

## REPRESENTATION OF THE BRAND BY IMAGE: SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF AUTOMOBILE LOGOS

Öğr. Gör. Tarık DOĞAN\*

Arş. Gör. Sezin DOĞAN\*\*

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### Abstract

Communication, in its broadest sense, is defined as the process of encoding a message and transmitting it to a target audience through various channels. The effectiveness of communication is directly related to the receiver's ability to interpret the message and respond accordingly. During the encoding process, communicators employ a range of tools to enhance clarity and engagement. The visualization of a message and its delivery through visual elements is referred to as visual communication. Visual communication supports the overall communication process through design products, ensuring that messages are not only comprehensible but also impactful. This study approaches the animal motifs used in the emblems of automobile brands from a semiotic analysis perspective, focusing on visual communication design, symbolic meaning, and intended brand narratives. Emblems are key components of corporate identity, enhancing brand recognition and fostering emotional connections with audiences. In this context, the study aims to explore how animal symbols function as mediators of brand values, narratives, and status positioning through emblem design. Through semiotic analysis, the study examines the relationship between signs and their denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings, discussing their role in the construction of brand identity. The findings reveal how emblem design serves as a strategic tool in positioning brands as symbols of luxury and status, offering a theoretical contribution to corporate branding strategies.

**Keywords:** Logo, Emblem, Visual Identity, Visual Design, Visual Communication, Semiotics

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\* Selçuk Üniversitesi, İletişim Fakültesi, Reklamcılık Bölümü, [tdogan@selcuk.edu.tr](mailto:tdogan@selcuk.edu.tr), ORCID: [0000-0001-6761-2536](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6761-2536)

\*\* Selçuk Üniversitesi, İletişim Fakültesi, Reklamcılık Bölümü, [tdogan@selcuk.edu.tr](mailto:tdogan@selcuk.edu.tr), ORCID: [0000-0002-5161-5481](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5161-5481)

## MARKANIN İMGEYLE TEMSİLİ: OTOMOBİL LOGOLARININ GÖSTERGEBİLİMSSEL ANALİZİ

### Öz

İletişim en geniş anlamıyla, bir mesajın kodlanması ve çeşitli araçlar kullanılarak hedef kitleye iletilmesi süreci olarak tanımlanmaktadır. İletişimin etkinliği, alıcının mesajı yorumlama ve buna uygun şekilde yanıt verme becerisiyle doğrudan ilişkilidir. Mesajları kodlama sürecinde iletişimciler netliği ve katılımı artırmak amacıyla çeşitli araçlardan yararlanmaktadır. Mesajın görselleştirilerek iletilmesi süreci ise görsel iletişim olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Görsel iletişim, tasarım ürünleri aracılığıyla genel iletişim sürecini desteklemekte ve mesajların hem anlaşılır hem de etkili olmasını sağlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, otomobil markalarının amblemlerinde kullanılan hayvan motiflerini; görsel iletişim tasarımı, sembolik anlam ve amaçlanan marka anlatıları açısından göstergebilimsel bir analiz perspektifiyle ele almaktadır. Amblemler, markaların tanınırlığını artıran ve izleyiciyle duygusal bağ kurmalarını sağlayan önemli kurumsal kimlik unsurlarıdır. Bu bağlamda çalışma, hayvan sembollerinin amblem tasarımları aracılığıyla marka değerlerini, anlatılarını ve statü konumlandırmalarını iletmede nasıl bir rol üstlendiğini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Göstergebilimsel çözümleme yoluyla işaretler ile onların anlamlı, çağrışımsal ve mitolojik düzeydeki ilişkileri incelenerek, bu unsurların marka kimliğinin inşasındaki işlevi tartışılmaktadır. Elde edilen bulgular, amblem tasarımının lüks ve statü odaklı marka konumlandırmalarında nasıl stratejik bir araç olarak kullanıldığını ortaya koyarak kurumsal markalaşma stratejilerine kuramsal bir katkı sunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Logo, Amblem, Görsel Kimlik, Görsel Tasarım, Görsel İletişim, Göstergebilim

### Introduction

Encoding a message and transmitting it to a target audience using various tools is most broadly defined as "communication." The success of communication is directly proportional to the ability of the message to influence the target audience and prompt action. Many communication professionals rely on the expertise of visual design specialists to deliver their visual and verbal messages effectively and powerfully to their audience. Although messages are strategic elements of communication, the stages of encoding and delivering them to the target audience through communication tools are as crucial as the success of constructing the strategic message itself. Transforming the constructed strategic message into a visual or auditory form that can be perceived and internalized by the target audience is of vital importance. In the communication process, achieving success at this critical application stage ensures the success of the entire process. However, no matter how well a flawed strategic message is expressed and delivered to the target audience, the outcome will inevitably remain unsuccessful.

One of the most significant methods for effectively delivering messages to a target audience is through visualization. The eyes serve as the primary gateway to the human mind, enabling individuals to register and interpret more input through vision than through any other sense. Communicators aiming to achieve success by encoding and transmitting messages to their target audience consider the necessity of having their messages perceived visually. The process of encoding a message visually and transmitting it to the target audience, thereby enabling the audience to perceive and respond to the message, is defined as "visual communication" (Becer, 2019, p. 30).

Visual communication is a systematic discipline encompassing numerous elements. Through its techniques, it conveys messages to the minds of the target audience via visual means or reminds them of previously transmitted messages, thereby prompting individuals or groups toward the desired action (Doğan, 2024). The most critical step in achieving successful message delivery and ensuring the message is perceived—the core goals of communication—is the effective execution of visual communication. Advancements in technology have enabled significant developments

in computer and mobile communication tools, placing these tools at the service of visual communication design. Moreover, the history of mass communication has made it possible to access numerous impactful visual materials.

Visual communication is often mistakenly equated with the concept of graphic design. Although their primary objectives may seem similar, graphic design represents only one of the techniques employed in visual communication (Aydın, 2021, p. 59). Visual communication utilizes various methods, such as illustration, photo manipulation, and typographic design, to convey messages. Humanity has interpreted the content of numerous messages through visual intelligence from birth to death, and has expressed emotions, thoughts, and feelings through visual messages. Visual communication begins at birth, and its products remain a constant part of daily life. Since its existence on Earth, humanity has effectively transmitted its accumulated knowledge and life experiences to future generations through visual communication tools. Graphic design is a visual communication tool, and its primary function is to convey a message or promote a product or service. The term "graphic design" was first used in the early 20th century to describe visual materials engraved on metal plates, drawn, and later reproduced through printing. With technological advancements, the scope of graphic design expanded to include not only printed materials but also visuals projected onto screens via film, displayed through video, and created with the help of computers. Thus, the meaning of the term has significantly broadened (Becer, 2019, p. 33). Comprising the terms "graphic" and "design," this concept has evolved into a communication technique widely encountered today, both in daily life and in commercial and professional contexts.

Visual communication encodes messages by transforming them into visual forms and delivering them to the target audience. During this process, message encoding strategies are developed. Ensuring that the same visual message is not interpreted differently by various individuals is of great importance. In addition to the creativity of the message, its comprehensibility and the ability to pass through a shared mental filter hold significant value. In this context, both the formal and semantic characteristics of the messages must be considered during the visualization process. While a message conveys a code through the eyes, the brain may interpret this code differently and derive varied meanings. These differing interpretations may not necessarily stem from misunderstandings but rather from deliberate strategies embedded by communication experts within visual communication tools. Visual communicators employ such strategies to insert visual codes that guide our perceptions and influence our understanding. The scientific discipline that seeks to understand and explain this process is known as "semiotics."

The term "semiotics," developed with reference to linguistics, is primarily defined as a scientific discipline that examines signs or scientifically defines them. Today, semiotics encompasses more than the semantic sum of the terms "sign" and "science" that constitute its name, due to the breadth of fields it influences (Rifat, 2019, p. 19). Generally, semiotics studies the relationship between different forms of expression in terms of denotation and connotation. It investigates how objects function in communication, the origins of meanings, and how these meanings are described. The answers obtained provide insights into the coding process of communication messages beyond their apparent meaning (Courtés, 1995, p. 10). In essence, semiotics is a discipline that reveals the underlying meaning behind what is visible or written. In this study, communication messages are analyzed through semiotic methods by focusing on animal icons in logos as corporate identity products. The aim is to examine the relationship between what is depicted and what is intended to be conveyed. Accordingly, the study seeks to uncover the actual messages embedded within visual communication products.

