The Ethics and Values of Visual Communication Strategies in European Advertisements in 21st Century Western and Islamic Culture

LOZA Ilze
Art Academy of Latvia
ilzelozagd@gmail.com
10.21606/drs.2017.241

This research analyses interaction of graphic design, advertising and visual communication strategies between Middle East and Europe. Economic, political, and globalization processes from the Middle East have migrated into Europe by way of Muslim immigrants and asylum seekers, while social and cultural integration of minorities has been a primary focus of Western 21st century culture. This research provides an analysis of the ethics and values of visual communication strategies in advertisement design in Europe based on Western and Islamic cultures, taking into consideration the principles and ethics used to communicate with Islamic audiences. Emphasis was placed on advertising design and the differences among the design ethics of various communities to determine how values and design ethics have caused visual communication and advertising to fail between the east and west. The impact that such failures have on theoretical and practical artistic research and visual communication and advertising strategies are also explored to discuss how the shifting functions of artistic practices in graphic design and theoretical research form the basis of successful visual communication. In this way, a potential strategy-building system incorporating the design ethics of the western world and Middle East is proposed.

advertising, visual communication, western/islamic culture, globalization

1 Introduction

Globalization unites nations and cultures and has created a world that is closely interconnected. It manifests as increasing flows of goods and services, as well as capital and populations, between countries. For example, free movement of labor and war in the Middle East have contributed to the rapid increase in immigration from this region into Europe. According to Eurostat (2017), migration to the European Union (EU) has rapidly increased; asylum applications from citizens of nonmember countries began to increase throughout 2012, within the EU-27 and later the EU-28. Since 2012, the
number of asylum seekers has continued to increase from 431,000 and 627,000 thousand applications in 2013 and 2014, respectively, to 1.3 million applications in both 2015 and 2016 (Eurostat Statistic Explained, 2017). The number of applications made in 2015 and 2016 was approximately double the number recorded within the EU-15 during a previous immigration peak in 1992 (Eurostat Statistic Explained, 2017).

Many of these immigrants and asylum seekers are Muslim, and in 2010, there were 4.8 million Muslims in Germany (5.8% of the country’s population), 4.7 million in France (7.5% of the population), and 14 million in Russia (10% of the population; Pew Research Center, 2010).

Between 1990 and 2010, the Muslim share of the European population grew by one percentage point per decade, from 4% to 6%. This pattern is expected to continue through 2030, when Muslims are projected to make up 8% of Europe’s population (Hackett C., Pew Research Center, 2016).

According to a new Pew Research Center (2017) analysis of demographic data, if migration to the continent continues at medium or high levels, the share of Europe’s population that is Muslim could more than double between now and 2050, according to the analysis, which defines Europe as the 28 European Union member states plus Norway and Switzerland (Lipka, 2017). There are three different projections for the coming decades with zero migration, medium migration and high migration scenario.

![In three migration scenarios, population decline for Europe’s non-Muslims, population growth for Muslims](pewresearch.org, 2017)

**Figure 1** Three migration scenarios, population decline for Europe’s non-Muslims, population growth for Muslims. Source: (pewresearch.org, 2017)

Last analysis of Pew Research Center (2017) predicts,

current circumstances of regular migration combined with some reduced numbers of refugees continuing to arrive, the most realistic endpoint for Europe may be somewhere between the medium and high migration scenarios – meaning Muslims could make up between 11.2% and 14% of Europe’s population in 2050 (Lipka, 2017).
The size of the European Muslim population in 2050 depends largely on the future of migration.

Estimated and projected Muslim population shares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2050 zero migration</th>
<th>2050 medium migration</th>
<th>2050 high migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Europe overall</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 The size of the European Muslim population in 2050 depends largely on the future of migration. Source: (pewresearch.org, 2017)
As such, Europe is experiencing cultural conflict due to rapid growth among immigrant populations and their economic and social impacts on European culture. Crawford explained that

*Europe’s uneven ability to integrate its immigrants, combined with the steep social ladder, the rise of the xenophobic right, and resistance to immigration have created a volatile mix of resentment, hatred, and rancor on the part of the native population that can translate into violence.* (Crawford 2007, p.18).

2 Materials and Methods

This analysis compared modern advertisement designs from the Middle East and Europe based on ethical values, cultural and religious principles, and differences between communities. Exploring practical graphic design examples from print and digital media, the analysis was based on the theoretical design research of Ilze Loza, «Influence of Globalization and Islamic Culture on the European Advertising Design 21st Century» (unpublished).

