

# Admen: a special worldvision

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## Abstract

Normally, the approach to the study of advertising meaning is a direct examination of the message, characterised by the anonymity of the creator, and most of the study continues the programme ignoring authors and their personal values, as well as the scope of the internal processes of ad message creation, as the current socio-structural intellectual reign only understands the subject as the locus for processes. We do not aim to favour either of the sides of the dilemma of whether or not biography influences ad creation (the specific case of the problem of creation, generally, be it artistic, technical, or philosophical), there is sense to the question on what, in fact, are the values prevailing in the limited environment of what are known as admen, to what point these values are transmitted to their work (ads), what perceptions are implicit in the receiver (consumer), and to what extent they are determined by the management system which, in the end, they serve. If the explanation of meaning in ad work cannot be based on the model of an autonomous author-subject, neither can it do without an understanding of admen's sets of mind and circumstance which is the main, outstanding ingredient in the makeup of meaning.

## Admen: the romantic myth

Although there are works written by admen<sup>1</sup> about their profession and their work (ads), generally works on advertising have been written by authors who are not admen and, when they are admen, they rarely set out a system of the values which guide them in their work beyond impressionist scraps on consumers or straitened professional appreciations on ad efficiency. Thus, it is important to follow what their implicit theories are, deducing them from dispersed clues in publications which are generally not read by anyone outside the advertising profession, and, above all, in ads least determined in creation, generally those qualified as 'very creative' ads.

That we cannot find complete declarations of principles and must use deduction and interpretation can



be explained because admen do not serve the Logos but Myth and are consequently reluctant to systemised and formalised formulae which belong rather to rational and institutional language and they prefer expression in their own work (ads) Myth territory and in artistic work (painting and literature beyond advertising) which are an escape valve from their profession's aggressiveness.

It also seems significant that in this distancing from the Logos there is a scarce consumption of specifically advertising literature among them,<sup>2</sup> which they share with a sector close to them, journalism, far from the bibliography consumption in other sectors such as sociology or the technical professions.

The name creative itself given both to the most famous and award-winning authors and ads gives us an interesting clue for reflection. Creation, creativity, and creative or creator, are concepts within

<sup>1</sup> David Ogilvy, Claude Hopkins, Rosser Reeves and, more recently, Jacques Séguéla or Joaquín Lorente and Marçal Molin, in this country.

<sup>2</sup> According to proofs from two publishers to the author about receptivity of specific collections of advertising titles.



the same basic premise, rooted in the illustration with its preferences for a new type of human being capable of creating himself and the world, 'one of the masterpieces of Ego-ideal building in contemporary culture' (Flahault and Schaeffer, 1997:6) and, thus, ideas with an important promethean component, as 'the creative artist is a Prometheus under Jupiter' (Galileo) which have not been chosen by chance to define ad work in message elaboration, as advertising will always place itself in the centre of modern values.

The creator is the person who produces new things and, above all, spaces, representations, and new experience and life possibilities for contemporaries, by means of art or technique. There is, therefore, a demiurgical intention to reorder the world under new coordinates, and if scientific or artistic creation is parsimonious and only shows itself sporadically, in advertising it is the everyday currency.

Not technical, but rather artistic creators, admen are an excrescence on the sides of major Art, mythologised by German Romanticism which has left us heirs to the ascension of the visual artist to the category of high priest of culture and the exaltation of Genius and Originality as the highest personality values. Thus, it is no coincidence that admen share many characteristics with 'the artist', as they also mostly come from the field of plastic or literary expression although, as we will see, their immersion in the commercial and management universe will give rise to a new figure. If the creative genius had a mythical moment in the apologetics of philosophers and the magnitude of some artists, advertising brings genius democratisation, as their work

is available to the masses.

The model artist is a being 'audacious, in an incomprehending environment, always going further' (Flahault, 1997:15) who is always consequently immersed in a great struggle and an epic model, who encloses revolutionary values and who, although unable to create from Nothing, like his Infinite AlterEgo, can upset what is given, producing 'novelty', the unusual, the revolutionary, the change in perspective and, above all, a change in order and the hierarchy of value and position.

In really intense admen (and, by extension, in their imitators), molded according to the previously mentioned modern ideal derived from German Romanticism, we frequently find the same traits which define the avant-garde artist, traits which are necessary for the advancement of both art and society, prone to fatal inertia and stagnation, victims of ties anchored in the past. Nowadays, life certainly imitates art and both avant-garde artists and admen have a mission: production of new models capable of influencing existence and, though obviously avant-garde and conventional models co-exist, both in art and advertising, only the former can be qualified as emblematic artists and creators.

