Dragon Kung Fu Fighter* (1975–1977) and the mixed-race *Karate Kid* (1976–78) (Martin, 2018).



It seemed that martial arts featuring Chinese actors and characters (real or imagined) as martial artists was extending beyond the televisual. This study uncovers how portrayals of Chinese on television and film may have contributed to their subsequent stereotyping as martial artists on British television commercials from the 1960s to the 1990s. The influence of martial arts tropes in television and film mirrors the move from black and white to colour television from September 1955 to November 1969 (Roderick, 2015). In addition, the earliest British adverts that featured Chinese actors occurred during the 1970s, such that the 1960s-1970s is an important era for investigation.

Likewise, the 1990s were an era of creativity in British advertising. This period is best exemplified by iconic campaigns such as Wonderbra's *Hello Boys* and Guinness' *Surfer* advertisements, with the British advertising industry becoming recognised for its award-winning campaigns (Nixon, 2017). This thesis accounts for the impact that this level of creativity has had on the industry's role as a cultural producer. Such contextual understanding is crucial to our interrogation of racialised constructions resulting from advertising. In fact, two of the television commercials that kick-started my interest in this study, namely: Levi 501's *Kung Fu* (1997) and Volkswagen's *Self Defence* (1998), which were testament to the creative revolution of British agencies at the time (Tylee, 2017). Coupled with the influence of martial arts films in popular culture (Farrer and Whalen-Bridge, 2011; Nixon, 2016), the 1980s-1990s was a critical period for illustrating how martial arts tropes were seeping into British television commercials. The next section considers martial arts tropes in films as a key influence on media and audience perceptions of martial arts to provide further contextual background to the study.

## **Martial arts tropes**

The development of martial arts film can be categorised into two stages. The first wave was sword fighting or 'wuxia pian' films during the 1950s and 1960s by directors such as King Hu<sup>4</sup>. These free-flying acrobatic fantasy films made their way to Western art cinemas in the 1970s (Teo, 1997). The genre, synonymous with excitement, offered audiences exotic escapism, inspired in part by imported Japanese samurai films, such as the *Zatoichi Blind* swordsman series. Another explanation for their growth between 1965-1980 was the rise of the Asian Tiger economies. Shaw Brothers and major studios, such as the former MP and GI (Motion Picture and General Investment), benefitted from the lucrative Wuxia action genre with its appeal reaching its peak with overseas Chinese audiences from 1966 to the 1970s.

The second wave was Kung Fu films. According to history, Kung Fu masters who were based at Shaolin temples left to establish their schools in Guangdong after their temples were attacked by the Manchus. Teo (1997) believed that Kung Fu's popularity, despite its rudimentary plot lines, was due to its action sequences and the choreographic skill of its stars. Actors, such as Sammo Hung, Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan made their name in this film genre. Much has been written about the difference between Wuxia and Kung Fu, and whilst the genres have developed distinctively there are crossovers. Put simply, Kung Fu is often referred to as a fist-fighting technique that originated in South China, whereas Wuxia's sword-fighting originated from North China. Audiences as far back as the 1960s could tell these styles apart, with Kung Fu's training and emphasis on the body contrasting with the fantasy and

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<sup>4</sup> Seeking creative freedom, Hong Kong based King Hu eventually settled in Taiwan. *Dragon Inn* is often cited as one of his most creative wuxia films.

supernatural feel of Wuxia films – the former were more popular with Western audiences (Teo, 1997).

Bruce Lee, a San Francisco born, and Hong Kong raised Chinese person, made substantial contributions to action cinema history in both Hong Kong and Hollywood. He singlehandedly spearheaded the development of Kung Fu as a martial arts genre in the West and kick-started the craze for what Americans referred to as 'chop socky' films, despite the anti-colonial undertones. Lee's unique '*Jeet Kune Do*' (the art of intercepting fist), his style of Kung Fu cinema and the type of Asian role model he was made his work accessible to Western filmgoers (Teo, 1997). The socio-political violence of his work meant such Kung Fu tropes also appealed to Southeast Asian audiences, marginalised overseas Chinese communities (Chiao, 1981; Shu, 2003), and also inner-city audiences (Kaminsky, 1974). Lee's films differed from Japanese Samurai or American Westerns in that they did not reinforce collectivistic traditions but emphasised individual superman heroics to earn respect through vengeance and violence (Kaminsky, 1974). As an immigrant to the US, Lee's experiences of racial prejudice shaped his cultural nationalism to his motherland, and it is this strong affinity with Hong Kong that has shaped the nationalistic anticolonial feel in his films (Chiao, 1981; Teo, 1997). Kung Fu films have also been said to enable overseas Chinese communities to overcome the economic defeats dealt by Western and Japanese powers. Lee's untimely death in 1973 made him a cult figure. His legacy of a graceful aesthetic depiction of a ritualised form of violence afforded minority populations dignity in redressing injustices in societal norms (Kaminsky, 1974). His legacy left a lasting impression on black and young audiences, through the spiralling popularity of the 1970s Kung Fu craze in Western cinema (Desser, 2000).

The role that Jackie Chan played in transforming Kung Fu as a genre in Hollywood has received some recognition (Shu, 2003). These include *Drunken Master* (1978), *Police Story* (1985), *Dragons Forever* (1988), *Rumble in the Bronx* (1995) and *Rush Hour* (1998). Chan redirected the appeal of Kung Fu to the middle classes, as well as increasing its accessibility for female audiences, effectively extending the genre to another sub-genre – that of Kung Fu comedy. If Lee's heyday was in the early 1970s, as a pioneer of Kung Fu cinema, then Chan's contribution to this transformative era occurred in the 1980s. By introducing audiences to Kung Fu comedy, Chan shifted the focus from class and racial politicisation in martial arts towards multiculturalism and transnationalism, and a more humane and trouble avoidant approach (Chiao, 1981; Shu, 2003). Trouble avoidance in martial arts is exemplified in Shu's (2003) analysis of Chan's contribution to martial arts movies: 'Chan creates two personas [...] "soft" Chan on screen, who runs away from trouble, gets hurt easily in escape, and wins the fight purely by luck [...] "tough" Chan offscreen, who defies death by jumping from one skyscraper to another or by dangling under a helicopter' (Shu, 2003, p. 59).

Despite the prevalence of Taiwanese producers in martial arts films, for example King Hu with *Dragon Inn* (1967) and Ang Lee with *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000), there is limited comparative research on Taiwanese films or Taiwanese communities in Britain. In contrast, the Chinese from Hong Kong constituted the third largest BAME community in Britain and cultural references to Hong Kong Chinese filmic influences are more readily accessible in archival holdings during the 1960s - 1990s (Chan, 2002). It is also worth noting that Chinese caterers who migrated to

Britain during the 1970s and 1980s fuelled the demand for Cantonese films and television shows. These were initially shown in cinemas in the early hours after the close of business. By the early 1980s, many families were able to access one of the most highly rated Hong Kong wuxia television series *The Legend of the Condor Heroes* (1983, TVB Jade) by renting Betamax and VHS videotapes from their local Chinese grocers. Clearly film and video recording technology had a role to play in making martial arts television dramas from Hong Kong more accessible to migrant families.



Fig.6. The Legend of the Condor Heroes 1983

(Source: <https://www.moviefone.com/tv-shows/the-legend-of-the-condor-heroes/UhakTul4tvmKBYQjbxI0G/>)

Chan (2009) contends that 'Hongkongification' during the 1980s and 1990s led to Hollywood becoming 'Asianized' on the one hand, whilst at the same time Chinese film industries have become 'Hollywoodized' (Klein, 2004; Chan, 2009).

Hongkongification in screen studies is now recognized as reverse cultural flow (Wang and Yeh, 2005; Wu and Chan, 2007). Krug's (2001) controversial standpoint that Japanese Karate actually has its origins in China perfectly encapsulates the fluidity of cultures. Likewise, Wang and Yeh's (2005) seminal work on Chineseness and authenticity suggests that martial arts does not belong to one culture, but that hybridity exists where typical tropes have been appropriated from a collection of experiences (Bhabha, 1994). This study concerns historical social change and shifting representations that requires 'conjectural analysis' – a methodological approach popularised by sociologist Stuart Hall. Here 'a conjuncture contains the circumstances and conditions of the past and their collision into the present' (Morris, 2021). Such analysis references the myriad of influences, incidences and contexts that have informed martial arts representations across film and television, as exemplified by Carl Douglas' disco song '*Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting*', *Hong Kong Phooey* animation in the 1970s, and the Blaxploitation of Wu-Tang Clan's hip hop rap in the 1990s (Bowman, 2016a). Hybridity debates continue today, including with respect to how practitioners of the increasingly popular traditional Chinese medicine have influenced the practice of Western martial arts (Krug, 2001).

Whilst some films are made by Far Eastern studios, others are produced in the West, with the boundaries blurring in recent years. Western-made films that have benefitted from Asian martial arts filmmaking and have globalised local cultures for mainstream audiences include; *Karate Kid* (1984, 1986, 1989, 1994) and its remake

(2010), *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai* (1999), *The Last Samurai* (2003), the *Kill Bill* series (2003, 2004), and the *Kung Fu Panda* series (2008, 2011) (Hiramoto, 2012). As mainstream population adopts Bruce Lee films in droves, we can see the impact that migrant communities cultural icons have had.

Martial arts techniques are now a regular feature across different genres, from science fiction (*The Matrix*, 1999), vampire (*Blade II*, 2002), superhero (*Daredevil*, 2003), video games (*Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*, 2001), and female empowerment (*Charlie's Angels*, 2000), to children's films (*Shrek*, 2001) and teen comedies (*Scary Movie*, 2000). The renewed interest of Western audiences in martial arts films produced by Asian film industries is evidenced by contributions made by Ang Lee with *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000), a martial arts film that moved from art-house to mainstream cinema. This was followed by 'theatrical re-releases' of older and newer martial arts films *Iron Monkey* (1993) and *Hero* (2002). According to Hunt (2003), martial arts films allowed the West to fetishise Asian culture using the popular medium of films where the West is depicted as having a culture which dominates the Orient (Said, 1978). Asiaphilia, as seen in martial arts films, therefore, constitutes cultural appropriation by the west of one form of Asian cultural expression (Hunt, 2003).

To sum up, hybridity is therefore closely linked to the concept of reverse cultural flow, where western martial arts may influence the Far East (Doshii, 1999; Wang and Yeh, 2005; Wu and Chan, 2006). Martial arts tropes have been derived from and are influenced by wider socio-cultural myths and events. The next section considers the process of ascribing meaning to advertising messages, as well as the influence of

tropes and genres in mediating or constructing authenticity in martial arts representations.

### **Defining advertising and unmasking authenticity**

This study maps the changing nature of television commercials from the early period during the 1960s to its entry into every home by the 1990s. It also explores the ways in which martial arts tropes and their visual aesthetics have been used as commercial advertising platforms. Film and televisual influences, in terms of what is shown to the public, are closely connected – any running themes in film will be linked to what is on offer in advertising. The growth of television commercials during the 1950s gradually took over from cinema advertising as the platform for brands to communicate with the masses. It is worth acknowledging the difference between British and American brand communication here. Whilst it is common knowledge that American creative revolution in New York in the 1950s had a role to play in modern British advertising in the 1960s (Nixon, 2017), British advertising in comparison has had to evolve differently from American commercials due to their different contexts (Lannon and Cooper, 1983). British advertising I. American hard sell styles of advertising, also referred to as hierarchy of effects, assumes that audiences of advertising messages are passive recipients ie they do not question what they are presented with but accept them readily. British audiences on the other hand, are harder to sell to, preferring subtle cues in its soft sell approach that commonly embraced humour with visual messaging that entertained audiences (York, 2010). American advertising with its fact-based messaging infomercials had to appeal to audiences through vast expanse of geographical distance, frequently utilising other communications tactics such as broadcast programme sponsorship.



What is advertising and how is it defined? Popular textbook definitions refer to advertising as a 'non-personal communication of information, usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature, about products (goods, services, and ideas) by identified sponsors through various media' (Arens, 2002, p.7). In other words, advertising is brand communication. For brand messages to work, they must be personally significant to target audiences. Some might argue that audiences are seeking deeper meaning from advertising, for example, advertisements may encourage them to shape the way they live. Advertising is also said to echo existing cultural norms, or help to reinforce the lifestyle that the advertising portrays (Pollay, 1986). According to social historian Peter York, onscreen media, including film, television, and commercials, share the need to entertain audiences (York, 2010). The main difference between film and advertising is the timeframe and commerciality in advertising. The latter must condense its creative storytelling to 30 seconds<sup>5</sup>, whilst also ensuring its overt brand messages appeal to target audiences (Wasserman, 2020).

As a form of socio-cultural meaning production, the advertising profession relies on its rituals and conventions to devise brand messages that can easily be understood by audiences<sup>6</sup> (Shao, Desmarais and Weaver, 2014). Within agencies, different departments have different perceptions of how audiences decode advertisements.

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<sup>5</sup> Although television commercials are generally 30 seconds, others may be between 10-60 seconds. 60 seconds commercials were common in the 1950s though legislation such as the Independent Television Authority (ITA 1954 – 1972) and the demise of cigarette advertising in the 1970s led to shorter durations of 30 seconds.

<sup>6</sup> The word 'audience' is primarily used to define target audiences whose reactions, responses, and ability to decode advertising messages inform the creative advertising development process. The word is used in place of ethnicities / minorities / other demographic identifiers for consistency.

Early advertising in the 1960s required art directors to collaborate with copywriters whilst the creative department oversaw their work. 'In the 1950s, agencies had developed market research and strategic services among these added extras but, by the 1960s, advertisers were building their own marketing and research departments' (The Marketing Society, 2012). The introduction of account planners signaled the importance of research and strategy in the advertising development process (Fletcher, 2008; Turnbull and Wheeler, 2017). Key personalities shaped the industry: JWT's Stephen King and BMP's Stanley Pollitt 'are the undisputed forefathers of account planning [...] they started a revolution in the advertising world which has spread from the UK to other countries and from ad agencies to management consultancies, direct marketing, PR, design and client research departments', according to Baskin (2001). The industry began to recognise the importance of consumer insights as a backbone of advertising practice. This strategic approach inspired Stephen King's *JWT Planning Guide* in the 1970s and led to the 'golden era of advertising' (King, 1974; Griffiths and Follows, 2016). King's publication 'effectively created the discipline of advertising strategy. It introduced systematic thinking into the inherently chaotic creative process, revolutionising the field' (Lahiri, 2024). As agencies have evolved and become more professional in their approach to advertising production, roles have become more clearly defined. Client-facing account executives believe in rationality with respect to how audiences interpret advertising messages, account planners perceive that audiences seek meaningful consumption, and creatives focus on the way aesthetic imageries inspire audiences (Hackley, 2003).

As a form of commercial cultural production, advertising also utilises a ritual or routine of genre conventions through which adverts are constructed so that associations with brands are easily established (Shao, Desmarais and Weaver, 2014). To facilitate the advertising construction of messages that audiences can respond to positively (using shared cultural knowledge, language, conventions, and common experiences), stereotypes are often used (Yeshin, 2006). As film and advertising industries borrow heavily from each other and from cultural trends that are prominent at the time, it is conceivable that stereotypes in films would be mirrored in advertising. The use of representational stereotypes or recognisable settings or characters must also be personally relevant to audiences if they are to infer meaning from them (Leiss, Kline and Jhally, 1990; Meline, 1996). Added to this is the notion that advertising content creation is notoriously illogical, relying on the advertiser's intuition on the one hand and negotiation with client expectations on the other (Johar, Holbrook and Stern, 2013). The process of advertising creation is therefore a complex one. This study investigates martial arts tropes or genres that have been borrowed from film. It interrogates the stereotypes and conventions commonly used in these Hollywood films, and in advertising, as well as the assumptions made by the advertising industry regarding what audiences wish to see (Neale, 1980).

Finally, advertisers are clouded by their own judgement and limitations. The myopic moral stance of advertisers may go some way to explain why stereotypes were prevalent in advertising, with the lack of diversity in the advertising profession certainly a contributing factor (Poole, 2021), which may explain the recurrent distortion of reality through stereotypical imageries that do not reflect or mirror social

reality (Pollay and Gallagher, 1990; Nixon, 2003; Drumwright and Murphy, 2004; Shao, Desmaris and Weaver, 2014). These cultural mirrors could lead to feelings of inadequacy or exploitation for audiences who feel they do not fit the ideal. In addition, minorities may imitate the behaviour of the role models that they are exposed to in advertising (Bailey, 2006).

Advertising production, therefore, has a role to play in ensuring that the meaning ascribed to martial arts tropes as cultural symbols accounts for a broader range of factors, including, colonial hegemony, and an appeal to ethnic/Asian and mainstream audiences, as well as the popularization of martial arts. The clues to the evolution of martial arts tropes in films come from an understanding of historical contexts, for example, the 1970s Kung Fu craze made martial arts and Chinese-ness 'cool' (Desser, 2000) and the more accurate the demonstration of fighting techniques on screen, the more authenticity is afforded to the 'art', and thereby the actors or models involved (Li, 2001). In this thesis, I argue that authenticity has a role to play in perpetuating stereotypes of the other, and consider the multifaceted nature of authenticity in relation to martial arts aesthetics, and the notion of realness in how a silent community is depicted on screen in chapter 2. This authentication process is facilitated by iconic characters, such as Bruce Lee, who singlehandedly made Chinese Kung Fu accessible to a wider audience (Moore, 2002). His 'authenticity' may be demonstrated through his techniques, his charisma as a martial arts actor (Hunt, 2008), and his super heroism as a leading actor who was able to break new ground and achieve iconic status through his work (Graper, 1983).

Despite these shortcomings, Bowman (2016b) asserts that what is deemed to be **'authentic'** or **'traditional'** in martial arts is not a fixed construct particularly as

martial arts have been adapted and taught differently in various localities, leading to questions around their authenticity. Another dimension of authenticity in martial arts films concerns the racial identifiers or ethnicity of the cast, as perceived by a diverse audience. Finally, insights into the contrasts between 'yellow face' and 'yellow mask', as contributors to stereotyping in the former and ethnic pride in the latter, are crucial to the use of martial arts representations in advertising (Dyer, 1988). These and many other concepts of authenticity in martial arts depictions onscreen and racialised constructions in advertising are discussed in the next chapter.

Additionally, Saha (2018) provides an update with respect to advertising as cultural production, contending that recurrent tropes are a product of cultural commodification, whereby martial arts, for example, are regularly reproduced. Arguing for further post-colonial historicity and understanding of structural constraints, this study discusses how advertising tropes exoticise the 'Other'. The study maps out martial arts aesthetics in advertising and how representations have changed over time. The conflicts that creative advertising producers face in balancing their client's brand communication requirements with increasing societal pressures have only become apparent in recent years. My study evidences how priorities have shifted over four decades, from chasing award winning work to being ethical. To do this, I consider the historical backdrop from the perspective of colonial representations, and authenticity in terms of realness or tradition. Any study of martial arts as a cultural commodity must also address the pressures that creative advertising producers faced.

## Research questions

This study, by providing an understanding of how advertising has utilised martial arts representations historically and how these are associated with authenticity in different decades, addresses a gap in our understanding of martial arts as a creative theme or appeal in advertising, and the meanings that can be ascribed to the brands being featured. To this end, the thesis provides background to the brands that have been advertised using such tropes and uncovers the rationale for their use in advertising, as well as how authenticity is executed in martial arts-themed adverts. Contextual understanding of existing stereotypes of the Chinese generally as well as martial arts is crucial. Past television advertising commercials and print adverts inform an investigation of how authenticity has been ascribed over time and how societal values or constraints prevalent at the time, such as colonial hegemony, impacted upon these forms of advertising. The study also accounts for constraints in cultural production and the resulting commodification of martial arts.

The following research questions and justifications were formulated for this investigation:

Research question 1: *What forms of martial arts tropes occurred in British advertising from the 1960s to 1990s?* The study, through reviewing literature about martial arts on screen (film and television), identifies key tropes for this research. This addresses the gap in current knowledge of what is being transferred to advertising from early tropes and how these have changed.

Research question 2: *How have these martial arts tropes that existed from the 1960s to 1990s changed over time?* To provide context to the historical background,

focusing on colonial depictions of the Chinese as a silent minority in Britain, and particularly on early stereotypical representational discourse such as Fu Manchu.

Research question 3: *What was the intention behind the advertisements that featured martial arts tropes?* By investigating examples of brands that have utilised martial arts advertising, the study questions the use and relevance of recurrent tropes, focusing on martial arts aesthetics and their cultural commodification. It also considers what kind of connotations martial arts can lend to advertising.

Research question 4: *What is meant by authentic martial arts representations? How authentic are these martial arts representations?* It considers why authenticity is important in this study and its role in ameliorating stereotyping. Through critical visual and discourse analyses, martial arts advertisements from the 1960s-1990s were analysed building on the parameters of authenticity in advertising construction and martial arts visual aesthetics.

Research question 5: *How did these representations create or reinforce stereotypes?* The study considers how authenticity and representations have evolved over time. Explanations about the meanings ascribed to martial arts-themed advertising over four decades to address how these visualisations contributed to stereotypes in advertising for the silent minority and what lessons could be learned from the study. The analysis is also informed by Britain's relationship with China and the Far East

## **Aims and objectives**

The study, therefore, aims to investigate the meaning construction of early martial arts representation in British advertising during the 1960s -1990s as a consequence of the way the British Chinese community has been portrayed on television and in film. This accounts for the notion that advertising creation does not purely contribute to racialised discourse, but also draw inferences from existing cultural representations.

The following research objectives were met sequentially:

1. To determine what forms of martial arts representation exist within the context of British film and television, given that martial arts is one of the dominant recurring tropes in representations of the Chinese in British television advertising
2. To identify authenticity in martial arts as a form of visual representation of the British Chinese in a select number of television and print advertising
3. To analyse recurring martial arts representational discourse as a form of commodification of popular culture
4. To identify case studies of brands that have utilised martial arts representational imagery to understand how these tropes addressed authenticity in representational imageries between the 1960s and the 1990s, and how this has changed over time.

The study includes an understanding of Britain's colonial history with the Far East, and in particular Hong Kong, prior to identifying the impacts of television and film on television advertising, with a focus on martial arts representation. The influence that yesteryear's 'yellow face' may have on today's appropriation of martial arts through 'whitewashing' will be considered. Mapping the changes in martial arts



representation from the 1960s to 1990s within critical race theories and critical media industries research provides an understanding of cultural production that enables us to review how martial arts advertising is linked to television and film, given the creativity of the profession from the 1960s onwards and the political agenda in play at the time with respect to colonial hegemony and race relations.

### **Value of the study**

In advertising, image selection is key, with Schroeder and Borgerson (2005) contending that unethical ads 'exoticise' and 'otherise' minorities. Such expositions are drawn from image-based textual research where stereotypical representations of minority communities are commonplace. The bulk of martial arts representation is based on film and television stereotypes, or authentication of martial arts practices from the perspective of film and television. However, studies of stereotypical depictions in advertising are based on different contexts, such as that of the US where 'model minority' representations of the Chinese are prevalent. This form of positive stereotyping relates to Asian Americans as 'a monolithically hardworking racial group whose high achievement undercuts claims of systemic racism made by other racially minoritized populations, especially African Americans' (Poon et al., 2016). This is not the case with respect to the British Chinese.

Building on the theoretical foundations of ethical representational frameworks proposed by Schroeder and Borgerson (2005), the current study integrates early discussions of Japanese Judo and Karate before addressing the power of Chinese Kung Fu and their respective representations in film (Marchetti, 2014). Desser's (2000) discussions of the recurrence of Kung Fu craze aesthetics in martial arts films hints at their influence on representations in advertising. Key representational forms

such as 'yellow face', 'yellow mask' and 'superman' influencing early martial arts tropes are then discussed within the context of authenticity in martial arts genres in films and martial arts appeals in advertising. The shortcomings of authenticity in martial arts tropes are then updated with recent debates about representations versus constructions of race as recurrent cultural commodities (Saha, 2018).

Considering the historical development of martial arts in Britain can assist us in understanding how its representation and associated depictions in film and television subsequently led to its popularity in advertising. This study updates previous work by examining the cultural economy and cultural production processes, through incorporating insights relating to colonial themes and hegemonic representations. Interest in incorporating retro themes or appeals into advertising shows no sign of abating as brands seek more meaningful consumer engagement. This study bridges a gap in our understanding of print and moving image production which commodifies and embodies martial arts. There is also a demand for advertising archive material, some of which this study draws upon, to be made accessible to the public, which could facilitate the exhibition of my research findings, as a means of further extending debate around this under-researched area. Such exhibitions would also facilitate ongoing debates around the continued popularity of martial arts tropes in both academic and practitioner circles, thus sharing knowledge about how these could be better utilised for future generations of advertising, media, or cultural studies researchers.

### **Organisation of the study**

This chapter covered the rationale and justifications for the study. It also detailed its context through consideration of Britain's colonial relationship with the Far East,

followed by the historical context of Chinese depiction on screen in popular print media, and culminating in setting out the research questions for the study. Chapter 2 provides insights into critical literature surrounding the authenticity of martial arts aesthetics and their commodification in advertising. It will address the framework for the study before Chapter 3 considers the methodological approaches that have been adopted herein. Chapters 4 and 5 provides findings spanning over four decades of 33 advertising case studies analysed in chronological date order using critical visual analysis and critical discourse analysis. Chapter 6 consolidates the findings with reference to the contextual and theoretical underpinning to illuminate the research questions set by the author. Finally, chapter 7 concludes with theoretical and practical implications that demonstrates the relevance of this study for future interdisciplinary research in this area.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Background**

#### **Introduction**

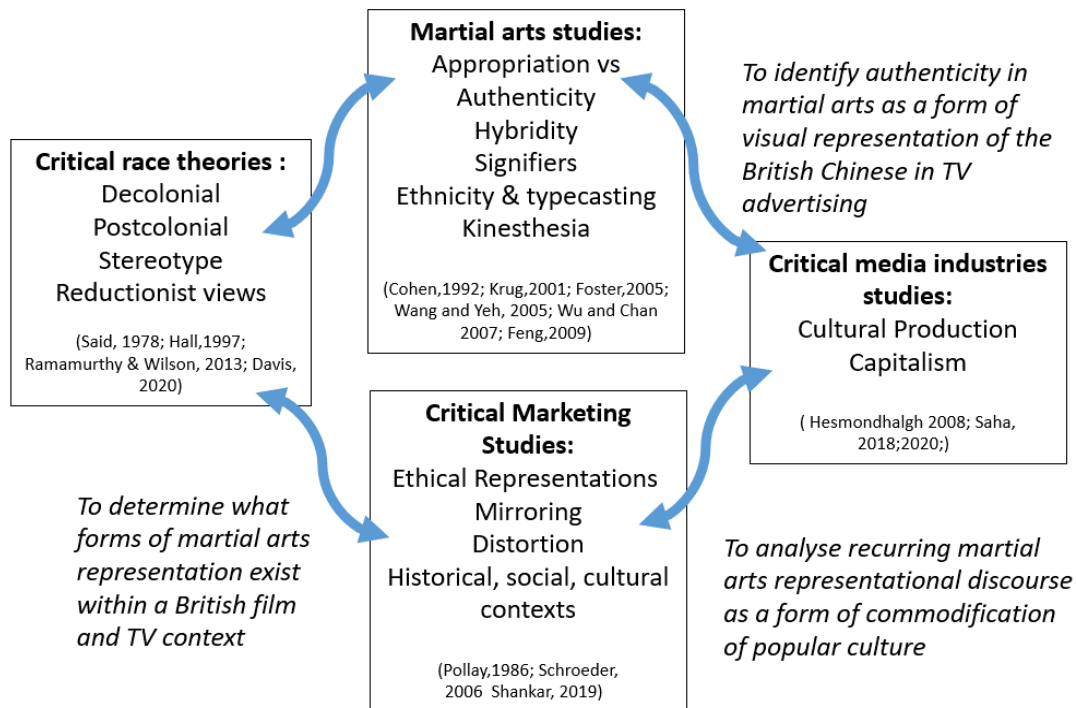
This chapter explores the theoretical underpinning of this study, namely the use of martial arts tropes and aesthetics, focusing on representations of the British Chinese in British advertising over four decades. I have borrowed from knowledge gained from Hong Kong and Hollywood cinema, with additional consideration given to the changing relationship that martial arts aesthetics has with cultural production representational processes. This section reviews the extant literature covering critical race theories, martial arts, critical media industries, and critical marketing studies (including advertising) reflecting the interdisciplinary approach undertaken for this study

The central focus is that martial arts is one of the most common stereotypes used with respect to the Chinese during 1960s-1970s, and that martial artness is often associated with Chinese cultural tradition. According to *BBC Creative Diversity* (2025): 'For a group that rarely gets any screen time, the list of tropes goes on. Criminal gangs, immigrants, prostitutes, waiters, submissive females, tiger mums, geeky Asian men and Kung Fu tropes are just some of the common themes we see played out on screens. Playing into these stereotypes is a common criticism of British Chinese representation on television'.

Initial research carried out by the author to address early martial arts tropes in British advertising (Chan et al., 2020), and more recently the methodological constraints involved in racialised constructions in advertising (Chan, 2023), suggest that there is considerable scope for further studies in these areas. This literature review provides

a detailed underpinning for the thesis and is divided into the following sections. Part 1 explores stereotypes as a consequentialist colonial representation of the British Chinese. Indicators of martial arts authenticity, as discussed in film studies literature, include aesthetics as exemplified by tradition of martial arts, its form and choreography, production quality, and racialised representations through casting. Consideration is therefore given to authentication of martial arts through its visualisations onscreen, underpinned by martial arts theories. Part 2 addresses the role of appropriation and advertising in racialised constructions arising from the cultural commodification of martial arts in critical media industries research. This section then explores ethical advertising using critical visual analysis to authenticate/place martial arts aesthetics and the degree of authenticity in recurrent tropes in advertising. The study contributes to debates concerning the orientalist reductionism of 'the Other', as well as to more recent debates surrounding martial arts tropes and their commodification and appropriation. Part 3 concludes with a theoretical framework for mapping martial arts representational aesthetics in advertising, that accounts for historical racial constructions. The framework also furthers our understanding of race and martial arts aesthetics and how these are used to authenticate or appropriate the Chinese in advertising. Emerging themes arising from the analysis of historical advertising are discussed in the findings chapters, 4 (Findings 1960s-1970s) and 5 (Findings 1980s – 1990s), and 6 (Discussions).

Fig. 7. Meaning construction in martial arts advertisements.



## Part 1

### Stereotyping Orientalism through martial arts tropes

Before deciphering meaning construction within advertising, an understanding of colonial power imbalances and stereotyping, and their contributions to how ‘the Other’ is depicted, is essential. In his pioneering work, ‘Orientalism’, Said’s (1978) contribution to race theory is influential in our understanding of East-West power imbalances. He contends that western superiority comes at the expense of ‘orientalising’ or generalising ‘the Other’. Authors such as Bonsu (2009), whose study concerns African Americans, and Moosavi (2022), whose work explores decolonisation in education, have made much of such hegemonic imbalances. Said’s Orientalism informs the Foucauldian thinking that typifies colonially mediated depictions where the West is dominant and the East subservient. As a relatively silent community in Britain, Orientalist caricatures of the Chinese in advertising are evidenced through and influenced by their depictions in historical films and television

programmes. The recurrent pigtailed as an aesthetic in early Chinese depictions is a form of cultural commodification (Dawson, 1967; Bright, 2017) that existed long before martial arts tropes were adopted in advertising. An example of this is contained in the History of Advertising Trust's tear sheet collection where pigtailed are clearly visible in one of the earliest print advert for the United Kingdom Tea Company Limited in 1894.



Fig.8. United Kingdom Tea Company Limited print advert, *The Sketch*, 9 May 1894. (History of Advertising Trust).

Bonsu's work on African Americans showed how dehumanisation processes enabled colonisers to discredit 'the Other'. To maximise fears about the migration of Chinese and subsequent threats to mainstream employment, PR campaigns that referred to the influx of Chinese as the 'yellow peril' during the 1900s demonstrated how easy it was to hijack discourse about Chinese culture in this early period. This form of

‘objectification’ and ‘subjugation’ of ‘the Other’ is a form of appropriation whereby minorities have limited control over how they are represented in advertising (Bonsu, 2009). I will return to appropriation within the latter half of this chapter with respect to cultural production.

Objectification, as discussed within critical studies, arises out of the notion of stereotypes, or generalisations made about one group by another. Such ethnocentric reductionist practices distinguish ‘the Other’ through basic characteristics. When coupled with the exaggeration and simplification of differences, such practices divide groups into those that are accepted and ‘the Other’ (Derrida, 1972, cited in Hall 2013a; see also Said, 1978; Hall, 1997; Taylor and Stern, 1997). Moosavi (2022) also discusses the prevalence of westernised hierarchical stereotypes which form part of the postcolonial rhetoric about race. The resulting typification or placing of ‘the Other’ into neat categories, helps audiences to decode a person’s role, class, gender, age, nationality, racial group and personality (Dyer, 1988).

This is a double-edged sword. Positive stereotypes may exist alongside negative ones, as exemplified with respect to the Chinese American ‘model minorities’. Here, the Chinese penchant for academic success may be seen by mainstream media as a positive representation of a cultural group’s ability to better itself. It is ‘another success story for the American dream, an example of the continuing immigrant urge to succeed’ according to David Brand’s front-page story for *Time Magazine* in 1987 (Brand). Educational success and over-representation in mainstream professional occupations by the Chinese provide positive PR fodder (Taylor and Stern, 1997). However, it cannot be assumed that positive stereotypes resonate with minority’s lived realities, as exemplified by the prevalence of ‘yellow peril’ aesthetics in Chinese American history.



For this thesis, it is therefore crucial to pay heed to the historical context of the Chinese in Britain and the resulting stereotypical advertising tropes, and to relate these to their lived realities. Depictions of the British Chinese as Chinese chefs or takeaway owners are a direct result of the proliferation of Hong Kong Chinese in catering trades from the 1960s onwards. As documented elsewhere, this led to a highly dispersed settlement pattern for the Chinese in most towns and villages in the UK (Parker, 1995; Chan, 2002).

Aside from catering stereotypes, 'chop socky'<sup>7</sup> martial artists, as attributed to films in the 1970s, is another common trope (Bowman, 2020). Wang (2017) contends that martial arts tropes highlight the marginalisation of 'the Other', arguing that hegemonic postcolonial oriental-occidental ideologies are to blame. Whilst Chinese culture, as featured in martial arts tropes, is amplified in films (Wang, 2017), more research is needed to map martial arts stereotypes and aesthetics onto the ambivalent representations of the Chinese in British advertising. The interest in my 'Hai Karate and Kung Fuey: Early martial arts tropes in British advertising' paper for JOMEC served to highlight the demand for critical racialised discourse (Chan et al., 2020). In addition, martial arts representations offer a mixture of positive (with glamorised depictions of Chinese actors as exemplified by any advertising that pays homage to Bruce Lee) and negative (with 'yellow face' actors in a triad gang role) stereotypes. Critical race theorists call this 'bifurcation' (Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013). This thesis develops a framework for understanding the multi-faceted nature of martial arts aesthetics and stereotypes.

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<sup>7</sup> Refers to a genre of violent Kung Fu or martial arts films primarily made in Hong Kong

## **Martial arts tropes, authentication, and commodification onscreen**

Drawing upon martial arts studies, this section considers the contribution of martial arts tropes and their role in stereotyping 'the Other' in advertising. Colonial influences on the (mis)representations of martial arts in all forms of media are unavoidable in the West. As reflected in the critical race theories discussed above, the fetishisation of 'the Other' (in this case, East and South East Asian -ESEA -culture) and Western orientalist reductionism has positioned martial arts as a 'marginal' art or sport with its own set of myths and stereotypes (Said, 1978; Chow, 1998). Its 'chop socky' associations have capitalised on the comedic value of the trope across all media (Bowman, 2016b, p.11-12).

This section discusses common martial arts tropes and aesthetics with respect to authenticity in representations across media, from television and films to advertising and videos (Bowman, 2013). Before unpicking aesthetics in martial arts, a review of authenticity as it relates to this art form<sup>8</sup> is required.

### **Authenticity as realness in martial arts**

The pervasiveness of authenticity as a socially constructed concept means that a lack of consensus about its meaning exists (Newman and Smith, 2016). Despite this, authenticity is often said to be about what is observed, as opposed to what is implied (Beverland, Farrelly and Deighton, 2010, p.839). From a branding perspective, authenticity refers to 'unbroken commitments to tradition and place of origin'

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<sup>8</sup> The author has referred to martial arts as a 'craft' or 'art form' as the traditional styles on which this thesis is based include not only combat techniques (basic attack or defence, sparring) but also artistic elements such as katas or patterns encompassing an imaginary opponent.

(Beverland, Lindgreen and Vink, 2008, p.7). This has particular significance in martial arts where lineage and history are crucial concepts for practitioners. Every martial artist has their own story and interpretation of their craft. However, the degree of **realness** or ***indexical authenticity*** in martial arts refers to something that is 'genuine, real, and/or true', with there being a felt need to differentiate between the 'real thing' and reproductions (Peirce, 1974, cited in Newman and Smith, 2016).

For the West, Wing Chun Kung Fu (or Wushu) is often perceived as an authentic form of Chinese martial arts, with its realism in terms of lineage and tradition, its action choreography and sound effects linked to Hong Kong cinema (Krug, 2001; Wong, 2017). This is despite the perceived relative inaccessibility of Kung Fu for mainstream practitioners when compared to Karate or Judo.

In contrast, ***iconic authenticity*** refers to the authentic reproduction of martial arts that meet practitioner/audience expectations about the art or craft, as exemplified by Karate with its background of knowledge dissemination to the West since the 1950s and 1960s. Authentic reproductions may also refer to perceptions of authenticity for martial arts relating to fictional objects, for example, fictional martial artists or myths about its origins that may have been reimagined in martial arts television and films (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). The distinctions between real action combat that is concretised in Kung Fu films and spiritual make-believe themes as seen in sword fighting or 'wuxia' arthouse cinema films have fuelled our understanding of realness in meditated martial arts imageries over the years.

Moore (2002) offers a new perspective about authenticity as authentication. Drawn from music performance, Moore's authentication refers to the extent to which martial arts represent both the truth of the culture and others. Here, the cultural and historicised interpretation of the craft 'is ascribed, not inscribed' i.e. not owned but given to something we see (Moore, 2002, p.210). Rather than review what martial arts are, Moore suggests analysing **who and how** the actor, model or practitioners *are, or have been, authenticated*. In this case, casting is reflected in the ethnicities of the actors / stunt action heroes, including costumes that help to signify to audiences about the presence of 'yellow face', 'yellow mask' or 'superman' (superhero). With inclusive casting becoming the focus of advertising production today, it is key to our understanding of racialised, mediatised constructions, particularly in martial arts where ethnicity of the cast or actors affect our perceptions of authenticity (Nguyen and Anthony, 2014; Poole, 2021). Ethnicity and race are also affected by the degree or quality of dubbing and voiceovers used in the production of all forms of media representation, from film and television through to advertising – which are often taken as signs of Western hegemony with its romanticised views of imagined geography (the Far East) and its stereotypically packaged cultural tradition (Said, 1978). These issues affect race

Thus, the performance and artistic elements of the craft that tie in with our understanding of aesthetics are considered, namely, **what is it about martial arts that is real** and enables others to be represented, and **what do such historical representations tell us about the choice of actors, models and practitioners?**

The next section provides a review of aesthetics in martial arts studies. It considers how commodifying or consuming martial arts is made more tangible by reference to its aesthetics.

### **Authentic martial arts aesthetics**

As hinted above, there are intense debates within martial arts studies as to what constitutes realness in authenticity and how aesthetics commodifies martial arts representations, and these provide the academic underpinning for this study. Martial arts studies are an emerging discipline that borrows from film and cultural studies. Herein I provide contextual understanding of authenticity in martial arts tropes under the following themes: tradition, choreography, production, and race.

**Fig.8.Martial arts aesthetics: Tradition, Choreography, Production and Race**

#### **Tradition**

- History
- Ritual
- Training
- Etiquette
- Uniform

#### **Choreography**

- Kinesthesia
- Close combat vs dance-like
- Asian body
- Yellow mask

#### **Production**

- SFX Wire Fu vs real actions
- PbP
- Dubbese Fu
- Fighting sounds

#### **Race**

- Ethnicity
- Accents
- Ethnic pride

Tradition:

The notion of East-West Orientalism provides useful postcolonial explanations for the concept of 'imagined geography' within perceptions of martial arts. Western 'Orientalist *phantasies*' relating to martial arts are linked to an Asiaphiliac fetishisation of martial arts as an ancient, timeless, often fictionalised tradition and history (Said, 1978; Bowman 2016a). These ancient rituals and techniques represent imagined idealisations of culture, where traditions are disseminated through 'wisdom' (stories or myths about lineage), history, nationalism, origins, and the masters themselves (Bowman, 2016a). Martial arts authenticity is therefore traced back through the plethora of ritualistic behaviours involved in training. This includes, lining up in dojos or training halls, customs or etiquettes, and teacher-student hierarchies (bowing), seniority as denoted through uniforms (cotton style gis or suits), belts to indicate grades or levels of seniority, rote and repetitive learning methods, use of Chinese/Japanese language, posture / stances, meditation, individual or group choreographed moves (katas or patterns), Asian calligraphy, weaponry, and ancestral reminders. Though their level of accuracy is sometimes questioned, these authentication cues are specific to how martial arts and ritualised traditions are perceived or seen through a western lens, despite the craft being introduced and adapted to western climes (Bowman, 2016b). Martial arts studies do not explicitly differentiate 'the West' into different regions though westernised perceptions of martial arts are more likely to refer to northern European localities such as England, Germany or France where martial arts have a presence. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to review the differing perceptions of westernised authenticated martial arts. Nonetheless, the main issue is this: for a more accurate authenticity debate, consideration must be given to martial arts history/heritage.

## Choreography

The bulk of the authenticity debate is concerned with the choreography or fighting styles depicted in martial arts films. 'Kinaesthesia' has its history in traditional Chinese operatic training, as undergone by martial arts celebrities such as Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee (Foster, 2005, p.194). Authenticity debates concern the styles and origins of the various art forms.

Hunt's (2003) early classification of the types of authenticity in Kung Fu films overcame some of the earlier shortcomings regarding traditions and rituals by accounting for different periods, contexts, origins, and how martial arts were used in films. Here, real or actual styles or forms of martial arts in films included Wing Chun, Wushu and Chinese boxing styles. This study also concerns traditional styles of Karate and taekwondo but excludes the modern mixed martial arts and their variants.

It is crucial to consider the popularity of different styles in different decades. The evolution of different martial arts styles over the four decades provides clues as to America and Britain's relations with Japan and China. Japanese Judo was prevalent in the 1950s before Karate became more common in the 1960s, fuelled by the arrival of Japanese Karate instructors popularising the art. This period also saw Korean instructors introducing Taekwondo. On the other hand, Chinese Kung Fu did not gain popularity until the 1970s and 1980s. It is also worth noting that Kung Fu, despite its mediatisation and realness on popular 1970s television remains relatively inaccessible to Western practitioners or audiences. The rhetoric surrounding Chinese Kung Fu as opposed to the more accessible Japanese Karate or Judo, however, illustrates the importance of geography in understanding martial arts

authentication and commodification. Within the context of geography also lies the need to account for changing broadcasting regulations regarding the degree of 'violence' permitted on television commercials.

It is not surprising that Bruce Lee's contribution to realness in martial arts is pivotal to our understanding of authenticity. Purists may argue that Hong Kong cinemas' authentic archival representations of close combat style, as favoured by Lee and rooted in Kung Fu's history, differ markedly from Westernised martial arts action cinema. Although close combat Kung Fu is a more tangible trope when compared to Wuxia films, opponents criticised Lee's dance-like performance and short rounds of fighting (Wong, 2017, p.73). Likewise, Lee's invention of 'Jeet Kune Do' is deemed impure, due to its combination of Japanese, Korean and Western boxing techniques (Marchetti, 2014). Furthermore, Lee's 'aggressive, brutal and sexual' style is deemed to be at odds with the more 'tranquil, tolerant and pedagogical' Ip Man films (*Ip Man 1*, 2008; *Ip Man 2*, 2010; *Ip Man 3*, 2015; *Ip Man 4*, 2019). It was only through the Ip Man film series and Jackie Chan's foray into martial arts comedy in the 1980s that Chinese Kung Fu was positioned as a serious martial art. It was however deemed to be inferior to the 'chop socky' aesthetics seen in Lee's *Enter the Dragon* (1973), produced for a Western colonial audience (Hunt, 2008; Wong, 2017).

Realness may also relate to the degree of real combat or implied sequence and the physical body which is involved - whilst martial arts techniques must be slowed down or simplified for the audience, demonstrations on screen may be performed alone, using stunt heroes, or using wires. This perfectly illustrates the issue of authenticity or realness in representational aesthetics.



Other research focus on martial arts cultural dynamics with respect to Asian bodies, particularly as the Westernised hegemonic marginalisation or exclusion of Asian martial artists in films occurred so frequently (Farrer and Whalen-Bridge, 2011). Authenticity here relates to the question of whether an actual actor or CGI have been used (Hunt, 2003). Lee's masculine and 'homo erotic displays of the male body', are seen as 'sexualized' and 'fetishized' (Foster, 2005; Hunt, 2008; Hiramoto, 2012). Lee's conspicuous display of the Kung Fu body contrasts sharply with the modest Chinese long gowns of Grandmaster Ip Man as portrayed by Donnie Yen (Wong, 2017; Painter, n.d.).

Another core aesthetics of martial arts is Lee's signature *yellow and black jumpsuit* – a form of 'yellow mask'. In fact, a duality of representations exists between the traditional Chinese suits to the modern yellow and black jumpsuits (Hunt, 2008). The embodiment aspects discussed here are therefore critical to this study's exploration of martial arts authentication in terms of how 'martial art-ness' is depicted and commodified.

### Production

This research distinguishes between authentic/hazardous fighting styles where true actions are taking place, and the use of stunt actors or cinematography special effects such as Wire Fu (Wong, 2017). It was common practice in the 1980s to find martial arts actors, such as Jackie Chan and Sammo Hung, attaining notoriety for performing their own stunts (Hunt, 2008).

The literature addresses the need for mediation transparency, with respect to capturing or demonstrating realness via long takes or wide frames (Hunt, 2003). In the 1970s, Bruce Lee relied on camera long shots or takes to capture the quality and

speed of his techniques on screen. Likewise, Hong Kong cinema productions would also adopt the 'pause burst pause' *combative* styles captured using 'raid zoom, overlapping or repetitive editing and audio effects of fighting'; 'somersaults and trampoline' of *Wuxia* (sword fighting) using 'bounding' frames, over informative long shots, whip pans, elliptical cutting and energetic rhythmic performances (Bordwell, 2011, p.80; Teo, 2009, p.71). Although Kung Fu action aesthetics have used illusionary choreographed representations in the form of sword fighting (*Wuxia*) or 'Wire Fu' stunts, the more authentic fistfights or Pause burst pause unarmed fights have become notorious since 1949 (Teo, 1997; Wong, 2017).

Specific to the Hong Kong Kung Fu genre is the post-production dubbing of spoken Cantonese or Mandarin dialogue with English actors' voices, which typified films from the Shaw Brothers and Golden Harvest Studios (Wong, 2017). As well as translating the original dialogue's content, dubbing had to match the movement of the lips 'in the target language' (Magnan-Park, 2018, p.219). This resulted in incongruity or 'lip lag', otherwise known as 'Dubbese Fu' (Desser, 2000; Magnan-Park, 2018, p.220). Western audiences were also exposed to 'synchresis' or perfect synchronisations that combined 'dubbing, post synchronization, and sound-effects' (Michel Chion, 1990, cited in Magnan-Park, 2018).

Dubbing also provides clues about colonial hegemony, where Cantonese or Mandarin dialogue must be dubbed for an English-speaking audience or for a former British colony, such as Hong Kong (Magnan-Park, 2018). The politics of dubbing may be reflected in overseas Chinese communities demanding that films be dubbed in Cantonese, particularly from 1938 to 1970, before Mandarin became the norm (Desser, 2000). Aside from dubbing, fighting sounds, in the form of the recognisable 'kiai' in martial arts training, became part and parcel of martial arts genres. Authentic

martial arts must therefore extend beyond physical appearances and racial characteristics to include audio sound effects, from dubbing to fighting styles.

### Race

Finally, martial arts identities provide clues about the powerful impact of the trope for the Chinese. Visual aesthetics must account for the ethnicities of the actors or models as indicators of cultural bias and authenticity in martial arts scenes (Hunt, 2003; Martin, 2018). Ethnic stereotyping of the cast may occur based on the degree of Chineseness gleaned through accents, behaviour, or dress. The actor's race, how that person is 'read', 'multiracial typecasting' and interest in mixed heritage illustrates the complexity of embodiment factors that exists (Hunt, 2003; Feng, 2009, p.14). For example, American actor Keanu Reeves' multi-racial ancestry is not acknowledged explicitly by mainstream Western audiences with respect to *The Matrix* Trilogies (1999-2003). Much has also been made of Bruce Lee's contribution to popularising martial arts in the West. As one of the most visible Chinese actors in popular media, he contributed to 'British ideas of Chineseness' and influenced 'British Chinese people's self-identities' (Chan and Willis, 2012, p.34). His multicultural upbringings (he was born in the US and raised in Hong Kong), and dual identities are also largely ignored by mainstream audiences.

Additionally, 'double consciousness' exists for Asian audiences, where they can better relate to actors with similar racial characteristics or ethnicities to themselves. Some distortion of Chineseness may be required to make the ethnic race more palatable for Western audiences, such as the use of fluid cultural references or 'metroethnicity' (Maher, 2010, as cited in Hiramoto, 2012). This was evidenced in the

casting of Caucasian actor David Carradine in the television series 'Kung Fu' (1972-1974). Despite his character having mixed heritage from a Chinese mother, the series was marred with 'yellow face' accusations as non-Chinese actors played Chinese roles or cultural references were based on the Western audience's assumptions about martial arts (and its actors). Aside from his racial characteristics, Bruce Lee introduced the thumbing nose gesture, originally seen in 1930s American gangster films, to help bolster his appeal to Western and Asian audiences alike (Hunt, 2008). The popularisation or associations of Lee's distinctive yellow and black jumpsuit in popular culture and his efforts to make 'yellow race' associations appealing to both audiences helped to restore a sense of ethnic pride for Asian audiences (Fanon, 1967).

Discussion of race with respect to Chinese and non-Chinese actors and audiences provides clarity and consistency to explanations of martial arts authenticity on-screen. This is addressed in the next section, on appropriation and racialised discourse. These issues allow for a more in-depth understanding of how race may be commodified. Likewise, the practice of 'yellow face', using Caucasian actors, illustrates the prevalence of post-colonial racial hegemony at play. Early depictions of martial arts on television showed how the commodification of race normalised stereotypes and how appropriation by mainstream cultural producers led to distorted racial constructions, as exemplified by David Carradine in 'Kung Fu'. These reductionist racial representations on-screen also explain how marketisation and mediatisation resulted in the normalising of these imageries (Saha, 2018).

This study concerns Chinese representation on-screen, the aesthetics of the Kung Fu craze in martial arts films (Desser, 2000; Marchetti, 2014), and how this involves

representing the Far East as a commodity (Krug, 2001). Martial arts films also affect how China or Chinese people are perceived worldwide, as well as the acceptance of Sinophilia or Asiaphilia in popular culture (Hunt, 2003, 2008).

## **Part 2**

### **Commodification of martial arts**

#### **Appropriation**

The reviews to date indicate that martial arts aesthetics and their authenticity requires an appreciation of cultural appropriation. Through this, a dominant culture takes or 'adopts' a subordinate one without any reciprocation, authorisation, or reimbursement (Ziff and Rao, 1997). In this study, appropriation by a dominant Western culture typifies Britain's colonial relationship with China (see Chapter 1) – the consequential appropriated representations onscreen of those being depicted meant that cultural identities or cultural markers / differences, and their impact on minority audiences are amplified (Rogers, 2006; Chan and Willis, 2012). In martial arts films, for example, the essentials of Chinese culture are taken and redefined to make them palatable for Western filmgoers, with the resulting genres, conventions, and actors' Chineseness perpetuating stereotypes (Foster, 2005). Although Chineseness is a useful signifier, in mediated content it is defined via a Western or British notion of what Chineseness is. For a silent and highly dispersed population such as the British Chinese, such distortions or exposure to a limited repertoire of their reflections in media portrayals amplifies their otherness in a way which can only be addressed through understanding of cultural production (Pollay, 1986; Hall, 1989, 2013a). Western appropriations of martial arts, therefore, requires an assessment of what constitutes traditional, authentic, or eastern styles, the inclusion of colonial or

cultural hegemony, and the role that audience and actors play in contributing to identity and the appropriation of martial arts representations (Tierney, 2006; Zukin, 2008; Feng, 2009; Gunning, 2012).

As discussed above, different racial identifiers or the multi-racial identities of the cast or actors enable audiences to see themselves reflected in advertising (Cohen, 1992). Perceptions of similarity with the cast affects an audience's affinity with the brand message – with mainstream audiences showing more acceptance of models or actors who are mixed-race (Appiah, 2001). This may be true of modern martial arts films, television and advertising where mixed-race models were more readily accepted by mainstream audiences. However, exotic 'othering' in Oriental representations with Chinese casts/actors do provide an air of authenticity.

Whilst the appropriation of Oriental culture by those attracted by cultural tradition and 'historical constructions of otherness' inform our understanding of martial arts authenticity, the literature to date *omits the role* that advertising production and creation play in martial arts constructions (Saha, 2018, p.22). As the following section demonstrates clearly, cultural production informs our understanding of the powerful role that media plays in fostering racial discourse. It allows us to understand where the hegemony of power lies.

### **Cultural production in the context of advertising**

A critique of cultural production requires acknowledgement of the rise of a global capitalist society, enabling us to understand how exactly advertisements are produced and consumed. Key debates centre around how advertisement producers make adverts or how race is explained by early Marxist thinking (Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013; Nava, 2019; Saha and Van Lente, 2022). Saha's (2018) premise is

that cultural producers in capitalist societies standardise or appropriate their representations of 'the Other'. Western hegemony over the East led to racialised depictions and recurrent racial tropes because minorities as cultural circuits of capital are conveniently commodifiable (Said, 1978; Shankar, 2015; Saha, 2018). However, cultural production research has omitted advertising production or branded communications, with its emphasis on music, film, and television. Despite this shortcoming, the paradigm shifts in racial politics, towards cultural production, stereotypes, authentic racial constructions, and racial commodities goes as far back as the 1960s, when media started to change in Britain with the onset of commercial television. There is therefore value in using cultural production to underpin this study's historical contextual analysis of martial arts advertising from 1960s -1990s (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). The concept of 'commodification', together with aesthetics appreciation or 'aesthetic expression' of a particular culture that is 'bought and sold', provides clues as to how martial arts aesthetics are controlled and appropriated (Wang and Yeh, 2005; Nguyen and Anthony, 2014; Bowman, 2016b; Saha, 2018). This would explain the long running mediatised appreciation of Bruce Lee in those martial arts films that were made with western audiences in mind. It would also enable further questioning of how martial arts in the West may differ from their traditional Asian counterparts in the context of advertising creation. Not only that, but it would close the knowledge gap with respect to how commodification may be applied to advertising as branded communication with an explicit commercial undertaking.

An effective advertising message relies on both the audience's ability to decode and an advertiser's ability to encode (Shim, 1998). With regards to audience ability to decode, the accepted view is that the audience is passive or easily duped by

advertising - although postmodernists would dispute these early assumptions (Williamson, 1978; Shankar, 1999; Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999). With regards to the encoding process, it has been said that advertising content creation is often illogical (Johar, Holbrook and Stern, 2013), relying on the intuition of the creators to tap into 'visual, textual, and auditory signs' (Nixon, 2003). These culturally specific reference points, 'circuits of beliefs' (Cronin, 2004) or 'assemblages' (Shankar, 2015) ensure that agencies continue to construct meaningful and relevant advertising for their audiences. However, these references were not always within an agency's control, instead resulting from external socio-cultural and regulatory factors.

The Race Relations Act of 1965 was the first racial discrimination legislation to promote equality of treatment for all, regardless of race or ethnicity (Brown, 2018). By 1976, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) challenged discriminatory practices, making racial discrimination illegal. Education campaigns were also introduced at this time to raise public awareness. Mapping the creative approaches adopted by advertisers during these periods of changing legislation during the 1960s – 1980s provides clues as to the efforts made by the industry to produce authentic representations through the casting of Chinese characters as part of their use of martial arts tropes (see Chapters 4 and 5).

As well as regulatory factors, advertising producers must negotiate complex client requirements and brand expectations during advertising production (Shao, Desmaris and Weaver, 2014). Indeed, Shankar (2015) and Saha (2018) recognise these assertions regarding internal and external factors whilst also arguing that these are examples of early cultural production constraints or the commodification of culture. More recently, Saha, Sobande and Titley (2024) have argued for better understanding of the roles of media producers who may be ambivalent towards more



positive representations, particularly when ‘racism does not stand still [...] (and) it is notoriously difficult to define’ (Saha, Sobande and Titley, 2024, p.9). On the other hand, the media industry’s penchant for ‘hot take’ simplifications presents challenges to those seeking impartiality. ‘Media is a space where racisms are reproduced, but also a terrain where they can be resisted and challenged (Saha, Sobande and Titley, 2024, p.21). Despite efforts ‘to increase representation of minoritised groups’ this has had ‘very little effect on the composition of the creative workforce’ (Saha, Sobande and Titley, 2024, p.23). These discussions highlight the complexities involved in the process of advertising production, which distinguish them from ‘the Other’ mediated cultural production in film, music and television. In other words, cultural production research has not considered film, music and television in its accounts of commodification until Saha’s (2018) seminal work in this area.

Past research has stated that distortions of reality are commonplace in advertising, as distortions are a form of image idealisation, and that stereotypes are a means to simplify representations (Leiss, Kline and Jhally, 1990; Pollay and Gallagher, 1990; Bonsu, 2009; Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013; Shao, Desmarais and Weaver, 2014; Shankar, 2015). Some might argue that mediated representations and cultural productions cannot escape from the use of stereotypical depictions in advertising. As detailed above, to cut through the noise and work within client and industry constraints, it would appear that advertisers are continuing to use stereotypical or fictional representations. However, this does not explain fully why *recurrent* racialised connotations occur in advertising. Likewise, although concerted efforts have been made by all forms of media to reduce negative stereotypes (Mullan, 1996), their continued practice of ‘exoticizing’ or ‘otherising’ of minority cultures (in this case, on British television) means that distorted representations have persisted

(Borgerson and Schroeder, 2002). As discussed above, martial arts tropes that were associated with positive and negative stereotyping have persisted despite efforts to improve them through regulation and impartial representation.

Bonsu (2009) asserts that media industry ambivalence results from subjugation (or conquests) in media coverage and the prevalence of a colonial gaze within many of the colonial tropes that have persisted in advertising. The tendency for media to rework and circulate half-truths about 'yellow peril' is often described as an example of the dehumanising efforts devised by those in power to put Asians in their place (Said, 1978; Bonsu, 2009). According to Drumwright and Murphy (2004), when faced with ethical dilemmas, advertising producers exhibit 'moral muteness', in that they either do not voice their concerns or they deny their existence (Bird, 1996).

Drumwright and Murphy (2004) explained how 'moral myopia [...] 'hinders moral issues from coming clearly into focus, particularly those that are not proximate, and it can be so severe that it may render a person effectively morally blind. If moral issues are not seen at all or are somehow distorted, it is highly unlikely that sound ethical decision making will occur' (p.11). This may also explain why those in power in advertising spaces may deny that Othering has even taken place, and why moral muteness is a recurrent issue in historical advertising (Drumwright and Murphy, 2004; Bonsu, 2009).

Another explanation for recurrent stereotypical tropes may lie in systemic issues within the creative industry. It is common knowledge that advertising of the past was predominately made by white middle-class males in London-centric agencies. This led to moral myopia, where stereotypical assumptions about minorities (fuelled by the marketing practice of segmentation or dividing consumers into broadly similar

groupings) were commonplace (Nixon, 2003; Cronin, 2004; Drumwright and Murphy, 2004; Ritson, 2017).

It was not until Ramamurthy and Wilson's (2013) critique of race theories relating to racialised appropriations in advertising that the concept of bifurcation was introduced. Here, representations either concern the good, i.e. the upward mobility of ethnic minorities, or the bad, i.e. the ghettoization and social unrest that marred race relations during the 1970s and 1980s. Though not entirely new – Kawai (2005) had already intimated positive and negative assumptions or stereotypes – there is scope to consider the bifurcation of using aesthetics and authenticity to theorise martial arts representations of the Chinese in Britain. This is particularly important given the negative representations of British Chinese communities in mass media, unlike the relatively positive model minorities status of their American cousins. Some would argue that Sinophilia and Sinophobia imageries also exist in the British media (Parker, 1995; Knox, 2019). As opposed to the model minorities notion in America, British stereotypes of the Chinese are focused on wealth, intelligence, and powerful characterisations. This contrasts with televisual representations of standardised tropes where British Chinese actors are cast as criminals in fantasy, action and crime genres (Parker, 1995; Knox, 2019). Sinophobic 'yellow peril' Fu Manchu representational discourse was a common feature in action-drama, such as *The Avengers* (1961–9) and *The Saint* (1962–9). However, this was soon replaced with improved representations of the Chinese onscreen due to the 1980s deregulation of broadcasting, the introduction of Channel 4, and growing awareness of cultural diversity in British television. *The Chinese Detective* (1981-2) is a good illustration of the changing repertoire of representations on terrestrial television (Knox, 2019). The main criticism of representational studies, such as Knox's seminal study, is the lack

of in-depth discussion surrounding martial arts tropes and aesthetics as a form of stereotyping in advertising specifically. Despite this *prima facie* contrasting perceptions of the Chinese in America and Britain, Davis (2020) would later argue that American depictions of the evil Chinaman during the 1882-1920s period predated the model minorities stereotypes of the 1970s and 1980s.

The differing understandings of the Chinese in Britain and America suggest that an historical contextual analysis would inform knowledge of how these stereotypes have been shaped and formed in a British colonial context. These colonial explanations would provide clues as to how advertising tropes are entrenched in British social history and why an understanding of colonial otherness is required in mediated representational studies such as this. Whilst Ramamurthy and Wilson (2013) have already provided deep analysis of race depiction in historical British advertising, their study lacked consideration of the process of advertising construction, unlike Shankar's study of American Asians (2015) discussed below. Despite this shortcoming, Ramamurthy and Wilson's (2013) study of colonial stereotypes does recognise the impact of political economy in cultural production. Although Said's (1978) premise of western dominance over 'the Other' within critical race theories is 45 years old, it has been used to explain early stereotypes, and his contributions to racialised discourse continue to underpin American or British advertising, in marketing, public relations, film, music and the arts (Shankar, 2015; Saha, 2018). Recent discussions have moved on to production, in terms of casting as a tool for advertisers to either elevate social status or make Asian Americans invisible (Shankar, 2015). Moosavi (2022, p.486) referred to similar ideals where the underrepresented are either invisible and ignored or hypervisible and scrutinised.

A final issue with advertising as cultural production is its polysemic nature, whereby the work is open to many different interpretations, meaning that our understanding or interpretation of Orientalist ideology and aesthetics in advertising is a complex issue. However, despite growing research into Asian American representations in advertising, the plethora of media featuring Asians, and the growth of martial art studies as a discipline (Shankar, 2015; Bowman, 2016b), Asian American stereotypes in film and television have excluded martial arts (Shim, 1998).

### **Part 3**

#### **Towards an understanding of martial arts aesthetics and authentication**

This new approach argues for an investigation of advertising creation that is rooted in its historical contexts and production regimes. These contextual factors affect advertising tropes and their representations and interpretations over time. Through investigating the historical construction and reproduction of 'Otherness' and the extent of rigidity in martial arts aesthetics in the context of authenticity, further understanding of race that extends beyond reductionist representations is possible. This PhD therefore contributes to debates concerning orientalist reductionism of 'the Other' and to newer debates surrounding martial arts tropes and their commodification and appropriation.

