

EDITED BY SALVATORE ZINGALE

**DESIGN** CASE STUDIES, PROJECT  
EXPERIENCES, COMMUNICATION  
CRITICISM

**MEETS ALTERITY**

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# Design della comunicazione

*La collana Design della comunicazione nasce per far emergere la densità del tessuto disciplinare che caratterizza questa area del progetto e per dare visibilità alle riflessioni che la alimentano e che ne definiscono i settori, le specificità, le connessioni. Nel grande sviluppo della cultura mediatica la presenza del Design della comunicazione è sempre più trasversale e in continua espansione. La comunicazione richiede un sapere progettuale là dove la cultura si fa editoria, dove i sistemi di trasporto si informatizzano, dove il prodotto industriale e i servizi entrano in relazione con l'utente. Il Design della comunicazione è in azione nella grande distribuzione dove il consumatore incontra la merce, nella musica, nello sport, nello spettacolo, nell'immagine delle grandi manifestazioni come nella loro diffusione massmediale. La collana è un punto di convergenza in cui registrare riflessioni, studi, temi emergenti; è espressione delle diverse anime che compongono il mondo della comunicazione progettata e delle differenti componenti disciplinari a esso riconducibili. Oggetto di studio è la dimensione artefattuale, in tutti i versanti del progetto di comunicazione: grafica editoriale, editoria televisiva, audiovisiva e multimediale, immagine coordinata d'impresa, packaging e comunicazione del prodotto, progettazione dei caratteri tipografici, web design, information design, progettazione dell'audiovisivo e dei prodotti interattivi, dei servizi e dei sistemi di comunicazione complessa, quali social network e piattaforme collaborative.*

*Accanto alla dimensione applicativa, l'attenzione editoriale è rivolta anche alla riflessione teorico-critica, con particolare riguardo alle discipline semiotiche, sociologiche e massmediologiche che costituiscono un nucleo portante delle competenze del designer della comunicazione.*

*La collana si articola in due sezioni. I SAGGI accolgono contributi teorici dai diversi campi disciplinari intorno all'area di progetto, come un'esplorazione sui fondamenti della disciplina. Gli SNODI ospitano interventi di raccordo disciplinare con il Design della comunicazione.*

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Edited by Salvatore Zingale

## **Design Meets Alterity**

Case Studies, Project Experiences, Communication Criticism

**FrancoAngeli** 

# Editorial Translations, Forms of Otherness Communication Design as Writing of the Other. The Cultural Turning Point of Independent Magazines

## 1. Translation and otherness

Communication design as an act of translation moves fully and constitutively within the scenarios of otherness. It comes to terms with nuclei of otherness that deeply mark its disciplinary statute. If in general, as the main distinctive feature, communication design seems aimed at the continuous construction of dialogic positions through the artefacts that belong to it, there are nevertheless aspects that return its relationship with the dimensions of otherness in terms of greater complexity. One of these is precisely the close relationship between design and translation.

The *translation paradigm* and its declinations in the field of design have in fact highlighted aspects of theoretical awareness that have now clearly established themselves also in application terms (Baule and Caratti 2016a, 2016b).

For two main reasons. In the first place, because designed communication, *communicative translation*, is already in itself a framework that synthesizes *other* languages, different from each other, through a sort of uninterrupted “internal” translation: what we can consider an exercise of first-level otherness.

Secondly, because communication, in its inherent mission of outward projection, by generating its own devices, becomes something *other* to reach the *other* and/or to talk *about the other* – or *with the other*. At this dual level, the point of view of otherness continually emphasizes the asymmetry inherent in the communication process and marks it structurally. The translational tension of project communication then confirms communication as a structured system of otherness in the most diverse meanings. And if communication is based on this dense network of tensions in the field of otherness, on closer inspection it is precisely this system of otherness that makes it flexible and available for its primary function, for

*conversation* with the *other* rather than pure transmission.<sup>1</sup> In this light, communication design can be reconsidered according to a double line of investigation, converging in several parts, which we will try to express here. The first is related to the very structure of communicative discourse; the second, of a thematic type, exemplifies *where* and *how* the design line of otherness is exemplarily expressed in terms of content, as is the case with independent magazines, a historically privileged medium in the field of *other* cultures.