The language of graphic design is an important topic in the context of globalization processes because it reflects changes within cultural environments. In particular, advertisement design is indicative of modern globalization because through such design, researchers can identify social processes, changing cultural environments, and influences and interactions between eastern and western cultures as well as between Christianity and Islam. Contemporary graphic design conveys messages that are often unique to different countries. There are several factors that influence regional graphic design, such as views of society, political structure, and culture. Art is an accumulation of culture that is unique to the society in which it is created, and advertising has become a global phenomenon with critical influence on both commercial and political or intercultural communications.

Culture is the cornerstone of national identity and includes everything that a society creates and values. Due to globalization processes, homogeneous culture may begin to appear. For example, Europe, as a geopolitical entity, is subject to strong globalization processes both internally and externally, and cultural mixing has occurred here between global and regional cultural elements. Schuerkens (2003, p.21) stated that such elements include “television series, Western consumer articles and values introduced by migrants [that] can become elements of the local daily life, often in changed forms and adapted to the local context”. The cultural environment in Europe is diverse, and

*Within a given culture are generally found smaller groups or segments whose beliefs, values, norms and patterns of behavior set them apart from the larger cultural mainstream. These subcultures may be based on age, geographic, religions, racial and/or ethnic differences.* (Belch & Belch, 2011, p.137).

Successful coexistence or integration of cultures depends on interactions between people. Cultural intelligence is needed to avoid social exclusion that promotes radical attitudes and leads to extremism. Understanding and interacting with people of other cultures is a requirement of modern media communication and among individuals involved in migration processes, who help immigrants become part of society within their new home countries as active members of local economies, which creates an ever-expanding audience for advertisers.

Today, advertising is a global phenomenon with a critical impact on commercial, political, and intercultural communications. Globalization processes are merging cultural barriers created by historically incompatible intercultural connections. Globalization manifests in global international organizations and marketing strategies that can create conflict between social values and commercial ethics, especially within the interaction between eastern and western advertising. For example, acceptance in the east of symbols of western consumerism does not necessarily mean acceptance of western values. A survey in 1997 found an attachment to technology and consumerism among young men in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates but did not indicate
Western liberal attitudes among these men, who were “still stalwartly conservative in their social outlook” (Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002).

3 Ethics and Values of Visual Communication Strategies in Western and Islamic Culture in the 21st Century

One of the most basic dimensions of culture is religion. Pargament (1997, p.34) described religion as: “... the habitual expression of an interpretation of life, which deals with ultimate concerns and values. Institutional religion formalizes these into a system which can be taught to each generation”. Thus, religion defines ideals, which in turn are reflected in the values and attitudes of societies and individuals. These values define behaviors, practices, institutions, and overall cultural ways of existing.

Religion and culture in Islam are a complex and inseparable whole, and religion is a part of every aspect of life through the Koran. Asad (2007, p.445) stated that “Islamic values are [a] set of beliefs and morals, a social doctrine and a call to righteousness among all members of society”. Abbasi (2010) explained is as “a complete, self-contained ideology which regards all aspects of our existence—moral and physical, spiritual and intellectual, personal and communal—as parts of the indivisible whole which we call ‘human life’”. When religious authorities object to advertising, usually it is because of disagreements with western icons and culture. Advertising can be used by religious scholars to study Islamic ideals, representation of woman in 21st century, appetite or rejection of controversial ideas in design.

In contemporary business environments, corporations are involved in promotional activities that adversely affect the social and cultural norms of the Islamic ethical system. For example, Islam defines ethical behavior as adhering to restrictions on human actions that are detrimental to society. Defiance occurred when the social and cultural norms of Islamic business ethics carried over to 21st century, as the Koran was written from 610 to 632 A.D., when contemporary marketing and advertising did not exist; thus, it conflicts with trends in globalization, global market, multiculturalism, and contemporary marketing. As per the Islamic ethical system, emotion, sexual attraction, romantic language, minimal dress, and images of young girls are unacceptable, which runs counter to advertising trends in Europe that emphasize all of these subjects.

Rice and Al-Mossawi (2002) suggested that because Muslims in the Middle East share the same beliefs, advertising messages within these countries are the same. However, guidelines are interpreted differently in different countries; for example, in the United Arab Emirates local advertisements rarely include pictures of women, while in Malaysia, models must cover their hair.

