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# 30

- Bilişim Toplumuna Geçiş Sürecinde Bilgi Yönetimi Yaklaşımı  
*Ahmet AĞIR*
- Postmodernism, Consumption and Fashion:  
Throughout the Fashion in Turkish Magazine Advertisements  
*Uğur BATI*
- Televizyon Reklamlarının Algılanan Değeri ve Reklam Tutumu İlişkisi:  
Bir Yapısal Eşitlik Modeli  
*Vesile ÇAKIR - Vedat ÇAKIR*
- Gündelik Hayatta E-Yaşam:  
İhtiyaç-Arzu Çelişkisi Çerçevesinde Yeni İletişim Teknolojileri Bağımlılığı  
*Vahit İLHAN*
- Tüketim Kültürü İçinde Müziğin Görseleştirilmesi; Klipler  
*Ayşe KALAY*
- Türkiye ve Almanya'da Gazetecilik Eğitimi Alan Öğrencilerin  
Eğitim Kalitesi ve Beklentilerine Yönelik Alan Araştırması  
*Ceyhan KANDEMİR*
- Les Cafés Dans L'Empire Ottoman Comme Espace De La Rumeur Publique  
Et Comme Appereil Etatique Du Controle Social  
*Hüseyin KOSE*
- Marksist Düşünce Sisteminde Kitle Kültürü ve TV'de Yayınlanan Çizgi Filmlerin  
İdeolojik İşlevlerine Bir Bakış  
*Suat SUNGUR*
- Üniversite-Şehir Etkileşimi Sürecinde Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk Projeleri:  
Evde Çocuk Bakan Kadınların Eğitimi Projesi Örneği  
*Sezen ÖNLÜ, Sevil UZOĞLU BAYÇU, Yavuz TUNA*
- Değerler, İletişim Davranışı ve Politik Katılım  
*Çev; Bahar EROĞLU YALIN*
- Turkish PR Agencies' Point of View About Corporate Reputation  
*Ayhan YILMAZ, İdil KARADEMİRLİDAĞ*

# Sayı 30 – Künye

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## Sayı 30

### İ.Ü. DERGİ ARŞİVİ

#### KÜNYE

#### İÇİNDEKİLER

- *"Bilişim Toplumuna Geçiş Sürecinde Bilgi Yönetimi Yaklaşımı"*  
Ahmet Ağır
- *"Postmodernism, Consumption and Fashion: "The Representation Of Ideal 'Men' Throughout The Fashion In Turkish Magazine Advertisements""*  
Uğur Batı
- *"Televizyon Reklamlarının Algılanan Değeri ve Reklam Tutumu İlişkisi: Bir Yapısal Eşitlik Modeli"*  
Vesile Çakır,
- *"Gündelik Hayatta E-Yaşam: İhtiyaç- Arzu Çelişkisi Çerçevesinde Yeni İletişim Teknolojileri Bağımlılığı"*  
Vahit İlhan
- *"Tüketim Kültürü İçinde Müziğin Görselleştirilmesi: Klipler"*  
Ayşe Melahat Kalay

- *"Türkiye ve Almanya'da Gazetecilik Eğitimi Alan Öğrencilerin Eğitim Kalitesi ve Beklentilerine Yönelik Alan Araştırması"*  
Ceyhan Kandemir
- *"Les Cafés Dans L'empire Ottoman Comme Espace De La Rumeur Publique Et Comme Appareil Étatique Du Contrôle Social"*  
Hüseyin Köse
- *"Marksist Düşünce Sisteminde Kitle Kültürü ve Televizyonda Yayınlanan Çizgi Filmlerin İdeolojik İşlevlerine Bir Bakış"*  
Suat Sungur
- *"Üniversite – Şehir Etkileşimi Sürecinde Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk Projeleri: Evde Çocuk Bakan Kadınların Eğitimi Projesi Örneği"*  
Sezen Ünlü, Sevil Uzoğlu Bayçu, Yavuz Tuna
- *"Değerler, İletişim Davranışı ve Politik Katılım"*  
Çev: Bahar Eroğlu Yalın
- *"Turkish Pr Agencies' Point Of View About Corporate Reputation"*  
R.Ayhan Yılmaz, İdil Karademirlidağ

## Postmodernism, Consumption and Fashion: “The Representation Of Ideal ‘Men’ Throughout The Fashion In Turkish Magazine Advertisements”

Uğur Batı

### **Abstract**

*Fashion is a pattern site to improve an apprehension of the representation of gender roles portrayals and self through appearance expression. It represents contingently, the most simply observed indication of ‘gender in portrayals’. This paper explores the prominence of fashion consumption for males as semiotic markers for expressing self and social communication in order to lay stress on the increasing fragmentation, necessities in state of belonging of this postmodern market and the role of consumption practices as cultural markers. In this paper the advertising industry’s representation of ‘ideal men’ throughout the fashion was examined in four popular men’s magazines such as Esquire, FHM, Max, and Boxer. As the conclusion of the content analysis conducted for the study, we stated advertising sets double–standard for the male gender that is portrayed in vastly different ways. Ads that target men in fashion advertisements still portray men as powerful and dominating creatures and point to traditional aspects of masculinity. On the other hand, some other advertisements targeted men with obsessed with self–image and lifestyle whose good looks can be seen as slightly womanly. The study revealed that contemporary man is characterized by both traditional and contemporary new images.*

Key words: Fashion, postmodernism, ideal men images.