## 2. For a map of communicative otherness

As far as the structural and process aspects are concerned, if communication in itself presents itself as a place of intersection between *other* languages that must meet – their destiny is the *meeting* –, communication techniques as such are confirmed as a truly translational field. Let's think, in this regard, of the nature of *mixed media* (Mitchell 2018: 135): it deals in an essential way with the intersemiotic plane starting from the text-image dialectic – object of the studies on the *imagetext* (*ibidem*) –; it is confirmation of the principle of “coherent tension of opposites”, that form of «continuous transition between opposites» where «opposites never cease to “communicate” with each other in a structural unity» (Jullien 2018: 49). It is the intermediary nature of communication, which digitization has decisively brought to the fore, that acquires particular emphasis in the hybrid devices that are dominant today.

The communicative artefacts, as they belong to the intermediate<sup>2</sup> circuit and are the result of *remediation* processes (Bolter and Grusin 1999) – *other media* that conflict, quote, meet – in turn only refer to the intrinsic nature of translation and the game of the otherness implicit in the production processes of communication. They bear witness to that «media life form»

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<sup>1</sup> «[...] communicating is not transmitting. In spite of dictionaries which monotonously, because they are prisoners of the same prejudice, define communication as transmission, in the etymology of the word communicating there is no reference to transmitting, there is instead the *cum*, the *communis*, the common and the community, and above all there is the *munus*, the gift and/or reciprocal obligation that concerns subjects who share a common place» (Ronchi 2008: 200).

<sup>2</sup> «[...] the audiovisual paradigm I am thinking of rests on the assumption that, only by starting from an active comparison between the various technical formats of the image (optical and digital, for example), can one do justice to the irreducible otherness of the real world and proof of the facts, media and otherwise, that happen there» (Montani 2010: xii).



(Montani 2010: 13) which sees one medium inside another, up to the effects of fusion and immediacy of the immersive experience defined as *hypermediation* (Bolter and Grusin 1999: 99).

Even the level of the image act pushes today, in full digital mode, to investigate the consequences of the infinite manipulability of images as a sort of intra-semiotic short circuit; up to touching the hypothetical fall of the «referential performance of images» (Montani 2010: 20) which necessarily affects the very status of images, their power to refer to *other*, as is evident in the debate on *photography* (Marra 2006; Fontcuberta 2018).

Or yet again. The boundaries of the image relating to the *offscreen* (Guerra 2020) and, more generally, the *communicative offscreen*, function at the same time as a concealment but also as a disclosure of the *other* through the *pressure of the offscreen* (*ibidem*). The *other*, ousted from the frame, without showing themselves speaks to us with their absence.

If the question of otherness, understood as distance or detachment from *reality*, questions the referential pact of images and of communication *tout court*, therefore their documentary consistency, can also suggest communicative outcomes such as the interdependence between fiction and documentation (Martinengo 2021) in info-narrative formats. But above all it pushes us to question ourselves about that *debt of testimony* that Ricoeur reminds us of (1985: 214) i.e. the «testimonial commitment (the debt of the image towards its other)» (Montani 2010: xiv).

Or: in identity design (*identity design, naming, etc.*), when the communicative device names the *other* by imposing a name, even in strictly functional versions such as *brand identity*, it tends to resolve aspects of otherness by approving them. Moreover, for example in the field of toponymy, it would be «of great cognitive value for the theory of terrestrial globalization if we could have a detailed history of the policy of geographical denomination of the last five centuries. [...] It could also represent the way in which the semantic side of that dis-estrangement from the world that Europeans had instinctively practised together with naming, unfolded in the history of world names» (Sloterdijk 2014: 854, authors' translation).

