

RESEARCH

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## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CHROMATIC SYMBOLOGY IN ADVERTISING. NIKE IN CHINA AND SPAIN

### *Análisis comparativo de la simbología cromática en publicidad. Nike en China y España*

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#### ABSTRACT

The different perceptions of color according to each socio-cultural context constitute a matter of relevant interest from the point of view of advertising creativity: black & white, for example, means mourn in different cultures and therefore must be used with care in international advertising. Color red is important to catch the western audience eye... but in China it is also perceived as a lucky color, which is by itself a powerful claim for potential customers. Therefore, this piece of research has analyzed the creative possibilities that can derive from the symbolic and cultural connotations of colors. To this end, a comparative analysis has been proposed in the design of which different theories on the perceptions of color have been considered in two very different cultures: European and Asian. This model has been used to analyze a sample of *Nike* graphic campaigns in order to obtain results that allow us to corroborate, through this case, that large brands use chromatic symbology in the design of their graphic campaigns in order to expand their possibilities of communicative effectiveness.

#### KEYWORDS

Color - *Nike* - Advertising - Chromatic Connotations - Symbology

#### RESUMEN

Las diversas percepciones del color según cada contexto socio-cultural constituyen una cuestión de relevante interés desde el punto de vista de la creatividad publicitaria: el negro y el blanco son, por ejemplo, colores opuestos que significan

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luto en diferentes culturas, y que por tanto deben ser empleados con mucho cuidado a la hora de internacionalizar una campaña de Marketing. El color rojo es muy importante para llamar la atención del público occidental... pero en China es además signo de buena suerte. Lo que en sí mismo es un poderoso atractivo para muchos potenciales compradores. Por ello, en esta investigación se han analizado las posibilidades creativas que pueden derivarse de las connotaciones simbólicas y culturales de los colores. Para ello se ha propuesto un análisis comparativo en cuyo diseño se han considerado distintas teorías sobre las percepciones del color en dos culturas muy dispares: la europea y la asiática. Dicho modelo se ha empleado para analizar una muestra de campañas gráficas de *Nike* con el fin de obtener resultados que permitan corroborar, a través de este caso, que las grandes marcas utilizan la simbología cromática en el diseño de sus campañas gráficas con el fin de ampliar sus posibilidades de eficacia comunicativa.

#### **PALABRAS CLAVE**

Color - *Nike* - Publicidad - Connotaciones Cromáticas - Simbología

#### **ANALISES COMPARATIVA DA SIMBOLOGIA CROMÁTICA EM PUBLICIDADE. NIKE NA CHINA E NA ESPANHA**

#### **RESUME**

As diversas percepções das cores segundo cada contexto sócio cultural constituem uma questão de relevante interesse desde o ponto de vista da criatividade publicitária. Por isso, esta investigação foi analisada as possibilidades criativas que podem derivar-se das conotações simbólicas e culturais das cores. Para isso propuseram uma análises comparativa em cujo desenho foi considerado distintas teorías sobre as percepções das cores em duas culturas bem diferentes: a europeia e a asiática. Este modelo foi empregado para analisar uma mostra de campanhas gráficas da Nike com a finalidade de obter resultados que permitam confirmar, através deste caso, que as grandes marcas utilizam a simbologia cromática no desenho de suas campanhas gráficas com a finalidade de ampliar suas possibilidades de eficácia comunicativa.

#### **PALAVRAS CHAVE**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Colors are an active part of our environment and the connotations associated with them are used by experts in different persuasive communication modalities. In relation to this consideration, Lee and Barnes Jr. (1990, p.25) declared: "Color shapes human perceptions of the world in which we live. Color gives us different impressions of objects that we see."

A color alone or by combining with other colors can assume a symbolic meaning and evoke different emotions (Wong, 1995, p.149). These meanings respond to the psychological effects of colors and different cultural traditions (Heller, 2004, p.48). Myths, taboos and customs intervene in the chromatic associations that develop within each context. Therefore, it should be taken into account that color is a factor influenced by both natural phenomena (Ko, 2011, p.871) and contextual variables.

The chromatic tradition of different cultures is very long-lived. As languages developed, colors were being defined following, in most places, the same order (Berlin & Kay, 1991, p.5). Thus, white and black were defined in order to differentiate day from night, and then red, green, yellow, blue, brown, purple, pink, orange and gray were established (Edwards, 2006, p.156). However, red is considered the first color, properly speaking, the reason why "colored" is "red" (Heller, 2004, p.53). Since its birth and over the years, colors have been welcoming a symbolic dimension fruit of the emotional effects that occur when entering into relationship with them (Edwards, 2006, p.157). In this sense, Harald Küppers (1982, 21) considers that color only exists as a sensory impression of the observer, something that Goethe already pointed out in 1810 when observing the moral effects of color:

[color] [...] produces on the human soul individually a specific effect and, in combination, an already harmonious or characteristic effect, often also not harmonious, but always defined and significant that is closely linked to the moral sphere (Goethe, 1922, p.203).

Brands have always based their own construction on communication based on the symbology of shapes and colors. Thus *Nike swoosh* (corporate brand emblem) has been exalted as a symbol of victory, challenge and overcoming (García García & García Guardia Lorente Barroso, 2010, p. 139), using formal, symbolic and implicit metaphors with a high degree of abstraction (Llorente Barroso & García García, 2015a, p.489). The significance of this symbol responds, to a large extent, to the connotations that emanate from its predominant presence in black to represent the sports brand. In this chromaticism lies the simplicity and functionality (Heller, 2004, pp. 140-149) of its corporate logo.

