

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Use of Archetypes in Creating Brand Personality: A Qualitative Analysis in The Context of The Relationship Between Art and Advertising

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Abstract

Everything that falls into the hands of the culture industry ultimately serves to increase consumption. This includes works of art, design products, and even everyday objects and practices. Even though these works were created with aesthetic concerns in mind, they have become mass media and advertising tools in modern society. As a result, Vermeer's Girl with a Pearl Earring, Leonardo's Mona Lisa, and Botticelli's The Birth of Venus have been transformed into cultural icons within mass media and advertising. This study argues that the primary reason for using art in advertisements is its ability to reflect the collective subconscious and convey strong archetypes. In this context, archetypes should also play a significant role in shaping brand personality. The study includes a content analysis examining how archetypes achieve the mentioned contribution to brand personality. The advertisement sample to be examined was created using the criterion sampling technique, which is one of the purposeful sampling types. The analysis of the collected data using MAXQDA revealed strong correlations between specific archetypes and certain brand personality types.

Keywords: Art, Graphic Design, Advertising, Brand Personality, Archetype

Öz

Kültür endüstrisinin eline geçen her şey eninde sonunda tüketimin arttırılmasına hizmet etmektedir. Sanat eserleri, tasarım ürünleri, hatta gündelik ürünler ve pratikler buna dahildir. Kendi dönemlerinde estetik kaygı ile üretilmiş bile olsalar modern toplumda kitle medyası ürünlerinin yardımcıları haline gelmişlerdir. Bu sayede Vermeer'in İnci Küpeli Kız'ı, Leonardo'nun Mona Lisa'sı, Boticelli'nin Venüs'ü, kitle iletişim araçlarının ve reklamların kült nesneleri olmuştur. Bu çalışma, reklamlarda sanat eserlerinin kullanılmasının altında yatan en önemli gerçeğin, sanat eserlerinin kolektif bilinçaltını çok iyi yansıtmaları, güçlü arketipler taşımaları olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu durumda marka kişiliği oluşumunda da arketiplerin önemli rolü olmalıdır. Bu çalışma arketiplerin bunu nasıl başardığını anlayabilmek için bir içerik analizi içermektedir. İncelenen reklam örneklemleri amaçlı örneklem türlerinden ölçüt örnekleme tekniği ile oluşturulmuştur. Toplanan veriler MAXQDA ile analiz edildiğinde özellikle bazı arketipler ile bazı marka kişiliği tiplerinin güçlü ilişkileri olduğu görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sanat, Grafik Tasarım,, Reklam, Marka Kişiliği, Arketip

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Introduction

Through consumer culture, the meaning of necessity changes, and sharp transformations occur in what we need, the duration of our needs, the following satisfaction period, and how we achieve that satisfaction. It is essential to consider what initiates this transformation and reflect on the instruments involved in the process. This study focuses on one of the most significant instruments of transformation: advertisements. When researchers gaze toward advertisements with this curiosity, they find traces of many things within the text they read. Among these, the imprints left by the touch of art become more visible. The brushstrokes that once gave life to an artwork in the hands of a painter driven by aesthetic concerns are now replaced by the advertiser's hands, pen, and sharp, transformative intellect, striving to create a new kind of magic. However, the motivation behind this endeavor is no longer aesthetic concern but rather the desire to persuade with a specific purpose. For persuasive advertising, a trash container in one context, a piece of nature in another, or even a work of art can be suitable materials. Advertising can relate to anything and make use of everything. While it operates with commercial concerns, it also acknowledges that advertisements appealing to aesthetic appreciation tend to be more persuasive. For this reason, works of art inspire advertisers as well. If art is a conscious act of design and presentation, advertising can easily align with it on this plane.

Discussing claims such as "Advertisements are the art of today" or "Advertisements are modern fairy tales" would require an extensive study. Instead, this study focuses on identifying the common elements in the stories told by advertisements that draw strength from art. Suppose archetypes are shared myths emerging from the unconscious. In that case, it is highly plausible for advertising—seeking a single way to appeal to a large and heterogeneous consumer audience—to use them. Moreover, archetypes are most encountered in works of art. This is another reason why the paths of art and advertising intersect.

Iconic brands are those that skillfully utilize identity myths and stories. Iconic brands such as Coca-Cola, IBM, Apple, and Louis Vuitton owe

their success to being master storytellers (Roll, 2014). Thanks to these brands, stories continue to be cherished today. Brechman & Purvis (2015, p.369) found that more than half of the advertisements aired during the Super Bowl in the United States between 2011 and 2012 employed storytelling. The storyteller is now the advertiser; the story itself is the advertisement. The one-eyed giant from fairy tales is now the market competitor, while the victorious hero is represented by "Super X," which removes stains in a single wash. If storytelling is the most effective way to create meaning and remain memorable, the appeal of a story depends on its ability to evoke a sense of familiarity. That is why the backdrop changes—sometimes set in the present day, sometimes a century ago—but the narrative follows a familiar pattern, repeating well-known motifs and dressing recognizable roles in different costumes. Well-known works of art and archetypes, which summarize and materialize pre-existing familiarity, present a unique advertising opportunity.

In a study conducted by Kavut (2019) on Apple and Samsung brand archetypes, it was found that these brands mainly exhibited the characteristics of the creator archetype, but also contained elements of other archetypes such as the magician, the healer, the rebel, etc. In a study conducted on the Instagram accounts of some famous brands, Türk (2022) revealed that Google adopted the 'everyone' archetype for its general audience and the 'rebel', 'explorer' and 'clown' archetypes for the younger generation. Archetypes are universal. For instance, shared patterns exist in stories across the world. Fairy tales display striking similarities, and perceptions, interpretations, and reactions to events or concepts align remarkably. This explains how a brand can emerge in one corner of the world, grow, and successfully communicate in many others. Often, the same story is sold to everyone—and it works. Consumers trust what they recognize. They prefer brands they have seen before, those that resemble someone they like, or those that speak in a way that reminds them of someone they miss. In other words, consumers do not just choose brands based on physical familiarity; they opt for brands whose identity and personality feel close to them, resembling someone they love.

