

Colour, Shape, and Time

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Abstract: *Evidence of significant influence of colour – related to light, as well as, shape, form, or pattern on human body, mind, and spirit - is proven by experience, by scientific medical, and psychological tests. The relationship between complex human nature and rich nature of colours with their seasonal changes and patterns still remains a highly interesting field of further research and fascinating in enduring design. Nowadays we learn from scientific results manifold possibilities of using characteristic qualities of colours and patterns in different technologies. We observe a border-crossing attempt for recognition of earlier hidden effects of colours and shapes on human, and a growing number of sensitive people perceive subtle phenomena from radiation and field, colours and patterns. In this context we meet important health questions. Architectural environment and interior are auspicious places of colours and patterns with their functions and effects. We distinguish essentially the colours, which are inherent to a material and to light from the colours, which we apply as coating or painting or by coloured light with the purpose of radiation and/or irradiation. Particularly the very last one can consciously be used for healing purposes. Insight in esoteric teachings of different cultures reveal interesting perspectives to a broader understanding of possibilities we gain by using colours for personal and interpersonal development. To a certain extend we change our perception of colours and patterns depending on mood, age, knowledge, and insight. However, striving to realise harmony could properly help us in designing for wellbeing and supporting integral health. Already on small scale, it would be possible and advisable to integrate special rooms for colour treatment for example against stress, the Sick Building Syndrome, and various sufferings. Insight into the interrelationship amongst obvious colours, patterns, sounds, etc. and hidden colours, patterns, sounds, and other subtle perceptible phenomena could become a guiding paradigm for a New Culture of Harmony.*

Keywords: *color, pattern, harmony*

1 Introduction

Recognition of our environment is a fundamental phenomenon in our consciousness so far we can distinguish between ‘me’ and ‘something else’. Our consciousness perceives our environment via our sense organs. The eye is one of these very sense organs. Visual perception and later recognition is dependent on the contrast of light and darkness in different intensities, and – more refined – on seeing colours and patterns in innumerable variations [1] [11]. A design process involves for example imagining colours. Possibly visual imaginations in dreams and ‘inner projections’ can be recognised by our ‘inner eye’ - according meditative research [9].

In this treatise we deal with some partially less known and hardly used approaches concerning colours and their meaning. Consequently, we investigate some beneficial and practical applications. We, moreover, try to find a structure among wide and different approaches, as well as among multifaceted fields what are also dealing with colour as a phenomenon.

2 Important Fields Dealing With Colour

Colours pervade many fields in our culture and civilisation. In all of them we find important and inspiring circumstances carried by colour. It is useful to deepen in those fields in order to get more inside as a designer, as an architect, as an interior architect, etc. Conscious use of colours can add measurable quality to any design [10].

2.1 Physics

From natural sciences we learn about ‘breaking’ of white light by a glass prism or water into the colour of the rainbow. We learn that what we can see and identify as colour is only a small part of an enormous spectrum of waves.

In addition, colour sensations can also happen beyond these physically proven circumstances [2] [3].

Recently we see fantastic colours on nano-scale, although they are mostly ‘manipulated’ by certain filters.

2.2 Biology

Certain colour (colours) of a flower has (have) the purpose to receive – by filtering – just those waves from sunlight what are necessary for its development.

Signalising functions of warning, or making afraid of enemies are other practical aspects of colours.