*Therefore, all parties shall run advertisements triggered human thinking in terms of fulfilling the command of Allah. Only with the right advertising contributes to enforce the Islamic economic system. Islamic advertising is consistent with the concept of Al-Bayan which is describing all details of the product with full disclosure to consumers (Nagata, 1994, p.191).*

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of unethical advertising on consumers. Marketing materials that use advertising techniques that do not conform to Islamic cultural norms and values are considered controversial and offensive to consumers from minority Islamic groups. Fam, Waller, and Erdogan (2004, p.114) found that “differences in religious affiliations tend to influence the way people live, the choices they make, what they eat and whom they associate with,” while Wilkes, Burnett, and Howell (1986, p.114) found that “[a] strong relationship is apparent between religion and a variety of social factors such as a greater concern for moral standards and having much more traditional and conservative attitudes.
Visual communication that includes characters and symbols varies by culture. An image may be positive in one culture but be offensive in others. Using an inappropriate visual communication strategy will create negative effects and simultaneously influence social behaviors. Andrade (2005, p.559) suggested that “[t]he word ‘offensive’ is highly associated with the subtleties of relational and situational context. Whether a word or an image is perceived to be offensive depends on the relationship between the parties involved and the occasion/situation where it occurs.” Offensive advertising is culturally specific and is perceived and judged by different criteria across cultures (Boddewyn, 1991).

Religion influences consumption patterns by restricting certain foods and beverages; for example, Jews and Muslims do not eat pork. The pictures below represent advertisement campaigns from the Middle East and a western food chain. The first example shows a keffiyeh-wearing desert nomad as
he warms his hands over a sandwich from Kudu, a chain restaurant. In contrast, a McDonald’s advertisement for the bacon Big Mac emphasizes the meat rather than story. Kudu advertises product without mentioning the type of meat because pork is halal—forbidden in the Middle East.

Additionally, advertisements often evoke emotional responses among target audiences by using cultural references. In Islamic culture, a sensitive topic in visual communication is gender role, particularly women’s role, which is strongly influenced by religion. This, in turn, affects advertising and social media, which must be sensitive to cultural and religious beliefs and traditions. Gokariksel and McLaren (2010, p. 72) discovered that “gendered identities are critical both to expressions of Islamic piety and to the operation of consumer cultures,” while Deng, Jivan, and Hassan (1994, p. 537) wrote that “[i]n Islamic countries, both men and women must cover their torso and upper legs at all times and in the case of women only their faces’ skin may be exposed.”

Muslim countries disapprove of lascivious displays and indirect sexual references. One of the most common tropes in Western advertising is sex. Harris and Sanborn (2013, p. 126) stated that “[a]lthough some products such as perfume and cologne are sold almost exclusively through sex appeal, practically any product can be marketed through associating it with a beautiful person.” The examples below are perfume ads, and the composition and points of interest are focused on the sexual appeal of the models. Product photography is secondary in this type of design, in which the focal point is the body of the person being displayed. Such advertisements are wide spread in western society.
In contrast, in perfume advertisements from the Middle East, the focal point is the perfume bottle, and in most cases, models are not present or are covered in long, usually black dresses. Thus, favorable attitudes toward advertisements using female sex appeal are significantly higher among western subjects than among Muslim subjects.
The Islamic Affairs Department (1989, p.74) has declared that “[i]n the Islamic tradition, the female form is treated very differently than either the male form or the Western female form, a main difference being that the role and the physical form of women is not accepted as public.” Publicizing female images in the Middle East amounts to being irreligious and disrespectful; however, images of Arab women in advertising seemingly violate long-held traditions within the Islamic private and public spheres. Krai (2006, p.75) explained that, “[s]pace is extremely important in Islamic social order, and spatial divisions regulate male–female relationships. The main objective is to prevent gender mixing.” During the twentieth century in the Middle East, it was strictly forbidden to use local women in photography for advertisement campaigns, and it is only recently that a shift has been observed toward more open attitudes about this matter. For example, Dailymail.co.uk (Akbar, 2017) recently published an article about the censorship of adverts featuring a white woman in a swimsuit in Saudi Arabia.

“The photo was changed by Saudi hardware retailer Saco, who have edited other ads to publicize their Ramadan sale. The women appear to have been edited out completely in other adverts. Women in Saudi Arabia, which is governed by strict Sharia law and has previously come under fire for its gender segregation laws, are required to cover up their face and body when they are out in public. (Akbar, 2017)

A beach ball had been digitally added to the image to cover her because the photo broke the country’s strict Shari’ah laws about women covering their skin in public. The photo circulating on social media shows a man and three children, all wearing black t-shirts, playing in a swimming pool with a Winnie the Pooh beach ball in the corner. However, the original version of the image was made to advertise pools by Intex, an American country, and had featured the woman lounging by the edge of the pool instead of the inflatable ball.
Messaris concluded that misrepresentations and debasing representations of women in advertising should be rectified:

