

## **REPRESENTATION OF ETHNIC IDENTITIES IN TURKISH ADVERTISEMENTS**

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### **Resumé**

Dans le monde d'aujourd'hui où tout est formé selon les besoins et les demandes des consommateurs, la détermination de ces derniers et la réalisation d'activités de marketing intégrées offre un avantage compétitif significatif aux marques. S'adresser aux consommateurs selon leurs besoins et demandes, et spécialement dans des pays à diversité culturelle, permet d'atteindre les buts du marketing.

De ce point de vue, il est important de prendre en compte les différentes identités culturelles de la population. Chaque groupe ethnique possède sa propre langue, sa croyance, ses valeurs etc. Par contre leur représentation dans l'industrie médiatique peut différer de ce qu'il en est réellement. La Turquie est un pays multiculturel. Divers groupes ethniques y vivent. Par exemple les Kurdes, les Lazes, les Circassiens, les Caucasiens, les Arméniens, les Rums/Grecs, les Alévis, les Yazidis etc. Toutes ces identités ethniques représentent une importante valeur pour la Turquie. Ma recherche porte ainsi sur la représentation des identités ethniques dans les publicités turques. Ma question principale est donc celle-ci: "Comment ces identités sont-elles reflétées dans les pratiques publicitaires".

Les concepts d'identité ethnique, de marketing ethnique et de publicité ethnique y seront tout d'abord expliqués et débattus selon la littérature concernée, puis j'entreprendrais une analyse de contenu sur des exemples de publicité, pour finalement tenter d'expliquer pourquoi l'identité ethnique est importante pour les marques et la publicité en Turquie et dans le monde.

### **Mots-clés**

Culture, Ethnicité, Identité Ethnique, Publicité, Turquie.

## **Abstract**

In today's world, everything is formed by customer's requests and needs, so to determine what these requests and needs are and to perform integrated marketing activities according to these create a significant competitive advantage to brands. Especially, calling out to the consumers appropriately in countries which represent cultural diversity makes it easy to reach for marketing purposes. At this point, considering the cultural identity of people living in that country and planning the ethnic marketing functions accordingly has become a requirement for brands. Ethnic groups have an original language, belief, values etc. However, conception of them in media industry is different from virtual. Media and media industries show to them in various ways. Turkey is a multicultural country. A lot of ethnic identities are in this country. For example, Kurds, Laz (Black Sea), Cherkes, Caucasians, Armenian, Greek /Rum, The Romany, Alewis, Yezidi etc. All of them are an important value for Turkey. Therefore, I will research on representation of ethnic identities in Turkey advertisements. My specific research questions are “How do they reflected in Turkish advertising practices?. In this research, titled " Representation of Ethnic Identities in Turkish Advertisements", primarily the concepts of ethnic identity, ethnic marketing and ethnic advertising will explain by reviewing the literature in depth and context analysis on advertisement samples, then development of ethnic advertising in the world and Turkey is and how important the term ethnic identity for advertising and brands world will prove.

## **Keywords**

Culture, Ethnic, Ethnic identity, Advertisement, Turkey.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Culture is signified as the totality of symbols, values and beliefs shared by members of the society or a particular group (Baba, 2003:31). According to the anthropologists, culture has the power to influence the behaviors and attitudes of a society (Graham et al., 1993:6). Therefore, nowadays “the target marketing strategies based on ethnic marketing segmentation” is stated to be gradually increasing. In other words, this practice can also be defined as the construction of a new identity for an already existing brand in order to enter a new market ([www.unitednationsplaza.org](http://www.unitednationsplaza.org)). The increasing purchasing power of the neglected ethnic groups has led the businesses to focus their marketing practices on ethnic marketing strategies (Holland and Genty, 1999:65).

Ethnic concept derived from “ethnos” word from the ancient Greek language. At the archaic period in Greece, ethnos concept illustrated the people, clans, hordes live in a harmony and shares cultural and biological properties according to common origin, birthplace, or the place where these people live (Sağır and Akıllı, 2004:2). In addition, ethnic concept in social

sciences illustrated mostly away from biological and genetic differentiation. In social science studies ethnic concept depicted as a clan's or a social organization's properties and a kind of social learning, social estate acceptations, owned language, religion and owned culture which will differentiate a group from others (Gül, 2007:25). At that point ethnic identity is described as one of collective identity which is contributed at social life and a kind of identity owned by the members or appropriated by others. Furthermore, ethnic identity is indicated as a natural and universal fact that comes up a person interaction with social environment and his strict to change this group consciousness (Yılmaz, 2010:1).

