

Article

Interrelations between the Media and Architecture: Contribution to Sustainable Development and the Conservation of Urban Spaces

Juan Monserrat-Gauchi *, Manuel Novo-Domínguez and Rosa Torres-Valdés

Department of Communication and Social Psychology, School of Economics and Business Sciences, University of Alicante, Rd., 03690 San Vicente del Raspeig, (Alicante) Spain; mind3@alu.ua.es (M.N.-D.); rosa.torres@ua.es (R.T.-V.)

* Correspondence: juan.monserrat@ua.es

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Abstract: The pace of architectural construction in the Western world today involves exploitation of environmental and natural resources that is unsustainable in the long term. The purpose of this article is to introduce a line of research on urban and industrial architecture, its use and its ultimate purpose in terms of social development and sustainability. We offer an overview of the main architectural movements that advocate the rational use of resources and of existing urban architectural constructions, and we explore the role of governments and the media in the use of architectural spaces. Various cases are considered, mostly in Spain, of derelict architectural spaces which, thanks to interventions by artists or major brands, have been given new uses with a view to contributing to a more sustainable world.

Keywords: sustainability; architecture; advertising; culture; recovery; urban planning; urban landscape

1. Introduction

The main objective of this article is to introduce a line of research on the intimate relationship between the media, architecture, and sustainability. Taking various examples, we seek to illustrate the power the media has to give new uses to derelict structures with architectural value, generating a beneficial synergy for advertising products and contributing to the conservation of urban spaces, the environment, and the sustainability of our planet.

One purpose of this research is to determine whether advertising is capable of acting as a tool for vesting derelict architectural structures with value. In this way, the media can contribute to the sustainability of projects to redefine spaces in urban areas. Full confirmation of this premise would require a broader chronological and geographical variable than that used for this study, which is limited to interventions in derelict architecture in Spain in the last 15 years. Nevertheless, as noted above, our main objective is merely to introduce this idea as a possible line of research for future studies. It is hoped that the findings offered here, intended to lay the foundations for a new analytical perspective on the media and its interrelation with architecture and sustainability, may lead to new urban sustainability studies and projects that could reduce current levels of demolition and construction.

To this end, it will be necessary to reflect on a range of disciplines or areas, including art, architecture, sociology, urban planning, communications, and sustainability, all of which will be addressed in this article. We will refer to various examples of ephemeral or temporary architecture, interventions in the urban environment, and the social impact they have had, as well as different works of art and the use of impersonal space. All of this will be with a view to raising awareness about

the possibility of recovering abandoned architectural spaces through brand interventions and with the help of the media to preserve their existence and contribute to a more sustainable planet. Precise determinations of the economic or environmental benefits of the repurposing of architectural spaces compared to demolition and reconstruction, and of the advantages of such repurposing in terms of the use of natural resources, fall beyond the scope of this article. However, this would obviously be an interesting line of future research, for which any of the examples offered here could be used.

Urban spaces can be seen as documents that describe a specific moment or idea; we might think of them as historical documents that are at the same time components of the future. They are vestiges with an incalculable value in sociological, political, artistic, and cultural terms. Unfortunately, obsolescence does not affect technological products alone; it also affects cities and their peripheral zones.

In Spain and throughout Europe there have been numerous public and private initiatives to preserve our architectural heritage, but sometimes a lack of awareness of a building's artistic value can result in the destruction of its identity, or in the worst cases, its demolition. Indeed, this was just what happened in January 2017 to the Casa Guzmán, a major European architectural landmark designed by Alejandro de la Sota in 1972 [1].

The mass media has the ability to influence a specific target audience very quickly. The hypodermic needle theory, developed by Harold Lasswell [2] for a political context, posits that media communication can act on a specific segment of the population in the same way as a hypodermic needle, noiselessly, and motivate them to behave or think in a certain way in response to different issues.

To observe, rather than merely to look, is the first step in any type of action. However, for this to happen there needs to be a perceiver, not just a spectator, because the former can be a force for change while the latter can only watch. The media and advertising offer a good way of creating perceivers because they are able to fuse multiple references into a single channel to ensure their effective reception by the viewer.

In this article, we analyze different cases in which timely advertising initiatives have been able to awaken public interest in derelict architectural structures, thereby facilitating their preservation, cataloguing, restoration, and appreciation, and contributing to the sustainability of our planet. Our intention is to fill in what is presently a blank space on the map in the perceiver's mind, to contribute to an appreciation of actions taken to preserve existing architecture and to safeguard our resources and our planet.

First of all, we offer a historical overview that draws on texts, narratives, and images. To this end we explore and analyze the work of sociologists and thinkers like Lefebvre with his idea of the right to the city [3], architects ranging from Le Corbusier to Carvajal, schools like the Bauhaus, movements like the Situationist International, and within that movement the work of Constant Nieuwenhuys with his multidisciplinary project New Babylon [4], as well as other more contemporary examples like Abellanas [5] or the *Racionalismo Levantino* project [6] with its interventions on the urban landscape of the Spanish Mediterranean Coast.

2. State of the Question

2.1. Literature Review

There is an abundance of publications on the fields of architecture, communications, sociology, art and urban planning, including numerous studies of the relationships between these fields and how interaction between them can bring about transformations and new creations. Such studies range from academic articles or essays to photography series.

This article constitutes an attempt to go a step further and examine media and advertising interventions as initiatives capable of vesting derelict architectural spaces with value in the interests of promoting sustainability.

One of the pillars of this research is our interpretation of the sociologist Lefebvre's [3] notion of the right to the city. Lefebvre's work offers some fascinating insights into urban space, which he

understands in terms of the future, the possible, and the alternative, based on the logic of the immediate and the tangible.

Another interesting contribution in this respect has been offered by the architect Tschumi [7], whose architectural projects are notable for the interrelation he establishes with events. Over the course of the 1970s, in both written texts and drawings, Tschumi highlighted the fact that architecture does not exist without events, actions, or activity. The first projects he developed recognized that buildings respond to and intensify the activities that occur within them, and that events creatively change and extend the structures they contain. In other words, architecture is not defined by its “formal” container but by its combinations of spaces, movements and events [7]. Tschumi’s work has been exhibited in individual exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, the Venice Biennale of Architecture, the Netherlands Architecture Institute in Rotterdam, the Center Pompidou in Paris, and other museums and art galleries in the United States and Europe.