Works of art inherently contain strong archetypes, making them an extremely fertile platform for the creative process in advertising. This study aims to understand how archetypes are used in advertisements inspired by famous works of art, whether advertisers preserve the existing narrative or alter the archetypes within the artwork for a different meaning, and ultimately, how this contributes to the formation of brand personality. To achieve this, the study examines advertisements at the intersection of art and commercial concerns through content analysis using MAXQDA Analytics 24.

The Relationship Between Art, Graphic Design, and Advertising

The ultimate goal of advertisements is to brand and sell products. Finding creative ways to achieve this becomes increasingly challenging daily, as advertising operates in intense and fierce competition. To stand out among numerous competitors and be noticed, the language of communication must also be distinctive. At this point, as Berger (2014, p.135) states, works of art come to the rescue of advertising. An advertisement may either closely resemble an old artwork—sometimes a sculpture or a painting—or contain subtle artistic elements that evoke such works. This approach enhances the appeal and impact of advertising imagery. "Art and design are everything that has an aesthetic purpose and influences or appeals to the visual senses" (Barnard, 2010, p.170). However, the perception of what aesthetic varies across cultures and changes over time. The journey of art and design, from classical art to artists like Duchamp, illustrates this transformation. As Berger (2014, p. 135) puts it, "a work of art is part of the valuable objects that the world offers to the wealthy and the beautiful." When such an artwork is used in advertising, these values are first integrated into the advertisement and then transferred to the brand itself, making the brand a representation of wealth, superiority, and luxury.

The resemblance between advertising characters or models and mythological figures is striking. The visual language of oil paintings is frequently

employed in advertisements. The romanticized depiction of nature to convey purity, as well as the stereotypical portrayals of woman—such as the serene mother (Madonna), the sexual object (Venus), or the fertile water nymph—are clear examples of this. However, the connection between advertising imagery and oil painting extends beyond just advertisements; it is shared across many other tools and platforms that encourage consumption (Berger, 2014, p. 138). The visual elements found in oil paintings are conveyed through similar methods in illustrated magazines, the displays of expensive boutique stores, and even museum catalogues featuring artworks. "To consider advertising as a continuation of post-Renaissance European visual art is a mistake; rather, advertising is the death throes of that art form" (Berger, 2014, p.139).

The first example of the intersection between advertising and graphic art is Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's "Moulin Rouge" poster, created in 1891. Lautrec used lithography and photography—leading techniques of his time—to produce posters and advertisements that incorporated text and simplified forms characteristic of modern advertising. His Moulin Rouge poster series played a crucial role in making his name known. This was a promotional poster for a nightclub, and by using bold typography and bright colors—elements highly favored by the advertising industry—Lautrec brought posters one step closer to modern graphic art. Thanks to him, the boundaries between art and advertising began to blur, and the art of the poster saw significant development (Yılmaz & Küpeli, 2017, p.1774).

As graphic design integrated with art, its intersection with advertising grew even stronger. A key turning point in this relationship was the emergence of Pop Art, which not only embraced art but also incorporated design into advertising. "Pop Art initiated an analysis of the consumer society that emerged after World War II and, by transforming the data it gathered, led to a true paradigm shift in art" (Güçhan, 2008, p.29). When the Pop Art movement emerged in the UK and the US, it readily incorporated images and objects from urban culture and mass media into art. Consumer products, in turn, became art objects through advertising (Güçhan, 2008, p.28). This reciprocal relationship is

evident in the works of artists such as Andy Warhol, whose designs for Coca-Cola and Absolut Vodka, as well as Keith Haring and Damien Hirst's works for Absolut Vodka, demonstrate how consumer goods and advertising imagery became central to artistic production.

When examining advertising posters from the 1960s, it is clear that advertisements derived their power from an artistic aesthetic. At this point, advertising and art began to speak a shared visual language that reflected the consumer culture of the era (Yılmaz & Küpeli, 2017, p.1776). While images from art and design served as sources of inspiration for advertising, advertisements and brands, in turn, inspired works of art. This process involves a cycle of deconstruction, distortion, and reconstruction. Everyday objects and their reproduced images, as seen in the works of artists like Duchamp, were integrated into art and design. As a result, any object could now be considered a work of art. What we witness today is evidence that the boundary between what is considered art and what is not has either eroded or entirely disappeared (Barnard, 2010, p.11).

Archetype

Archetype is a concept introduced to science by Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961). "An archetype is a universal way of thinking with strong emotional aspects and is inherited" (Jung, 2015). According to Jung (2017, p.7), "archetype" is a concept that was used even in ancient times and is synonymous to Plato's "idea". "Archetypes can be defined as the components or content of the collective unconscious, where deeply embedded personality patterns interact with the individual and guide the person's thoughts and actions" (Jung, 1954, p.77). Archetypes are initially the elements that make up the collective unconscious. An archetype is an untaught tendency to experience something in a certain way (Jung, 2015).

Archetypes, which are instinctual forms from the past, extend from there to the person's conscious life, even though they are in the unconscious. Therefore, archetypes need to be brought to the level of consciousness to analyze how they are reflected in life (Jung, 2006, p. 52). However, these

are not biological as in Freud. They have rather psychic desires. They do not have a form of their own, yet they act as organizing principles in what we do (Jung, 2015). People only become aware of them because of images in dreams and works of art, or emotional experiences that connect them in ways they cannot immediately understand (Berger, 2014, p.132). The third part of the psyche, the collective unconscious, is our "psychic heritage", the reservoir of our experiences, knowledge we all possess from birth. Archetypes are the contents of the said collective unconscious (Batey, 2008, p.34). Archetypes are primitive mental images in the collective unconscious (Abdullayeva, 2024, p.361). This collective unconscious is the source and storage place of the templates that make characters and plots familiar to us everywhere. But the collective unconscious contains templates not only for concepts that everyone is familiar with, but also for characters, plots, and other story elements that can be found in any story anywhere in the world.