A person's ethnic identity involves one's sense of belonging to a group, as well as the feelings being part of that group. In this sense, ethnic identity is said as a complex psychological process which involves perceptions, cognition, and affect and knowledge structures about person thoughts and feels about himself and others in society (Jamal, 2003:1602). All the same, ethnic identity is something about person's self-definition (O'Guinn 1998, Faber, 1985:138). On the other hand, the term "ethnicity" is generally agreed to refer to "people who perceive themselves as constituting a community because of common culture, ancestry, language history, religion, or customs" (Holland and Gentry, 1999:67).

On the other hand, ethnic identity seems most often to be a frame in which individuals identify consciously or unconsciously with those with whom they feel a common bond because of similar traditions, behaviors, values, and beliefs (Ott, 1989).

Laroche, Kim and Clarke (1997) highlight that the ethnic structure is a significant factor in terms of determining the attitudes and behaviors of customers. Ethnic identity includes not only the socio-economic status of individuals (education level, professional status etc.), but also the cultural differences and cultural influence areas (in other words language options surrounding them and the way he/she uses this language, customs and traditions as well as the identity they define themselves). Nevertheless, ethnic identities are considered to be closed to cultural interaction (which is defined as the appropriation of values and norms of another cultural group and adaptation to them). Hutnik (1991) on the other hand defines ethnic identity through four categories. These are (Baba, 2003:9);

- 1) *Dissociation ethnic identity*: Those who see themselves belonging exclusively to the ethnic minority group
- 2) *Assimilation ethnic identity*: Those who see themselves belonging exclusively to the majority group
- 3) *Acculturation*: Those who identify themselves with both the ethnic minority and ethnic majority group.
- 4) *Marginalization*: Those who identify themselves with neither group (Baba, 2003:9).

In short, ethnic identity is the expression of an individual's self-definition through cultural factors such as language, ethnicity and country of origin. Ethnic identity is a significantly leading factor in terms of approaching target minority groups with their language and achieving the desired consumer behavior in today's world where marketing strategies takes shape according to the needs of the customers.

The corpus of research on ethnic identity in advertising indicates that (1) ethnic identity influences commonly examined attitudinal and purchase-intention outcomes, and (2) attitudes toward both the actor(s)/model(s) and the ad moderate attitudes toward brands depicted in ethnically resonant ads.

As geographic markets become ever more culturally and ethnically diverse, advertisers will benefit from promotional stimuli that resonate with targeted consumers; such stimuli enable consumers to identify ethnically with advertising messages and image. Hence, understanding what ignites and what explains ethnic identification with ads is essential to marketers. Despite the prevalence of ethnic cues in ads and the importance of ethnic identification for marketers (Green, 1999; Whittler, 1989), research findings about ethnic identity in advertising have, at times, lacked consistency. For example, one study showed that Whites (Blacks) identify more with White (Black) actors than Black (White) actors, respond more favorably to ads with White (Black) actors, and are more likely to buy the advertised brand when White (Black) actors are featured. A different study showed that Chinese consumers found ads with White characters as appealing as ads with multiple Chinese ethnic cues. Yet another study showed Asians, Blacks, and Hispanics identify most with ads that use Black actors; and Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, and Whites evaluate ads that use Black actors more positively than ads featuring White actors (Appiah, 2001).

Advertising research has generally not gone beyond offering support for a positive effect where ethnic models in advertising are viewed by consumers of the same ethnicity. Kwai-Choi Lee et.al experiment reveals a strong self-referencing effect for ethnic minority individuals. Specifically, Asian subjects (the ethnic minority group) self-referenced ads with Asian models more than white subjects (the ethnic majority group). However, this result was not evident for white subjects (2002: 367). In this context, targeting a particular product with a strategy that addresses the language of a target market, its habits, beliefs and values as well as using material that features ethnic factors in line with the predispositions of ethnic communities play a key role in achieving the desired result through advertisement. However, the question that arises for consideration in the context of Turkey and perhaps plays a key role is :“ Are all cultural identities living in Turkey represented in advertisements produced here?” And “Do the cultural identities represented reflect true identities thoroughly and genuinely?”

As there is very little research on ethnic identity, marketing and advertisement in Turkey this research is an important source to draw benefits about the issue.

## **ETHNIC MARKETING**

Ethnic marketing is conceptualized as “the totality of marketing practices targeting ethnic groups who have different life styles and consumption habits (Kurt, 2009).” Ethnic marketing is considered to have been originated in the United States in 1900 when Mrs C. J. Walker, a black aesthetician woman, have noticed that her customers wanted to straighten their hair like the White women and launched the first straightener dedicated to the Black American women. Without any knowledge in marketing, she adapted the price separately to fit her customers’ incomes (Guichard, Ciccione and Lubrano, 2008:18).