Commodification of advertising content and its contribution to racialised construction have remained relatively unexplored despite research by Ramamurthy and Wilson (2013) and Shankar (2015). This interdisciplinary study adds to knowledge regarding advertising production by borrowing from critical race and martial arts studies, and a burgeoning media industries field. It builds on Saha and Ramamurthy and Wilson's interventions to address gaps in the understanding of cultural production in the field

of advertising (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). Rather than overemphasising how advertising represents race, or how representation is read by audiences, the focus should now be on how advertising commodifies race, using the appropriation and authentication of martial arts as examples (Saha, 2018).

This literature review has uncovered considerable hegemony within race theories behind racial representations in martial arts films and cultural production in advertising. This is because transferring authenticity in martial arts aesthetics from film to advertising requires acknowledgement of a myriad of contextual factors. Although film and advertising both belong to 'cultural industries', there are differences in how martial arts aesthetics are used in these two forms of media. Cultural production in advertising is underpinned by the political economy. The Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA) was established in 1891, The Advertising Association (AA) in 1926, and The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) in 1962. The ISBA represents the views of advertisers on key industry issues such as brand safety and media transparency (<https://www.isba.org.uk/>). The Advertising Association promotes responsible advertising (<https://www.asa.org.uk/>). Finally, the ASA is the UK's independent advertising regulator that promotes ethical practice within the profession so that advertising is 'legal, decent, honest and truthful' (<https://www.asa.org.uk/>). In addition, the Race Relations Acts (see p.56) responded to post-colonial hegemonic discourse in the 1970s to overcome recurrent tropes, narratives, and visual constructions of the 'Other' in television that utilised tropes such as martial arts to distort racial depiction, contribute to stereotyping, or reinforce the status of a Western dominant culture. The Race Relations Acts and ASA are therefore impactful regulatory determinants with respect to the culture of advertising production and the commodification of stereotypes.

Although Hall's reader response to racialised representational studies is not the focus of this study, the use of critical visual analysis to authenticate or position martial arts aesthetics and the authenticity of recurrent tropes in historical advertising is required to understand the politics of representation. Likewise, Saha's (2018) extensive study of cultural industries does not consider advertising as a commercial practice, such that inclusion of critical marketing studies' ethical research on visual representation is crucial for this thesis. Schroeder and Borgerson's (2005) framework of representational conventions are informed by 'tacit interpretations' of imageries using the four dimensions of faceism, idealisation, exoticisation, and exclusion. These have been developed from Van Leeuwen and Jewitt's (2001) earlier representational analysis.

The main weaknesses of the above visual frameworks are that they omit consideration of the authenticity and cultural commodification of martial arts, as well as the depicted subject's history, which play crucial roles in informing the reading of these images. The evaluation of advertising stereotypes in print is also outdated as studies of martial arts in film and television advertising warrant multimodal image analysis. Harrison, Thomas and Cross's (2017) visual representation framework includes four contexts for the visual image, analysing the visual depictions of people with respect to their surroundings and intended audiences. These include 'exclusion', as well as 'face-ism', the latter of which is captured under 'positioning'. 'Faceism' may include 'yellow mask' and 'yellow face' for martial arts critiques, whereas the concept of 'idealisation' includes examination of the ideal martial arts body (Harrison, Thomas and Cross, 2017). Their 'categorisation', 'exclusion' and 'portrayal' contexts are pertinent to explanations of Chinese depictions in British film and television.

Table 1 Ethical visual representation frameworks

Van Leeuwan and Jewitt's (2001)	Schroeder and Borgerson (2005)	Harrison, Thomas and Cross (2017)	<i>Proposed framework for this study</i>
<b>Social role portrayals</b>		<b>Portrayal</b> social roles within the image (Van Leeuwan and Jewitt, 2001; Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005)	<b>Portrayal</b> (bifurcated) social roles within the image such as superman/hero, villain
<b>Categorisation</b>	<b>Idealisation</b> ideal types or glamorising images	<b>Categorisation</b> visual stereotypes (after Van Leeuwan and Jewitt, 2001)	<b>Categorisation</b> stereotypes manifested as embodiment/ideal body
<b>Stereotypes</b>	<b>Exoticisation</b> exotic, strange or different through skin colour or dress		<b>Exoticisation</b> cultural aspects, e.g. 'Dubbese Fu', training suits, rituals, ethnicity, Asiaphilia/Sinophilia
<b>Exclusion</b>	<b>Exclusion</b> underrepresented minorities in ads - representations or tokenism of influence groups and individuals	<b>Exclusion</b> omission of certain identity groups (Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005)	<b>Exclusion</b> omission of certain identity groups appropriation, typecasting, signifiers,
	<b>Faceism</b> E.g. men shown with more prominent faces in adverts	<b>Positioning</b> technical aspects (lighting, camera angle, space - persons and objects)	<b>Positioning</b> geography, setting, colonialism, hegemony, class, brand practice of 'yellow face' or 'yellow mask'
			<b>Realness</b> technology to capture art forms, choreography, corporeal stunts, myths, archival (Pause burst pause), cinematic (Wire Fu)

As well as acting as a useful decoding tool for the articulation and interrogation of visual depictions or imageries (denotative), visual analysis allows for socio-cultural 'concepts, ideas, and values' connected with the image to be accounted for (connotative), which are invaluable in considering martial arts aesthetics (Van Leeuwan and Jewitt, 2001, p.94, 96). In exploring martial arts authenticity through racialised depictions in advertising, I have extended prior ethical visual representational frameworks to account for post-colonial visualisations in advertising. These include:

- bifurcation (Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013, Shankar, 2019; Davis, 2020)
- cultural production (assemblage, agency factors)



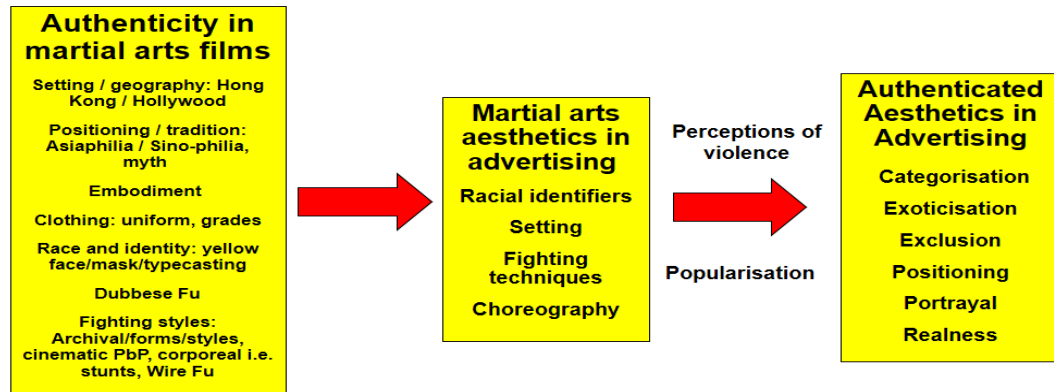
- and martial arts commodification through aesthetics and authenticity (Oriental 'phantasies', realness and casting) (Krug, 2001; Wang and Yeh, 2005; Bowman, 2016a).

Martial arts aesthetics are commodities that may be traded in and negotiated by producers – borrowed from martial arts studies (Hunt, 2003), aesthetics that indicate authenticity and realness in the art form may include tradition (style), race (actors, accents), choreography (kinaesthesia), and production (special effects) (Hunt, 2003; Foster, 2005; Bowman, 2016a; Magnan-Park, 2018). The notion of realness in martial arts advertisements refers to the degree of authenticity denoted with respect to the art form, which may help us understand why certain aspects of martial arts have been ascribed/appropriated in this research. The study has uncovered the need to address assemblages or cultural reference points in terms of how race is positioned, and bifurcation in terms of portrayal, to provide a better understanding of representational practices in advertising production.

Cultural producers are also influenced by film and television. For the Chinese in Britain, Said's (1978) premise of Western dominance over the Far East aligns with the colonial 'phantasies' (Bowman, 2016a) of traditional martial arts, with Asia-/Sino-philia influencing what is real or authentic about the common forms that have been appropriated in advertising. Likewise, the issue of hybridity and reverse cultural flow from a Western to Eastern influence add new ways of thinking about authenticated aesthetics in advertising (Doshi, 1999; Wang and Yeh, 2005; Wu and Chan, 2006). Martial arts aesthetics that are deemed authentic require an investigation of how the relevant tropes are and realness are used. This study is underpinned by an Authenticated Aesthetics in Advertising framework that contributes to our

understanding of categorisation, exoticisation, exclusion, positioning, portrayal, and realness.

Figure 3: Authenticated Aesthetics in Advertising (AAIA)



Advertising production, in the context of constructing relevant messages, entails an understanding of how text or copy or script or dialogue, as well as accents and the way the actors or models communicate, work in advertising. Nuances of race and depiction are therefore considered through extending the study from print to moving images. Earlier models have been updated to include other senses, aside from words and pictures, when dealing with action films. Here, atmosphere, emotions, cues, and movement are significant, as well as the stories or discourse about the commercials. For martial arts specifically, the kinaesthetic and aesthetic of martial arts, such as the Pause burst pause (pause burst pause) approach specific to Hong Kong films, must be accounted for in the context of advertising.

The new framework proposed for this study overcomes the shortcomings of the still image analysis used in earlier models. The predominance of print advertising goes as far back as advertising pioneer Claude Hopkin's 1923 'the power of pictures' (Rossiter, 1982). Television commercials, on the other hand, have the advantage of affecting the audience's emotions through a combination of audio, visual and verbal sequences or frames. Compared to the passivity of print advertising, television commercials, many of which are award-winning, enabled brands to engage with

mass audiences. This study draws from a mix of print and television commercials from which case studies have been developed. Finally, the complexities involved in analysing moving images in television commercials has led to content analysis of static print ads dominating advertising research. The next chapter details my rationale for selecting a non-content approach for advertising analysis.

Despite its marginalisation compared to other art forms, martial arts continue to be an influential cultural point of reference in Western society. The ready acceptance of martial arts comedy by mainstream audiences suggests that further work is required to ensure such tropes have a serious platform in advertising, given the recurrent or limited repertoire of martial arts imageries available. It is hoped that this study will add to knowledge and understanding that cultural producers who use martial arts as a point of reference or use 'assemblages' in advertising must contextualise and historicise this rhetoric in their advertising. Historical archival analysis has helped to document the development of early advertising over four decades. It is hoped that the rhetoric concerning yesteryear's 'yellow face' as well as the more recent debates about appropriation and authenticity may contribute to further understanding concerning racialised meaning construction moving forward.

Advertising featuring martial artists, or even martial arts paraphernalia, may influence the 'dignity and historical integrity' of the Chinese as minorities (Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005, p.584). Saha's (2018) recent work on cultural commodity supports the notion that martial arts tropes are broken down, reworked, and shaped to reinforce mainstream hegemonic forces. A gap, therefore, exists in advertising ethical studies that interrogate martial arts as a recurrent trope because these representations make assumptions about the Chinese on British television, in

advertising, with consequences for how they are perceived (Mullan, 1996; Borgerson and Schroeder, 2002).

## **Chapter summary**

Advertising, be it on television or in print, is meant to mirror society (Pollay and Gallagher, 1990) but also works to distort reality. This distortion may exist when brands are presented in a way that moves the audience from buyer readiness states of being unaware to being interested before desires set in. The ultimate goal might be to generate sales as exemplified by the AIDA framework by EK Strong (1925) that sought to explain how advertising works. Secondly, certain groups in society may find themselves omitted from or depicted in recurring stereotypical roles. Despite the foresight of historical analysis where renowned culturalist Stuart Hall (1997) argued that ethnic minorities have been misrepresented or distorted in popular media, these studies were largely limited to the 1990s.

This research, in contrast with previous studies, addresses the gap in the existing literature by focusing on the broader notion of advertising construction and the construction of meaning within different historical contexts. Rather than focus on a closed interpretation of representational meaning, a hermeneutics cultural production paradigm is adopted that considers how race is both constructed in advertising and constituted by the industry. I demonstrate how advertising has continually adapted its methods and techniques of cultural production over four decades.

In addition, extant literature in racialised martial arts discourse and cultural production has identified key themes that underpin authenticity in martial arts aesthetics in advertising. The research shows that martial arts tropes are linked to

the post-colonial position of the Chinese and their subsequent depiction in film and television commercials. Mapping how these historical contexts have influenced martial arts-themed advertisements provides clues to the inherent popularity of martial arts tropes in advertising. This PhD adds to our understanding of racialised representations in advertising of the past.

A conceptual framework that accounts for brand communications, from martial arts aesthetics in films and the commodification of martial arts tropes to its subsequent constructions in advertising, has been proposed. The next section provides details of the methodological approach that guides this study and discusses the importance of a historical mapping of martial arts advertising in the context of post-colonial structuralism.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodological approach deployed for the study. Firstly, following the introduction of a hermeneutic post-structuralist approach, the chapter provides my rationale for a historical analysis of the degree of martial arts aesthetics and tropes used in advertising. Historical mapping addresses the key socio-cultural, political, and economic forces that shaped cultural production. Secondly, the chapter describes archive methods, a scoping study, and my selection of television commercials from 1966-2018<sup>9</sup> and print advertisements from 1967-1998. A critical evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, limitations and biases of archival preservation and cataloguing is undertaken. Thirdly, in-depth analysis of thirty-three case studies selected for their social significance<sup>10</sup>, together with critical visual analysis of their advertising copy with visual storyboards formed key parts of the investigation. Fourthly, the chapter defends the inclusion of critical discourse analysis of media cultural texts to analyse historical contexts relating to the case studies. Finally, the researcher's positionality, including her identity and background, are acknowledged in analysing the construction of advertising stereotypical tropes before the chapter concludes with the ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

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<sup>9</sup> The scoping study generated a wider collection of advertisements from 1966 to 2018. However, the final list of advertisements selected for detailed analysis were from television and print advertising from the 1960s to the 1990s.

<sup>10</sup> The advertisements were selected based on their cultural impact, in terms of media discourse, press coverage, controversy, or references to films or television that were shown at the time.

## Poststructuralism

Advertising is notoriously difficult to decode due to its polysemic nature. Advertisers realised early on that there is no scientific cause and effect in understanding the very human side of audience interpretation. Ask any students to decode what they see in a piece of advertising, and they will each come up with different ideas. Puntoni, Schroeder and Ritson's (2010) review of extant literature in polysemic advertising uncovers the prevalence of more than one viewpoint related to audience readings of advertising messages, linked to an increasingly active audience who do something with the advertising (Shankar, 1999). By this they mean audiences are taking control and actively deriving meaning from advertising. The framing theory developed by Erving Goffman (1974) may provide clues herein. Readers or decoders of advertising typically use 'cognitive skills to make meaning out of individuals' environmental stimuli in daily life' (Ibuot, 2024, p.35). Not only that but intertextuality, where the reader combines their experience across different media spaces such as books or films, results in many different ways of seeing or reading a piece of advertising (McQuail, 2012; Ibuot, 2024). However, these unintended consequences (Pollay 1986), or misunderstandings of advertising due to the interplay between human cognition, media and social contexts, can inform culturalist and anthropological sociological paradigms.

Meaning production can either be expressed in realist, structuralist or poststructuralist terms<sup>11</sup>. Poststructuralism forms the basis of this thesis, where consideration is afforded to the different ways in which people from various cultural

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<sup>11</sup> In terms of meaning construction, realism refers to the viewpoint of one right culture prevailing whilst those that differ are wrong; structuralism where there are common structures in all cultures and everybody is the same; poststructuralism where all cultures see their world differently and we cannot say which is right or wrong.

backgrounds experience the notion of reality. This thesis emphasises historical representations of martial arts aesthetics which can provide clues as to how agencies as cultural producers see the reality of those they are depicting.

Poststructuralism offers discursive frameworks to aid in our understanding of how meaning is produced, how representations are constructed and the resultant assumptions made about those depicted therein. The historicity of the study entails an examination of martial arts tropes in advertising from the 1960s-1990s that includes the use of kinaesthetic and martial arts aesthetics in advertising production. This section considers the two periods of study – that of the 1960s-1970s, and that of 1980s-1990s.

The next section explores further philosophical assumptions that underpin this study.

## **Research Philosophy**

When discussing research philosophy, consideration of ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions is required. Through these notions of reality and knowledge, as well as the nature of values, judgements and ethics in research are considered (Saunders et al., 2019).

The ontological assumptions of this poststructuralist paradigm – where language and texts may be interpreted in an infinite number of ways (Foucault, 1976, cited in Hall, 2013b), mean that no one form exists when studying differences in advertising. This addresses the polysemic constraints discussed earlier with respect to how audiences decode advertising. We can also avoid questioning whether advertising depictions are accurate, present truths, or illustrate reality. Instead, the focus of this study is on the tradition of advertising construction where representational ideals generated by



advertising producers bring into question martial arts aesthetics that utilise genuine techniques, follow tradition, or use bona fide martial artists, for example. These representational ideals, alongside what can be deduced about society and culture from what is being presented, help us to address whether historical advertising worked to reflect and mirror cultures and audiences (Pollay, 1986).

Likewise, the ontology of the study concerns the author's assumptions of reality (Saunders et al., 2019, p.133). Within racialised studies such as this, how race is constructed for consumption in advertising and the use of cultural aesthetics to underpin racialised imageries are deemed to be consequences of capitalist and colonial hegemony (Shankar, 2019). Stereotypes of the Chinese in mainstream advertising were a regular occurrence from an ontological perspective. In this study, assumptions of historical stereotypical representations in advertising and the lack of awareness of the impacts of racial depictions during the 1960s and 1990s are crucial. Whilst it is true that the creative profession played a key role in propagating the stereotypes of this silent minority group, proficiency in reality distortion (Pollay, 1986) is also an indication of the (lack of) industry's moral compass (Drumwright and Murphy, 2004). This study therefore examines how advertisers as cultural producers have resolved any contradictions between race and aesthetics, and how ontological assumptions made about any visual distortions / misrepresentations in image studies such as this are based on the researcher's ability to read textual data (Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005)

The **epistemological** standpoint of this study refers to knowledge assumptions and ways of knowing and learning about social reality (Saunders et al., 2019, p.133).

With advertising literacy increasing, cultural texts that provide information beyond a sales message may appeal to audiences seeking education or entertainment.

Historical advertising provides an effective and valuable means of demonstrating that gaining knowledge through textual and visual data is an appropriate means of data collection. This supports the use of an interpretivist hermeneutics approach where the researcher can defend the use of historical advertising as qualitative visual data. Such visual evidence enables us to understand representational practices relating to the Chinese as a racial group, moving beyond assumptions from an ontological perspective. It also enables account to be made of those regulatory contexts seen in cultural production. These enable the author to elucidate propositions for a renewed revision of racial depictions within the advertising profession.

From an axiological perspective, this study addresses the fact that historical advertising by mainstream media failed to account for values and ethics in their depictions of minorities (Saunders et al., 2019, p.133). As McKee (2006) has highlighted, interpretations of advertising are complex, and the opportunities and limitations presented by the researcher's level of advertising literacy must be recognised. The research philosophy must reflect the author's values and beliefs in interpreting facts – as a British Chinese growing up in South Wales during the 1970s, I was familiar with adverts that featured martial arts imagery. As an academic specialising in advertising education, my advertising literacy informed and facilitated critical visual debates. With the complication of bias, I am aware of other interpretations and viewpoints which accompany visual and textual analyses that go beyond mere semiotics signification. Researcher positionality and situated knowledge are discussed at the end of this chapter.

Finally, this study is not concerned with generalising results. Instead, British colonial history and past representations of the Chinese as a minority group provide clues to

the extent to which culture has seeped into martial arts representational discourse. Such reflexive approaches enabled me to reflect, review and interrogate advertising based on my experience in the field. Access to historical archives provided a backbone to the selection of advertising. Industry/media reviews of the advertisements in question provide a clear rationale for the study that moves away from subjective memories and recall of ad-hoc advertisements. Data collection via established advertising archives is essential for the quality, breadth and relevance of media coverage that is essential to attaining a snapshot of advertising construction and production. The next section provides a further defence for upgrading representational studies to include the cultural production of race.

### **Representation vs cultural production**

According to Hall (2013a), the constructionist approach to representation involves the construction of meanings using signs and language. The assumption here is that 'cultural objects convey meaning and all cultural practices depend on meaning' (Hall, 2013a). He cites the influence of Saussure on our modern understanding of semiotics and the signifier (martial artist, the Gi, the moves, and the sounds) and the signified (what it means to us). Concepts or 'signifieds' may change their meaning according to history and how our view of the world changes. Hall believed that meaning is fluid and is dependent on our interpretative skills and decoding ability. The debates here concern denotation (simple descriptive level) and connotation (where audiences can decide its meaning) as explanations of cultural meaning. Saussurian representational discussions involve 'signifiers' and 'signifieds' working together to form a sign or denoted message (Barthes, 1957; Hall, 2013a).

In 'The World of Wrestling', Barthes later extended his work on semiology to the entertainment value that the sport provided and its ability to convey 'cultural values' (Barthes, 1972, p.14):

'It is said that judo contains a hidden symbolic aspect; even in the midst of efficiency, its gestures are measured, precise but restricted, drawn accurately but by a stroke without volume. Wrestling, on the contrary, offers excessive gestures, exploited to the limit of their meaning. In judo, a man who is down is hardly down at all, he rolls over, he draws back, he eludes defeat, or, if the latter is obvious, he immediately disappears; in wrestling, a man who is down is exaggeratedly so, and completely fills the eyes of the spectators with the intolerable spectacle of his powerlessness' (Barthes, 1972, p.14)

It is interesting to note Barthes' comparison of French (and American) wrestling to an Eastern martial art such as judo. He describes wrestling as a live theatre spectator event akin to a Greek tragedy, with its power struggles between the good and bad guys, exaggerated choreographic movements, caricatures as the drama unfolds (Barthes, 1972). Nandana and Dhanavel (2023) even applied this semiotic interpretation to cricket.

Barthes' argument is that wrestling is not seen as a sport when compared to combative authenticated modes of fighting, as seen in traditional martial arts, such as Judo and Karate. At first glance, the focus of this thesis might lean closer to Barthes' structural framework. Textual analysis could involve denotation or explicit reference to what martial arts aesthetics directly represent. This study could also utilise connotative analysis to ascertain the implicit positive or negative associations/meanings of its imageries. However, in this study priority is afforded to

the historical racial stereotypes on film and television in Britain as an essential element of the study, and how the texts tell their stories, how they represent the world and make sense of it (Barthes, 1957; McKee, 2006). Rather than assuming that cultural representation in an advertisement is THE one that reflects reality, the study acknowledges that other cultures, systems, and constraints are at play that provides equally valid different ways of seeing. In other words, representation and stereotypes require consideration of historical and structural postcolonial contexts to fully grasp hegemonic representations.

Hall's approach is not foolproof. The politics of cultural production with respect to racial representations and the reductionist power of media ownership and control have been omitted (Saha, 2018). By focusing exclusively on postcolonial culturalist representations of 'the Other', Hall's studies were limited to the audience's derivation of meaning as opposed to the political economy of culture and power at play in advertising (Hall, 1997, 2013a). Cultural production processes, on the other hand, provide a better understanding of racial meaning constructions in complex martial arts visual imageries (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). This study, therefore, identifies the agencies and personalities behind advertising construction that help to shape our understanding of difference when considered through the textual analysis of media (Saha, 2018). Any future studies must therefore go beyond mere racial representations to also explore how agencies and those in the creative industries construct race through power and history (Saha, 2018). By acknowledging the legislative and regulatory constraints that advertising agencies must adhere to as part of their cultural production process, we are better able to map the changing dynamics at play, and consequently to account for the quality of four decades of advertising.

The paradigm shift from culturalist representations and martial arts frameworks to encompassing cultural production and criticality in ethical representations enables this study to assess how cultural influences and aesthetics and racialised advertising are produced. There is therefore mileage in not engaging solely in the close reading of selected advertisements, but also in broadening researcher understanding of how historical constructions of otherness are reproduced, and how meaning is constructed within hegemonic contexts. These are key to the historical hermeneutics approach that I have adopted for this study.

## **Research design**

### **Hermeneutics for historiography**

As a poststructuralist approach, hermeneutics accounts for historical texts, providing a close reading of textual data to create multiple meaning constructions, despite the lack of a clear methodology (Gadamer, 1975). Hermeneuticists typically deal with rich and complex 'cultural artefacts such as texts, symbols, stories, and images' (Saunders et al., 2019, p.149). As a variant of interpretivist approaches, this underpinning philosophy of interpretation and understanding assumes socially constructed meanings as part of its reality. As well as providing textual interpretation or clear directions in understanding texts or how they are read, a range of interpretations is possible. Some may be interpreted as closer to the truth in terms of authenticated, real or genuine representations, yet - as discussed earlier - no interpretation is ever final due to polysemy (Hatch and Rubin, 2005; Brown and Heggs, 2011). The greatest benefits lie in the freedom this approach provides to researchers through enabling personal readings to be applied in resolving the meanings of texts, thereby allowing for hidden meanings to be uncovered.

The philosophy of hermeneutics consists of two elements (Arnold and Fisher, 1994):

1. The autonomy of the text. In this case, the advert's explicit and implicit meanings may concur with the researcher's interpretations or what the advertisers as cultural producers meant. The study may highlight additional realisations with respect to the advertising that a reader-led response would resolve.
2. Hermeneutic circle. Here, an iterative spiral of understanding exists, where the meaning of the whole text requires revisits to resolve any contradictions in interpretations.

By shifting the emphasis away from epistemological subjective interpretations to the ontological interpreter, hermeneutics enables the researcher to question the nature of reality, and how this is socially constructed (Arnold and Fisher, 1994).

Ontologically, this way of thinking requires us to go beyond the act of interpreting texts, whilst allowing for other paradigms to be identified (Arnold and Fisher, 1994).

This involves interactive and repetitive discussions or sense-making to allow the textual meanings and the cultural context of the interpreter to be connected as a prior understanding of the hermeneutic circle (Gadamer, 1975). For this study, due diligence is required to ensure that analytical endeavours open up lines of enquiry to clues about historical contexts. Rhetorical interpretations mean that words and images used in advertising may work to identify different categories or themes (Arnold and Fisher, 1994). Therefore, to add credence to what we are seeing, rhetorical reflections may also assist the researcher to understand what may have influenced the cultural producers (Caputo, 2018).

The advantage of hermeneutics for this study is this historicity of understanding, where texts may be different things at different moments in history, and this impacts upon interpretation of historical events and their meanings (Gadamer, 1994).

This is particularly important in how advertising meaning construction is linked to histories and how these then shape audience interpretations. According to Arnold and Fisher (1994), this subjective tool leads to more than one viewpoint, which is synonymous with polysemic decoding in advertising. Therefore, not only does history affect the business of meaning-making in advertising, but the audience's ability to decode is linked to their historical position.

Advertising archives such as the History of Advertising Trust rely on donations from brands, many of which are award-winning and illustrate Britain's creative prowess.

The study uses these iconic print advertisements and television commercials to suggest the implications of close reading in the hermeneutic tradition, particularly as television reflects society more closely despite polysemic interpretations. This

Gadamerian version of mutual understanding, where dialogue with a text is rooted in historical understanding, prejudice and tradition, may provide powerful insight, with the circle back and forth acting as a form of consensus making (Sikka, 2008).

This study, by adopting a hermeneutic approach, considers social practices and processes that influence cultural production, from film and television to advertising.

This study also considers the extent to which colonial hegemony, cultural production, advertising standards and regulatory bodies construct martial arts themes and aesthetics in advertising.



## **New research directions**

There is therefore scope to consider alternative ways of deconstructing advertising using a variety of textual approaches that utilise a myriad of interpretative strategies and representational frameworks, as popularised in racial studies. The need for historicity in martial arts depictions has shown that content or semiotic studies do not have a place in racialised research. Instead, this study's decoding of imageries and analysis of implicit associations have been borrowed from critical visual analysis – an ethical representational standpoint enabling a historical examination of social structures and cultural production processes that affect advertising construction.

The new approach adopted within this study entails extensive integration of historical-contextual reference points following the tradition of hermeneutics. This enables the researcher to investigate a sample of advertisements that have borrowed ideas/concepts from cultural history and to investigate how these have been transformed 'in the process of appropriating, reworking and using them' (Williamson, 1978, p.5). In fact, advertising messages that borrow ideas/concepts from history are a common practice in advertising production, particularly when we consider Sir Ridley Scott's remastered Hovis 'Boy on the Bike' (1973) advert by the British Film Institute (<https://www.hatads.org.uk/catalogue/44/hovis/hovis.aspx>).

According to Hall (2013b), understanding image reconstruction also entails ideological recreations and a critical approach involving those controlling the media. Rather than relying exclusively on how the communities are reflected or how the image is mirrored via its reconstructions, researchers should also consider discourse which critiques culture. This study therefore involves exploring how people talk and think about martial arts, and analysing the tone of debates or arguments, for

example, whether authenticity, appropriation, or stereotypes were noted, what words were used to describe racial politics, advert image choices. and how these adverts were received (Hall, 1997). There are also influences, from film to television to advertising, that may influence discourse and inform the reconstruction of representation. Within ethnic and racial studies, researchers must also understand people's cultural and colonial history, as these factors affect the meaning making process that audiences or researchers use to make sense of their world.

As highlighted above, the gaps in our knowledge with respect to the role of cultural production in racialised advertising deconstruction requires further investigation into the processes by which adverts were constructed, rather than descriptive research and hypothesis development. The exploratory, interdisciplinary nature and the mixed approaches that characterise this study further bolster the use of textual and visual approaches that provide depth and rigour for critiquing cultural meanings and cultural production (Fursich, 2009).

Hall's culturalist underpinning is updated to account for the critical visual representational frameworks proposed by Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001), and Schroeder and Borgerson (2005), and adapted by Harrison, Thomas and Cross (2017). These have been extended to account for authenticity in martial arts aesthetics and discourse that reflects creative media approaches to racialised communication.

The above has provided rationale for the visual interrogation of historical advertising that forms the basis of the data collection process for this study. The next section defends the use of historiography in advertising and brand communications using archives.

## **Advertising archival research**

This section considers the search process undertaken and is underscored by a review of the archival research methods used for the initial scoping study, before a detailed discussion of case study selection. Following in the Foucauldian tradition, that acknowledges the interplay of power relationships with advertising, I argue that archival research is key to unlocking our understanding of the past, particularly as to how historical advertising is moulded by a 'present state of knowledge' (Walden, 2023, p.54). Historical approach also enables the author to incorporate structured imagination of the past. This also provides rigour in terms of my ability to analyse and immerse myself in the process of ad production – such hermeneutic sense-making is crucial not only for me to interpret the advertising but to account for the cultural production process that advertisers had to go through. This process would typically entail remotely critiquing the advertising to interpret four decades of work between the 1960s to 1990s that was produced 25 to 65 years ago – which would invariably involve some form of mind reading or second guessing as to what the creative teams would have gone through (Collingwood, 1946; Decker, Hassard and Rowlinson, 2023) Contrary to popular belief, an 'archive' extends beyond the physical collection of materials to a tool that is used to facilitate discourse. Its changing format from physical to digital has increased its access to a wider audience, with early supporter Jacques Derrida (1995, as cited in Walden, 2023) perceiving archives to be an 'open letter' to the future (Walden, 2023, p.60). This is a crucial of racialised discourse as archives have the benefit of being captured at a moment in time, and therefore containing historical truth.

## **British advertising archives**

Advertising in Britain took off during the eighteenth century, where it proliferated after the abolition of advertisement duty in 1853 and tax on newspapers in 1855 (Strickland, 2020). Moreover, the development of chromolithography during the 1860s led to the creation of design orientated advertising materials by well-known artists. The industry has always been influenced by the art movement, particularly if we consider the design aspects of agency work. Art and advertising are complementary industries, as exemplified by the Design and Art Direction (D&AD) annual awards that seek out creative excellence in design and advertising. The National Archives currently hold some of the early artwork and slogans that came about after the Copyright Act of 1862. Aside from the National Archives, early advertising ephemera in Britain that illustrate media proliferation and growing consumerist societal changes may be found in television, cinema, newspapers, magazines, and radio. At the time of this study, many of these were stored at the Bodleian Library (John Johnson Collection) and the History of Advertising Trust (HAT) (Strickland, 2020; Chan, 2023).

Although the examination of advertising archives for research is relatively new, there has been growing interest in appealing to nostalgia in brand communications. As discussed earlier with respect to Hovis, there has also been growing interest in historical images being reproduced in recent years. Whilst it may be argued that this use of historical imageries IN advertising differs from the history OF advertising, the latter historiographical process of writing history through the production of an archive has been gaining traction.

To determine the extent of archival advertising material that featured martial arts aesthetics, this study focussed on two main archival resources; those at the History of Advertising Trust (HAT) and the British Film Institute (BFI). These archival resources have shaped the direction of this study providing breadth and depth with respect to advertising ephemera, including early print and television commercials pertaining to martial arts aesthetics from the 1960s onwards (Chan, 2023).

### **History of Advertising Trust**

Sourced from advertising agencies and professional industry bodies, HAT is the largest advertising archive in the world, with the earliest collection, dating back to 1800 (Schwarzkopf, 2013; Moir, Read and Towne, 2017). The educational charity was established in 1976 and provides an accredited archive service with the aim of preserving advertising and communications industry heritage. The charity holds some of the most well-known advertising agencies' and industry professional bodies' collections. The collections include ephemeral press, poster and commercials collections that reflect social and economic change in British society.

Digitisation has enabled access to 27,220 print and moving image texts dated 1920-2012 through HAT's online catalogue. The bulk of advertising is sourced from the BBC 'Washes Whiter' collection dating from 1955, as well as entries and winners for the 'British Arrows' collection (British advertising awards), dated 1976-2012 and 2015-2016. However, these digital collections represent only a fraction of the total holdings of the repository, with the following sources and collections requiring access to the physical archives or within HAT's repository (April 2019):

**Semiotic Solutions:** Compilation of VHS reels of television commercials collated by a company to sell to brands and advertising agencies.

**Media Expenditure Analysis Ltd (MEAL) collection 1970s-1980s:** Tear sheets of advertisements from newspapers and magazines compiled and sold to brands and agencies to monitor competitor advertising.

**Middlesex Collection 1880s-1970s:** Compilation of tear sheets from Middlesex University sourced from a company that sold the data back to the brands appearing in the advertising.

**Escott Collection:** Collection of magazines and tear sheets from local collectors

## **British Film Institute**

The BFI National Archive collection houses advertising on film reels dating from the Victorian period, circa 1837-2013 (Chan, 2023). Not all the films have been catalogued or are available commercially for viewing, such that some of the moving image collections may only be accessed through visits to the premises. This means additional time for negotiated access is required, relying upon curation managers to identify suitable materials for study. A critical evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, limitations, and biases of drawing upon archive preservation and cataloguing processes is presented at the end of this chapter.

## **Scoping study**

As detailed below, a large selection of advertising featuring martial arts themes was located for the scoping study. Materials that were not catalogued online were sought from curators or collections managers associated with the respective archives. For

the scoping study, requests were processed remotely in advance followed by a visit to the archives to view the collection on site.

For the purposes of this scoping study, advertising critique informed the initial selection and assessment of the commercials (Tag, 2011). This included initial attention being given to aspects of an advertising campaign's duration, product category and brand, appeal (humour, sex, fear, etc.), key message, model's age, gender, the setting, role, voice-over, and end lines. The scoping study of HAT and BFI repositories uncovered 69 martial arts-themed television commercials and a smaller number of print advertisements from 1966-2018 (see Tables 2 and 3).

Exploration of the BFI's online archives generated show-reels of historical advertising. With the curator's help the earliest martial arts television commercial for a breakfast cereal brand was uncovered – Kellogg's Frosties *Judo* (1966). HAT archives provided the bulk of historical advertisements in popular product categories, such as food, aftershave, clothing, and automobile.

The initial study revealed that print advertisements (magazines, newspapers, and billboards) were scarce, despite extensive tear sheet collections at HAT. Print is also more static and would only capture martial arts choreography in a two-dimensional format. On the other hand, moving images in television commercials have a broader audience reach and enable a myriad of martial arts kinaesthetics to be captured (Fairclough, 1995, cited in Wang, 2017). The scoping study also confirmed the period for the investigation should be 1960s-1990s, reflecting the change in media to early television commercials, the rise of British advertising creativity worldwide, changing regulations, and the impact of racial politics on mediated discourse. The specific contexts over four decades are provided in Chapters 4 and 5. As discussed earlier, these four decades contain examples of socially significant brand case

studies selected for their cultural impact in terms of media discourse, press coverage, controversy or reference to films or television that were shown at the time. These cases were for critical visual analysis of advertising copy with visual storyboards. The advertisements were

Table 2: List of 69 television commercials from 1966-2018 used in the scoping study:

Decade	Year	Brand	Advert	Agency (where known)
1960s	1966	Frosties	Judo	
	1967	Maxwell House	Yardley offer	
	1968	Guinness Export Ltd	The Man- Caucasian	
	1968	Guinness Export Ltd	The Man - Black	
	1968	Guinness Export Ltd	The man - Asian (Chinese)	
		Guinness	Bottle No. 4	
1970s	1970s	Guinness	Kung fool	
	1970s	Brylcream	Judo	Grey Ltd
	1971	Tankard	Judo	
	1971	Mars	Judo clerk 1	
	1972	Mars Bar		
	1973	Hai Karate	Restaurant	
	1973	Hai Karate	Pool	
	1973	Hai Karate	Kit Kat Club	Geers Gross
	1974-75	Golden Wonder	Kung Fuey: Something Very Special, New Way of Life, Fighting Stars	J Walter Thompson
	1975-76	Golden Wonder	Warriors of the World	
	1975	Wall's sausages	Japanese	Stab One Tonight
	1976	Tunes	Judo	
	1977	Beach boys	Dancers	CDP
	1978	Brick Development Association	Karate	Everetts
1980s	1981	Wrangler	Karate	Young&Rubicam
	1982	British Airways	Hong Kong	FCB
	1983	Walker's Crisps	My brother	Meares Langley Moore Ltd
	1983	Quick Dry deodorant	Coat hanger	



	1984	Comtrex		Comtrex. That's all. Nothing else
	1985	Brylcream	Judo	Grey Ltd
	1985	St Ivel (dairy foodstuff)	Karate	
	1985	Lil-lets	Judo	
	1985	British Telecom	Chinese warrior	KMP Partnership
	1987	The Guardian	Karate Club	Boase Massimi Pollitt Advertising
	1987	Allied Lyons	Karate	Saatchi
	1989	Holts	Ninja	J Walter Thompson (JWT) Manchester
	Circa 80s	KP Peanuts	Oriental Spice	
	Circa 80s	Sharwoods Stir Fry sauce	Chef	
1990s	1990	Lucozade	Judo	Ogilvy & Mather (O&M)
	1990	Tesco	Karate Chop	Lowe Howard-Spink
	1992	Rowntree Toffee Crisp	Karate	'Free the Crispy Bits'
	1993	Barclaycard	Karate	BMP DDB Needham
	1994	Pizza Hut	Kung Fu	Duckworth, Finn, Grubb, Waters
	1995	Fresh Brew Tea	Karate	Delaney Fletcher Bozell
	1996	Doritos ITV sponsorship	Bruce Lee	
	1996	Sony Play Station	Tekken	Simons Palmer Clemmow Johnson
	1997	Levi's	Kung Fu	Bartle Bogle Hegarty
	1998	Ambrosia	Wing chun	Delaney Fletcher Bozell
	1998	Volkswagen Polo	Self defence	BMP DDB (adam&eveDDB London)
	1998	Super Noodles	Shaolin	Mother
	1998	VA	Hong Kong	Rainey Kelly Campbell
	1999	Cadbury's Fuse	Kung Fuse	Euro Rscg Wnek Gosper
2000s	2000	McDonalds	Ancient Recipe	Leo Burnett
	2000	John West Salmon	Bear Kung Fu	Leo Burnett London
	2000	Flora Pro Active	Karate	Lowe Lintas
	2000	Nike	The Mission	Wieden and Kennedy
	2002	Pepsi Max	Kung Fu	CLM BBDO
	2004	Ribena CDUK	Rehearsal	
	2004	Trojan Games London	Judo	The Viral Factory

	2004	Pepsi Max	Canfu	Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO (AMV BBDO)
	2004	Sure for Men	Kung Fu	
	2005	Sony Play Station 2	Tekken 5	TBWA London
	2008	Volkswagen Golf	Fight	DDB London
	2008	Doritos	Bruce Lee	adam&eveDDB London (BMPDDB)
2010s	2010	Pfizer Nicorette	Kung Fu	Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO (AMV BBDO)
	2010	Toyota Prius	Ninja	Saatchi & Saatchi
	2012	Virgin Media	Kung Fu	Bartle Bogle Hegarty London
	2013	Johnnie Walker	Bruce Lee	
	2014	Snickers	Mr Bean Kung Fu	Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO (AMV BBDO)
	2016	Right Guard	Kung Fu fighting	TBWA Düsseldorf
	2018	Boost	Finger of Fury	Snap LDN
	2018	Audi	Escape	Bartle Bogle Hegarty London

Table 3: Print adverts from 1967-1998.

Decade	Year	Brand	Advert	Agency
1960s	1967	BMK carpets	The BMK Girl	Ogilvy & Mather (O&M)
	1967	BMK carpets	Don't let the softness fool you	O&M
	1968	BMK carpets	The BMK has a special kind of carpet for you	O&M
	1969	BMK carpets	Soft yet tough as they come	O&M
	1969	BMK carpets	The soft carpet with the quiet strength	O&M
1970s	1971	Suntory Royal Whisky	Samurai	Print
	1977	Japan Airlines	Kendo	Print
1990s		Guardian Royal Exchange group	Bruce Lee	Print
	1998	Specsavers	Contact lens trial	Leaflet

Here, the collection of advertising evidence could be contextualised into four decades (1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s), thereby enabling interrogation of the

assumptions, ideologies and evolution of themes and advertising messages over time.

Having laid the foundations for advertising historiography through archives in contextualising representational discourse, the next section considers the rationale for the cases selected for analysis to unpick racialised constructions and commodification of Chinese culture through martial arts aesthetics.

## Case studies

The aim of this thesis is to use the specificity of the martial arts representational aesthetics deployed in the advertisements in this study as a lens through which to document changes in the creative dynamics of the British advertising industry (and its regulation) over time, and how they informed the ‘quality’ and ‘cultural significance’ of the case studies chosen.

From the advertisements that were featured in the D&AD Annuals, 28 case studies were developed and analysed in detail using critical visual analysis. In line with the tradition of hermeneutics, advertisements were selected based on the level of publicity/media discourse generated (see critical discourse analysis below), their historical/social significance (as explained in the introduction), and press coverage of controversial martial arts aesthetics depictions that occurred at the time of the advertising execution<sup>12</sup>/dissemination.

Table 4. Rationale for the selection of case studies

No.	Advertisement	Reason(s) for inclusion
1.	Kellogg's Frosties 'Judo' 1966	First ever recorded martial arts television commercial located at the British Film Institute
2.	Yardley & Maxwell House 1967	Early black and white UK ad featuring Judo
3.	Whitbread Tankard 'Judo' 1971	First colour TV ad – authentic Judo
4.	Mars Bar 1972	First ever ad featuring a bona fide Judoka

<sup>12</sup> An advertising execution refers to the placement of the advertisement in the media space

5.	Wrigley's Tunes 'Judo' 1976	Memorable ad featuring authentic Judo
6.	Hai Karate 1969-1976	Most recalled ad for this topic
7.	Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey 1974-76	Most complete set of advertising from BFI
8.	Wall's Sausages 'Japanese' 1976	Earliest racially sensitive ad
9.	Guinness 'Kung Fool' 1977	References to Kung Fu television series
10	Brick Development Association 1978	Broader product category for business-to-business market
11	Walker's Crisps 'My brother' 1983	A memorable racially sensitive ad with reference to Bruce Lee
12	KP Peanuts Oriental Spice 1980s	A short but comedic take
13	Mum's Quick Dry Deodorant 1980s	Brief blink and you'll miss It featuring the Gi with music
14	Brylcream 'Judo' 1986	Fast paced take with music
15	BT 'Chinese Warrior' 1986	Explicit reference to Chinese
16	Lucozade Judo 1990	Fast paced ad – brief reference to Judo
17	Rowntree Toffee Crisp Free the Crispy Bits 1992	A departure from the norm located in the archives – Karate Kid influence
18	Knorr Stir Fry Oriental Spices 1990s	First reference to Tai chi
19	Barclaycard Karate 1994	Features Rowan Atkinson - comedy
20	Pizza Hut Kung Fu 1995	Stereotyping through casting; explicit reference to China
21	Premier Beverages Fresh Brew Tea Karate 1995	More animation – focusing on sounds
22	Levi's 'Kung Fu' 1998	Creative revolution by Jonathon Glazer
23	Ambrosia Splat 'Wing Chun' 1998	Low quality - Bruce Lee influenced but comedic
24	Batchelors Super Noodles Shaolin 1998	Comedy ad – filmic influences
25	VW 'Self-defence' 1999	Cerebral ad - creative revolution
26	Cadbury's Fuse Kung Fuse 1999	Low quality - military focussed
27	Proctor & Gamble Fairy Judo 1999	Low quality -featuring children at the dojo

The advertisements selected have a martial arts focus and may or may not feature actors or models of Chinese or East Asian descent. These advertisements may include the training hall, Karate gis or Kung Fu suits, aspects of martial arts choreography, a Chinese restaurant or laundry setting, recurrent characterisations, and stereotypes and scripts. Majority of the advertisements were award winning from established advertising agencies such as JWT, Ogilvy, CDP, AMV BBDO, and Saatchi.

As part of the analysis, storyboards, advertising copy, and advertisers' comments provided backstories to the advertisements (see below). Storyboards were constructed by the author for all 28 television commercials to capture core frames in each television commercial. The advantage of using storyboards is discussed later in this chapter.

I also collected the following print advertisements as examples of martial arts aesthetics and authenticity. The reasons for their selection are provided below:

- Luxaflex Venetian Blinds 'Karate Expert' 1966 -earliest print advert featuring a karate expert
- BMK Carpets 'BMK Girl' 1967-1969 – homage to Diana Rigg of *The Avengers* (1961-1969)
- Olympus Karate man 1979 – with bona fide judoka Terence Donovan
- Specsavers Contact lens free trial campaign 1997
- Guardian Royal Exchange Bruce Lee (1980s/1990s)

The BMK *Judo* (1967-69) print advertisements, Maxwell House *Yardley* (1967), and Guardian Royal Exchange (1980s/1990s) were found by the curation team at HAT. Unsurprisingly, the earliest martial arts advertisements commercials selected for analysis were black and white (Luxaflex, 1966; Olympus *Karate man*, 1979), reflecting growth of black and white television in the 1960s. Two of the advertisements belonged to the author's own collection: Specsavers *Contact lens* (1997), Ambrosia *Splat* (1998), with Levi's *Kung Fu* (1998) containing material obtained directly from the PR agency responsible for the advertising in 1998.

Once selected, a video recording or screenshot of the advertisement was captured for analysis using a mobile phone camera device. Consent was obtained from the repositories to utilise the advertisements for research purposes.

Although the analysis includes aspects of animation, such as Kellogg's Frosties (1966), these cases were few and far between. Additionally, racialised constructions in animation, let alone martial arts themed advertisements, are not the focus of this thesis.

## **Critical visual analysis (CVA)**

According to Van Leeuwen (2000), words provide facts, information, or product specifications, where to buy, etc. In contrast, images provide interpretations via suggestions or connotations that are often glamorised, insinuating desires to susceptible audiences, and encouraging prohibited indulgences. For image-based studies such as advertising, commercials that depict or visualise martial arts aesthetics were the subject for investigation, and where these were implied, for example via the clothing worn by the actors in a scene, or not explicit in their associations, such as the Luxaflex print advert where the actor has his back to the camera, assumptions were made about meanings. This involved seeking cues and hidden meanings. CVA provides the researcher with a systematic assessment of typical or recurrent tropes in martial arts advertisements, such as manifestations of portrayal through racial identifiers and choreography, as discussed in Chapter 2. It also enables the researcher to develop visual genealogies from historical imageries that have been contextualised to provide clues with respect to culture. More importantly, CVA is borrowed from art history where the ability of the

decoder/researcher to pick out relevant martial arts aesthetics in the messages is crucial (Schroeder, 2006; Minowa, Maclaran and Stevens, 2015). This art emphasis also defends the view that advertising is a 21<sup>st</sup> century art form and follows the industry's recognition that Design and Art Direction (D&AD) still play a key role in how the industry rewards creativity in advertising and brand communications. The next section provides rationale for the questions that I have asked as part of my analysis.

O'Barr's (1994) focus on advertising discourse provides useful parameters for this study's CVA. In particular, the flow of representation about commodities and society over time for contextual studies such as this enabled me to ask what the primary purpose of the ideas behind the advertising was – the template that I have used to structure my findings in Chapters 4 and 5 therefore include a section on the aims of the advertising and what it means for the brand to feature martial arts as an advertising theme. Not only that but noting recurrent or common ideas, themes or concepts relative to other advertisements, as well as how the advertising diverges or converge would be prudent. O'Barr (1994) also recommends evaluating secondary discourse i.e. the way society and its cultural norms are changing. This might include the changing role of women depicted in advertising from the 1960s when compared to the 1990s for example. Likewise, whether tropes contain idealised images or contain recurrent generalisations as shown in the use of martial arts aesthetics are noteworthy. A core component of CVA in advertising is the interrogation of the interactions and social relationships that the cast / actors have that is also advocated by Van Leeuwen (2000) and Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) – see later.

Facilitating CVA from an advertising perspective would therefore include questions such as.

- What is the product / service being advertised?
- What is the core message that the advertising is trying to convey?
- What aspects of society are being shown?
- What are the recurring depictions of the Chinese?
- How do product categories differ?
- How limited is the advertiser's knowledge of those depicted?

No CVA would be complete without reference to Tag's (2011) advertising critique that require researchers to not only consider the product category and brand appeal (humour, fear, etc.) but also the key message, actor / model's age, gender, the setting, role, voice over, and end lines. Analysis of scenes and characters are crucial in martial arts studies, with demographic data such as gender, nationality, occupation and class, or 'typical' roles, being important factors that must be noted. In addition, recurrent roles such as gangs, teachers or students, or martial arts practitioners with stories of vengeance (heroes or villains) and honour, power, or wealth are frequent themes popular in Kung Fu films (Graper, 1983). These recurrent character depictions and how they influence the audience's view of self and 'the Other' are relevant to this study.

As discussed in Chapter 2, this study is concerned with what's real or genuine in terms of martial arts depictions, the reader's understanding of the text and visualisations of how race is constructed in advertising. Likewise, the influences behind them, and how these have been manifested in advertising (McKee, 2006). Core questions to ask here would entail relating to the way actors or casts interact and the notion of structuring absences for those whose representations have



been excluded. McKee (2006) also suggests questioning what the casts / actors do to others (and vice versa) and whether bifurcated roles exist as promulgated by Ramamurthy and Wilson (2013). Similar to Graper (1983), any criminal or deviant activities should also be noted when it comes to racialised constructions in advertisements. The question of visualising one individual or depicting homogenous groups of people are common questions in racialised representations and martial arts – in the latter, one person performing stunts would connote positive or negative associations to those depicted in a group due to the cultural / racial categorisations / stereotypes.

Facilitating CVA from a racialised perspective would include questions such as;

- To what extent is martial arts synonymous with East Asian/Chinese actors?
- Is it possible to reverse the roles for Caucasian vs Chinese?
- Martial arts students vs Sifu / Sensei (master)
- Use of non-Chinese actors or 'whitewashing'?
- Extent to which Chinese actors are shown within a martial arts action sequence as heroes?
- Are Chinese actors shown in subservient roles / as gang members? Caterers?
- Martial arts may depict one person with an adversary or in a class/hall with many?
- What do the gis or Karate suits connote? Is that portrayed negatively or positively?
- Extent 'yellow face' or 'yellow mask' is shown, e.g., focus on skin colour and eyes/other Chinese characteristics

From Van Leeuwen (2000), the key parameters to consider in CVA concerns inequality and power and how casts are depicted in the advertising and their relationship to the audience. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) extended any research that deals with imagery and symbolism to include the relationship with the viewer

and those depicted. This requires us to consider the quality of the relationships depicted by the actors, identifying those who dominates vs those seen as subordinates. Questions to facilitate CVA would include:

- Who is in charge? Who is the master and who is the servant?
- Social distance - how close or distant are the actors?
- Is the audience Caucasian or ethnic or Chinese?
- Social relation i.e., power differences that are vertical or horizontal
- Social interaction
- Are the actors ...above or below us?
- How involved or detached are they?
- Are they strangers?
- How are they objectified?

Finally, Harrison, Thomas and Cross (2017) provide the most relevant and detailed CVA that incorporated Schroeder and Borgerson's (2005) framework, which helped me to interrogate martial arts themed advertising:

- Categorisation –stereotypes that can be manifested as 'Dubbese Fu', embodiment –the ideal body
- Exoticisation – cultural aspects, e.g. language, training suits, rituals, ethnicity, Asiaphilia/Sinophilia
- Exclusion - omission of certain identity groups through the practice of 'yellow face' or 'yellow mask', appropriation, typecasting, signifiers
- Positioning - expansion of this to allow for geography, setting, colonialism, hegemony, class, brand
- Portrayal – social roles within the image such as 'superman', villains
- Realness – technology to capture aesthetics, martial arts styles, choreography, corporeal stunts, myths, archival, cinematic (Wire Fu)

According to Wang (2017), Chinese culture is represented as an exotic and magnified world of martial arts. Each character in Wang's Kung Fu study has at least one martial art related aspect to their visual image, presented in typical Kung Fu-style postures. Aspects such as training suits therefore provide clues about the level of Kung Fu-related aesthetics and ultimately links to Chinese symbolic philosophies, such as yin and yang.

In terms of martial arts, CVA would entail a review of the following questions:

- Are there distinctions re: dialects (Cantonese/Mandarin)?
- What is the martial artist ideal?
- What kinds of martial arts rituals are being shown?
- Is there a preference for particular (mixed) ethnicities?
- How clear is the link with the brand message?
- How real are the martial arts, i.e. stunts, use of Wire Fu, or camera trickery?
- Is there a distinction between different forms of martial arts?

### **Summary of CVA of martial arts representations in advertising**

Building on previous CVA parameters and explanations (Harrison, Thomas, and Cross, 2017; Van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001; Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005) we can extend ethical visual representation research into an intertextual form of inquiry. Multimodal visual representation of television, film and advertising necessitates simultaneous investigation of an advert's production, content, and reception to ensure that contextual factors (such as history that will influence the text, social actors connected to the text, and the impact of the text on various constituencies) are thoroughly researched (McKee, 2006).

As discussed above, the criteria for selecting advertisements for case study analysis was based on how conceptually interesting or socially significant they were (Rose,

1997). As a practising martial artist of British Chinese descent, I also provide credence to the critique of racialised martial arts aesthetics and representation (Bowman, 2016b; Chan, 2023). An interdisciplinary approach that extends martial arts studies to critical race, media and critical marketing studies is essential to enable the reader as researcher to fully embrace the nuances in martial arts depictions in films and their subsequent adoption in advertising.

A thematic template provided structured data interpretation – I coded and transcribed visual images and product copies or texts. This method of analysis provides a systematic derivation of concepts that are typical or recurring in martial arts-themed advertising, to enable the researcher to seek commonly used aspects such as manifestations of race or ethnicity, and authenticity or appropriation. In addition, as image-based studies influence how they are interpreted by the researcher, there is a strong defence for intertextuality i.e. different ways of framing these interpretations.

In addition, martial arts aesthetics used in advertising content production leads us to question who generated the content and during which period the advertising took place. This is because agencies and the production team involved provide clues to the use of recurrent tropes in advertising. My analysis not only identifies the advertising agency responsible for each campaign listed in the case study, but also its art directors/producers (where known), as well as the client or brands that the campaign relates to. I also provide background to the specific product category alongside market and consumer insights (where relevant).

CVA approaches also provides flexibility in how advertising and other modes of representation work together so that not only adverts are studied, but account is also

taken of the influences of television and film. To this end, the inclusion of commentaries and documentary coverage of the advertising, and evaluation of film and television inspirations for it, offers scope for considering wider cultural meanings in the use of martial arts representations.

As highlighted above, this study addresses cultural production and commodification of culture by agencies (as opposed to mere cultural studies or race theories) and the sorts of pressures faced during advertising production (Saha, 2018). This includes political economy analysis of capitalism so that racial stereotypes or tropes are not re-used time and time again (Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013; Shankar, 2019).

Consideration is therefore afforded to the political economy and constraints within which advertising creation took place from an agency perspective. This is key to my mapping of not only the creative advertising executions over time, but also any changing practices that would validate textual interpretations therein. The investigations in this thesis provide clues as to how race may be dehumanised and commodified through common stereotypical representations of the Chinese as martial artists in post-colonial times, and crucially, interrogate the meanings behind these tropes.

In sum, there is a lack of research relating to how to evaluate advertising with respect to stereotypes, with many studies focusing on semiotics or content analysis of images. The latter, though popular in cultivation and portrayal studies (Pollay, 1986), focuses exclusively on the frequency of occurrence of martial arts portrayal and ignores the need for critique of the advertising imageries used within a historical context. However, as highlighted above, there is a shift away from content-based 'scientific' and semiotics analysis to more interdisciplinary approaches with textual and critical discourse analysis (CDA) that goes beyond mere audience recall, to

media discourse acknowledging media responses to racialised advertising (Van Leeuwan, 2000; McKee, 2006). As interpretative strategies, textual analysis (also referred to as thematic, critical discourse, ideological, genre, or cultural analysis) hinges on the interpretative capabilities of the researcher to 'read' cultural practice or products.

## **Storyboards**

Multimodal approaches that incorporate text and image analysis, where one mode informs the other, have seen a resurgence in creative, visual, and media studies, as well as finding a place in cultural studies. Ayrton (2020) supports this epistemological approach for the value it offers researchers a perspective about internal, rather than the external factors that influence audiences. A key part of the data manipulation for this study, therefore, involves converting the moving images contained in television commercials into six frame storyboards. Dating back to the 1900s in comic strips and Walt Disney productions, storyboards are commonly used in film production. Their value lies in their ability to generate texts visually, providing visual sketches or outline drawings for each scene, camera shot, or frame, thus helping producers to plan or visualise their work from beginning to end prior to filming (Hart, 1999; Labacher et al., 2012).

In advertising, storyboards are a visual conceptual tool that creatives and filmmakers use to visually organise their ideas for scripts or stories, and they may also be used post-production, e.g. to provide support for PR campaigns and to gauge or guide media perceptions or reading of advertisements. Storyboards are a critical part of the advertising creation process, also commonly used in creative visual studies, and

visualising the data of televisual imageries in this way enables analysis of quality in martial arts aesthetics or kinaesthesia as an 'essential ingredient of knowledge-making' (Gergen and Gergen, 2016, p.169).

The process of storyboard construction for this study entails capturing a sequence of key scenes, frames, or camera shots from a video recording of the television commercial to produce a visual story outline from the start to the end of the story.

This innovative approach enabled me to focus on the following aspects of visual analysis:

- relate the words, copy, or headlines to the images,
- focus on the visual backgrounds and note the setting,
- sound text including dialogue, voice-over, and music,
- character positioning and point of view or perspectives,
- shot angles, including widescreen or camera angle to capture fight action,
- what is included or excluded from the frame,
- style – martial arts form being depicted as well as the genre, theme, or appeal,
- use or significance of all aspects of colour, e.g. clothing and the white suit or gis as well as film aesthetics.

In addition, it was imperative to note the title of the advertisement, date, and credits, e.g. agency, production or PR company, as well as to collate notes with respect to each frame.

The benefits of storyboards are manifold:

- They allow the author to record, analyse and manage the dearth of data in a visual way, rather than trawling through all the videos individually,
- They close the gap with static print advertising, enabling the author to focus on the dynamism of film and textualizing the narrative (Ayrton, 2020),

- Capturing keyframes enables interactive links in the data to be uncovered that might otherwise be hidden,
- They facilitate conjectural analysis, where thoroughness with respect to repetitive discussions or sense-making between what we see and what was happening in the time period is critical. Moving between the general and the specific is at the heart of the learning which is harnessed through this creative process (Ayrton, 2020),
- The techniques used enable the researcher to break down a complex moving image into minutiae for representational aesthetics analysis, facilitating creative comparison of print and television commercials.

Awareness of how the images under study position the author as a viewer must also be accounted for (Rose, 1997). Analysis must be reflexive, requiring the author to account for her own views and experiences and to acknowledge the implicit role that she has with respect to the topic, as well as providing the time and opportunity to reflect and generate new insights. The author, by partaking in the construction of storyboards, is better placed to use the information from moving images to reflect, build upon knowledge, and permit deeper analysis of the script and storyline behind the advertising and copy. This is crucial to facilitating an understanding of the backstories of the advertising messages that influence culture.

For this study, and borrowing from Ayrton (2020), I chose to focus my interpretation of the advertising by reviewing the visual backgrounds of the storyboards. I considered what was included or excluded from the frames in the commercials. It was also crucial to relate the words to the images. Close analysis of the following was important:

- Setting, e.g., training hall, Chinese restaurant or laundry setting
- Sound text, e.g., gongs, dubbing
- Character positioning e.g., master vs student



- Voice over and the accents used
- Production techniques in terms of the shot angles or point of view
- Style, use/significance of colour e.g., Karate gis or Kung Fu suits

The above were used to construct cases of deconstructed advertising featuring martial arts tropes (as detailed in Chapters 4 and 5).

### **Critical Discourse Analysis**

CDA has evolved as an established academic discipline to study the interplay of discourse and power. As discussed above, Foucauldian principles suggest that cultural and historical contextual factors inform discourse, leading to the development of an analytical method, termed critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Hall, 1997, p.46). Fairclough, Mulderrig and Wodak's understanding is that discursive approaches are not only influenced by the social world in which they are situated, but that they also shape it (Fairclough, Mulderrig and Wodak, 2011). Discourse analysis examines how meaning is constructed in a text, through analysing the language or symbols used, particularly with regards to 'power and control as they are expressed through language within the wider context by society and culture' (Bazeley, 2013, p.216). News discourse, including commentaries and press coverage by journalists, with editorial content and reviews collected between 1960s-1990s, would facilitate the identification of discursive frames embedded in various texts. News media and cultural texts are informative of - and informed by - historical context, allowing us to review the discourse surrounding journalistic representations about diversity and representation from the former 'yellow face' marker to more recent ideas surrounding authenticity or appropriation, such as 'whitewashing' (Hall, 1997; Molina-Guzmán, 2016).

According to Van Dijk (2001, p.466), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) studies how power and inequality are ‘enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk’. Expanding this repertoire to general reflections about the advertising that occurred during various periods is crucial. Dominant discourse includes those from industry experts, art directors and advertising critics in official publications, and blog posts are essential. These ensure a broad spectrum of views to inform understanding of the impact on culture. By using key search terms from the 1960s-1990s, such discourse provides clues to the hegemonic tensions that existed within British film and television in terms of representation.

Source	Information
Campaign 1968-2000	Campaign dates back to 1968, and is a global business magazine published by Haymarket Media, covering advertising, media, marketing and commercial creativity.
The Sunday Times Magazine 1962-1980	Launched 4th February 1962, The Sunday Times Magazines provided useful context to the era and a backdrop to the advertisements. The magazine was the first colour supplement in the UK and was the most popular newspaper magazine, known for its quality journalism, photography, and interviews. The collection provides clues to the trends and views prominent in Britain and around the world. Creatives with media accounts linked to the magazine used it as a means to showcase their best work. The magazine features provided insights into topical issues each week.
Design and Art Direction (D&AD) Annuals 1964-2014	D&AD Annuals date back to 1964 and showcase the best creative work in advertising and design worldwide. These provided clues to the work that performed well, as well as the style of advertising that was prominent at the time
Newspapers: Daily Mail, The Times, Daily Telegraph, The Independent	Newspaper articles focused on the health benefits and the public's need for information about martial arts (Karate initially, before including other forms, e.g. Kendo, Tai Chi), including the need to control it. The tone of the relevant features in these newspapers has been scrutinised
Dominant discourse	Opinion leaders, bloggers, actors, who have provided their take on historical advertising
Marketing 2005-2016 Marketing Week 2013-2016 PR Week 2005-2019	These industry publications provided insights into how creatives may be influenced by martial arts through their own participation in the sport
Box of Broadcasts	Archive of content from nine channels: BBC1 London / BBC2 / BBC4 / ITV London / Channel 4 / More4 / Channel 5 / BBC Radio 4 / BBC Radio 4 Extra. Used largely for educational purposes, this resource provided context to past advertising
BFI player	TV programmes and documentaries about the Chinese during wartime Britain, Chinese caterers and Chinatown from 1965 – 2014
YouTube	Influencers and opinion/community leaders: information about the British Chinese community and identity, TV programmes.