The imaginary dialogues or references that Lefebvre describes so precisely tie in well with the concept of New Babylon, conceived by Constant in 1956 in parallel with his participation in the Situationist International. We therefore refer here to publications on the exhibition of Constant’s work that was held at Museo Reina Sofía in 2016 [4].

With the intention of bringing the ideas of these authors into the contemporary context, we also draw on short essays like *La ciudad en Movimiento* [8] and *Metrópolis Visionarias* [9], which help us to understand the current reality of urban planning and sociology, as well as publications in scientific journals and doctoral theses, of which Pinchart-Saavedra’s study titled *Rascacielos de Tokio a Babilonia la arquitectura como propaganda* [10] stands out for its role as an anchor for our analysis.

Moreover, bearing in mind the objective of promoting sustainability, this study considers the current scope of the concept of sustainability, i.e., in its environmental, social, economic, and cultural dimensions [11]. This holistic conception of sustainability based on these four pillars represents a redefinition of economic policy and regional development for the reconstruction of urban space and of the social and cultural fabric [12]. In this sense, Hawkes [13] (p. 11) views culture as playing an essential role in public planning, pointing out that sustainability has four objectives: environmental responsibility, represented by ecological balance; economic viability, represented by prosperity; social equity, represented by social justice, engagement, cohesion, and welfare; and cultural vitality, represented by creativity, diversity, and innovation, and also by social well-being. Indeed, art and creativity as elements of expression play an important role in the social appropriation of the concept of sustainability, through the effective production of public campaigns [14].

The vision of sustainability offered by Hakimi and Firoozabadi [15] is interesting in terms of its way of looking forward to the generations to come: sustainable development is one of the issues that is currently given great importance and is identified by the United Nations as a key part of the 21st century agenda. Sustainable development refers to a kind of development that will meet today’s needs without reducing the ability of the future generations to meet theirs [15].

2.2. The Meaning of Urban Space

Olalquiaga suggests that “history has been replaced by geography, stories by maps, memories by scenarios” [16] (p. 19).

The geo-socio-political, economic, cultural, and technological scenario of the 21st century exhibits tensions between sustainable regional development models and less sustainable models. This process is producing a new scenario of transition, in which sustainability is understood as a fundamental element in the quest for new, responsible forms of production and consumption [17]. Moreover, the concept of sustainable development appears to be associated, on the one hand, with democratic governance with a multidisciplinary perspective [18], and on the other, with governance that promotes sustainability and social innovation [19]. It also has the power to transform different types of regional vulnerabilities that are social [20,21], economic [22], environmental [20,23], and institutional [24,25] in nature.

The technological advances seen since the early 1960s transcend social systems. With the creation of virtual worlds and the recent changes to the media model, technology has begun exceeding our wildest imaginings. However, technological and social advances sometimes result in increased pollution and waste generation. One example of this is outdoor advertising, which has polluting effects due to electricity consumption and the use of chemicals, paper, and PVC vinyl. This is why the introduction of sustainable outdoor advertising in urban spaces is so important [26].

This forms part of the new scenario of sustainability in which symbolic technologies and creative cultures are redefining urban spaces as living laboratories of innovation and culture [12]. All of this affects the urban landscape; creating, changing, or transforming places (the spaces of social contact) that have not yet lost their association with what they once represented and with specific contexts; places that are charged with meaning, generating and projecting content onto the environment (both people and landscape).

An interesting example that reflects the redefinition of urban space can be found in the influence of Tschumi's writings on his design of the Parc de la Villette in Paris, as the architect himself acknowledges on his website [7]:

“La Villette has become known as an unprecedented type of park, one based on “culture” rather than “nature.” The park is located on what was one of the last remaining large sites in Paris, a 125-acre expanse previously occupied by the central slaughterhouses and situated at the northeast corner of the city.”

Awareness and recognition of the area where people live enhances their identification with their neighbourhood, region, or city. When the inhabitants of an urban territory feel a greater sense of belonging to their community they can participate much more actively in the culture and the development of wealth (in every sense of the word) of the society in which they live [27].

An urban space is not a product of chance; it is the reflection of what has been experienced there and a snapshot of reality with respect to societal trends. Following this idea, Lefebvre [3] understood the urban landscape to go much further than merely a space or an expression. In this sense, the landscape can change social dynamics, which in turn can transform the space. According to Lefebvre, this makes the space both a product and a producer of society.

In contemporary cities, public spaces constitute one of the fundamental components of the social and the physical. Urban public spaces in the most general sense are considered public domain, and they have been designed and crafted as spaces for face-to-face relations, public experiences of the environment, human interaction with the urban fabric, and the collective public activities of its citizens [28]. The British anthropologist Ingold considers that the transformation of spaces into places is a dynamic occurrence, suggesting that it happens as a result of practice, activity, and social participation [29].

2.3. From Space to Place: Reflection in the Plastic Arts

To explore the relationships between architecture, urban space, and sustainability and their interaction in contemporary society, we turn to the plastic arts. This is another discipline for which sociology constitutes a critical conditioning factor, because in many cases the works grow out of the analysis, reflection, and interpretation of the environment.

For our analysis of artworks, we have adopted and extrapolated Riley & Riley's model of communication [30], in which the person responsible for the work acts as communicator, while the spectator acts as receiver, influencing and conditioning the other in a manner that is probably indirect, as the receiver acts as a social group or movement that is capable of changing the environment with its activity, which the artist will subsequently capture in his or her work.

The work of the American artist Ruscha [31] explores the spaces that arise from the blending of capitalism and rationalism, and in his photographs, prints, and collages he is able to capture the boundaries between city, periphery, countryside, and the imaginary.

Pop art is a form that has been able to capture the aesthetic appeal of utilitarian structures and turn them into cult objects. Examples of this are Ruscha's *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966) and *A Few Palm Trees* (1971) [32], both of which describe the architecture and atmosphere of Los Angeles. His work has influenced other artists like Graham, who published *Homes for America* [33], and who is interesting as well because he also uses architecture as artistic content.

Another significant example in this respect is without doubt the photographer Burtynsky, who reflects in his photographs on manufactured landscapes. His website [34] features work he has completed on different human interventions in the landscape, including photographic projects titled *Anthropocene*, *Mines*, *Quarries*, *Shipbreaking*, *Homesteads*, *Urban Mines*, and *Railcuts*. *The Anthropocene Project*, an emblematic example of his work, constitutes [34]:

“a multimedia exploration of the complex and indelible human signature on the Earth. Originally conceived as a photographic essay and the third in a trilogy of films including *Manufactured Landscapes* (2006) and *Watermark* (2013), the project quickly evolved to include film installations, large-scale Burtynsky high-resolution murals enhanced by film extensions, 360° VR short films, and augmented reality.”

