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# O DESVIO COMO MÉTODO: A DIMENSÃO RELACIONAL NO DESIGN RADICAL DEVIATION AS A METHOD: THE RELATIONAL DIMENSION IN RADICAL DESIGN

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## Abstract

We live in a time of intense mediatization and image production. Many people give up their ability to develop critical thinking, exercise their potential for transformation and seek creative solutions to everyday problems, and end up developing an attitude of compulsive consumption. In the context of high education courses dedicated to the education of individuals who will act in creative economy segments, the repetition of models and habits of reading the world based on an uncritical attitude is an even more serious problem. How can education contribute to changing this scenario? How can we provide contexts that encourage and stimulate a generation of creative and critical people? The power of producing knowledge from the confluence of Education, Art, and Politics is the starting point of this article. The focus of the discussion is on process-oriented art projects that address political issues from an educational perspective. Understanding education

as a practice of freedom, the value of dialogue in the knowledge production, the dynamics of thinking through images, and the production of texts, documents, and records as power devices, this article presents a curation of works of art, develops reflections based on the method of cartography of imaginaries, and elaborates a teaching proposal for creative processes. As a result of the workshop, we were able to notice that the proposed teaching method aroused the learning and knowledge production powers.

**Keywords:** Method, Education, Arts and Politics, Creative processes, Cartography of Imaginaries

*Method is a digression.*  
Walter Benjamin

## 1 Introduction

In this paper, we adopt a critical-historical approach based on the idea of deviation as a method to present the interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary course that the practice of design has taken in relation to other practices such as architecture, art and fashion. To this end, we built a study itinerary based on the ideas of the Radical Design movement, which addressed both the transformations in research methods and in the practice of design as an open field for a variety of interactions.

Benjamin's epigraph (1984, p. 50) invites us to observe the deviations – the digressions – that designers, artists and architects used as a method for questioning the principle of functionality and also the plasticity, the use value and the fetishist exposure through conspicuous consumption. We present here how design integrated with other fields, developing new methods of exploring and discussing new ways for the body to experience objects, in order to investigate other ways of life and of experiencing the city.

## 2 Method and project: a critical perspective

Thinking about research methods leads us to issues related to the meaning of design as a Science of the Project. However, reflecting on this in our contemporary world requires paying attention to avoid imposing a sort of customs tax at the borders delimiting what is or is not design. Thus, it is worth asking: are methodological approaches responsible for defining what a design product would be? How, based on the methods adopted, could we call attention to the nuances that give meaning to the design experience and to the processes of experimentation in design research?

To answer this, let us recall Vial (2014, p. 22-3): the historical understanding of the meaning of the word design is related, since the Renaissance, to a type of methodical conception of project development. We often find timelines associating the origin of the word design with the industrialization process linked to the rise of decorative arts at the end of the 19th century. After the Industrial Revolution, design began to refer to the processes and strategies of mass industrial creation. However, design is characterized by the validation of a theory through experience, dating back to architectural practices in the *Quattrocento*, a period already marked by the management of complexity, which is an essential aspect in developing a systematic rational conception of the project. Thus, a *method* would be nothing more than the mastery of a conception, this being a complex system whose primary goal is to structure in connecting networks the different stages or processes of project research and execution.

The use of the word design suggests a kind of controlled anachronism because the process is heterochronic. This term points both to a methodical control of the conception and to an empirical experimentation with shapes and materials. Methods model and alternate the timing of these project phases. Nevertheless, we still follow modern rationalist ideals, adopting universal methodologies that separate the empirical practice in the studio from the scientific research in the laboratory. As a consequence, we ignore local empirical experiences that could favor design researches steeped in human ecology.

This methodical conception of design work was developed to the extent that some design schools and their studios rationalized and systematized their research-creation strategies. According to Vial (2015, p.23-4), empirical reflections made at the end of the sixties were responsible for introducing a model of experience which resulted in the discovery of innovative methods that transformed the approaches to problems by experimenting with other areas of knowledge.

As explained by Boutinet (2002, p. 224), since Brunelleschi (1377-1446) the concept of project is marked by a dual temporal division: the first moment is design conception in the studio through models; the second

moment is the execution and realization of the work. Since 1420, the practice of project is divided into specific phases: conception, creation, prototyping, execution and production. This perspective reveals a complexity intrinsic to the context in which research is carried out, because it is the context that provides the data for the project. This is due to the fact that the basis of the project's planning strategies is derived from the logical reflections carried out during the research process, at the same time that theories and abstract thoughts are being built during the realization of the work. This organization of knowledge, resulting from experimentation, is what constitutes the experience of the practice of project. It is thus necessary to point out what distinguishes experimentation from experience based on the methods chosen for executing projects.