Even the theoretical assumption of *interface design* (Anceschi 1993) highlights communication as a diaphragmatic device, a system that connects, maintaining their separateness, two spheres, two worlds with each *other*. The communicative project insinuates itself into the interstice between

these two areas, connecting them in their distinction. This confirms that the *devices of otherness*, by their constitutive nature and by referential tension, have a strong threshold potential. Furthermore, it is the design of the interface that introduces us to the aspects of communicative interaction. Communication design appears as a whole, at least on a methodological level, as a *tactical* knowledge, where «tactics has as its place just that of the other» (De Certeau 1980: 72 et seq., authors' translation), where the relationship with the other is a vocation for doubling, resulting in an ubiquitous accent.

The design process of communication design itself can be read as a continuous dialogue with the *other*, and in a double form: the *other within themselves* of the designer who, as the first addressee, wonders about the effectiveness of languages and devices which they put into practice; then, with the simulation of an *other* recipient, the hypothesis of a target *other than themselves*. If *target* is, for those who plan communication, the framing of an objective outside of itself, the gaze that aims at a clearly identifiable *other*, a critique of the *target* as a standardized construction of the other, pursuit of the other through stereotyping is nevertheless required (see for example Bassetti 2008). The beneficial training of the communication designer also follows: that oriented to the constant exercise of going *beyond oneself* – the peculiar sensitivity that distinguishes them from pure artistic practice –, oriented to the recognition and deconstruction of a *communicative self* often smugged as an expression of the right to authorship, devoted to self-referentiality where the sense of the *other* fails.

The design of artefacts and communication systems is therefore a practice that constitutively and incessantly confronts the dimension of the *other*, measures itself by necessity with the *original debt*, the *fracture*, the *waste* (Jullien 2018). Assuming this perspective, communication design is called on to design *devices for otherness*. Therefore, in its processes, it presupposes a continuous exercise on the level of otherness, in relation to which a map, albeit provisional, could be drawn, a *map of communicative otherness*.

In the statute of communication design, otherness is not only the possible object of communication but it is the subject that roots its deep structure. If this intrinsic interrelationship between communication project and otherness is not grasped, there is the risk of an exclusive standardisation in terms of content. Instead, it is in the depths of the device of communica-

tion itself, in the structure of the individual artefacts, that the dialectic of otherness is already at work, in turn representing the drive towards a continuous negotiation of the limits of communication.

On a general level, communication design can then be assimilated to the *writing forms of the other* (De Certeau 2005); consequently, with the communicative translation a relationship is established with the *other* in a pact of mutual understanding. *Editorial translation*, as a form of content, and therefore an integral part of communication design, should then be understood as an act of hospitality (Jabès 1991): a language that becomes *other* to reach out and recognize the *other*. Just as the *other communication* and the *other publishing*, like all forms of counter-communication, have been placed for over half a century as an expression of dissident thought dedicated to other contents – or “counter-cultures” (see Eco 1972). Starting from these considerations, in the context of editorial design products, those artefacts belonging to the area of independent magazines that make otherness their communication axis appear emblematic. Where, as has been said, the *other* is not only “described” or prefigured but is “inscribed” in the communicative act itself.

### **3. Reference context and classification criteria**

That independent magazines represent the principle of otherness with respect to a dominant culture is an established fact. The experimental nature of the formats, the quality of the media (the paper size is one of the most characterizing elements), the refinement of the verbal-visual languages, alongside a careful, critical and reflective treatment of topics, are the characterizing elements that qualify a publishing sector, very vital internationally. Independent magazines represent an alternative from a temporal point of view: they do not experience the time compression of mainstream magazines, they can choose to operate at different speeds (issues can even transcend rigid programming times) and on different scales. They have no limitations even from a spatial point of view, both in material and immaterial form. Over the last decade, not only have new publications arisen and are being generated every day in the most disparate areas of the world, but also physical places and online points of sale have multiplied.

The whole of magazines to refer to has expanded and the visibility of small-circulation projects has increased. The editorial offices can have

a position linked to a specific geographical context, or they can be made up of subjects who interact remotely with contents and purposes of common interest. The topics dealt with and the areas of reference are varied, but more focused, and often come together in a cultural programme declared in the form of a manifesto; the readers themselves form small communities defined thematically and interested in specialized content (Marcadent 2020: 57).