Burtynsky's work prompts us to stop and reflect on our own existence as human beings on Earth. It compels us to acknowledge that we urgently need to discover and maintain a balance between the resources we need from the environment and the health and viability of our planet.

Through the aesthetic neutrality with which he captures mundane architecture, Ruscha's images effectively turn them into iconic objects, acting at once as signifier and signified. He repeats buildings, petrol stations and posters in series, and through this repetition he gives the photographs a narrative quality, resulting in an important reflection on American culture. His work has been featured in countless publications and museums, including the Reina Sofía in Madrid, the Center Pompidou in Paris, the Whitney in New York, and Tate Modern in London. All of these museums have featured partial exhibitions and retrospectives on Ruscha and have contributed even further, if possible, to the transformation of these spaces into places.

Another artist exemplifying the transformation of spaces into places through art—in this case, within one of the most interesting movements in the field of photography, the so-called 'New Topographics'—is the American photographer Baltz (1945–2014). With his camera Baltz captured the action of man filling up the landscape with material content, and the effects of his actions from a distance. He does this by photographing residential, technological, and industrial spaces with no human presence. It is curious that these spaces are so close to us in chronological terms and yet at the same time we can observe in them the obsolescence of technology. In his work, Baltz takes an inventory of property speculation, deserted plots and factories, derelict spaces and the boundaries that exist between city and periphery. It is a stock-taking of excessive, unsustainable growth, the abandonment of previously occupied constructions. Baltz's *The Tract Houses* (1969–1971) [35] is a reflection of all this, with its presentation of various single-family dwellings beside a highway.

Baltz often photographed unfinished or abandoned constructions. This is significant, because it reveals the human imprint on environments used by humans. His work bears a close relation to Ruscha's pictures, because both artists did most of their work in the United States, and both reflect the American Dream in its before, after, and in-between phases. While Ruscha captures it with the ironic vision of pop art that turns icons into symbols, Baltz does it from a pessimistic perspective and with a critique that we can read on the surface of his work. Both artists' works are charged with gravity because they show the consequences of a model that is unsustainable in terms of production, society, and the use of urban space. In *Venezia-Marghera* (2000–2013) (The work cited formed part of the retrospective put together by the Mapfre Foundation in Madrid, which ran from 9 February to 4 June 2017), Baltz shows us an industrialized neighbourhood near Venice that acts as the hindquarters to an environment overexploited by tourism. It is once again a critique of contemporary society and its consumption of spaces in the name of an unsustainable capitalism.

We consume the present without thought for the past or future. McLuhan argued that we can only see the effects of technology in retrospect, and our ignorance of its impact in the current moment is what is referred to as the “rear-view mirror effect” [36] (p. 13). This idea of McLuhan’s offers us a different perspective for viewing the works of Baltz, Ruscha, or Burtynsky, which can be done mainly in two places: museums or publications. Neither of these are mass media channels, and both require interpretation and analysis on the part of the perceiver. They are what McLuhan calls “cool media”, because the spectator’s participation is essential for decoding the message conveyed by the artist. The images here have not been constructed in a linear order, as may be the case of radio, where the involvement of the listener’s senses is limited, and which McLuhan classifies as a “hot medium”. Hot media are consumed passively and leave much less of an impression because the perceiver has not had to develop skills to decode them.

Applying McLuhan’s reflections to our study, we could understand the possibility of creating in the present through an experience with the urban landscape that would allow us to give it a value that is much further away from the contemplative or the utilitarian. It could thus be effective to fill it with the idea of a symbol, perhaps a combination of cool and hot media through advertising on derelict urban structures.

The German photographers Bernd and Hilla Becher developed an interesting documentation project in both Europe and North America (furnaces, industrial towers, warehouses, lime kilns, etc.). Like Baltz, they avoided any human presence, and their documents appear to be as objective as possible; they rejected subjectivity through their academic use of the camera, controlling the exposure, saturation, framing, and composition [37]. Without being aware of it, the Bechers were ultimately responsible for an aesthetic and for a movement of greater significance in contemporary photography: “deadpan photography”. Perhaps because of their family backgrounds, Bernd and Hilla were able to focus on taking pictures and highlighting derelict industrial spaces, which the couple described as “works without an author”. They were romantic about the industrial landscape, and about that which was doomed to disappear. Their journeys to document these places, which first began in the Ruhr, would criss-cross Germany, France, England, and Spain. Their first project, *Fachwerkhäuser*, helped in many cases to preserve the architecture they documented, because they revealed the value of these constructions, always with an objective style, in photographs marked by clinical precision. The message conveyed seems to be created in a linear form, but the perceiver is inevitably compelled to reflect on the human intervention, the history of the space now occupied by these structures, the sustainability of such projects, or the void they have left behind.

In *The Modern Cult to Monuments* [38], the historian Riegl posits the existence of three different types of monuments: intentional monuments, where the creator seeks to preserve a past moment or a series of past moments; historical monuments, which also refer to a particular moment, but whose selection is dependent on the subjective taste of the perceiver; and finally, age-value monuments, which originate out of human choice, without considering their original purpose or function, and which by their nature are able to reveal the passage of time up to the current moment.

Of course, advertising often makes use of monuments to anchor a message, a context or a presentation, and it does so with all three categories of monuments proposed by Riegl. For example, ads for fragrances that show the Eiffel Tower evoke France and a long perfumery tradition. In this case, the advertising operates with a monument we already know and are able to locate in a given place, whether or not we have been there. The idea of making use of derelict architectural structures for advertising purposes operates on the other side of the subconscious, through discovery. The photographer White once said that “what a man finds is as creative as what a man does” [37] (p. 15).

Within the city, advertising and the media act as referencing elements. Through their interventions they vest the city with recognizable, identifying features. Advertising has a cultural and symbolic function in the city. It facilitates the establishment of spaces of interest to tourists that become symbols and points of reference in post-modern cities [39]. An example of this is Times Square in Manhattan, where the neon signs that completely cover the surrounding buildings serve as an

immediately recognisable tourist attraction. In Spain, the Tío Pepe and Schweppes signs at Madrid's Puerta del Sol have turned from advertising billboards into city landmarks with the protection of cultural organizations.

