

Re-Design - More a Social and *Industrial* Evolution than a Question of Luxury on Demand

Wachs ME^{1*}, Bendt E²

¹Hochschule Niederrhein - University of Applied Sciences, Reinarzstraße, Krefeld, Germany

²Hochschule Niederrhein - University of Applied Sciences, Webschlustraße, Mönchengladbach, Germany

Abstract

The need of (European) sustainable design codes is the conclusion about a design strategy, which does not frame sustainability in a luxury manner. The earlier definition of luxury during the baroque time specified: "luxury is the effort that exceeds all necessities." This traditional term is located in an understanding of luxury faced to a design, dominated by material of high quality and in techniques; by high quality the craft ship possibilities. At the end of the 20th century, we felt the trends for more "respect" for high quality in design objects and at the same time, the sensibility for outrunning resources on our planet. Several publications are telling about new visions of a "new luxury as consequence for sustainable consume". Today we are estimating more value regarding unique goods, of high quality, for cultural heritage and for traditionally based disciplines: The revaluing of traditional textile handcraft in combination with new techniques is very important to find new designs.

The question about sustainable and luxury design objects in the on-going 21st century is created by new parameters of luxury: terms of "space", "time", "self-expressing by solving societies problems", specify a new frame of Society's demand on re-design.

The following design objects have great symbolic meanings in demonstrating the message of the designer - with the help of the way of designing, - the way of using materials for a second life, with-the way of expressing design-attitude with powerful model names: "footprint", "coatbrella", "and cutt(h)ings", "craftwork".

The design code stand in relationship to the design method in rethinking old systems, combining old and new techniques and materials, old and new forms for a sustainable design code, which is communicating a new value of "luxury"-it demonstrate more a social and industrial evolution than a question of luxury on demand.

Keywords: Design; Social; Sustainable; Luxury

Introduction: European sustainable Design Strategy and the Coexistence of Sustainability and Luxury

While in time of the Sun King Louis XIV, the meaning of "luxury" focussed on the opulence of an luxury good, the meaning for the economic business parties developed with focus on marketing instruments in modern times: "*Luxury is exclusivity – it is made for you and no one else has it, [...] At a minimum, it must be impeccable, maximum and unique. It's the way you are spoken to, the way the product is presented, the way you are treated. Like the tea ceremony in Japan: the ritual, the respect, the transmission from generation to generation*"- Françoise Montenay, in: [1,4]. During the 18th century and after the II World War, we can recognize high respect for traditional attitudes

in high quality in design. After the finance crisis, which the world went through in the year 2008, we are estimating more value regarding unique goods, for cultural heritage and for traditionally based – for example textile – disciplines.

The revaluing of traditional textile handcraft in combination with new techniques or in "transmission from generation to generation" is very important to find new ideas and new levels of identification in order to continue with new accepted design objects for the future. It demonstrates a revaluing of craft and textile heritage forecasting design.

The Design "Lustgrund" [4] (figure 1), created by Miriam Adler, shows the potential of the combination of a former craft, making bobbin lace with a technique for ceramic products. The luxury of the "old Europe is described by adjectives like "unique", "high quality", "glamour", "ladylike", "unattainable" [1,4]. All these aspects reflect the design of Adler in an untouchable kind, with the help of technique: in combining old and new techniques for a new design language.

The new "luxury"-code in design will be created by other important aspects and adjectives of experience of luxury in the 21st century:



Figure 1: The Design "Lustgrund".

***Corresponding author:** Wachs ME, Hochschule Niederrhein - University of Applied Sciences, Reinarzstraße, Krefeld, Germany, Tel: +49 (0)2161 186-6121; E-mail: marina.wachs@hs-niederrhein.de

Received April 29, 2014; Accepted May 22, 2014; Published May 26, 2014

Citation: Wachs ME, Bendt E (2014) Re-Design - More a Social and *Industrial* Evolution than a Question of Luxury on Demand. J Textile Sci Eng S2: 006. doi:10.4172/2165-8064.S2-006

Copyright: © 2014 Wachs ME, et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

At the end of the 20th century, we felt the trends for more “respect” for high quality and good materials in design objects and at the same time, the sensibility for outrunning resources on our planet. Several publications are telling about new visions in a model of a “new luxury as consequence for sustainable consume” [5] and a growing marketing system for “luxury and sustainability” [6].

