LUXURY AFTER LUXURY

It's nice to see sometimes how reality can go beyond fantasy and how the future is nothing else than what we are able to fantasize in the present. If not like this, at the question "which mean of transport would you like to experience" people would still respond "a pedigree four-horses-tracking coach instead of a two". Nonetheless, at the question "which container would you like to use for travelling" they would respond "an all-over logo leather trunk instead of a simple wooden one". In contrary, we are able today to travel in the space for scientific matters and for pleasure as well. We can share huge quantities of documents in compressed formats across the metaverse. Because of globalization and the internet, time and space as we used to consider them, aren't making sense any longer, history and geography are overlapping in the moment of a finger tap, and the cartography of luxury is changing. The promising fashion designer Giulio Parigi, presenting his Urban Nomads artwork, told: "my collection has birth in the world, my world, a planet where there are no more boundaries". The Afghan costumes are made of tartan, the tribe is enlarged, the diverse cultures are becoming one universal *coolture*. Travelling is an inner mobility and an outer stationarity as well. In Andrea Incontri's design, the waiting moments along a physical journey can be more important than the final destination (which is usually preordered) and because of this a bag can be conceived more for enjoying emotional pit stops than for its traditional function (bringing cumbers on one's side). The man after man can use a bag for different purposes, the accessory can become central like in the primitive era, the occasion can shift from function to emotion, and the industry has to have a visionary mindset for detecting a far-reach change of this kind, for responding with a technological innovation and for making a new suitable product available. Now, are luxury brands aware that time and space are not existing as we are defining and re-defining them? Are they aware that the dogma of immutability (if not eternity) is buried under the Berlin Wall (if not in Wall Street)? Do they consider that luxury is not immune to the Zeitgeist's mutations and because of that also to the mid and long term tendencies (if not trends)? I'm afraid most of them are not, especially the majors. If fashion is full of contr[addiction]s like "menswear is the new womenswear", "colors are the new white and black", "Photoshop is the new cosmetic", or "ugliness is the new beauty", nowadays luxury is characterized by three im[mutation]s, three sliding doors between being immune to changes and being mutant in a positive (if not productive) way: management vs. creativity, heritage vs. innovation and ultimately luxury itself vs. low-cost.

Management vs. creativity. When LaChapelle portrayed the rapper Lil Kim's naked body printed with all-over bag-like logos, he embedded unconsciously (if not consciously) an hyper-realistic message. Women are defining their identity through the bag they hang (and this is one of the reasons for which even in times of crisis the sales of iconic bags are not decreasing). The bag, containing all the possible personal effects, is a metaphor of the body. So, in this case, leather is the skin. When women around the world or in a specific country are hanging all the same bag with the same logos, the management of a brand can scream loud victory, women a bit less because then their skin is becoming the leather. Nicole Tran Ba Vang's picture of a sewed and unsewed back of a woman is very telling about. When the power of a specific product and its connected brand is so high, the risk is a change of role between subject and object of purchase. The woman's identity becomes preordered like a bag in a shop and like the final destination of a trip. It's not her personality choosing the bag, but the brand giving a standardized one to her. The woman is purchased by what she's purchasing and consumed by what she's consuming. This is the final outcome of a specific managerial choice some luxury companies made starting from the late Seventies, not only for leather accessories but for all the categories of product, garments and fragrances included: serializing what previously handcrafted and decreasing the creative contents to the minimum in order to target broad and shallow, beyond any local specificity and any personal sensibility. After all, if a product doesn't displease to anybody, it can reach everybody, it's the same theory of broadcasting in the generalist media. Like Walter Benjamin underlined, an object is loosing its aura when serially reproduced, consequently in order for this strategy to work, the attention has been focused on the logo, a new artificial aura, a graphic mark made for an audience to connect with a brand without having the need in every single occasion to go through the understanding of its values. Now, when a brand is keeping alive the game of encryption and decryption of its values, it's physiological. When a brand is giving up the values for selling a theoretical encryption of them, it's pathological. At this point we are so far from Michel Maffesoli's *glutinum mundi*, the aesthetics as a feeling, the dialectical relationship between being subject and being part of a group, we are at the opposite in the field of the raw industrial patterns, mass-somatized, embodied in the figure of a kind of humanoid called *replicant*. It's not the man after man, it's an entity in which corporeal and corporate aspects are overlapping, a *corporate cannibal* like Grace Jones would sing. Well, what's happening if one day the *replicant* is realizing of having been programmed to respond one specific name of brand whenever stimulated by a less specific name of category of product? What's happening if realizing of having been living in a script written by somebody else? It's still coming up to my mind the scene of Blade Runner where the *replicant* Rachel is realizing that her memories are not hers and while doing this she's pouring human tears, so assuming a more respectable status because becoming conscious and able to feel non-preordered emotions. Even though the standardized products are, because of the law of the large numbers, always performing in terms of total revenues, in the so called mature markets women are starting to behave more and more like Rachel, with the consequence that serial products are becoming entry levels to luxury for teenagers, that the artificial aura of the logo is showing itself in all its fakeness, and that to be top of mind doesn't grant to be bestseller any longer. Moreover, as the so called emerging markets are influenced by the mature ones and the life cycles of consumption are recurrent, before or after they will show up many Rachels too, crying crocodile tears before and more human after, like we actually already did. The point is, while a globalizing brand has everything to gain by flattening its luxury original values in the mid term, in the long term it's loosing the possibility of being leader in lifestyle and aesthetics, which for luxury like for fashion is everything, as quality has become a precarious value. In fact, having been keen for decades to a mass-somatized industrial pattern prevents the brand to be exclusive and unique, but above all to introduce any minimal creative content without risking the winning format to fuse. Can we really pretend a couple of luxury tycoons to risk their capitals for