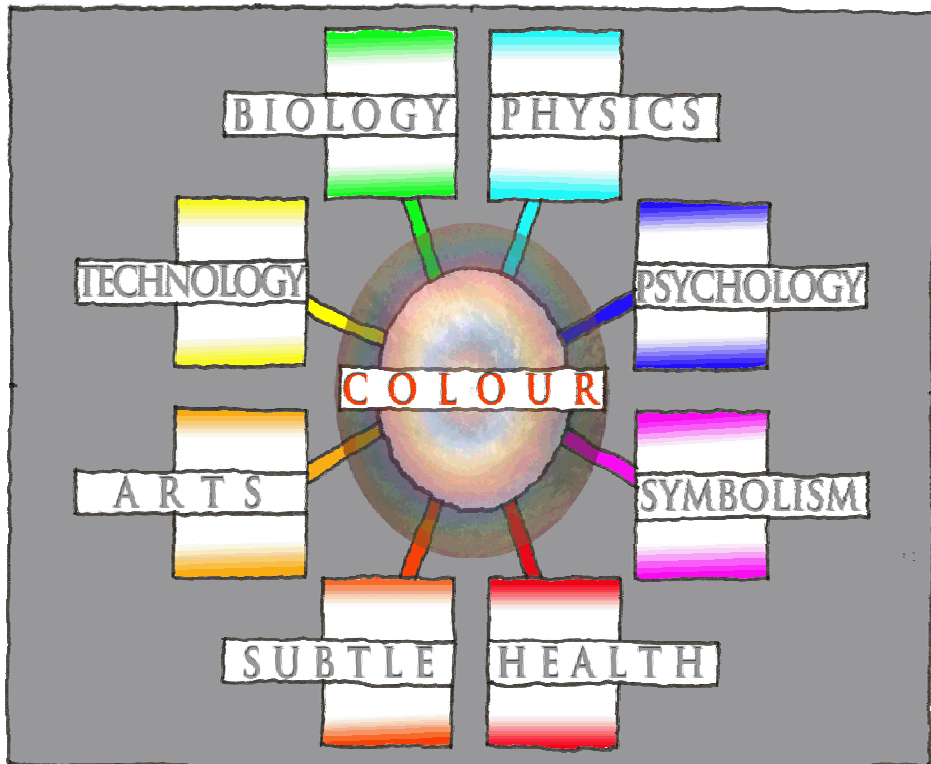


Figure 1: In these eight fields we recognise an essential place and meaning of colour.

We visualise those fields, but there is no claim that this impression is the only possible one. Some comments will be given to all of the eight different complexes (multifaceted fields) in this unit.

2.3 Technology

There is the area of producing and applying coatings and paints in various colours and in different qualifications from oil-based to light-based. Those coatings and paints play an important role in Building as well.

By means of various new technologies it is possible to recognize subtle (coloured) phenomena, and to transform, or to translate for example different sounds into colours (and patterns).

Infrared photography uses colours for identification of thermal circumstances.

2.4 Psychology

The application of colours are not the same in different cultures, however colours sign importantly certain messages in food, fashion, advertisements, ‘calm’ way finding, and in architecture [12] [13].

Red mostly means: stop, while green mostly means: go.

An important aspect is the use (or preference) of those colours, which are inherent to the used material – ‘natural colours’.

2.5 Arts

Colours are elementary for paintings, graphic arts, colour sculptures, or installations, colour / films, visual illustrations, ... - often highly expressive.

Wassily Kandinsky contributed elementary to this area [7] [8].

In architecture we find the coloured surfaces – everywhere, specifically coloured glass windows, and polychrome designed buildings.

2.6 Symbolism

Symbols are strongly based on colours. Most symbols we can find in heraldic, (on weapons and flags) religion, philosophy, and in politics. Various groups, or movements are characterised by colours, like the blue aristocracy or the green wave.

2.7 Subtle Colours

Normally non-visible colours can be seen by clairvoyance, or by clear-sighted persons, and by means of photography or film of objects under a high frequent field, like by means of the so-called Kirlian photography.

Emotions, feelings, thoughts, ideas can be recognized in characteristic shapes and colours [18].

There is (again) a growing stream of information on the concerned knowledge, which always already was a part of theosophical studies, shamanism, and the (partially hidden) traditions in India and China, and of the Mayans [17].

2.8 Health

It seems DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is light. And, our ‘holistic’ health – physically, psychologically, and spiritually has much to do with colours.

There is not only the colour of the taint, the skin, but also the colour of the (health) aura. This might be valid not only for humans, but also for animals, plants, and minerals, and even for angels, or (more or less) spiritual energy’s.

Aura Soma is a system, based on treatments (amongst others) with colours, in order to bring balance in the colours and constitution of a person.

One of the most successful implementations is the Spectro-Chrome Therapy, developed by Dinshah P. Ghadiali [4] [5] [6].

3 Snapshots From Ancient and Partially Neglected Meanings of Colours

We limit us mainly to some worth knowing views from the theosophical tradition, India, China, and Maya culture. There are – of course – also interesting African, Jewish, Tibetan, Inca, and other traditions that show a treasure of insights and habits concerning colours. In this contribution we only bring just some examples without any claim for completeness.

In those mentioned views on colour we recognise some correspondence, but also some deviation. However there is a clear similarity concerning the qualitative aspects and impacts of colours on human life, mainly along subtle relationships.