Researches on marketing to ethnic groups can be summarized broadly in three eras. Prior to the 1960s, ethnic groups were largely ignored. They were not considered viable market segments, and no effort was made to target them or conduct research on marketing to them. The second era began roughly in the mid-1960s and continued until about 1980. During that period, societal changes caused a reevaluation of the role of previously ignored consumer groups. As far as ethnic groups were concerned, marketers and researchers focused almost exclusively on African-Americans. Blacks began to appear more frequently and in higher status positions in advertisements. Research during the period was characterized by descriptive analyses of the differences between black and white consumers in their consumption patterns, media habits, and reactions to advertising. Little attention was paid to other ethnic groups, or to more fundamental questions such as why differences in consumption may exist or what values may influence ethnic consumers' reactions to marketing stimuli. The third era began in the early 1980s and continues today. Research studies examine a variety of ethnic groups and attempt to look at differences in culture that may drive consumption patterns (Holland and Gentry, 1999:66-67).

In another research, more than half of the companies listed in Fortune’s 500 are reported to have an ethnic marketing program (<http://www.e-sosder>.) For example, 2.6 million Turkish people are estimated to be living in Germany. They are identified as a minority group. They have a spending power of approximately 16 billion Euros. As they have developed their life styles and subcultures in Germany, led a large number of companies, particularly retail as well as food and beverage sector to engage in ethnic marketing activities. Some companies in Germany have taken the advantage of this opportunity in the dairy products industry by targeting the religious and national predispositions of Muslim Turkish community living there. On the other hand, as another example of this practice "halal" products are offered for the Muslim community living in France (Kurt, 2009). Likewise, in England the marketing approach to target ethnic tendencies has been adopted. For instance, HSBC Bank is known to have established expert banking units to target South Asian and Muslim markets. In addition, they have come up with special products addressing these communities. In a similar way, the retailer seller of health and cosmetics products, boots, has liaised with Islamic Food and Nutrition Council in order to access especially Muslim consumers. In this context they launched a product “Halal Baby Food” (Sirkeci, 2008).

Understanding your audiences and consumers is vital for the success of any brand. With the holy month of Ramadan on our doors this provides brands and marketers with an opportunity to target and reach affluent, young and aspirational consumers with big budgets to spend.

Muslims represent the largest consumer group, after the mainstream, both in the UK and Europe and are increasingly considered to be loyal consumer group not just for Halal food, but also for fashion and cosmetics luxury goods market. Eid-al-Fitr is the celebration that marks the end of Ramadan where purchases and spending is at its peak. For Muslims Eid is equivalent to the traditional Christmas shopping spree. This is the time when most brands launch their tailored campaigns as Muslims buy gifts and presents for their families and loved ones. Muslims buy food in bulk particularly before and during Ramadan, which is why, in the past few years, major supermarket chains have been realizing the huge potential in targeting Muslim consumers via tailored campaign. Realising the potential and acting accordingly is very important, however, the key to a success for marketing campaign for a Muslim community is having a marketing partner who has deep insights of the Muslim consumers and work with specialist marketing experts only with a proven track record of work. Ramadan Mubarak to all the Muslims around the world (Saraf, 2015).

In this regard, we can conclude that considering the purchase behaviors and cultural traits of the targeted community is an essential factor of the ethnic marketing practices.

## **ETHNIC IDENTITY IN TURKEY AND BUYING BEHAVIOR**

The cultural texture of every society is different and there are various patterns that color up this texture. Subculture and counter culture groups that are out of the dominant culture in particular can be mentioned as the examples of the aforesaid colors and patterns. Recently, integrated marketing communication specialists have noticed the importance of these diversities and started conducting researches on subculture groups (Çallı, 2014:43). Although language is the main aspect that is commonly used in ethnic marketing practices, it is seen that the usage of religious elements in food advertisements have increased in recent years and there is an emphasis on halal food (Çallı, 2014: 43-44). Global brands that rather benefit from spiritual-cultural elements to reach ethnic groups take advantage of the influence and efficiency of local culture in advertisements For example; “Coca Cola is advertised in our country on an iftar table with sufi music, the affiliation between Coca Cola and the iftar table is presented to the audience” (Bahar, 2008: 5). Sufi music that is specific to our country is included in the religious and cultural codes of the brand's advertising strategy (Çallı, 2014:47). The study performed by Velioglu et al. in 2013 stands out at this point. Velioglu et al. studies examined the impact of ethnic identity on purchasing behavior resulting from ethnic marketing. The research was conducted among 11 ethnic groups in Düzce; a city of Turkey: Abkhazians, Albanians, Bosnians, Circassians, Cremean Turks, Georgians, Gypsies, Kurds, Lazs, Manav People and Muhajirs. The results indicated that the economic equality among these ethnic groups was the driving force to live in peace for centuries and that the buying behaviors of these ethnic groups varied. Food and beverage type products were found to be a mean for recognizing other cultures (Velioglu, 2013:1).