**Öz: Postmodernizm, Tüketim ve Moda: "Türk Dergi Reklamlarında 'İdeal' Erkeğin Moda Üzerinden Temsili"**

Moda pratikleri, cinsiyet rollerinin görünümü ve kişiliğin görünüm yoluyla nasıl temsil edildiğinin anlaşılabilmesi noktasında en önemli araçlardan biridir. Bu araştırma moda tüketiminin, kültürel bir değer arz eden postmodern tüketim pratikleri içindeki parçalanma ve aidiyet ihtiyaçları paralelinde erkek cinsiyetin kendini ifade etmede ve sosyal iletişim kurmada nasıl gösterge değeri taşıdığını ve bunun sonucunda moda imgelerinde ideal erkek imajlarının ne şekilde gerçekleştiğini söz konusu etmektedir. Araştırmada reklamcılık endüstrisinin moda yoluyla ortaya koyduğu 'ideal erkek' imajını ortaya çıkarmak için popüler erkek dergileri Esquire, FHM, Max ve Boxer üzerinde bir içerik analizi gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada gerçekleştirilen içerik analizinin sonucu olarak, reklamlarda çok farklı imajlarla temsil edilen erkek cinsiyeti için reklamcılıkta çifte standartlar uygulandığı ifade edilmiştir. İçerik analizi gerçekleştirilen pek çok reklamda, geleneksel ataerkil imajlar doğrultusunda erkek cinsi yetinin hala güçlü ve dominant olarak gösterildiği görülmüştür. Diğer taraftan, pek çok reklamın da geleneksel yaklaşım dışında kişisel görünümleri ve yaşam stili ikonlarıyla bağdaştırılan erkek imajlarının kadın imajlarına çok yakın bir tarzda, hatta daha çok kadın cinsiyeti klişe imajlarıyla sergilen diği görülmüştür. Kısacası, reklamlarda hem geleneksel imajlarla hem de çağdaş yeni imajlarla temsil edilen erkek cinsiyetinin bu bahsedilen çifte standardın sonucu olduğu araştırmada belirtilmiştir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Moda, postmodernizm, ideal erkek imajları.

**POSTMODERNISM, CONSUMPTION AND FASHION:  
“THE REPRESENTATION OF IDEAL ‘MEN’ THROUGHOUT THE FASHION IN  
TURKISH MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS”**

Uğur BATTI\*

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***Anahtar sözcükler:*** Moda, postmodernizm, ideal erkek imajları.

## INTRODUCTION

Men and women akin have been sensible of their appearances for a long time past. It's fact that finding a friend or a partner, a good social life, accomplishment in business affairs, a good impression on different people and many other prominent things are clinched by a desirable appearance. All these attributes are related to communicative quality of fashion practices in essence. Any kind of clothing preferences acquaints with others who we are or who we would like to be-or not to be? Accurately, clothing is the most crucial consumer good which identifies one's personality to others. People array to amuse, to excite, to affect, to attract, to complaint, to protest, to conform, to feel honoured, and so on.

Apart from individual clothing preferences, especially in the mass-consumer society, a system called as fashion gives us great insights into how consumer goods-clothing for us- can be used to create an image of oneself, to make accounts about how we discern ourselves or what we would like to be (Crane, 2003: 11). Furthermore, fashion is essentially a language of embedded with signs and syntax of everyday life. And, it requires an articulate reader to uncover codes and signifiers to create their desirable appearance (Gottdiener, 2005: 306). Meanwhile fashion is not random construct, and it's created professionally by the dynamics of consumer industry which include designers, advertisers, and stage experts and so on. In this context, fashion system is an important cultural phenomena apart from its economic

benefits and it's not astonishing to find that examines of fashion reflect the major breaches within cultural/gender representation theory from the beginning. Changing male image is also can be seen as a cultural response to social change apart from its economic dynamics.

From the second half of the twentieth century, there have been many changes in the fashion system. Fashion extends a great variety of options for people to create and conduct their appearance in the postmodern consumer culture. The nature of fashion suits postmodern culture which constantly alters and lay stress on recentness, newness, ambiguity or illusion of something new, something different, meant that signs and symbols are transient (Burton, 1998: 301-310). The linkages between fashion and postmodernity come from social, cultural and aesthetics area of postmodernity (Kaiser, Nagasawa & Hutton, 1991; Partington 1996). In some aspects, fashion is a constituent feature of postmodernity by the destruction of constant style and creation of the new. Fashion itself is conceded on producing new practices, styles and tastes. It seeks for the new and admired things, while deserting from cliché. Therefore, fashion and postmodernism are like synonymous to create postmodern practices. Especially, with the fragmented and the decentring structure of postmodernity, self is accepted as a problem of it. In related to this, fashion industries highly implicated in the creation of personal self. Then, with this reason and some eco-



conomic necessities, fashion industries segment the marketplace and choose gender by their tastes and desires by the some promotional efforts. Fashion advertisements are in the important place.

