

## “FRAGRANCES” OF PROMOTION AND CONDUCT OF COMMUNICATION

### Interaction of the natural and structured environment with Graphics and Advertising

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#### Abstract

*Advertising presentations show no shortage of combined elements from both the structured and the natural environment, because these elements are seen as promotional signifiers that "lend" authority and "guarantee" the reflection and projection of quality.*

*Advertising and its communication function appropriates and coarticulates certain social practices and ideologies, constructs or deconstructs their meanings, and intervenes in the organization and operation of the state, as well as its cultural status. The socially conclusive role of this intervention comes from both the manifest and the latent function of advertising, which is in interaction with social cohesion and may either strengthen or weaken it.*

*Specifically, the advertising content and its analysis come under the study of communications. The study of both private and public communications also includes propaganda and publicity.*

*From the beginning of the 20th century, posters were produced from individual art paintings and photographs. They are multidimensional entities:*

— *The images illustrated typical landscapes and emblematic landmarks. They compose stimuli that, through their semantical status, cause sensations, recall memories, raise feelings and influence opinions and perceptions. They become symbolic forms that develop their own "vocabulary" of expression and communication..*

— *The representations involved symbols of the art and civilization associated with a place of visions and aspirations, expressions of social, political, economic and other attitudes and activities typical to each era.*

— *The compositions were abstract or involved more composite, standard or non-standard symbolism. They act as crossroads of material and spiritual "pathways" towards viewing, reading, and inspiring.*

*The commercial competition between incompatible (contradicting or even hostile) social powers or trends needs advertising. It promotes a "society of prosperity".*

*Thus, advertising takes up a role in managing society and assumes part of the state policy, without an organized substratum or operation study, and without processing, evaluating and restraining this significant project, which is undertaken arbitrarily as a side task.*

*In the field of communication, the questions that arise about the great economic and technological changes and their complexities mark not only a "closing", but also a new "opening", a lingering acceptance that might never end, same as the interpretation of the projects.*

*"... There will always be Poetry ..."*

*Poetic awareness transforms not only the expressive ability, but also the culturally charged experience of practice, as well as the subjective and social aspect of the significance attributed to the communications media and their function, which is integrated into social life.*

**Keywords:** promotion, interaction, graphics, advertising, function of advertising, structured and natural environment, communication, communication function, vocabulary of expression and communication, cultural status, interpretation, signification, social cohesion, social life.

## "FRAGRANCES" OF PROMOTION AND CONDUCT OF COMMUNICATION Interaction of the natural and structured environment with Graphics and Advertising

Advertising expression often uses representations of the city and its architecture, as illustrated in print ads and media of outdoor advertising.

These reflect the view of the city "in the advertisement's eyes": sometimes the city is seen as a major and prominent cultural descendant and thus becomes a luminous substrate for the city's self-projection, other times advertisement twists the meanings of symbols into anything that fits to enhance its own messages.

Every so often advertisement uses images of the structured environment even though there is no direct obligation for this kind of reference, i.e. the correspondingly dominant appearance of the urban environment is fully justified on magazine covers referring to the city and its architecture (pp. 2-4).

Here advertising makes a choice that could suggest an eagerness to draw upon the glory and prestige of the city's ideological overtone. However, the daily routine shows that the spatial intervention of advertising casts covetous glances at the position that the city occupies in society's perception. Advertising appears to compete and oppress, when inviting the citizens to "inhabit" its own space.

To promote its various messages, advertising often integrates the natural environment as a key object in its agenda. Quite frequently, in advertising the only function left to natural landscapes is to serve as background for projecting its representations (pp. 5-7).

Moreover, *advertising presentations show no shortage of combined elements from both the structured and the natural environment, because these elements are seen as promotional signifiers that "lend" authority and "guarantee" the reflection and projection of quality* (pp. 8-10).

*Advertising and its communication function appropriates and coarticulates certain social practices and ideologies<sup>1</sup>, constructs or deconstructs their meanings, and intervenes in the organization and operation of the state, as well as its cultural status. The socially conclusive role of this intervention comes from both the manifest and the latent function<sup>2</sup> of advertising, which is in interaction with social cohesion and may either strengthen or weaken it.*

*Specifically, the advertising content and its analysis come under the study of communications<sup>3</sup>. The study of both private and public communications also includes propaganda and publicity.*

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1. Emile David Durkheim, French sociologist, social psychologist and philosopher, professor of pedagogy and sociology in Sorbonne and in University of Bordeaux defines social facts as: **"manners of acting, thinking, and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power by virtue of which they exercise control over him."** That is, he believes that these phenomena are neither biological, since they give space to "representations" and "actions", nor psychological, as their existence is not limited to the individual sphere.