In literature, an archetype is a symbol, pattern, plot, or character template that represents our collective experiences and perceptions, which have been common across cultures and in many stories since the beginning of oral culture. An archetype is a story template. In a way, they are like shortcuts that save the narrator from long descriptions to describe characters, environments, and plots (Kramer, 2024). Although Jung (2015) says that archetypes are not divided into certain groups and do not have a fixed number, and are even intertwined, he lists and explains the archetypes in the collective unconscious as follows:

- **Mother Archetype:** It is our innate ability that allows us to recognize a certain type of relationship, the "motherhood" relationship. People tend to reflect this archetype mostly on their own mothers. Even when there is no specific person in the environment who can reflect this archetype, they try to personalize this archetype and transform it into a mythological novel character. The mother archetype is symbolized by the earth mother in mythology; in western beliefs, it is associated with Eve and Mary and with more personal symbols such as the church, the nation or the forest, the

ocean. Someone whose mother archetype needs in their mind are not met by their real mother will tend to seek peace in the church or choose life at sea in the future.

- **Shadow:** Sex and life instincts are part of the shadow archetype. It is a part of our "animal" past, where needs are limited to survival and reproduction instincts. The shadow is the dark side of the ego; potential evil is usually hidden here. In reality, the shadow is neither good nor bad. Animals do whatever they want and are innocent. But to people, it seems wild and cruel. The shadow is like a trash can where the unacknowledged aspects of people's personality are hidden. The symbols of the shadow are snakes, dragons, and monsters. Someone who struggles with one of these in their dreams is only struggling with themselves.
- **Persona:** Our social image. Persona is the mask people wear before showing themselves to the outside world. Persona is either the "good image" that society wants to give while fulfilling the roles it wants, or the "wrong image" used to direct people's thoughts and behaviors. Moreover, people believe in this themselves and think that they are how they want to be seen.
- **Anima \ Animus:** The female or male role that we have to play in life is also a part of persona. Expectations from male and female roles in society are different; although this generally comes from reproductive roles, it also carries traces of many traditional expectations. For example, women are compassionate and less aggressive; men are strong and durable. Anima represents the feminine side in the collective subconscious of men, while animus represents the masculine side in the subconscious of women. Both are called "syzygy" together. Anima represents deep emotionality and the power of life; a young girl who is spontaneous and intuitive; can be personified as a witch or mother earth. Animus is an old, wise man, a magician or logical, realistic and argumentative. Anima

and animus are archetypes that allow us to communicate with the collective unconscious in general. Man seeks the other half that was taken from him long ago in the opposite sex.

The Relationship Between Consumption and Archetypes

The potential forces that operate within people's inner worlds influence their behavior. These potential forces are archetypes. Brands that tap into profound, primal experiences and motivations establish emotional closeness and deep connections with consumers. Through archetypes—often called the magnets of meaning for the soul—brands gain a universal, iconic, and symbolic meaning. This is why symbolic meaning is often archetypal meaning. Strong brands typically achieve this by identifying with a single archetype. However, people are multifaceted, and depending on their needs and circumstances, they may be drawn to different archetypes at different times. The archetypal relationship between a brand and a consumer is defined not by the consumer's archetype, but by the brand's ability to embody a specific archetypal meaning (Batey, 2008, p.37).

Archetypes function as a subconscious matrix, shaping how people think and act. Consumers often make decisions without fully understanding why—in other words, their subconscious drives their choices (Kaftandjiev, 2023, p.8). One of the most significant challenges an advertiser faces is delivering a complete and purposeful message in a very short time frame or within a minimal space. The audience must be able to grasp the roles of the main characters—including the product itself as a central character—and the storyline at a glance. Achieving this in an advertisement is far more challenging than in a literary text. At this point, as Mark and Pearson (2001, p.13) suggest, archetypes come to the rescue by bridging the gap between consumer motivation and product sales. Archetypes reduce the time the audience needs to interpret the message, making it easier for consumers to relate to the advertisement's narrative quickly.

In the marketing world, there may not be a specific term or jargon that directly corresponds to

Jung's archetypal templates, patterns, and shared imprints. However, brands are the most vivid contemporary expressions of these deep and enduring patterns. Companies, brands, and products achieve profound and lasting differentiation by embodying this timeless archetypal meaning, whether consciously or by chance. The most successful brands effectively utilize archetypes (Mark & Pearson, 2001, p.11). Archetypal representations frequently surface in literature, art, mythology, and film, and when people encounter an archetypal myth, symbol, or character, they instinctively feel an emotional attraction. Mythological stories that bring archetypes to life—such as the beloved archetype in the Cinderella story or the outlaw figures in *The Godfather*—are an integral part of humanity's psyche. They are embedded in the psychic structures humans have inherited. Although archetypes originate from the past, they are not limited to mythology or fiction. As long as a personality holds greater significance than their personal life, real-life figures can also embody archetypes. For example, Florence Nightingale and Mother Teresa are strong representations of the Caregiver archetype (Batey, 2008, p.35).

The Relationship Between Archetypes and Brand Personality

Brand personality is "a set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker, 1997, p.347). Just as personality influences individual relationships, it also affects how consumers interact with brands. According to Aaker (2013, pp.94-97), brand personality is considered a valuable asset within a brand's core equity, as four key elements shape brand identity:

1. Product
2. Institution
3. Person
4. Symbol

Personality is one of these four factors. In addition to the product, corporate characteristics, and symbols associated with a brand, the human traits linked to it also significantly shape the brand's overall identity. According to Aaker (2013, p.99), brand personality serves three key functions:

- It creates personal benefits, allowing customers to express their personality through the brand.
- It forms the foundation of relationships between the customer and the brand.
- It contributes to functional benefits by helping communicate a product attribute.

