

## PREFACE

As we celebrate the Bauhaus centennial, a school that has changed our view of architecture, art and design, it is fundamental to debate design education and its role in these turbulent times of great disruptions in the contemporary world.

The remarkable set of texts gathered in here engrave reflections and practices on design education and research presented by Brazilian and foreigner scholars at the 12th edition of the seminar *Design & Education: Challenges for the New Millennium*, held in Belo Horizonte in 2018.

Faced with so many relevant topics, I highlight: design and fuzzy world, design and intentionality, design and sustainability.

The first point brings us to the instigating issue of the challenges to design teaching in the fuzzy world, where multivalence is pervasive, boundaries are fluid, and require our schools to be “a teaching that is equally fluid, open and diffuse.” This theme is dealt with by Dijon De Moraes, who reflects on how to teach design in this context, which goes beyond binary thinking, the yes and the no, the true and the false etc., prevalent in Western culture. One must see the world from a different perspective, a unity involving both yin and yang, where ambiguity and doubt are also present, and which defends the deconstruction of patterns imposed by business models unfamiliar with teaching operations.

This multivalent and fuzzy approach allows us to acknowledge the presence of design, both in the artifact of vernacular culture and in the highly industrialized product; both in the artifact produced by remote settlements and native cultures as well as in artifacts produced in globalized metropolises.

In Brazil, this observation is particularly meaningful because the specificity of education in design in the country is, in the words of Aloísio Magalhães, a critic attentive to the processes of colonization/decolonization in education and design practice: “Here, the contrasted and unequal nature of the development process creates problems, [...] which require a positioning of very broad latitudes; the awareness of our meager resources for the magnitude of territorial space; the ethical responsibility in narrowing the contrast between small, highly concentrated areas of wealth and benefits and large rarefied and poor areas. In the latter, only the latent wealth of authenticity and originality of Brazilian culture is powerful. “(*What industrial design can do for the country*, 1977<sup>1</sup>).

The discussion of intentionality in design or, as Vasco Branco puts it, the relation between things and causes is another relevant subject that dialogues directly with fuzzy thinking. It is an analysis of the epistemological and ontological nature of design, where, among others, the author approaches the so-called double rationality of design: a reason simultaneously technical-physical-mathematical and of applied social science.

Well, the rationality of the social sciences is within the scope of the understanding of social phenomena. Besides, it is structured on the basis of intentionality, capable of pointing to the future, even though directly related to the establishment of criteria and priorities for action. This topic is of very high relevance in the construction of priorities for design, which depends on reflections on the future from the material conditions of the present.

Gui Bonsiepe has dealt with this aspect, emphasizing that industrial design is a “soft” normative discipline. He defined “what is specific to industrial design, the essence of industrial design, as seismographic sensitivity to the material needs of a population, but not only that. More comprehensively than other traditional technological disciplines, industrial design has the capacity to respond in material terms, with a system of cultural reference, with an evaluative and aesthetic component” (BONSIEPE, 1980). This evaluative component is directly related to causes, to intention.

In today’s world, where all products seem to have already been created and produced, where the abyss perhaps insurmountable between wealth and absolute poverty coexists, the dimension of the evaluative component is a fortiori urgent. After all, would design be a mere means of solving problems or an instrument of transformation as well?

What are the consequences of these aspects in the field of human resource education-training in the area of design? Perhaps a reencounter with the sense of the humanist education of Ancient Greece, the Paideia, aiming at the formation of a citizen concerned about the future and questioning inequalities.

How can this dimension be recovered? Or is it forever lost in a society dominated by fetishism and the instant gratification of their impulses and desires?

Perhaps the route forward is the reflection on purposes, reasons and causes that have made us lose the vitality in the sense of education-training. Reflection understood in the philosophical sense of the word, meaning a movement of thought about oneself in an interrogative and simultaneously liberating attitude.

1. *Original title:* O que o desenho industrial pode fazer pelo país?

Seminars like this, mobilizing intelligence from different origins, bring us hope of overcoming the acute environmental and ethical crisis which we now face, of recovering the sense of education-training and of proposing an agenda for the future of design education. The event has encouraged us all, keeping alive the spirit of our Design community for sharing knowledge.

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