

**SYMBOLISM IN PERFUME ADVERTISING:
MYTHS, ARCHETYPES AND COLOURS
THE CASE OF MY WAY BY GIORGIO ARMANI**

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ABSTRACT

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<p>Advertising is a powerful tool for product promotion. As the use of perfumes is in its nature symbolic, meaning that their consumption does not stem from basic needs but from higher level needs such as the Love-, Esteem-, and Self-actualization- needs (Maslow, 1987, pp. 15-22), when promoting hedonic products practitioners must develop creative techniques to connect to their consumers on a deeper level. For this reason, advertisers take into consideration the power of consumers' individual and group identity to connect to their audience, triggering in them affective responses and connections with their products (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). The cosmetics industry relies greatly on building strong and aspirational brand narratives to represent their products, leading consumers to interpret those stories, and consume the meanings behind those products (Ketteman, 2014, pp. 45, 47), leading consumers to construct their identities through consumption (Rokka & Ulver, 2023, p. 17). To build advertising scenarios where the target audience feels represented, and the essence of the perfume is communicated, advertisers include signs and symbols, archetypal characters and allude to ancient myths in their narrative communication.</p> <p>This study aims to analyse the communication and targeting strategy of Giorgio Armani's MY WAY perfume advertisement as a means to gain deeper knowledge on the impact that non-verbal communication has in the persuasive effect of hedonic product advertisement. The chosen research method is Roland Barthe's Mythological system of semiotic analysis, a qualitative research method, taken on from an inductive and iterative approach.</p> <p>The results of the study point that the use of ancient myths, archetypal characters and colour symbology play a crucial role in the communication of character and product identity and the creation of meaning of the MY WAY perfume.</p>	
Key words: Narrative advertising, persuasion, signs, symbols, myths, archetypes, hedonic products	
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1 INTRODUCTION

The worldwide demand for luxury fragrances has increased in the last years owing to the changing lifestyles and the rise in disposable income of consumers (Mordor Intelligence, 2024). The beauty sector is rapidly growing as the popularity of e-commerce and the expansion of multi-channel customer touchpoints grows both online and offline (L'Oréal, 2023). According to LVMH's annual report, in 2021 perfume and cosmetic sales grew by 26%, and it is estimated that this number will increase by 6.34% annually by 2029 (Mordor Intelligence, 2024). Furthermore, with an increasing rise in the middle-class population, the L'Oréal group expects that by 2030 the number of potential customers of the beauty industry will increase by 600 million individuals worldwide (L'Oréal, 2023).

Global video advertising spending is estimated to be of around 191.4 billion dollars, or 176.6 billion euros (Statista, 2024). L'Oréal's global ad spending in 2023 was of 13.36 billion euros (Statista, 2024), from that spending, over 100 million euros were spent on digital, video and print advertisements (MediaRadar, 2024) and these numbers keep increasing overtime. L'Oréal moreover increased their ad spending on YouTube video advertisements in 2018, as they found that YouTube's global reach is a successful tool for consumer reach, brand engagement and return of investment (Rochet, 2018). Since video advertisements on YouTube provide the advantage of supporting long duration videos, it serves as a strategic tool for successful storytelling or narrative advertisements (Yang & Kang, 2021).

Perfumes are cosmetic products that people use in their daily lives as a way to express their identity (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021), improve their self-perception and self-esteem (Lenochová et al., 2012). Moreover, they have the power to influence how people are perceived socially (Croijmans et al., 2021). Because of the nature of the product, being a scent, perfume advertising must appeal to our other senses in order to be promoted. This is achieved by the creation brand narratives and stories which are target-group-focused

(Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 634) and which aim to trigger a fantasy (von, Wachenfeldt, 2018) which aligns to the target group's needs, their self-perception (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021) and the ideal they aspire to reach (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 630). In order to achieve this, advertisers introduce symbols and connoted messages in their communication to connect consumers with identifiable human themes and to sell them "the dream" (Barthes, 1988, p. 176) or the idea of the "good life" (Arnould et al., 2023, p. 2).

Furthermore, to strategically reach target consumers and generate in them affective responses, brands make use of archetypal ideals in their communication (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). These Archetypal ideals, originating from ancient Greek mythology, and later solidified by Carl Jung in the field of analytic psychology (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 11), have now become a useful tactic to align brand values to that of their consumers (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).

The purpose of this study is to analyse the signs and symbols present in the Giorgio Armani MY WAY perfume advertisement in order to uncover their underlying meaning, and to reflect on the relevance of ancient myths and archetypes in hedonic product's persuasive communication. The symbols used in advertising communication contain meanings which support and bring forward the company's image and its commercial goals (Itanghi et al., 2023). Applying semiology as a research method, this thesis aims to uncover the meanings behind the signs and symbols present in the 2023 YouTube advertisement for the MY WAY perfume, make sense of them, and understand how they are used as persuasive methods.

1.1 The MY WAY parfum by Giorgio Armani

Giorgio Armani is an Italian luxury fashion brand which was established in 1975 by Giorgio Armani and Sergio Galeotti, as a high end and prêt-à-porter fashion brand. In 1982, they expanded their line of business by releasing their first fragrance for women called "ARMANI". Their current market strategy and values rely greatly on ethics and sustainability. The firm established a corporate social responsibility department in 2013 and committed to follow a strategic sustainability plan based on three pillars: people, planet and prosperity. The brand has eliminated fur from their clothing collections since 2016, and actively participates and funds social and environmental projects. (Armani Values, 2024.) Giorgio Armani's cosmetics and fragrance line Armani Beauty now belongs to the L'Oréal house, the market leader in beauty products and luxury fragrances (L'Oréal, 2023).

The Armani house focuses greatly on delivering their sustainability promises, and these values have been transferred to the L'Oréal owned cosmetics line Armani Beauty, committedly using responsibly sourced ingredients and

following fair trade principles (Luxferity, 2023). The Armani Beauty line now counts with three refillable perfumes, “MY WAY”, “ACQUA DI GIO” and “ARMANI code”, aiming to minimise waste and their impact on the environment (Armani Beauty, 2024). This initiative comes as a response to the rising in popularity of refillable products (L’Oréal, 2023), as consumers are more environmentally conscious and aware of the harm that certain material waste and over-consumption has on the planet (Kumar et al., 2021).

The MY WAY parfum advertisement (2023) is the latest perfume campaign targeted to women performed by the Italian luxury brand Giorgio Armani, it presents actress and brand ambassador Sydney Sweeney as the face of the brand. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXHc2YHbcnI> the verbal description of the advertisement by the brand on their YouTube channel is as follows:

“Introducing the new MY WAY PARFUM fragrance, embodied by actress and face of the new MY WAY PARFUM Sydney Sweeney. At the heart of the MY WAY philosophy is “I am what I live”, encapsulating a new vision of femininity that is both profound and free-spirited, an invitation to explore new horizons and carve your own path. See the world through Sydney Sweeney’s eyes as she explores new horizons and carves her own path, embodying the spirit of MY WAY.” (Armani Beauty, 2023)



Figure 1. MY WAY perfume print advertisement (Luxferity, 2023).

In this advertisement, actress Sydney Sweeney embodies the qualities of the fragrance and takes the viewer on a journey to Morocco, where her adventures and experiences lead her to an emotion-filled journey that connects her to her true self.

1.2 Research objectives

According to Roland Barthes, an influential French literary theorist and semiotician; everything and anything that we can perceive, are signs. These signs, or symbols, are “readable” and indeed, we are constantly reading them, even unconsciously. Images, actions, gestures, are all signifiers of something, a culture, an emotion, desires, etc. We reflect upon these signs on the daily, both actively and passively, consciously and unconsciously. Reading between the lines of these signs is what allows us to understand our surroundings and the social, moral and ideological values attached to them. The theory of reading these signs is called Semiology. (1988, p. 159.) Semiology is, therefore, the study of signs and meanings, and its purpose is to uncover the meaning and connotation of concepts through interpretation and association (Mazeree et al., 2023).

The purpose of this research is to review how modern perfume advertising makes use of symbolism and mythical concepts as a communication strategy, and to contribute to the understanding of the importance that myths and symbols have in the consumers’ culture. Giorgio Armani’s 2023 YouTube advertisement for the MY WAY perfume is at the core of this semiotic analysis.

According to Müller (2011) the aspects from the data corpus to be chosen for analysis are dependent on the subjective interest, views and knowledge of the researcher. Barthes (1973, p. 95) furthermore highlights that the data set must consider and describe only the elements relevant to the point of view of the analysis and the features which are not associated with the research purpose must be discarded; he calls this the limiting principle of *relevance* in semiotic analysis. Hence, by taking an inductive and iterative approach to the analysis, the motifs to which this study pays importance to, in the scope of the MY WAY perfume advertisement, are the symbolic representations of **Greek mythological characters**, Mark and Pearson’s **archetypal characters, colour symbolism and other relevant advertisement-specific symbols** as meaning communicators and, consequently, as factors of attraction and persuasion towards the target group.

This study aims to gather knowledge and answer the questions that follow.

RQ 1: To what extent is symbolism used as a communicator in the MY WAY perfume advertisement?

RQ 1.1: What mythical Goddesses are personified in the ad?

RQ 1.2: What archetypal characters are personified in the ad?

RQ 1.3: How are colours used to convey meaning in the ad?

RQ 2: Are the archetypal/mythical characters in the MY WAY perfume advertisement an important factor of persuasion?

RQ 2.1: Who is the target audience of the MY WAY perfume??

In this study the terms **sign**, **symbol** and **myth**, with their respective *-ology* are used interchangeably to allude to concepts which bear meaning; as Ferdinand de Saussure, renowned Swiss linguist and semiotician, includes in his description of “sign” the terms symbol, index and icon (Itanghi et al., 2023), further followed by Roland Barthes’ (1973) addition of the term myth as an extended concept of “the sign”.

1.3 Structure of the study

This thesis is comprised of five chapters. The first chapter serves as an introduction to the topic and justification for the study. The literature review consists of two sections. Chapter number two point one (2.1) presents first the field of advertising in a general light, which is then followed by the topic of narrative advertising, also known as storytelling. Consequently, the concepts of consumer’s self-schema and consumer culture are studied from a social constructionist point of view. Chapter number two point two (2.2) focuses on topic-specific advertising techniques and presents in its sub-chapters the motifs which lay the bases for the development of the semiotic analysis. Chapter three (3) introduces the research methodology, followed by the conduction of the research and discussion of the findings in Chapter four (4). Finally, in Chapter five (5) the conclusions of the study are drawn, the theoretical implications of the study are reviewed, the research questions are answered, and the limitations of the study are evaluated as well as providing directions for further research. No Artificial Intelligence tools have been used to support the research nor execution of this Master’s thesis.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter the core literature needed to answer the research questions is presented. First, a global view of the advertising field and its best practices is studied, then the topic of narrative advertisements is reviewed and finally, consumer culture and consumer identity are introduced before narrowing down the research to understand perfume advertising techniques and the symbolical elements used in their communication to persuade consumers.

2.1 Advertising

Advertisements have been present throughout history. Until the invention of print, advertising was done through word of mouth, it was not until the 19th century that print advertising became a customary practice (Britannica, 2023). Since then, advertising's presence has grown and taken form through different mediums both offline and online, allowing firms to communicate their messages and differentiate themselves in today's highly competitive global market. Different forms of advertising are dependent on the channel and device where it is reproduced (Rodgers & Thorson, 2012, p. 4).

Marketing communication has become more complex after the emersion of new digital media, these emergent channels have made possible new strategic branding efforts. New media technologies such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok to name a few, have shifted both business and market dynamics, brands now are more involved and can reach higher competitive positions in the market. Through these new channels, customer power has also increased. (Park & McMahan, 2021.)

The field of advertising falls under marketing as a subcategory, it is presented in McCarthy's marketing mix as belonging to the 4th "P", the promotion of a product or service (Rodgers & Thorson, 2012, p. 4). Although various scholars believe that

McCarthy's framework is outdated and today's market requires the consideration of additional variables in the marketing mix, such as the Booms and Bitner's 7P model (Mir-Bernal & Sadaba, 2022). The element of promotion of the product, however, remains to be the aspect of marketing most visible to consumers, its role is to inform consumers of the existence of the product (Baker, 2012), generating positive attitudes towards the products, influencing consumer's opinion, persuading the buyers (Darmawan & Grenier, 2021), gaining economic positioning (Jain, 2013), and conditioning the consumer's perception of the product and of the brand promoting it (Baker, 2012).

Effective advertising emerges from focus on attention, brand communication, and evoking emotional and behavioural responses (Nyilasy and Reid, 2019). Advertising messages, moreover, serve as means for brand building and brand awareness, through the construction of images and concepts in the eyes of consumers, generating leads, attracting consumers who are willing to purchase, driving purchase of already interested consumers and changing life behaviours, such as promoting healthier habits or promoting better products (Rodgers & Thorson, 2012).

The techniques used in advertisement, although varying in levels of creativity and innovativeness, often share the same goal: to influence the consumer's thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs about a product (Fuchs et al., 2014). When designing advertisements, innovativeness and artfulness are key (Nyilasy and Reid, 2019), however, advertisers must align their creative process with the company's marketing objectives and characteristics of the target audience (Sudi, 2024). Advertisers want consumers to think about their products in the way that they intend to, and they achieve this by incorporating complex yet relatable messages in their communication (Fuchs et al., 2014). It is crucial to consider advertising's historical background, tactics and approaches when creating new advertisements, as consumer's attitudes shift over time and resistance to advertisements develops (Nyilasy and Reid, 2019).

This field, however, is not considered a "pure" science, it emerges from the combination of borrowed theories from scientific fields such as psychology, sociology and biology (Rodgers and Thorson, 2012). Advertising is a discipline that hovers between the scientific field and the artistic field, between logos, research, and myth, creativity (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 23). It is a highly subjective field, and advertisement outcomes are not always predictable, which causes practitioners to differ oftentimes with academics regarding what are the best advertising practices. (Nyilasy and Reid, 2019)

Advertising wields power beyond its commercial purposes, it represents the epitome of modern language; advertising messages are rich in both classical and modern cultural references (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 17), they are platforms that visually express culture, society (Page, 2006), political and historic

knowledge and understanding (Müller, 2011, p. 286). Advertisements are continuous melting pots where inherited and emerging culture converge (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 17). Over time, images in advertisements become historic material which serve as sources of information and contribute to building new forms of expression (Müller, 2011, p. 286).

The use of celebrities in advertisements as forms of value communication is common in the industry (Itanghi et al., 2023). It has been shown that using credible and reliable endorsers in advertising increases trust and believability of the advertised message and increases purchase intention (Mustapha & Issa, 2021). Celebrity endorsement in advertisements is a common strategy (von Wachenfeldt, 2018), and one of the most regularly used (Mustapha & Issa, 2021) to communicate product value and align the already existing image of the influencer to the properties that the brand wants to be associated with (von Wachenfeldt, 2018). Therefore, HR and Marketing departments, when looking for brand ambassadors, search for candidates who embrace the brand and company values to ensure a brand-building behaviour from the part of the chosen influencer (Al-Shuaibi et al., 2016).