The study focuses on the symbolic significance and intended meanings of animal motifs used in the emblems of automobile brands. Within this framework, the relationship between animal symbols and brand values, narratives, and representations of status is examined through a semiotic lens. In addition, the conceptual foundations of the study—such as visual communication, design, and visual identity—are briefly addressed in order to support the research framework.

## 1. Visual Communication

The sense of sight is one of the most important human senses. Through its ability to perceive visual stimuli, the eye transmits messages from the external world to the brain for interpretation. This transmission occurs either through the perception of a planned visual by the eye or through the visual representation of an object naturally present in the environment. Undoubtedly, among communication methods, visual communication is one of the most effective. The primary reason for this effectiveness lies in the permanence and repeatability of communication messages designed through visual communication, which distinguishes it from verbal communication (Uçar, 2019, pp. 21-22).

Visual communication is a form of communication aimed at conveying information, emotions, and thoughts through visual elements. Through this medium, individuals can transmit messages using components such as images, graphics, symbols, colors, and typography. In the communication process, the sender encodes their message by targeting the human sense of sight. Visual communication facilitates the interpretation of the received message by the brain within the sensory communication process, enabling either behavioral responses or the completion of the communication cycle. The act of encoding and transmitting a message visually is defined as visual communication. This form of communication plays a significant role in various fields, including advertising, design, media, art, and education (Schill, 2012, p. 181).

The earliest examples of visual communication can be found in cave paintings dating back to 15,000 BCE. Before the development of structured verbal communication, early humans conveyed their emotions, thoughts, and actions through visuals created on cave walls. Daily activities, disasters, and feelings were visualized through these paintings, serving as tools of communication. Beyond their function as a communication medium, these paintings also acted as instructional guides, providing information on hunting and survival. In a period before the invention of writing, cave paintings were perhaps the most important means of communication (Uçar, 2019, p. 22).

The core element of visual communication is the "image." Derived from the Latin word *imagos* (meaning "that which is imagined"), an image is defined as a vision, impression, or concept conceived or imagined in the human mind (Onursoy, 2019, p. 12). Visual communication utilizes images to convey messages to the target audience (Schill, 2012, p. 183). An image represents an object, phenomenon, or idea, and this representational quality enables communication to take place.

Visual communication design is defined as the creation of coding tools necessary for visualizing messages and delivering them to the target audience (Baldwin & Roberts, 2006, p. 53). With technological advancements, visual communication design now encompasses various disciplines such as desktop publishing, digital content development, game interface design, and film production. These applications facilitate the effective transmission of messages through static or dynamic visuals (Dur, 2015, p. 444). In essence, visual communication enables messages to be meaningfully encoded and transmitted to the brain via the eyes. This field continuously evolves with technological innovations and design trends, combining artistic creativity, psychology, and aesthetic elements to ensure effective communication. While graphic design is one of the techniques used in visual communication, it is an integral part of the broader domain of visual communication design (Pettersson, 2015, p. 57). As technologies continue to advance, visual communication will diversify further and solidify its significance in the realm of communication.

## 2. The Concept of Design

Design is a term that has become increasingly prominent in various aspects of daily life and across many fields in recent times. However, many individuals use this term without fully understanding its true meaning, relying solely on its commonly accepted definition. The primary reason for the misuse or incomplete definition of the concept of design is its transformation into a generic expression due to misinterpretation. Design has become almost synonymous with the concept of graphics, and the phrase "graphic design" has overshadowed the broader definition of design itself.

The concept of design is not limited to graphic arts; it serves as a foundational discipline for all fine arts, characterized by meaningful coherence and detailed planning (Becer, 2019, p. 32). At its core, design embodies a process-oriented approach and is fundamentally solution-driven. Various elements come together to form a problem-solving process, fulfilling the primary purpose of design—achieving a solution methodology (Ergüven, 2021, p. 13).

In many areas of daily life, solution methods based on process management are utilized, making design an action that is often performed unconsciously.

Design is the act of developing a meticulously thought-out and planned solution to a given problem or issue (Cross, 2023, p. 23). While not all problems have solutions, and a single problem may have multiple potential solutions, the role of design is to identify and develop the most ideal and definitive solution. Design is not only concerned with solving existing problems but also with anticipating and addressing potential future challenges (Ergüven, 2021, p. 13). The speed and efficiency with which a problem is solved determine the success of the design. In this context, the problem-solving function of design takes precedence over aesthetics. A designer who can effectively and functionally resolve a problem can be considered a good designer.

Another concept often confused with design is "designing." Designing can be seen as the root form of design and represents the initial stage of a structure. Like design, the goal of designing is to find a solution to a problem. However, its distinction lies in the absence of detailed planning and in-depth elaboration of solutions. In essence, designing involves identifying a solution to a problem, while design takes this solution and refines it into the most detailed and structured plan before implementation. Designing is the preliminary draft of design, not yet formalized into a plan.

The foundation of design lies in systematic problem-solving (Ergüven, 2021, p. 13). Planning is a critical phase that directly impacts the success of problem resolution and prevents complications during the solution process. The success of design is closely tied to the quality and detail of its planning. The more detailed and solution-oriented the planning, the more successful the design will be. A concept often confused during this process is "aesthetics." Aesthetics refers to the positive perception of objects by the eye, evoking pleasant emotions in the human mind (Berger, 1986, p. 11). However, the purpose of design is not aesthetics; the primary goal of design is to create a detailed solution to a problem and assess its feasibility. While a good design may also be expected to be aesthetically pleasing, it is essential to note that the quality of design is fundamentally determined by its problem-solving ability (Cross, 2023, p. 27).

It is essential to note that design is not limited to visual arts; it is effectively utilized across many disciplines that are integral to our daily lives. Differentiating the concept of design based on the disciplines in which it is applied and examining its characteristics accordingly is a more accurate approach from a scientific methodological perspective. In this regard, designers specialize according to the type of problem they aim to solve and continue their professions within this area of expertise. The exchange of expertise among different types of design, however, is both natural and common. Addressing problem-solving through a structured and planned method requires a process. This process begins when the designing phase transitions into design, transforming the solution into a detailed and structured action. During the design process, specific elements are used to solve problems systematically, and these elements constitute the foundational building blocks of design. These foundational components, which enable the realization of the design, are referred to as "design elements."

## 2.1. Fundamental Principles of Design

Design principles, which we frequently encounter consciously or unconsciously in daily life, play a crucial role in organizing visual information. Visual design principles refer to the fundamental rules employed to ensure a design's success in terms of aesthetics, functionality, and communication. While these principles assist in arranging words, images, and shapes that contribute to visualizing ideas, they also make the design more meaningful and enable effective communication (Öztuna, 2006, pp. 64-67).

Becer (2019, pp. 63-64) emphasizes the significant influence of schools, movements, and styles that emerged particularly in the 20th century in the formation of design principles. He identifies five fundamental principles of design: balance, proportion and visual hierarchy, visual continuity, unity, and emphasis.

**Balance:** In design, balance refers to the harmonious distribution and placement of visual elements within a composition. While physical balance implies the state of equality between two entities, visual balance allows a smaller or less prominent element to appear impactful and emphasized when contrasted with a larger or more dominant one (Turgut, 2013, p. 139).

**Proportion and Scale:** Although both concepts are related to size, they differ in their applications. Scale refers to a fixed or standard size, while proportion deals with the size relationships between two or more visual elements (Öztuna, 2006, p. 65). The proper use of proportion and scale within a design is essential for maintaining the integrity and coherence of the overall composition.

**Visual Hierarchy:** In design, visual hierarchy refers to emphasizing the most important elements within a composition to make them stand out from others. As Özbek (2021b, p. 133) notes, hierarchy is a crucial factor that facilitates the perception and cognitive processing of a design. The size, color, and position of an element within the visual composition determine its hierarchical order in the design. To establish visual hierarchy, factors such as the proximity or distance of visual elements, contrast through color tones, and scale can be utilized (Bati, 2012, p. 53).

**Visual Continuity:** The viewer's eye often follows a line or curve across the design. If the eye moves seamlessly from one element to another within a composition, the design achieves the required visual continuity (Ketenci & Bilgili, 2006, p. 283). The viewer perceives continuity in a design through time and space. A graphic designer must identify which elements will establish visual continuity and contrast beforehand and develop an appropriate strategy accordingly (Becer, 2019, p. 71).