It was also put forward in the research that the ethnic identities had another difference at purchasing amounts of goods, especially on consumption goods. The realization of the

purchases by the women in all 11 ethnic groups caused this question to be brought to the forefront along with it in weight in the FGIs and the assessments intensified on the amounts of the purchases. It was determined in FGIs that Lazs, Kurds, Muhajirs and the Albanians realized multiple purchases at one time; Cremean Turks and the Georgians realized small sized and frequent purchases on the contrary. For example, the Albanian participants put forward their reflections in their purchasing behaviors by saying that their most important specialty was “keeping food stock at home” that differs from other cultures in connection to the poverty degrees that they had lived in their ancestral lands and during the immigration before they migrated to Turkey. Whereas the Kurds put forward their reflections in their purchasing behaviors by saying “We, the Kurds like to buy in large sacks; we love buying in sacks.” (Velioglu, 2013: 9). The participants provided replies to the question “what are the factors that affect the purchasing behaviors at the level of ethnic identities?” within the frame of both their ethnic identities and their demographic specialties. For example, Manav participant in DI explained this situation as “I buy a refrigerator and I would like to buy it from a native seller from Düzce, in case I happen to know the identity of the seller. We, the natives, wish to purchase from each other. The important thing if the seller is from Düzce or not? It does not matter whether he is a Laz or a Circassian. I would like to buy from an old native of Düzce, even though its price is a bit different”. Whereas the Bosnian participants in FGI said “We affect purchases from the natives for the money not to go out of Düzce”. A Bosnian participant in FGI pointed out the importance of being from Düzce in purchasing decision and added “I never buy from this market, we even do not enter from its gate” by giving the name of a French retailer chain in the food sector (Velioglu, 2013:10).

It is evident that the study performed by Appiah in 2011 is important in terms of our subject as it is also about reflecting ethnic identity in advertisements. Appiah’s (2001) study examined whether the strength of ethnic identification influenced adolescents’ responses to advertisements and found that participants with strong ethnic identities identified more strongly with and responded more favorably to advertisements with characters matching their own ethnicity (Torres and Briggs, 2007:99-100).

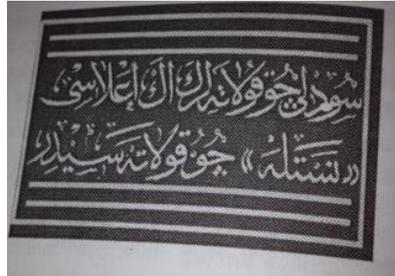
Consequently, the purchase behavior of ethnic minority groups are influenced positively when they encounter with ethnic marketing practices reflecting them or identifying with them. In this respect, it is considered important to analyze how these identities are reflected in advertising practices in a country that is rich in ethnic identities such as Turkey.

## **ETHNIC ADVERTISING IN TURKEY**

The existence of a structure comprised of divergent ethnic groups in the USA can be considered the origin of ethnic marketing as well as ethnic advertising. Ethnic advertising includes all advertising activities “prepared especially for various ethnic groups and addressing them” (<http://visionarymarketin.com>, 2015). It can be stated that the first ethnic advertisement was launched in Turkey, perhaps in the world in 1909 by Nestle. The Ottamans calligraphic figures used in Figure 1 “Nestle Milk Chocolate is The Best” is a powerful

example for that. It can be seen that traditional signboard is employed instead of nestle which appears in the Nestle advertisements all around Europe (Sirkeci, 2008).

**Figure 1:** First Ethnic Advertisement in Turkey (Nestle-1909)



Source: (Kara and Ozturk, 2009:36).

From the 1970s till nowadays the researches on ethnic advertisement has been categorized in three titles. These are as follow (Cortese, 2004:117-118):

- 1) The presentation of ethnic identities in the advertisements,,
- 2) The proportional state of ethnic minorities in the advertisements,
- 3) The impacts of ethnic advertisements on consumer behavior.