But as opposed to creative artists, admen lack social recognition; while their work (ads) is mass-distributed and even quoted by people to enrich popular jokes, they barely appear on stage and the best of them are scarcely known beyond the advertising sector itself. They will only be allowed to stage their triumph at advertising festivals, some of which are held at the same cities as other 'major' film festivals, such as San Sebastian or Cannes. And as to writers and painters, the most capable will try to avoid the desire for recognition by producing private works which they would do exclusively if they were sure of making a living, a desire held in by the instability of success in literature and art galleries. An autobiographical novel published in 1915, 'The Genius' by Theodor Dreiser<sup>3</sup>, is an example of the process by which an artistic calling becomes an advertising calling by means of an initial ascesis, leaving behind aspirations of creative autonomy, 'the mere idea of which is considered a joke here', entering 'the hobbesian agency atmosphere' to put up with a complete lack

<sup>3</sup> Analizada per Jackson Lears (1994).

SIEMPRE QUEDARÁ GENTE A LA QUE NO LE INTERESE EL CINE, NI EL DEPORTE, NI LOS DOCUMENTALES, NI LA MÚSICA, NI LA MODA, NI VIAJAR, NI EL FÚTBOL.

TRES MILLONES DE PERSONAS YA DISFRUTAN DE LOS MEJORES CANALES TEMÁTICOS DE TELEVISIÓN.

Cine MEXICO SPORTMANIA ESTILO VIAJAR KIDS

ABÓNATE, LLAMA AL 902 11 00 10 CANAL DIGITAL INSTALACIÓN Y ANTENA GRATIS\*

of taste in business people, but which offers the compensation of entering the elite which controls society, specialises in the most amusing part of the control process, the carnival of glamour production and the game which are always involved in advertising production processes, as an adman confessed to the author when referring to his 'healthy' envy of colleagues who had received an international creativity prize: envy not so much for the success itself, but rather for 'how much fun it must have been to film the spectacular prize-winning spot'.

## Social function of admen, commercial translator of the artistic avant-garde

There are some traits of the avant-garde artist which also positively define the standards and functions of genuine admen: without a doubt provocation, subversion, insolence, visionary perception and conciliators of opposites. We will illustrate this with direct testimonies from elite admen who give us an all-over view, whatever their nationality.

## Provocation

There is no other sector of the marketing structure which knows so well and is so sensitive to the fleeting nature of the audience as admen: 'Those of you who flee from us are the main problem in advertising',<sup>4</sup> whatever the models of persuasive communication in psychology postulated by different stages in persuasive action, admen only keep two of them in mind: shattering the attention barrier, the essential requisite for establishing dialogue with an audience (Kover, 1995). Consequently, admen will make the maximum effort to avoid that their messages, which they know compete with many others, are avoided by an audience who only has to stop looking. The only sure way to achieve this is creating ads which shock the audience: 'without shock, there's no movement',<sup>5</sup> 'everything should be shocking somehow',<sup>6</sup> and 'advertising should be scandalous to be seen'.<sup>7</sup> A black model, caged like a panther, a dying AIDS patient advertising clothes, or a decapitated head advertising a hair-dresser's are only some of the examples of the millions in advertising history.

Doubtless, provocation carries violence with it, but it is necessary to advance; there is no advance without a break, as any political or artistic revolutionary doctrine would say, as 'violence, like graffiti, is not a destructive but a creative act',<sup>8</sup> and 'violence is merely a matter of point of view'.<sup>9</sup>

Of course the position of admen is delicate as, in the end, they are working in mass communication and the commercial establishment and cannot, thus, defend a programmatic kind of violence or break, but rather a simply useful kind; their violence, the shock they tend to, is a mere instrument, only 'to break the limits so as to achieve audience reception'<sup>10</sup> and, moreover, advertising violence is normally amusement, to be received intelligently, as if it were a comic. In any case, it is to be considered as fictional violence, not to be compared

<sup>4</sup> SEGARRA, Toni (1992). *Documentary on advertising*, Canal+.

<sup>5</sup> JONASON, Joakim (1997). *Lurzer's International Archives*, vol. 4, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> FREEMAN, Cliff (1998). *Lurzer's International Archives*, vol. 1, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> George Lois. Quoted in BOVÉE C. L. and ARENS W. F. (1986).