**Unity:** Unity is a fundamental principle in design, referring to the sense of visual cohesion, completeness, and structural harmony within a composition. The principle of unity enables the viewer to perceive the combination of elements, principles, and materials as a whole. A design lacking unity can confuse the audience. For a design to feel complete, it must achieve unity. The harmony between the elements in the design and the balance within the visual composition are critical to establishing unity (Özsoy & Ayaydın, 2016, pp. 224-225). The essence of unity lies in the dominance of the whole over its parts (Öztuna, 2006, p. 67).

**Emphasis:** Emphasis, the primary purpose of design, involves positioning the element intended to stand out as the focal point of the composition. It is the most prominent and attention-grabbing point of a visual design. Emphasis captures the viewer's attention and directs it to a specific part of the visual, making it the first point the audience notices (Özbek, 2021a, p. 152).

## 2.2. Fundamental Elements of Design

Graphic design refers to the structured arrangement of visual elements that are read or viewed, with planning as its most essential characteristic. Wherever planning exists, design can be discussed (Bati, 2012, p. 52). Through effective planning, a design captures attention, thereby guiding the viewer or audience (Özsoy & Ayaydın, 2016, p. 9). During the planning process, attention must be given to the elements of design. In the visual design process, the artist or designer organizes design elements on a graphic surface, adhering to the principles of design to construct a composition. In this context, design elements and principles are universally applicable across almost all visual arrangements (Arıkan, 2008, p. 10). The elements and principles of visual design define the foundational ideas associated with good visual design practices. While principles shape the structural aspects of design, elements form its vocabulary. The fundamental principles used in creating a visual design product include line, tone, color, texture, form, size, and direction (Becer, 2019, p. 56; Özsoy & Ayaydın, 2016, p. 10; Ketenci & Bilgili, 2006, p. 281).

**Line:** In the fields of visual arts and design, the concept of the line serves as a fundamental component that shapes and concretizes the visual composition of artistic and design efforts. A line is a significant tool of visual communication, used to express thoughts and emotions that cannot be conveyed verbally. It has been employed to mimic nature and give form to objects. Cave paintings and Egyptian pictograms highlight the importance of the line (Öztuna, 2007, p. 88). Art begins with the line. In daily life, visible objects are defined by lines, which impart artistic meaning (Atmaca, 2014, p. 20). A line consists of an infinite series of points. While it possesses length, it lacks width. A line can represent a connection between two points or the trace left by a moving point. It can serve as a positive mark or represent negative space. Lines appear where two planes intersect and along the edges of objects (Lupton & Phillips, 2008, p. 36).

**Tone:** Tone value is one of the most critical design elements. Designers and artists use tone to enhance emphasis, create focal points, establish visual hierarchy, generate the illusion of depth, and give objects a three-



dimensional appearance (Öztuna, 2007, p. 104). The most commonly observed tones on design surfaces are variations of gray and black. Gray tones are typically achieved through techniques like halftone reproduction. Tone and line are elements that create contrast in design (Becer, 2019, p. 57).

**Color:** Color is the primary visual aspect of form, the carrier element of design, and a stimulus that awakens visual consciousness and prepares the viewer to respond (Arıkan, 2008, p. 12). Colors, which exist in conjunction with light, evoke different emotions in viewers. They act as a medium for conveying messages. As part of nonverbal communication or body language, the language of color functions as a meaning-bearing element. Its impact varies depending on the individual and cultural context. The proper combination of colors and tones, along with the creation of various blends, reinforces and amplifies the meanings conveyed in visual communication messages (Tuncer, 2013, p. 30).

**Texture:** Texture, a concept related to surface, is a design element perceived through the sense of touch (Öztuna, 2007, p. 86). While we recognize the textures of objects after touching them, in the visual realm, texture refers to surfaces that are perceived without physical contact. It is defined as the structure formed by elements closely related to one another, and this definition is applicable across all disciplines (Kızılhan, 2021, p. 129).

**Form:** Form is a fundamental design principle that describes the shape, structure, and three-dimensional geometric quality of objects and compositions. It is created in design through the combination of multiple lines, the twists and curves within a single line, and the surfaces formed by various tones (Becer, 2019, p. 62).

**Scale:** Scale can be defined as the numerical relationship between the dimensions of the elements that make up a structure or the relationship between the whole and the parts that constitute it (Arıkan, 2008, p. 15). Every design has a scale. A design product is formed by the proportional assembly of visual elements of different sizes (Batı, 2012, p. 52).

**Direction:** Direction is a design principle that refers to how the viewer's eye is guided through a composition by the arrangement of visual elements. It describes the relationships formed by visual elements relative to the viewer, to one another, or within the composition (Özsoy & Ayaydın, 2016, p. 261). Direction can be influenced by many factors, and the structural characteristics of objects used in the design can contribute to creating a sense of direction.

### 3. Visual Identity Elements

Visual identity products consist of elements that reflect an organization's entire visualized identity. All visualized communication efforts presented by the organization to the external world fall within the category of visual identity. The number of these elements increases in parallel with the size of the organization and the frequency of its communication activities. Elements such as the color palette determined for the organization, corporate signage, promotional products, and visuals on employee uniforms can all be defined as components of visual identity. However, to establish a general framework, the most commonly used core elements in visual identity designs are the emblem, logotype, and corporate or brand logo. Although these concepts may appear distinct, they are, in fact, interwoven and complement each other or can be used independently to form the foundation of visual identity elements. In representing the name of an organization or brand in the minds of the audience, the acceptance and memorability of these design elements are shaped directly through the process of human visual perception and cognitive filtering. The success of this process is closely related to the professional execution of the design and adherence to the defined communication strategy.

#### 3.1. Emblem

The terms logo, emblem, and logotype are often used interchangeably and confused with one another in visual design terminology. However, while these concepts belong to the same category, they are not identical. Emblem and logotype are independent design elements that can be used separately, but their combination forms a logo. In the visual identity design of an organization or brand, these elements can be used independently or together. An emblem is defined as a corporate visual representation in a drawing form without any textual content. When examining the concept of the emblem, it is also necessary to explain the term "symbol." A symbol is a tangible object or sign to which a society has collectively assigned a specific meaning. Abstract meanings are embodied through drawings or

signs. Symbols may vary according to cultural contexts but can also consist of shapes that are universally recognized and carry common meanings across many societies (Poulin, 2012, pp. 10-17). Although the concepts of emblem and symbol are similar, they are not synonymous. A symbol is a drawing that represents a specific meaning or object in a concrete or abstract way. An emblem, on the other hand, is a visual design product that may include one or more symbols or represent an organization or brand without using any symbols.

### 3.2. Logotype

A logotype is a visual identity product created by representing the name of an organization or brand solely with typographic characters, without the use of any symbols or illustrations. The name of the organization or brand can be expressed in a typographic form. This typeface can either be a publicly available font or a typeface uniquely designed by a designer specifically for the organization or brand. In some cases, a hybrid typeface may be created by modifying an existing font through structural changes. Considering a logotype merely as a typographic element is a misconception that can undermine its impact on visual communication. Similar to emblem design, the typeface used or created for a logotype should reflect the institutional communication philosophy of the organization or brand. A logotype is not merely an aesthetic element within a visual identity but also serves as an important medium for conveying messages. The art most frequently used in creating logotypes is typography. Typography can be defined as an art or skill aimed at communicating through the visual representation of letters and the creation of typefaces. This process involves the reconstruction or transformation of letters into new forms to design innovative type styles that align with the intended message (Childers & Jass, 2002, p. 2).

### 3.3. Logo

Graphic design is created for a target audience determined by the communication strategy of an organization. A visual message is planned and designed with specificity, transmitted, and subsequently received by the segment of the target audience exposed to the design. Whenever we read an advertisement or see a logo, we are on the receiving end of communication through design. Decoding the transmitted communication message and responding accordingly is directly linked to the success of the visual designer who created the message. Logos, as visual identity products, are often the first and most frequent point of interaction between a target audience and an organization. Thus, a strong and effective logo design is considered synonymous with strong and effective visual communication (Adams et al., 2006, pp. 9–12). The concept of the logo derives from the Latin word "logos," meaning "word" or "discourse," and has evolved to its modern meaning as the combination of an emblem and the typographic representation of a brand name (logotype) (Ries & Ries, 2005, p. 131). A logo is a visual design product that represents an organization both symbolically, through illustrations or shapes, and textually, through typography. Since the earliest days of trade and commerce, when goods began to be exchanged for money, logos have been used as a technique to differentiate organizations or products and communicate their names and identities (Taşkın et al., 2014, p. 34).