Despite variations in brand personality formation, a widely accepted notion in marketing literature is that brand personality characteristics parallel human personality traits. This perspective has popularized the concept of brand personality. Following this acceptance, scholars have argued that brand personality has several positive effects in marketing:

- It influences consumer preferences and product usage (Sirgy, 1982).
- It can change brand attitudes (Aaker, 2000).
- It enhances brand loyalty (Fournier, 1998).

Brand personality achieves these outcomes by differentiating the product's perception (Aaker, 1992; Batra & Homer, 2004). This is perhaps why people are motivated to tattoo Harley-Davidson logos on their bodies—the brand's personality resonates deeply with their identity.

Given the functional significance of brand personality, measuring it has been a research focus. One of the best-known studies in this area is Jennifer Aaker's 1997 brand personality scale. According to Aaker (1997, p. 351), brand personality can be measured across five dimensions:

- Sincerity (realistic, honest, wholesome, cheerful)
- Excitement (daring, imaginative, contemporary, lively)
- Competence (reliable, intelligent, successful)
- Sophistication (charm, quality)
- Ruggedness (masculinity, toughness)

However, this broad topic has been revisited in numerous academic studies, conceptualized, and measured differently. For instance, Geuens et al. (2009, p. 103) conducted a comprehensive study on brand personality and arrived at a classification similar to Aaker's (1997). According to their findings, brand personality consists of five fundamental traits:

- Responsibility (realistic, stable, responsible)
- Activity (dynamic, active, innovative)
- Aggressiveness (bold, daring)
- Simplicity (ordinary, simple)
- Sensitivity (romantic, emotional)

This body of research highlights that brand personality, like human personality, plays a crucial role in consumer-brand relationships, shaping how individuals engage with, perceive, and remain loyal to brands. The characteristics identified by Geuens et al. (2009) also serve as the basis for a measurement tool comprising 12 variables grouped under five factors. Dölarslan (2012, p.22) tested this tool in terms of its applicability along the functional and symbolic benefits axes. Due to concerns about significant cultural differences, some studies have attempted to reclassify brand personality within the context of Turkish culture (e.g., Aksoy & Özsoy, 2007). The formation of brand personality has been a highly debated topic. One of the most intriguing explanations is the role of archetypes in shaping brand personality. Archetypes are powerful tools that shape a brand's personality and enable it to establish emotional connections with consumers. Carl G. Jung's archetype theory is crucial in strategic brand communication and the personality formation process. Developed by psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung, archetypes have been found highly applicable in marketing. They are more than simple representations—they influence human emotions, thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors (Türk, 2022, p. 280). Throughout history, myths and legends have shown heroes overcoming challenges, which, in turn, has helped individuals find courage, resilience, and hope in their struggles. Jung (2007) describes this effect as a form of psychological therapy, where seeing archetypal narratives play out can alter one's perspective and increase optimism in times of crisis. Naturally, marketers seeking to build stronger emotional connections with consumers have long recognized this power of archetypes. This interest has led to developing "archetypal brand personality models" in marketing literature (Türk, 2022, p. 280). Although Jung's archetype theory has been widely used to understand literary and cultural re-

sponses, more recent scholars—including Campbell (1949/2004), McAdams (1993), Mark & Pearson (2001), and Faber & Mayer (2009)—have revised the general approach to archetypes and attempted to develop a new archetype theory. Faber and Mayer (2009, p.310) introduced the "Neo-Archetypal Theory," which defines archetypes as learned conceptualizations. These modern archetypes have five key characteristics:

- They are story characters.
- They are represented in the mind as psychological models, similar to the self, schemas, and prototypes.
- They elicit strong emotional responses.
- They operate at an unconscious level.
- They are culturally enduring, making them quickly learned and widely recognized.

Although many scholars (e.g., Mark & Pearson, 2001) define archetypes as consisting of 12 primary types, Faber and Mayer (2009) added the 'shadow' as an additional category, expanding the list to 13 archetypes. Below is a comprehensive overview of these 13 archetypes, along with their defining attributes, compiled from various academic studies (Hall & Lindzey, 1978; McAdams, 1993; Campbell, 1949/2004; Mark & Pearson, 2001; Batey, 2008; Faber & Mayer, 2009; Yakın et al., 2014; Bechter et al., 2016; Yılmaz & Sarı, 2019):

Caregiver: Compassionate, merciful, selfless, empathetic, loyal, protective, nurturing, and generous. Displays a well-meaning, friendly, helpful, and reassuring attitude. Often seen in a parental role.

Creator: Innovative, entrepreneurial, artistic, and inventive. Not very social and may be a dreamer. Seeks innovation and beauty, pursuing aesthetic standards. Prioritizes quality over quantity.

Everyman / Everywoman: Represents the ordinary working-class person, the underdog, or the neighbor. Diligent, careful, organized, virtuous, realistic, and generally sincere—sometimes fatalistic. Often self-deprecating, humble, or even sarcastic, and usually a disillusioned humanist.

Explorer: Independent, individualistic, pioneering, restless, courageous, and a relentless adventurer. Constantly in search of discovery and fulfillment. Always on the move, an excellent observer,

and resistant to societal norms, seeking to prove their potential.

Hero: Often brave, impulsive, and warrior-like. Disciplined, determined, competitive, and noble, serving as a savior. Solves problems with moral righteousness and must undertake a challenging quest to prove their worth. Once thriving, they become an inspiration to others. Symbolically, they are the "dragon slayer".

Innocent: Pure, loyal, naive, and childlike. Humble and peaceful, they are trustworthy, virtuous, optimistic, happy, positive, and hopeful. Their search for happiness and simplicity often represents a quest for paradise. Typically traditional, faithful, and a symbol of renewal.