Table 5: Sources of discursive material

The articles obtained for this study originated from *The Sunday Times* or *The Times* – these provide clues to the influences that creatives may have had in constructing advertising messages. Both the *Sunday Times Magazines* and *D&AD Annuals* have credentials amongst the creative industry in that these are the preferred mediated content for dissemination of work, hence their use in mapping historical advertising discourse over four decades. By studying analysis of thinking that was important at a particular point in time, I was able to learn about martial arts aesthetics and advertisements in the form of discussions, reflections, and articulation of the impacts of the imageries used, concerns about the racial political agenda, and controversial representations (Hall, 1997). These publications are supported by other postcolonial researchers such as Ramamurthy and Wilson (2013).

Embracing CDA also enabled a form of ‘triangulation’ of multimodal/multi methods, using a combination of textual and discourse data sources (which are also commonly seen in conjectural analysis) (Creswell, 2011). It also enabled me to take into account the embedded cultural responses to racialised advertising occurring in different decades, as well as the influences on film and television (Van Leeuwen, 2000; McKee, 2006).

Conducting historicity analysis of racialised aesthetics in advertising is complex, and the next section considers the role of the researcher.

### **Situated knowledge and cultural subjectivity of the researcher**

As the hermeneutics tradition has shown, a neutral reading of texts is not possible, as interpreters always have their take on any text that they see. Subjects that deal

with stereotypes may affect the level of interpretation undertaken due to the researcher's own position. Ontologically, hermeneutics enables the researcher to study a broad range of advertising images - in this case, a collection of television commercials and print advertisements have been selected which span over four decades. Hermeneutics offers researchers a close reading of textual imageries and enables them to use their interpretations to decipher any relevant preunderstanding/prejudice/prejudgment as reference points and to track these back to culturally produced contexts (Arnold and Fisher, 1994). This study's combination of learnings from stereotypical literature with visual textual analysis has facilitated reflexivity, tacit beliefs, and knowledge so that findings flow from the researcher (Arnold and Fisher, 1994). This reflexive tool allowed me to consider my position and role in the research process whilst also considering my 'preunderstanding' (Arnold and Fisher, 1994). In fact, researcher positionality - normally coming under the domain of feminist studies, queer epistemologies, and human geography - provides insight into situated knowledge (Haraway, 1988; Rose, 1997; Simandan, 2019). How we situate our knowledge depends on the interpreter/researcher. In other words, a researcher must account for the interplay of their understanding of theories, access to academic knowledge, archival connections, agency awareness, and privileged access to information (Rose, 1997).

In terms of privileged access, I took up Shotokan Karate in Leeds in 1996, just as its popularity soared and its position as the most common form of Karate meant it was offered in gymnasiums and training halls across the UK. In contrast, Chinese Kung Fu was not as accessible. When I moved to Manchester, I started Judo with Akinori Hosaka (8<sup>th</sup> Dan) before discovering a preference for taekwondo with Master Khaled Iqbal (7<sup>th</sup> Degree). After six years, I sought more traditional styles, like Shito-ryu

Shukokai Karate under Sensei Denis Casey - the first non-Japanese person to be officially graded to then 8<sup>th</sup> Dan by "The Shukokai" in Japan. In 2017, I attended a Wing Chun taster session in Hong Kong with Master Sam Lau – a disciple of Grandmaster Ip Man and assistant instructor for Yip Man Martial Arts Athletics Association. Since 2020, I have been training in Tai Chi with Master Chen Deqing, a performer and martial artist with more than 20 years' experience teaching and performing Chinese martial arts. My experience echoes those highlighted in martial arts discourse, which states that some degree of martial arts 'lived experience' is essential for interrogating the issues of authenticated representations. Such insider knowledge provides me with credence to critique more than one form of martial arts. In addition, this study requires me to consider visual metaphors during analysis and to embrace a reflexive approach that accounts for my identity and how I use it to add insights to the research. Due to researcher positionality, interests, and prejudices, the assumption must be made that data collection and analysis may be imperfect (Simandan, 2019). The onus is for the researcher to ensure that all aspects of ad selection and its analysis are laid bare. Situated knowledge suggests that complete knowledge is not always achievable because ad analysis and intuitive interpretations that typify advertising may be marred by knowledge and the limitations inherent in the worldview of the researcher.

It is therefore imperative to account for the author's identity, 'lived experience' and cultural position before analysis of the impacts on others is possible. Others may argue that the closeness that the author has to the subject invalidates the study. However, the focus on images generated elsewhere hermeneutically means that common bias or critiques may occur.

A researcher's 'positionality' may also be drawn from one's community. The author's 'ascribed closeness' to her community ensures a degree of legitimacy and endorsement of her social-cultural perspectives that underpin visual analysis and interpretation (Banks, 1998, p.475). Likewise, the degree of 'insiderness' with respect to martial arts means that my views and perspectives may be more closely aligned with those of the Chinese community, particularly the British Chinese. Some might argue that the reverse may be true and that those in the community may not share the same views. Nonetheless, this study enables me to use my knowledge and experience for detailed analysis providing a valid 'nuanced and unique insight about the underrepresented' (Banks, 1998, p.475). These assumptions were tested via a scoping study, outlined earlier in this chapter, to assess the level of knowledge of the community, with my knowledge of a range of martial arts providing credence to the study. This study is also the first time that a British-born Chinese has written about British Chinese experiences of martial arts representation in this country. There are therefore shared experiences of representational limitations. Finally, the author's role as an academic specialising in advertising education means she is well placed to use her advertising literacy skills to facilitate critical visual debate.

According to Chavez (2008), consideration of researcher positionality is crucial as it enables the researcher to acknowledge her sense of self and account for any prior knowledge or experience. Insider/outsider positionality relates to the degree of 'intellectual, cultural and social distance' (Chavez, 2008, p.476) with respect to an indigenous community. However, discussions of positionality cited here and elsewhere (Arnold and Fisher, 1994; Banks, 1998; Serrant-Green, 2002; Hamilton, Dunnett and Downey, 2012) involve personal interviews and interaction between the researcher and the research subject. In contrast, this study's emphasis on a close

textual reading of advertisements ensures that researcher values are not imposed on interview subjects, so that positivistic representations or interpretations are minimised. Instead, insider self or identity, through the author's interpretations of depictions in different periods, provides insight into what is relevant at the time historically. The author must recognise or acknowledge her position/identity as the researcher to account for all forms of cultural subjectivity.

Likewise, the researcher's own ethnic identity, and those of the community being researched, relate to the notion of insider-outsider (Serrant-Green, 2002). The author's view of 'the Other' is informed by her cultural background as a British Chinese who grew up in Britain during the 1970s and 1980s where the predominantly white male gaze was commonplace. These nuances and historical reflections are absorbed into the analysis.

However, a caveat of interpretivist approaches is that closeness to the topic under investigation may have a lasting impact on the author, particularly when researchers become 'affected, desensitised or transformed by the study' (Hamilton, Dunnett and Downey, 2012). The identity or emotional baggage of the author may increase because of the time spent on the study, and this may also affect how knowledge is constructed and debated. On the other hand, apathy to the issues may set in.

However, these challenges to the degree of objectivity in research are offset by studies where 'the *discovery* of the self is an integral aspect of discovering the *other*' (Humphries, Brown and Hatch, 2003, p.3). Insider subjectivity provides the required in-depth insights into a myriad of issues with respect to people, places, and events that can better support some of the complex interpretations/observations that are the domain of poststructuralists and postmodernists (Chavez, 2008).

Similarly, the author, although an advertising lecturer, is not a creative director per se. Concerted effort must be made to acknowledge that theories formed about advertising construction for this thesis are based on her interpretation and that this may differ from analysis by a bona fide creative within the industry. Despite this, the author is experienced at ad critique and has collaborated with ad agencies.

## **Ethics and limitations**

This section discusses some of the challenges in historiography and advertising ephemera that will impact on authentication and commodification of Chinese culture through martial arts aesthetics/stereotypes in British advertising (Chan et al., 2020; Chan, 2023).

Firstly, focusing on archival data and discourse surrounding the reception of historical television and print commercials involves limited risk to the public or audience. Some degree of cultural sensitivity was required to avoid inadvertently offending the Chinese population or the general public. There are also no known ethical risks to Chinese communities or advertisers involved in ad production, particularly as the data collection did not require interviews or confidential or sensitive data. Likewise, the historical archives – their images and textual data – are available within the public domain and provide a readily accessible source of rich data for analysis.

Secondly, the study under investigation focused primarily on how representational imageries for martial arts aesthetics were deployed in advertising. It is not concerned with the perceptions of the current audience's views of historical advertising, but rather the emphasis is on contextualising the approaches to ethical visual



representation during the period during which these advertisements were launched. The study, therefore, does not involve measuring of public perceptions of television advertising. Instead, the focus is on how film and television may have contributed to the representations and stereotyping of a silent Chinese population in Britain when released.

Thirdly, as advertising historiography is under-researched and under-appreciated in academic circles, contextual understanding requires an understanding of Britain's role in contemporary advertising – for this study, recognition of the creative revolution that took place in 1970s -1980s Britain and its role in shaping British advertising today is key (Fletcher, 2008; Nixon, 2016, 2017). During this time period, advertisers' myopia meant that many advertising campaigns that are deemed offensive today were not recognised as such in 20<sup>th</sup> century advertising – it is common to find brands/agencies disassociating from some of their early work (Chan, 2023). The lack of opportunities for East Asian actors in mainstream media also contributed to such inaccurate distortions of reality. This explains why interviews with creatives responsible for devising martial arts appeals in advertising were not the focus of this study given the period of the earliest commercials (the 1960s and 1970s), agency creatives involved in the process of advertising creation would have long retired. To limit risks, the study's focus is on the historical discourse surrounding the advertisements. Despite this, where opinion leaders were able to recall and offer their (unprompted) take on the advertisements under study, these were included in the analysis.

Finally, the reliance on archives for the data meant that the quality of the commercials is dependent on the completeness of the repositories. Both BFI and

HAT have a track record of traceable archival material, and the scoping study revealed that there was tremendous scope in the breadth and range of advertising over the selected periods and due to the range of product categories that have utilised martial arts aesthetics. Both archives are renowned for the quality of their data, which is unmatched in any other country. However, there may be issues of cataloguing biases arising from how the advertising has been preserved (Chan, 2023). The advertising would also have occurred at a particular point in time and been constructed to appeal to mainstream audiences of that period. This requires knowledge of the contextual background behind the collections. Access to digital archives has also improved the speed of access and provided researchers with some degree of autonomy, although digitalisation of advertising collections is not exhaustive, and is at times ad hoc, such that access is often related to curatorial displays on-site or archival collections of advertising online (Tomiuc, 2015, cited in Chan, 2023; Strickland, 2020). Close collaboration with the archivists or curation team is therefore essential. This means supporting research with contextual materials such as textual data in the form of ad reviews or editorials in Campaign magazine and newspapers is crucial.

## **Chapter summary**

Martial arts representational studies require detailed critical visualisations that deal with the impacts and influences of an East Asian aesthetic. It also requires critical martial arts discourse to help organise the implications of martial arts kinaesthetic projected onto the East Asian body, to help us understand racialised representations in film, television, and advertising. Hermeneutics provides a powerful tool to help researchers derive meaning from texts. The textual or thematic approaches described in this chapter not only account for polysemy interpretative strategies

typical of ethical representational studies but also hegemony ideologies that may underpin advertising messages. From an axiology standpoint, the study requires an acknowledgement of the critical role that researcher values and beliefs play. The study also accounts for the historicity of data, the reflexive position of the researcher, and situated knowledge. The author's identity as a British born Chinese has paved the way for a deeper understanding of the advertising era and its impact on how representations of the Chinese community were mirrored in selected advertising. Rather than a purely descriptive analysis of television commercials and print advertisements, the adoption of a textual analysis of the advertisements ensured technical rigour in the investigation. Active reflection through textual and storyboard analyses, coupled with the author's values and positionality, therefore, help to address the complexity of issues surrounding critical visual data and its interpretation. Adopting a multi-modal and intertextual approach enables depth and rigour in interpretative explanations that account for historical and conjectural collisions for the selection of advertising cases that will go some way towards explaining advertising representations. Two chapters are devoted to the textual analysis for the findings: Chapter 4 indicates how data was analysed, focusing exclusively on the historical backdrop for the 1960s and 1970s, as gleaned from coverage in media discourse and deep contextual analysis. This is followed by brand or agency perspectives, as exemplified via a range of television commercials and print advertisements used to illustrate martial arts tropes from a creative advertising standpoint. It also provides a historical mapping of the advertisements in chronological order. Chapter 5 provides detailed analysis with respect to the 1980s and 1990s.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Findings from the early period 1960s-1970s**

#### **Chapter introduction**

This study concerns martial arts representational aesthetics, examined to map changes in racialised constructions in British advertising and to highlight constraints in the cultural production processes used by British agencies over four decades. The findings provide evidence of the changing socio-political agenda for the depiction of a specific ethnic minority in Britain, as illustrated by the ‘cultural significance’ of the case studies chosen.

This chapter combines learnings from literature relating to stereotypes with visual textual analysis in order to historically map advertisements before discussing technical analysis adopted for each case study. Firstly, a rationale is given for the integration of critical visual analysis with an advertising case study approach to deconstruct each advertisement into technical, descriptive, formal, and advertising content analyses of martial arts representations. Secondly, the chapter describes critical visual analysis of ten television commercials and three print advertisements executed during the 1960s and 1970s as cases illustrating the adoption of martial arts tropes/themes. These cases are triangulated with textual analysis of media discourse for the 1960s-1970s (in addition 18 television and two print adverts from the 1980s to 1990s are discussed in Chapter 5). Thirdly, as advertising is historically bound, triangulation of the visual case studies with textual data derived from media discourse is then discussed in the context of colonial media representations before emerging themes are identified. Finally, the findings, presented in this chapter provide historical context and analytical detail for the cases. The findings suggests that visual representational frameworks in advertising and martial arts aesthetics in

British media support the notion that martial arts tropes either authenticated, mirrored or caricaturised the Chinese as ‘the Other’.

### **Early period of advertising: 1960s to 1970s**

This thesis seeks to understand how race is commodified by advertising cultures. The analysis in this chapter (and Chapter 5) concerns racialised constructions in British media thereby consideration of the historical overview of Britain's changing relationship with and attitudes towards the Far East, namely Hong Kong, China, and Japan is provided. Content that informed the bulk of this study came from a myriad of sources such as *Box of Broadcasts* (BOB)<sup>13</sup>, *The Sunday Times Magazine*<sup>14</sup>, *D&AD Annuals*<sup>15</sup>, *HAT* and other newspaper archives (Appendix 1). *BOB* resources include a comprehensive range of historical television programmes and documentaries that reflect changing narratives in British sociocultural history of the 1960s and 1970s. The History of Advertising Trust not only hold the largest collection of advertising materials in the world - including television commercials, print and radio advertisements - its comprehensive holdings included *The Sunday Times Magazine* - the first ever colour supplement attached to a broadsheet newspaper. Launched in 1962, it has garnered a reputation for quality journalism and photography. Since its launch, it has provided a barometer of significant historical cultural trends. *D&AD Annuals* are an extension of the advertising and design industry's commitment to inspiring creative thinking in design and advertising. Being considered for the D&AD awards is an accolade that all advertising creatives strive

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<sup>13</sup> Box of Broadcasts is Learning on Screen's on demand TELEVISION and radio service for education. It is a permanent archive of content from nine channels: BBC1 London / BBC2 / BBC4 / ITV London / Channel 4 / More4 / Channel 5 / BBC Radio 4 / BBC Radio 4 Extra

<sup>14</sup>The Sunday Times Magazine is a desirable publication for many creatives that has continued to this day

<sup>15</sup> D&AD Annual brings together the best of the best in creative work, a bible of inspiring projects from around the globe for anyone who is part of the design and advertising industry.

for. The *D&AD Annual* is a publication containing the year's awards in every category from print to television to radio – crucially it provides details of art directors and producers. The content from these sources have been selected as they include the cultural, historical and contextual detail required for this study.

### **Critical visual analysis**

This section details critical visual analysis where media, style, genre, comparative advertising borrowed from Schroeder and Borgerson (2005) were integrated with an advertising case study approach (López Paredes, 2017). This provides an effective structure to deconstruct each advertisement by breaking down the analysis into technical, descriptive, formal and advertising content analyses of martial arts representations. The evidence/illustrations corresponding to each level of analysis for each case is shown in Table 6. Although the levels of analysis are not mutually exclusive, they go some way to offer some depth and rigour when reporting each case. Building upon my previous descriptive analysis of this advertising (Chan et al., 2020), more depth and rigour in the form of technical analysis is provided in this thesis to help me understand the rationale behind the advertising and enable consistency in comparisons. To start, the agency responsible for the advertising, including art director or producers, are identified (where known). This is followed by various levels of analysis: technical (in terms of format, product category); descriptive (who and what is depicted), formal (connotations in the message), and advertising content (genres, appeals to calls to action). These are then followed by the identification of target audience demographics and specification of the aim(s) of the piece of advertising under study. The case studies in this chapter concern two

forms of mass communication media, namely television commercials and print advertisements.

Table 6 Deconstructing cases of martial arts tropes in advertising

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>Evidence / illustration</b>
<b>Agency</b>	Name of advertising agency responsible for the advertising, followed by TV commercials captured as storyboards or print advertisements.
<b>Technical analysis</b>	Product category, brand, sector. Advertising format e.g., television /cinema, print (magazine/newspaper), billboard, duration of the TV commercial, size of the print advert.
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	Subject matter: identify/describe persons, objects, places/events.  How image(s) are placed within context.  Description of advertised brand and specific features that relate to martial arts.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	Interpretation of meanings in the advert: actors, setting, geography, voiceover, sequence, rhythm, colour, music, actors, slogan etc.  Yellowface/mask, attire, stance, posture, wire-fu  Form: type of martial arts  Style: era, or geographic location e.g., dubbing, Chinatown, 1970s San Francisco
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	Core message  Formats/appeals e.g., testimonials, humour  Genre (type/category), comparison to other similar (or significantly different) advertisements, endlines  Product information e.g., call to action, where purchased, packaging.
<b>Target audience</b>	Who is the brand for and who is the message targeted at?  Is the audience Caucasian or ethnic or Chinese?
<b>Aim</b>	Advertising aim (where known or deduced from advertisement)

(Adapted from Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005; López Paredes, 2017)

Close analysis of emerging themes arising from four decades of historical advertising have been conducted. For critical visual analysis, nine television commercials and

three print advertisements executed during the 1960s and 1970s were developed into cases illustrating the adoption of martial arts tropes/themes.

These are:

- Kellogg's Frosties *Judo* (1966)
- Luxaflex Venetian Blinds *Karate Expert* (1966) **PRINT ADVERT**
- BMK Carpets *BMK Girl* (1967-1969) **PRINT ADVERT**
- Maxwell House Yardley (1967)
- Whitbread Tankard *Judo* (1971)
- Mars bar *Judo* (1972)
- Wrigley's Tunes *Judo* (1976)
- Hai Karate (1969-1976)
- Golden Wonder's *Kung Fuey* (1974-76)
- Wall's Sausages *Japanese* (1976)
- Guinness *Kung Fool* (1977)
- Brick Development Association (1978)
- Olympus *Karate man* (1979) **PRINT ADVERT**

The cases presented in this chapter are divided into advertising that occurred during the 1960s, followed by those executed in the 1970s. As advertising is historically bound, each period of analysis commenced with contextualization, including key trends, and published media stories, features, changes to regulation or advertising production processes, articles obtained from archival holdings of the complete series of *The Sunday Times Magazine*<sup>16</sup> and *D&AD Annuals* with discourse from videos and documentaries to add insights to the contextual factors at play. Selected case studies of martial arts tropes in advertising were then presented in chronological order over four periods.

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<sup>16</sup> The Sunday Times Magazine, thereafter, referred to as 'TSTM' or 'magazine', is a colour supplement to the Sunday Times newspaper. The date of the issue consulted is given



## **Contextualising the 1960s**

To add insights to an understanding of martial arts aesthetics and racialised constructions in advertising, contextualisation of Britain's changing relationship with the Far East is essential. This provides evidence to the way the 'Orient' was perceived, have been constructed and how these have informed Japanophilia and Sinophobia as it relates to martial arts aesthetics. As seen in the visual analysis, these are reflected in advertising amplification and simplification of stereotypes such as Fu Manchu and 'othering' visualisations such as pigtails, pidgin English, accents and the 'oriental riff'.

Legislative control of commercial television started in 1955, with advertising claims becoming subject to formal regulation, but the UK government and advertising industry wanted to move away from the Federal Trade Commission where advertising was governed by statute, as was the case in America. It was the Advertising Association in 1961 and the formation of the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) that placed consumer trust and protection at the heart of its focus. Such self-regulation in non-broadcast media led to consumer orientated communications in areas such as print, press, posters, and billboards. Against this backdrop, Britain was tackling race in the media (Advertising Association, 2024).

### **Racialised Britain**

Contextual understanding of the issues relating to the Far East as 'the Other' in this period is linked to changing social attitudes in the 1960s and how race is handled in

the media. 1960s television programmes provide for a snapshot of what life was like in Britain in the early period.

Postwar immigration from the Commonwealth countries since the 1950s helped shape contemporary Britain. This period saw the launch of the Race Relations Act 1965 and 1968. With 500,000 immigrants seeking work rising to one million by 1970, racial discourse was the order of the day. The Sunday Times magazine reflected on Victorian depictions of race with 'The unlicensed age of advertising' (TSTM, Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, 1968, p18-19) reminding readers of Pears soap racist depictions and Fry's Cocoa of Commonwealth immigrants.



Fig.11: 'The Unlicensed Age of Advertising: Pears Soap'  
(The Sunday Times Magazine, Feb 4th, 1968, p.18)

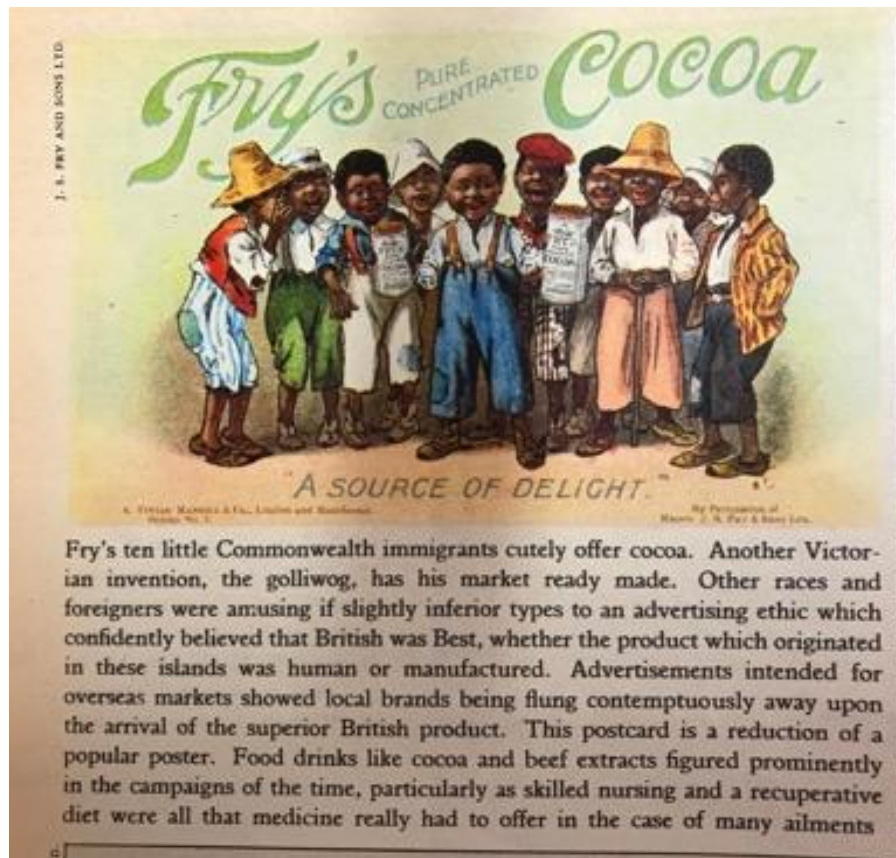


Fig.12.'The Uncensored Age of Advertising: Fry's Cocoa'  
(The Sunday Times Magazine, 4 Feb 1968, p.19)

On 20<sup>th</sup> April 1968, politician Enoch Powell made his infamous 'Rivers of blood' speech about immigration that divided the nation– *'In this country, in 15 or 20 years' time the black man will have the whip hand over the white man'*. There was overwhelming support for his actions at the time (Beyond a Joke, 2009).

In the same year, television commercials for the Vesta brand of chop suey ready meal raised concerns about racialized depictions of Chinese communities (Travis Banton, Advertiser's Weekly, Fri 26<sup>th</sup> July 1968 p26). Despite 'quality photography, tasty lighting, spicy casting' with Chinese actors, endlines such as 'did you ever see a Chinaman smile?' came loaded with problems due to their derogatory tone.



## Rise of communist China

Interest in Maoism continued in the late 1960s with a plethora of features and articles about Chairman Mao. The colonial bias in these articles is seen in headlines, such as:



Fig.13 'How China went red' Magazine feature  
(The Sunday Times Magazine, 1967)



Fig.14.'US Imperialism is a paper tiger ...'  
Magazine feature (The Sunday Times Magazine, 1967)

'How China went Red' (TSTM, Feb

26<sup>th</sup>, 1967, p 8-9) was a major feature on China's communism:

*"US Imperialism is a paper tiger and China is not afraid of losing a million people in a war. In 100*

*Bloody Years China changed from an ancient crumbling empire into a communist dictatorship. This issue traces the violent transformation".*

This detailed China's nationalist policies, including the long history of sending its academics abroad since 1872, their disdain of missionaries, the setbacks from the 1840 Opium war and the 1900 Boxer rebellion about anti-western governance. In another 'The Roots of Revolution' (*The Sunday Times Magazine*, 26th Feb 1967, p.11-20, 23-25), we see the first colonial article about the rise of communist China. In contrast, Japan was seen as an attractive destination for the intrepid traveller, with the frequent placement of Japan Airlines print ads in the magazine. This is the first indication that there may be a different perception of the two Far East Asian countries in the media during the 1960s. Communist China – closed to the West – versus the promotion of Japan as a destination, albeit for the business traveller.

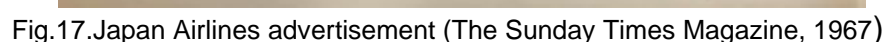


Fig.15. 'Chairman of China' Magazine feature  
(*The Sunday Times Magazine*, 1969)





McCann-Erickson's travel advertising for the Hong Kong Tourist Association, designed to encourage get business (male) travellers to stay longer in the former colony whilst enroute to other Asian countries, was devised. Advertising by Japan Air Lines was at its peak in examples seen in the Sunday Times in 1967 (TSTM 12<sup>th</sup> March 1967):



The *'Hong Kong, where the Orient winks at life!'* campaign was designed to change perceptions away from Victoriana representations to focus on its people and their experiences (O'Connell, 1965). Despite the agency's efforts, stereotypes in the messaging persisted with references to mah-jong, opium, beautiful Girls and best cooks in the world. The headlines used in the campaign hinted at the seediness of the region with

- *'Famous British Surgeon Shot in Hong Kong'*
- *'Wanted Film Star Recognised in Hong Kong'*
- *'London Travel Agent Arrested in Hong Kong'*
- *'Missing Bank President Turns up in Hong Kong'*

The tone of the reporting is also reflected in a 1968 feature that referred to Hong Kong as a 'bargain basement of the world' as its fashion trade started to take off (TSTM, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 1968, p.4).

There was also discourse around the relationship between China, Britain and Hong Kong in 1967. In particular, the potential impact on the Chinese restaurant trade in Britain from the overzealous coverage of communist China. Some of the media formed a demarcation between Chinese communities in England and those in mainland China, with the recognition that Chinese caterers in Britain originate from Hong Kong (and were largely Cantonese speaking) (BFI Chinese Restaurants -Non-Fiction 1967). In the same year, the Sunday Times ran a feature that provided some home truths to its readers about colonising the Far East with its "The day the unthinkable happened" piece (TSTM, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1967 p26-29). The link between colony and catering was clearly taking shape by the late 1960s. The next section considers discourse surrounding early exposure of British towards Chinese caterers.



## Having a Chinese

Documentaries such as the Timeshift series '*Spicing up Britain: How Eating Out Went Exotic*' broadcast on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019 on BBC4 details Britain's interest in exotic cuisines. Despite limited exposures to authentic Chinese culture, this did not prevent mainstream consumers seeking out Oriental cuisines in the 1960s at Chinese restaurants. These settings provided initial touchpoints to Chinese culture and community for many brave enough to experience something different.

It was recognised that Chinese migration to Britain was fuelled by Civil War and that the revolution in mainland China had forced thousands of refugees into Hong Kong, before continuing their journey, and eventually settling in towns and cities up and down the British Isles (Chan, 1997). The implication for this study is how this migrant community from rural Hong Kong formed the second wave of Chinese settlement in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s. I have written elsewhere about the impact of such dispersed settlement patterns for second generation Chinese identity and acculturation in Britain (Chan, 1997). Chinese food business and launderettes were the main activities they were engaged with especially laundrettes and washing machines led to its demise and the consequent rise of takeaways and restaurants. 'Chinese restaurants soon became a favourite place to eat out, and by the 1960s, there were over 2,000 of them. In 1965, a survey revealed that almost a third of those questioned had eaten at a Chinese restaurant' ('*Spicing up Britain: How Eating Out Went Exotic*' broadcast on 20/05/2019 BBC4).

Visiting restaurants for the first time was fuelled by exoticisation of the Orient where only the most adventurous partook with stories of the unknown: '*Absolutely terrifying*.

*I mean, there it was in the far East End of London, never been that Far East'*  
(*'Spicing up Britain: How Eating Out Went Exotic'* broadcast on 20/05/2019 BBC4).  
*'The first Chinese restaurant I ever went to was this Chinese restaurant just off Piccadilly Circus...it was upstairs ...and it had a wonderful gloominess to it....there was a sort of sense of going into a foreign country ...and of course, there were these things called chopsticks, which took you the entire meal to try and master'* (*'Spicing up Britain: How Eating Out Went Exotic'* broadcast on 20/05/2019 BBC4).

BBC2's *The Best of British Takeaways* showed the important role that Chinese cuisine and impact that the community have had on Britain and the laundries trade. In fact, it was the Butlins holiday camp that helped to bring Chinese cuisine to the masses when Billy Butlin started serving Chinese food in his holiday camps from 1958. An early footage showed how Chinese food was consumed and how China was perceived at a Chinese food tasting competition featuring chopsticks at Butlins when consumers were exposed to an exotic culture at a time when travel to the Far East was prohibitively expensive. (*The Best of British Takeaways, Chinese*, 03:05 20/04/2017, BBC2). The *Timeshift* documentary also provided insights to exoticisation of Chinese food with chopsticks frequently commented on as a point of difference –it was the first time that many Butlins holidaymakers would have encountered Chinese food in Britain. Many BFI films exist to support discourse about popularity of early Chinese cuisines, as well as community settlement patterns and the role that Race Relations played at that time. Examples include BFI series that captured 1960s Chinese restaurateurs who left Hong Kong and settled in cities such as Birmingham and Plymouth. These films depicted economic migrants shaping the popularity of exotic Chinese cuisine in Britain, and provided a social history mapping

of the shifting cultural dynamics that occurred in Britain. Rather tellingly, these early first-generation caterers were Hakka and Cantonese speaking (BFI Chinese Restaurants Non-Fiction 1965; BFI Chinese Restaurants in Plymouth - News 1966; BFI The First Chinese Shop in Plymouth -News 1968). The film in Plymouth states that there are over 80 million Hakka Chinese around the world and their cuisine is revered for its simplicity. Journalists were fascinated by the exotic ingredients found in a Chinese shop in Plymouth, for example as these businesses were run by the Chinese for Chinese consumers.

### **Mediated race**

As television sets became more affordable, they were soon found in every home and their demand reflected Britain's thirst for change. The Television Act of 1954 enabled a commercial television channel, ITV, to be launched in 1955. By the 1960s, *The Saint* (1962-69, ITV) and *The Avengers* (1961-1969, ITV) were mainstays of popular television. Actress Diana Rigg, with her black belt in Judo, played the role of Emma Peel in the latter, when Judo was the most popular martial arts in the 1960s.

Although different forms of martial arts were actually used in the series, American audiences were not receptive to the forces used in the Judo throws nor the kicks and punches of Karate. This led to the gentler version (Kung Fu) being used (<http://theavengers.tv/forever/peel2-prod.htm>). This illustrates the interchangeability of martial arts in films and television series, or, in this case, within the same television series. *The Avengers* (1961-1969, ITV) therefore played a crucial role in raising the profile of martial arts. This period was also characterised by limited direct contact the British public had with China or Chinese people, with the exception of the forementioned Chinese food and caterers.

Broadcast media painted a view of the Far East through a colonial lens with theatrical shows such as Gilbert and Sullivan providing early representations of the 'Oriental' that have been packaged in such a way that mainstream audiences could understand. The British Transport Advertising Ltd print advert for Outdoor advertising featured 'yellow face' actors in Japanese costume (Advertiser's Weekly 30<sup>th</sup> April 1965) with the headline: 'As Gilbert is to Sullivan ...so B.T>A. is to Outdoor Advertising.' The image used was of two main actors Sidney Granville and Darrell Fancourt in their famous Ricketts Costumes. These provide clues to how Victorian Britain viewed the Far East as the comic operas were devised between 1871 and 1896 with its echoes of a Japanese setting.



Fig.18.Sidney Granville and Darrell Fancourt in Ricketts costumes (<https://gsarchive.net/mikado/html/index.html>)

The Japanese reference was drawn from trading relationships between England and Japan. The exotic setting allowed for satirise British politics and institutions more freely by clothing them in superficial Japanese trappings

(<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/may/15/the-mikado-review>)



Fig.19.Actor Peter Sallis in a scene from *Sergeant Cork*  
(<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0932252/mediaviewer/rm955917313/>)

Evidence of 'yellow face' could be seen in 'The Case of the Dutiful Murderer' episode of the ITV detective series *Sargent Cork* (1963-1968). Aired in Sep 1964, it featured Chinese actress Lucille Soong who became the first Chinese fashion model in Britain in the 1960s.



Fig.20.Actress Lucille Soong  
(source: Getty Images)

These outdated depictions of race were also seen in James Bond films. 1968's 'You Only Live Twice' saw a Japanese-looking Bond played by the actor Sean Connery – the character had altered his appearance through cosmetic surgery. The BFI have resorted to adding a caveat to their collection of films to warn viewers of the offence (Cotterill, 2024).



Fig.21. Sean Connery as a Japanese James Bond in 'You Only Live Twice' (1968) (United Artists)

The involvement of bona fide martial artists on television began in the 1960s around this period. Credited with introducing Kung Fu to the West, Chee Soo had up to 2000 students as part of the British Wu Shu Association (British Movietone News documentary, 21 May 1970, Guildford, Surrey). Together with his student, Ray Austin (a Black Belt third dan Kung Fu Master), Chee was stunt coordinator for The Avengers (1961-1969).

The credentials of Chee as martial arts instructor and choreographer provided authenticity to the fight scenes of the series. So effective was his influence that British actress Diana Rigg was noted in the Guinness World Record in 1965 as the first western actress to perform Kung Fu on television (source: [Chee Soo Biography](#))



Fig.22.Ray Austin, Diana Rigg and Chee Soo pose for The Avengers 1967  
(Source:<https://www.seahorsebooks.co.uk/chee-soo-biography/>)



Fig.23. The Wrecking Crew poster featuring Dean Martin 1969 (Source:  
<https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/3054-the-wrecking-crew>)



Aside from British made *The Avengers*, the US' *The Wrecking Crew* (1968) was part of a five-film parody based on secret agent Matt Helm starred Dean Martin, Sharon Tate and Nancy Kwan. The film mixes up Chinese Kung Fu with Japanese Karate, as well as their different cultural references. For example, although the Chinese martial arts villain Yurang Wen was played by qipao wearing Nancy Kwan, the dialogue refers to Japanese kimonos. The fight scene between Sharon Tate and Nancy's characters is credited as 'Karate' yet Bruce Lee had choreographed it.

(<https://televisiontropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Film/TheWreckingCrew>)

Against this backdrop, mistakes in the advertising message by agencies and brands would occur. This is exemplified by the Chinese calligraphy used in Cadbury's poster advertisement by Young and Rubicam (D&AD Annual 1966). The copy, when translated means: '*Everybody loves Cadbury's fruit chocolate (though nut was omitted)*'.

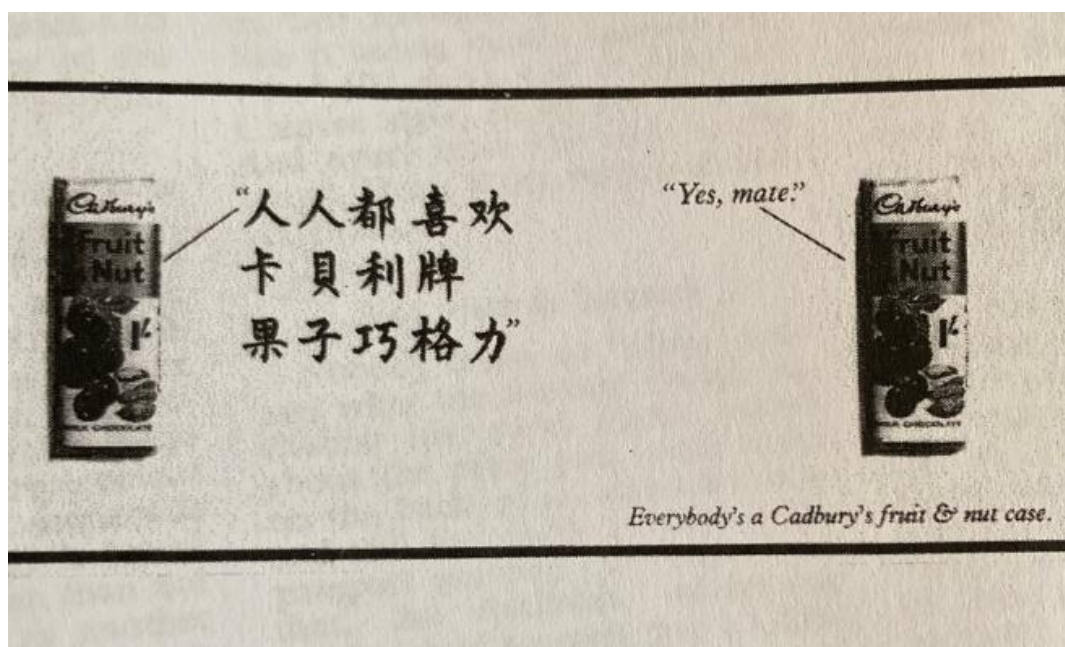


Fig.24.Young and Rubicam's 'Everybody's a fruit and nut case' advert for Cadbury's (D&AD Annual 1966)



Here, the print advert contained a mix of simplified and traditional characters within the same advert, together with Cantonese transliteration for the word 'Cadbury'. Although the use of Chinese characters provided an air of mystery, combining the traditional script (adopted by Hong Kong and Taiwan) with the simplified script (used in mainland China) may be deemed insensitive to (overseas) Chinese nationality and cultural identity.

### **Judo and Karate reigns**

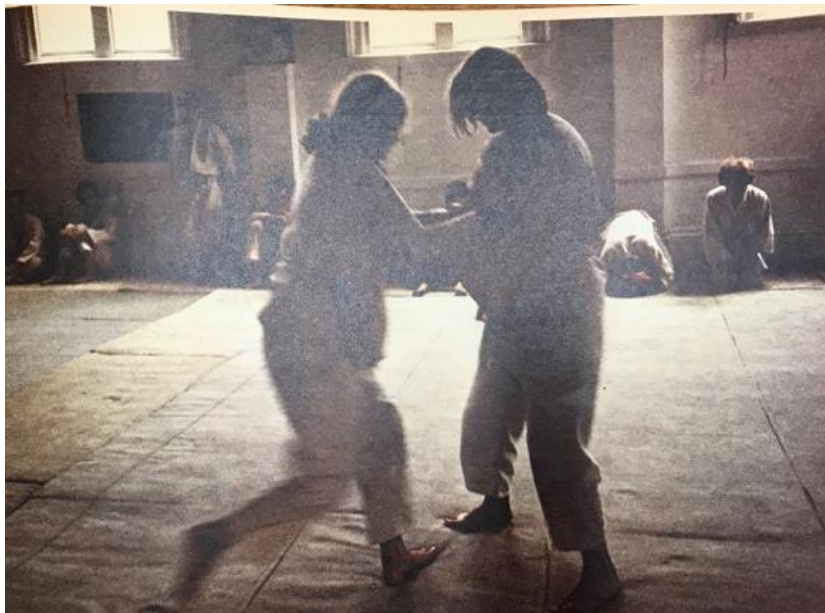


Fig.25. Two females sparring for Sheila Goodier's '*One day in Cambridge*' article (The Sunday Time Magazine, 1967)

By the 1960s Judo was gaining popularity as exemplified by Sheila Goodier's '*One Day in Cambridge*' article about the Ladies Judo Club at the university (1967, p.8).

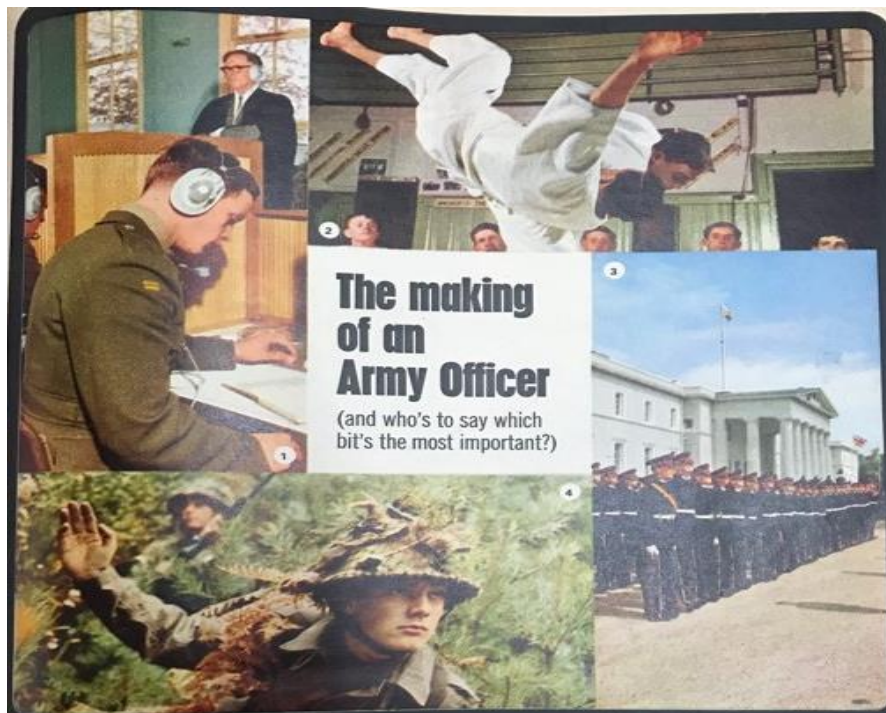


Fig.26. 'The Making of an Army officer' advertisement feature  
(The Sunday Times Magazine, 1968)

It was also a key activity in the Army Careers advertisement feature with a prominent image of the officers executing a Judo throw in 'The Making of an Army Officer' (TSTM 25<sup>th</sup> May 1968).


In terms of Karate, its popularity and usefulness are evidenced in an article entitled 'Tony Imperiale takes up the white man's burden' in which the New York City Councillor was quoted: 'most of my men do Karate ....' (TSTM 16th November 1968, p.26): *'Of course we never had with us but most of my men do Karate ....and they're trained to use kindle sticks ...and you know how to manoeuvre yourself Karate-wise'*. This is debatable if we consider the evidence in this chapter that female Judokas dominated both broadcast media, in terms of news and television programming, and advertising discourse in the 1960s.



Fig.27. 'Tony Imperiale takes up the white man's burden' article  
(The Sunday Times Magazine, 1968)

### **Case studies of 1960s martial arts tropes**

The earliest television commercial to feature martial arts was for the American company Kellogg's and its 'Frosties' brand, as sourced from the BFI archive. JWT is one of the world's oldest and most prominent advertising agencies that shaped modern advertising. It devised a series of black and white television adverts in the 1960s for the Kellogg's 'Frosted Flakes' campaign using the sports concept in the US. This advert features a young judoka executing classic judo throws on the brand mascot, Tony the Tiger. Kellogg's ran a series of adverts focusing on the concept of sports, including judo, suggesting the popularity of martial arts with mainstream audiences during the mid-1960s.

<b>Case 1</b>	<b>Kellogg's Frosties Judo (1966)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>J. Walter Thompson (JWT)</p>  <p>. SB1: Kellogg's Frosties Judo 1966 (BFI)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>Sugar-coated breakfast cereal cornflakes</p> <p>Black and white television commercials 30 seconds</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>A young boy is shown talking to Tony the Tiger whilst eating cereals in a Japanese room when Tony the Tiger walk in to take him to his Judo class.</p> <p>Combines animated character with the child.</p> <p>Close up shots of the bowl of cereal and a box of Frosties.</p> <p>Voice over: <i>Two bowls of those biggest flakes of corn with a special toasted-in sugar frosting.</i></p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>Caucasian boy in a Gi (training suit) and belt shows off his Judo prowess on Tony the Tiger.</p> <p>Setting: traditional Japanese tearoom with cues such as Japanese shoji screens, low rectangular table, bamboo plant, tatami mat flooring</p> <p>Aside from the setting and the boy's uniform, there is authenticity in the way the boy is demonstrating Judo etiquette: seiza style sitting posture, bowing and Judo throw techniques.</p> <p>The concept centres around the Judo lesson and how the sugar-frosted cereals gave the boy enough energy to execute not one, but two Judo throws on Tony the Tiger</p> <p>These executions always ended with the boy beating Tony at his game.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>Kellogg's used the sports concept of which martial arts was one of them.</p> <p>Humour appeal</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SC1 Kellogg's Frosties Judo script (1966)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The boy is sat on the floor next to a table. He is seen eating his bowl of cereals with a spoon. On the table is a box of Kellogg's Frosties. Tony the Tiger appears.</li> <li>➤ Tony: <i>Well son, are you ready for your Judo lesson?</i> (The boy gets up)</li> <li>➤ Boy: <i>Yes, I Judo lesson</i> (both bow)</li> <li>➤ Tony: <i>Let's do .....</i> (Boy Judo throws Tony to the floor)</li> <li>➤ Close up of a bowl of cereals with a box of Frosties next to it</li> <li>➤ Tony's voiceover (VO): <i>Two bowls of those biggest flakes of corn with a special toasted-in sugar frosting</i></li> <li>➤ Cut to Tony lying on the floor: <i>..Aww that's too much ener....</i> (Boy grabs Tony, rolls on to his back and throws Tony over, finally trapping him behind the wall bars)</li> <li>➤ Boy: <i>Come on Tony have some more of those sugar Frosties - let's live it up!</i></li> <li>➤ Tony (dishevelled with a black eye): <i>live it up? I've got to live this down first</i> (Horn sounds as a box of Kellogg's Frosties land on Tony's head)</li> </ul> <p>Midway through the commercial, there is a close up of a bowl of cereals (packaging is clear) and the end-shot is of the box of cereals landing on Tony the Tiger.</p> <p>The American voice over is in line with the brand's tone of voice, reflecting Kellogg's global campaign strategy.</p>	
<b>Target audience</b>	Households with children and mothers responsible for grocery purchases (buyers) (1960s target audience would be Caucasian)	
<b>Aim</b>	To increase awareness of the added benefits of sugar-coated cereals for active/sporty children	

The second case, from Luxaflex, is a perfect example of an early martial arts magazine advert, as featured in the 11<sup>th</sup> May 1966 edition of the *Sunday Times Magazine*. The reference in the headline to a 'karate expert' using his 'side swipe' to attack the venetian blinds and losing his battle with them. This advert is reflective of the combination of skilful headlines and copy with impactful imagery that is typical of 1960s advertising, in this case, to sell us the durability of the product. Although the agency is unknown, this advert made it into the industry's preferred publication.

<b>Case 2</b>	<b>Luxaflex Venetian Blinds <i>Karate expert</i> (1966)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	Agency unknown

	<div> </div> <div> <p>Headline:</p> <p><i>'We got a Karate expert to tangle with a Luxaflex Venetian blind. He was a good loser'.</i></p> </div>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>Luxaflex is a brand of durable lightweight aluminium window blinds.</p> <p>Early black and white full-page print advert (TSTM 11<sup>th</sup> May 1966)</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Hunter Douglas Machinery Corporation - established in 1959 by Joe Hunter and Henry Sonnenberg developed durable lightweight aluminium window blinds under the brand name Luxaflex for the US market before becoming market leader in Europe in 1961.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The print advert features a Japanese Karate expert. His back is to the camera, he is barefoot, in a white Gi, black belt and is seen attacking the blinds with 'a side swipe'.</p> <p>Although we cannot see his face, it is implied that he is a senior martial artist.</p> <p>His race is unknown though the assumption is that he is Japanese.</p>

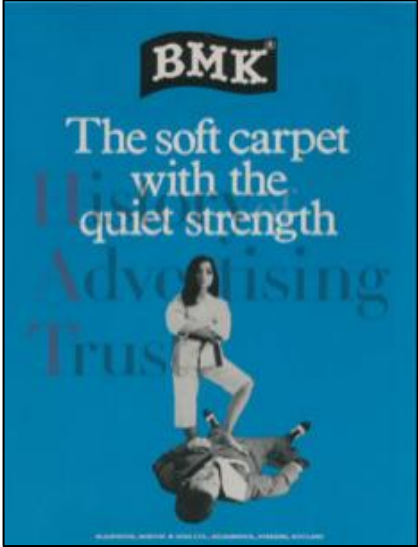


<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>The long copy is typical of print adverts in the 1960s. It describes the brand's attributes and how a Karate striking technique (the 'side swipe') does not 'dent' or 'knock it out of line'. The blind can retain its shape and form despite being attacked by a martial arts expert.</p> <p>The headline: <i>'We got a Karate expert to tangle with a Luxaflex Venetian blind – he was a good loser'</i> suggests that, even with his Karate prowess, he was unable to destroy the blinds.</p> <p>The advert copy informs the audience of the 29 colour shades with a call to action for the free colour leaflet.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SC2 Luxaflex Venetian Blinds (1966) (HAT)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><i>'If you give a 'Luxaflex' Venetian blind a karate side swipe it doesn't hurt it – or dent it- or knock it out of line. The heat treated aluminium alloy slats just spring back into place.</i></p> <p><i>'Luxaflex' Venetian blinds behave themselves. They stay up when they're meant to. They told to the exact angle you want. We believe blind making is an exact science. We're the only manufacturers who make every single part of our blinds ourselves. That's why we guarantee every 'Luxaflex' venetian blind for five whole years.</i></p> <p><i>And we believe in exact fitting too. Every 'Luxaflex' venetian blind is made to the exact size of your window. That's why you'll find no light chinks round the sides or ugly gaps at the bottom.</i></p> <p><i>There are 29 colour shades and patterns to choose from too. Sparkling unchippable colours fired to keep that colour there.</i></p> <p><i>So if you want a blind that's worthy of your attention you'd better stipulate 'Luxaflex' venetian blinds – who knows-the man might try to sell you something else and that would never do. Write for our free colour leaflet to: Hunter Douglas Ltd., Dept. ST 1, 33 Sloane Street, London S.W.1.'</i></p> </div>
<b>Target audience</b>	<p>Middle-class TSTM readers who are homeowners</p>
<b>Aim</b>	<p>To raise awareness of the quality and durability of Luxaflex Venetian blinds with a call to action</p>

BMK is a brand of carpets that ran a memorable series of adverts building on the popularity of Diana Rigg and television series The Avengers. The case details four print adverts from the world's most influential advertising agency, Ogilvy and Mather. The case study below includes discourse from members of the public who helped to piece together the television commercials that accompanied these print adverts.

Case 3	BMK Carpets (1967-1969)
Agency	<p>Ogilvy &amp; Mather</p> <div> </div> <p>Fig.29. 'The BMK Girl' print advert (HAT)</p> <div> </div> <p>Fig.30. 'Don't let the softness fool you' BMK print advert (HAT)</p> <div> </div> <p>Fig.31. 'Soft yet tough' BMK print advert (HAT)</p>



	 <p>Fig.32.'The soft carpet with the quiet strength' BMK print advert (HAT)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>During 1967-1969, BMK carpets ran a series of colour print adverts in newspapers and magazines:</p> <p><i>The BMK Girl</i> (1967),</p> <p><i>Don't let the softness fool you</i> (1967),</p> <p><i>Soft yet tough as they come</i> (1969) and</p> <p><i>The soft carpet with the quiet strength</i> (1969).</p> <p>These were also supported by television commercials.</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>BMK (Blackwood &amp; Morton, Kilmarnock) was a Scottish company that operated between 1909 and 2005. The company was an established manufacturer of high-quality carpets - its logo featuring the gambolling lamb in most of its print adverts.</p> <p>The 1960s 'BMK Judo Girl' adverts were part of a popular campaign that included print and television commercials released for both British and American markets.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The concept was to show how tough and durable BMK carpets were.</p> <p>In one TV commercial, the Judoka is seen defeating a male black belt by throwing her opponent onto a BMK carpet (instead of a Judo mat).</p> <p>In another TV commercial, BMK Girl uses her martial arts skills to defeat two intruders in her luxury apartment whilst wearing a silk or satin kimono style robe.</p> <p>Voiceover: <i>'BMK Carpets, tough, beautiful, durable, whatever you happen to throw on them'</i> as BMK Girl stands over the defeated assailant.</p>

	<p>Burmese born Anglo-Irish actress Edwina Carroll became a household name because of the campaign.</p> <p>Despite the success of the campaign, there was often confusion in the public's mind as to what form of martial arts is featured in these adverts with some referring to Judo, whilst others recall Karate (despite these being different forms of Japanese martial arts).</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>The copy for the print adverts is shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>The BMK Girl (1967):</i></b> <i>The BMK Girl invites you to fly around the world with BMK in the 1967 BMK magic carpet competition.</i></li> <li>• <b><i>Don't let the softness fool you (1967):</i></b> <i>Don't let the softness fool you, a BMK carpet has built in muscle. (BMK the close woven company). The BMK Girl is doing her best to help you sell more BMK carpets. Are you doing your bit and using the free display material?</i></li> <li>• <b><i>Soft yet tough as they come (1969):</i></b> <i>Soft yet tough as they come. Last year was the best ever for BMK carpet sales. This year we're promoting even harder, spending more money than ever before. Cash in on this by using the free display material.</i></li> </ul> <p>The art direction focuses on the strength and toughness of the BMK carpet as associated with the martial arts prowess of the actress/model.</p> <p>The advertising was supported with full sized cardboard cut-out of the BMK Girl in her Judo suit with her foot on her assailant's chest</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Business customers, retailers, or carpet fitters.
<b>Aim</b>	To raise awareness of the benefits that BMK carpets offer in terms of durability and strength.

The groundbreaking work did not stop there. Additional content for the BMK 'Judo Girl' campaign included two television commercial scripts that took place in the late 1960s that typically highlighted the beauty of the actress/model as well as her Judo skills, perfectly encapsulated in the line 'don't let the softness fool you'. The concept of toughness and durability ('the carpet has built in muscle') is portrayed as synonymous with the quality of the carpets.

SC3 BMK Carpet Judo television commercial (1967-69)  
(author description)


- A man with his Gi top open is grappling with the BMK Girl.
- He throws her first before he is somersaulted around the carpet by BMK Girl.
- She executes her signature throw (she falls back holding his lapels and her foot in his stomach and throws him over her head with her foot and onto his back. He lands and slides across the carpet.
- Female voiceover likened the BMK Girl to the carpet - tough, durable, beautiful...
- Camera pans across the carpet
- A pair of feet padding up and down on the carpet
- Camera pans across to show the BMK Girl holding the man in a Judo lock. Her legs are wrapped around his head and chest. He slaps his hand on the carpet in submission whilst she maintains her hold and blows a loose hair off her lips whilst he admits defeat.

This series of commercials and associated print advertising were influenced by the popular television series, *The Avengers* (1961-1969) where actress Diana Rigg would break into a fight demonstrating her Judo prowess. This is what the BMK Girl is shown to be doing in the television commercials, as exemplified by this script:

SC4 BMK Carpet Intruder television commercial (1967-69)  
(author description)

- Setting: luxury apartment, wall to wall carpet
- Music: gentle classical tune
- The BMK Girl (in a silk robe) kneels down on the carpeted floor and picks up a bit of fluff.
- Music changed to James Bond action style.
- Two smartly dressed men appears.
- BMK Girl uses Karate chops and knees them before Judo throwing one of them so that he falls down the rubbish shoot. BMK Girl dispenses him by pushing a button to release him.
- The doors close.
- Second man attacks
- BMK Girl uses her signature Judo throw so that the man lands behind her.
- Camera pans across the carpet
- FVO: spells out the carpet benefits.
- The man rises onto his elbows before BMK Girl plant her foot on his chest and press him back down onto the carpet.
- CUT TO The man is spreadeagled on the carpet and BMK Girl stands over him with her foot on his chest, fingers on hips looking around the apartment.

The success of the Judo Girl theme in advertising during the 1960s led to other brands following suit. This is exemplified by the Yardley and Maxwell House collaboration to promote free lipsticks in this black and white television commercial in 1967. The advertisement featured male martial artists in their classic white Karate/Judo suits engaged in various blocking and kicking stances at a dojo.

<b>Case 4</b>	<b>Yardley <i>Silky Pearl Lipstick</i> offer (1967)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Agency unknown</p>  <p>SB2 Yardley Silky Pearl Lipstick 1967 (HAT)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>Black and white TV commercial</p> <p>Assumed to be 30 seconds.</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Maxwell House coffee brand collaborates with a quintessential English brand, Yardley to signify the latter's expansion from fragrance to the cosmetics market.</p> <p>The advert reflects the 1960s vibe with the model, Twiggy, fronting other Yardley advertising campaigns during that period.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>Along a similar vein to the 'BMK Girl', this black and white TV commercial also featured an attractive Caucasian model in a martial arts-themed advert.</p> <p>The advert features the model applying lipstick whilst looking at the camera before drinking Maxwell House coffee from a mug. The final shot is of a jar of Maxwell House coffee and a range of lipsticks in different shades. The advert finishes with the endline 'free with Maxwell House'.</p> <p>The commercial is interspersed with scenes from a martial arts contest of two men in their gis.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>The commercial promotes the offer of a free Yardley branded lipstick with the purchase of a Maxwell House instant coffee. Sponsorship was a key communications strategy that the Yardley brand employed and the link with Maxwell House's instant coffee brand was deemed a good partnership at the time.</p>

<b>Target audience</b>	Females aged 20-35
<b>Aim</b>	To raise awareness of the joint promotional offer at Maxwell House and Yardley

The appreciation that the British public had for Judo in the 1960s is explained by those that recalled the advert: *‘Other martial arts didn’t have the same appeal ... I think Judo was the ‘smaller can beat bigger’ thing that I grew up thinking about because of the BMK adverts’*. Whilst martial arts advertising predominately feature men, the findings here provide evidence that women have contributed to the discourse in this early period. For example, Diana Rigg was pictured on 20th July 1968 with two martial arts fighters, reinforcing her Guinness World Records status in 1965 as the first female to perform (Chinese) ‘Kung Fu’ on television, despite her long-running association with (Japanese) Judo. This showed that Judo, Karate and Kung Fu were used interchangeably to mean the same thing in media discourse in the 1960s, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The audience’s ability to distinguish between the different martial arts styles featured in the series of BMK adverts is exemplified perfectly by this quote from my informant who recalled the television commercial: *‘(the BMK Girl) may have used a little bit of Karate in this advert, but the first advert was purely Judo.’*



Fig.33. Diana Rigg and two Judokas (Getty Images)



Fig.34. Diana Rigg Emmapeeler double page magazine spread (TV Guide 1967)

Martial arts in the 1960s was not only associated with beauty, but with glamour and fashion too. Diana Rigg, for example, fronted advertising campaigns for **Emmapeelers** that the celebrity photographer, Terry O'Neil, was responsible for shooting. These colourful jumpsuits were more comfortable and practical - a move away from the leather catsuits that Emma Peel's predecessor, Dr Cathy Gale, wore in *The Avengers* from 1962 to 1964.

This period provided opportunities for bona fide Judokas such as 7<sup>th</sup> Dan black belt Chris Gallie who was able to maximise her martial arts prowess on screen as stunt woman for *The Avengers* in the 1960s and *The New Avengers* in the 1970s (Clemens, 2022). In this still taken from 'The Living Dead' episode in 1967 for *The Avengers*, Mrs. Peel, normally played by Diana Rigg, is seen picking up a prison guard.



Fig.35. Chris Gallie in a scene from *The Avengers* (1967)

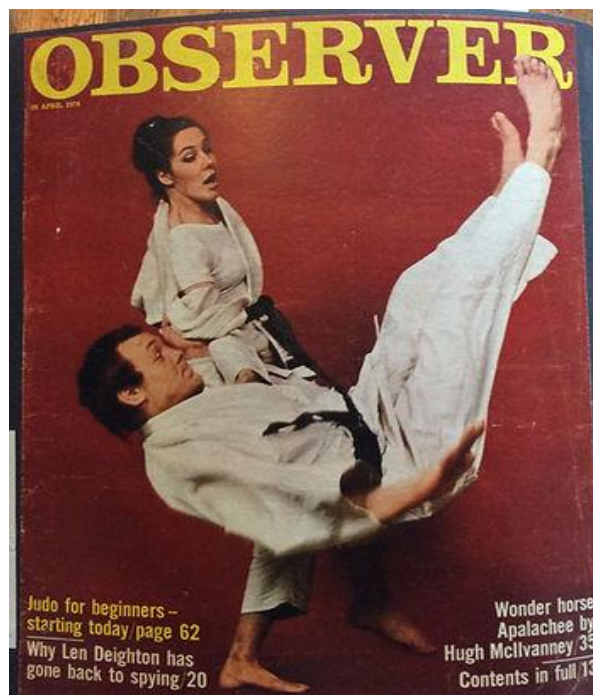


Fig.36. Chris Gallie on the 1974 cover of the *Observer* (Child, 2022)

Chris' contributions to stunt action in films as a Judoka is noteworthy: She was the first woman to be allowed to train with the men's elite class at the Budokwai Judo Club in London – the same club that celebrated photographer Terrence Donovan had attended. This illustrates how certain clubs such as the Budokwai benefitted from access to the film industry.



In terms of racialised constructions, the penchant of western audiences for British spy thriller television also influenced Guinness Export's *The Man* 1968 campaign. Here, *The Avengers* series (1961–1969), *James Bond* films (1962–1975), and *The Saint* (1962–1969) were reimagined for this global television campaign. Here, Judo and Karate influenced fight choreographies featuring the sophistication of the male lead in a sharp suit and attractive females in a supporting role were the order of the day. Cantonese and English language versions of the commercial were produced, featuring Far East Asian and Caucasian actors respectively, produced to appeal to different markets. However, the shortage of Chinese actors during the 1960s meant 'yellowface' depictions were unavoidable (Chan, 2023). This suggests that cultural producers had to work within constraints when attempting to mirror 'the Other' in advertising.



Fig.37. Still from Guinness Export 'The Man' 1968 with Caucasian actors (BFI archives)



Fig.38. Still from Guinness Export 'The Man' 1968 with yellow face or Chinese actors (BFI archives).



By the 1960s, brands were also starting to exoticise Oriental sounding names, as typified by Helena Rubinstein's print advert for Tang aftershave and its headline 'Flatter him shamelessly' (TSTM 15<sup>th</sup> Dec 1968.p83). It was during this period that Pfizer's Hai Karate aftershave was launched in America before making its way to British shores by the late 1960s.



