Semiotic Approach to Representation of Valentine's Day in Print Advertisements: The Case of North Cyprus

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Submitted to the
Institute of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts
in
Communication and Media Studies

Eastern Mediterranean University
September 2014
Gazimağusa, North Cyprus

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays it is widely accepted and rather a common knowledge that 14th of February is a Valentine's Day-the day when people, in particular lovers, are expressing their love affection for each other by means of gift giving, which ranges from cards and chocolates to more expensive items such as silver or golden jewelry. Essentially, about a month before an actual celebration, various media put in rotation commercials and advertisements, reflecting on gift ideas for special someone in Valentine's Day.

This study aims to examine codes and norms in today's popular culture, related to understanding and practices of love, relationships and romantic behaviors, by conducting semiotic analyses of selected advertisements. Hence, semiotics is chosen as a dominant methodological approach to analyses.

The advertisements for Valentine's Day occasion are collected from three local North Cyprus newspapers, published in 2014. In order to answer research questions and fulfill aims and objectives, the analyses are conducted with a particular attention to semiotic codes, denotative and connotative orders of signification of textual and pictorial signs individually, as well as in relation to connotative meanings of other signs within system.

Keywords: Print advertising, Valentine's Day, Love, Representation, Semiotics.

ÖZ

Günümüzde 14 Şubat, insanların, özellikle de sevgililerin birbirlerine olan sevgilerini kartlar ve çikolatadan başlayarak altın-gümüş benzeri pahalı ürünlere kadar yayılan geniş bir yelpazeyi içeren hediyeler vererek ifade ettikleri gün olarak kabul edilir. Bu durumda, kutlamanın bir ay öncesinden medya, özel birisi için alınacak özel bir hediye konusunda fikir verebilmek maksadıyla reklamlar yayınlamaya başlamaktadır.

Bu çalışma, seçilen reklamları semiyotik olarak analiz ederek günümüzün popüler kültüründe sevginin pratiğini, ilişkiyi ve romantik davranışı anlamak ile ilgili olan kodları ve normları inceleyecektir. Bu bağlamda, semiyotik, analizlerde üstün metodolojik yaklaşım olarak belirlenmiştir.

Sevgililer gününe ilişkin reklamlar, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta yayınlanan üç gazetenin 2014 yılındaki yayınları arasından seçilmiştir. Araştırma sorularını cevaplarken ve araştırma amaçlarına ulaşılırken, analizlerin odağında semiyotik kodlar, yazılı ve resimsel öğelerin işaret ve ima düzenleri hem tek başlarına, hem de sistem içerisinde kullanılan diğer ima anlamlarına olan ilişkileriyle birlikte ele alındı.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Basılı Reklamlar, Sevgililer Günü, Aşk, Temsil, Göstergebilim.

To my father, the man I will always be proud of being his daughter…

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Aysu Arsoy for the guidance throughout the complex process of thesis completion. In addition, I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ümit İnatçı for his invaluable help and support, and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bahire Efe Özad.

My deepest appreciation to my dear instructor Atiye Çırakoğlu who was there with me all the time with her prayers. My special gratitude is to my dear friend Anastasia Artyukhova. I would also like to thank my dear cousin Sema Gürtürk, my best girls Elif Kahraman, Pınar Umur, Leyla Özşan, Merve Doğru, and Işıl Nurdan Işık. In addition, my special thanks go to Sertaç Çağlamaz (Sergio), Kürşat Sekmen, Laden Özel Güneysoy, and all the others who stand by my side and inspire and encourage me by the help and support…

Finally, I would love to express my deepest gratitude to my beloved family, especially my dear father Nurettin Şen, and my lovely mother Ayşe Güngör Şen.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In general terms, this thesis aims to investigate cultural and social codes of Valentine's Day, as well as representation of love and romance in today's popular culture through semiotic analyses of print advertisements. Thus, the goal of this chapter is to introduce the subject and background of the inquiry, as well as to establish major aims and objectives of the research. Besides, sub-sections of this chapter present the definition of problem, main research assumptions and questions, together with layout of the study and its scope and limitations.

1.1 Background of the Study

A thorough insight into contemporary calendar reveals a considerable number of so called 'special days', like "Mother's day", "Father's day", "Teacher's day", or "Valentine's Day", including rapidly spreading celebrating traditions of certain events as, for example, "Baby Shower party", "anniversary", and so on. Each of such occasions is meant to acknowledge to importance of a particular events, people, or concepts, like 'love', 'family', 'parenthood', 'friendship', and the like.

In general, most of the special days are accompanied by gift-giving codes, presenting advertisement specialists with opportunities to increase the sales. However, it is only top layer of multifaceted realm of holiday market and media coverage of special days. This research aims to investigate cultural and social coding of special days

through semiotic decoding of related print advertisements. Within an array of special days, this study chooses to focus on Valentine's Day. Besides, research is limited regionally, concentrating solely on the case of North Cyprus, and 3 selected newspapers.

Considering historical background, it is suggested that celebration of Valentine's Day takes its roots in the time of ancient Rome, where festival of fertility was celebrated annually on February 15th to honor a god of agriculture Faunus (Maxwell, 2009). Further, as few centuries past, Christians dedicated this day to the priest Valentine, who was executed on February 14th for being engaged in performance of marriage ceremonies for young soldiers, while it was strictly banished by emperor (Maxwell, 2009). However, only by beginning of 18th century celebration of Valentine's Day has taken on more modern form in Europe, implying exchange of special cards, love notes and poems; while in United States it was triggered a century later by postcards industry (Schmidt, 1991).

Nowadays, it is widely accepted and rather a common knowledge that February 14th is a Valentine's Day-the day when people, in particular mates, expressing their love affection for each other mainly by means of gift giving, which ranges from cards and chocolates to more luxurious items, such as silver or golden jewelry. Notably, about a month before an actual celebration, shops' displays are getting dressed in appropriate decorations (e.g. red ribbons, heart-shaped balloons), and various media put in rotation commercials and advertisements reflecting on Valentine's gift ideas for special someone.

Along these lines, there is an increasing interest among scholars and researchers in surveying issues related to commercialization and representation of special days-and V-Day in particular. For instance, research of Close and Zinkhan (2006), attempts to explore behavioral patterns, cultural rituals, and themes allied with celebration of Valentine's Day, specifically in context of U.S. Close et al(2006) revealed that this special day couples extremes, considering consumers' perspective, as "commercialism and marketing communications contribute to consumers' reactions to this holiday by fostering materialism, togetherness and gender roles" (p. 1). According to another recent study, conducted by Close and Zinkhan (2009) "Market-resistance and Valentine's Day events", under the great pressure of commercials the majority of research subjects feels compelled to buy expensive gifts for the loved ones. Moreover, research of Close et al (2009) indicates that males and females who engaged into new relationships feel more obliged, comparing to individuals involved into established, long-term relations, to get the gifts.

Allegedly, advertising plays multiple roles in coding the popular culture of the contemporary society. The most obvious function of advertisement is to stimulate people to purchase a variety of goods. However, persuading population to buy something is just one among several others, less apparent, purposes of advertisement. For example, Williamson maintains that advertisement conceals ideological interests, while stimulating audience to create a meaning through a transition from one element to another (in Najafian and Dabaghi, 2002). Solomon (1992) asserts that individual's perception of the surrounding is greatly affected by advertising, influencing the ways people defer to social and cultural events that results in formation of specific viewing perspective of the surrounding world. In this respect, studies, examination and

analyses of graphical printed advertising can help to reveal dominant ideologies, myths, and social and cultural codes, dominating within domain of popular culture.

As the following study attempts to look into codes and implied social behavior patterns, interlaced into textual and pictorial facades of print advertising, semiology is chosen as a dominant methodological avenue of this research. Simply put, contemporary semiotics is 'the study of signs', implying that human-whether consciously or subconsciously- tends to appropriate multiplex significance to the objects of his visual environment (Lester, 2003, pp. 51-56). To quote Lester (2003), "Semiotics teaches the importance of symbolism in the act of visual perception and communication" (p. 56).

In order to follow semiotic approach under specified circumstances, this research will look into multiple interwoven dimensions of the subject. Thus, to make semiotic interpretations of cultural signs in the context of ads released for the Valentine's Day, this study will first look into historical background of the Valentine's Day. Then, the study will attempt to figure out system of signs used in V-day's print advertising, establish relations between elements, and reveal cultural significance and codes concealed by the images. Consequently, semiotic decoding will be made to reveal social dimensions and cultural significance in relation to the context of the contemporary North Cyprus.

1.2 Problem Definition and Significance of the Research

Among various special days and occasions, which rapidly enter into the Eastern culture through Western influences, Valentine's Day is significant in several respects. Perhaps, the most outstanding feature of this holiday is that it focuses on

couples being in process of romantic relationship. Thus, it might be stated that annually, during the days, preceding 14th of February, advertisers begun to exploit romantic feelings for the commercial benefit, resulting in occurrence of social pressure and obligations, where gift-giving ritual is represented as an established social norm. In other words, it appears that the most common message, delivered to the audience through various pieces of mainstream media is that in order to show love affection, one has to purchase a gift, or perform other kinds of spending (e.g. Romantic dinner, special trip, and the like). However, as it has been already mentioned previously, advertising function along multiple lines, and serves not only as persuasive mechanism, but also as a transmitter of ideological interests and power. Contemporary society is blistered by visual materials on daily basis, obtaining various bits of information and receiving a variety of messages. According to Lester (2003), participating in daily routines, practices and experiences, individual obtains a system of beliefs and attitudes towards various objects, subjects, and concepts. Lester (2003), maintains that persuasive aspects of advertising do not only influence people to purchase certain products, but play role in forming opinions, changing behavioral patterns and attitudes, as well as inducing various actions by receivers of visual messages.

In this respect, the current research intends to focus on print ads, which occupy an important domain within today's advertising medium. As it is mentioned in previous section, special days present advertisers with vast opportunities along both directions: to persuade in purchasing different products or services, as well as to imply certain ideological and cultural messages.

Preliminary studies and review of relevant literature indicated that while there are many studies exploring various aspects of special days and social occasions, there is relatively less research that touches exclusively celebration of Valentine's Day. Moreover, while most of researches concern with special events in the western context, there is limited studies, which focuses on raising popularity of Valentine's Day in East, and particularly in Turkish Republic of North Cyprus. Therefore, applying semiotic approach, this study tends to look into codes that supposedly lay beyond pictorial and textual elements of selected ads.

In this respect, this study suggests that the Valentine's Day event provides mass media with opportunity to re-emphasize and reinforce certain issues and aspects, encoded within the context of contemporary popular culture. Regarding specificity of Valentine's Day concept, the assumption of this study is that during period prior to Valentine's Day, the themes of love, romance and relationships become more prominent in media. Consequently, analyses of media pieces created and released exclusively for this event may reveal current tendencies and views of love, romance and couples involved into romantic relationships within general context of today's popular culture.

Regarding all mentioned above, this study attempts to explore representation of love and relationships in print advertising, produced exclusively for Valentine's Day occasion in North Cyprus newspapers. Furthermore, this research will examine commodification of cultural experiences and feelings, as well as shaping and representation of gender roles in the context of love/romantic relationships by viewing Valentine's Day advertising as a kind of encoded messages.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

This study aims to investigate cultural and social codes of Valentine's Day through semiotic decoding of print advertising in North Cyprus. The basic objective of the research is to reveal coding of gift-giving and social behavior patterns behind print advertising. In addition, current research tends to examine transformation of original meanings of special days, and the ways media shapes its perception by society.

Thus, the goal of this research is to take insight into the nature of advertising discourse. In particular, it focuses on the text of advertisements in terms of interrelation of their visual and textual components, attempting to reveal underlying chain of meanings. Specifically, one of the main objectives of this thesis is to reveal the fostering of material culture through objectification of feelings within a context of the popular culture. Moreover, this study focuses on exploring, how visual and textual components are coded, and depicted objects instrumentilized through the language of advertising during times of special days and occasions.

In summary, the main aim of this research is to explore codes and norms in today's popular culture, related to understanding and practices of love, relationships and romantic behaviors, by conducting semiotic analyses of selected advertisements.

1.4 Research Assumption and Research Questions

First of all, it must be emphasized that selected advertisements are gathered within one month period from three newspapers, each of which represent different ideology (KIBRIS Gazetesi as mainstream; HAVADIS as right wing, and YENİDÜZEN as left wing).

As has been indicated in preceding sections, this study focuses on advertisings, published for the occasion of the Valentine's Day. By and large, Valentine's Day event can be characterized as very theme-specific, evolving exclusively around concepts of love, romance and couples in relationships. In this regard, the major assumption of this research is that the mentioned themes are dominating within context of advertisings, encountered during Valentine's Day event, amplifying and revealing major tendencies and norms, related to the love and relationships. In other words, it is assumed that thematic peculiarities of Valentine's Day are reflected through advertising, making the representation of feelings, love and relationships during this period more reinforced and pronounced.

In this respect, semiotic analyses will be applied as dominant methodological approach, in order to answer the following research questions:

1) How social power relationship and exchange between genders are represented, supported and naturalized?
2) How abstract notion of love is represented through pictorial and textual components in advertising?
3) How the gender roles within context of relationships are represented by advertising?
4) How objects are exploited and instrumentalized through the language of advertising within a context of Valentine's Day?
5) What are the codes and myths of romantic relationship and romantic behavior, implied within visual and textual context of advertising?
6) How the concept of romantic behavior and time-spending are represented in advertising?

1.5 Outline of the Study

The current research consists of several major parts, which are arranged into separate chapters in a following way.

Chapter 1 presents introductory section, outlining background of the study, as well as defining main aims, objectives, and limitations of the research.

Chapter 2 constitutes review of the relevant literature in order to build up a strong theoretical ground in support to case study and analyses part. This section presents definitions and explanation of major concepts involved into the current research as well as overview of previously conducted studies in related fields.

Chapter 3 concerns with design of the research, defining methodological approach towards the study.

Chapter 4 presents an actual process of data analyses and classification of obtained results.

Chapter 5 presents a conclusion of the research, where results of the study are summarized and reported, and suggestions for further research implications are offered.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

Regarding basic aims and objectives, this study centers around analyses of media pieces dedicated to Valentine's Day. Therefore, while other special days, celebrated

in modern societies, are left out of the main scope of the research, study is majorly concentrated on exploration of Valentine's Day.

Moreover, this research focuses solely on newspapers print ads, while other advertising mediums are excluded from the sphere of interest of this thesis. In terms of newspapers, sources of advertising samples are limited to three newspapers, which also present three different ideologies.

The final limitation of the research is of regional character, as the study will be concentrated upon the case of Valentine's Day in North Cyprus.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main aim of this study is to examine representation of love, romance and relationships in the advertisements, designed and published in selected pieces of popular North Cyprus newspapers for the Valentine's Day occasion. In addition, for the purpose of this research, semiotic analysis is selected as dominant methodological approach. Therefore, in order to proceed with methodology and conduct a consequent case study, it is critical to introduce the research framework, and outline terms and concepts prevailing in this thesis.

Along these lines, the major goal of the current chapter is to establish a strong theoretical base through comprehensive review of relevant literature and previously conducted studies, correlated with research subject. On that account, the subsequent sections of this chapter will render the terms and concepts, dominating within a context of current thesis. First of all, the succeeding text will explain basic concepts of such terms as culture and representation.

Secondly, an ample part of literature review will be focusing on three major topics, comprised within research framework. Particularly, these three prevailing themes are advertising (as the study aims to conduct analyses of print advertising), the Valentine's Day (as the study focuses on advertisements designed and published for

the Valentine's Day occasion), and semiotics (as dominant methodological approach of this research).

2.1 Culture: Key Concept

For the most part, the conception of culture is rather multidimensional, and might be defined and understood from a variety of perspectives. Almost entirely, interpretation of the term 'culture' would be based on the frame of reference and the context in which it is implied. Conforming to Baldwin, Longhurst, McCracken, Ogborn and Smith (2004), culture can be described either in narrow or in wide terms. In the first instance, culture is often associated with mere intellectual and artistic practices. However, in broader sense, the term culture underpins a variety of coincidental social processes, acts and activities, as well as human behaviors, attitudes, system of believes, rituals, and customs (Baldwin et al, 2004). As noted by Lester (2003):

> Culture spans ethnicity, economic situation, place of work, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical disability, geographic location, and many other aspects of person's life. Culture also determines the importance of signs that affect people who live in that culture (p. 59).

While there is a variety of ways to define culture, it is, nevertheless, important to find a definition that efficiently corresponds with an established purpose. Hence, keeping in mind the aim and objectives of this study, the further discussion or any mentioning of culture will imply its broad term understanding.

Solomon (1992) characterizes culture as "society's personality", suggesting that it embraces both: transcendent concepts like values and ethics, and actual substantial commodities (p. 478). Accordingly, Hawkins, Best, and Coney (1989) imply that "culture provides the framework within which individual and household life-style

evolve" (p. 45). Simply saying, culture is a very comprehensive entity, which simultaneously reflects and influences social behavior, while relating people through collective set of values and believes.

Furthermore, it is essential to comprehend that culture is neither static, nor fixed notion. On the contrary, it sustains within dynamic processes of evolving and restructuring, as well as integrating long-apprehended convictions with new conceptions.

For the purpose of this study, it is worthy to noting major aspects of culture. While there is a number of hypothesis regarding this issue, views presented by Solomon (1992) and Hawkins et al (1989) are of a particular interest, when the framework of this study is concerned. In this respect, Solomon (1992) identifies three major interrelated cultural aspects, which are 'ecology', 'social structure', and 'ideology' (in Solomon, 1992, p. 478). Principally, ecology refers to level of industrialization of a certain group, and the consequent utilization of technology to adapt to given conditions. Social structure, on the other hand, implies maintenance of social life in orderly and organized manner. Finally, ideology, as an aspect of culture, defines mental attributes of individuals within a specific social group, which enables to establish common views and attitudes towards their surrounding and each other. Ideological aspect of culture, referring to Solomon (1992), includes shared values, estimations, moral codes, ethics, and the like. All these, as a result, contributes to the formation of social meanings, which relates individuals to each other as a members of common social group and, simultaneously, connects them to and reflects on the environment they inhabit. On the other hand, Hawkins et al (1989), speculating on

the aspects of culture, accentuates a notion that cultural attitudes and acts are cumulative and acquired, which excludes inherited, predicated or deduced reactions.

Furthermore, according to Hawkins et al (1989), culture defines certain boundaries for individual's attitudes and thinking that are reflected through cultural values and norms. Hawkins et al (1989) write, "the nature of cultural influences is such that we are seldom aware of them. One behaves, thinks, and feels in a manner consistent with other members of the same culture because it seems 'natural' or 'right' to do so" (p. 45). Therefore, social meanings are formed within a culture, and present a contemplation of social realm and material sphere of people's environment. Likewise, every cultural practice developed within society acquires a certain meaning, reflected through symbolic means in form of words and images. Apparently, importance of symbolic aspects cannot be taken for granted, as it is one of the fundamental constituents in building up a communication process.

To sum up, concept of culture is an extremely comprehensive matter that can be approached from a variety of standpoints. Thus, while conducting research on any culture-related topic, it is essential to seek for definition, which would best fit into the framework of the study. Besides, since culture is a multidimensional, dynamic and constantly evolving concept, it is important to concentrate an attention on those cultural aspects, which prevail within the context of inquiry.

2.2 Representation: Key Concept

Advertising is one of the central issues involved into the framework of the current study. However, before defining advertising, it is essential to review and understand the basic concept of representation, which tightly interwoven into the functioning of advertising. Indeed, a contemporary advertising is positioned within a system of representations that, in turn, produces a set of meanings within the domain of culture. Moreover, advertising itself can function as representational system by forming meanings beyond an actual realm of a product in question. Therefore, this section aims to define representation, as well as to review the relevant terms and concepts.

First of all, it must be comprehended that representation is a complex, multifaceted process, which is involved into production, exchange and communication of meanings within realms of culture. It comprises the uses of language and signs that represent various things or conceptions. In simple terms, referring to Hall (1997), representation means "using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people" (p. 15). In other words, representation refers to the generating and giving a meaning to various concepts existing within person's mind by means of language. According to Hall (1997), there are, in fact, two major 'systems of representation' involved into process of meaning formation, which are 'mental representations' and the 'language' (p. 17).

As follows, mental representations refer to the whole set of concepts in the mind of an individual that correspond to everything in one's surrounding, including, people, events, and objects. Therefore, meanings are built, first of all, upon a set of concepts and images, generated within people's thoughts, which facilitates in ability to refer to

and identify with anything, regardless of whether it is within or outside of one's mind. Moreover, mental representations can be formed not only about material things, like actual objects, or people, but also about immaterial, abstract conceptions and ideas, which cannot simply be seen or touched. Noteworthy, mental representations do not consist of randomized thoughts, but rather of organized and classified set of concepts, which inter-links and correlates one another. As it is summarized by Hall (1997), "meaning depends on the relationship between things in the world – people, objects and events, real or fictional – and the conceptual system, which can operate as mental representations of them" (p. 18). Thus, mental representations constitute a conceptual map, which is carried in the mind of each individual. However, even though members of same cultural group may possess a relatively similar set of conceptual maps, it makes very little sense unless they are able to express and communicate these conceptions with each other.

Therefore, the second system of representations, involved into formation of meanings, is the language. As it is emphasized above, in order to be expressed, communicated and understood, all conceptual maps need to be transferred into realm of language, by means of which they can be connected to images, or written and spoken words. Further, word or image, which acquires a meaning, becomes a sign that represents conceptions and their interrelations to one another. Thus, the language presents a form of communication, consisting of the system of signs, which enables intercommunication within a circuit of culture in order for the thoughts, opinions, feelings, and ideas to be expressed and understood. At this point, it must be underscored that in the context of representation, the term 'language' has to be taken in its broadest sense. Particularly, while written or spoken systems clearly constitute

language, they are not the only modes of communication and meaning production. Apart from written or spoken words, language include visual images created by means of any medium, or sounds that are not necessary the pronounced words. Simply saying, anything that is implemented as a sign, and function in correlation with other signs to produce and communicate meanings become a language. Hence, regarding the framework of this research, it must be accentuated that all forms of representation and meanings are generated, evolved and comprehended within cultural and social context. Consequently, existing and functioning within cultural and social domains, advertising is yet another representation practice, which generates meanings through integration of linguistic systems and visual languages.

In brief, generation of meaning within a culture involves two correspondent systems of representation, where first is responsible for construction of conceptual maps-mental representation, while second relies on establishment of correlation between conceptual maps and signs arranged into language systems to represent or express those conceptions. Thus, representation is the process, which enables a production of meaning by interlocking material and immaterial things from one's surrounding, mental conceptions, and signs.

While speculating on subject of meaning formation, it is important to note that there are more than one approach to an effort to reveal the functioning of representation. In this regard, Hall (1997) laying out three major approaches, which are 'reflective', 'intentional', and 'constructionist' accordingly (p. 15).

As follows, Hall (1997) states that in the reflective model ‘language functions like a mirror’, where ‘true meanings’ of things are already embodied in them and directly reflected by means of representation (p. 24). Next model, that is intentional approach, completely opposes reflective model, implying that there is an intentional sender, like speaker or author, who “imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language. Words mean what the author intends they should mean” (Hall, 1997, p. 25). Finally, the third is the constructionist approach, which distinguishes between surrounding material world and symbolic practices. According to constructionist model, meanings in language cannot be fixed by the things or sol individual, because meanings are constructed through representational systems. As Hall puts it:

> it is not the material world which conveys meaning: it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts. It is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and to communicate about that world meaningfully to others. (Hall, 1997, p. 25)

To sum up, all three mentioned approaches touches on important issues, but also have some missing points regarding production of meanings and representation. For instance, while reflective approach certainly reflects on the material side of representation, it totally dismisses its interpretative qualities and human factor within social context. Intentional approach, on the other hand, also appears to be too flown as the whole idea of communicating and exchanging meanings implies a shared language. Indeed, in order to be expressed and understood, the meaning cannot be communicated in sole, private manner. Therefore, constructionist approach to

representation is, probably, the most comprehensive among defined models, as it acknowledges that meaning is a construct, which comprises concepts and signs. Evaluating constructionist approach to representation Hall writes:

> Representation is a practice, a kind of 'work', which uses material objects and effects. But the meaning depends not on the material quality of the sign, but on its symbolic function. It is because a particular sound or word stands for, symbolizes or represents a concept that it can function, in language, as a sign and convey meaning – or, as the constructionists say, signify (sign-i-fy). (Hall, 1997, p. 26)

In conclusion, it is time to recall the introductory part of this section, where it was stated that advertising can be situated within a system of representations. To be more specific, as contemporary culture is dominated by visual imagery; advertising can be placed within realms of visual representation. In this respect, by generating meanings within the current of culture, advertising does both- contributes to and forms the culture. As it is implied by Schroeder and Zwick (2004), "advertising discourse both reflects and creates social norms" (p. 24). Hence, the following segments of the current chapter will focus on the subject of advertising and explain major terms and concepts, which are inside the scope of the research framework.

2.3 Advertising

Within a context of industrialized world, advertising has matured into one of the major effectual communication mediums. Indeed, contemporary society is surrounded by advertising in a variety of forms, ranging from ads in daily newspapers and magazines, to TV commercials and outdoor billboards. Today's advertising presents a compounded web, which frequently involves combination of textual and pictorial elements. On the surface, the purpose of advertising is quite

obvious - that is to encourage a beholder to purchase goods, or use particular services. However, the functioning of advertising is multidirectional and deeply interwoven into processes of formation, evolvement, and transformation of culture and cultural practices on global, as well as on regional levels. In other words, apart from promoting materialism, advertising operates within cultural domains by affecting value systems, together with shifts in attitudes and behavioral patterns. For instance, according to Jefkins (1991):

> Advertising tends to represent the economic progress of societies, and in this respect it ranges from the sophistication of the industrialized world to the new life-style of developing nations. A nation's prosperity is reflected in the extent to which advertising is used. (p. xi)

The concept and notion of advertising is at the core of this research's framework as, in pursuit of subliminal meanings and codes, the whole study centers on semiotic analyses and interpretations of printed ads. Hence, the purpose of this section is to provide background information and to establish theoretical grounds for the subject of advertising. In order to obtain a complete understanding of the topic in hand, the following sub-sections will define advertising as a term and practice; explain its classification according to the medium and media, as well as discuss advertising in the context of persuasive discourse and its relation to cultural practices.

2.3.1 Definition and Objectives of Advertising

Advertising today presents an integrative domain, which comprehend a variety of fields, ranging from communication and design to social sciences and linguistics. Moreover, advertising has turned into an integral element of contemporary society, which has a considerable impact on different aspects of beholder's life, culture and system of values. Consequently, there are a number of different definitions, which

can describe core concept and function of advertising. For instance, American Marketing Association (in Ciochetto, 2001), defines advertising as “any paid form for non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor” (p. 173). Burke (1980), from the other hand, suggests three definitions of advertising, following its evolvement over the time. Burke (1980) explains that by the end of 19th century, while Industrial Revolution has been progressing, advertising was widely considered as “news about products and services” (p. 6). Even though this definition reflects one of the basic functions of advertising, it does not grasp its multifaceted structure. Hence, more suitable definition to advertising was given by J. E. Kennedy in 1904, who wrote that “advertising is salesmanship in print” (Burke, 1980, p. 6). Altogether, Burke (1980) summarizes that one of the most well-known contemporary definitions is that “advertising is a sales message, directed at a mass audience that seeks through persuasion to sell goods, services, or ideas on behalf of the paying sponsor” (p. 7). Jefkins (1991) also proposes a number of definitions for advertising, like “advertising is the means of making known in order to sell” (p. 13), or “advertising presents the most persuasive selling message to the right prospects for the product or service at the lowest possible cost” (p. 18). In general terms, advertising, due to its interdisciplinary character and integrative structure, could be viewed from a variety of standpoints, all depending on purposes the definition is intended to be implied.