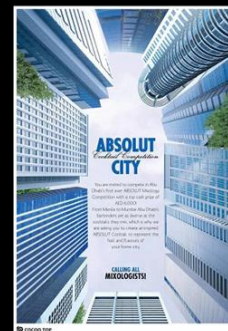
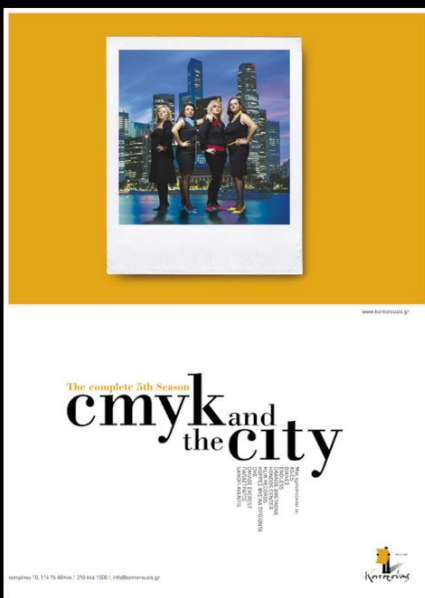
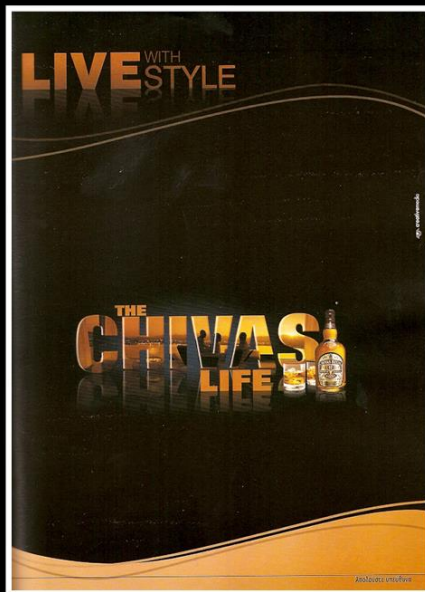
Let us recall the study of E. Durkheim concerning suicide or self-inflicted death, where he tried to prove that the apparently typical of human will is closely associated with social structure, the facts of collective life and the group, within which these occur. His views are transcribed by the Italian sociologist Franco Ferrarotti and presented in the following book, along with the contemplations of Comte Au., Spencer H., Marx K., Weber M., Simmel G., Scheler M., Veblen Th., Pareto V., Michels R., Mannheim K., Marcuse H.

FERRAROTTI, F., (ed.), *"Οι κλασικοί της κοινωνιολογίας"* (Sociology Classics), Translation: Kostas Katiforis, Dimitris Kounelakis, Yannis Papadakis, Alekos Sakkas, Odysseas Publications, Athens, 1977, p. 68.

2. Robert King Merton, professor of sociology at Columbia University distinguishes the functions of social activities into manifest and latent. To explain this distinction he used as an example the rain dance of the Hopi Indians of New Mexico. This ritual, which the Hopi believe is necessary for their crops (manifest function) helps enhance social cohesion (latent function). According to R. Merton: **"A major part of sociological explanation consists in uncovering the latent functions of social activities and institutions."** Relevant references to the concepts of the American theorist were made by the British sociologist Anthony Giddens in:  
GIDDENS, A., *"Κοινωνιολογία"* (Sociology), Translation: Dimitris Tsaousis, Gutenberg Publications, Athens, 2002, (Original work: *Sociology, a brief but critical introduction*, 1982).

3. The study comes under an area of social psychology called "Communication Research". See the broader analysis made by the French jurist, sociologist and politician Maurice Duverger.  
DUVERGER, M., *"Μέθοδοι Κοινωνικών Επιστημών II"* (Methods in the Social Sciences II), Translation: N. Papadodimas, National Centre for Social Research (E.K.K.E.), Athens, 1990, p. 79, (Original work: *Méthodes des sciences sociales*, 1961).