In advertising communication, there are variables (such as sex or race) that determine a chromatic preference, to a large extent, responsible for the effectiveness of messages (Lee & Barnes Jr., 1990, p.26).

The study this article presents seeks to deepen the chromatic analysis of advertising graphics, covering the different treatments of color made by the same brand in graphic advertising that develops in two very different contexts. Specifically, we analyze the associations of colors to different socio-cultural features

that determine the use of different chromatic parameters in graphic campaigns according to the specific context in which they are launched. This study has focused on Spain and China, countries selected for manifesting markedly contrasting political, cultural and demographic characteristics.

## 2. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESIS

The main objective of this piece of research is to study the influence of socio-cultural and psychological factors on the use of colors in graphic advertising that the same international brand generates for different contexts.

The hypothesis that arises is that brands use colors discriminately in their graphic campaigns to adapt them to the connotative code of each socio-cultural context in order to achieve the most effective communication of the message in each case.

On the other hand, the need to specify some concepts for the correct development of this piece of research requires the prior realization of a study of the state of the art.

## 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1. Main European theories

In the definition of colors, there are traditionally two fundamental chromatic systems: one that deals with their light properties and another that does it with their pigmented characteristics.

The *RGB* system (*Red, Green, Blue*), additive synthesis or three-color process is a discovery of Newton, who in the seventeenth century achieved the decomposition of sunlight through a prism of glass in a range of wavelengths<sup>2</sup> (Zelanski & Fisher, 200 1, p.13). This spectrum collected the colors violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red (Edwards, 200 6, p.15) that make up the chromatic circle of light colors (Caivano, 199 5, p.13). The *RGB* system considers that light has a corpuscular nature (Beléndez, 200 8, p.13) and makes it possible to recreate the white light by

Adding three colored lights: green, blue-violet and red-orange. These three lights are the only ones that cannot be obtained by mixing others (Carreres Ribera, 201 1, p.20) and, if they combine, they can give rise to all the colors that the human eye can differentiate, that is why they are also primary colors (Drew & Meyer, 200 8, p 55). The colors originating from the sum of two primaries (yellow, cyan and magenta) are known as secondary (Zelansky & Fisher, 200 1, pp. 13-16). This system is used in the reproduction of colors in digital systems (Ambrose & Harris, 200 5, p.35), which are in accordance with their light properties.

The *CMYK* system (*Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Key*), subtractive synthesis or four-color process refers to the pigment colors (Gatter, 200 5, page 39). The development of this system was necessary to solve the graphic needs and enable the reproduction of color images by adding inks (Ambrose & Harris, 200 6, pp. 32-33). The *CMYK* system consists of four basic colors: first, cyan, magenta, yellow, which are the only

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<sup>2</sup> The wavelength is the distance between crests of a wave energy. They are expressed in nanometers (nm.) and are visible to the human eye from 350 nm. and up to 750 nm. (period covering primary colors) (Zelansky & Fisher, 200 1, p. 13) or 380 nm. and to 780 nm. (Sanz & Gallego, 200 1, p. 366).

pigments which cannot be obtained by mixing others, and, on the other hand, black (*key*)<sup>3</sup>, which cannot be achieved after modifications either, which is why it was included as a base pigment (Gatter, 200 5, p 42). The four-color process translates the chromatic information composed of lights (*RGB*), so that the primary lights match the secondary pigment colors and the basic pigment colors match the secondary lights (Carreres Ribera, 201 1, p.22). This system is based on some of Goethe's findings who, unlike Newton, based his theory on qualitative methods. Newton considered colors to be achromatic light rays (Goethe, 200 2, p. 50), however, Goethe developed a theory based on the study of nature and its different forms of representation (Goethe, 200 2, p. 13). His great contributions to the study of color have been: the consideration of the symbolic meanings that each color can have (Ferrer, 199 9, p.82) and its classification according to the moral, intellectual characteristics, status and traditions of each context (Heller, 200 4, p.127, Table 1). The practical disadvantage of Goethe's contribution is that he did not conceive the mixtures, so he did not differentiate the behavior of the combinations among pigments -more colors, darker mixture- from the combinations among lights -more colors, clearer mixture- (Heller, 200 4, pp. 282-283).

Table 1.

*Classification of colors and values of Goethe and its relationship with society*

Categories	Purple	Red	Yellow	Green	blue	Violet
Moral	Beautiful	Noble	Good	Useful	Vulgar, ordinary	Useless, unprofitable
Intellectual	Genius	Reason, feeling	Understanding	Sensual, impulses	Sensual, impulses	Fantasy, unreal
Status	Rulers	Nobles	Scientists	Bourgeois	Workers	Artists
Traditions	Of kings, princes and cardinals	For nobles	Lighting and science	For Bourgeois	For Workers	Spiritual, magic and theology

Source: Heller, 200 4, p. 117

### 3 .2. Main Asian theories

Among the main Asian theories that have served to explain the meaning of colors, two stand out: that of *Feng Shui* and that of *Yin and Yang*.

*Feng Shui*<sup>4</sup> is a philosophy that aims to create harmonious environments, capable of generating an intimate and fluid relationship between man and his environment and attracting health and abundance (Álvarez, 200 8, p.121). It relies on the observation of nature, the influence of traditions (Tibet, Hindu-Buddhist, Confucian and modern cultures) and knowledge from Buddhism, the Tao, the *Book of Mutations* or *I-Ching* and of Chinese Astrology (Álvarez, 200 7, page 18). From the Taoist philosophy, it takes the consideration that there are five elements among which there is a circulation of energy that represents the entire environment and manifests the following chromatic links (Skilton, 200 5, pp. 29-32):

<sup>3</sup> Black is represented by the letter K referring to the real meaning of this color in the CMYK process, key -key, key- (Gatter, 2005, p. 33).