Numerous essays were published from the 1920s to the 1960s attempting to elucidate the practice of design, understood as a "science of the project." It was in this context that the theoretical basis for the Culture of Project in university laboratories was established; for example, through the contributions of Horst Rittel from the Design Methods Movement, based on the articulation of knowledge from a variety of fields such as mathematics, computing and architecture.

In the 1980s, the idea of design as science was called into question. Design was understood then as a reflective practice and, in this sense, this empirical approach favored the construction of knowledge through action. For Schön (2000, p. 225), research in the studio leads to a sense of reflection-in-action, thus contributing to construct an epistemology of the project based on scientific information. Reflections on strategies for action are important because they form the basis of the ways to think about design. Thinking as designers, according to Cross (2001, p. 4), turns upside down the notion of design as a discipline, because design thinking can then become a culture. As such, design thinking allows the understanding of new possible approaches for changing behaviors. This leads to the establishment of the science of design, that is, a form of knowledge built by alternating empirical research and scientific reflection. The change in understanding gives rise to a new concept: the science of design.

To think about the autonomy of design thinking involves observing the constitution of hybrid spaces that engage a creative stance in the contact with various fields of knowledge. We should approach design research methods while being aware of the gradual manner in which the various scientific fields intersect. This convergence of multiple forms of knowledge is an organic temporal experience, requiring the designer to adopt multiple strategies for organizing the project context: data collection, research of sources, development of alternative practices in studios, artisanal experiments in workshops, testing of materials and experimental techniques in laboratories. At each phase, different methodological paths are chosen in order to structure the research schedule, the experiments and the production<sup>1</sup>.

According to Goudinoux (2018, p. 57), collaborative scientific practices expanded the creative experience: if in the past the studio was just a place where a singular practice and a solitary experience accentuated the author's individual style, laboratories are now where the notion of authorship is being called into question. It is only by subverting the traditional view of the author that we can approach a complex epistemological structure. Collective agency and collaborative practices play an important role in breaking the hierarchical game that traditionally ranks the various areas of scientific research. However, it is not enough just to think about the mere coexistence of different fields. Different disciplines and their contents should be more holistically integrated, allowing methods to be shared between areas and triggering the construction of new forms of epistemological analysis.

Chomarat-Ruiz (2018, p. 13) reminds us that the difference between studio and laboratory methods is what distinguishes the artisanal process from the scientific practice. The hybridism between such processes allows design to approach art as a means of developing researches capable of overcoming the distinction between art and science. Artistic praxis would have a decisive role in this: to produce sensory knowledge in the face of reality. The hybridism of *poïesis* and *aesthesis* allows design not only to approach art but also, in doing so, to unify the intelligible and the tangible. This meeting subverts research methods in order to overcome the distinction between art and science. This passage, according to the author, is essential for theorizing about laboratory experimentation and to produce knowledge through technical-sensory development in the studio. The science of project can provide art with a new form of transforming the concepts arising from the experience of everyday life and reality.

For Morin (2015, p. 19), this principle is related to the systemic complexity. The notion of complexity implies an association of heterogeneous fields to increase the adoption of transdisciplinary approaches in different fields of knowledge. It is an opening to perceptual processes based on flexible connections of the ecosystem (subject, research object, social space, sciences, practices, etc.) with a paradigmatic shift in the way of understanding reality.

We present here a notion of complexity that aims to address the challenges knowledge production faces in the contemporaneity, a process that is structured by transversal movements that cross methods, areas and

practices of creation and research. This interaction of disciplines allows methods from different fields to intersect. Complexity points to new forms of organizing the application of scientific principles, it transforms epistemological analyzes and leads to the development of alternative approaches to the new disciplines focused on the trans attitude. As Brandão (2008, p. 30) points out, a transdisciplinary orientation intertwines rigor, deviations and an openness to the unknown, the unexpected and the unforeseen.

The engagement in collective practices can help to critically address non-institutional research spaces. From a new collaborative perspective, it is possible to think of forms of cooperation similar to the collectives, redefining the notion of authorship and the traditional conception of the artist or designer. A broader conception of the practice of design as a form of artistic practice calls into question certain aspects of social life in its political, social, economic and biological dimensions (Goudinoux, 2018, p. 58).