Attitudes towards fashion theory are starting to alter as it becomes more popular and clear within the frameworks of cultural studies, communication studies, consumption studies, and sociology. This paper's attitude to fashion and fashion images are in the view of cultural studies. When we look at to the Turkish literature Fashion Theory, we see that the dressed body had suffered from a lack of critical analysis. On the other hand, especially in the West world, researchers increasingly have identified the cultural significance of self-fashioning, including not only clothing but also such body alterations as tattooing and piercing. In this research notion of fashion is limited to clothing, and other consumption practices like body alteration and home décor, etc are not included to analysis. In the framework of above-mentioned premises, in this paper; we aim to provide a comprehensive framework for the fashion practices in postmodern consumption style which is cultural process and symbolic activity. In arguing this issue, we firstly aim to form the link between fashion and postmodern culture. Then we examine an important cultural change that has present to the portrayals of 'ideal' men throughout the content analysis within fashion advertisements of print media.

### **Postmodern Culture, Consumption And Fashion**

Theoreticians who have formed a notion of postmodern society (e.g. Firat and Venkatesh, 1995; Van Raaij, 1993; Elliott, 1994; Baudrillard, 2004) or a late modern society (e.g. Jameson, 1994; Featherstone,

1996; Giddens, 1991), which is distinct in quality from former structure of society which is identified as modern, set consumption as a main aspects of such a society. In relation to this, social theory is nowadays concentrating on consumption as playing a key role in the way the daily life is constructed, and it can be discussed that consumption practices have the central role in giving meaning to life through consumption (Van Raaij, 1993). Furthermore, social theories about everyday life practices including consumption, in recent years, many thinkers like Kellner, 1992; Jhally, 1987; Featherstone, 1996; Bocoock, 1997; Harvey, 1999; Firat, 1991; Jameson, 1994; Baudrillard, 2003 have examined the relationship between consumption and culture. In postmodern cultural theory, consumption practices are accepted as a symbolic activity in general and are not determined as a functional, or use value-based (Bocoock, 1997; Baudrillard, 2003; 2004). Therefore, consumption is nowadays the identification that the consumer does not make consumption decision merely from products' features but from also from their symbolic meanings (see Douglas, 1982; McCracken, 1988; Giddens, 1991; Dittmar, 1992; Gabriel and Lang, 1995). As consumption constitutes a key role in providing values and meanings for the creation of the consumer's personal and social world, so all the promotional activities are identified as one of the prominent sources of these symbolic values and meanings (Elliott, 1994: 159-179). These cultural values and meanings are transferred to components of consumption like brands, fashion, place and these are often used as symbolic resources for the construction of consumer's social worlds (Mick and Buhl, 1992). These symbolic characteristics of consumption propose for the agenda of postmodern self.

Postmodern consumers aim to caress good in distinct and discrete moments by obtaining self images that make them desirable, different, marketable in their daily life (Firat, Dholakia, and Venkatesh, 1995: 40-56). In advanced society, consumers have the ability to divert images and mark different selves by choosing products and services which provides freedom, uniqueness and excitement. This is the way for postmodern consumer to escape from boredom, monotony and cliché. At this point, the notion of fashion discourse is directly related with the notion of postmodern self. The discussion of self is vital subject for postmodern cultural theory. According to the prominent premises of postmodern cultural theory, postmodern self is characterized as fragmented, decentered and commoditized. The self is conceptualised in postmodernity neither as a stable formation nor as a fixed entity which the individual can easily suit (Gabriel and Lang, 1995; Solomon, 2004). In this context, the self is discussed in postmodernity in terms of its place and dominance for social system but also its relation with consumption as something the person creates, partially through consumption (see Giddens, 1993; Gabriel and Lang, 1995; Thomas, 1997; Solomon, 2004; Goulding, 2003). When we look at the relationships among symbolic consumption, postmodernism and self, we have to mention about the importance of fashion.

'Fashion' is a term that is qualified by many different definitions, the great majority of which are personal and generalizing. Fashion theory is complicated and quite deep subject. It takes as its initial point a definition of 'fashion' as the cultural construction of the embodied identity. The terms 'fashionable' and 'unfashionable' are employed to define whether someone or something fits in with the current popular mode of expression. The

term 'fashion' is frequently used in a positive sense, as a synonym for glamour and style. In this sense, fashions are a sort of communal art, through which a culture examines its notions of beauty and goodness. The term 'fashion' is also sometimes used in a negative sense, as a synonym for fads, trends, and materialism (Cumming, 2004: 24). On the other hand, we have to separate fashion and clothing at this point. Fashion and clothing are two distinct notions. Therefore, there is some confusion in terminology between the terms of 'fashion' and 'clothing' that is sometimes used synonymously. It can be said that whatever people wear until it wears out is clothing.