Furthermore, regarding the main objectives of advertising, the earliest and, probably the most primary one is to inform people about certain products for sales. Burke (1980) maintains that the earliest forms of advertising had solely served this basic purpose-to inform, while persuasive qualities were majorly missing. Contemporary

advertising, however, has advanced far beyond the goal of mere informing. In this respect, Burke (1980) speculates on three major aspects involved into contemporary advertising objectives and practice:

1) "Advertising is a sales message", meaning that it has to make the best out of convincing consumer of the advantages of a particular product/service;
2) "Directed at a mass audience", referring to the advertising as a media which can reach a wide mass of consumers through one-way communication;
3) "Goods, services, or idea", speaks of what advertising is actually aiming to sell. Particularly, it is maintained that advertising can simultaneously promote both-an actual material product and an idea or concept (Burke, 1980, pp. 6-7).

Kotler and Armstrong (2004) categorize objectives of advertising into three groups, which are: to inform, to persuade, and to remind. The first, and already mentioned, objective is to inform beholder about the product/service that would include actual technical data about an item, information on how it is functioning and financial aspects, such as price range. Secondly, advertising with persuasive objective focuses on encouraging audience to purchase a specific item/service, or shift their preferences towards advertised item/service. Thirdly, advertising with reminding objective aims to recall various information on the item/service in the minds of consumers (Kotler et al, 2004). Nevertheless, regardless of which of the mentioned objectives prevails in advertising, it is always functions to encourage audience to perform certain actions towards advertised good/service. This view is supported by Jefkins (1991), who maintains that one of the fundamental objectives of advertising is to affect or alter people's attitudes in relation to objects. Moreover, Jefkins (1991) emphasizes that "advertising is not just concerned with giving information. It must

do so in such an interesting, original, characteristic and persuasive way that the consumer is urged to take an action" (Jefkins, 1991, p. 14).

In summary, the very basic objective and function of advertising includes introduction and promotion of the goods within market domain. However, as it has already been stressed in this section, contemporary advertising possesses a complex structure and, consequently, its objectives become more intricate. Dyer (1982) argues that contemporary advertising gets more rapidly incorporated into mastering alterations of cultural values and attitudes, while its' primary function to communicate actual information on products gradually loses its' prerogative. In this respect, Beasley (2010) defines advertising objectives as 'rational' and 'non-rational', referring to whether advertising appeals to audiences' mind (objective) or emotions (subjective) (p. 10). Simply saying, rational advertising presents objective qualities and information, like usability of product, its availability and price range that are directed to audiences' rational mind. Non-rational advertising, on the other hand, usually focuses on emotional aspects and promote non-material matters like values, life-style, or attitudes represented through, or associated with advertised commodities. Along these lines, Beasley (2010) maintains that unlike TV or radio commercials, early print advertising has presented objective, rational qualities. However, rapid industrialization, mass production, mass media and technological development induced a shift particularly in print advertising paradigm. Beasley (2010) defines contemporary advertising as 'representational art', arguing that:

> the rational vs. non-rational dichotomy is quickly disappearing from contemporary advertising, as all forms of advertising, including the print ones, are becoming less and less designed to appeal to the reasoning mind (rational) and more and more to the emotions (non-rational). (p. 11)

To conclude, throughout the course of several decades, advertising has swiftly evolved and progressed along with rapid technological developments. Being driven by economic urges, advertising has spread into and extended its impacts on cultural spheres, where it became involved into processes of formation and alteration of social attitudes and value systems. Accordingly, its definition and objectives moved to the different level of complexity. For the purpose of this research, contemporary definition of advertising given by Burke (1980) and already mentioned above appears to be the most appropriate.

2.3.2 Classification and Types of Advertising

Nowadays, advertising is used to achieve a variety of purposes. As it was explained in previous sections, contemporary advertising has rather complex, multifaceted structure. Therefore, classification of advertising becomes more complex, and number of advertising types is increasing along with development and expansion of various social and cultural domains.

In general, advertising can be classified according to its primary purpose and target group, or medium by which an ad is presented. Inevitably, all three aspects are interrelated, and, at the end, define which group within classification system a particular advertising relates to.

Jefkins (1991) defines seven major categories of advertising, classifying it in accordance with purpose and dominant target group and type of market. Accordingly, in Jefkin's terms these categories are: 'consumer', 'industrial', 'trade', 'retail', financial', 'direct response', and 'recruitment' (Jefkins, 1991, p. 21).

Regarding the purpose of this research, the categories, which are of a particular interest and to be viewed in more detail, are ‘consumer’ and ‘retail’.

In this respect, consumer advertising promotes the commodities/services, purchased by general public. These goods are also divided into categories, which are ‘consumer goods’ (refers to general goods, that are bought on daily basis, like food, drinks, etc.), ‘consumer durables’ (refers to the more expensive group of products, that serves longer and purchased less frequently than consumer goods. E.g. clothes, electronic devices), and ‘consumer services’ (all service industries, including leisure and entertainment sector) (Jefkins, 1991, pp. 21-22).

Retail advertising, on the other hand, can be placed amid the trade and consumer advertising. While consumer advertising deals with promotion of specific products, retail advertising is focused on the promotion and recognition of the places, where these goods can be purchased. Consequently, the main goal of such advertising is to direct preference of audience towards advertised retail establishment. Usually, retail advertising is identified through four major aspects, which include formation of the establishment’s distinguished image, information on its location, range of products, and pricing systems (Jefkins, 1991, pp. 29-32).

Finally, as maintained by Jefkins (1991), every category of advertising “requires its own treatment regarding creative presentation and use of media” (p. 21). For example, consumer and retail advertising, due to their characteristics and targeting of a wide range of audience, are the best to be presented through media and by the medium, which would have the most appeal to the masses. Therefore, apart from its

purpose and target group, advertising can be also sub-categorized according to the media and medium through which it is presented. The mediums can include TV and radio commercials, LED screen advertising, internet advertising, and all types of print ads, encompassing large-scaled advertisements, like billboards and pan cards; as well as smaller-scaled and more temporary ads, like flyers, newspaper ads, or magazine advertising. However, since the focal point of this research is the analysis of advertising in the context of popular press, the subsequent section will concentrate on a detailed explanation of print ads as advertising medium and category, leaving other types of advertising mediums out of the scope of this chapter.

Finally, yet, another way to classify an advertising is in accordance with its goal and intended response. In this respect, advertising can be divided into two major categories which are commercial and noncommercial ads. Noncommercial advertising carries rather informative character and aims to inform or awake awareness of certain issues. Noncommercial ads may include, for example, government notices, social campaigns, or announcements from the sphere of public services. Commercial ads, on the other hand, are consumer-oriented and can be further categorized as ‘classified’ or ‘display’ advertisings (Lester, 2003, p. 73). In particular, classified advertising focuses on informative aspects of commodities and services, while display advertising aims to arouse interest and stimulate desire towards advertised product. Consequently, display advertising is usually characterized by finer designs and careful combination and application of graphic elements, which appeals to emotional side of audience and, thus, enhances persuasive qualities of an ad. On the contrary, classified advertising usually appeals

to the objective mind of an audience, aiming to present actual information on product or service, and frequently lack in persuasive appeal.

2.3.2.1 Print Press Advertising

Considering aim and objectives of this research, this section covers major issues related to print advertising. Specifically, this part of literature review focuses on subject of print advertising as medium and mainstream print press (newspapers in particular) as a media for advertising.

An invention of printer in 15th century set a beginning for usage of print as an advertising medium, making it the earliest mode of advertising medium, which evolved and flourished over the time into contemporary sophisticated and developed forms. The earliest samples of print advertisements were dominated by text, and were used independently to promote various products. After initiation of newspaper publishing, however, advertising has also begun to accompany different publications (Beasley, 2010). According to Beasley (2010), the first newspaper that got exclusive right to publish advertisements was London Gazette, and, due to success of such practice, by the end of the 17th century several agencies have begun to deal with creation and writing newspaper ads (p. 6).

Print advertising evolved and shifted to different level in response to rapid technological growth in era of Industrial Revolution. As was mentioned in previous sections, mass production required mass consumption that, in turn, required an awareness of wider masses of population about products availability. Consequently, from that point on importance of visual image in media and, particularly, print

advertising begun to increase, resulting in advertising pieces, which combined both-pictorial and textual elements, within carefully designed layouts.

Today, print advertising is presented in a variety of forms, ranging from newspapers and magazines, to outdoor billboards, transportation ads, point-to-sale advertising, and the like. As a matter of fact, in regard to persuasive objectives of advertising, print ad is assertively a powerful means to infuse product, ideas and values into mass audience. Indeed, from the point of its origin, print advertising has undergone through rapid evolvement and development.

Hence, contemporary print ads present a complex pattern of interwoven texts, colors, photography, images and graphic elements. Apparently, advertising medium and type of media through which it is presented are the important factors to consider, as each has both, advantageous and disadvantageous sides. For the purpose of this research, however, the further discussion will be focused on print advertising in context of mainstream print press, such as newspapers.

Characterizing newspapers as a press media, Burke (1980) writes:

> …the newspaper is an accepted and important part of community life. It presents a way through which the individual can identify with, or feel a part of, the immediate world. To the consumer the newspaper is "now"-practical, important, and to a great extent, authoritative. (p. 126)

Jefkins (1991), from the other hand, maintains that "the press predominates in literate, industrial countries", and that its importance relies on such factors as size of the country, level and extent of literacy, and purchasing power (pp. 64-65).

Nevertheless, due to rapidly developing technologies, spreading media, and raised level of industrialization, print press, and newspapers in particular, have certain advantages. For instance, print press can be characterized by comprehensive coverage, permanence, diversity and wide range of topics and mobility (Jefkins, 1991, p. 66).

Furthermore, in terms of advertising, newspaper provides a fine ground for the coverage of local, and sometimes national, markets. As stated by Burke (1980), "newspaper advertising is considered by the reader as a form of news, because it often contains information about prices and descriptions and illustrations of new merchandise, new styles, and fashions" (Burke, 1980, p. 127). Thus, newspaper as an advertising media has certain advantages, which can be listed as follow:

- Print press advertising, compare to some other advertising media, is relatively cheaper way to reach out to wider masses and, particularly, to potential consumers;
- Comparing to, for example, TV commercials, production of newspaper ads is a way faster, as an ad can be inserted into the newspaper issue literally over-night;
- Considering specialized newspapers, it is easier to establish a potential target group of audience;
- Newspapers have a potential to publish a larger number of ads;
- Due to highly developed printing technologies, majority of today's newspapers can offer advertising in color; (Jefkins, 1991, p. 74)

Nevertheless, to the advantageous side there always come some disadvantages. In case of newspaper advertising, it can include, first of all, a very short life-span of such publications, especially considering daily issues. Therefore, there is very low chance that newspaper, and the advertising within it, will be re-viewed and re-read

again. In addition, even though today's technologies offer a lot of printing opportunities, including variety in paper qualities and range in color, daily newspaper issues are in general rather poorly printed. Finally, newspaper ads are frequently lacking design qualities.

2.3.3 Advertising as Persuasive Discourse

It is hard to deny that in the context of contemporary culture advertising occupies a very important place. In fact, it is difficult to define borderline to the extent of its influence, since todays' advertising has assimilated with visual surrounding to the point of being somewhat commonplace matter. As it is accurately noted by Pajnik and Lesjak-Tušek (2002):

> Their (advertising) existence in several media gives advertisements a sort of independent reality that links them to our own life. As they appear constantly and thus share continuity, they form a world experienced as real. Advertisements provide a structure that transforms a language of objects to that of people and vice versa. (p. 277)

Thus, to be able to reveal and analyze meanings and codes beneath complex visual-textual pattern of advertising, it is crucial, first of all, to view advertising as persuasive discourse.

As already has been mentioned earlier in this chapter, since beginning of Industrial Revolution, advertising, as concept and practice, has undergone a considerable transformations. While at its initial stages the main objective of advertising was to inform consumer about availability of certain products, comprehensive social, economic, and technological changes turned advertising into a form of persuasive discourse. In particular, as early as the first decade of 20th century, large industrial

corporations were extensively utilizing advertising to associate certain lifestyles with specific goods, instead of providing mere data on products' quality and availability. Thus, it was a beginning of what Beasley (2010) termed as an "era of persuasion in advertising" (p. 14). In other words, contemporary society lives in time, when advertising has long ago shifted its focus from providing mere product information onto its audience, creating an images of the goods with which an individual can associate and identify. As stated by Džanić (2013):

> …the consumer is the central figure in an ad's structure. The discourse of advertising today focuses on so-called image-creation, which has become one of the leading persuasive techniques. The product itself is no longer in focus, nor is its description used as a primary persuasive means. (p. 477)

Hence, before pursuing to discussion on persuasive aspects of advertising any further, it might be essential to define 'persuasion' as a term and concept. According to Lester (2003), "persuasion uses factual information and emotional appeals to change a person's mind and promote a desired behavior" (p. 71). In fact, as early as during period of Antiquity, Aristotle defined the nature of persuasion and its constituent components as:

- "Ethos": referring to the credibility of the source;
- "Logos": referring to logical arguments implied in order to convince an audience;
- "Pathos": referring to emotional overture utilized within persuasive argument; (Lester, 2003, pp. 71-72)

Nowadays, due to a great range and variety of products, the objective of advertising is more complex, as it is not enough anymore to merely introduce an item. First and

foremost, it is crucial to create an appealing image of the product in question. Moreover, in order to guarantee particular emotional response from the audience, the message of advertising has to be maximally persuasive. Consequently, within objectives of contemporary advertising, insurance that a product would awake certain associations and meanings in viewers is as much, and sometimes even more, essential, as to provide actual information on product's attributes and availability.

El-daly (2011), conducting research on discourse of advertising, suggests that different advertisings may function differently and, thus, result in different impacts. However, at the same time, most of the advertising still undergoes general analogous processes. These processes can be subdivided into stages, which are: 1) perception, 2) communication, 3) learning, and 4) persuasion (El-daly, 2011, p. 35). As it is seen, according to such classification, persuasion presents a final stage within advertising-audience communication.

The primary objective of persuasive aspect of advertising is to change or modify attitude of audience towards the product in question, and the way an individual identifies. Solomon (1992), speculating on definition and formation of attitudes in context of advertising, outlines the 'functional theory of attitudes' developed by D. Katz, distinguishing among the following functions:

- Utilitarian function: refers to principles of 'reward and punishment'. Attitude towards product is formed in regard to whether it provides pleasure or pain.
- Value-expressive function: refers to the formation of attitude towards product in relation to self-concept (product is used in accordance with how the individual identifies himself, rather than due to its objective qualities).

- Ego-defensive function: refers to attitudes that develop in order to protect the individual either from external forces, or inner insecurities.
- Knowledge function: refers to attitudes that develop due to the need for order, structure, or meaning. (p. 166)

By and large, alteration or modification of attitude is a complicated task to accomplish, as basis of attitudes begin to form at a very early stages of person's development, getting deeply attached to psyche and various systems of values and beliefs. To quote El-daly (2011), "advertising uses cognitive understanding to follow the logic of an argument, make discriminations and see differences, compare and contrast features, comprehend reasons, and, in general make sense of important ideas" (p. 36). El-daly (2011) maintains that persuasive mechanisms of advertising primarily function through the appeal to the individuals' emotions, resulting in construction of convictions and beliefs. Therefore, persuasion in advertising motivates people to take certain action by appealing to emotional aspects of person's psyche, and influencing formation and structure of value systems, beliefs, attitudes and opinions. At this point, it is worth to distinguishing that attitudes reflect the general, long-term emotional responses to people, places, or events; while beliefs may alter or modify those attitudes, as they refer to information that people obtain about certain places, individuals, or issues (Lester, 2003). Along these lines, advertising presents a type of visual message, where combination of pictorial and textual elements can create certain emotional appeal which, in turn, motivates desired responses from audience.

Furthermore, regarding a topic of persuasion, it can be noted that one of the functioning of advertising is to establish a connection between products and certain lifestyles, situations, or activities, achieved through the chain of associations. Consequently, facing a specific situation, people are automatically linking it to the associated product, and vice versa. As a matter of fact, a contemporary consumer culture is full of examples, where certain items become a synonymous to and material representatives of such concepts as luxury, comfort, care, or love (e.g. designer cloth, diamonds are stand for luxury; while brand new car of the latest model may stand for both: luxury and status).

Additionally, in the research on the semiotics of contemporary advertising messages, Džanić (2013) argues that persuasive and manipulative practices of advertising are based on "targeting human insecurities" (p. 476). In particular, contemporary advertising appeals to human needs and desires, and ensures to provide a solution or hope. For instance, depending on nature of need, advertising can promise a better looks, prolonged youth; health, security, comfort, social status, and the like.

To conclude, contemporary advertising has long shifted into realm of persuasion, taking on a form of social discourse and penetrating a variety of cultural domains. Moreover, while mastering an art of persuasion, a contemporary advertising has rapidly switched to newer, advanced level of presentation style, altering framework of verbal communication. It can be stated that persuasive practice of advertising functions to link products to the consciousness of audience, resulting in a considerable impact not only on purchasing decisions, but on the ways a contemporary individual identifies with and perceives commodities.

2.3.4 Advertising, Culture and Value Formation

As has been already expounded in previous sections of this chapter, culture is a complex and multifaceted matter, which accumulates social processes in order to generate, compile and transmit meanings. Thus, culture encompasses such concepts as values, beliefs, norms, codes, and signs, comprising all notions of surrounding world within its framework. Advertising in contemporary society, therefore, presents a mean of communication within cultural domain. Particularly, as was revealed during review of subject of advertising, apart from communicating primary product-related information, it generates and delivers messages that influence formation and transformation of values and social attitudes. Within context of culture, the functioning of advertising carries a dual character, as it simultaneously reflects various aspects of culture and takes a part in its production. As a result, it becomes obvious that culture and advertising are closely related in more than one way, and accumulate and develop within social context. In this regard, Pajnik et al. (2002) define advertising as one of the most essential 'cultural artifacts' that has a tremendous impact on life of contemporary society.

According to De Mooij (1998), an individual perceives and responds to surrounding through the prism of cultural map, which, in context of contemporary society, is formed under various influences including the one of advertising. In this respect, advertising is a cultural construct, existing and functioning within realm of culture. Correspondingly, Ciochetto (2001) explains that while at the dawn of industrialization the major goal of advertising was to present and inform about product, the contemporary advertisers work less and less with uniqueness of the products in hand, and more with values, lifestyles and ideas that can be associated

with it. Indeed, due to a very wide range of similar goods within today's market, advertising is rapidly shifting into cultural domain, functioning within value forming systems.

As follows, considering role of advertising in the process of value formation, Ciochetto (2001) distinguishes between two major sets of values: the ones reinforced by advertising, and the ones omitted by it. Thus, reviewing a large body of relevant literature, Ciochetto (2001) refers to five primary reinforced values drown out of Hofstede's research, which are 1) masculinity/femininity; 2) power distance; 3) collectivism/individualism; 4) uncertainty avoidance; and 5) long-term orientation (in Ciochetto, 2001, p. 179). On the other hand, regarding values that are usually omitted by advertising, Ciochetto (2001) points at absence of social justice and racial equality, exception might be presented by social campaigns, released by government or specialized organizations.

Furthermore, the presence of values, reflecting environmental issues, is rather recent, and appearing mostly within context of corporate advertising with quite pronounced 'greenwash' character (Ciochetto, 2001, p. 179). The resulting summary is that:

> There is naturally a strong emphasis on consumption, but also self-gratification and leisure activities, defined by product use, rather than the promotion of the ethics of hard work, study, educational achievement, community values, social justice and social responsibility. (Ciochetto, 2001, p. 179)

In brief, from what is discussed up to this point, it can be concluded that within a context of contemporary society advertising is closely connected to the cultural

practices, and tightly interwoven into systems and processes involved into formation of values and social attitudes. Advertising reinforces values, which maintain consuming culture. The values like personal identification and individualism are reinforced by means of fashion industry, beauty products and services, while concept of modernity is represented through promotion of technological devices like mobile phones, computers, or I-Pads. Finally, advertising defines, represents and promotes attitudes and lifestyles, which function within context of people's personal life. In this regard, commercialization of holidays and special days exemplifies the case, where advertising defines values and attitudes within a context of one's personal life, and the ways of interacting with and behave towards other members of society. With that in mind, the following section focuses on definition of special days, and Valentine's Day in particular, as well as examines its place within the context of today's culture and society.

2.4 Special Days, Holidays and Contemporary Society

In order to obtain a better understanding of issues, related to Valentine's Day and its contemporary interpretations, one should first thoroughly grasp an idea and multiple perspectives on the current holidays and special occasions as such. Therefore, this section aims to cover general aspects of holidays and special days in the context of contemporary society and consumerism, as well as to review some of the relevant literature and conducted researches.

Indubitably, today's calendar introduces a variety of holidays, like Christmas, New Year, and Hallowing; together with an increasing number of so-called 'special days', which include "Mother's day", "Father's day", "Grandparent's Day", as well as "St. Valentine's Day", "Teacher's day" "Secretaries Day" and even "Boss Day". As a

matter of fact, while some of these holidays and special occasions take their roots in the past, an occurrence of the others is rather recent event. On the surface, each of these days is associated with acknowledgement and relish of certain people, events, or immaterial matters like ‘love’, ‘family’, ‘friendship’, or ‘parenthood’. However, a thorough insight into contemporary cultural rituals, associated with special days and occasions, exposes increasing commercialization and commodification of holidays. For example, Leslie (2001) states that popular culture of today’s society has become an equivalent to commodity, as lesser facets of cultural experiences remain intact by commodification. Conjointly, Solomon (1992) addresses an invention, re-invention and rapid popularization of special days to the raising demands of various industries, and, in particular, of those, whose production centers on holiday-related items-‘ritual artifacts’ (p. 533).

Under these circumstances, advertising takes a very important place in the formation and definition of a popular culture. Explicitly, advertising plays a crucial role within realm of holiday, as it is not merely pursuing audience to purchase different goods, but, more importantly, leads to establishing specific rituals, life styles, behavior patterns, and cultural attitudes. Indeed, it can be said that media spreads the news about existence of a certain special day, features rituals, and suggests particular behavior and attitude that, at some point, turns into culturally and socially accepted norms. These cultural transformations in conjunction with commercialization of holidays, however, did not skip an attention of various researchers, writers and theorists. For instance, comprehensive paper by Schmidt (1991) outlines commercialization of holidays and development of consumer culture in the United States, covering time span between the end of 19th and the first half of 20th centuries.

Reviewing early editions of holiday-related books, Schmidt (1991) points out that publication of Spencer Stuff in1926 was dominated by the theme of commerce, unlike its contemporaries, which were solely focused on chronicles of holidays' customs. Staff (in Schmidt, 1991) claimed that "this is an age of commercialism", exposing the fact that holiday could be fascinating by its marketing possibilities as much, as they are appealing by its folklore, history and celebrating customs (p. 887).

Apparently, commercialization of holidays and special days is a result of industrialization. According to Burke (1980), emergence and development of advertising go hand in hand with industrialization process. Holidays and special days imply various customs and rituals that, among all, include gift-giving and special decoration attributes that, consequently, presents industries with a vast opportunity to produce and sell. In other words, to quote Schmidt (1991), "long thought to be impediments to industrial production, holidays were found, on the flip side, to have all kinds of possibilities when it came to consumption" (p. 889). Furthermore, rapidly developing media and globalization process are other prevailing factors in the progression of holiday and popularization of special days. In this regard, comprehensive studies by Sandikci and Omeraki (2007), focused on transformations of celebration customs and cultural rituals during Ramadan in contemporary Turkey, reveals certain tendencies towards commercialization and consumption lifestyle. In this respect, Sandikci and Omeraki (2007) point out that globalization, capitalism and modernity appear to work along two dominant directions: firstly, there is obvious tendency towards rejuvenation of various cultural rituals and their consequent re-interpretation in accordance with consumerism culture. This view is also presented in the Schmidt's (1995) book "Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American

Holidays", where he points at a commodification of belief during Easter celebration, or transformation of 'spiritual expressions' into commodities during Christmas (pp. 86-110).

Secondly, Sandikci and Omeraki (2007) emphasize that many customs and celebrating rituals begun to appear in the cultures to which they have no historical belonging. This point is supported by various researches, among which are the studies of Minowa, Khomenko and Belk (2011) on celebrating and gift-giving rituals during Valentine's Day in Japan, or publication by Fair (2004), which connects privatization of media sector to emergence and popularization of Valentine's Day in Accra, Ghana. Thus, both of the mentioned studies illustrate an advent of a particular special days, accompanied by number of customs and rituals, which do not belong to the original historical and cultural context of given regions.

To sum up, due to various processes, among which are capitalism, globalization, and consumerism, the contemporary calendar undergone numerous transformations and reinterpretations. Moreover, idea of various special days, together with related rituals, rapidly crosses cultural borders, synthesizing, hybridizing, or diffusing into local customs. Consequently, while looking through the prism of contemporary interpretation of special days, it can be observed that various cultural experiences undergo a process of rapid commodification, where an immaterial matter like feelings and believes are gradually finding concrete expressions through the objects. Finally, an axonometric progression can be witnessed in invention of new special days, as well as re-invention and revitalization of those holidays, which were once demised. However, whether newly invented or revitalized, contemporary special

days are rapidly re-interpreted in accordance with consumerist perspectives, prompting new forms of lifestyles, attitudes, traditions and rituals.

Belonging to the category of special days and occasions, the subject of Valentine's Day dominates a conceptual framework of this study, and, thus, is selected for the purpose of case study and analyses. In this regard, the following sections of this chapter aim to introduce the contemporary concept of the Valentine's Day; to take insight into its historical background, and to review its contemporary form in the context of todays' society.

2.4.1 Gift-Giving Rituals and Holidays

In general terms, an act of gift-giving presents an important ritualistic attribute in the context of the contemporary holidays. Therefore, for the purpose of this research, it is essential to review process of gift exchange as a cultural ritual, which underlays celebrating customs of most holidays and special days. Moreover, it is essential to understand the role it plays in today's society, and its relation to the special days and occasions. Hence, this section defines the term 'ritual', and overview gift-giving process as a cultural and ritualistic act.

Generally, a common beholder sees rituals in rather large scale, associating it with, for example, religious activities, cults, or certain actions performed by primitive tribes. However, life of contemporary society is full of rituals, ranging from particular acts implemented during special events (e.g. funerals, weddings, birthdays, etc.), to simple daily tasks (e. g. daily grooming). According to Solomon (1992), the term 'ritual' can be defined as "a set of multiple, symbolic behaviors that occur in a fixed sequence, and that tend to be repeated periodically" (p. 529). As a matter of

fact, regarding special events and occasions, many industries are based on the production of goods-‘ritual artifacts’-that are utilized during process of performing various rituals (e.g. cards, specialized snacks, birthday candles, themed decorative accessories, etc.). In addition, referring to Solomon (1992), beholders are commonly use ‘ritual script’ that defines which ritual artifacts to apply for a particular occasion, order of utilization of these artifacts, and who is meant to use them (pp. 529-530).