Building a mutual intelligibility between various areas of knowledge produces an ecology of collective practices, articulating bodies, ways of life, social groups and the city. The articulation between the studio and the laboratory creates a (dis)possession of the use values of knowledge, thus producing a nomadic knowledge by democratizing signs, symbolization processes and the development of conceptual reasoning. The consequence of this movement is the dissolution of the territories where the cultural capital mobilized and applied by certain groups are classified and qualified.

The (de)monopolization of the practice of project puts group micropolitics in perspective. The personalism of creative practices is thus dissolved in the production of a common sensitivity and a communal body to enable the forms of approach and distancing that make us think of what Nancy (2016, p. 18) called community without community: an inoperative community. It would be, in fact, a community practicing a very specific type of sharing, in which the collective experience shifts the sense of the singular towards a dimension of multiple and plural perceptions. These sharing experiences would take place at a specific time and place.

According to Vercauteren (2018, p. 89), the experimentation with collective devices is essential for experiencing different ways of doing, disrupting, modifying and enriching a practice, based on the quality of the experiences of sharing and their socially woven expressions. The author considers that co-creation practices are not just social devices produced by working methods; they are events that generate other events and new reflections. Such actions problematize the new perspectives that distinguish the moment of questioning from the attempt to find an answer. Collective workspaces are also essential for developing new methods, as they allow problems to be collectively experienced in order to create an ambiance of doubt for the elaboration of questions and experiments. Collective practices instill in the participants the desire to create a conceptual space for posing the questions that will prepare the path of experimentation.

Experimenting with artistic praxis through the abstraction of concepts, in design, reshapes the idea of authorship and the conception of a final product (Boelen, 2014, p. 287). In this process, a co-creation attitude links scientific experience to the temporal experience of life, as it establishes diverse geo-cultural and contextual policies, sensorially intertwining the subject and the objects, the citizen and the city, the creator and the fields of knowledge, etc. Architecture also becomes a complex system, a space in which actions take place. Upon the opening of this free space is formed the relational dimension of the ways of life. We thus understand that architecture can organize some structural elements for articulating the temporal experience of fashion, as space allows us to understand the dimension of the instant. So, it is the sensory experience of contemporary space-time that allows the artistic experience. We suggest that this understanding reveals that the time to come – that is, the future projected by the ideas generated in design research – can be elaborated and realized.

Considering this, we can say that the Radical Design and the Anti-Design movements gently established an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary dialogue with fashion, architecture and art. Fashion presents itself as a metaphysical phenomenon; it expresses a temporal dynamics by marking a disruption, and allows us to distinguish the practices of the past in the face of the innovations of the future. It also accentuates contemporary aesthetic nuances. As Agamben (2009, p. 59) explains, fashion outlines our unique relationship with the contemporary and, by experiencing the “present” of fashion, the designer can capture the inapprehensible threshold of the future. It is at that moment that the designer projects an ethics of the future because he designs a product that will generate new behavior. Fashion lends to the practice of design a certain “premium,” which design uses to establish a very particular relationship with the future. Art engages in this dialogue allowing the knowledge of the sensory experience to be produced through the gesture, that is, through the practice itself (*téchné*) articulating the poetics and the experience of the senses (*aesthesis*).

