

ILLUSION OF EXCESSIVE CONSUMPTION AND ITS EFFECTS

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Abstract

The aim is to explore, explain and describe this phenomenon to a better understanding of it and also the relationship between advertising and the consumer society members. This paper aims to present an analysis of excessive and unsustainable consumption, the evolution of a phenomenon, and the ability to find a way to combat. Unfortunately, studies show that this tendency to accumulate more than we need to consume excess means that almost all civilizations fined and placed dogmatic among the values that children learn early in life. This has been perpetuated since the time when the goods or products does not get so easy as today. Anti-consumerism has emerged in response to this economic system, not on the long term. We are witnessing the last two decades to establish a new phase of consumer capitalism: society hiperconsumtion.

Keywords: *society hiperconsumtion, excess consumption, anti-consumerism, non consumerism, welfare.*

Classification JEL : E21

1.Introduction

The issue of the study was to identify the role, functions and techniques for running the advertising in the social, economic and cultural, to meet the numerous criticisms publicity relating to the quality of the advertising message, content, quantity and form, but also on ethical and moral issues regarding the negative impact on consumers. Moreover, we watched and changes over time within consumer with its transition to a new stage - was hiperconsumtion. Consumerism is the result of an economic model which is based on production rather than on needs. It is a system that, when oversaturated market, decided to produce and more. Has converted desires into needs, changed social positions, overturned value systems, has mystified within the purchasing of products. We are lead to think that buying a bottle of water, but the freshness of mountain air, do not buy some clothes, but an attitude, do not buy a car, but a place among the top placed, a social position. People are just consumers and categorized in terms of how and quantity of consumption, masses of people are the target sites, countries measured in purchasing power and consumption. All these models have worked well for decades and included around the world and whatever the peculiarities consumer economy stifled any political ideology or model of living. Globalization is also a consequence of consumerism. We are told that we need more products around the world. It is so civilized to eat certain foods and then we call civilized. Civilization does not seem to be related to morality, education, and science, but the goods they consume. And because the Earth is a closed system means that if you take a hand somewhere is shrinking.

2. Anti-consumerism

Anti-consumerism has emerged in response to this economic system, not on the long term. They say we should distinguish between wants and needs, to look pragmatically products, to seek happiness and welfare elsewhere. Ideally to buy as little and as local environmental reasons or nominal income. Buying local products reduces the consumption of carbon dioxide that it quantifies the product transport and help the local economy, ie those around you. When you buy a product you should know what's behind it, where it's made, what it's made, whether the local market can find a similar one. You should know that the whole system is based on your money. You do not have the excuse that you did not know. The buyer is not only a privilege, but a responsibility. Already there are economic models that bring economic engine of production in society and places new concepts based on the green economy. Degrowth (in french, décroissance) is a political movement, economic and social, and ecological economics based on the idea anticonsumeriste and anticapitalist. The authors and advocates of degrowth economics pledază for decreasing production and consumption and economic contraction, arguing that overconsumption underlying long-term environmental problems and social inequality. The key concept of degrowth is that reducing consumption does not require individual sacrifice and a decrease in welfare.

History books usually study social movements of the second half of the nineteenth century from the point of view of the split between anarchists and Marxists. Both theories played an important role in debates of the great workers' movements of the following century, and for a long time, no one seemed to question the root they shared: the idea that the origin of the "social problem" was in the way in which the production of things was organized.

It's normal for that powerful idea to occupy, almost without question, the center of historical stories: from the First International to the fall of the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe, the story of European reforms and revolutions was written in terms of work stoppages, general strikes, "wildcat" strikes and factory occupations. In the world of alternatives in the same days, not much was different. For two centuries, to say "cooperative" in continental Europe or in South America automatically meant "worker cooperative," and it was the most powerful community movement of the time. Israeli "kibbutzim" (communities) were founded to create a productive base in the wastelands of Jewish migration in Asia. Even when the Catholic Church started to develop its "social doctrine" with the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, its focus was on the same starting point as the theoreticians of the IWA: the drama of proletarianization of the artisan and the peasant, the transition from the workshop and its culture to the factory and alienation.

Social Anglicanism

But the Anglo-Saxon world was going the other direction. In Great Britain, a strong philanthropical tradition existed, linking both liberals and conservative social Christianity, which was afraid that unions would be "contaminated" by the radical ideas of the continent. At the end of the nineteenth century, this tendency had little influence on unions, but had a strong relationship with different experiments of workers' stores and little mutuals, often linked to the social outreach of Anglican parishes. Little by little, from this effort there emerged a "friendly cooperativism." The worker cooperative showed the possibility of a world where capitalists were not the owners of the businesses; however, a consumer cooperative can put in question the need for a shopkeeper-owner, but not owners as a group, so it didn't question the social order.