Representations of the city integrated in  
print advertisements



### Representations of the city integrated in print advertisements

*Sans folie, l'homme est plus petit.*



ILS SE RÉCENSENT CHAQUE ANNÉE. ILS SONT TOUJOURS AU MOIS QUATRE. PARFOIS D'AVANTAGE. ILS CÉLÈBENT LA VIE AVEC PANACHE ET EXUBÉRANCE. ELLE, ILS SONT ENTRÉS DANS LA LÉGENDE.

VEUVE CLICQUOT  
LA GRANDE DAME DE LA CHAMPAGNE

# COCKTAIL CITY

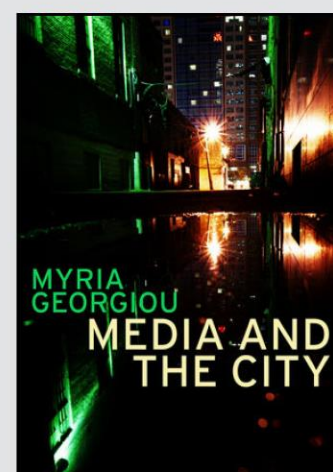
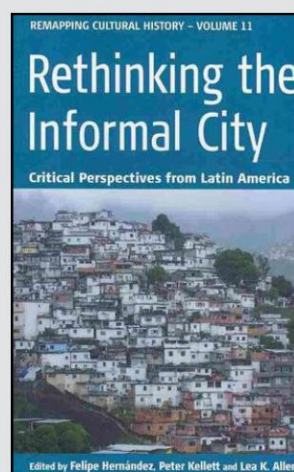
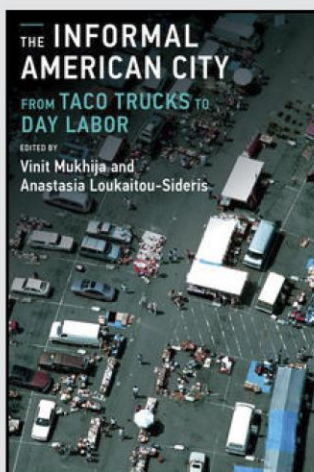
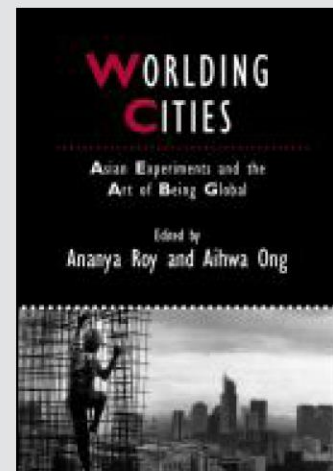
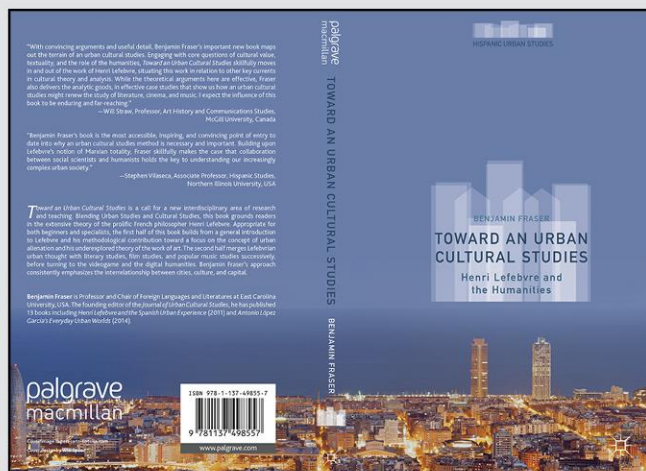
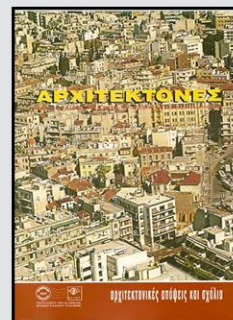
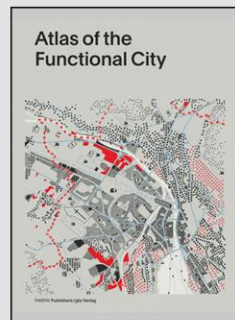
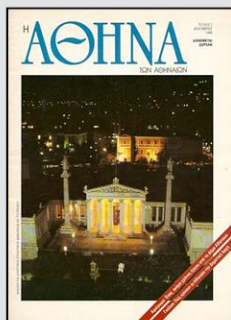
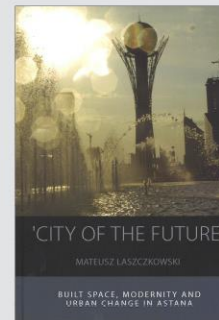
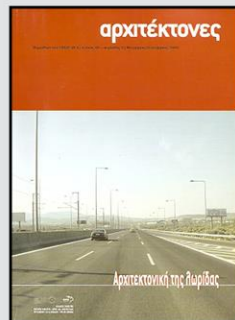
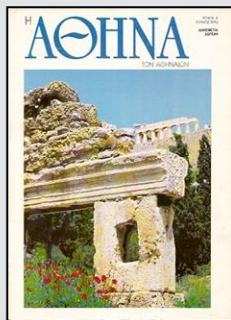
A GASPAR LIBEDINSKY & COSTHANZO COLLABORATION