Apparently, holidays and special days are marked by the particular scripts, ritual artifacts, and performance of behaviors, which are exclusive for the time of a given event. As maintained by Solomon (1992), “holidays provide a formalized time to reaffirm-and sometimes redefine-everyday relationships” (p. 532). Among various rituals, surrounding holidays and special days, gift exchange-or gift-giving ritual-is probably most common and most assimilated in contemporary celebrating traditions of popular culture. Analyzing the process of gift-giving rituals, Solomon (1992) divides it into three major stages, as follows:

1) “Gestation”: the giver is motivated by the event to produce a gift. This motivation can be either ‘structural’ (assigned by cultural customs and traditions), or ‘emergent’ (based on personal decision);
2) “Prestation”: an actual process of gift exchange.
3) “Reformulation”: the bounds between giver and receiver are re-adjusted to reflect relationships emerged after gift-exchange. (pp. 531-532)

Being a distinguished cultural practice tightly interwoven into social context, gift-giving ritual - as concept and process - increasingly attracts an attention of researchers. It is studied in relation to gender roles; from consumer and marketing

perspectives; from the anthropological and psychological standpoints, as well as a subject of cultural studies and communication. For instance, Areni, Kiecker and Palan (1998) explore variations in meaning of 'memorable gifts' regarding gender difference. As follows, according to Areni et al (1998), "women are socialized to be gift givers at an early age", which makes them more apprehensive and generally more engaged into practice of gift giving, than men (p. 82). Furthermore, it is suggested that practice of gift-giving, and nature of gifts as such, carry a symbolic aspect, which represents and reflects the nature of relationship between the giver and the receiver. In this respect, Areni et al (1998) identify major categories of the giver-receiver relationships as: 1) romantic partners; 2) parents-children; 3) siblings, and 4) friends and kin (p. 96). Thus, character and meaning of the gift are simultaneously influenced by a variety of factors that include motivations to gift-giving; the context; the nature of relationships between the giver and receiver; and an actual event or occasion the gift is presented for.

Noteworthy, gift-giving ritual is practiced within all societies, and might be introduced in a variety of forms. In fact, within a social context, gift-giving and gift-exchange play an important role in establishing, re-establishing and reinforcing relationships, as well as facilitating in building a 'bound of trust'. In this regard, (Rugimbana et al, 2002) affirm that "it is this strong symbolic quality, demonstrated in the meaning of the gifts, that differentiates the various gift-giving occasions, making each one unique and deserving of special investigation by marketing researchers" (p. 64).

To sum up, it must be noted that, reviewing and understanding a concept of gift-giving ritual as a social and cultural practice is essential in this research, as it is tightly interwoven into context of the contemporary celebrating tradition of Valentine's Day. The uniqueness of gifts in the particular case of the Valentine's Day is that they represent a symbolic mean by which two people involved into romantic relationship articulate their love and affectionate feelings. Besides, gift-giving ritual is also closely related to another key concept within framework of this study, which is advertising. Indeed, the Valentine's Day, being a potentially gift-giving occasion, presents a perfect opportunity to promote different services (mainly within tourism and entertainment sectors), and products, ranging from symbolic goods (e.g. cards, heart-shaped accessories, balloons, candies) to cars, jewelry, and even domestic items.

2.5 Valentine's Day

It is widely known today that February 14th is a Saint Valentine's (or, shortly, Valentine's) Day. It is a holiday of western origins that implies celebration of love and romantic relationships, which, nowadays, is rapidly spreading into and blending with eastern cultures and customs. As a matter of fact, this day is keenly associated with romance, as well as love confession and commitment. Thus, it is a day, when couples express their love affection for each other, by performing certain rituals and acts to celebrate their feelings. In other words, Valentine's Day in contemporary popular culture presents a highly orchestrated holiday, administering certain set of ritualistic behaviors and 'romantic' acts, expected to be performed between couples in order to express and affirm their feelings for each other (Morse and Neuberg, 2004).

Along these lines, this section of the chapter focuses on providing background information on Valentine's Day and related topics. Owing to Valentine's Day being one of the core subjects involved into the framework of the current research, it is essential to cover the key aspects associated with its history, and the ways it is seen, presented and represented today. Accordingly, the following text will reveal origins and brief history of Valentine's Day, as well as introduce information on the contemporary perspectives towards Valentine's Day and its celebrating traditions. In addition, the following sections will also review some recent researches, conducted in regard to relevant subject.

2.5.1 Origins and Brief History of Valentine's Day

Although Valentine's Day celebration can be thought of as a relatively recent innovation, this holiday, in fact, has long and diverse history. Moreover, it is essential to mention that there is no one and only version about origins of Valentine's Day, its celebrating traditions, and development at early stages. Nevertheless, majority of sources seem to agree on relating the point of origin of the Valentine's Day to the pre-Christian times (Myers, 1972; Schmidt, 1995; Fair, 2004). As follows, it is maintained, that Valentine's Day traditions are rooted in the annual custom of ancient Romans to celebrate the festival of Lupercalia (Schmidt, 1995; Fair 2004; Maxwell, 2009). Particularly, the celebration of Luprecalia was taken place every year on February 15th in order to dignify the god of fertility and agriculture Faunus, and was carried out in aspiration of growing and harvesting fine crops. It is assumed that the name of the holiday derived from a Christian martyrs-Valentine of Temi and Valentine of Rome-executed by Roman emperor on February 14th, just before celebration of Lupercalia, for performing marriage ceremonies, forbade among Roman soldiers. In consequence, the church assigned to Valentines the rank of saints,

and their name became to be linked to the February 14th, love, and romance (Fair, 2004; Maxwell, 2009).

Later, in medieval age, a variety of traditions started to appear during Valentine's Day celebration in order to couple unmarried youngsters. For instance, in Medieval Italy young people were rounding up for poetry and music performances, while French government authorized a "court of love", which dealt with issues related to women's abuse and marriages. However, celebration of Valentine's Day, most resembling to its contemporary form, first appeared around 18th century in England, where, to confess and celebrate the love and romance, couples started to exchange greeting cards, pieces of poetry, and notes (Maxwell, 2009). According to Schmidt (1991), concept and celebrating customs of Valentine's Day in England of that period laid along three intercrossing directions, "religious", "popular or folkloristic", and "aristocratic or courtly" (p. 211).

At this point it is essential to note that the first Valentine's greeting cards were predominantly handcrafted, frequently lacking in sophistication. Mass production of Valentine's cards and consequent popularization of the holiday has begun in 19th century, in U.S.A., during the period of Industrial Revolution, when Esther A. Howland started printing of Valentine's cards. Pointing at turning point in celebrating traditions and customs of Valentine's Day, and its transformation into highly commercialized holiday, Schmidt (1991) claims that "the holiday was a harbinger of the possibilities and sardonicism that arose out of allying commerce with celebration and mass production with deep-felt sentiment" (pp. 209-210).

Therefore, throughout its complex and multifaceted history the Valentine's Day holiday has undergone various stages of evolving and alterations. Being first firmly rooted in religion, and linked to saints, it has evolved into a holiday of cheering, entertaining, matchmaking and coupling, becoming a day of pairing activities and games. Among all, it involved various customs like drinking, dancing, picking lots, and reading fortune, interlaced with music performances and poetry reading. Referring to the history of its evolution and varying customs and traditions, performed in the past, Schmidt (1991) writes, "in re-fashioning the holiday the commercial revolution played upon various dimensions of this diverse heritage" (p. 213). According to Schmidt (1991), process of commercialization, which begun during Industrial Revolution, has largely influenced occurrence of new holiday-related rituals and customs. In fact, the commercial base of newly invented rituals has affected the comprehension of valentine, bringing it to the level of commodity, which has been reflected through the conversion of meaning of the word "valentine". Indeed, while at earlier stages of Valentine's Day celebrating tradition the word 'valentine' was referred to a person (the loved one), with emergence of commerce and mass production it has shifted to mean an "object of exchange", a pretty piece of paper-a greeting card (Schmidt, 1991, p. 215). Thus, to conclude, it can be referred to Schmidt, who reflects on the historical process of commercializing and objectification of the holiday and related concepts, that "a valentine had become a commercial product, a piece of merchandise marketed and consumed. The very etymology of the term suggested this fundamental change" (Schmidt, 1991, p. 215).

2.5.2 Valentine's Day in Contemporary Context

Nowadays, Valentine's Day, celebrated on 14th of February, is widely seen as an occasion to celebrate romantic relationships, when partners express their affection for

each other and celebrate their love through implication of certain rituals and traditions. As has been mentioned in previous section, the oldest tradition of this day is an exchange of valentines-the special greeting cards, which include love notes and suitable visual themes, like heart shapes, Cupids, roses and doves.

However, contemporary celebration of Valentine's Day seems to expand far beyond simple card exchange and love poetry. On this day, lovers are expected to exhibit certain behavior and attitude towards each other. Thus, apart from exchange of valentines, people involved into relationships are expected to perform a variety of rituals, which include gift-exchange and every sort of acts and behavior that are accepted as romantic.

The subject of Valentine's Day and rapid global spread of its popularity are attracting a raising attention of researches in variety of fields. Review of relevant literature displayed that there is a range of studies, examining Valentine's Day from a variety of perspectives, including communication, anthropology, psychology, sociology and marketing. As a result, several notions can be drawn from such studies. For instance, some studies point at a rapid global spread of Valentine's Day, contemporary form of which is originally belong to the west. In addition, such studies examine how the Valentine's Day celebrating traditions and rituals are integrating with local culture and customs. As an example, study of Minowa et al. (2011) on celebrating traditions of Valentine's Day in Japan reveals how the adaptation of Valentine's Day by local culture transfers gender roles and power relationships; changes social values, and gradually alters a structure of consumption and gift-giving rituals. Likewise, Fair (2004) examines recently emerged tradition among Ghanaian population to celebrate

Valentine's Day, connecting its sudden advent and popularization to globalization, and privatization of media sector. Accordingly, Fair (2004) concludes that in combination with other factors, integration of Valentine's Day celebrating traditions with local culture plays a comprehensive role in transferring concepts related to love, sexuality, romantic relationships and marriage structure. In addition, there is a study by Karabacak (2012), which examines media representation of Valentine's Day in Turkey through analyses of various magazines' contents. Conclusion, drawn by Karabacak, points at promotion of consumption and material culture, by popularizing Valentine's Day within context of contemporary Turkey. Thus, all three mentioned studies exemplify how concept of Valentine's Day crosses cultural boundaries, enters different cultures and, within a time, alters existing social norms, values and attitudes.

Furthermore, another important aspect, underlying contemporary celebrating traditions and representation of Valentine's Day is gender roles and relationships. In this regard, research of Rugimbana et al. (2002) is of a particular interest as it focuses on motives for gift-giving rituals on Valentine's Day among young males, and investigates underlying social power relationships and exchange between the genders. Keeping with marketing perspective on Valentine's Day event, Rugimbana et al. (2002) concludes that messages of Valentine's Day advertisements, can produce meanings as "as individuals should give to make their partners feel special, but also underline the fact that giving will allow the individual to fulfill their 'obligation' and, in so doing, achieve their self-interest of feeling rewarded" (p. 71). Another research, concerned with gender roles in relation to Valentine's Day by Ogletree (1993) indicates that in general terms, females and more 'feminine

individuals' give a greater importance to this day and, consequently, have a higher expectations comparing to male subjects. Both, Rugimbana et al. (2002) and Ogletree (1993) agree that Valentine's Day becomes highly feminized holiday, on which females are seen as main gift-receivers, while males, accordingly, are expected to play role of the gift-giver.

Considering marketing and consumer perspective, research conducted by Close and Zinkhan (2006) investigates celebrating traditions and rituals of Valentine's Day event in terms of associated meanings, behaviors and themes. Close and Zinkhan (2006) conclude that marketing communication during periods right prior to Valentine's Day are cultivating "materialism, togetherness, and gender roles" (p. 1).

To conclude, it must be re-emphasized that rapid popularization and spread of Valentine's Day traditions throughout different culture result in raising number of studies conducted in regard to this issue. However, review of the relevant literature and conducted studies revealed that contemporary Valentine's Day is researched predominantly from either consumer/marketing or sociological/psychological perspectives, while very few encountered researches dealt with media coverage and representation of this special day. In this regard, this study attempts to contribute to general body of the research on this topic, by presenting semiotic analyses of advertisements, released during Valentine's Day event.

2.6 Defining Semiotics

Generally, as it has been explained in previous sections of this chapter, advertising plays a multidimensional role within contemporary society and culture. On the surface, the function of advertising is to create and reinforce a demand for various

services and goods that supposedly would complement one's life. However, beyond the obvious, today's advertising has a great effect on producing and establishing the dominant norms, morals, values, lifestyles and social power relationships through a system of signs and codes within its textual and pictorial content. In this respect, semiotic analyses, selected as dominant methodological approach of this research, will assist in examining signification systems within advertising text, to reveal prevailing meanings and codes within social and cultural realms of today. Regarding functioning of advertising in terms of signs systems and semiotic codes, Berger (2004) expounds that "People purchase the "right" products and assume (or hope) that these products will signify a certain social class, status, lifestyle, or what you will" (p. 9).

However, before conducting actual analyses, it is essential to introduce semiotics, together with related set of terms and concepts, which are the core concerns of the subsequent sections.

In general terms, semiotic implies the study of how the meanings are created, conveyed and communicated by verbal and non-verbal means within cultural and social domains. Development of semiotics as a field is based on the works of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. Noteworthy, various sources use either 'semiotic' or 'semiology' as a term to define the field, which are synonymous and refer basically to the same discipline. While the term semiology derives from the work of de Saussure, the term semiotic is introduced by Pierce. Thus, in order to avoid confusion and preserve consistency, this research applies the term semiotics throughout its entire content.

Largely, there is a range of definitions, which explain semiotics as a term and discipline. In simplest sense, semiotics can be defined as a science, or discipline, which deals with production and communication of meanings through signs and signs systems, which take place in social and cultural domains. At this point, it is essential to introduce a brief definition of sign. In this regard, Lester (2003) maintains that "any physical representation…is a sign if it has meaning beyond the object itself" (p. 52). In simple terms, anything can be a sign, as long as it stands for something and carries a meaning, which can be understood by individual or a group.

Importantly, semiotics adapts and employs linguistic concepts and models, which are utilized during the process of analyzing a text. Elaborating on the subject of semiotics, Eco maintains that:

> Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign. A sign is everything that can be taken as significantly substituting for something else. This something else does not necessarily have to exist or to actually be somewhere at the moment in which a sign stands for it. Thus semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie. (Eco, 1976, p. 7)

Fundamentally, there are two interrelated focal points in semiotics, which are the text, constituted of signs system, and meaning, which establishes a link between signs. Viewing advertising text from perspective of semiotic approach, it can be stated that it presents a structured entity, where all elements function as a whole. Accordingly, even though single elements within a larger context carry a great deal of significance, it is the correlation between the elements and their collective meanings that construct the final picture and, thereupon, are the major focus of semiotics and semiotic analyses (Chandler, 2013). Simply saying, the text in semiotic

analysis is seen as a language, where relations of the signs within a system are of primary importance. In fact, the systems of signs are not apparent at the first glance and, thus, have to be extracted from the text in order to reveal meanings.

To sum up, it can be referred to Berger (2004), who outlines the major semiotics-related notions as follow:

- Semiotics is concerned with how meaning is created and conveyed in texts;
- The focus of semiotics is the signs found in texts. Signs are understood to be combinations of signifiers and signifieds;
- Because nothing has meaning in itself, the relationships that exist among signs are crucial;
- Texts can be viewed as being similar to speech and as implying grammars or languages that make the texts meaningful. Codes and conventions make the signs in a narrative understandable and also shape the actions (p. 16).

Thus, for the purpose of the current research, the following sub-sections of this chapter reveal and explain brief history of semiotics, key figures in formation and development of the field; as well as basic terms and concepts, which are crucial in conducting semiotic analyses of print advertising.

2.6.1 Brief History of Semiotics

Although semiotics, which is basically the field concerned with the study of signs and signs systems, is regarded as relatively new field, its core notions and concepts are rooted in the time of antiquity. Indeed, ancient philosophers, like Plato and Augustine, had a profound interest in signs, and how they produce and communicate meanings. As early as 397 C.E., Augustine, a Roman linguist and philosopher,

suggested studying signs, pointing at the fact that majority of globally recognized entities could provide communication by many non-verbal means. Moreover, Augustine saw signs as “link between nature and culture”, and even the term semiotics is based on the Greek word ‘semeion’, meaning ‘sign’ (Lester, 2003, p. 53).

Nevertheless, while various theories on nature and communicative properties of signs have been appearing throughout the history since ancient times, semiotics in its contemporary form emerged around the end of 19th- beginning of 20th century, with the works of Swiss linguist F. de Saussure, and American philosopher C. S. Peirce. In particular, Saussure’s division of sign into two major constituents ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’, and Peirce’s categorization of signs as ‘iconic’, ‘indexical’, and ‘symbolic’, are the crucial points, which establish the foundation of modern semiotics (Berger, 2004, pp. 3-4). Consequently, the works of Saussure and Peirce has served as a source of inspiration for many other contributors and developers of the field, including U. Eco, R. Barthes, A. Berger, C. Morris, T. Sebeok, and the like. For the purpose of this study, however, the review will be focused only on the works of Saussure, Peirce, and Barthes. To note, while the works of Saussure and Peirce are at the roots of contemporary semiotics and, thus, are essential to cover, Barthes’s semiotics is added to the content, as it is at the core of methodological framework of the current research.

2.6.2 Saussure’s Semiology: Signifier and Signified

Saussure introduced several concepts, which play a crucial role in emergence and development of semiotics and semiotic analyses in its contemporary sense. Being a linguist, Saussure basically dealt with linguistic signs, suggesting a study of

linguistic in broader terms. First of all, Saussure made differentiation between, what he called ‘langue’ (language) and ‘parole’ or, simply, speech (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993, p. 8). As follows, language presents an entire whole, a complete and all-inclusive system, while parole can stand for one’s writing, or usage of the word. Thus, parole is a constituent component of the language. Regarding semiotics, the term language is seen in broader terms and can be taken as metaphor to define all variety of communication systems, verbal and non-verbal.

Another crucial contribution of Saussure is his notion about duality, encompassed within a sign. Particularly, according to the model, originally defined by Saussure, every sign consists of two complementary parts, termed ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’ (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993, p. 23). As follows, signifier refers to the explicit, physical element of a sign; the material entity of a kind that is present during communication. Signified, on the other hand, is an implicit side of the sign. Shortly, in Saussure’s terms, signifier is a ‘sound-image’ of the sign, while signified refers to its ‘concept’. Thus, the Saussure’s model displays that sign is functioning through the interaction of signifier and signified, while the relations between these two elements are ‘arbitrary’, meaning that there is no logic in relations of signifier and signified (Burger, 2004).

Lastly, it is important to mention another important insight, introduced by Saussure, which implies that relationships of oppositions are fundamental in relations of concepts and production of meaning (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993; Berger, 2004; Chandler, 2013). In other words, the meanings of the concepts are not construed by their

content, but rather by oppositional, binary relation to other elements and terms within a system.

2.6.3 Peirce's Semiotics: Classification of Signs

Like Saussure, Peirce also proposed the division of the signs, however in a different way. While Saussure's model is built upon duality of sign (signifier and signified), the Peirce's model is based on a triadic division into the 'representatum' (or a sign), the 'object', and the 'interpretant' (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993; Berger, 2004). First element of the model-the representatum-stands for the same idea as signifier in Saussure's terms. The object and the interpretant, therefore, refer to the two aspects of signified. Specifically, the object is an entity, referred to by representatum; while the interpretant is "the meaning conveyed by the representatum about the object whatever was not previously known about that object but here conveyed" (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993, 23). At this point, it is essential to highlight that despite of differences in terms utilized; on closer inspection both models (Saussurian and Pierceian) are very similar at its basis. Another comprehensive contribution of Pierce to the field of semiotics is his typology of signs. As a matter of fact, Pierce defined about 66 types of signs, among which three are of particular popularity and importance. These categories of signs, in Pierce's terms, are namely 'icon', 'index', and 'symbol', and are explained as follows:

1) **Icon**: a mode in which the signifier is perceived as resembling or imitating the signified (recognizably looking, sounding, feeling, tasting or smelling like it) - being similar in possessing some of its qualities… (Chandler, 2013, p. 27).

2) **Index**: a mode in which the signifier is not arbitrary but is directly connected in some way (physically or causally) to the signified - this link can be observed or inferred… (Chandler, 2013, p. 27).
3) **Symbol**: a mode in which the signifier does not resemble the signified but which is fundamentally arbitrary or purely conventional - so that the relationship must be learnt… (Chandler, 2013, p. 27).

Consequently, regarding above definitions, it is apparent that relationships between signifier and signified are the key aspects for each category. Leeds-Hurwitz (1993) defines these relations in simple terms as for an icon it is the relation of "similarity or resemblance"; for an index it is the relation of "contiguity or connection"; while for symbol it is the relation of "arbitrariness" (p. 23).

2.6.4 Barthes's Semiotics: Three Orders of Signification

Generally, Barthes was particularly interested in reading and interpreting daily life and popular culture by means of semiotics, while analyzing and decoding signs within a variety of areas (e.g. photography, advertising, fashion, etc.). Barthes's insights and developed concepts present a profound contribution to the field of modern semiotics. In particular, one of his major contributions is the notion on the three orders of signification, termed 'connotative' (or connotation), 'denotative' (or denotation), and 'mythical' (or myth). As follows, denotation presents the first order of signification, in which there is a sign, comprised of a signifier and signified. Accordingly, connotation presents the second order, which utilizes the first order sign (denotative) as signifier and adding to it another signified. Finally, the third order of signification is defined as myth, which is combining first and second order to actualize an ideology (Chandler, 2013, pp. 92-94). Thus, the mechanism and

functioning of three orders of signification emphasize polysemy of signs. In other words, while a sign may appear to signify one thing, at the same time it can underlay a range of meanings. Consequently, connotation can vary with varying form of a signifier, but same signified.

It is essential to emphasize, nevertheless, that there is no strict and clear distinction between defined orders of signification. However, a certain degree of distinction can be reached through the following notions:

1) **Denotative Order (Denotation)**: denotation is commonly referred to the "literal or explicit meanings of words and other phenomena" (Berger, 2004, p. 17). Thus, the first order of signification is majorly representational.
2) **Connotative Order (Connotation)**: connotation comprises historical, emotional and symbolic values that form cultural meanings, being connected to the components of various forms of communication. Thus, the second order involves 'expressive values' connected to the signs (Chandler, 2013, p. 92). Berger (2004), cites a comparison example of denotation and connotation as follows:

Connotation	**Denotation**
Figurative →	Literal
Signified →	Signifier
Inferred →	Obvious
Suggests meanings→	Describes
Realm of Myth →Realm of existence	

3) **Mythical Order (Myth)**: sign in the third order implies various cultural concepts, which reflect a specific perspective on the world (Chandler, 2013,

p. 92). Myths, in semiotic sense, are aiding in recognizing, organizing and conceptualizing various cultural experiences. Thus, regarding Barthes's notion of myth, it plays a dominant role in the processes of naturalizing the cultural constructs, until they begun to appear normal, natural, and commonplace. Besides, myths can conceal ideological functioning of signs and sign systems, as well as codes. As defined by Chandler (2013), "The semiotic analysis of cultural myths involves an attempt to deconstruct the ways in which codes operate within particular popular texts or genres, with the goal of revealing how certain values, attitudes and beliefs are supported whilst others are suppressed" (p. 94).

2.6.5 Signs and Codes in Semiotics

In general terms, semiotics is usually defined as "the study of signs". Hence, signs are central to semiotics, and can be seen as a fundamental 'building component' within semiotic theory. Although the term sign has been already elaborated throughout this subchapter, it is important to take insight into its definition and the ways it functions within signifying system.

Sign can be defined in a variety of ways. Eco (1976) defines sign as "everything that, on the grounds of a previously established social convention, can be taken as something standing for something else" (p. 16). Chandler (2013) maintains that a sign is "a recognizable combination of signifier with a particular signified" (p. 16). Thus, sign is rather an active entity, which is functioning in order to generate and convey meanings. Noteworthy, sign may generate either single or multiple meanings, depending on its place within signifying system and its interrelationship with other elements of the system.

Furthermore, signs can be encountered in a variety of forms, among which probably the most familiar is a word that usually represent idea, concept, or a thing. Berger (2004) exemplifies variation in forms of signs by elaborating on subject of advertising and material culture. In case of advertising, according to Berger (2004), a variety of signs are combined into a system that creates pictorial and textual image of advertising. Moreover, corporate identities of firms and companies are defined by utilization of signs, whose visual characteristics, like forms and colors, aid in generating a sense and idea about company's character and profile. In terms of material culture, its constituent components like things, objects and material artifacts are also serving as a kind of signs, which can generate meanings and stand for various ideas and concepts. In fact, semiotic readings of material culture can take place for both, real life and media representations in films, commercials, TV-shows, print ads, and the like. For instance, clothing, accessories, or hairstyles, of people/models, together with locations and objects presented within interior and exterior settings, are all signs, which form a chain of signifying systems conveying a great deal of information on presented people character and lifestyle.

At this point, it is essential to note that signs are rarely appearing in isolation, but rather form groups and systems, which are organized in accordance with certain set of rules. In semiotic terms, these groupings of the signs are referred to as 'codes'. Notably, the concept of code is one of the central to the framework of this research, as the major aim of the study is to examine representation of love, romance, gender roles and relationships through elaboration of semiotic codes comprised within the context of selected print advertisements. Therefore, it is crucial to review key code-related terms, concepts and notions.

First of all, the concept of semiotic code implies two notions that are the grouping of signs and the rules of their organization. As follows, in order to convey meaning, signs are grouped in accordance with appropriate placement within system, which accentuate the interrelation between the signs, rather than relationships of signifier and signified. The rules of organization of the signs, on the other hand, points out the means by which people can utilize signs to convey and exchange meanings (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993, p. 51). In this respect, Chandler (2004) states that "codes organize signs into meaningful systems which correlate signifiers and signifieds. Codes transcend single texts, linking them together in an interpretative framework" (p. 35). Chandler (2004) defines codes as 'interpretive frameworks', utilized by producers and interpreters of the text likewise. Indeed, in order to generate a text, signs are selected and joined into system in accordance with suitable familiar codes. Thus, during the reading of the text, signs are interpreted in relation to the codes, which appear to be the most appropriate to situation.

Generally, there is a variety of classification systems of the codes, but, keeping in mind theoretical framework of this research, code groups, defined by Chandler appear to be most suiting. Thus, Chandler (2004) divides codes into three major groups as follows (p. 12):

1)Social Codes:

- verbal language (e.g. phonological, syntactical);
- bodily codes (e.g. bodily contact, proximity);
- commodity codes (e.g. fashions);
- behavioral codes (e.g. rituals);

2) Textual Codes (Representational):

- scientific codes;

-aesthetic codes;

-genre, rhetorical and stylistic codes;

-mass media codes;

3) Interpretative Codes:

-perceptual codes;

-ideological codes;

In addition, Chandler (2004) emphasizes that in wider terms, all semiotic codes can be considered as 'social', and all codes can be viewed as ideological (p. 12). Moreover, Chandler (2004) points out that in order to make interpretation of defined three types of codes, one is required to obtain three kinds of knowledge, which are the 'social knowledge', the 'textual knowledge', and the 'modality judgment'.

