

Full Length Paper

Mysticism in Subliminal Advertising

**Yalçın Kırdar, Ph.D. Gediz University,
Business Administration Department, Izmir, Turkey
yalcinkirdar@yahoo.com +905057164226**

Accepted 3 February 2012

The study evaluates the meaning of mysticism and its connection to the conscious mind, the unconscious mind, and the subconscious as well as the use of archetypes in advertising to influence people by impacting their subconscious mind. More specifically, the article investigates the myths, mysticism, symbols, codes, metaphors, and hidden persuaders that are used in advertising raising the possibility that there could be an unethical aspect to advertising since consumers and customers may be unaware of its manipulative use of archetypes, codes, hidden writings and hypnotic sound effect. The main reason for the use of such methods and techniques in advertisements is to create a strong will to buy the product advertised without any explicit reasons for doing so. The spate of research on how these hypnotic messages have become a means that is of great use in a wide range of disciplines such as political communication, marketing, promotion and advertising has made it necessary for this article to address the ways subliminal advertising techniques are explored in real advertisements.

Keywords: Mysticism; Consciousness; Subliminal Advertising; Myth; Archetypes.

INTRODUCTION

A shared feature manifests itself in the mystical experience-based records made in different cultures at different times. In mystical experience, consciousness plays a key role. However, it has not been long since it has not received the respect it deserved as a discipline in that it was associated with religion and regarded not only as being the enemy of objective reality but also as far from being scientific (Deikman, 2008, 299). In fact, non-academic studies confirm that a number of scientists have various mystical experiences. Nevertheless, mysticism continued to be a mystery since it was perceived as being non-academic.

Manufacturers feel obliged to develop different strategies to attract attention and acclaim preference for their products because the properties and services available in the market have almost no features that make them unique. Due to the developing and changing production facilities, initiating a new product in turn paves the way for the production of similar or imitated commodity. With this in mind, advertising tends to tempt the consumers to buy using certain feelings ingrained in the subconscious. More specifically, marketers abuse psychological and sociological elements of fear, longing, jealousy, desires, ambition, expectation, and feelings deep-seated in the subconscious since birth (Gençtan, 1993: 29). The subliminal perception includes all the intellectual events other than conscious perception. The subconscious is composed of the impulses that need to be satisfied as much as possible and that are impossible to access due to the structural barriers of the censorship system.

The first attempts to send messages to influence the subconscious commenced in the 1900s. Knight Dunlap, an American psychology professor, used in his illusion show imperceptible shadows that the conscious was not aware of in order to get the audience to perceive two different lines with the same length. The researcher who attempted to practice the illusionist's visual illusion methods later made applications in line with the analysis carried out by a marketing researcher, James Vicary, in 1957. James Vicary runs a cinema hall in New Jersey, USA with numerous resources from which he can collect data on subliminal advertising. He undertook a series of work that experimented with almost 45000 people in June, 1957. In the experiment, by using tachistoscope James Vicary inserted in the picnic film some messages flashing at the rate of 1/3000 per second and that could not be detected at the conscious level. The messages were "eat popcorn" and "drink cola". The popcorn and cola sales during the period of this application were higher than other periods of sales without such an application (Sunday Times, 10th June 1956).

In the light of these findings, the advertisement executives realized that the subconscious can be controlled, so they began to collaborate with the psychology researchers to design subliminal advertisements which include hidden messages. They also made use of the investigations that were then published as a book by Vance Packard *the Hidden Persuaders*. The book highlights the fact that the human brain is sensitive to three archetypes: birth, death and sexuality. The people watching the subliminal advertisements may be aware of the brand, institution or product that are being advertised, but what they are not aware of in the advertisement are the elements that trigger their subconscious such as colors, sounds, symbols, persons, objects, demands, fears, desires hidden in the subconscious. In addition, it should be understood that advertisers also employ linguistic and literary devices in semiotics such as denotation, connotation, myth, metaphor, metonymy, paradigm, syntagm and code to construct meanings for consumers:

Denotation

The first level of assigning meaning is the one that Saussure examined. This level is to describe the connection of a sign to its signifier and signified as well as to its referent point in the real world. Barthes calls this "denotation" (Guiraud, 1994: 18). Denotation is the reflection of the cognition of an object in the real word. The extent of this reflection is determined by culture. A sign has particular denotations which must have connection with the signifiers.

Connotation

The second important level of assigning meanings is connotation, which describes the interaction emerging when a sign coincides with the feelings, excitement and cultural values of the audience. Each sign has a connotation because it associates a receiver with at least something psychological. Connotation is relatively subjective in assigning meanings associated with a sign in terms of form and content. Due to the subjectivity, interpretation is influenced by the interpreter just as it is by the object or the sign.

Each advertisement has a particular denotation just as objects in photographs are identified. The codes of connotations, on the other hand, are primarily based on common social values such as being respected, admired and honored. There is always a message that is not explicit,

but almost implied when the behaviors, dressing, gestures and mimics of the person in the advertisement coincide with those of a good housewife or of an admired personality.

Myths

Myth is a story that helps a culture account for or assigns meanings to some aspects of nature or reality. Primitive myths are basically life and death, gods and humans, good and bad. On the other hand, sophisticated myths are about masculine and feminine, family, success and science. Without fictional stories, it is impossible for a society to understand history, or culture. Myths are also described as symbols and signs that are transmitted to the next generations and that account for the rooted beliefs. Each society has a unique creation myth. Western films portray such myths for the American Society. The picture of cowboy in the advertisement of Marlboro has become a symbol of an urban man who is fond of rural life and his freedom. The cowboy mission became the myth of brave and free people and has made Marlboro one of the most desired brands across the world including Turkey.