<sup>4</sup> Feng Shui means "air-water" (Alvarez, 200 7, p. 17).

a) The fire element can be a reflection of aggressiveness and conflict if there is an excess of said element, or it can symbolize emotional coldness if the opposite occurs. It is located in all variants of red color.

b) The earth element can create a dense and conservative environment, or otherwise, disorder and instability. It is found in yellow and earthy colors.

c) The wood element gives values such as responsibility and burden, or in its opposite effect, lack of creativity and irresponsibility. It is found in plant colors.

d) The metal element generates obstinacy or confusion. Chromatically it is found in gray, white, silver and gold.

e) The water element, as a flowing element, symbolizes dispersion and lack of it, rivalry, pettiness or anxiety. It is found in black or dark blue.

In relation to these associations, a part of *Feng Shui* deals with the importance of the use of colors to reach equilibrium with the environment, linking each color with a daily activity (Table 2):

Table 2  
*Feng Shui: activities-colors relationships*

Everyday Activity	Color
Finance	Violet
Fame and reputation	Red
Marriage and association	pink
New knowledge	blue
Family relationships	Green
Benefactors	Gray
Career and profession	Black
Children and Creativity	White

Source: Álvarez, 200 7, p. 51

*Yin* and *Yang* is the Chinese philosophy that explains the world as the combination of two opposite-complementary. *Yin* and *Yang* represent different energies that seek a balanced balance in a continuous movement and the existence of one is impossible without the other (Skilton, 200 5, p.12). They are "vital breaths" that govern the destiny of the world, *Yin* as receptive softness and *Yang* as an active force (Chen, 200 8, p 68, 86). *Yin* is representative of the negative or the feminine, while the positive or masculine takes its form in *Yang*. *Yin* appears associated with the Moon, the cold, the white color, emptiness, passivity, wetness, the night, the left side and everything soft (Skilton, 200 5, pp. 12-13). *Yang* represents the Sun, the heat, the black color, fullness, activity, dryness, the day, the right side and hardness (Skilton, 200 5, pp. 12-13). The graphic symbol of *Yin* and *Yang*, known as *Tai Chi*, is made up of the colors white with a black point (*Yang*) and black with a white point (*Yin*), linked (Skilton, 200 5, p.13); the points that are born in each part represent the embryos of the opposite (Skilton, 200 5, p.14). This sign reflects that, to Asians, nothing is absolutely black or rigorously white due to the interrelation they consider to exist among all the

elements that make up the context (Ferrer, 1999, p.34). This influence also extends to the composition of colors, since nothing can exist without its opposite-complementary. Black and white<sup>5</sup> have the same importance; in opposition to other cultures, in Asia, white and black are considered both feminine and one does not entail the opposite of the other (Heller, 2004, p.98). White includes the symbology of death and black the symbol of the beginning or birth (Heller, 2004, p.98). The most important color in China is yellow, considered the male pigment par excellence, but so are red and green<sup>6</sup>. Black, white and soft colors fall within the female group (Heller, 2004, p.98).

### 3.3. Color and advertising

Labrecque, Patrick and Milne (2013), considering the chromatic meanings and their ability to influence thoughts, feelings and behaviors of consumers, address their importance from the field of marketing. Referring to the complexity of their nature, they determine that "culture influences learned color associations" (Labrecque, Patrick & Milne, 2013, page 194). Under this consideration, they study the cultural influence on the chromatic associations we learn and which are responsible for the diverse perceptions we develop when evaluating the objects having them.

In the relationship between culture and chromatic associations, two fundamental considerations that have led to various possibilities in the study of color and advertising have developed (Labrecque, Patrick & Milne, 2013, p 194;.. Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi & Dahl, 1997, p.1398):

1. A trend that determines significant differences in the chromatic association according to each culture. Within this current are Block and Kramer (2009) and Madden, Hewett and Roth (2000).
2. Another trend that considers the existence of chromatic meanings shared in all cultures, this trend being shared by authors such as D'Andrade and Egan (1974) or Fraser and Banks (2004).

At the same time, Labrecque, Patrick and Milne (2013, p.194) estimate that certain cultural meanings attributed to colors may change over time. In this sense, they refer to two examples; the first, related to the minimization of the negative connotations attributed to the yellow - color used by the Nazis to identify the Jewish people - by the Jews over the years (Kreitler & Kreitler, 1972); the second, related to the influence of globalization and the Western culture on certain Oriental chromatic traditions; thus, Chinese brides have changed their red dress into white (Baker, 2009).

Referring to the specific field of advertising, Labrecque, Patrick and Milne (2013, pp. 195-196) highlight two fundamental points of interest:

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<sup>5</sup> The chromaticity connotations associated with Yin and Yang are unclear; while Skilton (2005, p. 12-13) makes an association by opposite chromatic categories, Heller (2004, p. 98) makes an interpretation of black-white matrix as energy stream representing the Yin and Yang set.

<sup>6</sup> Blue is not considered a basic color in the Oriental country, but a variety of green (Heller, 2004, p. 98).

1. The importance of color as compared to black and white advertising. Color manifests itself as a sign of quality and efficiency, acting as an exhortative resource - it motivates consumers and captures their attention - and mnemonic - it facilitates the memory of the message.
2. The influence of each color on consumers. Color influences one's mood and the evaluations of products. In this regard, Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi and Dahl (1997, pp. 1397-1398) determined that the highest levels of chroma<sup>7</sup> and value<sup>8</sup> influence the feelings of emotion and relaxation, respectively, being able to generate a more favorable attitude towards advertising and towards the brand.