2.1.1 Narrative advertising and Storytelling

Advertisements are a form of communication greatly reliant on storytelling; this storytelling is referred to in literature as narration. A narration is a representation of a happening, real or fictitious, carried out by an individual in a given space and time. Narrations communicate a happening (the story), told from a specific point of view (the discourse) (Fernández et al., 2014). Advertisements often follow the Aristotelian rhetoric of "*The Art of Rhetoric*" which distinguishing the presence of three aspects in storytelling: "the logos (rational argumentation), pathos (emotional appeal) and ethos (the image and the expression of the orator)" (Fuchs et al., 2014).

Knowing that the elements that constitute an advertisement are built upon the bases of storytelling, advertisers structure ad storylines in accordance with a chosen dramatic intensity, aligned with the goal of the campaign (Fernández et al., 2014). Narrative advertising aims to trigger mental stimulation, empathetic processing, transportation and identification of the audience (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). Furthermore, narrative advertisements prompt consumers to imagine themselves living the life portrayed in the stories, performing the actions advertised and visualise potential scenarios derived from using the products (Chang, 2012, p. 242, 244).

Images present in advertisements, may that be still or moving, are strong influencers of behaviour; packed with symbols, images have the power to enter the receptor's mind through an unconscious and emotional route (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 147), referred to as the "peripheral route" to persuasion in Petty and Cacioppo's (1983, pp. 3-5) *Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion*. Claiming

that attitude change occurring through the peripheral route, the first of the “two-routes to attitude change”, takes place via the association of positive or negative thoughts towards the message, or through evaluating information by means of simple decision rules, without the need to engage in any extensive issue-relevant thinking (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983, p. 4). Verbal messages, naturally more rational than the latter, generate more resistance in the audience as they are processed through the second “central route” to attitude change. Through this path, the change in attitude or behaviour is a result of thorough consideration and evaluation of issue-relevant information (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983, pp. 3-5). Cognitively, messages processed through the emotional or peripheral path generate less resistance than those processed through the central path (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 147).

Furthermore, the persuasive effect that stories produce on the audience can be explained through the narrative transportation theory, which states that when a consumer is immersed in a story, narrative processing largely predominates over critical analytical processing, inducing an increased amount of positive affective responses and fewer number of negative thoughts (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021), as the messages appeal to the emotions, pre-conceived notions of the mind (Fuchs et al., 2014) and the self-concept of consumers (Chang, 2012, p. 249).

Storytelling is at the core of brand building; stories serve as means to attach value to products in the eyes of the consumer. The product is simply the “conduit” through which those stories can be experienced. (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021.) Advertisements paint big promises to convey the feelings represented in the stories, therefore consumption of the product signifies consumption of the emotion being sold (Page, 2006). Vincent (2002) furthermore implies that consumers possess an individual identity as well as a personal narrative, because of these personal narratives shaped as a “script” of their lives, consumers tend to match and utilise brand narratives as means of fitting them to their own personal narrative. Sarkowsky (2018, p. 7) calls the conceptualization and construction of these narrative identities as “life writing”, while Thompson et al. (2023, p. 283) calls them identity projects. When done well, a brand story aligns the plot and the characters with the values of their target group through relatable events or characters, or through notions which the target group perceives as aligned to their self-image (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).

2.1.2 Self-schema and consumer culture

Self-schema is an individual’s cognitive generalization, or perception, about themselves, it results from the mental organisation and categorisation of one’s past experiences. It acts as a basis for future decision-making, influences, judgments or predictions about the self and is useful for understanding consistent patterns of behaviour which relate to the individual’s descriptions of themselves. (Markus, 1977.) An individual’s self-schema can make them, in persuasive communication, particularly responsive to arguments pertinent to their self-

conception, evaluating arguments which fit their self-schemata as more persuasive than others (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983, p. 9).

The term consumer culture is defined as a system of meanings deriving from material, economic, social and symbolic relationships in the market which provide consumers with a set of values, norms and ideals that influence their perceptions of what is attractive, desirable or cool, serving as a reference for what it means to have a “good life” and as means of ascribing meaning to who they are and what they do (Arnould et al., 2023, p. 2). These meaning systems are diverse and depend on social factors such as social classes, generational groups, gender identity (Arnould et al., 2023, p. 2) and self-schema (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983, p. 9). Consumers work together, unconsciously, to create culture through consumption; they are active co-creators of value and meaning for brands (Cava et al., 2023, p. 99).

From a social constructionist point of view, Kettelman (2014, p. 46) states that consumption has become a central signifier in our lives and therefore is one of the main sources for identity creation. Rokka & Ulver (2023, p. 17) further add that consumption is a social practice that allows individuals not only to construct and express their identities but also to communicate social distinctions, establish social connections and assigning meaning to products and experiences. People do not only consume goods, but they also consume meanings, representations of items that have been previously agreed on by society (Kettelman, 2014, pp. 45, 47). These systems of meaning creation were anteriorly presented by semiologist Roland Barthes (1973, p. 41) inspecting the idea that daily-use objects, which in themselves do not intend to signify anything, are signifiers of something e.g. a raincoat, mere piece of clothing, signifies a meteorological phenomenon, rain. Kettelman (2014, p. 47) expands this thought to the social implications of the current consumption of goods; people consume certain products and brands to construct their identity in society, and to communicate their self-schema to the world.

An example of this phenomenon is seen, for instance, in an individual with a need for a warm coat. This individual could choose to buy the product from a brandless store, which would satisfy the need for a coat. However, if the individual belongs, or desires to belong, to a social group made up of people who enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, climbing, camping etc., the individual will likely purchase from a brand such as *Carhartt* or *Dickies*, as these are brands used by members of that social group. On the other hand, an individual who cares for urban fashion, might choose *The North Face* or a *Napapijiri* coat as means to display their identity and social status within their social group and others. These cases portray how different brands serve as identity signifiers in society. Ultimately, the individuals are buying the same product, a coat that satisfies their primary need for warmth, but through their purchase they are choosing a brand that fits best their own representation of their identity, based on social constructs, status and current trends.

Marketing and advertising practitioners explore and create consumer identities, which later are communicated through marketing channels, consumers then imagine and redefine these identities and adapt them to their own identity (Rokka & Ulver, 2023, p. 17). Hence, consumers utilise material and symbolic products available in the market to communicate their constructed identities (Crockett & Weinberger, 2023, p. 80) These identity “negotiations” between brands and consumers are magnified and facilitated by the presence and use of digital media, causing symbolic meaning to be created in consumer culture at an accelerated speed (Rokka & Ulver, 2023, p. 17).

Perfumes are products perceived socially only through smell. The brand image of the luxury product is not visible when it is worn; what is perceived is the aroma it produces, which allows for the creation of identity through smells (Croijmans et al., 2021). Since the perception of smells and its influence in identity creation and perception is highly reliant on biology, it will not be covered further in this business faculty research, the spotlight will alternatively be on the sociological and symbolical motifs that advertisers utilize to connect to their consumers emotions.

2.2 Advertising perfumes

Perfumes fall into the category of symbolic or hedonic products, these products fulfil internally generated needs such as needs of expression of the self, social identification, status etc. (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021) Moreover, the need for these luxury products does not stem from basic needs, but from psychological needs (Xu, 2020) Based on Abraham Maslow’s “*The Basic Need Hierarchy*” the need for symbolic products is made evident in the higher-level needs of “Belongingness and Love-”, the “Esteem-” and the “Self-actualization-” needs (Maslow, 1987, pp. 15-22).

Perfumes are used to cover body odours and to enhance one’s own natural smell. Its use has been proven to influence the wearer’s self-esteem, self-perception and self-consciousness (Lenochová et al., 2012), additionally, odours and perfumes can influence how a person is perceived individually and socially (Croijmans et al., 2021). Different odours bear social meaning and can cause either avoidance or attraction and have the potential to cause prejudices or incite intimacy (Largey & Watson, 1972). Recent research on the human’s sense of smell shows that body odours are influential in social communication through chemosignaling. These chemical messages relayed through body odours, allow for the detection of stable trait characteristics (e.g. gender), personality traits (e.g. introversion, extraversion, dominance), hormonal fluctuation (e.g. ovulation, testosterone), and illness detection. (Croijmans et al., 2021.) Chemical communication of olfactory messages, however, tends to be relayed unintentionally by the emitter and unconsciously processed by the receiver (Dal Bò et al., 2020). The perception of olfactory

communication is, furthermore, relative to an individual's overall odour awareness, which varies greatly between people and culture (Croijmans et al., 2021).

Brands whose products are symbolic must design their marketing efforts to appeal to the self- or group- schema of their customers; made possible by aligning the target group's values to their communication strategy, creating an atmosphere in which the customer can relate with the product and the brand image (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). Since perfumes are products which cannot be perceived through the advertising medium, the personality of the aroma must be brought to life through connection with an individual's identity and the creation of idyllic scenarios (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 634).

2.2.1 Perfume communication

Luxury beauty brands understand the power of identity and play with it in their advertisements. Quoting Page (2006, p. 99): "*Meaning construction exists inside our self-image and we constantly recreate it... something in the ad signifies us... through this process we also create ourselves. In fact, a history is being constructed.*". Luxury houses highly focus on strategies of personalisation of commodities in their marketing efforts, they communicate with intensified effort on "what the I worships" considering the "I" as a symbol of strong self-image that is to be shared and appreciated, simply, like in L'Oréal Paris adverts, "Because I am worth it" or in Louis Vuitton advertisements, "I don't walk behind, I find a new path" (von, Wachenfeldt, 2018).

When advertising perfumes, a visionary world is created, an ideal which fits the image of the luxury brand, and which communicate an **experience of the senses**, formed by the hyperbolised concepts of pleasure, love, attraction, adventure etc. which are easily perceived and relatable to the consumer. (von, Wachenfeldt, 2018) To communicate such complex notions, perfume advertisements make use of complex audiovisual language to communicate aspirational and transcendent messages, to evoke desires and dreams (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 15, 16). Advertisers aim to create a superlative ideal, a meaning in their products that customers will relate to or aspire to reach. The representation of the concepts presented in perfume advertisements connect the consumer with the experience of being a human, communicating a desire to play, to fall in love, to discover and to experience life, triggering a fantasy and a need for the viewer. (von, Wachenfeldt, 2018.)

The diverse narratives painted in advertisements, serve to envision and bring to life the aroma of the product (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 634). This is often achieved through **anthropomorphism**, transferring human qualities to product's features; if the protagonist is adventurous, so is the product (Page, 2006). The use of double meanings is useful in the creation of advertising messages as they aid the creation of short messages with strong arguments through the use of rhetoric, such as figures of style, puns, turns of phrase etc. (Barthes, 1988, pp. 175-

177). This is further achieved using metaphors, connotation and myths in advertising (Ketteeman, 2014). These connoted messages connect consumers with human themes and assist in selling them “the dream” (Barthes, 1988, p. 176). Furthermore, advertisements can reach an outstanding level of memorability, which carries with it undeniable cultural consequences (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 29).

2.2.2 Myths and archetypes

Brands make use of archetypal ideals to construct their brand narratives and to connect with their consumer’s emotions, evoking a state where the consumer feels represented as “protagonists” of the stories (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). Specifically, perfume advertisements look to connect their consumers with an aspirational identity or ideal through the model’s behaviour and actions on screen (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 630). Moreover, research has shown that assigning archetypal identities to brands serve as strong means of persuasion and brand recognition (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).

Ancient Greeks developed through their mythology a series of archetypes associated to their Gods and Goddesses. In ancient Greek, the word mythology is formed by combining the words mythos and logos (Murray, 1988, p. 7) referring to the act of speaking the tales and stories of men, women, gods and goddesses (Rutter & Singer, 2015, p. xix). This pantheon of deities embodied characteristics which were most desired, valued and looked up to in their society (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 61), or the adverse (Murray, 1988, p. 10), and reflected the structure of their observed reality (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 61). Deities served to give explanations to the ever-fluctuating state of nature, earth, sky and sea (Murray, 1988, p. 9). Furthermore, the behaviours, motivations and intentions of human beings was additionally associated to the deities who governed those given aspect of life (Rutter & Singer, 2015, p. xix) which led to men and women to turn to deities with offerings and sacrifices to express their gratitude for blessings, or to seek for help and guidance in times of need (Murray, 1988, p. 9).

The main Greek goddesses in mythology (Higginson, 2007, p. 201), and the most represented in perfume advertising (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 629) are Artemis, Goddess of the reproductive power in nature (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112), Athene, Goddess of battles (Murray, 1988, pp. 89, 90), Aphrodite, the Goddess of love (Murray, 1988, p. 83), Hera, Goddess of storms (Murray, 1988, p. 47, 48), Hestia, Goddess of all homes (Higginson, 2007, p. 200), Demeter Goddess of the earth and fertility of earth (Murray, 1988, p. 55, 69) and Persephone the Goddess of the underworld (Murray, 1988, p. 64). However, a Goddess less present in archetypal studies of divine representations in advertising is the primeval Goddess Hemera, or Eos, Goddess of day (Woodward, 2007, p. 86).

Table 1. Greek Goddesses.

Greek Goddesses	Governing areas
Artemis	Goddess of the reproductive power in nature, divine personification of the moon carer and nurser of children (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112) She represents freedom and youthhood (Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167), independence and emotional autonomy (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631) restlessness, strength, determination and coldness (Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167). She has a love of nature and the freedom which comes with that connection (Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631)
Athene	Goddess of battles and divine personification of the mind (Murray, 1988, pp. 89, 90) born from the brain of Zeus, she carries with her the highest form of intelligence and the power to educate mankind to, after war, enjoy peace and what gives life beauty (Higginson, 2007, p. 167; Murray, 1988, p. 88, 92). She symbolises a more mature woman, passed her “nymph” years, she shows loveliness and strength (Higginson, 2007, p. 167), she is pure and gentle (Murray, 1988, p. 90), non-dependant and wise, virtuous and charming (Higginson, 2007. p. 167).
Aphrodite	Goddess of love (Murray, 1988, p. 83) she represents love and virginity (Higginson, 2007, pp. 198, 199), sensuality, creativity, generosity, naturality, self-fulfilment and the archetype of the perfect woman (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 629). She is passionate and her power comes from her modesty; flowers represent her in the time of April (Higginson, 2007, pp. 198, 199).
Hera	Goddess of storms, queen of heaven and faithful wife of Zeus (Murray, 1988, p. 47, 48), is the protector of marriage, she represents beauty and mastery and sets the bases for Greek values and practices (Higginson, 2007, pp. 199- 201). She is jealous and angry; storms were often linked to her, caused by the fights taking place between the divine couple (Murray, 1988, pp. 46, 47).