Myths mystify or hide their own origins and in turn political and social dimensions (Berke, 2001: 86). This definition leads to the hypothesis that “myths create mysticism”.

Metaphor

Metaphor is the substitution of the literal meaning of a word for another. More specifically, it is to describe something with a word that basically seems irrelevant but is similar in a particular way. It is also the use of a concrete object to express an abstract feeling or thought. A concrete object in a photograph is identified with an abstract concept. For example, a vulture associates the concept of death, whereas a pigeon that of peace. On the other hand, simile is also another most frequently used metaphor. It is conveyed with the conjunctions such as *like* and *as*. Metaphoric meanings may be universal, while they can also be regional or national. However, what is certain is that it is the advertisers that most frequently use language metaphorically.

Metonymy

This figure of speech is to demonstrate a particular characteristic of something instead of demonstrating itself in order to convey the meaning. One reason behind this is that one object can reflect a person. For example, demonstrating tanks and soldiers instead of the whole army or demonstrating a white uniform, a tension measuring tool in order to identify a doctor.

Metonymy is to convey similar meanings by association. It is also the representation of a whole object by one of its parts or sometimes of a part by a whole object. The selection of the metonymy is of great importance because it is this metaphor that reveals the rest of the reality.

Metonymy is the establishment of the relation between the signifier and signified through association. Unlike metaphors, there is no replacement of a concept by a physical object in metonymy. It does not require reporting either. This aspect makes metonymy relatively more natural than metaphors (Filizok, 2001: 42).

Advertisers use both metonymies and metaphors. For example, using a mother figure that prepares breakfast for her children is metonymy for all the tasks she does (cooking and washing), while the atmosphere of love and security she provides is metaphor. There are also times when metaphor and metonymy are interwoven because an object can be conveying both metaphoric and metonymic meanings.

Paradigm

Paradigm is to select only one sign from a number of all other signs that can be substituted. It requires the simultaneous combination of many elements in a cognitive order. The elements are associatively related to one another and this association occurs in the brain (Günay, 2002: 56). Paradigm is the vertical dimension, which is composed of units, each being a sign. For example, cameras and types of objectives are a paradigm of units. A photographer may choose a middle size or Polaroid camera as a paradigm that forms meanings. All the units in a paradigm must have shared characteristics. However, each unit must also be explicitly different. For example, among hundreds of flowers, orchids are on a paradigmatic axis.

Each of the visual communication codes in advertisements is paradigmatically related. What really plays a key role in the composition of the story is choosing a particular selection of lightening techniques among all others, of a model among many others, and of a soft filter among all others. In paradigmatic analysis, binary oppositions and unselected options determine the meaning of the selected units. Therefore, there is also meaning where a particular selection is made.

Syntagm

Syntagm is to form a set of meaning by ordering the selected units, which are gathered, based on the unrecognized rules and conventions. A syntagm can order its units in the flow of time. An example can be the syntagmatic ordering of word in a sentence. It is also important in what order the units are sequenced.

Codes

Codes can be defined as deducing meanings from signs and as the arbitrary (conventional) systems learnt or taken from culture. In fact, culture from anthropologic point of view can be regarded as a collection of codes (Aybar, 2002: 216). Codes are systems in which signs are organized. These systems are created by the conventions among society members using this code. A code is a system that is made up of signs that explain conventional rules in the society. There are codes behind everything in all walks of life or behind all the advertisements of industrial products ranging from cars to cosmetics. Codes enable a message to be interpreted in the same way by the receiver and sender. Therefore, the code used by both parties must be the same in any communication. The identification of codes by societies themselves leads to the fact that they convey different meanings from society to society, and from culture to culture (Barthes, 1999: 243).

MYSTICISM AND ITS IMPACTS

It has been claimed throughout the human history that certain parts of the brain have played a key role in the development of mystic experiences. Significant evidence for this claim is based on the observation of changes in religious beliefs in patients after experiencing brain lesions and of changed brain activities during a religious ceremony or mystic experiences through the use of functioning magnetic resonance imaging (Eşel, 2009: 193). It is also claimed that there are basically three sources of supernatural beliefs, more specifically religious beliefs. The first is the attempt to interpret dreams. The second is fear of dying and the willpower to explain the dying phenomenon. The third is mystic experiences. The term mysticism is closely related to religious doctrines. However, it points to the religions and practices beyond these doctrines. It can be defined as the belief in the existence of the universe, life and love. Mystic experience is the one in which there is a feeling of powerful contact and unity (unio mystica). Mysticism is a term classified under spirituality and is more comprehensive than religion.

Mystic experiences can create a sense of unity (disappearing of self and non-self dilemma), the nonexistence of time and space, a feeling of discovering an unknown fact and the truest fact (illumination and reaching divine truth) and a sense of infinity.

Maslow calls mystic experience, “zenith experience” and defines it as a deep and impressive experience that it can leave permanent impact on one’s personality. Freud, on the other hand, defines this experience as full unification with the external world, a sense of ocean (Meissner, 2005: 507). Another pioneering scientist, Albert Einstein, says with regard to his beliefs on mystical reality:

The most beautiful and true feeling that you can experience is mystic excitement. The source of all true sciences is this feeling. Those who have not tasted this feeling or been overwhelmed by it are just like dead. The things that we have not passed through do in fact survive at the utmost level of wisdom and beauty. This knowledge is at the very center of religion (Einstein, 1991: 191).