Fig.38. Tang 'flatter him' print advert in The Sunday Times Magazine 1968 (HAT)

### **Summary - 1960s advertising and the use of martial arts tropes**

The 1960s represented a period of change in Britain, with a gradual shift from black and white to colour television coinciding with the launch of commercial television in 1955 (More 4, 2019a; Science and Media Museum, 2020). A lesser-known fact was that Sir David Attenborough led the trial for colour television in 1967 on BBC2 to showcase his projects before its eventual base on BBC1 (Lawson, 2017). This period is also marked by a burgeoning youth driven cultural movement and women's liberation, which shaped art, music and fashion. Its significance for mainstream commercial advertising and the cases analysed during this period reflect the shift to

Technicolor. Although 1960s (and 1950s) television advertising were predominantly food related, the use of martial arts themes helped to broaden the product categories from carpets to cereals. Early examples such as, Kellogg's Frosties (1966), Luxaflex Venetian Blinds (1966) and Yardley's Lipstick (1967) were typical of the early period. Colourful print advertising as illustrated by BMK Carpets (1967) tied in with the carefully crafted silhouettes of the Emmapeeler campaign fronted by *The Avengers* (1961-69) actress Diana Rigg.

Britain's understanding of race as it relates to the Chinese community can be summed up in documentary programmes about the growth of migrant Chinese population and their contributions to the establishment of exotic restaurants. This contrasts with ambivalent over reporting in British media about Chairman Mao and communist China. Cadbury's Fruit and Nut (1966) provided our first example of the (incorrect) use of the Chinese text in print advertising where mainland traditional forms have been mixed with the simplified versions of those used in Britain's former colony. Whilst Britain was preoccupied with communism and Chairman Mao, New York agency Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB) had already begun to develop the 'Think Small' campaign for Volkswagen Beetle with the subsequent release of the iconic 'Lemon' print advert in 1961. This period marked the start of the creative advertising revolution in London's Soho, and the growth of consumer sovereignty that underpinned the marketing era (Nixon, 2017; Chan, 2023). Ogilvy & Mather paved the way for research-driven advertising focusing on 'big ideas' that would resonate with audiences.

The cases selected demonstrate an appreciation of those who could perform martial arts, in particular, Judo and Karate in both print and television advertising during the 1960s. The cases showed that martial arts tropes in this era were associated with

strength and durability which were easily associated with the brands in question. More often than not, interest in Japan and all things Japanese was influenced by the appeal of Akira Kurosawa's samurai films with cultural mavens. Japanese martial arts were enjoyed by a broad demographic of the population, with Judo being much more visible in British media. Japan was also seen as THE place to visit with print advertising for Japan Airlines dominating mainstream publications such as the Sunday Times during this period. It is plausible that the rise in the economic and cultural capital of Japan and subsequent business travel to the Far East fuelled the popularity of Judo and Karate in Britain.

The knock-on effect of film and televisual influences on advertising is clear if we look at the involvement of bona fide martial artists in action film choreography. Master Chee Soo's contributions to *the Avengers* (1961–1969), and Bruce Lee's role as stunt choreographer in *The Wrecking Crew* (1968) are some of the most well-known cases. The study has also uncovered the contribution that stunt woman, Chris Gallie, made to *Avengers* as demand for attractive female martial arts on screen grew, mirroring the sexual revolution and female empowerment at the time (York, 2010). It may be argued that the propensity to collaborate with bona fide martial artists reflected the audience demand for the authenticity, at least in the choreography performed by Caucasian actors. Likewise, casting for 1960s advertising focussed on Caucasian actors or models therefore martial arts were not performed by Oriental actors onscreen. Instead, authenticity was exhibited in the way Judo or Karate were depicted (the setting, gis, etiquette, basic reference to the technique) rather than through racial identifiers. On the one hand, Britain's foray in international Judo competitions and the establishment of some of the oldest Judo clubs in Britain meant

the sport became enmeshed in mainstream culture. These examples suggests that martial arts in the 1960s have been somewhat appropriated.

The publication of an earlier article 'Hai Karate and Kung Fuey' in 2020 resulted in some conversations with those willing to share their views about BMK's 'Judo Girl' (1967) and the influence of the American television series *The Wrecking Crew* (1968). This 'second-hand' account helped me to triangulate the critical visual analysis that I undertook during this period.

## **Contextualising the 1970s**

This section covers the critical visual analysis of television commercials and print advertisements triangulated with textual analysis of 1970s media discourse. It divides the context into Britain's view of race, racialised constructions in advertising, Chinese communism and food, colonial representations, gender stereotypes, and community. As audiences started to embrace colour television, the style of advertising changed during the 1970s. This period is characterised by increasing sophistication in the use of martial arts as viewers became more advertising literate: 'Whether thanks to the introduction of colour spurring people on to new heights of creativity, or simply because viewers were now television-literate and demanded higher production values, adverts in the 1970s were noticeably different from what went before' (Science and Media Museum, 2020). Notable campaigns during this period include BMP DDB's Smash Martians (1974) and CDP's Hamlet Cigars campaigns that engaged audiences with wit and humour (*The Rise and Fall of the Ad Man*, BBC4). This period also saw the establishment of the Advertising Standards Association as self-regulation in the industry started to take effect (Advertising Association, 2024).

### **Regulation and programming**

With increasing regulation, there were concerted efforts by advertisers to better represent minorities in mainstream media. The back catalogues of *The Sunday Times magazine* housed at the History of Advertising Trust revealed a plethora of advertising that included depictions of people of colour, although many of these imageries contributed to a colonial view of the Far East for Orientals. The breadth and extent of coverage is discussed in this chapter.

Although the Race Relations Act 1965 was updated in 1968, it was not until the revised Race Relations Act 1976 that forbade discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, and ethnicity and this has had an impact in advertising practices (Beyond a Joke, 2009).

Although my thesis draws from British advertising, American experiences cannot be ignored as there are parallels in terms of the way the Chinese have been depicted in mainstream media, the influence of American film and television on British culture, and the growth of the creative industry in New York's Madison Avenue and London's Soho. According to the documentary *I Love 1973* (BBC 2, 2014), Hollywood representations of Orientals in the 1970s included 'pigtails' and 'eyes slanted'. The documentary also suggested that mainstream audience access to migrant or minority cultures could only be gained from second hand sources such as newspapers or through television programming. These sources would invariably lead to inaccurate representations of those yet to find their voice. The popularity of British comedy shows, such as *The Two Ronnies*<sup>17</sup> (BBC1 1971-1987) provided distorted racialised representations through 'black face' or 'yellow face' (*Beyond a Joke*, 2009). As discussed in chapter 1, *Mind Your Language* (ITV, 1977-1986) where racial stereotypes about a diverse group of immigrants and foreigners set at an adult education centre in London was most notable for its popularity amongst mainstream and minoritized ethnic communities alike. Likewise, *Love Thy Neighbour* (ITV, 1972-76), about a white working-class couple and their black neighbours was one of the most popular sitcoms of the 1970s. Schaffer (2017) linked the proliferation of racist comedies to the lack of diverse talent in cultural production and the tendency for producers to mute their moral compass. These 'transgressive comedies' were

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<sup>17</sup> The Two Ronnies is discussed in the next chapter (1980s)

popular because imagining others being offended created a bond amongst those who understood the jokes (Hunt, 2015). As we shall see in the cases from this period, transgressive comedy in advertising was the norm.

Although the 1970s was a period of powerful changes when it came to race and immigration, sexual liberation and women's power that challenged deep seated stereotypes also took place. I discussed this with respect to the 1960s context earlier. There were strong characters for female actresses in television series such as *The New Avengers* (1976-1977). that changed the roles of women. The secret agent action series described as 'a quirky spy show of the adventures of eccentrically suave British Agent John Steed and his predominantly female partners' (IMDb 2024) was sequel to *The Avengers* (1961-1969). This is a therefore a running theme in the 1960s and 1970s. Strong female leads provided characters such as Purdey (played by actress Joanna Lumley) that followed on from Mrs Peel (Diana Rigg) in the 1960s – once again, opportunities to demonstrate their martial arts prowess (More 4, 2019b)

## **Constructing race in 1970s advertising**

In examining Britain's penchant for all things Oriental, I start with this painting by Russian-born South African artist Vladimir Tretchikoff (1913-2006). His 'Chinese Girl' (1952) depicts a pensive looking lady with blue/green skin –according to the documentary *I Love 1973* (BBC 2, 2014), this image was found in every house in 1970s Britain. Its popularity became one of the most-reproduced artworks of the mid-20th century. Tretchikoff lived in Shanghai in the 1930s and worked in advertising

and graphic design. He was renowned for making art accessible to the working classes (Rohrer, 2006).

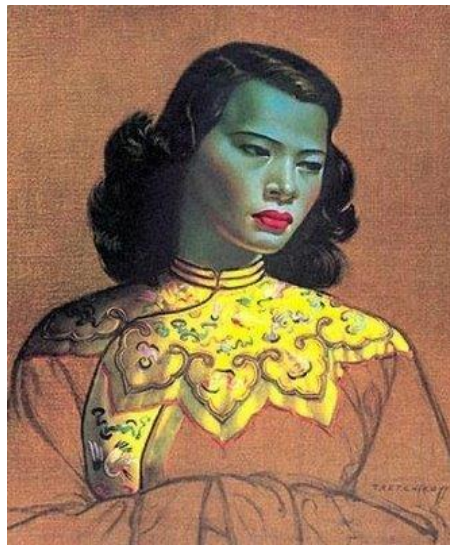


Fig.40. Tretchikoff's Chinese Girl  
(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-22344710>)

Advertisers may often borrow artistic references seen here in their creative work.

The D&AD Annual 1970 references Papert Koenig Lois agency's execution for Kendal Milne that features a smiling Chinese man in a white t-shirt:

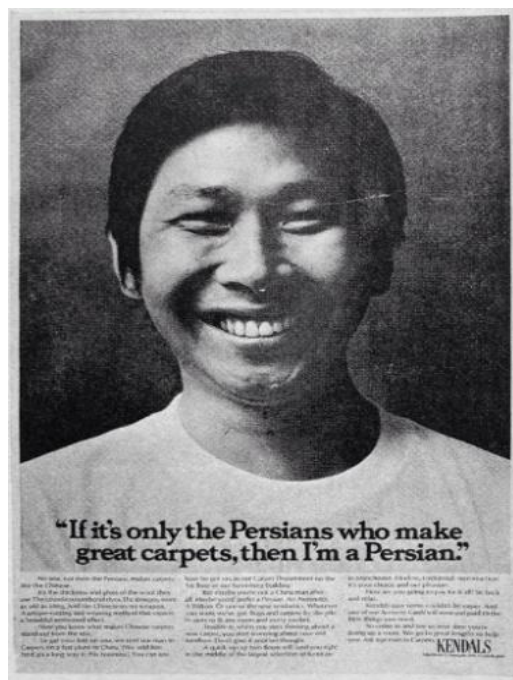


Fig.41. Kendal Milne 'Persians' print advert (1970) by Papert Koenig Lois  
(D&AD Annual, 1970)



This was a simple photo with some detailed copy that prima facie, appeared to be inclusive and ahead of its time in terms of depiction. Although not a martial arts themed advert, it is one of the earlier depictions of a bona fide Chinese man. The headline in this print advert '*If it's only the Persians who make great carpets, then I'm a Persian*' suggests that this is an inclusive execution, the degree of 'Othering' that one can deduce from reading in between the lines demonstrates perceptions of the audience through a colonial lens. Choice of words such as '*China man*', as in '*But maybe you're not a China man after all. Maybe you'd prefer a Persian*', are loaded with a myriad of racialised connotations. This is also seen in the notion of sending '*our man in Carpets on the first plane to China*' has an association to the 'slow boat to China', idiomatic slang that purportedly describes a slow process that takes a long time:

SC5 Kendal Milne 'Persians' print advert (1970) by Papert Koenig Lois

Headline:

*If it's only the Persians who make great carpets, then I'm a Persian*

Copy:

*No one, not even the Persians, makes carpets like the Chinese.*

*It's the thickness and gloss of the wool they use. The countless number of dyes. The designs, some as old as Ming. And the Chinese secret weapon. A unique cutting and weaving method that creates a beautiful, embossed effect.*

*Now you know what makes Chinese carpet stand out from the rest.*

*To get your feet on one, we sent our man in Carpets on the first plane to China. (We told him he'd go a long way in this business). You can see how he got on in our Carpet Department on the 1st floor of our Furnishing building.*

*But maybe you're not a China man after all. Maybe you'd prefer a Persian. An Axminster. A Wilton. Or one of the new synthetics. Whatever you want, you've got. Rugs and carpets by the pile. In sizes to fit any room and every pocket.*

*Trouble is, when you start thinking about a new carpet, you start worrying about your old furniture. Don't Give it another thought.*

*A quick nip up two floors will land you right in the middle of the largest selection of furniture in Manchester. Modern, traditional, reproduction. It's your choice and our pleasure.*

*How are you going to pay for it all? Sit back and relax.*

*Kendal's easy terms couldn't be easier. And one of our account cards will soon put paid to the little things you need. So come in and see us next time you're doing up a room.*

*We go to great lengths to help you. Ask our man in Carpets.*

**KENDALS**

The *D&AD Annual* in 1973 annual also featured other examples such as Gallaher's Benson and Hedges cinema commercial by CDP agency. The silver award for most outstanding cinema commercial featured imageries of a Chinese junk, Chinese man, and his dog.

Different races increasing used in the 1970s as shown by Sylvasun's infamous advert for suntan medication with its headline '*We all have resistance to sunburn. Only some of us have more of it than others*' (TSTM, 26<sup>th</sup> May 1974). To illustrate the brand's remedy for the prevention and treatment of sunburn, the execution depicted 8 males from the fair-skinned, untanned to tanned and black skin tones. The print advert provides an example of inclusive racialised representations, however controversial the initial reading of this advertising may be. Constructed by Boase Massimi Pollitt Partnership Ltd, this Sylvasun consumer advertisement was featured in the D&AD 1975 Annual.

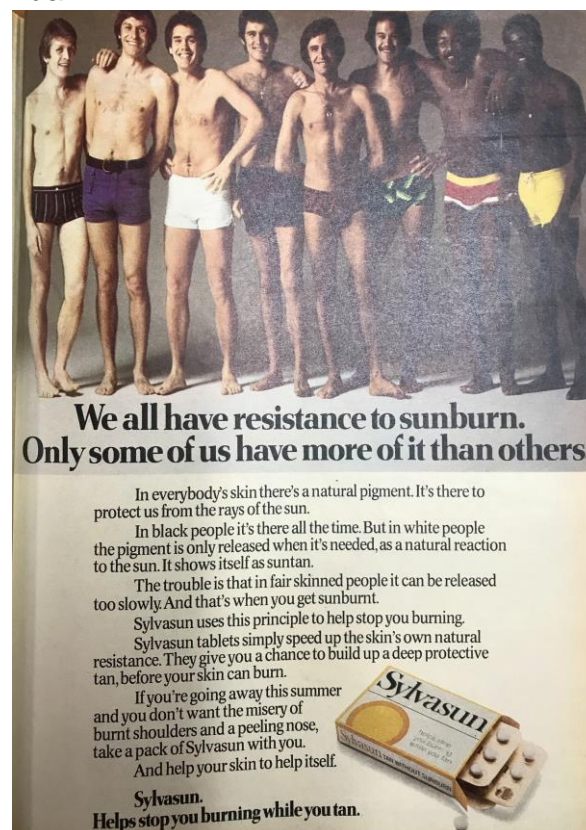


Fig.42.Sylvasun 1974 'Sunburn' print advert (D&AD Annual 1975)

The copy for this Syvasun advert is sensitive to all creeds and colours: *'In everybody's skin there's a natural pigment. It's there to protect us from the rays of the sun. In black people it's there all the time. But in white people the pigment is only released when it's needed, as a natural reaction to the sun'*. It is confident in its tone.

These examples demonstrate the different ways that 1970s agencies

have contributed to racialised discourse that explicitly references race, creed and colour. They show cultural producers' confidence in selecting the right imagery from actors of different racial characteristics, backed by well thought out copy.

For the Chinese community in Britain, the 1970s saw renewed media interest in the fast growth of this population that outstripped other minority groups by 1979 (BFI Chameleon Soho, 1979). Wang (2014, p. 47) had cited 96,035 as the Chinese population in Britain using data from the 1971 Census. Young's 1977 seminal report on Chinese Londoners for the Sunday Times recognises this over concentration in catering (Chinese restaurants and takeaways). It was not long before the British public became acquainted with Lion and Dragon Dance routines to celebrate the opening of a new restaurant in Gerrard Street and Soho's surrounding areas (BFI Chameleon Soho, 1979). The *'Silent Dragon'* article plays on the notion of the silent minority and sojourn status felt by migrant populations, with concerns for the next

SC6 Chefaro Proprietaries Ltd's Syvasun  
'Sunburn' print advert (1974)

Headline:

*'We all have we all have resistance to sunburn. Only some of us have more of it than others.'*

Body copy:

*'In everybody's skin there's a natural pigment. It's there to protect us from the rays of the sun. In black people it's there all the time. But in white people the pigment is only released when it's needed, as a natural reaction to the sun. It shows itself as suntan.*

*The trouble is that in fair skinned people it can be released too slowly. And that's when you get sunburnt.*

*Syvasun uses this principle to stop you burning.*

*Syvasun tablets simply speed up the skin's own natural resistance. They Give you a chance to build up a deep protective tan, before your skin can burn.*

*If you're going away this summer and you don't want the misery of burnt shoulders and a peeling nose, take a pack of Syvasun with you.*

*And help your skin to help itself.*

*Syvasun.*

*Helps stop you burning while you tan'*

generation and support for relatives (Lailin, 1997; Chan, 2002). Not only that, but mainstream journalists would typically profile Chinese based activities for this community, with some references to Kung Fu clubs and opium. Other headlines to articles for the Sunday Times have included '*Blossoming Lotus*' about the British Chinese (TSTM, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1976) and '*Takeaways of the UK*' (11<sup>th</sup> Sept 1977). Editorial features about Chinese food (and Indian foods) were in abundance at this time as evidenced by the myriad of print and television commercials. The burgeoning interest in exotic cuisines, particularly Chinese and Indian foods as witnessed in a double-page advertisement feature for Sharwood's<sup>18</sup> (Allison, 1978).

Foreign package holidays were just starting to take off for mainstream customers. The increase in international travel in the 1970s was to the Far East with the proliferation of airline advertising targeted at business customers or sojourning migrants. For example, during the summer of 1972, Singapore and Malaysian Airlines have become popular alternatives competing with Japan Airlines for advertising space in the Sunday Times. Singapore Airlines' strapline '*To know Singapore is to know the east*' (TSTM, 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 1976 p32) in line with Japan Airlines' '*The way we are is the way we fly*' featuring Japanese teenage Girls in Kendo uniform (TSTM, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1977) shows mainstream audience receptiveness to the Far East. The headlines appear to emulate typical sayings akin to the riddles that are synonymous with Far East Asian culture. For Japan Airlines, the depiction of, not just one but up to six Japanese schoolgirls, albeit in Kendo uniform, made this a standout advertisement.

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<sup>18</sup> Sharwood's is a British food company that specialises in Asian food. It was established in 1889.



g.43. Singapore Airline's 'To know Singapore is to know the East' print advert (The Sunday Times Magazine, 25 Jan 1976)



Fig.44. Japan Airline's 'The way we are is the way we fly' print advert (The Sunday Times Magazine, 23 Oct 1977)

These adverts provide some rationale in the copy for travellers keen to learn about other cultures in far flung destinations. Japan Airlines' efforts to continue conversations with their target audience is cleverly shown in a later headline: '*The way we still care is the way we fly*' featuring a Bonsai tree (TSTM, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1978). The tone of these early contributions to oriental themed advertising for travel indicates an appreciation of the Far East – in the case of Japan, in particular, this contributed to an interest in contemporary Japanese culture and cinema as exemplified by Peter Cowrie's feature on '*Cinema in Japan*' (TSTM, 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 1979).

However, depictions of the Western traveller in a Far East context may also be seen through a post-colonial lens, as was the case with Smirnoff's rickshaw advert (17<sup>th</sup> Dec 1972). Although not a martial arts themed advertisement, I have included this to illustrate the racialised constructions. The print advert depicts a rather dishevelled Caucasian man in a white linen suit, pink shirt, light blue trousers with a white hat perched on his head. He is sat inside a rickshaw against a Far East Asian backdrop

with two natives in traditional Chinese bamboo coolie hats clearly visible. Headline:  
*'I'd set my sights on a day trip to Calais until I discovered Smirnoff'.*

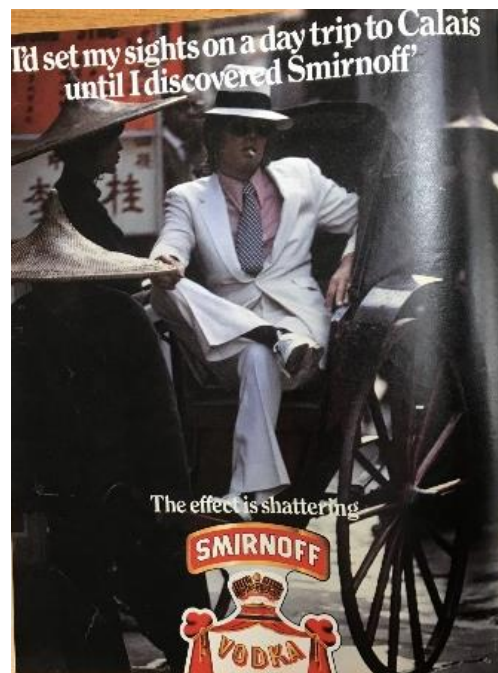


Fig.45.Smirnoff's 'I'd set my sights on a day trip to Calais until I discovered Smirnoff'  
 print advert (The Sunday Times Magazine, 17 Dec 1972)

It depicts the Far East as off the beaten track, and an exotic destination. The endline  
*'The effect is shattering'* suggests that the experience may be lifechanging, and  
 certainly unexpected. It is noteworthy that this version was one of a collection of  
 executions with the same tag line



Fig.46.Smirnoff's 'Accountancy was my life until I discovered Smirnoff' ([Avocadosweet.com](http://Avocadosweet.com))



Fig.47.Smirnoff's 'I was working in the typing pool when I first tasted Smirnoff'  
 (Retro alcohol adverts telegraph 2014)



Reflecting the degree of sexism that was prevalent in the 1970s, it was not uncommon to find an immaculately suited Caucasian man (Bill Woodward) depicted with an Oriental female counterpart (Celia Fung). Take the case of the image used in the packaging for the Mastermind Game in 1973. The British public would recall *‘an attractive lady of Oriental persuasion’* stood behind a Caucasian gentleman in a suit. He is sat in the foreground with his hands together quietly contemplating his actions (as he would do in the game). Discursive material from BBC2’s *I Love 1973* documentary showed how the Oriental female was what most people would remember:



Fig.49.Dormeuvill's Cloth for Men

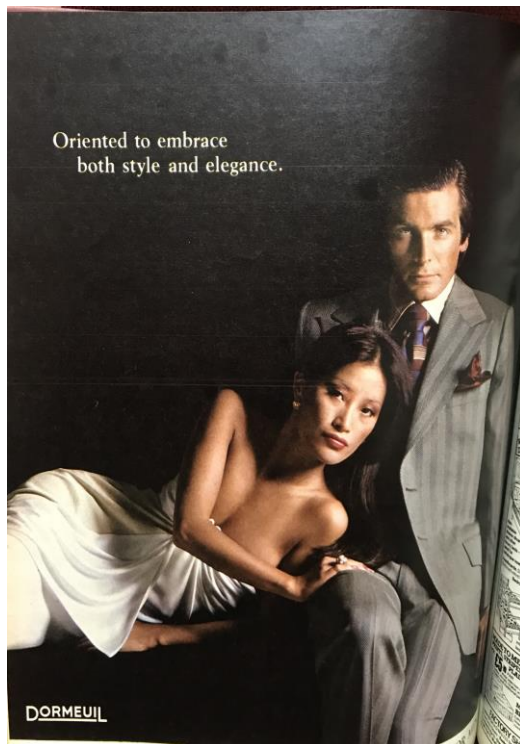
(Sunday Times Magazine, 18 Apr 1976)

*‘Did he have an Oriental woman on his lap?’*

The Oriental lady is actually stood behind the man - her Master – with a reassuring hand resting on the back of the seat. The BBC2 documentary suggests the Chinese having *‘an air of mystery’* and *‘the Far East [...] mysterious. (The Oriental woman) was there [...] to enhance the mystery’* (*I Love 1973*, BBC 2, 2014).

Finally, the connotations of the word ‘Master’ hark back to the colonial era of the white Master and the Oriental servant. As we will see later, master and servant are commonly used to denote martial arts etiquette, including the unquestionable authority and respect that Senseis and Sifus (instructors) have over their students.

Mainstream perceptions of the subservient and mysterious Oriental female continued to be shaped by classic 1970s representations of Othering. This is evidenced in



Dormeuil's<sup>19</sup> Cloth for Men print advertising with its headline '*Orientated to embrace both style and elegance*' (TSTM 18<sup>th</sup> April 1976 p42).

The glamorous female here, as in the Mastermind image, is wearing a white dress. Likewise, her partner is wearing a smart suit made from Dormeuil's finest cloth.

Fig.49.Dormeuill's Cloth for Men print advert  
(The Sunday Times Magazine, 18 Apr 1976)



As the demography started to shift in 1970s Britain, the words 'melting pot' and 'mixed race' played a political role to manage racialised discourse. Thompson's 'Mixed Double Matches' for The Sunday Times Lifespan provided inspirational stories about the experiences of mixed-race couples (Thompson, 1979).

Fig.50.Model Muriel Cooley  
(The Sunday Times Magazine, 10 Oct 1976)

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<sup>19</sup>Established in 1842, Dormeuil manufactures and supplies English cloth worldwide.



In fact, Oriental models of mixed parentage such as Muriel Cooley appeared frequently during this decade, particularly in Eastern themed articles, such as 'Feathered friends' as a native American Indian (TSTM, 11<sup>th</sup> July 1976) and 'Eyes of the East' (TSTM, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1976). These articles tended to focus on the mysteriousness of Oriental females.

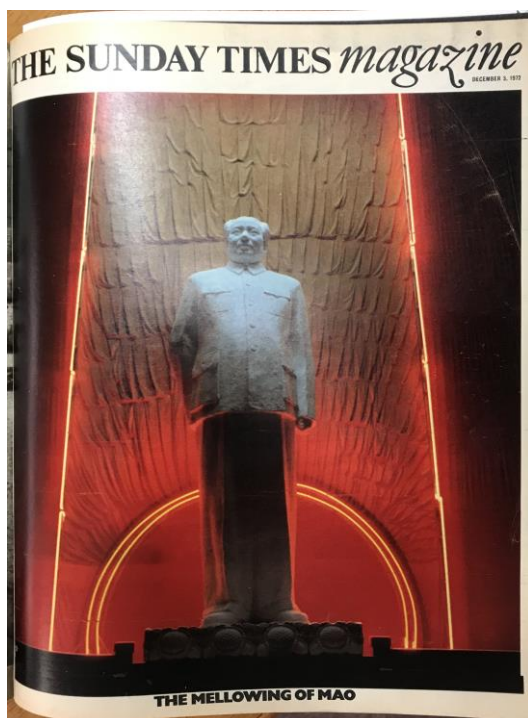


Fig.51. The Mellowing of Mao  
(The Sunday Times Magazine, 3 Dec 1972)

Aside from the post-colonial and sexist stereotypes, preoccupation with Chairman Mao and China continue to dominate the media space. Features include The Sunday Times Magazine's D&AD silver award for its 'best complete editorial feature' centred around Chairman Mao and China's imperial history (D&AD Annual 1970, p.130). References to Mao in advertising are few and far between.

China's promising start to the Olympics stage with its communist training regimes formed the crux of Guy Lagorce's 'No Medals for Mao' feature (TSTM, 27<sup>th</sup> August 1972, p18-24). Chairman Mao's ideologies supported the proliferation of sports clubs in schools and workplaces to identify gifted sports people. Such interventions ensured that the setbacks from the cultural revolution would improve the country's sporting achievements. The thirst for knowledge about communist China is also

reflected in an award-winning issue in Times Educational Supplement dated 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec 1972 for its editorial design entitled 'The mellowing of Mao' focussing on education in China, Maoist imageries and the red guards (D&AD 1972 Annual, p.166).

After Mao's death in 1976, Newsweek's print advert by TBWA London headlined:

'How is China managing without Mao?' with an image of a Ming vase, red book and



Mao's spectacles placed on glasses on a table. Cultural sensitivity and relevance came in the form of a plain white poster in the background where white denotes mourning in China. The copy reminds readers of the quality of Newsweek's detailed coverage of events, implications and objective assessment. This print advert was a D&AD Black Pencil Winner for its outstanding illustration (D&AD Awards 1978).

Fig.52.TBWA London's 'How is China managing without Mao?' print advert (D&AD Awards 1978)

Communism was used as a point of reference in a Dexion print advert for its storage and materials handling business (TSTM 18<sup>th</sup> Sept 1977). Alongside an animation of Mao Zedong was German and Russian philosophers, Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin in work overalls with the headline 'Is this really what's holding up the British Industry'. The accompanying long copy ended with a tagline 'Dexion. We'll help you make money out of thin air'.



Fig.53.Dexion's 'Is this really what's holding up with British industry?' print advert

(The Sunday Times Magazine, 18 Sept 1977)

It is noteworthy that, aside from Maoism, journalism about China also concerned the discovery of the Terracotta Soldiers and the tomb of the first emperor of China in the valley of the Yellow River. This was reported Susan Raven in her article for The Sunday Times 'In China: The Find of the Decade -Great Haul of China' (TSTM 16th Dec 1979, p26-32).

In 1972, aside from Maoist philosophies, there was a resurgence of media interest in the Opium Wars of 1839-42 (see Chapter 1). Robert Hughes' Sunday Times magazine feature 'When Britain Directed the Traffic' (TSTM 30th Jan 1972 p26-30) and 'The Opium War: The British as pushers' (TSTM, 30th Jan 1972) and 'Locking up the Yellow Peril' (TSTM, 4th June 1972, p.54) are examples of discourse that acknowledged the role that Britain empire played to degrade China for its own gains, and the devastating effects of opium addiction amongst the Chinese population. One of the consequences of the 1898 British occupation of Hong Kong were that areas

such as Kowloon continued to be associated with opium or heroin dens, and triad gangs (Norman, 1974). These deep-seated racialised connotations continued to be associated with the Chinese population in Britain, despite the popularity and growth of ethnic foods (Chan, 2002). The 1970s saw the introduction of Anglo-Saxon and the more acceptable chop suey and sweet and sour options in Chinese restaurants (Wolfe, 1977). In fact, one of the Cantonese restaurants in Oxford was called 'Opium Den'!

Finally, the 1970s was a period of increased ad literacy amongst British audiences as Cadbury's Smash Martians (1974) by Boase Massimi Pollitt and the 'For mash get Smash' slogan entertained ITV viewers. ITV's (and Channel 4's 1982) foray into commercial television reflected the trend for the lucrative commercials targeted at mass audiences (Curtis, 2002). Coupled with migration, global travel and socio-cultural change in Britain, mainstream press advertising about martial arts also began to grow. In 1973, Chee Soo appeared in a BBC Nationwide television interview where he demonstrated Kung Fu self-defence techniques live in the studio – keen to educate audiences about the different forms of martial arts, he raised awareness of the Kung Fu's history, the difference between Northern and Southern Kung Fu styles in China and how these differed from Karate. In 1973, a business-to-business print advert for The News section of Campaign magazine featured an image of a Karate side kick accompanied by Japanese characters or kanji with the headline 'It's great'. The accompanying copy included cliches such as 'Land of Rising Circulation' and 'get yourself orientated to the market of the South East ...', 'fiendishly clever' (Campaign, 28 Sept 1973). It would appear that practitioners of various martial arts were keen to promote the differences between them. Media discourse would make the distinction that Kung Fu was a 'foot boxing style from

traditional Chinese martial arts' when compared to the more familiar Japanese Judo and Karate (Sunday Telegraph, 29th July 1973, p5). Kung Fu's popularity from 1971–1974 led to more journalistic coverage with some appreciation of its ballet like choreography seen in silent sword play films (Robinson, 1975) though there were also questions of its authenticity and whether Kung Fu artists would be able to fight for real (Sunday Telegraph 25<sup>th</sup> May 1975).

There was increased coverage of Bruce Lee after his death on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1973. Cathay Film distributors organised a memorial in London, and he was described as the 'Chinese James Dean' and 'King of Kung Fu'. It is well known that his 'Eastern westerns' helped steer the discourse away from stereotypical portrayals of the Chinese in films as 'bumbling, obsequious' Charlie Chan's (Sunday Telegraph, 29th July 1973, p5). The Times also uncovered original film reviews for Bruce Lee's final film 'Enter the Dragon' dating back to 18th Jan 1974 (The Times, 12th July 2013, p10). Many would argue that Bruce's fight scenes made him a Hollywood icon; 'the camera loved Bruce' (I Love 1973, BBC2 2014).. More importantly, Bruce appealed not only to the Chinese, but he was also popular with other minorities 'who saw in Bruce Lee a hero who represented them' (I Love 1973, BBC2 2014). By the time of his death, there was an interest in all things Kung Fu related. The Hollywoodisation of martial arts is an important context within which British advertising representations of the period operate.

Prominent media coverage of martial arts included a full-page spread by Brian James of the Complete Guide to the Growth of Martial Arts devised by the Martial Arts Commission for Sportsmail. Entitled '*Occident by Accident*' (Daily Mail, 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 1977), the newspaper feature discussed how Karate arrived in the West through the



American forces who were based in Japan. In contrast, it also highlighted the relative inaccessibility of Chinese Kung Fu training despite the popularity of the television series of the same name *Kung Fu* (1972-1975). The series did, however, inspire a Marvel comic character Shang-Chi in the early 1970s. The mixed-race superhero was a visual carbon copy of Bruce Lee though the character was the son of Sax Rohmer's Dr Fu Manchu. According to writer Steve Englehart, the name was derived from 升 (shēng) meaning 'ascending', and chi, meaning energy (Francisco, 2021).




Fig.54.Avenger's 12 Apr 1974 edition of Master of Kung Fu comic (author's own)

## Case studies of 1970s martial arts tropes

The contextualisation above provides a useful backdrop to the plethora of martial arts tropes in advertising during this period. As with the 1960s, the Japanese form of martial arts, most notably Judo, that has dominated the style used in advertising message construction in the 1970s. This is reflected in cases of Japanese Karate and other Japanese influences such as the Suntory Royal Whisky 'Dare You Be Different' print advert (1971) that demonstrates an appreciation of traditional martial arts in an authentic way that educates the reader about Kabuki plays in Japan, including the sword and cry or 'Shibaraku'. The message focusses on the brand's success and difference.

SC7 Suntory Royal Whiskey 'dare you be different' print advert (1971)



**DARE YOU BE DIFFERENT**

No villain can match the youthful Kabuki character with his great sword and chilling cry—Shibaraku! One of the eighteen favorite Kabuki plays, Shibaraku never fails to please audiences. Another sure crowd pleaser is Suntory Royal Whisky. It's light as a great Scotch, mellow as a distinctive Bourbon, yet different!

For years, incredibly smooth Suntory has been the best-selling whisky in Japan. Now, this supreme whisky is a soaring success in the United States. Straight, on-the-rocks, or mixed, serving Suntory is an entertaining idea! Suntory, the classic whisky from Japan.

**SUNTORY ROYAL WHISKY**

© 1971 SUNTORY LTD. TOKYO, JAPAN. IMPORTED BY SUNTORY (USA) INC., NEW YORK, N.Y.


No villain can match the youthful Kabuki character with his great sword and chilling cry—Shibaraku! One of the eighteen favorite Kabuki plays, Shibaraku never fails to please audiences. Another sure crowd pleaser is Suntory Royal Whisky. It's light as a great Scotch, mellow as a distinctive Bourbon, yet different!

For years, incredibly smooth Suntory has been the best-selling whisky in Japan. Now, this supreme whisky is a soaring success in the United States. Straight, on-the-rocks, or mixed, serving Suntory is an entertaining idea! Suntory, the classic whisky from Japan.

Fig.55.Suntory Royal Whiskey 'dare you be different' print advert 1971 (HAT)

The first case study for the 1970s is Whitbread Tankard 1971. Named 'Judo', the television commercial explicitly references the Judo form through demonstrations of its techniques in the background. The association with Judo is that the bitter is for

the most discerning type of drinker (who also knows a thing or two about Judo). The tone is factual and no nonsense – the bitter that can make you excel at your sport. This is typical of the work that was coming out of influential advertising agency Collett Dickenson Pearce (CDP) during its heyday in the 1970s. Using the dojo as a setting became one of the means of illustrating authenticity – the connotation here is that there are real Judokas practising the form ‘live’, albeit within shot and in the background.

<b>Case 1</b>	<b>Whitbread Tankard <i>Judo</i> (1971)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	Collett Dickenson Pearce (CDP)  SB3 Whitbread Tankard Judo 1971 (HAT)
<b>Technical analysis</b>	30 seconds TV commercial
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	Whitbread's Tankard was one of the key players in keg bitter in the market for British beers.  Advertising in the 1970s promoted keg over cask bitters as the former was more expensive. Keg bitter's popularity was eventually overtaken by lager (Redman, nd). <sup>20</sup>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	With up-tempo instrumental background music, the setting is at a dojo or gym. Two men are shown practising their Judo throws with their partners whilst being watched by the others.  This is interspersed with scenes of the beer being poured from a beer tap into a large glass at a pub.  The camera pans to one of the men at the dojo who wipes away the sweat from his face.  The scene then changes to the same man who has now changed out of his Gi and downing his pint of Tankard before walking towards the bar to order another.  The quality of the Judo is evidenced by the demonstration of various Judo throw techniques.  The Judokas, all Caucasians, have mastered the sport.

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.retrowow.co.uk/retro\\_britain/keg\\_bitter/60s\\_and\\_70s\\_beer.html](https://www.retrowow.co.uk/retro_britain/keg_bitter/60s_and_70s_beer.html)



<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>The voice-over towards the end of the commercial states simply: <i>'cool... refreshing ...Whitbread Tankard'</i>.</p> <p>Whitbread Tankard's concept was that their beer could help the drinker to excel.</p> <p>The association with Judo suggests that the beer is preferred by more discerning drinkers.</p> <p>CDP was one of the most influential advertising agencies during the 1970s and with a large client base, it was not uncommon to find the use of martial arts imageries being used by the agency to market different brands.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Younger drinkers who would pay more for a premium brand.
<b>Aim</b>	To reinforce the message that Tankard is for the discerning drinker.

In fact, the next two case studies for Mars Bar (1972) and Wrigley's Tunes (1976) also feature Judokas demonstrating the correct use of Judo techniques. With the familiar dojo setting carefully constructed, the quality of the throws demonstrated by our Judokas are clear. By now, those in the know will recognise Kevin Crickmar who provided a slice of life 'a day in the life of' a Stockbroker-Judoka in this Mars Bar commercial. The complexity of the techniques captured from what appears to be a live Judo session provided an element of realness/authenticity never seen before in a martial arts themed television commercial. This is reflective of the handiwork of AMV BBDO - one of the most successful creative agencies in London in the late 1970s.

<b>Case 2</b>	<b><u>Mars Bar (1972)</u></b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Advertising agency: AMV BBDO</p>  <p>SB4 Mars Bar Judo 1972 (HAT)</p>

	Features former Tonbridge Judo Club coach and Budokwai Judo member Kevin Crickmar
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>Television commercial 30 seconds</p> <p>Director Karel Reisz</p> <p>Confectionary</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>A bona fide Judoka Kevin Crickmar goes about his job as a stockbroker's clerk in busy central London office, before he is seen taking a break sightseeing with a friend. The friend offers him a Mars bar. He is then seen demonstrating his Judo prowess at a busy dojo.</p> <p>The film is shot by renowned film maker Karel Reisz and is reflective of the quality of filming available in the 1970s. There is a good degree of authenticity in terms of the storytelling, close up of the product and its ingredients and packaging, and voiceover to direct the audience.</p> <p>The glucose, sugar, milk, and chocolate provide enough energy for those with a sporty active lifestyle.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>Music: trombone</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SC8 Mars Bar 'Judo' script (1972)</p> <p>Kevin is pictured at work at a busy firm of stockbrokers – he is shown walking towards his desk holding some papers.</p> <p>The words 'Kevin Crickmar stockbroker's clerk' appears on screen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ MVO: Kevin Crickmar.</li> <li>➤ Kevin arrives at his desk.</li> <li>➤ MVO: he's got a bustling job.</li> <li>➤ He puts down his papers, turns around,</li> <li>➤ MVO: and he works full out.</li> <li>➤ He picks up the phone and sit down to speak on the phone.</li> <li>➤ CUT TO Kevin walking with a male colleague in a busy London Street.</li> <li>➤ MVO: but there's always time for sightseeing.</li> <li>➤ The men stop and sit down on a bench. His friend hands him a bar of chocolate.</li> <li>➤ MVO ...and Mars bars</li> <li>➤ Kevin takes a bite of the chocolate bar.</li> <li>➤ CUT to CU Glucose is poured into a glass jar labelled with the word 'Glucose'.</li> <li>➤ MVO: There's glucose ...</li> <li>➤ CUT to CU sugar.</li> <li>➤ MVO: sugar ....</li> <li>➤ FADE TO milk being poured.</li> <li>➤ MVO: milk</li> <li>➤ CUT TO: Half cut Mars bar followed by a full bar inside its wrapper.</li> <li>➤ MVO: and thick, thick chocolate in a Mars ...</li> <li>➤ Full size Mars bar inside its wrapper</li> <li>➤ CUT TO: Kevin is seen inside a dojo class with 5 other Judokas stood in a line facing each other. Kevin leads and says 'Yumi' (bow) before they all bow towards each other in pairs. They are wearing gis and bare feet.</li> <li>➤ CUT TO: Kevin is seen executing a Judo throw before wrestling with his opponent 'arrghh!' whilst the others are doing the same.</li> <li>➤ Jingle: A Mars a day helps you work rest and play (appears on screen)</li> </ul> </div> <p>Kevin is not an actor but a stockbroker's clerk who trained the renowned Budokwai dojo in Chelsea, London. The voice over has a reassuring tone and</p>

	<p>there are many extras (work colleagues, tourists and Judokas) that have been captured.</p> <p>The casts are all Caucasian – indoor and outdoor work outfits, and Judo gis. The only Japanese heard is 'yumi' or 'bow'. The stances for bowing, grappling, wrestling and throwing are authentically executed. There is no camera trickery involved.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>Using slice of life, the focus is on the use of real people to illustrate how Mars Bar may help them 'work, rest and play'.</p> <p>There is clear reiteration of the ingredients, close up of the chocolate and its wrapper that is easily recognisable.</p> <p>Jingle associated was devised in the late 1950s and used until the mid-1990s</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Mainstream adults, busy professionals and tourists seeking a snack bar
<b>Aim</b>	To raise awareness amongst professionals seeking the benefits of a Mars snack bar

By 1976, we were treated to a humorous take on the infamous Wrigley's Tunes Judo advert with its catchy iconic slogan, 'Tunes help you breathe more easily'. The 1976 commercial was an early take on subsequent commercials, with the recurring slogan featuring a man suffering from a cold.

<b>Case 3</b>	<b>Wrigley's Tunes Judo (1976)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Agency unknown – agencies known to have links with the brand include Saatchi and Saatchi, and TBWA London.</p> <div> </div> <p>SB5 Wrigley's Tunes 'Judo' 1976 (HAT)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	30 sec TV commercial
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Tunes, manufactured by The Wrigley Company in the UK, is marketed as a cough sweet, or anti-congestant lozenge.</p> <p>In 1976, its memorable TV commercial featuring the actor Peter Cleall who enunciates the word 'Tunes' after taking the anti-congestant made the brand and its slogan '<i>Tunes help you breathe more easily</i>' a household name.</p> <p>By the mid-1970s, Judo continued to be used despite the growing popularity of Karate and Kung Fu.</p>

	This particular advert focuses on improved physical performance from taking the lozenge.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The setting is in a Judo hall in Britain as indicated by the association flags. The Judo hall appears authentic with visual cues of the club's associations, mats, uniform.</p> <p>The casting includes Judo experts as it is clear that Judo throws are being executed at the start of the commercial and during key background scenes. Although all the cast members were Caucasian, one of the men at the start of the commercial appeared to be 'Japanese'.</p> <p>However, this 'blink and you will miss it' split-second appearance would have been easily missed by the audience.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SC9 Wrigley's Tunes 'Judo' script (1976)</b></p> <p>Setting: A busy Judo club with men practising Judo throws. British and Japanese flags, as well as Judo association flags hang from the ceiling. A man arrives at the club with a scarf and coat. He touches his nose and shakes his head. The instructor spots him.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Instructor: <i>'Here - you need tunes'</i></li> <li>➤ Man: <i>'Tunes?'</i></li> <li>➤ VO: when you have trouble breathing, try Tunes - they're menthol medicated</li> <li>➤ Close up of packaging with 'Menthol' 'Medicated' copy displayed on screen.</li> <li>➤ Cut to changing room: The man takes off his coat whilst sucking the lozenge. His instructor is seen leaving the changing room.</li> <li>➤ VO: suck tunes and you release a cool menthol vapour that really does help clear stuffiness</li> <li>➤ Gym floor: In slow motion, the man kiai's and Judo throws his instructor to the floor.</li> <li>➤ Close up: The man looks at the instructor and says <i>'Tuuunes!'</i></li> <li>➤ End line: Help you breath more easily, in cherry, honey and new blackcurrant favours.</li> </ul> </div> <p>The concept for the commercial focuses on the benefits of the lozenge. The voiceover spells out how the menthol medication can make you breathe more easily.</p> <p>The endline refers to the different flavours.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Anyone seeking an anti-congestant lozenge.
<b>Aim</b>	To raise awareness of the benefits that Tunes offer to the user.

As discussed at the start of this section, the 1970s was a seminal period in British advertising as it was only 15 years before that commercial television was launched with ITV in 1955. Collett Dickenson Pearce (CDP) were at the helm of creativity collaborating with Sir Ridley Scott and Geoff Seymour for the infamous Hovis 'Bike'

Advert (Rogers, 2018). It is very telling that the three Judo adverts in the early 1970s are British made featuring settings, accents and locations (pub, London office, gymnasium) which are easily identifiable to the audience. The use of Caucasian Judokas or actors in all three commercials above implies that Judo had become the most popular form of martial arts style in Britain, such that CDP, Ogilvy and other creative agencies started to build it into their advertising briefs.



Fig.56.Still from BBC Annie Nightingale Judo demonstration 1973  
(<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=913280213357867>)

The popularity of the sport in the 1970s is reflected in media coverage as exemplified by an interview that then journalist Annie Nightingale did for the BBC in 1973. As well as a demonstration of Judo throws, the increasing success that Britain had in the sport, its recent inclusion in the Olympics and British and the importance of finding a club that was formally accredited to the British Judo Association.

Real action heroes in the 1970s were characters such as James Bond – by 1977, it was the Roger Moore era – the Daily Mail reported that the actor spent two months

training in Kung Fu to an alleged green belt standard. The second authentication question here concerned the ability of the actor to perform their own stunts and action scenes (Gilchrist, 1977). Doing one's own stunts as an actor may add kudos to their prowess. In fact, martial artists sustain many bruises and injuries as part of their training and see these 'rewards' as a testament of their skills and hard work. Interestingly, Roger Moore was quoted as saying that the bruises were 'as if I am fighting half of Red China' (Gilchrist, 1977)– this is a perfect illustration of how western / Caucasian actors viewed the Chinese as the 'Other' in the 1970s. For actors that do not wish to injure themselves during filming, stunt doubles are used.

What role did the infamous Hai Karate television commercials play in all of this? The next case analyses the transnational advertising campaign that defined 1970s advertising. The 30-second television commercials in the US and UK did not have the budget for celebrity-endorsed commercials of competing brands. Instead, the advertising featured a stereotypical 'wimp' being pursued by attractive females and having to resort to his Hai Karate skills to defend himself with the tagline 'be careful how you use it'.

<b>Case 4</b>	<b>Pfizer's Hai Karate (1969 – 1976)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Geers Cross Advertising (UK) / McCaffrey &amp; McCall (USA)</p> <p>Benton and Bowles (1976+)</p> <div> </div> <p>SB6 Hai Karate 'Kit Kat Club' 1973 (HAT)</p> <div> </div> <p>SB7 Hai Karate 'Restaurant' 1973 (HAT) 20 sec</p>

<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>The style of commercials did not change until Hai Karate came along. Hai Karate was a transatlantic brand that was invented by George Newell, Co-Creative Director of McCaffrey &amp; McCall agency, in 1967.</p> <p>The brand became one of the best-known men's aftershave.</p> <p>Different executions and durations were released in both US and UK markets e.g., Hai Karate <i>Kit Kat Club</i> (1973) was an extended 40 second TV commercial whereas Hai Karate <i>Restaurant</i> (1973) was the standard 20 seconds.</p> <p>By 1961, it was owned by the Leeming Division of pharmaceutical Giant Pfizer - a market leader in men's toiletry during the sixties (Pollard, 2008; Ostrom, 2017). The brand was discontinued in the 1970s and briefly revived in the 1990s (Pollard, 2008).</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Hai Karate's popularity was cemented by the humorous TV commercials that incorporated many of the clichés of aftershave advertising.</p> <p>This was supported with an Oriental-themed brand concept of black packaging with Chinese effect typography that contained self-defence instructions to help the user defend himself from amorous women.</p> <p>The brand extension included variants beyond cologne and aftershave, namely: soap on a rope, shaving cream, talcum powder. As well as Regular, Hai Karate lines included Oriental Lime (1968), Oriental Spice (1968) and Musk (1968) (Pollard, 2008).</p> <p>Valerie Leon is intrinsically linked to the commercials and, like Edwina Carroll for BMK Carpets before her, became known as the 'Hai Karate Girl'.</p> <p>In 1995, the trend for nostalgia re-ignited interest in Hai Karate's revival by the cosmetics company Miners International (Marketing Week, 1995).</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The earliest black and white TV commercial shown to American audiences was Hai Karate <i>House Visitor</i> (1967)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SC10 Hai Karate 'House Visitor' script (1967-69)</b></p> <p>Setting: A man visits a woman at her house. As he knocks on the door, he is seen holding a box of chocolates behind his back. A woman opens the door, greets him and invites him in. Once he enters the building, the woman starts to chase the man around the living room as soon as she catches a whiff of his aftershave.</p> <p>VO: <i>This man has used a little too much of an aftershave called Hai Karate. Hai Karate is a cool soothing lotion, drives women wild, makes men irresistible. That's why every pack of Hai Karate contains indispensable instructions on ..... self-defence. Hai Karate aftershave. Be careful how you use it.</i></p> </div> <p>Hai Karate shows how clever advertising, branding and sales promotion helped it overtake sales of the more established competitors, namely: Old Spice (associated with manliness), Brut (sportiness) and Denim (seductiveness).</p> <p>According to blogger David Henningham, Hai Karate's ability to combine these with 'an element of Bruce Lee characteristics' made it stand out<sup>21</sup>.</p>

<sup>21</sup> <https://retro-hen.com/2019/05/25/hai-Karate-aftershave-the-fine-line-between-self-defence-and-vandalism/>

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These 'farical advertising' was influenced by the popularity of Bruce Lee's Kung Fu films with its 'comic violence' and 'Carry on' or 'Benny Hill style of humour' (Ostrom, 2015).

**SC11 Hai Karate *Kit Kat Club* script (1973) – 40 sec**

Setting: Strip club. 60s music in the background whilst a woman (leopard) dances inside a cage.

A smartly dressed bespectacled man in a long coat is seen at the top of the stairs. He looks over at the dancer then notices a sign at the cloakroom '*Please Don't Touch the Leopards*' followed by another sign directly below '*Violators will be persecuted*'. He turns to the camera grimacing '*mm*'

A leopard removes his coat and grabs him whilst he tries to get away.

- Leopard: '*oohh what's that aftershave you're wearing?*'
- Man: '*hey!*'
- He runs down the stairs to be confronted by a crowd of leopards reaching out to touch him. The man shouts '*hahh!*' gesturing with his arms to warn them off.
- VO: wear too much Hai Karate aftershave and women can be a problem. That's why we have to put instructions on self-defence in every package.
- Man: '*Hii-yah*' '*pardon me*'
- He bumps into another leopard before defending himself using knife-hand strikes '*hah!*'
- The women become increasingly hysterical as he trips and knocks over a table in a room filled with other male guests sat on their own. He turns to one of the female guests.
- Man: '*I'm terribly sorry*'
- He turns round and Karate chops tray that one of the leopards was holding spilling its contents '*Hahh!*'
- Cut to two bottles -aftershave lotion and cologne.
- VO: *Hai Karate aftershave, cologne and Gift sets*
- Cut to man being dragged by the other leopards into the cage
- Man: '*stay off Girl!*'
- VO: *Hai Karate – be careful how you use it*

**SC12 Hai Karate 'Restaurant' (1973) - 30 sec**

Setting: restaurant scene, woman sits alone at a table. She is about to take a sip from her wine glass when she spots a man, stands up suddenly, knocking over her table in the process:

- VO: *Hai Karate aftershave drives women wild ...makes men irresistible*
- The man throws Karate punches to warn her off and split a water fountain in two with a Karate chop, before falling over and water splashes over a couple dining at another table
- VO: *that's why there is a special leaflet on self-defence*
- The woman advances towards the man whilst he jumps up and lands on a table behind him.
- VO: *in every pack*
- The woman follows him to the floor before the scene cuts to a still image showing a bottle of the aftershave and body talc.
- VO: *Hai Karate after shave ...and body talc*

Hai Karate 'Eastern Spice' (1973). This version featured the same scenes as Hai Karate Restaurant but with amendments to the VO script to account for the new Eastern Spice line. The commercial had new features in the form of gong sound effects, stills of the new packaging (shown at the start and end of the commercial) and 'be careful how you use it' end line.



**SC13 Hai Karate 'Eastern Spice' (1973) – 30 sec**

Still image of the new packaging


- VO: *Hai Karate second fragrance – new Eastern Spice*
- Gong sound effect
- VO: *Just one whiff drives women wild. Its sultry, oriental aroma makes men irresistible. That's why there is a special leaflet on self-defence in every pack.*
- *Hai Karate and Hai Karate Eastern Spice – be careful how you use it!*

Still image: Regular and New Eastern Spice bottles.

Hai Karate: *Don't dare use it without memorizing this*




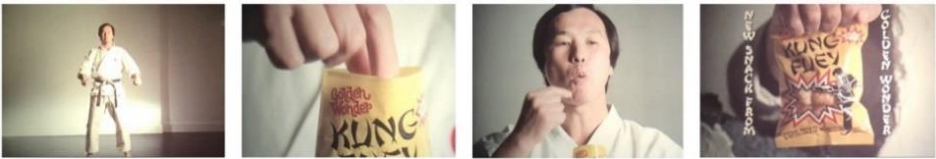
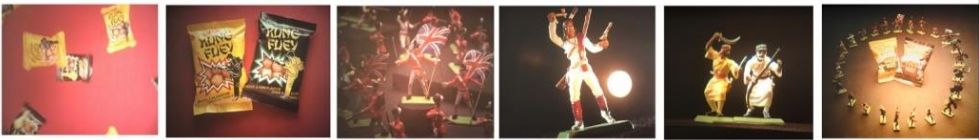

Fig.57.Hai Karate 'Don't dare use it without memorising this' leaflet insert  
(<https://desperate-living.com/2024/10/26/be-careful-how-you-use-it-the-story-of-hai-karate/>)

<p><i>New Oriental Lime</i></p> <p>Use too much and you can find yourself in a tight squeeze.</p>	 <p>Fig.58.Hai Karate 'New Oriental Lime' print advert 1968  <a href="https://flashbak.com/fifteen-manly-after-shave-ads-from-the-sixties-and-seventies-19924/hai-karate-with-oriental-lime-1968/">https://flashbak.com/fifteen-manly-after-shave-ads-from-the-sixties-and-seventies-19924/hai-karate-with-oriental-lime-1968/</a></p> <p>Other Hai Karate commercials included updates, such as the bottles moving in line to 'punching sound effects' similar to those found in 1970s martial arts films. The self-defence leaflet is often referred to as a 'Kung Fu' guide suggesting, once again, the tendency for British audiences to mix up the Japanese Karate with Chinese Kung Fu (Curtis, 2002). In addition, the use of 'Chinese typography on its packaging to emulate Chinese calligraphy strokes may have racialized connotations (Padman, 2015).</p>
<p><b>Target audience</b></p>	<p>Men aged 25-45</p>
<p><b>Aim</b></p>	<p>To introduce the functional benefit associations of the brand where the user is taught basic self-defence.</p>

The analysis implies a link to Bruce Lee's Kung Fu films, although Bruce Lee films are not in the same comedy genre as Jackie Chan films, for example. In terms of martial arts styles, Hai Karate is synonymous with its namesake, though its use of comedy 'violence' is more akin to that found in the *Pink Panther* films (1964-1992) with manservant Cato's attempts at karate chops. The commercials captured the public's imagination and changed the way the British public felt about martial arts. 'Hai Karate Girl' Valerie Leon injected glamour into the commercials as model Edwina Carroll did for BMK Carpets before her. Despite a successful run of commercials over five years, Hai Karate eventually fell out of favour with British

consumers. To this day, Hai Karate commercials continue to feature regularly in blogs and on TV documentaries for their creative use of humour.

Hai Karate provides some of the most memorable campaigns of the decade, however inauthentic the martial arts were. This contrasts sharply with JWT agency's authentication through the recruitment of a bona fide Karate master, Keinosuke Enoeda, for Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey in 1974.

<b>Case 5</b>	<b>Golden Wonder's <i>Kung Fuey</i> (1974-76)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>J. Walter Thompson (JWT)</p>  <p>SB8 Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey 'A New Way of Life' 1974 (BFI)</p>  <p>SB9 Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey 'Something Special' 1974/1975 (BFI)</p>  <p>SB10 Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey 'Warriors of the World' 1976 (BFI)</p>  <p>SB11 Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey 'Fighting Stars' 1976 (BFI)</p>

<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>Four TV commercials:</p> <p>Kung Fuey <i>A New Way of life</i> (1974): 30 seconds</p> <p>Kung Fuey <i>Something Special</i> (1974/1975): 15 seconds</p> <p>Kung Fuey <i>Warriors of the World</i> (1976): 30 seconds</p> <p>Kung Fuey <i>Fighting Stars</i> (1976): 30 seconds.</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Golden Wonder was established in 1946 by William Alexander, an Edinburgh baker. The acquisition by Imperial Tobacco in 1960 led to increased investments in production with TV commercials communicating Golden Wonder's success as the UK's leading crisps manufacturer, beating established rivals Smiths and Walkers (Berry and Norman, 2014)</p> <p>In 1974, the company launched Kung Fuey, a crunchy corn and potato snack with an 'unusual' flavour (bacon and mushroom), targeted at teenagers and children. Its distinctive yellow packaGing included an illustration of a martial artist - a clear homage to Bruce Lee (Gosling, 2019).</p> <p>Both <i>A New Way of life</i> (1974) and <i>Something Special</i> (1974/1975) featured Karateka Enoda Keinosuke - Annoyda Sensei sampling a new flavour of Kung Fuey crisps.</p> <p>The third advert <i>Warriors of the World</i> (1976) introduces 'Britain's Deetail Soldiers'.</p> <p>Kung Fuey <i>Fighting Stars</i> (1976) features the promotion of a free dartboard. Annoyda Sensei is replaced with a Chinese actor in a black Kung Fu suit.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The early Kung Fuey commercials possessed martial arts authenticity by casting a real-life Karateka. Annoyda Sensei was invited to Britain from Japan in 1965 as part of the Japanese Karate Association's initiative to introduce Shotokan Karate to the West. His demonstrations live on BBC in 1973<sup>22</sup> led to his subsequent casting in the 1974 Kung Fuey commercials that played on his Karate prowess.</p> <p>He later reprised his role in a Wrangler Jeans TV Commercial (1980) for Young &amp; Rubicam Scandinavia. In contrast, Kung Fuey's <i>Fighting Stars</i> (featuring a Chinese actor demonstrating his skills on the dartboard) is a departure from Annoyda Sensei's kata demonstrations. Kung Fuey offered audiences the 'real deal' in terms of martial arts representation as it was the first time that oriental actors were featured in commercials, albeit with non-speaking parts.</p> <p>The martial arts (real or imagined) in these commercials suggest that Kung Fu was starting to become more popular by the late 1970s. Despite this, Karate and Kung Fu are referenced interchangeably from the Chinese influenced 'Kung Fuey' brand name to the casting of Annoyda Sensei.</p> <p>Around the mid-1970s, Hong Kong Phooey was a popular animated TV series and this may have influenced Golden Wonder's decision to select a brand name that children could readily identify with. Berry and Norman (2014) described how children in playgrounds were already 'Karate chopping piles of wood and trying to kick down walls barefoot' before TV commercials 'filled with Chinese stereotypes doing the same in the name of snack food'. Stereotypes could come from visual and aural representations – in this case, the use of 'gong' sound effects and</p>

<sup>22</sup> Dave Hazard (2007): *Born fighter* (p. 71–74). London: John Blake Publishing.

	xylophones common in martial arts films may contribute to stereotypically racist depictions of the Chinese.
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>JWT's TV concepts for the brand ran successfully for two years and the brand became a popular snack amongst children during the mid-1970s before Golden Wonder stopped trading in 2006.</p> <p><b>Kung Fuey A New Way of life (1974) and Something Special (1974/1975):</b> TV commercials of different duration featuring Annoyda Sensei in a white Gi (suit) and black belt performing kata (set of Karate moves), before sampling and indicating his approval for the brand, followed by the obligatory board breaking using his hand.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SC14 Kung Fuey A New Way of life (1974)</b></p> <p><i>VO: Kung Fuey. From out of the East, comes a taste of a new way of life...Kung Fuey. Kung Fuey in bacon and mushroom flavour. Crisp, crunchy. Kung Fuey – the smashing new snack from Golden Wonder</i></p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SC15 Kung Fuey Something Special (1974/1975)</b></p> <p><i>VO: We asked someone very special if he would like to try our new Kung Fuey bacon and mushroom flavoured snack. We were lucky – he liked it. Crispy, crunchy WHACK! Kung Fuey - new from Golden Wonder</i></p> </div> <p>In 'Warriors of the World' (1976), the commercial is accompanied by fanfare and sound effects (battle cries, bugle sounds, machine gunshots) as different toy soldiers appear on the screen. This commercial is a departure from the norm and although some of the original content is the same as 'Something Special' (1974), the commercial noticeably changes tact halfway through to showcase the promotion of the plastic toy soldiers.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SC16 Kung Fuey Warriors of the World (1976)</b></p> <p>'Gong' sound effect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ VO: From out of the East comes Kung Fuey crisp crunchy <i>bacon and mushroom flavour ...cheese and ham flavour.</i></li> <li>➤ And now (battle cry) <i>Warriors of the World Turkish, British, Apache, Desert Fighters</i> (bugle sound) <i>all in full colour and armed to the keep .....they're yours to collect in Kung Fuey packs.</i></li> </ul> <p>Machine gunshots followed by a gong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ VO: <i>Look for details on special packs. They're in the shops ...now!</i></li> </ul> </div> <p>In 'Fighting Stars' (1976), a Chinese actor in a black Kung Fu suit teaches a young boy and girl how to play the dartboard game. The setting includes antique Chinese screen panels in the background. The commercial also starts with the 'gong' sound effect commonly associated with the Shaw Brothers martial arts films with</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SC17 Kung Fuey Fighting Stars (1976)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ VO: <i>From out of the East comes Kung Fuey crisps ..crunchy...bacon and mushroom flavour ...cheese and ham flavour. And now (Gong sound) with Kung Fuey comes the thrilling Fighting Stars game ..the Kung Fu pallet with three magnetised soft,plastic fighting stars that stick, like magic.</i></li> <li>➤ Girl: <i>your turn</i></li> <li>➤ VO: <i>75p when you buy special Kung Fuey packs. Get Fighting Stars ...now!</i></li> </ul> </div>

These TV commercials were supported with sales promotion tactics, such as coupons in the Daily Mail newspaper and Action comic.