In the year 2012 I considered “*The previous discussions and résumés on the status of the sustainable resolutions of Rio implemented in 1992 indicate a new awareness among the general population for the urgency of sustainable solutions; however, positive results are lacking* [7].” Higher expectations of Rio+20 Summit in June 2012 was the incitation to take the subject into the universities tasks into greater extent not only to develop, but also to *communicate* sustainable textile codes for a better place with more respect for artefacts - at the same time: that means, we need to focus on design objects more valuable aspects (function, material, aesthetic form, symbolic meaning).

Re-Design in Applied Sciences - Design Driven by Social and Ecological Objectives

Great expositions with a great range of design solutions have been the result of the student's interdisciplinary projects from 2012 until today, coming from German and English study-programs of the BA and MA of the Hochschule Niederrhein, faculty of textile and clothing technology, creating and communicating sustainable textile design solutions driven by social and ecological objectives: e.g. “smart and slow men's fashion design”, “From NGO to social Entrepreneur” in Textile and Clothing Management, “green lamp as cultural textile heritage - redesign and revalue textiles as new product design”; “dressing the earth in Textiles Management for conflict area” [8-11]. Verbs are describing the designers idea for tomorrow like “revalue”, “reuse”, “redesign” are focusing the design strategy of trend forecaster and design manager. Today we are going on with new Re-Design solutions not only focussing the communicating aspects like Marshall McLuhan demonstrated in the 1970s with his thesis “The medium is the message” [12]. That is due to the fact that in today's Europe we are in the situation to consider sustainability as a matter of fact, as a state of the art and not as a kind of luxury product placement or question of imaging the enterprise.

The question about sustainable and luxury design objects in the on-going 21st century will be created by new parameters of luxury: for example the terms of “space”, “time”, “self-expressing by solving societies problems of mobility”, specify a new frame for luxury goods – not only for Lohas and Lovos. Society's demand on re-design is greater than ever and the offer of re-designed objects and “re-designed” processes are the result in rediscovering old handcraft systems [13] and searching new applications for old materials and - old machines:

When talking about re-design by Jennifer Tumanggor of a “coatbrella” for children (figure 2a), the object and the name of the design object tells us a story of social engagement, to make the younger generation more sensible for the resources of our planet at an early age. It is a question of education and (design) attitude, to be an idol of behaviour in life in earlier times. The coat is created using a broken umbrella – a new way of application for sub-standard goods. This material was not used on rainy days, but it is comparable with designing the first shoulder bags by the brand “Freitag” (Germany: Hamburg) in the 1990s, the first product had been made of old canvas covers of trucks.

The shoes “Footprint” (figure 2b, 3) designed by Caroline Sell 2013

show a re-design in a second use of materials, or a second life - in this case Jeans - to demonstrate consciousness and to create identity with textile self-heritage. Roses made of worn cotton jeans define new symbolic meaning, underlining with the help of sustainable fibres, thinking and feeling our individual footprint on Earth by consuming an enormous number of shoes during one's life. Value and confidence are important tools for the marketing strategy of tomorrow:

How can we create the required confidence in sustainable products,



Figure 2a: re-design Tumanggor of a “coatbrella” for children by Jennifer.



Figure 2b: The shoes “Footprint”.



Figure 3: The shoes “Footprint”.

in market offers, and in the brand's message(s)? Today the buying decision is more a question of confidence between producer / retailer and consumer = user, between the consumer and the philosophy of the brand. So the decision to purchase a product is - more than ever - dependent on transparency and honesty in the information given by the brand [13,14]. If we look at the luxury market, we can consider that not only the design have to serve the demand of uniqueness, unique features are important parameters at the global market.

To fulfil transparency of a product, we can have a look on the design "cutt(h)ings" (figure 4), designed by Theresa Brinkmann, 2013: You will see the soul of the heel, it is made of metal - waste and it is not only symbolizing the message: you have to take care and think about re- and up-cycling of waste of the industrial process. The content of the heel, the metal splinter could also fulfil a practical function of cushioning your walk. So wearing this shoe is more of statement than just presentation



Figure 4: Design "cutt(h)ings" designed by Theresa Brinkmann.