### **3 Anti-design as an end: reinvention of the object, creation of experience**

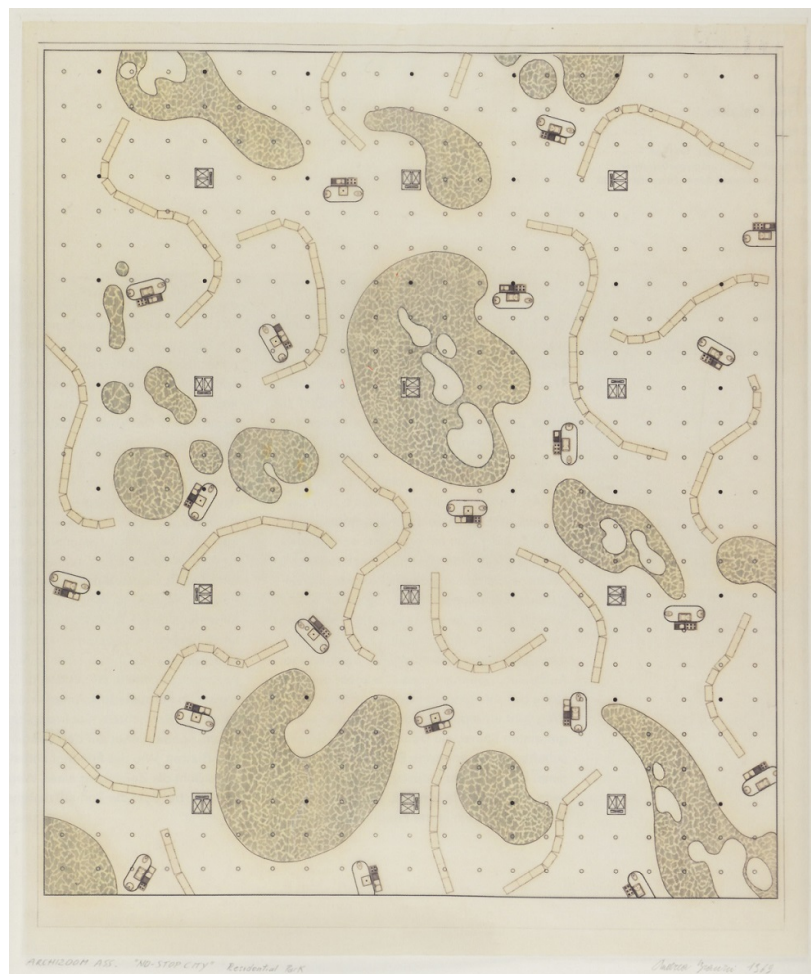
The intersections of architecture, art, design and fashion generate language forms, integrating *artisticity* into the works produced, focusing our attention on the current discussions about the practices of the project in

design. In this scenario, disruptive groups blurred the boundaries between design categories and the aesthetic experiences of conceptual art (RANZO, 2012). It seems that in articulating artistic and architectural methods with design, they inverted ontologically the notion of the project, introducing the idea of coexistence as a function. The project thus becomes an anti-project.

The following Italian groups stand out in this respect: Studio Archizoom (1966), Superstudio (1966), Strum (1966), Global Tools (1973), Studio Alchimia (1976), and Memphis (1981). These avant-garde collectives were based in the cities of Milan, Florence and Turin. They were formed with the aim of developing an avant-garde creative approach, conceptualized as Anti-Design. Their method was based on a critical stance aimed at imagining new ways of inhabiting the world by proposing anti-commercial projects, called anti-design, which prioritized the collective experience of co-creation as a methodical device for design. For its members, the processes developed collectively were important: soirees, performances, writing of manifests and treatises, sketches, drawings, photomontages and utopian projects, which emphasized their protest against established design practices (Schneider, 2010).

In these proposals, we encounter a provocatively ironic tone and a strong, conscious element of play. But in this designing game, the architects show their understanding of what is happening and their wish to have an impact on reality (Menna, 1972, p. 411).

In this paper, we highlight the Studio Archizoom (Figure 1) for its proposals to create environments conceived as theaters of life. Based on this idea, the objective was that objects would embody the personal identity of their users (something very similar to the notion of *stylism* in fashion). For the studio's members, the shape of the object could not be generic, that is, it could not be the same for everybody. The design should offer a plastic variety to represent the cultural diversity of human groups (Garner, 2008). Archizoom's proposals confronted the minimalist canons, prioritizing the transmission of the most unique messages through co-participation processes.



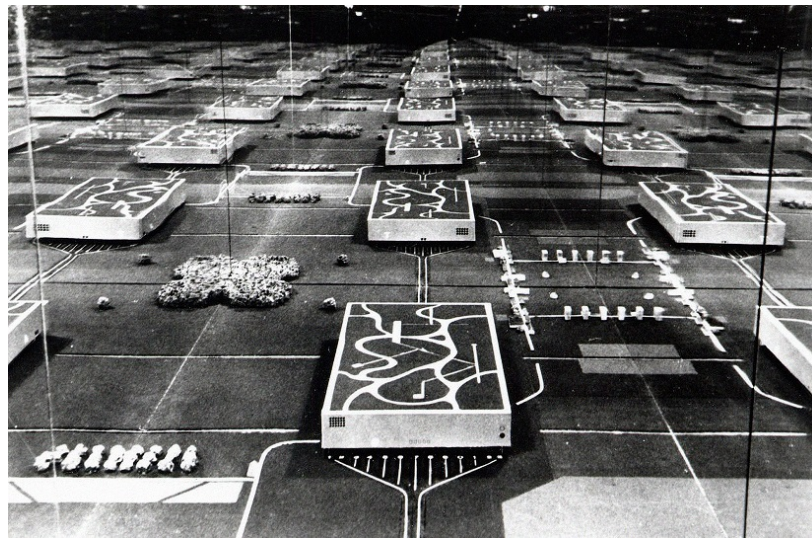
**Fig. 1:** Studio Archizoom, No-Stop City project. Source: Studio Archizoom, 1969. Available at: <http://www.andreabranzi.it/portfolio/no-stop-city-andrea-branzi-archizoom/>. Accessed: 12 May 2020.