MYSTICISM AND THE BUSINESS WORLD

Mysticism, practices of mystic life and business styles in the Far East countries have an undeniable contribution to the mysticism literature. Mysticism has considerable influence on their management philosophy, their marketing techniques, and their integration of advertisement codes and symbols. This influence has manifested itself as Culture usually identified with practices of myths, rituals, and language across the world via globalization. The rationale behind such development is the idea that the Far East is governed through the mystical approach. With the understanding of symbols, myths, and traditions, Japan and the Far East mystic governing approach can be better understood, which in turn is thought to lead to higher efficiency levels among Western managers.

Films, stories, novels, newspapers, TV serials, and advertisements are all integral parts of our cultural systems. These are made up of different codes and symbols just like a book is. These codes are exposed in proportion to the knowledge level of the audience; with the development of advertising, the Western managers and marketers aimed to create a different way of

addressing the subconscious using elements such as secrecy, mysteries, rituals, myths, tales, legends, and secrets through which they seek to generate consumers' interest in the brand. One can see a relationship between ways of addressing the subconscious and Freud's psychoanalytic theory is based on determinism (cause-effect). According to Freud, every behavior has a reason and the origin of behaviors can be traced back to babyhood, childhood, and adulthood. Freud proposes two basic theories; typographic theory and structural theory (Walters, Bergiel, 1989: 188).

The conscious mind; includes feelings, thoughts, behaviors, attitudes, and urges that we are aware of. More specifically, a person is conscious of what s/he lives (Avant, Helson, 1990: 5).

THE CONSCIOUS MIND AND WAYS OF USING THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

The subconscious is defined as the lower part of the threshold of the conscious. It includes all the phenomena and elements except conscious perception. In the conscious perception, individuals tend to store and shape their cognition of what they hear, see, feel, in other words, all that they can do through the five senses. A small portion of this storage is done with awareness, but the rest is done without any awareness via the subconscious mind and recorded without any filtering. Such records then manifest themselves in human behavior or play a key role in behaving in a particular way (Key, 1981: 84).

Senses are always available and open to gather and send messages to the conscious and subconscious from birth to death. They send millions of data to the brain in a lifetime. Even when individuals are asleep, they can recall events in life or can hear their names and other sounds and make reactions.

In line with the research into the complex system of the brain, human brain perceives at the conscious level a slight portion of the data gathered through the senses, while the rest is sent to and completely stored in the subconscious. Many researchers and theorists claim that the amount of conscious perception of the human brain is 1/1000, whereas the data perceived by the subconscious is 999/1000.

The brain gathers data for the conscious mind through five senses. The most effective organ that collects the most amount of information is eyes. The ability to see allows infinite and unlimited data to enter into the conscious mind. Human eyes can perceive all events that occur around them. The things seen in daily life and data sent to the conscious mind are in fact only a small portion of what the eyes perceive. All the other data that are perceived by the eyes or perceived without any awareness are gathered and recorded in the subconscious mind.

Advertisers first attempt to send message to the consumers' subconscious mind in a particular order in their advertisements. The things consumers see in the advertisements are only 1/1000 of all the messages. The rest 999/1000 are details such as pictures, figures and symbols. The human mind stores these details in order of importance in the subconscious mind. For an advertisement to be considered successful, it needs to send relevant, appropriate and necessary scene, sound and messages to the subconscious mind.

The stored data can readily be recalled at the conscious level. For example, if one wants to buy a pair of red shoes, s/he stores in the conscious level all kinds of information perceived regarding these shoes. However, the established relation might originate from a variety of reasons such as wanting a pair of red shoes but not being able to buy them during childhood, or feeling oppressed to see friends wearing the shoes that one dreams of having. Advertisers tend to make use of the data that could tempt consumers to prefer the advertised services or products particularly by identifying the demands and desires of the target groups of people to be able to address their subconscious mind just as in the red shoes example (Çelik, 2000: 58).

FACTORS AFFECTING THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND and ARCHETYPES

Advertising is a psychological branch to some extent. There is a bond between the consumer and the product other than the one between the advertising producer and the company in the attempt to advertise the product and enhance its effect. The strongest component of this bond is desire, impulse and feelings. If it is thought that it is these impulses that play a key role in tempting consumers to buy, addressing the subconscious mind is of great importance. This shows that advertisers should collaborate with psychologists in order to properly identify and analyze these impulses. Psychologists in such advertisement teams attempt to insert the impulses of the target group into their lives by addressing their dreams and demands when constructing the adverts.

The subconscious factors that expose the customers' desires to buy differ from person to person, from societies to societies and from nations to nation. However, there are two factors that do not differ (Key, 1981: 59).

1. The beginning of life: for all societies this is the moment when a person starts his life and it is an archetype. It is symbolized through sexuality in the advertisements.
2. The end of life: this is an archetype for death and is accordingly symbolized with conflict and violence.

The beginning of life: Sexuality, Love Symbols and Archetypes

This archetype addresses impulses such as sexuality, love, attractiveness, desirability, all settled in the subconscious mind which is also called subliminal advertising.

For example, in advertising *Arko*, a shaving cream, there is a woman figure seen behind a man having shaved him, which sends male consumers the message that if they use this product, they will also be desired by such a well-groomed, beautiful woman.