The visual identity design of an organization or brand begins with logo design, which initiates its visual communication process. The core visual elements of corporate identity design include the colors to be used in the logo, the logotype (corporate typeface), and the emblem. The typeface in the logo, the symbols used in the emblem, the logo's visual attributes, and the color palette collectively form the framework of the entire visual identity. Logo design constitutes the most significant component of an organization's visual design and corporate identity (Landa, 2010, p. 243).

## 4. Methodology

This study is a qualitative research project employing semiotic analysis techniques. Semiotic analysis involves the examination and interpretation of visual and textual materials through adherence to specific scientific principles and the application of comprehension and perception techniques (Oruç & Türkay, 2018, p. 313). When semiotics engages with visual tools, it addresses the ways in which design conveys meaning and understanding. To comprehend the design of visuals, semiotics seeks to uncover the codes embedded in the transmitted messages, both directly and indirectly. Semiotic analysis investigates the relationships between all objects on a design surface, exploring connections between the signifier and the signified as well as messages that move from the visible to the invisible (Özdemir, 2007, pp. 38–39). Visual communication products typically convey messages not through direct



narration but by encoding intended meanings via symbolic designs. Messages hidden behind the displayed designs are conveyed through these coded images, offering deeper insights. Semiotics is among the most effective methods for deciphering the intended meanings and encoded messages in visual communication designs.

In this study, a qualitative research design grounded in semiotic analysis was employed to examine the emblem designs of selected automobile brands. The sample was determined through judgmental sampling, with a specific focus on brands that incorporate animal motifs into their visual identities. Lamborghini, Ferrari, Jaguar, Peugeot, Alfa Romeo, and Aston Martin were selected due to their emblematic use of animals that possess rich symbolic meanings and enjoy broad recognition within global markets. These brands exemplify the strategic use of animal imagery to convey attributes commonly associated with premium brand positioning—such as luxury, power, agility, and heritage. This selection criterion enabled a focused analysis of how symbolic visual elements contribute to brand narratives within the luxury automotive sector. The limitations of the study stem from this targeted sampling strategy: automobile brands that do not feature animal motifs or whose logos rely exclusively on typographic or abstract forms were deliberately excluded. This narrowed scope was essential to facilitate a more in-depth semiotic interpretation of animal symbolism in the context of luxury branding. The analysis centers on the emblems that comprise the defined sample group, applying Roland Barthes' theory of the two orders of signification—denotation, connotation, and myth. According to Barthes, signs operate within a system of signification composed of the signifier (the physical form, such as a word or image) and the signified (the conceptual meaning associated with it). This framework allows for the exploration of how animal imagery in brand emblems functions not only at a literal and connotative level, but also how it contributes to broader cultural myths that shape consumer perceptions of luxury, status, and identity.

Barthes employs a linguistic approach to analyze visual communication, proposing that visual meaning can be divided into two distinct levels: denotation and connotation. The denotative level corresponds to the literal meaning of an image, representing the objective content depicted. This level concerns the direct and explicit meaning of the image. However, denotations rely on connotations to support and connect them with other denotative codes (Diken Yücel, 2019, p. 218). The connotative level, on the other hand, corresponds to the symbolic or ideological meaning of an image and reflects the cultural codes that signify a range of possible meanings (Aiello, 2006, p. 94). For instance, a photograph of a famous football player denotes the player at a literal level but connotes strength, agility, and speed at a symbolic level (Özdemir, 2007, p. 40). According to Barthes, denotation refers to *what* is signified, while connotation refers to *how* it is signified (Küçükerdoğan, 2005, p. 68). Barthes conceptualizes the first level of meaning as being related to language or the structure of language. The second level, a semiological system, occurs at the associative or connotative level, where the sign at the first level functions as the signifier in the associative system. Barthes names this second-level system "myth." A sign (comprising a concept and an image) at the first level becomes a signifier in the second-level mythological system. As part of semiological inquiry, transcending the layer of meaning to reach the mythological level is essential (Echtner, 1999, p. 49). An iconic image, such as a portrait, carries an evident meaning. Advertising serves as a prominent example where visual relationships are employed to convey associations rapidly. Much of the messaging in advertisements is subtly expanded through connotative meanings, with most of these connotations operating in a non-verbal mode (Moriarty, 2005, p. 232).

In the research, the characteristic features of each emblem will be examined by addressing the following questions for each emblem:

1. How is the symbol positioned within the emblem?
2. What are the color and texture characteristics of the symbol?
3. Which graphic technique was used to create the symbol?
4. What is the proportional relationship and placement between the emblem and the logotype?
5. What are the mythological characteristics of the animal icon used in the emblem?

#### 4.1. Lamborghini

**Figure 1: Lamborghini Logo**






Source: [logowik.com/lamborghini-vector-logo-3150.html](http://logowik.com/lamborghini-vector-logo-3150.html)

The logo of the luxury and sports car manufacturer Lamborghini consists of a shield surrounded by a gold embossing, containing a logotype and a bull symbol. The logotype is composed of uppercase letters in a sans-serif typeface and can be used independently. The bull symbol in the logo is positioned at the exact center of the shield. The bull's right front and hind legs, along with its left front leg, are inclined at a 40-degree angle toward the right border of the shield, while its right hind leg stands parallel to the center at a 90-degree angle. This arrangement positions the bull's head tilted slightly to the left, creating a sense of motion and visual balance. The tail extends in an "S" shape from the center upward, ensuring the symbol is proportionally aligned within the shield.

The color scheme of the Lamborghini logo has undergone several changes over the years. Between 1974 and 1982, the company used monochromatic versions of its logo. From 1963 to 1972, red and white tones were incorporated to emphasize passion and power. However, since 1998, the brand has utilized black and gold tones in its logo. These colors evoke associations with wealth and exclusivity, making them a common choice for luxury and sports brands (Ambrose & Harris, 2020, p. 128). The logo was created using a vector drawing method. The shield was designed linearly in a vector design program, while the bull symbol was generated using the "trace" technique (converting a photograph into a vector) based on a bull photograph, then meticulously redrawn to add detail. The emblem and logotype are not proportionally positioned within the logo. The emblem occupies approximately two-thirds of the logo's space, while the logotype covers about one-fifth of the upper portion. Despite its smaller physical space, the logotype appears larger due to its uppercase letters and the application of a 15-degree "warped effect" (a slanting effect) added through graphic design software. Mythologically, the bull is a frequently used symbol in Greek and Sumerian mythology, referencing fertility, virility, strength, and masculinity. The Hittites depicted the bull as a guiding and barrier-breaking animal, and in many mythological sources, bulls are portrayed as pulling the chariot of the storm god Teshub. The bull symbolizes resilience, indomitability, and power (Beydiz, 2016, pp. 103-112).

**Table 1: Analysis of Lamborghini Logo**

SIGN	SIGNIFIER	SIGNIFIED	DENOTATION	CONNOTATION
Bull Drawing 	A horned bull with its tail up, its head down, three legs inclined to the right, and one leg straight.	The stance of the bull, ready to run and attack, with its tail raised, symbolizing danger with its horns and power with its muscles.	The way a bull is symbolized in motion.	Power, masculinity, aggressive, determination, mythology, confidence, leadership.
Shield Drawing 	Drawing of a shield with a golden border, a black center, a European-style pointed tip and a domed top.	A shield that is the most important protection tool in war, durable and carries luxury and exclusivity with its colors.	An icon that forms the colors of the logo and represents movement in form.	Strength, attack, defense, protection, luxury
Brand Name 	The brand name is written in gold color, without serifs and in a slanted style, using a special font.	Expressing luxury and privilege with a unique font and meaningful color.	Logotype formation as a result of writing the brand name.	Luxurious, special, different

The analysis reveals that the symbols used in the Lamborghini logo convey emotions such as masculinity, power, aggression, security, and protection. Additionally, the logo emphasizes the concept of luxury, which is the second desired attribute in a car. Through its logo, the brand communicates to its target audience that its automobiles are aggressive, powerful, and reliable, while also referencing values associated with social status, positioning itself as a luxury brand.