<sup>8</sup> GASKIN, Malcom (1997). *Lurzer's International Archives*, vol. 3, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> LEIKANGER, Stein (1997). *Lurzer's International Archives*, vol. 1, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> LEIKANGER. *Op. cit.*, p. 8.



to reality, as shock as a means both in advertising and in art is not so much a product of societies suffering war conflicts as satisfied societies which need to give themselves excitement in a too-boring life, along the lines of a theme park.<sup>11</sup> Probably due to this net function of providing impact and provocation, the script-writer of a spot about a book about admen found no image more appropriate than some of them roaring like lions.

## Symbolic subversion

Artists and admen are, above all, defined by their revolutionary role which, in admen, refers not to a political or economic order, of course, but to the everyday order, which can be a much more ambitious revolutionary aim, that is, an inversion in order, the whole of what we call conventional reality, an inversion obviously derived from the need to surprise and show novelties, quite definitely, being original which is one of the main basic defining virtues in advertising creativity (Altsech, 1996). Revolutionary inversion is to be

carried out in the following fields:

- reordering distinctions between the real and the ideal or dream world, or between the conventional world and the one beyond, erasing borders and making them exchangeable, according to the surrealist credo
- inversions of the old hierarchies, man/woman, adult/youth or child, bureaucracy/individual, making the weaker prevail in advertising over the stronger in each duo, to the point of vulnerating the establishment, reaching its apex in anti-advertising in campaigns such as Diesel jeans 'an anti-advertising and anti-establishment campaign'<sup>12</sup>
- Ontological subject-object inversion, personalising objects and objectivising subjects as, after all, the real star in each ad ought to be brand-objects.

The search for contradiction will be the main principle in creative advertising work, as it is the only thing which contributes the dynamic intensity capable of making audiences leave their perception dens, so that it will be necessary to make the ad elements themselves clash, setting a premise and then destroying it, in the so-called Pirella style: 'I try to contradict what I say with what is seen',<sup>13</sup> a face-off between text and image. Pirella, an adman who also moves in the field of illustrated press political satire, which reveals that a healthy subversive advertising exercise is framed in a wider revolutionary ethos needed to convulse a deadly social self-sufficiency but carried out in a pleasant way, by jolly fun, as is proper in a developed society which is tired of maximalist preaching and ideological wind-bags.

Humour will be the favoured weapon for the advertising exercise of iconoclasy which intends to bring fresh air to corseted rigid social rules, but also ridicule the opposite, instinctive brutality: in a Scandinavian ad, a husband enters nude and with a rose between his teeth, ready to jump on his wife, but behind the door she is enjoying a family visit and he crashes in on the scene. This type of layout requires a special perception by the adman himself, who catches that in our society we want to control everything and opposes the weapon of humour which is essentially uncontrollable, 'as our

<sup>11</sup> Our paraphrase on GASKIN. *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>12</sup> Joakim Jonason, campaign creator.

<sup>13</sup> PIRELLA, Emanuele (1992). *Italian Art Directors Club*, vol. 7, p. 22.

culture needs ceremony and hierarchy to function, humour has been declared dangerous and undesirable by the powers that be: church, state, army (...) (when looking for advertising ideas) I enjoy looking at serious ceremonies: royal weddings, award ceremonies such as the Nobel, inaugurations, looking for the moment of a mistake, an awkwardness, which lets laughter loose'.<sup>14</sup>

The reason for this recurrently mocking, iconoclastic behaviour is none other than 'after 1968, we stopped believing in myth and irony time began'.<sup>15</sup>

This iconoclastic spirit in the adman, enemy of any formality, is manifest in the most diverse ways, for example against symbols of social standing, directing mocking barbs as Fallon, a prestigious adman does, giving data in his curriculum such as: 'my son's pet is a snake, and I cry at the movies' because, in the end, this sort of thing defines us as a person while degrees and titles freeze us, and an adman without human feeling could not communicate with other human beings. However, the other extreme is very close, the curriculums of Jupiter admen, supreme managers of great agencies who collect professional and, especially, philanthropic, titles as presidents of executive committees, members of philharmonic societies, presidents of such-and-such museum business committees, university executive counsellors, etc.

## Insubmission and insolence

Subversion must necessarily go hand-in-hand with insubmission and insolence. It is sometimes manifest in the clothes of advertising artists, strange specimens with license to move among the circumspect circles of the business world. But, in any case, the outer freedom reflected in clothing is a symbol of the inner freedom admen ought to have: 'I do not express trends, I express my own universe'<sup>16</sup>. Insubmission is, of course, one of the traits of genius (Brenot, 1998), which all admen would like to have inside; insubmission means going against the rules more than not having them, as 'rules are made for mediocre people'<sup>17</sup>. The American agency Mullen gives 10 recommendations on its web page for creating 'great ads', and three of them are a repetition of one of them: 'don't follow the rules' (Mullen Agency, 1998), and includes a funny test to measure the qualities of aspirant admen, and considers daring to not submit to the customer's arbitrariness a positive datum.