liberating millions of *replicants* from their condition? As profit and individual responsibility are apparently untouchable laws, we can't. Contrariwise, a possible solution for making the im[mutatio]n between management and creativity become positive, has been displayed by Ewa Bathelier. The French artist has exhibited a collection of similar tutu dresses in a variety of colors. The painture, used like if literally thrown against the tablets, was leaking down, creating different fringes between a tutu and another. The final outcome was a kind of serial uniqueness, a serial production of items each one irreproducible. In the Alexander McQueen's S/S 1999 a model was turning on herself like a carillon, an imperfect machine because still human in her pathos. She was wearing a white skirt sprayed of fluorescent yellow and black by real machines similar to the ones painting cars, in this scene looking like animals moving according to the music in background and chasing their victim. Imperfect animals because in any case artificial. McQueen inverted the miserable relationship between human and machine that previously generated the *replicant*. In his Weird Science the industrial pattern was not somatized but used for generating a potential serial uniqueness. The conventional perfection was turned into exceptional imperfection. Given the surrounding painting machines, every woman, according to her own pathos and movements, can have a uniquely sprayed skirt. Every brand could produce thousands of these serially unique items just changing the colors and the living models. More than ten years ago Helmut Lang commercialized some jeans with white painture spots. They were immediately copied by different major brands, extended up to the kidswear and predictably mainstreamed. At that time, if I would had ever been in the shoes of these major brands, instead of copying a pattern of serial dirtiness bringing it to the cleanest fast saturation, I'd better invent the system of making every pair of jeans spotted in a different way. Can you imagine a client who likes to wear almost the same things, maybe feeling sometimes a bit boring, but not willing to give up to his own singularity? If all the jeans had the different white spots in different places according to the McQueen's vision, that client for differentiating the closet and at the same time staying minimal, steady and coherent, would purchase three of those jeans instead of one. Like Kyra O. Pistilli says, it's about neural luxury: differentiation is not necessarily of the individual among the others, but also among his own self. It's the kind of human I call *dividual* and/or *multividual*. Translated in the roughest managerial language: there is a possibility for *upselling*, which means selling to the same person more of the same item. As seen, management and creativity can coexist, no doubt, and sorry to say but the best management of creativity is the creativity of management.

