

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p>European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p>MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p>Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p>SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	--	---	--

2ND INTERNATIONAL EUROPEAN PH.D. LAB MEETING

Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society

“Image-based research methods for analysing representations in action in different cultural contexts”

*at the Multimedia Lab in Rome
in combination with worldwide online connection points*

Techniques and Method of Analysis of Images in Advertising: A Content Analysis-based Study on International Magazines

Prof. Renata Metastasio □ University of Rome “La Sapienza”

Content Analysis and Research

1. Investigative Research on Glamour Magazine

This study of advertising published in the monthly women's magazine *Glamour*, printed in five different countries, is part of a wider research project coordinated by Prof. Renata Metastasio, Chair in the Sociology of Communication, Faculty of Psychology 2, University of Rome "La Sapienza". It is an investigative study that has a dual objective to test the validity of the tool, a specific content analysis chart, and to examine advertisements found in magazines of different kinds and nationalities in order to identify the representation of reality communicated in them.

In this study we used a type three content analysis, defined as an inquiry which, in order to point out certain properties in the totality of selected analysis units, made use of an analysis chart with a structure similar to a questionnaire consisting of a series of open and closed questions. Therefore, the general characteristics of the magazine and advertising were taken into consideration and then, the analysis was focused on individual advertisements, evaluating their formal and content characteristics, the prevailing theme, the characteristics of human figures present and, finally, the communication strategies adopted.

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--	--

1.2 The Sample Used: Advertisements.

All the advertisements found in the monthly magazine *Glamour* in four European countries (Italy, Germany, United Kingdom and Spain) were analyzed. The study is part of a project to identify the differences and specificities found in *Glamour* advertisements in different countries.

Glamour magazine is primarily directed at a female audience between 20 and 30 years of age. It is a magazine that contains articles on fashion, beauty, home decor, and, in general, anything that has to do with the lifestyle of young people today (www.glamour.com). The issues used were those of March 2002, with the exception of the Spanish edition of *Glamour*, which dated to November 2002.

The sample consisted of the advertisements contained in these issues, excluding self-promotion ads and advertising inserts, for a total of 491 advertisements divided as follows:

- Italy 214
- Spain 108
- United Kingdom 85
- Germany 84

1.3 Method Employed: Content Analysis

Content analysis was developed in the United States in the 1930s by Harold D. Lasswell. He was the first to try to design a systematic and quantitative procedure to analyze political communication that described the characteristics of messages in an objective and systematic way. This empirical research procedure, commonly known as *content analysis*, was the subject of various theoretical reinterpretations and also began to spread in Europe. In Italy, in particular, there are two scholars interested in this type of analysis, Gianni Losito and Franco Rositi. Rositi defines content analysis as “a grouping of methods that are oriented towards examining certain hypotheses on communication issues (broadcasters, messages, audience and their relationships) and for that purpose use analytic breakdown and classification procedures of texts and other symbolic groupings normally used for statistics” (Rositi, 1988 cited in Losito 1993, p.9). Content analysis can be considered a group of procedures applicable to multiple and differentiated research objects. It is particularly useful when the object of the analysis is a large number of messages, as is the case in social research on mass communications.

Rositi also observed how analysis procedures “essentially consist of breaking down communicative units into simpler elements (classification units) and in the classification of the latter into categorical variables (systematic and not), having pre-defined the contextual unit of reference for classification” (Rositi, 1988 cited in Losito 1993, p. 9). Departing from this premise, the author proposes differentiating content analysis into three different types based on the various modalities of breaking down the message under analysis and the different definitions of analysis units.

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	--	--

In *type one*, the analysis units coincide with the significant elements or elements of the linguistic structure of the text. Obviously, the type of messages analyzed is written linguistic texts or oral texts transcribed afterwards. The analysis units can be words, syntagma, key symbols, themes or sentences, ordered along a rising scale of range and semantic complexity from the smallest analysis unit, the word, to the most complex, the sentence. As you go up the semantic complexity scale of the analysis units, their definition and identification implies a more substantial and demanding intervention on the part of the researcher, who must attribute meanings to the analysis units, necessarily referring to the context in which they appear (Losito, 1993). The simplest quantitative analysis procedure applicable in the case of type one content analysis is frequency analysis. In addition, contingency analysis can also be applied. The "quantitative semantic" approach, that of discourse analysis and traditional content analysis use analysis procedures common to type one content analysis.

In *type two*, the classification units of type two content analysis do not have "linguistic recognizability at the level of meaning, but inside the contextual unit possess a relatively elevated force" (Rositi 1988, cited in Losito 1993, p. 10). Analyses of this type can be, for example, an analysis of physical environments associated to various types of products in advertisements or analysis of news items to identify the type and characteristics of the most frequent crimes.

Finally, in *type three* there is no breaking down of the text into elements. The analysis unit coincides with the contextual unit. The analysis unit can be therefore, a commercial, a television program, a film, a printed advertisement, or an interview in its entirety. An analysis of this type, for example, is one that aims to detect the presence or absence of certain values, certain prejudices or stereotypical representations of certain social categories in the analysis unit. (Losito, 1993).

The second and third types of content analysis use a method that is substantially similar to an inquiry, in which the content under examination is no longer only linguistic but also extra-linguistic. This means that the content is examined globally via a standardized or semi-standardized analysis chart specifically designed and constructed to record the stages in which certain properties are present in the various analysis units.