Architecture is viewed as an innovative tool that has contributed to social development, whereby architects of the modern movement like Le Corbusier, Mies, Aalto, or Charles and Ray Eames, among many others, have marked out a new way of consuming architecture. These architects understood that their discipline was a service to society, with a very powerful effect on improving the human environment, and they pursued this objective through standardization and the investigation of new materials and especially with an ethical approach. One of the maxims was that the building's form follows its function and must always respond to the needs of the individual.

2.4. Utopias: A Creative Scenario

In advertising the key is to place the space in a concrete location, given that we understand social dynamics as occurring through an encounter. This is what is meant by 'social spatiality'.

In his work, Constant brings together all these reflections and creates various graphic documents, conversations, scale models, publications and other materials related to New Babylon [4]. His work is based on two essential premises: automation, and collective ownership of the land. Thanks to automation, the masses have much more free time to engage creatively and independently of the workplace; the mobility of each individual is thus increased exponentially, and the new model of space must respond to this need. Based on this idea, "*Homo Artisticus*" [40] will make art in order to bring about change, manipulating the existing space to meet the needs of playful activity and movement of "*Homo Ludens*" [41]. This will result in constant changes to the space through ephemeral architectural structures and temporary interventions. In the same architectural piece we can imagine a space left derelict by those who have gone, leaving knowledge and experiences of the physical space to those who come afterwards. Because even if the society has a nomadic character, spaces are static in terms of location.

The artificial environment built by the human being is the embryo, and Constant calls this 'New Babylon'. Movement is needed, because remaining static produces assimilation and therefore limits or hinders our capacity to relate to other individuals. The modification of the space by the individual has consequences for society as a group, consequences that are not only architectural interventions but symbols of identity and belonging. Culture in New Babylon emerges through the global activity of the whole population rather than merely a restricted part of it; all human beings have a dynamic relationship with the environment which, as the sociologist Ingold suggests, transforms spaces into places.

In his outline of the social model, Constant locates the completely automated production superstructures far from the presence of man and the spaces of everyday life, and an extensive network of services provides everything needed for the comfort of the population [4].

All of this serves to confirm that ideas about the need and ultimate aim of play have been appearing since the early 20th century. Interventions on derelict architecture need to be viewed in this way, as play; just as Constant foresaw, it is through the exercise of freedom and creative activity that humans learn, and that they vest the things they experiment on with value.

Advertising is also a provocation, because it changes the passive receiver into a perceiver, turning the message into a fluid that can penetrate and settle inside the individual. Mere intervention in a space by a brand, an entity, or a group represents the performance of a creative activity, and this is, in Constant's words, the beginning of freedom.

2.5. Architecture as Symbol

In an interview included in the publication *Conversaciones con Alvar Aalto*, the Finnish architect remarked that "the architect should consider more and more that he is responsible for the task of humanizing technology" [42] (p. 18). Aalto (1898-1976) has left behind an immense legacy of organic

architecture. His work is respectful of the environment, meditated, and measured, recognising that form is the result of function.

Although very different from the work of Constant [4], given that his constructions have no tangible relation to utopia, in the 1950s Aalto made reference to a concept that represents a powerful connection between the two architects: their reflection on the importance of play, and the interaction and experimentation of play in architecture. He did this at a time when the modern movement had utterly abandoned all imaginative elements and was completely anchored in the rational dimensions of construction.

This idea that architecture needs to possess a responsibility for the environment (present in the work of both Aalto and Constant) has been taken up again by a group of Spanish architects in the project *Nación Rotonda*, launched in mid-2013 [43], which since that time has been documenting urban planning disasters, abandoned constructions, and public spaces of questionable taste. Various architects and engineers have joined the project, adding visual content to the publications on its website [44]. Images captured by the Google Earth app allow us to compare different pictures of the same space taken a few years apart. This reflects how architecture is used as a symbol of development in many Spanish cities. Once we build something, there is no turning back; we have occupied the space, we have consumed resources and wasted the chance to use architecture as a democratic force, with the possibility of environmental sustainability. However, we can give spaces new uses, recover them through social dynamics, through encounters, contact, and play.

In the field of catalogue design, it is worth noting the graphic content created by the photographer Sardaña and the industrial designer Lanz, which they refer to as “*Racionalismo Levantino*” [6]. Although the buildings featured in their catalogue are not derelict, they are endangered due to the lack of awareness about them, and they are vulnerable to partial or total interventions that would rob them of their expressive form.

Sardaña and Lanz’s work presents different constructions on the Spanish Mediterranean Coast as symbols of this region of tourist beaches, focusing on different elements worthy of cataloguing and protection. They capture the motifs of the latticework and wall fixtures, the construction techniques, materials, stairway designs, and a long list of elements with a plasticity that allows us to reflect on the way we consume space. They also include several images of the work of architects like Guardiola and García-Solera, both important exponents of modern architecture in Spain. The project has been featured at various galleries and exhibition halls, such as Palacio Quintanar in Segovia, Casa Negra in Asturias, and the Parking Gallery in Alicante, as detailed on the project’s website.

To understand the factors that have led to this situation, it is instructive to examine the concept of “city branding” [8], which we will explore in more detail in the next section. The objective of such branding is to vest territories with brand images, to fulfil the need to stand out in order to be commercially successful, which often tends to result in the elimination of the distinguishing features of each area where it is applied, in the interests of an architectural ‘backdrop’ that is often impersonal and unremarkable.

In opposition to city branding are notions like Constant’s model of a city in constant change, and far from utopian. It is a concept inherent in the urban landscape, because the city is in constant movement; conversely, the concept of city branding acts in the opposite direction, as it eliminates complexity in order to establish certain permanent features. The space loses its polysemy.

Another attempt to give architecture a symbolic dimension can be found in the work of Dot-Jutgla and Pallares-Barbera, who offer an exhaustive review of the literature on industrial heritage sites in the process of urban revitalization in the post-industrial city. On the one hand, they analyze the concept of industrial heritage, while also studying its transformation into new functions for the territory from different and interesting perspectives: for cultural purposes, tourism, housing, business, and amenities. On the other, they discuss the process of image creation and symbolism of the city as a political strategy of development and attraction based on its heritage resources [45].

The conversion of urban architecture into a symbol has helped turn the city into a place designed not for its inhabitants, but for tourists keen to post another conquest to their social networks. Ingold reflects on a view of the city in terms of its individuals [46], as citizens rather than consumers. When cities abuse this concept, phenomena like gentrification or loss of identity are the results. In this sense, the city is a document capable of faithfully reproducing what has happened in a given space, arising from the clash between the community and the physical space: the uses of the land, the function of the spaces, their technological development, their productive capacity, the interests of the population. The city is not merely the reflection of what the dominant classes decide to do with the space, but a testimony to the reaction of the subalterns to particular urban planning policies.