#### 4.2. Ferrari

**Figure 2: Ferrari Logo**






Source: [logowik.com/ferrari-vector-logo-757.html](http://logowik.com/ferrari-vector-logo-757.html)

Ferrari, an Italian brand, has positioned itself in the category of fast cars with its automobiles and has successfully become one of the first brands that come to mind when speed is mentioned. The association between Ferrari and speed owes much to its remarkable achievements since its early years and its strong ties to Formula racing, with which its name has become synonymous. Ferrari's current logo consists of four main elements: a yellow background framed with rounded black edges; three parallel stripes in green, white, and red at the top representing the Italian flag; a centrally placed black prancing horse turned to the right, balanced on one rear leg with its mane and tail upright; and at the bottom, a distinctive logotype in a custom font where the letter "f" is elongated and stylized. The horse figure in the logo stands on its right hind leg, with its front legs bent and its tail and mane positioned upright. This design aligns the figure proportionally to both horizontal and vertical axes, creating a sense of motion and aesthetic balance. The logo uses five colors: green, white, red, yellow, and black. While green, white, and red symbolize the Italian flag, yellow serves as the primary color, evoking warmth and happiness. Additionally, the use of yellow is seen as a nod to Italy's Mediterranean climate (Ambrose & Harris, 2020, p. 114). The horse figure is a monochromatic graphic illustration, enhanced with white contours to highlight key details. Over time, the font used in the logotype has undergone various graphical modifications. In the logo, the horse figure occupies a central position and serves as the main focus due to its size and prominence. However, despite its smaller size, the logotype successfully captures attention through graphical adjustments to its typography, ensuring visual balance and cohesion within the design.

The horse figure in Ferrari's logo holds significant symbolic value in both mythological and historical contexts. This figure is derived from the same horse emblem used by Italian World War I pilot Francesco Baracca on his aircraft, which served as an inspiration for the brand. The horse motif has been a part of human life since the Paleolithic era and, after domestication, became one of humanity's greatest allies. In mythology, the horse is associated with speed, grace, and divine power, often depicted as a noble, strong, and selfless entity in Greek, Asian, and Indian mythologies (Beydiz, 2016, pp. 37-55).

**Table 2: Analysis of Ferrari Logo**

SIGN	SIGNIFIER	SIGNIFIED	DENOTATION	CONNOTATION
Horse Drawing 	A rearing horse illustration featuring its tail raised high, its right hind leg firmly on the ground, its front legs drawn toward its chest in a poised, running stance, and its mane standing upright.	Drawing of a horse ready to run and also ready to strike at its enemy, emphasizing the strength of its muscles.	A graphic depiction of a physical response and outline image of a horse.	Power, masculinity, aggressive, determination, mythology, nobility, speed, balance, harmony, ability
Green, White, Red Belts 	Three parallel belts consisting of Green, White and Red colors.	The brand symbolizes the country of its birth and refers to the Italians' talent in automobile manufacturing.	Graphic representation of the Italian flag colors and shape	Nationalism, Talent.
Brand Name 	Writing the brand name in black by changing the font to original.	Speed is represented by the upper part of the long letter f. In this way, the letter f is read more dominantly and the speed effect is provided.	Logotype formation as a result of writing the brand name.	Speed, originality, balance.

The Ferrari brand is widely recognized as a symbol of speed and power. The analysis confirms this association. The elements that make up the brand's logo—namely the emblem and logotype—are meticulously designed to reinforce the imagery of speed and strength. The posture and symbolic form of the horse figure in the emblem, combined with the design style of the logotype, align seamlessly with the brand's positioning strategy centered on speed and power. Additionally, the Ferrari logo prominently features an element of nationalism. The inclusion of the Italian flag not only appeals to subtle nationalist sentiments but also serves as an homage to the historically exceptional skills and design prowess of the Italian automotive industry. This emphasizes the brand's roots, celebrating national pride while reflecting the legacy of Italian engineering excellence on a global scale.

#### 4.3. Jaguar

Figure 3: Jaguar Logo




Source: [logowik.com/jaguar-vector-logo-1-3201.html](http://logowik.com/jaguar-vector-logo-1-3201.html)

The logo of the British luxury automobile manufacturer Jaguar consists of two main elements: an outlined leaping jaguar figure and the brand name written in a custom font called "Jaguar JC Book." Over the years, various embossed and colored versions of the logo have been introduced, but the design eventually returned to the original single-color and clean-line style. The emblem, prominently positioned at the top of the logo, serves as the central symbol of the brand. Jaguar has utilized both the emblem and the logotype independently, while also featuring the emblem as three-dimensional silver sculptures on its vehicles. The original logo was designed in monochrome black, later incorporating green and silver embossed versions. However, by 2020, the brand reverted to a single-color design. The black tone is often chosen by luxury brands for its association with elegance and prestige (Ambrose & Harris, 2020, p.128). Similarly, Jaguar has positioned itself as a luxury automobile brand and reinforced this identity with its choice of black. The jaguar figure in the emblem was created using a linear drawing technique. The sharp transitions in the lines convey a sense of aggression and strength, while the softer transitions in the paws and tail direct attention to the head, further emphasizing the figure's dynamic and powerful stance. In the layout of the logo, horizontal prominence is given to the logotype, while vertical prominence is reserved for the emblem. The emblem is tilted 35 degrees to the left, symbolizing the jaguar in motion, either leaping or preparing to attack. When aligned horizontally, the logotype retains its prominence. The emblem spans from the last letter "r" to the first letter "J" in "Jaguar," ensuring a balanced and cohesive design.

When examining the mythological context of the jaguar, traces of this figure can be found in various cultures. For instance, the Maya people of the Americas described the jaguar as "fast, aggressive, enigmatic, and possessing captivating beauty." In Indian mythology, the jaguar is referred to as the "cat of the heavens" and is imbued with spiritual significance. These attributes are linked to the jaguar's ability to thrive both on the ground and in trees, its speed, and its inherently aggressive nature. Similarly, in Greek mythology, the jaguar is depicted as a creature that is fast, agile, aggressive, and uniquely aesthetic. These characteristics make the jaguar an exceptional and powerful icon, perfectly aligning with Jaguar's branding as a symbol of unparalleled strength and elegance in the automotive industry.



**Table 3: Analysis of Jaguar Logo**

SIGN	SIGNIFIER	SIGNIFIED	DENOTATION	CONNOTATION
Jaguar Drawing 	Drawing of a jaguar with its front legs extended forward and its hind legs extended backwards, with its head and feet clearly visible.	A muscular jaguar that jumps with its hind legs and forwards to its front legs, giving an aggressive image with its mouth structure..	Drawing the linear and main lines of a jaguar with muscles and creating it graphically.	Balance, speed, agility, aggressiveness, nobility, leadership, masculine.
Brand Name <b>JAGUAR</b>	Writing the company name with its own original font.	The horizontal spacing of the letters in the brand's unique font is designed with a wide distribution, creating an impression of grandeur and prominence.	The brand name is written in capital letters in black.	Originality, greatness, nobility, magnificence.

When conducting a semiotic analysis of the Jaguar logo, it is evident that both the emblem and the logotype share common connotations. These connotations provide significant insights into the brand's positioning strategy. Concepts such as speed, durability, and prestige, which are key factors influencing consumer preferences for automotive brands (Thulasi & Raju, 2018, p. 292), are prominently reflected in the connotation section of the semiotic analysis table. Through its emblem choice and logotype design, Jaguar effectively communicates not only its status as a luxury and prestigious brand but also its commitment to producing fast and powerful vehicles.

#### 4.4. Peugeot

Figure 4: Peugeot Logo






Source: [logowik.com/peugeot-2021-new-white-vector-logo-5675.html](https://logowik.com/peugeot-2021-new-white-vector-logo-5675.html)

Brands that use animal symbols in their logos have retained their chosen symbols while making graphic and stylistic modifications over time. French automobile manufacturer Peugeot, for instance, has consistently used the lion symbol but refreshed its logo through various forms and design versions. In the early years of the automotive industry, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, brands favored emblematic visuals over logotypes due to low literacy rates. Selecting a memorable animal symbol as an emblem during this period was a highly strategic branding decision (Lloyd & Woodside, 2013, pp. 9–18). An analysis of the Peugeot logo reveals three main graphic elements: a shield symbol comprising a black base and white border lines, a linear lion head figure at the center of the shield, and the brand name (logotype) placed at the top in a unique font angled at 10 degrees. The lion figure, instead of being centered, spans two-thirds of the shield area, starting from the bottom and extending upward. This arrangement ensures the emblem's dominance while enhancing the logotype's visibility. The logo employs two primary colors: black and white. The white linear lion figure, despite being composed of fine lines, stands out against the black background due to the strong contrast. Similarly, the sans-serif, thin font used for the logotype benefits from this contrast to enhance readability. Black represents power, nobility, and luxury, while white conveys symbolic meanings of goodness, purity, cleanliness, and comfort (Ambrose & Harris, 2020, p. 126). Through the contrasting interplay of these colors, Peugeot strategically positions its logo to exude both strength and elegance.