Although, in subliminal advertising, sex or sex-related words are not overtly used in the given slogans, they are covertly implied. This implication arouses an interest in the consumers' perspectives. This interest activates the consumers' subconscious by using elements of sexuality to encourage them to generate a bond or an approach towards the product. On the other hand, in advertisements that send a message to the subconscious mind with hidden element, the concept of sexuality is usually applied with the insertion of S, E, and X letters in particular moments of the advertisements using the subliminal advertising techniques.

These messages are not explicitly perceived by individuals, but the subconscious mind stores and record them without a process of filtering in order to be able to resort to them later. These messages promote an interest in the advertisement and create sympathy and an interest towards the product.

The End of Life: Death, Aging, Conflict Symbols and Archetypes

The main reason for using this theme to influence individuals is that it has a high stimulating efficiency. This technique is used as the most accessible way of attracting attention in that it is the most effective aggressive stimulator of personal conflict and it has been observed that the cheerful, funny, and talkative elderly are the characters used to sooth and reflect the meanings of confidence and persuasion in TV advertisements rather than people, who are “in need” or “conservative”.

Research reveals that television advertisements produce themes that are of more positive aspects of aging rather than the negative elderly discourse of weakening, peeving, physical and cognitive retardation, obsessing about health, losing interest and ambition in relation to aging. In tandem, old actors play in the advertisements more than old actresses evidencing the use of the elderly to imply “trust and persuasiveness” to convince people in the long run.

On the other hand, in movies, subliminal advertising generally uses the letters D I E or objects that symbolize death. *Die* is an archetype word used in written mode at particular scenes by embedding method. The aim in doing so is to draw the attention of the audience to the concepts of dying and ending of life, which is deep-seated in the subconscious mind.

In the film posters of *The Silence of the Lambs*, starring Antony Hopkins and Jodie Foster there are a series of symbols addressing the subconscious mind. One of them is the skull on the butterfly in the mouth of the main character (Figure 1). Closely examined, the skull contains seven naked women imitated from Salvador Dali (Figure 2).



Figure 1

Figure 1: The Silence of the Lambs



Figure 2

Figure 2: Salvador Dali and Seven Naked Women

ATTRIBUTING MEANINGS TO SHADOWS

Individuals endeavor to comprehend, interpret the world and assign meaning to it throughout their lives. When a signifier is seen or heard, the signified, or its meaning is formed in the cognition, which is how the process of assigning meanings to signs is constructed.

Signs may powerfully represent particular meanings out of context. However, what constructs meaning is the sum of the meanings of the signs. Assigning meaning is what an individual believes a sign really expresses among all others (Akerson, 1987: 65). The successor of Saussure developed a systematized model by which the idea of argumentative and interactive meaning can be analyzed. In his theory, assigning meaning has two levels. These are denotation and connotation. The former is what a sign represents, while the latter is how a sign is represented.

PRACTICES and TECHNIQUES of SUBLIMINAL ADVERTISING

Unlike what is assumed, the history of the concept of subliminal perception dates back to the very ancient times. It ranges from Plato, Democritus (B.C. 400), Aristotle, Montaigne, Leibniz (1695) to Otto Poetzl (1919) and Marshall McLuhan (1960-1970) to Umberto Eco and Mario Schenberg, an atom physicist, Vilém Flusser, a professor of new technologies (Sutherland, 1986: 31).

The subliminal techniques were first used in experimental psychology by Suslowa. According to Benjamin Wolman, the research on subliminal advertising began to be applied in that period. In 1894 W. R. Dunham investigated the subconscious and subliminal communication and proved the existence of both subconscious and subliminal communication and of its influence (Karamolla, 1995: 5).

The first experiment to be carried out with subliminal techniques was published by Jim Vicary in a London newspaper, Sunday Times, 10th June 1956. In the experiment, he used tachistoscope that reflects the scene at the rate of 1/3000 per second and inserted in the film "Picnic" the message "eat corn" and "drink cola". During the films in which such messages were hidden, a considerable increase was achieved in the sales of cola and corn.

With the publication of *The Hidden Persuaders* by Vance Packard in 1957, Americans became aware of the use of the subconscious mind in plug-marketing and advertising thus intriguing psychologists. Packard mentioned psychological subjects and moving analyses in areas ranging from art to science, from belief systems to product analysis. To him, individuals' rights to freely choose are sublimated and restricted by the subliminal hidden messages (Buchenroth, 1977: 5).

In addition, Professor Wilson Bryan Key suggested in his published books that throughout the centuries humans were subliminally convinced to buy and they still are (Packard: 1957). Vance Packard on the other hand, accounted for this with reference to three things: birth, sexuality and death.

To prove the existence of subconscious, many scientists did research which revealed, with the use of brain mapping and electroencephalogram, that the advertised products are more permanently and effectively stored in an area in the right hemisphere that allows subliminal advertising to be perceived as a brand image. In addition, it was observed that the brain reacted dramatically to the messages sent at the rate of 1/3000 per second.

A number of precautions began to be taken against the thefts that are made using subliminal messages. In supermarkets, during the announcements at periodical intervals, the message "I am honest" is sent using a second wave. Such practices were performed in 81 supermarkets in 4 states in America, which lead to a decrease in thefts by 30%.

It is thought that there are six subliminal advertising techniques. These include (1) figure-ground reversals, or syncretistic illusions, (2) embedding, (3) double entendre, (4) tachistoscopic displays, (5) low-intensity light and low-volume sound, and (6) lighting and background sound.

Figure-ground reversals; having seen the examples such as face-vase, old-young woman face in the book *Rubin's Profiles* by Dr. E. Rubin, advertisers placed it on the ground of the picture.