Heritage vs. innovation. The skull, packaging of our brain, has always been a strong metaphor. Formerly symbol of death used in war for warning the enemy, it has become today the ultimate iconic print for merchandising the death of a designer, an unrecognized romantic warrior accustomed to savage beauty in life, now celebrated as a perfectly loosing hero to be sold in the shapes of a scarf. Noticeably, if brands can have a life after life, they can have also a death after death. Anyway, let's try to go beyond sarcasm. As Fannie Wang reported from the last Parisian Fashion Week, avant-garde is the new mainstream. And I would like to add, as time and space are disappearing, there is no more margin to let the values of a designer, of a brand, of a movement, or of a whole era to be settled, so avant-garde is already the new heritage. This is visible in the sudden acceleration the metaphor of the skull had in the last years. In the beginning of the seventeenth century Shakespeare wrote the drama of Hamlet where the Prince of Denmark, in front of Yorick's skull, stated the famous question "to be or not to be". Luxury is here related to the human condition of tormented animal. Existence is the domain, the red or blue blood beneath the skin is tracing the demarcation line between nobles and folks, between being someone and no one, and who is someone can then enjoy luxury as *luxus*, the gift to gods, the princes' mark. In 2007, four centuries after Shakespeare, Damien Hirst created For The Love of God, the diamond skull representing both the *memento mori* and the

physical impossibility of death in the mind of someone living: the objectified cranium is reminding that we have born waiting to die but also that something of us is resisting to the mourning of the time passing, for showing at the end our glorious infinity [?]. Here, the human is not just a tormented animal but a moral entity. Beyond the universal poetic, Hirst's skull, composed of 8.601 flawless diamonds, is also the most costly work in the history of art. Here, economy is the domain, therefore the further question to be posed is "to have or not to have". Luxury is the outcome of a triumph in the business competition, a kind of *luxuria* to be enjoyed only by successful people. The distinction is between who can afford and who cannot, between who can waist and who cannot, luxury is monetized, somatized as aesthetics of power, with all the consequences in terms of ethics. Givenchy, Menswear S/S 2011, under the notes of the Eyes Wide Shout's soundtrack, Riccardo Tisci presented a leather mask looking like an armoured skull which gave a new taste to the skirty trousers and to the animalier style, the first symbol of the gender transversality introduced in the Eighties by Jean Paul Gaultier and evolved up to the nowadays carnal unrecognizability à la Pejic, the second a fetishization of the first human status and the dominance of the human on the nature by wearing the animals' leather. Evolution, involution, evil-ution, revolution, [r]evolution. Cross-dressing and dress-crossing. Givenchy's mask is a skull outside, the container-become-content-become-container, wearable for all those able to wear it, wearable as portable, ready for changing identity and role-playing as per one's convenience. The categories are broken and the identity is only a possibility among the others. Here, the domain is the contemporary culture: "to be what you want to be or not to be what you want to be". Once de-somatized, the aesthetics of power are leaving place to the power of aesthetics. Luxury is here fashion, not in its transitional aspect, but in its anthropocentric essence: "to become what you are". The distinction is not among those who are, not among those who have, but among those who can be because aware of what they can become by going onwards, backwards, or on both the directions at the same time. Heritage and innovation, once disjoined from the industrial matters and re-contextualized in the current liquid society, are equal concepts, expressions and instruments, because in a world living in a constant present, the past and the future, history and sci-fi, research and forecast, are one. The next skull considered in the sequence is a face, even though not a common one. Nick Gentry is painting portraits on tablets composed by used floppy disks, real ones, full of files, and still with the handwritten etiquettes stitched on. The floppy disk is a technosaur that didn't survive to the technological evolution, having been replaced in few years by the DVD, the USB and ultimately by the cloud. Obsolescence: it's a process of forced ageing, most of the times programmed by the producers, that makes a product expire before its natural death. Obsole-science. Well, up to few years ago we all were using the floppy disk for saving our documents and now the pronunciation of its name sounds like referring to a monster lived millions of years ago. Technology dies fast, and when died it's going to be destroyed. No traces of the human production are going to survive, nor in form of container (the floppy and all the engines of this kind), nor in form of content (the files inside). Not the skull, not the brain, not the memory, not the memories inside. And the cloud is not a solution, as the few tycoons owning the memory are going to own all the memories of ours, like already happening for fashion and luxury. So the heritage will disappear raining from the cloud or will be in the hands of few making the sky becoming darker. Not knowing what to choose among the two options, at this point better to get rid of it, to format the memory (*hardwear*) and start again in order to let the new generations write and sketch the upcoming memories (*softwear*). Nick Gentry's portrait is futuristic while embedding pieces of vintage technology variously filled with human memories: obsol-essence. Here, the human is the outcome of its previous pasts collected and recycled to be the future. Vintage is re-defined, from being an item produced minimum twenty years ago, to being an item survived to the forced obsolescence (ob-sole-science) It's the post-human, the human survived to its own