# ABSOLUT.

BEBER CON MODERACIÓN. PROHIBIDA SU VENTA A MENORES DE 18 AÑOS. SI TOMASTE, NO MANEJES.

### Representations of the city integrated in cover pages



## Integration of the natural environment in advertising in print advertisements



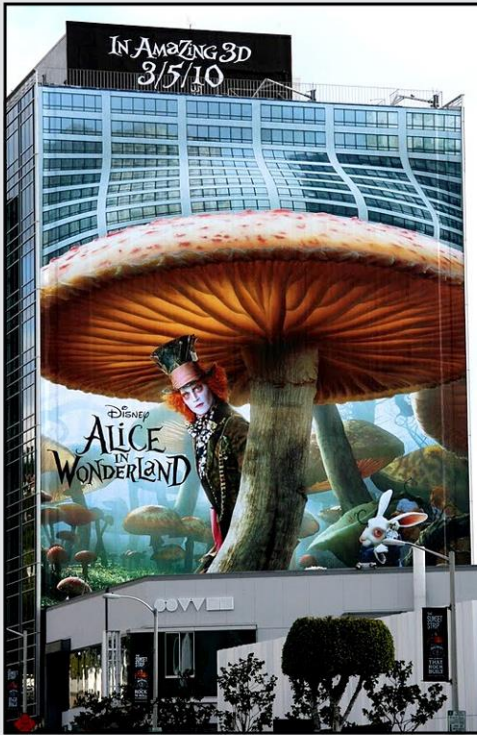
## magazine covers



### Integration of the natural environment in advertising in outdoor advertising media

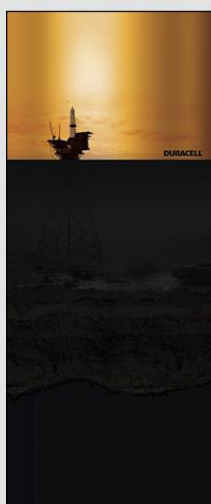
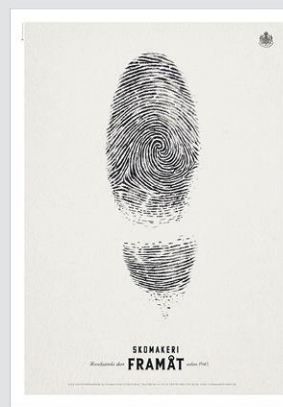