Studio Archizoom recognized architecture's complexities and contradictions, understanding that, as a discipline, it could not exist in isolation (Garner, 2008). Thus, its members used the term architecture in an expanded sense, arguing for the adoption of a transdisciplinary architectural practice in constant contact with

technology to seek other ways of organizing city spaces. The anti-designs proposed by the group dialogued with the idea of an ecology of knowledge, promoting an identification with the social environment. The studio broke with previous aesthetic guidelines established without interaction with users (La Pietra apud Dautrey and Quiz, 2014, p. 55).

The destruction of objects, the elimination of the city, and the disappearance of work are closely connected events. By the destruction of objects, we mean the destruction of their attributes of 'status' and the connotations imposed by those in power, so that we live with objects (reduced to their condition of neutral and disposable elements) and not for objects. (Museum of Modern Art, 1972, p. 245)

Studio Archizoom's researches culminate in the No-Stop City project (Figures 1 and 2), developed from 1969 to 1971, which consists of a radical vision for the cities of the future, presenting the city as a place without limits and designing multifunctional furniture, objects and clothing with the aim of occupying its spaces and surfaces (Garner, 2008). The studio's researches aimed at the creation of a continuous, open urban space, abandoning the concept of hermetic spaces. It was a proposal for a free architecture, following a fluid and limitless conception. The occupation of space should not occur by its habitual and pragmatic use, but by the momentary need, in a manner similar to the guidelines of the Situationist movement. The anti-design proposal for No-Stop City was radicalized by integrating the political and cultural tensions between the local and the global. Branzi tells us that "the most important phenomenon we wanted to highlight was precisely that of the most profound transformation of the concept of the city itself" (Ranzo, 2012, p. 28).



**Fig. 2:** Archizoom collective, No-Stop City project. Source: Studio Archizoom, 1969. Available at: <http://architectuul.com/architecture/no-stop-city>. Accessed: 12 May 2020.

Studio Archizoom proposed to blur the boundaries between architecture, art, design and fashion, as each of these fields saw a resurgence of philosophical questions about body and space, time and novelty, aesthetic experience and critical stance, project and improvisation. The studio's proposals opened to questioning a variety of practical situations, engendering new concepts of participatory authorship, often focusing on what contemporary art has understood as social sculpture. This stance suggested some questions regarding the text to Lipovetsky and Serroy, who state:

While the old boundaries are dissolving, a new type of design asserts itself, made up of overlaps, interpenetrations, transversalities. Currently, design, sculpture, fashion (...) everything can mix and become undifferentiated: design no longer has a clearly distinct status. It has become an indeterminate, open, multidimensional universe, and at the same time it can be a utilitarian object, decoration, fashion, art and even a luxury item (Lipovetsky and Serroy, 2015, p. 170, our translation).

In this respect, if the methods chosen for the practices of collective creation did not answer the classic questions of design, they started to be guided by a deviant practice. They adopted deviation as a method and integrated the experience of the strange and the unusual into the practice of design. Using experience as a method enabled each individual to build a conceptual definition for the practices experienced. This process appears, then, as a central element for the systematic conceptualization of collective creation. In this context, the strengthening of the links among language, expression and execution becomes clear. The conceptual repertoire has expanded beyond stylistic influences and has deepened in the application of methods developed in a specific context of interaction: the social life in city spaces.