Thanks to theosophical studies we meet with the phenomenon of subtle expressions in colours of emotions, feelings, thoughts, and ideas, and similar emanations of man-made objects, plants, animals, and human bodies. Although those colours are normally not visible for our unprepared eyes, there are possibilities of meditative exercising in order to see those subtle colours, to use, also with some exercise, so-called aura-spectacles, or the help of high frequent fields for viewing the normally invisible colours [2] [3].

By the way – nowadays in the time of energy saving in the built environment, more and more use is made of infrared-photography in order to make the heat-loss of buildings at their outer walls visible by showing different colour-nuances depending on the temperature, which differs in different materials used in the walls.

In India we find – on base of meditative traditions – a lot of very interesting descriptions of the colours inherent the creating, maintaining, and transforming powers, characterised in Brahma – red, Vishnu – green, and Shiva – violet, as the

first contribution of the Colourless Absolute. There are the colours of humans subtle energy-centres – chakra's called, the colours of the subtle bodies, or kosha's of annamaya (constitution), pranamaya (life force), manomaya (thoughts and feelings), vignanamaya (insight), and anandamaya (happiness). Depending on the state of a person (of object) the colours can change in intensity and nuance [9].

According the Indian building tradition – Stapathya Veda, certain colours are used for certain building elements and sides of a building in order to optimise harmony for the inhabitants.

The colours of the monks' and nuns' clothes have their own meaning as well – related to certain qualities or virtues with their typical colours.

Similarly we find rules for the use of colours in the Feng Shui guidelines, the Chinese building traditions. Quite functionally – colouring in a building has to serve wellbeing, health, and welfare of its occupants. The five in China used qualitative elements – Earth, Water, Fire, Metal, Wood – have all their specific colour, and a number of related attributes, which are applied in many fields for the benefit of the users.

Possibly influenced by Indian input in the 14th century, that Chinese knowledge can be recognised also in other Eastern countries, like Korea, Japan, and Indonesia...

In recent time, we get to know more over the culture of the original American peoples. One of them is the Maya culture, which shows very interesting knowledge, not only concerning the Sun-Moon-Calendar. Actually in the context of this calendar, we learn about the meaning of colours in the life of the Mayans. Beside this we recognise some interesting similarities of the concepts of the Mayas and the concepts of the Indians, like in case of the energy-centres or chakras. [17]

It seems that Mayans used the main colours in a relatively simple way characterising those functions what plays a dominating role in our life like Input, Store, Process, Output, Matrix, or Initiate, Refine, Transform, Ripen, ... [19].

In a time – like ours – we recognise a colourful world. The dominating colours actually are carried by commercial and political advertisements. They nearly took away the previously and partially by churches used colours.

In the above discussed place and meaning of colour in some other cultures, we found a much more spiritual, philosophical, and on wellbeing and happiness of humans orientated approach.

4 Colour in Service for ‘Holistic Health’

Inspired, generally by the ideas on Integral Bio-Logical Architecture [15], as well as the ‘hidden’ traditions of old cultures, and specifically by the work of Dinshah Ghadiali [4] [5] [6] and Hugo Kükelhaus [16], we propagate a zone or a room of silence and colours for each dwelling or at least – commonly – for a group of dwellings [14].

Each person has sooner or later the desire of contemplating moments or periods.

Spiritual, psychological, and/or physical re-creation, for example in case of stress, might be sometimes a need.

The Spectro-Chrome Therapy of Dinshah Ghadiali has proven, that coloured light can be successfully used for numerous health treatments.

Such a Holistic Health Silence and Colour Room would not take away a healthy lifestyle, but would essentially contribute to such a lifestyle.

However in such a room one can find opportunities for self-recreation and meditation, eventually supported by a proper indoor climate, harmonious sound and silence, stimulating odour, and inspiring, or healing colour, supported by coloured paper, fabric, glass, light, etc, and the necessary equipment for it.