Within the rich panorama of independent editorial proposals, we have identified some magazines that come from situations or countries that are generally underrepresented or that do not represent themselves. This assumption has allowed us to grasp different translation methods, beyond the limits of the Western imagination and beyond any type of racial prejudice.

In this contribution we summarize a series of editorial projects aimed at affirming the concept of identity or cultural diversity, moved by a desire for redemption and as an alternative to a limiting vision in which «the other is a distinct plurality» (Arduini 2020: 42).

The criteria with which we analysed the magazines are linked to four possible paths of cultural interaction (Burke 2008) in terms of: *cultural homogenization*, *resistance*, *biculturalism* and *hybridization*. These categories derive from a different vision of the world and from a different way of being *oneself*, through dialogue or in contrast with the idea of an *other than oneself*.

In the panorama of the magazines analysed, we found on the one hand highly ethnocentric magazines (associated with phenomena of cultural resistance), on the other magazines attributable to phenomena of cultural creolization and hybridization (ethno-related). Intermediate situations were also found, in correspondence with magazines that represent the outcome of cultural homogenization processes.

We specify that with “ethnocentric” we mean a vision that sees the centrality of one’s own experience as opposed to that of others; with “ethnorelative” a position in which one’s own culture is experienced in the context of other cultures (Castiglioni 2005: 14-15).

The main assumption is that the more the experience of cultural difference is open to dialogue and interaction with the other, the more new cultural syntheses and new ways of conceiving the publishing project itself are possible.

#### 4. Cultural homogenization

India, in relation to its past as a British colony, was, together with many other British colonies, for a long time relegated to occupying a marginal geographical and cultural position with respect to the United Kingdom (Buonanno 2009: 119). Together with other countries, it fell within a melting pot of different cultures defined with a derogatory connotation of *black culture* due to the colour of the skin.

In the last fifty years the term *black* has become an umbrella term aimed at giving a sense of unity, of sharing to cultural practices implemented by young people who were educated and specialized in Great Britain and later returned to their home country. In many cases artists, writers, musicians have initiated a series of cultural practices aimed at overcoming discrimination, but above all at offering a new perception of their own country.

This is the case of the first magazine taken into consideration, «Cocoa & Jasmine», whose name derives from the scents of the cocoa fields of Coonoor and from the jasmine of Madurai. It is an independent annual Indian magazine, established in 2018 within a communication agency (<[www.cocoaandjasmine.com](http://www.cocoaandjasmine.com)>) on the initiative of Sayali Goyal, a young fashion designer trained in London.

The magazine arose from a series of experiences and travel documents by Sayali herself in India and in other countries around the world, with the aim of changing the way people see and experience India, but, at the same time, to create possible connections with other cultures.

Issue 3 of the 2021 magazine (rectangular in size, 210 x 280 mm) is dedicated to Mexico, Morocco and India (one third of the magazine deals with the cultures of foreign countries, while two thirds concern India itself).

The aim is to highlight the similarities between the three countries starting from the symbols found within their material culture (in the fabrics, in the decorations of objects, in the architecture). The contents in text form and the photographs, made largely by Sayali herself, arise from a series of interviews with local artisans or artists; there are also short biographical experiences written by emerging artists.

The general layout of the magazine has a simple structure (a single serif typeface for the entire issue). There are colour photographs (a single illustration) alongside text in one or two columns. Most of the photos reproduce details of objects or fabrics, or architectural elements. Rarely do local

people appear, if any, filmed while they are crafting. The only full frontal figures refer to people interviewed who enjoy a prominent social position. The cover was printed on recycled cotton paper and the magazine has a total number of 128 internal pages (the value of environmental sustainability characterizes the activities of the agency itself).

This magazine, entirely in English, is part of the trend of travel magazines that draw inspiration from cultural anthropology research. The magazine does not yet express a consolidated coordinated image (previous issues are completely different), and appears decidedly anchored to a homogenizing and stereotyped vision of the world that does not fully value cultural differences but rather standardises them.

Although the magazine is aimed at translating textually, and largely photographically, the specificities of India or of countries considered similar, no characteristic features of any country emerge; it is as if it ideally crystallized people, places and local traditions according to a standardized model, through clichés (only beauty, only well-being, only lightness).