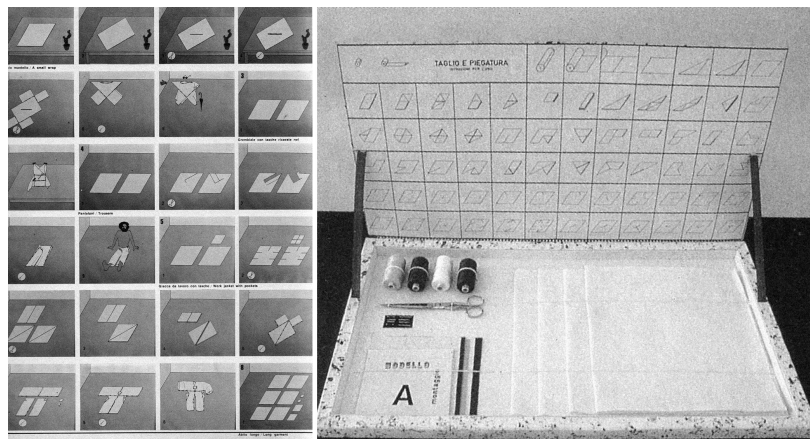
#### 4 Multiple gestures, numerous methods: the autonomy of the co-creative user

In order to address the innovative practices of Anti-Design or of Radical Design, it is necessary to turn to the importance of the power of the individual in the relationship established within the collective experience context. As Vercauteren (2018, p.164) explains, when we are able to establish relationships within a group, we are also able to be aware of our power of acting. Being aware of this strength is part of the *regime of relationships* through which an ecological system is built (Spinoza apud Vercauteren, 2018, p. 165). This regime is the foundation of the *ethos* that determines aesthetic perception in the collective ways of feeling. The nature of these affects is reflected in how individuals build their own way of acting, that is, each participant can create a method for interacting with the work being done. Thus, individuals become free to invent their own proposals or ways of acting. It is the strength of the relationships arising from these encounters that enables the autonomy of co-creation.

According to Vercauteren (2018, p. 169), it is the act of coming together to create collectively that creates the awareness of one's power of acting. In this context, the collective experience not only produces a shared understanding but also increases the capacity for creatively developing new methods. Collective agency provides a dynamic understanding of the cultural interstice of collective experiences as a factor both in sociability and in the construction of the Self (processes of subjectification). Therefore, the projects of these disruptive groups are developed in such a way as to disseminate the creative gesture, enhancing the autonomy of the users to produce their own creations. This multiplication of gestures allows the political dimension of diversified experiences to become a form of social design.

The anti-design No-Stop City, which we mentioned above, was also developed as a proposal for design criticism and the creation of furniture, objects and clothes. The *Vestirsi è facile* series is part of an already mature phase of the collective's researches. The project was carried out in 1973, when the group had already published texts and developed other proposals for clothing production.

In *Vestirsi è facile* (Figure 3), as Siravo (2005) points out, a box/briefcase is presented that, when opened, reveals origami-shaped drawings and a kit for the production of clothes. The box contained 70x70 cm square pieces of fabric, basic sewing materials and an instruction manual on the case cover with a step-by-step guide with illustrations of folding and pleating possibilities, to give the "users-producers" autonomy to create their own clothes. The proposed clothing would be composed of unisex, neutral, flexible and modular garments, which could be modified according to the user's needs.



**Fig. 3:** *Vestirsi è facile* – published in Revista Casabella no. 387. Source: Studio Archizoom, 1973. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/ydgj86s6>. Accessed: 12 May 2020.

The studio's method intends to subvert the temporal boundaries we addressed at the beginning of this paper, as explained by Boutinet (2002, p. 224), since its design principle focuses on a clear conception of a project's procedural steps: ideation, prototyping and realization. In this clothing production experience, design, conception and execution are entirely in the hands of the users, and it is up to them to co-create using the guidelines proposed by the designer. In the *Vestirsi è facile* series, the understanding of the city becomes more complex, incorporated into the clothes that cover the bodies. The human landscape appears as a communication mechanism for cities, reconfiguring the imaginary and structuring new relationships and forms of coexistence. Clothing becomes part of the visual language of the bodies that occupy city spaces and, as such, an expression of a given time. To the extent that these codes are conveyed as an expression of a way of acting that allows the invention of a variety of bodily gestures, the production of these clothes become similar to the phenomenon of fashion. This experience with clothing aims to make the clothes produced unique and, consequently, they become a reference for a community of users.



**Fig. 4:** *Vestirsi è facile* – published in *Revista Casabella* n° 387. Source: Studio Archizoom, 1973. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/ybymymw7>. Accessed: 12 May 2020.

The *Vestirsi è facile* concept (Figure 4) became remarkable for giving users a kind of autonomy in the production process, enabling them to adopt collaborative authorship procedures. At the same time, it proposed a design model that helped the user experience a new way of being in the world. This creation was part of the studio’s systematic confrontation with closed structures, allowing participants in the experience to practice their reflective autonomy in a pedagogical way.