Hestia	Goddess of all homes (Higginson, 2007, p. 200) and the Goddess of the pure element, fire (Murray, 1988, p. 72), sworn to remain a virgin until the end of times, she represents the fire that keeps cities warm, safety, protection “the power of sublime motherhood” and virtue (Higginson, 2007, pp. 200, 201). She is the guardian of family life (Murray, 1988, p. 71).
Demeter	Goddess of the earth and fertility of the earth (Murray, 1988, p. 55, 69) she symbolises motherhood, and is responsible, together with her daughter Persephone (Murray, 1988, p. 64), for the change of seasons and of providing food to the nation (Higginson, 2007, p. 200) through fruits, vegetables and grain (Murray, 1988, p. 55). Additionally, she is the Goddess responsible of teaching mortals the art of agriculture (Murray, 1988, p. 66).
Persephone	Goddess of the underworld (Murray, 1988, p. 64) and daughter of Demeter (Higginson, 2007, p. 200; Murray, 1988, p. 62). She is the divine personification of the process of blooming and vegetation, appearing in spring next to her mother Demeter, and disappearing in autumn when she was sent back to the underworld (Murray, 1988, p. 63). She represents youth, sensibility and coming of age (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631).
Hemera / Eos	Goddess of Day (Woodward, 2007, p. 86) Goddess of all the stars and mother of the early morning winds (Hard & Cuenca, 2023, p. 88). She represents the light of day, the beginning of a new day, and that of the aurora, personified by the paint-like colours of the sky appearing as having “Rose Fingers” and a “Saffron Dress” (Hard & Cuenca, 2023, p. 86)

Women observed and worshiped these goddesses as great ideals to follow and identify themselves with in different stages of their life: youth, love, marriage, motherhood, fertility, protection etc. (Higginson, 2007, p. 202). And to this day, these ideals are recognised and looked up to in modern advertisements.



Figure 2: J'adore by Dior print advertisement (IMDb, 2024).

The myth of Aphrodite can be recognised for example in Dior's perfume advertisement for J'adore (Figure 2.), reminding the viewer of the myth of the goddess of love, beauty, femininity, and seduction, a woman who is admired both by men and by women (Fernández-Fernández et al., 2014), embodying the prototype of the ideal woman (Madero-Milla, 2019). Furthermore, the perfume bottle resembles the hourglass figure of a woman's body, which serves as an identity attribution of sensuality to the personality of the scent (Fernández-Fernández et al., 2014).



Figure 3: Bloom by Gucci print advertisement (IMDb, 2024).

Another example of the representation of a mythical goddess can be seen in Gucci Bloom's perfume advertisement (Figure 3.), representing a parallelism with the

Goddess Persephone, known to be the representation of blooming, vegetation, youth and the underworld. The advertisement incorporates spring-like scenes where flowers, and vegetation cohabit in the surrounding, an in interaction with the actors. Although not visible in the print ad, the chosen song to accompany the video spot resembles the mythical tale that recounts the story of Persephone's abduction in the hands of Hades, the God of the Underworld, causing an eternal winter on earth. (Madero-Milla, 2019.)

These myths and archetypes which emerged from Greek mythology, although remaining present and sometimes unchanged in modern advertisements, reached our modernity once philosophy dove into a more rational plane of thought, the logos. This shift began with Socrates' (470–399 AC) detachment from emotional and intuition-based thinking towards the scope of logical reasoning to explain reality. This line of logical reasoning continued through Socrates' disciple, Plato, with his "Theory of Forms" and later actualized with Aristotle's transition "from myth to logos" consolidating the bases of understanding reality, no longer relying on mythology as means of justifying the world but focusing solely on the rationale. (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 61, 62.) These archetypes however, although of ancient origin, have remained significant in our culture (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 11), the archetypes that came to life in Greek mythology remain present in modernity, although adapted to modern needs (Rutter & Singer, 2015, p. xx).

The desire to look back to myths had major influence in the analytic psychology field thanks to Carl Jung's theories of the archetypes; he describes archetypes as concepts which are imbedded in the human mind and serve as basic structures to explain reality (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 11). Furthermore, Jung, as explained by Ganassali & Matysiewicz (2021, p. 444), describes archetypes as "*primordial inherent patterns and psychological structures shared by all human beings, deriving from the universal collective unconscious and reflected in symbols, images and themes*", they are individual representations of ideals, from a specific world view, which give life meaning (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021, p. 444), and are collectively inherited and stored in the unconscious (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 11). Archetypes are not static, human nature lays completely on archetypal grounds and influences our psychology (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 67), they serve as a universal language to define human aspirations (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021, p. 444). Fairytales and myths, amongst others, are medium by which archetypes are communicated and imbedded in people's minds (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021, p. 444), popular myths have been created and transmitted through art and literature throughout time because of the undeniable attraction that they exert on individuals and the attention they pay to the mystique of human life (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 11).

Barthes (1973, pp. 121, 130), moreover, infers that myths are derived from an existing historical foundation, and with them comes no fixity; myths can be created, modified, dissolved and entirely erased. Rutter & Singer (2015, p. xxii,

xxiii) explain through a phenomenon they call “recombinant visionary mythology” that mythological aspects originating from different cultures have today merged and become new myths in our modern world, supporting the view that myths are not static, and change overtime.

Marketers have considered and simplified Carl Jung’s archetypal theories and adapted them to the marketing and branding fields (Thompson et al., 2023, p. 255). Mark and Pearson (2001) presented an archetypal framework (Table 2.), consisting of 12 archetypal characters which connect with four universal human desires: leaving a mark on the world, yearning for paradise, providing structure to the world, and connecting with others. (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021, p. 446.)

Table 2. Mark and Pearson’s (2001) Archetypal characters (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021, p. 446).

Universal human desire	Leave mark on the world (risk and mastery)		
Archetype	Hero	Magician	Outlaw
Core Desire	Proving worthiness through courage and action.	Understanding fundamental laws and how the world works.	Revenge, revolution.
Goal	Exercising mastery and improving the world.	Making dreams come true.	Destroying everything what is not working.
Strategy	Being strong, competent, powerful.	Developing vision & living it.	Disrupting, destroying, shocking others.

Universal human desire	Yearning for paradise (independence and fulfilment)		
Archetype	Explorer	Sage	Innocent
Core Desire	Free to find the self by exploring the world.	Discovering truth.	Experiencing paradise.
Goal	Better, more authentic, fulfilling life.	Using intelligence & analysis to make sense of the world.	Happiness.
Strategy	Journey, experience, escape from boredom.	Seeking information & knowledge, being self-reflective.	Doing things right.

Universal human desire	Provide structure to the world (stability and control)		
Archetype	Creator	Ruler	Caregiver
Core Desire	Creating something of value.	Exercising control.	Protecting people from harm.
Goal	Giving form to a vision.	Creating a prosperous, successful family/ company.	Helping others.

Strategy	Developing artistic control & skill.	Exerting at leadership.	Doing things for others.
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Universal human desire	Connect with others (belonging and enjoyment)		
Archetype	Everyman	Jester	Lover
Core Desire	Connection with others.	Live in the moment with full enjoyment.	Attain intimacy, experience sexual pleasure.
Goal	Belonging and fitting in.	Having a great time and lighting up the world.	Forming relationships with others, work, experience, surroundings.
Strategy	Develop solid virtues, common touch, blending in.	Play, jokes, fun.	Becoming more attractive.

According to Table 2., there are three representations of archetypal characters for every human desire. The three archetypes associated with the desire to (1) **leave a mark on the world** are (I) the **Hero**, improving the world and exercising mastery through action and courage, (II) the **Magician**, bringing dreams to life through a deep understanding of the world, and (III) the **Outlaw**, destructor of systems not aligning to his views through revolution or revenge. The associated with the desire of (2) **yearning for paradise** are (I) the **Explorer**, seeking for a fulfilled and authentic life through exploration and finding of the individual self, (II) the **Sage**, wanting to understand and make sense of the world through the seek of knowledge and the truth, and (III) the **Innocent**, seeing happiness to reach the heavens. For the desire to (3) **provide structure to the world**, (I) the **Creator** brings their visions to life as to provide value to the world, (II) the **Ruler** creates a successful and prosperous project through leadership and control and (III) the **Caregiver**, helps people in need and protects them from harm. Finally, for the desire to (4) **connect with others**, (I) the **Everyman** looks to belong and fitting in through connecting with others, (II) the **Jester** looks to brighten the mood and having a good time by enjoying life fully, and (III) the **Lover** seeks to bond with others romantically seeking to attain intimacy and seek pleasure.

The archetypal myths presented previously set a clear base to support brands in the construction of archetypal characters (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). When a promotional message includes specific and recognisable archetypal roles, consumers can easily deduct connoted messages and understand brand values and meanings. When the appropriate archetype is communicated, consumers who find that their self- or aspirational- schema aligns to that being communicated will feel identified and reflected, associating the use of the product or service being promoted to the acquisition of the desirable characteristics of the mythical character portrayed in the advertisement. (Thompson et al., 2023, pp. 288, 293.) Making use of these archetypes, selecting the mythical character that best aligns with the promoted brand and product, and introducing

relevant signs and symbols across every aspect of the persuasive strategy, allows companies to connect with their consumers identity projects, resulting in more positive affective responses towards brands and their values (Thompson et al., 2023, pp. 277, 283, 288).

2.2.3 Colour theory and colour psychology

Colour is an essential component of storytelling. Visually linking colour codes to symbolic imagery aids in the creation of cohesive and coherent cinematic pieces (Bernard, 2011). The symbolic use of colours is both an objective and a subjective process and its representations can be linked to traditional usage, modernist usage, as well as to the originality of the artist and how they choose to incorporate it in art and literature to **communicate**, for example, **character and plot development** (Matteson, 1985, p. 35).

Through our vision, we perceive many more things than what we are aware of consciously. To operate successfully in the world, we scan and process different kinds of informational inputs which we receive from our surroundings. The human brain processes around 10 million bits of visual information per second, of which we can only consciously process 40 bits per second, the rest of the information is in turn processed subconsciously. (Kuehni, 2012, p. 18.)

Quoting Buether (2014, p. 7) *“Colour is both a phenomenon and a medium of visual perception and communication”*; colours shape the way in which we experience our environment, and they have the power to convey emotional meaning and information. A study presented in Martin Lindstrom’s (2008, p. 155) book *Buyology* showed that when making a subconscious judgement about a product or a person, within the first ninety seconds of exposure, from sixty-two to ninety percent (62%-90%) of the cognitive product assessment is based on colour alone, influencing the overall perception and reception of the product advertised (Swarnakar, 2024).

Colour results from the interaction of light with our organism (Buether, 2014, p. 7), and it appears as a combination of the polarity of darkness and light (Son, 2023). Colour vision allows us primarily to recognize and identify objects easily and allows us to understand patterns and situations. Moreover, colour vision is beneficial to see colour in nature, art and entertainment environments; faculties which make up a substantial portion of our lives. (Kuehni, 2012, p. 18.) Through colours, subjects can indirectly experience what designers want to express in their art (Son, 2023). The painter Kandinsky stated that colour can be used deliberately to generate a desired “psychic” or emotional effect. Additionally, many researchers have paid importance to the study of affective responses to colours and how their use can influence mood and behaviour (Gonigroszek, 2023). For Son (2023) *“color is not only a visual perceptual phenomenon, but also an emotionally charged psychological phenomenon mediated by the senses”*.

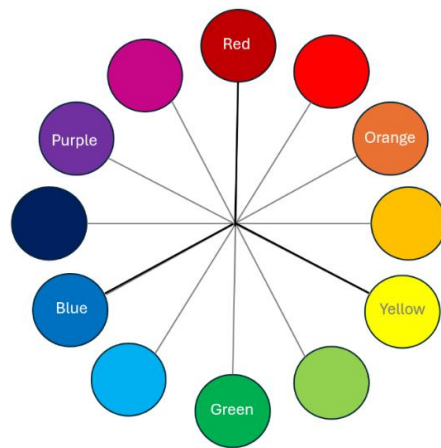


Figure 4. The hue circle (Stone, 2016, p. 257)

The hue circle is formed by a combination of three primary colours Blue, Red and Yellow, three secondary colours formed by combining the primary colours and resulting in purple, orange and green (Stone, 2016, p. 257) and three tertiary colours additionally formed by combining secondary colours (Coates, 2010, p. 9). This circle of colour, or colour wheel, is however a “pragmatic abstraction” as true colour in the “true circle” is invisible to the human eye (Coates, 2010, p. 9).

In colour theory, the term **contrasting colours** refers to colours lying opposite to each other in the colour wheel, these colours, when mixed in paint, form a neutral or grey shade (Stone, 2016, p. 258) they can also be referred to as “opposite colours”. **Analogous colours** on the other hand are the colours presented closer together in the colour wheel. (Stone, 2016, p. 258) The use of analogous colours is pleasing for the eyes, they unify and harmonize a design, opposite to contrasting colours which are exciting for the eye and serve to focus attention (Stone, 2016, pp. 257, 273), they create stable and static image effects in design (Son, 2023). Moreover, the level of brightness and saturation of colours serve to convey different messages (Son, 2023).

Colours have been packed with symbolic associations over millennia from a combination of different cultural values; these associations vary between cultures and time periods (Kuehni, 2012, p. 24). Colour association in media is motivated by the symbolic message which accompanies any given colour (Page, 2006) however, no concrete consensus has been reached regarding the origin of symbolic colour associations as being solely individual, universal or culture-bond (Gonigroszek, 2023). The symbolic use of colours is both an objective and a subjective process, it can be linked to traditional usage, modernist usage, but also to the originality of the artist and its use in art and literature, to **communicate character and plot development** (Matteson, 1985, p. 35).

Different colour schemes are conveying of different messages, guided by the primary colours, red signifies warmth, yellow signifies vibrance and blue signifies

coolness (Stone, 2016, p. 264). Furthermore, the schemes including yellow, and orange represent a cheering energy, giving the impression of warmth whereas dark blue and violet convey lower spirit and sensitivity of individuals (Gonigroszek, 2023).

Table 3. Symbolic meaning of colours.

Colour	Symbolic meaning
Red	Love, happiness, passion, strength, power, excitement, anger, cruelty, jealousy, revenge, war (Kuehni, 2012, p. 14) sensuality, sexuality, the uncontrolled (Bernard, 2011) and energy (Gonigroszek, 2023).
Yellow	Sun, loudness, energy, warmth (Gonigroszek, 2023), courage, kindness, youth (Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024), life, hope and deities (Son, 2023).
Blue	Ideal, an idyllic representation, a dream (Matteson, 1985, pp. 36, 37), emotions, spiritual power, purity of mind (Bernard, 2011), reliability, trust, freedom and youth (Itanghi et al., 2023) emptiness, sorrow, grief and longing (Gonigroszek, 2023) depending on its lightness or darkness blue can signify calmness or deep sorrow (Son, 2023).
Green	Nature, productivity, blooming (Gonigroszek, 2023), peace, fresh air (Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024), safety, renewal, youth (Israilova, 2023) agriculture and a close relation with religion (Mackenzie, 1922, p. 140).
Pink	Innocence (Tait, 2015), femininity, sensitivity, tenderness, charm, sweetness, romance, childishness and vulgarity, power, maturity and solidarity (Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023).
White	Wisdom, purity, art and mysticism (Matteson, 1985, pp. 36, 37), cleanliness, elegance (Itanghi et al., 2023), silence and motionless (Gonigroszek, 2023).
Black	Formality, authority (Elliot & Maier, 2014), elegance (Fung et al., 2022) obscure characteristics (Kaya & Epps, 2004) such as death, sadness (Itanghi et al., 2023), grief, silence, ashes, strong emotions, motionless (Gonigroszek, 2023), suffering, illness, misfortune (Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024).
Gold	Wealth, connection to deities, the divine (Holland, 2005, p. 139) luxury, success, royalty, light (Itanghi et al., 2023) the spirit and holiness (Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024).