We encounter with some theories when we analyze ethnic advertisement works. “Identification theory” comes at the beginning of these theories. Identification theory (Kelman, 1961) maintains that people automatically assess their level of similarity with a source during an interaction and make similarity judgments (Hovland and Weiss, 1951; Kelman, 1961). This process drives individuals to prefer models based on perceived similarities between themselves and the model (Kelman, 1961). When viewers perceive that the source possesses characteristics similar to their own, such as race, they begin to infer that the source will also share other characteristics, all of which lead to greater identification. Studies have shown that individuals who are more likely to identify with television characters are more affected by the media content in which those characters are engaged (Huesman et al., 1983). Viewers who do not identify with television models based on race or ethnicity may identify with other characteristics that the model possesses. Identification often occurs when individuals infer that their tastes and preferences are similar to those of the source (Eagly, Wood, and Chaiken, 1978).

Other than that, another theory about ethnic advertisement is the “whiteness theory”. Since the 1990s, whiteness theory has been used within the social sciences and humanities as an additional way of examining ethnic relations in Anglo-Saxon societies. White scholars developed whiteness theory as a way of exploring their particular epistemological standpoint. Whiteness theory focuses on analysing power, privilege and rewards of whiteness (Bonnett,

2000; Levine-Rasky, 2002). In accordance with the relative theory, it is highlighted that especially the white identity dominates the advertisements (Green, 1999).

It is seen that “self-referencing” is another model encountered in studies on ethnic advertising. Self-referencing occurs when a consumer processes information by relating it to some aspect of their self, such as their past experiences. For example, a consumer may see an ad which reminds them of a past holiday they took. Or, as in the case of this study, the ethnicity of the model may result in consumers of the same ethnicity self-referencing the ad information. This perspective assumes that the self is a highly organised, complex memory structure that contains both the semantic and episodic knowledge gained over a lifetime (Burnkrant & Unnava 1995). Thus, when an ethnic minority consumer is exposed to a message that involves a dimension that is central to the self – like a model of the same ethnicity – self-referencing is activated and influences how the message is processed (Rogers et al. 1977; Krishnamurthy & Sujana 1999). The advantage for marketers is that research suggests that relating information to oneself heightens ad recall and can generate more favourable ad evaluations (Meyers-Levy & Peracchio 1996; Krishnamurthy & Sujana 1999). Consequently, ads are better remembered and better liked by consumers (Kwai-Choi Lee et al, 2002: 368) when advertisements mirror the consumer’s own ethnic group (Burton and Klemm, 2011: 679).

In recent years, there are subjects in literature on the advertising strategy types to be adopted in reaching ethnic market. This study shall focus on the presentation of ethnic identities in Turkey-specific advertisements.

No ethnic advertising project is seen for a long time in Turkey since the first one by Nestle in 1909. It is seen that the Kurdish identity became prominent in marketing as an ethnic identity and culture in 2009 (Kara and Ozturk, 2009:42-43). TRT 6, which is the first ethnic channel opened by the government on January 1, 2009 and the article added to the advertising regulation, that reads as “Advertising can be made in different languages and dialects. These kinds of advertisements can only be broadcast in their relevant channels.” are seen as important improvements for ethnic advertising in Turkey. TRT 6 has faced with difficulties to get ethnic-based advertisements as the advertiser is the determining factor for the channel to receive advertisements and some companies might be negatively affected by that. Accordingly, it is seen that the first and only ethnic advertisement broadcast on TRT is from *Radikal Daily*. The advertisement did not include anything other than a cultural music and a tag line that reads as: “One needs a tongue to tell the truth and a heart to understand”(Ji bo gotina rastiya ziman, ji bo fehmkirine ji lazim e) (Kara and Ozturk, 2009:43). In the meantime, Deng Adoption, the only advertising agency of Turkey that provides service in Kurdish, was founded in 2009. However, it is remarkable that Dündar Hızlan, the agency chairman, stated in an interview in 2009 that large-scale advertisers find this ethnic advertising situation favorable in order to achieve their goals whereas they state that there is a prejudice among consumers towards such ethnic advertisements (Kara and Ozturk, 2009:43-44).

Moreover, because Turkey is a country which tries to maintain a sensitive balance the global and local advertisement projects of the brands which highlight the local cultural traits are deemed to be free of risk when compared to “ethnic advertising”. Therefore, in this research it

will be more meaningful to analyze how "ethnic identity" is presented in the advertisements reflecting the local identity.

## **PURPOSE AND LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH**

This study aims to try to find an answer for the question of how ethnical identity is presented (whether it is represented correctly or not) in advertisements in Turkey. The most significant limit of the research is that there is not any ethnic advertising activity in Turkey except for Radikal's, therefore the research addresses advertisements that represent ethnic identity.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

11 ethnic groups were targeted in this research as ethnic identity. These groups were identified in one of the The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey's (TÜBİTAK) project (Kümbetoğlu, Yazar et al., 2007:347-350) which was completed in 2007. These groups are: Abkhazians, Albanians, Bosnians, Circassians, Cremean Turks, Georgians, Gypsies, Kurds, Lazs, Manav People (Native Turks in West Anatolia and Sakarya) and Muhajirs (Muhacirler) in alphabetical order (Velioglu, 2013: 5).