Collective action here should not be understood merely as the reclaiming of what has already been built, but as the movements and dynamics that emerge for the recovery and appropriation of these elements for use. The totality of architectural structures and the movements launched to highlight their value may constitute a source of both cultural and economic wealth.

2.6. City Marketing or City Branding: Some Examples in Spain

We will attempt a description of city branding specifically in terms of architecture and the media. The term actually covers various fields, from graphic design and gastronomy to music, because it refers to the image that effectively creates the city in the mind of those who think about it.

Cities tend towards polysemy, with a multitude of messages converging in a single place to enhance the power of the concept, so that visitors, or those who consider visiting, will find reasons to make the city their own.

According to Dot-Jutgla and Pallares-Barbera [45], interventions in Spain's urban architectural heritage are relatively recent, beginning around the year 2000. These authors offer the examples of the CaixaForum cultural centers in Madrid and Barcelona, whose buildings used to be a factory and an electrical power plant, respectively. Another is the Canal Isabel II Exhibition Hall in Madrid, which was formerly a water station.

A particularly notable case of an architectural intervention aimed at city branding can be found in Santiago de Compostela, (Spain). Of Roman origin, this ancient city has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1985. The cathedral is of Romanesque origin, although the best-known image of it is the façade that faces the Praza do Obradoiro, which offers an excellent example of Spanish Baroque. The city is a massive collection of samples of medieval, Gothic, and Baroque architecture.

In 1999, the regional government held an international public tender to provide the city with a construction that would reflect Galician progress, and that could serve as an icon to make Santiago a recognizable and memorable city.

The team of American architect Eisenman won the tender with their proposal to construct a six-building complex on Monte Gaia, two kilometres from the city center. In 2019, the work is as yet uncompleted, and there is no sign that it will be. In 2013, the Galician parliament determined not to invest any more money in its construction, given that up to that time, although more than half of the complex had yet to be built, the project had already gone three times over its original budget; this may have had something to do with the use of quartzite rock imported from South America, as reported in the local newspaper *Voz de Galicia* [47], despite the fact that Galicia itself is one of Europe's biggest producers of this type of rock.

The local architect Llano commented [47]:

"The scale model was a marvel [. . .] an Opera House was designed with three elevators on the stage, with the capacity to stage three operas on the same day, as if it were the Lincoln Center. In New York you can keep the opera season going all year round. But in Europe—in Milan and Venice, for example—it can't be done. And yet we here, with a population of just over 90,000, could afford a theatre like that [. . .]".

This cultural center is a space that now costs Galicians more than 4.5 million euros a year in maintenance, with limited transport services and a highly questionable layout that is still missing its main buildings.

A rather more shining example of this kind of city branding (if only for the effect of the sunlight on the titanium plates that cover its façade) is the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, a building that serves as an emblem of one of the most controversial movements in architecture: deconstructivism, of which its architect, Gehry, is a faithful adherent. In keeping with our approach to the previous example, we will not engage in an appraisal of architectural aspects, but instead we will focus on numerical questions: although it had a cost of 133 million euros, which in the 1990s represented a major challenge for the local government (which covered the full cost of the construction), today the museum has a major impact on the regional economy. In 2017 alone, it brought in more than 453 million euros, with a total of 1.16 million visitors that year, according to the digital edition of the newspaper *El Independiente* [48]. The museum's collection includes works by international artists like Hockney, Holzer, Warhol, and Picasso.

The point is that, until its construction, industry represented 25% of Bilbao's GDP, and the objective was not only to provide the city with a symbol but also to create a project that would revitalize its economy, as it evolved from an industrial center into a cultural center.

An even more successful example was the construction of the Igualada Cemetery in Barcelona, which was designed by the architects Miralles and Pinós and constructed on an old quarry. For Miralles, direct and personal observation is the seed out of which any project needs to grow: "to listen to users and understand their new needs". To this end, the architect uses personal notes, different points of view, and explorations of the exterior to establish a dialogue with the place, its people, the local customs and the way of life, with maps, with history and with memory. The landscape and the architecture converge naturally in this work to become one. Miralles shows us a type of organic architecture that can adapt and age with the landscape, integrating and mutually enhancing the two [49].

A case that has contributed to Barcelona's branding and image—specifically, the recovery of the city's industrial heritage in the Poble Nou district—is examined by Dot-Jutgla and Pallares-Barbera [45]. The authors adopt different perspectives to analyze the conversion of the industrial buildings in this neighbourhood into residential complexes, cultural centers or tourist attractions [45]. They also analyze the interrelations between these initiatives of the city's local government and the marketing programs to promote an urban image aimed at attracting international capital (through tourism, corporate investment, etc.).

At this point, it is worth considering the reflection on sustainable urban development offered by Hakimi and Firoozabadi [15]:

"The concept of sustainable urban development is also the result of the environmentalist debate about environmental issues, especially the urban environment, which was provided after the proposal of sustainable development theory to support environmental resources. The level of urban sustainability shows the quality of life in cities".

3. Materials, Research Questions, and Methods

In light of the literature review outlined in the previous sections of this article, we have formulated the following research questions. To answer them, in the following sections we propose a series of objectives and the methodology designed to achieve them.

1. Is advertising an activity that can find uses for derelict architectural spaces?
2. Can the values associated with an architectural space be projected onto an advertising product? Or alternatively, what interrelations occur between the architectural space and the advertising brand or product?
3. Can the media or advertising promote sustainability?

4. Could the media or advertising be used as a tool to enable the public to discover structures located in a city's 'unmapped' spaces?
5. Could advertising be used to initiate a new conception and use of existing architectural spaces through encounters, contact with the public, and play?

The objective of this article is to confirm our premise that advertising communications can act as a tool to vest derelict architectural structures with value, and in so doing to contribute to the sustainability of projects to redefine urban spaces. To this end, we analyze a number of projects undertaken in Spain in the last 15 years.

Furthermore, given that most research has analyzed the media or advertising as a sales tool at the service of capitalism, we believe it interesting to analyze their possibilities on a collective level as a driver for social change, and as an element capable of developing the symbolism and identity of a region through its derelict spaces, cities, and its peripheral zones.

To understand how advertising communications can be turned into a catalyst of the kind of activity needed to recover derelict architectural spaces, we use a method of observation of the historical context, the actors and their interactions, identifying the points of contact between the two fields (advertising and architecture) and establishing parallels with others, such as plastic arts. To this end, we will make use of a correlational study with an inductive methodology.

