

# Fashion, Symbols, Styles through Digital Communication



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## Perspective

From an anthropological point of view, the divergent affinities between utopia and ubiquity could be explored focusing on fashion, technologies and cultures. If the first concept invents an inexistent and ideal place, the second expands everywhere the presence of a generally divine and controlling entity. Between being nowhere and everywhere moves the current graft of potential ubiquitous utopias thanks to the diffusion of digital communication through an animated individuality.

The concept of ubiquity has a history that precedes utopia: because of their divergent affinity, I thought of connecting the two terms. To the ubiquity that flows in every place is added the utopia that, instead, lies nowhere. In the transitive gap between these two apparently aporetic propositions, the contemporary ubiquitous utopia moves. The current meaning of the ubiquitous concept is immersed in the flows of digital culture, so - if you type ubiquity - there is an infinite phantasmagoria of sites. The reason is simple: this term identifies the modus operandi in the web-culture. A shared affirmation is that the web is ubiquitous and that the subject that uses it absorbs the communicational ubiquity of the space-time practices of the Internet.

In medieval theological meaning, the concept of ubiquity is metaphysical and expresses a radical opposition to dualism and, so to speak, even to the "two". Ubiquity embodies the omnipresent radicalism of the "One". This spatial autonomy derives from being - the ubiquity - an abstract condition mystically linked to a divine being. Ubiquitous is not a result of empirical experience in daily life such as simultaneous; on the contrary, it belongs to the visionary perception of the invisible in which the human condition is constantly observed by the divine gaze. From this ubiquitous eye one cannot escape, not even hiding in a secret place, because "ubiquitous" being reaches you always and everywhere, observes and judges you because it transcends you.

In contemporary times, the spatio-temporal coordinates become tendentially superfluous and expands a type of ubiquitous subjective experience about lifestyles as well as visions of the world. As a researcher and a consumer, I'm placed in this situation of ubiquity immersed in his personal experience and in the instantaneous relationship with the other; and this other is equally ubiquitous, in the sense that he lives where his digitalized communication system is at that moment active. This experience does not mean the dematerialization of interpersonal relationships; attests a complex psycho-corporeal network, optical and manual connections, certainly cerebral and imaginary that move the experience of the subject even in the apparent immobility. The obvious psychological implications would require specific research, together with self-research by the subject-ethnographer who experiments on him/herself these accelerated mutations. The concept of subject manifests itself fully in such ubiquitous connections. And the ubiquitous ethnography expands a connective subjectivity. They are plots that connect fragments of spaces/times lacking that "normal" identification and that multiply temporary identities. The subject of the ethnographic experience about fashion is ubiquitous. And the divergent ubiquitous utopia may be the perspective for a not-anthropocentric anthropology.

The ethnographic experiences based on material/immaterial fieldwork may offer a decentred methodological perspective in order to face, decipher and invent the contemporary forest of symbols. Anthropology applied to design, fashion, visual artes, architecture produces syncretic, ubiquitous, polyphonic transfusions about different cultures, codes, styles. This is the focus for an "undisciplined" design oriented by a multi-sited methodology.

Ubiquity revolves around spaces/times relationship through the ethnographic method of field research, expanding syncretic

concepts in digital/auratic cultures. Our paper faces the concept of ubiquity through web-culture and performative ubiquitous subjects. Ubiquitous subjectivity may prepare researchers for the encounter with the stranger, the uncanny, the unknown. Ubiquitous ethnography may favour the everyday experiences through “immaterial” pulses based on self-representation.

Exact imagination and astonished glances are our plural methodologies whose visions are driven fashion researchers toward unknown natural/cultural beauties. Since its linguistic (and theological) invention, the concept of ubiquity is free from any empirical matrix. Ubiquity is an abstract condition mystically tied to a divine being. Ubiquity is the ontology of the sacred, a tension beyond human’s dualistic distinctions (body and soul, heaven and earth ...) and the mere institution of religion. The monotheistic religion was (and still is) interested in the control of orthodox dogma and behaviour in everyday life. Ubiquity belongs to the visionary perception of the invisible in which the human condition is constantly observed by God without any secret places to escape to, as this ubiquitous being reaches you everywhere. Proprio come internet...

In contemporary times, ubiquity plays a logical-sensorial immanence to a material/immaterial character; expresses tensions beyond dualism, that simplified feeling in which binary oppositions are functional in connecting everyday’s complexity into the dichotomous domain of the hegemonic ratio. Ubiquity is uncontrollable, incomprehensible and indeterminable. Ubiquity remains aside from any vertical political control,

mono-logic rationality or any space-time linear determination. In this perspective, ubiquitous visions are moving beyond any fix identity of things and beings where, thanks to the ubiquitous quality, unlimited poetic and political visions are wandering.

Ubiquitous identities are perspective where fashion imagination is potentiality connected to digital cultures. My identity as a researcher does not remain the same, as it simultaneously develops diagonal relations, using expressions from different local methodological areas, which happen to be increasingly less geographically but more subjectively and emotionally characterized and connected. This identity is more flexible in relation to its industrialist past. In part a transformable identity, oscillating between different contexts co-existing at the same frame. Hence, the ethnographic glance is ubiquitous as it is trained to decipher conflicting codes (fashion, music, visual arts and etc.) whilst practicing equally differentiated modules. Every wandering subject who wants to practice this ubiquitous ethnography or temporary narratives has to live the astonished experience of a stylish polyphony, i.e. transform himself/herself into an ubiquitous performer. This processual composition has the physiognomy of a moving constellation, where wandering/wondering researchers are elaborating exact imaginations through a connection of fragmented montage of familiar as well as stranger cultures, experience design and an uncanny mix of spaces-times. There is no unified we or other: there is a different kind of subjectivity creating a wandering research and symbolic communication.



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