It is worth noting how for the three analysis types there are method issues of an increasingly problematic nature in the analyses from the first to the third type. For example, the operative definitions of the properties under consideration are increasingly complex. In type one they are explicit while in type two and three they are often latent and therefore decidedly difficult to define. In addition, the level of involvement of the analyst's subjective dimension contributes to making the data gathering phase more problematic. To get around this last problem, certain guarantees must be offered, such as insuring that data is collected in a collegial way to try and reduce to a minimum the risk of interpretations that are too subjective.

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--	--

1.4. The Content Analysis Chart and Training for Analysts.

Losito (1993, p. 87) defined the content analysis chart as a “methodical sequence of items, each of which corresponds to a variable that constitutes the operative definition of a certain property considered significant for research purposes. This variable can be an indicator of another, more general variable.”

The items of the content analysis chart are like the questions of a questionnaire that, instead of being directed at subjects, are directed at the analysis unit texts. The analysts, who must interpret the text according to previously established rules in order to avoid arbitrary interpretations, therefore supply the responses. The subjectivity of interpretations is a factor that has an influence on data codification that cannot be eliminated. However, by giving particular attention to training for analysts and favoring collegial method of data collection over individual methods, a means was devised to keep this under control. A couple or a group of analysts individually examine the same analysis units and then, in cases in which there is a difference of opinion in the analysts' codifications, a collegial decision is taken, either unanimous or by majority, and the resulting codification is inserted as the definitive one.

The analysis chart items are subdivided in homogenous thematic areas in a logical order. Inside these areas the items are ordered from the most general to the most specific in respect to eventual relationships of logical derivation.

The response alternatives for the items present on the chart should, in addition, satisfy the three principal requirements fundamental to classification: exhaustiveness, mutual exclusiveness and the uniqueness of the *fundamentum divisionis* (Marradi 1984, cited in Losito 1993).

- a) *Exhaustiveness* of response alternatives means the fact that each classification must be able to be attributable to a category. To make the body of the response alternatives exhaustive, alternatives are used where necessary; “not determinable” (in cases where the characteristic the item refers to is not identifiable in the analysis unit); “not present” (if the characteristic is not represented); and finally, the residual category “other” (when the analysis units do not fall into any of the alternatives provided for).
- b) In order to respect *mutual exclusivity*, according to which every alternative must be attributed to one single category, the criterion of prevalence was used, on the basis of which the analyst chooses the prevailing alternative from among the items that allow for multiple responses, or, as an alternative, each modality is considered a variable in and of itself, with the modalities present/absent.
- c) The *uniqueness of the fundamentum divisionis*, according to which “the attribution of alternatives to categories of a single classification must occur on the basis of a single rule” (Losito, 1996, p. 46), is satisfied by taking into consideration the conceptual definition of the variables, their modalities, and their indicators in the choice of alternatives.

Therefore, we designed a content analysis chart composed of 74 items, subdivided in six thematic areas that were internally homogenous.

The **first area** concerned the *magazine's general characteristics* (8 items), for example, the magazine's name, the country where the magazine was published, the prevalent thematic area, the number of pages and advertisements, the advertising

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	--	--	--

concentration index (the ratio of the two preceding variables), and the target age and sex.

The **second section**, *general characteristics of the advertisement* (6 items), reveals the merchandise sector to which the product belongs, if it is an advertisement of the commercial or social type, the presence of activities associated with product promotion and the commercial value of the product (compared to category). Finally, the target age and sex are codified.

The **third section**, concerning the *formal characteristics of the advertisement* (11 items), first collects information on the advertisement's appearance, identifying items such as the advertisement's format, placement and position inside the magazine, and, finally, the kind of register used and the presence of words or phrases in a foreign language (not including the product's name). It then examines the presence or absence of elements such as human figures (even if only in part), the product itself, the use of details and the brand.

In the **fourth area**, concerning the *advertisement's content characteristics* (18 items), contains items that concern the more particular aspects of the advertisement and the themes discussed in it. In the first items appear the temporal and spatial setting, the kind of interaction represented, the relationship context and if present, the kind of activity prevalent.

The part that concerns the theme identifies the presence of references to dimensions such as amusement, economic and physical well-being, friendship, sensuality and seduction, beauty and glamour, conquest, professional success, physical security, force and power, dynamism, information and adventure.

The **fifth section**, concerning the *characteristics of human figures in the advertisement* (18 items), collects information on the number of male and female seniors, adults, young people and children represented and the kind of figure present (unknown, famous, animal or imaginary). Relative to the typification of the gender aspect, two items allow for identifying when the figure's sexual gender is represented in a stereotypical manner or when it is represented in a standardized way but in an opposite sense, such as the case of an effeminate, delicate man or an aggressive, masculine woman. In addition, also in this section are examined the movement or stasis of the human figures and the use of male and female nudes.

The last thematic area, the **sixth**, analyzes the *communication strategies* employed in the advertisements (10 items). The first variable, referring to the prevailing attitude component, explicitly refers to a multidimensional concept of the attitude construct, derived from the interaction of three components: the cognitive, that includes information, knowledge and opinions; the emotional/sentimental or evaluative, that represents the area of judgments, evaluations and emotions towards the object of the attitude; and the conative, that contains intentions to take action towards the object (Zanna and Rempel, 1988, in Arcuri 1995). The item concerning the effect that the message tries to induce in the addressee codifies items in which messages try to reinforce or convert a pre-existing attitude or positively orient the consumer's attitude towards a certain product. The response alternatives for the variable "prevailing communicative model" allowed for distinguishing the items in which advertisements were concentrated on the product's "pluses", or rather, the characteristics and exclusive properties of the product, on the benefits, and emotional advantages and benefits derived from the product's use and its promise. To have an influence on the attitude components the advertisement can use various strategies, also examined in the analysis chart. In particular, an analysis was conducted on attraction by similarity, when contexts or figures represented are similar to those of the target, the transposition of evaluation, when something or someone already positively evaluated by the public is associated to the product, the symbolic cancellation of the product, when a certain world view or a philosophy of life that is supposedly shared by the addressees is associated to the brand. Then the presence of repetition, humor, transgressive and/or anxiety-inducing elements are identified and, finally, eventual references to personal influence and opinion leadership.