The field of fashion theory is a new one. Fashion studies importantly analyses the role of fashion in society. Academic studies about the field of fashion have really only gained momentum since the 1980s. And, today, fashion is a growing area of international study. Several papers of fashion in the 1990s emphasize on the relationship between fashion and postmodernism (see Gottdiener, 2005; Crane, 2003; *Burton*, 1988; Edwards, 1997; McKenzie, 1998; Kaiser, Nagasawa & Hutton, 1991; Partington, 1996; Wilson, 1990). These papers have suggested the connection between contemporary fashion system and the self concept, fragmentation and customization notion of postmodernity. Postmodern fashion is a call for a tolerance towards different ways of being, life styles and realities. The postmodern sensibility even encourages the experiencing of many different ways of being, not conforming or committing only to a single one with the help of some equipment like fashion. Fashion practices easily allow for an expansion of fragmentation, of fragmented moments of experience and existence in a lifetime. In this way postmodern consumers have an op-

portunity to not commit or conform to any consistent, unified, system, centred, idea (Jay, 1986; Wilson, 1989). Fashion practices are valuable apparatus here for postmodern consumer that recognizes himself/herself as a customizer and a producer of (self-) images at each consumptive moment (Firat et al., 1995). When we look at the theoretical point of view, these papers approach fashion as a commodity thing that shape the body related with the creation of desirable self. But we have to say that we don't interpret the relationship between self and fashion specifically in this paper. This means that this paper's aim is not to reveal that how does fashion shape postmodern self. We only try to uncover the portrayals of male images in fashion advertisements.

#### **Movement of Idealizing Men: 'Mirror Theory and The Idealized Male Body in Fashion Practices'**

Fashion is critically underestimated social factor. It affects not only as an economic agent but also form social practices. The mentioned social practices are about belonging of fashion consumers, life style preferences of consumers, sense of self for consumers. When we think of loyal Donna Karan consumers, Diesel fans, Nike community members, dedicated Armani users; we essentially mention the style and meaning of labelled fashion brands. These brands, their styles and fashion styles in general clearly functions as a how-to-guide to material life and but also as a how to look as ideal portrayals of gender. Fashion brings emphasis to the obvious view of the body. Moreover, fashion brings the justification of image which is seen ideal for different genders. By the fashion images shown in fashion advertisements are significantly strengthened the rigid codes of appearance that fashion creates opportunities for

individuals to construct self as they pleased. Past from early times, female is accepted as ideal consumer in the consumption practices including fashion (see Marchand, 1985; Bocoock 1997; Firat & Venkatesh, 1993). But men now, are part of modern consumerism as women are. It's clear that as new consumers, men's market holds out considerable potential to marketers, as reflected in many publications, web-sites, books etc., related with men. However, from now, traditional approach to the gender and gender identity are no longer same in the consumption. The old gender identity views really are gone (Firat & Venkatesh, 1993: 227-49).

Until now, objectification of women has always been an issue in advertising research. Especially, stereotypical view of woman as an object to focus on beauty is widely used in advertisements until the early times of advertising. For example, women's faces and bodies adorned Coca Cola calendars back in the 1980s and have been employed to sell everything since (Jacobson & Mazur, 1995). The objectification, idealization and sexualization of the males images in advertising have been a subject of examination, too (La-France, 1995; Masse, 1996; Bordo, 1993; Rahlinger, 2002). In relation to this, in recent years, sexual imagery in advertising becomes more garden, more definite, and more explosive especially for men (Kanner, 2004: 26). In this concept, the male body is also subject to aesthetic innovation and commodity upgrading in the fashion images. The advertisers' new approach to the man placed the male body at the centre of self and sexuality. According to this, appearance is essential to this construction of gender portrayals. The redesign of the male looks means looking goods become adds value through fashion. It's about social status, desirability, ur-

ban life necessity. It's a totally transformation of the body into commodity (Finkestein, 1991). When we look at the perspective of new man, new man is not only aware of fashion practices, but an active and seeker in consumption to construct his sense of self (Craik, 1994: 1-16). His self is reflected in some cultural products like in advertising according to the mirror theory of advertising.

### **SAMPLING AND METHODOLOGY**

When we look at the units of analysis, image-clothing ads which manifest iconic structures are analyzed in the fashion magazines. These fashion-clothing images work within a sign system. In the view from this conceptual definition of our paper, this investigation is empirical insofar as the fashion advertisements and sign systems themselves provided us with the crucial facts from which we ultimately established the main concepts of this paper. We have to say that this paper concentrate on specifically images which male readers would be likely to recognize with. Hence, we were not conferring about the portrayal of men in advertisements addressed at women. We only try showing the portrayals of male images in fashion advertisements. This case has proposed for the agenda of the mirror theory examined by Moog, (1990: 35) and Fox, (1984: 329). It asserts that advertising practices and their images are as a mirror of the culture that stimulated it. In terms of research's objectives we think that fashion practices, and consequently fashion advertisements are one of the most prominent way to indicate images that male readers would be likely to identify with. The term gender advertisement in this investigation refers to advertisement still photograph ads featuring gender displays that are designed to sell a fashion product for an advertiser. It does not

refer to ads that only consist of words and/or objects, illustrations, drawings, and cartoons. And, for the purpose of this paper gender is accepted as culturally established categories of sex, such as female or male.