As a final notion within this section, it is also important to comprehend that all codes possess a set of shared characteristics. These characteristics are cited by Leeds-Hurwitz (1993) as follows (p. 53):

1) Codes have a number of units arranged in paradigms from which one is chosen.
2) These units are combined syntagmatically into a message or text.
3) Codes convey meaning derived from the agreement among and shared cultural experiences of their users.
4) Codes are transmittable by their appropriate media of communication.

5) Codes can be a way of classifying, organizing, and understanding material as well as of transmitting or communicating it.
6) Codes are, by their very nature, full of gaps and inconsistencies and subject to constant change.

To conclude, understanding the key aspects of codes are crucial in semiotic analyses, as within semiotics the code presents a framework for comprehending usage and functioning of signs. In terms of semiotic analyses of advertising texts and the role of codes, it must be emphasized that, as Chandler (2004) puts it, "all representations are systems of signs: they signify rather than 'represent', and they do so with primary reference to codes rather than to 'reality' " (p. 26).

2.6.6 Metaphor and Metanomy

Understanding an idea and functioning of metaphor and metanomy are essential to semiotics, as these two concepts present important means by which meaning is conveyed and transferred. Thus, as with metaphor, the relationship between two concepts or things is established by means of analogy. Linguistically, the most familiar form of metaphor is the simile that utilizes 'like' and 'as' for the purpose of comparison (Berger, 2004). However, concept and use of metaphor expands beyond linguistic implication, and can be widely applied in visual communication within areas of cinema, advertisements, commercials, and the like. In this case, it is called visual metaphor.

Simply, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) define core concept of metaphor as "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 5). Applying terminology of semiotics, therefore, metaphor may take place when one

signified stands for another signified as signifier. Chandler (2013) explains that, “Whilst metaphors may require an imaginative leap in their initial use … many metaphors become so habitually employed that they are no longer perceived as being metaphors at all” (p. 99). In addition, Chandler (2013) cites a basic classification of metaphors according to their kinds as follows (p. 100):

1) **Orientational Metaphors:** primary reference to spatial organization (e.g. up/down; left/right; in/out; on/off);
2) **Ontological Metaphors:** association of activities, emotions and ideas with entities and substances (e.g. metaphors involving personification);
3) **Structural Metaphors:** overarching metaphors (building on the other two types) which allow us to structure one concept in terms of another (e.g. rational argument is war or time is a resource).

Finally, it must be emphasized that there might be a variation in metaphor from one culture to another. Besides, metaphors are hardly arbitrary, but rather formed in accordance with experiences, obtained through culture, socialization and interaction with physical world.

Metanomy, on the other hand, involves the relations between things or concepts, which are established through associations. According to Berger (2004), such metonymic relationship “implies the existence of codes in people’s minds that enable them to make the proper connections” (p. 29). Chandler (2013) implies that metonymy frequently involves substitutions, which are exemplified as follows (p. 101):

- effect for cause ('Don't get hot under the collar!' for 'Don't get angry!');

- object for user (or associated institution) ('the Crown' for the monarchy);
- substance for form ('lead' for 'bullet');
- place for person ('No. 10' for the British prime minister);
- place for institution ('Whitehall isn't saying anything');
- institution for people ('The government is not backing down');
- producer for product ('She owns a Picasso');
- object for user ('The ham sandwich wants his check [bill]');
- controller for controlled ('Nixon bombed Hanoi').

Thus, comparing to metaphor, metonymy does not usually imply ‘imaginative leap’ from one thing or concept to another, as it is normally happens while dealing with metaphors.

Probably one of the most commonly known and applied forms of metonymy is a synecdoche, which implies a relationships where either a part represents the whole, or the whole stands for a part.

2.6.7 Semiotics and Advertising

The definitions, given earlier in this chapter suggest that semiotics is a study of signs and sign systems, while through the method of semiotics any textual materials can be examined in terms of underlying meanings. In a broader sense, text can be referred to anything that can be read and understood in terms of meanings (e.g. sounds, words, pictures). In this respect, advertising also can be seen as a text, combining verbal and non-verbal information in form of signs, which constitute signifying systems. Thus, in order to decode implied messages and reach to the core of the meanings within these complex structures, one needs to utilize a specific approach. Semiotics, in this

sense, serves as a method of reading and interpreting texts of advertisements, as it examines relations of the signs within signifying systems, and reveals codes and myths, comprised within a message. Studying advertising text from semiotic standpoint was first proposed by Barthes (1964), who maintained that:

> In advertising the signification of the image is undoubtedly intentional; the signifieds of the advertising message are formed a priori by certain attributes of the product and these signifieds have to transmit as clearly as possible. If the image contains signs, we can be sure that in advertising these signs are full, formed with a view to the optimum reading: the advertising image is frank, or at least emphatic (Barthes, 1999, p. 33).

Notably, every text, including advertising, is generated through the signs systems, where the signs are arranged in connection to various codes, which mirror particular cultural and social values, practices, or beliefs. In brief, it can be said that advertisements embody certain mythical concepts and meanings, which is provoking a chain of association between an image and its audience, shaping and adding significance to the daily experiences, and encouraging certain views of various social and cultural aspects.

This statement, together with all mentioned above, clearly points at relevance of semiotics as a method for analyzing print advertisements in terms of underlying codes and meanings. Thus, it concludes literature review section and transits this thesis to the next chapter, which will focus on selected methodological approach to the case studies.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter aims to provide an annotation to methodological approach of the research, as well as background information on the collected print advertising units. Thus, first, methodology and design of the research will be presented, which will be followed by identification of the method, and speculation on relevance of selected methodological approach. Secondly, basic information on selected print advertisement units will be provided, including some statistical data and period of investigation. Finally, categorization system of selected advertisements will be presented and explained in accordance with established methodological approach.

3.1 Design of the Study

In general terms, this study is based on qualitative methodology, while examination of selected advertisement will be made by means of descriptive thematic analyses, which, above all, implies categorization of collected data and development of the themes. In addition, thematic analyses underlay examination of defined categories, and the functioning of the established themes regarding collected data.

In order to conduct actual readings of the selected advertisements, it is essential to identify a method, which would be the most agreeable with the aim and objectives of the study. Recollecting introductory chapter of this thesis, the main aim of this research is to reveal and examine meanings and codes, related to comprehension and

practices of romantic relationships, behavior, and love, comprised within visual and textual components of Valentine's Day print advertisements. As has been revealed through literature review, a majority of today's print advertisements combines textual and visual elements, assembled into intricate system of signs. Analyzing these signs' meanings and functioning in relation to each other within signifying systems is a core concern of semiotics. Therefore, visual and textual semiotic analysis is favored as a dominant method of the present inquiry. In particular, selected print advertisements will be analyzed in terms of their constituent textual and pictorial components, by shifting from their denotative to connotative meanings. Moreover, considering major theme of Valentine's Day, examination of selected advertisements will be focused on revealing structure of social and cultural codes, concealed within presented system of signs. In addition, the present inquiry will attempt to provide an insight into connection between cultural and social myths and semiotic codes.

As all selected print advertisements are united by the common theme, which is Valentine's Day, the analyzed units will be categorized and grouped along several lines. The aim of categorization is to maintain consistency within analyses and subsequent conclusions, while avoiding fragmentation and randomness.

Thus, in accordance with methodological framework of this research, the major steps of analyzing process will be as follows:

1) Selected print advertisements will be categorized along several lines at the stage of preliminary overview.
2) Visual and textual components will be defined within sign system in terms of their denotative meanings.

3) The connotative meanings of the defined signs will be interpreted.
4) The relationships of connotative meanings within defined sign systems will be looked upon to reveal semiotic codes.
5) Semiotic codes will be analyzed in relation to the cultural and social myths, underplaying such notions as love, romance, relationships, and gender.

In brief, visual and textual elements of selected print advertisements, identified as signs, will be analyzed in terms of their paradigmatic arrangement. In addition, relationships between signs will be examined through different coding systems.

3.1.1 Relevance of Semiotics as Method of Reading Advertisements

In pursuance of defining and rationalizing a selected methodological approach, first it would be useful to recollect major goals and objectives of this research, as it would help to achieve more concrete understanding of and motivation to establish a method that would be the finest alignment to the aim of the study.

According to the chapter 1 of this thesis, the conducted research aims to seek meanings through semiotic codes, interwoven into pictorial and textual components of print advertising designed and published for the Valentine's Day occasion. As a matter of fact, depending on the primary goals of inquiry, a researcher may approach analyses of advertising from various perspectives, which can include, for example, anthropology, psychology, or cultural studies. However, current research focuses on method of visual semiotics, as today's print advertising commonly presents a combination of a text and an image, where both elements function correspondingly in order to reinforce the message.

According to Danesi (2008), semiotics, on the one hand, provides theoretical tools to interpret images by decoding their meaning and, on the other hand, aid in understanding of how different images generate these meanings. Likewise, Chandler (2013) maintains that "studying semiotics can assist us to become more aware of reality as a construction and of the roles played by ourselves and others in constructing it" (p. 14). Hence, an anticipation of this study is that semiotic method corresponds to the objectives of the research that is to reveal and examine codes and meanings behind print advertising, as well as to explore how advertisements construct reality. In particular, as this research is centered on contemporary concept of Valentine's Day, semiotic interpretations will be focused, above all, on representation of love, romance, gender roles, and myths about relationships between couples.

As a matter of fact, while all terms and concepts outlined in literature review will be used, the analyses will be dominated by Barthes's approach due to its implication of reading popular culture by means of semiotics. In particular, Barthes's theory allows gaining in depth analyses of signs systems, comprising text and image, and, what is the most important, a correlation between them. In other words, semiotic model of Barthes appears to be consistent with primary goals of this research, which focuses on semiotic readings of advertising in the context of popular culture. First of all, as it is already mentioned above, Barthes's semiotics targets both-pictorial and textual elements, as well as their interrelations in the context of constructed meaning. Secondly, Barthes defines and develops an approach towards implication of three orders of signification, namely "connotation", "denotation", and "myth", in the context of visual communication rather than linguistics (Leeuwen, 2005). Thus,

Barthes's connotative and denotative attributes of an image are essential analyzing instruments of this research, which will be applied during the process of reading and interpreting selected print advertising samples.

In other respects, according to Solomon (1992), "every society possesses a set of myths that define that culture" (p. 518). Indeed, myth plays a very important role in everyday life, and contemporary myths constitute an essential part of today's popular culture. Along these lines, methodological approach of this study will include mythological aspects in context of print advertising, considering Barthes's third order of signification and its functioning in relation to the sign system, constituting the text of advertisement.

To sum up, in addition to Barthes's three orders of signification, such terms as sign, symbol, code and metaphor are central to methodological framework of the inquiry.

3.1.2 Textual Semiotic Analysis

Due to polisemeous nature of connotative meanings of signs (pictorial signs in particular), semiotic analyses will be made for both: textual and pictorial/graphical components of the selected advertisement units. As it is already stressed previously, advertisement as a whole combines pictorial and textual components into a sign system. As a matter of fact, the visuals alone are *polysemic* in nature, resulting in non-stable, non-fixed, floating meanings. Linguistic text, in this respect, serves as an anchor, which stabilizes the floating meanings and, to various degrees, conceals their uncertainty within context of pictorial constituents of advertising.

Therefore, the connotative relationships between both elements are needed to be established and analyzed, in order to obtain meanings and reveal semiotic codes. In fact, verbal, or textual elements of advertisements aid in interpreting and understanding intended connotative meaning of advertisement. Therefore, verbal text within advertisement's context is as important as its pictorial constituents. In this respect, analyses of written texts will be made in accordance with its anchorage function on two levels: 1) identification (denotative level); and 2) interpretation (connotative level).

3.2 Selected Advertisement Units

For the purpose of this study it was decided to focus on the analyses of Valentine's Day print advertisements, encountered within local newspapers in 2014. The selection is limited to three newspapers, which also represent three different ideological movements. Thus, the relevant advertisements are gathered from:

"KIBRIS GAZETESİ" (as mainstream)

"HAVADİS" (as right wing)

"YENİDÜZEN" (as left wing)

In order to gather required newspapers, a request has been addressed to the newspaper archive of the library in Eastern Mediterranean University. Preliminary overview of newspaper contents in terms of advertisements was made regarding issues, published within one month period.

3.2.1 Period of Investigation

The sample advertisements were collected from three local popular North Cyprus newspapers, for one month period, prior to the Valentine's Day event. Thus,

collected advertisements belong to the period from 15th January to 15th, February, 2014.

3.2.2 Statistical Treatment of Selected Print Advertisement Units

In order to provide a statistical backdrop, the total number of advertisements was counted for each selected issue, and then the number of Valentine's Day ads was driven out. As a result, the following numerical data was obtained:

1) **"KIBRIS GAZETESİ"** (15th January-15th February):

- Total number of advertisements: 378
- Number of Valentine's Day Advertisements: 107

2) **"HAVADİS"** (15th January-15th February):

- Total number of advertisements: 404
- Number of Valentine's Day Advertisements: 84

3) **"YENİDÜZEN"** (15th January-15th February):

- Total number of advertisements: 463
- Number of Valentine's Day Advertisements: 59

As a result, the total number of advertising from all three newspapers of defined period is 1245, out of which, the total number of Valentine's Day advertisements is 250. At this point, it must be stressed that several advertisements were repeated from issue to issue within the context of the same newspaper. Moreover, some of the advertisements were encountered within context of more than one newspaper. Therefore, in view of the fact that same advertisement was re-published from issue to issue of the same newspaper, or published simultaneously in the multiple newspapers, the final numerical data was driven out, limiting the number of analyzed Valentine's Day advertisements to 95.

3.2.3 Preliminary Overview of Selected Newspapers

It has to be mentioned here that all three selected newspapers provide inserts. However, only "Kıbrıs Gazetesi" provides inserts (issue from February 08 and issue from February 12), containing advertisements and articles, closely related to or reflecting on the Valentine's Day event. Inserts of "Yenidüzen" and "Havadis", on the other hand, left Valentine's Day event out of their contents.

To exemplify, in one of the inserts of "Kıbrıs Gazetesi", Valentine's Day advertisements are frequently placed beside Valentine's Day themed articles. In this regard, two cases have attracted a particular attention. In first case, an article titled "*Sevgililer Günü'nde sevgilinizi şaşırtın: 24 Sürpriz Öneri"* ("*Amaze your loved one on Valentine's Day. 24 suggestions of surprises"*), listing 24 ways to surprise the loved one, is bottomed by advertisement of restaurant, which offers romantic experience (see Appendix C, fig. 97). In the second case, an article, titled "*Zaman Kaybetmeyin*" ("*Don't lose time*"), which addresses to the ones, who would like to make an original gift, by proposing different type of watches, is accompanied by the full page colored ad of "Zen" watches (see Appendix C, fig. 98). Although it is not the aim of this research to explore interconnection and interrelationships of newspaper contents, the former examples are mentioned to exemplify how advertising reinforces and re-emphasizes given themes.

In addition, yet another point to highlight is that preliminary review of advertising during the process of selection revealed that, while some of the advertisements of defined time span do not provide any textual information or mentioning of Valentine's Day, the pictorial components utilized are reflecting on the theme of this

occasion (e.g. use of red colors and heart shapes). Accordingly it has been decided to include such advertising into the scope of the analyses, in order to examine implication of sole Valentine's Day signs and symbols, which are not reinforced or supported by linguistic message.

3.3 Categorization System of Selected Print Advertisements Units

Preliminary overview of the selected advertisements shows that they fall into two major categories in accordance with type of the goods presented. Thus, two major groups derive from this categorization, which are the advertisings that promote actual material goods-further referred to as 'objects', and the advertisings that offer certain services and experiences. Consequently, it makes the following:

1) Objects
2) Services

The rationale behind categorizing selected advertisements is a necessity to preserve a certain degree of order during the process of inquiry, and to satisfy aims and objectives of the current research at its best. Particularly, even preliminary generalized categorization of advertisings, briefed above, aids in observing contemporary tendencies in social power relations regarding genders; as well as myths on behavioral models of the couples, ritualization, fostering of materialism through commodification of feelings; and representation of love as such. All mentioned issues are discussed in the following section, which outlines theoretical framework of analysis part by means of recalling major themes and subjects involved into the process of semiotic and textual analyses to be implied for this study.

Thus, for the purpose of the analysis, the following studies and examination will be made for two major groups: advertising of objects (e.g. cars, jewelries), and advertising of services and entertainment sector.

In general, the first group is assumed to relate to the problem of commodification of feelings, objectification of love and instrumentalization of consumer goods, while the second group is assumed to be more related to cultural and social codes, and myths about relationships, and specifically representation of love, romance and related behavioral patterns. It must be emphasized, however, that defined themes are interrelated and not firmly fixed to either of given categories.

3.3.1 Category Objects

According to statistical data, obtained during preliminary overview of selected newspapers, it is revealed that 51 advertisements fall into 'objects' category.

Apparently, this group is over-generalized and can be further divided into subgroups as:

a) Domestic (including home accessories and furniture)
b) Cloth, Jewelry and Personal Accessories
c) Cars
d) Cosmetics
e) Gifts and Souvenirs
f) Electronics

3.3.2 Category Services

In accordance with statistical data, obtained during preliminary overview of selected newspapers revealed that 44 ads belong to the category defined as ‘services’. Like in the case of first group, this category can also undergo further division as follows:

a) Activities (e.g. dinner, concerts)
b) Places (e.g. hotels)
c) Grooming Services (e.g. beauty salon)
d) Financial
e) Communication

3.3.3 Campaigns

Preliminary overview of selected advertisements reveals that Valentine’s Day is used as an occasion to introduce various campaigns for both ‘objects’ and ‘services’ categories of advertisements. Therefore, the connotative aspects of campaigns will be analyzed within larger content of selected ads.

3.3.4 Visual Elements: Colors

In general, being very powerful element within visual communication, color presents a variety of symbolic qualities. Thus, application of various colors and color combinations may reinforce, or even change intended message and meaning of the image. Indeed, even though there is a subjective aspect to color perception, it still can communicate universal concepts. According to Birren (1989), color symbolism is majorly connected to the cultural practices and experiences by means of attaching to color certain qualities, through the chain of associations with certain objects and ideas.

Overly, newspaper prints imply dominance of achromatic color scheme, due to the printing cost on the one hand, and relatively poor quality of printing on the other hand. However, some of the colored Valentine's Day advertisements were noticed at the preliminary stage of gathering and selecting sample units. Even though their number is relatively low, comparing to black and white samples, color, as an important visual and symbolic mean, became included into the theoretical framework of the analyses. Consequently, colored print advertisements will be analyzed, above all, in terms of color coding and its relation to the other elements within a sign system.

3.3.5 Visual Elements: Shapes

Apart from photographic and textual components, many selected advertisement samples also include application of various graphic elements-shapes. In this regard, semiotic analyses will attempt to define to which type of sign these shapes belong to (iconic, indexical or symbolic), and how it is functioning within signifying system of advertisements' texts.

3.3.6 Icons, Indexes, and Symbols

Peirce's classification of signs into icon, index and symbol is another essential component of theoretical framework of the analyses. Particularly, while switching from denotative to connotative order of signification, the functioning of the signs within a system will be examined, above all, in terms of iconic, indexical and symbolic aspects.

3.4 Semiotic Codes, Myths and Thematic Categorization

Despite of its rising popularity, the Valentine's Day can be still considered as rather small-scale event, especially comparing to other Western-originated holidays, like Christmas or Easter. However, due to specificity of its theme, it turns into a complex

and multilayered subject in the context of mass media and popular culture. It is apparent that any special day within contemporary calendar, including Valentine's Day, presents a great opportunity to the marketers to promote a variety of goods and services. Significantly, while Valentine's Day in the past was celebrated by presenting small symbolic items (e.g. heart-shaped chocolate, cards, roses, and the like) to the loved ones, today's advertising takes a full advantage of the event, offering and promoting a vast range of goods as a "perfect Valentine gift". Indeed, even household items, like washing machine or furniture are often instrumentalized through the language of advertising, to be gifted as a sign and expression of one's love and affection. However, fostering and cultivating material culture is only one of the layers constituting advertisings, created specifically for Valentine's Day event. As has been already mentioned, the purpose of this research is to reveal underlying meanings within pictorial and textual components of advertising. As the scope of the research is narrowed down to the Valentine's Day as a special day, and its coverage within print advertising, the analysis will be focused on the related themes, which are feelings, love and relationships.

Before conducting the analyzing process, it appears essential to recall and outline main terms and themes, which serve as a base of the analysis within a context of this thesis. Thus, the current section of the chapter aims to provide a brief overview of major terms, themes and hypothesis, which will constitute the framework of semiotic analyses of the selected print advertisements, published for the Valentine's Day event in selected local North Cyprus newspapers.

3.4.1 Gift Giving Ritual

Although the subject of gift giving ritual was covered in the literature review chapter, it is important to re-emphasize certain points in relation to the analysis to be conducted. Thus, in the context of popular culture, the majority of holidays and special days are defined by performing a gift exchange as a ritualistic act, in which a gift turns into ritual artifact. The gift in this context, therefore, reflects the nature of relation between the giver and receiver, and carries certain social, cultural, and personal meanings. As a matter of fact, gift giving and exchange as cultural and social phenomenon has existed since down of civilization. However, for the purpose of this research, it is important to comprehend its social and cultural dimensions in the realms of contemporary society and popular culture. Apparently, gift-giving ritual is multilayered in its nature, and can be defined by a number of aspects, which include personal motivations on the one side, and social norms and conventions on the other side. Allegedly, gift-giving tradition exhibits a great economic significance and, therefore, is widely used in marketing and advertising. Every holiday, event, or special day is rapidly turning into gift giving occasion, while advertises offer a wide range of products as ‘perfect gifts’, appealing to and exploiting non-material matters and concepts, like feelings and emotions.

As has been already mentioned above, contemporary celebration of Valentine’s Day is marked by raising popularity and normalization of gift-giving and exchange. In this respect, and with regard to general framework of this research, the following aspects must be highlighted for the purpose of the analysis of selected advertisements:

1) First of all, it is affirmed that character and form of gift reflects both-the theme of the occasion it is presented for, and the nature of relations between a giver and receiver. Thus, due to specificity of the Valentine's Day theme, the focus of the analysis will be centered on the relationship type defined as 'romantic partners'. In this respect, the analysis will look upon the products and services offered by advertising as gifts, as well as the ways and forms they are presented in order to appeal to couples and represent the relationships.
2) Secondly, there are always certain motivations that lay behind an act of gift giving. Consequently, the analysis of selected advertisements will aim to reveal, which of the motivations are played upon and exploited most within textual and pictorial image of advertising. Noteworthy, these motives exist in both: social and personal domains. The motives within social domains are defined by established traditions, as well as social and cultural norms, while motives within personal domain lay closer to the realm of human psychology. In many cases, motives on social and personal level are interrelated and appear simultaneously. In general, the motivations for gift-giving can be summarized as "*obligation*", "*self-interest*", and "*altruism*" (in Rugimbana et al., 2002).

3.4.2 Fostering Material Culture and Objectification of Love

As already mentioned previously, the special days and their relation to gift-giving ritual have a great economic significance, and actively exploited in advertising to promote and sell more goods. The uniqueness of the Valentine's Day lays in the fact that it exclusively focuses on concept of love, feelings, romance and couples in relationship. In accordance with its popular concept, this day is meant to confess and

celebrate one's love and affection. In this regard, the analysis part of this research will aim to investigate how pictorial and textual elements of selected advertisements represent the concept of love. Referring to previous section, it becomes apparent that nowadays the gift giving ritual on Valentine's Day is turning into social and cultural norms. Thus, it seems that non-material matters like feelings are commoditized to the form of actual material gifts, or measured by the amount of money-spending. In other words, it seems that in accordance with the context of today's popular culture and advertising, to celebrate values related to the Valentine's Day it is necessary to engage in spending and consuming. Along these lines, advertising related to Valentine's Day plays a great role in fostering material culture through objectification of love, by means of promoting a material good as an indicator of feeling.

At this point it might be useful to establish a parallel with E. Fromm's concept of 'having' and 'being'. Fromm (2008) points out at ongoing linguistic transformations, in which more and more verbs (realm of being) are becoming substituted by the nouns (domain of having). Apparently, today's popular culture, together with mass media, advertising, consumerism and commercialization tendencies locate contemporary society within domain of 'having'. The mode of having, on contrary to the mode of being, reflects general passivity and alienation of an individual in relation to the world.

Regarding advertisements related to Valentine's Day, it can be suggested that within their context the love, presenting an abstract non-material matter, is being reduced to the level of material objects that one can have. Thus, objectification of love in

advertising suggests that love is a thing that can be touched, measured, and possessed. Simply saying, contemporary advertising and popular culture communicate the meaning of love in terms of the 'having' mode-emphasizing materialistic aspects, rather than in terms of 'being'. This idea is well expressed by Fromm (2008), who states that:

> To say, "I have a great love for you", is meaningless. Love is not a thing that one can have, but a process, an inner activity that one is the subject of. I can love, I can be in love, but in loving, I have…Nothing. In fact, the less I have, the more I can love. (p. 19)

To sum up, considering all noted above, one of the essential components of framework of the analysis will be presented by notion that Valentine's Day advertising objectifies love and reduces it to the level of object, shifting the paradigm of its existence to the side of 'having' mode. Besides, the analysis part will aim to reveal the ways the material culture is fostered through advertising by means of exploiting very essence and idea of Valentine's Day.

3.4.3 Instrumentalization of Advertised Objects

Another important aspect that attracted attention during preliminary overview of selected advertising and, thus, will be included into framework of analysis, is the way common objects are instrumentalized through the language of advertising to fit into, and reflect a concept of special occasions, such as Valentine's Day. As has been revealed in previous parts, the celebration of Valentine's Day in the past was made by gifting themed, occasion-specific symbolic items, like cards or heart-shaped chocolates. Moreover, presenting a poem or a song only, without accompanying it by other items, was perfectly appropriate. Nowadays, however, even though flowers, cards and candies are of a great popularity, it seems that anything and everything can

serve as a ‘perfect’ Valentine’s gift. Framed and shaped by advertising in accordance with a holiday or occasion, even a washing machine suddenly appears to be a suitable Valentine’s present (example is a multiple newspaper ads by ‘Blomberg’ company, which will be discussed in details in analysis part). It is interesting to observe how such item as washing machine or electrical cooker, associated with household routine, fits in with the concept of love and romance of Valentine’s Day. The phenomenon of such instrumentalization is an attention catching, and thus, a separate section of the analysis part will be dedicated to its studies.

3.4.4 Gender Roles and Social Power Relationship

Consideration of the fact that the very basic idea of Valentine’s Day is a celebration of love and couples in romantic relationships implies certain gender-related issues. In this respect, semiotic analysis of this research will be dealing with, yet, another aspect that is gender-related. While it might not be thoroughly focusing on the representation of gender role in advertising, the semiotic reading of selected advertisements will aim to reveal ideologies behind representation of love and relationships, and roles inscribed for either of genders.