In brief, it is as if the pages of the magazine still had that *Englishness* that shapes everything in its own likeness, refusing to show the otherness of the countries represented; in fact, the magazine does not express its own specificity in an incisive way, but conforms in contents and expressive languages to other travel magazines that we find in the West.

## 5. Resistance and cultural defence

According to Paul Ricoeur (2004) there is no absolute criterion for a good translation:

for such a criterion to be available, it should be possible to compare the source text and the target text with a third text carrying the identical sense that one assumes circulates from the first to the second. The same thing said from one side and the other. [...] Hence the paradox, even before the dilemma: a good translation can only aim at a presumed *equivalence*, not based on a demonstrable *identity* of meaning. [...] This equivalence can only be sought, worked on, presumed. And the only way to criticize a translation – which can always be done – is to propose another, allegedly, claimed to be better or different. (Ricoeur 2004: 40, authors' translation)

«Kajet Journal» represents, in its intent, the third text, a space for cultural renegotiation and rewriting. We are referring to an international magazine in English, created, designed and printed in Bucharest since 2017, thanks to the initiative of Petrică Mogoș and Laura Naum.

Currently four issues have been printed, and since the first issue their intentions have been openly declared: to overturn prejudices, stereotypes and anecdotal representations of Eastern Europe and build new bridges by opening up to others.

The first issue (dimensions 165 x 230 mm), printed in a thousand copies, contains a real manifesto, which is re-proposed on the corresponding website (<<https://kajetjournal.com>>).

«Kajet» challenges cultural Eurocentrism with a well-designed publication, both in content and form. The first issue contains an introductory letter addressed to readers in which the meaning and objectives of the magazine are specified; following on are 18 essays accompanied by 18 visual projects created by 40 writers and artists, for a total of 240 pages. The layout is based on the book format, divided into five main sections; the editors state that the name of the magazine – *Kajet* – is an orientalized version of the French *Cahier*.

Overall, there is an extreme refinement both in the layout of the texts (in one or two columns) and in the iconographic apparatus, which includes: illustrations, a collage, documentary photos or historical archive photos, with additional contrasting graphic signs (as it appears on the front cover). On the one hand, the magazine recognizes the significant traits and contradictions that characterize Eastern Europe: «A boiling cauldron, a crucible, a constellation in fusion with its own power struggles, a world driven by internal social dynamics tainted by congenital corruption, as well as by stubborn memories that refuse to fade»; but at the same time it claims the right to disseminate its culture in all its components beyond prejudices. Only in these terms is it possible to break down every barrier by supporting a broader vision, open to dialogue and mutual respect.

## 6. Biculturality

It is now quite a widespread issue to be bicultural, i.e. refer to a local language and at the same time communicate through another language (see the term EFL, English as a Foreign Language), to participate in culture on a global scale (Burke 2008: 97).

There are cases in which the two languages are not on an equal footing, and then we speak of “cultural diglossia” (coexistence of two linguistic codes, one of which is considered inferior to the other). But there are cases in which, following exposure to a second culture beyond that of belonging, two linguistic registers are used equally and in an undifferentiated way, in other words they are recognized as having equal dignity. This is the case of the independent magazine «Safar», designed in 2014 by the Lebanese graphic studio of the same name.

It is a biennial and bilingual magazine, English and Arabic, published in Beirut, dealing with design and visual culture. In fact, the subtitle reads as follows: *flirt with, flee from, and fall for graphic design and visual culture*.

The term *Safar* in Arabic means “journey” and the magazine itself wants to represent a journey around a chosen theme, across disciplinary, cultural and linguistic boundaries. According to the authors, it was designed to remedy the scarcity of critical contributions on design in the global south and to give a voice to designers considered active agents of cultural production. One of the most interesting aspects of this project is the close integration between Lebanese culture and Western culture. This co-presence of two cultures is highlighted by the presence of a double cover, in English on the front (for a progressive reading of the text from left to right), in Arabic on the back (according to a reading that proceeds from right to left starting from the last page).