Colour psychology as an advertising strategy has the power to communicate a brand's image and personality, attracting or deflecting attention and influencing purchase decisions, ultimately guiding the target audience to act in a desired manner (Swarnakar, 2024, p. 35). The influence that colours have on humans' emotions is one of the key elements of advertising psychology, the consideration not only the colour choice but also of its saturation, hue and tone can have a substantial impact on product selection, brand perception and power of the advertising message (Kokiel et al., 2024, pp. 565, 566). Warm colours, such as Red, Yellow and Orange have the capability to generate accelerated and impulsive buying behaviours as well as attract attention (Kokiel et al., 2024, p. 565), evoking vibrance and urgency (Swarnakar, 2024, p. 36). We can see this in brands such as Coca Cola, McDonald's and Lay's to name a few (Kokiel et al., 2024, p. 567). However, in some cultures this colour might convey anger, in which case it should be carefully used (Swarnakar, 2024, p. 36). Cooler tones such as blue, conveys a level of trust (Swarnakar, 2024, p.37), calmness,

professionalism and logical thinking, that is why many technological companies such as Nokia, IBM, or Samsung primarily use the colour blue in their logos and communication (Kokiel et al., 2024, p. 568). Green communicates well-being (Swarnakar, 2024, p. 37), health and environment, which makes it the first choice for organic food and natural product companies, and for environmental associations such as Greenpeace (Kokiel et al., 2024, p. 569).

The power of colour psychology is vast, and crucial to establish a memorable and recognisable brand identity, create strong emotional bonds with consumers, and communicate desirable messages in the persuasive communication of products and services (Swarnakar, 2024, p. 36, 37).

3 Research design and methods

The research method used for analysis is Roland Barthe's Mythological system as a qualitative research method for the interpretation of signs and meanings. The chosen case for analysis is the YouTube advertisement and the latest perfume campaign performed by the Italian luxury brand Giorgio Armani, the MY WAY parfum advertisement (2023). The 1:28 minute long advertisement presents actress and brand ambassador Sydney Sweeney as the face of the brand and communicator of the message.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXHc2YHbcnI> The company describes the advertisement on their YouTube channel as follows:

"Introducing the new MY WAY PARFUM fragrance, embodied by actress and face of the new MY WAY PARFUM Sydney Sweeney. At the heart of the MY WAY philosophy is "I am what I live", encapsulating a new vision of femininity that is both profound and free-spirited, an invitation to explore new horizons and carve your own path. See the world through Sydney Sweeney's eyes as she explores new horizons and carves her own path, embodying the spirit of MY WAY." (Armani Beauty, 2023)

The video was transcribed by means of screenshots and grouped for analysis according to scenes. These scenes were interpreted following Panofsky's 3 step method for visual interpretation (Müller, 2011, pp. 283-286): After familiarisation with the video advertisement, the data was first objectively transcribed avoiding early attributions of meaning. During the process of transcription screenshots were taken and grouped according to scenes, and the visual signs and symbols were identified and named. The second step for analysis encompassed the meaning attribution process, where the visual signs and symbols were analysed with the assistance of available resources and by using Roland Barthes' Mythological system model (Figure 5.) for the interpretation of signs and myths. The third step of the analysis consisted in the final interpretation and connection of meanings. The process of data analysis and symbolic interpretation was highly iterative and reliant on the available resources and the researchers intuition.

3.1 Semiology

Semiology is the study of signs and meanings, and its purpose is to uncover the meaning and connotation of concepts through interpretation and association (Mazeree et al., 2023). Signs are entities that embody or represent anything beyond their existence (Mazeree et al., 2023). Roland Barthes infers that a **Sign** is formed through the union of a **Signifier**, a denotator, and a **Signified**, a connotator (1973, p. 39-41). The interpretation of signs is subjective and dynamic in nature (Mazeree et al., 2023), and is highly reliant on the researchers' available resources, knowledge, experiences (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 27) and intuition as part of the research method (Müller, 2011).

On one hand, the **Signifier** represents the plane of expression. Signifiers communicate messages perfectly constituted, which can be received by the receptor in their simpleness (Barthes, 1988, p. 174) signifiers can also be referred to as denotators; the explicit and direct description of a sign or symbol, absent of personal meaning. It is a concept which can be perceived objectively, independent of environmental and ideological influences (Mazeree et al., 2023). In media studies this form encompasses writing, sound and image (Barthes, 1973, p. 47). On the other hand, the **Signified** represents the plane of content (Barthes, 1988, p. 175), where a meaning or mental representation of the signifier is connoted (Barthes, 1973, p. 39-47). The Signified portrays the depth of the message, its connotation; the subjective process in which a concept interacts with the cultural values and the emotions of receptors, allowing for a variety of readings (Mazeree et al., 2023) and leads phrases to be permeated with a duality or multiplicity of meanings (Barthes, 1988 pp 174-175). Connotation according to Barthes, is dependent on denotation and is "always operated within the domain of what is signified" (Mazeree et al., 2023). Significations, moreover, are complex. One signifier can have an infinite number of significations. We can find as many significations as "mode of thoughts", narratives and point of views available in individual, social and historical environments. (Barthes, 1988, p. 96, 159.)

Barthes (1973, p.121) presents the idea of mythology as a part of semiology. The term mythology is not only used to allude to ancient history and fables, but as a concept to describe meanings, a form of semiotic analysis (Itanghi et al., 2023). A Myth is a sign, a form of collective knowledge which emerges from a variety of cultural beliefs. Myths surface posterior to uncovering the subjacent meanings of concepts during the process of signification; it is a method of significance attribution. (Mazeree et al., 2023.) Hence, Barthes talks about mythology as a system of communication, as well as a mode of signification (Itanghi et al., 2023).

Figure 5. The Mythological system (Barthes, 1973, p. 124)



Barthes developed a system to analyse signs based on two-order systems: the linguistic system and the Mythological system presented above in Figure 5. Barthes infers, however, that the spatialization found on the table is merely a metaphor that serves as a guide for analysis, but the reality of the process of signification is not linear (1973, pp. 121, 124). The linguistic system is a first order system (Barthes, 1973, p. 124) it represents the level of expression and content, also known as the system of denotation (Itanghi et al., 2023). The Mythological, or Mythical system, is a second-order system (Barthes, 1973, p. 124) of connotation, derived from the sign of the first linguistic system (Itanghi et al., 2023). In the mythical system, the signifier is equally the final term of the linguistic system, the sign, as it is the first of the Mythological system, the signifier. Roland Barthes uses the term “mythical form” when referring to the signifier of the second order system and the term “mythical concept” when referring to the signified of such (Barthes, 1973, p. 126).

According to Barthes (1973, pp. 118-131), a myth is a type of discourse which is accepted as truth yet lacks verifiable evidence, additionally, mythology arises from social usage, from the historical and ideological associations that individuals and collectives have given to “natural” things through time, and it appears through the substance of the form. Mythical concepts are not fixed, since they are built through individuals, they have the power to be modified, appear and disappear (Barthes, 1973, p. 130). Rutter & Singer, (2015) later supported this statement implying that Myths are not static and change overtime. Mythical systems are purely ideographic, its mythical forms (signifiers) are representations of the mythical concept (signified), however true the representation is, the forms still carry with them infinite possibilities for representation (Barthes, 1973, p.138) .

Using an example of Finish food as a mythical concept, we can identify that karelian pies, muikku fish and pea soup are mythical forms representant of the mythical concept: Finnish food. However, in isolation, these dishes can be linked to uncountable other concepts e.g. karelian pies to home-made dishes, muikku fish to summertime, pea soup to the military service etc. Without renouncing their initial representation. This comes to show that a signified (concept) is rich in signifiers (forms) and quantitatively poorer than the latter, usually representing nothing other than itself. (Barthes, 1973, p. 129.)

Unlike oral myths which are linear, visual myths are multi-dimensional, reliant on various spatial visual cues or forms e.g. size, proximity, location of the elements etc. and their association with each other. (Barthes, 1973, p. 131,132) In the case of audiovisual advertisements, visual communication takes the lead when transferring ideas, being the medium by which meanings and intentions are communicated (Page, 2006).

4 RESEARCH AND FINDINGS

In this step of the analysis, Roland Barthes Mythological system (Figure 5.) will be used as a model for the interpretation of meaning within the data corpus. The first order system, due to its nature being visual, will serve to bring forward the denotative signs and symbols present in the communication. The signs of the denotative visual system are named as 1. Signifier, 2. Signified and 3. Sign, meaning that the **1. Signifier** and the **2. Signified** of the visual items make up the denotative **3. Sign**. The second order system, the mythological, will in turn uncover the connotation of the images, where the denotative **3. Sign** becomes the connotative **I Signifier** of the second system, ultimately leading through the **II Signified** to uncovering the **III Myths** present in the advertisement.

4.1 Analysis of the visual communication

The plot of the advertisement being analysed is developed along five settings found in four identifiable locations within the span of 1:28 minutes. The first setting presents the advertised product, which is later repeated at the end of the advertisement with additional product characteristics. (Picture 1. & Picture 6.) The remaining four settings are recorded in various locations throughout Morocco: The first identifiable location is the **Sahara Desert** (Pictures 2.). The second setting and location is the **Blue city of Chefchaouen** (Pictures 3.). The third location is based at the **Lake Merzouga** (Pictures 4.), and the last setting is located at the **Caves of Hercules** (Pictures 5.). The figures for analysis are numbered according to their setting, therefore encompassing the snippets belonging to the same location under the same number (e.g. Picture 2.2.) to aid in the guiding process and, later, in the interpretation and discussion section.



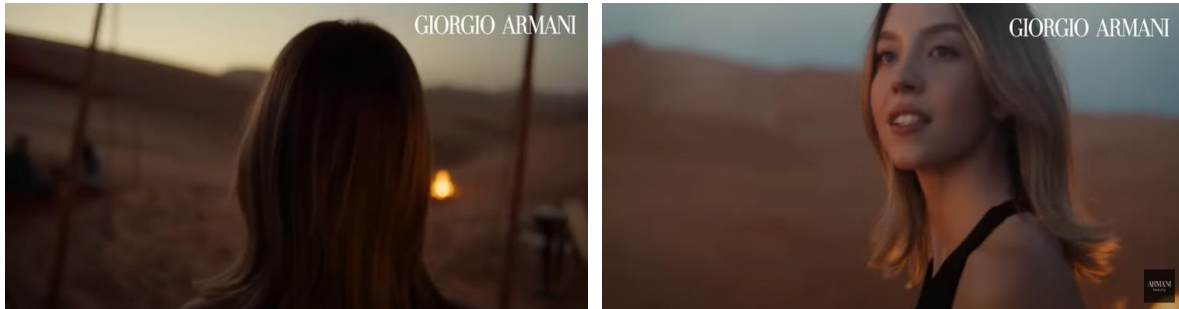
Picture 1. MY WAY perfume ad first scene.

In this first image (Picture 1.) the product is presented as a whole, as the centre of the visual plane. The bottle has an elegant shape and shares the colours blue, pink, and gold.

<p>1. Signifier Perfume bottle is presented.</p>	<p>2. Signified The name of the perfume, the company, Giorgio Armani, the characteristics of the bottle and a beach location are visible. The perfume design is elegant, the colours pink and blue are sandwiched together, “crowned” by a hint of gold presented in a calm-looking location portraying an identity.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: perfume bottle, colours blue, pink and gold, the sky and water.</p>	<p>II Signified Perfume bottle has an elegant shape resembling movement. Blue represents the sky and the water, dreams, idealism, youth, calmness, spirituality, purity and freedom (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; (Itanghi et al., 2023). Pink represents sweetness, femininity, sensitivity, sensuality, charm and power (Tait, 2015; Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023). Gold represents light, luxury, richness, connection to the deities, success and the spirit (Holland, 2005, p. 139; Itanghi et al., 2023; Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024). Fire is the essence of gold. (Cirlot, 1971, p. 108).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>In this first image the product is presented as a whole, as the centre of the visual plane. The bottle has an elegant shape and shares the colours blue, pink, and gold. The location where these colours are found in the bottle, together with the background suggest a connection between water, the earthly sensuality, the sky and the divine. The colour pink, as studied in the theory above, represents qualities of femininity, sweetness, innocence, charm and sensitivity (Tait, 2015; Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023). The colour blue on the other hand, representing not only symbolically but also literally in the image above, is the symbol of the water and the earth, and the mysticism, freedom, emotion, spiritual power and purity of mind (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; (Itanghi et al., 2023) that accompanies both elements through their colour. There is a hint of gold</p>	

on top of the perfume bottle, suggesting a luxurious hint, linked to wealth, success, light and connection to the gods and the divine (Holland, 2005, p. 139; Itanghi et al., 2023; Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024).

The representation of these colours in the advertisement symbolises an embodiment of the anthropomorphic features to the perfume; hinting an affective representation of the product, which cannot be smelled through the screen. The perfume will smell like the deepness of the waters, the sweetness of femininity, the dreams and freedom of the heavens with a hint of the luxurious gold of the divine.



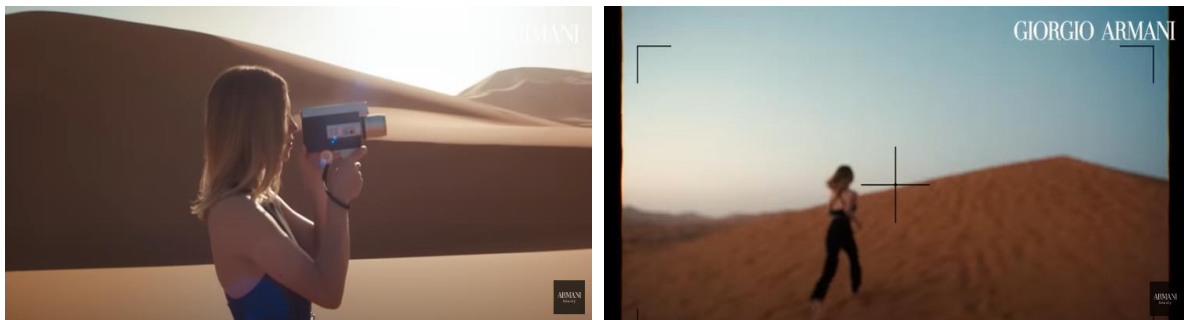
Picture 2. Opening scene of the narration.

The scene presented in Picture 2. unfolds in the first of six settings that make up this advertisement. In it, we see the actress and brand ambassador Sydney Sweeney coming out of a tent into the Sahara Desert at dawn. A fire is visible in proximity. She walks towards the desert with a soft glaze in awe and exploration. The light from the fire shines through her hair.