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	---	--

Three new items were added to the chart that had been previously used by other codifiers to analyze Italian, German, Spanish and United States samples which allowed for codifying respectively, the distance between one advertisement and the following one, the visual placement in an open newspaper (left or right) and the presence or not of the producer's website.

1.5 Data Analysis

Once the data collection and the process of verifying the data codified by the other analysis was finished, the data was placed inside a matrix on which it was possible to apply various statistical analysis procedures.

First the *frequency distribution* procedure was used which allows for counting the number of circumstances in which a variable assumes a determinate value and to investigate the distribution of the variables. Thanks to examining the results of this first analysis, the problems derived from data insertion errors and from the presence of missing or too low values were solved.

Multiple correspondences analysis (ACM), a sophisticated procedure of factorial analysis for irregular categorical variables that were objects of the study, was then applied to the variables judged to be the most significant for the hypotheses put forward. This was accomplished using the SPAD-N statistical program.

The multiple correspondences analysis procedure was prepared by Benzécri (1973) within the French school of *analyse des données*, from which he also produced the SPAD-N statistical program used to analyze the data in this study (Losito, 1993). The ACM allows for contemporarily working with an elevated number of variables and identifying "latent" dimensions subtended to the data, called *factors*, which synthesize the multiple relationships between the original variables. This method studies the relations between categorical variables with the Chi² test and should be applied to data codified in a complete logical-disjunctive matrix. That matrix has the *n* items in lines and in columns the *q* modality of all original *p* variables considered variables of the dichotomic type, which each have the modalities "present" and "absent" indicated respectively by codes 1 and 0. Therefore, in the cells of this matrix for each analysis unit a value was attributed, 0 or 1, which corresponds to the absence or presence of the modality (Ercolani, Areni, Mannetti, 1990). Finally a double entry table is constructed called the *Multiple Correspondences* or *Burt Matrix*, which cross-references all the modalities of the complete logical-disjunctive matrix. In each of the matrix's boxes appear the number of analysis units that simultaneously have the alternative "present" for both the modalities that correspond to it.

The complete logical-disjunctive matrix and the Burt Matrix are the starting points for the ACM, which is able to identify new synthetic variables, factors, which "express the optimal linear combinations between the modalities under consideration" (Losito, 1993, p.102).

Before analyzing the data it was necessary to decide which original variables would be the *active* ones, that would therefore take part in determining the factors and which others, excluded from the construction of the complete logical-disjunctive matrix, would not have a role in determining the factors. These variables, called *illustrative*, contribute in any case to clarifying the factors' meaning and highlight eventual relationships with these factors.

To each factor is associated an *auto value* or *self-value*, indicated by the Greek letter λ (lambda), that represents the *inertia*

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p>European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p>MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p style="font-size: small;">European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p> <p>Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p>SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--

quota (synonymous with variance in the ACM) shown by that factor. The factors extracted are then examined beginning with the one with the highest auto value that shows the highest total inertia quota. The first factor constitutes the best approximation of the original data matrix, the second is the second best approximation and shows a total inertia quota that is lower than the first one, and so on. In the analysis only the factors with the highest auto values are taken into consideration and therefore, in this study only the results of the first three factors were commented on.

The factors with lower auto values are reevaluated and reconsidered using Benzécri's optimistic formula:

$$\lambda^* = (\lambda - 1/p)^2$$

In this way the auto values of non-marginal entities can be reevaluated, that is those $\lambda > 1/p$ (Losito, 1993). The factors extracted are then interpreted on the basis of certain fundamental indicators, shown below:

- a) The *absolute contribution* of each modality that indicates the total inertia quota of the factor shown by the modality itself, represents how much of a role the modality had in the factor's determination, in relation to the body of the modalities. In interpreting the factor modalities those taken into consideration have an absolute contribution superior to $100/q$ (where q is the number of modalities of active variables).
- b) The *squared cosine*, which indicates the factor's contribution to explaining the variability of a certain modality. The higher the squared cosine is, also called the *relative contribution*, the more the modality is well represented on the factor.
- c) the *factorial coordinates* that, with a positive or negative sign, indicate the position of the modalities, whether on the positive or negative semi axis, the factorial axes and their distance from the origin of the axes themselves.
- d) the *relative weight* or *mass* of each modality, which is the result of the relationship between the frequency of the modalities and the number of active variables.
- e) the *distortion index* of each modality, which indicates the major or minor significance of the modality itself.
- f) the *value test* of modalities of illustrative variables attributes the position on the positive or negative semi axis in relation to the sign. Only modalities with an absolute value test superior to $+0 - 2$ are considered in the analysis.

In a final phase and still using the SPAD-N program, you proceed to **cluster analysis**, which makes it possible to group the advertisements on the basis of similarity of their profiles, constructed even on the basis of an elevated number of dimensions (Mannetti, 1998).