self. Luxury is a monad, a condensed moment of time and space to be written/ sketched, traced, saved and shared (*sharewear*). It's not only that the artist painting on the floppy disks is English and the authors of the files inside these supports can be Afghan. It's not only that the futuristic artwork is made out of memories. It's also that the common memory is not top-down generated and handled. It's not the update of a Vulgate, let's say of a formalized history (heritage), but an innovative way to turn into positive the coexistence of elements from the past, the present and the future (innovage = innovation + vintage) related to different and also distant places. Luxury, sustaining and condensing the chaos, is becoming the continuous ephemeral, a pure concept that can be composed and re-composed according to the memories stored in the memory. The monad is nomad. This is a metaphor for describing a kind of creativity potentially generating a huge amount of products simply mixing, moment after moment, the multiple and shiftable ways to conceive time and space. The last and most recent skull considered in the sequence is not a jewel, nor paint, it's a skull-tattooed visage, Rick Genest, the face of the trans-human recruited by Nicola Formichetti for re-branding Thierry Mugler. A living avatar, a technologically-driven primitive man, a brainy body-corpse, a male doll disobeying to the use-abuse-disuse preordered behavior line of its owner, a psycho-physical dialectic between life-embedded death and death-embedded life, the final evolution and total convergence of the animal human, the im[moral] human, the inhuman and the post-human. It's the totemized process of revitalization, life-after-death-after-life, finally the man after man. Now, some brands like Rodarte are oscillating between the first avant-gardistic identity and a more recent will for cocooning, like telling if avant-garde has become the new mainstream, a reassuring tradition can be the real innovation. But then, such a contr[addiction] has to be sustained in practice. Some other brands, especially the majors, according to what seen in Paris, are putting forward again a kind of new look played on the recurrence of the long term trends, like if from the New Look to nowadays nothing happened, like if we didn't have Matthew Barney and Takashi Murakami instead of Pablo Picasso and Jean Cocteau. Some brands are selling the heritage through expositions and museums. Those who still have members of the founding family in the management of the company, they have the right to do it. It's the luxury of "to be or not to be", a matter of blood, a noble cause for making one's breed keep on existing. Sorry for being so poisoning but those who, in contrary, are selling the heritage purchased from somebody else, they are merchants in the temple and would better think to the non-sense collections they show up every season instead of building up museums, sanctuaries that without sacrality are only cemeteries. Their attempt to be real is looking more artificial than the artificial world of the internet where people are commenting historical pictures everyday in innovative ways because out of the museum context. The time for these brands has arrived to invest in young, passionate and even ingenuous creative people both in management and in design for producing something to be prayed in the next decades. What I already defined as archeology of the future. Then, we have more sophisticated minds using avant-garde as heritage: modern body, kind of woman and sensuality, mixed with post-modern concepts, details and finishes. It's the case of Givenchy by Riccardo Tisci and Haider Ackermann. Finally we have Maison Martin Margiela without Martin. This is one of the rare situations, like happened with Tom Ford in Gucci and John Galliano in Dior, in which the current creative direction is seminal like the founding one, probably because, as the CEO Giovanni Pungetti declared in a recent interview to Imran Amed, Martin was a good trainer. In the S/S 2102 Maison [Martin] Margiela presented all the models with the hair covering their eyes (when not the whole faces). Despite this had been already shown by A.F. Vandevorst before, made by Margiela the meaning is multiplied for thousand because this brand is the one of the masked faces. The mask is artificial, the hair is natural. The mask is Givenchy's "to be what you want to be or not to be what you want to be" or, turned into negative, the lost face of the Western culture bringing to the impossibility to do. The hair used like a mask has the same weight of Rick Genest's skully-tattoed head: inside-become