Therefore, in this paper the advertising industry's representation of 'ideal men' throughout the fashion was examined in four popular men's magazines such as Esquire, FHM, Max, and Boxer. These four magazines selected for analysis target an 18-50 year-old male audiences. The number of general interest magazine titles for men, such as our samples FHM, Esquire, Max, Boxer to name a few, has risen from approximately under the past 10 years. Former times, the term 'men's magazine' referred to publications conceived to concern men, such as motorcycle, car, fishing or sport magazines. The new kinds of magazines were addressed directly a male readership, using sexuality and masculinity in general as a promotion tool. It is claimed that it is the expansion in the concept and practice of men's fashion which resulted in the emergence of new style magazines such as our samples aimed specifically at the new style conscious male readership (Edwards, 1997: 5). In the study, advertisements were analysed from the year of 2001 to 2004 representing images of 'ideal' men created by promotion professionals which function as the mirror in society and which male readers could recognize. As the first step of the research, a broad, detailed, and an extensive sample of 301 advertisements are determined to represent how men were portrayed in the fashion advertisements (see Table I). In the second step of the study, the second step was to notice the most prevalent types of men portrayed in the fashion advertisements from our sample and to establish a broad analysis of each type. To

realize this, it is started to group sample advertisements according to patterns that, ultimately, approved us to identify a copy of different types of male images. Furthermore, in that process, far-reaching coding scheme was improved to enquiry the depictions of men's images in the sample. Coding scheme was grounded on the past literature such as Bordo, (1999); Mosse, (1996); Pleck, (1995: 5-12); LaFrance, E. (1995). With the help of this identification, the 301 ads of the primal sample divided into smaller groups that each representing one particular type of man essentially. Following this, each type of images is analyzed to improve a general statement of its main feature through inevitably subjective approach of the group of ads which represented it in the third step. Thus, a small number of representative advertisements were analyzed in greater depth to generate comprehensive data

Although we made some efforts to quantify our data, our findings are attached to our own specific reading of advertising text. And, it has to be said that it is inevitably subjective manner a little. In terms of conceptual definitions of this study, Erring Goffman's (1978) methodology, especially his technique about portrayal of men, women, and their relationships in the advertising page has created some opportunities to gender studies. He indicated how advertising functions to display our notions of gender roles, implying use of visual meanings. In the light of Goffman's analysis (1979: 28-37), we controlled whether women were exist in the ads and, if so, whether they positioned the actual aggregate of space. This is a type of comparison in essence. We also aim to form whether a man or a woman was control the action in accordance with the approach of Goffman. When women were missing from the ads in the sample, we aim

to assume the importance of this exclusion basically. Following to this, according to the analysis of Goffman that consists of nearly 350 advertisements do it clear that gender differences in function and status not only brings over from the daily life to the advertisement practices but may acquire their purest identification there.

In related to this, when we look at the focus of the study, it's seen that this study is specifically designed to explore further kinds of messages prevalent in the fashion advertisements used by men. The following research aims are investigated:

1. The first aim is to examine the prevalent images of men throughout the fashion images.
2. The second aim is to recognise a number of different types of men and lay stress our enquiry on each of these types.
3. What messages are men sent about the importance of body appearance?
4. What messages do the fashion advertisements send men about the how they should become 'ideal' by choosing proper chooses.
5. How does the portrayal of men differ in various fashion advertisements? Do fashion ads seem to portray any contrary images between each other in terms of postmodernism?

In terms of the importance of paper, this text has no claim to supply further statement regarding sexual identification. Moreover, this is a basic way to view images that privileges ideal 'men'. On the other hand, the aim of this analysis was to start investigation on these relations rather than to supply pure answers. Therefore, we believe that this investigation provides crucial contribu-

tions to gender studies for showing how the fashion advertisements can be seen as a mirror of men’s attitudes. Moreover, research is emphasized on in the advertising page representation of male gender is realized.

**RESEARCH AND FINDINGS**

Present studies about man revealed that contemporary man is characterized by popular terms ‘metrosexual’, on the other hand, entrenched, more traditional stereotype of man are called as retrosexuals who are attached to masculinity and sensibility together. In a basic expression, both are clinched to gender debate and when we look at the relative to woman, woman is accepted as man is more like woman (metros) or man who is claiming the difference from woman (retros). The male stereotype has known a real evolution years after years. Males are most often depicted in different ways in advertising. When people think of male images shown in advertising, ideal men have 8 categories with which they are categorized (see Table 2).

Masculine portrayals of men with seventy-four samples are in the first place in the content analysis. We found significant message of male superiority in these advertisements. Man as the metrosexual and man as the erotic images were two prominent category in order. The fourth largest category was the adventurer man, which accounted for 9.63 % of the sample (see Table II). Lastly, the playboy man type accounted for 5.98% or 18 of 301 figures.

**Man as the Metrosexual or Urban Man**

When we try to define men images in advertising, it is seen that advertising sets double-standard for the male gender. This is a

Magazine	Total of Analysed Magazines		Total of Analysed Advertisements	
	n	%	n	%
Esquire	66	25,4	97	32,2
FHM	64	24,7	94	31,2
Boxer	65	25	58	19,2
Max	64	24,7	52	17,2
<b>Total</b>	259	%100	301	%100

**Table 1:** Current advertisements samples

Images of Med Ads	Total of Ads	Portion of Analysed
1.Man as the Metrosexual	61	20,26
2. Masculine Man	74	24,5
3.Man as the Adventurer	29	9,63
4. Man as the Erotic	57	18,9
5. Man as the Playboy	18	5,98
6. Man as the Gent	23	7,64
7. Man as the Yuppie	19	6,31
8. The Lonely Man	20	6,64