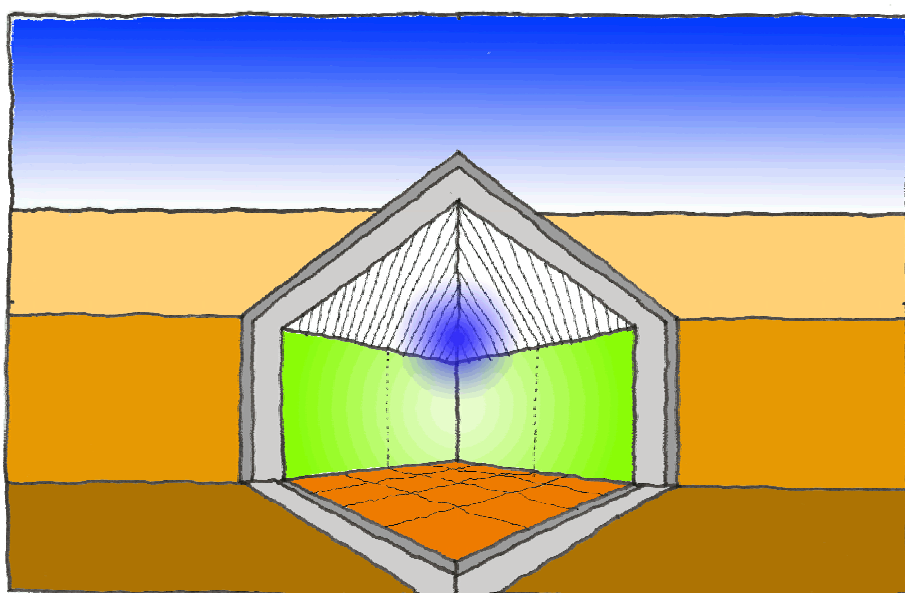


Figure 2: Sketch of a Holistic Health Colour Room (pyramid-covered) for supporting spiritual, psychological, and physical condition and health; the here shown colours are only an example, they can be changed. This and the next illustration show various geometrical harmonic pattern and shape.

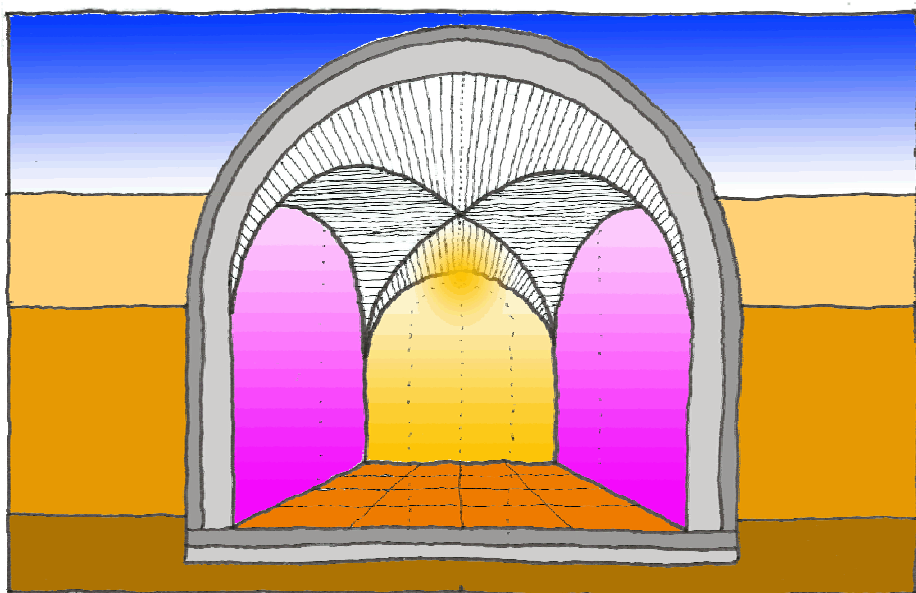


Figure 3: Sketch of a Holistic Health Colour Room (vault-covered) for supporting spiritual, psychological, and physical condition and health; the here shown colours are only an example, they can be changed. In both illustrations there are possibilities to integrate instruments for irradiation in the walls.

Conclusions

The richness of the world of colours and the elementary place and meaning of colours was again underlined.

It might be natural to use this phenomenon also for our own benefit.

Within the important visualised multifaceted fields – essentially dealing with colour – we highlighted snapshots of ancient and partially neglected meanings of colour. Traditional of hidden or neglected aspects inspired to suggest a zone or space or room for especially colour treatment for each dwelling of a cluster of dwellings.

It might be evident that timeless beauty and harmony (including patterns) are closely connected to colour use as mentioned in the service for holistic health.

The use of colour for insight, knowledge, healing, and pleasure can become an extended practical task in the future.

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