We begin with the observation of the disuse of different architectural structures arising from two factors:

- On the one hand, an outdated social model (the monumental nature of the construction as a center of attraction or the consequence of an economic boom) that has resulted in the abandonment and deterioration of these spaces (Environment City in Soria, the Culture City in Galicia, Justice City in Madrid, etc.), which are often unfinished.
- On the other hand, the industrial structures and the urban periphery that have been abandoned due to changes in productive activities, as occurred in the Ruhr in Germany or in Bilbao (Spain).

In view of the above, and given that this is a study founded in the social sciences, the need for a qualitative methodology is clear.

Through the analysis of different essays, articles, and doctoral theses, among other sources, we have identified connections between architecture and advertising, with a focus on the impact that the latter has on the former. At the same time, we have examined how the intrinsic values of an architectural construction can be inscribed onto an advertising product, whether that construction is used as a support or a setting.

With a framework that includes art, architecture, sociology, and urban planning, we refer to various examples of ephemeral or temporary architectural spaces, interventions in the urban environment and their social impact, as well as works of art and the use of impersonal space. All of this is with a view to raising awareness about the possibility of recovering abandoned architectural spaces through brand interventions and with the help of the media to preserve their existence and contribute to a more sustainable planet.

4. Results

It may prove somewhat complicated to explain what we are referring to when we speak of partial intervention in a space. The aim is not the complete rehabilitation of the architectural structure, but giving it a different temporary or ongoing use that can vest it with value and develop a particular type of societal behavior and attitude towards the space itself. This aim is achieved based on the advertising product and the social movements and dynamics that it can give rise to.

Bazaga-Sanz offers a description of the process that illustrates the relationship we are seeking to identify between architecture and advertising [50]:

“The process whereby a building is turned into an identity symbol for a place or a community has a lot to do with the concept of cultural heritage. And in the establishment of heritage, advertising is a very important triggering agent.” (p. 12)

With respect to advertising and its integration into the city, García-Carrizo suggests that there needs to be a win-win situation in which advertising is at the service of the brand, the environment and the citizens and society, and, of course, the city where that advertising takes place [26].

From a perspective closer to the concern with sustainability and preservation that underpins our study, Borowczyk [51] (p. 10) stresses that if urban design is to effectively support sustainable development through its influence on the proper formation of new urbanized places (spaces) or the revitalization of existing ones, it is necessary to preserve its interactive character and make it evolve.

On the other hand, Santi, Leporelli, and Di-Sivo consider the interrelation between urban architecture, sustainability, and health, concluding that the role of designers, in the field of architecture and urban planning, becomes significant in the realisation of democratic and sustainable urban contexts for the direct connections established with the policy of interventions, government actions, and social cohesion [52] (p. 1). In the next section, we analyze some example of interventions in this sense, but in which the media has played a key role.

Examples of Partial Intervention in Derelict Spaces

A contemporary example of the kind of intervention described above can be found in the work of Okuda, an artist whose activity and public impact in Spain has been considerable. Okuda has taken part in interventions in abandoned spaces, mostly industrial structures, to which he has added highly colorful mural paintings. He is considered one of the most important figures in contemporary pop art, and his work has been featured in museums like the Contemporary Art Center of Málaga, biennials like ArtPlay in Moscow in 2014, and major galleries like the Active Art Gallery in Hamburg (information from artist’s website [53]). His piece titled “Skull in the Mirror” (Figure 1) [54] is a mural intervention on the façade of the Château de la Valette (1864) in Loiret, France. This castle, which was once used by Republicans in the Spanish Civil War to house political exiles and children, had been in a derelict state since the 1980s. The intervention served as a trigger for the creation of the Festival LaBel Valette and more than 100 artists contributed to the building’s interior design. Although in this case there was no advertising involved as such, the media exposure resulting from the festival (which celebrates its second edition in 2019) has given this 19th-century architectural space a new purpose.



Figure 1. Skull in the Mirror [54].

Another project involving this artist, although this time based on the promotion of an advertising product, took place in December 2015. Red Bull sponsored work on a church in Llanera, Asturias, which until that time had been in a derelict state, to turn it into an indoor skateboard park, in a project that was given the name “*Skate Church*” (Figure 2) [55]. Over seven days and with the sponsorship of the energy drink and a creative crowdfunding campaign on the Verkami platform [56], the gloomy interior of the building was brightened up by a colorful mural and skateboard ramps.

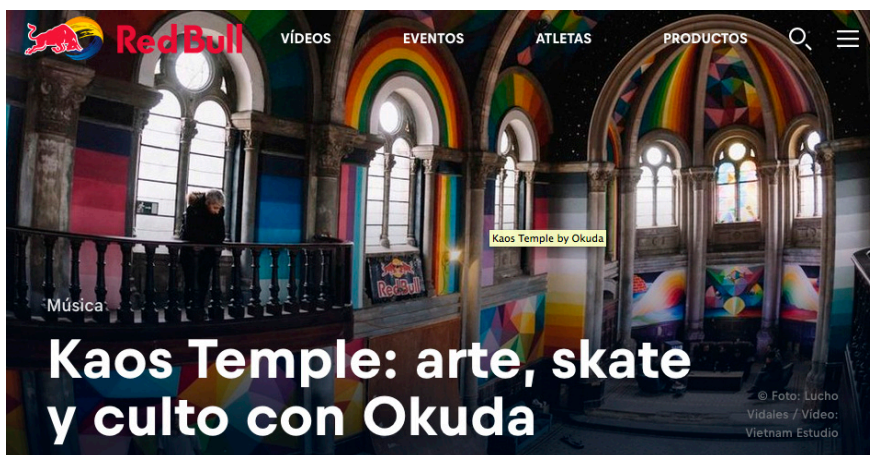


Figure 2. *Skate Church* [57].

In addition to his interventions on derelict spaces, Okuda has contributed his artwork to advertising products, collaborating with brands like Adidas, Nike, RocheBobois, CampoViejo, and Red Bull.

A project that has acquired considerable notoriety in 2019 is *TITANES* (Figure 3). This is an initiative organized by various municipal governments in Spain’s Castile-La-Mancha region, the Ciudad Real Provincial Council, together with Okuda and other artists, the associations Laborvalía and Ink and Movement, and the art supplies brand Montana Colors, to support the integration of people with disabilities into society and the workplace. In its first phase, the project involved painting 10 disused silos in the province, resulting in one of the biggest artistic events for social inclusion in the world with 450 differently abled people taking part. In this way, derelict architectural spaces were recovered, giving them a new function, integrating differently abled people, and turning the province of Ciudad Real into an attractive tourist and cultural destination [58].



