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Research on the Unified Transformation of Shop Signs Based on Order Theory

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Abstract

To analyze the renovation methods of shop signs. Methods Based on the theory of order, this paper studies people's sensitivity and preference to various orders by analyzing the problems in the unification of shop signs. As a result, the order of repetition and unity is the most elementary in aesthetics. Conclusion the renovation of shop signs can't just be simple and unified, but we should pay attention to the overall order and details to create a delicate and attractive facade landscape.

Keywords: signboard, renovation, order, design, unified

1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been an upsurge of street shops' facade renovation in many places in China. One of the most striking measures is to replace the signs of all shops and unify their size, color, font, material and layout (Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3). However, once such signboards are used, they not only have no positive effect on the streets and shops, but immediately lead to widespread bad comments from the public, and even cause critical reflection from the media such as focus interviews. However, the voice of opposition has not stopped other cities from unifying shop signboards in an endless stream. Leaving aside the political, economic, historical and other reasons, we can analyze the logic and shortcomings behind this behavior from the order theory in design art.

Figure 1-3. Unified transformed shop signs

It should be admitted that many signboards were actually very rough, crude and even vulgar before they were unified, and the reason lies in the lack of cost and aesthetics. Different from the colorful signboards that are pleasing to the eye and unforgettable in some developed countries and regions (Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6), the most common signboards of small shops in China usually adopt the same color scheme of blue, white, red, yellow, red and white, etc. The fonts used are usually native Song-style or bold Chinese, and the words are so big as to fill the whole signboards that they can be said to have no sense of design (Figure 7, Figure 8). Shopkeepers generally think that compared with the price, quality and service attitude of the goods in the store, whether the signboard is beautiful or not has little impact on the business. As long as the characters are big enough, the colors are eye-catching enough and people can see clearly, it is not worth spending time and money to beautify it. Some shopkeepers even refuse to optimize the signboard because they are afraid that the excessively beautifully designed signboard is inconsistent with the temperament of the cheap goods in the store, which leads to people who want to spend at a low price. The accumulation of such unsightly signboards is undoubtedly the most glaring obstacle in the process of street facade beautification and quality improvement, so it is very reasonable to take measures to improve and optimize them.

Figure 4-5. The signboards of shops after renovation

Figure 6. Signboards of Japanese shops

Figure 7-8. Shop signs before unified renovation

However, after a hard transformation, these new signs have not achieved the expected results. Compared with the old signs that are as simple as hut huts, the unified new signs are like a neat row of cages. Not only has the aesthetic feeling not improved much, but also the original recognition has been lost, which makes it impossible for people to quickly find the shops they want to go to. Whether barbershops, clothing stores or snack bars look the same, but the situation of thousands of shops makes the facade of the street lack vitality, which is worse than those excellent streets that serve as models. This blind unified transformation is a waste of resources. In the eyes of executives, it should be a cleaner and more concise scheme. Why can't it achieve the expected results after unification?

Based on Gombrich's (Gombrich E H., 1961) and arnheim's (Arnheim R., 1956) theories, this paper analyzes the reasons and disadvantages of the unification scheme from the perspective of order theory. So many urban streets cling to unified shop signs, which is essentially an excessive dependence on simple order and a kind of laziness. The reason why we prefer "order" is that the five senses of human beings are constantly receiving a large amount of information from the outside world, and the memory capacity of human beings is very limited, so the brain has produced forgetting mechanism and simplification mechanism, which makes the brain adopt a set of rules to screen and simplify massive information, and "order" is the means of brain simplification. For example, primitive people need to run for dozens of miles in pursuit of prey. In order to remember the way home, the big brain will automatically ignore a large number of disorderly plants and other scenery along the way, and especially remember some rocks and water flows with distinctive features. For areas without distinctive features, simple geometric symbols will be engraved as markers. Because even the simplest triangle or circle is extremely difficult to form naturally in the wild unless people deliberately do it, when hunters come back here, they can recognize their own marks at a glance, so early humans became particularly sensitive to simple and orderly shapes. In addition, due to the low productivity of early human beings, it is difficult to process items straight and flat, so this simple order often means a lot of labor and superb ability. These neat items are also status symbols, so the regular shape and neat arrangement are undoubtedly beautiful for ancient people.

However, the simple order will gradually depreciate over time. Contrary to the primitive society, the productivity of modern industrial society has been greatly improved, and the cost of machine manufacturing is much lower than that of manual manufacturing. Mass production of standardized and modular products is full of life.

Even the cheapest product can have a straight line, a right angle, a perfect circle or a perfect sphere, which greatly reduces the sensitivity of human beings to simple geometric order. However, after several collisions of ideas, such as the Arts and Crafts Movement, people's pursuit of beauty has become more and more complicated, monotonous mechanization or similar complex ornamentation are hard to impress people's hearts, and people are pursuing a more delicate order.

Mies van der Rohe's "less is more" (Van der Rohe

L M & Puente M., 2008) made many people misunderstand that "less" is simple, and even listed it as the truth. However, the so-called scarcity is not an excuse to be lazy. There are exquisite designs and productions behind any simple and beautiful works. If it breaks away from the exquisite order and shows a sense of vulgarity and cheapness, it is "scarcity is boring". So "less is more" is actually a balance made to prevent "over-design" or "over-processing". In the process of shop sign renovation, we only understood the literal meaning of "less" and tried to create a sense of high level with the least color matching, the least font and the least decoration. Instead, it became the best case of "less is boring" (Venturi R, Stierli M, Brownlee D B., 1977).