Being an adman is definitely a synonym of bravery,

as 'creativity demands the courage to be different and discover difference'.<sup>18</sup>

Insolence is tightly connected to insubmission which, as Michel Meyer has pointed out (1996), is not just an attitude of defiant daring, but rather the content of a social function as necessary today as before; in the past the court jester was the embodiment of insolence, that is, beyond the limits (because of physique, behaviour, and language) and thus defying them, saying what others think but must keep quiet, 'mocking and criticising, laughing and seeming laughable' but, due to deformity allowed anything, even laughing at the king, although at the same time, thanks to the jester as the figure of visible transgression, public aggression against the king is diverted and eventually falls on the jester. In the same way, admen mercilessly portray human baseness by bufoonery, irritating image juggling, satire, and ingenious lies, some of which are too transgressing and irritating and call on advertising public spite which instigates law-makers to draw up laws against advertising to protect weaker members of society (children, youngsters threatened by tobacco and alcohol, women presented as objects, deceived consumers, drivers endangered by advertising billboards, etc.). As they are the most visible part of the system, the strongest darts are aimed at advertising, thanks to this diverting attention away from the great sponsor corporations.

## Visionary role

Brenot paradoxically concludes his work on the cliché of madness in creative genius not with a psychopathological but a magical thesis, as the creator definitely carries out the social role of the shaman in primitive societies which is none other than serving 'as an intermediary between human beings and parallel worlds (...) the shaman in trance alters sense perception and breaks with reality to set out on the dream adventure, enter the world of dream and hallucination (...) intensely lives fruitful hallucinations of another reality' (Brenot, 1998:243/244). Admen as creators are also visionary, apostols of modernity (Marchand, 1985) who are already living in what is still the future for

<sup>14</sup> LEIKANGER, Stein. *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> PIRELLA, Emanuele. *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>16</sup> GOUDE (1992). Canal+. *Documentary*.

<sup>17</sup> FIGGIS, Mike (1997). *Lurzer's International Archives*, vol. 2, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> LEIKANGER, Stein. *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

their contemporaries; that is why he can say, 'we want to create something completely new in advertising',<sup>19</sup> or 'I'm not talking of the past but of the future',<sup>20</sup> and also 'we are contributing a different way of seeing things, designed for these new times' (Bozzell & Jakobs Agency, 1998). The whole history of advertising has been impregnated by this visionary conscience and in the 20's a BDO Agency documentary already set out the purpose of advertising which is still valid today, not only 'to help people to decide what to eat and wear, how to invest their savings, how to improve their minds, (but also) what faith will save them' (Marchand, 1985:31).

The expository style of advertising gurus tends towards a maximalist language, and they are often heard giving advice on advertising action taking on a Ten-Commandments style such as Lorente (1986:14) whose first commandment is 'void yourself in producing good ideas', and the second, 'love your trade above all things', or George Lois<sup>21</sup> who places first the commandment 'do very human advertising' and last 'listen to your heart and keep your instinct in mind'. This last piece of advice addressed to admen is not trivial, as the adman's heart, his genuine interior, is the real inspiration space where he is alone, isolated from the outer world and its obligations, which once listened to can unleash his creative process which 'comes from the depth of the creator's conscience and, for that same reason, has truer and deeper consequences on the audience' (Saatchi & Saatchi, 1998). If the adman must necessarily have a foot in market reality, it is no less true that 'good admen go where there be dragons' (Biggs-Gilmore Agency, 1998), inviting the customer-producer to go along with them, ever further in search of the exotic ingredient necessary for their products and without which they cannot succeed.

The use of grandiosity in advertising is understandable in a logical wish to overcome the level of banality in most advertised objects but, for this same reason, admen as lovers of parody as a logical expressive resource unthinkingly turn themselves into a parody of the visionary, contradicting the exalted language used with the absolute poverty of the reference-product.

In the end, we are talking about an evangelical announcement of trifle-innovation: new broth flavours, pizzas with new ingredients, new package with improved closure, etc. However, there always remains the demiurgical pleasure of seeing how people are led by the message itself, how ingenious phrases become

public, how buyers flock to the commercial call, altogether, the pleasure of seeing how the audience can be moved by the least thing touching the childish element of the soul.