<p>1. Signifier The actress comes out of a tent at dawn and steps into the Sahara dessert.</p>	<p>2. Signified There is low lighting, with the sun beginning to rise, illuminated only by a fire in her campsite. She looks to her surroundings while walking ahead.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: desert, fire, new day, wind, expression.</p>	<p>II Signified The desert is symbolic of a place for divine revelation (Cirlot, 1971, p. 79). The fire symbolizes rebirth, desire, transformation, inspiration and light (Syromlia, 2021; Padilla, 2013). Fire is the essence of gold. (Cirlot, 1971, p. 108). The new day and the wind symbolise the myth of Hemera/Eos (Woodward, 2007, p. 86; Hard & Cuenca, 2023, pp. 56, 86, 88). Her look conveys awe, exploration, confidence and excitement embodying the archetype of the Explorer (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>This scene marks the beginning of an adventure, she walks fearlessly towards the light open to explore ahead. Her exploratory look portrays a readiness to face anything connecting her to the archetype of the Explorer, on a quest to achieve an authentic and fulfilled life and searching of the individual self (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). She is in the desert, a location which</p>	

symbolises divine revelation (Cirlot, 1971, p. 79), the **fire** symbolizes a new beginning, divine energy, clarity and desire (Syromlia, 2021; Padilla, 2013), which together with her exploratory expression symbolizes the beginning of a new adventure. Furthermore, fire is the essence of gold (Cirlot, 1971, p. 108), making a first **anthropomorphic allusion** to the design of the perfume bottle.

Connecting to the archetype and the **myth of Hemera or Eos**, Goddess of the day. She symbolizes the entrance of light into a world of darkness, the beginning of a new day, marking a positive change towards the development of the universe. She is also represented as the Goddess of the morning winds, which we can see in the movement of her hair (Woodward, 2007, p. 86; Hard & Cuenca, 2023, pp. 56, 86, 88).



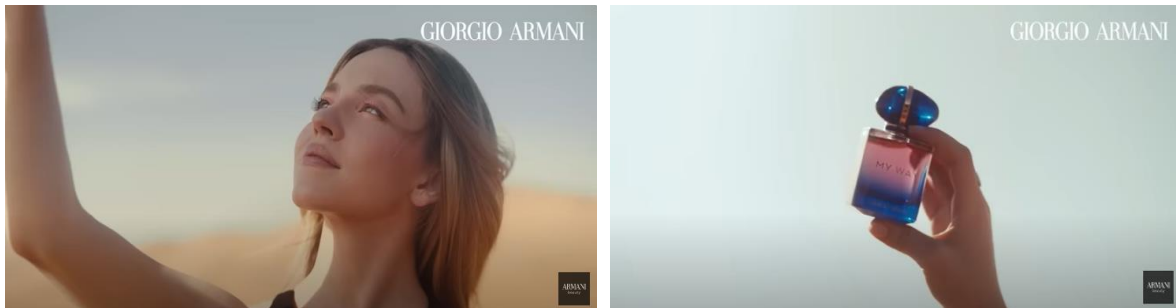
Picture 2.1. Beginning of the exploration.

The scene in Picture 2.1. the actress wears black clothing as she runs through the desert and records on the way.

<p>1. Signifier The sun is up, and the vastness of the desert is visible. She holds a camera and records.</p>	<p>2. Signified The actress is running up a sand dune in the light of dawn, the sun is rising, and she starts running towards the top of the sand dune. She is wearing a black dungaree and advances barefoot. She records her movements.</p>
<p>3. Sign/I Signifier Symbols: dawn, camera, running, bare feet, black clothing.</p>	<p>II Signified The light of dawn, the colour of the sky and the sun rising signifies the myth of Hemera (Woodward, 2007, p. 86; Hard & Cuenca, 2023, pp. 56, 86, 88). The camera a will to explore and capture memories. Her running symbolises eagerness and expectation to reach a destination, embodying the archetype of the Explorer (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). Being barefoot symbolises comfortability and freedom. The black dress represents authority, elegance, formality, obscurity, silence, ashes and strong emotions. (Elliot & Maier, 2014; Fung et al., 2022; Gonigroszek, 2023; Kaya & Epps, 2004)</p>

III Sign/ Myth

The light of dawn represents a new visible beginning embodied in the myth of **Hemera/Eos**, Goddess who is often represented as the light of a new day, but also of the colours of the aurora, personified with “rose fingers” and a “saffron tunic”, resembling the colours of the sky when the sun raises (Woodward, 2007, p. 86; Hard & Cuenca, 2023, pp. 56, 86, 88). The colours in the sky while the actress advances into her adventure resemble that of the depiction of Hemera. The **camera** symbolises that she is in an environment which she finds beautiful and interesting. The actress runs to the top of a sand dune with the rising sun illuminating her path, showing her eagerness to advance and explore what is to come, here she embodies the archetype of the **Explorer**, satisfying her desire of yearning for paradise through the search of a fulfilled and authentic life through exploration and finding of the self (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). The **colour black** of her clothes perhaps symbolises a clean slate to start her adventure from, a rebirth from the ashes, an obscurity and a formality (Elliot & Maier, 2014; Fung et al., 2022; Gonigroszek, 2023; Kaya & Epps, 2004).



Picture 2.2. First interaction with the perfume.

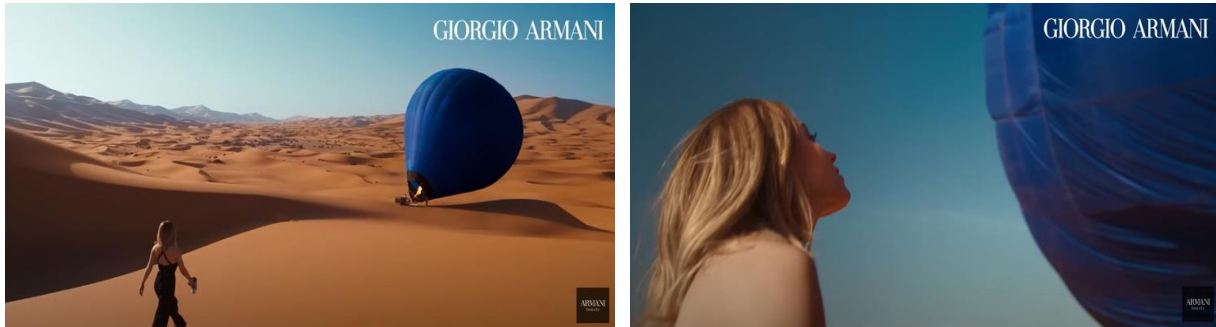
The scene in Picture 2.2. shows the actress on the top of a dune, she has her first interaction with the advertised perfume. She stops and gazes up towards the perfume bottle.

<p>1. Signifier Actress, looks up with her arm towards the sky, the second shot shows the MY WAY perfume bottle.</p>	<p>2. Signified She is looking up towards the product, her hair is blowing in the wind. The product shines through with the light of the sun</p>
<p>3. Sign/I Signifier Symbols: location of the product, sunlight, wind.</p>	<p>II Signified Looking up in admiration embodying the archetype of the Sage (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). The perfume shining through the light an elixir of morality, intellect, awareness, creative force and cosmic energy (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188). The wind is a sign of virtue, freedom, breath and the spirit (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 6, 373).</p>

III Sign/ Myth

The actress finds the MY WAY perfume and holds it upwards towards the sky, her head tilted up represents admiration for the product, as she embodies the archetype of the **Sage**, she yearns for paradise through the seek of knowledge and understanding of the world (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). Her **regard** towards the perfume resembles “**seeing the light**” finding

some things, as if this perfume is the answer, an elixir, a secret to freedom, intellect, morality, awareness and energy (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188) which she has found in the desert, a place of divine revelation (Cirlot, 1971, p. 79). With the **wind** caressing her, a feeling embodying virtue, freedom, breath and the spirit appear (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 6, 373).

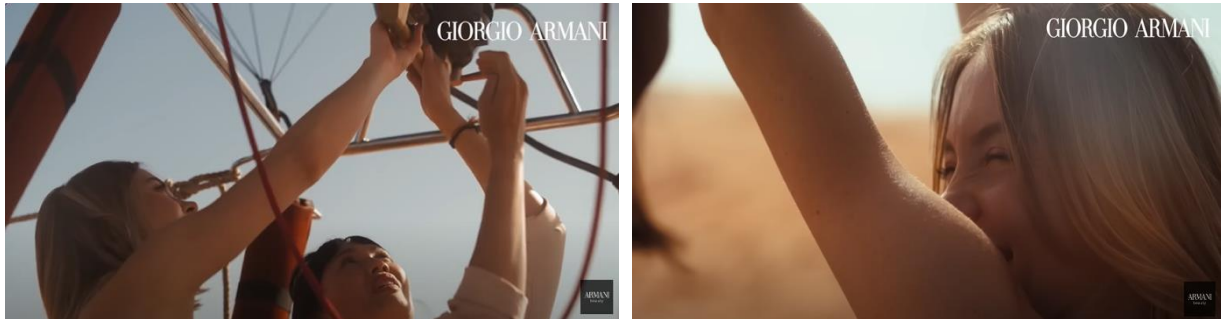


Picture 2.3. First adventure.

The scene in Picture 2.3. shows the actress coming across a blue hot air balloon; she approaches it and gazes up towards it.

<p>1. Signifier The protagonist walks towards a hot air balloon in the desert.</p>	<p>2. Signified The actress finds herself next to the blue hot air balloon, the balloon's burner is on, filling it with heat for take-off. The balloon is bigger than her, and she looks up towards it.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: Blue balloon, balloon burner, looking up, exploring, orange tone of the desert.</p>	<p>II Signified Blue balloon: the colour blue of the balloon symbolises dreams, idealism, youth, calmness, spirituality, purity, power and freedom (Matteson, 1985. p, 36, 37; (Itanghi et al., 2023). The burner showcases a fire, igniter of feelings. The fire symbolizes rebirth, desire, transformation, inspiration and light (Syromlia, 2021; Padilla, 2013). Exploring and looking upwards shows her will to head towards the unknown embodying the archetype of the Explorer (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). The orange tone of the desert shows warmth (Gonigroszek, 2023).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>The colour blue of the ballon stands out in this scene, directing the attention of the viewer towards the object. In addition to the colours symbolic meaning of representing dreams, idealism, youth, calmness, spirituality, purity, power and freedom (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; (Itanghi et al., 2023), the colour blue represents the beginning of an adventure. As she fulfils her desire of finding her individual self through exploration (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). The burner is filling the balloon with fire, relating to the symbology of fire as a desire, a transformation, inspiration and rebirth (Syromlia, 2021; Padilla, 2013), it fuels the blue object</p>	

for take-off, symbolically marking the rebirth towards exploration. The **orange** tone of the desert shows the warmth of the scene (Gonigroszek, 2023).



Picture 2.4. Friendly interaction with woman in the balloon.

The scene in Picture 2.4. represents the first social interaction the actress participates in, she helps a woman to start the hot air balloon, they laugh together and seem to have a friendly interaction.

<p>1. Signifier The actress approaches the woman igniting the balloon and interacts with her.</p>	<p>2. Signified A friendly interaction is taking place, the actress is helping the woman with care and kindness, they both smile and laugh, the sun shines through.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: the sun, joy, helping hand.</p>	<p>II Signified The yellow of the sun symbolises warmth, vibrance, joy, courage, kindness, energy and self-revelation (Page, 2006; Gonigroszek, 2023; Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024). Helping hand represent the archetype of the Caregiver (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>The yellow of the sun shining through gives the impression of warmth, vibrance, joy, courage, kindness and energy (Page, 2006; Gonigroszek, 2023; Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024), adjectives which complementarily resemble her interaction with the woman. Furthermore, she embodies the archetype of the Caregiver, connected to the desire to provide structure to the world by helping people in need (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021), as she assists the woman in igniting the balloon for take-off.</p>	



Picture 2.5. Fire of the hot air balloon next to the actress.

In the scene in Picture 2.5. the fire of the hot air balloon igniter is visible, the blue colour of the balloon lays as the background. The scene quickly changes to a shot, in similar light, of the actress, her hair is blowing in the wind on a blue background.

<p>1. Signifier A shot of the burner contrasted with the balloon in the background is followed by a shot of the actress in the same scenario.</p>	<p>2. Signified The fire is burning strongly in contrast with the colour blue of the balloon, followed by a shot of the actress in the same scenario as the fire was previously, shown with a soft gaze and wind blowing through her hair.</p>
<p>3. Sign/I Signifier Symbols: fire, gaze and stance, wind.</p>	<p>II Signified The fire symbolises energy, desire, inspiration, clarity and lightness (Syromlia, 2021; Padilla, 2013) Fire is the essence of gold. (Cirlot, 1971, p. 108). Embodying the spirit of the Goddess Artemis (Murray, 1988. p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010. p. 631), and Goddess Hemera (Woodward, 2007, p. 86; Hard & Cuenca, 2023, pp. 56, 86, 88). The wind is a sign of virtue, freedom, breath and the spirit (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 6, 373). Her gaze and stance show calmness and confidence.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>This scene portrays a metaphorical interpretation to the actress' feelings and nature. She is visually being compared to the fire, burning with passion, lightness and energy, a fire for adventure (Syromlia, 2021; Padilla, 2013). Moreover, the element of fire is found to be the essence of gold (Cirlot, 1971, p. 108); correlating to the divine, success, lightness and status. She embodies a connection with nature through the element of fire, representing the spirit of the determined, independent, free and strong Goddess Artemis (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631) in addition to the fire, and with the wind, she continues to represent Goddess Hemera, the light of the day and goddess of the wind (Woodward, 2007, p. 86; Hard & Cuenca, 2023, pp. 56, 86, 88). Her gaze and head tilted slightly upwards suggests calmness and confidence but also enjoyment of the wind blowing on her giving off a sense of freedom and peace (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 6, 373) yet a strong fire burning inside of her.</p>	



Picture 2.6. Last scene of the first setting.

The scene in Picture 2.6. marks the last scene of the first setting in the Sahara Desert, the blue hot air balloon flies away, while Sydney remains on the ground, exchanging a farewell to her adventure, onto more.

<p>1. Signifier</p> <p>Wide angle shot of the desert, a person stands in the dune, the balloon flies away.</p>	<p>2. Signified</p> <p>The actress stands alone in the desert while the blue balloon flies away into the sky leaving her on ground while she watches.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier</p> <p>Symbols: stand alone, balloon flies desert, sky.</p>	<p>II Signified</p> <p>The balloon flying away symbolises the end of something and a new beginning.</p> <p>The desert shows vastness.</p> <p>The sky portrays an idyllic depiction of rising to the heavens (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37).</p> <p>Standing alone shows independence, embodying the Goddess Artemis (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631). Archetype of the Explorer (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>In this scene, the balloon flies away into the heavens of the sky, marking an end to her first interaction and adventure. She stands alone in the sand leaving a trail of footsteps behind her, she walks strongly and independently until the scene ends. The Goddess Artemis is a lover of nature, and of the freedom that accompanies that connection. Artemis shows emotional autonomy, independence, strength and determination. (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631) Moreover, the archetype of the Explorer continues to be present (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021), embodied through the actresses' will to move on to a new adventure.</p>	



Picture 3. First scene of setting number two.

The scene in Picture 3. shows the actress walking down a set of stairs, accompanied by children, it is recorded in the second setting and location of this advertisement, in the city of Chefchaouen, Morocco, also known as the “Blue city”. In this scene, a change in attire is identifiable, she is now wearing the colour blue. She glances upwards in exploration.