Embedding method is the one more frequently used in the campaigns of alcohol advertisements. In such advertisements, the drink is poured into a glass by half and the rest is filled with ice. Drops or heads are seen flowing off the glass. Here graphic designers and advertisers have enough space to embed writing or figures. In embedding, graphic designers generally use skulls, a screaming human, wrinkled human face (Williamson, 2000: 62). The techniques first to be revealed by the 18th century painters dominated a number of painters some of whom are Salvador Dali, Escher, and Rembrandt. Bryan Key analyzed advertisements using this method he developed and revealed that these are objects that alcoholics and addicted people dreamed about quite often. The most important element of this technique is the embedded symbol, writing, and figures that can sometimes be realized or not with human eyes in the printed and visualized advertisement messages. The rationale behind this system is to reach the subconscious mind. It is of high probability to achieve this using the technique. Unlike the tachistoscope technique, when closely examined, the writings and symbols can be seen.

Symbols convey a second meaning in themselves. This second meaning is called doubleness. Symbolism can also be put into this category. It frequently contains hidden meaning, sexual messages. Symbolic images are often used in this technique. When advertisers intend to create a message denoting reproduction, multiplication and growth, they generally use trees, oranges, and lemon images. These symbolic approaches allow subliminal influencing with a deeper expression, but do not harm the individuals.

In low-intensity light and low-volume sound, graphic designers draw ambiguous subliminal elements above the threshold of perception. The word sex is the most proper stimulator for this method. Graphic designers usually embed the sex associated words in the corners or shadows of printed surfaces. Light and background sounds are often designed to develop a conscious perception in line with the nature of décor and design. The most frequently employed method in subliminal advertising is the practice of picture or word embedding.

232 Journal Academic Marketing Mysticism Online

Tachistoscope is not an illegal machine as most people assume. It was patented and produced for use by a US company, Precon Process and Equipment Corporation, on 30 November 1962. Tachistoscope is the most common technique used in subliminal advertising on TV and cinema. Tachistoscope is a film projector that reflects messages due to its objective cover that is opened and closed at the rate of 1/3000 per second. Such messages are usually reflected once for 5 seconds, but this period may shorten and extend for different effects and purposes. The hidden messages can be deciphered with the reverse playing or scene retarding.

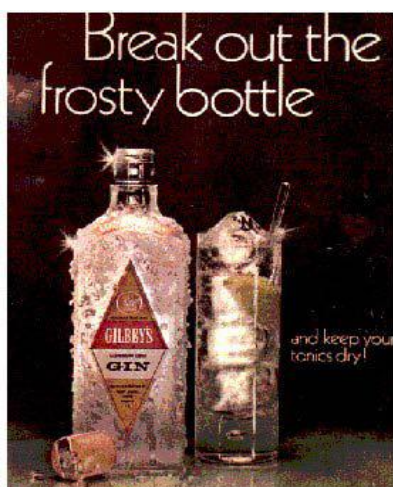


Figure 3

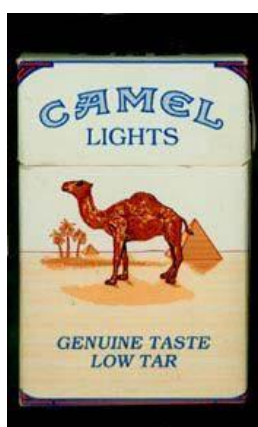


Figure 4



The Gilbey's London Dry Gin advertisement appeared on the back page of Time magazine across the world in 1971. The sale success was one-twentieth. According to these data, Gilbey's Gin increased the sales amounting to nearly \$1,5 million. After the publication of the advertisements, researchers examined a group of 1000 people. The study elicited the participants' feelings and thoughts through the discussion of Gilbey's London Dry Gin advertisement. During the research, the hidden messages were not mentioned to the participants. It was found that only 38% reported that they saw a bottle and a glass full of alcohol and that the advertisement evoked no other feelings or thoughts, while 62 % said that they felt satisfaction, sense evoking, excitement, and sexual arousal (Figure 3).

There are a number of figures, symbols, and images as well as a code consisting of the combination of s e x letters in this advertisement. For example, there is a woman face figure on the right of the ice cup that coincides with the letter X (Figure 3).

In Camel advertisements various subliminal elements and archetypes are employed. The most known of all these is a man figure with his hand on his belly hidden on the front legs of the camel which is the logo of the product. What is highlighted in the advertisement is that Camel is a man's cigarette. The word sex is not explicitly emphasized but hinted at (Figure 4).

Figure 3: Gilbey's Gin Sample

Figure 4: Camel Samples

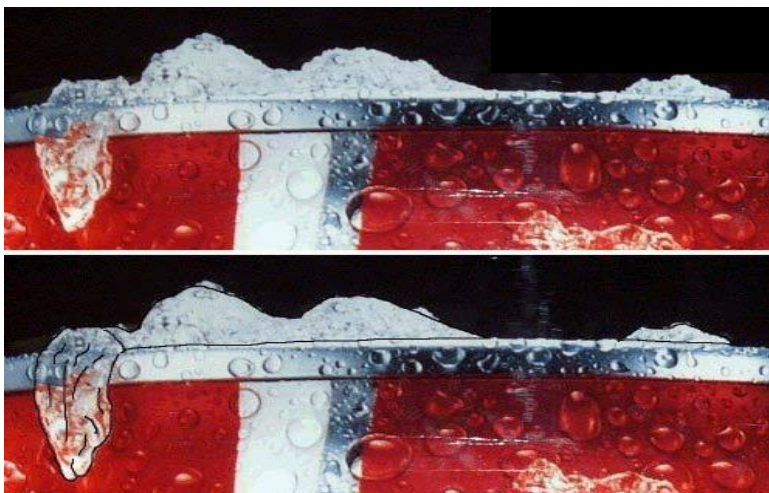


Figure 5

Coca-Cola is a company that employs elements of subliminal advertisements. Messages are given using embedded faces, words, and figures, which highlight the pleasure felt after drinking cola (Figure 5).