outside-become inside. The disjunctions between container and content, packaging and product, visage and face, identity and role, artificial and natural, primitive and technological, life and death, have been all rejoined. Furthermore, Margiela's show is trying to rejoin also the big disjunction of our times between business and creativity when using the plastic for fashioning the dresses directly as dress: a symbol of serial commercialization becoming a symbol of unique creativity. In Margiela's collection there's no time and space. Innovation is the heritage because the brand has always been innovative. Heritage is the innovation because never stopping to look at the spirit of the time without following the waves and because whatever bringing you to think can be thought also at the opposite, like also McQueen used to do with his fresh perfect flowers or/and his flowers perfectly dead. So, it's a pity Maison [Martin] Margiela is near to be invisible in the global panorama of fashion luxury brands, and I don't think it's for respecting Martin's philosophy of invisibility [sarcasm]. When brands like this, with all their baggage of innoveritage (innovation + heritage) will be promoted for what they do and not for the name they have, and when Formichetti's vision from being pure styling will become product, then also the second of the three luxury im[mutation]s will be solved.

Luxury vs. Low-cost. Luxury doesn't exist, we create it, because the ideas of exclusivity and uniqueness, related to those of time and space, scarcity and abundance, are by definition mutable, subjective and manipulable. Major luxury brands, becoming too public through the second lines, the improbable category extensions and the over-flow of accessories, introduced abundance into scarcity: masstige (mass+prestige). Their trading down policy created the territory for the mass merchandisers with a minimum style quotient to play and become their competitors by trading up. Zara is the most evident example. The innovative formula of this brand is composed by three elements perfectly matching. Technology: the product is a best copy selection of what the majors are showing during the fashion weeks, produced and commercialized at record time with the double effect of making the originals look old and to exploit the investments (e.g. research, sampling, showing and advertising) of the real inventors. Occasion/Use: the shops are informal and the absence of service is recreating the feeling of a street market to be attended for finding the best bargain or to pass an afternoon with friends or relatives at the price of a pub attendance, with the difference of going out with something solid in one's hands. What purchased can be worn in a personal mix & match as a substitute or complementary of what coming from a real luxury shop. Also the visual impact of a Zara's window and the shopping bag are similar to those of the majors. Client: everybody. There are those who say "thanks to Zara I can purchase fashion, so for me it's luxury", those who say "there's no difference with the real fashion so why spending three times the budget for the same item in a boutique?", and those telling "the difference is visible, but Zara is in any case ok for the basics". The price is a plus when associated to real values, not alone, as mass merchandisers existed also before Zara without having had the same success. Walking in a Sunday morning along a fashion street at the seaside, a multi-brand luxury boutique was well attended, Emporio Armani beside a bit less, D&G totally empty with the shop assistants standing in front of the door with their arms folded, and Zara beside packed with the cue outside. When a product is comparable, people choose for the best price, when it's not, people prefer the best quality. So, the mistake of the majors was to make their products comparable and not absolute like luxury should be. When the demand is rising, in luxury you rise the price, not the offer. And the story of having being democratic is unbelievable: democracy is not existing even in politics, imagine in luxury! Despite the impact is similarly perceived, H&M has another model, potentially revolutionary for the world of fashion luxury because, differently from Zara, going beyond traditional factors like up & down or more & less. Technology: H&M is from time to time launching micro-collections created by the hyper names of fashion luxury. The audience's perception is of being in front a real second line specially made for one occasion, because of that

