Abstract
Modern times are characterized by phenomena such as speed, globalization, publicity and the boom of mass communications media in an era with a capitalistic ideological model. In this milieu that is distinctive of our times, artistic production has two currents: cultivated art and applied art. It may be said that, even in our days, the former (painting, sculpture) can only be acquired by economical elites; whereas applied visual art, such as graphic design and illustration, is aimed at the popular sector, as it is predominantly dependent on massive communications and information media. In this setting, the visual sign is dependent on two phenomena: a) The use of visual conventions that affect the sign’s formal dimension and contents dimension, as symbolization is used, and b) Art’s popularity in modern times. In this essay, these two aspects are analyzed in the context of our time.

Keywords
Symbolization, conventionalization, modern times, icon, graphic art, graphic design.