### Integration of the natural environment in advertising in posters and banners





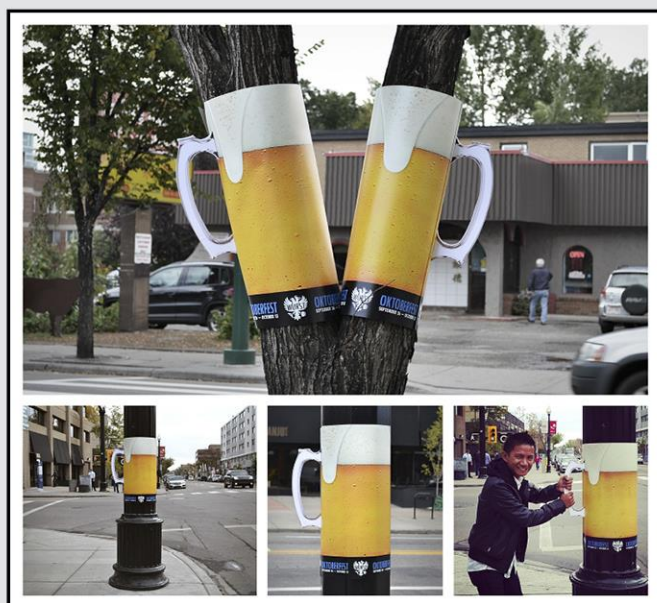
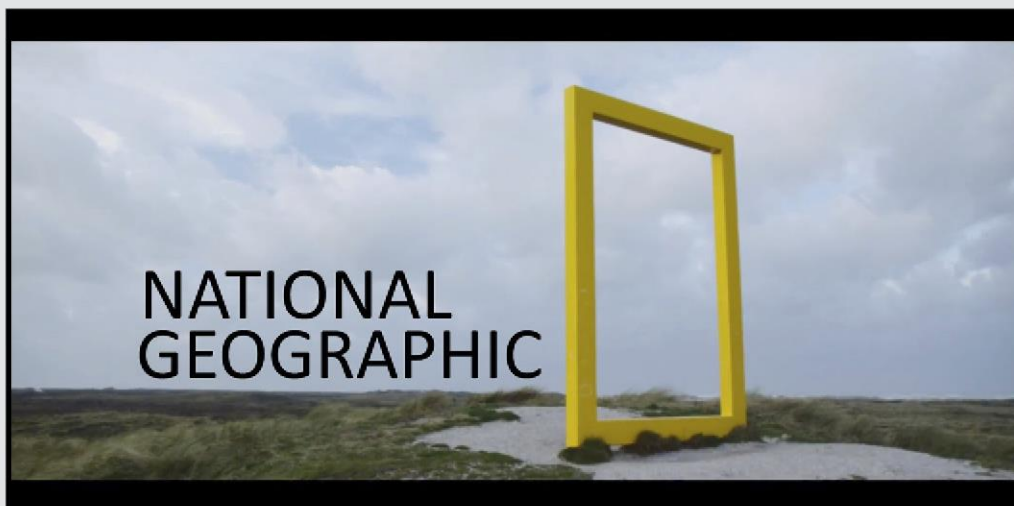
### Combinations of structured and natural environment elements in print ads



Combinations of structured and natural environment elements in outdoor advertising media



Combinations of structured and natural environment elements in outdoor advertising media



The issues designed and promoted in advertising media are sometimes of particular interest. They are creations that also function as mass products. That is, both their aesthetic "fragrance" and their rational content formulate messages—invitations to the general consuming public, with the aim to profit from attracting it to the events or the market of the products advertised.

The arduous work of producing promotional products (posters, etc.) conveys a structure to each of these products. Through the communication process involved, the content –rational or not, meaningful or not– takes on the task of leading the recipient from the charm emitted by the perceptible elements of the advertising material (signifiers) to its notional content (signifieds), which includes the implied "claim" of the messages' sender.

However, the deconstruction of structure<sup>4</sup> through a freeplay, as mentioned above, does not translate into a decryption of authenticity, that is, a **completely "controlled" interpretation is impossible**.

To document this view, we shall quote I. Kant on his viewpoint about judgements of taste:

"...is applied to objects of Sense ... would be limited as regards its validity to the individual judging. The object is for me an object of satisfaction, by others it may be regarded quite differently — every one has his own taste. "

Moreover, he explains that: "It is absolutely impossible to give a definite objective principle of taste, in accordance with which its judgements could be derived, examined, and established..."

That is, our power of judgement is guided by a subjective principle:

" ...the indefinite Idea of the supersensible in us,..."

According to Kant's definition: "...Ideas are representations referred to an object ..." and distinguished into "aesthetical" and "rational".

Also, he argues that: "...an aesthetical Idea cannot become a cognition, because it is an intuition (of the imagination)...", ... "a rational Idea can never become a cognition, because it involves a concept (of the supersensible), corresponding to which an intuition can never be given."

He concludes with the important point that: "As in a rational Idea the Imagination with its intuitions does not attain to the given concept, so in an aesthetical Idea the Understanding by its concepts never attains completely to that internal intuition which the Imagination binds up with a given representation."<sup>5</sup>

***There is only an infinite "play of signification"<sup>6</sup>. Each message acts independently of its sender or receiver<sup>7</sup>, and is re-evaluated repeatedly and infinitely<sup>8</sup>.***

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4. For the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, every structure is deconstructed through a play of oppositions that have neither an origin nor an end, but rather complement each other indefinitely: "**Therefore structure can never be defined.**" Collective work, "Η τέχνη και η επικοινωνία στις γραφικές τέχνες" (Art and communication in graphic arts) – vol. B, Hellenic Open University (E.A.Π.), Patras, 2002, p. 52.