going immediately out of stock, without leftovers for the producer. Occasion/Use: the launch of a collection is an event restricted in time and space, people stay in the cue since before the opening of H&M's shop for granting a piece of a collection which will never repeated in the future. The purchased garment is more than a substitute or a complementary for real fashion luxury. It's lived like a unique piece: "I was there that day!". The fact of being lower quality is becoming secondary because in any case not lower than a second line by the same designer. Client: less mass than Zara, more acknowledged and conscious, aware of what's happening and exploiting the moment: special product/event. Now, if we take the rectangle of luxury, we have a short base (few availability) and a high height (premium price), if we take the rectangle of fashion is right the opposite, larger base (availability) and shorter height (acceptable price). If the major luxury brands passed from the first to the second rectangle, H&M wisely took the rectangle of fashion as an operative basis and a continuative business, but with the single events divided this large rectangle is many small ones looking like those of luxury. H&M is not luxury, but the audience perceives the product/events in a very similar way. Exclusivity and uniqueness are not intrinsic like in the real luxury, but coming from a sense of urgency for having something hype, unrepeatable and limited in time and space. H&M's model is, by word of its executives, mass exclusivity. It's a system perfectly fitting to the nowadays spirit of the time because using the same sense of time and space, letting the clients compete among themselves instead of making the brand in competition with other brands, benefiting of the elements coming from the higher with the prices of the lower, and exploiting two moments in the business, one feeding the other. The event sells fast and feeds the brand awareness both in a quantitative and qualitative way; the everyday mass merchandising is keeping the sales constant through the acquired awareness. Major brands' masstige at the opposite is not fitting to the spirit of the time, first because in a world in which the possibility of choice is extreme, style is becoming more important than status (pre-stige). Second, if prestige is mass it's not even granting the promised status. Third, as trading down has diluted the legacy of the name, people are stopping to perceive the logo as sufficient factor for their distinction (ex-clusivity). Fourth, because prestige contrarily to the current society is slow in time, pyramidal, so steady and immutable also in space. Fifth, a wide masstige collection includes also pieces of second relevance, while Zara is a kind of "the best of" and H&M is "exactly what I want in this moment", in both the cases without margin of error in meeting the audience's expectations. If luxury, as we were accustomed to conceive it, is moribund, fashion has become permanent. Beyond the mass merchandisers with a style quotient, major brands like Chanel are putting out six collections per year instead of two like once, outlets are selling collections sometimes not older than one year, and the sales are starting more or less officially every year before, sometimes when once the official product was late in the deliveries, with the final effect of eating a season every season. Internet is making available everything in every moment from every part of the world, at home in three days just moving one finger for clicking. The time from production/show to availability has disappeared, dreams and desires with it. The seasons faded away and the physical points of sale have become non-places. The fashion luxury system is a vortex going round and round faster and faster. By following this circular wave luxury will sink and fashion will drown with it. We all know what luxury is and should be, we all would like to restore the origins, but this is not possible because we are living in an historical moment of big radical changes and the time machine for going back has not been invented yet. What we can do is going back looking forward, which means bringing the original values of luxury into the future, being original instead of re-establish the origins. So, the practical methods for succeeding on luxury survival and re-launch are only two and both are coming from a careful observation of the reality. Here the first. Every vortex, a typhoon, a whirpool, a celestial black hole, and even simply a car wheel, has a center looking motionless. In astronomy it's called singularity. A brand can shape itself like a person with a specific archetype and meet the single clients who are singular. Persons, more than clients.