The lion head symbol in the emblem is designed as a right-facing profile silhouette. The back of the head, where the mane and ears are located, is outlined with tapering and thickening lines, while the nose and jaw areas are rendered with greater detail to emphasize the teeth and aggressive gaze. The shield in the background is a single piece created using vector graphic software, and the logotype is designed with a 10-degree tilt using a custom typeface. There are notable differences in the spatial distribution of the design elements in the logo. The shield, which occupies the largest area, utilizes the contrast between black and white to highlight the lion figure, which covers a relatively smaller area. Positioned at the top, the logotype occupies the least amount of space among the design elements; however, its tilted placement and the use of white text on a black background enhance its effectiveness and visibility.

When examining the lion symbol in a mythological context, it is evident that in most mythological sources and societal narratives, lions are depicted in scenes of battle and hunting, preying on other animals or humans. This portrayal has imbued the lion with symbolic meanings of strength, aggression, and dominance. In both Eastern and Western mythologies, the lion is often characterized as a figure of power, aggression, intelligence, and warrior-like attributes (Beydiz, 2016, pp. 11–30). These attributes, along with the "king of the jungle" myth ingrained in societal memory, make the lion a meaningful emblem for a brand aiming to represent strength, resilience, and leadership.

**Table 4: Analysis of Peugeot Logo**

SIGN	SIGNIFIER	SIGNIFIED	DENOTATION	CONNOTATION
Lion Drawing 	Drawing of a male lion drawn from perspective, looking to the right with his mane, mouth open, showing his teeth.	Aggressive drawing of the lion's face, ready to attack with its teeth effectively displayed.	Graphic drawing of a lion's head from a side view.	Power, masculinity, aggression, determination, mythology, nobility, leadership.
Shield Drawing 	A pointed shield with a European-style outline drawn in black with a white line just inside providing depth..	A war shield symbolized as an attacking tool with its pointed lower part and also referred to as a guard and durable shield.	Drawing of a shield showing the outline on the ground.	Strength, attack, defense, protection, confidence.
Brand Name 	The brand name's greyhound character is written uniquely in black.	Writing the brand name with a ten-degree slope to show agility in a sans-serif font, which is the symbol of finesse and detail.	Logotype formation as a result of writing the brand name.	Speed, originality, finesse.

The semiotic analysis of the Peugeot logo reveals that the logo's iconic narrative is predominantly shaped by the lion symbol used in the emblem. The lion figure, associated with concepts such as "leader, warrior, and noble" in both mythological and social memory, serves as the core element of the brand's visual identity and is effectively reflected in the logo. The colors, background, and other design elements within the logo collectively contribute to the brand identity in a harmonious manner. This demonstrates that the logo's narrative is not reliant on a single element but rather on the integration of all components to create a unified story. The Peugeot automobile logo, with its cohesive combination of design elements, successfully conveys the intended messages. This analysis underscores the multi-layered structure of the logo, which enhances the brand's identity and communication.

#### 4.5. Alfa Romeo

Figure 5: Alfa Romeo Logo








Source: [logowik.com/alfa-romeo-11141.html](http://logowik.com/alfa-romeo-11141.html)

Founded in 1910 in Milan, Italy, by an aristocratic Milanese family, Alfa Romeo became a popular brand in Europe during the 1950s. The Alfa Romeo logo consists of an emblem and a logotype placed within two concentric circular structures. Examining the design elements of the emblem, a shield form reappears; however, Alfa Romeo's shield takes a circular shape. This circular shield is divided into two sections, referencing both a wheel symbol and a regional shield structure. In terms of layout, the inner circle contains emblematic symbols: a cross, a giant snake holding a red human figure in its mouth, and a crown positioned at the top. The outer circle features the logotype, slanted at a sixty-degree angle to cover the semi-circular area. Surrounding the logo is an outer shield with gold-colored outlines at the bottom and periphery. Although the logo uses gradient colors for print applications, its original design incorporates white, red, dark blue, green, and gold. These colors hold symbolic meanings: white and red represent the Milan flag, green signifies the snake's grassy hue, gold symbolizes wealth and prosperity, while dark blue conveys nobility, royalty, and aristocracy. The emblem's symbols are designed as iconic drawings, emphasizing suggestive single-angle illustrations over realistic depictions. The cross and crown are drawn from a front-facing perspective, while the snake is rendered from a side view.

The snake symbol used in the logo is a figure deeply embedded in the mythological narratives of various societies. Often regarded as an icon symbolizing death, the snake has been prominently featured on weapons of war, such as knives and swords. For ancient civilizations, mortality and lethal qualities were considered representations of power and warfare, making the snake a common motif on family crests and national flags. Furthermore, in mythological contexts, the snake is also associated with immortality, wisdom, and healing power. This dual symbolism highlights its complex role as both a representation of mortality and a source of transformative and regenerative qualities (Wilkinson, 2011, pp. 233–235).

**Table 5: Analysis of Alfa Romeo Logo**

SIGN	SIGNIFIER	SIGNIFIED	DENOTATION	CONNOTATION
<p>A Man in a Snake's Mouth</p> 	A sinuous snake drawn from perspective and a human drawn from the front with both arms open in her/his mouth	A drawing of a mythical, gigantic snake figure that easily eats a red-colored human enemy, coiling and growing.	A side-view drawing of a snake with a human in its mouth, symbolized in red and green. Visconti family crest.	Power, superiority, legendary, terrifying, deadly, aggressive, invincible, masculinity.
<p>Cross</p> 	A red cross outlined within a semicircle.	Graphic drawing of the cross, the symbol of Christianity and the Crusader army.	The flag of Milan, the city where the brand was founded.	Religion, belief, value.
<p>Brand Name</p> 	The brand name is written in a semicircle in gold color.	Writing the brand name in a regular font that is legible and visible sans serif.	Logotype formation as a result of writing the brand name in gold color.	Value, originality, readability.
<p>Crown</p> 	Crown symbol consisting of three parallel thick gold lines and five dots.	Crown symbol, symbol of nobility and royalty.	A drawing of the Visconti family as a symbol of nobility.	Nobility, value, elite.
<p>Ground Shield</p> 	A war shield consisting of two parts, circular and outlined in gold.	A shield with a protective feature and a circular shape attributed to vehicle wheels.	Shield symbol drawn on the ground to show the outline.	Strength, protection, value.

Among the analyzed automobile brands utilizing animal symbols, the Alfa Romeo logo stands out as the one with the least symbolic association with automobiles. Instead, the Alfa Romeo logo predominantly references geographical locations and historical symbols, reflecting a design rooted in a rich historical legacy. While there are various anecdotal interpretations regarding the symbols represented in the logo, these are not included in the study as they lack scientific basis. Rather than being categorized as a purely symbolic narrative logo, the Alfa Romeo logo is more appropriately viewed as a design conveying a message of prestige. The findings from the semiotic analysis indicate that the logo embodies meanings related to prestige, value, nobility, geographic location, and historical symbols. This suggests that the brand emphasizes historical and geographical elements to create a prestigious image as part of its identity construction efforts.

#### 4.6. Aston Martin

Figure 5: Alfa Romeo Logo



Source: [logowik.com/aston-martin-20842.html](http://logowik.com/aston-martin-20842.html)

The British sports car manufacturer Aston Martin, named after its founder's surname, Martin, and Aston Hill in Buckinghamshire, features eagle wings and a logotype in its logo. Compared to other brands with animal symbols, Aston Martin's logo employs a more symbolic narrative, combining an emblem and a logotype. The Aston Martin logo consists of two primary elements: the emblem, which serves as the background and features eagle wings, and the logotype, positioned at the center of the wings and written in the "Optima Roman" font. The eagle wings symbol is composed of twenty symmetrical feathers on both the right and left sides and a central tail feather. A proportional transition is maintained between the feather sizes, with perspective carefully considered. The upper part, representing the neck area, is designed with an inward curve to add dynamic movement to the design, while the outer edges of the wings are rounded to create a softer appearance.