This co-presence of cultures also characterizes the magazine from a conceptual and political point of view. Since the culture of design was created and codified in the West, the magazine pursues the objective of providing Lebanon with an opportunity for cultural study of the design sphere, with the possibility of creating neologisms or new linguistic interpretations (<[www.stackmagazines.com/magazine/safar-issue-5](http://www.stackmagazines.com/magazine/safar-issue-5)>).

Overall, the magazine has 208 pages, with a rectangular format of 275 x 210 mm.

Its readers are represented by a rich community of designers, architects and researchers, or more simply by people interested in the art and culture of Western Asia and North Africa.

Number five of the magazine, for example, has migration as its central theme; more specifically, the cover story consists of an interview with Tsi-gereda Brihanu and Mekdes Yilma, two Ethiopian women, activists and



domestic workers, who share their experiences related to “Kafala”, the sponsorship system used to exploit many vulnerable migrant workers in Lebanon.

The stories of these women are emphasized in the photographic representation on the double cover: in the foreground, the first woman (Mekdes) wears a doubtful expression on the English front cover, while the second (Tsigereda) smiles on the Arabic back cover.

The inside pages are printed in a combination of colours that recall the double cover: yellow, green, dark pink and white. The text is printed in contrast against the coloured background: green on yellow, photographic pages on a pink background or indefinite colours, green on white for in-depth panels, infographics or line illustrations on a white, pink or grey background to create a rhythm and avoid monotony while the images progress without text.

Full-page photographs are intended to contextualize the interviews or to render the portrait of the interviewer and the interviewee. The text of three short stories takes on different colours on a white background but is flanked by line illustrations in black and white. A succession of images relating to an international exhibition for Palestine skims over a uniform green background with double captions in yellow. The lead article appears at the end of the magazine (English reading progression) or at the beginning of the magazine (Arabic reading progression). Alongside the interview translated into two columns in English and Arabic, a series of full-page photographs appear that represent the subjects and the reference context in a realistic or evocative way.

Despite multiple local difficulties (Beirut is going through a serious economic, political and social crisis), the magazine continues to operate with a view to promoting the confrontation between East and West through a series of online and offline intercultural initiatives.

## **7. Cultural hybridization**

When two cultural universes come into contact, *interculture* is created, which presupposes a dynamic contiguity between two cultures in which interaction and mutual exchange are central («Safar» is a paradigmatic example). A subsequent step, *transculturality* or, in other words, cultural hybridization, is part of a broader perspective that presupposes a common

work between people of different cultures moved by common goals. The result is new cultural syntheses and the consequent emergence of new forms of creative collaboration.

An example of this is the award-winning editorial project «Migrant», which is one of the independent magazines that deal with the phenomenon of migration.

The innovative point of view is that the project, which includes six issues (from 2016 to 2019), arose as a collective initiative within a working group made up of migrants from different geographical areas: a Portuguese living in Norway, a German and an Austrian based in Switzerland, a Frenchman living in London; and later (from number 3) a Spaniard living in London, and a German woman working in Moscow. The project was initially launched on Kickstarter, the goal was to create a paper magazine to be distributed through book stores.

As the founders of the magazine state:

Migrant's issues are incredibly multifaceted in content, with each issue handling one specific theme. The first, Across Country, looks at the countryside as a space of migration; the second, Wired Capital, is about the movement of information, money and human labour; Flowing Grounds moves to the sea and sky as migratory spaces; Dark Matters looks at migration that happens by night, or in illegal or invisible contexts; Micro Odysseys is about movement in small scales, like bacteria or sand; while the final issue, the newly released Foreign Agents, examines the movement of culture. (<[www.itsnicethat.com/features/migrant-journal-publication-graphic-design-100619](http://www.itsnicethat.com/features/migrant-journal-publication-graphic-design-100619)>, accessed 20 August 2021)

Contents and graphic design have been developed in an integrated way, each issue of the magazine is distinguished by two colours which take on a symbolic value in relation to the theme dealt with; we find the two colours on the cover (which in turn has a paper of a different texture), but also within the images and illustrations:

So for us, it was important to have the right paper, especially for the cover. Because we're creating this experience, affecting how people remember things with a special touch or a metallic colour. It's not about being a luxury product, though, but more about conveying the stories in a way that is different from on-

line. (Isabel Seiffert, <[www.itsnicethat.com/features/migrant-journal-publication-graphic-design-100619](http://www.itsnicethat.com/features/migrant-journal-publication-graphic-design-100619)>, accessed 20 August 2021).

