Design as activism: the exchange of value and the dialects within visual resistance and consumption

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Since very early, visual artists and activists have a strong relationship. Aiming to create a visual response to go against dominant culture, they unit their tools, practice and methods. With a very specific role and profession, each of them had the tendency to influence each other and re-shape those tools and techniques exchanged. This is one of the reason why we are able to identify also a strong technical development. For example, it was thanks to the development of litography that photography and printing techniques were also improved. With time and the technology upgrading, the relationship among artists, activists and technicians started to become blurred. In between, the figure of designer apperead within this process and a visual resistance aesthetic started to be stablished. We can identify the Russian Defiance movement, Russian Constructivism and German Bauhaus has one of the most i mportants movements among all resistance movements to involve (and be influenced by) designers. Nowadays, what was once very clear, is transforming in a confusing frontier. I.e., these three main participants and their respective professions are merging in one. It is becoming difficult to separate the visual artist from the designer and from the activist. These lack of boundaries are creating new forms of visual communication/expression, new aesthetics and types of behavior. Regarding this last point, it is necessary to point out the paradoxical behavior that we were able to identify among designers. Now, it is becoming harder to distinguish what are their production related to activism and to mainstream. I.e., guerrilla visual warfare and guerrilla marketing are being transformed in the same "product". That means, the influences and the exchange of practices between design and others areas became so immersive that it happened to be complicated for the designer to release himself from the context in which he is. By observing the consequences of these flows, that is: the responses, (re)actions, aesthetics and consumption, this research aims to investigate the commodification process of the resistance and counterculture movement. The gap opened between jamming and mainstream culture makes us wonder who are the resistance producers nowadays and what's the designer's role within this process. To exemplify our theory, subverted graphics, as for instance billboards and magazines, will be used as the main object of analysis of this ongoing research.

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Andréa Poshar is a brazilian/chilean creative copywriter/visual artist with more than ten years in the market. She is a second year PhD Candidate in Communication Design in the College of Design of the Politecnico di Milano, Italy. Poshar as a M.Sc in Social Communication at the Social Communication under the research track Audiovisual Media Cultures. Currently, works in partnership with two research labs: 1) GMID - Research Lab in Media Languages Studies, coordinated by Prof. Dr. Marcos Nicolau in the Federal University of Paraíba, Brazil, and 2) Research Lab of Typography and Graphic Language coordinated by Professor Reginal Wilker, at the University Center Senac/ São Paulo, Brazil. In previous research, Poshar analyzed the processes of reconfiguration of posters along with interactive digital media and sought to understand their integration to digital culture and new digital media. Nowadays is developing a research on aesthetic, social mobility, Culture Jamming and visual strength. Her main focus is on visual communication, graphic design,
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