Although the logo is adapted for different applications using various materials, the original design employs black and white colors. Black represents sophistication, power, and luxury (Ambrose & Harris, 2020, p. 128), while white conveys purity, cleanliness, comfort, and serenity. These contrasting colors emphasize positive spaces in the logo, enhancing the readability of the logotype and the visibility of the emblem. The eagle wings in the emblem are created through a continuous line technique, with interconnected feather drawings, and are designed vectorially. The logotype font, although not unique, is a rarely used typeface chosen for its distinctiveness. Letter spacing adjustments were made to enhance readability. The rectangular plaque framing the logotype is proportionally placed horizontally at the center of the wings. In the placement of the emblem and the logotype, the emblem is prioritized as the main element, with the logotype positioned in the upper central area of the emblem. This arrangement increases the visibility of the logotype. Furthermore, the symmetrical placement of the feathers on both sides ensures balance, one of the key design principles, focusing attention on the center and enhancing the overall visual impact (Özsoy & Ayaydın, 2016, p. 182).

When examining the mythological context of eagle wings, it is evident that they hold significant symbolic meanings in both Western and Eastern mythological sources. In some cultures, it is believed that the movement of eagle wings governs the seasons, with the arrival of winter and summer attributed to their motion. Eagles have always



been regarded as mystical and revered figures due to their strength, endurance, and ability to undertake long journeys. In Native American beliefs, these predators hold a special place, while in Eastern mythology, eagles are seen as symbols of immortality, attributed to their long lifespans (Rosenberg, 2013 pp. 320-329). The use of such a creature, embodying qualities like flight and resilience, as a symbol in the branding of an automobile company can be considered an apt and strategic choice.

**Table 6: Analysis of Aston Martin Logo**

SIGN	SIGNIFIER	SIGNIFIED	DENOTATION	CONNOTATION
<p>Eagle Wings</p> 	<p>Drawing of eagle wings obtained by combining feathers, drawn from the front.</p>	<p>Two wings that open their wings and fly with speed, drawing in harmony with each other, creating a sense of movement and flight.</p>	<p>The linear shape of the wing figure representing flight.</p>	<p>Power, legendary, invincible, speed, flight, durability, hunter, masculinity aggressive.</p>
<p>Brand Name ASTON MARTIN</p>	<p>The brand name is written in plain black.</p>	<p>Writing the brand name with a readable and different font, "Optima Roman".</p>	<p>Logotype formation is achieved by writing the brand name in black.</p>	<p>Difference, originality, aesthetics, readability.</p>

When analyzing the semiotics of the Aston Martin logo, it becomes evident that the eagle wings symbol in the emblem plays a pivotal role in conveying significant symbolic messages aligned with the brand's communication strategy. This symbol strongly emphasizes speed by associating the company's vehicles with wings. Additionally, the use of wing symbols in various aviation organizations reinforces the idea that the cars evoke a connection to aircraft, aiming to position the brand's vehicles as belonging to the realm of superior technology and performance akin to airplanes. The animal symbol used in the Aston Martin logo, unlike those in the logos of other automobile brands, is designed with a symbolic rather than a realistic and direct depiction. This indirect representation allows for the creation of a more enigmatic image, enabling the symbolic meanings of speed, endurance, and strength to be expressed more effectively. This approach not only reinforces the brand's prestigious and distinctive identity but also enhances the emblem's role as a compelling communication tool.

### Conclusion

The logo is one of the foremost visual design tools created when establishing a brand's corporate identity. Its most significant distinction from other corporate identity products lies not only in being the first step of visual identity creation but also in its foundation on a communicative message, functioning as a medium of communication. The extent to which the message embedded in a logo aligns with the brand's positioning and image, and how effectively it conveys that message, determines the logo's success as a visual communication tool. Logo design is not merely an artistic activity with aesthetic value; it carries a functional purpose. For this reason, many brands meticulously plan their logo creation process and collaborate with experts during this phase.

A logo is a structure formed by combining graphic design elements. A common misconception is equating the logotype—derived from creating a brand name using distinctive or standard typography—with a logo (Childers & Jass, 2002, p. 7). Similarly, referring to the emblem, which uses symbols to express the brand's communication strategy, as a logo, is another frequent misunderstanding. In reality, a logo is a visual communication tool formed by combining these two design elements. It encapsulates a message and creates an image in the minds of its audience (Ries & Ries, 2005, p. 131).

This study aimed to analyze the animal symbols used in the emblems of selected automobile brands from a semiotic perspective, revealing the relationships between these symbols and brand identity, visual communication, and cultural representation. Guided by five key research questions, the study examined the positioning of symbols within emblems, their color and texture characteristics, the graphic techniques used in their creation, the proportional and spatial relationship between emblem and logotype, and the mythological associations of the animal figures. The findings were interpreted not only at the brand level but also through a comparative and integrative lens. Overall, animal symbols are positioned as central visual elements in all analyzed emblems, serving as the primary carriers of brand meaning. In terms of color schemes, brands tend to prefer high-contrast and symbolically loaded palettes—such as black, gold, and white—that reflect notions of luxury, power, and prestige. The most commonly used graphic technique in emblem design is vector illustration, which offers scalability and clarity across various media platforms. Complementary techniques, including photo tracing (as seen in Lamborghini) and continuous line drawing (as in Aston Martin), were also identified. Among these, the combination of vector drawing and stylized detailing stands out as the most prevalent and visually impactful approach. The relationship between emblem and logotype generally favors a dominant emblem, with the logotype functioning as a supporting visual element. In brands like Ferrari and Aston Martin, these two components are integrated harmoniously, whereas Alfa Romeo places greater emphasis on historical and symbolic motifs. From a mythological standpoint, each animal figure conveys culturally embedded meanings: the bull (Lamborghini) symbolizes strength and resilience; the horse (Ferrari), speed and nobility; the jaguar (Jaguar), agility and aggression; the lion (Peugeot), leadership and endurance; the serpent (Alfa Romeo), both mortality and rebirth; and the eagle wings (Aston Martin), endurance and transcendence. These meanings closely align with the identities and values the brands seek to convey.

.Brand-specific analyses further elaborate these general patterns:

- Lamborghini uses a centrally placed bull figure to emphasize luxury, strength, and durability.
- Ferrari features a rearing horse that not only evokes speed and power but also communicates a sense of national pride.
- Jaguar draws on the animal's mythological and physical traits to reinforce industrial power, agility, and mystique.
- Peugeot, with its updated lion symbol, communicates leadership and resilience through sharp, detailed features.
- Alfa Romeo diverges from traditional animal symbolism by incorporating historically and politically charged icons, creating a brand identity rooted more in heritage than in automotive symbolism.
- Aston Martin incorporates eagle wings that evoke speed, freedom, and strength, while adhering to principles of balance and symmetry in design.

These examples collectively indicate that the inclusion of animal symbols in automobile emblems is not merely an aesthetic decision but a strategic communication practice. Through these symbolic choices, brands aim to establish associations with values such as power, speed, reliability, and elegance. The most frequently observed symbolic themes across all emblems include durability, leadership, power, speed, protection, and mythology. This consistency reflects a strong alignment between symbolic representation and the core values of the automotive industry. In conclusion, the findings of this study demonstrate how animal symbols in luxury automobile branding

serve as semiotic instruments that construct meaning, reinforce brand narratives, and influence consumer perception. The research contributes to both semiotic analysis methodology and to a deeper understanding of symbolic strategy in brand communication.

**Table 2: Connotation Table of Logos**

Brand Name	Lamborghini	Ferrari	Jaguar	Peugeot	Alfa Romeo	Aston Martin
<b>CONNOTATION</b>	Power, masculinity, aggressive, determination, mythology, confidence, leadership, strength, aggressive, defense, protection, speed, special, different originality.	Power, masculinity, aggressiveness, determination, mythology, nobility, speed, balance, harmony, talent, nationalism, talent originality	Balance, masculinity, speed, agility, mythology, aggression, nobility, hunter, leadership, originality, width.	Power, masculinity, aggressive, determination, mythology, nobility, leadership, hunter, solid, attack, defense, protection, confidence, speed, originality, finesse.	Power, superiority, legendary, masculinity, terrifying, deadly, aggressive, invincible, religion, value, originality, legibility, nobility, solidity, protectiveness.	Power, legendary, invincible, masculinity, speed, flight, endurance, hunter, difference, originality, aesthetics, legibility, offensive.