The brand is providing an identity always equal to itself for a person-client who is obviously changing in its phenotypes but not in his genotypes. The bond between the two is human, not marketing based. The archetype is transversal to the segments. The point of attraction is made of love and respect, not of price/quality ratio and convenience. Singularity is not comparable and not marginally differentiable, it's unique. It's exclusive not by excluding the others rather because excluding the possibility for everyone to be something else than him/her-self. In this way, the client-person doesn't need to compare among different brands and doesn't even need a big offer or diversification by the brand of reference, he/she just needs few items, always equal, with some differences in the details. Dressing always in the same way is a thrift style, a refusal of the hetero-directed styles, for affirming one's own identity. The brand is becoming the best friend or lover, the one and undisputed, a warranty. When meeting somebody else along the street wearing the same, you find a friend or a lover as well and the brand becomes a bond, potentially a cultural attractor, as in this case, wearing the same means being the same, so sharing thoughts, feelings and emotions. Final outcome: no competition, less production, less marketing, high fidelity: a tribe. After this first option, here the second. Around the motionless center, the vortex is moving fast. Going as fast as the others makes a brand comparable, by capability of providing new styles and also in terms of business (e.g. the weight of the company in its structures is inverted, paradoxically the more it's structured the slower goes, the more unsustainable is becoming for competition). Ok, but how to go faster than the mass merchandisers preserving the values of luxury? Right an example. Who cannot remember when Vivienne Westwood produced garments printed as newspapers? Like happened for the paint on Helmut Lang jeans, the idea was copied and mass merchandised so massively that after years we still have some around. None thought to print the garment with the newspaper right of the day in which the garment was produced, creating items all equal and all different, reflecting the time passing, the moment. And none thought of extending the diversification by country, printing in every different place with the daily local newspaper in different languages and fonts. It would have meant making them interchangeable and collectable. Serially unique through time and space, without killing the brand and, again: *upselling*. The strategy can be brought to the extreme by making the garments directly using the paper of the newspapers, those of that day in that country. If newspapers are leaving their place to the internet as main source for information, they can be used as reminder of a previous way to have access to news and culture. It's a media recycled as content. Preciousness with a cheap material, as treating paper is very difficult and a single mistake means throwing the work away. It requires a specific know-how, ask to the Japanese producers of origami. Here the garment becomes unique again because, made in paper, after the first use it's rotten, so it's a mono-use garment. If uniqueness can't be forever, the longest time, it can be for one evening, the shortest. If the mass-produced garments of Zara are purchased without the pain of the investment, used for few times, and replaced by new ones after fifteen days (this is what we call fast fashion), luxury can be faster and unique at the same time, giving the possibility to consume and waist in few hours what meticulously created under the name of an historical brand. When I first wrote this idea in the book Luxury Hackers, more than one year ago, I was aware I had to face many critics, and every time I tell publicly I take this risk once again. Fortunately, few weeks ago, while speaking at Polimoda's Luxury Management master course, Matthew Collins, one of the most brilliant students of ours, showed me a picture he took in Milan of a newspaper-made garment by Aspesi. Few days after, Hanne Clijsters from Fashion Brand Management detected in the Hermes' Florentine window a real paper-made bag. Kelly's are downloadable online as well. Aren't these perfect examples of fantasy becoming reality? The future is belonging to those who can imagine it. To all the skeptics I say: don't be afraid of thinking abstract, don't stop dreaming and telling what you dream. Don't forget to consider the immaterial side of luxury. Emotional ghosts can be more productive than what thought brutally concrete for being immediately productive.

What disappearing can be potentially more emotional than what lasting because what disappeared is keeping the person thinking on it, what lasting can become boring. What disappearing can be more eternal of what keeping on existing, we don't need skull-printed scarves for knowing it.

We have another key word for ending the discourse: unfinished. It means both not yet finished and infinite. What is not finished can't be object of a programmed obsolescence, so it's keeping the brand infinite. In the case of the paper bags, clients are virtually involved in the creative process while playing the collage, developing a mental link to the brand, and they can do it and do it again, for an unfinished number of times. They can be attracted by the product in the window or just check online what it's exactly about if they are running and don't have time to stop, and vice versa. Clicks & bricks: the physical point of sale and the online download are feeding each other. Once logged, the client will be reached time by time by the info of new releases: the brand as pre-selected source of information. Whereas, in the case of the newspaper-made garments, the smartest brands can play on their sustainability for creating the sense of unfinished, e.g. asking to their clients to bring the garment back to the shop for recycling the paper. The unconscious clients will be victim of a targeting action, because once back in the shop they will be tempted to purchase also something else, while the more conscious and really believing in sustainability, by recycling the used newspaper garments and purchasing new ones, will wear always fresh news, so they will recycle also themselves. After having proclaimed the man after man, we will proclaim the product after production. Only in that moment we will be able to proclaim also the coming of luxury after luxury.

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