Cluster analysis consists of a body of statistical techniques able to identify groups of units that are similar in respect to a body of characters under examination and according to a specific criterion. The objective is substantially that of putting together mutually heterogeneous units in more tendentially homogenous and mutually exhaustive subgroups. Beginning with n undifferentiated subjects, you arrive at the formulation of k groups (with $k < n$) in a way that the internal variable, among the subjects in the same group, is the minimum possible while the external variable, between groups, is the maximum possible (Scalisi, Areni, Ercolani, 1994). The *cluster analysis* allows us then to arrive at the following results:

- a) *The generation of research hypotheses.* In fact, to conduct a cluster analysis it is not necessary to have any interpretive model in mind;
- b) *Reducing the data* into a form (even graphic) to facilitate interpretation of the information obtained and presentation of the results;

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--	--

- c) *Typological research* to identify groups of statistical units with distinctive characteristics that make the physiognomy of the system being studied stand out;
- d) *Construction of automatic classification systems*;
- e) *The study of homogenous classes*, inside which one can presume that the members are mutually replaceable.

It is especially worthwhile to highlight the first point. In fact, differentiating it from other multivariate statistical techniques (for example, discriminating analysis, which makes the division of a body of individuals into groups possible, predetermined from the outset of the study on the basis of various modalities assumed by one or more characters), *cluster analysis* does not make any a priori assumptions on the existing fundamental typologies that can characterize the collective under study. In this case, the technique has an exploratory research role for latent structures in order to deduce the most probable division. *Cluster analysis* is, in fact, a purely empiric classification method and as such is primarily an inductive technique.

Application of cluster analysis is divided into several phases. First of all, you must carry out the *choice of classification variables (1)*, the units under study. The choice of variables essentially mirrors the researcher's convictions and ideas and is an operation that implies a high level of subjectivity. It can happen that highly selective variables are not considered and, therefore, there can be an incorrect division into groups. On the other hand, including variables with an elevated discriminating capacity, but not relevant to the goals of the study, can lead to results with little practical value. It must be stated that generally, the variables used must be expressed in the same units of measure. If the quantitative variables to be used in the cluster are expressed in different units of measure or have different orders of magnitude, it is necessary to standardize the variables.

Once the variables are established, the next step is the *choice of a measure for dissimilarity between the statistical units (2)*. The characters obtained can be expressed in four distinct scales of measure: nominal, ordinal, by intervals and by relationships.

Once the measure of dissimilarity is chosen, there is the problem of proceeding to the *choice of an appropriate cluster algorithm* for the units under study (3). The distinction that is normally proposed is between:

- a) ***hierarchical methods*** that lead to a body of groups that can be ordered according to rising levels, with a number of groups from n to 1;
- b) ***non-hierarchical methods*** that provide a single division of the n units into g groups, in which g must be specified a priori.

The most commonly used aggregation criterion is the analysis of hierarchical clusters that can be applied according to:

- a) an ***aggregate*** procedure, if the clusters are formed by grouping the subjects into an ever increasing number of groups, to the point of arriving at a single group that includes all the n subjects -- most commonly used outside this specific study;
- b) a ***disaggregate*** procedure, if you begin with a single group that includes the n items and the subjects are subdivided into ever smaller numerical groups, to the point of obtaining as many groups as there are subjects (that is, n groups each with one subject).

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	---	--

The hierarchical methods are appropriate for a situation in which you have n clusters of a single unit to arrive, via successive fusions of the clusters closest to each other, at a situation in which there is a single cluster that contains all the n units. The final product of hierarchical methods is not, therefore, a single division of the n units, but a series of divisions that can be graphically represented using a "dendogram" or "tree diagram" in which the degree of distance is carried on the ordinal axis and the single units on the abscissa.

The concluding steps of the analysis include the *evaluation of the division obtained (4)*, *choice of the optimal number of groups (5)* and, finally, *the interpretation of results obtained, with the consequent connotation of the groups (6)*.

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

	<p align="center">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p align="center">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>		<p align="center">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p align="center">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
---	---	--	---

2. Research Results: Multiple Correspondences Analysis

The Multiple Correspondences Analysis is a factorial analysis procedure applied with the SPAD-N program. This procedure allows for identification of "latent" dimensions among the variables, or factors, that synthesize the multiple relationships between the variables (Losito, 1993). The active and illustrative variables are located on the factorial axes, each one made up of a positive and negative semi axis. The combinations among the various types of variables permit clarification of the meaning of the factors and identifying eventual relationships between these and the variables' modalities.

2.1 The Factors

In this study the first three factors presenting the highest auto values were taken into consideration. The "optimistic" Benzécri formula (1979) was applied to them, by which the most significant factors should be able to explain the near totality of the total inertia and correspond to:

$$\lambda = (\lambda - 1/p)^2$$

where λ stands for the auto value of each factor and p for the number of variables. By studying these factors it was possible to identify the dimensions subject to the data structure, which summarize the relationships of interdependence among the original variables via a more restricted number of variables (cf. Tab. 1):

NUMBER	Self Value	Reevaluated Lambda	%	% Reevaluated Inertia	% Reevaluated Cumulative
First Factor	0,2613	0,0582	17,30	73	73%
Second Factor	0.1203	0,0144	7,97	18	91%
Third Factor	0.0789	0,0034	5,22	4.3	95.3%
Fourth Factor	0,0715	0,0026	4,74	3.3	98.6%

Tab. 1. Distribution of reevaluated lambda.

1st FACTOR

The first factor, showing 73% reevaluated inertia, represents the contrast between: *“absence of unknown figures excluding young women vs. presence of mythological and famous figures”* (cf. Tab 2) .