**Table 2:** Ideal images of men in the advertisements

real case for past years and then for nowadays. For a very long time the man has represented the power, dominancy, the virility, and the real authority. It is seen that the masculine man in advertising is usually used fairly in active case today. On the other hand nowadays, man also positioned in more sensitive to appearance, more anxious by the image which they are portrayed. This is the man's return to his public in other words. This new male icon which appears with cinema, sport, advertising, TV or magazine is a sign of perfectly new trend now called as 'metrosexuality.' (Salzman, Matathia and O'Reilly, 2006: 95; Flocker, 2005: 179). In the consumer culture dynamics, man has to be coded as a 'real' consumer firstly for economic reasons. Then in our society, physical appearance for a man also became a quintessential point, since it is the initial image which one gives of oneself. Wernick identifies that as an increasing trend to depict male and female not as opposites, but as fluid categories that occupy equivalent places in society (Wernick, 1987, 280-293). We have to make good figure to become desirable and likeable in the eye of society. All these criteria are realized only by consuming. Therefore, metrosexual man is the statement of new male stereotypes who is ready to change his way of life, or of consumption.

When we look at the fashion catalogue advertisements of Jean Paul Gaultier, it's seen that firm touches on sexual politics. Especially, unisex emphasise of the fashion firm is clearly seen. It is a surprise to see Pink Panther theme for menswear show. With pink colour, bubble gum jackets and vivid stylized flower trousers are used for men's wear. Louis Vitton that is another fashion firm in its strong advertising image has shown that man has sophisticated and romantic fashion rendition with elegance plaid

jackets shirts with rippling frills and deep cuffed jeans. In the ads of Hussein Chalayan and Ann Demeulemeester, the collections can be described as 'Act to institution' which is identified as fighting establishment-traditional codes. In these collections, polo shirts with wing tips to the collar and raincoat lapels are the signification of clear spectacle for men.

### **Masculine Man: 'The Man is Man'**

A new trend of metrosexuality is defined as robbing men of their masculinity by man people. In this context, many traditional images shown in many fashion advertisements can be argued that as part of reaction to the recent androgynous portrayal of male figure. With copious fashion advertisements featuring moderately built, 'feminine' males and other fashion advertisements utterly the opposite, in this manner advertisements create an ambivalent interpretation of what it means to be man. It is fact that for advertisements that portray a man as a metrosexual, there is also an offensive portrayal of a man who thinks the traditional masculine definition of man means to be a man. Therefore, the virile, muscular, powerful and invulnerable portrayals of man are one of the most visible ideal man definitions of advertising. In this type of advertising, advertisers clearly say that 'men should act like men' and there is no denying that muscular, hard and powerful images of men in fashion advertisements are for who think that men should act appropriately to their gender. Muscular portrayals of men would be presented in a suggestive sexual style to charm the glance of potential consumers. In addition to this, this type of portrayal of man's body has to be defined as the source of power and being able that controls the action and dominates surrounding space. The clothes worn by the male actors are asser-

tively masculine, and again and again accent a broad shouldered and solid and well-built body shape. The models display a highly masculine independence and assurance, as well as the coding of narcissistic self-absorption. In accordance with this, in fashion advertisements which include muscular notion of male body, it's seen that man excluded woman. It is no surprise that we found some sexual appeals in twenty-five of the seventy-four advertisements in the content sample. Moreover, we saw unspeakable narcissistic content in all of the ads samples. In some of these advertisements- in forty-two advertisements-, there were no women; some of these women were shown who were clinched to the background. Lastly, men and women were not equally featured like the same height, or same amount of space in the advertisements of masculine men.

#### **Man as the Adventurer**

In a 2002 advertisements for Polo Sport, another kind of male image has shown. The advertisement shows two good-looking models as middle aged sailors, on the deck of a luxury boat, both wearing red rain slickers in a struggle against wild nature. In the advertisements both men look competent and self-assured. Moreover, both men are seen to esteem and appreciate each other in the intense way of people who have endeavoured together. Water droplets are seen on their *Polo* slickers – exactly on the brand logo of their slickers- to show togetherness of brand and elements- struggle with nature- in the aim of creation the meaning of the brand. The advertisement is more stress on the men and nature instead of the real product. Above-mentioned image of advertisement is related to 'man is man' category of gender approach. The man as the adventurer often has dominance over the wild nature of his environment. This type of man is seen too

much in the fashion advertising, especially in the sports fashion. Moreover, there is no denying that they are made to attract both male and female consumers. These men's images in the fashion advertising are attached to adventurous, brave, virile and strong characters of men in the eye of society. Rational and independent features of men are also emphasized on to tell men to 'be all you can be' clearly. Generally, the ads in the category of adventurer man, samples had some mild sexual appeal with the swim suits. Most of the ads-nineteen of them- showed a single man, on the other hand, there are couples or groups of couples, but men are focused on especially than women.