According to previous section of this chapter, it was revealed that selected advertising fall into different groups, which are categorized in terms of target audience on the one hand, and products advertised on the other hand. Assuming that being an integral part of popular culture, advertising texts and images suggest certain patterns, which, in part, define social power relations and exchange among genders. For instance, many relevant conducted researches revealed that male audience during Valentine’s Day event present a dominant target group of advertisers and retailers, as they are given a role of gift-givers and expected to perform an act of gift giving as a

social and cultural norm, while females are generally to receive the gifts (Rugimbana et al., 2002; Saad & Gill, 2003; Close & Zinkhan, 2006). Indeed, in the context of patriarchal society, men are usually considered to have more social and economic power than women. Consequently, as various studies suggest, in terms of exchange of social powers, man is traditionally expected to offer economic security in exchange to beauty and attractiveness on behalf of a woman (in Rugimbana et al., 2002). Valentine's Day event, therefore, seem to be a good case to reveal these tendencies, as the idea of social power exchange on this occasion is the most prominent through ritualistic behaviors performed by either genders (e.g., extra-grooming and self-gifts for female; and providing gifts and romantic experiences from the male side). The semiotic and textual analysis of this research aim to reveal how advertising published for this particular special day prompt, support, and present such power relations, exchange and distribution by means of its textual and pictorial components.

In this regard, each of the selected advertisements will be analyzed in terms of the relationship between product/service advertised, and which of the genders it is supposedly targeting. Giving same example from previous section, the washing machine as an advertised item is strongly associated with household routine and, thus, with females, as in the societies with dominant patriarchal structure woman is seen as a 'natural' housekeeper. However, considering specific context of Valentine's Day, for which a particular ad was designed and published, washing machine is presented as a gift that a man can purchase for his beloved one. In addition, it is important to note here, that analysis will be also conducted in terms of another category of target audience, regarding a marital status. In this respect,

attempt will be made to analyze selected advertisements in terms of myths and codes on marriage, relationships and behavioral patterns, carried out by pictorial and textual components of advertising. As marriage presents a rationalized social institution, based on economic arrangements and mutual interests, giving value to celebration of Valentine's Day the way it is represented within today's popular culture might be as well a step forward towards this institution.

3.4.5 Myth and Codes of Romance and Romantic Behaviors

As defined earlier in this chapter, it is revealed that selected advertisements fall into two major categories in accordance with what is advertised: objects or services. By and large, services and entertainment sectors usually do not promote any specific material goods, but rather offer experiences or assistance of different kind. Thus, regarding major theme of Valentine's Day, that is love and romance, this study assumes that advertisements published specifically for this occasion are encoded with messages about performance of romantic behavior. In this respect, semiotic readings of such advertisements will reveal social codes and myth comprised within presented signification systems.

It must be noted that the term 'romantic' or 'romanticism' is deriving from and often utilized in connection to the cultural context of the arts. Hence, in such context, romanticism underlays the focus on imagination, individuality, emotion, innocence, wander, alienation and a sense of opposition to reason and rationalization, as well as formal order, formal rules and symmetry (Stevens, 2004, p. 11-14). In terms of art and literature, romanticism occurred as a reaction to Enlightenment and Classicism, and everything they stand for. In broader sense, the understanding of term 'romance'/'romanticism' and its usage change greatly in accordance with period and

context within which it is applied. Historically, 'romance' is of the Western origin and in 18th century was often referred to "a form of somewhere between a long narrative poem or ballad and folk tale" (Stevens, 2004, p. 12). Regarding the topic of this research, the term 'romance' is considered in relation to the contemporary context of popular culture and, particularly, in connection to love, couples, their relationships and behavior. To quote Schafer (2008), "Romantic love is also one of the most ubiquitous subjects of mass media and popular culture; images of romance are the main themes of many movies, songs, magazines and advertisements" (p. 187). Noteworthy, many researchers agree that notion of romantic love is originally standing at the core of Western social life, and by many means seen as a social and cultural construct (Dion and Dion, 1996; Stevens, 2004; Gottschall and Nordlund, 2006; Schafer, 2008). As a matter of fact, it is rather intricate matter to give a clear-cut definition to romance in terms of human interaction and experience, as it is virtually impossible to give one and only definition to love. However, there are certain widely-accepted features, assigned to the notion of romance, which are listed by Furman, Brown, and Feiring (1999) as follow:

1) Romance involves a relationship, an ongoing pattern of association and interaction between two individuals who acknowledge some connection with each other.
2) Romance is a matter of personal choice, meaning that such relationships are tenuous.
3) There is some form of attraction that usually involves sexual component.
4) Attraction to romantic partner involves feelings and matters which expand beyond solely sexual nature. (pp. 3-4)

3.5 Summary

As a final part of this chapter, it might be useful to make a brief outline of main points and processes, covered above, which will be utilized throughout analyzing process. Thus, first it must be re-emphasized that the present study applies qualitative methodology, which uses visual and textual semiotics as the major methodological tool.

In terms of treatment of selected print advertisements, it is defined that they fall into two major categories in accordance with what is advertised. These categories are termed as 'objects' (for material goods) and 'services' (for services and entertainment sector), and undergo further sub-division.

Furthermore, both defined groups will be analyzed in semiotic terms, where advertisement image will be seen as a sign system, consisting of pictorial and textual elements. For the written text, a particular attention will be paid to its denotative and connotative meaning, as well as signifying relationships with pictorial elements.

The pictorial elements will be analyzed in terms of color symbolism, graphical elements like shapes, and photographic components. Consequently, after defining denotative and then connotative meanings of the major signs within signifying system of each advertisement image, the analyses will focus on correlation of all components, their functioning within system, the codes they construct, and underlying social myths, these codes are built upon. Notably, a particular attention will be paid to the codes of gift-giving, romance, gender roles and representation, romantic behavior, love, and relationships. In addition, coding and representation of

Valentine's Day as such will be examined and reported. Thus, listed thematic categories, listed below, will serve as a focal point of visual and textual semiotic readings:

1) Representation of Love
2) Gender Connotations
3) Romance and Romantic Behavior
4) Gift-Giving
5) Domestication
6) Status and Power
7) Representation of Valentine's Day

In addition, codes, comprised within system of signs of selected print advertisements will be examined and evaluated in terms of Chandler's classification, defined in previous chapter. A particular attention will be paid to all types of *social codes*, and ideological aspects of *interpretative codes*.

Chapter 4

CASE STUDY: SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PRINT ADVERTISING

The aim of this chapter is to present a thorough analysis of selected advertising pieces, in order to fulfill the aim and objectives of the present study. To recollect, the main aim of this research is to explore codes and norms in today's popular culture, related to understanding and practices of love, relationships and romantic behaviors, by conducting semiotic analyses of selected advertisements. Although contemporary calendar is full of newly invented and re-invented special days, this study focuses solely on the print advertising during the Valentine's Day event and the weeks, prior to it.

As it has been mentioned in previous chapters, the Valentine's Day was selected among other holidays and special days due to specificity of its themes that are love, and couples at various stages of romantic relationships. The assumption of this thesis is that due to thematic characteristics of Valentine's Day, the representation of feelings, love and relationships in advertising during this period is amplified and more pronounced, bringing to the surface the contemporary tendencies in representing and practicing relationships and related ritual behaviors within the context of popular culture. Thus, by means of visual and textual semiotic analyses as dominant methodological approach, this chapter aims to reveal cultural and social codes, myths, and rituals, scripted within advertisings' representation of feelings, love and relationships.

In this regard, this chapter consists of three major parts. The first section summarizes general information on selected print advertisement units, and presents categorization system applied to selected ads during preliminary studies. Besides, it briefly outlines theoretical framework and core concepts involved into analyses. The second part of this chapter focuses specifically on semiotic analyses of advertising organized in accordance with defined categories and, thus, constitutes the core part of this research. As finalizing point, the third section focuses on reporting of the findings, leading to the concluding chapter of the thesis.

4.1 Major Grouping of Selected Advertisings

As has been explained in chapter 3, the major grouping of selected advertising was made in accordance with what is advertised. Thus, two major groups derived from this categorization, which are the advertisings that promote material artifacts, namely 'objects', and the advertisings that offer certain services and experiences, termed 'services'.

4.2 Categorization System and Plan of the Inquiry

Prior to initializing the process of analyses, it is essential to highlight once more the core points and basic concerns within a plan of inquiry. Thus, visual and textual semiotic analyses will be applied to each selected print advertisement sample in order to:

1) Define denotations;
2) Reveal connotative meaning;
3) Define signifying system;
4) Examine relationships and functioning of the signs within system;
5) Reveal and explore semiotic codes;

Accordingly, advertisement images will be analyzed in terms of relationships between textual and pictorial components, where particular attention will be focused on shifting from denotative to connotative meanings, connotations of colors (for colored samples) and shapes, as well as photographic images.

In terms of semiotic codes, analyses will be focused on subjects of love, romance, romantic behavior; gift-giving, representation of gender and gender roles, and love/romantic relationships. Finally, the codes of representing the Valentine's Day will be also searched, examined, and analyzed. The following topics are the focus of the analyses:

1) Representation of Love
2) Gender Connotations
3) Romance and Romantic Behavior
4) Gift-Giving
5) Domestication
6) Status and Power
7) Social Codes of Valentine's Day

In addition, it must be noted that defined code-related themes are closely related. Therefore, it is expected that more than one related codes might be comprised within a context of same advertisement sample.

4.3 Introduction to Semiotic Analyses of Selected Advertisements

This section presents a core part of this research, as it focuses on the actual analyses of selected print advertisements to answer the aim and objectives of the study. The previous part of this chapter introduced the basic categorization of selected

advertisements, and outlined the major themes according to which the selected samples will be analyzed.

Thus, for the purpose of the analysis, the following studies and examination will be made for two major groups: ‘objects’ (e.g. cars, jewelries), and ‘services’. In general, the first group is assumed to relate to the problem of commodification of feelings, objectification of love and instrumentalization of consumer goods, while the second group is assumed to be more related to cultural and social codes, and myths about relationships, and specifically representation of love, romance and related behavioral patterns. It must be emphasized, however, that defined themes are interrelated and not firmly fixed to either of given categories.

As it has been mentioned in methodology chapter, the sample advertisements were collected from three local popular North Cyprus newspapers, during one month period, prior to the Valentine’s Day event. Thus, collected advertisements belong to the period from 15th January to 15th, February of 2014. Noteworthy, the earlier issues of the selected newspapers are not included into analyses, as preliminary overview of the press prior to defined time span revealed absence of any Valentine’s Day-related ads.

In order to provide a statistical backdrop, the total number of advertisements was counted for each selected issue, and then the number of Valentine’s Day ads was driven out. As a result, the following numerical data was obtained:

1) **“KIBRIS GAZETESİ”** (15th January-15th February):

- Total number of advertisements: 378

- Number of Valentine’s Day Advertisements: 107

2)**“HAVADİS”** (15th January-15th February):

- Total number of advertisements: 404

- Number of Valentine’s Day Advertisements: 84

3) **“YENİDÜZEN”** (15th January-15th February):

- Total number of advertisements: 463

- Number of Valentine’s Day Advertisements: 59

As a result, the total number of advertising from all three newspapers of defined period is 1245, out of which, the total number of Valentine’s Day advertisements is 250. At this point, it must be stressed that several advertisements were repeated from issue to issue within the context of the same newspaper. Moreover, some of the advertisements were encountered within context of more than one newspaper. Therefore, in view of the fact that same advertisement was re-published from issue to issue of the same newspaper, or published simultaneously in the multiple newspapers, the final numerical data was driven out, limiting the number of analyzed Valentine’s Day advertisements to 95. Besides, regarding general categorization defined, out of 95, 51 advertisements fall into “objects” group, while remaining 44 ads are grouped under the title “services”.

4.4 Group 1: Objects

As has been discussed in previous parts, the assumption of this research is that the Valentine’s Day event provides advertisers with opportunity to amplify certain issues, embodied within the context of contemporary popular culture. Regarding

specificity of Valentine's Day concept, the assumption of this study is that during period prior to Valentine's Day, the themes of love, romance and relationships become more prominent within context of the media. Consequently, analyses of media pieces created and released exclusively for this event may reveal current tendencies and views of love, romance and couples involved into romantic relationships within general context of today's popular culture.

In this respect, this section focuses on the analysis of advertisements, grouped within "objects" category, and aims to answer the following questions:

- Regarding codes and signifying systems within the context of given advertisement, how social power exchange between genders are represented, supported and naturalized?

-What are the current tendencies in representation of love and feelings in advertising?

-How abstract notion of love is represented through the use of pictorial and textual components in advertising?

-What are the codes of gender roles implied by advertising?

-How the myth of couples is worked out through semiotic codes of advertising?

-How material artifacts are exploited and instrumentalized through the language of advertising within a context of Valentine's Day?

In addition, as defined in methodology chapter, the present group includes several subgroups, which are:

a) Domestic (including home accessories and furniture)

b) Cloth, Jewelry and Personal Accessories

c) Cars

d) Cosmetics

e) Gifts and Souvenirs

f) Electronics

g) Unclassified

Hence, the subsequent analyses will be made for each of the sub-groups, defined above.

4.4.1 Domestic Objects

Preliminary overview of the selected print advertisements revealed that a number of ads denote various domestic objects. Further, it was defined that domestic objects can be subdivided into domestic appliances or domestic instruments (like washing machine, fridge, hoover, etc.) and house items (like furniture and other home-related accessories).

In terms of statistics, the total number of ads, presenting domestic objects, is 19, out of which 12 advertisements denote domestic instruments, while remaining 7 depict various house items. It is crucial to stress that from this point on the statistical data will be given only for those ads, which were selected for analyzing purposes. As explained previously, some of the advertisements are re-printed from issue to issue of same newspaper, as well as might appear within a content of other newspapers. Therefore, all statistical data referred within analyses is obtained by making single count for each advertisement.

Starting with advertisements of domestic instruments, the primary step is to define the first order of signification. In other words, what are the denotative meanings of pictorial and textual components within advertisements' image? First of all, the major denotative signs are presented through photographic images of one or more domestic instrument for each advertisement (see figs. 1-12). Commonly, represented objects are washing machines, cookers, dishwashing machines, ovens, and the like. Furthermore, each image is enhanced by utilization of heart shapes, ribbons, or roses. In addition, only one advertisement presents a full colored image (fig. 11), while the rest are achromatic.

In terms of textual components, advertisements in question are also sharing similar and, in some cases, even identical denotations. For example, there is a number of same words, constituting major written segments, like titles or slogans. This case is illustrated by figs. 1,3,4,5, and 7, as all of them include same slogan, stating "sevgiliye özel", that is "special for the loved one".

Any depiction of human figure, on the other hand, is fully absent within denotative context of either of advertisements. This fact, therefore, can point at objectification of certain concepts. Thus, since selected advertisements are published for the Valentine's Day occasion, it can be suggested that feelings and love in particular, are the subjects of objectifications, represented through commodities. Moreover, the type of objects presented (that is domestic instruments) points at certain level of domestication of love.

Noteworthy, 8 out of 12 advertisements present the same brand (‘Blomberg’), which results in similarities in layout arrangement, and utilization of similar pictorial and textual elements. All mentioned aspects are contributing to analogous appearance of “Blomberg” ads. In other words, advertisements within defined group share many similar features on figurative, denotative level of signification.

Consequently, in order to proceed with deeper multilayered semiotic readings, it is decided to focus on three remaining advertisements (figs. 9, 10, 11), and choose two samples from ‘Blomberg’ ads (figs. 1, 3), while cross-referencing them to other samples if such necessity arises.

To start with, figure 1 presents an ad of ‘Blomberg’. In terms of denotative order, an image displays three domestic instruments, framed by the heart shape. The composition is centered, and the major space of the image is occupied by a big heart shape with three domestic appliances within. The remaining areas serve as background, which is filled with smaller floating heart shapes. The major textual elements are presented by a slogan “sevgiliye özel” (meaning “special for the loved one”), price, and notion that all three presented items are being sold together for the one price (“üçü birden 999TL”: “three in one for 999 TL”). Furthermore, presented domestic instruments connote a domestic sphere and signify female, as in a society with predominant patriarchal structure, domestic sphere is strongly associated with women’s domain. On the other hand, the major textual element as a slogan states “special for the loved one”, implying that presented artifacts can be gifted for the ones you love. Thus, relations of connotative meanings of photographic elements (three domestic appliances) and connotative meaning of a slogan create a connotative

chain, leading to representation of gender roles and social power exchange. Indeed, as already mentioned above, in terms of denotative order, there is no pictorial representation of human. However, there is related connotation within a system of presented textual and pictorial signs. In this respect, several connotative meanings can be obtained from the relationships of signs within given signifying system. First of all, it must be recalled that this advertisement is published for the occasion of Valentine's Day. As has been discussed in the chapter of literature review, celebration of Valentine's Day is associated with love, relationships of couples, and underlying codes to rituals like grooming, gift-giving; and romantic behavior. Thus, as explained above, this advertisement involves gender connotations. Female is connoted through the objects, which represent a domestic sphere. Male, on the other hand is connoted through relationships between pictorial and textual signs, and the major theme of advertisement that is Valentine's Day. In this regard, the man is signified as gift-giver, while female as gift-receiver that further points at gender related power relationships and exchange within society. Thus, implication of signification of the man as gift-giver is that male has more economical power than female. Furthermore, this advertisement comprises a code of gift-giving ritual through representation of domestic instruments as a 'special' gift for the 'loved one', by representing Valentine's Day as a gift-giving occasion. The connection to love and Valentine's Day is made by examining textual component and also graphical elements used, in addition to the photographic image. In this case, graphic elements applied are the heart shapes, which commonly symbolize love.

The way the biggest heart shape frames images of domestic instruments may create an association of looking through a window (metaphorically, 'the window of the

heart'). The objects are partially covered, which creates an impression of bigger picture beyond the frame.

The second advertisement, selected for detailed analysis within category of 'domestic objects' is presented in figure 3. It is also an ad of 'Blomberg', and, as will be seen further, shares many similarities with the first analyzed sample. The image denotes a washing machine, crossed by the ribbon, which is tied into a big bow. The washing machine is positioned against a huge heart shape that serves as its background and presents the second major visual element of the ad.

One of the major textual elements, the slogan, is identical to the one of figure 1 that is "special for the loved one". In addition, though, this advertisement presents a second slogan, which reads "kalpler, onunla gülümseyecek!" ("Hearts will smile with him/her"). The other textual elements denote price of artifact and information on its properties.

In terms of second, connotative meanings of presented signs, probably the strongest within a system is an image of washing machine, wrapped with a ribbon, which is tied into big playful bow over the top surface of the presented domestic instrument. Thus, this particular combination of washing machine, ribbon and a bow signifies a box with gift, and might be considered as an iconic sign. Indeed, box-like form with a ribbon tied into a bow on it is a widely recognized icon, which represents a gift. The squared shape of the washing machine naturally supports the resemblance to the box, while the ribbon with a bow brings forward an association with a gift. Consequently, washing machine in this advertisement is connoted as a present,

pointing at gift-giving code. Textual elements-the slogans-amplify and reinforce this meaning.

However, there is also secondary connotative meaning comprised within combination of given signs. This meaning is parallel to the one defined for advertisement in figure 1, and points at domestic sphere and social power exchange between genders. Moreover, like in case with ad in figure 1, this advertisement is published prior to Valentine's Day event and, thus, reflects its theme through implication of symbolic element in form of heart shape. In addition, it is essential to stress how all elements are functioning within given system and in relation to the specified time period the ad was released. As a matter of fact, each of the defined signs within given advertisement has a set of connotative meanings, but only in combination with each other it reflects and activates an intended message. For example, removed from the context, the washing machine with ribbon may still stand for the gift, but connotation about the receiver of this gift may change, as this artifact could also serve as a gift for mother, grandmother, sister, friend, and the like. Thus, the time segment prior to the Valentine's Day, when the ad was published, together with heart symbol and main slogan constitute a system which signify a particular nature of relations between gift-giver and receiver, as couple in relationships. Moreover, connotation of the gift leads to the coding of Valentine's Day being, above all, a gift giving occasion. Finally, the secondary slogan, reading "kalpler, onunla gülümseyecek!" ("hearts will smile with him/her"), is used metaphorically, signifying the happiness of the person, who would receive the denoted artifact as a gift. Indeed, a heart, in its direct anatomical terms is an organ which obviously does not smile or express any other sort of emotions. However, it is widely associated

with an emotional sphere of people and frequently used in connection with other verbal and non-verbal signs to signify certain positive, as well as negative, feelings and emotions.

While in terms of denotative-connotative structure ad in figure 9 is very similar to already analyzed 'Blomberg' adverts (figs. 1 and 3), advertisements in figures 10 and 11 worth of more detailed examination. Thus, to start with, figure 10 presents an advertisement of 'Bosch', which denotes four electrical domestic instruments: a mixer, a toaster, a blender, and a coffee making machine. The title and slogan reads "Hayatın tadına "onunla" varın!" ("Taste the life with it"), while below text denotes "Her anın tadını birlikte çıkarmanız için Bosch'un tüm küçük ev aletlerine şimdi %30 indirim" ("All the small electrical home devices have %30 discount to enjoy the life with"). Moreover, behind each presented device there is an outline of a heart shape, which frames a text. The heart outlines are made of silhouettes of flowers and butterflies, amplifying feminine theme. As follows, text behind the mixer reads "Onunla dinamik başlarsın her yeni güne" ("You will start every new day dynaically with it/her"). The text behind the toaster reads "Onun kokusu sarar her yanı" ("Its/her smell embraces every place"). The text behind the blender reads "Onun farklı özelliklerini seversin" ("You will love a variety of its/her features"). Finally, the text behind coffee making machine reads "Onun sıcaklığı yumuşatır kalbini" ("Its/she heat will soften your heart"). In addition, letter 'o' in every word onun/onunla is replaced by little heart shape. Plus, heart shape is placed at the top right corner of the image, as a background for the notion on 30% discount.

In terms of denotative order of signification, there are no signs pointing at Valentine's Day. However, pictorial elements like heart shapes, which are present within the system, connote related theme of love. Commodity code of presented devices relates them to the kitchen and cooking, signifying the domestic sphere. Consequently, it leads to gender connotation signifying female domain, which is commonly linked to domesticity. The connotation of women is also revealed through examination of textual elements. As explained above, letter 'o' is replaced with heart symbol for every word 'onun/onunla'. Such replacement is pointing at a play with semiotic meanings. Particularly, 'o' in Turkish language stands for he/she/it, owning to the fact that Turkish is not 'gendered' language. However, due to pictorial elements, which connotes domestic sphere and female domain, 'o' in the particular context is intended to be seen as standing for she/her. At the same time, it also stands for 'it' that are the devices presented. Closing the word 'onunla' into quotation marks at the title is also pointing at duality of meaning. Therefore, 'o', which stands for both 'it' as devices and 'she' as a woman, being replaced by heart symbol, connotes love and the loved one. Along these lines, 'onun/onunla' with 'o' replaced by heart shape within a context of writings behind each of the presented devices simultaneously signifies two things. First of all, it signifies the daily functioning of each device through indexical referencing, and secondly, it signifies the role of loved women in terms of behavioral codes, as well as her physical (odor) and emotional ('softening the heart') qualities.

Figure 11 presents a full page colored advertisement of distribution company, representing two brands "Arzum" and "Voit". Although belonging to same company and placed within same page, there is a clear division of given advertisement along

horizontal ax, in accordance with promoted brands. As a result, the page presents us with two advertisements, which will be analyzed independently. The part of the page from middle up is occupied by advertisement of brand “Arzum”. The name of the brand occupies the middle part of the ad, placed inside white cloud-like shape against bright orange background. Right above the name of the brand there is a text that reads “Aşk’ın dili yoktur. Aşkla hazırlanan yemek bile, bunu anlatmaya yeter.” (“There is no language (words) to define love. Even the meal prepared with love is enough to explain it”). From either side of slogan there are heart shapes, which are quite recognizable even though they are partially cut by page boundaries.

The cloud-like shape with the name of the brand within it is surrounded by icons of various domestic devices, including toaster, hoover, iron, cattle, coffee maker and hair dryer. The primary connotation of these images is representation of the range of artifacts, offered by specified brand. Noteworthy, there is no direct reference to the Valentine’s Day, but there are several connotations to love codes. As follows, first of all, all the denoted artifacts belong to the domestic sphere and connoted as a tools, or devices, commonly used by woman. Therefore, an image of given advertisement comprises ritualistic codes to express love. Simply, the presented images of devices can be grouped in accordance with their connotative meanings. For example, coffee maker and toaster connote cooking and, thus link to the meal preparing ritual, while hoover connotes cleaning. Moreover, there are such items as hair straightener and hair dryer, which connote beautifying and, thus, connect to the code of grooming ritual. As a result, there are several behavior codes, comprised, which can be performed by women in order to express her love, such as preparing meal, keeping living space clean, and performing grooming ritual in order to beautify herself.

Along with the pictorial elements, the text of advertisement connotes that in order to express the love; one must perform certain actions that would talk for this feeling. Again, the emphasis falls onto domestic sphere. Finally, color coding also accentuates female connotations, from the dominant orange hue of the background, to the pink and red colors of the presented devices. In addition, randomized placement of pictorial elements, and their graphic representation as paper cutouts, combined with cheerful warm color scheme of the advertisement

The second part of the advertisement in figure 11 presents the brand named "Voit", which offers sport training equipment. In denotative terms, two rows of sport training devices. The images are cropped out of the original settings and placed against plane white background. The slogan reads "Sevdiğinize sağlıklı bir yaşam hediye edin" ("Gift the healthy life to your lover"). The major code, upon which this advertisement is built on, is about healthy lifestyle.

Moving further, the following part of this section will focus on another sub-group of advertisements presenting domestic objects, which are home-related items, like furniture, light fixtures, and accessories. To note, almost half of ads within this group, which is 3 out of 7, are presented with colors. Like advertisements of domestic appliances, the ads of this group share many similarities on denotative, as well as connotative levels, which will be exemplified through the following analyses.

Figure 14 shows an advertisement that present a shop. It is a small scale, but colored ad. The layout exhibits invisible horizontal division in terms of distribution of photographic elements. Thus, the part of an image above imaginary horizontal ax

present a raw of various objects, cropped out of their original settings and placed against white background. The bottom part, on the other hands, is occupied by framed images, which are supposedly showing interior of the advertised shop. Framing and highlighting are in soft pink color. The major verbal elements are the name of the shop, and the slogan, which reads "Sevdiklerinize en güzel hediye çeşitleri ve uygun fiyatlar" ("The most beautiful gifts and reasonable prices for the ones you love"). The denotative images include various objects, like coffee tables, picture frames, model cars, table lamps, and decorative drawers. In addition, there are three pink boxes, tied by the pink ribbon with a bow. The most obvious connotation of these objects is the display of variety of objects offered by the shop. The pink boxes with a bow are the iconic images of present, and pointing at gift-giving. In the context with slogan and gift boxes, all the other images are connoted as gifts. Moreover, the font used to write the name of the shop can be associated with handwritten, slightly oriental, and old-fashioned, which signifies uniqueness of the presented artifacts and fine craftsmanship. On the other hands, half of the presented artifacts do not possess much of the practical function, but rather stand for decorative home accessories. Furthermore, use of pink color coding signifies softness, femininity and feminine nature, as well as love and compassion-the themes, present in the context of Valentine's Day. Thus considering relationships between signifiers and signifieds within presented sign system, the major semiotic code is the one of gift-giving ritual, in the context of coding Valentine's Day as a gift-giving occasion. However, other codes and meanings can be revealed within a context of given advertisement. First of all, color coding brings to mind a strong gender connotation, signifying female. The objects denoted signify home accessories and home decoration, which brings the focus towards private domestic sphere. The code here is

the naturalized need of continuously renewing and beautifying the space of the home by means of various artifacts. The gender connotation in relation to the other signified, locates female within a role of main maintainer and keeper of the appearance and atmosphere of the home.