Jester: A comedian who lives for fun and pleasure, playful and mischievous. Often ironic and cheerful, though sometimes irresponsible, living in the moment. Loves to enjoy life, escape worries, play games, and make jokes. Naturally, Jester's greatest fear is boredom or being bored.

Lover: Represented by a passionate, romantic, sensual, and affectionate character. Seeks love, pleasure, and giving and receiving joy. Charming, seductive, enjoyable, yet dangerous, often stormy and capricious. Frequently portrayed as warm, playful, erotic, and eager in romantic relationships.

Magician: Represented by a physicist, chemist, visionary, or alchemist. Can also be a dreamer, similar to the "mad scientist" stereotype in Hollywood films. Seeks to uncover the principles of growth and how things work—often a teacher, performer, or scientist fascinated by natural forces, transformations, and metamorphoses. The Magician archetype can appear as a sorcerer, wizard, shaman, healer, witch, or prophet.

Outlaw: Rebellious, revolutionary, destructive, divisive, ruthless, and an iconoclast—one who overthrows oppressive structures and aligns with countercultural and liberal values. Often a survivor of intense struggles, making them wild, provocative, and defiant. Due to deep-seated anger, they may be vengeful and unwilling to obey rules.

Ruler: Embodies power and control. Often seen as a leader, boss, or judge. Can be highly influential, strong-willed, and stubborn. May take the form of a dominant, sometimes ruthless, authoritarian, or even despotic figure.

Sage: Seeks enlightenment, knowledge, and truth—a philosopher, intellectual, or expert who shares wisdom and insight. Objective, informative, and intuitive, the Sage serves as a prestigious guide in the world—though they may at times appear arrogant.

Shadow: Represented by violence, curses, and primitive instincts. The Shadow embodies the dark side of humanity. Often strange, rejected, and emotionally tragic, this archetype may lack morality and serve as a savage enemy.

Content Analysis of Archetypes and Brand Personality in Advertisements Inspired by Works of Art

Objective

One of the most well-known studies that aligns archetypes and brand personalities in the literature is Mark and Pearson's (2001) work, also called the "archetypal personality model." This model is frequently used to define brand personality. Using archetypes in advertisements is now a fact that no longer requires proof. While archetypes are not the sole factor in forming brand personality, they play a significant role. Archetypes facilitate the connection between the target audience and the brand.

For example, a dishwashing detergent brand that adopts the hero archetype might emphasize family budgeting when responding to competitors' pricing strategies through discounts. As a result, in the eyes of the consumer, the brand may transform into 'the hero of the kitchen' (which aligns with the hero archetype in the new archetype classification). It may also be perceived as a sincere family member (corresponding to the sincerity dimension in Aaker's brand personality framework). Everyone recognizes the friendly hero in the kitchen—the product may even become associated with the mother figure. Since the connection between archetypes and brand personalities is evident, the next critical question is: Which archetypes are more effective in shaping different brand personalities?

Additionally, while Jung suggested that archetypes originate from biological heritage and are stored in the unconscious, recent research indicates that archetypes are shaped more by culture than

biology. For instance, the image of an apple may evoke completely different associations in a Christian and a Buddhist individual. Moreover, some brands may change their archetypes and personalities over time (Bechter et al., 2016, p. 4). Therefore, it is important to re-examine studies that integrate brand personality and archetypes in different cultural context

Research Question

This study is a qualitative research project. Instead of formulating hypotheses, the research problem has been framed as a research question, around which the study is structured. The main question of research is:

- "What is the relationship between the use of archetypes and brand personality in advertisements that incorporate works of art?"
- Based on this central question, the study also explores the following sub-questions:
- "Which archetypes are more commonly used in product advertisements?"
- "Which archetypes are more commonly used in service advertisements?"
- "Which brand personality types are predominantly featured in product advertisements, and to what extent?"
- "Which brand personality types are predominantly featured in service advertisements, and to what extent?"

Population and Sample

The increasing use of world-famous works of art in advertisements may be attributed to the striking presence of archetypes in these artworks. This makes them a highly suitable platform for meaning transfer in advertising. Instead of investing creative effort into selecting and integrating an archetype into their advertisement's design or strategy, advertisers may leverage existing artworks that already contain strong archetypal elements or have naturally acquired them over time. This study was designed based on this assumption.

Since the study aims to understand the relationship between archetype usage and brand personality, its sample consists of advertisements inspired by works of art. The sample includes 42 product and service advertisements from 29 brands, selected from various online sources based on their alignment with these criteria. Although it is not possible to provide all the advertisements and the artworks that inspired them as pictures in this study, an example explaining the selection criteria is given below (Picture 1).

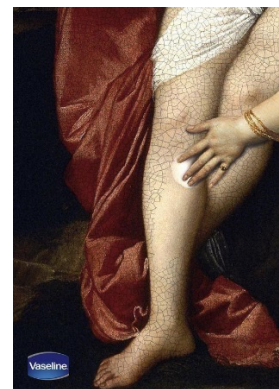
The advertisements in the sample are print media ads published internationally and domestically. However, factors such as publication location and date were not considered significant criteria for sample selection, at least within the scope of this research.



The Portrait of a Young Woman painting by Petrus Christus
www.artatberlin.com



Vaseline Advert 1



Vaseline Advert 2

Hunt (2023)

<https://elpais.com>

Picture 1: Vaseline Advertisements inspired by the Portrait of a Young Woman painting by Petrus Christus

Because these advertisements exhibit strong archetypal characteristics and serve as adaptations of significant works in painting, they are highly visual with minimal verbal elements. Consequently, textual analysis was not required in this study.

Table 1. Artwork-inspired ads in the sample.