*Things are beginning to change. As more and more women become employed in the industry, more positive and realistic images of women are coming to light. Yet the old tensions between the West and the Middle East, the modern and the traditional, the secular and the sacred, sexual freedoms and privacy, and appreciation and objectification remain and have resulted in an ambivalence in much of the media depicting the Arab woman today (Messaris, 1997).*

After extensively examining Middle Eastern advertisements that increasingly include local women in marketing campaigns. Such ads depict Arab women in modest dress (i.e., *abaya* [long dress] and *shailah* [scarf]) without reference to sex appeal; although the women are shown, these ads strictly follow Koran rules about visual appeal and modesty. Both men and women wear local clothes and cover their torsos; in the case of women, only their faces and wrists are exposed.
In the following comparison, featuring mineral water advertisements, significant differences are apparent between the Islamic and western ads. Both advertisements include female models to examine the ethics of sexual appeal in advertisements, which reveals that western ads focus viewers’ attention on the beauty of the model rather than the product. The opposite compositional approach is used for the Islamic ad, in which the mineral water product photo placed at the center of the ad.
International brands should change how they promote products to different target audiences. For example, a marketing specialist could be employed to develop communications that are effective within a target group using simple techniques, such as choosing minority models or including principles from the Koran. In a Knorr’s advert for an Islamic target audience, the designers took into account cultural differences and advertisement ethics.
Designers must make complex choices. As globalization continues, designers who can create advertising for a multicultural target audience are becoming increasingly important, especially in the Middle East, which has a significant expatriate community. Advertisement studios are coming up with increasingly creative and unexpected solutions to Islamic advertising rules that still target expatriates from all over the world.

*Change is an international upscale brand providing quality lingerie, swimwear and home wear. The objective of the ad was to announce the launch of CHANGE in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The ads’ focus is to utilize the concept behind censorship in Saudi Arabia to pull focus on the Brand’s product line and to transform censorship into art. The ads are all in English, as they target an upscale bilingual audience.* (Ogilvy, 2008)

In the following advertisement for a resort, described by Eduards (2013) as “an excellent example of the tightrope that advertisers walk in Islamic countries,” the female is dressed modestly in the long, body covering dress. In the second example, depicting an advert for the Gran Melia Hotel and Resort in Spain, the model is instead dressed in a bikini.
According (Badran, 2005) gender issues are one of the complication of the globalization processes in the countries of Muslim Culture:

Gender issues are one such complication when trying to address adaptations in a rapidly modernizing society. Thus, questions about whether media are damaging Islamic values or the representation of women in a media-rich Islamic culture are also questions about a division in UAE society between tradition and modern, or the sacred and the secular. (Badran, 2005, p.27).

4 Visual Communication Strategies in Europe Influence by Islamic Culture

In Europe, there are very few ethical rules applied to advertising; thus, Islam-related marketing campaigns take one of two paths. Brands targeting Islamic minorities tend to respect and understand Islamic cultural ethics and values. In the first advertisement example, a campaign for Kushbu, which is a fashion line based in the UK that sells Islamic wear, is depicted.

![Figure 29 Kushbu advertisement. Source: (pinterest.com, n.d.)](image)

The second example is for H&M, which is a western brand that targets Muslim minorities and is expanding sales into the Middle East. In 2015, H&M featured a Muslim model wearing a hijab, which was a first for mainstream advertising, in a video designed to encourage consumers to recycle their clothes. The advert made headlines as well as business sense; Muslims spent $266 billion on clothing and footwear in 2013 (Reuters).

![Figure 30 H&M advertisement. Source: (hijablicious.com, 2015)](image) ![Figure 31 H&M advertisement. Source: (Elliott., 2015)](image)
Similarly, sportswear brand, Nike, launched a revolutionary sportswear line for Muslim woman in 2018 to integrate Muslim sportswomen into the global sports world. The advertisement released in the Middle East featured five female professionals from different parts of the Arab world pursing their athletic dreams.

Another approach is to use shock advertising, in which designers play with Islamic values and ignore ethical principles of Muslim culture to attract attention. One example is Diesel’s 2013 “Reboot” advertising campaign. Shock advertising is a common practice in the western world. It is not designed to offend minorities, but it often does. Many Muslim women spoke out, mainly against the ad.
Arianna (2014) also found that “[d]esigner Kenneth Cole is another famous seeker of controversy. Cole sees his fashion-maker status as an opportunity to get people talking, and his detractors see him as exploiting international crises and news items to drive sales.”