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**Araştırmacı Katkı Oranı:** Araştırmacılar çalışmaya eşit oranda katkı sunmuştur.

**Destekleyen Kurum/Kuruluşlar:** Herhangi bir kurum/kuruluştan destek alınmamıştır.

**Çıkar Çatışması:** Herhangi bir çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

### Genişletilmiş Özet

Mesajı kodlayarak, çeşitli araçları kullanarak hedef kitleye iletme çalışmasına en genel tanımıyla iletişim denmektedir. İletişimin başarısı, mesajın hedef kitleyi etkileyerek harekete geçirmesiyle doğru orantılıdır. Mesajların nitelikli bir şekilde hedef kitleye gönderilmesinde en önemli yöntemlerden biri, mesajların görselleştirilmesidir. Görsel iletişim, mesajları görsel hale getirerek kodlama işlemi yapmakta ve bunları hedef kitleye iletmektedir. Bu süreçte, mesaj kodlama stratejileri oluşmaktadır. Aynı görsel mesajın farklı zihinlerde farklı şekilde anlaşılması oldukça önemlidir. Mesajın yaratıcılığının yanı sıra, iletilen mesajın anlaşılmasının ve ortak bir zihinsel süzgeçten geçmesinin önemi büyüktür. Bu bağlamda, mesajların görselleştirilirken şekilsel özelliklerinin yanı sıra anlamsal özelliklerinin de dikkate alınması gereklidir. Mesaj, göz aracılığıyla bir kod iletirken beyin bu kodu farklı şekilde çözümleyebilir ve farklı anlamlar çıkarabilir. Bu farklı anlamlar, yanlış anlaşılardan ziyade, iletişim uzmanının görsel iletişim araçları içine gizlediği bilinçli stratejiler nedeniyle ortaya çıkabilir. Görsel iletişimciler, bu tür stratejilerle zihinlerimize algılarımızı yönlendirecek görsel kodlar yerleştirir. Bu süreci anlamlandıran bilim dalına ise göstergebilim denmektedir.

Logolar, bir markanın kurumsal kimliğini oluşturmada temel unsurlardır ve markanın en göze çarpan görsel temsili olarak hizmet ederler. Diğer kurumsal kimlik araçlarının aksine, logolar yalnızca estetik veya dekoratif unsurlar değildir, aynı zamanda belirli bir iletişim mesajını iletme için tasarlanmıştır. Bu mesaj, markanın konumlandırması ve imajıyla uyumluysa, logonun görsel bir iletişim aracı olarak etkinliğini artırır. Bu bağlamda, özellikle hayvan sembolleri içeren otomobil markası logolarının göstergebilimsel analizi, bu sembollerin anlamı nasıl iletildiği, marka kimliğini nasıl şekillendirdiği ve tüketici algılarını nasıl etkilediği konusunda kritik içgörüler ortaya koymaktadır. Logolar ayrıca mitolojik yapılar olarak işlev görür ve tasarımlarına kültürel açıdan önemli anlatılar yerleştirir. Barthes'ın mit kavramı, işaretlerin ideolojik mesajları nasıl iletildiğini vurgular. Bu çalışma, otomobil markalarının amblemlerinde kullanılan hayvan motiflerinin sembolik önemine ve amaçlanan anlamlarına odaklanmıştır. Nitel bir metodoloji kullanan araştırma, altı seçilmiş otomobil markasının (Lamborghini, Ferrari, Jaguar, Peugeot, Alfa Romeo ve Aston Martin) görsel ve sembolik yönlerini yorumlamak için semiyotik analiz tekniklerini kullanmıştır. Analiz yapılırken görsel kimlik, tasarım ilke ve elemanlarından da faydalanılmıştır.

Analiz sonucunda **Lamborghini** ambleminde boğa sembolü yer almaktadır. Amblem ve logotype, tek bir platformda birleştirilerek oluşturulmuştur. Lüks, güç ve sağlamlık gibi yan anlamların baskın olduğu tespit edilmiştir. **Ferrari** ambleminde şaha kalkmış at sembolü bulunmaktadır. Koşan bir at yerine şaha kalkmış bir at kullanılması, markanın hız, yetenek ve güç vurgularını güçlü bir şekilde iletmektedir. Ayrıca logoda milliyetçilik kavramının da vurgulandığı gözlemlenmiştir. **Jaguar** ambleminde jaguar sembolüne yer verilmiştir. Jaguarın hem mitolojik hem de gerçek özelliklerinin markanın sektörel kimliğiyle uyumlu olması, güçlü bir yan anlam oluşturmıştır. Hız, çeviklik ve gücü çağrıştıran imgeler öne çıkmaktadır. **Peugeot**, 2021 yılında yenilenen logosunda aslan sembolü kullanılmıştır. Aslan figürü, yüz hatlarındaki detaylarla anlam derinliği kazanmıştır. Güç, liderlik ve dayanıklılık gibi kavramlar, logonun yan anlamlarını oluşturmaktadır. **Alfa Romeo** ambleminde kullanılan semboller, diğer otomobil markalarının logolarından farklı olarak siyasi ve tarihsel izler taşımaktadır. Yılan sembolü, geleneksel hayranlık duyulan mitler dışında bir imgeye sahiptir ve diğer markaların sembolleriyle örtüşmeyen bir anlam taşımaktadır. **Aston Martin** ambleminde kartal kanatları tercih edilmiştir. Kartal sembolü hem de toplumsal kabul açısından olumlu anlamlara sahiptir. Göstergebilimsel analiz, amblemdaki hız, dayanıklılık ve güç imgelerini öne çıkarmaktadır.

Otomobil markalarının amblemlerinde seçtikleri hayvan sembollerinin göstergebilimsel analizi, ortak yan anlamların varlığını ortaya koymaktadır. Yan anlamlar, markaların oluşturmak istediği imgesel anlatımlar için kritik bir rol oynamaktadır. Seçilen sembollerin, toplumsal mitler ve kabul gören imgelerle ilişkili yan anlamlarının, markaların iletişim stratejilerinde önemli bir yere sahip olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Analizi yapılan markaların amblemlerindeki en sık rastlanan diğer özellikler "sağlamlık", "güven", "liderlik", "koruma", "hız" ve "mitoloji"dir. Otomobil markalarının logolarında hayvan sembollerine yer vermesi, sektörün temel anahtar kelimeleri ile hayvan sembollerinin mitler aracılığıyla oluşturdukları yan anlamların imgesel ve sembolik anlamlarıyla örtüştüğü süreçte doğru bir strateji olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Aksi durumda, bu tercih yanlış bir seçim olarak karşımıza çıkabilir. Örneğin, araştırma sonucunda ortaya çıkan yan anlamların tersi bir anlam taşıyan kaplumbağa sembolünün, bir otomobil markasının ambleminde kullanılması oldukça düşük bir ihtimaldir. Otomobil markalarının logolarında hayvan sembollerine yer vermesinin altında yatan nedenlerden biri, bu sembollerin "güç" gibi yan anlamlarla



ilişkilendirilmesidir. Bu tercih, satın alma davranışlarını inceleyen araştırmaların veya gözlemlerin ortaya koyduğu bulguların bir yansıması olabilir. Böylelikle, markalar tüketici algısını yönlendirmek ve güç, hız ya da güven gibi kavramlarla özdeşleşmek için bu tür sembolleri tercih etmektedir.

Logolar, bir markanın kimliğini şekillendirmede ve değerlerini tüketicilere iletmede önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Otomobil logolarında hayvan sembollerinin kullanımı, markaların güçlü, çok yönlü mesajlar oluşturmak için nasıl logolar tasarladıklarını göstermektedir Mitolojik ve kültürel çağrışımlardan yararlanarak, bu semboller gerçek anlamlarının ötesine geçerek güç, hız, güvenilirlik ve prestij gibi marka niteliklerini iletme için etkili araçlar haline gelmektedir. Göstergebilimsel analiz yoluyla, bu logoların başarısının estetik çekiciliği sembolik derinlikle dengeleme yeteneklerinde yattığı açıkça ortaya çıkmaktadır. Hayvan figürünün tasarımı, renk şemaları ve tipografi gibi görsel öğelerin etkileşimi, tüketicilerde yankı uyandıran bir anlatıya katkıda bulunmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, otomobil logolarında hayvan sembollerinin stratejik kullanımı yalnızca marka tanınırlığını artırmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda marka ile hedef kitlesi arasındaki duygusal ve ideolojik bağlantıları da güçlendirir.