

Colour and urban publicity in the construction of the image of the contemporary city

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ABSTRACT

Due to the importance the construction of the image has on the contemporary city an influence of the colour on the urban publicity has been observed as well as the way it determines the image and the appropriation and conducts of its inhabitants. Several publicity formats were created, noticing the role of the colour as form and sign. The advertising chromatic invasion was corroborated in different urban fields, verifying the contribution of the colour to the structures of the urban spaces and the modifications that arise from the instant mutability of the publicity in its different means of spreading.

1. INTRODUCTION

The shape of the city is understood as active energy that, in order to satisfy the eagerness of the matter, is impulsed from inside and gives origin to its constitution. That active energy, changeable according to its own definition, has lately reached unpublished characteristics such as unusual speed related to the development of the information and communication technologies. That is to say, the form of the city is understood as its own essential inner quality that is externally shown by a compromise with the social, aesthetic and ideological aspects, that is to say, by its appearance. In understanding the elements of said appearance, there is a need to think over the way the urban image, external expression of an idea of city, is changed by the addition of the expressive characteristics of the colour of the publicity, as well as the influence on the ways of perception and appropriation that people have about the place where they live. Publicity has become a persuasive element of life in modern industrial societies, promoting not only goods and services but also definitions of life, status, image, hope and feelings². Publicity achieves spaces, representations and new possibilities of experience and life for contemporary people. The city, daily place of collective life, has developed into one of its favourite pillars to successfully influence imagery, using resources such as the colour in publicity graphic as a messenger and creator of new urban appearances. This paper will deal with the importance of colour, as form and sign, in publicity and its role to develop the city into a place of changing imagery that forcefully works to create its image.



2. METHOD

Assuming the hypothesis that the perceptual manifestation of the image of the city determines ways of personal possession on the part of the users of urban places because it denotes urban meanings, publicity stands out as an important element. Publicity resorts to different chromatic resources: monochromies, synchronies and visual synesthesia to attract the consumer public as well as the multiple formats that currently form part of the everyday landscape of the contemporary city.

For this purpose, graphic, visual, sonorous and moving styles are used which range from signs, mobile publicity, brochures, electronic and television screens to participation in graphic, radio and television means as well as in the web of webs.

The urban inhabitant is able to access web sites which host endless publicity which is as changing, ephemeral and of varied syntax as the one on television, so he gets used to a certain style of communication which overflows with visual noises ruled by a hypertextual logic: a kind of praise for complexity. This attitude to build spaces stands out in the city and its places, which may appear monotonous or boring when this hyperkinetic visual bombardment is not taken into communication account.

According to the concept of publicity stated by O. P. Billorou² (1990:3) publicity is the technique of multiple which uses paid means of communication to achieve predetermined commercial aims by shaping, changing or reinforcing the attitude of people subject to its action. The main function of publicity is to create needs that did not exist before and would have never existed without its stimuli. The suggestion of social ideas and lifestyles proposed by an idealistic image of the world that publicity creates is free of conflicts and fake since it omits every unpleasant fact.



Therefore, the colour in publicity, expressive and meaningful, in the perceptual plane as well as in the level of icons becomes a basic element of a progressive structuring of the suggestion of the physical surroundings, by means of which the inhabitant becomes aware of the environment around him because of the publicity that denotes or connotes it. This double interpretation of the role of colour and the responsibility of the action of publicity in the construction of the urban image leads to considering all aspects of this component of urban language.

Different kinds of urban publicity will be mentioned and the role of colour in them, their location in the structure of the city and the syntax that is established in the urban environment, as well as their morphological features, both expressive and meaningful, highlighting the language of colour.



3. RESULTS

Publicity uses colour to put across messages which go beyond words so it is a powerful tool which becomes one of the most active foundations for advertising strategy.

Publicity transforms colour, by means of its strategies, in moods. This resource magnifies colour transforming it into a visual platform of human perception using all kinds of contrasts and chromatic synesthesia.

Among the advertising strategies legibility is a priority as well as the dominant frame of the trademark. On the other hand, the chromatism of an advertisement extends or stresses the chromatism of a product; it identifies or releases apparent or hidden meanings; it denotes and connotes. It is a language within another language with great freedom of action. The language of colour in publicity is mainly characterised by the possession of emotional roots; each colour evokes or connotes a sensation or emotion. That is to say that each colour tries to convey a meaning in the consumer public by invading the urban place and determining its image.

Besides, the advancements in technology and especially in computing have fostered a radical transformation in the communication in publicity, altering its scope and arrival to the consumers in an immediate way.

The colour in publicity proposes a new syntax in the city, reinforcing, blurring or destroying the boundaries that support it. It makes the city a place of permanent fascination or magical charm and at the same time creates different levels of disappointment in the consumers, which establish a limitless search for expression

4. CONCLUSIONS

The city is transformed into an object of desire and consumption and becomes very similar to advertised products, so it must become visible, highlighting its own qualities and symbolic and practical references. To appeal is a must in the city which resembles more and more an advertisement where everything, from goods and services to values and forms is an object of consumption and as such, they need to call people's attention, create an interest and avoid becoming obsolete. Consequently, the relation among publicity, imagery and city can be so close that the components become indistinguishable. The urban image affected by publicity and its chromatic manifestation is so invasive that it constitutes a powerful and incomparable factor of anticipatory socialisation in the contemporary city (Améndola,³ G. 1997), since the development in technologies of information and communication have transformed the perception of time and space becoming a challenge for the designers of the urban image who face a new urban logic and aesthetic.

References

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