Color becomes a key element making it possible to build and strengthen the relationship between consumers and brands, being part of the corporate "DNA" (Labrecque, Patrick & Milne, 2013, page 199). In this line, Lee and Barnes Jr. (1990) develop a study of ads in magazines, considering the psychological effects colors have on the emotions of human beings and in order to improve advertising effectiveness. These authors perceived that advertising professionals did not use color to improve the response of their *target* to their messages according to their sex, but they saw a discriminated use in advertising messages aimed at different races (Lee & Barnes Jr., 1990, p 29).

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

So as to achieve the objectives and corroborate the hypothesis, a methodology based on the comparative analysis of a sample of graphic creativities of *Nike* brand for China and Spain has been proposed. For the development of this study, we decided to choose *Nike* as an example, as it is an international brand that performs graphic advertising actions of considerable notoriety in the two selected countries, accumulating a great socio-cultural impact at the international level. Such impact is reflected in the American lifestyle, which is why it was incorporated into the American Marketing Association's Hall of Fame in 1991, cataloging it as an icon of the country (Goldman & Papson, 1998, page 18). In fact, in the 1990s, Nike rose as one of the most recognized brands in the world and an international symbol of athletics (Spar, 2003). To a large extent, this recognition comes from the great communication strategies of the brand and its recurrent relationship with significant cultural symbols (Goldman & Papson, 1998) that have transferred to the brand their values and the admiration the public has for them (Llorente Barroso Garcia & Garcia, 2015, pp. 478-479).

The creativities that make up the sample have been selected because they match the criterion of importance in the use of a certain color in each of the respective

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<sup>7</sup> "Chroma refers to saturation; highly saturated colors have a greater proportion of the pigment in them" (Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi & Dahl, 1997, p. 1387).

<sup>8</sup> "Value is the degree of darkness or lightness of the color relative to a neutral scale that extends from pure black to pure white" (Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi & Dahl, 1997, p. 1387).

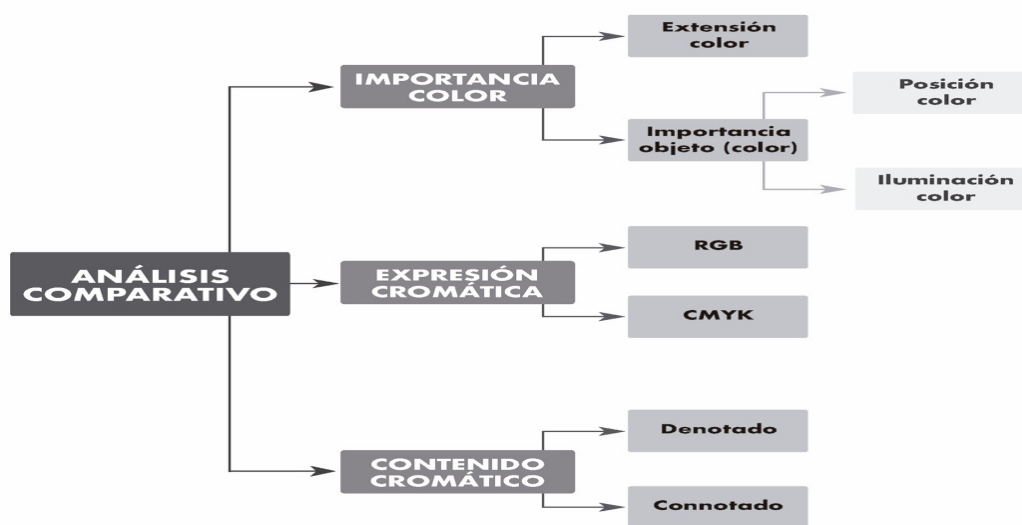
countries in which our research is focused. Mentioned importance has been calculated based on two parameters that have allowed a selection of pieces:

- a) The approximate extension of the color in the graph.
- b) The importance of the colored object according to the position it occupies in it and / or its lighting.

The analysis of each graphic piece has been divided into two major categories of study:

- a) The chromatic expression, which has been examined from the chromatic systems RGB (light) and CMYK (pigment).
- b) The chromatic content of the piece, taking the denotative meaning and especially the connotative (symbolic) meaning of each color as the main elements for analysis.

The comparative analysis has been carried out using an analytical record model (Figure 1) that has been applied systematically to the creativities of the sample, which has allowed an orderly compilation of results, in compliance with the level of objectivity required by research to extract valuable results



## 5. RESULTS OF THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF CHROMATIC ASSOCIATIONS ON GRAPHIC ADVERTISING IN CHINA AND SPAIN

To facilitate the understanding of the results, they have been recorded in tables that allow the comparative analysis to be visualized.