Advertisement	N	%	Advertisement	N	%
Kiwi	4	9,52	Kitchen Aid	1	2,38
Easy Jet	4	9,52	Red Bull	1	2,38
McDonald's	3	7,14	Lego	1	2,38
Samsung	3	7,14	Marithe F. Girbaud	1	2,38
Jotun	2	4,76	İkea	1	2,38
Vaseline	2	4,76	Snickers	1	2,38
Welti Furrer	2	4,76	Owl	1	2,38
Karaca	1	2,38	H-7	1	2,38
UPS	1	2,38	Pantene	1	2,38
Volkswagen	1	2,38	Keloptic	1	2,38
Orbit	1	2,38	Dove	1	2,38
Victoria Secret	1	2,38	Nike	1	2,38
Neosporin	1	2,38	Cristian Dior	1	2,38
Absolut Vodka	1	2,38	Calvin Klein	1	2,38
			Beats	1	2,38
			Total	42	100,00

Methodology

Although new communication technologies have transformed the advertising field (Çakır, 2004), the strength of the bond between the consumer and the brand remains important. Archetypes are a way to ensure this. This study aims to concretize the relationship between archetypes and brand personality through qualitative content analysis conducted on a sample of advertisements inspired by works of art. "Content analysis is a qualitative research technique that aims to analyze various materials -such as documents, texts, and records - within a set of predefined rules (sampling, coding, categorization, etc.) to obtain objective, measurable, and verifiable information" (Metin & Ünal, 2022, p. 273). The large number of units, categories, and subcategories being examined makes content analysis the most suitable method for this research, as it relies on classification systems (Balci, 2007, p. 87). When research requires identifying themes that explain the collected data, content analysis is often preferred (Alanka, 2024, p. 71). This study examines archetypes as a variable that explains brand personality.

Coding System

Archetypes shape how individuals define themselves, position themselves in the world, and adopt values. More importantly, people construct their identities and personalities through personal myths and grand narratives (McAdams, 1993). However, an archetype alone cannot fully encapsulate a person's personality. In other words, one archetype may not be sufficient to explain an entire personality. While an archetype may significantly shape personal myths, many other factors influence an individual's interpretation of life experiences. Otherwise, the number of personality types worldwide would be limited to the number of archetypes classified in literature. This principle applies not only to human personalities but also to brands. Therefore, Mark & Pearson's (2001) classification should not be viewed as a strict brand personality model but rather as a modernized and adapted version of Jung's archetype theory, updated for marketing and branding processes.

In order to identify and code the archetypes in artworks used in modern brand advertising, the archetype classification by Faber and Mayer (2009) was used. While Mark and Pearson (2001) categorized 12 archetypes, Faber and Mayer (2009) introduced 13 archetypes. Faber and Mayer's (2009) classification was used in this study because it was thought to allow for more meticulous coding since it includes more archetypes. In addition, Faber and Mayer's (2009) classification is quite remarkable as it includes a less discussed but deeply influential archetype such as Jung's "shadow" archetype. These archetypes are:

1. Hero
2. Ruler
3. Outlaw
4. Magician
5. Sage
6. Lover
7. Jester
8. Innocent
9. Explorer
10. Creator
11. Caregiver
12. Everyman / Everywoman
13. Shadow

To identify and code brand personality types in advertisements, Aaker's (1997) brand personality

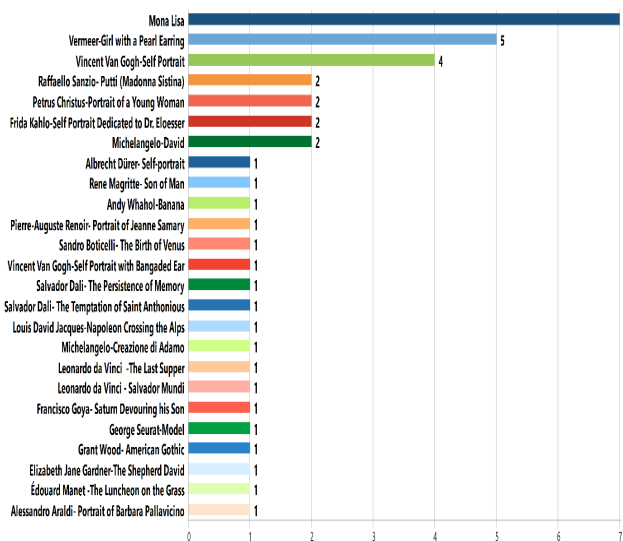
framework was used, which categorizes brands under five personality dimensions:

1. Sincerity
2. Excitement
3. Competence
4. Sophistication
5. Ruggedness

This study aims to clarify the relationship between archetypal storytelling and brand identity in advertising by examining how brands use archetypes and how these align with their brand personality.

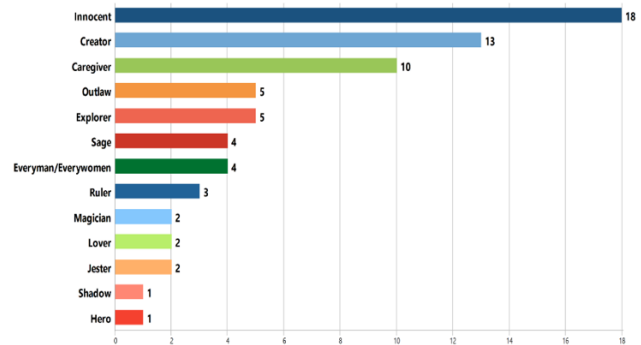
Findings

This study focuses on how archetypes in advertisements inspired by works of art contribute to brand personality formation. The MAXQDA analysis program was used to analyze the content of the collected data. Graph 1 illustrates the distribution of artworks that inspired advertisements within the sample set, showing their frequency of use.