These are the cooperatives that met in the "First British Co-operative Congress" in 1869. Wanting to create an "alternative" to the dominant workers' movements, they will rewrite the history of cooperativism as it was then commonly understood, placing its origins in Robert Owens, a liberal philanthropist—rather than in Fourier—and will date the birth of cooperativism to "the Rochdale Pioneers," an English consumer cooperative, ignoring the fishing, agrarian and artisan commons that had been modernizing and becoming modern [worker] cooperatives for at least sixty years prior. For a long time, this reductionist interpretation was almost exclusively Anglo-Saxon. In 1895, when the first assembly of the "International Cooperative Alliance" took place, the delegates belonged almost exclusively to the British Empire: England, Australia, India, and Ireland. The Anglo-Saxon homogeneity was only broken by the participation of German Christian cooperativism, born of the Lutheran Church, a minority in an environment of overwhelming development of social democracy.

United States

After the Second World War, "consumerism" took off in the United States. US unions spread consumer and housing cooperativism across the country as a way to protect their members from the economic crisis following the Japanese recovery. The idea that "conscious consumption" can not only relieve crises but transform the very international economic structure is made manifest in 1946, when the Committee Central Mennonite creates "Ten Thousand Villages," the first "fair trade" association.

Meanwhile, society is stunned to discover the proportions of the Jewish genocide, and the media have to explain how "Hitler's madness" could have led to electoral success and social consensus in enlightened Germany.

The attention of academics and creators of opinion turns to techniques of mass manipulation. There is a growing distrust of the power of the media and the effects of the then nascent television. The publicists of Madison Avenue ("Mad Men") will soon become the epitome of the new industrialist fascism, which is able to use Goebbels' mass techniques in a new way, to make us consume what we don't need. Alternative consumption and what soon will be called the "counterculture" are then defined as a new form of resistance.

Europe

In Europe, during the '70s, a good number of college kids—then much less numerous than today—discovered the radical Left. After failing again and again to convince the workers that they needed a revolutionary party, they wonder the same thing that, years before, Bordieu and Castoriadis had asked in the magazine *Socialism or Barbarism*: "Why is the proletariat no longer revolutionary?" Castoriadis' answer, and above all, Bordieu's, later followed by his Situationist disciple Guy Debord, will be very well developed intellectually. According to these authors, capitalism had entered a new phase, where the determining factor of the social order, including the control and the generation of identities, was carried out not in the direct relationship between capital and labor, in production, but rather in the system of reproduction of the labor force, consumption, where the new contradictions of the system were concentrated. More than capitalism, we would have to call the new mode of social production/reproduction "consumerism."

The discourse is soon taken up by the non-parliamentarian German and Dutch Left: the fundamental contradiction of capitalism is no longer between capital and labor, as Marx described, but between capital, culture and natural resources. The enemy was no longer capitalism, but consumerism and industrialism. The discourse recovers the

priority and urgency of an alternative: the dream of a world revolution—something that the people make, and would have to make—will gradually be substituted with a global ecological catastrophe, something that would be beyond people’s control if they don’t change their lifestyles and consumption habits. In that ideological framework, *die Grünen*, the Greens, are born, the first European political party to systematically organize campaigns of alternative consumption.

The fall of the Communist regimes of eastern Europe, with the consequent loss of influence of the parties of Marxist inspiration, gave even more relevance to anti-consumerism—and therefore to “consumerism”—in alternative discourse in a wide variety of forms and topical associations: from catastrophism and radical ecologism to the discourse of movements against climate change and a good part of the “sharing economy.”

Today

And in fact, it has been the development of a whole series of movements born in the English-speaking world over the two latest decades that has ended up establishing the argument of the “centrality of consumption” among new social sectors in Europe and Latin America. Alternative discourse has gone from the productive kibbutz, still a major point of reference in the ’70s, to “ecovillages” that only share ownership of common services, from cooperatives with houses to “co-living,” and even from consumer co-ops themselves to “collaborative consumption” platforms listed on the stock market. And if there is no belief that production is the center of social organization, it is difficult to understand the nature and distribution of property as the determinant institution of an era.

3. Conclusions

The “consumerist” discourse, the idea that consumption patterns can modify the social structure through the market, has gained extraordinary strength. Paradoxically, it has fed and given legitimacy to a certain sense of “guilt” about consuming and enjoying doing so, a certain ascetic and degrowthist ideal, closer to Christian millenarianism than to the dream of abundance of the utopian and revolutionary movements of the nineteenth century. A new social consensus about how to change the world seems to have formed. And yet, we realize that something substantial is diluted when we ignore production. Maybe it’s because our empowerment as consumers, by definition, has a ceiling. Perhaps because we realize that unemployment and poverty can’t be addressed by changing only our purchases, or only distributing production another way. Perhaps because consuming “less,” or “even less,” is the immediate result of the crisis (economic “degrowth”), and we see that it means nothing but poverty. Or simply because, inside, we know that, for as valuable and important as sharing culture is, our sovereignty and that of our communities continues to depend on our ability to satisfy the needs of our loved ones, and that that, beyond cultural change, in the end has to do with capacity and the mode of production of goods, both material and cultural, that satisfy them.

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