5. Excerpts from a study by the German Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant regarding critique and the interpretation that emerges from it:  
KANT, I., "Κριτική της κριτικής ικανότητας" (Critique of the Power of Judgment), Second Division, "Η διαλεκτική της αισθητικής κριτικής ικανότητας" (Dialectic of the Aesthetical Judgement), §57. Επίλυση της αντινομίας της καλαισθησίας (Solution of the Antinomy of Taste), Translation: Vasilis Romanos, Printa Publications, Athens, 2000, pp. 277-285, (Original work: *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 1790).

6. The French philosopher Jaques Derrida discusses the infinitely extended domain of the play of signification, explaining that we need to eliminate the disparity between the signifier and the signified. It was always understood and determined that there is "**... a signifier referring to a signified, a signifier different from its signified.**"  
DERRIDA, J., "Η γραφή και η διαφορά" (Writing and Difference), Translation: Kostis Papagiorgis, Kastaniotis Publications, Athens, 2003, p. 437, (Original work: *L'écriture et la difference*, 1967).

7. This viewpoint was analyzed by the American philosopher and historian John Fiske, along with other issues associated with culture and communication, in:  
O'SULLIVAN, T., HARTLEY, J., SAUNDERS, D., MONTGOMERY, M. & FISKE, J., "Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies", Routledge, London, 1994.

8. For an extensive review of the interpretations diverging from the orientation and self-focus of the message, see study by the Russian–American linguist and literary theorist Roman Jakobson:  
JAKOBSON, R., "Δοκίμια για τη γλώσσα της λογοτεχνίας" (Essays on the Language of Literature), Translation: A. Berlis, Hestia Publications, Athens, 1998, (Original work: *Language in Literature*, 1987).

The presentation of the advertising material is sometimes studied and composed in such a way that the elements of verbal and virtual messages contribute depending on their significance, the messages are interesting to read, and they function as an invitation to impressive manifestations and fascinating events or markets. That is, they should be perceived by the spectator as positive, rather than as a needless advertising jabber or a pseudo-challenge to consume.

In early posters *from the beginning of the 20th century*, the virtual word was mostly represented by works of art created by famous artists. Many interesting and impressive posters have been designed in the context of this tradition.

Hence were created several Greek poster samples, which are presented below.

This material comes from an exhibition organized by the Greek National Tourism Organisation (E.O.T.) with the title "Greek Tourism Posters: *A journey in Time through Art*", which was held on 11.7.2007 at the Zappeion Megaron Hall. Certain exhibits could be seen as representations of the traditionally high level of the Greek visual culture (pp. 13-16).

Initially, *posters were produced from individual art paintings and photographs*, representing complete or partial, national, artificial or conceptual environments or depicting themes stemming from combinations thereof. *They are multidimensional entities:*

— *The images illustrated typical landscapes<sup>9</sup> (visual, audio, ... cultural) and emblematic landmarks. They compose stimuli that, through their semantical status, cause sensations, recall memories, raise feelings and influence opinions and perceptions. They become symbolic forms that develop their own "vocabulary" of expression and communication..*

— *The representations involved symbols of the art and civilization associated with a place<sup>10</sup> of visions and aspirations, expressions of social, political, economic and other attitudes and activities typical to each era.*

— *The compositions were abstract or involved more composite, standard or non-standard symbolism. They act as crossroads of material and spiritual "pathways" towards viewing, reading, and inspiring.*

Since 2005, the E.O.T. advertising campaign has been assigned to advertising agencies. They handle design issues with a modernized, composite approach and the intention to integrate within the broader context of the promotion strategy pursued by the organization and the country, inside and outside the Greek borders. The new orientation is evident in the advertising campaign: modern design and production means and techniques, application of a newly-designed logo and mainly, the use of selected advertising slogans.

The last posters presented here distinctively demonstrate the change in the approach of their mandators concerning the aesthetic function and communication capabilities of advanced technical means and their contemporary application in promoting messages and projecting the delivery of services.

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<sup>9</sup>. The landscape was the subject matter of a collective work by the German sociologist, philosopher and critic Georg Simmel, the German chemist, physicist and philosopher Johann Wilhelm Ritter and the Austrian art historian Sir Ernst Hans Josef Gombrich.