Fig.59. Golden Wonder's 'Hey Kids! Cut the coupon and cut the costs of crisps and snacks!' advert in Daily Mail 21st April 1977 (HAT)



Fig.60. Golden Wonder's 'Here's Real High Flying Fun – the exclusive Kung Fuey Dragon Kite!' advertisement in Action Issue 35, 9 October 1976 (5mudg3 Blog)



	 <p>The image shows a yellow bag of Golden Wonder Kung Fuey snacks. The text 'Golden Wonder' is at the top in red. Below it, 'KUNG FUEY' is written in large, bold, black letters. A red starburst with the word 'NEW' is to the right. At the bottom, it says 'CRUNCHY BACON &amp; MUSHROOM FLAVOUR CORN &amp; POTATO SNACK'. An illustration of a person in a black martial arts uniform performing a high kick is on the right side of the bag.</p>
	Fig.61. Golden Wonder Kung Fuey packaging (Gosling, 2019)
<b>Target audience</b>	Children aged 8 - 16
<b>Aim</b>	To introduce the new flavours of Kung Fuey crisps (early commercials) To increase awareness of the promotional offers

Japan Karate Association introduced Karate to the West by sending its best



Karatekas abroad to spread the world.

Keinosuke Enoda, the 'Tiger of Shotokan', seen here on the cover of Kick Illustrated in 1983 became Shotokan Chief Instructor who settled in Britain. He was instrumental in placing Britain on the Karate world map, and coached actors such as Lee Marvin, Michael Caine, and Sean Connery in some of their fight sequences in films.

Fig.62.Keinosuke Enoda on the cover of Kick Illustrated magazine March 1983 (<https://ma-mags.com/index.html>)

*'Master Enoda stands out.... he is one of the fittest, most powerful Karate technicians but he has another, less definable quality. His energy and charisma - almost an aura - are something special'*, Terry O'Neill 8th Dan Karate Union of Great Britain (<https://www.shuriway.co.uk/enoda.html>). Keinosuke Enoda is not only known for his power and influence in Karate but also in the media circuit, as encapsulated in this conversation thread at martialartsplanet.com:

- *Mr Enoda certainly did like his advertising Gigs, didn't he?!*
- *Yep, I do wonder if that's part of the reason why Shotokan took off so much in the UK - as well as being a damn fine Karate man, he certainly had a sense of showbiz too, so helped to get Karate out in the public eye.*
- *Quite possibly. Just remember that you're not a Shotokan master until you have awesome flares, wear Hai Karate and eat Kung Fueys*

(Source: <https://www.martialartsplanet.com/threads/the-old-masters.80953/page-7>)

The Kung Fuey commercials have clearly referenced Enoda's aura with the 'Something Special' where his approval is sought for the new flavour of crisps, and in 'The Way of Life' where he is shown performing kata moves before breaking boards to get to the 'smashing' new snack. The distinctive brand packaging features an illustration of a male martial artist in black complete with the use of Far East Asian inspired typography/calligraphy, which may have racialised connotations.

The opportunity for bona fide martial artists such as Sensei Enoda to coach actors in the film industry was made possible by the use of stunt actors during the 1960s where 7<sup>th</sup> Dan Judoka, Cyd Child, was a regular on film sets as a stunt double. Her expertise in The Avengers (1961-1969), providing an added layer of authenticity. Clearly authenticated martial arts aesthetics rely on the techniques and experience of a 'real' or 'imagined' Judoka in the 1960s and a rather well-respected Karateka by the 1970s.



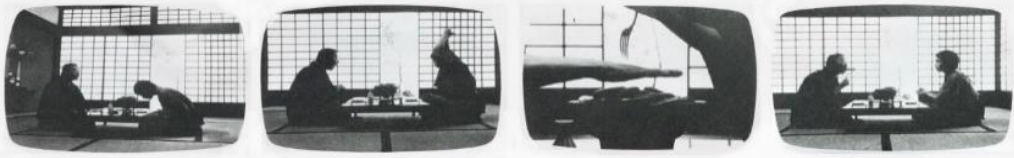
Not only that, but Golden Wonder's use of the style of martial arts changed from Enoda Sensei and his Karate prowess to the use of a Chinese actor made to look like he was a Kung Fu practitioner in his unmistakable black Kung Fu suit compared to the white Karate Gi of Enoda Sensei. In terms of racialised depictions, Kung Fuey's 'Fighting Stars' commercials at least started to feature Chinese actors. This is comparable to Golden Wonder's earlier efforts at authenticity with its 'A Way of Life' and 'Something Special' executions that featured a well-respected Japanese Karate Sensei. These commercials by JWT involve a bold move to feature Far East Asians in martial arts roles, at least in advertising that features Karate or Kung Fu.

Goodbody's (1977) feature 'Get your kicks from Karate' for the *Sunday Times Magazine*'s Lifespan section stood out for its coverage of Karate as a sport, with quality photography that perfectly captured Karate in action, and its use of Karate terminology. Despite this advancement, the feature fell short with its generalisations about the flexibility and inbred competitive drives of 'negro' Karate practitioners (TSTM, 27<sup>th</sup> Nov 1977, p.21). This suggests that black and minority ethnic communities in Britain were at the mercy of mainstream journalists during the 1970s.

The next two case studies, Wall's sausages Japanese (1976), and Guinness 'Kung Fool' (1977), provide evidence of the level of racial stereotyping of the Chinese community that occurred during the mid-1970s that both CDP and JWT agencies were involved with.

Fig.63. Goodbody's feature 'Get your kicks from Karate'  
(The Sunday Times Magazine 27 Nov 1977)



<b>Case 6</b>	<b>Wall's Sausages <i>Japanese</i> (1976)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Collett Dickenson Pearce (CDP)</p>  <p>SB12 Wall's Sausages 'Japanese' 1976 (HAT) (shown here in black and white)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	45 seconds TV commercial.
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	Wall's Meat Company was established in 1786 by Richard Wall. The company became a Unilever subsidiary in 1930. As one of the most well-known brands in Britain, its sausages were a staple part of every British household.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The setting provides cues to its Japanese setting: shoji screens, low rectangular table, tatami mat flooring. The father and his number three son pay homage to the Charlie Chan films.</p> <p>By the late 1970s, the increasing use of oriental actors in British TV commercials, albeit in stereotypical roles for the food grocery category was commonplace. This commercial is no different with its emphasis on 'Japanese' accents, the use of the word '<i>inscrutable</i>', and reference to '<i>mysterious customs</i>'.</p> <p>The link to martial arts is seen by the father's quest to teach his son to '<i>master the art</i>' of eating sausages using a fork and the son's attempt to exert some force before attempting to stab the sausage. The son also exclaims '<i>ah so!</i>'.</p> <p>This commercial may also have exacerbated the imitation of the derogatory term '<i>ah so!</i>' by British schoolchildren in the playgrounds, along with the slant-eye or 'slitty eye' gestures in the 1970s.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>This humorous TV commercial communicates the focus on 'Stab One Tonight' effectively and was one of the earliest adverts featuring oriental actors who had speaking parts.</p> <p>The work made it to the 1976 D&amp;AD Annual which suggests recognition by the industry for its level of creativity.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SC18 Wall's Sausages 'Japanese' (1976)</p> <p>Setting: A Japanese father and son are having dinner at home.</p> </div>

	<p>Father: <i>Number three son, before you visit Britain ..must learn art of eating Wall's sausage</i></p> <p>Son: <i>Wall's sau-harge...hah...</i></p> <p>Father: <i>Pick up fork ..stab sausage ...dip in yellow paste....</i></p> <p>Son: <i>ahhhhhhhhsoooooooooo!</i></p> <p>Father: <i>No! Like this.....British love Wall's sausage ...eat many times each week</i></p> <p>...</p> <p>Son: <i>Father ..if British love wall's sau-harge so much, why stab with fork?</i></p> <p>Father: <i>No-one know, my son. British inscrutable island people...Have many mysterious customs... Come.....try again.</i></p> <p>VO: Succulent pork. One of a range of great British sausages from Wall's. Stab one tonight.</p>	
<b>Target audience</b>	Grocery shoppers	
<b>Aim</b>	To counteract increasing competition and remind consumers of Wall's range.	

This commercial by CDP is different to the transgressive comedies from the 1960s era such as *Mind Your Language* (1977-79) and *Love Thy Neighbour* (ITV, 1972-76), where audiences bonded over the degree of offence created by the jokes (Hunt, 2015). The next case study references the popular television series *Kung Fu* (1972-75), on which JWT based its creative theme. It parodies the American drama with clever scripting and the use of 'yellow face' makeup for the two characters. David Carradine was made to look Eurasian for his portrayal of Shaolin monk Kwai Chang Caine in the television series that cultural producers for JWT wanted to emulate for the Guinness commercial.


<b>Case 7</b>	<b>Guinness <i>Kung Fool</i> (1977)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>J. Walter Thompson (JWT)</p> <div>  </div> <p>SB13 Guinness 'Kung Fool' 1977 (BFI))</p>

<b>Technical analysis</b>	30 seconds TV commercial
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Guinness &amp; Co. Brewery, from its humble origins in Dublin, introduced the stout in 1759 before achieving global success worldwide. It moved its operations to London in 1932 and is currently owned by Diageo PLC.</p> <p>The brand has a long history of advertising - from its first-ever print ad in the Daily Mail on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1929 with '<i>This is the first advertisement ever issued in a national paper to advertise Guinness</i>' - to AMV BBDO's 'Surfer' TV (1999).</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>In 1977, Alan Parker directed 'Kung Fool', a parody of the popular American TV series <i>Kung Fu</i>. The series, broadcast from 1972-75, was notorious for casting Caucasian actor David Carradine as Shaolin monk Caine / Grasshopper opposite blind Master Po who was played by a Chinese born American actor (Keye Luke)</p> <p>In keeping with the theme of the original TV series, Guinness' Greenhopper is played by English actor Philip Sayer. The Master, on the other hand, is played by Preston Lockwood as opposed to a Chinese actor (unlike the TV series).</p> <p>To emulate the TV series, the Master spoke in a riddle which the young apprentice had to decipher.</p> <p>The 'yellow face' casting of Caucasian actors for the storyline based on the Shaolin temple illustrates an appropriation of Chinese culture for entertainment purposes.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	The commercial's strong reference to the TV series with the words 'Kung Fu' at the start is unmistakable and Greenhopper's failure to unlock the secret to enlightenment made for a humorous commercial.

	<p style="text-align: center;">SC19 Guinness 'Kung Fool' (1977)</p> <p>Setting: Two monks are in a dark room filled with candles. The words 'Kung Fu' appears on screen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Master: <i>The first lesson in meditation Green-hopper is to learn how to lose yourself in the dark</i></li> <li>➤ Greenhopper: <i>But it's still light though master</i> (points to the sky)</li> <li>➤ Master: <i>You always done that does you credit Greenhopper but is it not true - some only see light while those more fortunate observe the dark</i></li> </ul> <p>CUT to two glasses full of Guinness. Master takes a drink slowly from a Guinness glass whilst Greenhopper watches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Greenhopper: <i>You have lost me master.</i></li> <li>➤ Master: <i>No, I lose myself and thus discover the innermost secrets of the dark</i></li> </ul> <p>Takes another drink.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Master: <i>Come Greenhopper join me in the dark</i></li> <li>➤ Greenhopper: <i>Yes master</i> (Greenhopper: starts to blow out all the candles whilst Master sighs in the dark)</li> <li>➤ Master: <i>You still have much to learn Greenhopper</i></li> <li>➤ End line: <i>Thank goodness for Guinness</i></li> </ul> <p>The script also had an element of Star Wars (1977) with its reference to the 'dark side'. However, being authentic to the TV series would require a Chinese actor to inhabit the role of the monk.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Guinness fans
<b>Aim</b>	To remind existing drinkers of the benefits of Guinness

It may be argued that television commercials such as these perpetuated the stereotyping of the Chinese during the late 1970s. These messages may have inadvertently led to the exposure of Chinese children and adults to playground taunts of 'ah so!' and the mocking of Chinese people with the word 'grasshopper' during the 1970s. Both commercials are made by well-respected agencies such as CDP and JWT. Both drew their references from films with their references to 'number three son' a la Charlie Chan films of 1930s and 1940s, and the Kung Fu television series from 1970s by using 'Greenhopper' instead of the original 'Grasshopper'.

Traditional martial arts (Karate and Judo) continued to dominate the discourse as the decade drew to a close, with these two last examples of creativity and authenticity in their use of racialised constructions and martial arts: Everetts Agency's Brick Development Association (1978) and Olympus' Terence Donovan print advert (1979).

<b>Case 8</b>	<b>Brick Development Association (1978)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Everetts Advertising Agency</p>  <p>SB14 Brick Development Agency 1978 (HAT)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	30 seconds TV commercial.
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>The Brick Development Association (BDA) was established in 1946 to promote the UK's brick industry and support its clay brick and paver manufacturers. It communicates the interests of its members through advertising and PR.</p> <p>Ad features a martial artist attempting to break a brick with his bare hands.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>A Caucasian actor is seen preparing for this challenge by warming up with a few punches before focusing all his attention on the brick.</p> <p>His preparation, breath control and kiai (yell), 'mind over matter' posturing in executing the manoeuvre suggests some level of authenticity in his approach.</p> <p>There is authenticity in his approach and his technique even though the Karateka may be portrayed by an actor.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>The advert was awarded the diploma at the British Arrows Awards</p> <p>The attention to detail in the copy and twist at the end made this an effective commercial that communicated the benefits of bricks to its audience.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>SC20 Brick Development Agency (1978)</p> </div>

	<p>Setting: Dimly lit room. Man in Karate Gi approaches the brick and rolls up his sleeves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ VO: <i>It is easy to work with, it's there when you want it in over 800 colours and textures</i> He breathes in</li> <li>➤ VO: Bricks can't start or spread a fire He gets ready and positions his right hand on the brick.</li> <li>➤ VO: <i>...and it's a good insulator for a quieter life</i> He inhales quickly and Kiai loudly as he strikes down on the brick.</li> <li>➤ VO: <i>...and brick is very, very strong</i> The brick does not break, and he holds his hand, covering up his pain, turns and walks away</li> <li>➤ VO: <i>That's the beauty of brick. Let's make more of it.</i> End line The Brick Development Association</li> </ul>
<b>Target audience</b>	This TV commercial is targeted at the business-to-business sector.
<b>Aim</b>	It broadcasts prima facie a serious message that all Karatekas can identify with – the focus and intense preparation needed to prepare for breaking.

This advert plays on the strength of Karateka and his ability to break bricks – this simple concept showcases what a martial artist can do. It does not use humour and there is no dialogue, just a reassuring voiceover extolling the benefits of the Brick Development Agency. This piece of advertising, although targeted at the building industry rather than household audiences, hinges on the need for focus and intense preparation that's required when a Karateka prepares for breaking.

We finish the 1970s with another simple business-to-business or industry advertisement by CDP – this time for celebrity photographer and Judoka Terence Donovan:

<b>Case 9</b>	<b>Olympus Optical Company <i>Terence Donovan</i> (1979)</b>
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<b>Agency</b>	<p>Collett Dickenson Pearce (CDP)</p> <div> </div> <p>Fig.64.Olympus' Terence Donovan with his Olympus camera' 1979 (HAT)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>A4 black and white print advert for the Olympus Optical Company, a global manufacturer of optical and digital solutions, including cameras and medical systems.</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>It features renowned celebrity and fashion photographer, Terence Donovan, in his Judo outfit with the headline '<i>Terence Donovan with his Olympus camera</i>'.</p> <p>Donovan was a Judoka and Zen Buddhist whose interest in martial arts was influenced by Akira Kurosawa's 'Seven Samurai' (1954).</p> <p>Not content with achieving his black belt in his 40s, he co-authored, photographed and published <i>Fighting Judo</i> (1985) with former World Judo Gold medallist, Katsuhiko Kashiwazaki.</p>



<b>Formal analysis</b>	There is authenticity in that the advert features a Judoka who provides credibility to the brand as a leader in its field.  Terence was a member of a renowned Judo club called Budokwai in Chelsea.
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	This print advert was an entry for the 1979 D&AD Annual (Trade and Professional Magazines category) for its level of creativity.
<b>Target audience</b>	Business-to-business customers
<b>Aim</b>	To use celebrity endorsement to reinforce the association of quality of the brand.

This black and white print advert achieved creative industry accolade with its entry for the 1979 *D&AD Annual* in the trade and professional magazines category. Not only that but Majendie (2018) provides an interesting context to the Donovan print advert. He is shown in his gi a powerful presence – in his traditional martial arts master pose. Why? Terence began to attend one of Europe's oldest Judo and martial arts clubs in London (the club was established in 1918). Its central location in Chelsea meant it was a mecca for film directors such as Guy Ritchie, or politicians and fashion photographers. These enabled Judokas associated with the club to access cameo roles in major films and television series. Stunt woman Christine Gallie (*The Avengers*), and fashion photographer Terence Donovan were former students of the club. Kevin Crickmar – the Judoka who starred in the Mars commercial was also an alum of the club.

Together with Sensei Enoda for *Kung Fuey*, it would appear that martial arts such as Judo and Karate were promoted to both household and trade audiences, and across all media, from features in mainstream and specialist magazines, newspaper articles to television programmes, films and commercials.

## Summary - 1970s advertising and the use of martial arts tropes

To summarise, 1970s Britain was characterised by growing interest in the economic rise of the Orient, sophistication of the British palate for foreign cuisines and the continued appreciation of all things Japanese. As the popularity of ethnic foods and catering took hold, the 1970s saw the Chinese takeaway and restaurant sector expand and with that, magazine and newspaper features that educated the public about Chinese food were on the rise. Opportunities presented by China's Open Door Policy in 1978 and the demand for foreign travel to far flung destinations were also reflected in the plethora of airline advertising, with Japan, Malaysian and Singapore Airlines leading the way.

Although the British press was more reflective of the repercussions of the Opium Wars and role that Britain played, 'yellow peril' ideologies soon found their way to advertising copy. Colonial and romanticised notions of 'the Other' and the 'Far East' continued from the 1960s to the 1970s. There were concerted efforts to include authentic actors and actresses in racialised depictions, although the tones may be somewhat derogatory as seen in the *Sylvanus* (1974) with its reference to skin tones and Kendal's' (1970) copy about foreigners alongside a large portrait of a smiling Chinese man.

Despite improving race relations in the 1970s for better representations of ethnic minorities in Britain, media coverage such as *The Sunday Times Magazine* continue to perpetuate the ethnic stereotyping of the Chinese<sup>23</sup>. This was reinforced by films such as *James Bond* (1962-2021), and television series such as *Kung Fu* (ABC,

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<sup>23</sup> Whilst stereotypes may extend to other Far East Asians in Britain, this study concerns the Chinese as a silent minority making up Britain's third largest minority ethnic group at the time, after Afro-Caribbean and South Asian communities (Chan, 1999).

1972-1975). These representations were mirrored in racialised depictions of the Chinese (Wall's sausages *Japanese*, 1976; Guinness' *Kung Fool*, 1977). In addition, racist comedy was back with a vengeance by the second half of the 1970s. The Othering process is explicit in terms of the use of 'ah so!' 'Japanese' accents, and references to 'inscrutable' and 'mysterious customs'. It is plausible that Wall's sausages *Japanese* (1976) influenced the use of 'ah so!' by school children in Britain that I as a teenager experienced, thereby providing me with a unique lived experience perspective on how racialised constructions were developed. Although this era saw less use of 'yellow face' characterisations, there was mocking of Chinese accents or expressions, oriental riff and other comedic references to *Monkey* (1978). It is clear that Kung Fu tropes, including Hollywood action films starring Bruce Lee, Hong Kong cinema, and mainstream comedies such as the *Pink Panther* films shaped and informed racialised discourse.

Close analysis of textual materials also uncovered a period of sexism in all forms of media including the use of Chinese or Oriental females seen alongside a white male (Mastermind 1973, Dormeuil 1976). For martial arts tropes, these were exclusively male, irrespective of ethnicity. To reflect demographic shifts in Britain, media coverage of mixed-race communities educated the British public about race and stereotypes. The independent women who would handle her opponent in the *BMK Girl* (1967-69) advert paved way for some very sexist representations in *Hai Karate* (1969-1976) and an increase in subservient / decorative roles for female actors or models. This was also the James Bond era with Roger Moore influences in the Dormeuil print advert.

There was also a lack of awareness or understanding of the differences between Chinese vs Japanese aesthetics and mistakes would be evidenced in some of the

advertising during this period. Despite this, 1970s advertising continued to feature Japanese martial arts (Karate and Judo) as these forms were more accessible to the British public. It was during this period that Judo had a massive influence in martial arts representations, with overwhelming use of bona fide London based Judokas and associated aesthetics (gis, techniques, and the odd celebrity photographer!). There was also thirst for knowledge with editorials about joining new Karate or Tai Chi classes.

This is reflected in the number of commercials and case studies available for analysis that feature Judo as the preferred trope during this period. Television commercials for Whitbread's *Tankard* (1971) and Wrigley's *Tunes* (1976) and the print advert for *Olympus Optical Company* (1979) all featured Caucasian (male) Judokas.

Commercials that featured Karate in *Kung Fuey* (1976-76) and the *Brick Development Association* (1978) provided some level of authenticity, with renowned Karate Master Enoeda appearing on in commercials and on television shows to promote Karate to the masses. The *Hai Karate* campaigns (1969-76), although less authentic in how Karate is represented with its farcical depictions, was able to increase awareness and recall of the brand amongst different generations of men before eventually reaching cult status (Pollard, 2008).

Chinese Kung Fu was starting to gain traction around this period despite the untimely death of its greatest proponent - Hong Kong star Bruce Lee singlehandedly changed martial arts in the West (BBC Radio 4, 2013). Its associations are linked to popular television series *Kung Fu* (1972-75) as referenced in Guinness' parody *Kung Fool* (1977), *Hong Kong Phooey* (1977-79) and Kung Fuey's *Fighting Stars* (1976).

Despite racialised content within these commercials, the production quality are a testament of the copywriting talent and art direction and production of some of the best advertising agencies in the 1970s (CDP, AMV BBDP, Saatchi and JWT to name but a few).

This period witnessed how casting and the selection of stunt action heroes for film, television, and advertising was based on authenticity in terms of race and martial arts expertise. The greatest surprise is lack of coverage of Bruce Lee during this period – in fact, his death in 1973 received limited coverage in mainstream media in Britain. Despite this, my investigations have included Lee's contribution to the martial arts craze in Britain and his influence on how Orientals have been represented in films and advertising.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Findings from the 1980s-1990s**

#### **Introduction**

The aim of this thesis is to use martial arts representational aesthetics as a lens through which to document changes in the creative dynamics of the British advertising industry over time, and how they informed the ‘quality’ and ‘cultural significance’ of the case studies chosen. Once again, I extend the historical mapping analysis carried out in Chapter 4 by providing evidence of further brand case studies for the 1980s-1990s period. Following on from Chapter 4, critical visual analysis of television commercials and print advertisements is triangulated with textual analysis of media discourse for the 1980s-1990s. The chapter concludes by offering further insights into the changing use of martial arts tropes in British advertising during this period of cultural significance in terms of advertising .

#### **The golden era of advertising**

As explained in Chapter 3 with respect to methodology and Chapter 4 around my findings, I have chosen to divide the critical visual analysis into four decades to offer depth in terms of the industrial history of screen advertising in consecutive decades. As advertising is historically bound, each period of analysis required contextualisation, including key trends, published media stories, television documentaries, and magazine features drawn from a myriad of sources such as *The Sunday Times* magazine. As before, in-depth contextual data is interwoven with critical discourse and visual analyses using an advertising case study approach (Lopez Paredes, 2017) to identify martial arts tropes used in advertising during Britain’s golden era of advertising. Once again, deconstruction of technical,

descriptive, formal, and advertising content in television commercials and print advertisements add depth and rigour to each case.

A total of 18 television commercials and two print advertisements published during the 1980s and 1990s were developed into cases. Their selection, as detailed in Chapter 4, entails Bob of Broadcasts (BOB), historical programmes, and documentaries shown during the 1980s and 1990s. Once again, the *Sunday Times Magazine* acts as a barometer of significant historical cultural trends, as a popular medium for print advertisements, due to its quality journalism and photography. The content from these sources has been selected for its cultural, historical and contextual detail. Likewise, *D&AD Annuals* and the D&AD Awards were perused for advertisements, as well as art directors and producers listed by the History of Advertising Trust. Selected case studies of martial arts tropes in advertising are presented in chronological order.

Close analysis of emerging themes arising from four decades of historical advertising have been conducted. The case studies for 1980s and 1990s covered in this chapter are as follows:

1. Walker's crisps, My Brother (1983)
2. KP Peanuts, Oriental Spice (1980s)
3. Mum's, Quick dry Put Your Shirt On It (1980s)
4. Brylcream, Judo (1986)
5. BT, Chinese Warrior (1986)
6. Smithkline Beecham, Lucozade Judo (1990)
7. Tesco promotion, Karate Chop (1990)

8. Rowntree Toffee Crisp, Free the Crispy Bits (1992)
9. Knorr stir fry, Oriental Spices (1990s)
10. Barclaycard, Karate (1994)
11. Pizza Hut, Kung Fu (1995)
12. Premier Beverages freshly brewed tea, Karate (1995)
13. Specsavers, contact lens free trial campaign (1997) (PRINT ADVERT)
14. Levi's Strauss, Kung Fu (1998)
15. Ambrosia flavoured custard, Splat Wing Chun (1998)
16. Guardian Royal Exchange, Bruce Lee (circa 1990s) (PRINT ADVERT)
17. VW Polo, Self-defence (1999)
18. Batchelor's Super Noodles, Shaolin (1998)
19. Cadbury's Fuse, Kung Fuse (1999)
20. P&G Fairy non-biological washing powder, Judo (1999)

## **Contextualising the 1980s**

This section considers how racialised constructions in advertising were informed by Britain's perceptions of China and Japan as 'the Other', pointing to the influence of Japanophilia and Sinophobia. Increased international trade and travel (with the Far East), the Race Relations Act, and media regulation from the last decade provide additional contextual factors. The 1980s context therefore shares many of the factors already covered with respect to the 1970s in Chapter 4.

The 1980s were known as the golden era of advertising as broadcast programming such as TV-am (1983), Channel 4 (1982), MTV (1987) and Sky TV (1989) started to offer multi-channel media for established brands (Evans, 2012; Alves, 2024).



Thatcherism, the property boom, and consumer excess meant established brands could afford larger budgets for their campaigns (Science and Media Museum, 2020).

The 1980s had a post-colonial feel, with representations increasingly exoticising the Other (Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005). Japanese references were in abundance, with English pop band The Vapors' songwriter Dave Fenton being inspired by Japanese culture. One of their videos featured an oriental lady in a kimono and a samurai wielding a sword, set in a room with a *shoji* (a traditional Japanese room divider made of translucent sheets on a lattice frame).



Fig.65.The Vapor's Turning Japanese single cover 1980  
(<https://www.rotosound.com/blog/players/the-vapors-steve-smiths-history-with-rotosound/>)

The song starts with an 'oriental riff' - a short musical phrase used to signify Chinese culture – that had already been used in the 1970s, such as in Carl Douglas's 1974 *Kung Fu Fighting* (Simpson, 2023). The latter was a disco song released to take advantage of the chop-socky film craze.

The actor David Yip has discussed Chinese representation within British broadcasting and media, and how *the Chinese Detective* series (1981-82, BBC)

challenged stereotypes explicitly. As broadcasters garnered support in response to the Race Relations Act 1965, others such as Chanel 4 began to follow suit. At the height of its success, *the Chinese Detective* series had a prime spot, on Sunday at 9pm, with audience numbers of 10-12 million. Yip (2015) reflected on how he was selected to play the leading role as the main character in the 1981-1982 TV series *The Chinese Detective*— the writer of the series had deliberately moved away from martial arts, preferring to focus on a character with more depth:

*'Kenny Martin (the writer) said to me he said you know this guy is never going to do martial arts because my biggest worry was because I see American programs where the guys do martial arts [...] (your character) will never do martial arts, he uses his brain'* (Yip, 2015; 4:59-5:11). The writer of the television series obviously felt that martial arts, as a genre, had limitations, as evidenced in film and television storylines during the 1970s and 1980s.

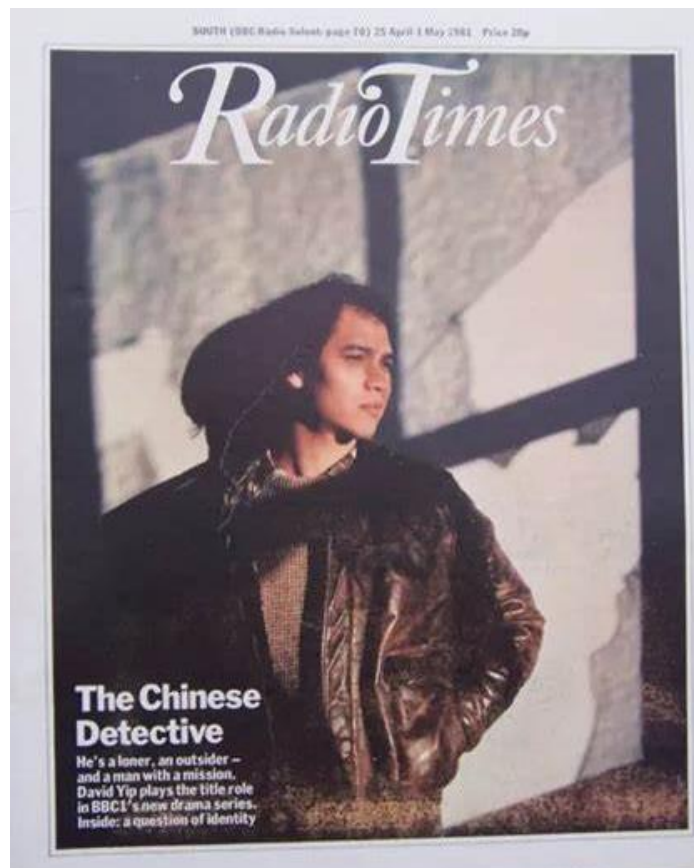


Fig.66.The Chinese Detective on the cover of Radio Times magazine, 25 Apr 1981

(<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0081840>)

By 1981, Yip had appeared on the cover of *The Radio Times*. The series, in a short space of time, have challenged one of the common stereotypes about the Chinese as martial artists. Yip acknowledges that, as a major BBC series, *the Chinese Detective* was crucial in the history of how Chinese people are portrayed in the UK. Before that, Charlie Chan stereotypes were in abundance. Yip (2015) also entertained the notion that the Charlie Chan series fuelled racist taunts in the playground. Television presenter Gok Wan provided evidence of the racism he encountered in the 1980s growing up in the family catering business, despite being mixed race. He recalled the importance of food in Chinese (takeaway) culture, and the recurring martial arts references. The television series *Monkey* was prevalent in Britain during the 1980s (Wan, 2019).

**Tonight, try a little Chinese cooking.**  
(Don't worry, Sharwood's have done most of the shopping.)

**Beef, onion and red pepper** gently simmered in a rich dark sauce. For a classic Chinese dish it sounds almost European. That is, until you taste the sauce. Chinese sauces are characterised by a vivid contrast of flavours. They excite the palate in a way that our simpler Western sauces never could.

The reason lies in the weird and wonderful ingredients that go into them.

**REAL CHINESE SAUCES. IN SACHETS.**

Szechuan pepper and star anise are not ingredients you can pop down to your local supermarket for. So Sharwood's have done the shopping for you.

We've taken four classic Chinese sauce recipes, scoured the East for the correct ingredients, blended them, dried them, and packaged them in sachets.

On the page on the right you can see just some of the ingredients for the rather poetically named Dark and Aromatic sauce.

It tastes as good as it sounds. The soy, ginger, and clove give the sauce its robust, musky flavour. (This is what the Chinese mean by 'dark'.)

The fennel seed and star anise provide the contrasting sharpness. The cinnamon is there to add a hint of sweetly sweet, while the Szechuan pepper gives the blend a delightful aroma, rather like bitter orange.

**JUST LIKE MAKING A CASSEROLE.**

To turn a Sharwood's mix into a sauce, you simply add water. The cooking method itself is hardly more difficult.

The Chinese call it 'long braising'. In fact, as you'll see from the recipe it's very much like making a casserole. The beauty is that the preparation time is very short. The dish simmers to perfection in the oven while you can be getting on with something else.

mark 4) for about 1 1/2 hours. If you wish to thicken the sauce slightly, remove the lid towards the end of cooking. Serves four.

**SOME MORE CHINESE MEAL IDEAS.**

Once you've discovered how simple it is to use Sharwood's Chinese mixes, you might like to try the other sauces in the range. There are 3 more to choose from.

Our Chilli and Tomato Sauce adds a spicy zest to pork. For chicken, try our Lemon Sweet and Sour; its fragrant, tangy flavour complements the subtle taste of the meat perfectly.

If you're feeling more adventurous, try the Singapore Curry Sauce. It reflects the marriage of Chinese and Indian ideas that is so typical of Singapore cooking. Spicy, yet sweet and rich, with a generous hint of ginger, it gives pungency to lamb, duck - even fish.

Incidentally, if you're worrying about what to serve with these dishes, don't. Sharwood's Chinese Noodles make the perfect accompaniment - and all you need to cook them is a pot of boiling water, and about six minutes.

You'll find lots more Chinese meal ideas in Sharwood's full-colour recipe booklet.

For your copy, simply write enclosing a first class stamp to: **The Chinese Kitchen (DA 1H), 1 A Sharwood & Co Ltd, London NW10 6NU.**

**SHARWOOD'S**

**DARK AND AROMATIC BEEF.**  
1 lb braising steak  
1 large onion  
1 dried or red pepper, or 2 sticks celery  
1 sachet SHARWOOD'S DARK AND AROMATIC BEEF MIX

**METHOD:** Slice the meat thinly across the grain into coin sized pieces. Coarsely chop the vegetables. Fry both the meat and vegetables in a little oil. Transfer to a casserole. Blend the contents of the sachet with 1 pint of water and add to the casserole. Cover and simmer slowly at 350°F (gas


Fig.67.Sharwood's 'Tonight, try a little Chinese cooking' print advert 1981 (HAT)

Coupled with Japanese cultural interests and promotions of Chinese culture in the 1980s, Chinese food and martial arts representations were commonplace: the 1985 D&AD annual contained JA Sharwood and Co Ltd press advertising in a consumer magazine for agency Wight Collins Rutherford Scott PLC, headlined: 'Tonight, try a little Chinese cooking (Don't worry Sharwood's have done most of the shopping').

Derek Day as copywriter constructed a recipe-based feature with images of raw ingredients and Chinese characters:

References to immigration and tracing relatives who have settled in the UK are seen in a television commercial for Walker's Crisps below.

### Case studies of 1980s martial arts tropes

<b>Case 1</b>	<b>Walker's Crisps <i>My brother</i> (1983-4)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	Meares Langley More Ltd / Messenger Page Ltd   <p>SB15 Walker's Crisps 'My brother' 1983-4 (HAT)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	TV commercials - 40 seconds Banned advert
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	A smartly dressed young man in a suit approaches the counter of a snack shop with his suitcase and asks for directions to his brother's takeaway 'Lotus ....' Server does not give eye contact but continues to read his paper.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	Caucasian male and Chinese visitor/tourist Setting: café area The style of kicks and acrobatic nature of the techniques The concept centres around the negative stereotypes that Chinese people experienced at the time Dismissive attitude towards international travellers and persistence of the visitor Loses his cool and demonstrates some impressive Kung Fu moves Sage like ending

<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>This ad is award winning (British Television Advertising Awards) although it was banned for its racism.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SC21 Walker's 'My brother' (1983)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Young man approaches a snack shop with suitcase and asks for direction – refers to his papers</li> <li>➤ 'Please direct to Lotus Flower takeaway - my brother he works there'</li> <li>➤ Man doesn't look at the customer but is reading his papers and munching crisps from an opened packet of Walkers crisps</li> <li>➤ 'This is a taster John not an information centre'</li> <li>➤ 'Do you want a cuppa tea or not?' Smiles at the customer</li> <li>➤ 'Oh, ok and a packet of Walker's crisps'</li> <li>➤ Puts his money on the counter whilst man stops munching and removes the packet on display</li> <li>➤ 'My brother he say Walkers crisps so fresh so tasty always say Walkers'</li> <li>➤ Man reaches to a box of So-so crisps clearly labelled and shows them to the customer</li> <li>➤ 'Nah John these will do ya'</li> <li>➤ Visitor frowns</li> <li>➤ No Walkers</li> <li>➤ 'Take these me old China'</li> <li>➤ The visitor is heard shouting Waaalkers – as this echoes in the background, the visitor proceeds to Karate chop the counter in two, kick the side of the counter, smash the signage whilst the man looks horrified before the visitor ends with a back flip landing on his feet with a packet of Walkers crisp in his hand. He looks at the camera and takes a crisp out of the packet 'you brother he say man who seek perfection insist on Walkers crisps so fresh so tasty'</li> <li>➤ He puts one in his mouth and crunches it with a smile</li> <li>➤ So fresh, so tasty! End lines</li> </ul> </div>
<b>Target audience</b>	Mainstream audiences – crisp lovers/snack audience
<b>Aim</b>	To increase awareness of the superior quality of Walker's Crisps over lesser-known crisps.

The commercial is also known as the 'Me Old China'. Its post-colonial tone is perfectly captured in the dialogue between the two actors. The Caucasian stall owner refers to his customer as 'me old China', whilst the Chinese visitor/tourist actor in this commercial is mocked for his accent. The culmination of their interaction results in the Chinese actor using his Kung Fu skills to break down the stall. His Kung Fu prowess is captured through typical martial arts choreography and camera angles.

Social media discourse surrounding this advertisement perfectly illustrates the furor it caused. Despite these comments being recent, they are based on recall:

- *'I remember as kid shouting "Waaaaalkers!"'*

- *'The slightly out of their depth Japanese tourist, being used to explain the product to the British audience was a regular [...] trope over the time.'*
- *'I remember looking at this ad in my media studies class and it was banned because children were copying it so looks like Ofcom and BBA were snowflakes already.'*

The evidence here suggests that race was colour blind in the early to mid-1980s, particularly if we consider that the D&AD 1980 silver award for an outstanding cinema commercial went to Gallagher Ltd.'s Silk Cut by CDP agency. Directed by Alan Parker, the 'blackface' advert was of its time.



Fig.68.Blackface in Gallagher's 1980 Silk Cut advert  
(D&AD Annual 1980)

It would appear that racism in advertising increased during the 1980s, despite concerted efforts made in the previous decade to do better. Likewise, the D&AD 1984 gold and silver award for most outstanding poster campaign went to the golliwog campaigns for James Robertson and Sons Ltd by Bartle Bogle Hegarty. The golliwog symbol had been Robertson's controversial mascot since 1910. In 1983, the Greater London council campaigned for Robertson's jams to be withdrawn, and by 1988 they were removed from television commercials after AMV took over as the



agency from BBH. After initial complaints were received by the Advertising Standards Authority in 1984, and from anti-racism campaigners who claimed the mascot was perpetuating stereotypes of the black community, the brand kept a low profile during the controversial period (Campaign, 1988; Bowcott, 2001).



Fig.69 Robertson and son's golliwog print advert (D&AD Annual 1984)

Clearly, racialised constructions in advertising had reached a pivotal point by the mid-1980s. In terms of martial arts, racially loaded terms such as 'Ah, so!' as seen in



Fig.70. Coen's 'Ah, so! Sherry is served' (Sunday Times, 30 May 1980)

Harry Coen's 1982 article entitled '*Ah So! Sherry is served*' (Sunday Times, 30th May), had yet to cause controversy. The article discussed the popularity of the Kung Fu butler and how Steve Burns (a green belt with 10 years Kung Fu training) trained his students to offer prospective employers self-defence techniques.

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During this period 'yellow face' comedy, as it related to martial arts, did not cause offence to mainstream audiences, as evidenced by the BBC's *The Two Ronnies*. Ronnie Corbett and Ronnie Barker were household names whose 1983 'Jiu Jitsu' Skit (directed by Marcus Plantin) was aired on Christmas Day.



Fig.71. The Two Ronnies' 'Ju Jitsu' skit 1983  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tE5Ken5ePLY>)

As a brand, Walkers have been known to court controversy. By the time Walker's *My Brother* was broadcast, controversy surrounding school children imitating the martial arts moves in the playgrounds which may have led to the commercial being banned (Bowman, 2020). Discourse about this commercial has continued as audiences recognise the stereotypes perpetuated. There are brief associations with Bruce Lee (through the spectacular martial arts and underdog scenarios often seen in Lee's films), economic migration of Chinese chefs to the UK during the 1970s-1980s, and the perennial Japanese tourist. In the 1980s, concerted efforts by the media to




improve race relations through television programming, including the BBC drama *The Chinese Detective* (1981-82), highlighted the need to reduce stereotypes in mainstream broadcasting. As explained earlier, the television series challenged existing stereotypes, primarily by not referencing martial arts explicitly. Instead, the main character appeared to be your average detective, albeit one who happened to be British-born Chinese and spoke fluent English. This early representation of a complex character showcased Yip's acting ability to mainstream audiences.

In terms of product category, it is interesting to compare Walker's *My Brother* commercial to another snack brand, with a martial arts television commercial for Golden Wonder's *Kung Fuey* a decade earlier - in 1974, when a bona fide Japanese Karateka, Keinosuke Enoda was featured in a series of commercials. The difference in tone between the Chinese visitor/tourist (Walker's *My Brother*, 1983) and the Karate Sensei (Golden Wonder's *Kung Fuey*, 1974) is stark. Although Enoda does not have any speaking parts in the commercial, the focus was on his mysterious presence as the central character in the commercial and his karate prowess – authenticated through his reenactment of the breaking technique and his kata performance. In contrast, the Chinese actor in the Walker's commercial loses his cool in the same way that Bruce Lee's character Chen in *Fist of Fury* (1972) did when being mocked by the Japanese who had occupied Shanghai. Chen's response to the 'No Dogs and Chinese allowed' sign was to use his Kung Fu kicks to break it down. The use of elaborate Kung Fu techniques to break down the stall out of sheer frustration is clearly a nod to *Fist of Fury*.

The next case study adds another layer to the authentication argument with its parody of a classic television series, *Kung Fu* (1972). The reference to classic 1970s martial arts films in British television commercials had become much more frequent by the 1980s. In this very short, spoof comedy, television commercial, no fight scenes are evident. Instead, the focus is on the Chinese monk asking his Master 'what is the secret of life?' His Master appears to mimic munching in his bizarre response. The mood and tone at the start, coupled with the presence of two Chinese actors, presents an air of seriousness also found in the *Kung Fu* (1972) television series, coupled with the mock Chinese accent of the apprentice. In the cultural production of advertising, recurrent themes are often 'borrowed' by one agency from another. This commercial would be in the same vein as JWT's Guinness *Kung Fool* (1977) parody of the same television series. In the latter, the Master advises 'Greenhopper' to tap into the 'dark side' of meditation – a reference to Luke Skywalker's foray into the same in *Star Wars* (1977).

<b>Case 2</b>	<b>KP Peanuts <i>Oriental Spice</i> (1980s)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	 <p>SB16 KP Peanuts 'oriental spice' 1980s (HAT)</p> <p>Agency unknown</p> <p><a href="http://letslookagain.com">A history of KP Snacks - Let's Look Again (letslookagain.com)</a></p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	30 sec <b>TV</b> akin to a skit Snack brand
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Kung Fu parody and comedy of a scene from Kung Fu featuring a young monk and his master. The background is dark and foreboding, indicating the seriousness of the conversation that is taking place. The master has his back to the camera and only his silhouette is visible. He is facing the monk who, in contrast, is clearly visible. The master is dressed in elaborate head gear and has a long moustache, typical of sages at the time.</p> <p>It is associated with the Kung Fu series in terms of the character depicted. The only link to martial arts is through the TV series and the characters depicted. The link is 'Oriental Spice' is loosely connected to martial arts only. The emphasis on the Chinese accent is also worth noting.</p>

<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>Kung Fu film parody – set in a dark room lit with candles. It emulates a scene from the film of the same name where the master and student are having a meaningful discussion.</p> <p>The actors appear to be Chinese and in traditional costumes. The young monk speaks with a mock Chinese accent. His head is shaved. Before the scene ends there is association with the communist red guard marches when the strapline ‘you never know when hunger will strike!’ is said in a mock Chinese accent.</p> <p>Although there are no fight scenes, there are clear references to the TV series. The setting, or geographic location, is deemed to be somewhere in China as seen with a western lens (via the popular TV series).</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>KP stands for ‘Kenyon Produce’. KP is the second largest snack foods manufacturer in Britain and largest buyer of nuts in the world (sourced from Asia, Africa, South America and Central America).</p> <p>Established by Yorkshireman Charles Kenyon in 1853, initially selling jam, eventually selling pickles and sauces as well. Lithuanian born Simon Heller set up Hercules Nut Company and acquired Kenyon, Son and Craven in Leeds in 1948 and began producing and distributing roasted and salted peanuts in 1953.</p> <p>KSC created this category in Britain and achieved dominance of KP Nuts with limited advertising. The company KSC was acquired by United Biscuits in 1968 and became the largest nut processor in Europe in 1970, alongside many crisp launches (Hula Hoops, Skips and Discos in 1970s; Frisps and Space Raiders in 1980s).</p> <p>Although the brand has many variations of flavours (original salted, dry roasted, honey roast, unsalted, etc), ‘Oriental Spice’ used the popular American TV series ‘Kung Fu’ as parody.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>SC22 KP Peanuts ‘Oriental Spice’ (1980s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Young monk: ‘Master – what is the secret of life?’</li> <li>➤ Foghorn starts as scene switches to the master</li> <li>➤ He raises his head and stares intently at the young monk</li> <li>➤ A gong sounds</li> <li>➤ He opens his mouth as if to speak but moves it up and down repeatedly</li> <li>➤ VO – ‘you never know when hunger will strike!’ is heard being chanted collectively</li> <li>➤ MVO: ‘New oriental spice nuts fresh from KP’</li> <li>➤ End line: Fresh from the No. 1 nibble</li> </ul> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Fig.72.KP Peanuts Nibbles campaign</p> <p>Nibbles campaign was at the peak of the brand’s success - similar one was released in 1985 <u>KP Peanuts Nibbles Will Strike Poirot 1985</u> and <u>KP Peanuts</u></p>

	<p><u>Oliver Twist advert.</u> ‘You never know when the nibbles will strike’ was the slogan used for a long-running and very successful advertising campaign for KP Peanuts during the 1980s, as evidenced by the <u>promotional badges released in the 1980s</u></p> <p>Core message is that the nibbles could catch you at any time  The humorous advert showed that efforts were made to cast East Asian characters with some level of authenticity, as indicated by the costumes.  The end line is memorable with brand packaging shown.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Snack consumers – mainstream market
<b>Aim</b>	To increase awareness amongst snack consumers that KP Nuts have an oriental spice option

The 1980s martial arts tropes in advertising are therefore linked to television dramas – in the case of KP, it was the popular *Kung Fu* series (1972-1975). They used a simple association of the ‘oriental’ flavour that formed the basis of the advertising message and humour to aid recall. However, the television drama had a prima facie serious storyline, which contrasts with the advertising appeal used here. It must be noted that KP advertising at this time focused on the use of humour, such that *Oriental Spice* fitted that tone of voice for the brand. This also served to reinforce the association of martial arts with comedy.


With changing race relations and the introduction of regulations to improve representation in the media of Britain’s ethnic minorities, came demands for television programming to educate the British public. As discussed earlier, the actor David Yip helped to document Britain’s long history with Chinese seamen setting up enclaves in Liverpool’s Chinatown for the *Here and Now* TV show in 1981. The documentary also touches on the burgeoning catering trades that took over from the laundry businesses established by the early settlers. The most fascinating part of this was the inclusion of a segment featuring a community martial arts class in action in Chinatown, for Chinese youth carrying on the ‘spirit of Bruce Lee’. A Kung Fu class for children such as this had never been seen before on mainstream media. The class was clearly not meant for outsiders and reflects the relative inaccessibility of

Chinese martial arts, compared to Burn's earlier article about karate for the black community in Wolverhampton. Other programmes that served to shed light on the silent Chinese community, included the *Magazine and Review Show* in 1985, which focused on the West Midlands Chinese community's language concerns and the importance of the Chinese catering trade for their livelihood. As media interest in the Far East continued we began to see the creative industry's recognition of diverse representations, such as the *Sunday Times*' 'Look East' fashion feature that won a D&AD 1982 silver award for outstanding concept for a new magazine, despite the inclusion of stereotypical representations of what fashion in the Far East looks like. Aside from a winged aesthetic to the eye makeup and a high ponytail accessorised with chopsticks, we can see the inclusion of the obligatory martial arts weapon:



Fig.73.'Look East' feature, The Sunday Times (D&AD 1982)

As martial arts became mainstreamed in the 1980s, we see cultural references through the inclusion of white Gis and colour belts as reflections of martial arts activity for the Mum brand of deodorants. This advert reflects the fun that cultural producers may have had using fast-paced music, visual prompts, and a strong headline alone to drive the message that you can put your shirt on as soon as you have used the quick dry deodorant. The comedy value of the switching of adult and child Gis may be lost on some. However, there are references to a type of martial art activity that the parent and child are engaged with though their attire and nothing else.

<b>Case 3</b>	<b>Mum's Quick Dry Deodorant <i>Put Your Shirt On It</i> (1980s)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	 <p>SB17 Mum's Quick Dry Deodorant 'Put your shirt on it' 1980s (HAT)</p> <p>Name of advertising agency unknown – although not award winning, the brand was a leader in its market</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>30 sec using basic stop-go animation technique.</p> <p>The MUM brand was a pioneer in that it was the first deodorant that was invented, in 1888. The brand name was associated with the nurse of the inventor who was based in the USA. In 1952, the brand also invented the first roll-on, which continues to be the main form of application in the deodorant industry. By the 1960s, MUM was introduced worldwide (<a href="https://www.mum-deo.com/en/story">https://www.mum-deo.com/en/story</a>)</p> <p>Early advertisements on TV show the brand to be ahead of its time, as shown by this black and white 1950s <a href="#">Mum Deodorant Commercial</a></p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>The actors in each scene always have their backs to the camera, such that we never see their faces.</p> <p>In the first scene, a woman is in her underwear in a room. When she stretches her arms out, a shirt magically appears. The camera then focuses on two bottles of the deodorant that are being held by a well-manicured hand, to reinforce the brand message 'Quick Dry ...from Mum'.</p> <p>In another scene, a woman and her 8-year-old child are both shirtless in a gym. With one hand resting on a bar, they both punch the air with the other hand and a white Gi top appears. The twist is that they are wearing the wrong gis and coloured</p>

	<p>belts by mistake. The action is then repeated – this time, each Gi and belt is worn by the correct person.</p> <p>The commercial would appear to afford more emphasis to the woman and her child - there is attention to detail in terms of the size and fit of the Gi tops and the coloured belts (red and green).</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>This is an upbeat commercial, as indicated by the soundtrack, with a touch of humour.</p> <p>The ad focuses on the magical formula of the deodorant – quick dry. This benefit is afforded to the users of the deodorant in that it allows them to put their shirts on more quickly. The strapline ‘Put your shirt on it’ was emblazoned on one of the shirts.</p> <p>In terms of casting, Caucasian actors are shown. They are shown either at home, at the gym (dojo), or in scenarios where deodorants may be used. Branding is strong in terms of the bottle and logo, with the end line ‘NOTHING DRIES FASTER’ in capital letters.</p> <p>The only martial arts reference is in the scenes with the gis as these featured prominently in the commercial, with the woman and child needing to have their gis rectified. The woman and child are naked from the waist up, albeit with their backs to the camera. This may be unusual. The form of martial arts is also unclear. The red and green belts denoted that the two are at different stages of their learning, with green being more junior than red grades (for Karate and taekwondo). The colours of the belts were reflected in the colours of the two bottles shown.</p> <p>The style is typical of the 1980s with its references to working women. The scenes show women having to dress the part – wearing a man’s shirt. It was the era of the power suit.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>The users are shown in various scenarios. Formats/appeals - humour</p> <p>A shorter 9 second segment of the <u>Quick Dry deodorant advert (1983)</u> depicts the silhouette of a man looking at his shirt in a window with a woman in another room - his shirt disappears from his hands whilst he looks at her through his window and she has her back to the camera – she spreads her arms out and the shirt reappears on her. The music is at a much faster tempo. A female voiceover is heard saying ‘Quick dry - put your shirt on it’ before the advert ends with ‘quick dry’.</p> <p>In contrast, the longer segment does not have any voice over and has slower paced instrumental music throughout. As described above, the second segment shows a woman and child wearing the wrong set. The woman has a red belt and a top that is clearly too small for her. The boy is swamped by his shirt and green belt. Cut to two bottles of quick dry that they each reach for – when they stretch their arms out, they are in the correctly sized gis.</p> <p>The final segment is of a woman in a shirt – when she stretches her arms out, her shirt disappears and the owl reacts by raising its wings. End line – nothing dries faster (4 bottles of the deodorant can be seen – green, red, blue, orange) with the words ‘put your shirt on it’ written on the blinds in the background.</p> <p>Core message- nothing dries faster than Quick Dry deodorant</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Females interested in personal care products - the target is either a mother or a professional woman
<b>Aim</b>	To spell out the quick drying benefits of the brand to female users

This commercial is typical of the early 1980s, where power suits and the recognition of women as a main consumer group were driving the market for deodorants. This reflects an understanding of consumer insights and lifestyle by cultural producers keen to appeal to their target consumers in a crowded marketplace. The context indicates that Karate was prominent, though references to race or any additional identifying factors of martial arts-ness through choreography were limited.

It is important to map out the popularity of various forms of martial arts by the 1980s to understand its accessibility and uncover clues as to what was available to cultural producers as points of reference for their advertising campaigns. As discussed earlier, the media space became crowded with TV-am (1983), Channel 4 (1982), MTV (1987) and Sky TV (1989). These developments fuelled the public's interest in all things martial arts, providing a more even playing field between Japanese Judo and Karate vs Chinese Kung Fu and Tai Chi. There was diversity in terms of styles of martial arts and in terms of the demographic profile of the typical martial artist.

Although Tai Chi's popularity is emphasised in Cynthia Rose's 'Footing it lightly' piece for the *Sunday Times* (1980, p.83), the pervasiveness of Karate is evidenced in the article 'Black Country Blues' that discusses the uptake of the sport by the black community in Wolverhampton (Burn, 1980). The article takes place 10 years on from Enoch Powell's comments on black immigration, using Wolverhampton as a case study, where clubs and YMCA members used to be frequented by the white majority, but 10 years down the line, this has changed to 95% blacks – addressing the changing demographics in Britain in the 1980s.





Fig.74 Rose's 'Footling it lightly' feature  
(Sunday Times, 1980)



Fig.75 Burn's article 'Black Country Blues'  
(Sunday Times, 1980)

By 1983 *the Daily Mail* featured an article introducing Karate to the masses. Stuart Collier's 'The Takahashi Tackle' published on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March (p.21) cited that there were more than 100,000 people participating in or taking up one of the 15

martial arts, with over 50% of them choosing Karate, the second most popular being taekwondo, and Kung Fu taking third place (Collier,1983). As discussed in Chapter 1, Karate was introduced to Britain in the late '50s and boomed in the '60s due to the influence of Bruce Lee, although the latter is more often associated with Kung Fu. By the 1980s, styles and forms of martial arts started to collide as the distinctions between them became less clear cut. Take the case of Bruce Lee, who practiced various forms from the acrobatic Tae Kwon Do to the softer and more peaceful Tai Chi. Martial arts interest also moved from sport and fitness to self-defence as exemplified by the following *Daily Mail* article:



Fig.76 Self-defence illustrations as part of 'The Takahashi Tackle' article (Daily Mail 17 March 1983)




Fig.77.Collier's 1983 article 'The Takahashi Tackle' (Daily Mail 17 March 1983)

At the same time, interest in the Far East was fuelled by international travel. British Airways' 'Chop, chop!' promotional campaign drew references from the proverbial Karate chop.



Fig.78. British Airways 'Chop, chop! Hong Kong £60 off' (The Economist 22 Oct 1983)

Despite a proliferation of media interest in other forms of martial arts, such as Kung Fu and Tai Chi, advertisers were still playing catch-up with this throwback to Judo, complete with a Judo throw. By now, the focus of the advertising was the entertainment value of the commercials – no surprise then that most of the production budget for the Brylcreem Judo ad was spent on music by artist Yello.

<b>Case 4</b>	<b><u>Brylcreem Judo (1986)</u></b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Agency: Grey Limited  Client: SmithKline Beecham Proprietaries  Producer: Roger Randall-Cutler; Editor: Nick Thompson.</p>  <p>SB18 Brylcreem 'Judo' 1986 (HAT)</p>

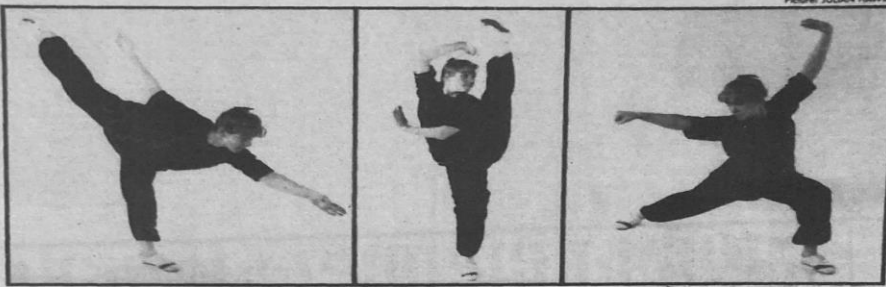


	1986 D&AD Silver award for the Most Outstanding Television Campaign - Best TV campaign and Best use of Music in a commercial Sponsored by Central independent TV PLC
<b>Technical analysis</b>	30 secs television commercial Product category: men's hairstyling products
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	Subject matter: a young man takes a shower and washes and styles his hair after a Judo session at the gym/dojo. The man appears to be an active sportsman, judging by his prowess in executing a Judo throw at the start of the commercial – this initial sequence is the only link to martial arts. There is limited dialogue or voiceover to make the connection between Judo and the hairstyling product being featured more explicit.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	There is no voiceover but a loud 'kiai' is heard at the start – it is unmistakable that this is a martial arts themed ad Gym or dojo setting is hinted at with the floor mats and plain background Two actors are dressed in white gis and have bare feet, with black belts clearly visible. The main actor is shown executing an unmistakable Judo throw perfectly, landing his opponent on the floor correctly. The tone is energetic and dynamic, of similar vein to that found in exercise videos.
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open on the corner of a gym</li> <li>• Two men are practicing Judo throws</li> <li>• One of the men has a shower</li> <li>• He washes his hair and towels it dry</li> <li>• He applies Brylcreem to his hair</li> <li>• Super: The Right Stuff</li> </ul> <p>Music by Yello dominates the advertising throughout. According to the creative team Jan Heron and Su Sareen, the music was the most expensive production element of the campaign.</p> <p>The campaign was to relaunch Brylcreem after years of decline. As an iconic brand in men's hairstyling, Brylcreem was established in 1928 in Birmingham by County Chemicals. Originally a hair cream targeted at barbers, demand from those keen to recreate clean, smart hairstyles ranged from World War II with RAF's Brylcreem Boys to the 1950s super-styled Teddy Boy, up to the early '60s. Artists such as The Beatles, with their longer, less perfectly styled hair saw styling creams decline by the '70s. The '80s then saw the brand reinvent itself for the youth market (<a href="#">A brief history of Brylcreem</a>)</p> <p>All the ads in the campaign were created from old commercials. The slice of life theme is supported by a demonstration by the actor applying the product after towel drying his hair. There is a close up of the jar of the product and the final shot contains four products at the end of the clip.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Brylcreem is targeted at young active males aged 20-35 with a busy lifestyle who wish to maintain their appearance. The advert also appealed to a small number of loyal users. The advertising features a Caucasian main actor – the opponent being thrown appears to be Japanese – further highlighting the Judo prowess of the Caucasian actor.
<b>Aim</b>	To attract new young active males and to remind loyal users that Brylcreem hairstyling product is the right product to use after an authentic Judo session

This award-winning commercial follows on from those in the 1970s, when Judo became a mainstream sport, such as Whitbread Tankard Judo (1971) Mars (1972)

and Wrigley's Tunes Judo (1976). Here, the execution of martial arts techniques is demonstrated by actors or bonafide Judokas. Knowledge and interest in Japanese martial arts had reached its peak by the 1980s, and there was a demand for other styles of advertising. Audiences would also assume to be knowledgeable about the authenticity of the moves shown on the advertisements. Articles such as those by Collier (1983) for The Sunday Times Magazine concur that martial arts interest haven not waned.

**Oriental exercises are not only for self-protection. Serena Allott finds that those disciplined enough to practise them, discover health, vigour and relaxation too**



Picture: SUJAN HAWYING

Gillian Barber demonstrates three movements basic to wushu's "chang-quan" which are used in sequence with more difficult moves such as the splits and cartwheels.

## Eastern skills that mend Western ills

**U**PSTAIRS in the Pineapple Dance Centre leotard-clad bodies pant their way through grueling aerobic exercise routines in pursuit of the body beautiful and cardio-vascular fitness. Downstairs meanwhile there is less sweat, less strain. These clients have come to master the more complex and disciplined rituals of the Orient.

Starting with basic moves—kicking and sparring—they move towards an intricate dance-like sequence of movements in pursuit of the ultimate "harmony of mind and body" which the East has long believed to be crucial to complete health.

Of course, not all of the Pineapple's clients will have the dedication to achieve this total harmony, but the growing popularity of such classes bears witness to increasing Western interest in these ancient Eastern skills. Many continue to play an integral part in the everyday life of Asia where even the elderly can be seen going through their daily routines in the streets and parks.

Some popular misconceptions about the martial arts are dispelled by Richard Thomas of the Martial Arts Commission, which has seen its membership grow from 16,500 to 106,000 in the past decade. "The world of martial

arts is like a department store. People wander in, see what's on offer among some 14 different disciplines, then decide what's in it for them."

For some the appeal is purely social. A great many others enjoy the highly physical and competitive elements of karate and judo which, if taught well, improve cardiovascular strength, muscular endurance and strength flexibility and motor co-ordination.

"But, in recent years, we've also watched a growing number of the intellectual middle-classes developing a strong interest in those arts, which include a strong philosophical and spiritual element," Richard Thomas says. "Anybody studying shorinji-kempo, for instance, would be taught the principles of Zen Buddhism."

Beverley Milne, who teaches tai-chi, believes the spiritual element to be so important that she aligns herself with alternative medicine. Tai-chi is one of the "internal" arts based on inner forces rather than physical strength, and her 90-minute lessons are based on a 25-minute sequence of slow and controlled movements followed by a period of meditation.

"My teaching is geared to relating everything you do to everyday life," she says. "When you thrust a fist forward there is no need to see it as an aggressive action. It is a focusing of the mind, a marshalling of energies designed to achieve balance and an emotional 'letting-go' which allows the muscles to open and flow smoothly until gradually they develop strong elastic qualities."

If, at the end of one lesson, a pupil did not feel calm and in control of the stresses in his or her life, Beverley Milne would not be doing her job, she says.

This capacity for reducing stress has been observed in all the martial arts and is believed to be an effective means of controlling high blood pressure.

"Some of the fittest people I see are martial arts practitioners," says Malcolm Emery, technical director of London's City Health Centre. "The aerobic and anaerobic qualities of this type of exercise are good for building all-round body musculature. And because many of them are based on principles of stressing and then releasing groups of muscles—as in Hatha yoga or the Alexander technique—they lead to a depth of relaxation not engendered by other sports."

Being a rugby man himself, Malcolm Emery's praise of the martial arts is somewhat grudging. But he has noticed that this form of exercise does

pick up those people who have shown no aptitude for more conventional sports. This fact, and the very low drop-out rate among those who have decided to "give it a go," may well be attributable to the spiritual benefits.