The specific research questions are as follows:

- (1) Are ethnic identities used for appealing advertisements in Turkey?
- (2) In advertisements in Turkey, are ethnic identities represented correctly in terms of their traditions, customs, values, and dialects etc.?
- (3) Are ethnic identities more commonly used in advertisements of Turkish brands or global brands?

## **RESEARCH SAMPLE**

The research sample of this study consists of eight TV commercials that aired on national networks between the years 2004-2015. These commercials could be viewed as the most conspicuous in terms of 'presenting ethnicity.' They have been accessed via the internet. The commercials in question are as follows:

**Ad1:** Lipton Tea Advertisement- “Is It Easy To Make Lipton Tea”-  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGoIa48RqvM> (Laz identity)

**Ad2:** Doğuş Tea Advertisement - “The Best Tea Is Doğuş Tea”-  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gxDoJlsgxE> (Laz identity)

**Ad3:** Lays Chips Advertisement - “Lays Chips Isot Pepper”-  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_gZSvi1C0d8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_gZSvi1C0d8) (Kurds and Manav People identity).

**Ad4:** Coca Cola –Ramadan Ad from East to West -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPLLMijnGeI> (Mixed)

**Ad5:** Turkcell –Dumduk Ad- <https://www.izlesene.com/video/turkcellin-yeni-yildizlari-koylu-cocuklar-turkcellin-yeni-reklami/8381495-> (Kurds, Arabian, Assyrian mix Identity)

**Ad6:** Turkish Airlines- Igdir Airport Ad-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSD0YigRW3o->  
(Kurdish Identity)

**Ad7:** Radikal- First Kurdish TV Ad-<http://www.timsah.com/TRT-Seste-ilk-Kurtce-reklam-Radikalden/NrTPTmIUOpt-> (Kurdish Identity)

**Ad8:** Çaykur Didi Ice Tea-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkIsAp2j2lY-> (Turkish Identity)

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS**

This study has used the content analysis model of Linzee Locke. The categories of analysis for this study have been used frequently in previous research (Elliot, 1995; Taylor, Lee, & Stern, 1995; Wilkes & Valencia, 1989; Kassarian, 1969). The commercials have been analyzed in accordance with the following basic categories (Locke):

- 1) The incidence of appearance of ethnic identity in a commercial,
- 2) The perceived importance of the models that portray ethnic identity,
- 3) Product type advertised and product value.

In addition to these categories, this research will try to provide answers for questions such as whether ethnicity is portrayed realistically or not given the sample commercials and which national or global brands include the representation of ethnicity more in their commercials. Accordingly, the incidence of using and integrating ethnic identity in a given commercial may vary: the commercial may include actors/actresses that belong to the same ethnicity, a group of 2-8 or an ethnic group of 9 or more (Locke).

Regarding the perceived importance of the models representing ethnic identity, the following distinction has been made with regard to the positioning of ethnic identity in the commercial (Locke):

- 1) Major role- The person using the product in the ad or the ethnic identity talking about the product is very important to the commercial.
- 2) Minor role: The person using the product in the ad is of average importance to the commercial; s/he does not talk about or handle the product.
- 3) Background- The person/people in the ad are not important to the commercial.

There are eight categories for judging the type of advertised product. These categories are as follows: household, electronic, car products, clothing/personal care, business/travel, recreation/entertainment, food and alcoholic beverages. As regarding the product value, there are three criteria: products that are over \$20, under \$20 and other (Locke).

## **FINDINGS OF RESEARCH**

When the incidence of appearance of ethnicity in the commercials has been examined, it has been observed that the commercials include a group of 2-8 at most or a group of more than 9 people from the same ethnicity. The only commercial whose cast entirely consists of a person belonging to a certain ethnicity is the Radikal Daily Newspaper commercial. It is striking that the person in question takes place in the commercial as ‘voice-over’ (See Table 1).

**Table 1.** The Incidence of Appearance of Ethnicity in Turkish TV Commercials

	<b>Ad1</b>	<b>Ad2</b>	<b>Ad3</b>	<b>Ad4</b>	<b>Ad5</b>	<b>Ad6</b>	<b>Ad7</b>	<b>Ad8</b>
All the people in the commercial are of ethnic identity	-	x	-	-	-	-	X	-
A group of 2-8 people in the commercial are of ethnic identity	x	-	x	-	-	x	-	-
A group of 9 or more people in the commercial are of ethnic identity	-	-	-	x	x	-	-	X

Nevertheless, it has been observed that in the eight TV commercials that have been examined, the ethnic identity was given a prominent role (7 commercials out of 8) and was brought to

the forefront. Ethnic identity was given a relatively minor role only in the Coca Cola commercial (See Table 2).