Figure 3. *TITANES* [59].

In 2005, the Spanish advertising agency Sra. Rushmore created an advertising campaign for the sports drink Aquarius (part of the Coca-Cola group). The name of the ad is “*Don Justo’s Cathedral*”

(Figure 4) [60], and it features Justo Gallego, a farmer from Mejorada del Campo, near Madrid, who has built a church on the outskirts of his town using only recycled materials and without any kind of technical training or assistance from any organisation. His work has been documented in photographs by the international press and exhibited at MOMA in New York. The ad features Gallego's explanations for building his own cathedral, presented in a style that appropriates some of the elements of the documentary format: interviews, descriptive shots, etc.

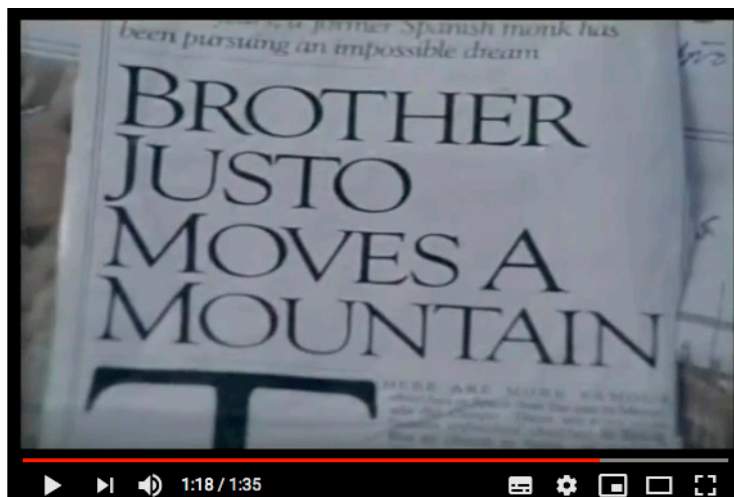


Figure 4. Don Justo's Cathedral [61].

While in the previous examples discussed we were unable to provide data to confirm their effectiveness, in this case, data provided by the Coca-Cola office responsible for the Aquarius brand shows that the Don Justo campaign put Aquarius into second place for the first time among the company's biggest selling products, right behind Coca-Cola itself (No. 1) and ahead of Fanta (No. 3) [62] (p. 404). The ad represented the beginning of a new phase of emotional advertising by Aquarius, which would be followed by others like "Radio La Colifata" and "Ataúdes", also highly successful in terms of consumption and brand value.

Another case that exemplifies every dimension of our discussion here is the project developed by the beer brand Heineken in Valencia, Spain. *Las Naves, Espacio de Creación Contemporánea* is a center promoting innovation in five strategic sectors: mobility; energy and water; agrifood; health and a healthy city; and creative and cultural industry [63]. From its establishment in 2013 through to its closure in 2018, the project had a significant impact in terms of promoting culture and public engagement.

In relation to all these examples, it is worth reflecting on García-Carrizo's assertion that advertising will never disappear, and that therefore the best thing to do is to integrate it into the city so that it can have positive repercussions both for the city and for itself [39]. The Heineken case exemplifies how advertising, or the advertising product, can vest a derelict structure with value: in this case the factories on Carrer de Joan Verdeguer, a street located close to the city's port district that remained in a state of abandonment and in danger of partial collapse, until the Heineken beer company coordinated a partial intervention to create a space where it could associate its beer with different cultural events, mainly for music, design, and film [64]. The space hosted more than 300 concerts and received around 140,000 visitors, according to the digital version of the newspaper *Levante* in the news story published on the date of its closure [65].

Until the creation of Greenspace (Figures 5 and 6), as it was known during Heineken's management of the site, these vestiges of industrial architecture went unnoticed by most of the population (they are located in a district that receives few visitors, next to the port facilities, with minimal public transport connections).



Figure 5. Greenspace “Las Naves” (outside view) [66].



Figure 6. Greenspace “Las Naves” (inside view) [67].

In 2017, the designer (carpenter and plumber) Abellanas came up with a project to create an ephemeral work under one of the bridges that cross the new course of the River Turia in Valencia [68]. The structure he designed offers shelter in a cool space surrounded by cars passing by at high speed. The artist created the work as a dialogue with alternative housing that invites us to reflect on how we consume space, taking possession of public spaces and assigning them an identity. The project was titled “Under the Bridge” (Figure 7).

Newspaper *El País*, *Las Provincias*, the magazine *AD* and websites like *Dezeen* covered Abellanas’ creation. The video on the intervention, posted on *Vimeo*, has had more than 909,000 views [68], and the top three YouTube videos about the work have more than 150,000 views.

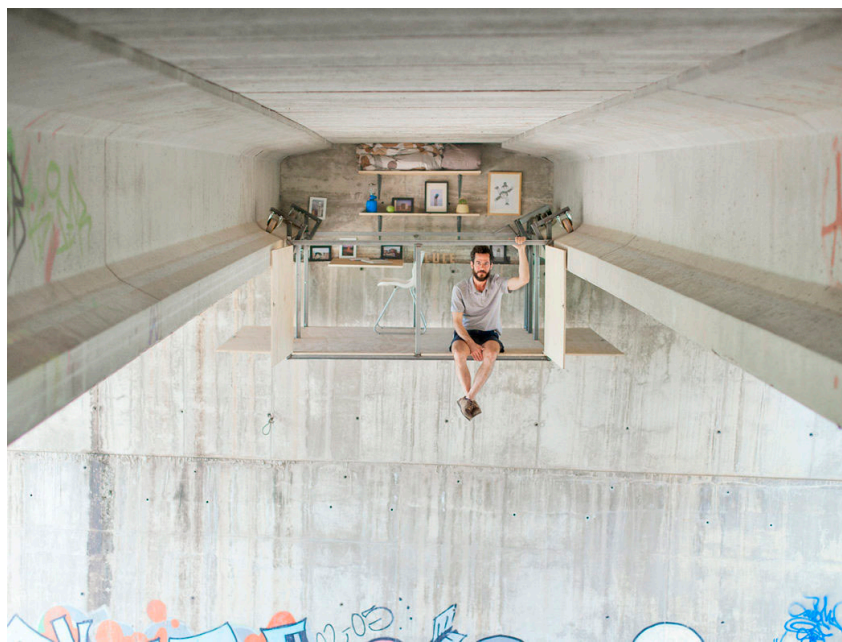


Figure 7. Under the Bridge [69].