#### **Man as the Erotic**

Sexism is a popular theme of men's magazines for women but also for men, and it is believed that this will inevitably produce sexist attitudes amongst the readers. There is possible to find stereotyped image for men nowadays inside the men's magazines. In the 2003 advertisements of *Emprio Armani*, the male model is young with muscular naked body eyes staring straight into the camera, he is rather self-assured. His pose suggests he is the target of objectification. His body looks strong but his facial expression is rather different and inappropriate for a man which is rather girly with his gestures. This man is a ladies man, and he is not ashamed, in fact he is prepared to any type of objectification. This new man is little narcissistic, too who is in love with himself and his target is on his appearance. The men who want to be attracting are capable of leaving the beaten paths wit deviating from old male stereotypes. Just as females are often shown with their sexy bodies, nowadays men have also been depicted with sex appeals. The erotic male image is the stereotype for the ideal man, usually with naked large, muscular



body, well-defined stomach muscles and long, hard arms. The focus of the advertisement is the man's body rather than products which are promoted on the advertisement. It can be said that it is the most visible image of these defined male images.

From the content analysis we conduct is seen that Abercrombie's clothes are regularly featured in teen's and men's magazines. These photos depict young, healthy, supposedly red-blooded young females and males posing in 'action' and generally living what could be considered the 'good life.' It's revealed from the advertisements that the clothing company maintains that despite the "group sex and more" cover teaser, there's nothing wrong. In the process, the idea that men are sexual objects that are around just to please women and also men became bolstered. While advertisers aim to sell their products, gender roles are being pounded into our minds clearly. Our sample contained fifty-seven advertisements portraying the erotic male. In these category' ads, we found significant changes in the treatment of gender relationships. It's not traditional advertisements that portray men as sex object than women. In the thirty-one ads in this category, men and were shown at about the bigger height, existing about the bigger amount of space in the ads, with men guiding the act more than the women. On the other hand, in the twenty-three ads that depicted couples, we found no prominent point that would indicate male sexuality particularly.

### **Man as the Playboy**

Now we have advertisement of Ralph Lauren from 2003 *Esquire* magazine. The model shown in advertisement is a clean-shaven and good looking young man who has long brown hair and looking charming

and perfect. The very attractive man who is pulling his brown hair back gives a nasty look into the camera for all the women. The model inside his clothes looks playful and particularly seen as 'high-quality'. This advertisement looks like to show perfectly evolution of the man in our current society. His glance appears a rather sure man of himself, with the virtually cavalier glance. He is actually like 'play-boy' and ready for all women. Another example is taken from *FHM* that is created for *Roberto Cavalli*. In the ads, there is a group of young people. Camera centrally has focused one of them. He is young, and he is high-quality looking. None of these ads show the man in the work place like this but their depiction of leisure is that of mature success, not youthful excess. Moreover, because of the camera angles, the strong stances, the rugged good looks, and the depictions of success, these ads reinforce the stereotypes of men as playboy, successful, stylish providers. He is clearly sophisticated man attracts women to find irresistible. He likes an effortless dominance over his environment and over the women he encounters. Similar to the message is shown in some other advertisements where men express their desire of pleasure by acting crazily and they are seen as playful and slightly irresponsible. This playful man dedicates his all life energy to the finding way to pleasure. This man is reach and has desire to women, also self-centred. He looks like in the centre of the universe. The man is obviously a sex symbol and displays the playboy stereotypes of the charming and attractive. On the other hand, he can not really belong to any woman. Dominant and central view of this man image is clearly seen. In the beautiful environment of him, especially the image surrounded by high-class women is common stereotype for playboy images.

### **Man as the Gent**

For several years, a new male character has dominated fashion styles as one of the ideal images of man which is presented to the society. It is the man as the gent. The gent as the ideal of contemporary man as someone who cared about clothing style or skin care as much as a woman did. But it is seen that he has also portrayed with some traditional masculine values such as fine whiskies, wines, cigars. He has exactly red-blooded heterosexuality, furthermore. The gent is affluent, polite, upper-class status and gentlemanly courtesy with his dominant heterosexual contents. The gents are confident, stylish and committed to uncompromising quality in all areas of life. The 2003 advertisement for Chanel brand from *FHM* magazine shows the middle-aged, confident, compelling, stylish and handsome model with fashionable and tasteful clothes of Chanel in the green grass under the poplar trees. The actor holds the two glass of wine to offer one of them to his woman. While male model is centrally located in the picture, the blond woman looks to the man meaningfully with big admiration. The actor is so smooth character and accents his unashamedly masculinity and his desire to pleasure with his body position and gestures. As we mentioned-above playboy type can not belong to any woman really. He is the only one who really exists in the picture primarily. Unlike the playboy image of man, this man is not the only one who is really there. In addition to this, 2003 advertisement from Max for Tommy Hilfiger illustrates the man with his arm around a girl who is leaning into his chest. This ad depicts a man as protector, the gent and as a heterosexual. There is an important point about the images of the gent that is encountered in the analysis. When we look at the view of Goffman, in

the 23 advertisements that are depicted couples, it is not found any significant clues about male's dominance. Men and women were equally featured like the same height, or same amount of space in the advertisements. Moreover, there is no representation of competitiveness or representation of patriarchy in these advertisements.