Order can be a means to create a sense of beauty. However, order itself is complex, and it can be basically divided into three stages if it is expressed by means of visualization. Take the arrangement of numbers as an example. When all the numbers in a row are 1 (Figure 9), the formed pattern is repetitive and boring, and it is not even worth people looking at it again or calculating how many numbers there are. This stage is similar to the simple repetition stage without aesthetic feeling in the unified renovation of signboards. When a row of numbers is arranged in the order of 1 to 9, various measures can be taken, such as changing the order, direction, brightness, size, position, etc. (Figure 10). Through some simple adjustments, this string of numbers can be made into a certain order, thus having a certain attraction. This is the second stage. When the numbers are completely rearranged, so that each number has a different order, direction, brightness, size, and position in the picture, and at the same time it can be combined in a picture in a complete and harmonious way (Figure 11), the exquisite order makes the picture the most attractive and rich, but not messy. This is the third stage of order aesthetics.

Figure 9. Simply repeated

Figure 10. Single sequence

Figure 11. Complex sequence

In order to improve the efficiency, the human brain always simplifies the familiar things around it through order, and finally makes it transparent. It does not rely solely on sensibility to produce likes and dislikes for an object. On the contrary, it has a preference for the exquisitely designed items. Dutch artists Lernert and Sander cut 98 kinds of uncooked foods into perfect 2.5 cm square cubes. Thereby creating a wonderful geometric visual effect (Figure 12). In this work, hidden behind the simple arrangement of a single square outline, it is the producer's careful color matching, material selection, cutting, lighting and shooting, making it an amazing and excellent creation that is willing to be appreciated over and over again. When we tried to redraw this work with white squares

(Figure 13), although it was still the same size squares and the same arrangement, even the size and placement direction of each square was more accurate than the original picture, forming an impeccable array. However, because the repeated flat white squares don't have the rich texture and color of the original materials, simple copying and pasting in computer modeling and rendering is the repetition of lacking skills and design. On the other hand, the original picture, after rational thinking, will have a reverse guess on the production process from the aspects of the composition of photography, the cutting and placement of food, etc., and the rich details on each food square are more attractive under the cutting of the square. Besides the difference of color and texture, it also implies the complexity of different touch, smell, etc. These rich pleasures are far from being comparable to those of the squares drawn by computers. Therefore, the process from unity and repetition to complexity and order is from boring to interesting. In another work, the author carefully selected items with similar colors from some unrelated daily necessities, and then skillfully arranged them to complete a wonderful work like coincidence, making it look like a pleasant cube on every side (Figure 14). Among them, the rich details and the vicissitudes of the daily necessities on each cube imply the difficulty of finding and combining, rather than being newly produced for the cube, thus enhancing the drama of "coincidence" and increasing its interest. When we break it down and replace it with a model (Figure 15), the interest is greatly reduced. Comparing the controversial shop sign renovation project in China with the street shops in developed countries (Figure 16, Figure 17, Figure 18), we can find that the gap is also between boring repetition and exquisite order. Even under limited conditions, excellent design can always highlight its own characteristics while taking into account the relationship with the surrounding environment and other shops, thus forming a flexible and orderly whole.

Figure 12. Photography of cutting food

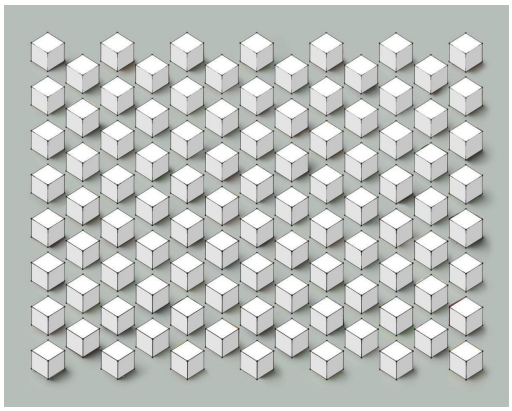

Figure 13. Computer Modeling Diagram

Figure 14. Cube of article combination

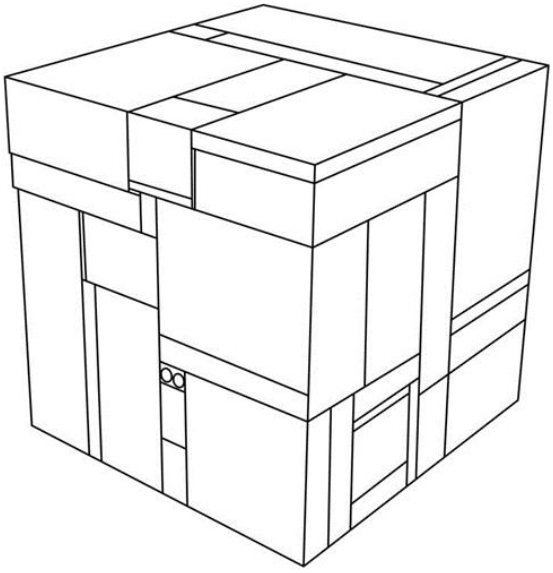

Figure 15. Computer Modeling Diagram

Figure 16. Japanese Street

Figure 17. New York Street

Figure 18. London Street

In recent years, huge capital and manpower have been invested in the renovation of urban facades, and more and more attention has been paid to the redesign of shop signs. The reason why the phenomenon of being criticized still occurs is that the society is complicated, people are complicated, and beauty is complicated, so we can't simply rely on the uniform color or shape. Shops are not meaningless jungles that primitive people pass by when hunting, but vibrant individuals. Repetition can only be the roughest solution. It takes more time to hammer out the deep and subtle order, so as to satisfy people who are tired of the same mechanical production, thus creating a more pleasant street landscape

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