- On the negative semi axis one notes the total absence of representation of unknown figures in the advertisement. The same is true for animals, cartoons and mythological figures. To the total absence of representations of human figures, with the exception of young female figures, is substituted the presence of both registers, verbal and iconic. The component of the addressee's attitude, which the message seeks to play on, is not determinable.

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	---

As far as the illustrative variables, these advertisements, prevalently belonging to the merchandise sector "apparel", are characterized by a format corresponding to one half or more pages and the product advertised has no determinable commercial value. The activity associated with the promotion of the product consists in the presence of more products. German and Italian magazines are more characterized by this type of advertisement.

- The positive semi axis is characterized by the presence of a human figure, prevalently in a singular modality, with the sole exception of "young males" (more than one) and famous figures (more than one). Not present are themes tied to seduction/sexuality/sensuality, but rather themes related to information/knowledge/discovery. The setting is in the past and with representations that make use of the male nude to attract attention. The dominant communication strategy is attraction by similarity and the register is exclusively verbal.

As for the illustrative variables, this kind of advertising is characterized by products belonging to the food sector and others. They are addressed to a target of children and young people that consider the product of high or medium-low commercial value. In this case the advertising format is a half page. The magazines characterized by this type of advertising are those from the United Kingdom and Spain.

This first factorial dimension establishes a net difference between Italy-Germany and United Kingdom-Spain concerning the representation of advertisements respectively characterized by the absence and presence of unknown figures. These are rather informal messages that have as their only strong point the use of the image proposed via both the iconic and verbal modalities. Neither the commercial value nor the effect that the message wants to induce in the addressee can be determined.

2nd FACTOR

The second factor, showing 18% reevaluated inertia, represents the contrast between: "*absence of human figures vs. typification of gender and use of the nude*" (cf. Tab. 3).

- On the negative semi axis is shown a total absence of human figures and consequently some of the advertisement's characteristics determined by the themes of seduction and beauty. There is no figure movement or stasis and not even typification of appearance by gender. There is, however, a temporal setting in the past. The language used in the advertisements tries to influence the cognitive component of attitude, giving a lot of information about the product and highlighting positive things about the product. The effect that it tries to induce is that of orientation. That is, it tries to encourage the addressee to have a favorable attitude towards a new product.

As far as concerns the illustrative variables, activities associated with the promotion of the product are not present and its commercial value is middle to low. The prevalent targets for this kind of advertisement are children and the sex is universal. German and English magazines are more characterized by this kind of advertisement. In these advertisements products were publicized that were grouped in the modality "other merchandise sectors" that alone do not reach significant percentages, for example, networks, pharmaceutical products, magazines and vehicles.

- On the positive semi axis, however, a very different situation is represented. There are advertisements representing a couple in a sentimental relational context. Also present are the themes of friendship, seduction and conquest. The figures, in motion, are engaged in activities of taking care of themselves. In some advertisements the use of a male nude is present, a

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--	--

strategy used to attract attention, especially of women, the magazine's primary target. The figures, male and female, are typified according to gender. The advertisements pursue no particular end, and consequently, no particular communication strategy is used. As shown by the illustrative variables, it is a kind of advertising used in the apparel sector, characterized by the promotion of additional products from the same merchandise sector. The target age for the product is represented by young people, male and female. The advertisement's format is usually very broad, running two or more pages. Italy and Spain are the two countries especially involved in this kind of advertising.

This second factorial dimension highlights two different ways to advertise. The first, found especially in English and German magazines, uses a bare scenario, dressed only by the text that invites the addressee to engage in a certain behavior towards the product being advertised. It is a text that aims to minimize difficulties and maximize possible results. The value of the products is not high and to stimulate purchasing, they try to act on the cognitive sphere of attitude. The positive semi axis represents, instead, a kind of advertising found in Italian and Spanish magazines, which aims more toward the theme of seduction, in relation to the target to which the magazine under study is directed. The intimate-sentimental relationship of the couple presupposes the need to feel good first about oneself, then about others. Today the major method used to improve oneself, feel good about oneself and appeal to others is the increasing and habitual use of cosmetics and "fashionable" articles of clothing. Women have always been more attentive to these aspects, but we can easily say that even men are beginning to show themselves to be very attentive to personal care.

3rd FACTOR

The third factor, showing 4.3% reevaluated inertia, represents the contrast between: "*relationship of a friendly-sentimental type vs. absence of relationship*" (cf. Tab 4).

- On the negative semi axis a type of advertisement prevails that is characterized by the presence of couples of human figures drawn in a relational context of the friendly-sentimental type and set in the past. There is also the presence of one or more female adult figures and single young males. The prevailing theme is happiness, amusement and friendship. Reference to the theme of beauty is also present. The message aims to play upon the emotional-sentimental component of the addressee's attitude. The typification of gender is only male. This kind of advertising does not aim to create any kind of effect on the addressee. Almost all the figures are unknown and very similar to the target except for the presence of one sole famous figure that has the goal of giving the product a value higher than its actual value. The type of activity represented is taking care of oneself, and the merchandise sector most involved is that of apparel.

According to the data provided by the illustrative variables, another merchandise sector that characterizes this kind of advertising is food and alcoholic beverages. The commercial value of the product is high and aimed at a young and universal sex target. The country involved is the United Kingdom.

- On the negative semi axis the advertisement presents aspects that characterize a total absence of relationships, with the consequent absence of any kind of activity represented. The representation of human figures is prevalently one of adult female figures and unknown single figures, who act as spokesmen for themes such as beauty and information-knowledge. Also present are groups of young males and famous figures. The figures shown are presented in both static and movement modalities in a temporal setting that corresponds to the present. The presence of unknown figures similar to the target shows

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--	--

the presence of the strategy of attraction by similarity as well as a reference to the emotional-sentimental component of attitude.