The advertisement in figure 15 presents a furniture shop of specific brand 'Kilim'. It is a full page black and white advertisement, loaded with a lot of pictorial images. Thus, it shows four photographs of home spaces: bedroom, two dining areas, and sitting area. In addition, there are images of one single bed, one double bed, and one massage armchair, which are cropped out of their original settings and placed against plane white background. In addition, there are several graphic elements, like randomly distributed heart shapes, and an illustration of teddy bear, which holds heart shaped balloon and big note with a price tag. Left and right margins of the image are filled with repeated slogan of the brand, reading "Bir kilim yeter sevgilim" ("one carpet is enough my love"). In addition, there is a major title of an ad, reading "Sevgililer gününe özel kampanya" ("Special campaign for Valentine's Day"). Besides, the secondary textual elements present name of the furniture set and listing of the objects included into the set.

In terms of semiotic codes, the major code here is comfort, which is signified through a system of signs, in form of cozy furniture. Moreover, the settings within each photograph clearly indicate a home concept. Indeed, furniture can be used in a variety of spaces, like offices, clinics, educational, or food facilities, etc. However, the code within analyzed advertisement is home, or, to be more specific, comfort at home. These codes are comprised within combinatory meanings of photographic and

textual components of the ad. The names of the spaces used, like bedroom, or dining room signify different living areas within home settings. The verbal signs are reinforced by visual elements, which represent segments of each room with given furniture. In addition, it also connotes the function of each given space, and points at what kind of objects are suitable for specified area. Therefore, this advertisement also presents codes of commodities in terms of home organization and arrangement.

Noteworthy, photographic elements are following a certain hierarchical arrangement within a layout of given advertisement. The hierarchy is achieved through variation in sizes of the images, and their placements on the page. First of all, such arrangement can signify an order of importance of the spaces. The photograph of the biggest size, occupying top half of the page is an image of the bedroom, which is followed by smaller image of dining area, and even smaller photographs of sitting area and another dining space. At this point, it is essential to point out multilayered structure of given advertisement. As a matter of fact, this ad presents a complex subject for analyzing, as it presents image within image. Simply saying, each photograph within the context of the ad can be analyzed individually, and individual meaning can be obtained from each of this images. Simultaneously, each of the photographs is a part of a larger picture, which makes a whole of advertisement image. Nevertheless, certain intended meanings and connotation can be revealed at the level of analyzing hierarchical arrangement of the visuals. As it is mentioned above, the dominant image of advertisement is the photograph of a bedroom. The bedroom connotes privacy and even intimacy. Moreover, in case of this particular image, double bed signifies couples, while two wine glasses on the coffee table placed on the foreground of the image connote romantic and intimate relationships

between couples. These connotations can be placed in line with major concept and theme of the Valentine's Day, and bring forward sub-codes to romantic behaviors, which is drinking wine within intimate settings of the bedroom. All these is reinforced and supported by graphic elements in form of heart shapes, which overlap an image of the bedroom, and the main title of the ad. Speaking of the title, which reads "Sevgililer gününe özel kampanya" ("Special campaign for Valentine's Day"), there are two major connotations, where one refers to the special campaign offered by the shop, and another one points at Valentine's Day occasion.

Another important aspect that has to be mentioned here is a duality of meaning within the slogan of the brand 'Kilim'. There is an apparent semiotic game of word which presents switch from denotative to connotative meaning of the word 'Kilim', and as a result the whole slogan. The denotative meaning of the word 'kilim' is a carpet. However, in the context of the slogan it connotes the brand of the furniture offered by the advertised shop. Thus, the connotative message of the phrase "Bir kilim yeter sevgilim" ("one kilim ("carpet") is enough my love") is that there is no need to search through other shops and brands, as 'kilim' can provide you with everything you need (for your home). Apparently, this slogan comprises linguistic and cultural codes, and in order to be understood, the reader of advertisement must be familiar with given language and culture. Otherwise, the presented slogan would give no sense, but confusion and frustration.

Finally, in terms of shapes and other pictorial graphic elements, image of advertisement include several heart shape symbols of love, and an iconic figure of teddy bear.

Preliminary studies of advertisements revealed that ads presented by figures 16 and 19 follow the similar denotative and connotative structure with already examined advertisement in figure 15. Therefore, that can be analyzed simultaneously, and in a line with analysis of figure 15. Both images advertise shops that offer furniture and home accessories. Figure 16 is an advertisement of "Elektrokur" shop, while figure 19 advertises "Özok Mobilya" shop, picturing a particular brand "Karaca", which majorly specialized on home decoration and accessories. In denotative terms, advertisement in figure 16 displays photographic images of furniture, cropped out of their original settings and located against plane white background. On the other hand, image of advertisement in figure 19 is visually divided into two. The left side is occupied by the larger image of the double bed, while right side present an array of smaller images of various home accessories within different settings. Noteworthy, like in figure 15, pictorial elements of advertisements in question follow a particular visual hierarchy that is the focus of both images are on visual of double bed. The textual elements are also present in both advertisements. Thus, in figure 16, the major slogan reads "%40'a varan büyük indirim Sevgililer gününe özel" ("Big discount around %40 … Special for Valentine's Day"). Advertisement in figure 19 is dominated by two slogans, where one reads "En özel an yaşadığınız an" ("the most special moment is the moment you lived"), and another is "Sevgiliniz bir tane hediyeler binlerce" (your lover is one, the presents are thousands). Moving towards major codes of both advertisements, like in case of figure 15, it is comfort. In addition, advertisement in figure 19 is also containing codes of sophistication and luxury represented through commodities. However, as a subject of this research is Valentine's Day, the analyses attempt to focus on Valentine's Day related themes and codes. Along these lines, certain connotative meanings can be driven out of

textual elements and representation of double bed, which dominates both of advertisements. In case of advertisement in figure 16, the emphasis falls on the images of the beds due to arrangement of elements. In particular, the images of the beds are placed above all other types of furniture. In advertisement of 'Karaca' brand, on the other hand, visual hierarchy is achieved not only through the placement of the image of the bed, but also through the size of the image being considerably larger than all the other images within advertisement. Thus, the double bed, as a sign in context of particular advertisement connotes couples and relationships, privacy and intimacy However, image of figure 19 is more complex and contains additional connotative cues and codes to be read. For example, what is advertised for 'Karaca' brand is actually not a bed but a set of blanket and pillow cases, that also defines the selection of photograph angle, presenting a top view of the double bed, dressed in particular set. The pattern on the pillow cases and blanket denote heart shapes and flowers, which connote love and romance. Moreover, together with connotation of double bed, defined previously (couples, privacy and intimacy), it leads to the codes of romantic behavior. The beds, and the bedroom settings, therefore, are coded not only as a place to sleep, but as a place of romance and intimacy. Consequently, in broader terms, these signs comprise social codes about appropriateness of certain behaviors in accordance with specific spaces. For example, dining room is a space for having meal, while intimate acts are assigned to the privacy of the bedroom. Additional graphical elements, which are an array of heart shape, reinforce these codes and meanings through their symbolic quality.

Yet, another ad related to the furniture is presented in figure 18. It is an advertisement of the shop, which offers various brands of furniture and home

accessories. It is a full page colored ad. This advertisement denotes several images of various home spaces, where the largest shows living room furnished by sofa, armchairs, coffee tables, and drawer. The bottom of advertisement's page includes a raw of pictures with various objects, framed by circular shapes. There are two textual elements. The first reads "İpek Mobilyada Fırsatlar Devam Ediyor…" ("Opportunities are continuing in İpek Mobilya"), added by the brand name, price tag, and notion that reads "3'ü bir evde" ("3 in one house"). The second major textual element is placed at the bottom of the page, in red color, it reads "Arzunuz onu mutlu etmekse, ona bir arzum hediye edin" ("If your desire to make him/her happy, present her Arzum"). The first code of this advertisement is again a comfort, represented through objects, such as home furniture. Besides, like in previous advertisements, appropriateness of particular furniture for specific areas in the house and spatial arrangements are all comprised within commodity codes. The textual element connotes an ongoing campaign, offered by specified brand.

The bottom image of this advertisement is of particular interest, as it exhibits elements pointing at the topic of this research's concern. First of all, the bottom raw of images is visually separated and emphasized through layout arrangement. Specifically, each photographed object is cropped out of its surrounding context and placed against plane natural background, cancelling any additional cues to its connotations. Moreover, while images of various living spaces above are comprised within rectangular shapes, the objects of the bottom line are framed by circular shapes. Written text, therefore, is functioning as anchorage, defining and limiting connotative interpretations of given objects. According to the slogan, presented commodities are connoted as gifts, pointing at code of gift-giving ritual. Moreover,

written text on itself comprises layered meanings, comprising semiotic game of verbal signs-words, similarly with the case of “Kilim’ advertisement. The word ‘arzu’ in Turkish language denotes ‘desire’. However, in case of given advertisement it connotes the brand’s name. Therefore, first connotative message implies that the artifacts of ‘Arzum’ brand present the most desirable gifts. At the same time, by switching between connotative and denotative orders of significations, this slogan also implies that your special/loved one desires to have items from ‘Arzum’. In addition, the slogan makes use of color coding, as written text is presented in red color, which signifies love, compassions and “arzum”-a desire. Therefore, apart from the color coding, this ad involves linguistic and cultural codes, readings and understanding of which requires certain knowledge of given language and culture.

Finally, although there is no direct denotation of Valentine’s Day among pictorial and textual elements of given ad, color code (the use of red accents in written text and graphic elements) and implication of heart shaped symbols connote the Valentine’s Day themes.

4.4.1.1 Domestic Objects: Summary

The analyses of advertisements, categorized under the title “domestic objects” reveal certain meanings, messages and codes, upon which their signifying systems are built upon. Before presenting a brief summary, however, it must be stressed that preliminary studies of selected advertisements revealed groups of advertisements that follow similar denotative and connotative structure. In this respect, only few ads were analyzed in details, to exemplify the case, while the rest ads were simply referred to. Thus, regarding aims of the research and research questions, the following has been revealed:

1. While there is no human figure on the denotative level within images of analyzed advertisement, almost all of them comprise various connotations related to human subject. The most common are the gender connotations, as well as behavioral codes.
2. The codes of love and romance are represented through commodities.
3. Connotative meanings of textual and pictorial components of many analyzed advertisements comprise a code of gift-giving, encoding the Valentine's Day as a gift-giving occasion.
4. Colored advertisements contain color coding, commonly utilizing symbolic qualities of color red to reinforce the concept of love and romance.
5. Advertisements, which do not present direct textual denotations of Valentine's Day, still utilize graphical elements or color coding, which signifies love. The most common element is a variation of heart shapes.
6. It is revealed that representation of common domestic instruments, like washing machine or fridge, turns into means of signifying themes and concepts of Valentine's Day through the language of advertisement. In other words, the objects, commonly associated with domestic sphere and labor are instrumentalized through the language of ads in accordance with Valentine's Day occasion. As example, comparison might be made between advertisements of brand 'Blomberg' (figs. 1-8, in Appendix A) published during Valentine's Day event, and ad of the same brand, released on the common day (see Appendix C, fig. 99). In the first case, as been analyzed, textual and visual components signify special gift-giving for the loved one, as well as connote an occasion of Valentine's Day and related concepts.

4.4.2 Cloth, Jewelry and Personal Accessories

The next distinguished sub-group within 'objects' category is represented by advertisements, which denote personal artifacts like cloth, jewelry and accessories. In statistical terms, the total number of these types of advertisements to be analyzed is 12. Among the total number of advertisements, there are 5 ads for jewelry (figs. 20-24), 1 for man's watch (fig. 25), 2 for watches and glasses (figs. 26, 27), 3 for the cloth (figs. 28-30), and 1 for the shoes (fig. 31).

First, analyses are conducted for jewelry advertisements. Noteworthy, most of these ads denote a female figure, except for the one, which present sole objects (fig. 24). Three advertisements denote female faces (figs. 21-23), and one shows the close-up shot of female's hands (fig. 20). Thus, there are three different representations of women, which suggest variations in semiotic codes and connotative meanings. In broader terms, the usage of female image in jewelry advertisements is rather common; as the codes of gift-giving imply that female are more often receivers of the gifts. Moreover, jewelry is usually associated with decorating and beautifying concepts, which are both within a realm of female and femininity. Some of the codes, implied in these advertisements are luxury, status and class. The listed codes are particularly prominent in advertisement of figure 22, which denotes female profile at the left upper corner of the image. Her hand is raised and touching necklace, while the rest of the body below is faded into background. Right opposite of her face there is an image of single stone diamond ring, underlined by the slogan "Aşkın iki kalbi vardır sen ve ben" ("Love has two hearts you and me"). The text below the slogan signifies a special campaign, which provide heart-shaped diamond necklace as a gift for the ones, who spent on purchase more than amount, defined by campaign. In

terms of connotations, the presented image of woman signifies class and status through her well-groomed appearance, make up, hair style, accessories and pose. The diamond ring, placed in a line with her face, represents an object of her desire. Therefore, connoted message of combinatory meanings of both signified brings forward an idea that by possessing such a ring, women would upgrade her status and become more classy, in association with female image within given advertisement. Moreover, facial expression, direction of the gaze, and the pose of the denoted women connotes expectation. Consequently, it derives from the code that woman is expected to be presented jewelry, while a man is expected to play a role of a giver.

The textual element of advertisement connotes two lovers in love relationship. Therefore, the combination of connotative meaning of written text and symbolic qualities of diamond ring signifies strength of bond and concrete relationship between the couples. Diamond ring, in this regard, presented by a man, can be connoted as a kind of investment and reassurance about the future of the relationships. Indeed, image of ring connotes a proposal of marriage-a naturalized vision within traditional society and culture of how relationships must develop and evolve, according to social myths of couples and marriage. While there are no direct or literal denotations to Valentine's Day within the context of analyzed advertisement, the theme of love is reflected through quite prominent connotations. Indeed, women in general are thought to be more concerned with development and future of their love relationships, and diamond ring, especially presented during Valentine's Day event, is a mean of reassuring her in integrity and seriousness of her partner's intentions.

Another advertisement of the jewelry, presenting a particular artifact that is the ring, and comprises themes of love, relationships and marriage is shown in figure 23. It is the full color advertisement. Its image denotes a portrait of a young woman, looking straight at the audience. Her chin, lips and part of the nose are hidden behind the bouquet of white and pink flowers, while her hair is dressed with bridal veil. The face of a girl occupies upper middle part of the advertisement, and underlined by the text, which reads "Ölümsüz sevgilerin sembolü" ("Symbol of eternal love"). Right below the text, there is an image of two black diamond rings, which occupies a major area and, thus, dominates the total picture. Bellow the rings; there is a smaller text, underlined by red ribbon which form heart shape on either side of the text. The text reads "Sevgililer Günü'ne Özel Modeller" ("Special Models for Valentine's Day"). The white veil on the girl's head and the way she hides a part of her face inside flower bouquet, presented in white and pastel pink tone, signify a bride. The color coding signifies purity through the dominance of white and pastel tones, while the blue of the girl's eyes reflect naivety and youth. Such surrounding creates a strong contrast with an image of the black diamond's rings. While image of the girl, faded into the white of the background creates an ephemeral sense of lightness and airiness, the rings, in contrast, appear very solid, and, so-to-say, 'tied to the ground'. Being connoted by the slogan of advertisement as "symbol of eternal love", these rings indeed express a sense of something concrete and long-lasting. Furthermore, the duality of rings, and two heart shapes formed by the same ribbon signify a couple, two individuals, bounded together in a strong, never-ending relationship. The Valentine's Day, therefore, is connoted as an occasion to reinforce and seal the relationships by means of presented rings. The unusual aspect is that pictured rings are made with black diamonds, instead of traditional crystal-clear sparkling stone.

This may point at changing traditions, as well as social and cultural values. Therefore, black diamond ring may appeal to the younger individuals, as an alternative to traditional white stone. On the other hand, the black of the stone may connote sophistication, upscale and classiness.

Two more advertisements of this group depict female, and will be analyzed simultaneously, as they promote the same shop, and posses almost identical denotative and connotative structure (figs. 20, 21). First of all, both advertisements denote exactly the same text, which reads "Sevgililer Günü'ne Özel" and "Reşat Kuyumculuk'ta herkes kazanıyor!" (Special for Valentine's Day" and "Everybody win at Reşat Kuyumculuk). Besides, written text also includes information on discount, where the jewelry offered is of gold and diamonds. The image of advertisement in figure 20 denotes woman's hands, decorated with many colorful, large rings, consisting of colored stones in form of small flowers and other floral themed shapes. In addition, the hands hold a dry plant. The image of advertisement in figure 21, on the other hand, denotes a close up of female face, which is turned towards audience, while the gaze is directed down. The part of her shoulder is also seen, and the hair, free and loose is fading into background. She wears a decorative circular piece of accessory, which surrounds her head, and another accessory that wrapping her shoulder and crosses her back towards the other shoulder. Both accessories are colorful, pretty massive, and consist of variety of little shape, which include flowers, floral elements, sea stars and the like. In addition, pictorial and textual components of both advertisements are placed against solid black background. Noteworthy, while no difficulty appeared during listing denotative signs of the given advertisement, the relation of connotative meanings within signifying

system of both advertisements appear to resonate with each other. Simply saying, connotative meanings of text and color code of background present a set of meanings, which contradict to signifying system of photographic images. To start with, black of the background, in relation to upscale jewelry like gold and diamonds, connoted by written text of both advertisements, signify sophistication, luxury, classiness and status. These codes are also reflected through selection and color of the fonts, used to produce written text. The photographic images, on the other hand, have strong connotation of nature and free spirit, which are reflected through worn accessories, loose hair style of the young women and her stun in figure 21, as well as plant hold by denoted hands in figure 20. Therefore, codes of luxury and sophistications, embodied in within representational system of written text are failing to find their reflections within pictorial elements.

Finally, the last advertisement of this group in figure 24 again presents single stone diamond rings. The written text follows standard scheme of "special for Valentine's Day". The difference with already analyzed advertisements is that ad in figure 24 does not depict any human figure. In addition, it offers a present of "endless love" bracelet for those who spent a certain amount on their purchase, which connotes a special campaign. It is full color ad, depicting three single stone diamond rings and three "endless love" bracelets, floating against deep red background. The overlapping heart shapes are arranged along the edges of advertisement, creating its frame. Basically, combinatory connotative meaning of diamond rings, golden bracelets, use of color coding through dominance of the red as background color, together with multiple heart shapes and written text, signify same concepts and based on same codes as advertisements, already analyzed above.

Next in a row is an advertisement of men's watch from "Zen", presented in figure 25. Noteworthy, it is one of a very few advertisements, published for Valentine's Day occasion, which connotes man as a gift-receiver. In terms of layout, the advertisement is simple and minimalistic. It contains minimum visual element and complete absence of any additional graphical 'decorations', like flowers, ribbons, or heart shapes. Thus, an image of advertisement denotes a pocket watch and watch necklace, placed against plane deep wine-red background.

The written text is presented by a font, which resemble a neat handwriting. The text is arranged into two separate paragraphs, placed within a relative distance from each other. The first text reads "Bu Sevgililer Günü'nde ona ışığı armağan edin…" ("Endow him with the light on this Valentine's Day"), while the second text denotes "Pırlantalı saat kolye ZEN'den hediye" ("Diamond watch necklace as a gift from Zen). First of all, an image of this advertisement, with its minimal visual elements, and generally moderate and reserved tone signifies masculinity. The pocket watch connotes old-fashioned, conservative tendencies, class and intellectuality. The color code of the background comprises the concept of style and sophistication. The major code of gift-giving places a man within a role of gift-receiver. However, unlike meanings of gift connotations, revealed through analyses of 'domestic artifacts' and jewelry, presented pocket watch does not connote neither specific practical purposes, nor signification of couples relationships, as diamond ring does. The mentioned connotations of pocket watch point at admiration and adoration of a woman with her lover, which she would express by means of such gift. The connotative meanings of written text also amplify this idea.

4.4.3 Cars

Another sub-group of advertisements defined is the one denoting cars. Statistically, the number of analyzed car advertisements, which are related to Valentine's Day, is 8. Noteworthy, only three out of 8 samples are actual car advertisements (figs. 32, 34, 39), while the rest present the ads announcing lotteries, in which the main price is the car. To note, due to predominantly similar structure and visual arrangement of ads in questions, it is decided to analyze all given samples simultaneously, rather than individually. Yet, any ad, which stands out among the rest, will be examined with more attention to the individual features.

First of all, it might be worthy to examining a general features, which are common for all car related ads, published during period, prior to Valentine's Day. Thus, out of 8, two advertisements are printed in full color, while the rest are achromatic. The hue of the cars within colored advertisements is red, which can point at color coding, suitable to the theme of the occasion. As noted previously, symbolic qualities of red, above all, include love and passion. Almost all advertisements follow similar structure of layout, where the photograph of the car dominates the image of advertisement. Moreover, the location of the car within picture frame, scale, and angle are almost identical, with exception of one advertisement. Particularly, advertisement in figure 32 stands out among the rest of the samples first of all due to difference in layout and size and viewing angle of the car. In this ad, the car is shown from top view, and placed on the road, which, by bending and turning, forms the shape of the heart. The heart shapes are also used in four other advertisements (figs. 35, 36, 38, 39). However, while advertisements in figures 35, 36, 38 and 39 utilize heart shape symbols in rather direct way, and as an additional graphical elements, the

heart shape in figure 32, formed by the bends of the road is an integral part of the image's concept. Moreover, it is less obvious and involves certain level of metaphorical relations with other elements of the signifying system of the image. Thus, in terms of denotative order, advertisement in figure 32 belongs to 'Renault' brand, and shows a top view of the car, placed on the intricately bending and turning road. In terms of composition, it is rather unusual, as car, supposedly being the main subject of the ad, is rather of a small size, presented from the top view, and placed at the lower third of the page. The major space of the ad is occupied by the image of the road. The background is plane and does not present any other elements, which could serve as additional connotative cues. Hence, car and the road are the main focus of the image. Besides, advertisement contains textual elements. The major written components are the name of the brand, placed on the left side from the image of the car, and slogan, which is seen as a title of the image owning to its location above the image. The slogan reads "Gelin test edin tutkuyu hissedin!" ("Come, test it and feel the passion!").

On connotative level, the implication of the road's image is the most attention catching. First of all, it does not present an accurate photographic representation of the highway, but created graphically. It is read as a road mostly due to the presence of the car image, which anchors its first level of the meaning. However, at the same time, the way it bends and turns forms the shape of the heart, which connotes the symbol of love. In addition, though less obvious, the stripe of the road can be also perceived as a ribbon, which, in the context of other elements, can signify a present/gift.

An image of the car, shown from the top view, first of all has a compositional function. Particularly, top view reveals the formation of the heart shape at its best. Moreover, the use of linear perspective for the image of the road, by decreasing its thickness as it deseeds from the viewer, points at distance and length of the way. The location of the car at the bottom of the page, on the segment of the road which, according to the applied visual cues, is the closest to the audience, and directional characteristics of the car signify that this car has already made its way through this road with its intricate turns. The slogan, therefore, connotes invitation to test this way with this particular car.

Noteworthy, this advertisement does not contain any direct denotations to Valentine's Day or love, but leads to these concepts through the chain of connotations and associations. The key word within written text is the "passion", as it associates with certain emotional aspects involved into experience of love.

Furthermore, as it is seen from other advertisements in this group, the image of the car is commonly dominate the page, showing front and side of the car, which is photographed from around the normal eye level of the viewer (considering how would individual with average height see the object from a normal standing position). In brief, utilization of such image gives to presented car so-to-call 'showroom' appearance. On the connotative level, the car, especially if it is visually represented in the explained way, stands for the social status and power. The car is upscale, luxury artifact, and advertisement of the cars are commonly built upon the codes of related codes, which are, as mentioned, luxury, power and status. Moreover, in the context of most of the given advertisements, which are basically talk of lottery,

which gives a chance to win a shown car, the car is also stands for the gift. Considering the occasion, therefore, the car also stands for a gift option, to be presented for the loved one on the Valentine's Day. The text of one of the advertisements (fig. 37) even reads 'En güzel Sevgililer Günü hediyesi Çangar Motors'dan' ("The best Valentine's Day present from Çangar Motors).

Turning back to advertisement in figure 32, the position and shooting angle of the car does not remind static showroom appearance, but rather stand for other qualities like dynamics, movement and speed, which signify a process. The road, shaped as a heart, therefore, signifies love experience as a process. The written text, as a system of sign, is also signifying love as a process, and experience of passion.

As a final point, advertisement in figure 34 presents a good case of color coding and interrelation of visual and textual elements signifying the same concept, which is worth to brief mentioning. It is a full paged colored ad, which denotes an image of the care in its "showroom" position, placed within a setting of an evening city's street. The slogan reads "Kıbrıs'a aşk geldi" ("Love came to Cyprus"). The text right under the slogan denotes "Hayalini kurduğunuz Alfa Romeo'lar artık Kombos Otomotiv showroom'unda sizi bekliyor" ("Alfa Romeos, you dreamed of, are waiting for you at Kombos Otomotiv Showrooms"). Of a particular interest here is the connection of visual and textual signs through color coding. The denoted car is of the bright red color. At the same time, while the text of the slogan is made in black, the word "aşk" (love) is only one standing out being colored red. The red color in given context represents love and passion. Therefore, through the use of same color code, advertisement interconnects an image of the car and verbal sign, making them

to stand one for the other. Simply saying, such relationship establishes a direct parallel between car and love, making them synonymous to each other.

4.4.3.1 Cars: Summary

To sum up analyses of the advertisements, grouped as 'cars', the following can be stressed:

1. Most of the presented advertisements follow the similar visual structure, where signification system is built upon the codes of luxury, status and power.
2. The car is commonly connoted as a present, which can lead to the further connotation of the car as a gift for the Valentine's Day.
3. In terms of graphic elements, the presence of heart shapes is rather commonplace.
4. For the colored advertisements, the color coding is applied, making use of symbolic qualities of color red.
5. While signification systems of majority advertisements analyzed are built upon codes of power and status, the other codes are revealed through examination of ad in figure 32, which are speed, dynamism, and movement. These codes are further used in representation of love experience, establishing a parallel with experience of driving the advertised car.

4.4.4 Cosmetics

Out of 51 advertisements within 'objects' category, only 2 ads present cosmetic items. On is an ad for 'Avon', while another is a perfume seller and distributor "Prestige Brands Corporation" (fig. 40 and fig. 41). These two advertisements greatly differ in terms of layout and visualization. In particular, advertisement of 'Avon' is full color print, which presents a combination of photographic, graphical,

and textual elements. Advertisement of “Prestige Brands Corporation” at the first sight does not even look like an ad in a popular understanding of how advertisement should look like, as it presents only textual elements, made in black and white. The only pictorial element is the logo of company. In this respect, it rather reminds a note or announcement. What is common for both advertisements, however, is that they are built upon the code of grooming ritual. Owning to the fact that most of such ads are female oriented, it can be assumed that grooming and beautifying are dominant for the women’s domain. In the context of Valentine’s Day, grooming ritual takes an important place and more common attributed to female, as she is considered to be the one to ‘wow’, while the man is the one to be ‘wowed’.