Figure 6

Many people may not have realized the hidden figure in the logo. However, when closely examined, there seems to be a figure of a bear in the picture symbolizing the Alp Mountains. This, first points to the origin of a chocolate produced in Bern, Switzerland, which is also the symbol of the city (Figure 6).

Figure 5: Coca Cola Example

Figure 6: Toblerone Example

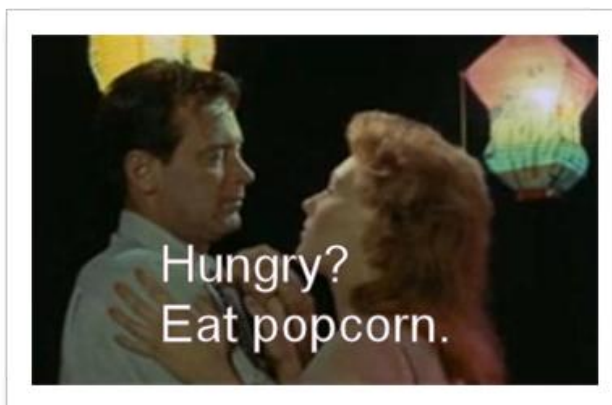


Figure 7

Vicary who was running a movie hall in Fort Lee, New Jersey, USA performed a test on 45,000 people for six weeks and inserted in the film the messages “are you hungry?” “Eat popcorn” and “drink cola” using tachistoscope. These two hidden messages soon increased the sales of popcorn by 57.5%, coca cola by 18.1%. These are the first examples of subliminal advertising. In the scene that was added a 25th frame on the 24th to show that the human mind can perceive in the unconscious mind, people are dictated to consume a particular product. With the 25th frame technique, writings are perceived in the subconscious mind even though they cannot be at the conscious mind. Human mind stores everything that is seen. Customers are driven to consume products of certain brands for the reasons they cannot account for. These are hypnotic and advice methods in some ways (Figure 7).



Figure 8

Firms in the Turkish communication sector employed competition strategies in telephone number transfer throughout 2011. In the advertisement of Turkcell, the kid’s hero, “Cellokans” carry the numbers to the Turkcell center. When the frames of the advertisement are watched in slow motion, the numbers of the rival company AVEA, 5, 0, 6 are carried into the Turkcell center. The last of those to be carried are 5, 4, 7 numbers. Thus, these advertisements attack the numbers of a rival firm (Figure 8).

Figure 7: First examples of subliminal advertising in movies

Figure 8: Turkcell Example

CONCLUSION

The biggest ethical problem in using subliminal archetypes in cartoons and advertisements to attract attention and promote consumption for kids is that children are exposed to sexual messages and scenes at too early ages (Figure 9).



Figure 9

In Jessica Rabbit (Who Framed Roger Rabbit), in the escape scene of the heroine; Jessica is seen to have no underwear.

There are naked women's pictures flashing on the screen in the cartoon, "Rescuer". In the cartoon, Aladdin, the hypnotic sound of "good teenagers take off clothes" is covertly repeated. In The King Lion, the word sex is written on the sky using the stars (Figure 10).

Subliminal advertising can also come in the form of product placement. By using visual technology in the movie "Lord of The Rings", the words "Coca Cola" can be clearly seen inside the ring, the main theme of the mystic film written with the institutional typeface of the brand itself (Figure 11).



Figure 10



Figure 11

Figure 9: Walt Disney Example Figure 10: The King Lion Example Figure 11: Lord of The Rings Example

People who have become consumers since birth have encountered too many codes and value judgments imposed by the societies they belong to and have taken them for granted adapting each code consciously or not. Consumers apply the given data with or without their consent in order not to be at odds with the society in which they live, but to receive its approval. They also avoid instinctive behaviors and thoughts as much as possible. These pleasure sources that are of powerful and mysterious motivations seek opportunities to express themselves. Language, which constitutes the subconscious mind, assists in the expression of this subconscious and in the exchange of messages. What makes all this possible are symbols that people receive or send consciously or otherwise.

Subliminal advertising is in general the sending of mystified archetypes in the form of indistinct figures and symbols through communication channels. People are provided with messages with connotation using body languages, symbols, colors already coded in the society. These messages are only realized by the subconscious mind. The content of these messages that remain a mystery, myth or a mystic element for the most part is made up of three basic archetypes that the human brain reacts to. These include birth, sex and death. The use of these words in advertisements assists in the rapid absorption of the message.

Although, subliminal advertising has been banned in 57 countries its significant problem remains the weak control system. These advertisements covertly change the decision making mechanisms of consumers, customers and societies. Their secrecy creates ethic problems not mysticism. The control mechanism as well as related academic studies is not sufficient to close the significant gap which exists especially since a regulatory board is yet to be established. Finally, subliminal advertising explicitly tempting consumers to buy particular products and is also used to pressurize voters in political communication, still abounds today, throughout the world.