As far as the illustrative variables, this kind of advertising represents advertisements that have as their object products for which the commercial value is not determinable, and belong to a merchandise sector called "other" (network, technological and pharmaceutical products, etc.) The target of reference is composed of young females and the magazine containing this kind of advertising is above all the Spanish one.

This third factor is characterized by the presence on the two factorial axes of advertising that represents, respectively, a relationship of the sentimental-friendly kind and a situation in which any kind of relationship is absent. The first type of advertisement is characterized by products that belong to the merchandise sector apparel as well as food and alcoholic beverages, sectors in which the majority of purchasers are young, in line with the magazine's target. The second type of advertisement is, instead, tied to products belonging to the merchandise sector "other". These are atypical advertisements, from merchandise sectors that are not very representative of the sample, whose modalities do not by themselves reach significant percentages. Therefore, in this kind of advertisement, figures, usually single and in a "present" setting, try to instill a "direct" relationship with the reader, informing him/her of the product's characteristics in order to provoke an effect of reinforcing a pre-existing attitude. Via this kind of advertisement, sometimes reinforced by the presence of a famous figure, the text expresses the promise that you will not be unhappy with that product and tries to inform and communicate to the consumer the advantages that he will receive from using the product. The advertisement appears simple but well structured.

2.2 Cluster Analysis

Again using the SPAD-N statistical program, it was possible to apply *cluster analysis* to the body of advertisements in order to identify certain groups divided on the basis of the research variables and in this way, to construct a typology of advertisements. The clusters that are derived from it in each cluster must contain advertisements that are to the greatest extent possible mutually homogeneous and heterogeneous in relation to those that belong to the other clusters.

As for the advertisements in the monthly magazine *Glamour*, five clusters were identified:

1st CLUSTER: "BEAUTY"

It is characterized by the presence of human figures, in particular, adult women, represented in single modality, typified in appearance according to gender and who are not engaged in any kind of activity. The use of female nudes is frequent and the woman is photographed in an undetermined temporal setting, usually in a photographic studio. In this kind of advertisement are present the themes of beauty, glamour, seduction, sensuality and sexuality. The themes of social relations and friendship are absent as the figure is represented alone. The advertising is directed at a female target and aims at promoting more products from the same merchandise sector, which is apparel. For this reason there is great attention to the use of details, among which is the brand. No particular communication strategy is used and the effect that the message is trying to prompt in the addressee is not determinable. In order to be more visible and have greater effect, these advertisements are represented on two or more pages. The most involved countries are Italy and Germany (cf. Tab II. and Fig.II.1).

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--	--

2nd CLUSTER: “INTIMACY”

In respect to the previous one, this cluster is characterized by the presence of the relational dimension, of the friendly, intimate and sentimental type. Figures are represented in couples or groups and are typified in appearance according to gender. In addition, they are shown in movement and, usually, in a natural external setting. Among the figures represented no one is famous; therefore the representation is of unknown people, similar to the target of reference. Since the type of relationship is friendly or sentimental, the attitude component to which it is referred is the emotional-sentimental. In the advertisement there is no reference to any communicative model. Even here the format can be two or more pages. Here as well, the merchandise sector under examination is apparel. The activity associated with presenting the product is promotion of more products from the same merchandise sector. In general there is no text and the themes of information, knowledge and discovery are missing. Italy is the country that is most involved in this kind of advertising. (cf. Tab II.2 and Fig II.2).

3rd CLUSTER: “THE PRODUCT”

This cluster is strongly characterized by the absence of figures. For this reason the absence of themes concerning beauty, seduction, interaction, activity and relational context is justifiable. The target age for this kind of advertising is not determinable but the target sex is universal. The register is both verbal and iconic and the messages cover an entire page. The merchandise sector of reference is that belonging to the category called “other” (pharmaceutical products, publishing, network, vehicles, electronics, etc.). The attitude components that this type of message is trying to reach are the cognitive and conative and the prevailing communicative model is one that highlights the positive aspects of the product. The commercial value of the product is not determinable and there is no characteristic present in the message that favors change. This type of advertisement is characterized by the absence of human figures, which usually have the job of attracting attention. Therefore, only the product appears and its characteristics have the job of reaching the target. Italy is the country that is most involved in this type of advertising (cf. Tab. II.3 and Fig. II.3).

4th CLUSTER: “FEELING GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF”

This cluster is characterized by the presence of advertising that adopts various communication strategies, for example: the use of a famous person in a testimonial; a transposition of evaluation, by which “if this famous person uses this product, it must be exceptionally good”; and benefit as a communicative model. In this group as well, moving single human figures are present and are engaged in activities of taking care of themselves. The merchandise sectors of reference are those of personal hygiene and the sector called “other”. Among the formal aspects of these advertisements are found the register, which is verbal, the presence of words or phrases in a foreign language and the use of attraction by similarity as a useful technique for inducing a change in attitude. The format of these advertisements is the half page and the effect that they want to have on the addressee are reinforcement and conversion. The function of this kind of advertising is to encourage the addressee to action, since beauty and well-being can easily be obtained thanks to the use of the product being advertised. Spain is the country involved in this kind of advertising (cf. Tab II. 4).