Thus, advertisement in figure 40 presents a color image, which denotes a close-up shot of the young woman. Her head is slightly inclined to the side, while she smiles widely with her eyes closed. Below her chine and very close to the side of the neck she holds a bright red shape of the heart. Right underneath, there is a written text added by the image of red lipstick and red ribbon that partially wrapping the text and forms a heart shape from the one end. Although there is no direct verbal denotation to Valentine’s Day, colors, shapes and graphics used connote related theme of love and romance. Written text on the right side of the image denotes an announcement for the job application in ‘Avon’. In terms of connotation, however, it represents and signifies an image of independent working women, who can be a master of herself and her time. On the other hand, written text, which accompanies image of the lipstick, and wrapped by figure of red ribbon, reads that every women, who applies to the job within specified time period, will get depicted lipstick as a gift from ‘Avon’. Lipstick connotes an instrument of grooming and beautifying. It has a strong

association with lips, signifying sensuality, while the bright red color takes it further to the level of sexuality. While red ribbon within context of same image signifies a concept of gift, the way it forms a heart shape also connotes love.

An advertisement in figure 41 can be viewed only in terms of its verbal signs, as any pictorial elements are absent within its image. Therefore, there is no pictorial signs that points at Valentine's Day or love. However, the main title reads "Sevgililer gününü sevgi gününe dönüştürme fırsatı!" ("An opportunity to turn Valentine's Day into a day of love"). In connotative terms, the concept of love and romance, in this case is expressed through the connotations of perfume, attributing to sense of odor. On the primary connotative level of this advertisement, perfume is connoted as a gift for Valentine's Day. The deeper layer of meanings, however, brings to mind association with grooming, as 'smelling nice' is one of the attributed results of the grooming rituals. Moreover, perfume and its odor have romantic and sexual connotations, as sexuality and romantic partners are often signified metaphorically through the reference to the sense of smell. Therefore, sexual attraction is encoded within a concept of perfume, referring to the connotative meaning of the sense of odor.

4.4.4.1 Cosmetics: Summary

To some up, the following points can be drawn from the conducted analyses:

1. Valentine's Day is coded through grooming ritual. Grooming is attributed predominantly to the women, as she is the one expected to 'wow' her partner.
2. The theme of Valentine's Day is expressed through color coding and implication of related graphical elements, which are predominantly ribbons and heart shapes.

3. The application of ribbon shape within a particular context connotes present/gift.

4.4.5 Gifts and Souvenirs

Out of 51 advertisements within ‘objects’ category, only 4 ads present gift and souvenirs, which are themed specifically for Valentine’s Day occasion. As a matter of fact, various special days and holidays present a number of concepts, which are represented by a particular material forms and objects. In other words, for each special day, holiday or occasion, there is always a number of artifacts, which carry little function or practical purpose, but attributed to a great symbolic value. Moreover, there is a number of signs and symbols, presented in either verbal or pictorial forms, which, when applied on the insignificant daily object, turning it into artifact with particular meaning and value. Themed artifacts, commonly called souvenirs or gifts, belong to this category, and 4 of evaluated advertisements are focused specifically on Valentine’s Day themed artifacts (figs. 42-45). Indeed, all 4 ads denote various objects, which includes home slippers, cups, and other small accessories, decorated with heart shapes (or made in shape of the heart), where hues of red dominate the color scheme. Thus, while on denotative level these objects are what they are, connotatively, they represent special artifacts, the gifts for Valentine’s Day occasion. The main code, comprised within signifying systems of these advertisements is the code of gift-giving, encoding Valentine’s Day as the gift-giving occasion.

Moreover, analyses of connotative meanings of these advertisements reveal several other issues. First of all, red color and heart shape become symbolic and signify love and all love-related codes, including romance, romantic relationships and couples as

lovers. Thus, it displays how common objects acquire symbolic meanings through application of colors and shapes, naturalized to express certain concept. In particular case, decorating various artifacts with heart shapes, ribbons and red color, or making an object in shape of the heart (like cookies in figure 45) assign to this object/artifact a specific meaning, which automatically transfers from the symbol, depicted on the object onto object itself. For example, advertisement in figure 42 depicts different types of soft home slippers, placed between small pillows on white carpet. The part of wooden floor can be seen as well. It also shows randomly distributed shiny red heart shapes, a candle, and red box. The dominant color scheme of the image is red and white. The slogan reads "Aşkın en sıcak hali…" ("The warmest state of love…"). In denotative terms, slippers are the footwear worn at home. In connotative terms, it may signify coziness, home, and domestic settings. However, in given example and additional connotative meaning is added to the concept of slippers through application of love symbols, turning them into artifacts, which can be gifted to express the love. Noteworthy, there is a specific type of love, represented through connotative chain of meanings. Carpet, pillows, and puffy material the slippers are made of signify home and softness. In addition to candle and wooden floor, they also signify warmth. Color code used and heart shapes symbolize love, while the red box at the background may point at the code of gift-giving. Combined with textual component, which reads "the warmest state of love", pictorial signs signify homey, domesticated love. In the context of particular advertisement, love represented as cozy, warm and soft, in a way a 'matured', calm love. Moreover, in terms of gender connotations, presented objects and shapes signify feminity, and together with that lead to sub-code of woman's love, which, according to connotative meanings, should be 'warm', 'soft', 'calm', 'cozy' and being contained within settings of home.

Remaining 3 advertisements (figs. 43-45) comprise more prominently a code of gift-giving ritual, representing Valentine's Day as gift-giving occasion, on which, in order to signify one's love, a special thing must be gifted. Moreover, these advertisements also contain codes of what kind of artifacts can be accepted as appropriate Valentine's gift and how they may look like. Simply saying, photo frame is just a photo frame on the normal day, but decorated with heart shapes and given for Valentine's Day occasion, it turns into symbolic artifact, which comprises all concepts, associated with this special day (e.g. figure 43).

4.4.5.1 Gifts and Souvenirs: Summary

The following can be drawn out from conducted analyses:

1. Common daily objects are instrumentilized for specific occasion (in context of this research it is Valentine's Day) through the language of advertisement, and by means of attaching to them a particular symbolic value. In specific case of Valentine's Day, it is made through broad utilization of red color and heart shapes, which symbolize love.
2. Valentine's Day is coded as gift-giving occasion, naturalizing a notion that one should give in order to express his/her love.
3. Analyses revealed representation of love as soft, subdued, warm, and 'cozy' feeling. In addition, it presents a certain level of domestication of love.
4. The colors, shapes, and other decorative/graphic elements pointing at feminization of Valentine's Day.

4.4.6 Electronics

The final sub-group within 'objects' category is presented by advertisements, which denote various electronic devices (e.g. mobile phones, computers). In statistic terms, the total number of these advertisements is 2, out of 51.

Thus, figure 46 presents advertisement of a place that offers both, electronic devices like smart phones or digital cameras, and jewelry and accessories. Advertisement in figure 47, on the other hand, presents desktop computers, laptops, and tablets. Both ads are full colored. The major code used in both ads is a gift-giving. Therefore, denoted devices and artifacts are connoted as gifts. Graphic elements, like heart shapes in images of both advertisements and verbal signs signify Valentine's Day. Image of advertisement in figure 46 present a pile of red boxes with golden bows bellow the company's name, as well as heart shaped box and red ribbon bow above the written name of company. These elements aiding in connoting presented artifacts as Valentine's gifts. In case of advertisement in figure 47, the connotation to Valentine's gift is made through usage of heart shapes, as well as read ribbon bows, tied on the either side of frame, surrounding an image of each device.

Furthermore, multiple connotations can be derived from seeing electronic devices and jewelry within a context of same advertisement. First of all, it can connote both genders, where jewelry signifies female, while technological devices attributed to male's sphere. Apart from major code of gift-giving, modernity, fashion (in its broad sense) and being in line with everything new are sub-codes comprised that half of ad, which depicts electronic devices. On the other hand, codes of luxury, sophistication and upscale underlay another part of advertisement's image, presenting jewelry and accessories. Moreover, juxtaposition of jewelry and technology within the context of same advertisement can also signify binary relations as old-fashioned vs. modern. Thus, the connotative message of this advertisement suggests two lines of attitude towards gift-giving, where one is old-fashioned way to present the loved one with a piece of upscale jewelry, while the other is to move alone with present and gift to the

partner the latest technological innovation in form of smart-phone or digital camera. Finally, connoted two types of gift can have further gendered connotations, which suggest what kind of gift should be presented to either of genders (simply, women can gift to her partner a technological device, while man can present his lover a piece of jewelry).

4.4.6.1 Electronics: Summary

The results of these analyses can be summed up as follow:

1. Major code on which a signification system of advertisement is built on is the code of gift-giving.
2. Presented artifacts are connoted as Valentine's gifts by means of interrelation with applied graphical elements, like heart shapes and ribbon bows, as well as images of red and white boxes, connoted as gift-boxes.
3. Presented gifts are gender connoted through the language of advertisement.
4. In addition to major code of gift-giving, other sub-codes are modernity, technology, luxury and sophistication.
5. There is a binary relationship between connotative meanings of denoted artifacts, which underlies codes to modern vs. old-fashioned attitudes.

4.4.7 Unclassified

Four advertisements within 'object' category, due to combinations of the artifacts advertised, did not found their place in neither of defined groups. Therefore, it is decided to analyze them independently.

Advertisements in figures 49 and 51 present an "Önder" supermarket. Advertisement in figure 50 presents a shop "Fenerium", which specializes on fan items of a specific football team "Fenerbahçe". Finally, figure 48 presents advertisement of "Kombos",

which offers three special artifacts as alternatives for Valentine's gift. While advertisements of figures 48, 49, and 51 contain written text which includes reference to the Valentine's Day, advertisement in figure 50 does not present direct verbal signs of it. However, all four ads imply heart shapes, which in combination with other elements help to anchor the floating chain of meanings.

Both images of "Önder" advertisements connote a selection of artifacts, which, in context of the occasion, signify Valentine's gifts, as well as personal items which can be used for grooming and beautifying. Such artifacts represented through the selection of cloth, revealing a commodity codes. In particular case, it is a code of dressing. Moreover, presented items have clearly pronounced gender connotations, which are also supported by description, placed by the side of each of the presented objects. In general, for both advertisements, these objects include footwear, clothes, chocolates, wine and Champaign bottles, as well as teddy bears, heart shaped pillows, and boxed single rose. Noteworthy, as it already has been revealed in analyses of themed gift advertisements, there are several signs, which, in time, got naturalized and transferred into particular symbols. In this case, heart shape, red rose and teddy bear became integral symbols of love and Valentine's Day of contemporary popular culture. In fact, during Valentine's Day occasion these images presented in both forms: as material objects, connoted to be the most known and accepted Valentine's gift, and as symbols presented in forms of images, illustrations or graphic elements on the pages of magazines, newspapers, and other printed media.

Likewise, advertisement in figure 50 presents heart shaped balloons, and, among others, images of teddy bears, connoted as Valentine's gift. Additionally, heart shape

is used in full colored advertisement in figure 48. The upper third of advertisement's image displays a part of agenda's calendar page. The close-up shot zooms at segment of calendar, which reads "14 Cuma" ("14 Friday"). The heart shaped object is placed on top of the page, right within of a frame of the specified day. Such arrangement signifies that Friday 14th is the special day, while the heart shape placed by its side further anchors the meaning to the Valentine's Day. The written text reads "Sevgilim olur musun?" and "Sevdikleriniz için özel hediyeler…" ("Would you be my Valentine?" and "Special gifts for the one you love…"). The objects, connoted as 'special gifts' are a tie, a broche, and a picnic set. Together with dark background, simplicity and absence of any additional decorative elements (like birds, flowers, bears), the image of advertisement comprises the codes of class and sophistication. Moreover, the appearance and function of presented object connotes masculinity and signifies artifacts that could be presented particularly to a man. However, the picnic set signifies an activity, which involves at least two individuals, and in the general context of signifying system point at behavioral code. In particular, regarding theme and concept of Valentine's Day, picnic set can connote a romance, an activity through which a romantic behavior can be performed and displayed.

4.4.7.1 Unclassified: Summary

The major results, obtained from above analyses can be summed up as follow:

1. There are number of figures, which, in time, acquired a concrete symbolic quality and widely used today within popular culture to symbolize Valentine's Day. These symbols include heart shape, red rose, and teddy bear. The symbolic value is strongest, when all three appear side by side, or within a same context.

2. Valentine's Day is encoded as gift-giving occasion, on which gift exchange is performed between two lovers.
3. Language of advertisement utilize commodity and gift-giving codes to connote what are the appropriate gifts for either of genders (for example, female is more likely to get teddy bear or heart shaped pillow than a male).

4.5 Group 2: Services

Regarding the major assumptions of this research, current section is focuses on the analysis of advertisements, grouped under the category "services and entertainment sector". Along these lines, the following analysis aims to answer the questions, like:

-How the concept of romance is represented through advertising?

-What are the codes and myths of romantic relationship and romantic behavior, implied within visual and textual context of advertising?

In addition, this group can be further subdivided into:

a) Activities (e.g. dinner, concerts) and Places (e.g. hotels)
b) Grooming (e.g. beauty salon)
c) Financial
d) Communication

The following analyses, therefore, will be conducted in accordance with the sub-categories, defined above.

4.5.1 Activities and Places

The first subgroup of 'services' category is named 'activities and places', as advertisements within this subcategory offer special activities for Valentine's Day occasion. In statistic terms, 'activities' present a major subgroup within 'services category, containing 36 advertisements out of 44 as total.

Noteworthy, preliminary review of advertisements in this group revealed that the dominant activities proposed by ads for this day are dinners, concerts, or, what is more often, a combination of both. Generally, even though the number of advertisements belonging to the 'activities' group is dominating, the codes of romantic behavior and romantic experience are comprised within representation of very limited activities. Indeed, regarding a major message of given advertisements, a dinner at restaurant, accompanied by music performance is a core expression of romance and romantic experiences, while taking your love partner for such dinner, consume the meal and drink the beverages are accepted and normalized forms of what is thought of as a romantic behavior. Moreover, not only given advertisements are built upon same social codes, but also follow very similar, and in some cases even identical, visual structure. In fact, in some examples such similarities are reaching a level, where one ad can be mistaken for the other (e.g. figs. 52-54).

In terms of layout and denotative order, the majority of advertisements within this group presents photographs of various people, connoted as singers and performers, who are meant to entertain on Valentine's evening (figs. 52-68; fig. 76; fig. 79; fig. 82). The written text connotes the place of the event, time, name of performer/performers, as well as night's specialties (like specific items in menu). Furthermore, more than half of given ads (17 out of 36), are full color images, which makes it possible to examine the uses of color codes. In this respect, color schemes of advertisements are dominated by various hues of red. The usages of red are ranging from its application on major areas as background color, to coloring of various photographic and graphical elements as accents. In terms of denotative order of written text, the most common include a word "special" (e. g. special menu,

special program, special for…) in relation to Valentine's Day (figs. 54-56; figs. 59, 65, 66, 75-77; 80, 81). In primary connotative terms, such texts signify uniqueness and exceptional qualities of the referred object or subject. At the same time, however, such textual connotation encodes Valentine's Day with the meaning of being an exclusive, extraordinary, and significant day of a year, suggesting experiences, unique for this day specifically. On the other hand, it is also connotes the feeling of being special, by means of various special experiences, offered by advertisements. In fact, seeming simplicity of these advertisements conceals a complex functioning of multilayered connotative meanings within signifying system of the ad's image. For example, advertisement in figure 81, presents establishment named "Naturland". In terms of primary denotative elements, it shows three overlapping images, where two shows man and women. On the closer, dominant image they appear sitting next to the table, facing each other and holding glasses, while on second image they appear to sit side by side, in outdoor setting with wooden bungalow. The third image shows close-up image of some food. The textual elements include the word 'Naturland' (which connotes the name of the establishement), which is underlined by the writing "Sevgililer gününe özel…" ("Special for Valentine's Day…") and "Canlı müzikli" ("Live music") and "bol eğlenceli" ("Full entertainment"). In connotative terms, the written text signifies a 'specialty' of the night that is live music, and exclusiveness of Valentine's Day evening. Moreover, connoting the program of the night as being 'special for Valentine's Day' also connotes an exclusion of singles, and people not involved into romantic relationships. Furthermore, the pictorial elements signify a myth of couples and comprise the behavioral codes. Indeed, picturing male and female facing each other at a dinner table with wine glasses in hands connotes specific behavior, which

are considered to be romantic and expected to be seen between couples on this day. Another image within same advertisement also denotes male and female, sitting on the grass a front of wooden bungalow, holding hands, while their heads incline towards each other. There are no other people seen within the frame of the image, concentrating focus on the couple, and connoting privacy and intimacy. The graphic elements in form of heart shapes, which float through the images, partially framing each of them, reinforce the idea of love and romantic relationship by means of their symbolic quality.

As has been revealed during analyses in previous section, there is a number of certain major signs, which are used to signify Valentine's Day and all the related themes and concepts. Accordingly, these shapes include hearts, roses, rose petals, teddy bears, and ribbons. Within a time, these signs acquired a symbolic quality, and are seen to be widely used within an image of almost each analyzed advertisement. In colored advertisements, meanings of these symbols are enhanced through color coding. For example, rose as a flower, can be seen in nature in a variety of colors (e.g. pink, yellow, white). However, specifically red rose is used as a sign to connote love, passion and romance within a context of Valentine's Day ads (figs. 57-63; and figs. 66, 71, 74, 79).

The only advertisement that displays no presence of mentioned symbols of Valentine's Day is the one shown in figure 73. However, it comprises codes of romance and romantic behaviors, reflected through photographic image. In particular, this advertisement consists of two major areas, of around same size, where one is located within upper part of the page, fading into second image, occupying the

lover part of the ad. The upper image denotes a building by the seaside and a beach, while the second shows a figure of kissing male and female on the seashore, silhouetted against the sea and sunset sky. It is an advertisement of Palm Beach Hotel, and the written text denotes the name of the place, a slogan, and the list of the services, offered by the hotel. The text of the slogan reads "Sevgililer gününü Arkın Palm Beach Hotel'de kutlayın ki, unutulmaz anılarınız olsun!" ("Celebrate your Valentine's Day at Arkın Palm Beach Hotel to have unforgettable memories"). The list of services consists of three parts, where each part has a special title. First title is "Gizemli Kırmızı ("Mysterious Red"). Second title is "Pembe Düşler" ("Pink Dreams"), while the third one reads "Gala Gecesi" ("Gala Night"). In terms of connotative meanings, the slogan signifies a specific place, while photograph underneath supports it, by connoting this hotel. The further connotations of combination of signs (verbal in form of slogan and pictorial in terms of photograph of the hotel), implies a 'scenario' to Valentine's Day celebration, signifying a hotel as a place of romantic experience. The second pictorial element, which is the described photograph of couples, reinforces the connotation of romantic experience through the series of signs it contains. It also comprises the codes of romance and romantic behavior. The couples kissing by the seaside on sunset is rather popular vision of romance and romantic behavior, which also connotes intimacy. Moreover, owning to the angle the photograph is taken in relation to lighting, the facial features or other details, like age of the couples, cannot be defined. The understanding of gender is derived from other visual cues, represented through, for example, dressing code (female wears a skirt), and body codes (female has long hair and her playful pose, tiptoeing on one leg). The sun, positioned right behind their heads creates an impression of shining halo, while, in visual terms, also aid in producing higher level

of contrast. In this respect, silhouettes with undefined features are like templates, or blanks, which viewer can associate with and fill in with his/her own image. Finally, instead of adding specific color accents to the visuals of the image, advertisement implies verbal color coding to signify themes of love and romance. This can be observed through the use of the words which signify particular colors in the titles to the list of services and offers, presented by the hotel. “Gizemli Kırmızı (“Mysterious Red”) and “Pembe Düşler” (“Pink Dreams”), are the verbal signs that stand for specific hues, signifying their symbolic meanings. Noteworthy, there are two more advertisements, which utilize a concept of silhouettes (figs. 69, 70). Thus, figure 69 presents an advertisement of restaurant. It displays a photograph of the night view of restaurant, added by the slogan and iconic image of two people next to the table raising Champaign glasses. There is a large red heart shape as a background of the people. In visual terms, the red of the heart shape creates a strong contrast with black silhouettes of the icon, making it more prominent. Moreover, there is also strong contrast between slogan, placed within red colored ribbon shape, and black of the photograph. The slogan reads “Sevgiliniz ile romantic akşam yemeği @ Missina Restaurant” (“Romantic dinner with your love@Missina Restaurant”). This advertisement again comprises behavioral code and code of romance within signifying system of it image, which connotes that dinner at restaurant with the loved on the Valentine’s evening is an appropriate activity and expression of romantic behavior. Similarly, advertisement in figure 69 use a similar visual elements and color coding to signify concepts of romantic behavior and activities, which should be undertaken on the Valentine’s Day. In addition to dinner, however, this advertisement also signifies dancing as a romantic experience. Moreover, dancing implies bodily contact, connoting sexuality and sexual attraction.

In addition, another activity, connoted as romantic within a context of Valentine's Day is traveling (figs. 83-85). For example figures 83 and 84 connote a special campaign/lottery introduced by specific shops. Advertisement in figure 84 of "Erülkü Supermarket" presents a result of lottery, made during time period prior to Valentine's Day, where the main prize is a trip to Ankara. At the same time, advertisement in fig. 13 "Özok Mobilya" presents a campaign participants of which will be given an opportunity to stay for a night at "Naturland" (see analyses of fig. 81 for "Naturland").

To sum up, it appears that most of the advertisements within this group are built upon behavior code and code of romance, which are also inscribed within a core concept of Valentine's Day. Thus these advertisements connote specific activities and time-spending as romantic and suitable to be undertaken during Valentine's Day event. As a result, it seems that in order to be 'romantic', one must take the loved one either to stay at the hotel, attend dinner, or listen to the concert. Additionally, in many cases dinner and music performances are combined as a single experience.

4.5.1.1 Activities and Places: Summary

The following can be summed up from the above analyses:

1. Advertisements of given category are majorly based on the behavior code and code of romance. Thus, they signify particular time spending and activities as romantic and, thus suitable to have on Valentine's Day in order to express love and experience a romance.
2. There is a tendency towards three activities, which stand for romantic time spending: 1)dinner at restaurant, 2)attending to music performance, 3)staying at the hotel. Besides, advertisement in figure 67 ads dancing to this list.

3. Color coding is very prominent within context of analyzed samples, where various hues of red are used either as dominant background, or accent color. Thus, the idea of love and romance is signified through symbolic properties of color.
4. In terms of shapes and figures, heart shapes, roses, and ribbons dominate in symbolizing Valentine's Day and relating themes.
5. In terms of verbal signs, written texts are dominated by adjective 'special', connoting Valentine's Day as a significant day of the month, when couples are meant to feel 'special' and do something "specially' appropriate according to the themes and concept of the occasion.
6. Advertisements are encoded with possibilities of scenarios to the romantic experiences, like kissing at the sunset by the seashore (fig. 73), dancing and kissing (fig. 70), whisper love confession within specific settings, preferably five star hotel (fig. 58), make a marriage proposal (figs. 74, 78), spend a 'memorable' night at the hotel (figs. 55, 58, 61, 62, 73, 74, 78, 81, 85,), have a dinner accompanied by music performance in one of the restaurants (majority of ads), or travel (figs. 83, 84).

4.5.2 Grooming

Noteworthy, while in general terms grooming ritual has certain cultural and social significance, only one advertisement is found to offer grooming-related services. Figure 86 presents advertisement of "Uzman & Perk" beauty center. In terms of pictorial elements, advertisement denotes a female figure in full height, turned away from the viewer so that we can see her back. She is partially wrapped into white towel. The figure placed on the left of the page, while middle and right side of the image is occupied by three heart shapes with written text within. The major text

within the biggest heart shape, also written with a bigger font size, reads “Sevgililer gününe özel kampanya. Tüm kol + Tüm bacak + Koltuk altı + Özel Bölge 8 seans 890 TL” (“Special campaign for Valentine’s Day. Whole Arms + Whole Legs + Under arms area + Bikini areas in 8 sessions for 890 TL”). Apparently, the signification system of this particular ad is built upon the code of grooming, and sub codes of sexuality and sexual appeal. By these means, it normalizes certain notions on how female body should or should not look like.

Therefore, considering denotative verbal and pictorial signs, the image of advertisement connotes the female’s grooming rituals. Moreover, it signifies the way the female body should look like through specification of areas on the body where the hair removal can be performed. In connection to the Valentine’s Day, the ad signifies the grooming rituals, which females are to perform for the occasion. Indeed, as has been seen through literature review, while male role for the Valentine’s Day is defined as main gift-giver and organizer of romantic activities/experiences, the extra grooming and beautifying oneself is generally attributed to the female.

Finally, in addition to written text, denoting and connoting Valentine’s Day, the advertisement include heart shapes, which, through their symbolic meaning, reinforce the message.

4.5.3 Financial

Out of total 44 advertisements within ‘services’ category, 2 ads appear to offer financial services, connoting special campaigns within a time span, close to the Valentine’s Day. Thus, figure 93 presents an advertisement for “Cardplus”, while figure 94 presents an advertisement for “Unicard” of “Universal Bank”. Both

advertisements are full color prints. These two samples demonstrate how such in romantic subject like money and finances is articulated and instrumentalized in accordance with the concept of Valentine's Day. Taking as example figure 93, an image of advertisement denotes two heart shapes, where one is bigger and another, right by its side is a way smaller. These heart shapes dominate the visual space of the page. Prevailing color is red, and hues of red, with some white accented areas (mainly written text). Furthermore, there are other graphic elements, which are the shapes of the ribbon: the white with written text on it above the heart shapes, and the red, again with written text on it, bellow the heart shapes. The main text, presented in form of slogan, reads "Aşk olsun...+3 Taksit olsun". The slogan is added by the first line within paragraph at the bottom of the page, which reads "Aşkınızı taçlandınrken +3 taksit, hem de X3 puan mı dediniz? Aşk olsun..." ("Are you saying that I can crown my lover in 3 installments, and also get triple points? Aşk olsun..."). The basic connotative meaning of the written text is that advertisement presents a special campaign, which would continue until 16th of February. Indeed, the mentioned time period of campaign's duration, together with color coding and domination of heart shapes signifies relation to Valentine's Day. Even the fact that there are two heart shapes, dominating an image, may point at reference to two people-more precisely a couple. Furthermore, the written text in combination with specific colors; and shapes of the ribbons connotes gift and, therefore, built upon the code of gift-giving. An advertised credit card is represented as a magic tool, by means of which a perfect present for the loved one can be acquired. Noteworthy, this advertisement uses semiotic game of words, shifting between denotative and connotative meanings. As can be seen, the slogan "Aşk olsun…+3 Taksit olsun", due to its visual characteristics (like position, size and contrasting relationship with background), is

connoted as dominant message of the ad. However, expression “Aşk olsun…” is layered with meanings and presents a cultural linguistic phenomenon. As a matter of fact, there is no direct translation for “Aşk olsun…”, as the phrase presents a figure of speech and contains both, negative and positive connotations, depending on the context under which it is used. Primarily, considering the denotative order of each word, the phrase can sound as “Let the love be”. The word ‘aşk’ stands for ‘love’. On the other hand, the whole phrase is frequently used within a daily speech with connotations, which have nothing to do with concept or idea of love. Thus, “Aşk olsun…” is used to express a state of being surprised or astonished in either positive or negative way (though negative connotations are more usual). Probably the closest meaning of the phrase would be “I don’t believe it!”, or simply “Wow!” It seems, therefore, that while the same phrase is repeated twice within context of same advertisement, each time it is used under different connotative order. To be more specific, while within secondary text at the bottom of the page the use of “Aşk olsun…” is more obvious as being a figure of speech, which expresses joy and surprise, the use of the phrase within a slogan simultaneously contains both connotative meanings. In particular, keeping in mind a theme of Valentine’s Day, the slogan claims that the love should be, and, connotatively, it will be if one uses the magic tool of advertised credit card. At the same time, slogan expresses positive surprise and joy about connoted campaign, which offers 3 installments while purchasing any artifact.