5.1. Comparative analysis of the use of blue

<p><b>Figure 2. There are no rankings for ambition</b></p>	<p><b>Figure 3. MadRunning Exhibition</b></p>
	
<p>Source of execution: Wieden + Kennedy Shanghai , 2010. Source of extraction: info.cloth.hc360.com, 2014.</p>	<p>Source of execution: Villar-Rosàs, 2007a. Source of extraction: Anuncios.com, 2014.</p>
<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR: - Approximate 75% by extension in graph. - Importance of the colored object according to its position in the piece.</p>	<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR: - Approximate 60% by extension in graph. - Importance of the colored object according to its position in the piece and lighting.</p>
<p>CHROMATIC EXPRESSION: - RGB (Average Photoshop Histogram): 62.77    63,76    77.24. - CMYK (Average Photoshop Histogram): 67.99    73,12    119,48    153.57.</p>	<p>CHROMATIC EXPRESSION: - RGB (Average Photoshop Histogram): 43,58    53,71    66,77. - CMYK (Average Photoshop Histogram): 57.06    71,78    117,26    132.85.</p>

<p>DENOTED CONTENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In <i>RGB</i> composition, blue is color light whose wavelength is between 460 and 482 nm. (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.127).</li> <li>- In <i>CMYK</i> composition, blue is the common denomination of cyan , although in China it refers to moderate blue and blue-gray colorations (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.132).</li> </ul>	<p>DENOTED CONTENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the <i>RGB</i> composition, blue is the light corresponding to wavelengths between 460 and 482 nm. (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.127). Blue is the third primary in additive chromosynthesis ( <i>RGB</i> ).</li> <li>- In composition <i>CMYK</i> is the third primary standard in descending order of wavelengths (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.128).</li> </ul>
<p>CONNOTED CONTENT IN ASIA:</p> <p>The symbolic meaning of distance that blue has, acquires greater importance in this graphic, in which the cold color "calm" (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p.164) the passion of the protagonist. In China, blue is linked to <i>Yang</i> (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.128) and, in the graph, it is compensated with manifest <i>Yin</i> in white areas (Skilton, 200 5, p. 13 ). The protagonist of the ad symbolizes a "Empress of the sport", distant and powerful. Linked to this concept of power and power, blue is associated with Tibetan Buddhism, specifically the Vairocana Buddha, representative of transcendental wisdom (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.128), potentiality and emptiness (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p.164). The gesture of the athlete symbolically enhances the imperial emphasis of the composition that reflects ambition and immortality.</p>	<p>CONNECTED CONTENT IN EUROPE:</p> <p>In this piece the blue takes all the attributes related to water. In Europe, this color is one of the favorites in corporate communication to transmit tranquility (it is used by banks ( <i>La Caixa</i> ), beverages ( <i>Solán de Cabras</i> ), cosmetics ( <i>Nivea</i> ), etc.) (Heller, 200 4, p. Four. Five). The lightness that connotes this blue is related to the speed that the sport demands. Applied to an object, blue softens forms and undoes them, is the "path of the undefined, where the real is transformed into an imaginary" (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p.163). In its combination with black, blue is much more serious, giving the graphic a more powerful and masculine aspect (Heller, 200 4, p 32). In addition, the technological connotations offered by blue give the brand an avant-garde look that is often inseparable from <i>Nike</i></p>

## 5.2. Comparative analysis of the use of red

Figure 4. Use Sports	Figure 5. Momentum
	
<p>Source of execution: Wieden + Kennedy Shanghai, 2011. Source of extraction: wkshanghai.com, 2014.</p>	<p>Source of execution: Villar-Rosàs, 2007b. Source of extraction: <a href="http://Anuncios.com">Anuncios.com</a>, 2014.</p>
<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50% by extension in graphics.</li> <li>- Importance of the colored object according to its position in the piece.</li> </ul>	<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 75% by extension in graphics.</li> <li>- Importance of the colored object according to its position in the piece.</li> </ul>
<p>CHROMATIC EXPRESSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RGB (Average Photoshop Histogram): 169.09     121,94     107.13.</li> <li>- CMYK (Average Photoshop Histogram): 176.05     109,90     104,70     229.32.</li> </ul>	<p>CHROMATIC EXPRESSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RGB (Average Photoshop Histogram): 146.53     51.50     42.49.</li> <li>- CMYK (Average Photoshop Histogram): 169.40     39,30     42,58     211.84.</li> </ul>
<p>DENOTED CONTENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the RGB composition, red is</li> </ul>	<p>DENOTED CONTENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In RGB composition, red is the</li> </ul>

<p>the photoreception of light with a wavelength between 618 and 780 nm. (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.758).</p> <p>- In CMYK composition, red approaches magenta. In China, red refers to reddish-orange and reddish-brown colorations (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, page 763).</p>	<p>light corresponding to wavelengths between 618 and 780 nm. (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.758) . It is the first primary additive and first color of the Newtonian spectrum (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.759, 128).</p> <p>- In CMYK composition it is the first secondary standard in descending order of wavelengths (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.759).</p>
<p>CONNOTED CONTENT IN ASIA: Red is the predominant color in China, present in its festivities and institutions (Heller, 2004, 59, Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 2007, 889). The chromatic associations linked to the red that appear in the advertisement allow us to consider the character as a national icon. In many of the Asian legends "the spirit of fire" appears dressed "with a red cap" (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p.889), explicit attribution in the graph to mythologize the athlete. The most important elements of the graphic are described in reddish tones: the cap, part of the costume, the earth and the brand or the bottom of the slogan. This shade of red, red-orange, is the most characteristic of China and the one with the greatest presence in advertising there, as it expresses joy and harmony.</p>	<p>CONNECTED CONTENT IN EUROPE: In Europe, red has a more carnal and passionate dimension. It is linked to fire and blood (Heller, 200 4, p 55). In the combination of red with white and yellow, "the essential symbol of vital force" is formed (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, page 889), very much in accordance with the graphic studied. In it, red is dark and appears linked to power, strength, competitiveness and battle. All these properties are also what characterize the best Spanish tennis player in the history that the message stars, Rafael Nadal. Red embodies the "virtues of war" (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p.889) of the athlete. For Spain, the color red is life, but it also fights; it is the passion reflected in the graphic and the most representative of its patriotic colors.</p>