The Diesel denim niqab ad really isn’t shocking in comparison. But the reaction to it is illustrative of a change in the psyche over the last couple of decades. In 1992, print adverts for Bijan perfume appeared in Vogue magazine. These showed two female faces close up and side-by-side. The first woman—meant to represent a Muslim woman—was veiled, serious, and sober looking. Although the woman’s face was heavily made up with cosmetics, the impression was of a nun-like woman. A caption next to the face read: “women should be obedient, grateful, modest, respectful, submissive, and very, very, serious.” The face of the woman next to her was completely different. Carefree, this woman was smiling or laughing, with her mouth wide open. She was wearing a baseball cap, but had let her hair hang down at the same time. Next to her was a small American flag, and the caption: “women should be bright, wild, flirty, fun, eccentric, tough, bold, and very, very, Bijan.” (Millar, 2013)

The understanding of ethics in graphic design and marketing has become a source of broad discussion among designers and within society. Michael R. Hyman, Richard Tansey, and James W. Clark (1994, p.6) wrote an article on the evolution and progress of researches on advertising ethics and the found out that advertising ethics is still a mainstream topic and it is not an exhausted topic. (Hyman, 1994). Nevertheless, every conceptual decision in advertising should be ethical, which requires designers to be morally responsible and understanding of the cultures and values of their target audience, in this era of globalization and multiculturalism. The need to understand how personal beliefs, religions, socioeconomic classes, and other differences affect visual messages is a key part of professional graphic design. If these differences are not recognized, then the messages generated can provide incorrect information or inappropriate graphical compositions.

5 Conclusion
Technology has created a global culture and provided unprecedented communication to all corners of the world. Understanding cross-cultural conversations and providing fresh perspectives are important to ethical graphic design and visual communication that must take into account globalization processes and intercultural influences. Particularly sensitive ethical issues include racial stereotypes and religious ethical standards, especially those of Islam.
Advertising both forms and reflects social life, and marketing activities are widely affected by intercultural processes. New ethical values are emerging in the 21st century, based on various nationalities living in close proximity. Mass migration from Middle East to Europe has influenced the way target audiences respond to ethically sensitive topics in Islamic culture. Thus, advertising communications must create hybrid identities to negotiate between eastern and western cultures. While western advertising ethics follows very few rules, Islamic culture has many rules based on business ethics present in the Koran. Principles of Islamic business and ethical considerations must be taken into account when marketing to Islamic audiences to avoid controversy, negative publicity, or obviation of brands.

Value principles and design ethics in visual communication and advertising for Islamic audiences should include the following but are often interpreted differently in various Muslim countries.

- Business ethics and advertising should be based on Shari’ah laws and the Koran.
- Islamic advertising should be aestheticized, modest, based on the story and emotional.
- Sex appeal cannot be used in Muslim countries, nor indirect sexual references.
- The female gender is treated very differently from that male gender, based on cultural and religious traditions, with the main difference being that women’s physical form cannot be presented for public viewing.
- Both men and women must cover their torsos and upper legs at all times, and in the case of women, only their faces may be exposed.
- *Haram* products forbidden for use in advertising include gambling, liquor, pork, interest in money, blood of animals, and meat from dead animals scarified.

Research has shown that Islamic and western cultures influence each other. Every year, more international brands target Islamic audiences and move into Middle Eastern markets, while intercultural processes between the east and west increase globalization. Advertising strategies in the Middle East tend to adapt western advertising styles without losing connections to Islamic cultural traditions. Most European advertising and communication strategies in the Middle East are based on cultural understanding and respect for Islamic values and ethics, although there are a few examples of controversial advertising.

Gender issues are the most complicated to address when creating adaptive advertising strategies, although globalization has caused modernization in within tradition-based Middle Eastern societies. Therefore, media are often questioned for damaging Islamic values or representing women inappropriately, and Islamic culture also questions the division between tradition and modern. Despite such obstacles, marketing strategies that strictly follow Shari’ah laws about female visual representation and women’s roles in society, that combine western style with cultural traditions or Islamic values, and westernization of marketing tools and adverts can be successful.

Globalization is the process in which local events are induced by widespread events and vice versa; thus, globalization has created new social relationships, in which politics, economy, culture, and ecology are united in a single interdependent network that influences every society and individual. Education reforms are needed to encourage respect and tolerance of other culture, religious beliefs, traditions, and habits.

6 References
About the Author:

Ilze Loza researches transdisciplinary between design, globalization, culture and advertising. She currently pursues an PhD at the Art Academy of Latvia. Her thesis examines the Influence of Globalization and Islamic Culture on the European Advertising Design 21st Century.