The book presentation on the back cover mentions that:

**"A landscape is a historically meaningful representation of human environment, that is, it defines the specific relationship of man with his/her environment at a specific time of its historical path."**

SIMMEL, G., RITTER, J., GOMBRICH, H. E., *"Το Τοπίο"* (The Landscape), Translation: George Sagriotis, Potamos Publications, Athens, 2004, back cover, (Original work: *Philosophie der Landschaft*, 1913).

<sup>10</sup>: Concerning the notion of place, Iosif Stefanou, professor at the School of Architecture of the National Technical University of Athens, argues that: **"A place is not just a space. Space is an abstract geometrical concept assessed in terms of capacity, potential content. As long as space fills in with people, their activities, feelings, visions, expectations, dreams, as long as it is filled with the outcome of human activity, full of objects left by each and every one on their passing through, then it becomes a place"**

Collective work, *"Το ελληνικό τοπίο. Μελέτες ιστορικής γεωγραφίας και πρόσληψης του τόπου"*(The Greek landscape, studies on historical geography and spatial assimilation), P.N. Doukellis (ed.), Hestia Publications, Athens, 2005.

Samples of Greek posters from the EOT exhibition at the Zappeion Megaron Hall  
"Greek Tourism Posters: A journey in Time through Art"  
Initially, posters were produced from individual art paintings and photographs



The images illustrated typical landscapes and landmarks



The representations involved symbols of art and civilization





The compositions were abstract or involved more composite symbolism



Since 2005,  
the EOT advertising campaign has been assigned to advertising agencies.  
They handle design issues with a modernized composite approach and the intention to integrate within the broader context of the promotion strategy pursued by the organization and the country, inside and outside the Greek borders.  
The new orientation is evident:  
modern design and production means and techniques, application of a newly-designed logo and, mainly, the use of selected advertising slogans.



In our days, creative artistic design endures, although the Hollywood effect on the morphological standardization and photographic representation is overt, critical and ever-expanding.

Using impressive graphisms, many of the composite expressions mold the three-dimensional space of their narration with rare insight. They function as reliable promises for manifestations of an alluring atmosphere, unconventional attractions and high-quality goods. Thus, they can be seen as quality works of exceptional delicacy that, as individual images, and with the singular controversy of their morphological elements, boldly stimulate imagination, producing unconscious harmonics that lead to an involuntary aestheticism.

*The dream-like representation of a "paradise" lures and may ensnare into a decryption "journey". The endeavor to interpret advertising images could allow for explanations similar to those given for linguistic symbolism, since:*

"The language does not simply describe and classify reality, rather it creates, composes and gives meaning, as a result, it is a universal channel that effects comprehension."<sup>11</sup>

We see the spectrum of interpretations<sup>12</sup> that could stem from observation seen as chaotically wide, given that even a single image involves an almost infinite field of interpretations determined by the recipient's perceptiveness and psychological disposition. The external characteristics of images usually produce different informative and semantic interpretations of the message they intent to transmit and create various connotations and associations to their recipients.

However, we agree with the semiotician Umberto Eco, who argues that:

"The principle of unlimited semiosis (a subject of examination in a number of Eco's books) does not sanctify an uncontrolled drift from meaning to meaning, but rather composes a framework of agreements—even temporary and refutable—among interpreters that respect the semantic coherence of a work. Although there can be infinite interpretations to a text, this does not mean that they are all "good": even if there is no way to decide which interpretations are "good", it is still possible to decide which ones are unacceptable."<sup>13</sup>

For the attentive observer–analyst of representations, we would suggest that the visual elements that diversify the various versions are the means and the codes used to compose them, the messages they intentionally transmit, as well as the ideas they produce in the recipients' perception. A shift takes place, from the external characteristics skimmed over by the eyes to the internal-mythologizing elements diffused through them.

By attracting interest or curiosity, and by amazing the spectator through the spectacle and the impressive image, certain elements -liked or not liked- capture the eye, motivate and occupy the mind.

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11. Concerning the use of the language and its contribution to approaches of interpretation, we mention and applaud the view of Christos Lyritzis, professor of political science.  
LYRITZIS, CH., "Σύγκριση και ερμηνεία" (Comparison and Interpretation), Nissos Publications, Athens, 2001, p. 139.