5.3. Comparative analysis of the use of yellow

<p><b>Figure 6. Battle of the Nine Gates. Final Poster</b></p>	<p><b>Figure 7. Godó: Sharapova</b></p>
	
<p>Source of execution: DMG Beijing, 2007. Source of extraction: adsoftheworld.com, 2014.</p>	<p>Source of execution: Villar-Rosàs, 2007c. Source of extraction: Anuncios.com, 2014.</p>
<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR: - 75% by extension in graphics. - Importance of the colored object according to its position in the piece and its illumination.</p>	<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR: - 80% by extension in graphics. - Importance of the colored object according to its position in the piece.</p>
<p>CHROMATIC EXPRESSION: - RGB (Average Photoshop Histogram): 58,86    39,99    21.21. - CMYK (Average Photoshop Histogram): 86,69    56,50    54,74    114.41.</p>	<p>CHROMATIC EXPRESSION: - RGB (Average Photoshop Histogram): 177.76    147,90    111.67. - CMYK (Average Photoshop Histogram): 188.10    141,30    112,18    218.67.</p>
<p>DENOTED CONTENT:</p>	<p>DENOTED CONTENT:</p>



<p>- In the <i>RGB</i> composition, the yellow has a wavelength between 574 and 577 nm. (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p 45).</p> <p>- In <i>CMYK</i> composition, yellow is the second primary in decreasing order of wavelength (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p 45) . In China it refers to bright yellow, strong, light yellow, moderate yellow and orange yellow (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.50 ).</p>	<p>- In the <i>RGB</i> composition, the wavelength of light corresponding to 574 nm and 577 nm corresponds to yellow (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p 45). It is the first secondary additive and ranks third in the Newtonian spectrum (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p 45).</p> <p>- In <i>CMYK</i> composition it is the second primary in decreasing order of wavelengths (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 2001, 45).</p>
<p><b>CONNOTED CONTENT IN ASIA:</b>          In traditional Chinese culture yellow is born of black - the light that reappears from darkness - (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p 46). It was widely used in the Ming dynasty (1465-1487) -the imperial yellow- and in the <i>K'ang Hsi</i> and <i>Ch'ing</i> periods (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p 53). A symbol of good omens and eternity, so is the Empire (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p.46). With red it is the most important color in Asia. In the graphic they want to highlight the imperial qualities of the protagonist, approaching the status of the Gods and / or the Emperors (Heller, 200 4, p.97). In Chinese philosophy, yellow and black are opposite-complementary (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p.88), hence the chromatic composition of the piece to achieve the balance of the whole.</p>	<p><b>CONNECTED CONTENT IN EUROPE:</b>          In western cultures, yellow represents, for its warm attributes linked to the Sun, softness, excitement and light (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p 45). As a warm color, it is the one that most attracts the vision when perceived at a great distance (Dupont, 200 4, page 187). Eternity is colored yellow because yellow is the Sun and gold. Also because of their association with gold, the alchemists related yellow with the Great Work (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p 46). Therefore, it is a symbol of power and magnificence and is used by the brand in this creativity to symbolize the winner who, in addition, wears <i>Nike</i> . In Europe, bright yellow is not frequently used because it is associated with negative connotations (Heller, 200 4, p.95), which explains the low purity it presents in the graph.</p>

#### 5.4. Comparative analysis of the use of green

<p><b>Figure 8. Beijing Young Masters</b></p>	<p><b>Figure 9. If something burns you, burn it running</b></p>
	
<p>Source of execution: Wieden + Kennedy Shanghai, 2007. Source of extraction: wkshanghai.com, 2014.</p>	<p>Source of execution: Villar-Rosàs, 2011. Source of extraction: benvivemkt.wordpress.com, 2014.</p>
<p><b>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50% by extension in graphics.</li> <li>- Importance of the colored object according to its position in the piece and lighting.</li> </ul>	<p><b>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 85% by extension in graphics.</li> <li>- Importance of the colored object according to its position in the piece.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHROMATIC EXPRESSION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RGB (Average Photoshop Histogram): 100.97     70.53     61.53.</li> <li>- CMYK (Photoshop Histogram Average): 113.65     88.33     78.76     170.71.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chromatic expression:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RGB (Photoshop Histogram Average): 102.80     208.72     135.18.</li> <li>- CMYK (Photoshop Histogram Average): 112.43     244.99     98.63     252.75.</li> </ul>
<p>Denoted <b>CONTENT:</b></p>	<p>Denoted <b>CONTENT:</b></p>



<p>- In composition <i>RGB</i> green responds to the wavelengths ranging between 529 and 497 nm. (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 931).</p> <p>- In composition <i>CMYK</i> green approaches the cyan. In China it is called green to bright yellow-greenish-yellow colorations dark green and yellow-green live (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 932).</p>	<p>- In composition <i>RGB</i> green is defined by wavelengths between 529 marked and 497 nm. (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 931). It is the additive primary second and fourth Newtonian spectrum (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 931).</p> <p>- In composition <i>CMYK</i> is the second secondary standard in order of decreasing wavelength (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 931).</p>
<p>Connoted CONTENT IN ASIA: Among the few negative connotations for green it is China has its definition as violent disturbance nature (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 932). China agrees with other countries in the Association green movement (Ko, 201 1, p. 862). Green, nature and life, is a main color in Chinese philosophy. -sign representative ray rise <i>Yang</i> - (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p. 1057), green is dominant in the composition, but their superiority effect would not be the same without combination with red, black and the yellow. It is one of the most sacred colors because dragons are green and East are revered animals (Heller, 200 4, p. 115). Thus, the protagonist clothing imitates a dragon, symbol of strength and eternity, its green oriental country is for strength, power, wisdom and peace (Heller, 200 4, p. 115).</p>	<p>Connoted CONTENT IN EUROPE: In Spain the green is hope (Heller, 200 4, p. 111). Linked to earth element, it is used by the mark on the piece to give natural connotations (Heller, 200 4, p. 106) to the sport. Healthy living is green; between foods considered healthier vegetables are predominantly green (Heller, 200 4, p. 107). This can also be derived from the Middle Ages where the toga of doctors was green (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p. 1058). In addition, other elements of the graphical -black and white- refer to the current items (computers and other technological elements) that make the sport (implicative of healthy living) pass into the background. "A Isabel burns that people do not listen to reason" demands the need to understand that sport is essential for a healthy life. Therefore, "If something burns, I burn it running."</p>