## Conciliating opposites

Our culture, after centuries of confrontation in all orders, has reached a solution in the synthesis of opposites or, to put it better, has reached the same solution already set up by old gnostic doctrines. Admen could not but participate in this cultural rediscovery and in this way the adman, although moving in a difficult balance, has the mission of harmonising antagonisms, making them work together with the aim of persuading. In their work, they reconcile the opposites of carnival culture and management culture, expressive intoxication and organisational discipline.

Admen came to be because of the production system's need for a human touch in its relation to the public, and this is why presidents of agencies such as Saatchi and Saatchi present themselves as businessmen and, at the same time, human beings.<sup>22</sup> The business world cannot speak to the consumer in technical language, in rational-beaureaucratic language; it has to dress in clothes lent by admen which allows it to unite with the consumer in a completely euphoric climate as it cannot be perceived as alienating but aspire to reaching a level of intimacy with its consumers such as imitates the closest personal contact. This is why admen sell themselves to companies as human experts, because 'we have the sensitivity to uncover the human side of your company to the consumer'. To communicate this principle in a much more visual way while defining what is to be understood as human touch, the Biggs Gilmore agency has placed an ice-cream stand in its entrance hall, while in other agencies some managers personally prepare coffee for their customers. What is human is either pleasant or it is not human and the best philosophy will always be 'being close to the customer while being close to the consumer' (Bozzell and Jakobs Agency, 1998), laying a bridge of real communication between them.

<sup>19</sup> JONASON, Joakim. *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>20</sup> SEGARRA, Toni (1992). Canal+. *Documentary*.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in BOVÉE, C. L. and ARENS, W. F. (1986).

<sup>22</sup> Tim Cronin, Saatchi and Saatchi, 1998.

This human sensitivity has to be combined with a strict personal discipline as, quite definitely, 'no conflict can exist between maximum professional accuracy and human warmth' (Ogilvy and Mather, 1998). Accuracy in an exhaustive exploration of all possibilities, both in art and science which must be complementary in advertising work, as 'without investigation it would be difficult to get to the bottom of the human soul' (Saatchi and Saatchi, 1998). Thus, capacity for aesthetic manifestation and scientific accuracy will be qualities demanded from an adman defined as a professional. Advertising history has always followed the way of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, with two schools of thought considering exclusively the best formula in each field, and ending up by reaching a consensus. For example, the 'reason why' school, with reasoned sales and scientificism argument, personified in the older figures of Claude Hopkins<sup>23</sup> or Rosser Reeves<sup>24</sup>, facing the 'ad with atmosphere' school created by admen such as McManus or Calkins, who preached the commercial need for human beauty and emotion,<sup>25</sup> schools of motivational research with a Freudian-based psychology and a model of interpretation of consumer declarations, facing the school of attitudinal metric investigation. There finally appears a synthesis which is nowadays the most common: ads which combine argument and sensitivity, interpretative investigation, hermeneutics, and quantitative investigation, all serving the same purpose.

Equally, the adman as persuader will use all languages, whether he speaks of aims, campaigns, impacts, tactics and strategies, strongly imbued by the military view; as he will whisper in consumers ears like a seductive lover; as speak grandiosely of consumers' needs to convert, showing parallel worlds like a preacher; will make them laugh, as a clown, dress in their clothes and language to become one with the audience; spout quasi-judicial obligatory sentences like a judge. This is their own field, the rhetorical, a necessarily synthetical and repertory art, with referents, products, and services, from this point of view excellent jokers for the persuasive exercise.

## Controlling admen

We have seen the parallel between the ideal of the artistic avant-garde and the adman, but there are naturally

notable differences; although they share the iconoclastic spirit and the search for novelty, the adman belongs to a second step in the spectrum of artistic autonomy and his production is subject to a higher censure as it is placed at the service of organisation aims. Practically from the beginning of modern advertising, they have been basically accused of trying to discipline admen's work, the accusation of 'narcissistic preciousness' inspiring ads which satisfy the author's ego, basically directed to the reduced elite of professional colleagues who will, above all, value the production aesthetics and originality, as '*a la page* admen direct their coded messages to one another' (Caro, 1994:174), leaving the obvious selling function of the ad in second place.