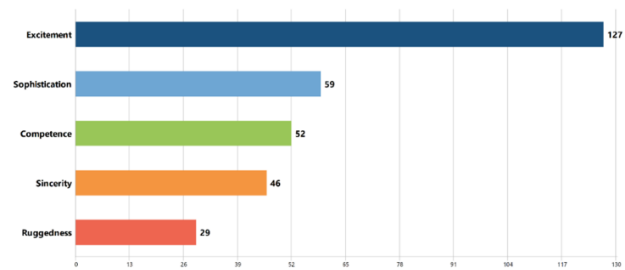
Graph 1. Distribution of Artworks Used in Advertisements

As seen in Graph 1, Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa is the most frequently referenced artwork among the 42 advertisements in the sample (7 times). It is followed by Vermeer's Girl with a Pearl Earring (5 times) and Vincent van Gogh's Self-Portrait (4 times).



Graph 2. Distribution of Archetypes Used in Works of Art

As shown in Graph 2, a total of 70 codings were made for the archetypes. The 'innocent' archetype (18) is the most frequently used, followed by the 'creator' (13) and 'caregiver' (14) archetypes. The least common archetypes in this sample are the 'hero' (1) and 'shadow' (1).



Graph 3. Distribution of Brand Personalities Reflected in Advertisements Inspired by Works

Graph 3 illustrates the distribution of brand personality types in advertisements inspired by the sampled works of art. According to the analysis, 313 codings were made for the 42 advertisements included in the study. The most frequently observed brand personality type in these advertisements is 'excitement' (127), followed by 'sophistication' (19) and 'competence' (17).

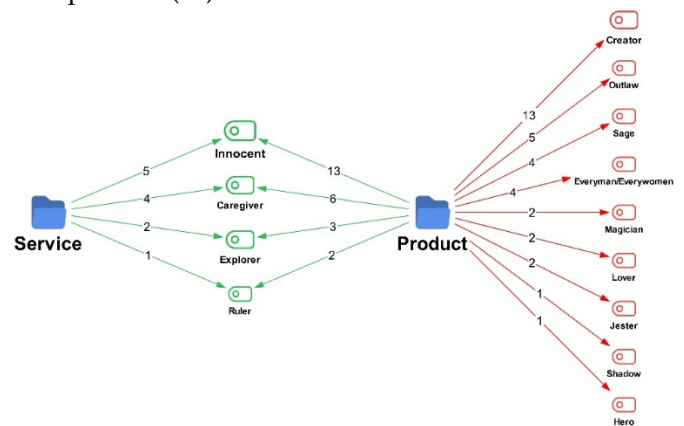


Figure 1. Differences in Archetype Usage in Product and Service Advertisements

Figure 1 shows the similarities and differences in terms of the archetypal use of advertisements inspired by works of art in product and service groups. Accordingly, the archetypes commonly used in both service and product advertisements are the 'innocent,' 'caregiver,' 'explorer,' and 'ruler' archetypes. The innocent archetype is the most frequently used archetype in both product and service advertisements. In product advertisements, the 'creator' archetype was used most often. The 'outlaw' archetype follows it.

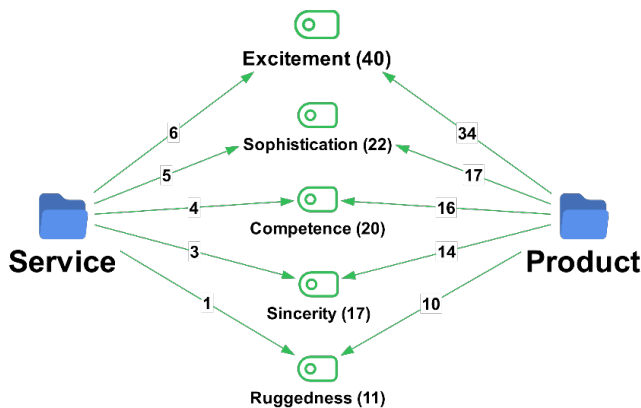


Figure 2. Brand Personality in Product and Service Advertisements

Ads in the service and product categories were also compared in terms of brand personality. As can be seen in Figure 2, the most common type of brand personality in both service and product category advertisements is 'excitement.' The second most common type of brand personality by ranking is 'sophisticated.' 'Competence,' 'sincerity,' and 'ruggedness' come later.

According to the relationship map (Figure 3) made through MAXQDA to see the relationship between archetype and brand personality, which is the focus of the study, the most 'excitement' brand personality is seen in the entire sample. While the excitable brand has received help from almost every archetype in creating its personality type, the most significant support has come from the 'innocent,' 'creator' and 'caregiver' and then 'outlaw' archetypes. Another type of brand personality that the innocent archetype supports is 'sophisticated'. Other archetypes in which this brand personality is most often seen are 'creator' and 'lover'. The brand personality of 'competence' is most often seen with the archetypes of 'everyman/everywoman', 'explorer' and 'ruler'. 'Sincerity' is another type of brand personality that ads using the archetypes of 'everyman/everywoman', 'innocent' and 'explorer' help create. An alternative way for advertisers aiming for a 'ruggedness', brand personality to achieve this is by using the archetypes of 'ruler', 'everyman/everywoman', and 'explorer', according to the relationship chart above.