12. Umberto Eco, the Italian professor of semiotics in the University of Bologna analyses fundamental issues arising from the philosophical question of interpretation which consists in: "(...) **deciding about the conditions of interaction between us and something that is considered a given for us, (...)**". This issue has also been analyzed by the American philosopher, logician, mathematician, and scientist Charles Sanders Peirce, French phenomenological philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Swiss clinical psychologist Jean Piaget, as well as German philosopher Immanuel Kant, Austrian-British philosopher and professor Karl Raimund Popper, and American physicist, historian and philosopher of science Thomas Samuel Kuhn.  
ECO, U., "Τα όρια της ερμηνείας" (The Limits of Interpretation), Translation: Marianna Kondyli, Gnosi Printing & Publishing Company, Athens, 1993, p. 23, (Original work: *I limiti dell'interpretazione*, 1990).

13. The viewpoint of the Italian novelist, literary critic, philosopher, semiotician, and University professor Umberto Eco is analyzed in his book:  
See footnote 12, back cover.

In the end, those are the elements that constitute the internal sensation and set in motion the related aesthetic process that refers the image spectator to the sensations and impressions mentioned above.

*The commercial competition<sup>14</sup> between incompatible (contradicting or even hostile) social powers or trends needs advertising. It promotes a "society of prosperity"<sup>15</sup>. Representations are interpreted according to socio-economic factors, as well as projected standards. Thus, advertising takes up a role in managing society and assumes part of the state policy, without an organized substratum or operation study, and without processing, evaluating and restraining this significant project, which is undertaken arbitrarily as a side task.*

Regarding the state of affairs in everyday life today, as it emerges from the productive processes of technology and art, our views are similar to relevant statements made by the social and historical researcher Vangelis Angelis:

"...The landscape is more than ever a political issue with stressful associations and technocratic interventions. Elytis' poetry and Ghika's topographical representations have been replaced by references that qualify as urgent institutional proposals ... while the literary landscape-centric discussions of the 30s have given way to conferences..."<sup>16</sup>

*In the field of communication, the questions that arise about the great economic and technological changes and their complexities mark not only a "closing", but also a new "opening", a lingering acceptance that might never end, same as the interpretation of the projects.*

As regards the aftermath of the changes, let us recall the concerns of the thinker and philosopher Kostas Axelos:

"We play or we don't,  
like children,  
with the same seriousness,  
the same futile,  
desperate hope.  
Yes, that is the best ending we can expect.  
With the enigma and the acceptance. Of what is to come.  
Let us be curious, we have nothing else left anyway.  
There will always be Poetry  
And the unheard and unseen Poetic Awareness of the World."<sup>17</sup>

*Poetic awareness transforms not only the expressive ability, but also the culturally charged experience of practice, as well as the subjective and social aspect of the significance attributed to the communications media and their function, which is integrated into social life.*

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14. The relevant encyclopedia entry mentions that:

**"One of the main means of competitive struggle is advertisement. Advertisement contributes to the redistribution of the markets among competitors, the increase in the market capacity to absorb, and the creation of new markets."**

"Μεγάλη σοβιετική εγκυκλοπαίδεια" (Great Soviet Encyclopedia), Akademos Publications, Athens, 1978, Vol. 3, p. 9, (Original work: *Большая Советская Энциклопедия*, 1926 to 1990).

15. Analytically the views of the Italian novelist, literary critic, philosopher, semiotician, and university professor Umberto Eco, in the book:

ECO, U., "Η σημειολογία στην καθημερινή ζωή" (Semiotics in everyday life), Translation: Antonis Tsopanoglou, Malliaris-Paideia Publications S.A., Athens, 1997.

16. ANGELIS, V., "Το ελληνικό τοπίο στον 20<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα: Από τη λατρεία στην απαξίωση" (The Greek landscape in the 20th century: from adoration to deprecation), [www.kaput.gr](http://www.kaput.gr) art magazine, issue 08, June 2010.

17. The poem is part of a lecture given by K. Axelos.

AXELOS, K., "Το άνοιγμα στο επερχόμενο και το αίνιγμα της τέχνης" (Anticipating the aftermath and the enigma of art), Compilation of two lectures, Nefeli Publishing, Athens, 2009.

## Literature

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## Images

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Images taken by the author from an exhibition organized by the Greek National Tourism Organisation (E.O.T.) with the title "Greek Tourism Posters: A journey in Time through Art".