Figure 5: Design "craftwork" designed by Laura Marie Witt.

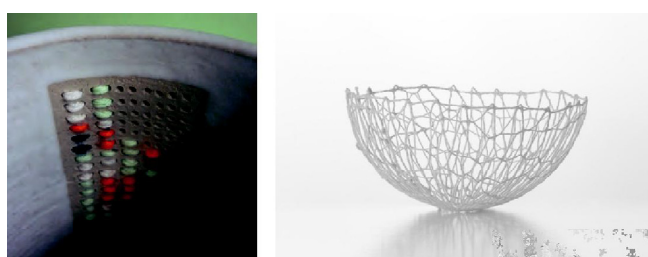


Figure 6: Textile yarn and ceramic solutions by Laura Witt and Miriam Adler.

of good taste. Mystique moment of new design and in developing new design shows the object "CraftWerk" (figure 5) designed by Laura Marie Witt in 2013.

"Re-"A Question of Term and Word as a Matter of Design Code and of Design Methods

All these design objects (figures 1-5) have great symbolic meanings in demonstrating the idea and the message of the designer - with the help of the way of designing, - the way of using materials for a second life, and with the way of expressing design-attitude with powerful model names: The design codes are expressed in terms like "Lustgrund", "coatbrella", "footprint", "cutt(h)ings", "craftwork". The design language of the objects is strong in form, in silhouette, in lines, accorded to the mind-set of the designers and in underlining the messages of sustainable systems in terms.

So the design codes stand in relationship to the design method in rethinking old systems, combining old and new techniques, old and new materials, old and new forms for a sustainable design code, which is communicating a new value of luxury. Marketing aspects of new luxury sustainable goods show new luxury demands with old luxury value: high quality of material, timeless - long durability of form, made for unique partners, in respect of honest behaviour with each market competitor.

So re-design of old traditions in a new method shows us the conclusion: Re-valuing in re-designing for a better life - more a social and industrial evolution than a question of luxury on demand (figure 6).

References

1. Sombart W (1967) Liebe, Luxus und Kapitalismus (edns.). Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag 86, Germany.
2. Sombart W (1967) Liebe, Luxus und Kapitalismus (edns.). Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag 170, Germany.
3. Thomas D (2007) Deluxe – How Luxury lost its Luster page 324. Penguin Press, Germany.
4. Wachs ME (2007) "lust" in a matter of desire, and the word „ground“ is playing with the sense of „base“ and „reason“ and „cause“, it is more dimensional to „read“ in this term, this model name. Hochschule Niederrhein, Germany.
5. Kütke, Susanne (2013) Neuer Luxus als konsequente Form nachhaltigen Konsums : Ursachen seiner Entstehung und Merkmale seiner Produkte. Hamburg : Kovač, Germany.
6. Gesa P (2013) Luxus und Nachhaltigkeit – Entwicklung strategischer Handlungsempfehlungen für das Luxusgütermarketing, Wiesbaden: Springer Verlag, Germany.
7. Wachs ME (2013) Transdisciplinary Science – Transdisciplinary Design. Sustainable Textiles Design, Hamburg: Schaff Verlag page 22. Germany.
8. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TheqQVkykE&feature=youtu.be>
9. <http://www.hs-niederrhein.de/textil-bekleidungstechnik/projekttestudienarbeiten/ntd/>
10. <http://www.hs-niederrhein.de/textil-bekleidungstechnik/projekttestudienarbeiten/ntd/>
11. <http://www.schaff-verlag.de/pdesign.htm>
12. McLuhan M (2001) Das Medium ist die Botschaft. The Medium is the Message. Mit dem legendären Playboy- Interview. Fundus 154, Dresden: Philo Fine Arts, Germany.
13. Horizont.net (2014) Premium Park startet Nachhaltigkeits-Magazin "Pure", Germany.
14. Simonetta C (2008) Radikales Umdenken erforderlich: An ökologischen und ethischen Fragen kommt kein Unternehmen mehr vorbei. Design Ecology, Mainz: Hermann Schmidt Verlag page 202. Germany.