5.5. Comparative analysis of the use of white

Figure 10 . Quien eres?	Figure 11 . Davis Cup 2004
	
<p>Source of performance: Wieden + Kennedy Shanghai, 2008. Source extraction: wkshanghai.com, 2014.</p>	<p>Source of performance: Villar-Rosàs, 2004. Source extraction: villarrosas.com, 2014.</p>
<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 25% extension graph.</li> <li>- Importance of the object colored by their position on the piece and lighting.</li> </ul>	<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 90% by extension graph.</li> <li>- Importance of the object colored by their position on the workpiece.</li> </ul>
<p>Chromatic expression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RGB (Photoshop Histogram Average): 89.49    82.61    79.68.</li> <li>- CMYK (Photoshop Histogram Average): 98.49    96.56    107,59    153.41.</li> </ul>	<p>Chromatic expression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RGB (Photoshop Histogram Average): 230.56    220,15    208.52.</li> <li>- CMYK (Photoshop Histogram Average): 230.93    212.77    202.78    252.02.</li> </ul>
<p>Denoted CONTENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In composition RGB white is the name of the visual perception</li> </ul>	<p>Denoted CONTENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In composition RGB white is the color of dark null coming</li> </ul>

<p>of maximum clarity (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 172).          - In composition CMYK white is a neutral-achromatic (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 172). In China called zinc white to white (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 174).</p>	<p>from all wavelengths of the visible spectrum (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 172).          - In composition CMYK is neutral. It is called white Spanish to pale yellow-orange color (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 175).</p>
<p>Connoted CONTENT IN ASIA:          Chinese alchemists related to white with the initiation phase "assumption of life" and the spirit level "human significance" (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 172). White solar ratio is indisputable, therefore described as bright. East white is mourning, but understood as hopeful revival, bounce and -reencarnación-death (Heller, 200 4, p. 264). White can represent in the graph to a new candidate for battle (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p. 190). In the ad, its combination with the black -in East are not opposites colors makes its symbolism acquires darker shades but hopeful. Use in the ad can be considered forethought to the challenge of competition. The red color in the piece appears in elements that the importance of identity stands.</p>	<p>Connoted CONTENT IN EUROPE:          European brands they want to convey purity using white as the highest representation (Heller, 200 4, p. 156). Western alchemists relate to the initiation phase white called "the target work" (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 172). In this graph, the white becomes less distinct tones because it is not pure white. This is related to the idea of white as the beginning of everything (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p. 190), for the land, without which man could not grow food, is the rebirth of everything. The composition is based on natural elements. Both land at the bottom left of creativity, such as off - white background endow the graph of a local, warm and expansive connotation (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 171), easily identifiable and near the sunlight.</p>

5.6. Comparative analysis of the use of black

Figure 12 . Run free Road 3	Figure 13 . Five Magnificent: Puyol
	
<p>Source of performance: JWT Shanghai, 2005. Source extraction: adsoftheworld.com, 2014.</p>	<p>Source of performance: Villar-Rosàs, 2008. Source extraction: anuncios.com, 2014.</p>
<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50% by extension graph.</li> <li>- Importance of the object colored by their position on the workpiece.</li> </ul>	<p>IMPORTANCE OF COLOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 30% extension graph.</li> <li>- Importance of the object by colored lighting.</li> </ul>
<p>Chromatic expression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RGB (Photoshop Histogram Average): 100.30    99.39    100.20.</li> <li>- CMYK (Photoshop Histogram Average): 11.23    115.05    132.80    166.24.</li> </ul>	<p>Chromatic expression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RGB (Photoshop Histogram Average): 102.74    96.49    87.55.</li> <li>- CMYK (Photoshop Histogram Average): 98.49    96.56    107,59    122.32.</li> </ul>
<p>Denoted CONTENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In composition <i>RGB</i> black is the name given to the absence of</li> </ul>	<p>Denoted CONTENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In composition <i>RGB</i> is the achromatic perception of</li> </ul>