<p>1. Signifier The actress walks down a city’s stairs accompanied by children and glances her surroundings.</p>	<p>2. Signified She is in the blue city of Chefchaouen in Morocco, wearing a blue and white dress, the children who accompany her additionally wear these colours. She looks around as she advances into the city.</p>
<p>3. Sign/I Signifier Symbols: blue, white, children and expression.</p>	<p>II Signified Blue signifies idealism, youth, spirituality, purity, freedom (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021) White signifies purity, wisdom, cleanliness, elegance, art and mysticism (Itanghi et al., 2023; Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37) Children signify youth and innocence, simplicity, protection, angels, the soul and spiritual change (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46). Her expression shows excitement, exploration and learning; the Sage and the Explorer archetypes (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>The colour blue is represented in the city, the actress’ clothes and the children’s clothes. The colour blue in this scene is used as a continuation to the blue balloon present in the last setting of the advertisement. Understanding the use of colour as a strategy for character and plot development (Matteson, 1985, p. 35), the colour in this scene is being used to show an experience and an adventure. Given the current explosion of colour, it appears that she is seeing life “in blue” as idealistic, young, spiritual, pure and free (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). The addition of the colour white shows an ambiance of purity, elegance and art (Itanghi et al., 2023; Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37). The accompanying children provide a sense of simplicity, innocence, angelic protection and joy (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46). She continues to seek to experience the world and understand it through the archetypes of the Explorer and the Sage, seeking knowledge, and the truth and finding the individual self (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>	



Picture 3.1. Girl approaches and blows blue pigment.

In the scene in Picture 3.1., a young girl appears running towards the actress, the girl, with a wholesome expression, blows some blue pigment towards the camera. The actress records the wholesome interaction with the child.

<p>1. Signifier The shot shows children running in the city, one heading towards the actress. The child interacts with the actress.</p>	<p>2. Signified Some of the children are running away from where the actress stands, while a girl runs towards her in excitement. She blows a cloud of blue powder in the direction of the recording camera with a smile.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: Girl running, smile, children, blue powder, camera.</p>	<p>II Signified The girl running with a smile shows innocent joy and will to show the actress new things. Being accompanied by children embodies the Goddess Artemis (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631). The blue powder symbolises an impregnation of freedom and adventure. The camera represents the actress's excitement towards capturing new experiences.</p>
<p>III Sign/ Myth The girl running towards the actress and blowing blue pigment symbolises an impregnation into the experience and adventure. The girl's smile shows joy in sharing and showing the actress a new world, accompanying her and protecting her (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46). As the actress is followed and accompanied by children in her exploration journey, she embodies the myth of the Goddess Artemis, she is the embodiment of the reproductive power in nature and is the carer and nurser of children. Moreover, she is the embodiment of free spirit</p>	

and youthhood, restlessness, strength and determination (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631).



Picture 3.2. Second social interaction in second location.

In the scene in Picture 3.2., the actress can be seen enjoying a moment next to one of the blue walls of the city, the first image is recorded with her own camera. In the second shot, a stranger politely returns the camera to the actress while they exchange broad smiles.

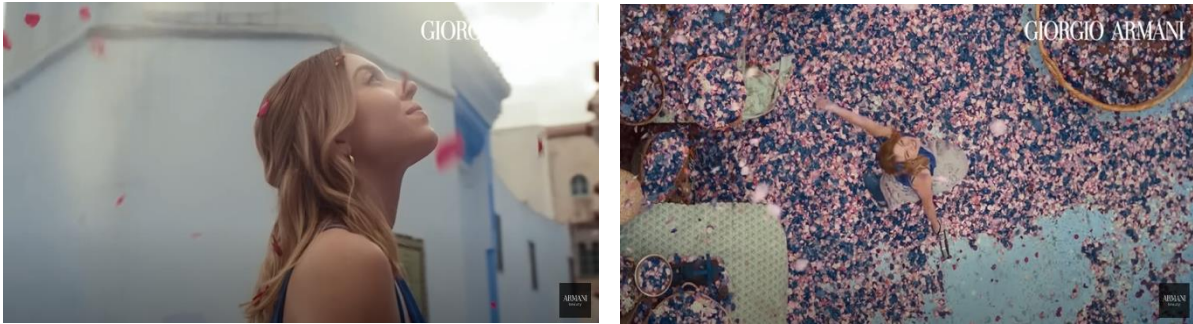
<p>1. Signifier This double shot presents the actress being recorded in a video camera shot. The woman recording is later shown returning the camera to the actress.</p>	<p>2. Signified The actress is depicted in a dark blue shirt on a lighter blue background. This time she is being recorded by someone else, a stranger wearing an orange shirt. The woman hands the actress her camera back while they exchange a smile.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: Camera, blues, orange, exchange.</p>	<p>II Signified The camera represents the actress's excitement towards capturing new experiences, this time being the main character. The contrast of blues creates an analogous harmony (Stone, 2016. p 257, 273). The orange represents warmth and a cheering energy (Gonigroszek, 2023). Their exchange shows friendliness and open-mindedness, connecting to the archetype of the Everyman (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>The actress now becomes the main character in her camera recording, she smiles with an expression of joy and fulfilment. The combination of the colour blue of the wall, with the darker colour of her top resemble an analogous colour combination which pleases the eye and gives the impression of harmony (Stone, 2016. p 257, 273). The blues are later contrasted with the orange shirt of the stranger, which conveys warmth and a cheering energy (Gonigroszek, 2023). Blue and orange are contrasting colours in the hue circle, this contrast becomes exciting to the eye and serves to focus the attention of the viewer towards the interaction (Stone, 2016. p 257, 273). The focus is directed towards the exchange with the stranger, showing kindness and open-mindedness looking for a connection with others, the archetype of the Everyman is channelled by her desire to connect with others (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>	



Picture 3.3. The actress smells flower petals.

In the scene in Picture 3.3. the actress, in an interaction with a merchant, smells flower petals and shares a friendly smile with the merchant.

<p>1. Signifier The actress approaches a market vendor and leans over to smell the product.</p>	<p>2. Signified The actress leans over to smell the white flower petals which are being sold by a market vendor. The vendor is wearing a white shirt and a gold necklace.</p>
<p>3. Sign/ I Signifier Symbols: white flower petals, white shirt, gold necklace, exchanging looks.</p>	<p>II Signified The white flower petals represent one of the ingredients of the perfume: orange flower, tuberose or iris pallida (Armani Beauty, 2024). The white shirt symbolises the vendors purity, elegance, cleanliness, wisdom and mysticism (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; Itanghi et al., 2023). Her gold necklace symbolises luxury, richness, connection to the deities, success and the spirit (Holland, 2005, p. 139; Itanghi et al., 2023; Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024). Their exchanging looks connect to the archetype of the Everyman (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>Here the main focus is directed towards the exchange of the characters, embodying the desire to connect with others through the archetypal Everyman (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). Moreover, the appearance of the colour white in the woman’s tunic and the flower petals, make an indirect connection to the smell of the perfume. The colour white of the vendor’s tunic and the petals symbolise purity, elegance, wisdom, mysticism (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; Itanghi et al., 2023), while the gold necklace remarks a richness and luxury (Holland, 2005, p. 139; Itanghi et al., 2023; Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024). These attributes are connected to convey to the audience the fragrance which the actress smells in the moment, while communicating the natural source of the perfume ingredients.</p>	



Picture 3.4. Reaction to the flower smell.

The scene in Picture 3.4. shows the actress' reaction after smelling the flowers, she experiences a feeling that awakens something in her. The colour pink appears for the first time in the narration as opposed to the previous scenes containing only the colour blue. Marking an end to the completely blue atmosphere.

<p>1. Signifier The actress looks around as petals fall from the sky, she spins around looking up.</p>	<p>2. Signified After smelling the perfume, pink and blue petals fall from the sky covering the whole ground as she spins around and on them.</p>
<p>3. Sign/ I Signifier Symbols: pink petals, blue petals, spinning around.</p>	<p>II Signified The colour pink of the petals symbolises sweetness, femininity, sensitivity and charm (Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023). The colour blue of the petals symbolises idealism, youth, spirituality, purity and freedom (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; (Itanghi et al., 2023) Her spinning around is a sign of joy, excitement, admiration and a feeling of freedom.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>Here her reaction to the smelled petals becomes evident, pink and blue petals begin to fall from the sky as a metaphor to the feeling that the aroma of the perfume evokes on her. She is being impregnated with the smell and transported to a fantasy world where metaphorical petals fall from the sky. The colours of the petals resemble the colour of the perfume bottle, making even more evident the connection of the perfume smell to the symbolism which accompanies the colours pink and blue: sweetness, femininity, charm, sensitivity, idealism, youth, spirituality, purity and freedom (Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023; Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; (Itanghi et al., 2023). The colours of the petals moreover represent the growth and development of the character and her transition from blue Artemis to pink Afrodite, since flowers represent the spirit of the Goddess of love (Higginson, 2007, pp. 198, 199).</p>	



Picture 4. First scene of setting number three.

The scene in Picture 4. experiences a shift from the previously presented softness of her character, towards a more daring and confident personality. The actress drives a motorcycle through the desert and arrives at Lake Merzouga, Morocco. At arrival she removes her helmet revealing her hair, she rocks it side to side letting her hair down. The figure of a man can be seen in the background.

<p>1. Signifier</p> <p>The actress rides a motorcycle across the desert until she reaches a body of water, where a man stands alone.</p>	<p>2. Signified</p> <p>The actress dresses black clothing as she rides a motorcycle through the desert before reaching Lake Merzouga. As she removes her white helmet and shakes her hair, a man is seen standing alone facing the lake at the light of sundown or “golden hour”.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier</p> <p>Symbols: motorcycle, black clothing, white helmet, letting hair down, sundown/golden hour.</p>	<p>II Signified</p> <p>The motorcycle signifies independence, dominance, bravery and fearlessness. The black clothing symbolises authority, elegance, formality and strong emotions (Elliot & Maier, 2014; Fung et al., 2022; Gonigroszek, 2023) The white helmet represents wisdom, purity, elegance, cleanliness and mysticism (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; Itanghi et al., 2023). Moving her hair symbolises to “let your hair down” communicating free behaviour and enjoyment (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). The sundown, or golden hour portrays warmth to the image.</p>
<p>III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>As the actress arrives at the scene in a motorcycle, she is embodying the appearance of a strong, independent, brave and fearless woman who is sure of herself. As she lets her hair down after removing her helmet, and while the golden hour shines on her, she portrays a sense of freedom and enjoyment (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024), embodying the archetype of the Explorer (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021), and continuing to embody the spirit of the Goddess Artemis (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631). The appearance of a male figure in the distance suggests an evolution of her character, leaning towards the Goddess of love, Afrodite (Murray, 1988, p. 83).</p>	



Picture 4.1. The third adventure.

In the scene in Picture 4.1., the actress wears a black jacket over a pink t-shirt. She looks at the man with a glare of attraction, while she tucks her hair behind her ear. The man, holding binoculars, looks back at her with a wondering look.

<p>1. Signifier</p> <p>The actress stands next to her motorcycle as she begins to walk towards the man.</p>	<p>2. Signified</p> <p>The actress, with a now visible pink top under her black jacket tucks her hair behind her ear as she glances at the man with seductive eyes and confidently walks towards him. The man notices the actress and puts his binoculars down.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier</p> <p>Symbols: pink top, tucking of hair, seductive eyes, confident walk, male look.</p>	<p>II Signified</p> <p>The pink top represents sweetness, femininity, sensitivity, charm, power, innocence and maturity (Tait, 2015; Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023). Tucking hair behind the ear, a seductive look and confident walking are signs of interest and flirtatiousness embodying the Goddess Afrodite (Murray, 1988, p. 83) and the archetype of the Lover (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). The man turning towards her is a sign of attention.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>Her strong appearance with the motorcycle and black clothing is contrasted with the pink shirt that she wears, balancing to a more feminine, sensitive, sweet and charming (Tait, 2015; Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023) yet bold and powerful appearance. She confidently walks towards the man while she gives him a flirtatious look and touches her hair, which are all signs of interest and desire. In this scene, Sydney embodies the archetype of Afrodite, the representations of the archetypal Lover (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021), the perfect woman, natural, sensual, self-fulfilled and passionate (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 629; Higginson, 2007, pp. 198, 199). Moreover, her representation of the archetypal Lover connects with the desire of connection through the seek of intimacy and pleasure (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). The man in this case, shows signs of attention towards the actress, as he puts his binoculars down to focus on the woman.</p>	



Picture 4.2. Interaction with male actor.

In the scene in Picture 4.1., the actress approaches the man, who hands her his binoculars, with them she can watch the flamingo birds in the lake. He, in turn, looks at her while she doesn't notice. The actress proceeds to look at the man with a big smile, showing enjoyment of each other's company.

<p>1. Signifier The male and female actors interact with each other and their environment.</p>	<p>2. Signified The actress borrows the male's binoculars to look at the flamingos which he points out, while she looks through them, the man looks at her in an exchange. The actress records the view and the birds, after, sharing a moment of laughter with the man in a soft pink/orange light.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: male glance, birds, laugh, dim light.</p>	<p>II Signified Male glance shows discreet interest and desire. The birds symbolise a love of nature, as well as freedom, un-conditioning and love (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 26- 28). Laughter signifies having a good time. The dim pink and orange light signify warmth (Gonigroszek, 2023), charm and romance (Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>After approaching the man, The actress borrows his binoculars to bird-watch the flamingos at the distance. While she looks through the binoculars, the man is captivated by her looks and discretely, unwatched, admires her. The pink and orange lighting sets the ambience to a romantic, charming and warm atmosphere (Gonigroszek, 2023; Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023), alluding to their connection and interaction with one another. There are clear signs of the couple getting along and enjoying each other's company as they share looks and laughter. The birds here serve as symbols of love, freedom and un-conditioning (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 26- 28). The</p>	

embodiment of the **archetypal Lover** is presented in their connection (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). However, this appears to be a modest connection, a valued aspect of the **Goddess Afrodite** (Higginson, 2007, pp. 198, 199).



Picture 4.3. Last scene of the third setting.

In the scene in Picture 4.3., the silhouettes of both the actress and the man are perceived from the wide-angle panoramic perspective. The flamingo birds are flying away, and it marks an end to the scene.

<p>1. Signifier A wide angle shot depicts the silhouette of a man and a woman at sunset while birds fly above them.</p>	<p>2. Signified The actor and actress share a final moment together while they look at the birds fly away. They stand close by, however with a slight distance.</p>
<p>3. Sign/I Signifier Symbols: sun setting, birds flying away, stance.</p>	<p>II Signified The sun setting means the end of a day. The birds flying away symbolise freedom, movement, un-conditioning, leaving a place (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 26- 28). Their stance signs to a connection, built on shared interest.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>The sun setting marks the day coming to an end, the birds have now set flight symbolising movement, un-conditioning and leaving a place (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 26- 28), and their connection, built through a common interest, now too concluding. The slight distance in their stance signifies that they shared a modest and sensual, yet not a sexual connection; they were connected by the birds, and now that the birds and the sun are gone, they move on along with them. Marking an end to the third scenario.</p>	



Picture 5. First scene in setting number four.

The scene in Picture 5. is located in the surrounding of “The caves of Hercules” in Tanger, Morocco. In this first scene three children, who are dressed in soft blue and pink colours, invite the actress to follow them. The actress wears a pink dress.