What is more, there is a metaphorical and metonymical relation between written signs of the secondary text, presented by the first line of paragraph at the bottom of the page. In particular, the segment of the sentence, denoted as “…crown the loved

one…" has a several layers within its connotative order. First of all, in metonymical terms, the crown stands for royalty, including kings, queens, princes and princesses. Thus, crowning signifies the raise of rank and status in both, material and non-material terms. Moreover, crowning signifies the crowned person as someone special and significant, taking the priority within an order of importance. Further, deeper connotative layer, considered in accordance with other signs within signifying system, signifies crowning as gifting the other person with something upscale or luxury.

An advertisement in figure 94 is also presenting a credit card, connoting a special campaign within period of Valentine's Day event. It denotes hairy green smiling creature, holding a red heart shape, and placed against pale pink background. In addition, background also contains many heart shapes in various hues of pink, placed on top of line shapes, which brings to mind an association with growing flowers. The main written text is presented by a slogan which reads "Sevginize sevgi katın" ("Add love to your love"). On connotative level, advertisement uses color code of red and pink, together with utilization of many heart shapes, which signifies love and Valentine's Day theme. On the other hand, the connotation of the slogan leads to the associations with the finances or other material things that could be 'add' to each other. While surficial meaning of this slogan may connote rising one's love, deeper connotations set parallel with increasing a capital by adding up. Therefore, the love, which presents feeling and rather abstract concept is referred to in material term, which, if can be added to, could be also subtracted from.

4.5.4 Communication

Advertisements, gathered under the title ‘communication’, relate to various communication services (from internet and mobile phone communication, to newspaper announcements). In terms of statistics, the number of these advertisements is 7 out of 44 as total. In this group, 2 ads belong to internet company (figs. 91, 92), 2 advertisements represent a mobile operator company (figs. 87, 90), while other two are announcing about an opportunity to publish a love note in the newspaper, which will be published on Valentine’s Day (figs. 88, 89). The last two mentioned are of a particular interest, as they connote an element of publicity to the love.

Figure 88 presents advertisement of “Havadis” newspaper. In terms of denotations, it presents blue sky with light white clouds as a background, while foreground contains the main slogan, heart shape balloon with a written text, floating towards sky, two red stripes (around the middle and bottom parts of the page). The space between two stripes is occupied by shapes of the note papers, pinned to the sky background, and each note contains a word, which is a noun. The words within notes are placed in the following order: “sevgi” (love, in terms of affection and fondness), “aşk” (love, in terms of passion and adoration), “tutku” (passion), “fedakarlık” (sacrifice), “sonsuzluk” (eternity/infinity), “sevda” (loved/love/lover), “mutluluk” (happiness), and “sadakat” (loyalty). The main slogan reads “Aşk ilan edilmek ister” (“Love wants to be announced”).

Noteworthy, this advertisement comprises the code of love. The connoted meaning of the words within each paper note is the characteristics, or aspects of love. Simply

saying, the given words can be equated to the sub-codes of love, by which it is defined. Thus, the 'true love' is the love comprised of the sum of the listed notions. Besides, the way the words are arranged within note shapes, while the note shapes themselves are pinned and arranged, brings to mind a pin board. In the context of a particular advertisement, such arrangement can connote an announcement board. However, in wider terms, the connotations of the pin board and note papers can be reviewed. For example, pin board may serve several purposes, the most common of which are either to place announcements or to locate particular reminders. The main slogan of advertisement reads "Love wants to be announced", which complements connotations of other pictorial and textual signs. One more point to mention, is the colors of the pins. According to color coding and associations, softer hues of red, especially pink are commonly referred to femininity, while blues, especially darker tones of it, are commonly associated with masculinity. Therefore, it can be also connoted that some aspects of love are more commonly connected to women, while the others are to men.

4.6 General Summary and Major Results

To recollect, the main aim of this thesis was to examine codes and norms in today's popular culture, related to understanding and practices of love, relationships and romantic behaviors through visual and textual semiotic analyses. In this respect, the images of selected advertisements were examined according to first and second orders of signification, with the focus on interrelationship of pictorial and textual signs within system.

Hence, to conclude this chapter, it might be useful to present a brief summary of the major results and findings of the analyses. Hence, it should be reminded that

preliminary studies of selected advertisements defined two major categories in accordance with what is actually advertised: “objects” and “services”. It was assumed that both groups may have many similarities in terms of semiotic codes and representation of love, and other notions related to the Valentine’s Day, as well as representation and codes of Valentine’s Day as such. However, at the same time, it was estimated that while having some points in common, the defined groups can also differ in various ways. The main speculation of this thesis was that the main differences between the groups will be due to the peculiarities of the matters, advertised. Briefly, it was assumed, that analyses of advertisements within ‘object’ category would more likely reveal commodity codes in relation to Valentine’s Day and all related themes and concepts. On the other hands, advertisements within ‘services’ category were assumed more likely to contain codes, related to romance, romantic behaviors and activities; love expression and rituals.

The following sections, therefore, are the concluding notes on the analyses, which will present briefs of general findings of the analyses in terms of differences and similarities among two major defined categories, which are ‘objects’ and ‘services’.

4.6.1 Similarities

The list, which follows, presents the brief summary of major findings, considering similarities within signifying systems and signification orders among defined categories of selected advertisements. In brief, the common points are:

1. In terms of color, both groups exhibited same usage of color coding. Accordingly, the dominant colors within both groups of advertisement are various hues of red, ranging from deep wine red to pale pink. In given

context, red represent love and passion and thus serves as one of the cues to encode representation of Valentine's Day.

2. In terms of graphic elements and shapes, it was revealed that there are four major signs, presented within pictorial context of almost all advertisements in both categories. These elements are heart shapes, roses (the coding of color red is used if the print is in color), ribbons and bows, and teddy bears.
3. Advertisements within both groups comprise the code of gift-giving.
4. Advertisements within both categories comprise behavior and gender codes, which, however, are expressed, connoted and signified from various perspectives and, thus will be also viewed in the section on differences.

4.6.2 Differences

In terms of differences within coding and signifying systems of advertisements of both groups, the following can be noted:

1. The theme of gift-giving is more clearly pronounced within advertisements of 'objects' category, encoding Valentine's Day as gift-giving occasion.
2. While advertisements within 'objects' category majorly comprise commodity codes, advertisements within 'services' category are revealed to be majorly built upon behavioral codes.
3. Advertisements within 'objects' category comprise gender connotations, which point at gender roles and attitudes within a context of Valentine's Day. On the other hands, advertisements of 'services' category are predominantly focused on representations of behaviors in the context of romantic relationships. Thus, such advertisements encoding celebrating traditions of Valentine's day with specific activities and behaviors, which should be

counted as romantic and performed during Valentine's Day event in order to express love and obtain romantic experience.

4. Both categories of advertisements exhibit strong tendencies in fostering material culture. However, ads within 'objects' category utilize objectification of love, commodity codes, and instrumentalization of daily artifacts in accordance with themes and concepts encoded within Valentine's Day occasion. Simply, these advertisements are built upon a notion of purchasing a material artifact as an expression of one's love. On the other hand, advertisements within 'services' category fostering spending through purchasing immaterial things, like romantic experiences.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this thesis is to explore codes and norms in today's popular culture, related to understanding and practices of love, relationships and romantic behaviors, by conducting semiotic analyses of selected advertisements related to Valentine's Day. In addition, this research also takes insight into representation of Valentine's Day occasion within a context of contemporary society.

In this respect, the goal of the present chapter is to re-state main aim and objectives of the study, as well as to report major findings in accordance with established research questions.

5.1 Overview of the Research

The goal of this study was to examine semiotic codes of Valentine's Day through semiotic decoding of print advertisement in North Cyprus local newspapers. As already re-stated above, this study aimed to explore codes and norms in today's popular culture, related to understanding and practices of love, relationships and romantic behaviors, by conducting semiotic analyses of selected advertisements.

This study aims to investigate cultural and social codes of Valentine's Day through semiotic decoding of print advertising in North Cyprus. The basic objective of the research is to reveal coding of gift-giving and social behavior patterns behind print advertising. In addition, current research tends to examine transformation of original

meanings of special days, and the ways media shapes its perception by society. In addition, the basic objectives of this research were focused on the text of advertisements in terms of interrelation of their visual and textual components, as well as shifting patterns of meaning from denotative to connotative order of signification.

The process of the research was conducted through a number of major stages. First of all, an area of inquiry was defined, and relevant literature was reviewed in order to create a strong theoretical framework. Secondly, semiotics was defined as a method of analyses, resulting in completion of methodology chapter, which outlined the major steps of analyses. At the same time, data was collected and analyzed preliminary. Finally, semiotic analyses of selected advertisements were conducted to reveal whether or not it answers given research questions, and fulfills established aims and objectives.

It must be re-emphasized that the present research focused on the print advertisement for Valentine's Day, encountered within three selected local North Cyprus newspapers during specified time span. In general terms, Valentine's Day event can be characterized as very theme-specific, evolving exclusively around concepts of love, romance and couples in relationships. In this regard, the main assumption of this research was that the mentioned themes are dominating within context of advertisings, encountered during Valentine's Day event, amplifying and revealing major tendencies and norms, related to the love and relationships. In other words, it is assumed that thematic peculiarities of Valentine's Day are reflected through advertising, making the representation of feelings, love and relationships during this

period more reinforced and pronounced. Furthermore, research questions were created and arranged in accordance with primary research assumption. Thus, the following section presents established research questions; reports major results and findings, as well as taking insight into relevance of research questions and findings.

5.2 Major Results and Findings of the Research

This section is a core part of the present chapter, as it aims to reveal whether or not the conducted analyses answer established research questions, which are as follow:

1) How social power relationship and exchange between genders are represented, supported and naturalized?
2) How abstract notion of love is objectified through use of pictorial and textual components in advertising?
3) How the gender roles within context of relationships are represented by advertising?
4) How objects are exploited and instrumentalized through the language of advertising within a context of special days and occasions?
5) What are the codes and myths of romantic relationship and romantic behavior, implied within visual and textual context of advertising?
6) How the concept of romantic behavior and time-spending is reduced to consumption and materialism through representations in advertising?

The preliminary studies of selected advertisements revealed that they can be divided into two major categories in accordance with what is advertised. Thus, the analyses were conducted for two major groups, defined as ‘objects’ and ‘services’. Semiotic readings of advertisement in terms of semiotic codes, signification systems; and denotative and connotative order have shown that each category answers certain set

of questions. In this respect, it can be stated that analyses of ‘objects’ category gave more detailed answers to questions from 1 to 4 (e.g. the majority of gender connotations was found in advertisements, assigned to sub-category of ‘domestic instruments’), while answers to the questions 5 and 6 were generally found through the analyses of advertisements within ‘services’ category (e.g. most of the advertisements within sub-category named ‘activities’ comprise codes of romance and romantic behavior).

Furthermore, it is found that certain codes are dominating the context of analyzed advertisements. Regarding main subject of the research that is Valentine’s Day, the most common codes implied were the codes of behavior, commodity codes, color codes, codes of gift-giving, as well as codes of romance and romantic experience.

In terms of visual components, the majority of advertisements within both groups utilize specific common shapes within their layouts. These are heart shapes, roses, ribbons with bows, and teddy bears. Noteworthy, even advertisements, which do not include any textual elements about love or Valentine’s Day, contained such elements within their contexts, connoting love and special occasion of Valentine’s Day. Along these lines, it was concluded that the listed signs shifted paradigm of their existence towards symbolic means. Simply saying, it appears that heart shapes, especially combined with images of red roses, ribbons and teddy bears have turned into popular symbols of Valentine’s Day.

Finally, considering the representation of Valentine’s Day itself, it was revealed that it becomes highly feminized through the color schemes, and various pictorial signs,

normally associated with femininity. Moreover, through the connotative chain of signs Valentine's Day is represented as a gift-giving occasion, during which female is commonly signified as a gift-receiver, while male plays a role of gift-giver.

To sum up, the conducted analyses are generally answering to the research questions and established aim and objectives. At the same time, it is generally confirms the major research assumption. Nevertheless, due to a variety of factors, including strict set of research limitations, this study is just a tiny contribution to the main body of research and literature. In fact, the topic, undertaken by the present study is rich and multifaceted, presenting a scholar with a variety of research topic opportunities.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

Although the subject of Valentine's Day gradually attracts rising attention of scholars and researchers, review of relevant literature shows, that for present day, there is still a very limited studies conducted on this topic. Thus, the present thesis attempts to contribute to the general body of the knowledge of the subject, and suggests a number of directions for further research implications. In particular, the dominant number of sources was found within the fields of marketing and sociology, while, regarding the topic, there is a gap in such areas as media studies, mass communication, or cultural studies. Indeed, Valentine's Day, being a cultural phenomenon, implies a variety of topics to consider. For example, while semiotics, which has been chosen as major methodological approach, set the focus of the research solely on context of the advertisements, another study can be conducted, viewing this subject from the audience standpoint. In addition, it might be useful to conduct historical overview to reveal point of delivery and development of Valentine's Day within a context of specific culture.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: “Objects” Category

Fig. 1: Blomberg (Yenidüzen Gazetesi, 04.02.2014, p.12)

Fig. 2: Blomberg (Yenidüzen Gazetesi, 05.02.2014, p.13)

Fig. 3: Blomberg (Yenidüzen Gazetesi, 06.02.2014, p.13)

Fig. 4: Blomberg (Yenidüzen Gazetesi, 11.02.2014, p.13)

Fig. 5: Blomberg (Havadis Gazetesi, 06.02.2014, p.17)

Fig. 6: Blomberg (Havadis Gazetesi, 10.02.2014, p.14)

Fig. 7: Blomberg (Havadis Gazetesi, 13.02.2014, p.17)

Fig. 8: Blomberg (Yenidüzen Gazetesi, 14.02.2014, p.13)

Fig. 9: Hoover (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 11.02.2014, p.6)

Fig. 10: Bosch (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 08.02.2014, p.7)

Fig. 11: Arzum (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Ekran Insert, 08.02.2014,)

Fig. 12: Erülkü Supermarket (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 17.01.2014, p.21)

Fig. 13: Özok Mobilya (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 30.01.2014, p.11)

Fig. 14: Gara Sandık Oymacılık (Havadis Gazetesi, 09.02.2014, p.19)

Fig. 15: Kilim (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 11.02.2014, p.19)

Fig. 16: Elektrokur (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 08.02.2014, p.31)

Fig. 17: İsmail Kofalı Hırdavat (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014)

Fig. 18: İpek Mobilya (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014)

Fig. 19: Özok Mobilya/Karaca (Havadis Gazetesi, 06.02.2014, p.11)

Fig. 20: Reşat Kuyumculuk (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.29)

Fig. 21: Reşat Kuyumculuk (Havadis Gazetesi, 14.02.2014, p.23)

Fig. 22: Aşe Diamond (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 13.02.2014, p.33)

Fig. 23: Macila Jewellery ((Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014, p.27)

Fig. 24: Karasu (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.6)

Fig. 25: Zen (Havadis Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.23)

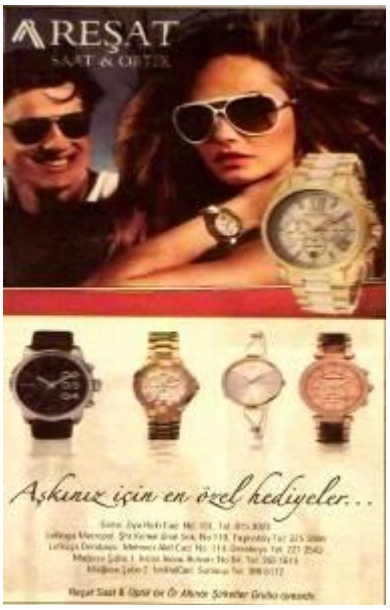

Fig. 26: Reşat Saat & Optik (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 11.02.2014, p.25)

Fig. 27: Akay Vizyon (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 09.02.2014, p.31)

Fig. 28: Nalken Burberry (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 07.02.2014, p.6)

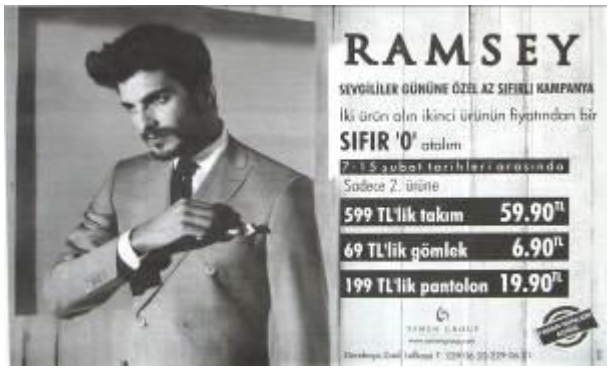

Fig. 29: Ramsey (Havadis Gazetesi, 07.02.2014, p.9)

Fig. 30: Tommy Hilfiger (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014)

Fig. 31: Bayramoğlu (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014)

Fig. 32: Renault /Özok (Havadis Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.13)

Fig. 33: BMW (Havadis Gazetesi, 07.02.2014, p.19)

Fig. 34: Kombos (Havadis Gazetesi, 03.02.2014, p.21)

Fig. 35: Asok (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 10.02.2014, p.21)

Fig. 36: Asok (Havadis Gazetesi, 05.02.2014, p.11)

Fig. 37: 'Çangar Motors' (Havadis Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.15)

Fig. 38: 'Çangar Motors'/Çekiliş (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 14.02.2014, p.23)

Fig. 39: BMW (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 27.01.2014, p.17)

Fig. 40: Avon (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014)

Fig. 41: Prestige Brand Corporation (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 07.02.2014, p.37)

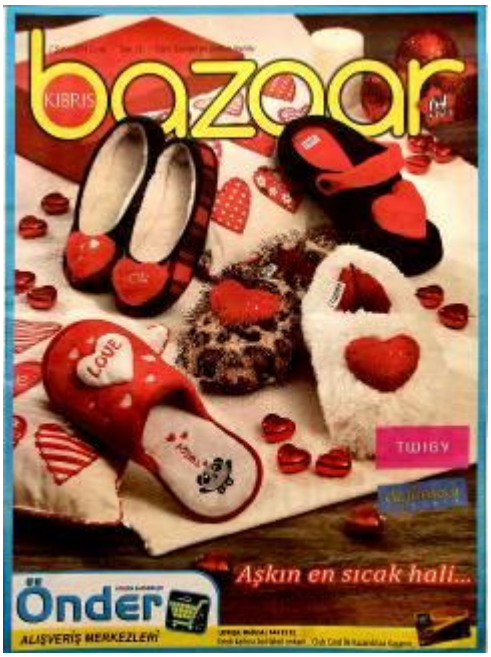

Fig. 42: 'Bazaar'/Önder (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014)

Fig. 43: 'Oral' Fotoğrafçılık (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Ekran Insert, 08.02.2014)

Fig. 44: Magictouch (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.46)

Fig. 45: Şefler (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.56)

Fig. 46: 'Fellahoğlu Collection'(Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.61)

Fig. 47: 'Laconic Computer'(Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.18)

Fig. 48: 'Kombos' (Havadis Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.21)

Fig. 49: 'Önder' (Havadis Gazetesi, 13.02.2014, p.9)

Fig. 50: ' Fenerium' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.8)

Fig. 51: 'Önder' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.19)

Appendix B: "Services" Category

Fig. 52: 'Huzur Ağaç' Restaurant (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 10.02.2014, p.35)

Fig. 53: 'Mahzen' Restaurant (Havadis Gazetesi, 09.02.2014, p.5)

Fig. 54: 'Açmenya' Restaurant & Bar (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 10.02.2014, p.37)

Fig. 55: 'Haktan Konseri'/Salamis Hotel (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.14)

Fig. 56: 'Ergün Salamis Restaurant' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.16)

Fig. 57: 'Selami Şahin Konseri'/Malpas (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 04.02.2014, p.5)

Fig. 58: 'Mustafa Ceceli konseri'/Acapulco Hotel (Havadis Gazetesi, 03.02.2014, p.7)

Fig. 59: Cümbüş Restaurant & Bar (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014, p.24)

Fig. 60: Cratos Hotel (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014)

Fig. 61: 'Emre Altuğ Konseri'/Merit Park Hotel (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014)

Fig. 62: Selami Şahin Konseri/Malpas Hotel (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014)

Fig. 63: Amadeea Konseri/Almahara (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014)

Fig. 64: W Club (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert , 12.02.2014)

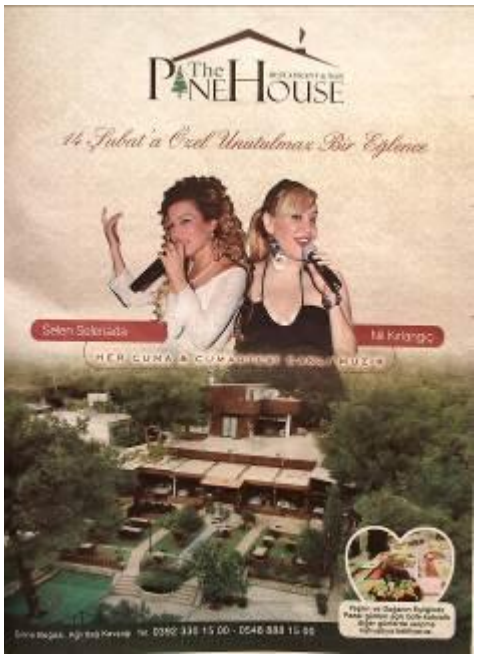

Fig. 65: 'Pine House' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Ekran Insert, 08.02.2014)

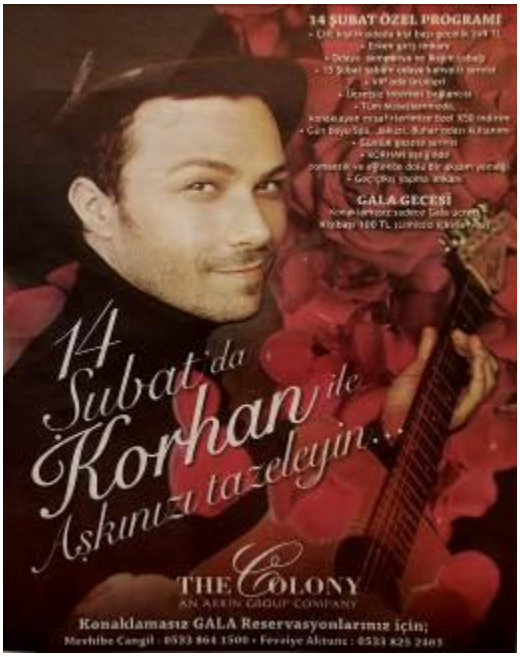

Fig. 66: Korhan Konseri/The Colony Hotel (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014)

Fig. 67: Cevdet Aktepe Konseri/Alaçatı Bar (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.38)

Fig. 68: Meril Restaurant (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.60)

Fig. 69: Missina Restaurant (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert 12.02.2014, p.16)

Fig. 70: Tango to Buddha (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014)

Fig. 71: Niazi's Restaurant (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.54)

Fig. 72: 'Park Marine' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Ekran Insert, 08.02.2014)

Fig. 73: Arkın Palm Beach Hotel (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert,12.02.2014)

Fig. 74: 'Merit' Hotel (Yenidüzen Gazetesi, 19.01.2014, p.4)

Fig. 75: 'The Courtyard Inn' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 06.02.2014, p.30)

Fig. 76: 'La Reserva' (Havadis Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.7)

Fig. 77: 'Jashan' Restaurant (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 05.02.2014, p.30)

Fig. 78: 'Malpas' Hotel (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 19.01.2014, p.5)

Fig. 79: 'Güler's Fish Restaurant (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 06.02.2014, p.7)

Fig. 80: 'Karpaz Gate Marina' (Havadis Gazetesi, 13.02.2014, p.1)

Fig. 81: 'Naturland' (Havadis Gazetesi, 11.02.2014, p.10)

Fig. 82: 'Rafet El Roman Konseri' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 28.01.2014, p.25)

Fig. 83: 'Alpet'/Cardplus (Havadis Gazetesi, 13.02.2014, p.13)

Fig. 84: 'Erülkü Supermarket' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 10.02.2014, p.16)

Fig. 85: 'Sayar Turizm' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 10.02.2014, p.5)

Fig. 86: 'Uzman & Perk Estetik Kliniği' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 03.02.2014, p.6)

Fig. 87: 'Telsim' (Havadis Gazetesi, 04.02.2014, p.21)

Fig. 88: 'Havadis' (Havadis Gazetesi, 27.01.2014, p.23)

Fig. 89: 'Kıbrıs Gazetesi' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 02.02.2014, p.23).

Fig. 90: 'Telsim' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 14.02.2014, p.25)

Fig. 91: 'Airnetworx' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 03.02.2014, p.6)

Fig. 92: 'Kıbrısonline' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 27.01.2014, pg.29)

Fig. 93: 'Cardplus' (Yenidüzen Gazetesi, 13.02.2014, p.23)

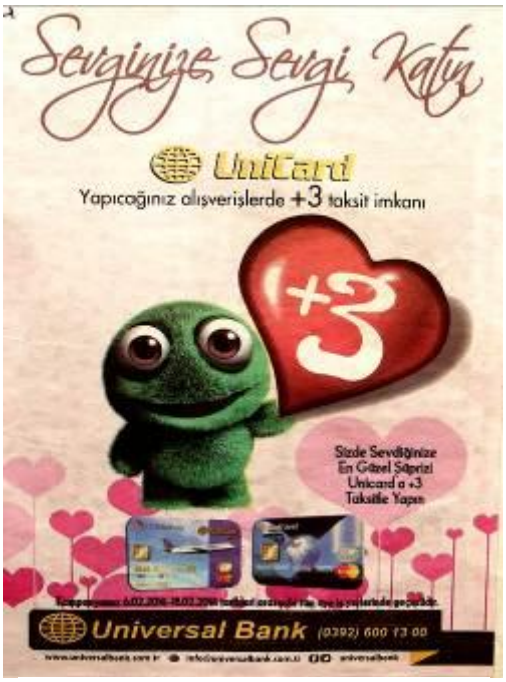

Fig. 94: 'Ünicard'/Universal Bank (Yenidüzen Gazetesi, 14.02.2014, p.23)

Fig. 95: 'Güzelyurt İndirim Şöleni' (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 12.02.2014, p.37)

Appendix C: Extras

Fig. 96: Article +Ad, sample 1 (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.60)

Fig. 97: Article +Ad, sample 2 (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, Baazar Insert, 12.02.2014, p.62-63)

Fig. 98: 'Blomberg', normal day ad, sample (Kıbrıs Gazetesi, 15.07.2014, p.19)