**Table 2.** The Position of Ethnic Identity in Turkish TV Commercials

	<b>Ad1</b>	<b>Ad2</b>	<b>Ad3</b>	<b>Ad4</b>	<b>Ad5</b>	<b>Ad6</b>	<b>Ad7</b>	<b>Ad8</b>
<b>Major Role</b>	x	x	x	-	x	x	x	x
<b>Minor Role</b>	-	-	-	x	-	-	-	-
<b>Background</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

It draws one's attention that among the eight commercials, the ones that present portrayals of ethnic identity belong to none of the eight categories stated above (3 tea ads, 1 fizzy drink ad, and 1 newspaper ad). At this point, it could be stated the commercials regarding tea, a significant beverage in Turkish culture, make use of cultural identity as an element of attraction or communication (See Table 3).

**Table 3.** The Product Types That Use Depictions of Ethnic Identity in Turkish TV Commercials

	<b>Household</b>	<b>Electronic</b>	<b>Car Products</b>	<b>Clothing&amp;Personal Care</b>	<b>Business &amp;Travel</b>	<b>Recreation &amp; Entertainment</b>	<b>Food Products</b>	<b>Alcoholic Beverage</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Ad1</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X (tea)
<b>Ad2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X (tea)
<b>Ad3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>x</b>	-	-
<b>Ad4</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X (cola)
<b>Ad5</b>	-	<b>x</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Ad6</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>x</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Ad7</b>	-	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	X (newspaper)
<b>Ad8</b>									X (ice tea)

When the value of the products that use depictions of ethnic identity in their ads is examined, it has been observed that the value of the majority of these products are under \$20 (6 products out of 8). Only 2 of the products are over \$20 (See Table 4).

**Table 4.** The Value of the Products That Make Use of Ethnic Identity in Turkish TV Commercials

	<b>Ad1</b>	<b>Ad2</b>	<b>Ad3</b>	<b>Ad4</b>	<b>Ad5</b>	<b>Ad6</b>	<b>Ad7</b>	<b>Ad8</b>
<b>Over 20\$</b>	-	-	-	-	x	x	-	-
<b>Under 20\$</b>	x	x	x	x	-	-	x	x
<b>Other</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

When the global and national brands using ethnic portrayals in their commercials are examined, it draws one's attention that they are numerically the same (4 commercials by a global brand, 4 commercials by a national brand) (See Table 5).

**Table 5.** The Global / Local Brands Using Ethnic Portrayals in Turkish TV Commercials

	<b>Ad1</b>	<b>Ad2</b>	<b>Ad3</b>	<b>Ad4</b>	<b>Ad5</b>	<b>Ad6</b>	<b>Ad7</b>	<b>Ad8</b>
<b>Global Brand</b>	x	-	x	x	-	x	-	-
<b>National Brand</b>	-	x	-	-	x	-	x	X
<b>Other</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

When the portrayal of an ethnic identity is examined in terms of its accuracy, it has been observed that both the national and global brands engage in an effort to present the ethnic identity in question accurately / as it is in real life (See Table 6).

**Table 6.** The Incidence of Accurate Portrayal of Ethnic Identity in Turkish TV Commercials by the Global / National Brands

	<b>Ad1</b>	<b>Ad2</b>	<b>Ad3</b>	<b>Ad4</b>	<b>Ad5</b>	<b>Ad6</b>	<b>Ad7</b>	<b>Ad8</b>
<b>Global Brand</b>	x	-	x	x	-	x	-	-
<b>National Brand</b>	-	x	-	-	x	-	x	X
<b>Other</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## **CONCLUSION**

