Sign consumption

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Culture adherence to the speech of globalization require reviewing purposes and values design assumed.

Globalization's impersonal speech has installed in culture, making it more of an economical logistics tool. In this context, the exercise of design participates in a system that conceives and questions an individual only as a consumer.

Globalization is transferred from an economical aspect to every single stage in social exchange and presents itself as a “geological” reality, neutral, unquestionable. It takes part in cultural and media thinking under a diffuse nomenclature that refers to some sort of technocratic mythology: we inhabit meekly this new global village, with no geography, no matter, suspending in a planetary network of virtual perceptions, avidly consuming televised immediateness, memoryless. The myth's plot reasons within the magical, the esoterical, building an interpretation of what is real from an oniric perspective, escaping any analysis or criticism.

Thanks to the cultural industry, a mythological replica of globalization is built, a story that describes a closer, more bearable reality than its original model. We perceive a borderless globalisation, without polarity, of free exchange and movement, ignoring the map drawn in this relationship: a self-defined “western culture” that inhabits the center and the media's “now”, relegating all others to walk on the edge of space and time.

An uneven cultural exchange occurs between the center and the outskirts, a reflection of a current reality in economic exchange. The core builds a prodigious amount of current-realities, images and stories that dwell on today and expand up to the margins of technological extent, where these are consumed by a peripherie that only broadcasts “underrealities”, messages quickly cast into oblivion, when not directly refused by the mainstream. In this context, dominant culture values are defined as universal, while peripherical culture values are tagged local and obsolete.

The universal-local binomial forces us to rethink the speech of multiculturalism, a speech that power has known to take and recreate with mediatic imagery until achieving to show miscegenation and cultural communion where exclusion and margination exists. Cultural miscegenation isn't produced in neutral fields, it consists in a vassalage of the local system in tune with the dominant globalizing system, an encounter resolved in a neutralization of the difference, a cultural standardization that clears the field for local economies to adhere to the hegemonic capitalist system.

Each community expresses its culture in an identity context that interconnects with its social-

economical system. Without it, cultural expression vanishes or remains confined to a ritualized space of folkloric representation. Economical system globalization presents, finally, opposite to peripherical culture sustainment, which means a dysfunction, of global reach, of the principle of existing identity.

The speech of globalization, as a symbolic construct, offers the individual a new globally-dimensioned identity, a consumer identity. Established in a mediatic territory, this identity appeals to the individual as an urban cell, hyper connected and collective-fragmented. Identity born and died in communicational immediateness, requiring for its survival a permanent review and update through consumption.

In this scenario, the exercise of design is considered from a multidisciplinary systematic, applied to sign consumption. A sign consumption as a fetish of social exchange, where the product is relegated to a mere material verification of the act of consumption itself. A ritualized act where individual identity is projected into a collective and thus, legitimized.

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