## 5 Disruptive unbalancing as a comprehension system

Still addressing the issue of action – and developing theories and concepts through praxis – we would like to comment on the possibility of creating city experiences using objects and reflection during the act of creation, producing a model of experience that can lead to the discovery of innovative methods, transforming approaches to problems or themes. For that, we will analyze the work *Il Commutatore*, presented below.



**Fig. 5:** *Il Commutatore*, *Comprehension Systems* series. Source: Courtesy *Archivio Ugo La Pietra*, 1970. Milano. Available at: <https://ugolapietra.com/en/the-1970s/il-commutatore/>. Accessed: 12 May 2020.

Returning to Radical Design, we call attention to Ugo La Pietra. As a polymath, he developed projects related to architecture, cartoons, clothing and wearables. He worked as a university professor, critic and also as a graphic designer. According to MOMA’s 1972 catalog of the Radical Design exhibition, “His researches have focused not only on practical problems of mass production and the uses of new materials but also on theoretical problems regarding the morphology and social role of design” (Museum of Modern Art, 1972, p. 224). The work we selected here (Figure 5), called *Il Commutatore*, is part of the “Unbalancing Systems” series. In an interview with Emanuele Quinz, Ugo La Pietra comments on it:

In fact, the *Piano Inclinato (Commutatore)* is a kind of programmatic manifesto, which alludes – through objects suggestive of deviation – to the decoding of the environment and the overcoming of imposed codes. This work and research program was completed by a whole series of interventions (at the same time objects, installations, performances), which I carried out in the 1970s (2014, p. 55, our translation).

The object (Figure 5) is composed of two wooden boards connected by an angular, folding and reclining central axis. It presents itself as a simple object, but shows a great conceptual insight. Leaning against the wooden boards, users place themselves in an unusual position in relation to the urban environment, becoming capable, from then on, to observe the city from new perspectives. The following definition of the *Unbalancing System* can be found on the Ugo La Pietra website (2018):

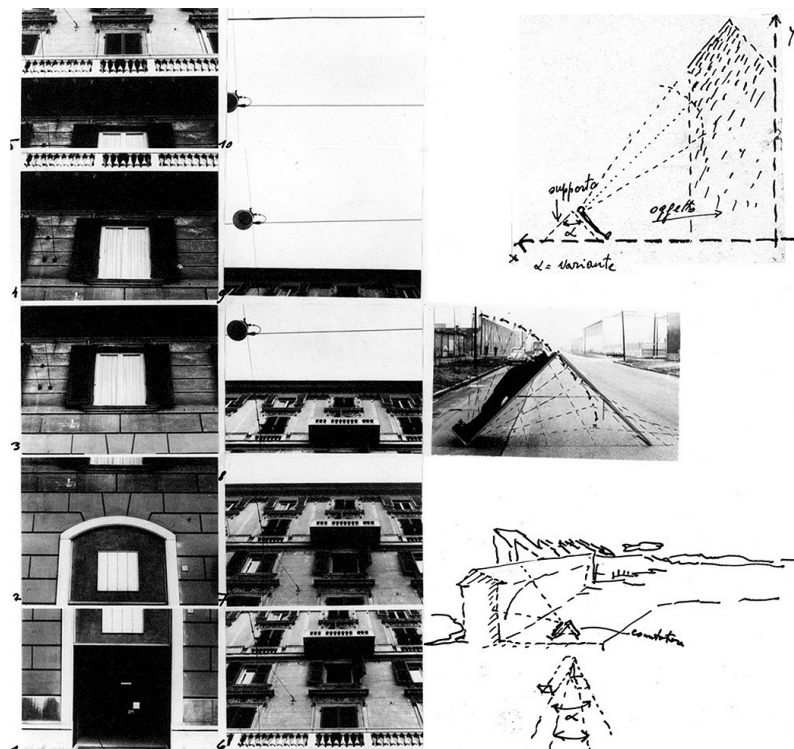


This unusual tool is in a way the hallmark of all La Pietra's explorations of the urban environment. La Pietra has used it many times to see things that were not immediately apparent; he often had other people use it, too. It is a means of exploring and developing ideas, a tool developed at a time when "radical design" was constructing elusive, utopian objects.