REFERENCES

- Akerson, F. E. (1987). *Gösterge Bilime Giriş*. Istanbul: Alan Yayıncılık.
http://books.google.com.tr/books/about/G%C3%B6stergebilime_giri%C5%9F.html?id=JXb8GwAACAAJ&redir_esc=y [GS SEARCH](#)
- Avant, L. L. and Helson, H. translated by Topsever, Y. (1990). *Algı Kuramları*. Izmir: Ege Üniversitesi Basımevi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 58
<http://ekitap.kulturturizm.gov.tr/dosya/1-127664/h/metin.pdf> [VIEW ITEM](#)
http://psikoloji.iieu.edu.tr/index.php/akademik-kadro/?staff_id=102 [VIEW ITEM](#)
- Aybar, S. S. (2002). *Sahne Tasarımına Göstergebilimsel Yaklaşım ve Bir Uygulama*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Barthes, R. (1999) *Göstergebilimsel Serüven*. Istanbul: Kaf Yayıncılık.
<http://www.nadirkitap.com/gostergebilimsel-seruven-roland-barthes-kitap2072091.html> [VIEW ITEM](#)
http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roland_Barthes [VIEW ITEM](#)

Berke, V. (2001). *Dilbilimin Temel Kavram ve İlkeleri*. Istanbul: Multilingual Yayınları
<http://www.idefix.com/kitap/dilbilimin-temel-kavram-ve-ilkeleri-berke-vardar/tanim.asp?sid=KTY7RMH054B1HTDXK4JI> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Bermeitinger, C., Goelz, R., Johr, N., Neumann, M., Ecker, U. K. H., & Doerr, R. (2009). The Hidden Persuaders Break Into The Tired Brain. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. 45 (2), p320-326.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2008.10.001>

<http://www.mendeley.com/research/the-hidden-persuaders-break-into-the-tired-brain/> [VIEW ITEM](#)

<http://currawong.net/2010/09/02/the-hidden-persuaders-persuasion-techniques-and-propaganda-in-the-midst-of-our-society/> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Buchenroth, M. L. (1997). *Subliminal Advertising Effects in Magazine Advertisements*. Ohio: The Ohio State University.

<http://old.disinfo.com/archive/pages/dossier/id321/pg1/> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Bullock, A. (2004). *The Secret Sales Pitch: An Overview of Subliminal Advertising*. San Jose, CA: Norwich Publishers

[http://www.sublimalsex.com/subliminal%20sex%20x\(3\).htm](http://www.sublimalsex.com/subliminal%20sex%20x(3).htm) [VIEW ITEM](#)

[http://www.sublimalsex.com/contents%20\(2\).htm](http://www.sublimalsex.com/contents%20(2).htm) [VIEW ITEM](#)

Challaye, F. (1948). *Freud*. Paris: Editions Mellottée.

<http://www.freud.org.uk/archive/60759/detail/> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Çelik, M. (2000). Thesis: Reklamda Tüketicinin Yönlendirilmesi. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Yüksek Lisans Tezi*

http://xa.yimg.com/kq/groups/16350015/2117153190/name/reklamc_305_I_305_ktez.pdf
[VIEW ITEM](#)

Deikman, A. J. translated by Atalay, M. (2008). Mistisizm: Bir İşlevsel Yaklaşım. *İstanbul Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*. 18 (14), p299-318.

<http://www.iudergi.com/tr/index.php/ilahiyat/article/viewFile/580/536> [VIEW ITEM](#)

<http://www.deikman.com/functional.html> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Einstein, A. (1991). *In The Enlightened Mind*. New York: Basic Books

[http://books.google.com.tr/books?id=dJVQP2dhGY8C&pg=PA90&dq=Einstein,+A.+\(1991\).+In+The+Enlightened+Mind&hl=en&ei=YGd4T6vkM6Gm0QWk8ZCwDQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=book-](http://books.google.com.tr/books?id=dJVQP2dhGY8C&pg=PA90&dq=Einstein,+A.+(1991).+In+The+Enlightened+Mind&hl=en&ei=YGd4T6vkM6Gm0QWk8ZCwDQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=book-)

[thumbnail&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Einstein%2C%20A.%20\(1991\).%20In%20The%20Enlightened%20Mind&f=false](http://books.google.com.tr/books?id=dJVQP2dhGY8C&pg=PA90&dq=Einstein,+A.+(1991).+In+The+Enlightened+Mind&hl=en&ei=YGd4T6vkM6Gm0QWk8ZCwDQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=book-thumbnail&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Einstein%2C%20A.%20(1991).%20In%20The%20Enlightened%20Mind&f=false) [GS SEARCH](#)

Eşel, E. (2009). Dini ve Mistik Deneyimlerin Muhtemel Bilişsel ve Nörobiyolojik Düzenekleri. *Bulletin of Clinical Psychopharmacology*. 19 (2), p193-205.

http://www.psikofarmakoloji.org/pdf/19_2_15.pdf [VIEW ITEM](#)

Filizok, R. (2001). *Anlam Analizine Giriş*. Izmir: Ege Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları. 115.

<http://www.nadirkitap.com/anlam-analizine-giris-riza-filizok-kitap1296085.html> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Gençtan, E. (1993). *Psikanaliz ve Sonrası*. Istanbul: Remzi Yayınevi.

<http://www.kabalci.com.tr/remzi-kitabevi/engin-genctan/psikanaliz-ve-sonrasi-9789751404039.htm> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Gray, G. (2000). Nothing Subliminal About It: The Truth About the Myth of Marketers' Manipulative Powers, from Someone Who Was There. *Marketing Magazine*. 105 (47), p9.