The findings of this study align with the results of Bechter et al. (2016, p. 7), who examined the compatibility between archetypes and brand personality. In both studies, the 'ruler' archetype aligns with the 'competence' brand personality; the 'creator' archetype is associated with 'excitement' and 'sophistication'; the 'jester' archetype corresponds to 'excitement' and 'sophistication'; the 'lover' archetype aligns with 'sophistication';

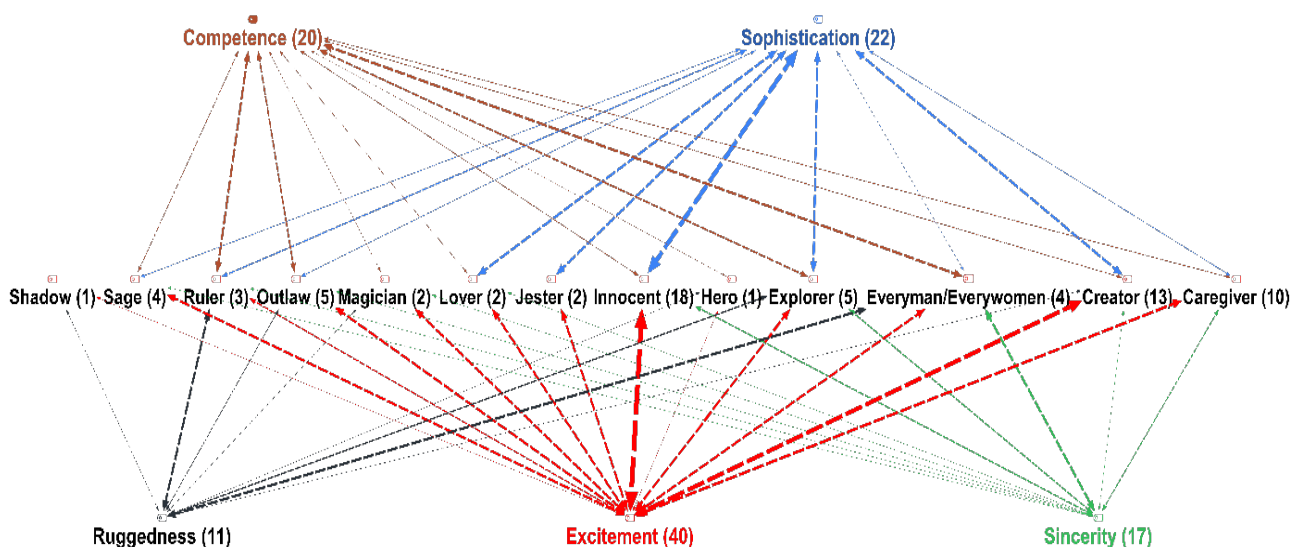


Figure 3. Archetype-Brand Personality Relationship Intensity

the 'everyman/everywoman' archetype is linked to 'sincerity' and 'competence'; the 'outlaw' archetype is associated with 'excitement'; the 'magician' archetype is linked to 'excitement'; the 'sage' archetype is related to both 'excitement' and 'competence'; the 'explorer' archetype aligns with 'excitement' and 'ruggedness'; and finally, the 'innocent' archetype corresponds to both 'excitement' and 'sincerity'.

Conclusion

Personality cannot be defined solely by biology and behavioral traits. The "personal story" (personal myth) composed of significant events, experiences, and major changes in an individual's life is also important in shaping personality. Archetypes are the foundational building blocks hidden in the subconscious of consumers' personal myths, and they play prominent roles in individuals' life stories. When brands use archetypes, they speak to the subconscious of the consumer, connecting with the archetypal symbols and their corresponding meanings. Thus, a perception and attitude toward the brand personality is formed.

For example, a person might possess the "hero" archetype and build their life around overcoming challenges, helping others, or discovering their own strength. This directly affects their personality structure and values. Similarly, the "sage" archetype can form a person's inner guide and life philosophy. However, a single archetype may not fully describe this person's personality. Likewise, even if a brand adopts the sage archetype as its guide, its portrayal to the world depends on many factors, such as the actions of competitors, changing trends among consumers, and its own unique journey in the market. Not all of these factors are necessarily related to an archetype.

Even if this depiction contains elements reflecting the sage archetype within a broader picture, it does not change the fact that art is placed in service of consumption.

Archetypes are the intrinsic potentials (strategically determined, planned, or spontaneous) of a brand. The findings of this study show that advertisers can easily utilize this potential. Indeed, in the advertisements adapted from artworks, which

constitute the main body of this study, it has been observed that all 13 archetypes were coded at least once. This demonstrates that the initial assumption of the study—"artworks are strong carriers of archetypes"—is indeed true.

More importantly, the analyses reveal that each of the 13 archetypes is associated with at least one brand personality type. The most significant associations are between the "innocent" archetype and the "sophisticated" and "exciting" brand personality types. Another important association is between the "caregiver" archetype and the "exciting" and "sophisticated" brand personality types. The "creator" archetype appears to be most responsible for forming an "exciting" brand personality. Additionally, the "everyman" and "ruler" archetypes are most effective in creating a "competent" brand personality.

In other words, if a brand wants to be described as intelligent, successful, a leader, confident, reliable, and hardworking, it should depict a powerful ruler or an ordinary individual overcoming challenges in its advertisements. Although the ruler and everyman archetypes may seem contradictory, they are similar in their ability to cope with difficulties.

According to the results of this study, another strong relationship exists between the "exciting" brand personality and the "innocent," "creator," and "caregiver" archetypes. This means that if a brand wants to define itself as lively, energetic, dynamic, independent, contemporary, and daring, it should portray someone pure, optimistic, and imaginative in its advertisements (innocent archetype). Similarly, depicting someone who believes they can achieve everything they imagine will also work (creator archetype). Furthermore, if the portrayals in advertisements point to a generous and compassionate protector (caregiver archetype), the "exciting" personality will be completed. Nevertheless, the commercialization of art remains a clear and undeniable reality. This study demonstrates the role of archetypes—whether to a greater or lesser extent—in shaping brand personality, which can be seen as a constructed portrayal of products and brands for consumers. Furthermore, the inherent appeal of artwork enhances the persuasive power of advertisements.

The study also highlights stronger associations between certain archetypes and specific brand personalities, providing a valuable shortcut for creatives and strategists in the advertising industry. The findings support advertising production and explain why people feel drawn to specific brands, even if they claim to dislike them. This is because advertisements leverage archetypes, and people are naturally drawn to archetypes embedded in the collective unconscious. In this sense, the findings also provide insight into the mechanisms of advertising influence, shedding light on how advertisements create impact and engagement.

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