<p>color or brightness level of zero (null) (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 616). - In composition <i>CMYK</i> the black approaches the sum of all primary colors.</p>	<p>maximum darkness due to the absence of the photoreception (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 616). - In composition <i>CMYK</i> is the basic color, constituted by cromosíntesis primary cyan, magenta and yellow (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 616).</p>
<p>Connoted CONTENT IN ASIA: Eastern black is a color that evokes the way. For traditional taoístas, black refers to "rise essential moisture" refers to the collapse of the "human truth" into the pit, from which start the journey to the significance of the target (Sanz &amp; Gallego, 200 1, p. 617). As <i>Yin</i> and <i>Yang</i>, black and white are needed to coexist. Therefore, in the white and gray graphic elements compensate the presence of black. If anything defines Chinese culture it is that nothing is categorically black or all white (Heller, 200 4, p. 98). Every element needs its opposite-complementary to occur in nature. Creativity black is analyzed symbol way, because the black abismal yellow emerged, color cradle country (Heller, 200 4, p. 98). Therefore, in this case, the black is the beginning of a journey that nowhere can end, I sense that is reinforced by the maze of roads.</p>	<p>Connoted CONTENT IN EUROPE: Europe black is strength, power, distance and death. The use of this color in the graph is explicable by their warlike connotations. In addition, the black symbolizes the "renunciation of vanity" (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p. 747), so, Puyol is presented as a naked man prepared for battle sport. As the black is the color of the threat par excellence (Chevalier &amp; Gheerbrant, 200 7, p. 748), it is a good choice graphics with black coloring dyes referring to the battle that is intended to advertise. In this case, the winner will be the protagonist of the plot as can be interpreted by the chromatic scale chosen for the ad. To be in black, a strength and invincible power is assumed, so that victory in battle is assured. Associations to black developed in the West are not so different from those developed in the East as with white.</p>

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

### 6 1. Hypothesis contrast

The results extracted and summarized in the previous section of this proposal confirm the hypothesis stated at the start of this paper. Cultural connotations associated with certain colors influence the composition of graphic advertising. Thus it can be seen, for example, that in Asia the use of yellow is important to mystify brands and praise the characters included in them, whereas in Europe it is not frequently used with the dimensions of the Asians and "discrete yellows" are opted for.

Confirmation of this hypothesis leads to the conclusion that advertising uses colors strategically, adapting their use to their symbolism in each socio-cultural context to ensure more effective communication. Thus, *Nike* adapts the chromatic characteristics of its graphic campaigns depending on the peculiarities of the context in which they are launched, because, as Goethe concluded, a color cannot be extrapolated from its context (Goethe, 2002, p. 13-19). Thus, it should be noted that, for example, in China green is a symbol of power and a fundamental color (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 2007, p. 1057), while in Spain it does not have that importance and its use is essentially linked to the natural and ecological matters (Heller, 2004, p. 106-107).

This confirmation is in addition to the contributions that analyze the psychological effects of colors and their influence on emotions, such as the contributions made by Lee and Barnes, Jr. (1990) on their perceptual differences by gender (male or female) and race (white or black) race. Thus, this proposal is a small contribution in this effort to improve the effectiveness of advertising messages, which supports the consideration of color as a key hortatory and mnemonic resource, able to get the attention of the public and the memory of the advertising message (Labrecque Patrick and Milne, 2013, p. 199).

## 6.2. Other important lessons

Comparative analysis allows us to draw other considerations of interest:

1. Colors, which are part of visual communication, constitute "a system halfway between what is scientific in information and what is artistic in expression" (Sanz, 2003, p. 189). However, from the advertising standpoint, the expressive capabilities of color to generate a connoted meaning are the ones that interest most, as they are those that make it possible to record the brand more definitively in the mind of the recipient. In fact, color is considered a leading element in advertising transformations that occur in the current communicative paradigm (Nicolas Ojeda, 2012, p. 308). It is an element that is part of the "DNA" of the brand and allows us to build and strengthen the brand-consumer relationship (Labrecque, Patrick and Milne, 2013, p. 199). It is therefore necessary to continue its study associated with the advertising communication, as the effectiveness of the message depends, in part, on its proper use in the message.
2. The subjective dimension of color is the one that impinges most on the construction of meaning and makes it an instrument to effectively and adaptably communicate the message of the brands. This subjectivity complicates the study of color, as it responds to the intervention of the subject who perceives it, who is particularly affected by colors (Brusatin, 1987, p. 100-101). Any interpretation of the subject is linked to the unconscious value of what we perceive. Therefore, the latest research on advertising focuses on understanding the workings of the mind from neuroscience, in order to develop advertising strategies that are in line with consumer needs (Muñoz Sánchez, 2012, p. 47-48) and which increase profitability without compromising creativity (Serrano Abad & Balanzó Bono, 2011).
3. The importance of colors in China is so remarkable that philosophies such as *Feng Shui* or *Yin* and *Yang* have them considered for the development of decorative

techniques that make it possible to achieve greater harmony between man and the environment. Also, the chromatic aspects such theories collect affect the development of graphic advertising pieces that are launched in China.

4. Goethe's color theory has had great importance in establishing the uses of color in European graphic advertising, especially for its contributions on the connotative meanings attached to the contextualization of colors. However, over time, researchers have contemplated two possibilities in this type of analysis (Labrecque, Patrick & Milne, 2013, p. 194; Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi & Dahl, 1997, p. 1398):

a) The study of the effects of color that operate both at a basic and universal level (global context).

b) The study of the effects of color that operate at a specific level of each culture (local context). To which the one presented in this proposal belongs.

5. Graphic advertising pieces, such as logos, help build brands using the symbolic potential of shapes and colors. Similarly to what happens with corporate logos, graphic advertising builds the ultimate meaning of the message "by common rhythm" with these shapes and colors, the connotations of which have existed since ancient times and are the result of the socio-cultural traditions (García García, Barroso Lorente & Garcia Guardia, 2010, pp. 143-144). The construction of this meaning is supported by rhetorical techniques specifically in elocution shapes that facilitate better assimilation of visual connotations (Llorente Barroso & Garcia Garcia, 2015b, p. 304). Such formulas, in the articulation of the advertising message, are based on the use of patterns "recognized by the general public or by some 'tribe' in particular" (Nunez-Tired, 2011, p. 57), considering that audiences "are symbols and inhabit symbols" (Rabadan Crespo, 2016, p.39).

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