The artist's proposal shows his intention to search for a collective practice of producing sensory means of experiencing collectively the city space using wearable objects. This experiment clearly shows the importance of the term *comprehension*. For La Pietra, new forms of collective creation are generated through the *comprehension* of the body-object-space relationship. The users seeks, with this new perspective generated in the relationship with the object, a *comprehension* of the world, that is, the development of a process to experience their creative gestures. According to La Pietra:

Immersion is an invitation to a behavior that departs from reality to discover a kind of 'privacy' that is a separation and a means of testing the possibilities for intervention by way of disruptive elements that can displace codified, traditional terms. In this way, one sets in motion a dynamics of relationship, with the free behavior of the individual giving meaning to the potentialities inherent in the spatial presence. (La Pietra apud Museum of Modern Art, 1972, p. 226)

As Ugo La Pietra states in his interview, this unusual tool marked his explorations of the urban environment in the 1970s. This object allows us to demonstrate design's ability for allowing the body to experience other ways of being in the world, raising, from this experience, a new awareness of the relationship between the body and the object. It uses space to make a sensory approach to clothing as a poetics of the body. The desire to participate in this collective action of wearing objects in the city space constructs the performative dimension of design, with the presence of acting individuals calling attention to the idea of behavior. For this reason, the Italian word *commutatore* is an important index of his work method. In the sense of a switch, this word enables us to comprehend the meaning of the transformation of the practice of project. The term is also used in mathematics – as in the English verb *commute* – to refer to the exchange of factors in an operation. In electronics, the Italian word takes on the meaning of a phase transformer. *Mutare* comes from the Latin for to change; it is an object that allows the user to transform his way of seeing the world.



**Fig. 6:** *Il Commutatore*, Comprehension Systems series. Source: Courtesy Archivio Ugo La Pietra, 1970. Milano. Available at: <https://ugolapietra.com/en/the-1970s/il-commutatore/>. Accessed: 12 May 2020.

La Pietra's projective actions (Figure 6) invite participants to experience a new way of looking at the urban environment in order to transform their comprehension of design. In addition, they also enable new aesthetic experiments in art and architecture. The culture of the project as a methodical conception underscores how much the design found in art a point of contact to express the importance of joining projective action and aesthetic creation through performance actions.

## 6 Final considerations

This paper aimed to present how the methods chosen by designers in the Radical Design movement rehabilitated collective experimentation to build relational situations in design. The notion of situation points to the idea of the performative dimension of art, to a relationship of otherness with space and with the body. Starting from readings of manifestos, construction of poems, treatises, production of collages, and experiments with the plasticity of materials, designers tried to subvert modern rational methods.

The participants in the process of experimenting with design practices produced collaboratively numerous reflections on the socio-political dimension of the relations among subject, bodies, space, objects and cities. The idea here is not that all users can become architects, artists or designers, but that by experimenting with new methods of experiencing design projects, they can experience new functional possibilities of products.

The research methods of radical design and anti-design aimed to sensitize users to the relational dimension of design. This relational dimension concerns both the production of knowledge in the interaction and integration of different scientific fields and the reorganization of aesthetic enjoyment in the city space. The integration of methodological concepts from different fields contributed to the conception of an individual's sensitive behavior in the face of a collective experience; in addition, it enhanced the users' imageries by transfiguring their relationship with the form and function of objects.

We intended to show throughout this paper how some interventions created by designers allowed the user to build a new sense both of the objects and the design. The collective experiences we presented enabled us to perceive the complexity of the methods for developing projects in design.

Our objective was to present how the experiences of Radical Design led users to produce new links between design and life, a historical event that leads us to think of how co-participation or co-creation methods function as devices for experimenting with new behavioral models and fostering collective forms of intelligence. We aimed to present design achievements as allegories of nomadic science, which enables bodies, objects and the city to reflect the continuing transformation of different forms of knowledge and of the territories in which they are produced. We could say that Radical Design presents itself as the proto-history of contemporary Relational Design, producing the coexistence of bodies, objects and the city.

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**1** These spaces could also serve to problematize the paradoxical injunction of design practice, making visible the tension resulting from the conflict between the designer's desire for autonomy and the heteronomy of the capitalist industrial system. Vial (2010, p. 46, our translation) explains to us that "This is why the attitude of expecting designers to design industrial design without compromising themselves vis-à-vis the logic of the industry can be considered a form of coercion to madness, a kind of effort to drive designers crazy". Thus, the reasonable option to the design production paradox is to consider the market not as an end, but as a means.