Although there are those who strongly disagree, many martial arts practitioners insist that their skills are not quintessentially violent. As well as being physically dramatic, exercises are invariably strikingly graceful and their dance-like qualities are particularly apparent in those such as wushu which are performed at great speed.

Gillian Barber has been studying wushu for three years. At 19 she is European champion and ranks third in the world. She will be performing with a wushu demonstration team at Crystal Palace in London to mark the 10th anniversary of the Martial Arts Commission on April 26.

"Wushu is the oldest, most traditional of the Chinese martial arts," she says. "It combines spectacularly fast moving and rigorous sequences with slower, smooth and graceful movements."

And whatever you may think from the photographs above, Gillian assures us that, combined in the appropriate sequence, such balancing exercises really do relax the muscles.

□ **PEOPLE** of all ages can practise martial arts, although beginners over the age of 40 may be asked to produce a medical certificate. Lessons are adapted to suit different ages and levels of fitness. When choosing an instructor check that he or she is registered with the Martial Arts Commission.

Information from: The Martial Arts Commission, 1st floor, Broadway House, Deptford Broadway, London, SE8 4PE (Tel. 691 8711). For information on Beverley Milne's classes ring 01-459 0764.

**ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPICE**  
 MAKE ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPICE  
 (Querry Rd. No. 231323)  
 So many arrive as strangers, weary of pain and fearful of the unknown.  
 They gladly stay as friends, secure in the embracing warmth, fortified and cherished to the end with the help of your graceful gifts.  
 I thank you kindly on their behalf.  
 Sister Superior.

Fig.81.Allot's piece about the wellbeing aspects of martial arts.

(Daily Telegraph 14 Apr 1987)

In fact, there was a shift in focus to the health and lifestyle benefits of the sport. Allot (1987) published a seminal piece about wellbeing aspects for *the Daily Telegraph*, discussing the rituals associated with the Orient's harmony between the mind and body that western audiences found beneficial, thus reducing associations of kicking,

and sparring with martial arts. The knock-on effect was the Martial Arts Commission witnessing a membership increase from 16,500 to 106,000 in the 10 years from 1977 to 1987. By then 14 different martial arts were identified with the benefits of Karate and Judo as physical competitive forms being noted. Interestingly there is a reference to the middle-class preference for the spiritual philosophical form of Tai Chi for mindfulness and stress management, amongst other health benefits.

During this time period, Chinese representations were linked to comedy directly, such as through Burt Kuouk's bamboo steamer commercial by Gold Greenlees Trott for William Levene Ltd, which won a D&AD 1983 silver award for most outstanding 2

**SILVER**





Television and Cinema Advertising  
Television Commercials  
Over 45 seconds

The 1983 D&AD Silver Award for  
the most outstanding 2 minute  
commercial.

Director: Paul Welland  
Copywriter: Steve Henry  
Art Director: Axel Chadecock  
Set Designer: Terry Noble  
Producer: Glynn Murray  
Editor: Ian Well  
Lighting: Cernemian  
Terry Rance-Roberts  
Agency Producer: Diane Chell  
Agency: Gold Greenlees Trott  
Limited  
Production Company: Welland  
and Lee Limited  
Advertising Manager:  
Barry Mandy  
Client: William Levene Limited

**"Bamboo Steamer"**

WOMAN:  
Hello, me and my husband.  
Wah!  
WALHI:  
Hello.  
WOMAN:  
...Want to show you this oriental  
bamboo steamer. You can only  
buy it on pennyration, so please do  
get pen and paper ready to take  
down notes at end of advert.  
Not you. Wah! go get food.  
WOMAN:  
Sorry later.  
We put one English meal of fish,  
potatoes, vegetables and sprouts  
dick into the steamer - and one  
into ornately saucy ones. Notice  
fish is frozen, straight from deep-  
freeze.  
WALHI:  
Bless monkeys.  
WOMAN:  
If you eat food you both vitamins  
away. And food stinky! If you steam  
food, you eat in vitamins. And food  
very tasty.  
WALHI:  
Damn, didn't these Chinese,  
he, he, he.  
WOMAN:  
Wah! been at cooking saki again.  
You can steam old left-overs and  
they come out fresh and tasty.  
Or you can steam stale old bread,  
and it comes out fresh as new-  
baked bread.  
Now look at main meals:  
Tender fish. Tasty desserts, crispy  
vegetables. (Rip smacking tasty)  
Baked food -  
WALHI:  
Look like old school dinner.  
WOMAN:  
Shums. Wah!  
And look at other meals you can  
prepare with steamer. Delicious  
corn on cob, succulent prawns,  
mouth watering chicken.  
WOMAN (C):  
Now look at special offer from  
W.L. Housewares.  
K.W.O.  
You can get all three baskets and  
lid for just £20.99. With free recipe  
booklet plus free spatula.  
WOMAN:  
Reave it, some Wah!  
VERY ENGLISH VO:  
To get your oriental bamboo  
steamer, see your local shop or visit  
send by ringing 01-920 0800 now.  
Or send a cheque made out to  
Steamer One to Asda's,  
London NW1 3DY.

second commercial. Chinese businessmen were also a regular feature, such as those seen in the D&AD 1984 30 sec advert by Cinzano UK Ltd. Associating Chinese people with humour became much easier as exemplified by these two examples

Fig.79.Burt Kuouk in the bamboo steamer commercial 1983

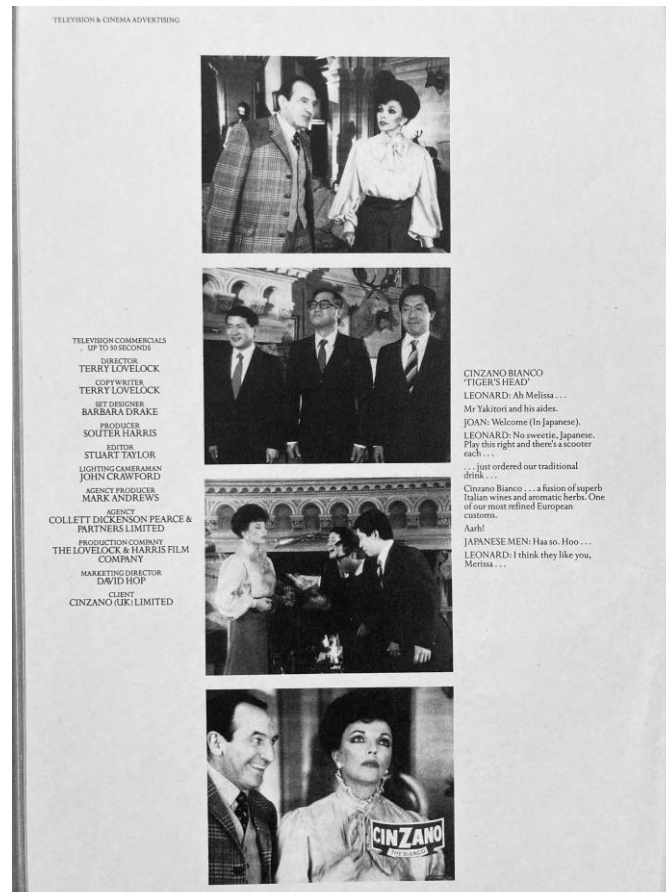



Fig.80. CDP's Cinzano Bianco's 'Tiger's Head' commercial 1984 (D&AD Annual 1983)

The combination of martial arts themes with comedy is not new as a film genre if we take into consideration the *Pink Panther* films (1964-1992) at one end of the spectrum, and Jackie Chan's influence in martial arts comedies at the other. Likewise, British advertising is synonymous with a distinctive brand of self-deprecating humour (Lannon and Cooper, 1983).

<b>Agency</b>	 <p>SB19 BT 'Chinese Warrior' 1986 (HAT)</p> <p>KMP Partnership 1960s London based agency (David) Kingsley, Manton and (Brian) Palmer was the quintessential 1960s Brit agency. Director Paul Weiland</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>60 sec television commercial advertising BT as a utility for British audiences D&amp;AD silver award nomination for direction</p> <p>Open on Chinese foot soldiers entering castle courtyard. Cut to young Chinese man sweeping the steps. On seeing foot soldiers advancing towards him, he launches into 'Kung Fu' style kicks demolishing some statues.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>SC23 BT 'Chinese Warrior' (1986)</p> <p>SFX: Ring Ring MVO: 'It's for You-oo' Young Man: 'For me?' Foot soldiers: 'It's for You' Young Man: 'Herro! Ah yes, Honourable Father, he says it is better to be friend than enemy' Foot soldiers: 'Hurray!' Young Man: 'Specially when outnumbered like this. Oh, and by the way how is grasshopper?' MVO: 'The phone' SFX: Ring Ring MVO: 'It's for you to make someone's day'</p> </div> <p>Chinese gong sound effect is heard – followed by the stereotypical flute/foghorn sound. Whenever the young man appears in the scene, the flute/foghorn is heard. Bruce Lee's watah fighting sound effect is also audible. Production quality high. The actor performs back flips, then breaks the statues with fists whilst in mid air Flying sidekicks can also be seen The actor has a white suit that is opened to the navel – the outfit is not in traditional Chinese style. The detail and finish of the suit are rather elaborate (e.g. on lapels etc) for the main character (sweeper) Ends with the classic gong sound and Chinese music.</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>The cleaner is the main character with many Far East Asians as extras. The film has the feel of a classic Japanese warrior film - particularly when soldiers are storming the temple or fortress. The story is about a father advising his son over the phone not to fight but to remain friends with his enemies. The word 'grasshopper' is a reference to the Kung Fu TV series. The benefits of BT in getting an important message across is clear.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The actors that storm the building appear to be vigilantes in traditional Chinese theatrical clothing. The core message: BT enables users to get important messages across directly. The visual reference is the TV series 'Kung Fu'. The extras and the main characters are Chinese. Classic martial arts film techniques have been deployed to demonstrate the actor's competency in martial arts. The main actor is wearing traditional outfit and is seen performing some acrobatic stunts before intruders stop him in his</p>



	tracks. Classic fight scenes ensue with the use of 'yellow mask' (Bruce Lee's influence through the clothing, stance/posture, and wire-fu) Although not explicit, dubbing is common practice in Kung Fu storylines hence the reference to 'Grasshopper'
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	The end line: 'It's for you to make someone's day' encourages telephone users to make that important call. Humour is used as a core appeal The end sequence encourages audiences to take action.
<b>Target audience</b>	The message is targeted at any phone users who need to get messages reliably to their recipients. The audience is largely Caucasian.
<b>Aim</b>	To remind audience of reliability of BT phones

As discussed previously, in terms of racialised programming, transgressive comedies that came out of the 1960s era with *Mind Your Language* (1977-79), and *Love Thy Neighbour* (ITV, 1972-76) continue to appeal to audiences (Hunt, 2015). It is therefore not uncommon to find martial arts humour/comedy in advertising. The BT Chinese Warrior commercial, though recognised by D&AD for its effectiveness, is a reminder of how accents and pronunciation informed audiences or viewers about

**MAO'S ADDRESS TO THE MASSES ON THE LAUNCH OF SWEET & SOUR PORK FRIES.**

**(A TRANSLATION BY SMITHS FROM THE ORIGINAL CHINESE.)**

現本人與史密斯商行伙友推出一件令無產階級大眾驚奇叫絕之食品  
**咕佬肉餡餅**  
同志,真係生意經啊!  
一旦群眾嚐到咕佬肉餡餅之甘潤香脆,一定排長龍長到像北方古羅馬赫準皇帝的長城。推銷咕佬肉餡餅並非全仗毛氏之言。今年九月敝行將耗資三十萬英鎊在電台播出廣告及遍貼海報精明食家必不錯過。及時果腹莫蹉跎!大詩人沙基曰:「歡愛落空已足哀,顧客不滿難生財。」

"Grocers! Cash and Carriers! Fellow workers in the on and off trade and CTN's everywhere but especially Harlech at this moment in time.  
Remember Scampi Fries?  
Well now me and the boys at Smiths have come up with something that's really gonna knock the proletariat for six.  
Sweet and Sour Pork Fries!  
Comrades, they are the business!  
Once the masses get a taste of that crunchy texture and heavenly sweet and sour pork flavour, the queues outside your gaffs are going to be longer than that thing of Hadrian's up north.  
Nor, in our efforts to promote them, are we relying simply on word of Mao.  
We've got a three hundred thousand pound national equivalent radio and poster campaign booked for September that no right-thinking consumer will be able to resist.  
So stock up now! For as our great poet Saki once said, 'Unrequited love is a sad thing, but an unsatisfied customer is a pain in the wallet!'"

**史密斯** **SMITHS**

aspects of Chinese culture and, indeed, how these were perceived. This is also reflected in stereotypes of China and the Chinese community during the 1970s.

Fig.82.Smith's Crisps 'Mao's address to the masses ...' (D&AD Annual 1987)

For Smiths crisps around the same period, Abbott Mead Vickers/SMS Limited came up with the headline ‘*Mao’s address to the masses on the launch of sweet and sour pork fries* (a translation by Smiths from the original Chinese)’ with the endline ‘*Today*



*Harlech, tomorrow the rest of Blitain*'. This harked back to the early examples of rhotacism for Chinese people and their inability to pronounce the letter 'r', as encapsulated by the Ogilvy and Mather's print advertising for Pagoda Oranges in the 1930s.

Fig.83 Smith's Crisps 'Today Harlech, tomorrow the rest of Blitain' (D&AD Annual 1987)

This is a double-edged sword, because when Sumo wrestling was broadcast on British television in 1988 – this presented broadcasters with the challenge of pronouncing Japanese live on air (I Love 1988, BBC2). According to the Sumo commentator, Brian Blessed: 'Des Lynam and all the others had trouble with the pronunciation. You have to go from a komi ashi to uchi mata —and you have to do it at speed!' (I Love 1988, BBC2). This highlighted the challenges of being able to pronounce martial arts techniques correctly, from counting to instructing students. The preoccupation with authenticity in terms of pronunciation also extends to the use

of calligraphy, as seen in this D&AD 1988 silver award for Clark Production. The artwork was noted for its outstanding graphics in terms of aesthetics as well as its quality in terms of composition and consistency in its form, size and appearance that a bona fide calligraphist would appreciate.



Fig.84.Clark Production calligraphy (D&AD Annual 1988)

Depictions of Oriental men in advertising often reference Confucius – a philosopher (551 BCE to 479 BCE) who shaped classical Chinese society through his teachings. Vimto’s Matotaki sake print advert is a typical example (*The Grocer*, March 1, 1986). The Chinese Warrior commercial refers to an ‘honourable father’ where honour is part and parcel of Chinese culture that deals with behavior, relationships, and societal norms. Vimto’s headline reads: ‘A SAKE FLAVOURED SOFT DRINK. CONFUCIUS, HE SAY ‘WHY DIDN’T I THINK OF THAT?’





Fig.85.Vimto's Matotaki sake print ad (The Grocer 1 March 1986)

Associations of Chinese folks with education and learning was also a key feature of the *Kung Fu* (1972) television series and the KP Peanuts (1980s) advert above. In fact, Confucius' manner of speaking or teaching also came up in the following headline for a print advert for Fray Bentos: 'FRAY BENTOS, HE SAY, HEAVY ON CHINESE NEED NOT MEAN LIGHT ON PORK'.

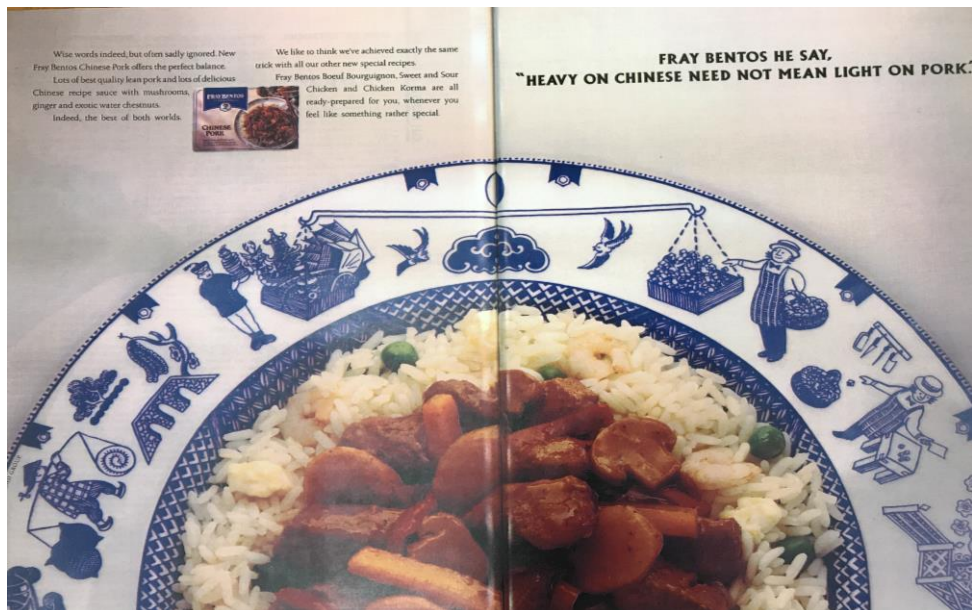


Fig.86. Fray Bentos 'He say...' print advert (Good Housekeeping April 1989)

It is also worth noting that during the late 1980s, racist stereotypical representations in the form of Fu Manchu and 'yellow face' also made an appearance on Vesta's new Chinese menu in 1988:



Clearly, visual (graphics and typography), copy and audio (Oriental riff) as well as racialised representations contributed to deep-seated stereotypes of the Chinese community during the 1980s.

Fig.87. Vesta's 'Something new to Fu Man Chew' print advert (HAT)

### **Summary - 1980s advertising and the use of martial arts tropes**

Overwhelmingly, advertising in the 1980s utilised aspects of Chinese cultural norms to shape societal norms. It also utilised humour, and the entertainment value that stereotypes of the Chinese may have, alongside an interest in all things Far Eastern and the need to protect the community with positive programming. In contrast, appreciation of all things Japanese continued. The 1980s saw increasing references to and discourse around a broader range of martial arts, especially Japanese forms, demonstrating an ability to appreciate the Far East using creative approaches that highlight western understandings of language and calligraphy, and use of accents through the casting of Chinese actors. Production value was high with invested techniques such as Wire Fu and stunt actions for authentic martial arts that ensured a wider audience appeal. The executions often showed actors engaged in the art form in situ. In addition, ownership of martial arts by the non-Chinese, as shown in *Sure* (1980s) and *Brylcream* (1986) adverts, normalised these depictions for audiences, reflecting the popularity of the sport. The evidence collated to date for the textual analysis showed an increasing range of product categories being advertised in this way started to become more diverse, ranging from deodorants and personal grooming to snacks. This suggests that the appeal and replicability of martial arts aesthetics in advertising – when used as a creative theme for television commercials and print advertisements – had become more frequent, particularly when used alongside transgressive comedy.

The success of the short-lived but impactful *The Chinese Detective* (BBC, 1981-1982) was a conscious effort by broadcasters to improve the stereotypical

representations of the Chinese in the media. The Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968 were designed to offer protection from discrimination based on colour, nationality, ethnic and national origins. However, racist stereotypes persisted, particularly in the latter half of the 1980s, suggesting that cultural producers did not all follow through with their ethical practices. Instead, discourse continued around Maoism, Confucianism, Fu Manchu fuelled by the success of *Kung Fu* TV series (1972-1975).

This period also saw a great degree of creativity as consumer sovereignty and increasing proliferation of media across multi channels from TV to radio to growth of commercial television. The Vapours' 'Turning Japanese' had already stormed the charts. The rather serious *Kung Fu* TV series (1972-1975) was the overriding influence (despite its comedic interpretation in many of the television commercials, such as KP Peanuts' 1980s advert). It was also clear to see how Bruce Lee's downtrodden hero, as seen in his anti-colonial films, may have influenced Walker's Crisps (1983). Stereotypes have now taken a more sophisticated form, from the use of oriental riff and 'Confucius He Say' references, to the authentic use of calligraphy as art. Despite some degree of yellow face, this period also saw increasing diversity in the casting of Chinese actors as a means of counteracting negative stereotypes. Examples include Walker's crisps *My Brother* (1983-4), KP peanuts *Oriental Spice* (1980s) and BT's *Chinese Warrior* (1986) for television commercials and Vimto's Matotaki sake (1986) for its print advert.

The rise of Chinese catering during this period meant the community suffered some serious deep-seated stereotypes from mainstream assumptions that all Chinese were caterers. This is despite efforts made by broadcasters to shift negative stereotypes through advertising, and to embrace more positive stereotypes.

In terms of martial arts, Karate and Judo still dominated the rhetoric despite increased interest in all aspects of Chinese culture. Chinese forms such as Kung Fu and Tai Chi were starting to take shape. There was an appetite to learn about the different styles, and how to practice them properly, as evidenced by press articles such as *The Takahashi Tackle*, the popularity of Karate for the black community in Wolverhampton, and recognition of the health benefits of Tai Chi. Chinese references were linked to films such as *Kung Fu* cinema coming from Hong Kong, although Bruce Lee references were yet to emerge. Despite these developments, it was common to find aspects of Japanese culture being mixed up with Chinese by audiences and agencies alike.



## **Contextualising the 1990s**

This period was characterised by many studies exploring British Chinese cultural identities, the burgeoning Chinese catering sector in Britain, and the effects these have had on second generation Chinese people (Chan, 1997). Whilst studies by David Parker (1994) and Diana Yeh (2000) have dominated discourse on Chinese cultural identity constructions and contestations of British Chinese and East and Southeast Asian identities, the media impact on such communities has been under researched. As before, this section considers racialised constructions through martial arts aesthetics, as discussed in chapter 2, with clues to how the Far East (China and Japan) has been portrayed in the past and how this influences its inclusion in contemporary television and print advertising.

### **Representing race in the 1990s**

Discourse did not move away from race entirely during this period. Similar to *Mind Your Language* (1978), the 1990s often dealt with racism as part of comedy sketches. Series 3, episode 1 of *Father Ted*, ('Are You Right There, Father Ted?' aired on 13 March 1998) entailed Father Ted impersonating a Chinese man. When caught, he decides to hold a '*celebration of Craggy Island's ethnic diversity*' party to prove that he was not being racist. The slideshow that the character showed was loaded with stereotypes – thus defeating his objective of appeasing the Chinese community. The writers included images of: Mao Zedong, Mr. Miyagi from *The Karate Kid*, Cato from the *Pink Panther*, and Ming the Merciless from the *Flash Gordon* films.



Fig.88.Father Ted 'Are you right there, Father Ted?' Channel 4, 13 Mar 1998

In 2021, Channel 4 released a statement that the 'episode was made in 1998 and contains language and racial impersonation which some viewers may find offensive' and that 'In light of current audience expectations, we have updated the viewer advice for certain episodes of Father Ted on All4' (Harte, 2021).

The mid-1990s also witnessed concerted anti-racism efforts by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the European Youth Campaign against Racism. The Saatchi and Saatchi agency was awarded a Wood Pencil during the D&AD poster awards in 1996 in the public service and charities category, following this a year later with the Roots of the Future campaign. These laid the foundation for discourse about racial stereotypes and the role played by advertising, challenging deep-seated views and beliefs. Clues to racialised constructions may therefore be found in the 1980s.

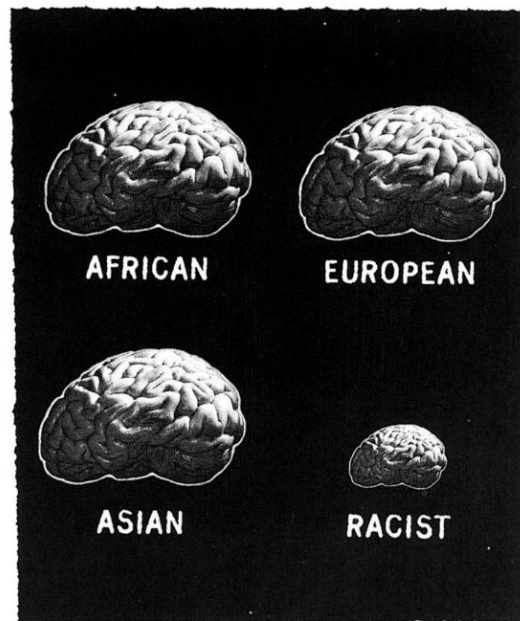


Fig.89.CRE print advert (D&AD Annual 1996)

Post-1980s efforts to include Chinese casts or actors may be evidenced in the archives and textual material for a myriad of product categories and brands. Their inclusion may be a nod towards a more inclusive approach as pressures to conform to changing industry regulations grew. Chinese actors/models may be found in one segment of a commercial also featuring other mainstream or non-Asian actors.

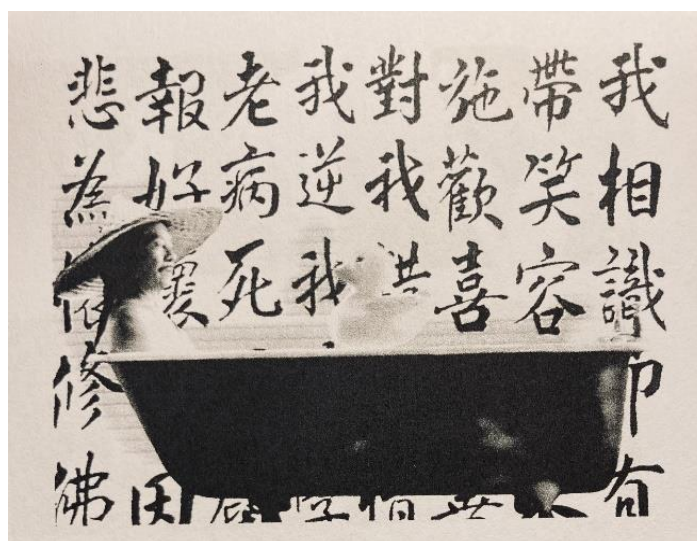


Fig.90.Miller Pilsner's 'Glad' television commercial (D&AD Annual 1992)

For example, the television and cinema commercial for Courage Ltd's Miller Pilsner Lager by BMP DDB Needham was awarded silver for its use of music themed around '*all of these things make me glad*' (D&AD Annual, 1992). Lyrics from the Miller Pilsner Lager *Glad* commercial include references to Peking Duck and stir fry:

*'Shiny new shoes [...] And old jeans [...] Baking days [...] And baked beans. **Peking duck [...]** Stir fry [...] '65 E-type [...] Sci-fi [...] All of these things make me happy [...] All of these things make me glad.'*

The *Glad* (1992) commercial showed a Chinese man (with moustache, pigtail and a conical hat) sitting in a bathtub with a yellow rubber duck clearly visible, against a backdrop of Chinese calligraphy. However, the style of hat as juxtaposed against the Chinese reference to 'Peking duck' in the segment shows inconsistencies, with *nón lá* being the conical hat that symbolises Vietnam and its people, rather than China. It would appear that the Chinese man is a racialised representation of a popular Chinese dish based on some of the earlier images of 'coolies'.

The use of music in another television cinema advertisement for KISS FM's *100% Potential* demonstrates efforts towards more diverse representation. Constructed by Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO Limited, the commercial contains 'a range of inspirational vignettes and thoughts, expressed in different ways, how to open up and get more out of life', with an endline 'Get 100% out of life tune to 100 FM. KISS' (D&AD Annual, 1994). The execution features different minorities, including a black man feeding birds in the street, and a Chinese woman wearing a qipao (traditional Chinese dress) shown eating chips from a paper bag with the copy 'eat something you've never tried before' appearing across the screen. This suggests that

assumptions were made that Chinese people have not tried chips before, despite the majority running takeaways or being involved in catering businesses.



Fig.91.TV commercial 'eat something you've never tried before' with Chinese woman (D&AD Annual 1994)

The following year, the Holsten Distributors Limited's ELVISH (D&AD Annual, 1995) television commercial by Agency GGT featured comedian Denis Leary with the line, *'You can stein and frau and gluck and schtuck as much as you like but if you don't say brewed in Germany it's as authentic as a Chinese Elvis ...Holsten pills. It's hops,*

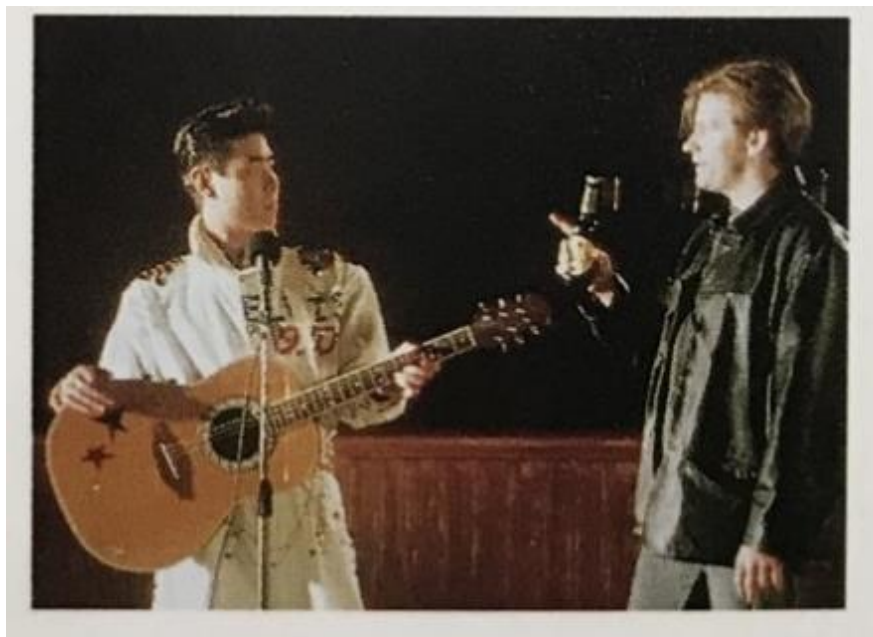


Fig.92.Chinese Elvis (D&AD Annual 1995)

*it's barley, it's yeast, it's water, it's made in Germany and it's authentic*'. This commercial demonstrates the importance of authenticity in the brewing process.

As Leary paces back and forth, he comes across a Chinese Elvis

*'don't even think about it'*.

*Endline: 'German ish? Get real!'*

This is the first time that a reference to authenticity is made in a television commercial, albeit about the brand Holsten Pils and an inauthentic Chinese Elvis. One such Elvis is Paul Hyu, a restaurateur from Hong Kong. He recalls *'there are no famous Chinese people in the UK. Chinese Elvis is the vehicle by which I plan to change that low profile of the Chinese. Everyone seems to love Chinese Elvis. I was born in London but grew up in Yorkshire. My dad is Chinese and my mum English, but I feel more English than Chinese, and I can relate very well to an English audience. The act is entirely tailored for a British audience'* (Rohrer, 2002). It would appear that there were recurrent issues about the lack of Chinese visibility in Britain.

### **Fashioning martial arts in the 1990s**

With increased representations using a Chinese cast or actors in broadcast media, what may be gained from discourse surrounding martial arts? The frequency of media coverage of martial arts increased dramatically between 1993 and 1997, with the majority occurring in 1997 – the year that the Bruce Lee renaissance took place.

As discussed in the methodology, *The Sunday Times* or *The Times* was a crucial resource as it was one of the main print media platforms that agencies used to showcase their art direction and copy writing credentials long before social media

proliferation. Analysis of *The Sunday Times* magazine provided clues to the influences behind cultural production.

Jenkins (1993) discusses the Bruce Lee effect on Shaolin monks and Buddhist monasteries in Henan, China. She introduces the importance of Shaolin monastery as the birthplace of Chinese martial arts that was founded in AD 495 by Indian monk, Batuo. More importantly, Jenkin contends that the **demand for authenticity** of experience led to the development of monastery hotels and Kung Fu schools fuelling the growth of martial arts tourism.

Martial arts' categorisation as a sport was augmented by its featuring in the sports section of newspapers. Cook (1994) introduces Japanese Kendo as the oldest form – once again focussing on **authenticity in terms of its origins** for Samurai swordsmen during the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The article served to educate the public about Chinese martial arts. The renewed focus on the health benefits of martial arts, such as its ability to help practitioners release stress, led to more interest from the public about the practitioner's journey. By the mid-1990s, 350,000 people were engaged in martial arts, in a range of styles from Karate to kickboxing, and taekwondo to Tai Chi (Avery, 1995). However, the lack of a single governing body to cover the myriad forms meant standardisation was difficult. In addition, the injuries sustained by practitioners meant insurance and training facilities also became problematic. Each form of martial arts has evolved, and the perceived lack of an overriding expert knowledge to differentiate them led to questions of authenticity and legitimacy. Despite these issues, there was recognition from key martial arts governing bodies e.g. British Karate Federation and British Council of Chinese Martial Arts.



As part of the 'Sport for All' initiative, the Sports Council promoted sport as both elite competition and a community provision. Part of this was linked to disability. Walker (1997a) discusses the potential of Shotokan Karate for those with disabilities, providing examples of young people benefitting from improved balance and movements (<https://sportsleisurelegacy.co.uk/uncategorized/sport-for-all/>).



Fig.93.Walker's 'sport for all' article (The Times 17 Mar 1997)

In her second article, Walker (1997b) shares her experience of her first aikido class. As a classical Japanese martial art, it differs from Karate or Chinese Kung Fu in that it is a defensive discipline that redirects the aggressor's energy back to them. Yoshinkan aikido is taught to Japanese policewomen and Tokyo's riot squad. The article focuses on martial arts journeys or stories to authenticate its lineage and tradition, such as the instructor's training in Tokyo with Gozo Shioda. Gozo was a



student of the founder of aikido Morihei Ueshiba, and one of only six westerners to become a live-in instructor

# Focused on the 'way of harmony'

**Aikido is a defensive art that turns an aggressor's power against himself. Victoria Walker reports**

I hate fighting. I am not a particularly aggressive person and I shy from confrontation. I was therefore shocked to discover how much I enjoyed the physical contact of my first aikido class.

Aikido is a classical Japanese martial art. In contrast to karate or Chinese kung fu, for example, it is an essentially defensive discipline. Students of aikido are taught how to redirect the force of an attack back against the aggressor, and it is because of this redirection of energy that smaller, weaker people are able to exert control over larger, stronger ones.

There are four main schools of aikido, one of which, Yoshinkan aikido, is taught as part of the basic training of every policeman in Japan. It is also one of the classical martial arts practised by Tokyo's riot squad.

David Rubens teaches Yoshinkan aikido at the Meidokan Dojo, or school, in West Hampstead, London. Before the lesson the class devotes a short period to silent meditation. They then bow and the action begins.

We started with a series of warm-up exercises. These consisted of simple stretches that are common to most active sports, plus a few rolling and moving techniques that are more attuned to the direct needs and moves of martial arts (at this point I attempted my first forward and backward roll since the age of seven). The last of the warm-up exercises were "controls".

These loosen up the tendons in the wrists and get the systems of joints which are usually locked-in to a control position.

In the class that I watched there were 12 students, including three beginners. As Rubens demonstrated the controls at the front of the group, three of the more advanced students ran to the aid of the novices, gently positioning their hands in the correct formation to achieve the best stretch for the control. Such unbidden assistance was an example of the empathy with the needs of others demonstrated by both Rubens and the students.

Rubens demonstrated the first move with a more senior student in front of the entire class. He showed it initially as a fluid whole and then broke it down step-by-step. After several examples, we copied the move alone as if holding on to "shadow" partners. Then came the time to practise with a real body.

At this point, I felt markedly anxious. My male opponent, Nick, was bigger and undoubtedly stronger than me -- when I had to grab his wrist I had difficulty in getting a good hold. I thought he looked pretty fierce, too, though in hindsight that may have been my own imagination, for he was gentle and firm and incredibly tolerant of my clumsy attempts.

At first I was the attacker and moved forward to grasp his wrist. Taking hold of the arm I had grabbed him with, Nick used two basic pivotal movements to knock me off my balance and a kneeling motion to pin me to the floor.

He had made it look so simple that I was initially disappointed when our roles were reversed and I had difficulty in remembering which step followed which. To my horror, I found that I even developed problems in recognising which was my left and which was my right hand.

Yet, when I finally managed to complete the movement, controlling Nick's body and forcing him to the ground, I was exhilarated by a sense of achievement and a curiously calming sense of empowerment. After practising the move several times, we bowed to our partners and sat back while Rubens demonstrated a second move.

As an observer, I was struck by the beauty of the fighting moves. The aikido performed before me was an intractable combination of grace and menace. The carefully choreographed steps were balletic in their poise and precise execution. I felt drawn to the idea of being able to defend myself with grace and power.

People are attracted to aikido for different reasons. Martin Gilbert, 46, has tried many different martial arts and joined this aikido dojo because it is conveniently located close to his home. He pursues it for the exercise, discipline and philosophy it provides.

Lucy Armit, 28, manages a bookshop in north London and took up aikido two years ago. She found it quite by chance, as she was looking for Tai Chi classes. "I went the first time and quite liked it, but, by the time I had been a second time, I loved it and was hooked," she said.

Ali Ganchi, 18, is a student studying for his A levels. Fascinated by martial arts, he first tried karate, but found that it did not suit him. He now regularly attends a Saturday morning class and has achieved a promising level of skill in a relatively short time.

As a father of two children (with a third due very shortly), Rubens recognises the education and fun that children can get out of martial arts. As a result, he offers classes from the age of five.

It is impossible to get Rubens to talk about his own experiences as a student and teacher of aikido without him mentioning his own teacher, Goto Shioda (who in turn was a student of the founder of aikido, Morihei Ueshiba). He spent five years training directly under Goto Shioda in the Yoshinkan headquarters school in Tokyo and was one of only six Westerners to become a live-in Shido'in (instructor). Such lineage shows how important tradition is within the discipline.

Japanese martial arts, unlike just over a century ago, were practised by samurai, the warrior class. Aikido means "way of harmony". Training in aikido differs from that of many other Japanese martial arts in that it has a deep underlying philosophy. The aim of aikido is to unify the mind, body and energy of a person. By focusing the energy and the mind and by using the body to work with, rather than against an opponent, harmony is achieved.

This philosophy and the sense of being part of something much bigger is a powerful force in itself. For the past few days, like someone enamoured by a new romance, I have not been able to get aikido off my mind. I have been caught so many times in an apparent daydream as I re-enact moves trying to perfect them in my imagination. I am excited at the prospect of learning a whole new art and suspect that Rubens may not have seen the last of me.

**STARTING OUT**

**British Aikido Board:** General secretary: Shirley Timms. Write with sse to 6 Halkingscroft, Langley, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 7AT. 01753 819086

**Meidokan Yoshinkan Aikido Dojo:** David Rubens, Studio One, 187-191 West End Lane, West Hampstead, London. 0171-328 4533

**Further reading:** The official book of the Tokyo Yoshinkan Aikido Federation is published in Britain this month by Kodansha International, £24.00. **Total Aikido: The Master Course**, by Goto Shioda with Yauhisia Shioda. Translated from the Japanese by David Rubens. ISBN 4 7700 2058 9



The writer deflects Ali Ganchi in her first aikido class

Fig.94.Walker's 'way of harmony' article (The Times 17 Mar 1997)

In advertising, the diversity of product categories and brands associating themselves with all forms of martial arts grew in the 1990s. The level of creativity and awareness of differences and breadth with respect to martial arts is demonstrated in the range of advertising selected for this thesis. On the one hand, appropriated imageries surrounding martial arts were less about the mystical Far East and more about the prowess afforded to non-Asian practitioners. On the other, a core theme running through the advertising from the mid-1990s onwards was Bruce Lee, due to a revival of his films and recognition of his impact that resulted in many imageries relating to him being used in all product categories, from insurance to clothing. According to

Bowman (2013), Lee's revival during the 1990s was partly due to renewed interest in the politically charged messages of his films in the lead up to the 1997 handover of Hong Kong back to mainland China. It was also a period when Hollywood sought to replay history through the making of the 1993 biopic *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*.

There is a need to learn from the Far East – the tone in the media coverage more broadly, and specifically in the advertising industry, was respectful, with depth and authenticity sought after, as educating oneself about the origin of the arts became key in the 1990s, e.g., interest in Shaolin Temples. Depictions centred on the setting and geography, and access to the Far East through reproductions of Eastern architecture. This is reflected in references to television series *Monkey*. References to *Monkey* in advertising have been limited to a 30 second television commercial for SC Johnson's Japanese Garden Toilet Duck by the BMP DDB Needham agency (D&AD Annual, 1995):

SC24 SC Johnson's Japanese garden toilet duck (1995)

Classical Japanese music throughout.

- Mvo: 'I tell the tale of Tripitaka...Whose life was made misery...By the demons under the rim'.
- 'Until arrived her hero – Hu Clean-loo...'
- Sfx: quack quack.
- Mvo: '...Who vanquished them effortlessly...Leaving to ...fresh fragrance of a Japanese garden'.
- Old proverb: when demons look beneath the rim - duck!
- Sfx: quack quack.
- Mvo: 'new Japanese garden Toilet Duck'


The folklore surrounding *Monkey* is based on China, yet references used in this advert are Japanese, with its music and reference to a Japanese garden, then reverting back to China through the proverb. The fictional 'Hu-Clean-loo' appears to

be a Chinese sounding name, which is very similar to one of the main characters in the Monkey storyline.

Against this backdrop, the next section provides cases as evidence of martial arts authenticity and racialised constructions as these relate to advertising during the 1990s.

### **Case studies of 1990s martial arts tropes**


This Lucozade Judo advert by Ogilvy features bona fide Judokas in action, utilising moving image editing techniques to showcase the fast-changing lifestyle that they inhabit during competition training.

<b>Case 1</b>	<b>Smithkline Beecham <u>Lucozade Judo (1990)</u></b>
<b>Agency</b>	Agency: Ogilvy & Mather   SB20 Lucozade 'Judo' 1990 (HAT)
<b>Technical analysis</b>	20 sec TV commercial Featured in 1990/1991 British Arrows John Fenner (Director)
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	High energy, Judo - competition setting Two Judokas in white gis are competing in a large hall with spectators, referee is seen in the background .
<b>Formal analysis</b>	The actors, or Judokas, are Caucasian, and demonstrate their prowess in the sport within a competitive setting in the UK There is no voiceover, but a sequence consisting of what appears to be live action shots is interspersed with strong copy (text) that dominates the screen. The audio focusses on the action with grunts and grappling sounds clearly audible. These clips are quickly followed by single words in capital letters that dominate the screen. The action sequences appear to be real with correct techniques and throws thereby providing a degree of authenticity to the message.
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	Judo action shots or throws are interspersed throughout the ad breaking up each word onscreen:  'Some thirst for bronze' – man is seen drinking from a bottle of Cola 'Some thirst for silver' – man is seen drinking from a bottle of water

	<p>'But Lucozade.... 'Cut to bubbles rising and hissing 'IS GOLD' - Cut to man drinking from Lucozade bottle End line: 'The one with glucose is Lucozade' – bottle appears covering the Lucozade word</p> <p>Core message: Lucozade will provide the competitor with energy from the glucose in the drink to win gold. Thirst refers to both the need for refreshments and the need to win gold.</p> <p>The advertising combines testimonials with a slice of life, focusing on the benefits that Lucozade has over water and Cola. The end shot is of the distinctive bottle of Lucozade to reinforce brand image associations.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Active audiences (competitors) seeking additional benefits from a drink – profile could be men aged 25-35 who compete in a professional capacity.
<b>Aim</b>	Lucozade has added benefits for those chasing endurance and sporting prowess

This is an example of authenticity in action through the visualisation of the Judo throw action sequences. The audience's awareness and recognition of the sport is high thanks to the visual cues such as the training hall, gis, that act as signifiers. However, the link with Asia is weak as the advertising does not feature any Asian cast members.

In a similar vein, we see an actor acting as a Karateka to perform breaking in Tesco's Karate Chop promotion. This short advert parodies the 'Karate Kid':

<b>Case 2</b>		<b><u>Tesco Promotion Karate Chop (1990)</u></b>
<b>Agency</b>		<p>Agency: Lowe Howard-Spink</p>  <p>SB21 Tesco 'karate chop' 1990 (HAT)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>		<p>Director: Ian Shingle 10 sec TV commercial to advertise Tesco's price promotion 1991 British Arrows Awards</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>		<p>A barefoot Karate master in a white Gi and headband demonstrates his breaking skills He is viewed from above and the table/board and the fresh pork chops can be seen above the boards with £1.94 printed on the boards. He smashes the board in half to reveal the letters '£1.19 / lb' underneath</p>

<b>Formal analysis</b>		<p>No voiceover</p> <p>The actor has dark hair, but his ethnicity is identifiable as Asian from the camera angle</p> <p>The setting is a blue background viewed from above</p> <p>Although this is a silent ad, his footsteps as he approaches the table/board and the kiai (more like watah, akin to the Shaw Brother movies) can be heard</p> <p>A gong sound is heard at the end as he walks away</p> <p>His bow, his hands, posture and belt suggest this is an actor rather than a bona fide martial artist. The headband is seen in popular shows such as 'The Karate Kid' therefore the martial arts aspect lacks authenticity</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>		<p>'£1.94' is clearly visible on the breaking boards and 'fresh pork chops' just above it – when the actor kiais and chops the board in half to reveal the new price of £1.19 / lb before leaving, the message is clear. What appears to be a serious advert is actually a parody with comic undertones</p> <p>The Tesco logo can be seen on the bottom right of the screen</p>
<b>Target audience</b>		Mainstream Tesco or grocery shoppers who are price conscious
<b>Aim</b>		To raise grocery shoppers' awareness of price promotion at Tesco's

This association with popularised notions of what martial arts is drawn from popular films – the genre often features comedy, and this advert does not take itself too seriously. A degree of appropriation has occurred with the adoption of 'watah', reminiscent of the Shaw Brother filming era. What can be observed is that Karate and Judo have entered mainstream culture – being used to advertise popular drinks and grocery store promotions. From these two adverts, Judo and Karate have become synonymous with mainstream culture, such that ethnicity is no longer important.

By 1992, the comedic value in mimicking the Chinese accent, mocking sounds from the early martial arts films, and parodying Karate chops led to this commercial:


<b>Case 3</b>	<b>Rowntree Toffee Crisp <i>Free the Crispy Bits</i> (1992)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	 <p>SB22 Toffee Crisp 'Free the Crispy bits' 1992 (HAT)</p> <p>Name of advertising agency – unknown</p>

<b>Technical analysis</b>	20 sec TV commercial for a popular brand of confectionary
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	A teenage schoolboy attempts to demonstrate his martial arts skills by breaking into a Toffee Crisp chocolate bar. The benefit of the confectionary is shown in some detail He is having some fun with his friend re-enacting some of the martial arts moves seen in films and on TV.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	The Caucasian actor explains his actions for breaking into the Toffee Crisp It is done with good humour The setting could be an after-school playground – his uniform is evident. He mimics the sounds made in Kung Fu movies (or a parody thereof) whereas he is performing a Karate chop. The actor speaks in pidgin English, as often seen in the Kung Fu series, and imitates martial arts sounds viewed through a Western lens, which was common practice at the time.
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>The boy is sat down with his knees crossed and a school tie around his head a la Karate kid in front of a breaking table:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SC25 Rowntree Toffee Crisp 'Free the Crispy Bits' (1992)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actor 1 – 'Free the crispy bits must be at one with the bar toffee...it must be crispy...and then...'</li> <li>• Moves his hands to demonstrate the balance before feeling the urge to strike the bar 'arrghhh!'</li> <li>• VO: 'there are hundreds of crispy bits to get out of a toffee crisp, you've just got to set it free!'</li> <li>• CU of chocolate bar</li> <li>• 'Aargh!'</li> <li>• Actor 2 appears and stops him</li> <li>• Actor 2: 'It's fine'</li> <li>• Takes the chocolate from the table and takes a bite</li> <li>• Actor 1 resigns and shrugs:</li> <li>• 'alright alright'</li> <li>• Waits for actor 2 to leave before taking out another Toffee Crisp from his pocket and proceeds to imitate 'Hooyaaah ... Hoyahhh ahh!' and Karate chops the bar</li> <li>• End line: Free the crispy bits</li> </ul> </div> <p>Core message: Toffee Crisp's crispy bits are irresistible, as clearly demonstrated and illustrated with humour.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Mainstream confectionary customers from school age upwards.
<b>Aim</b>	To generate interest in the Toffee Crisp brand by highlighting its crispy bit content.

The Caucasian actor imitates how Far East Asian/Chinese people spoke within a Western view of the Far East – seen in popular films and television series such as *Kung Fu*. There is also reference to *Karate Kid* with the headband. Once again, humour is involved and there is no authentic representation of martial arts –filmic references were used instead.



The next case also features that headband with a nod to the Karate Kid films of that era and introduces an element of the lesser-known Tai Chi:

<b>Case 4</b>	<b>Knorr Stir Fry <i>Oriental Spices</i> (1990s)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	 <p>SB23 Knorr 'Oriental Spices' 1990s (HAT).</p> <p>Agency unknown</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	30 sec TV commercial for a popular brand of cooking ingredient
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>A chef uses his martial arts skills to test out the quality of the ingredients in Knorr's stir fry in a kitchen setting</p> <p>The chef is from the Far East and is of Far East Asian descent – he has what appears to be a striped kitchen towel wrapped around his forehead (a la The Karate Kid)</p> <p>He executes his moves slowly using a mix of balance and arm gestures suggesting that this is Tai Chi - he is seen balancing on one leg with his arms raised in the air and slowly raising his legs and arms into different positions.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The chef/Tai Chi master shows how he gauges the quality (authenticity) of the oriental spices through a close-up of him examining them using his senses of sight, taste and smell. The chef is wearing a clean white suit and white shoes. The setting is a well-stocked kitchen, and the voiceover reinforces the message by helping the audience to understand what the actor is doing. The music is light-hearted with a stereotypical oriental theme</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>MVO: has a slight clipped accent</p> <p>'Knorr always advise their chefs take their time – these creative types all have a certain artistic temperament...in creating something as tasty as this Knorr stir fry you must not be rushed so we give our chefs all the time they need to create our recipes so that you can take no time at all to create yours...delicious Oriental Stir fry to eat in cos we've got the know how'</p> <p>Starts with Knorr packaging – a cube of Knorr Oriental Spices Stir Fry (clearly labelled) is taken out of the packaging</p> <p>Cut to kitchen with ingredients in the foreground and chef in the background</p> <p>Close up of chef performing martial arts moves</p> <p>Cut to wok with vegetables – a cube is added to the wok</p> <p>Cut to close-up of chef inspecting granules at the end of chopsticks – he is looking at them from side to side before going cross-eyed</p> <p>Cut to stir fry action where spatula stirs vegetables in the wok</p> <p>Cut to chef sat at the counter, cross-legged with chopsticks in right hand – he is seen reaching out and tasting food from 20 small dishes lined up neatly in four rows in front of him</p> <p>Cut to stir fry now coated in the sauce</p> <p>Cut to weighing scales in foreground and chef inspecting the aroma of the granules and dishes closely – he rises up as the scales containing rice go down</p>


	<p>Close-up of chef sniffing the granules with his eyes shut before wincing and grimacing.</p> <p>Cut to another close-up of him looking at a piece of food at the end of the chopstick before putting this inside his mouth and tasting it – eyes are shown moving from side to side</p> <p>Cut to close-up of the cooked vegetables – a pair of chopsticks is then shown picking up the veg</p> <p>End sequence – chef is stood in relaxed pose with his hands together in Kung Fu style and he is facing the camera –in the foreground is a cube of the product – he bows towards the camera but he is bowing lower than you would expect for Japanese and too low for Chinese</p> <p>Final scene – three flavours of the packaging are shown – tikka oriental spices and hot ‘n’ spicy – onion and broccoli next to it with green salad leaves at the back in a bowl</p> <p>Core message that Knorr stir fry recipes have been developed to save users time is clearly demonstrated throughout in a light-hearted way.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Domestic mainstream audiences seeking authentic ingredients for creating oriental dishes at home
<b>Aim</b>	To raise awareness and create interest in the quality of ingredients used in Knorr’s stir fry

This commercial contains some complex information to be disseminated to audiences, and the authenticity of the source required an oriental theme. This is the first ad that uses a Tai Chi theme although it is not explicit but the reference to time needed (to come up with a quality product) is linked to Tai Chi. There are many caricatures of Chinese people employed, such as having a discerning nature, slight comic undertones, sitting cross-legged (albeit at the table), and this sends some mixed messages, leading to an ambivalent understanding of what constitutes oriental. He is also seen tasting the ingredients (rather than the cooked dish) using a pair of chopsticks, grimacing in a comical manner. Although light-hearted in approach, and with attempts to represent ‘Orientals’, this is a loaded commercial containing many stereotypes. It depicts Chinese people in a limited way.

Next, we revert back to Karate comedy in this BMP DDB advert:

<b>Case 5</b>	<b><u>Barclaycard Karate (1994)</u></b>
<b>Agency</b>	Agency: BMP DDB Director: Mark Chapman



	 <p>SB24 Barclaycard karate 1994 (HAT)</p> <p>British Arrows Award - Silver D&amp;AD 1994 Annual TV and Cinema advertising</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	30 sec TV commercial Financial products
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Barclaycard was one of the two leading credit card brands in the UK but needed to defend itself from competition, including the introduction of annual fees and purchase insurance. The commercials between 1992 and 1997 featured Bough and Latham characters with comedian Rowan Atkinson helping to devise the scripts. The campaign was a move away from the 7-year campaigns that featured TV presenter Alan Whicker. Atkinson developed Richard Latham as a bumbling secret agent (Blackadder meets James Bond) with Bough as a sidekick (A True Story: The Birth of a Great Campaign)</p> <p>Both actors are in gis in a gym - Latham is busy practising his Karate moves by throwing a range of punches and kicks at Bough whilst the latter tries to tell him about Barclaycard's benefits (send off for a free sports bag).</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>One of the actors (Latham) demonstrates his Karate prowess whilst the other (Bough) tries to inform his boss about the benefits of signing up for a Barclaycard. The moves are choreographed and lack authenticity, due to the comedic nature of the commercial, not helped by the stereotypical sounds made by the leading actor. Efforts have been made to build some authenticity through the attention to detail re the quality of the gym, mats, gis, belt, and the use of 'yamai', kiai and bows at the end.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>SC26 Barclaycard 'Karate' (1994)</p> <p>Music: Barclaycard theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latham: 'grr...Keeeyahhhh!'</li> <li>• Bough: 'Sir...? You know Barclaycard, sir?...'</li> <li>• Latham: 'Grrrrraaaaaggghh!'</li> <li>• Bough: 'If you phone up and get a Barclaycard now, sir...'</li> <li>• Latham: 'Hurggh!'</li> <li>• Bough: 'They give you this really fantastic sports bag...'</li> <li>• Latham: 'Yamai!'</li> <li>• Bough: (bowing) 'bit of a surprise, eh sir?'</li> <li>• Latham: 'Now that's what I call a surprise, Bough'</li> <li>• MVO: 'Call 0800 492929 and apply now'</li> </ul> <p>Core message: Barclaycard offers a free sports bag to those who contact them The use of humour reflects Atkinson's writing and character. The endline has a clear call to action with the free phone number.</p>

<b>Target audience</b>	Current and prospective mainstream Barclaycard users
<b>Aim</b>	To ensure audiences are aware of Barclaycard's offer of a free sports bag

'Yamei' means 'stop' in Japanese. Karate has become mainstream according to this commercial with the setting, Gi and use of correct terminologies in Japanese providing baseline standards for martial arts storytelling in advertising. Despite the comedic value in the use of the over-exaggerated noises made by Latham, these nonetheless added a touch of authenticity to the generic type of Karate shown. The message is straightforward with a clear call to action. This classic martial arts comedy has benefitted from the help of comedian Rowan Atkinson in developing these two main characters who feature heavily in a range of commercials. The characters and stereotypical sounds, however, prevent martial arts choreography from being taken more seriously. In addition, Chinese/Japanese audiences would perceive the audio as contributing to stereotypical representations.

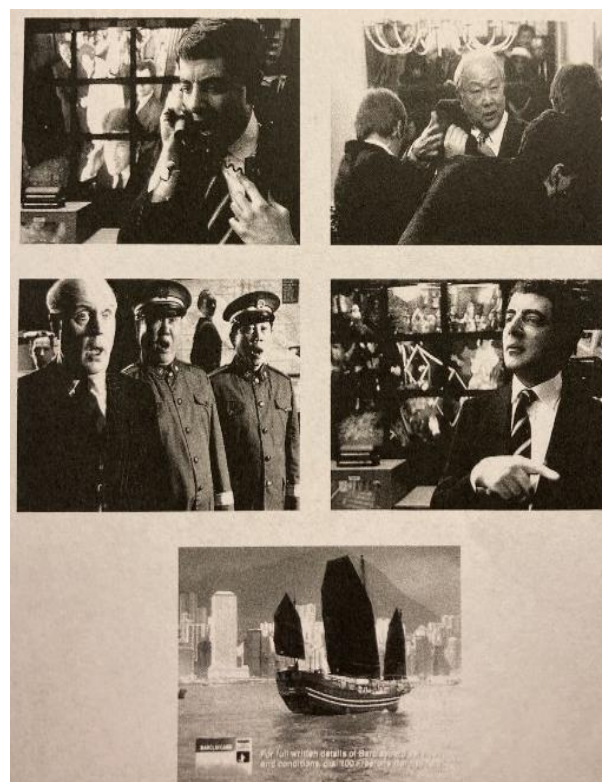


Fig.95.Barclaycard's 'Chinese Take-away' (D&AD Annual 1994)

It is noteworthy that Richard Latham is a fictional undercover agent who appeared in a series of Barclaycard advertisements with his sidekick Bough. Crafted by BMPDDB Needham and directed by Mark Chapman, 'Chinese Take-away' ran in the same year (D&AD Annual, 1994). In this particular advert, Latham is undercover when his mother telephones and interrupts him when he is dealing with Chinese characters. Although the story is not centred around martial arts, a Chinese VIP is shown arriving at an event. Two additional Chinese actors in the control room are depicted as red guards, as indicated by their green military uniform. The actors do not speak but we hear the familiar Chinese riff and gong at the start, and the commercial ends with the familiar image of a Chinese junk in the South China Sea with the Chinese riff effect applied to Barclaycard's sonic logo.

It would seem that Kung Fu perceptions were starting to shape advertising with this Duckworth Finn Grubb Waters agency effort:


<b>Case 6</b>	<b>Pizza Hut <i>Kung Fu</i> (1995)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Duckworth Finn Grubb Waters</p>  <p>SB25 Pizza Hit Kung Fu 1995 (HAT)</p> <p>Duckworth Finn Grubb Waters was established in 1989 – one of UK's most successful independent agencies. Pizza Hut was one of its major clients.</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>30 sec television and cinema advertising</p> <p>Pizza Hut UK Ltd</p> <p>British Arrows Bronze award 1995</p> <p>D&amp;AD Television and cinema advertising 1995</p>

	Director: Richard Phillips. Product category: Fast food
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Two Far East Asian men have to fight their way out of an ambush before settling down to dine in at a Pizza Hut restaurant</p> <p>The actors are of mixed ethnic background with evidence of yellow face (one is made to look Chinese). The setting is a Chinese temple somewhere in the Far East.</p> <p>The men are dressed in white tunics with black belts, they exhibit a range of punches, kicks and acrobatic techniques, with camera and film techniques used to enhance them.</p> <p>Pizza Hut is featured ¾ of the way into the commercial after the audience has witnessed some lengthy action sequences. The ad promotes Chinese chicken pizza.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The actors represent shaolin monks or Kung Fu students – they are having to defend their temple from attack. We do not really see who the baddies are apart from their black clothing. The noises made by the actors emulate those of 1990s martial arts films of the time – with a bit of a Jackie Chan comedic fast paced approach. The shrieks and fighting sounds indicate the authenticity of representation as it relates to the genres of martial arts films of its time.</p> <p>For the first time, dubbing is used on an Asian actor, it is exaggerated, and the MVO helps to drive that message home to audiences.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>Core message is to promote the Chinese chicken flavour of pizza using Kung Fu comedy as a genre. The end line is strong, stating the price of the offer in its call to action. The recognisable logo and box are featured towards the end. The waitress also delivers her pizza in a Kung Fu style.</p> <p>All the dialogue is dubbed. Out of sync, Kung Fu movie style. Open on two men fighting off many baddies Kung Fu style</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SC27 Pizza Hut 'Kung Fu' (1995)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SFX: Kung Fu fighting noises.</li> <li>• They manage to beat them all in a comic book battle. The baddies are left lying around them.</li> <li>• SFX: groaning.</li> <li>• They dust their hands off.</li> <li>• Man 1: 'What now?'</li> <li>• They both do a Kung Fu style point</li> <li>• Man 2: Now we...Hit the Hut'.</li> <li>• SFX: Music, hey, hey, hey.</li> <li>• MVO: 'Get a Chinese chicken pizza only £5.99 at Pizza Hut'.</li> <li>• Cut to food shots of the ingredients, the two beers and the pizza</li> <li>• Cut to the Pizza Hut. The waitress bursts in from the kitchen with pizzas balanced on either hand. She serves the pizzas with a flourish of Kung Fu style movements.</li> <li>• SFX: Kung Fu noises.</li> <li>• She serves our two men their beers, again Kung Fu style.</li> <li>• Man 1: 'Is that really necessary?'</li> <li>• MVO: 'For a Chinese pizza...Hit the Hut!'</li> <li>• SUPER: Pizza Hut offer and logo.</li> </ul> </div>
<b>Target audience</b>	Mainstream fast-food consumers who may be interested in trying out the new flavours or attracted by the promotional price.
<b>Aim</b>	To increase awareness of the new range of Pizza Hut pizzas.

There are many instances where this commercial may be deemed inauthentic – from Caucasian actors imitating fighting sounds and lip synching from Asian films to the yellow face appearance of one of the actors. The martial arts are heavily choreographed using camera/film angle shots with breakages staged. With ‘Chinese’ as an ingredient of the pizza, the creative direction for the advertising is reduced to Chinese associations through dubbing, yellow face, use of pidgin English and cues from the attire worn by the actors. The work won bronze in the British Arrows award in 1995.

It is plausible that Pizza Hut and Barclaycard set the scene for the use of martial arts sounds in all forms of media, with negative connotations for East Asian/Chinese communities.

This next advert represents a bold move away from the use of actors and actresses.

<b>Case 7</b>	<b><u>Premier Beverages Fresh Brew Tea <i>Karate</i> (1995)</u></b>
<b>Agency</b>	Advertising agency: Delaney Fletcher Bozell   SB26 Premier Beverages Fresh brew tea 'karate' (HAT)
<b>Technical analysis</b>	TV commercial 20 sec 1996 British Arrows Television Awards  Production quality and finish is notable  Teabags are shown trying to break out of their packaging– inside, we can hear Kung Fu kicks and punches with accompanying shrieks, ‘watah’ and cat calls – viewers can make out the hands and feet punching and kicking Copy: Fresh Brew Foil Packed Teabags The packet is seen crashing into something - slight comic touch. Copy: ‘The freshness can’t get out’
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	This is an animated ad with no voiceover – to get the martial arts message across, it uses a range of Kung Fu comedy sounds to support the distortion of the packaging as kicks, punches, and somersaults are heard.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	The form of martial arts is Kung Fu, and the sounds are typical of 1970s Bruce Lee inspired films
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	The ad does not have voiceover – instead animated images drive the humorous message across that the foil packaging prevents any teabags from escaping.



<b>Target audience</b>	Mainstream tea drinkers
<b>Aim</b>	To drive home the message that Fresh brew teabags are fresh

Typical of ads at this time is the association of martial arts sounds with Hong Kong cinema - the sounds are unmistakable and clearly associated with comedy.

During the late 1990s, I came across this print advert in the form of a leaflet at my local Specsavers opticians. I had just started Karate lessons.