### **Man as the Yuppie or Sophisticated Consumer**

Yuppies (or young urban professionals and young upwardly mobile professionals) is a market segment whose consumers are characterized as self-reliant, financially secure individualists who do not exhibit or aspire to traditional values (Yuppies, [www documents], 2007). Especially from the last decade rich urban professionals has been used as a synonym of Yuppies with the negative associations of this once-homogenous market segment. The new male image which arose since 1980s, was considered to be 'sophisticated consumer' This new man was portrayed in the advertisement which were seen as successful in his career, rich ad high-standards of living with thanks to consumer products like fashion consumption. The yuppie in advertising is showing that he enjoys luxury. In the fashion advertisements which we encountered the yuppie has shown that he is happy and excited about his clothing style. It is asserted that the yuppie appeared to bring together several different features of the other male images. He is like the gent's flavour for the good things in his life, or he has the loner's idiosyncratic, or the playboy's pleasure or irresponsibility.

### **'The Lonely Man'**

It is arguably best known the loner man is the manly cowboys of mythical Marlboro Country. The loner man in advertising is usually portrayed as an individualistic, in-

dependent, durable and hard-wearing. He is dedicated himself to the searching of freedom and special personal space. Indeed, the loner is the best fit for the patriarchal ideology of traditional gender roles. In none of content sample advertisements was woman is found. It is also unrelated with any sexual appeals. The 2004 advertisements from Boxer magazines for Marlboro Clothing Company illustrates that a craggy and rough cowboy is portrayed who is making his affairs. With the background of advertising pictures some signifiers refers to the pleasure of freedom such as horses, grass, trees, and so on. This character is often involved in a light of strong, tough and silent activity. The loner affirms the notion that men, unlike women, do not practice any emotions in essence. Therefore, the loner shows no emotions in the fashion advertisements. His challenge is not related with contemporary affairs like entertainment, career, or something.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It is fact that the primary role of men's style magazines is to advocate and keep going spending amongst its readers, evident through the lay stress on consumption as a means to add the new style first class, elite, and attractive advertising of fashion, and the visual attention paid to commodities. Some academic critiques debate that these magazines represent betterment in media portrayals of gender since they lay stress topics aforementioned considered being exclusively the interest of women. On the other hand others claim that some of these magazines rely on stereotypical portrayals of new men, masculinity and sexual view featuring affluent, good-looking, muscular, and well-dressed men, concerned only in reaching the finer things in their life. While magazines such as *FHM* and *Esquire* are criticized for

sexualizing women's bodies for years, recent considerations about men's magazines are focusing on what these magazines say about men, men's sexuality and men's masculinity. Researchers revealed that the recent popularity of these magazines is a reflection of men's uncertainty over the roles they are anticipated to deduce in postmodern society, at daily life, at work life, and in their relationships. In addition to this, this examination claimed that the presence of the distinct and the contradictory male images like erotic male, masculine male, the playboy, the gent, etc., is because of the necessity to a response to cultural factors related to postmodern consumer culture.

According to the above-premises implications about the images which are portrayed in the fashion advertisements, conclusion of this research can be counted item by item as follows:

- It is noted that expansive use of 'idealized' images of new men associated with desire, leisure, fun, and hedonism of postmodern consumer culture. Fashion images in the advertisements for men are also key reference for new consumption style about men.
- It is discussed that gender portrayals in advertisements bear primary messages about shared meanings are constructed in a society. These cultural norms and values commonly stem from social interactions.
- It is apparent that fragmentation and commodification of products and services, 'men identities' are centred. The article states that fashion consumption is the most visible action of this point.

- Here we can see that the stereotyping of men within these magazines' fashion advertising are portrayed as the metrosexual or urban, as the masculine, as the outdoors, as the erotic, as the playboy, as the gent, as the yuppie, as the lonely man.
- The study revealed that contemporary man is characterized by both traditional and contemporary new images. Then it is also assumed that it is appropriate of postmodern cultural theory's fragmented, decentred, ambiguous approach.
- In today's postmodern consumer society, it is claimed that the target of the objectification is no longer stabilized. This means that the target of objectification is not women as thought traditionally. It is concluded that there is clearly no longer foremost gender identity, no longer fixed ideals about masculinity, femininity, meanings of gender.
- It is concluded that nowadays advertisers commonly accent the sexuality and the importance of physical attractiveness in an attempt to sell fashion products.
- It is evident that fashion advertisements painted an idealistic picture of the well-educated, confirmed bachelor who

appreciates the finer things in life: whisky, music, art, luxury and woman.

- The outcome of the current research advises that fashion advertisements in new men magazines reflect a trend of men's changing gender relations, self image and body movements. This new male body is a desirable, virile, decorative, compelling and fancy, related with fitness, health, action and beauty in fashion advertisements.
- We advocate that ideals of masculinity and ideal of sexuality presented in the fashion advertisements of the research are associated with social interactions. And, it is counselled that these ideals are the traditional and new cultural definition of 'being men'
- It is clear that in commercials, men are portrayed in vastly different ways. We revealed that from study advertising sets double-standard for the male gender. Ads that target men in fashion advertisements still portray men as powerful and dominating creatures and point to traditional aspects of masculinity. On the other hand, some other advertisements targeted men with obsessed with self-image and lifestyle whose good looks can be seen as slightly womanly.

#### **Last Notes**

- A stereotype is a view or a characterization of a person or a group of persons based upon narrow and frequently incorrect assumptions.
- Buckingham claims that in this world, 'real men' are fearless and invulnerable, unburdened by emotion or sensitivity to others.' It's the definition of a become man by many people (1993: 89)

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