One of the most important civilization centers of the old world, Anatolia has been home to different nations and it has hosted various lifestyles. Before the common era, Hattians, Luwians, Hurrians, Urartu, Babylonians, Lydians, Persians dominated this region and it has been proved by some researches that Turks were also in this region. Moreover, Armenians, Greeks, Arabs have also affected the way this region has been shaped ethnically. However, Turks have been the dominant power in this geography for the last thousand years. Because of Mongolian invasions, many Turks immigrated to Anatolia, therefore it became home to Turks as a result of Seljuks, Principalities and Ottoman domination. With Turkish domination, Armenians, Laz people, Kurds, Arabs, Zazas and other Muslim or non-Muslim ethnic groups also continued their existence. However, during the last years, groups of non-Turkic origin such as Circassian, Georgian, Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian people from Balkans and Caucasus have immigrated to Turkey. Depending on all these historical and geographic dynamism, different life styles, beliefs and ethnic groups have existed together and created a common identity with Turkish ethnicity being the dominant one (Aka, 2012:293). Today Turkish identity has a two-phase characteristic in Turkey. First one is the identity of those who accept themselves as Turkish in terms of origin, language, history and culture. Being the

majority, this group constitutes 85% of the whole population. The second one, on the other hand, is the politically, legally and socially Turkish identity. This identity includes all citizens of Republic of Turkey, who are from different origins, have different beliefs and speak different languages. Just as "everyone who is committed to the French Constitution is accepted as French" or German is not an ethnic identity in Germany, every citizen of Republic of Turkey is politically and legally Turkish. Therefore, Turkish identity is not an ethnic group in broad sense. Turkish identity is the only identity that has the ability to represent the state and the nation. First of all, in the strict sense, Turkish identity is as valid as the identity of other ethnic groups in both private and civil areas. The second is it is a political, legal and official identity. Especially those who are from Turkish origin and who speaks Turkish, for a substantial part of the society, these two identities are identical. Nonetheless, the common identity for those who see and perceive themselves different is the second one. Atatürk identified this identity as "the name of the people who founded the Republic of Turkey". In this respect, Turkish identity is not only an "ethnic group" identity in Turkey, but also the common national identity which includes all citizens of the Republic of Turkey. The basic values of this identity are citizenship of Republic of Turkey, common history and geography, Turkish as the common language, for the majority being Muslim, and also culture of lifestyle, uniting both in joy and sorrow, tradition, customs, common values as both material and nonmaterial culture (Aka, 2012:294). In this sense, it is indicated that majority of the population in Turkey consists of Turks and respectively Kurds, Circassians, Zazas, Arabs, Laz people and Georgians follow them (<http://onedio.com>, 2015).

As has been demonstrated in the content analysis of the eight TV commercials as well, 'ethnic identity' in Turkey is used both by the global and national brands alike as an 'element of attraction and communication' in advertising. It is striking that the people depicting the ethnic identity in question use the locale dialect of that ethnic identity in the commercials. One of the important findings of the research is that the only commercial using a person / people from the ethnic identity in question in the presentation of that ethnic identity is the commercial of *Radikal Daily* newspaper. It is because *Radikal's* commercial, whose motto is 'Telling the truth requires language, understanding requires being courageous', is the first commercial in Kurdish and it aired on TRT 6. The focal point of the ad is ethnic identity and it is the very first ethnic TV commercial. However, there is no actor / actress involved in the commercial. It consists of a combination among voice-over, the writings reflected on the screen, and music. The fact that brands approach the issue of 'culturally targeted advertising' delicately results from the sensitiveness of Turkish people to the issue of a unitary state. As the major advertisers in the sector make clear, the issue of 'ethnic advertising' in Turkey is not a concept that the major and national brands and their target audiences are ready for. Furthermore, it has been observed that in countries such as Turkey, a multicultural society, ethnic marketing is not preferred; instead the strategy of 'think global, act local' is deployed as a more reliable advertising strategy.

Another remarkable finding is the fact that the advertised product including a portrayal of an ethnic identity is generally under \$20 and it is generally a tea commercial, which is an important beverage in Turkish culture. The analysis that has been carried out by Locke

regarding ethnic advertising reveals that food is followed by clothing and personal care products and this, in turn, leads one to the conclusion that the cultural dynamics of the target market could be of significance in this context. This also makes the access of the relevant target market to the products easier. On the other hand, the commercials of the two brands whose product value is over \$20 (Turkcell and THY) are ‘corporate advertisements’ that are directed to create an image for the brand rather than boost the sales; it is thereby significant that these commercials could also present a portrayal regarding an ‘ethnic identity.’

All in all, it has been observed that the global and national brands pay attention to present an accurate representation of the relevant ‘ethnic identity’ in their commercials. As with regard to the communicational impact of the commercial, it is important to establish a sincere, respectful way of communication that does not give rise to any misunderstanding while reaching out to the consumer with their own cultural values. The fact that these advertisements attracted notice when they aired on networks in Turkey could be viewed as an achievement in terms of striking a balance between the two dynamics. This research has also aimed to provide a basis for the future studies by conducting a content analysis with eight commercials. The increase in the sample size that will be used for content analysis and the variation in the advertising media (printed, outdoor, radio, digital advertising, etc.) will contribute to obtain clearer results.

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