Abellanas' work has not gone unnoticed by the major brands. The beer company Turia, headquartered in the city of Valencia itself, used it as content for one of the festivals it sponsored, the Festival de l'Horta Sud (Figure 8), the purpose of which was to raise awareness about spaces endangered by urban speculation in Valencia [70]. In 2019, the festival celebrated its third edition, promoting the protection of the green areas surrounding the city of Valencia, preserving their essence and making them sustainable and compatible with the city.



Figure 8. Festival Horta Sud. Turia Beer [71].

5. Discussion and Limitations

The analysis of interventions on derelict architectural spaces through advertising constitutes a laboratory for rethinking urban settings and their social possibilities. Examining such cases in itself involves a forward-looking vision, an alternative to viewing advertising merely as a sales tool.

The quest for places compels us to broaden our perspectives on the city and its peripheral zones and on how we consume spaces. Advertising is an activity that can bring together different cultural,

artistic, social, and traditional references into a single message that the spectator is able to digest. It has the capacity to engage with the environment as a distinctive element and contribute to its development. Thus, for example, in the cases of Okuda's work and the Titanes and Skate Church projects mentioned above, we can see that art and creativity, as elements of expression, have an important role to play in the social appropriation of the concept of sustainability through the effective production of public campaigns, as indicated by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and FUETERRA [14]. Initiatives like Okuda's or the ones created by Heineken in Greenspace, Cerveza Turia, or Aquarius, thus support the perspective of García-Carrizo [26], who argues that the most interesting approach is the construction of sustainable outdoor advertising in urban spaces, or of Molina-Garrido et al. [17] when they suggest that we are in a new sustainability scenario where symbolic technologies and creative cultures are redefining urban spaces as living laboratories of innovation and culture.

We have considered the concept of 'city branding' and how it can render a space homogeneous, overlooking the fact that the city is a place where individuals, spaces, ideas and historic events converge—a convergence to which its architectural spaces are incalculably valuable witnesses. The examples outlined in this article confirm that modifications to the space by individuals have consequences for society as a group, understanding such modifications not only as architectural interventions but also as symbols of identity and belonging [4]. Thus, we can observe in the Festival de l'Horta in Valencia that the city experiences the event as its own even though it is an initiative by a beer brand. The same is true of the *TITANES* project in Castile-La Mancha created by Okuda and the paint brand Montana, together with other organizations, Heineken's Greenspace project, and the *Skate Church* in Asturias. Simple intervention in the space by a brand, an organization or a group represents an exercise of creative activity, and this is, in Constant's words, the beginning of freedom [4].

We consider advertising and architecture to be activities that can operate in parallel, as illustrated by numerous authors, some of whom we have referred to here to contextualize the issue historically. The actions of brands like Aquarius (Coca-Cola Group), Cerveza Turia and Heineken, and initiatives like Okuda's entail a redefinition of economic policy and regional development for the reconstruction of urban spaces and of the social and cultural fabric [12]. They also fulfil the premise described by Ingold [29]: the transformation of spaces into places through dynamic practice, activity and social participation [29]. However, beyond this, we believe that the effect of one activity over the other is much greater than the mere fact of serving as content or support. In this article, we have sought to connect the two fields so that they can work together as the modern movement did in its day, at the service of society and of the individual, with their actions and creations contributing to a new social model: honest and ethical with the consumption of space and the environment; concerned and interested in promoting the well-being of the city's inhabitants. In this study, with the examples provided above, we have sought to contribute to the concept of sustainable development associated on the one hand with democratic governance with a multidisciplinary perspective [18], and on the other with governance that promotes sustainability and social innovation [19]. Other equally valid examples include those provided by Dot-Jutgla and Pallares-Barbera [45]. The CaixaForum cultural forums in Madrid and Barcelona, whose facilities were formerly a factory and an electric plant, are living reflections of intervention in urban architecture by a bank brand (La Caixa) with a social objective.

As noted above, García-Carrizo [26] argues that the interrelation between advertising and urban spaces should be a win-win situation where advertising operates at the service of the brand, the environment, the public, and even the city where that advertising is implemented. We believe that most of the examples offered above fulfil this objective. As we have seen in the cases of Okuda, the Aquarius ad, Turia Beer's collaboration with Abellanas, or Heineken's Greenspace-Las Naves, temporary interventions in a space can arouse interest, elicit responses and encourage social engagement. In all the cases examined here, the dissemination of the works has had lasting consequences for the space, from sponsorships that have resulted in structural rehabilitation, like the church in Llanera, Asturias, to the donations in a crowdfunding campaign that enabled Justo Gallego to progress notably with the construction of his cathedral. This confirms that sustainability is an essential element in the search

for new forms of responsible production and consumption, both for the government and for certain advertising brands [17]. In each of these two cases, while the original purpose of the intervention was not to promote a product, the use of the media and advertising for its dissemination contributed considerably to vesting the architectural construction with value.

We believe that the examples provided here, limited to projects in Spain in the last 15 years, have demonstrated that advertising and the media can contribute to the preservation of derelict architectural spaces. The cases of Heineken, Cerveza Turia, Aquarius-Coca-Cola, Montana, and Okuda show that advertising initiatives involving interventions in spaces can contribute to the preservation and repurposing of those spaces. This conclusion points to two interesting possibilities for future research: academic studies of these kinds of advertising initiatives by different brands; and feasibility studies of such initiatives within the advertising sector itself, including a detailed analysis of their potential return on investment.

With respect to the limitations of this study, it is clear that more systematic data collection and analysis, together with broadening the scope of study to an international context, could contribute to the development of more precise answers to the research questions. However, it is our hope that the ideas, concepts, reflections, and theories outlined here may open up lines of research in this respect that can be explored further.

Another limitation of this research is the absence of a cost analysis that would compare the actual costs of these initiatives with the potential economic and environmental costs of demolishing the structures and building new ones. This is another line of research that we believe could be pursued in future studies.

Together with further research that would facilitate the analysis of whether advertising is, as suggested here, an activity capable of triggering the transformation and repurposing of spaces, it would also be interesting to measure the impact of temporary interventions on architectural spaces in terms of the consumption or impact of the advertising product. Moreover, a cost and profitability analysis could facilitate the development of these kinds of initiatives, although due to limits of scope this has not been explored in this study.

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