<p>1. Signifier An image of children is being recorded, after putting the camera down, one of the children spreads her arm towards the woman.</p>	<p>2. Signified Children appear again, this time in the area located around the Caves of Hercules. The children are dressed in soft pink and blue colours, while the actress now appears with a fully pink dress. The girl who is being recorded is wearing a blue dress, reaching her arm towards the actress, inviting her to follow them.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: children, blue dress, pink dress.</p>	<p>II Signified The children represent simplicity, angels, protection, the soul and spiritual change (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46). The blue dress remarks exploration, adventure and beginnings. The pink dress, the sensuality acquired through romance.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>The children in this scene share resonance with the children in the second scenario (Picture 3.), representing simplicity, protection and spiritual change (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46). They accompany the embodiment of Artemis (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007. pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631) through her exploration. The girl’s blue dress implies to the viewer that following the blue leads to an adventure, the symbolism of this colour is now established by the creatives of the advertisement, combining traditional symbolism with originality in meaning attribution (Matteson, 1985, p. 35). Moreover, the colour pink of the actress’s dress shows a representation of the character developing after sharing a romantic interaction; the symbolism of the colour pink has now become a part of her, of her story. Still, as she continues to follow the colour blue, the free spirit of Artemis, with her independence, restlessness and determination (Murray, 1988. p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631), remains evident. The appearance of the children once again alludes not only to the archetypal character of the Caregiver (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021), but the children in pastel colour clothing symbolise a group of angels, or spirit guides who protect her (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46) and take her towards new adventures. They could moreover represent her own youthful soul, longing for adventure and experiences, advancing her further in life.</p>	



Picture 5.1. The fourth adventure

The scene in Picture 5.1. shows the children taking the actress into the caves and guiding her towards what appears to be a blue luminescence light, which she seems to admire, the wide-angle perspective shows their silhouette from the inside of the cave.

<p>1. Signifier A child leads the actress by the hand into a cave.</p>	<p>2. Signified The blue dressed child has led the actress into a cave, which appears to be illuminated with blue bioluminescent light.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: entering cave, bioluminescent light.</p>	<p>II Signified Caves signify the concealed, a spiritual centre, the unconscious (Cirlot, 1971, p. 40). Children are symbols of protection, angels, the soul and reawakening (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46). Blue bioluminescence light represents the spirit (Bernard, 2011), awareness, morality, intellect and cosmic energy (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>As the actress is led into a cave by the “angelic” children, they encounter an opening covered with blue bioluminescent light, she is in awe of what she witnesses. The act of entering a cave symbolises a trip into the concealed, her unconscious, a search within herself (Cirlot, 1971, p. 40) which, through the symbolism of the light, brings her awareness, morality and intellect (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188). The children leading her there, symbolises the journey that her guardian angels, or spirit guides (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46), are taking her on to find her inner light and knowledge of the self, the one that the archetypal Explorer and Sage are longing for (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).</p>	



Picture 5.2. Finding the light.

In the scene in Picture 5.2., the actress walks alone towards an outdoor-facing opening of the cave, where a glimpse of light can be seen caressing her face. Her gaze is inquisitive, as if she was seeing something that makes her reflect.

<p>1. Signifier A shot of a cave opening shows the silhouette of a woman, the next shot shows her face illuminated by the light that enters the crevice.</p>	<p>2. Signified The actress stands alone, facing an opening of the cave towards the sea, the light that enters shines on her face making her expression visible.</p>
<p>3. Sign/I Signifier Symbols: standing alone, cave opening, light.</p>	<p>II Signified Standing alone symbolises strength and independence, embodying the Goddess Artemis (Murray, 1988, p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007, pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631) and the non-dependence of Goddess Athene (Higginson, 2007, p. 167). The cave opening alludes to Plato's "allegory of the cave". The light is a symbol of enlightenment (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188) Furthermore with enlightenment the Goddess Athene is personified (Higginson, 2007, p. 167; Murray, 1988, p. 88, 90, 92).</p>
<p>III Sign/ Myth The actress now stands alone at a cave opening facing the light. She is inside the cave looking out, as the light illuminates her face, her gaze shows inquisitiveness, as if reflecting on something. Alluding to the symbolism of the previous scene's light, looking inside has brought her a deeper intellect, awareness and morality, embodiments of the Goddess of wisdom, Athene (Higginson, 2007, p. 167; Murray, 1988, p. 88, 90, 92). Now looking outwards and "seeing the light", shows a means of enlightenment and intellect (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188). There is a correlation with Plato's "allegory of the cave" as a representation of her acquired learning</p>	

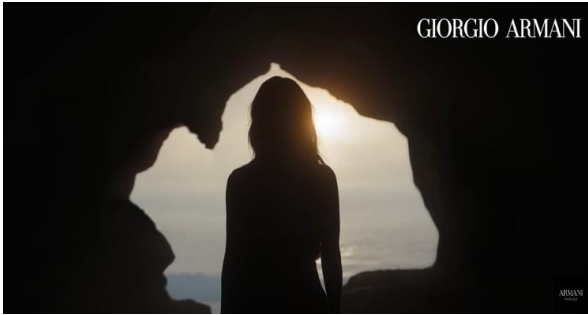
and knowledge (Peterson, 2017). She embodies equally the archetypal **Sage**, in his search for knowledge and truth (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021) as the divine personification of the mind of **Goddess Athene** (Higginson, 2007, p. 167; Murray, 1988, p. 88, 90, 92).



Picture 5.3. Reflexion

In the scene in Picture 5.3., as the light coming in from the opening of the cave brightens the actress' image, she takes her camera out to record one last time, however she quickly puts it down with a serious, more mature regard of realisation.

<p>1. Signifier The actress takes her camera to record, consequently the actress puts the camera down.</p>	<p>2. Signified This scene shows how the actress takes her camera one last time to record, however as she is about to record, her eyes keep facing the light and, without recording, she puts the camera down.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: putting camera down, facing the light.</p>	<p>II Signified Putting the camera down symbolizes a desire to enjoy the present moment. Facing the light is a symbol of enlightenment (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188.) and the personification of the Goddess Athene (Higginson, 2007, p. 167; Murray, 1988, p. 88, 90, 92).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>As the actress is going to record her surroundings, she seems to get faced by her thoughts, causing her to put the camera down. This represents a maturity, wanting to be present in the moment, to enjoy the peace and life beauty, features of the embodiment of the myth of Goddess Athene (Higginson, 2007, p. 167; Murray, 1988, p. 88, 92). At this stage of her journey, she is reflecting on her lived experiences, her enlightenment (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188), which has transformed her and made her grow; visible in the transition of colour of her clothes throughout the plot.</p>	

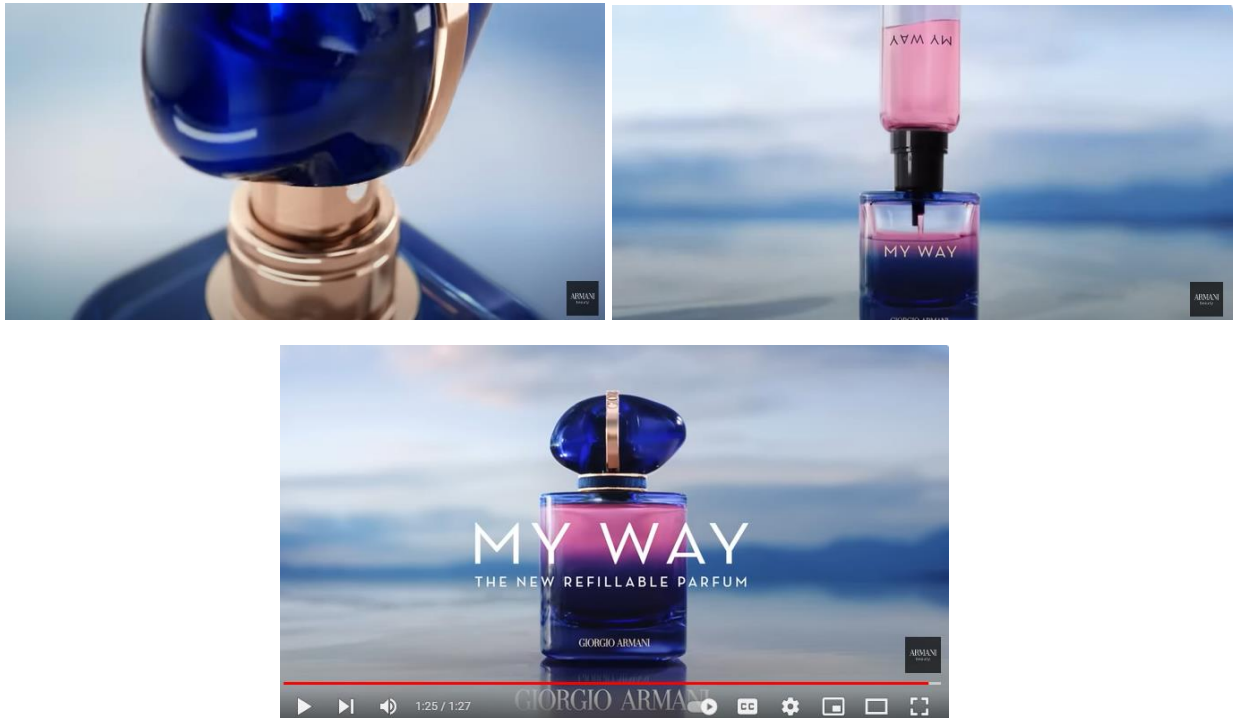


Picture 5.4. Realisation.

In the scene in Picture 5.4., the actress stands alone, looking at the light. She speaks for the first time in the scene in the left saying, “I am what I live” followed by the next shot of her on the right saying, “MY WAY” while she stands confidently.

<p>1. Signifier The actress stands facing the camera.</p>	<p>2. Signified The actress now stands confidently facing the camera. She speaks for the first saying “I am what I live”. Her pink top is visible and contrasting with the blue sky behind her.</p>
<p>3. Sign / I Signifier Symbols: Confident stance, pink top, blue sky, sun.</p>	<p>II Signified Confident stance embodies the mature Goddess Athene (Higginson, 2007, p. 167; Murray, 1988, p. 88, 90, 92), and the free Goddess Artemis (Murray, 1988. p. 109, 112; Higginson, 2007. pp. 166, 167; Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 631). The pink top represents sweetness, femininity, sensitivity, charm, power, innocence and maturity (Tait, 2015; Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023). And the love acquired through the Goddess of Love, Afrodite (Murray, 1988, p. 83). The blue sky signifies idealism, freedom, emotions, spirituality and power (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; Itanghi et al., 2023) The sun represents the light as awareness, morality, intellect, creative force and cosmic energy (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188), alluding to gold as success, spirit, wealth and the divine (Holland, 2005, p. 139; Itanghi et al., 2023; Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024).</p>
<p align="center">III Sign/ Myth</p> <p>This last scene shows actress Sydney Sweeney having reached the peak in her character development. Wording the sentence “I am what I live” she implies that her past experiences have shaped who she is now; this is symbolised through her pink top, contrasting with the transition from black, to blue, to pink wardrobe throughout her experiences. She confidently embodies her experiences of freedom, emotions, power and dreams (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; Itanghi et</p>	

al., 2023) of blue in unison with the femininity, sensitivity, sweetness, romance and charm (Tait, 2015; Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023) of pink finally culminating an enlightenment with the gold-coloured sun (Cirlot, 1971, p. 187, 188). Furthermore, integrating to her self-schema the initial freedom embodied by the myth of **Goddess Artemis**, the sensuality of **Goddess Afrodite** acquired through a romantic encounter and the wisdom of **Goddess Athene** as she successfully finds the truth within her and out.



Picture 6. The MY WAY perfume.

The scene in Picture 6. shows for the last time to product. The perfume's lid is removed slowly, in the background, the voice of the actress is heard saying, "the new refillable parfum, by Giorgio Armani". Marking an end to the advertisement.

<p>1. Signifier The product is being showcased with its features.</p>	<p>2. Signified The blue and gold lid of the perfume is removed revealing a gold pulveriser. The feature "refillable parfum" is shown by introducing the pink liquid into the bottle. Finally, a full shot of the perfume, in a background showing the sky and the water is presented.</p>
<p>3. Sign/I Signifier Symbols: blue, pink, gold.</p>	<p>II Signified Blue represents the sky and the water, idealism, dreams, youth, freedom, calmness, spirituality, purity, power and emotion (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; (Itanghi et al., 2023). Pink sweetness, femininity, sensitivity, charm, power, innocence and maturity (Tait, 2015; Tarajko-Kowalska, 2023). Gold symbolises success, luxury, richness, connection to the deities, light</p>

	and the spirit (Holland, 2005, p. 139; Itanghi et al., 2023; Yunusova & Ikromova, 2024).
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III Sign/ Myth

In this setting, it becomes evident the constant use of the colours **blue and pink** serve equally as **symbols of character development**, as an **anthropomorphic signifier** throughout the advertisement. The representation of the colours of the bottle from the bottom up aligns with the development of the character from the beginning to the end of the plot. Before she finds the perfume, she is wearing black, the ashes, the nothingness (Gonigroszek, 2023), as she finds the first blue object, the balloon she moves on to live her adventures in blue. Consequently, when reaching the pink section of the bottle, she has a romantic encounter which transforms her into wearing a pink top. Once the bottle is “full” and as her adventure reaches the end, she encounters again the colour blue, but this time she maintains her lived romantic experience which is contrasted with the light of the sun represented as **gold**. As the top of the perfume bottle is removed, the gold pulveriser represents the fire that fuelled her journey. The sky and water represent a dream (Matteson, 1985, p. 36, 37; (Itanghi et al., 2023) and the sun a connection to deities (Holland, 2005, p. 139). The **children** being the angels guiding her through her journey (Cirlot, 1971, pp. 45, 46) to the **Explorer’s** self-knowledge and the **Sage’s** knowledge of the world (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021).

4.2 Discussion

Throughout this advertisement a variety of reoccurring themes appear. The use of symbolism in this persuasive message communication is apparent both in the use of colour and in the mythological and archetypal character associations, aspects chosen as motifs for the focus of this study.

As studied above, advertisers’ communication strategies look to structure ad storylines in accordance with a chosen dramatic intensity, which aligns with the goals of the campaign (Fernández et al., 2014), and with the target group’s values and notions, which they perceive to be aligned to their self-image. (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). Furthermore, since the product cannot be perceived through the advertising medium, the personality of the aroma must be brought to life by connecting with an individual’s aspirational identity and by the creation of an ideal, conveyed through the model’s behaviour and actions on screen (Fernández-Fernández, 2010, p. 630, 634).

As means of **conveying product characteristics** through the advertisement, colour symbolism, character traits, wardrobe and actions are used to anthropomorphically connect the character and plot with product features (Page, 2006), shaping the story to both communicate product characteristics to the audience and to connect on a deeper level to the audiences’ psyche, self-schema and ideals.