<b>Case 8</b>	<b>Specsavers Optical Group <i>Contact lens free trial</i> campaign (1997)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	  

	Fig.96.Specsavers contact lens free trial leaflets (author's collection)
<b>Technical analysis</b>	In house print (leaflet) advertising. Contact lens wearer tends to be female.
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	The images show one female demonstrating a set of martial arts moves as still images, largely shown as silhouettes against a Japanese screen in the background. The front of the leaflet shows the female's face with emphasis on her eyes. She is wearing a white Gi, with a long belt and has bare feet. She is pictured on her own. Idea: to show that with contact lenses you can play sports including contact sports such as football, wrestling and martial arts, and if you're wearing glasses it's a lot more difficult.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	The Caucasian female is expressionless. She appears to be focussed on the martial arts stances and postures. The form is likely to be Karate. Despite the Japanese screen, the location and context are likely to be UK. Each print has a similar silhouette. Some of the images suggest that this is an actress posing for the camera as some of the moves are unclear – the front page for example, shows the fist at the back is incorrect. There is a statue of a dragon and Chinese/Kanji characters on a hanging scroll in the background which refers to Karate's other alias ('empty hand')
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	Copy inside the leaflet: <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SC28 Specsavers contact lens trail leaflet copy (1997)</p> <p>'At Specsavers Opticians, we offer you a five-day free trial of our standard soft contact lenses, including daily disposables. So, you can now discover for yourself the comfort, convenience and subtlety of contact lens wear.</p> <p>After five days, if you are not convinced that contact lenses are for you, simply return to Specsavers Opticians for a check and leave it at that - there's no charge unless you buy. If you decide to continue wearing contact lenses (and we are sure you will), we have a wide range of schemes available. Our staff will discuss this with you and suggest the scheme best suited to your needs. The free trial offer is only available until 24th December 1998.'</p> <p>Small print: 'A current prescription will be necessary. If you require an eye test, please ask for details of our price. A consultation fee of £25 will be payable only if you subsequently purchase contact lenses. One free trial per person. Excludes tinted, coloured, and all non-standard soft contact lenses'</p> </div> <p>Core messages concern a 5-day free trial with no reference to the martial arts. This is a straightforward factual advert. The headline drives the reader to act and make an appointment for a sight test. The green logo stands out from the red leaflet. The campaign was originally devised as a national campaign in 1997 and its effectiveness meant many stores continued to run the campaign.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Mainstream female contact lens wearers 18-35
<b>Aim</b>	To drive the customer to make an appointment

Hanging scrolls enable paintings and calligraphy to be enjoyed as pieces of art in the Far East. The first character in the hanging scroll is obscured in the advert. Insights

from a Chinese and Japanese linguist approached by the author reveal some fascinating references to Japanese and Chinese cultures:

During the Tang dynasty, the Japanese sent scholars to learn language, technology, skills, etc. from China, resulting in the promotion of Chinese languages and Chinese characters (Kanji) in Japan. This has meant that classical meanings of Chinese characters have been retained in Japan. Japanese primary school pupils continue to learn Chinese classical poems and study aspects of classical Chinese in high school.

Speculative interpretation of the messages in the scroll: Should the obscured Chinese character be ‘刀’ (knife), taken together with the other two characters (“刀掌斩”), this could mean ‘chop with a palm that is as sharp as a knife’, which would fit with the meaning of Karate as an ‘empty hand’ style. Taken further, in classical Chinese, the character ‘渐’ means ‘aggravate’ and ‘advance’. Should the obscured character be ‘分掌’ (instead of ‘刀掌’), the meaning in both Chinese and Japanese would be ‘division of duties’. The linguist suggested that the implied meaning in this advert relates to what Specsavers stand for, i.e. ‘Specsavers take care of your eyes’.

Mid-1990s advertising shows that martial arts in all its forms have become mainstream. The Spice Girls era began with the release of ‘Wannabe’ in 1996 just as Lara Croft was fighting villains in Tomb Raider (BBC 2, ‘I Love 1996’). It is therefore not a total surprise to see a female Karateka being depicted in a Specsavers campaign.



The marketing team at Specsavers described the advert as featuring a woman doing an active sport such as martial arts, without reference to a particular style or form.



Fig.97.Kick article for The Times 25 oct 1997

'Kick' references the influence of martial arts in advertising:


*'Martial arts jeans adverts, a Bruce Lee season on the telly, the World Championships coming up in Italy...It's hard to avoid the fact that Kung Fu is back in vogue. These days the likes of Van Damme and kickboxing have been platform booted right out the street cred window. It's time for 'Return of the Dragon' and welcome back Bruce. This 70s hero was just a little guy who could turn on the energy and roundhouse kick when necessary. He wasn't a macho thug' (Kick, The Times, 25 Oct 1997)*

Similarly, Smithkline's

Lucozade Judo advert focuses on the exercise regime aspects for the Judoka, with limited explicit reference to Far East Asian culture. This suggests a degree of appropriation of Judo and Karate in westernised depictions, partly due to its popularity. *The Times* featured an article entitled 'Kick' on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1997 to educate children about the benefits of martial arts.

The article recognises the different ways in which the name of the sport may be pronounced and hinted that the correct way is to say ‘Gung Fu’ as opposed to ‘Kung Fu’, ‘for that extra bit of Chinese authenticity’. True Kung Fu prowess is seen through discipline, fighting skills, bowing/nodding and respect, as opposed to the ‘aieeahhhoaaahh’ squawk sounds or Cato-esque flailing of arms. ‘Someone phoned me up to try and get some performers for the jeans advert. And the woman said they do make the Kung Fu noises, don't they? You know that “aieeeeeooaaahh”’. The article recognises that legitimacy is an issue as reinforced by governing bodies such as the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts.

The next commercial has been described as a classic by esteemed agency BBH.

<b>Case 9</b>	<b>Levi Strauss Europe <i>Kung Fu</i> (1998)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>BBH</p>  <p>SB27 Levi Strauss Kung Fu 1998 (HAT)</p> <p>BBH produced a range of ads for Levi Strauss as one of their founding clients – the relationship dates back to 1982</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>Product category: clothing (jeans) brand</p> <p>TV and cinema advertising 60 seconds - £9m marketing campaign -aired 1<sup>st</sup> Aug 1997</p> <p>Director: Jonathan Glazer</p> <p>Music: Stepping Stones by Johnny Harris</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Shot in the style of a Bruce Lee movie – a young man (a successor to Bruce Lee) Kung Fu fights his way across a Chinese metropolis circa late 1970s. He enters a Chinese restaurant and ends up at a Chinese laundry, arriving just in time to ensure his Levi's 501 jeans are washed the correct way – inside out.</p>

<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The setting is San Francisco</p> <p>Yellow mask abundance with a myriad of caricatures of villains, subservient female. The main actor wears a Lee-inspired vest and shows off his martial arts prowess in a range of authentic stances and postures.</p> <p>The extras are bona fide Kung Fu masters, and the quality of their techniques is evident in the scenes.</p> <p>Leaps and somersaults are achieved, including wire-fu choreography</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>A Bruce Lee like hero (double black belt taekwondo actor Dustin Nguyen) dressed in indigo 501s fights Chinese man, barges into a restaurant and interrupts a villain's meal. This results in Kung Fu fights with various henchmen chasing him on rooftops and alleyways. The man then sees off a Kung Fu Grandmaster at a Chinese-owned launderette before showing a young Chinese maiden how to wash his jeans (inside out).</p> <p>Film colourised to look like a 1970s martial arts film</p> <p>Audio – dramatic sound effects akin to 1970s-style action film soundtrack, with grunts and shrieks typical of the genre.</p> <p>Bad dubbing - pastiche of Bruce Lee films</p> <p>There is no dialogue in the commercial, but the following description is adapted from BBH's storyboard:</p> <p>The man disposes of a handful of villains in a restaurant ...the fights continue on the restaurant roof...as well as back on the streets Cut: in front of a laundry, he is confronted by the evil leader of a gang...who is striking a thousand exalted poses...but they don't do him much good. Here he is seen hurtling through the closed laundry door Cut: The hero decides to have a look around the laundry...and proves that he's not just a Karate expert but also knows...a thing or two about washing jeans. Exercising a swift movement, he turns a pair of Levi's inside out...all under the admiring gaze of a young laundry worker. But he has no time to linger...for new martial arts chores are awaiting him outside as the end scene shows him leaping out of the shattered window and into the street where the villains have regrouped. The action then freezes with the endline: 'Levi's 501 jeans - best washed inside out.'</p> <p>The advert led to a 30% increase in sales of dark finish Levi's 501 jeans</p> <p>The campaign is part of a £9m spend in the UK for 1997</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	To appeal largely to male mainstream jeans buyers, aged 20-35.
<b>Aim</b>	To promote 'Best Washed Inside Out' for Levi's 501 dark dye jeans. Brief: Levi's 501 is the original and definitive jean'

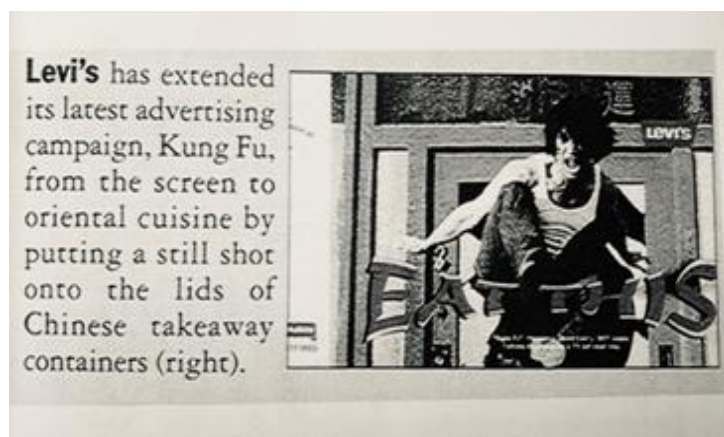



Fig.98. 'Levi's has extended its latest advertising campaign'  
(Marketing Week 21 Aug 1997)

The campaign is a parody of Bruce Lee, with real action hero actors demonstrating a range of Kung Fu choreography. The campaign was extended from screen to 'oriental cuisine' when a still from the advert was used on Chinese takeaway container lids (Marketing Week, 21 August 1997). The fun commercial exploits the renaissance of Kung Fu films in the 1990s and *'the exciting, quickfire editing celebrates the movies rather than just taking the mick'* ('Levi's Kung Fu ad', Creative Review, August 1997). Despite this, the campaign appeared to have received mixed reviews, including comments that it was farfetched. Within the creative industry, there were positive reviews such as those of Larry Barber (Campaign, 12 Sept 1997), who described it as *'the best Kung Fu ad on television [...] and the only one with an idea'*, with its clarity of proposition and quality film making. The article hints at the mixed reactions to the commercial, and it is not hard to see why, with its stereotypical Chinese launderette setting, the subservient oriental girl, and Triad gang references. In an interview for CB (France) news on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September, Jonathan Glazer defended his approach, stating that his aim was *'to explore 1970s Kung Fu films'* whilst retaining 'a kind of naivety, without too many special effects'. The biggest challenge for him was *'to make the viewer understand [...] that the jeans presented by the Karateka at the dry cleaners were actually his'*.

Although Kung Fu references were made, the producer himself referred to Karateka, suggesting that distinguishing the features of various martial arts was not important.

The next commercial also references Bruce Lee, with the lead actor demonstrating his Kung Fu skills to promote Ambrosia custard. This is another notable contribution to martial arts in advertising from the Delaney Fletcher Bozell agency who devised Fresh Brew Tea's Karate advert two years earlier.

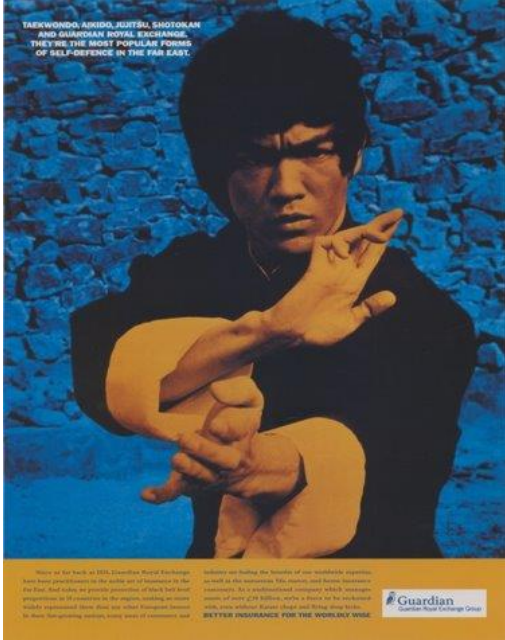


<b>Case 10</b>	<b>Ambrosia Flavoured Custard Splat <i>Wing Chun</i> (1998)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Agency: Delaney Fletcher Bozell.</p>  <p>SB28 Ambrosia Flavoured Custard Splat 'Wing Chun' 1998 (author's collection)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>TV commercial and sponsor of Children's ITV programme SM:TV Live. Ambrosia Splat! is the flavoured custard brand for US multinational Bestfoods UK. The Ambrosia brand is renowned for its cheekiness and fun brand values. There are 3 commercials in the campaign (Wing Chun, Cop and Lecturer). Brand stands for wholesome, natural goodness and trusted by mothers to give to their children. Bestfoods UK is keen to develop what it calls a 'real personality' for the brand.</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>A Bruce Lee type character demonstrates his prowess in fighting imaginary opponents before being splatted in the face with custard. The actor is shown negotiating his surroundings in a dark warehouse, with a sense of foreboding.</p> <p>The tone changes during the splat sequence when the actor is splatted with custard. The ad shows the product as a fun food that you can play with.</p> <p>The martial arts appear authentic, though tone and appeal are Kung Fu comedy. Quality production and authenticity shown in this late 1990s advert.</p> <p>To become a more talked about brand in the playground, research showed children like conventions turned on their heads and for pretentious or show-off characters to be taken down a peg or two, whilst not minding being splatted with custard.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>An Asian actor - in a black vest - was used to parody the low budget, low production value in Kung Fu films. The actor demonstrates his martial arts skills effectively.</p> <p>Children are moved by emotive 'fun to eat' messages as opposed to rational 'good for you' ones. The ad is designed to appeal specifically to children. Relies on predictable characterisations of Kung Fu films and an Asian actor – the agency does not believe this to be a stereotypical portrayal. A Caucasian actor would not work as the advert had to reference the Hong Kong film genre.</p> <p>Wing Chun suggests Kung Fu is being used in the sequences.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>Bruce Lee character is shown navigating his surroundings in a warehouse. Footsteps can be heard – the actor is scanning for enemies. Kung Fu prowess ensues with demonstrations of back flip and sidekicks – as in Bruce Lee's films, the action sequences are too fast to be captured on film. The actor then quickly but casually rubs his thumb across the side of his nose a la Bruce Lee. Custard then appears out of nowhere and lands on his face before he can pre-empt it. The actor licks the custard off quickly, and thinks for a moment before looking surprised and lip syncing 'mm strawberry flavour'.</p>

	The advert was the strongest in terms of likeability, entertainment, and use of fun and humour. The end sequence shows the product packaging and the strapline 'Devon knows how they make it so creamy' in an oriental type of font on a scroll that runs across the screen.
<b>Target audience</b>	Primary school age children aged 8-10 (mainstream)
<b>Aim</b>	Imbue Ambrosia Flavoured Custard with up-to-date fun values and playground credibility, whilst not alienating mothers.

The agency believed that martial arts imageries could work depending on the message and how they are being used. Although they claimed no stereotypes were involved, the most interesting comment was that martial arts films had to have an Asian actor. Bruce Lee references are clear despite the lower quality production compared to Levi's, and despite the link between Kung Fu and the product category (dessert) being weak. This advert is an homage to the Kung Fu films of the 1970s.

<b>Case 11</b>	<b>Guardian Royal Exchange Group Bruce Lee (circa 1990s)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	 <p>Fig.99.Guardian Royal Exchange. 'Another popular form of self-defence....' (HAT)</p>

	 <p>Fig.100.Guardian Royal Exchange. 'Taekwondo, aikido, jiujiitsu ....' (HAT)</p> <p>Name of advertising agency unknown – likely to be in-house</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>Guardian Royal Exchange was one of the largest insurers in the United Kingdom, with a portfolio including life insurance, private motor and household insurance, health care, property, and marine business. Internationally, the company competes in the insurance markets of Germany, the United States, Canada, Ireland, and Asia, and has representation in over 50 countries A series of print advertisements highlighting the company's strengths in the Far East is seen in these press adverts for newspapers or business press.</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>The print advert focuses on the company's success in Asia by associating its strengths with martial arts, using Bruce Lee in action shots – stills from his films. These have been updated with colour schemes. The copy relates to martial arts generally, with Bruce Lee in Kung Fu poses being used visually</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>Bruce Lee has positive connotations for those seeking to enhance their image due to his iconic status in contemporary culture. He is the most recognisable Asian in the west, such that using images of this martial arts practitioner provides many positive associations for brands.</p> <p>He is shown in stills taken from his films and these are therefore action or publicity shots that project a glamorous side to martial arts.</p> <p>The copy refers to Karate (Shotokan) and other Japanese forms (aikido, jiujiitsu), Korean taekwondo, whereas Bruce Lee was a Kung Fu (Chinese) practitioner</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>Print advert 1  Headline: 'Guardian Royal Exchange. Another popular form of self-defence in the Far East'  Endline: 'Better Insurance for the Worldly Wise'</p> <p>Print advert 2  Headline: 'Taekwondo, aikido, jiujiitsu, Shotokan and Guardian Royal Exchange. They're the most popular forms of self-defence in the Far East'  Body copy: 'Since as far back as 1835, Guardian Royal Exchange have been practitioners in the noble art of insurance in the Far East. And today, we provide protection of black belt level proportions in 14 countries in the region, making us more widely represented there than any other European insurer. In these fast-growing nations, many areas of commerce and industry are feeling the benefits of our worldwide expertise, as well as the numerous life, motor and home insurance customers. As a multinational company which manages assets of over £18 billion,</p>

	<p>we're a force to be reckoned with, even without Karate chops and flying drop kicks.  Endline: 'Better Insurance for the Worldly Wise'</p> <p>It would appear the company was using its successes in the Far East to target prospective customers. Reference is made to all forms of martial arts that have been popularised in the UK from taekwondo, aikido, jiu-jitsu, Shotokan – except the latter is a style within Karate. It also addresses the self-defence theme</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Business customers and organisations seeking insurance.
<b>Aim</b>	To raise awareness of Guardian Royal Exchange's track record in offering insurance-related products

In the 1990s, therefore, the renaissance of Kung Fu films in British media fuelled further interest in all aspects of martial arts. However, not all efforts made to improve representation were positively felt. The increasing use of Bruce Lee themed advertising is discussed in an article by the television reviewer AA Gill (1999) who provided a scathing review of Channel 4's Bruce Lee weekend during which a suite of Kung Fu films was broadcast (Gill, 1999). He contends that 'blood genre is tedious and morally distasteful', describing Lee as self-obsessed, arrogant, selfish, violent and insecure, which 'made him perfectly suited for his first job as a waiter in a Chinese restaurant', and stating that efforts were made to change Americans' racist image of the Chinese in pigtails.

The level of creativity used to include martial arts themes in advertising is best seen in this VW self-defence television commercial by renowned agency BMP DDB:

<b>Case 12</b>	<b>Volkswagen Polo <i>Self-defence</i> (1999)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>BMP DDB</p>  <p>SB29 VW Polo 'self defence' 1999 (HAT)</p>



	BMP DDB have a long running relationship with VW
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>TV commercial – Nov 1998 for 4 weeks, as 60-second version and as a 40-second cut-down. The commercials were supported by national press adverts 'protective shells' and 'self-protection'</p> <p>British TV advertising awards 1999 (Campaign, 12/3/99) silver</p> <p>D&amp;AD 1999 TV and cinema advertising winner</p> <p>Director: Rangan Ledwidge</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>There are about 12 students from different demographic backgrounds in the gym - a pregnant woman, male and female of black and Asian ethnicities. The instructor himself appears to be of mixed heritage. The gymnasium is well lit, with a shiny floor, lit with florescent lighting, fire extinguishers can be seen near the exit to the door. This is an evening class - the windows show that it is dark outside. The car is not shown until the very end.</p> <p>The self-defence strapline at the end refers directly to the martial arts activity that viewers are led to believe is taking place at the gymnasium.</p> <p><a href="https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/bmp-uses-martial-arts-theme-vw-polo-ad/30150">https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/bmp-uses-martial-arts-theme-vw-polo-ad/30150</a></p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>A class is silently going through what appear to be martial arts movements. As they continue it becomes apparent that the movements are associated with driving.</p> <p>Following the lead of the instructor, the class continues adopting a series of poses which appear at first sight to be based on Tai Chi. However, as the commercial unfolds, it becomes apparent that the students are, in fact, simply miming the action of getting into and starting a car. The scene then switches to outside the building as the instructor steps into his Volkswagen Polo and the endline, 'Self-defence by Polo', appears on the screen.</p> <p>The instructor is wearing a blue tunic and loose clothing. The students are in comfortable clothing. Their posture/stances, and quiet demeanour suggests that this is a Tai Chi class. The instructor reassures his students throughout the session. He has an air of authority afforded to him by his students.</p> <p>The advert does not use any stereotype, but a decision was made to include a range of people of different genders and ethnicities</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>The advert revolves around the concept of 'protection' to make VW stand out from other competing cars that have been marketed as fashion accessories – with VW focused on the fact that their cars are more solidly built compared to most of their competitors'. The campaign was an extension of 1997's 'protection' which showed how people often protect themselves from danger by making themselves smaller.</p> <p>No soundtrack or voiceover drew audiences to the atmospheric commercial. Only the gentle swoosh of feet on the gymnasium floor and the rustle of loose clothing with each precise manoeuvre.</p> <p>The creative team looked at video footage of people doing martial arts and concluded that amongst females an advert featuring one man doing martial arts would be deemed aggressive.</p> <p>Clever use of imagery ensured viewers would remember the commercial</p> <p>The end sequence was changed to ensure VW Polo is clearly visible as recall of the brand was missed in the earlier version</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Any mainstream driver - male or female - seeking a small car in the next 3 years (3 years is the average buying cycle)

<b>Aim</b>	To increase awareness amongst car buyers that VW Polo offers better protection than its competitors.
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The above VW Polo commercial is an early inclusive advert where Asian-ness is less of a criterion – in fact, the research conducted by the agency has ensured its longevity. VW and BMP DDB have a long history of creative collaboration. The iconic 1970s VW Burt Kuouk commercial, where a VW is shown dropped out of the sky, is associated with the agency’s founder Bernbach and his ability for unique ideas (McCann, 1998).

This was the second Tai Chi themed advertisement in the UK (Knorr’s Stir Fry Oriental Spices dated sometime in the 1990s being the first). Most viewers would, by then, have understood that the commercial was referencing a form of ‘martial arts. Around this time, there was a good degree of interest in Tai Chi. As Chinese martial arts became more accepted, authors such as Prentice (1991), Avery (1995), and Newsome and Hodson (1997) discussed health and fitness for mind and body through using Tai Chi for stress release, and as therapy for heart attacks. This gracious, gentle and slow-motion fighting style was developed by monks in China in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and is now practised by millions of Chinese people. Students of this slow style of martial arts often grapple with the need for more acceptance of this style. For those who saw Karate as an aggressive form, Tai Chi offered a solution, replacing the aggressiveness of martial arts with a softer form that would integrate body, mind, and spirit. Note that fighting applications would still being relevant in Tai Chi, and weapons are sometimes used, but it does help practitioners to achieve balance between their Yin and Yang. It is interesting to note VW Polo’s self-defence

commercial drawing from these Tai Chi references, particularly for one that is as self-deprecating at this one.



Fig.101.Newsone and Hodson's 'Mind and Body' article for Sunday Times 5 Jan 1997



Fig.102.Prentice's 'Building martial hearts' article for The Times 28 Feb 1991

The next two advertisements offer something unique – Mother agency's Super Noodles Shaolin and Euro RSCG Wnek Gosper's Kung Fuse for Cadbury's. Parody, humour, and frankly something a bit bizarre for the product category, reflecting the creative direction of advertising agencies during the latter half of the 1990s.

<b>Case 13</b>	<b>Batchelor's Super Noodles Shaolin (1998)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	Agency: Mother
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<div> </div> <p>SB30 Batchelor's Super Noodles 'Shaolin' 1998 (HAT)</p> <p>30 second TV commercial 1999 British Arrows Awards - silver Client: Van Den Bergh Foods Director: Daniel Kleinman</p>

<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Parody of a combination of the TV series <i>Monkey</i>, Bruce Lee's Kung Fu films from the 1970s and Jackie Chan's Kung Fu comedies from the 1980s</p> <p>Two men (students or young professionals flat sharing) are in the kitchen. They are topless and in the midst of a playfight. During the standoff, they speak in pidgin English and in 'Oriental accents' with exaggerated facial expressions and mock Kung Fu moves. Instead of contact with fists, they are throwing super noodles at each other. They stop when the action gets out of hand and one of them does not wish to play anymore. There is no voiceover until the very end to link the super in their actions to the brand 'Super Noodles'.</p> <p>Batchelors was established in Sheffield in 1895. The company provides British families with convenient, easy to make meals of which the Super Noodle brand is a household staple. The brand uses a range of humorous approaches to appeal to its target audiences. Daniel Kleinman also directed this <u>Batchelor's Super Noodles Wasted Away (1998)</u> in the same year.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The setting appears to be student digs in the 1990s somewhere in a UK city, with two fridge freezers, an abandoned TV monitor, dishes drying by the sink, dishcloths hanging from the cupboard, posters and stickers on the walls and cupboards, cables and a keyboard mouse in front of the microwave, baseball bat and sports bag, washing machine door left ajar. The old windowpane shows that this is an old property that has been converted to shared accommodation. It is dark outside, suggesting it is autumn or winter.</p> <p>Two Caucasian actors (one of whom is Martin Freeman) are parodying Kung Fu films using words such as 'honour' 'trouble' and 'son' and imitating poor dubbing. The majority of the audio is of the two men cat calling a la Bruce Lee in many martial arts films from the 1970s.</p> <p>The men are topless – much like Bruce Lee in many of his films and adopt various stances using their arms and hands (to attack and defend) and feet (raised leg to kick) – these are rudimentary postures imitating Kung Fu moves. One of the men has a Scottish accent.</p> <p>The end sequence of the actor catching a packet of noodles thrown at him is typical of Kung Fu cinematic techniques.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>This Kung Fu comedy parody uses humour, Kung Fu film references and a strong endline to link the message of 'super' to the brand with a clear image of the packaging.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SC29 Batchelor's Super Noodles 'Shaolin' (1998)</p> <p>The men are sizing each other up in the kitchen. M2 is holding a bowl of noodles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actor 1/M1 '...and you insult my honour!'</li> <li>• M1 picks some noodles from the bowl and throws them at M1, landing on his chest 'ohh'</li> <li>• M2 is shocked - in mock Chinese accent; 'Dan son - you in big trouble now'.</li> <li>• He retaliates by throwing noodles at M1 twice in quick succession. These land on M1's chest.</li> <li>• M1 shakes his head and mutters 'ooohhh you in too much trouble - I use monkey finger' ...he turns and pick up some noodles in a bowl behind him on the work surface and, using his index finger, throws them at M2, landing on M2's face</li> <li>• M2 retaliates 'ohhhh' by throwing noodles directly at M1's left eye, whilst cat calling</li> <li>• Both men: 'hiiyaaaahhh ooohhh'</li> <li>• M1 is hurt: 'oh you got me in the eye!' and covers his eye whilst M2 executes some 'Kung Fu moves' beside him using two left hand</li> </ul> </div>

	<p>blows before raising his right leg with his arms raised in combat mode 'herrrllooo wuuuu lllloo'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M2 is dubbed, 'You make stupid...' (His lips are out of synch with what he is saying).</li> <li>• M1 shouts 'that's enough' in his Scottish accent, grabs more noodles and throws them at M2 'stop it!'</li> <li>• CUT to M1 throwing a packet of noodles at M2, who catches it and stares at the camera with cat call 'ooooohhh'</li> <li>• MVO: 'Batchelors super noodles – is it me or are they just super?'</li> </ul>
<b>Target audience</b>	Twenty-somethings interested in a quick snack at mealtime – the audience is diverse if we take into account the 'Wasted Away' television commercial from the same producer
<b>Aim</b>	To remind hungry audiences aged 18-25 that Super Noodles is a fun snack brand

The name associated with the advertising execution provides a clue as to the creative team's focus – this commercial is termed 'Shaolin', drawing its reference from the Shaolin Temple where Chinese Kung Fu originated. The creative team behind the advertising wanted to focus on some degree of authenticity in terms of insights related to martial arts comedy. However, the accents and cat call sounds have been over-exaggerated in this commercial

Just before we enter the next decade, confectionary advertising – led by Cadbury's Kung Fuse shook up the market.

<b>Case 14</b>	<b><u>Cadbury's Fuse <i>Kung Fuse</i> (1999)</u></b>
<b>Agency</b>	<p>Agency: Euro Rscg Wnek Gosper</p>  <p>SB31 Cadbury's Fuse 'Kung Fuse' 1999 (HAT)</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>10 sec TV commercial for a confectionary brand</p> <p>Director: Graham Rose</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>Cadbury's Fuse bar was launched in 1991 to shake up the confectionary market by combining chocolate, raisins, peanuts, cereal and fudge. It became Cadbury's fastest selling new chocolate bar since the launch of the 'Wispa' in 1983. An earlier execution entailed an army major putting his soldiers through their paces in</p>


	a 1997 Cadbury's Fuse advert. This 1999 version is a follow-on from that advert – this time featuring an army major demonstrating his martial arts prowess against his soldiers as part of a training session inside a gymnasium. Once again, the actors are wearing purple uniform to match Fuse's purple packaging. It focuses on how anger in the major arising from his hunger pangs could manifest in his aggressive behaviour towards his subjects.
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The major dominates the story – he is explaining the benefits that the Fuse bar has to viewers and to his soldiers who are paying attention to the drills directed at them at the gymnasium. There is a mat on the floor. The final message is to not 'blow your fuse', but that if you are hungry, you should eat one.</p> <p>All the actors are Caucasian, and they are all wearing purple vests and purple combat trousers. The major has a purple beret with a feather, and a Kung Fu tunic with a purple belt. The soldiers are in attention pose with their hands behind their backs. The major cat calls throughout the martial arts kicks and punches through the commercial.</p>
<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>Military training scene: A man - a major with a feathered purple beret in military uniform - demonstrates his prowess to the others. Camera pans to a group of soldiers in a purple vest and combat trousers uniform encircling the major – they are in a relaxed stance with their arms behind their backs in typical military style. They are paying attention to what is being said</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SC30 Cadbury's Fuse 'Kung Fuse' (1999)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major: 'Cadbury's Fuse bars are...'</li> <li>• He holds an opened Fuse bar in front of him... (martial arts swooshes can be heard as he pulls out the chocolate bar)</li> <li>• CU: Fuse bar</li> <li>• Major: '...dense, solid and very very very tasty...just like me ...yaaaaaooooow' He executes jumping front kicks and attacks the soldiers. Pause burst pause (fighting sounds) correspond to the punches</li> <li>• CU two soldiers seen running away</li> <li>• CUT TO: empty gym – blue mats on floor. Major is alone and throws a left punch in mid-air.</li> <li>• CUT TO: Major standing alone in ready stance - martial arts swooshing is heard when he moves his head left to right to check for other opponents.</li> <li>• End line – 'Don't Blow a Fuse...Eat One'</li> </ul> </div> <p>Fuse Bars are described as densely packed with tasty ingredients.</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Mainstream confectionary consumers
<b>Aim</b>	To raise awareness of the densely packed ingredients of the Fuse bar

Despite not focusing on accents or dubbing, as seen in other Bruce Lee inspired films, the explicit use of cat calling during the execution of a range of martial arts techniques is unmistakably from Hong Kong film and inspired by Bruce Lee's work



during the 1970s. The title of the commercial, 'Kung Fuse', refers to Kung Fu as the point of reference with respect to technique. The Bruce Lee revival in the 1990s inspired many brands and product categories to build martial arts into their brand communications. Both Batchelor's Super Noodles *Shaolin* and Cadbury's *Kung Fuse* feature Caucasian actors borrowing the essence of Hong Kong cinema and reducing its cultural references to caricatures

I finish the decade with a simple 'back to basics' campaign by Proctor and Gamble's Judo - replete with product demonstration and voiceovers.

<b>Case 15</b>	<b>Proctor and Gamble Fairy Non biological washing powder <i>Judo</i> (1999)</b>
<b>Agency</b>	 <p>SB32 P&amp;G washing powder 'Judo' 1999 (author's collection)</p> <p>P&amp;G in-house advertising department</p>
<b>Technical analysis</b>	<p>60 sec TV commercial</p> <p>There is female voiceover throughout in this laundry washing power advert that focuses on the softening benefits of the detergent on clothes. The repeated movements in a Karate class provide a good example of where there would be repeated friction between clothes and skin.</p>
<b>Descriptive analysis</b>	<p>A 40-year-old mother waits in the doorway for her daughter at a martial arts class taking place during the day at the gymnasium. The eight to 10-year-old child is shown executing a range of punching drills in a class of 11 children, with the camera zooming in on the arms and sleeves of the Gi to highlight areas where friction might occur with the skin.</p>
<b>Formal analysis</b>	<p>The class is taking place somewhere in the UK with careful attention given to the mother's role as a parent – she is a conventional mum (well-groomed and conservatively dressed, happy!) who wants the best for her child. Female VO provides context and information about the benefits of the brand. Soft ambient music plays in the background throughout.</p> <p>The children's performance of punches is typical of those of their age. They are shown turning around with a rising block, before the scenes switch to punching drills whilst stepping forward, which are typical Karate as opposed to Judo techniques. The children are all wearing white gis with white belts. The child runs towards her mother and hugs her at the end of the class. Looks authentic as the children are in sync, wearing the correct white Gi with white belts. However, the way the children bow with their hands inside the sleeves is unusual.</p>

<b>Advertising content analysis</b>	<p>Scene opens to a training hall – about 11 children in white gis turn towards the camera and execute a rising block. They shout 'kiai' in unison before stepping forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close up of a girl who looks over at her mother smiling whilst punching with her left and right fists. Mother is shown smiling back at the door. Close up of her arm moving through the sleeves of her Gi</li> <li>• Cut to action shot of the group of children punching – fists are formed properly</li> <li>• Cut to two packaging (regular non-bio powder and non-bio tablets). Animation of a baby kicking one of the boxes away using a side kick.</li> <li>• Cut to Fairy non-bio box with the words 'best ever softness' on its packaging descending down from the screen in front of the washing machine whilst the animation of the baby reappears</li> <li>• Cut to white Gi submerged in water with the words 'natural softening system' disappearing into the Gi in the water</li> <li>• Close up of child's arms inside her sleeves</li> <li>• Long shot of all 11 children with their arms inside sleeves before bowing together – the child runs towards the mother</li> <li>• Cut to mother looking down and smiling whilst giving her child a hug. Her hand is gently touching the child's back</li> <li>• End shot: 'not just fairly soft but Fairy soft' – packaging and an animation of a fairy appears bowing to the box</li> </ul> <p>FVO: a regular routine like this might be rough on precious skin How can you be sure your non-bio is soft enough? No other non-bio is as soft as Fairy. Only Fairy has a natural softening system that leaves clothes so soft 'Easy to glide gently over precious skin. So, if you want softness - Fairy is not just fairly soft but Fairy soft.'</p>
<b>Target audience</b>	Mothers with children aged 0-10
<b>Aim</b>	To drive home the message that Fairy is soft on skin - even in situations where there is a lot of friction between clothes and skin

This lengthy advert contains many references to the benefits of the product and uses martial arts clothing to drive home the message that the washing power offers the right kind of protection for parents keen to reduce the friction caused by gis. The stiffness of martial arts uniforms may however have been misunderstood.

There are some cultural aspects missed in the advertising:

- The gis are meant to be hard to make a sound effect on impact – the need for washing powders that soften gis is a western concern
- Holding arms inside the sleeves during bowing is poor etiquette – this is a western notion of Orientals
- The title of this advert is Judo – however, the children are clearly doing Karate.

### **Summary - 1990s advertising and the use of martial arts tropes**



As representations improved during the 1990s, it became more common for Chinese casts or actors to be featured in mainstream advertising across a myriad of product categories and brands. Their inclusion is usually limited to one segment of a commercial featuring other mainstream or non-Asian actors, as discussed above.

My analysis shows that martial arts aesthetics have provided avenues for brands to generate positive associations with the benefits of their offering through authenticated depictions and representations in their advertising. For certain product categories, such as a brand of washing powder, its softening agents may help to reduce the roughness of the martial arts uniforms worn by the actors/models, or the added ingredients contained in refreshment products may prolong the model's/actor's endurance at sporting events, as in the case of Lucozade.

Another observation from the analysis concerns the name or title given to the advertising campaign – many of these state, in no uncertain terms, the form of martial arts that the commercial or print advert purports to be about. However, disparities exist between the given name or title and the actual martial arts seen in the commercials. It is not uncommon to find creatives unable to distinguish Japanese Karate from Chinese Kung Fu, as was the case for Premier Beverages' Fresh Brew Tea (1995), where the title stated 'Karate' when, in fact, the executions and actions are clearly influenced by Kung Fu comedy.

The 1990s also witnessed diversification of interest and media coverage away from Judo and Karate and onto other martial arts such as Japanese aikido and Korean taekwondo. Likewise, it was during the 1990s that Chinese Tai Chi became increasingly used, as evidenced, in campaigns for well-established brands, such as VW Polo's 'self-defence' and Knorr's 'Oriental spices'. BMP DDB's cerebral effort

with VW Polo was ahead of its time with a clear brand message and inclusive representation of a diverse population of targeted car drivers. Tai Chi in commercials stood out as being distinct from Karate and Kung Fu with its non-aggressive approach that slowed down time, focusing on balance and lack of dialogue. The demeanour of the instructor or master serving to reiterate the mysteries of the Far East is present in these two commercials. Another martial arts aesthetic that is seen across four decades is the reference to the Karate chop, as seen in Tesco Karate chop, and the Toffee Crisp commercials. Likewise, Karate Kid films influenced the attire that adorned the martial artists' heads for Rowntree Toffee Crisp and Knorr's Stir Fry Oriental.

Parodies of Bruce Lee were in abundance in the 1990s, some 25 years after his death. Lee was now fully entrenched in western contemporary culture. Despite the resurgence of media interest in Bruce Lee that is evidence in a range of advertising from the mid-1990s, this period is also characterised by Kung Fu comedy, due to Jackie Chan's growing popularity. The commercials during this period have an overwhelmingly comic theme, whether they feature Asian casts or not (Ambrosia's Splat, Toffee Crisp, Fresh Brew Tea Karate, Pizza Hut Kung Fu, Super Noodles Shaolin, Barclaycard Karate, and Cadbury's Kung Fuse). Humour in advertising is more suited to emotive messages such as those shown in the advertising in this period because they enable audiences to better recall the messages for low involvement products such as confectionary and refreshments more readily.

Commercial work may also influence film making, as evidenced by Rowan Atkinson's writing for Barclaycard's secret agent Latham and his sidekick, Bough. These characters laid the foundations for Johnny English - a 2003 spy action-

comedy film that Rowan Atkinson eventually starred in. It is also worth noting that the Pink Panther era from the 1970s with Inspector Clouseau and Burt Kwouk's Cato may have influenced the Barclaycard commercials.

However, martial arts aesthetics may have a serious side to it, as exemplified by Lucozade Judo, Tesco Karate Chop, Specsavers Karate, and P&G's Fairy Judo. It would appear that Japanese Karate aesthetics suited the rationality of the messages that such product categories require. Consumers of products such as washing up liquid and eye wear base their buying decisions on factual information that the advertising afford them.

Levi's Kung Fu and VW Polo's Self-defence stood out for the quality of their storytelling and production, and their attention to detail – these reflect the best of Britain's creative talent working in advertising at the time (Jonathan Glazer for Levi's and Ringan Ledwidge for VW) and have contributed to some authentic cultural references/representations. There was also quality in the use of print imageries for Bruce Lee themed advertising for Guardian Royal Exchange, and of the Caucasian female in various Karate poses for Specsavers.

Both emotive (comedy) and rational forms of advertising relied on martial arts aesthetics that went beyond the casting, setting or costumes (gis), with audio cues also used. Whilst these are deemed racially insensitive to Asians and Orientals today, the myriad catcalling, squawking, lip syncing, not forgetting the use of the oriental riff, were all common in martial arts films and genres, and therefore within advertising. Whilst the advertising in the 1990s used a mix of Chinese or Caucasian actors, there was evidence of making a mixed-race actor appear more Chinese (a

type of 'yellow face') in Pizza Hut's Shaolin, and Chinese accents or pronunciations were used regardless of actors' ethnicities, with white actors mimicking how a Chinese person was supposed to sound (Super Noodles' Shaolin).

Coupled with this is growing public awareness, experience and knowledge of the different martial arts, leading to demand for more authentic martial arts representations. Chinese actors were predominant in Levi's and Bruce Lee themed commercials such as Ambrosia Splat's Wing Chun and Pizza Hut's Kung Fu— in fact, the name or titles here suggest that there is general awareness of differences between Japanese Karate and Chinese Kung Fu.

In summary, a diverse mix of martial arts aesthetics were used in the 1990s in virtually all product categories. There was also inclusion of other martial arts forms to reflect their popularity, and the use of Chinese as opposed to Japanese characters as Kung Fu gained popularity.

The next section considers the findings to date with respect to the four decades of martial arts representation in British television advertising being considered herein.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Discussion**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter consolidates the findings from the previous two chapters covering four decades of martial arts tropes, from the 1960s to the 1990s, to strengthen the critical visual analysis of racialised constructions in British advertising. Interpretations are derived from an assessment of how the cases of brand advertising related or compared to extant literature for each of the four periods under consideration. The chapter summarises these case study findings with reference to the contextual and theoretical underpinnings of the thesis to illuminate the study's research questions.

#### **Recap of the study**

The aim of this study was to investigate the meaning construction of early martial arts representations in British advertising over the span of four decades, from the 1960s to the 1990s. By mapping the forms of martial arts representation in television and print advertising within the context of film and television over four decades, the study seeks to understand racialised constructions and representations of 'the Other' in advertising informed by Britain's historical relationship with the Far East. From an advertising ethics perspective, the impact of my study on the portrayal of the British Chinese community over four decades on film, television, and subsequently advertising has been documented using martial arts representational tropes and aesthetics. Although my initial focus contrasted with deontology where the focus is on 'a duty-based, non-consequentialist theory of ethics that asserts that certain, human actions are inherently "right or wrong"' (Pratt and James, 1994, p.456), the changing creativity, cultural and social significance of the case studies in this study

showed that the martial arts representational aesthetics deployed in the advertisements considered provide a means to document changes in the creative dynamics of the British advertising industry (and its regulation) over time. I undertook critical visual analysis of **28 television commercials and five print adverts** (33 case studies) featuring recurrent martial arts tropes that provided clues to their degree of authenticity, in terms of how Chinese actors and casts were used, martial arts styles and techniques featured, and racial and martial arts discourse in documentaries and published media. These forms of ‘commodification’ of popular culture were analysed with respect to their art direction, visual aesthetics, and copy/script against the context of representational discourse alongside which the advertising was made across diverse brands and product categories. As will be seen from this chapter, the case studies provided a core understanding of how brands have adopted/benefitted from these common tropes during key periods in British advertising history: from the early period of televisual media in the 1960s to the creative revolution in Britain in the 1990s. In addition, the core thesis centres around the martial arts as a form of visual representation that has enabled me to evaluate stereotypical representations. I have considered the notion realness in terms of whether martial arts tropes - as exemplified by a range of aesthetics such as casting, setting, geography, and cultural appreciation of the art through physical embodiment, choreography, and casting - amplified stereotypes of the Chinese in Britain. In this chapter, I follow on from my adoption of a post-structuralist hermeneutics paradigm and Foucauldian ideology to propose a framework for analysing those racialised representations in historical British advertising that document changes in the creative dynamics of the British advertising industry (and its regulation) over time. To help interpret and explain the findings, this chapter is structured by research questions

relating to the way in which authentic and traditional martial arts has been depicted in contemporary television and print advertising over four decades.

### **Polysemic interpretations**

The gaps in the literature identified in chapter 2 highlighted that underpinning knowledge must be borrowed from the following strands of literature: martial arts studies (that largely focuses on film), media (advertising as cultural production), critical race theories (constructing race through stereotypes), and critical marketing studies (ethical representational frameworks). Rather than focus purely on martial arts aesthetics, choreography, and production, as proposed by Hunt (2008) and Bowman (2016b), the study requires contextualisation of race arising from colonial hegemony, as defined by critical theorists such as Hall (1997) and Said (1978).

Within the domains of media industries, cultural production proponents such as Saha and Van Lente (2022) consider the ways in which advertising constructs meaning (how advertising ‘makes’ race), whereas Ramamurthy and Wilson’s (2013) work on bifurcation considers positive and negative ways of seeing. It is through the strands of critical marketing studies that race is seen within martial arts tropes – this goes some way to explaining the **commodification** processes that advertising constructs for the masses in the business of advertising and brand communication.

Deconstruction of race for this thesis was only possible through the historical mapping of different **forms, styles, and imaginings** of martial arts as a trope through advertising archival research. The study confirms the value of historical archives for contextualisation of the constraints for advertising creation, drawing upon analysis of martial arts **authenticity**, coupled with the role that **casting** plays in **racialising messages**. The plethora of case studies and contextual background

available presents researchers with an understanding of the complex socio-political issues prevalent at different time periods in Britain.

The next section interprets the findings with respect to the five research questions that the study set out to address:

### **Research question 1:**

**What forms of martial arts tropes occurred in British advertising between the 1960s and 1990s?**

The literature on martial arts on screen (film and television), contextual background to 1960s-1990s broadcasting, and archival material uncovered recurring tropes related to martial arts depictions and representations in British advertising. A comparison of the type or form of martial arts reveals that Japanese styles were far more influential in the early period, with Judo dominating in the 1960s, before Karate gained popularity in the 1970s alongside Judo. This trend reflected the receptiveness of British Judo and Karate professional bodies to authentic bona fide instructors being invited to the UK to teach the traditional art forms. Chinese Kung Fu, in contrast, became relatively popular in the 1980s-1990s, particularly when the Bruce Lee revival 25-30 years after his death was at its peak.

The case studies contained in this thesis of advertising selected for analysis revealed a degree of exoticisation of Japanese and Chinese cultures, with 'the Orient' and 'Orientals' used interchangeably between the two as mainstream audiences were unable to distinguish between them, let alone decipher encoded



messages that referred to their cultural reference points. In the earliest black and white advertising for Kellogg's Frosties *Judo* (1966), the setting with its tatami mats, screen panels, and especially the Judo gis that the actors wore provided early evidence of exoticisation. The cases in this thesis have provided evidence that martial arts were a cultural reference point or 'assemblage' (Shankar, 2015) that shaped early racialised discourse. Showing Far East Asian actors as martial artists became a normalised trope, with its 'circuit of beliefs' (Cronin, 2004) in historical advertising in Britain as these representational visualisations were easily read or deciphered by mainstream audiences (Dyer, 1988). In addition, the increasing frequency of martial arts tropes mirrored their popularity in British culture.

The study also revealed some common discrepancies in the identification of the correct form or style of martial arts shown in the advertising, where television commercials were incorrectly named, e.g. a Karate themed advert where children were clearly practising Karate in Proctor and Gamble's Fairy's *Judo* (1999), and Golden Wonder's *Kung Fuey* (1974-1976) featuring renowned Karateka Enoeda Sensei. This is often seen as an example of the fetishisation or exoticisation of the Orient, or what Bowman (2016a) recognises as Asiaphilia, with its fictionalised traditions and history. Here, I argue that, although fragments of Oriental culture are reduced to a one-size-fits-all categorisation, this is not only inaccurate but has an impact on martial arts authentication, if we adopt the lens of consequentialist ethics and consider how stereotypes are constructed in advertising. I question the ethical stance of advertisers who have adopted stereotypical representations of minority communities. The question of deontology comes into play where 'the continuing search for clear-cut do's and don'ts is a major focus of a number of advertising departments, agencies, and associations' (Pratt and James, 1994, p. 457).

The exclusion of Chinese or East Asian casts in advertising meant Caucasian actors dominated the representational efforts in early martial arts tropes, particularly for Judo in the early period (1960s -1970s). Table 7 illustrates how martial arts tropes may be deconstructed through the race/ethnicity of the actors/cast and the form of martial arts depicted. Television commercials that featured authentic Judo throws included Kellogg's Frosties *Judo* (1966), Mars Bar (1972) with Kevin Crickmar, Wrigley Tunes *Judo* (1976), and Lucozade *Judo* (1990). Another key observation is the tone of the advertising – the evidence in this study suggests that a bona fide martial artist would provide a more serious platform for the brand message. Karate prowess was later demonstrated through katas or performances, Karate chopping or board breaking, as exemplified by Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey (1974-1976) with Enoda Sensei, Brick Development Association (1978), and Barclaycard *Karate* (1994) with Rowan Atkinson.

Table 7: Comparison of Casting (Ethnicity) and Martial Arts Forms

Form of martial arts	Advertising	Ethnicity of main actor	Period
<b>Judo - throws</b>	Frosties Judo	Caucasian (animation)	1960s black & white TVC
	BMK Carpets Judo	Mixed race (female)	1960s colour TVC
	Yardley lipstick	Caucasian (serious)	1960s black & white TVC
	Mars Bar Judo	Caucasian (Kevin Crickmar)	1970s colour TVC
	Tunes Judo	Caucasian (humour)	1970s colour TVC
	Brylcream Judo	Caucasian	1980s colour TVC
	Lucozade Judo	Caucasian	1990s colour TVC
<b>Judo - pose</b>	BMK Carpets	Mixed race (serious)	1960s colour print
	Olympus Judo	Caucasian (Terence Donovan) (serious)	1970s black & white print

<b>Karate - kata performance</b>	Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey	Japanese (Sensei Enoeida) (serious)	1970s colour TVC
	Specsavers		1990s colour TVC
	Fairy Judo	Caucasian (female) Caucasian (children)	1990s colour TVC
<b>Karate - chopping / striking / board breaking</b>	Luxaflex Karate expert	East Asian (serious)	1960s black & white print
	Hai Karate	Caucasian (comedy)	1970s colour TVC
	Brick Development Association	Caucasian (serious)	1970s colour TVC
	Barclaycard Karate	Caucasian (comedy)	1990s colour TVC
	Tesco Promotion	East Asian (serious)	1990s colour TVC
	Rowntree Toffee Crisp	Caucasian (comedy)	1990s colour TVC
	Batchelors Super Noodles	Caucasian (comedy)	1990s colour TVC
<b>Kung Fu – master</b>	Guinness Kung Fool	Caucasian (yellow face)	1970s colour TVC
	KP Peanuts Oriental Spice	East Asian (comedy)	1980s colour TVC
	Cadbury's Kung Fuse	Caucasian (comedy)	1990s colour TVC
<b>Kung Fu – Chinese / East Asian casting</b>	Walker's My Brother	East Asian (comedy)	1980s colour TVC
	BT Chinese Warrior	East Asian (comedy)	1980s colour TVC
	Levi's Kung Fu	East Asian (comedy)	1990s colour TVC
	Pizza Hut Kung Fu	Mixed race/Yellow face/East Asian (comedy)	1990s colour TVC
	Ambrosia Wing Chun	East Asian (comedy)	1990s colour TVC
	GRE Bruce Lee	East Asian (serious)	1990s colour print
<b>Tai Chi</b>	VW Polo Self defence	Multicultural (serious)	1990s colour TVC
		East Asian (humour)	1990s colour TVC

	Knorr Oriental Spice		
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\*TVC – television commercial

In contrast, martial arts comedy became a common theme in the 1980s, as reflected in the popularity of Jackie Chan films during that period. In fact, Chinese Kung Fu appeared often to have a master and servant theme, as seen in the popular television series *Kung Fu* (1972-1975), as exemplified by Guinness' *Kung Fool* (1977) featuring yellow face casting. This contrasted with KP Peanuts' *Oriental Spice* (1980s) and Walker's Crisps' *My Brother* (1983) featuring Chinese actors. It is evident from this study that conscious efforts were made from the 1980s onwards to include more East Asian castings. This reflected Britain's commitment to the Race Relations Act 1976 and efforts made by broadcasters to tackle racial stereotypes in the media industry, as exemplified by the television series *The Chinese Detective* (1981-82, BBC) that saw British-born Chinese actor David Yip cast in the leading role (Knox, 2019). Conscious efforts were made by the writers to ensure a non-stereotypical representation of the Chinese community, with the main character (Detective John Ho) possessing a cockney accent at a time when othering through Chinese accents or 'rhotacism', such as the award-winning Walls' Sausages *Japanese* (1976) and Walker's Crisps' *My Brother* (1983) was more common. Finally, the later popularity of Chinese Tai Chi in the 1990s is evident in VW Polo *Self-Defence* (1999), and Knorr Stir Fry *Oriental Spices* (1990s).

Table 8 illustrates the transference to the brand featured from martial arts themed advertising messages that accounts for historical racialised depictions. It usefully

categorises the tropes according to characteristics relating to casting, aesthetics from martial arts films and television, form/techniques, and colonial perspectives. These tropes are categorised according to the message cues afforded to the brands featured in the advertising.

Table 8 Transference of martial arts aesthetics and message cues to brands

<b>Trope</b>	<b>Advertising examples</b>	<b>Aesthetics and message cues</b>
<b>Female martial artists</b>	BMK Carpets, Yardley, Specsavers contact lens	Prevalent in 1950s advertising, women (usually Caucasian) were depicted as bona fide Judokas and latterly Karatekas. Their depictions are heavily influenced by television and film, including Diana Rigg's stint promoting a range of Emmapeelers.
<b>The real McCoy</b>	The Karateka (Luxaflex, Kung Fuey, Tesco Promotion) e.g. Enoeda Keinosuke  The Judoka (Tankard, Tunes, Lucozade) e.g. Kevin Crickmar and Terence Donovan	Seasoned bona fide practitioners of the sport/art form in print and moving image. The appreciation and seriousness of the sport is exemplified by renowned and well-respected Judokas and Karatekas. Their involvement in films as stunt actors augments their status.
<b>Kung Fu comedy</b>	Hai Karate, Guinness Kung Fool, KP Oriental Spice, BT Chinese Warrior, Rowntree Toffee Crisp, Barclaycard, Pizza Hut, Super Noodles 'Shaolin'; Cadbury's 'Kung Fuse'	Derived largely from western interpretations of martial arts films and martial arts comedy, the tradition of martial arts is not respected or taken seriously. This is exemplified by references to 'grasshopper' (Kung Fu television series), headbands (The Karate Kid) and the Cato inspired characters (Pink Panther films).
<b>Bruce Lee</b>	Explicit references to Bruce Lee's films e.g. Levi's 'Kung Fu', Ambrosia Wing Chun	Commonly seen in the 1990s due to the resurgence of interest in Bruce Lee's legacy. This is the embodiment of Lee's superhuman prowess, his unmistakable style, and film production techniques.
<b>Tai Chi Master</b>	Knorr, VW self defence	Not as common as Judokas or Karatekas – the Tai Chi master steadily practicing his moves – the focus is on trust, support, precision and self-deprecation.
<b>China man</b>	Walker's My Brother, Wall's Sausages Japanese	Not necessarily martial arts practitioners but focus is on casting of Chinese/East Asian actors with stereotypical manifestations of colonial views of Chineseness (accents, appearance, culture)
<b>Appropriated</b>	Kellogg's Frosties; Quick Dry Deodorant, Brylcream Judo, Fresh Brew Tea; P&G Fairy non-biological washing powder 'Judo'	Caucasian actors dominate this category. Reduction of martial arts to uniform, as a form of exercise that is far removed from tradition and history.

As was typical of the 1970s, Wall's sausages *Japanese* (1976) represents transgressive comedies (Hunt, 2015), with its East Asian conflation of Japanese and Chinese being an example of Britain's understanding of all things 'Oriental', despite an obviously Japanese setting, the references to 'inscrutable', 'mysterious customs', and Charlie Chan's father and son relationship are distinctly Chinese.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the geo-political histories of Japan and China's relationships with Britain meant that perceptions and appreciation of the two cultures differed from a colonial perspective, with the economic rise of Japan in the 1960s and 1970s offering trading opportunities to Britain. Communist China, on the other hand, generated many articles for *The Sunday Times Magazine*. Their differing patterns of acceptance by the British public are reflected in the different levels of accessibility of martial arts. Japanese Judo and Karate were popular themes in advertising in the early period of the 1960s and 1970s. However, by the 1980s and 1990s Chinese Kung Fu and its variant Tai Chi became more popular thanks to the Bruce Lee effect. The research therefore extends the established colonial and orientalist underpinning (Said, 1978; Hall, 1980; Davis, 2020) by adapting critical visual representational frameworks (Van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001; Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005; Harrison, Thomas and Cross, 2017) to martial arts authentication and mediatised commodification (Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013; Saha, 2020). The findings indeed suggest that our understanding of tropes, as borrowed from studies about martial arts on screen (film and television) by Hunt (2008) and Knox (2019), provides classical representational tropes and associated aesthetics for use in a range of advertising from the 1960s to the 1990s. Martial arts and screen studies provided rationale for the inclusion of film production techniques and the aesthetics of martial arts through various tropes. As demonstrated by the investigations in this

chapter, this study would not have been possible without references drawn from such an interdisciplinary approach, with the mapping process of four decades worth of advertising archives having furthered my understanding of mediated racialised discourse.

As will be explored later, racialised casting, as defined within critical race theories, explains how the casting of Chinese/East Asian actors provides audiences with some degree of authenticity. This is only possible as martial arts is a convenient shorthand or commodified cultural reference to the Far East. The data adds to our understanding of how martial arts can easily be (re)constructed as a theme in advertising.

Appropriation is inevitable as martial arts have captured the interest and imagination of mainstream audiences, and as hybrid forms such as mixed martial arts grew in popularity, the relevance of aesthetics that reflect tradition and geography become less important for representational studies.

The data also support bifurcation where positive and negative connotations associated with its use in advertising is evidenced (Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013). This is certainly the case with 'yellow face' vs 'yellow mask' explanations. Likewise, exoticisation of the Chinese and their exclusion from mainstream mediated culture during the 1960s meant that martial arts afforded them some degree of visibility. The evidence presented here has shown that this period was responsible for some of the iconic images of women in Judo (see research questions 4 and 5).



## **Research question 2:**

### **How have martial arts tropes that existed in the 1960s to 1990s changed over time?**

The tropes identified above suggest that there is value in addressing the ways in which martial arts styles have been adapted and appropriated for use in advertising. A typology of martial arts styles and (borrowed) aesthetics from film and television programmes requires an interrogation of socio-cultural history, such as that provided by Knox (2019), as well as of martial arts history onscreen – we know from this study that martial arts hierarchy exists when we are talking about authenticity in the art form. Japanese Judo was the pioneering form in 1960s advertising, before Japanese Karate gained popularity in the 1970s. Although Chinese Kung Fu was popular in cinematic form in the 1970s – this style of martial arts was not used in advertising until the 1990s. On the other hand, martial arts comedy has been used since the 1970s and caricatures of Chinese people in illustration form – unrelated to martial arts - have been around since the turn of the century, as exemplified by a United Kingdom Tea Company print advert (1894) and Ogilvy & Mather's press advertisement for Pagoda Oranges (1930s) (see Chapter 1).

Martial arts in advertising are commodified in an easily digestible commercialised format for mainstream audience readers, as opposed to gratifying the needs of minorities concerned with better representation. The findings show that commodifiable images that deal with foreignness or exoticisation had to be made palatable before mainstream audiences could decode them. Dyer (1988) referred to this as a simplification process to facilitate the audience as reader's ability to interpret what they see. Western or mainstream audiences in the early period

(1960s) with limited awareness, let alone lived experience of racism, viewed their world through a colonial lens – this suggests that early martial arts imageries are based on Western colonial perspectives of ‘the Other’ (Said 1978). On the other hand, as advertising often borrowed references from films and television, Bruce Lee’s success with *Enter the Dragon* (1973) positive martial arts as a positive Chinese cultural reference for the Chinese community and brought Kung Fu to a wider global audience. However, the Bruce Lee trope in advertising did not materialise until 1998, as exemplified in this study by Levi’s *Kung Fu* (1998) and Ambrosia’s *Wing Chun* (1998), when British media marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lee’s death.

The analysis of a range of advertising for this study also suggests that an understanding of colonialism and its impact on how race is constructed is crucial, alongside consideration of media interest in martial arts films and martial artists, and consideration of government legislation such as the Race Relations Act (1976), and the Campaign against Racism in the Media in 1970s Britain to reduce biased representations of minorities. Indeed, this reflected the rise of Hong Kong ‘chop socky’ Kung Fu films featuring class and race struggles with its anti-colonial sentiments (Kaminsky, 1974).

The tropes identified in this study can be mapped alongside Britain’s relationship with the Far East and how its contextual historical background has informed colonial depictions of the Chinese as a silent minority in Britain. Contextual understanding has helped to identify the fashion for Japanning that contrasted with early Fu Manchu representational discourse for the Chinese. Likewise, the Yellow Peril era

facilitated the practice and adoption of 'yellow face' on screen (making Caucasian actors look Chinese with loaded negative connotations of power imbalance). This study provides evidence to suggest that martial arts advertising in the latter period saw cases of 'yellow mask' - a form of nationalistic preservation of cultural protectionism where Chinese characteristics are revered. This is reflected in the support for multiculturalism in the 1980s and 1990s that shaped our understanding and appreciation of the Other (Said, 1978). This is often tied to the rebellious characters seen in Walker's Crisps' *My Brother* advert (1983) or seen as an homage to Bruce Lee's iconic imagery in Levi's *Kung Fu* (1998) and the Guardian Royal Exchange's print adverts that made associations with Bruce Lee cool. The latter provided a perfect platform for those being 'Othered' to counteract colonial hegemony in mediatised representations during this period of change with more positive representations of the Chinese onscreen, particularly as *The Chinese Detective* (BBC, 1981-1982) starring David Yip did so well to challenge stereotypes of the Chinese in Britain. It would appear that a move away from martial arts tropes made this a more positive challenge to stereotypes about the British Chinese community (see Chapter 5).

Central to this thesis is the stark contrast between Sinophobia and Japanophilia, despite China and Japan coming under the collective umbrella of 'the Orient'. Japanophilia is evidenced by the attention to detail in earlier martial arts tropes for both print and television in terms of the setting (dojo), etiquette, gis, authenticity of the Judo throws, and quality of the katas being demonstrated. The level of engagement or degree of association with Japanese Judoka or Karateka hints at an appreciation and understanding of the sport, despite these being largely represented by Caucasian actors or models in the early period. Historical analysis has revealed

Britain's long-running relationship with Japanese martial arts, in terms of access, that increased their appeal to the British public (Krug, 2001). These early martial arts tropes offered positive connotations, such as 'strength', 'durability', and in some cases 'beauty', that could easily be applied to a diverse range of product categories, from food (cereals, beer, crisps, sausages) to household goods (carpets, bricks). Table 9 provides a comparison of these connotations to brands by the more accessible Japanese martial arts when compared with the more elusive Chinese Kung Fu.

In contrast, Chinese Kung Fu tropes were strongly influenced by television and films, with the use of humour linked to the popularity of *Hong Kong Phooey* (1977-79), *Monkey* (1978) and the visibility of Chinese actor Burt Kwouk's Cato in the *Pink Panther* (1964-1992) films. Chinese cultural references were also drawn from the success of the American television series *Kung Fu* (1972-75) and burgeoning interest in Bruce Lee's films as the Kung Fu Craze took hold starting in the 1970s. Kung Fu tropes reflected the inaccessibility of these martial arts for the British public which, coupled with Sinophobia and China's Open Door Policy for economic advancement, perpetuated stereotypes of Chinese culture (customs, accents, calligraphy). Kung Fu tropes in advertising, therefore, presented more complex means of association because who is being authenticated in the advertisement poses important questions about representation. This study has also shown that Chinese Tai Chi is not commonly used in martial arts advertising, partly due to limited mainstream experiences of this form. Tai Chi is not popularised onscreen in film and television when compared to Kung Fu.

As discussed in Chapter 2, perceptions of race and ethnicity, model/actor similarity, typecasting, and the cultural markers of those being depicted are some of the factors

that are crucial for authentic casting for Western audiences. With Edwina Carroll fronting the BMK *Judo Girl* campaign (1967-1969) and Valerie Leon as poster girl for Pfizer's *Hai Karate* (1973), this study has uncovered noteworthy depictions of women in martial arts advertisements. Contextual analysis revealed that female martial artists and strong female leads in television series such as *The Avengers* (1961-1969) were influential in changing the rhetoric. Not only that but casting bona fide Karateka such as Enoeda Sensei for Golden Wonder's *Kung Fuey* (1974-1976); or Judoka such as Terence Donovan for Olympus Optical Company (1979) and Kevin Crickmar for Mars Bar (1972), contributed to notions of realness whereby competence and seniority in the martial art are lauded. The example here indicates that the competence of Western martial artists compensated for any appropriation by western practitioners of traditional martial arts, as was often the case with respect to authenticity in racialised discourse (Nguyen and Anthony, 2014). Instead, I propose that commodification over appropriation occurs with martial arts authentication. The case studies have provided evidence that Western versions of martial arts, in terms of casting, appear to have made more of an impact in British advertising during the 1960s and 1970s. Whereas Hong Kong cinema with their 'Dubbese Fu' and 'Wire Fu' were more frequently used in the later period (1980s and 1990s), as evidenced in the findings in Chapter 5.