All issues of the magazine feature the Migrant Grotesk typeface (designed by Christoph Miler and Isabel Seiffert) and the Akzidenz Grotesk for service texts.

Note that the Migrant Grotesk font is an evolution of Akzidenz Grotesk, designed to emphasize the idea of migration between countries and continents:

“It is movement that is defined by constant stops and goes”, says Christoph. “You move organically through the landscape, following your own path, but then you encounter a checkpoint, a border, a visa office, and your movement comes to an abrupt stop. We wanted to reflect these ambiguous ways of movement within a journey and this is why Migrant Grotesk has smooth curves but also hard edges that contrast in a weird way”. (Christoph Miller, <[www.itsnicethat.com/features/migrant-journal-publication-graphic-design-100619](http://www.itsnicethat.com/features/migrant-journal-publication-graphic-design-100619)>, accessed 20 August 2021).

Alongside the chromatically treated illustrations and photographs, we find numerous maps and infographics, visual components that strongly characterize each migration. The front cover flyleaf features a United Nations geoscheme that divides the world’s countries into regions and sub-regions, grouped on a statistical basis; this configuration constitutes a sort of summary visual index indicating the countries taken into consideration in the internal articles. The magazine has seen close collaboration between editors and designers, roles that overlap and reinforce each other in terms of content research and the search for sophisticated expressive languages. This can be seen from the close correlation between the multiplicity of contents (the phenomenon of migration underlies different narratives) and the visual translation of the magazine with attention to every detail.

Bringing us back to the theme of otherness, «Migrant» represents an exemplary case of cultural hybridization, where openness to the *other*, in their difference, is confirmed as a resource and an incentive to produce new creative syntheses of value.

## 8. Conclusions

Starting from a redefinition of communication design as *writing of the other*, both on the structural level of the communication production process and on the level of the designed artefacts, we have placed the accent on four distinct forms of contemporary independent magazines which constitute the outcome of a series of translation processes in the publishing field, but at the same time a synthesis of the forms of self-representation of cultures considered “other” compared to the West.

If, as Di Giovanni and Bollettieri Bosinelli (2009) argue, the West in the past has attempted several times and on several fronts to forge otherness in its own image and resemblance/dissemblance, conditioning the voices of others and adapting them to its own universe of values. Through independent publishing the possibility seems to open up of bringing to light the writings, images and experiences of those who we should by now define the *former others*.

In these terms, editorial translation as *put into the form of content* highlights a series of operational-process steps (the methods of translation and its possible declinations), but also the versatility in terms of cultural, linguistic and ideological options connected to the cultural context of reference, the need for self-representation or the intent to establish new forms of cultural hybridization in the relationship other than oneself.

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The **QUESTION OF ALTERITY** has become fundamental to understanding contemporary societies, which are increasingly multicultural, multi-ethnic and intersectional. That which is **OTHER** poses questions that one is not used to answering, poses itself as a term of contradiction, questioning established certainties and beliefs.

Alterity is a field yet to be explored, especially when one wants to move from theoretical reflection, inevitable and necessary, to transformative praxis.

Reflection on alterity leads to the **ABANDONMENT OF ALL FORMS OF CENTRALISM**. Acceptance of a culture based on the recognition of alterity and mutual responsibility requires overcoming anthropocentrism and androcentrism, but also Eurocentrism and logocentrism, that is, the domination of some forms of communication and signification over all others. Today, it is legitimate to think that the design dimension can also undertake research paths that highlight **THE NEED TO RECOGNISE THE OTHER**: from migratory flows to gender cultures, from social fragility to mental health, from cultural distances to the difficulties of social integration, etc. This is the direction in which the essays in this volume are heading. Design culture has the right tools to promote innovative and open visions of relations between people, peoples, and languages.

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