<http://emerging-advertising-media.wikispaces.com/Subliminal+Ads> [VIEW ITEM](#)

<http://www.mendeley.com/research/misplaced-paranoia-subliminal-advertising-whats-big-uproar-time/#page-1> [VIEW ITEM](#)

<http://arno.uvt.nl/show.cgi?fid=120657> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Guiraud, P. translated by Yalcin, M. (1994). *Göstergebilim*. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi.

http://www.imge.com.tr/product_info.php?products_id=4487 [VIEW ITEM](#)

Günay, V. D. (2002). *Göstergebilim Yazıları*. Istanbul: Multilingual Yayınları.

<http://kisi.deu.edu.tr/dogan.gunay/Turkce.html> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Karamolla, N. (1995). Thesis: Attitudes of Turkish Students Toward the Use of Sexual Embeds and Overt Sexuality in Advertising. Istanbul: *Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Psikoloji Bölümü Yüksek Lisans Tezi*.

https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:xbT2V_LQecwJ:www.hatam.hacettepe.edu.tr/82/04.pdf+Karamolla,+N.+1995+Attitudes+of+Turkish+Students+Toward+the+Use+of+Sexual+Embeds+and+Overt+Sexuality+in+Advertising&hl=en&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEEsge1_1-d5AhKtHwzOUhXT4qLg-8ka-4fiNZNejTUKkM5lpGaTguxTfnZ9vFjBSEF9PpNFgF8S2WrhxSgxLVstjQcvjSd6YivF79iw6_7tMRbrCZhwqYyZGdw6e9m7goIY4CC01j&sig=AHIEtbSp6bxdSgt_6S4j2B8k_fE-Vu0bhQGS [SEARCH](#)

Key, W. B. (1981). *Subliminal Ad-Ventures In Erotic Art*. Boston: Brendan Publishing Company.

http://books.google.com.tr/books?id=OGsXAzJVrXcC&printsec=frontcover&hl=tr&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false [GS SEARCH](#)

Key, W. B. (1981). *Subliminal Seduction: Ad Media's Manipulation of a Not So Innocent America*. Boston: Signet Book.

http://books.google.com.tr/books?id=HqtPAAAAMAAJ&dq=inauthor%3A%22Wilson%20Bryan%20Key%22&hl=tr&source=gbs_similarbooks [GS SEARCH](#)

Meissner, W. W. (2005). On putting a cloud in a bottle: psycho analytic perspectives on mysticism. *Psychoanal Q* (The Psychoanalytic quarterly). 74 (2), p507-559.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15889691> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Packard, V. (1957). *The Hidden Persuaders*. US: Pocket Books
<http://www.amazon.com/The-Hidden-Persuaders-Vance-Packard/dp/0671531492> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Rubin, E. *Rubin's Profiles: Face-Vase Image*
http://www.google.com.tr/imgres?q=y%C3%BCz-vazo&hl=tr&biw=1366&bih=622&tbn=isch&tbnid=RYItXiMvZBEu4M:&imgrefurl=http://www.hafif.org/yazi/yuz-ve-illuzyon&docid=7n75oWJWKOdcbM&imgurl=http://www.hafif.org/imaj/odo/face-vase.gif&w=237&h=318&ei=MtOPT9i_l-Ki4gT7uuCQBA&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=111&vpy=117&dur=8473&hovh=254&hovw=189&tx=52&ty=145&sig=101188050382899204023&page=1&tbnh=134&tbnw=94&start=0&ndsp=23&ved=1t:429,r:0,s:0,i:61 [VIEW ITEM](#)

Rubin, E. *Rubin's Profiles: Old-Young Women Face Image*
<http://www.google.com.tr/imgres?q=old-young+woman&hl=tr&biw=1366&bih=622&tbn=isch&tbnid=2tPScPdKXWCjiM:&imgrefurl=http://logoblink.com/before-after-beer-logo/&docid=KbVvqsJH6vpyoM&imgurl=http://logoblink.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/young-woman-old-woman-illusion.gif&w=350&h=481&ei=ydOPT9GyGYfe4QTzw7inBA&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=113&vpy=2&dur=1941&hovh=263&hovw=191&tx=114&ty=149&sig=101188050382899204023&page=1&tbnh=136&tbnw=100&start=0&ndsp=24&ved=1t:429,r:0,s:0,i:61>

Sutherland, M. (1986). *Advertising and The Mind Of The Consumer*. New York: The Allen F. Unwin Business and Management Serie.
<http://www.sutherlandsurvey.com/Introduction.htm> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Walters, C. G. and Bergiel, B. J. (1989). *Consumer Behavior: A Decision Making Approach*. Cincinnati: South-Western Pub. Co.
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/16691157> [VIEW ITEM](#)
http://books.google.com.tr/books/about/Consumer_behavior.html?id=qx4PAQAAMAAJ&redir_esc=y [GS SEARCH](#)

Williamson, J. translated by Fehmi, A. (2000). *Reklamların Dili. Reklamlarda Anlam ve İdeoloji*. Ankara: Ütopya Yayıncılık.
<http://www.kitapyurdu.com/kitap/default.asp?id=46300> [VIEW ITEM](#)

Yanbastı, G. (1996). *Kişilik Kuramları*. İzmir: Ege Üniversitesi Basımevi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları. 53
<http://www.nadirkitap.com/kisilik-kuramlari-gulgun-yanbasti-kitap766376.html> [VIEW ITEM](#)

(1956, June 10). *Sunday Times*.