My findings suggests that over four decades representations of martial arts changed from an appropriation standpoint to one of commodification, when we consider what was deemed acceptable. As explained in Chapter 2, the western appetite for martial arts films, coupled with Asiaphilia, constitutes cultural appropriation of one form of Asian cultural expression (Hunt, 2003). In the early period, appropriation through 'yellow face' was reflected in advertising. As our knowledge and access to authentic

martial arts grew in the later period, martial arts aesthetics were commodified to make way for a more authentic mode of expression. Thus, the findings suggests that over four decades representations in martial arts changed from an appropriation standpoint to one of commodification, when we consider what was deemed acceptable. This is reflected in the way martial arts tropes have been used in advertising over the period under study. Contextually, different time periods presented different challenges for those engaged in advertising as a form of cultural production. My case studies explored a myriad of different martial arts tropes to map out changing sociocultural and political movements that impacted on advertisers as cultural producers. Examples such as the liberation of women in the 1960s (BMK Carpets *Judo* 1967-69), race relations in Britain (Golden Wonder's *Kung Fuey* 1974-76; Walker's Crisps *My Brother* 1983; BT's *Chinese Warrior* 1986), and advertising as a form of entertainment (Levi's *Kung Fu* 1998) have resulted in creative works that are not only award winning but also contribute to racialised constructions. The findings suggest that racialised constructions are not fixed but are continuously evolving to reflect colonial posturing and Britain's ambivalence to its past. As a hyper visible trope, martial arts enable advertisers to commodify a culture by getting audience as reader to reflect on racialised idealised forms of representation and moving us to question whether we have inadvertently exoticised or excluded the Other.

### **Research question 3:**

**What was the intention behind the advertisements that featured martial arts tropes?**

The analysis to date involved some of the most influential advertising agencies, such as Collet Dickenson Pearce, Ogilvy and Mather, J. Walter Thompson in the 1980s and 1970s; Grey, BMP DDB, Delaney Fletcher Bozell, Mother and BBH in the 1980s and 1990s. Consideration was also given to brands such as Proctor and Gamble's Fairy non-bio *Judo* (1999) for its in-house advertising efforts. The 28-brand advertising and five print executions in this study provide evidence that recurrent martial arts tropes are closely tied to Westernised notions of the Far East, as exemplified by the range of martial arts aesthetics in cultural production. From an advertising standpoint, these tropes provided brands with a point of difference or bifurcation that illustrated the positive or negative perspectives from a representational lens (Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013).

Table 9 provides a summary of the advertising aims specific to those cases selected for this study. The advertising was unsurprisingly linked to the brands and their product categories, e.g., increasing awareness and reinforcing the brand's benefits. Whilst it is accepted that advertising message design should be reflective of the degree of creativity in different eras, there are agency pressures to ensure that any associations with martial arts must support the brands and their benefits. These must also account for the diverse range of product categories – the cases under study are drawn from a broad range, from groceries to beverages to utilities. This demonstrates the wide appeal of martial arts in advertising:

Table 9 Advertising aims and product categories

Case	Aim of advertising	Product category
Kellogg's Frosties 'Judo' 1966	To increase awareness of the added benefits of sugar-coated cereals for active/sporty children	Grocery - breakfast cereal cornflakes

Luxaflex Venetian Blinds 'Karate Expert' 1966	To raise awareness of the quality and durability of Luxaflex Venetian blinds with a call to action	Window - aluminium blinds
BMK Carpets 'BMK Girl' 1967-1969	To raise awareness of the benefits that BMK carpets offer in terms of durability and strength	Flooring - carpet
Maxwell House Yardley 1967	To raise awareness of the joint promotional offer at Maxwell House and Yardley	Beverage and personal care: Maxwell House coffee and Yardley fragrance & cosmetics brands
Whitbread Tankard 'Judo' 1971	To reinforce the message that Tankard is for the discerning drinker.	Beverage - beer
Mars Bar 'Judo' 1972	To raise awareness amongst professionals seeking the benefits of a Mars snack bar	Grocery - confectionary
Wrigley's Tunes 'Judo' 1976	To raise awareness of the benefits that Tunes offer to the user.	Medicine -anti-congestant lozenge
Hai Karate 1969-1976	To introduce the functional benefit associations of the brand where the user is taught basic self-defence.	Personal care - aftershave
Golden Wonder's Kung Fuey 1974-1976	To introduce the new flavours of Kung Fuey crisps (early commercials)  To increase awareness of the promotional offers	Grocery - snack
Wall's Sausages 'Japanese' 1976	To counteract increasing competition and remind consumers of Wall's range.	Grocery - meat
Guinness 'Kung Fool' 1977	To remind existing drinkers of the benefits of Guinness	Beverage - beer
Brick Development Association 1978	To broadcast a serious message that all Karatekas require the focus and intense preparation needed to prepare for breaking.	Brick industry
Olympus 'Karate man' 1979	To use celebrity endorsement to reinforce the association of quality of the brand.	Optical industry
Walker's Crisps 'My brother' 1983	To increase awareness of the superior quality of Walker's Crisps over lesser-known crisps.	Grocery - snack
Mum's Quick Dry Deodorant <i>Put Your Shirt on It</i> 1980s	To spell out the quick drying benefits of the brand to female users	Personal care – deodorant
Brylcream 'Judo' 1986	To attract new young active males and remind loyal users that Brylcream hairstyling product is the right product to use after an authentic Judo session	Personal care – hair styling



BT 'Chinese Warrior' 1986	To remind audience of reliability of BT phones	Utility - telecom
Lucozade 'Judo' 1990	To generate awareness that Lucozade has added benefits for those chasing endurance and sporting prowess	Grocery - drink
Tesco 'Karate Chop' 1990	To raise grocery shoppers' awareness of price promotion at Tesco's	Grocery - retail
Toffee Crisp 'Free the Crispy Bits' 1992	To generate interest in the Toffee Crisp brand by highlighting its crispy bit content.	Grocery - confectionary
Knorr Stir Fry 'Oriental Spices' 1990s	To raise awareness and create interest in the quality of ingredients used in Knorr's stir fry	Grocery - ingredients
Barclaycard 'Karate' 1994	To ensure audiences are aware of Barclaycard's offer of a free sports bag	Financial services
Pizza Hut 'Kung Fu' 1995	To increase awareness of the new range of Pizza Hut pizzas.	Restaurant
Premier Beverages 'Fresh Brew Tea' Karate 1995	To drive home the message that Fresh Brew teabags are fresh	Beverage - tea
Specsavers 'Contact lens free trial' 1997	To drive the customer to make an appointment	Contact lens
Levi's 'Kung Fu' 1998	To promote 'Best Washed Inside Out' for Levi's 501 dark dye jeans.	Clothing
Ambrosia Splat 'Wing Chun' 1998	To imbue Ambrosia flavoured custard with up-to-date fun values and playground credibility, whilst not alienating mothers.	Grocery - desserts
Guardian Royal Exchange Group 'Bruce Lee' 1990	To raise awareness of Guardian Royal Exchange's track record in offering insurance related products	Financial service
VW 'Self-defence' 1999	To increase awareness amongst car buyers that VW Polo offers better protection than its competitors.	Automobile
Batchelor's Super Noodles 'Shaolin' 1998	To remind hungry audiences aged 18-25 that Super Noodles is a fun snack brand	Grocery - snack
Cadbury's Fuse 'Kung Fuse' 1999	To raise awareness of the benefits of the densely packed ingredients of the Fuse bar	Grocery - snack
P&G Fairy Non biological washing powder 'Judo' 1999	To drive home the message that Fairy is soft next to the skin - even in situations where there is a lot of friction between clothes and skin	Laundry

The findings suggest that, although a myriad of brands and product categories have used martial arts themes in advertising, the overriding aims of the campaigns were awareness raising or generating interest for the brands featured. This is not surprising given the nature of commercial advertising. Some advertising efforts are focused on generating a direct call to action. Most of the advertising case studies contained within this thesis have benefitted from associations with martial arts and connotations of ‘martial art-ness’ – as stated above, the transference of martial art-ness to brands implies quality, durability, strength, discernment, energy and endurance, protection, and credibility. The cases featured are illustrations of the best work in the industry, if consideration is afforded to the tendency of advertising archives to preserve successful campaigns. It is also noteworthy that the selected cases become more prominent when associated with some degree of authenticity. The next question deals with the notion of authenticity in martial arts representations further.

#### **Research question 4:**

**What is meant by authentic martial arts representations? How authentic are these martial arts representations?**

In an ideal world, as a hyper visible trope, martial arts could enable advertisers to commodify a culture by getting the audience as reader to reflect on racialised, idealised forms of representation. However, the reality is that this ethical standpoint would not be the cultural producer’s primary objective, particularly during the 1960s-1970s. What this study suggests is that those involved in cultural production have inadvertently exoticised or excluded ‘the Other’. Our use of critical visual and

discourse analyses to analyse martial arts advertisements from the 1960s-1990s hinges on an understanding of the parameters of authenticity in advertising construction. The four decades considered have shown that shifting colonial perceptions of race and 'the Other' helped advertisers to adjust the level of authenticity used in their representational efforts when it comes to martial arts aesthetics. As discussed above, this study has uncovered the unique role that female martial artists played in the 1960s and early 1970s, thanks to influential television such as *The Avengers* (1961-1969), and films such as *The Wrecking Crew* (1968).

For advertising messages to work, meanings and, in our case, visual references must be drawn from relevant cultural 'assemblages' (Shankar, 2015). The form or style of martial arts provides clues to its authenticity, including its lineage, myths, histories, rituals, and cultural traditions from Japan or China, which are made all the more tangible when backed by historical records that help to convert martial arts myths into facts. In addition, the degree of authenticity may sometimes be related to proper fighting styles or the degree of realness perceived by audience as reader. It may also be related to ritualised behaviours, or stories, e.g. Karate has a long history that can be traced back to its founding fathers in Japan and these stories are reproduced and restated in the clubs in Britain to reflect the tradition (Peirce, 1974). However, geography must also be noted, in that martial arts based in Britain and run by Western instructors mean that, to a certain degree, this tradition would be a concept that is (re)defined by the West.

Earlier arguments may prematurely suggest that Caucasian casting constitutes the appropriation of martial arts, which when coupled with the demise of martial arts tradition may reduce the degree of authenticity. The findings have identified the following cultural reference points for authenticity in martial arts representations over four decades (see Table 7 in research question 1):

1. 1960s Female martial artists and the swinging '60s
2. 1970s Bruce Lee era and the popularity of Kung Fu comedy
3. 1980s East Asian casts to implement race relations legislation
4. 1990s Multiculturalism including Bruce Lee's 25th anniversary

These findings suggest that there are many ways in which authenticity in martial arts is manifested. Research question 1 has already covered martial arts tropes in terms of casting. A commonly held view is that the adoption of martial arts as a theme centred on perceptions about appropriation where Caucasian casts have been recruited. The exception to the rule comes in the form of Chris Gale - a bona fide Judo ka who played a key role as stunt double for Diana Rigg's Emma Peel character in *The Avengers* (1961-1969). Chris paved the way for positive associations with stunt actors in popular television series. Anecdotal evidence has suggested that female-led martial artist depictions were sexualised, as exemplified by BMK Carpet *Judo* (1967-1968) and the notorious Hai Karate campaigns of the 1970s. Despite these issues, this study has stated the need to update martial arts aesthetics with respect to gender and stunt actors.

Who is depicted or shown performing martial arts moves and techniques in any commercial (actor/model/bona fide martial artist) is central to the authentication argument (Moore, 2002). This means that a continuum of martial arts advertising exists. Golden Wonder *Kung Fuey's 'Something Special'* (1974) television commercial featuring the 'real McCoy' Enoeda Sensei - a Japanese master of Shotokan Karate and the former chief instructor of the Karate Union of Great Britain – provided the most authentic of Karate representations. It is interesting to note that, for the same brand, a Chinese actor was recruited for *Kung Fuey's 'Fighting Stars'* version of the long two-year campaign by JWT. In contrast to Enoeda Sensei, the Chinese actor did not appear to be executing any bona fide martial arts moves in the commercial. This suggests the concept of 'realness' – being as close to the actual fights or 'the science' of fight scenes as possible – is not always possible. The discrepancy suggests that a trade-off between realness and 'make believe' are tests of authenticity in martial arts commercials.

Casting female martial artists as models or stunt action heroes must be included within the overall framing of martial arts tropes in British advertising as they are crucial to the debates about authentic representation in the early period. The BMK *Judo Girl* campaign (1967-1969) involved the casting of an Anglo-Irish Burmese-born actress Edwina Carroll. Casting a Caucasian female martial artist in this campaign is an exception to the rule of western appropriation and commodification due to the absence of 'yellow face' – in fact, the actress appears to be of oriental extraction, particularly when featured in her white Gi . Likewise, her Judo prowess appears authentic in terms of the degree of detail involved in the commercial. Martial arts commercials from the 1970s onwards featured largely men (Golden Wonder's *Kung*

*Fuey* 1975-76, Wrigley's *Tunes* 1972, Mars Bar *Judo* 1972). It is beyond the scope of this study to analyse the use of female martial arts tropes on female representation in the advertising industry in more detail despite many successful female advertisers, such as Rosie Arnold (formerly executive creative director of BBH) and Kate Stanners (chairwoman at Saatchi & Saatchi), having contributed to award-winning campaigns in the 1980s and 1990s.

Casting bona fide martial artists - particularly those performing their own stunts/choreography/utilising their own styles borrowed from traditions such as Wing Chun or Karate - provides tremendous kudos to the production. In this way the findings suggest that kudos equates to proper/correct techniques being shown. Production quality may also suggest a degree of authenticity in film techniques such as pause-burst-pause, and Wire Fu as seen in Jonathon Glazer's efforts for Levi's *Kung Fu* (1998). This lauded campaign featured an all-East Asian cast with the lead role played by bona fide martial artist Dustin Nguyen, whose 'Bruce Lee' character performed a mix of Kung Fu techniques that emulated Lee's creative vision to bring Chinese Kung Fu to mainstream audiences.

Authentic technical manifestations have been scripted to fit within the limits of a typical 30 second execution time frame, such that the scope for complex storytelling may sometimes be compromised to a basic level of martial arts understanding. Naturally, this led to the reductionist representation in mainstream media of western colonial views of Judo or Karate. Commodification processes serve to make commercials more palatable to mainstream audiences, which would account for their ability to decode ascribed messages as readers of the advertising. Understanding

the contextual factors that influenced how target audiences interpreted martial arts choreography and techniques, casting and stunt actors and their roles in storytelling are therefore crucial. The study here supports Moore's (2002) authentication processes regarding the role that actors play and their performance.

To sum up, authenticity in this study is related to the question of whether the advertising identified could **mirror** contemporary society – a core question that all ethical advertisers in the business of cultural production must ask themselves (Pollay and Gallagher, 1990). This section links advertising intent, authenticity debates and the degree of stereotypes that martial art-ness may generate, as well as the types of tropes used.

#### **Research question 5:**

##### **How did these representations create or reinforce stereotypes?**

This study uncovers how portrayals of the Chinese on television and film may have contributed to their subsequent stereotyping as martial artists on British television commercials from the 1960s to the 1990s. Explanations about the meanings ascribed to martial arts-themed advertising over the four decades considered provides clues as to how these visualisations may have contributed to, and amplified, stereotypes of the Chinese community. Contextualisation of the advertising provided clues to our understanding of the different relationship Britain had with China compared to Japan, with connotations for martial arts styles and forms.

The advertising examples curated for this study illustrate a diverse range of representations in terms of race (and gender) that served to authenticate martial arts tropes. In addition, the use of bona fide martial artists as stunt doubles provided 'kudos' or 'realness' that afforded more meaningful links to 'martial art-ness' to different audiences. These ranged from those being depicted (women and East Asian communities) to martial arts fans, as well as mainstream audiences. The ability of these audiences to interpret meanings ascribed to each martial arts trope is crucial. This is because racialised constructions contain elements of the truth or denial of those being depicted. Not only that but production methods or techniques that 'Otherise' or facilitate hegemony imbalance using accents, overly exaggerated representations, (unusual) make up and costumes that reference 'yellow peril' perspectives or not giving such communities a voice through consultations but muting them altogether. Lack of interest or awareness meant that incongruous cultural mistakes that confuse martial arts forms, styles and techniques are made when silent communities are misunderstood, or stereotyped representations have occurred. This is exemplified by Cadbury's mistakes with Chinese calligraphy in their poster advertisement by Young and Rubicam (D&AD Annual, 1966), hinting at a lack of real understanding of the rich collection of cultures on our doorstep.

On the other hand, the gradual launch of colour television from 1967 coupled with opportunities for martial artists to participate in stunt action choreography for popular television programmes such as *The Avengers* (1961-1969) is clear to see. However, their involvement was always in the background. In contrast, Chinese or East Asian depictions were limited when compared to the more popular (Japanese) Judo references. The BMK *Judo Girl* (1967-1969) commercials are often seen as



glamorised representations drawing their influence from Hollywood and Diana Rigg's Emma Peel.

By the 1970s the shift from female to male Judokas in media took off, with racialised depictions and the presence of 'yellow peril' representational discourse. This contrasted with martial arts comedy, where concerted efforts were made to include authentic East Asian martial artists during this period. Clearly martial arts authenticity is linked to casting calls for East Asian actors, with inclusive casting very much the focus of advertising cultural production today (Kantar, 2021). Martial arts took off by the 1980s with a diversity of Chinese casts being featured in advertising before sophistication in terms of aesthetics took off in the 1990s. This is reflected in the growth of Chinese Kung Fu, and this period saw many racialised connotations, from catcalling, squawking, and lip synching to the oriental riff. This period also saw a resurgence in stereotypical references when it came to Chinese themed - as opposed to Japanese themed - advertising, with 'yellow face' seen in the Pizza Hut *Kung Fu* (1995) commercial.

As well as the above factors related to authentication through aesthetics, Chinese and Japanese assemblages or cultural/historical tradition reference points were often used interchangeably in the 1970s to represent the notion of 'Orient' or the 'Far East', yet this study has uncovered notable differences. Japanese forms (Judo and Karate) seen in advertising typically visualised the craftsmanship or techniques of these martial arts through kiais (yells), breath control, and a plethora of throws, punches, chops, and swipes being demonstrated onscreen.

My case studies have revealed the recurrent use of martial arts comedy or humour in Chinese Kung Fu themed advertising – this may be explained through the propensity for transgressive comedy in racialised constructions from the 1960s (Hunt, 2015).

The combination of martial arts themes and comedy is not new as a film genre if we take into consideration the *Pink Panther* films (1964-1992) at one end of the spectrum, and Jackie Chan's influence in martial arts comedy at the other. Likewise, British advertising is synonymous with a distinctive brand of self-deprecating humour (Lannon and Cooper, 1983).

The findings would support the contextual underpinning, in that Japan was not a former colony of the West, and therefore a degree of appreciation of its culture and traditions remained. In contrast, former British colonies such as Hong Kong have either been influenced by western hegemonic dominance or have a more hybridised culture that was more open to comedic depictions in films and advertising. It would appear that relatively positive representations occurred for Japan through the Japanning era – in contrast, despite Chinoiserie appreciation, it would appear that Sinophobia with its 'Yellow Peril' recurrences never went away. A certain degree of glamorising the 'Orient' and demystifying the Far East has occurred and martial arts had a role to play in the construction of race.

The use of mixed-race actors or casts at a time before multiculturalism was the norm suggests that there is cultural bias towards an idealised racialised aesthetic or metroethnicity (Hiramoto, 2012). Mixed race appeared to be a normalised reductionist representation of the colonised in British advertising.

Table 10 provides evidence of the representational issues at play in each decade, linking these to migration and settlement patterns, and perceptions of ‘the Other’, as influenced by race relations.

**Table 10 Summary of martial arts tropes and racialised constructions**

<b>Decade</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Martial arts tropes in advertising</b>	<b>Racialised constructions</b>
<b>1960s</b>	<p>1967 launch of colour television</p> <p>Exotic Chinese cuisines paved way for restaurants</p> <p>Japanophilia</p> <p>Maoism</p> <p>London's creative evolution</p> <p>Britain's Judo performance</p>	<p>Predominantly Judo</p> <p>Shift from black and white to colour e.g. Yardley's black and white to technicolour Emmapeeler campaigns</p> <p>Luxaflex and Kellogg's black and white ads</p> <p>Judo themes and female Judokas</p> <p>Stunt action choreography (Avengers, Wrecking Crew) by Chee Soo, Chris Gallie &amp; Bruce Lee</p>	<p>Basic awareness of migration</p> <p>Strength and endurance of martial arts</p> <p>Realness and authenticity of bona fide artists</p> <p>Casting: predominately Caucasian vs stunt crew (Chinese)</p> <p>Authenticity - Judo or Karate cues (setting, gis, etiquette, basic techniques shown) rather than racial identifiers</p>
<b>1970s</b>	<p>Rise of the Orient and air travel</p> <p>1973 Bruce Lee's passing</p> <p>1978 China's Open Door Policy</p>	<p>Largely Judo representations - bona fide London based Judokas</p> <p>Aesthetics (gis, techniques, and celebrity photographer) e.g. Whitbread's Tankard (1971) and Wrigley's Tunes (1976) and the print advert for Olympus Optical Company (1979) all featured Caucasian (male) Judokas.</p>	<p>'Yellow peril' othering e.g. Kendals' (1970) Chinese man 'foreigners' copy</p> <p>Casting – Chinese/Japanese actors/stunt action heroes (race)</p>

	<p>Growth of Chinese restaurants and takeaways</p> <p>Continued accessibility and Japanophilia with Judo.</p> <p>Television shows promote Karate and an initial interest in Tai Chi and Kung Fu (Bruce Lee effect)</p> <p>Demographic shifts and race relations - better representations including mixed-race</p> <p>Confusion over Chinese vs Japanese aesthetics</p> <p>Oriental females - adornment</p> <p>Production quality, copywriting talent and art direction of CDP, AMV BBDO, Saatchi and JWT.</p>	<p>Kung Fu cinema tropes influenced by TV series Kung Fu (1972-1975)</p> <p>Mainstream comedies e.g. Pink Panther films and Monkey (1978) – ads that feature mocking of Chinese accents or expressions, oriental riff and other comedic references e.g. Guinness' parody Kung Fool (1977), Hong Kong Phooey (1977-1979)</p> <p>Racialised depictions of Chinese (Wall's Sausages, 1976; Guinness' Kung Fool, 1977; Kung Fuey's Fighting Stars, 1976).</p> <p>Action films such as James Bond and sexist representations e.g. Hai Karate (1969-1976)</p>	<p>Martial arts expertise – authentic Karate demonstrations in Kung Fuey (1976-78) with master Master Enoeda, Brick Development Association (1978)</p> <p>Hai Karate campaigns (1969-1976) – martial arts comedy</p> <p>Aid brand recall through comedy – a common theme in 1970s advertising</p>
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<p><b>1980s</b></p>	<p>Far East and Japanophilia continued through Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, sumo wrestling</p> <p>Japan vs Chinese distinctions blurred</p> <p>Chinese catering stereotypes and concerted efforts by broadcasters for positive stereotypes</p> <p>Martial arts have become mainstream - Karate and Judo still dominated discourse re styles and forms</p> <p>Interest in Chinese culture and martial arts e.g. Kung Fu and Tai Chi</p> <p>Demand for authentic martial arts styles e.g. The Takahashi Tackle</p> <p>Politics of martial arts e.g. Karate for the black community</p> <p>High production value and film production techniques e.g. Wire Fu and stunt actions choreography for authentic make belief</p> <p>Chinese Maoism and references to Kung Fu and Hong Kong cinema.</p>	<p>Use of humour and entertainment value that plays on Chinese stereotypes e.g. accents</p> <p>Normalisation of martial arts for the masses with performance of the art form by non-Chinese as shown in Sure (1980s) and Brylcream (1986)</p> <p>Kung Fu TV series (1972-1975) was the overriding influence (despite its comedic interpretation in KP Peanuts 1980s).</p> <p>Colonial sentiments a la Bruce Lee's political films - Walker's Crisps (1983)</p>	<p>Casting - diversity of Chinese actors to counteract negative stereotypes</p> <p>Product categories – diverse (deodorants and personal grooming to snacks).</p> <p>Stereotypes – Chinese accents, oriental riff, to 'Confucius He Say' references</p> <p>Positive stereotypes (bifurcation) - authentic use of calligraphy and western notions of language</p>
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<p><b>1990s</b></p>	<p>The mysteries of the Far East</p> <p>Diversification from Judo and Karate to other martial arts e.g. Japanese aikido and Korean taekwondo.</p> <p>Popularity of Chinese Tai Chi</p> <p>Resurgence of media interest in Bruce Lee 25 years after his death</p> <p>Jackie Chan's Kung Fu comedy and popularity of humour appeals</p> <p>Production and quality of the print and storytelling, and attention to detail</p> <p>Rise of celebrity artists, directors (Jonathan Glazer for Levi's and Ringan Ledwidge for VW) and authentic cultural references/representations.</p>	<p>Some confusion or inaccuracies e.g. Premier Beverages Fresh Brew Tea's (1995) 'Karate' for a clear take on Kung Fu comedy.</p> <p>VW Polo's 'self-defence' and Knorr's 'Oriental spices' for Tai Chi's non-aggressive style and lack of dialogue (BMP DDB's VW Polo)</p> <p>Aesthetic - the Karate chop (Tesco Karate chop, and Toffee Crisp commercials); parodies of Bruce Lee</p> <p>Karate Kid headbands (Rowntree Toffee Crisp and Knorr's Stir Fry Oriental)</p> <p>Kung Fu comedy influenced by Jackie Chan or 1970s Pink Panther era – diversity of representation from Chinese/Asian/mixed race to Caucasian (Ambrosia's Splat, Toffee Crisp, Fresh Brew Tea Karate, Pizza Hut Kung Fu, Super Noodles Shaolin, Barclaycard Karate, and Cadbury's Kung Fuse).</p> <p>Serious Japanese Karate aesthetics suited to more serious and rational brand messages</p>	<p>Commercials influenced film making (Barclaycard's secret agent Latham became Johnny English in 2003)</p> <p>Diverse martial arts aesthetics in diverse product categories.</p> <p>Chinese casts replaced Japanese characters as Kung Fu gained popularity (Levi's, Ambrosia Splat's Wing Chun and Pizza Hut's Kung Fu).</p> <p>Martial arts aesthetics - positive associations through authenticated depictions and representations e.g. washing powders reduce roughness of gis or energy drinks that promote endurance (Lucozade).</p> <p>Aesthetics beyond casting, setting or costumes (gis) but also audio cues.</p> <p>Mix of Chinese or Caucasian casts - 'yellow face' prevailed (Pizza Hut's Shaolin), and Chinese accents or</p>
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	<p>Racialised associations of catcalling, squawking, lip syncing, oriental riff common in martial arts films</p> <p>Growing public awareness, experience and knowledge of different martial arts meant more authentic martial arts representation needed.</p>	<p>(Lucozade Judo, Tesco Karate Chop, Specsavers Karate, and P&amp;G's Fairy Judo)</p> <p>Quality of print imageries (Guardian Royal Exchange, Specsavers).</p>	<p>pronunciations used regardless of ethnicities (Super Noodles' Shaolin).</p>
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Chapters 4 and 5 have provided a close analysis of emerging themes arising from four decades of historical advertising. This chapter has distilled the findings of my analysis to address the key research questions for this study. The study suggests that exoticisation or assemblages are crucial to explore, as are exclusions, colonial and political influences on British television, authenticity, and the mirroring of culture through martial arts tropes. Table 11 provides a framework for martial art-ness that combines findings from authenticity debates and the myriad of martial arts aesthetics to explain the use of martial arts tropes in advertising.

Table 11: Framework for martial art-ness representations

<p><b>Portrayal</b> (bifurcated)</p> <p>social roles within the image such as superman/hero, villain</p>
<p><b>Categorisation</b></p> <p>stereotypes manifested as embodiment/ideal body</p>
<p><b>Exoticisation</b></p> <p>cultural aspects, e.g. 'Dubbese Fu', training suits, rituals, ethnicity, Asiaphilia/Sinophilia</p>
<p><b>Exclusion</b></p> <p>omission of certain identity groups, appropriation, typecasting, signifiers</p>
<p><b>Positioning</b></p> <p>geography, setting, colonialism, hegemony, class, brand</p> <p>practice of 'yellow face' or 'yellow mask'</p>
<p><b>Realness</b></p> <p>technology to capture art forms, choreography, corporeal stunts, myths, archival (pause burst pause), cinematic (Wire Fu)</p>

The above framework suggests that historical-cultural analysis is essential to our understanding of the commodification of martial arts tropes as a form of visual image construction in advertising. Extending an already established body of work in martial arts films, this study contributes to authentication debates by integrating race in representational frameworks for analysing martial arts kinesthesia and aesthetics in advertising. Here, choreography, stunt action and styles such as pause-burst-pause are essential parts of these tropes, and the way these have been used in advertising provides clues with respect to appropriation and cultural production. Applied to martial arts tropes, the framework involves an understanding of categorisation (type of martial arts or film techniques may stereotype), exoticisation (uniform and rituals), exclusion (yellowface/mask), positioning (setting), portrayal (roles), and realness (authenticity/casting/choreography). These have been illustrated by the myriad cases uncovered to date.

### **Chapter summary:**

This study has investigated the meaning construction of early martial arts tropes in British advertising during the 1960s – 1990s as a consequence of the way the British Chinese community have been portrayed on film and television, with emphasis on the unique contribution that *The Chinese Detective* series (1981-82, BBC) has played to challenge stereotypes explicitly. The findings from four decades of British advertising reveal that recurrent tropes were shaped by Britain's perceptions of Far Eastern culture. It also provides clues to cultural norms that have been borrowed. By interrogating brand specific advertising that has utilised these tropes, we can understand why these recurrent themes have been used and question why certain

aesthetics were adopted, the contributions that film and television have had on Britain's relationship with the Far East, and how the practice of martial art-ness influenced cultural production. This thesis has also enabled the author to consider the multifaceted nature of authenticity in relation to martial arts aesthetics, and the notion of realness in how a silent community is depicted on screen.

The discussions in this chapter synthesised the findings and patterns of racialised representations, thereby supporting recent research on the impact of cultural production on racial ideologies in advertising (Saha, 2020).

The proposed framework references portrayal, categorisation, exoticisation, exclusion, positioning and realness as core aspects to authentic martial arts representations. These account for the contextual historical representations of the Chinese in Britain, suggesting issues that advertisers as cultural producers should address when dealing with racialised constructions.

Though findings suggest the advertising profession's creative use of martial arts tropes may vary in terms of authenticity, the archives have shown that award winning work using these themes exists – often at the expense of generating negative stereotypes in terms of racialised constructions. When there is client pressure to deliver work, cultural producers seek novel and disruptive messages at the expense of historical accuracy or authenticity with respect to representational references. Having considered the range of case studies, illustrations of impactful authentic martial arts representational work may be found over four decades. However, creative advertising is only creative if the audience can interpret the message meaningfully and connect with it – this also suggests why humour was a recurrent theme in British advertising that featured martial arts themes. This coincidental congruency with martial arts comedy requires further investigation (Smith and Yang,

2004). My findings have contributed to discussions about exoticisation or cultural reference points, exclusion, colonial and political influences on British television, and Western (Hollywood) power and authenticity in action.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Conclusion**

#### **Addressing Racialised Constructions of Martial Arts through Authenticated Aesthetics in Advertising**

##### **Introduction**

This chapter offers the conclusions of the study with a review of the use of martial arts tropes as representational aesthetics in advertising over four decades to document the creativity of Britain's advertising industry. Firstly, this study has shown that the link between martial arts culture and the Far East is dependent on how popular media and advertisers construct or distort race, using martial arts as a cultural point of reference. The study suggests that production studies relating to race must acknowledge the damaging effects of racial stereotypes. Secondly, the findings show that martial arts and their categorisations enrich understanding of the role of martial arts tropes in advertising, and that Judo, Karate and Kung Fu (and their variants) have offered different meanings to audiences/readers in different eras, such that mapping the use of martial arts tropes, as evidenced in case studies, helps to examine creativity and sociocultural significance. Thirdly, the study offers a new model for explaining racialised constructions of martial arts aesthetics and authenticity whereby representations are linked to casting that contextualises historical racialised cultural production. The chapter then discusses how the study adds to understandings of racialised representations in advertising and how historical mapping can provide clues as to the inherent popularity of martial arts tropes in advertising. It further contextualises the significance of developments in the advertising industry and its regulation over four decades, which mirror Britain's relationship with the Far East, and how cultural producers have used these to

influence creativity in aesthetics and ethical representation. The study has achieved the research aim of evaluating the meaning construction of early martial arts representations with reference to historical, cultural and postcolonial contexts. The chapter concludes with limitations of the study and recommendations for further research to test existing frameworks in this under-researched area of representation.

### **Dissecting aesthetics and authenticity in martial arts tropes**

The study addresses authenticity and commodification within martial arts tropes, given the construction of meaning that these representational tropes offer for brands, and the ascribed meanings for the Chinese as a silent minority within the context of changing race relations in Britain. Through the paradigm of post-structuralist hermeneutics, and following Foucauldian ideology, I have undertaken a critical visual analysis of television and print advertisements, as well as of racial and martial arts discourse in documentaries and published media, to identify cases of martial arts tropes that either authenticate, mirror, or caricature the Chinese as ‘the Other’. A contextual rationale was provided for the popularised media portrayal of the Chinese during postcolonial times, as well as their depictions as martial artists in historical British advertising from the 1960s to the 1990s. Using holdings from the History of Advertising Trust and British Film Institute archives, historical mapping enabled me to identify the patterns of martial arts aesthetics used. The initial exercise revealed close to 70 television commercials and print advertisements featuring aesthetics related to martial arts. From this, I selected 33 case studies of brands for detailed critique of advertising quality (awards and agencies involved), brand history, copy and visuals and/script and storyboards, target audience and advertising purpose. More specifically, martial arts aesthetics drawn from casting, setting, geography,

uniform, choreography or stunt action that typified the recurrent tropes in advertising were included in the critique.

The thread connecting and underpinning each period of analysis was an interrogation of Britain's colonial history with the Far East and changing perceptions of China and Japan - two countries that have contributed to the popularity of traditional martial arts in Britain. The study revealed that cultural traditions relating to martial 'art-ness', and associated aesthetics from martial arts tropes in television and films, provided a plethora of connotational representations of the 'Oriental'. These underpin cultural production by providing recurrent reference points or 'assemblages' that have their origins in Sinophobia and Japanophilia. In other words, the relative accessibility and transparent organisation of Judo and Karate from Japan in the early period of advertising is reflected in a series of authentic demonstrations, albeit featuring Caucasian casts. In contrast, the more elusive Chinese Kung Fu aesthetics tended to be racialised martial arts tropes.

Where appropriation of martial arts representations in advertising has occurred, this is manifested through 'whitewashing', through the casting of white actors as martial artists, or a preference for mixed-race actors or models. In terms of racialised constructions, yesteryear's 'yellow face' (white actors made to look Chinese) can be contrasted with the more recent 'yellow mask' (Chinese casts). Whilst this study suggests that martial arts 'assemblages' have been derived from filmic and televisual representations of East Asians and their cultural traditions, the study supports Ramamurthy and Wilson's (2013) notion of 'bifurcation' where both positive and negative connotations for those depicted exist.

This interdisciplinary study addresses a gap in the consideration of authentic martial arts visualisations onscreen. Critique of advertising content in this study has been informed by a paradigmatic shift from pure visual representational studies to cultural production, in order to explain racialised constructions in advertising. Of particular importance is the commodification of race through martial arts aesthetics in advertising (Borgerson and Schroeder, 2002; Saha 2020). Screen studies research focusing on martial arts aesthetics informed my understanding of the importance of martial arts authentication as part of the critique undertaken in this pioneering research. The need to address martial arts as a stereotypical consequentialist representation of the Chinese required consideration of audience interpretation, or the reader perspective from critical race theories (Hall, 1980). The degree of authenticity in martial arts representations over four decades of advertising suggests that the meaning construction of early martial arts representations in British advertising is linked to popularised portrayals of the British Chinese. Another key development of this interdisciplinary approach is that mapping the cases identified for this study advances understanding of changes in the cultural production of advertising.

The methodological approach adopted for this study addresses a gap in our understanding of how these colonial forces shaped advertising construction and the distortion of race in advertising, as well as historical aesthetics (in martial arts) as assemblages. The period of analysis is timely in that colour television was first introduced to Britain in the 1960s, and cultural production (and the industry's contributions to advertising creativity) provided insight into how racialised constructions are 'imagined' in historical archival research (Decker, Hassard and



Rowlinson, 2023). Historical mapping over four decades was necessary to understand the political agenda (race relations) and post-colonial hegemony that influenced the process of 'Othering' in advertising. Critical to our understanding of cultural production is the meaning making process that creatives have to operate within, as pressures to address racial stereotypes in all aspects of their work become ever more important. The archival case studies in this investigation required a structured imagination approach using hermeneutics that has enabled me to question socially constructed realities in martial arts representations (Collingwood, 1946; Arnold and Fisher, 1994). The interactive and repetitive sense-making that I undertook allowed for rigorous analyses of the visual (image) and textual (copy) aspects of 33 case studies over four decades to provide a snapshot of history. This required calling upon a degree of imagination and lived experience to critique the advertising remotely long after they had been executed and to ascribe meaning to their construction. Imagination about what Britain was like in the 1960s and 1970s, for example, came in the form of television documentaries and discourse from published sources. Advertising crit, or critique of each piece of advertising, informed my critical analysis. Such sensemaking through hermeneutics enabled the study to bridge any knowledge gaps. For the 1980s and 1990s, I was able to use my lived experience to delve into the past, seek evidence that backed up my process of ad critique, and identify the contextual influences affecting advertising production (Lannon and Cooper, 1983).

My positionality as bona fide martial artist facilitated the close analysis of emerging themes arising from historical advertising, and interpretation of a range of recurrent martial arts aesthetics and tropes. This insider-outsider perspective required an ability not only to identify, understand and interpret martial arts imageries in

advertising as an advertising academic, but also to use my lived experience as a practicing martial artist to interrogate issues of authenticated representations. As discussed in Chapter 3, such insider knowledge provided me with credence to critique more than one form of martial arts.

### **Attainment of thesis aim and objectives**

This thesis is the first to utilise advertising archives to map historical racialised representations in martial arts themed television commercials in Britain in order to kick-start meaningful conversations about cultural history and stereotypes of the Chinese in British advertising. I have already discussed research questions for this study in Chapter 6 and herewith provide a review of the aims and objectives.

The aim of this study was to investigate the meaning construction of early martial arts representations in British advertising during the 1960s -1990s, both as a consequence of British Chinese portrayals on film and television, but also of changing developments within the advertising industry that have influenced creativity in advertising production and ethical representation.

The following objectives were achieved:

**Objective 1: To determine what forms of martial arts representation exist within a British film and television context, given that martial arts is one of the dominant recurring tropes in representations of Chinese people in British television advertising**

This study identified martial arts tropes commonly used in film and television that provided historical context for their popularisation and adoption in advertising. This is evidenced in Chapters 1 and 2 where the plethora of research in the realms of martial arts studies and cultural studies uncovered a wide range of martial arts tropes as depicted onscreen. These are exemplified by Cato's Karate moves in *the Pink Panther*, a Shaolin monk's prowess in *Kung Fu* (1972-1975), and Bruce Lee's early casting in Hollywood's *The Green Hornet* to his anti-colonial forms of high kicking 'chop socky' martial arts. This study shows that traditional martial arts such as Japanese Judo and Karate in the early 1960s and Chinese Kung Fu in the 1970s captured the imagination of the West, contributing to the Kung Fu craze, and this is reflected in the mainstream discourse of that period (Bowman, 2020). That is not to say that these were the only tropes - other Japanese martial arts films such as *The Samurai* and *The Water Margin* fuelled the preoccupation of the West with the Far East. These tropes support the notion that advertising mirrors cultural shifts or societal trends (Pollay and Gallagher, 1990), with the findings of this study demonstrating that it was not long before cultural producers began featuring martial arts themed advertising in their creative portfolio of work. Another outcome of this investigation is understanding the critical role that media regulatory frameworks such as the Race Relations Act 1976 and 'Campaign against Racism in the Media' in the 1970s have with respect to onscreen depictions of the Chinese in counteracting colonial stereotypes of Britain's third largest minority group. The outcome of this martial arts historical influence, as derived from martial arts tropes in mainstream film and television, defined the parameters for this study. The wealth of evidence obtained in this study has shown that there are two key aspects to categorising the types of commercials uncovered in the study, which reflects changing legislation and

racial discourse: the early period of the 1960s and 1970s, and the later period of the 1980s and 1990s.

**Objective 2: To identify authenticity in martial arts as a form of visual representation of the British Chinese in television advertising**

This study has examined authenticity in martial arts as a form of visual and cultural representation of the British Chinese in advertising. I have argued that martial arts as a form of representation of the Chinese community in Britain is linked to colonial stereotypes of the Chinese throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Following on from objective 1, the research confirmed that authentication of martial arts may be defined through its historical origins or casting preferences. This is not to say that this dichotomy is the only explanation, but the research undertaken has shown that 'yellow face' in films such as *Kung Fu* (1972-1975), informed by Sinophobic yellow peril Fu Manchu discourse, seeped into advertising construction. This study also shows that martial arts aesthetics, physical embodiment, and kinaesthesia arising from film and televisual studies are indicators of martial arts authenticity. Chapter 2 demonstrated that stereotypical representations of the Chinese may be linked to advertisers' moral myopia, where distortions of reality are part and parcel of a reductionist cultural production process. The study uncovered the political, social, economic, and hegemonic constraints that advertisers work under when generating commercials, arguing that these have implications for the social realities of the British Chinese community (Pollay and Gallagher, 1990; Bailey, 2006). The objective of this study in examining martial arts authenticity is prescient as the isolation of the community (as a consequence of their dispersed settlement patterns in Britain) means that the

British Chinese population derive additional meanings from cultural appropriation and mainstream racialised representations. This study shows that model similarity as exemplified in casting for martial arts themed advertising was fundamental to how this silent minority saw themselves, and that this imbalance of power or lack of control over their own visual discourse perpetuates 'othering'. The authenticity question, representational discourse, and meaning construction of martial arts can only be resolved via the historical mapping of advertising using an AIAA (Authenticated Aesthetics in Advertising) framework to more fully interrogate martial arts realness or choreographed actions as authenticity as a form of racialised construction, thereby fulfilling objective 2 of the study.

**Objective 3: To analyse recurring martial arts representational discourse as a form of commodification of popular culture**

This study reviewed recurrent martial arts representational discourse that defined commodification processes of popular culture. Extant literature in Chapter 2 identified a paradigm shift away from purely visual representations, as proposed by Stuart Hall (1990), that relied on the notion of the audience as reader/interpreter, towards an authentication of martial arts as a form of cultural commodity in advertising (Saha, 2020). Despite the emphasis on a consequentialist approach to advertising ethics, where the impact of advertising on 'the Other' is foregrounded, this study shows that our understanding of how established representational conventions construct meaning can partially account for historical racialised cultural production. The study shows that recurrent martial arts representations require a

close analysis that extends beyond that of print advertising seen in previous studies (Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005). It also requires a fresh analytical framework that accounts for the complexity of factors at play. The influence of film and television specific to kinaesthesia constructions would benefit from moving image analysis that befits martial arts genres. As detailed in Chapters 2 and 3, martial arts studies often entail moving image analysis involving kinaesthesia or demonstration of movement through choreography that must be analysed in addition to aesthetics such as physical embodiment, casting and setting, for example. Kinaesthesia arising from film and televisual studies are indicators of martial arts authenticity. The continued popularity of martial arts with mainstream audiences supports Saha's (2020) notion of commodification processes. This suggests that there is value in hermeneutics research that interrogates the meaning constructions of stereotypes in advertising – in other words, how advertising constructs race in a way that reflects industry discourse surrounding diversity and inclusion. My reading of industry discourse for this study is taken from detailed analysis of each piece of advertising executed by the agencies in question. The study entails a paradigm shift that considers my own cultural identity, positionality, and ability to interrogate the repertoire of martial arts tropes beyond the limitations of how advertising represents race.

**Objective 4: To identify case studies of brands that have utilised martial arts representational imagery to understand how these tropes addressed authenticity in representational imageries between the 1960s and the 1990s, and how this has changed over time.**

This was accomplished through the identification of 33 brand case studies to be used as evidence of the commodification of martial arts tropes in Chapters 4 and 5. The study shows that the aesthetics of martial arts, as informed by film and television, is linked to the authentication of racialised constructions of Chineseness. The investigations, undertaken by me during 2019, yielded a plethora of martial arts tropes in television commercials and print advertisements that covered a diverse range of brands across different product categories over four decades. Starting with the earliest Kellogg's case study in 1967, the study shows that television and print commercials between the 1960s and 1990s ascribed meanings to those being depicted, whether through casting, appropriation, or association. The study shows that martial arts tropes have been effective in communicating brand messages, as evidenced by the discourse and media interest generated about the advertising. These insights provide a snapshot of historical constructions of race and how, despite polysemy, martial art tropes were adapted and changed over time to account for changing legislation and audience acceptance of authenticated aesthetics in advertising.

## **Contributions**

This PhD research has extended understandings of racialised constructions in advertising over four decades beyond them being mere representational discourse. This study defends the use of historical mapping of television commercials and print advertisements that illustrate the inherent popularity of martial arts tropes in advertising, whilst accounting for researcher positionality and polysemy in audience interpretations.

This study contributes to critical debates surrounding the use of martial arts tropes in British advertising in four ways.

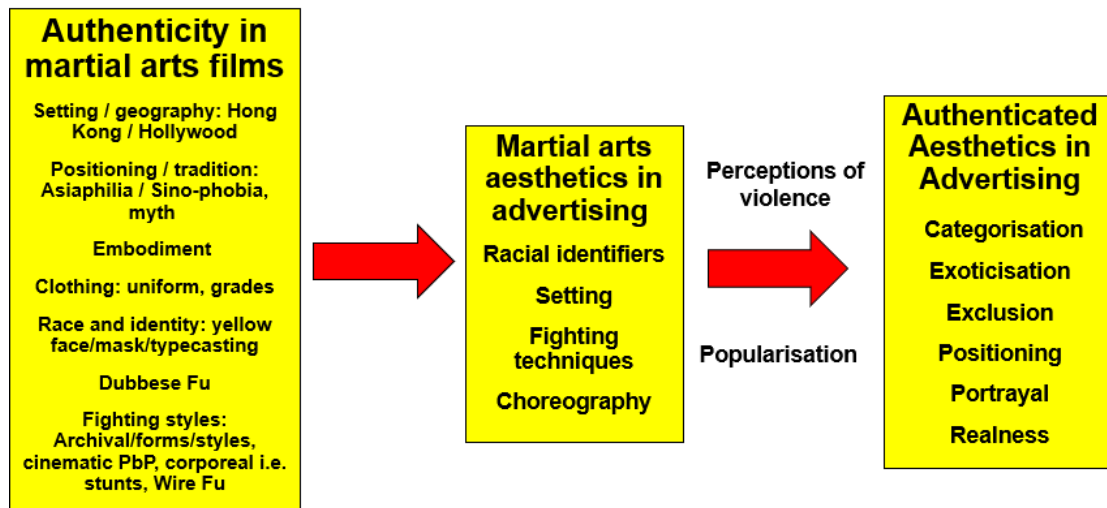
First, the research contributes to literature on ethical visual representation. While Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001), Schroeder and Borgerson (2005), and Harrison, Thomas and Cross (2017) have discussed representations of race from an audience interpretation point of view, this thesis builds upon the established concepts of faceism and idealisation, as witnessed in martial arts commodification.

Commodification in terms of how advertising construction is racialised and subject to the dichotomy of 'bifurcation' is crucial (Ramamurthy and Wilson, 2013). While ethical studies have provided useful insights with respect to racialised representations, nonetheless there are shortcomings in their ability to explain cultural production in advertising, least of all through martial arts as a creative theme. In other words, this study shows that emphasis needs to shift away from the audience to the responsibility of the agencies themselves. It confirmed that the process of advertising production for a creative commercial is not defined solely by audience perceptions, but also through the advertiser's ability to devise core messages that resonate or connect with audiences in a meaningful way (Ang et al., 2007). Not only this, but the determinants of ethical creative advertising that rest upon agency personnel to construct meaning is intrinsically linked to the political, economic, and hegemonic powers at play (Hesmondhalgh, 2019; Saha, 2020). This is exemplified by the constraints presented by the Race Relations Acts that influenced the type of racialised constructions that are permitted.



Second, the established body of literature from martial arts studies (Hunt, 1998; Bowman, 2020) and ethical advertising (Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005) did not address aesthetics and authentication issues with respect to casting and appropriation. This research is the first to investigate aesthetics in creativity, and further to link this to authentication in culturally commodified imageries of a silent community such as the Chinese in Britain. The study contributes to notions around the authentication of martial arts from a casting and appropriation point of view. Whilst questions of authenticity in martial arts films and television are common (Hunt, 2003; Bowman, 2016b), these fall under the domain of martial arts or screen studies. Early research by the author (Chan, 2020) have already demonstrated that authentication in terms of the ‘realness’ and lineage of traditional martial arts forms (Karate, Judo and Kung Fu) from film is transferable to advertising. It could be argued that authentication of martial arts through aesthetics and casting have an impact on how the Chinese as a silent minority have been mis- or unrepresented or constructed in a particular way in early advertising in Britain. While this is not a panacea, these notions may be of benefit to those seeking reflexive understanding of racial politics, particularly with the industry’s recent focus on inclusive casting and storytelling (Poole, 2021). This study therefore fills a gap in our knowledge with respect to the meanings ascribed to kinaesthesia and the aesthetics of martial arts through the development of an Authenticated Aesthetics in Advertising (AAIA) model (see discussion in Chapter 5).

Fig.103. Authenticated Aesthetics in Advertising (AIAA)



AAIA, as applied to martial arts tropes, involves an understanding of categorisation (type of martial arts or film techniques may stereotype), exoticisation (uniform and rituals), exclusion (yellow face/mask), positioning (setting), portrayal (roles), and realness (choreography). These have been illustrated by the myriad cases uncovered to date. The study has shown how agencies (cultural producers) have adopted martial arts tropes from a meaning construction standpoint as their popularity continues in modern advertising. The framework suggests that historical-cultural analysis is essential to our understanding of the commodification of martial arts tropes as a form of visual image construction in advertising.

Third, perhaps moving away from unpacking the politics of representation to considering martial arts representations as recurrent themes in cultural production may be of benefit to future research. This study's undertaking of the historical mapping of race over four decades enables investigations to be carried out from a colonial perspective. This achieves the aim of the study, to shed light on the meaning construction of early martial arts representation in British advertising during the 1960s -1990s as a consequence of how British Chinese communities have been portrayed. The study shows that martial arts tropes contribute to brand messages, as

well as how brands associated with martial arts may enhance their appeal to their target audiences. The categorisation from this study seeks to enrich our understanding of the role of martial arts tropes in advertising, and that Judo, Karate and Kung Fu (and their variants) were ascribed different meanings by an increasingly advertising literate audience in the early period. As the History of Advertising Trust, and advertising bodies such as the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA) and Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), have indicated their growing commitment to diversity and inclusion, this thesis provides the industry with the knowledge and language required to articulate racialised discourse in advertising that contributes to colonial racialised construction debates. The caricatures of the Chinese in British advertising constructed in early martial arts tropes could aid advertisers in understanding where barriers to diversity and inclusion in the creative industries may come from.

Fourth, this thesis embraces the identification and sourcing of relevant archival materials. The study drew from the HAT and BFI archives for evidence of racialised constructions in advertising. The ensuing investigation shows that a rich collection of advertising content covering four decades of British advertising may be identified for critical visual analysis. Despite this, archival research methods are subject to bias due to limitations in archival acquisitions, digitalisation and cataloguing. There is also appetite from members of the public to access some of the earlier advertising featured in this study, such that there is scope to exhibit the work to a wider population.

The study has also highlighted the concept of reverse cultural flow, where the globalisation of Hong Kong cinema, for example, may not only impact the West, but Western influenced martial arts genres such as *The Karate Kid* (1984) and the

recent *Cobra Kai* TV series (2018–2024) may have an effect on the perceptions of martial arts in the Far East too (Doshi, 1999; Wang and Yeh, 2005; Wu and Chan, 2006). Clearly, authenticities are multifaceted, and the study has shown that audience interpretation and appreciation of martial arts as entertainment (film, television, advertising) (Moore, 2002), as well as how they derive meanings from the messages, who is performing the techniques, and how they are presented are crucial.

## **Limitations, implications, and future research**

### **Limitations**

Advertising research is notoriously content-based, or semiotics-based, and this study's reliance on archival and textual analysis is a valuable addition to these approaches. Informed by poststructuralist hermeneutics, a deeper assessment of racialised construction in advertising that is informed by film and television is possible. This approach has enabled me to analyse explicit and implicit meanings through an interactive toing and froing process (as part of the hermeneutic circle) so that textual meanings and clues about historicity emerge, particularly when advertising may mean different things at different moments in history (Gadamer, 1975). Such rhetorical reflections are crucial for an understanding of factors influencing cultural producers (Gadamer, 1994; Caputo, 2018).

Some may argue that my own identity may lead to biased interpretations. As a British-born Chinese and academic specialising in advertising education for 30 years, I am well placed to use my advertising literacy skills to facilitate critical visual debate and historical reflections as a result of my 'ascribed closeness' to the Chinese as an underrepresented group. Although the level of subjectivity in this

study may result in more than one reading of the advertising, this phenomenon is synonymous with the polysemic nature of advertising (Arnold and Fisher, 1994).

Whilst archival research is the main source of data collection for this study, its use presents many methodological challenges (Chan, 2023). Although the advertising collections housed at HAT and BFI represent the largest collection of advertising material in the UK, dating back to the 1800s, these collections only represent a fraction of the total holdings of repositories. Materials not catalogued online must be obtained from curators or collections managers, necessitating frequent visits to view non-catalogued collections on site. Additionally, Hall (1997) and Saha (2020) contend that a Western gaze dominates how 'the Other' is represented, and recurrent racial tropes occur because minority representations are appropriated by a dominant Western culture. Although this form of commodification typifies Britain's colonial relationship with China, it also means that assumptions about race have been made by the collections team when cataloguing material, such that advertisements that have been sorted into categories (catalogued on site and digitally) may contain margins of error.

Finally, the study contextualises changes in the Race Relations Act and its implications for British broadcasting regulations. These developments in the advertising industry and its regulation over four decades have influenced creativity with respect to the adoption of martial arts aesthetics and ethical representation, resulting in constraints as to what may be shown in commercials. Authentication of martial arts discussed in this thesis would also invariably lead to questions of the ethics of depicting violence on screen, despite the use of stunt actors.

## Implications for practice

As positive and negative stereotypes reinforce attitudes, cultural producers must be accountable for the way diverse cultures are represented (Mullan, 1996; Kawai, 2005). The fact remains that advertising continues to 'exoticise' or 'otherise' cultures, and the limited representations of the Chinese on British television during the early period meant martial arts tropes such as those investigated in this thesis had greater representational power (Gillespie, 1995; Borgerson and Schroeder, 2002).

Understanding the impact of stereotypes, whether through casting or appropriation, of the silent Chinese community would encourage more discourse about authenticity in meaning construction as martial arts tropes continue to be adopted in advertising. Advertisers using martial arts as points of reference might contextualise and historicise this rhetoric in their advertising. The study included television commercials that have achieved notoriety for their creativity despite the prevalence of stereotypes within them.

Policies are needed to further our understanding of how racialised constructions may affect brands, advertising agencies, and the creative industry responsible for their production. Collaboration between HAT, the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA) and the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA), for example, would facilitate industry debate as the industry seeks to address diversity and inclusion. This research would add to Kantar's seminal publication *The Power of Inclusive Portrayal in Advertising* (Poole, 2021), which provided practitioners with insights into inclusive casting and storytelling. This research provides advertisers with the arsenal to not only acquire vocabulary to articulate representational discourse, but also the confidence to suggest how advertising could minimise

stereotypes. Brand owners could then embrace diversity and inclusion as key themes for raising their brand's profile.

## **Impact**

My research also has important implications for advertising teaching and research. HAT's Education Summit aims to raise awareness of the value of archives in understanding historical advertising in schools, colleges, and universities. As a trustee, my role entails collaboration with academics in the subject of advertising to engage students and their academic course tutors about the long-term impact of barriers to equality, generating activities related to diversity and inclusion in the creative industries by influencing how archives should be integrated in the curriculum in order to kickstart conversations about cultural history and stereotypes in advertising. Frameworks such as Authenticated Aesthetics in Advertising (AAIA) would enable understanding of the role of casting that have mis-or unrepresented the Chinese as a form of understanding authenticity where martial arts have been commodified in advertising.

Beyond the domain of the creative industry, community groups interested in migration, culture and identity would benefit from the knowledge gained in this study. At the time of writing, I have already participated in the advertising industry's ISOLATEDTalks in 2020 where I shared insights from my talk on 'Martial Arts in Advertising' to raise awareness of the impacts of historical racialised constructions. Subsequent contributions at PechaKucha Manchester's event on 'Migration' with 'Martial Arts Representations in British Television Ads' generated many views online in the same year. More recently, invitations to panel discussions at the newly

launched 'Yellow Peril Awareness Day' annual exhibition would enable me to offer my expertise to educate, and more importantly to offer a voice to the East and South East Asian community, and to encourage the wider population to explore the hidden histories of this hitherto silent community.

### **Future research**

The polysemic nature of advertising means there is more than one way of interpreting or deconstructing an advertisement (Puntoni, Schroeder and Ritson, 2010). While active vs passive assumptions are made about the way audiences engage with advertising, the speculation that historical cultural production dealt with passive audiences still holds true (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). Further research is needed to incorporate advertising literacy when testing the AAIA model developed in this study. The notion of literacy could be extended to martial arts literacy, as the study has shown that authenticity in martial arts tropes could be read in many ways by the Chinese community. Extending the study might involve questions about the extent to which audiences recognise the authenticity of those martial arts featured in commercials, their production quality, and technical aspects. A review of secondary literature about advertising literacy in the Chinese as minorities and textual discourse analysis of media coverage might provide clues with respect to literacy and authentication.

The study has highlighted that curation of historical advertisements is not a tidy mechanistic process, as subjectivity in terms of how the collections have been catalogued suggests that bias may be inherent in the archives relating to racialised imageries. The potential for omissions or inaccuracies by curators creates limitations when researchers rely upon one set of archives as their main source of data. Future



research should stipulate access to more than one repository, as well as opportunities to conduct independent searches in the collections.

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Finally, this thesis is in a neglected area, that of the representation of the Chinese as a 'silent' minority in martial arts-themed advertising. By delving into historical Chinese representations in film and television, I identified recurrent tropes that either mirrored, reflected, or contributed towards stereotypes or appropriation. The learnings defined how the creative industry should question its assumptions of China and the Far East by using the AAIA framework to fuel debates about authenticated racialised meaning construction in advertising. Not only that, but the potential reverse flow effect assumes that advertising creativity or advertising appeals may influence or be influenced by martial arts films and television (Doshi, 1999; Wang and Yeh, 2005; Wu and Chan, 2006). Whilst some films are made by Far Eastern studios, others are produced in the West, with these boundaries blurring in recent years. Western-made films that have benefitted from Asian martial arts filmmaking and have globalised local cultures for mainstream audiences include; *Karate Kid* (1984, 1986, 1989, 1994) and its remake (2010), *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai* (1999), *The Last Samurai* (2003), the *Kill Bill* series (2003, 2004), and the *Kung Fu Panda* series (2008, 2011) (Hiramoto, 2012). As the mainstream population adopts Bruce Lee films in droves, we can see the impact that migrant communities cultural icons have had on popular media.

This study sought to investigate the meaning construction of martial arts representations in early British advertising as a consequence of the portrayal of the

British Chinese community in television and film. These include identification of the different forms of martial arts representations in film and television; martial arts authenticity as a form of visual representation of the British Chinese; recurring martial arts representational discourse as a form of commodification of popular culture; and that brands that have utilised such tropes may assist understanding of authenticity in representational imageries between 1960s and 1990s.

As a profession concerned with meaning manipulation and symbolic representations, advertisers have utilised a range of tropes to illustrate martial art-ness. However, 'ways of seeing' by those commodifying cultural practices must account for, and be sensitive to, any loaded stereotypical imageries of the Chinese or East Asians when it comes to traditional martial arts. This is especially important as the historical mapping afforded to this study has highlighted the inherent popularity of martial arts tropes in advertising. It is hoped that the study's model for explaining racialised constructions of martial arts aesthetics and authenticity will help those in the business of cultural production to consider contextualising historical racialised imageries for Britain's East and South-East Asians (BESEA) in the face of #antiasianhate. The link between martial arts culture and the Far East is dependent on how popular media and advertisers construct or distort race using martial arts as a cultural point of reference in Western society. Ultimately, any production studies about race must acknowledge the damaging effects of racial stereotypes so that future efforts to minimise these representational forms are encouraged (Saha, 2020).

The analysis to date provides clues about the extent to which martial arts tropes have contributed to brand messages, and how brands associated with martial arts may have thereby enhanced their appeal to target audiences. In the case of *Kung Fuey* (1974-1976) and *Hai Karate* (1967-1976), brand associations were maintained

at the outset from the oriental sounding brand names to advertising execution. In contrast, BMK Carpets (1967-1969) and the Brick Development Association (1978) benefitted from the strength and durability concepts associated with Judo and Karate. These categorisations have enriched our understanding of the role of martial arts tropes in advertising, and that Judo, Karate and Kung Fu (and their variants) ascribed different meanings to an increasingly advertising literate audience in the early period.

This chapter has provided a historical context, including key socio-cultural trends and the influence of television and film during the 1960s and 1970s, that led to the popularity of martial arts material with members of the public about the context surrounding the *BMK Girl* (1967-1969), *Hai Karate* (1967-1976) and associated films and television series from the 1960s. There is also an appetite from members of the public to access some of the earlier advertising featured in this study, and as such there is scope to exhibit the work to a wider population.

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## **Appendix 1**

### **A brief guide to oriental martial arts**

- Karate means open hand and originated in Okinawa. Based on blows delivered by hand, foot or knee.
- Kung Fu is a generic term for Chinese martial arts, originating in northern China and most famously adopted by Bruce Lee. More than 1000 different types exist today, many in secret.
- Tai chi, full name Tai chi Chuan, means grand ultimate fist. Originated in China as a form of Kung Fu with fluid dreamlike movements.
- Aikido was founded in Japan in the 1900s and means way of harmony. A defensive art where a focused practitioner can redirect an opponent's aggressive force.
- Jujitsu is a Japanese martial art meaning the gentle art. Employs arm locks and joint manipulation and is regarded by many as a precursor to judo and aikido stop.
- Judo originated in Tokyo and means gentle way. Developed as a sport based on a system of leverage techniques, throws and holds.
- Kendo translates as way of the sword in Japan. Uses heavy, two-handed sword techniques with bamboo swords called shinai.
- Sumo contestants compete on a 15-foot dirt circle and aim to make any part of their opponent's body, bar the soles of his feet, touch the ground.
- Taekwondo is unarmed self-defence combat that originated in Korea featuring kicking and punching techniques.
- Muay Thai is the correct term for Thai kickboxing. Fighters today wear boxing gloves and are often trained to be complete fighting machines from a young age.

(Walker, V. 1997. Equals on the field of combat. *The Times – Sport*. 17 March, p.3)

## **Appendix 2**

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SB27 Levi Strauss Kung Fu 1998 (HAT)	267
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SB29 VW Polo 'self defence' 1999 (HAT)	228
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