The mere expectation of covering artistic or self-expression ends is forbidden in advertising, as well as the expectation of public recognition, however much the advertising work may be launched at the masses, as 'ours (the advertising agency's) is not the place for a sensitive soul searching for appreciation' (BBDO); management, directed by the Logos, will inevitably look on admen mistrustfully, in any field, not just in advertising but also in architecture or cinema. A study considers them insecure, egotistical, rebel, stubborn, time-wasting, perfectionist, fame-starved and, besides, not very intelligent beings, from which we can derive that managers, although having to understand all these aspects considered inevitable must, at the same time, always stay in control and make few concessions (Fletcher, 1990), advice followed, of course, by a top executive of a Spanish agency who, asked at a lecture by a student on his role in the agency answered unhesitatingly: 'setting a very high standard and (metaphorically) killing off anyone who doesn't reach it'. The conflict between the Jupiters of management rationality and admen in Hermes' volatile sphere is invariably solved in the same way: the best example is the well-known case of one of advertising's greats, the American George Lois, victim of this conflict, thrown out in spite of his brilliance by his colleagues because, as they publicly set out at the time, 'an agency is, above all, a business and he (Lois) seems unaware of it'.<sup>26</sup> On the contrary, from the admen's side they consider that 'the better a marketing professional is, the less capable he

<sup>23</sup> Author of *Scientific Advertising* (1927).

<sup>24</sup> Proposed the «Single Sales Proposition» in Reeves (1957).

<sup>25</sup> Fox (1984), for an excellent discussion on this debate.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted by Fox (1984).

is of judging advertising, because he wants to be sure of everything and cannot be sure of anything'.<sup>27</sup>

Thus there are two forces fighting for control of the advertising product: on one hand those admen who produce it and, on the other, customers and supervisors in the agencies themselves; of course the latter have the last word but the admen have a strong personal implication with their work and consequently develop 'methods' to founding their own agency with a creative boutique seal to those followed by conventional agency structures such as aggressive defence or mental restriction like 'I agree with the objections but in the end I'll do what I want to', through presenting a great variety of ads to force a choice among them (Kover, 1995). It is, however, surprising that at management level in large agencies there is so much attention given to business policy and so little to message philosophy,<sup>28</sup> which is, in the end, the specific product of any agency, a fact unparalleled in any other business area, where management directs product policy. However, though surely it is not intended a priori, business policy finally becomes expressive policy; an obvious example of this contradiction is that of Marion Harper, CEO of McCann Erickson, himself incapable of creating an ad but who, in the 60's, built up an expansive policy of following multinational customers overseas, a policy followed by the rest of main American agencies, and which in the end determined the United States' dominating world organisation in advertising which, added to the cinema, has become Yankee domination over the world's imagination mind-set.

This struggle between management and creativity consequently determines a diversity of agency types, on one hand those dominated by an organisational leadership, characterised by large structures, in which managers, as the legendary Raymond Rubicam would say of those in the agency he himself founded, 'are not overly concerned with ads and know even less about them', and against this model the one of a leadership not management-inclined but rather ad production-inclined, an example of which is the Fallon/McElligott agency (1998) which, due to this same principle, does not allow simultaneous working for many customers although it does lead to more charismatic ad productions with a possibly greater impact on social values, as this second type of agency is more likely to be approached by customers disposed to allow greater creative freedom, a condition for campaigns being ruled by a spirit of rupture much closer to artistic avant-garde

production and, consequently, for admen to exercise their whole potential as revolutionaries of the everyday, which is one of their main functions, as we have seen.

On the other hand, manager, customer, and agency priorities, due to organisation rationales and consequent lack of value of anything without technical variables such as the ad, lead to arbitrary decisions in the choice of ads finally approved, which produces tension and conflict with the creative ethos and, added to other factors such as normally having to work periodically according to customer competition, also working on dissimilar products, and the undervaluing perception of audiences, has produced, among admen, an ideology of professionalism without axiology with a programmatic exclusion of any ideal which is not instrumental efficiency in persuasion; the price paid for this is the appearance of a cynical attitude which in its turn generates a preference for message styles which stress an existential absurdity that cannot help but seep into their ads as a quite usual background message, although probably unconscious in the authors. A new contrast among many quoted in advertising is this lack of axiology, that is, an ideological innocence sincerely self-proclaimed in the statements of admen who call themselves mere providers of persuasive know-how, and the constant attribution by outside critics of advertising as having highly ideological ends.

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<sup>27</sup> Bill Bernbach, creativity historian and founder of DDB, in Cunningham (1982:46).

<sup>28</sup> Evident, except in specific exceptions, in volumes of interviews such as Cummings (1982) or Ferrer (1992).



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