5th CLUSTER: “TRYING IS BELIEVING”

The fifth and last cluster is characterized by the representation of one or more unknown figures. Both registers are used, usually with the brand name and additional information about the product's characteristics. The presence of functions and

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	---	--

communication strategies is elevated. The effect that it seeks to instill in the addressee is a positive orientation towards a product that is usually new. The communicative model used is "pluses" that give even more specific characteristics to the product, which already by itself has a high commercial value. This type of advertising is especially characteristic of the cosmetic and vehicle advertising sectors. The United Kingdom is the country involved (cf. Tab. II.5).

In conclusion, thanks to cluster analysis, it was possible to define five types of advertisements:

- If articles of clothing are advertised, as in the first cluster, they are represented by very beautiful young women. This type of advertisement wants to convince the target, female, that by using the products advertised she will acquire the same ability to please and seduce. The message plays on the desire of young people to feel more self-confident, more appreciated and always able to be attractive. It tries to act on the sentimental and emotional dimensions of attitude as the most sensitive to esthetics and the need for self esteem.
- The second type of advertisement is characterized instead by the theme of human relations. Present are themes such as social relations and friendly and sensual interaction, which once again must act on the emotional and sentimental dimensions of attitude. These images of figures engaged in sensual physical relations and entertaining group relations are used as an expedient to attract attention but, also, to involve the audience in sentimental relations and relations of integration in social groups as well as representing the advantages obtained by using the advertised product.
- The third type of advertisement is differentiated from the preceding ones by the absence of human figures. The central role is occupied by the product which by itself must "speak" to possible purchasers, transmitting to them trust and reliability. Often the product can be accompanied by text that serves to stress the goal of attracting and persuading addressees. In order to be as efficient as possible, the advertisement should involve a product or at least a brand that is already known to the audience.
- If cosmetic products for personal hygiene are being advertised the presence of the human figure returns, this time especially represented by a famous person to induce a transposition of evaluation in the addressee. In this way, the female target can be persuaded, via words as well as images, that by using the product advertised you can become as beautiful as the person in the testimonial.
- The last type of advertisement is typical for products that belong to the "self publicity" sector. The text has a very important role, as it is the principle vehicle for knowledge about the product and for transmission of information about its value.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Equally with other means of communication, the press can be considered an important socialization agent and an important vehicle for transmission of culture and language. Analyzing the advertisements present in four magazines permitted us to define the various kinds of communication used as well as the cultural symbols evoked and mirrored in the latent dimensions of the cultures to which they belong. The fact of having examined periodicals from the same time frame (March 2002 and November 2002, for the Spanish magazine) helped in making almost all the products being advertised on the basis of their merchandise sector coincide. Even if the advertising concentration indices are different from magazine to magazine because of the different proportion between the number of pages and the number of advertisements in the fourth magazine, from the

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--	--

frequency analysis we find that 100% of these advertisements concern the clothing and fashion sector and the target of reference is exclusively young and female. This data proves that inherent to the culture of the countries studied is the need to appear and always feel beautiful, seductive and prepared for all occasions. The protagonists in these advertisements are, in most cases, very beautiful girls devoted to the care of their appearance as a function of seduction. The image of women carried by this kind of advertisement is increasing moving away from the image of women that emerged from research ten years ago. It no longer consists of a woman represented in the setting of her own home, devoted to the family: it is no longer a housewife. On the contrary, it has become a woman who has decided and is determined to take all the time necessary to take care of her own beauty or to share beautiful moments with her partner or friends. She is a dynamic and energetic woman, but expresses this energy via seduction and sensuality or via entertainment of a friendly, relational type. Today women are involved in many other activities from which they were excluded in the past but, in advertisements, these aspects were only marginally taken into consideration. Even today, her figure is used for purely esthetic ends. Many of the advertisements studied are directed towards a universal sex target. Given the merchandise sector of this magazine, this is a very important piece of data.

Even the male figure is changing. Man is no longer the “head of the family” of the past, depository of wisdom and the only worker. His image as the “rule and money bearing engine” is being replaced by a representation of man as more "feminized" in which he increasingly is presented as seeking physical security that he pursues via attention to his own image. He is an aesthete exhibiting his own body and his principal activities are amusement and couple relationships.

From the results obtained from the Multiple Correspondences Analysis and the Cluster Analysis it is possible to define different types of advertisements for each specific country dealt with.

Italy is characterized by a type of advertisement that publicizes products belonging to the merchandise sector "apparel". This type of advertisement has very attractive men and women as its protagonists, typified in appearance by gender and sometimes represented undressed into order to better show off their physical qualities. The photography is almost always done in a non-determinable temporal and environmental setting, often a photographic studio. The themes of seduction and glamour are present but not those of social relations and friendship since the figures are represented alone. The presence of the human figure is by itself able to attract the attention of the addressee to the extent of making the presence of a certain language or a certain communication strategy unnecessary. The only device used is that of placing the advertisement on two or more pages to make it more visible and more efficient in instilling in the addressee the desire to buy that particular article of clothing in order to be "fashionable" and "in style". If you had to define the communication strategy of this advertisement by referring to the distinction made by Codeluppi following one of his research projects, it would represent a perfect example of “Autonomy”.

Still referring to the apparel merchandise sector, there are advertisements present that, however, are characterized by the absence of figures and the presence of the product and a text, often the brand. These advertisements usually carry advertising for known brands with high commercial value. The brand is the product's guarantee and therefore, there is no need to provide further information and engage the reader using particular strategies.

In Italy there are also advertisements present that are characterized by the social and relational dimension that can be of the friendly or the intimate/sentimental type. In this type of advertisement the figures are represented in couples or groups

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p>European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	--	--

typified in appearance by gender and shown in movement while engaging in friendly or intimate relations. In this case as well, the merchandise sector involved is apparel.