4.2.1 Colours

The perfume bottle is made up of three **colours** which, from the base of the bottle upwards, are blue, pink, blue and gold (Picture 1.). These colours appear throughout the story as markers for character and plot development in the ways that follow: Before the actress finds the perfume bottle in the desert, she wears black clothing, a neutral colour, it is not until after finding the perfume bottle (Picture 2.2.), which the actress handles as a tressure, that the first hints of colour blue appear in the hot air balloon (Picture 2.3.). The use of colours here are strong allies in guiding the plot. The scene conveys that once she encounters the perfume, she automatically enters a world of experiences guided by the scent. The use of colours in the advertisement aligns with their traditional symbolism, but also acquire a new meaning communicated by the creatives through context and repetition. In this case, the **colour blue**, in addition to its symbolism as idealism, dreams, youth, freedom, calmness, spirituality, purity, power and emotion, also conveys a fabricated meaning through the plot symbolising exploration, adventure and new beginnings. The fire is an element present in the beginning of the advertisement as a symbol of transformation and power (Pictures 2., 2.3., 2.5.), as a driver, an essence fuelling the hot air balloon, and her adventure. Fire is the essence of **gold**, which is one of the core symbolising colours of the product, and therefore of the plot. Her adventure soon takes on a colour explosion in the second location (Picture 3.) where the actress finds herself in a blue city and wears a blue dress, embodying the first layer of the perfume's colour. After smelling white flower petals in a local market (Picture 3.3.), ingredients which appear to be part of the scent of the perfume, a storm of blue and pink flower petals begin to fall from the sky (Picture 3.4.), taking over the scene and hinting the upcoming colour transition of the plot and the perfume, pink. The **colour pink** now appears evident at the third location (Picture 4.1.). The actress wears a pink top and a black jacket as she connects with her romantic side; with this colour she moves on to represent sweetness, femininity, sensuality, sensitivity, charm, power, innocence and maturity as she interacts with a male actor. As her romantic adventure comes to an end, moving on to the fourth location, she continues to wear pink clothing, this time a full dress, (Picture 5.) showcasing how the experience has marked her character while, the children who accompany her in the scene wear **blue** clothing. The children lead her into a cave with blue bioluminescent light (Picture 5.1.) again transitioning to the upper blue level of the bottle, and returning to the independent, free-spirited idyllic nature of the colour blue. This time, moreover, the light that shines through the cave opening (Picture 5.2.) represents the **colour gold**, which culminates the character development and the top of the perfume bottle. The colour gold symbolises success, luxury, richness, connection to the deities, the spirit and light; this representation of light moreover symbolises knowledge of the self, of the world, an enlightenment.

4.2.2 Mythical and Archetypal characters

After thorough analysis of this advertisement, the main symboliser and carriers of meaning, which in turn serve as communicators of aroma characteristics are found to be reliant on four Greek Goddesses, Hemera, Artemis, Afrodite and Athene and five archetypal characters, The Explorer, the Sage, the Caregiver, the Everyman and the Lover. Through the use of these myths and archetypes, the brand aims to reach a target audience which self-schema aligns to the idyllic and archetypal values represented.

The Greek Goddesses represented in the persuasive communication appear in the order that follows: Hemera, Artemis, Afrodite and Athene. The plot emphasises the experiences of a young woman navigating through different locations which lead her to a womanly transformation. With the representation of the myth of Hemera (Picture 2., 2.5.) came the light of the new day, marking a positive advance in the development of the universe, and in this case, in the beginning of the story and development of her character. Furthermore, in connection to this myth, appears the vast Sahara Desert, a traditional symbolic place of revelation, where the appearance of the perfume bottle serves as a symbol of a divine elixir leading to adventure and wisdom. Throughout the advertisement, though, the most represented identity comes from that of the myth of Goddess Artemis (Pictures 2.5.- 4., 5.- 5.1.) through her seek of freedom, independence, exploration and connection with nature, she walks ahead in her path to seek for the truth and knowledge of the self. Children play a supporting role in the plot symbolically representing guidance (Pictures 3.- 3.1., 5.-5.1.). The children often lead her to new paths and places of knowledge. The myth of the Goddess of love, Afrodite (Pictures 4.1.- 4.3.), is briefly represented during her romantic encounter in the third scenario, showing a modest connection from a young woman who is finding herself. Finally, the character develops to her highest form, embodying the myth of Goddess Athene (Pictures 5.2.- 5.4.) who through her experiences and enlightenment reaches knowledge of the self and the world.

Regarding the archetypal characters of the Explorer, the Sage, the Caregiver, the Everyman and the Lover, they are imbedded in the personality of the actress interchangeably throughout the persuasive communication. The archetypal Explorer is the essence of her character (Pictures 2., 2.1., 2.3., 2.6., 3., 4., 5.1.) as its appearance and embodiment in the character's personality appears the highest number of times. The Explorer seeks a fulfilled and authentic life through exploration and aims to find the individual self, which the actress well embodies through her adventures and brave explorations. Additionally, the Sage is the second most present archetypal character embodied by the character (Pictures 2.2., 3., 5.1., 5.2). The Sage aims to understand and make sense of the world by seeking knowledge and the truth; in this communication, the actress actively analyses her surroundings searching for meaning, learning and growing as the plot develops. Third, she embodies the archetype of the Caregiver (Pictures 2.4,

5.) in her connections helping individuals and interacting with the children, she seeks through the embodiment of this archetypal character to help people in need and protect them from harm. The fourth archetypal character descriptive of her character is the Everyman (Pictures 3.2., 3.3.) channelled in her desire to connect with others and need for belongingness. Fifth, following the desire to connect with others, the actress embodies the archetypal Lover (Pictures 4.1., 4.2.) as she aims to acquire intimacy and pleasure by forming a romantic bond.

4.2.3 Target audience

After uncovering the meaning behind the signs and symbolism present in the ads with focus on the motifs of colour, mythical characters and archetypal characters, it is deduced that the advertisement aims to attract an audience consisting of young woman of 18-29 years of age who are undergoing, or wish to undergo, a character transformation.

The representation of mythical characters follows a natural order of a womanly transformation, guiding the viewer through the process of beginning of the journey with the Goddess Hesperia, the fiery seek for freedom and exploration of Goddess Artemis, the coming-of-age and sensuality of Goddess Aphrodite and the highest level of wisdom and intellect of Goddess Athena.

The advertisement seeks to connect with an audience whose archetypal core human desires are yearning for paradise, through exploration and seek of the truth with the archetypal Explorer and the Sage, connecting with others through the formation of connections and intimacy with the Everyman and the Lover, and finally the core desire to provide structure to the world by helping others with the archetypal Caregiver.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This section serves as a reflection of the research findings, for this purpose the theoretical contributions to the topic of the study are reviewed and the research questions are answered. Furthermore, the limitations of the study are presented, and the research is concluded with suggestions for further research of the topic.

5.1 Theoretical implications of the study

This study aimed to study in depth the ways in which advertisers make use of signs, symbols and archetypal and mythical characters to convey product characteristics and create value in the eyes of the consumers. The analysis was performed using Roland Barthe's Mythological system of semiotic analysis as a qualitative research method to uncover the underlying meanings present in the persuasive video advertisement of the Giorgio Armani MY WAY perfume.

After a thorough semiotic analysis, it was found that the use of signs and symbols as meaning conveyers are evident across the persuasive plot of the MY WAY perfume advertisement. The results point towards the understanding that the use of the colours blue, pink and gold are strategically chosen to create an atmosphere which resembles the product's qualities and simultaneously serve as conveyers of meaning. Moreover, the advertisers have chosen, through the actress' actions and personality, to connect the archetypal characters of the Explorer, the Sage, the Everyman, the Lover and the Caregiver and the mythical characters of Goddess Hemera, Goddess Artemis, Goddess Aphrodite and Goddess Athene to the perfume, ultimately targeting individual who see themselves in those desirable characteristics or aspire to attain them in the future.

This thesis deducts that the use of signs and symbols is an important factor in persuasion for successful perfume advertising communication as it (1) allows the audience to understand non-verbally the characteristics of the advertised

product, (2) aids in the creation of value and meaning in the minds of the consumers, (3) enables identification and representation with the character and plot, and (4) creates an idyllic representation of what an individual can achieve through the purchase and use of the product.

This study further aimed to reflect on the relevance and presence of Greek myths in modern hedonic advertising communication. It has been found that Greek myths were not only present in advertisement, but that they also followed the natural transition of transformation that Greek mythology intended. A transition from a new beginning with a clean slate, towards the highest form of knowledge and wisdom which comes with knowing oneself and the world.

5.2 Research questions

The symbolic interpretations of signs and symbols are used as a persuasive strategy in the communication of the MY WAY perfume advertisement to convey product characteristics, create value, target a specific audience and create aspirational ideals for consumers. In order to respond to this thesis, the research questions were structured to first, understand the importance and the extent of the presence of symbolic elements in the advertisement, followed by 3 topic-specific sub questions which narrow down the symbols to the chosen motifs of analysis. The second research question aims to understand the implications that the use of those symbols have on persuasion, followed by a sub question that explores the deduced target audience.

RQ 1: *To what extent is symbolism used as a communicator in the “MY WAY” perfume advertisement?*

Symbolism in the MY WAY perfume advertisement is first and foremost used to bring to life the personality of the product and portray an ideal scenario where the audience can emotionally connect to, ultimately linking the use of the product with the experiences and adventures that the actress lives in the ad. The most apparent signs are based on the colour use and correlation between blue, pink and gold, followed by the allusion to Greek mythology in the character’s development through the myths of Hemera or Eos the Goddess of day and the stars, Artemis the Goddess of nature and carer of children, Aphrodite the Goddess of love and Athene the Goddess of battles and the mind. Furthermore, the character is presented embodying the archetypes of the Explorer, the Sage, the Caregiver, the Everyman and the Lover. In addition to these main symbols, other accompanying signs and characters are used to support plot development and convey messages to the viewer.

RQ 1.1: *What mythical and archetypal characters are personified in the ad?*

The mythical characters personified in the advertisement follow a natural transition of womanly transformation. The Goddess Hemera or Eos is the Goddess of day, she marks the beginning of a new day. In the context of this advertisement her embodiment marks the beginning of her journey and subsequent transformation, her presence is seen from Picture 2. to Picture 2.3. The Goddess Artemis of nature and carer of children represents youth and freedom. She is embodied by the actresses' thrill of exploration as she enters a new adventure, the essence of Artemis is moreover connected to the colour blue of adventure and the presence of children who accompany her along the way. The essence of Goddess Artemis is represented throughout the advertisement, making her the most represented mythical figure of the four goddesses, her nature appears predominantly in Pictures 2.5.-4. and Pictures 5.-5.2. Her representations hints that the aroma of the product is rich and brave in nature. The third Goddess represented is the Goddess of Love, Aphrodite the embodiment of the mature, sensual and self-fulfilled woman. Her transformation comes during an encounter with a man, apparent in the Pictures 4.1.-4.3., her embodiment however is short but brings characteristics of sensuality to the aroma of the perfume. Finally, after a short return of the character to the personification of the Goddess Artemis, Goddess of battles and the mind Athene is personified. In the final scenes where Athene is embodied, Pictures 5.2.-5.4., the character has reached the culmen of her transformation, she is now seeing the light and has gained wisdom of herself through her experiences.

RQ 1.2: *What archetypal characters are personified in the ad?*

The archetypal characters that the actress embodies in this advertisement aid in gaining deeper understanding on the actress' personality traits. The archetypal Explorer represents the highest essence of her character, she aims to find her individual self through exploration and adventure. The Sage is the second most embodies archetype by the actress, through her explorations she seeks to gain knowledge and wisdom of herself and of the world. The third most represented archetype is the Caregiver, her interactions with people throughout the advertisement show her kind nature, helping people in need and protecting them from harm. The fourth archetype embodied by the actress is the Everyman, in connection to the caregiver, the actress seeks connections and emotions with other characters, and this is shown by the varied friendly interactions that the actress shares throughout the plot. Finally, the archetype of the Lover is embodied by the actress shortly seeking to make a romantic bond with the actor and acquiring intimacy.

RQ 1.3: *How are colours used to convey meaning in the ad?*

The colour blue, pink, and gold present themselves as the main colours of the perfume bottle. These colours are used throughout the advertisement in both the atmosphere and in the actress' attires. The colours are used as product identity associators, guiding the audience through the plot and character development of the actress. These colour associations conclude that the personality of the scent, and the idyllic aspiration they portray lay their bases in, freedom, youth, spirituality and dreaminess with the colour blue, sweetness, femininity, sensuality charm and power with the colour pink and richness, success, light, luxury and transformation through the colour gold.

RQ 2: *Are the symbols present in the MY WAY perfume advertisement an important factor of persuasion?*

The plot development, with the respective symbols mentioned above, served to bring to life an image and understanding of a product which cannot be perceived through its main sense, the smell. Using symbolism therefore, the creatives have the power to create an allusion to their audiences' other senses and unconscious psyche and therefore trigger a fantasy and understanding of the advertised product. The advertisement uses symbolism, the creation of archetypal characters and the allusion to Greek Goddesses to target young women whose self-schemata and/or aspirational identity corresponds with the need of freedom, exploration, seek of knowledge, connection with others, and knowledge of the self.

RQ 2.1: *Who is the target audience of the MY WAY perfume?*

The target audience is found to be young women, of 18-29 years of age who are undergoing, or wish to take on, a transformation and development of their persona, taking on a journey to find their true self and their place in the world. For women who are dreamy yet brave and non-conformist, with a desire for freedom and adventure, women who are kind and caring and seek for meaningful connections with others, and women who are intuitive, inquisitive and seek for knowledge and wisdom.

5.3 Limitations of the study

This research encounters a limitation innate to the subjectivity of semiotic analyses, that is, according to Roland Barthes (1973, p. 75), the limiting principle of relevance. This analysis has been developed with focus on the chosen motifs found important and relevant for analysis by the researcher, motifs that could vary when analysed by other researchers, and are highly subjective and reliant on the researchers' intuition as part of the research process (Müller, 2011).

Furthermore, as presented by Fernández-Fernández (2010, p. 27) it is imperative to understand that as individuals we are limited beings, cognitively incapable of delivering a complete interpretation of meanings as they are reliant and vary on the available resources, knowledge and experiences of the interpreter.

Furthermore, the analysis is limited to focus on western cultural and symbolic interpretations with focus on Greco-Latin deities and archetypal characters developed from western values. As the firm analysed is of Italian origin, the symbolic associations are for that of western culture only.

5.4 Further research

Although many studies analyse the use of symbology in advertising communication, further research could analyse a bigger number of advertisements to further prove the relevance of this phenomena and its effects on advertisement persuasiveness. Furthermore, the concepts of self-schema and aspirational-self could be further studied in connection to the symbology present in advertisements. This would allow for a deeper understanding a broader view into the cognitive and affective effects that advertisements have on individual's self-image, identity creation, social-identity creation and ideal -self achievement.

Furthermore, an interesting turn to gather deeper scientific understanding, and assist in forging the gap between advertising researchers and practitioners, the phenomena of linking aromas to personalities could be cognitively studied. The implications of this study could lead to the creation of more accurate descriptions of aroma characteristics, which if supported with "guides" could assist advertising practitioners to accurately link aromas to personality or archetypal traits, and therefore develop more accurate product descriptions in their persuasive communication.

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