Concerning Germany, the situation is substantially the same, if with some exceptions. Advertisements are present in which human figures are absent and there are only iconic and verbal elements present. In this case the latter try to play on the cognitive and conative components of attitude, providing a lot of information on the product, which highlights the product's "pluses". Products represented in this manner are those belonging to the merchandise sector "other" and have a medium-low commercial value. In the case of advertisements in which figures are represented in couples, a communication strategy and communicative model are used that correspond, respectively, to attraction by similarity and benefit in order to provoke a reinforcement effect in the addressee. This type of advertisement, especially used to publicize accessories and aimed at a female target, have the sole goal of showing the object to emphasize its exclusivity and the uniqueness of its characteristics. Other advertisements characterized in this way are those aimed towards products belonging to the merchandise sector "other": automobiles, technological products, network, etc. Advertising should inform and reassure the consumer by legitimizing his or her choices.

Spain is characterized by the use of advertising that adopts diverse communication strategies, for example, the use of the testimonial, via which it wants to induce transposition of evaluation. That is, "if that product is used by that person, it must be really excellent and will allow me to enjoy the same advantages that the personality in question enjoyed". The merchandise sectors involved are personal hygiene, cosmetics, and taking care of oneself. The register is both iconic and verbal, with the presence of words or phrases in a foreign language to attract more attention. The advertisements are characterized by the presence of a single figure as well as figures in couples shown in a sentimental context, in which the theme of seduction, conquest and even friendship predominates. The merchandise sector of reference is apparel.

If they are single, the figures are represented in a static modality and are not engaged in any sort of activity. They are unknown figures similar to the target of reference and their goal is activating the attraction by similarity strategy, which refers to the emotional-sentimental component of the addressee's attitude.

Finally, even for the United Kingdom, the picture is not very different than in the previous countries discussed. Here also are present advertisements in which human figures in couples are represented in a relational context of the emotional-sentimental type with reference to the themes of happiness, amusement and beauty. No particular communication strategy is used and the figures are unknown, with the exception of a single famous figure. The commercial value of these products is high and the merchandise sectors involved are apparel, cosmetics and personal hygiene.

Analysis of the content of advertising in the magazines did not show large differences between the four countries studied. In fact, one can say that they all have a common denominator: the elevated value given to themes of beauty, glamour, seduction and physical appearance. This result is in line with the magazine under study, *Glamour*, which is specifically interested in the themes of fashion and beauty. What is interesting is to see how these themes are dealt with and if it happens in a way that was different in the past.

The majority of advertisements are characterized by the elevated presence of the female figure represented alone. She is no longer represented in domestic scenes or while performing her role as mother but is represented in relation to her body. The

European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Lab Meetings
New series of events 2005-2008

 <p>MARIE CURIE ACTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">European Commission Research Directorate General Human Resources and Mobility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES & TRAINING COURSES (MSCF-CT-2004-013264)</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">European Ph.D. Social Representations and Communication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social Representations in action and construction in Media and Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SoReCoMedia & Society</p>
--	---	---	--

typical 1970's representation of women as "mothers and housewives" has been abandoned but they are still considered a "woman-object". Even if you can notice some hints of change in some advertisements where the woman is represented in a guise showing her involved in work, the prevailing theme is still that of seduction. A woman must first be beautiful, well looked after and right for all occasions. She must publicize the product in a way to convince addressees that with it they can become beautiful and perfect like her. In addition, today seduction no longer seems a role forced on women for advertising, and therefore economic ends, but also a true inborn gift and characteristic. It is a weapon that, according to the situation, can be voluntarily activated. In the past women were linked to images associated with gentleness, tenderness and romanticism. Today, instead, one notes a reversal in this sense: women are increasingly represented as engaging in activities or assuming attitudes considered "masculine". Hence, the advertisements in which women are represented in sports activities (for example, the Prada advertisement in which a woman is engaged in gymnastic exercises). They are dynamic women who love freedom (for example, the Levi's advertisement in which a girl is running and there is the written phrase "freedom of movement"). But she is also a seductive and aggressive woman who can be well employed in advertising an automobile that has the same characteristics (for example, the advertisement for the Rover 25). Fashionable women assume masculine features without, however, losing their femininity and their power of seduction.

Men, on the other hand, present clear characteristics that differentiate them from the past. If before men were represented as holding prestigious social positions, today it is no longer so, or at least, not solely. Stereotypically in the past, men tended to be associated with advertising with informative content and were not very present in the field of fashion. Today men are increasingly gaining ground and alongside the figure of the man at work, who occupies a prestigious role in society and is a depository of knowledge, is found a man who does a lot of sports in order to sculpt a body that he wants to display in all its perfection. He pays ever more attention to his own good looks and style, a "feminized" image of man. In the apparel field there has been a serious change in the production of men's clothing that are now shown in livelier colors and cuts that follow and enhance muscles. The production of perfumes for men is also increasingly growing. In this way, the male and female worlds are growing closer via cosmetics. There also has been a notable increase in advertisements for men's underwear that make nudes the principal attraction. In this way the image of the "man-object" is being constructed. A fundamental characteristic of today's man is that he more easily indulges in sentiments such as gentleness, tenderness and romanticism.

In spite of small changes from those of the past, these advertisements continue to preserve particular stereotypical aspects of men and women. Society is in a state of clear and continuous change, but evidently the media and, in particular, advertising, are not able (or do not want) to keep abreast of its rapidly flowing stream and tend to exemplify its complexity.